

Father's Day Comes Early

A Tribute to Some of the Industry's Most Revered Dads

by Max Perilstein



In the glass industry no other holiday carries the same weight or meaning as Father's Day. With the amazing amount of father/son or father/daughter combinations in our little sector, this upcoming celebration is something to behold. As I sat down at my keyboard to honor some of these folks in this column, my mind started racing—the sheer number of people that fall into this category is amazing. While I'll miss a bunch, and I apologize for that, here's kudos to an abbreviated list of great dads who have led their blood through the rigors of the glass world.

GREAT DADS I'VE KNOWN ...

MITCH SHAMMAS ... PETE TRYKOFF ... RICHARD GIANFORTI ... AL SHAPIRO, HARRY PHENEY AND DOUG SAMPSEL ...

Doug Sampsel of Tempered Glass Inc. looks back on the day his son Matt wanted to join the business. "When he came to me, I told him that if he wanted to see how difficult life could be, then he should join the glass industry," said Doug.

While Doug feels like his prediction came true, as we all have those incredibly adventurous times, having his son with him is still "encouraging, because of the feeling of trust and commitment. You don't have to worry about him, he gets it done," he said.

BOBBY SILVERSTEIN ... THAD M. ZIEGLER ... BOB HARTONG ... AL BAKER AND LEO KARAS ...

Joey Karas' father is Leo Karas of Karas & Karas Glass and Leo happens to be one of our industry's most recognizable folks. Involved in so many aspects of our business, Leo's care for our industry is top-notch and unques-

tioned. Having worked with his dad "forever," Joey's respect runs deep for the man that has spent more than 50 years in our industry. "He is a very powerful figure of a guy. It's great what he does," said Joey.

But, as in most relationships, there was a time when things weren't a utopia. "Our offices are now a half-mile apart and I joke that if my room was a half-mile apart from him when I was a teenager I would've given him no problems during that period of my life," he said. Joey may have déjà-vu sometime in the future, as his ten-year-old son wants to join the business, which would make Karas & Karas a fourth-generation company.

JIM TYRELL ... DICK KRUG ... ED HICKEY ... GEORGE STATHOPOLIS ... JOE SALERNO AND JERRY WORDHOUSE ...

Only one of Jerry Wordhouse's four children followed him into the glass business at Edwards Glass. At one point all of his kids wanted in, but it isn't Jerry's style to push so he left it up to them. In the end, only his son Erik joined by starting at the bottom and working his way up. Watching it happen has been a great experience for Jerry. "It's been a realization of a dream for me," he said. "Seeing Erik rise above the problems, work through them and be successful gives me a great deal of pride and comfort."

Wordhouse also has seen another occurrence that most fathers who work with their children have. "We have a tremendous bond, he's not only my son but a great business associate," he said.

Knowing Jerry the way I do, I can tell you Erik has been lucky to learn

with one of our industry's classiest people.

BILL CASEY ... TOBY RINALDI ... BARRY DEAVEN ... GARY HOLLABAUGH AND ED BERKOWITZ ...

For the past 26 years Arthur Berkowitz has worked side-by-side with his father Ed at JE Berkowitz. His decision to work with his dad, who has been in business since 1950, was a classic story of a college graduate. Arthur was traveling overseas after college and ended up staying too long and running out of money. His father wired him some cash on a Friday and by the following Monday, Arthur was on the phone working for his dad in the glass industry. As the saying goes, the rest is history. "It's been terrific. In some family businesses tensions exist but that's not the case here. It has truly been great," said Arthur. Furthermore, he joked, "I continue to be a great believer in nepotism."

HARRIS PERILSTEIN ...

While the time would be perfect for me to write about my dad, I'll save that for some other time. (*Editor's Note: Following the writing of this column, Max's father passed away. See obituary, page 68.*) This column's focus is on the men listed above, like my dad, who took chances and led their families proudly. Happy Father's Day to all! ■

the author



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