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# SUPPLYHOUSE

SEPTEMBER 2013

TIMES<sup>®</sup>

# BLACKMAN OUTDOOR

## In the wild

Outdoor living is a fit  
for Blackman Supply.



Blackman  
Plumbing Supply's  
David Lyon

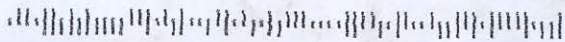
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# PRODUCT PREVIEW

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## Battery backup sump pump system

The PHCC Pro Series 1730 battery backup sump pump system has been upgraded. It continues to monitor battery and power conditions with three new features for greater convenience. Features include: accommodates AGM and maintenance-free batteries; output terminals for connection to a security system, auto dialer or other device; and automatically exercises the pump weekly.

**Glentronics.** [www.glentronics.com](http://www.glentronics.com)

## Vessel basins

Add a touch of genuine English elegance to any bathroom vanity with new vessel basins from luxury bath manufacturer Victoria + Albert. These new traditional basins — the Radford 51 and the Drayton 40 — capture the essence of Victorian Period design with the modern-day touch of their gracefully flowing rim design. The new basins are crafted of ENGLISHCAST, a material unique to Victoria + Albert, rich in volcanic limestone mixed with high performance resin and cast in one seamless piece, then finished by hand to provide a glossy white solid surface that is highly durable and easy to clean.

**Victoria + Albert.** [www.vandabaths.com](http://www.vandabaths.com)



## Kitchen and bath faucet collection

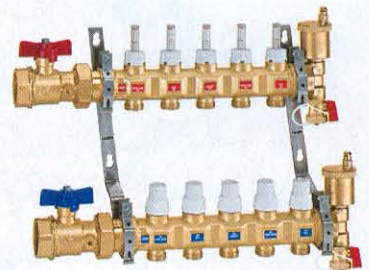
Gerber has added several kitchen and bath faucets to its Viper Collection. The kitchen faucets come in three configurations: pull-out, single-handle and single-handle with side spray. Each of the faucets feature a ceramic disc cartridge with temperature limit stops to ensure quality and safety, a solid lever handle and an aerator that ensures a flow rate of 2.2 gpm at 60 psi. Available in chrome and stainless steel finishes. The new bath products in the Viper line offer a full suite of options: single-handle faucets, two-handle faucets, a tub/shower trip kit and a Roman tub faucet.

**Gerber.** [www.gerberonline.com](http://www.gerberonline.com)

## Distribution manifolds

The Caleffi TwistFlow distribution manifolds use integrated balancing valves enabling precise 0.25-gpm to 2-gpm adjustment to each circuit. Distribution manifolds are used for distributing fluid to emitters used in hydronic heating or chilled water systems. Simply twist a circuit stem and read the flow rate on the integral scale. Universal compression fittings are compatible with all brands of PEX or PEX-AL-PEX tubing. TwistTop thermo-electric actuators have "pop-up" indicators that give visual indication that fluid is flowing. The hermetically sealed 6564 Series actuators are effective in accommodating upside-down manifold installations.

**Caleffi.** [www.caleffi.us](http://www.caleffi.us)



## Quick coupling connectors

Bee Valve's quick coupling connectors are available in two flow sizes, 1/4" and 1/2" in three high-performance materials. Connectors are available with internal shutoff valves or straight through configurations. 40AC Series connectors offer 1/4" flow capacity and are manufactured in a high performance natural white, acetal material resistant to most chemicals. The 40CB Series 1/4" flow connectors are manufactured in brass and chrome plated. 40AC and 40CB couplings interconnect with each other and are compatible with other 1/4" flow, metal latch and spring connectors. 50AC Series connectors offer 1/4" flow capacity and feature an easy-to-use plastic thumb latch. 65GP Series connectors offer 1/2" flow capacity and are manufactured from high performance glass-filled, pure white polypropylene.

**Bee Valve.** [www.beevalve.com](http://www.beevalve.com)

# In the wild **OUTDOOR**



Blackman Supply's David Lyon washes an eggplant at the Blackman Outdoor suite at its Southampton, N.Y., showroom. Blackman Outdoors provides products for living and enjoying the outdoors. Photo by Gus Phillipas/Gus Phillipas Photography.

