

CNN comes to Signal Hill

By Nancy Prentice
Morey Construction
Signal Hill, Calif.



www.moreyconstruction.org

Ben took a call from Kellie Riley, associate editor of Southern California Builder, on March 2 asking if he would like to be on a TV program put on by CNN called Turnaround. It's a program where the small business person would receive advice from a successful person in a related field.

Ben came to me and said to give the production company a call to see what it was and if it would be something interesting to do. Ok, call Hollywood; I'll just add that to my list. Well it was late in the afternoon and I figured I would just leave a message, but no, Marcy Walton, of Weller Grossman productions was at her desk.

We had a long talk; she explained it was not a "reality" show. They wanted someone who would be open to advice from the mentor. In past programs they had Kathy Ireland mentor an interior designer, John Paul De Joria, CEO of John Paul Mitchell products went to a beauty salon, Mark Mastrov CEO of 24 Hour Fitness mentored a boxing gym owner. Ok, I thought, who would we get that was well known enough in the building industry to make for good TV...Donald Trump?? Right, he and Ben would get a long just fine.

Well days went by and no phone call. Monday, March 7 we all gathered early to have a group photo taken (more about that in a future issue) and when we got back to the office, there was the message on the answering machine, "Hi, we will be there on the 10th to start filming". So it started. Thank goodness for email. Marcy and I emailed each other several times a day getting all the paperwork taken care of. They had to have our financial reports, pictures, releases signed and clients lined up to interview. And on top of all of this, there is a construction business to run.

All that Glitters

One of our main concerns was that the filming would not affect business, it's bad enough that we invade people's homes and their lives with out dragging a film crew with us. Fortunately that was their concern too. For those of you, who were able to say yes to my phone calls, thank you!



One of our main concerns was that the filming would not affect business, its bad enough that we invade people's homes and their lives with out dragging a film crew with us. Fortunately that was their concern too. For those of you, who were able to say yes to my phone calls, thank you!

Thursday morning, 9am the film crew arrived. Well so much for Hollywood glamour, they looked just like my sons friends from USC film school. They did their test shots, got their equipment ready, and then sat in the parking lot for hours as the mentor was not scheduled to show up until 1pm.

The mentor...we were not to know who it would be until they showed up. And like I said before, Donald Trump was all I could think of. Bob Villa of This Old House fame wouldn't fit as he could not offer financial advice, Jimmy Carter with Habitat for Humanity, again wouldn't fit the financial part, and there were no Secret Service people hanging around. Needless to say, it was an interesting wait. Ben had thought of a few people, the builder for Extreme Makeover, and Bruce Karatz, of KB Home.

Well, trust Ben to get it right, it was Bruce Karatz, Chairman and CEO of KB Home, a very gracious and nice man. He and Ben hit it off right away. It was an experience to watch the filming. All the crew jockeying around with their cameras and boom mikes, shushing everyone to keep quiet and stay out of their way. Mr Karatz went around after talking with Ben to see our showroom. Ah yes, the showroom. Candy and I had despaired of trying to clean it up and move out the most annoying junk that collected there, not to mention, chasing out gigantic dust bunnies that seemed to be in every corner before filming. While the cameras were on, Mr Karatz walked over to the kitchen sink display and pulled on the faucet. The head pulled out with out the flex attached, which we had used to replace a defective flex hose installed at a client's house. He made a comment about how if he was going to have us build a home, he'd like to see that our showroom was an example of our work. I thought to myself, it was a good thing that Ben had siliconed down the toilet display, so children would not push it over, or else if he'd sat on it, it would have fallen over! Well, then he mentioned our web site and we agreed we need professional help with it!

The second day of filming, Ben went to KB Homes showroom and toured that site. At the end of the tour, Mr Karatz presented Ben with four new logos that his art department had worked on the night before. Bruce said to him there was one he liked the best, but would let Ben decide what he liked. Turned out they both liked the same one and it's on the front page of the newsletter. That afternoon they visited some of our job sites and came back again to talk. Neither Ben nor Mr Karatz had any problems keeping the conversation going. The show host, Ali Velshi, told Candy that on previous programs he had to step in and help the flow. Not with us. It was great to watch the two of them exchange ideas. One of his suggestions was to have before and after photos in the showroom, so the executive producer set up for Ben and Candy to go to Kinkos and have them done overnight. They took the film crew with them. My project was to copy the new logo and place it around the office. That night I went to Office Max and had a color copy of the logo made, and then got mounting boards to put it on. So instead of an entire art department, Ben had me with scissors and a glue stick.



Saturday morning 7:30am, we were back. Candy went to Kinkos to pick up the enlarged photos. She had to drive back to pick up an additional photo that they forgot to give her, I went out for more poster board, but found none of the stores in our area were open that early, and of course, Ben called to let us know that they were on the way! Well, where there's a will, there is a way, and also where there are two desperate women, just get out of the way! We got it together; fortunately the one photo that we taped to the board fell off the mount before Mr Karatz sat down, (it would have landed on his head) and so we lucked out. The faucet was replaced with one that had all its parts and Rafael and Danny, and then Collin made sure it wouldn't move, the logo was on the front door and placed around the showroom, and Jill Sharpless who does the embroidery on our shirts and jackets, had stayed up until the wee hours of Saturday morning and got the logo on a jacket which we presented to Mr Karatz at the end of filming.



Wow, I hope we don't do that again for a long while. A lot of information was given to Ben to think about, and I am sure Ben will take the best of the advice and put it to good use here. We will just have to find the time to take the time to do it.

Our thanks to Michael and Cyndy Kirk, Christy and Dave Cleveland, and Matt and Catherine Gorski (who had to endure the film crew during their design appointment as well as at their job site) for letting CNN invade their lives. Also, many thanks to Derrick Hall, Senior Vice President of Communications for KB Home for encouraging Mr. Karatz to do this show, everyone at Weller Grossman Productions, and the film crew. A big thank you to Jill Sharpless for all the time spent working on the new logo for the jacket. And of course,

thank you to Bruce Karatz. He took three days out of his busy schedule to come to Signal Hill and offer advice to us.

The program is called Turnaround, and is on CNN on Saturday mornings at 8am. We were told it will air April 30th. Due to breaking news stories the program can be preempted and would be shown the following Saturday. The web site is the best bet to check on the air date and it is <http://money.cnn.com/ontv/turnaround/>