

Bush family remolds renovation industry

by Jill Holloway | photos submitted

When it comes to renovation, there is no one who knows their way around tile work and tubs better than Bret Bush of Tubz Plus.

Tubz Plus was founded by Bret and his late father, Ken Bush in 1993. However, Bret was the one who really got the ball rolling on the untapped market.

“Previously, I was employed with Dave Co. and I became interested in creating my own company,” Bret explained. “We (my dad and I) explored different opportunities and found that tub refinishing was the new big thing. We thought that might be an opportunity for us.”

Bret dove in head first to the world of tub refinishing, traveling to Tuscon, Arizona in 1993 for training.

“I trained on how to refinish bath tubs and came right back here to Thomasville to work,” he recalled.

Upon returning to Thomasville, Bret and his father discovered the tub refinishing industry was largely unknown.

“No one wanted what they didn’t know was available,” Bret said. “We had to educate the public. We were the ground floor of the industry; we really had to create the need for the service; we had to advertise and had to promote the tub refinishing so people would understand what was available to them.”



Pictured left to right, Bret, Pamela and Blake Bush of Yur Bath and Kitchen.



Bret admitted the first year of business was difficult, explaining at times they may only refinish 2-3 tubs a month. However, a bright spot came for the men when they tapped into the multi-family unit market in Tallahassee. When working on multi-family units, Bret said the duo would refinish up to 10 tubs a month.

“After people realized it was an option for them, the demand increased,” Bret said.

During the first few years of tub refinishing, Bret began to look at the bigger picture and saw the company move in a new direction, while still paying homage to their roots. He envisioned the team at Tubz Plus remodeling bathrooms completely.

While it was something Ken wouldn’t live to see, Bret said his father always knew the big plans he had for the company.

“Even 30 years ago, I felt like we could create a company similar to what we have today,” Bret said. “It’s been a dream and vision of mine for a long time.”

Throughout the years, Bret has renovated numerous homes, but there’s one that will always stick with him.

His team renovated both a kitchen and a master bathroom in under 90 days.

“It was quite a challenge, but it was one I was proud of and the customer was happy with as well,” he said.

The home was a historic home, but Bret explained that Tubz Plus works on all types of homes, even those that seem newer.

As individuals’ health changes, their needs may also change. Bret has worked on a number of homes where he has converted bathrooms and showers into something more wheelchair accessible and handicap friendly.

“Some homes may be as new as 10 years old, but the average age of the homes we work on is 20-25 years old,” he said.

During his time working on bathroom remodeling, Bret noticed homeowners would often renovate their kitchen at around the same time. With a mind for business, Bret began to do the





same, recruiting Sam Harnevious as an installation manager to help schedule the new line of work, renaming the business Yur Bath and Kitchen.

"He's a local guy and has a lifetime of experience in what we are trying to do," Bret said.

Bret, with the help of Harnevious, is currently updating the showroom to include an entire kitchen display to show what Yur Bath and Kitchen is capable of doing in homes today.

However, the kitchen display is causing Yur Bath and Kitchen to burst at the seams.

Yur Bath and Kitchen has only been at their current location for four years.

When they moved in, Bret recalled saying that he never believed they would be able to fill up a showroom of that size, but now with the kitchen expansion, he wonders if another move will soon be in the future.

As far as what comes next for Yur Bath and Kitchen and their ever-growing business, Bret said they are always watching the industry.

"We are always watching for where the industry is going and what are the new trends," he said. "We pride ourselves in adding those new options and trends to our service and being able to offer those to our community."

Some of the trends Bret is currently seeing for both kitchens and bathrooms is to open them up and create an open living space.

"Where you have a kitchen that may have a dividing wall between the kitchen and family room, the trend now is to take down that wall and create a kitchen and family room all in one," he explained. "Same thing goes for the bathroom. For years the trend was to create a closed in shower, one that was almost a separate room within the bathroom, but now we are taking those walls down and creating a larger open space in the bathroom."

Looking toward this upcoming year, Bret fully expects that to continue to be the trend and hopes this will be another record-breaking year for Yur Bath and Kitchen.

"We are very pleased to say that we have set revenue records for the last 5-years in a row, even during the COVID era" Bret said. "Our company was perfectly situated to offer those services during that time, and this year we are on track to break those sales records again."





None of this would be possible without a team, though.

Bret acknowledged that all of his employees have been instrumental in growing the business over the years, especially his wife, Pamela.

“During the early days of refinishing, Pamela was a huge part of our success,” Bret shared. “Surface refinishers tend to be a one-man show and work from their homes and communicate with the cellphone they have, and so as a result, customers would call to inquire about a service, but that refinisher would be out working.”

Bret said he knew early on, Pamela would be a “secret weapon.” He and Pamela developed the phone system to go straight to her cell phone, so she could always answer the call when Bret was out on jobs.

“Back in those days, we grew the business because people could get ahold of someone to get information,” he said.

As Bret and Pamela have grown older though, they have looked toward their blended family of eight to see if any of them might be interested in joining the family business.

Their eldest son, Blake is now in the process of being groomed to take over Yur Bath and Kitchen.

Bret shared that Blake holds the contractor’s license for the company and is a licensed residential contractor.

“We are working with him now and maybe in a few years he will allow me to retire,” Bret joked.

While his family has been a huge help in the growth, Bret said he would be remiss if he did not acknowledge the group of individuals who have dedicated so much to his company.

“They are all local people,” he said. “We have about 17 people employed here and they all live here and raise their families here.”

Bret said this is very important to him, because it is similar to a family within a family, and he wants to give them opportunities to grow in their professional and personal lives as well.

As a way to give back to the community that supports his family and the families who he works with, Yur Bath and Kitchen has been dedicated to Cure Childhood Cancer and raised more than \$50,000 the past few years to donate directly to Childhood Cancer research programs.

“Without this community, we wouldn’t be where we are today, and I just wanted to do something to help them in any way we could,” Bret concluded.

Although Blake has some large shoes to fill, Bret is sure that his son will continue the legacy he and his father built and continue to invest in the community that has poured so much into the Bush family. *TS*