## Blackman Supply gets some fresh air while selling the outdoor living lifestyle.

>> By John McNally  
mcnallyjp@bnpmedia.com

**L**auren Regan appreciates knowing exactly where she will be enjoying dinner on Thursday nights. That is if the Southampton, N.Y., weather plays nice.

If the rain stays away — and it has sadly been a wet summer in Southampton this year — the veteran Blackman Plumbing Supply showroom consultant will be able to enjoy an exquisite menu prepared by a local chef with her colleagues and, most importantly, her customers during Blackman's Grill Night.

"They've been great," Regan says of the Grill Night events. "All the food is delicious."

This is the first full summer where Bayport, N.Y.-based Blackman has been showcasing its latest crown jewel: Blackman Outdoors. The weekly Grill Night events are part of the Blackman Outdoors presentation.

The product of longtime showroom designer David Lyon, formerly of David Lyon Associates and now Blackman Supply's creative director and director of retail showrooms and operations, Blackman Outdoors is designed for the ritzy vacation homes in Southampton where customers are enjoying the outdoors and hosting friends and family.

"Southampton is unique," states Lyon, who has been with Blackman for eight years. "It's one of our luxury markets. For people who are coming here and building and living out here, it's obviously a summer resort. It's the 'Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous'. They are here to enjoy the outdoors, summer and entertain guests. With that concept we asked, 'What is that customer looking for?'"

Lyon says these outdoor living suites aren't just for Robin Leach's feature subjects. Anyone in the region can walk into Blackman Outdoors and leave with a beautiful and reasonably priced outdoor kitchen and bathroom.

"These outdoor suites are not strictly going for the highest price," he says. "We can work within most people's budget, from mid-range to top of the line."

### Avoiding tunnel vision

Blackman's Southampton location and two other showrooms sell lighting, tile and stone, countertops, cabinetry and other products outside the traditional kitchen and bath scope.

This goes to Lyon's idea of selling the entire room to customers. It's a quality he looks for when hiring a new showroom sales consultant and it's worked out handsomely for the company.

"It's a philosophy I've always had," he says. "Those products have rounded out the opportunity to control someone's entire space. That becomes a wonderful chance for our sales staff. A certain sales associate who knows how to walk through the entire space and can utilize the tile and stone, the colors and textures can put the entire environment together. That becomes something that makes this completely unique."

Longtime Blackman sales consultant **Amanda Guglielmi** has been at the Southampton location for the last 12 years. When customers come to her for a new-build or a remodel project, she tells them how essential outdoor living is to the area.

"It is part of the experience of the Hamptons," says Guglielmi, a year-round Southampton-area resident. "It's practical and it's the lifestyle that you sell. Ninety percent of the houses here have an outdoor shower system. I sell it as an extension of your house."

Guglielmi notes outdoor living has exploded over the last 15 to 20 years in the Blackman area. Homeowners will continue to host and utilize the space until the first snow falls.

"This is the go-to summer spot. It has that label," she says. "For me, it's about selling the right product for that label."

Guglielmi says the Southampton sales staff is ready for anything the customer throws at them. "We'll look under any rock and figure out what works," she says.

"Someone here always has the answer."

## Building it out

Lyon and the Southampton branch were dealt a generous hand after Blackman officially moved its corporate headquarters. Lyon originally designed the Southampton showroom nearly 25 years ago. When it first opened it was just a 2,000-sq.-ft. space within a 30,000-sq.-ft. building that housed every department and a traditional counter area for contractors. In 2009, Blackman built its major distribution center in Bayport and centralized its corporate operations.

"In setting up our distribution center it enabled us to study the value of our properties and the value of certain markets," he says. "We were able to reallocate and redesign the space. Now we can say it was better to use 'X' amount of space for a retail store."

The Southampton location still has warehouse space and a traditional parts and counter area, but Lyon quickly put the newfound space to work. Blackman has 21 branch locations and 15 showrooms throughout New York City, Long Island and New Jersey, but when Lyon and his staff were done with the renovations and additions in Southampton, in Lyon's eyes it became the belle of the ball.

