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Limelight America

by Michael Drew Shaw

A lot of people hate to get up and go to work. Either they don't like their job or feel they're getting paid too little or both. I have always liked my jobs, except for one.

When I was fifteen I got a part time job as a stock boy in the lingerie department at LaSalle's department store. Most *guys* would think that would be a great job to have. But just imagine Wil Wheaton's character Gordy Lachance working at a perfume counter in Stephen King's "Stand By Me" and you'll get my drift.

The ribbing from my buddies was more than I could take. One Saturday I just punched my time card and walked out. It was the only time I ever burned a bridge like that. It turned out to be a life-altering move because serendipity intervened and my radio career was born.

Loving my work is a real blessing. Last November I met three young entrepreneurs who fall into this lucky category.

When I walked into the Cutting Edge countertops showroom in Perrysburg I could tell the countertop displays didn't just happen. Somebody had to really care. Here's the Reader's Digest version.

Three friends start a business. They buy granite and quartz from Brazil, Spain and Italy and run it through a machine that cuts, shapes and polishes the raw stone into strikingly beautiful countertops

The trick is to get it right the first time. Every countertop is different. I didn't know that. Learning how to skillfully make a countertop that is exquisitely beautiful and the exact right size is not something you learn overnight.

Brothers Brad and Brian Burns and Jeff Erickson built their first countertop in April 2006 and now have customers throughout Ohio and Michigan and they're approaching \$4 million in sales. You can view their collection at **cectops.com** (*Of course they're being challenged by the rotten economy! but these guys have made a conscious decision to survive.*)

The Burns brothers grew up in a family with a strong work ethic. As teenagers they bought their first "fix-m-up" house and sold it for a good profit. They continued this while learning the stone business selling retail for ten years. Then, along comes Jeff with a background in stone and glass manufacturing and before you know it, badda bing.

The partners share a passion for working with their hands and they are collectively proud of *“doing what they say they’re going to do”*. If a delivery is scheduled for Tuesday, it’s Tuesday, period the end. And if you’ve ever built or renovated anything you know that in itself is pretty unusual ... and refreshing. Which brings spring to mind and spring means baseball.

Years ago the Cleveland Indians usually started the season dead last and managed to go downhill from there. But that changed. A new season is upon us Toledo, so why don’t we start focusing on getting our minds and hearts out of the basement and back on track!

Toledo has a long and grand history of corporate excellence. We once were recognized as world leaders. It’s time to go to the plate with a new attitude.

Cutting Edge is setting the right example. I don’t hear Brian or Brad or Jeff complaining about how bad things are in Toledo. They don’t have time for that kind of nonsense.

Limelight America can be heard on Fox Sports Radio 1230 WCWA, Wednesday, Thursday; Friday 5-6 pm and online at **www.limelightamerica.com**

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