

# ASK THE HOME EXPERT

Whether you're building your dream dwelling, updating your abode or sprucing up your landscape, you need someone who can inspire your vision, navigate trends and keep you on budget. Get to know some of the area's most knowledgeable and creative home experts. After all, when it comes to improving your living situation, you don't want to open the front door to just anyone.

*Photography by Katie McGee*

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*Katherine Weeks, Owner*

**I love working in Savannah because ...** this is my hometown, and I genuinely love the people and the slower-paced Southern lifestyle. The salt air and the Spanish moss are part of my childhood memories.

**My business specializes in ...** custom window treatments. We offer everything from basic functional coverings, such as blinds, to elaborate drapery treatments. Our clients love our shutters, particularly when layered with decorative panels for a pop of color and added softness.

**The newest addition to our product line is ...** an aluminum exterior shutter. American-made and wind-rated for 170 mph, we anticipate this will be popular for homeowners wishing to protect their homes during hurricane season.



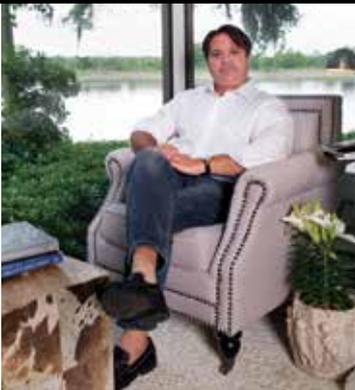
## BUDGET BLINDS OF SAVANNAH

414 Bonaventure Road | Savannah, GA 31404  
 912-344-4200 | [budgetblinds.com/savannah](http://budgetblinds.com/savannah)



## GREG HALL CUSTOM HOMES

19 Bartow Point Drive | Savannah, GA 31404  
912-313-0457 | [greghallhomes.com](http://greghallhomes.com)



Greg Hall, Owner and Custom Builder since 1984

**Looking to build? I always tell people to ...** work with a builder who has a long and successful track record of building beautiful housing within a given budget. You want someone with good communication skills who is passionate about the building profession. Ask for references and find out how the potential builders you are considering handle change orders and warranty work.

**A trend in my industry is ...** harnessing technology to cut costs. Solar power is becoming more affordable every year. Other products like spray-foam insulation

and tankless water heaters are relatively modest investments that produce energy savings from the beginning.

**My clients love that ...** our services range from custom home renovations to complete design-and-build construction. We are equipped to handle and oversee all phases of custom-home-building projects, including cost estimating, design review submissions and approvals, building specifications, permitting, contract management and interior and exterior design selections.

**I've learned from experience that ...** preplanning can save you more than just money—it saves time and stress, too. Select your finishes and price them out before you begin construction. Surprises often crop up in new construction, but you can minimize them by concentrating on advanced planning.

**I am proud of the fact that ...** I have served six years on the Southern Living Builder Board and have been a part of accumulating more than 60 awards since 1985, including *Southern Living* magazine's Builder of the Year award.



## GARAGE SOLUTIONS SAVANNAH

6 Modena Island Drive | Savannah GA 31411  
912-238-2566 | [garagesolutions.savannah.com](http://garagesolutions.savannah.com)



*Christopher Ramsden, Owner/Manager*

**I love working in Savannah because ...** of the history, the weather and the eclectic collection of different people who all get along so well.

**I specialize in ...** garage organization, commercial grade cabinetry, flooring and shelving. I like to help my customers rise above the mess.

**My philosophy is ...** keep your commitments—show up when you say you

will and do what you say you will do—with no b.s. and no surprises.

**I've learned from experience that ...** the lowest bid is not necessarily the best value. You do get what you pay for.

**My clients love that I am ...** honest, responsive and listen carefully to their opinions. My goal is to have more than satisfied customers; I want raving fans.

**When I'm not in the office, I ...** am an avid road cyclist. I like to drive hot laps at Roebing Road and watch my son play varsity soccer.

**Most people are surprised when they learn I ...** am a Yankee. However, I am married to a Georgia girl who is trying to turn me into a Southern gentleman.