"We were able to pick up 11,000 sq. ft. and we used that for decorative luxury showroom products," he says. "This allowed us to put the crown jewel on the series of Blackman showrooms we have throughout the New York, New Jersey and Connecticut area."

The Blackman Outdoors section was carved out some of the exterior and enclosed with a brick wall to mirror a patio or side of a Southampton home. Customers had a hard time waiting for the space to be completed.



Photos courtesy of Blackman Supply.

The Blackman Outdoor space hosts Blackman Grill Night on Thursdays. It's a chance for customers to get a bite to eat and perhaps purchase a full outdoor kitchen. So far in 2013, three full kitchens have been sold during the Grill Night events.

"The space originally was one of the loading dock ramps," Lyons states. "Before we had that section open and while it was still under construction, people were coming out and looking at the outdoor shower systems. Before the kitchen was installed, people were ordering them."

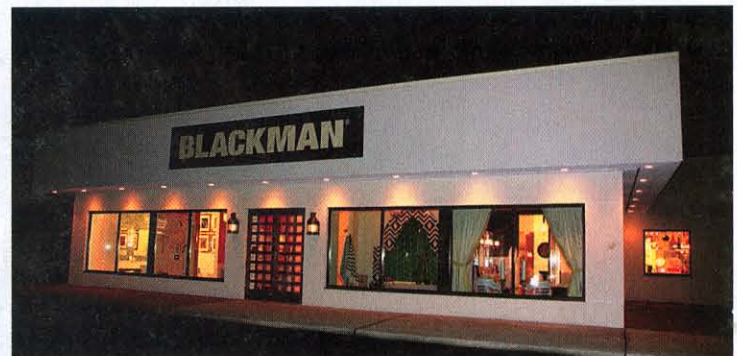
The products in the Blackman Outdoors suite run the gamut from outdoor showers, bathrooms, kitchens, fire pits, fountains, spas and outdoor lighting. More outdoor furnishings are on the way. The foray into Blackman Outdoors and the expansion of its showroom have proved to be the right moves for the company.

"We're still a traditional plumbing wholesale distributor and we're looking at the bottom line and margins," Lyon says. "These retail stores are important to the profitability of distributors. We're treating Blackman Outdoors as a whole new entity. It's like a new business."

## Smooth sailing with contractors

On the surface, it would seem like having an outdoor kitchen would require an intense amount of training and knowhow for contractors. Not so, Regan says.

"This isn't anything contractors aren't used to," Regan states. "They all know how to winterize and prepare for the winter months."



Lyon designed and help build Blackman Supply's Southampton branch 25 years ago. The space has been extended by 11,000 sq. ft.

# Outdoor living



Southampton is one of Blackman Supply's luxury markets and nearly all indoor bath and kitchen products can be applied outdoors. The company has 21 branches and 15 showrooms in the New York-New Jersey region.

Blackman's plumbing lines include Kallista, Kohler, Moen, Delta, Dornbract, THG, Newport Brass, Victoria + Albert, Duravit, BainUltra, InSinkErator and Rohl. Regan says any brand and type of faucet can be installed into an outdoor kitchen or bathroom. She says stainless-steel and

spot-resistant models are the most popular with Southampton customers. Those styles best withstand what Mother Nature dishes out during the summer months.

Lyon adds frost-proofing is critical for an outdoor suite. "We're designing these spaces like we would design an interior kitchen," he states. "Everything in your interior kitchen is applied to the exterior. In the winter season we drain the lines and close them off. For the needs of our marketing in the Northeast, products need to be frost-proof so they can withstand the weather and the elements."

In Southampton, Blackman has reached out to the architectural and design community. Soon, the company will work with landscapers to help make these outdoor spaces as beautiful as possible.

"We're holding more intimate events with them," Lyon says. "With our marketing department, we're constantly looking at options and venues we may have. This is relationship building and having the opportunity to show off this space as a tool and gallery for them. It shows them this is the right environment for them to bring their clients into and shop."

## Always innovating

Lyon, who has been featured on the cover of Supply House Times several times since he entered the industry in the 1980s, always is looking for the new thing in showroom design.

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