## UNITED COMMUNITY BANK MORTGAGE SERVICES TEAM

8201 White Bluff Road | 912-927-5623  
2225 E. Victory Drive | 912-303-9667  
27 Bull St. | 912-234-6565  
ucbi.com

*Pictured Above From Left: Sarah Arcanti, Loan Processor; Jodi Lewis, Mortgage Loan Originator Assistant; Adam Hart, Vice President, Regional Sales Manager; Preston Laird, Mortgage Loan Originator; Padraic Robertson, Savannah Market Manager; and Karen Martin, Mortgage Loan Originator*

**United Community Bank Mortgage Services is ...** the mortgage division of United Community Bank, Inc. We take a consultative approach and work one-on-one with customers to build a relationship and match them with the right home loan. For many customers, this is one of the most important financial decisions they will ever make. Whether buying their first home, expanding their current home, or refinancing, our mortgage team walks them through every step of the mortgage process.

**Our philosophy/culture is ...** the golden rule of banking—serving our customers

the way we want to be treated. Our CEO Jimmy Tallent said it best when UCB was recognized by Forbes as one of America's Best Banks: "Banking is a 'people business,' and United is fortunate to have dedicated, result-oriented employees with a true passion to serve its customers."

**We stand apart from the competition because ...** we have the size and strength of a regional/national bank, but act and operate like a local community bank/mortgage operation. In addition to traditional mortgage products, we also offer specialty portfolio loans for specific needs. Plus, our team consists of local people

with knowledge of the Savannah market.

**It's the perfect time to ...** buy, move or refinance. Rates are low, values have stabilized and the timing is great to find that dream home or secure permanent financing on your existing home.

**We stay involved in the community by ...** supporting local nonprofits. Our United Community Bank employees are proud volunteers with numerous charitable organizations throughout the area.



*Dane Eckard, Owner*

**We are experts in ...** flooring—whether that's tile, vinyl and laminate, hardwood or carpet and rugs. We offer design help and installation services, too.

**What sets us apart is ...** our personality and vibe. I don't want to feel like the other carpet shops. We genuinely enjoy what we do, and I think that comes through in a lot of ways. If you don't have a great experience here, I don't believe we've earned or deserve your business.

**Most people aren't aware that ...** my family has been in the flooring business for more than 50 years. I opened the Savannah location—our first store in Georgia—in 2008 after graduating from the SCAD.



## ECKARD'S FLOORING DESIGN CENTER

29 Echols Ave. | Savannah, GA 31406  
912-355-6224 | eckardsflooring.com



*Tracy Gibson Eckard, Owner/Manager*

**People are surprised when they learn ...** I'm not just the girl on the commercial—I actually run the store!

**Good sleep leads to ...** better health. The right mattress and adjustable base can make differences in your life you can't imagine. That's why we take a health-related approach to selecting products for you.

**Family members may have different sleep issues ...** so bring your partner with you. Wear comfy clothes and be ready to relax. We even have an awesome kids' area!



## GREEN FROG SLEEP CENTER

7501 Abercorn St. | Savannah, GA 31406  
912-352-4001 | greenfrogsleepcenter.com



Danny Nelson, Owner and President of The Nelson Group

**Looking to landscape? I tell my clients ...** to spend 5 to 10 percent of the home's value on their landscaping budget. Not only will you get day-to-day enjoyment out of a well-planned, well-executed landscape, but you can also expect a 100 to 200 percent return on your landscape investment.

**I've learned from experience that ...** well-landscaped homes are easier to sell. Realtors often tell me how important curb appeal and first impressions are to get potential home buyers in the door. A good first impression also can encourage a potential buyer to be more willing to overlook other negatives a property may have.

**A common landscaping mistake is ...** skimping on quality of design (or no design), materials or contractor. If you don't do it right the first time, it ends up being a waste of money. Save up, do the project in phases or put the renovation cost into your mortgage.



## THE NELSON GROUP

912-355-5881 | nelsongroup.us



**An on-site liquidation ...** usually occurs after one of the three Ds: death, divorce or downsizing.

**We've learned from experience that ...** families oftentimes feel overwhelmed with the task of divesting of a loved one's estate and begin giving items away. Thinning out the estate could jeopardize the opportunity to have a successful on-site estate sale. A professional liquidator can help. We offer free consultations with no obligation.

**Most people don't understand ...** at an estate sale all household contents are for sale! From antique to contemporary furniture, clothing, collectibles, and cars! When "everything must go!" it's best to call a professional.



## THE MINT GREEN TAG SALE COMPANY

912-232-1039 | TheMintGreenTagSaleCompany.com  
AJ and Cody Hetzel, Estate Sale Planners