All Decked Out

T.W. Ellis has always believed in helping support our community in a number of ways. One way we get involved is through the Annual Gala that benefits the Harford County Public Library.

At the 14th Annual Gala “An Evening in the Stacks” on October 13 we presented a Live Auction Package valued at $15,000. Joining with us were DeWalt, Ivy Hill Land Services, Klein’s ShopRite, Myers Building Product Specialists, and Trex.

Our Live Auction Package called “All Decked Out” consisted of a custom built, maintenance free 12’x16’ Trex Transcend Deck with white vinyl railing, a lighting package, deck furniture, grill, wireless speakers, and professional landscaping.

The winners of this package will be thrilled with all the luxuries and conveniences their new deck will provide. And the Harford County Public Library will benefit from it as well!
The Latest in Tile

Tile has always been a versatile product, but its versatility has been increasing steadily over the last several years because of new technology. Tile of Spain presented global design trends at CEVISAMA 2018, the International Fair for Ceramic Tiles and Bathroom Furnishings in Valencia, Spain. Coverings 2018, the largest international tile and stone show in North America, also featured amazing innovations in tile. Here are some of the exciting revelations brought out during the shows.

Due to the latest 3-D digital printing technology, tile has taken on the convincing look and form of many other materials that are three dimensional—from vintage stone slabs, terrazzo, and cork to industrial-look concrete, rusty Cor-Ten steel, and rough hardwood boards. It is difficult to see the difference between the tile and the material it mimics, but the advantages of choosing tile are many: it is durable, hypoallergenic, mold and mildew resistant, and easy to clean. Tile can also be used in locations and for purposes that were previously unimaginable.

Some of the new fashionable statements tile is making today include: small, square, rustic tile in place of subway tile; glossy ink added to terrazzo-look tile to make the chips glossy with a patina around the edges; wallpaper inspired tile designs on large-format thin slabs that can reach from floor to ceiling; cleaner, less-distressed concrete looks that are more refined. Artisan craft tiles offer no two pieces that are alike—different chemicals are added to each tile so the radiance of the finishes are distinct. Metallic effects on tile, such as gold and platinum, are still very popular. A “sinking ink” process produces a heightened result in tile with relief.

Marble and stone looks for tile continue to be in style, but the appearance is more natural and realistic than ever before. The veining in tile that perfectly mimics the look and feel of marble is getting softer, finer, more diffused and more sophisticated. Multiple finishes are available, going beyond the usual high gloss.

Unlike actual stone, the benefit of porcelain tile is that it can be used for any application since it is nonporous and stain resistant.

Internationally, the classic tile colors of white, gray and black are still very much in style. In addition, saturated earth tone colors—ochers, terra cottas, blues and greens—are on the upswing in Spain and Italy, some of the major tile manufacturers that import to the U.S. It is expected that these colors soon will become popular among designers and homeowners in our country as well. Creamy, off-white tones are on a comeback as well.

The technologically advanced manufacturing processes allow tile to combine function and efficiency. For example, large porcelain tiles are now designed to be used as floors, wall surfaces and countertops—an all-in-one surface for kitchens and bathrooms. The tile is produced in a variety of thicknesses, since walls, indoor flooring and outdoor flooring have different requirements. A smooth porcelain countertop can serve as an induction cooktop when an induction warmer is mounted under the surface. There is no resin in the tile, so this same countertop may be used to prep, cook and eat food.

Anti-slip technology allows safe placement of tile on floors in kitchens, bathrooms, high traffic areas and outdoor spaces. For a smooth transition between indoor and outdoor spaces, the tile colors can be identical—it is simply the texture that changes. New anti-slip technology allows the tile to feel quite smooth when it is dry. The tile feels fine on bare feet; not the harsh sandpaper feel of traditional anti-slip tile. However, when the tile is wet a change is created in the body of the tile. The hydrophilic properties are changed in water so that the tile achieves a higher slip resistance.
An island is one of the most highly desired features homeowners want in their remodeled kitchens. This new Monogram Kitchen Island concept is a multifunctional glass-ceramic surface that will provide plenty of space to cook, eat, connect, and party all in one elegant and expertly engineered unit. The luxury appliance will launch by 2019.

The Kitchen Island includes a 36-inch Monogram five burner induction cooktop with built-in glide-touch controls concealed beneath a 94-inch by 43-inch sheet of black glass-ceramic. Glass-ceramic is a unique material that is easy to clean, cool to the touch, and with near-zero thermal expansion. An optional wireless cooking probe is available for sous vide cooking. A warming zone in the Kitchen Island can warm appetizers or keep chocolate at the perfect temperature for fondue. The glass-ceramic also has wireless charging capabilities in spots throughout that can power cordless countertop appliances, as well as charge mobile devices.

One of the most important aspects of your kitchen is the lighting. Without appropriate lighting, it is difficult to perform the prep work, cooking and clean up that your busy kitchen requires. Be sure to include overall general lighting that brightens the kitchen, eliminating dark corners. Recessed ceiling lights, as well as natural daylighting from large windows and skylights, perform this function. Under cabinet energy efficient LED strip lights, along with pendants installed over the island, focus directly on the tasks at hand—illuminating your work space.

Beyond functioning as task lighting, island pendants also add a decorative touch to your kitchen. They provide you the possibility of personalizing and transforming the space, making a statement that enhances your existing design. Today’s light fixtures are designed to appeal to a multitude of tastes—ranging from updated traditional and mid-century modern to vintage industrial and contemporary. Current innovative trends in decorative lighting fixtures feature bold asymmetrical and mixed-metal designs (especially natural brass and black), and rich gold finishes. Depth, dimension and geometric interest come together to give these light fixtures an uncommon style.

“We’re continuing to see formal spaces in the home phasing out and consumers morphing large gathering rooms together,” says Tia Bahr, senior product manager at Kichler. “This allows an opportunity for them to tap into their personal style with unconventional lighting options—the use of larger linear chandeliers or oversized pendants—in these spaces.”
T.W. Ellis Stays on the Cutting Edge

Our T.W. Ellis team attended the Remodeling Show and Deck Expo on October 9–11 at the Baltimore Convention Center. Our team was able to take advantage of the many top-notch educational sessions that were offered, along with opportunities for networking with other experts in our field. We were excited to learn some of the leading edge building techniques and best practices that will continue to keep our company at the forefront of the building industry for the sake of our clients.

Top Left: Eric Sneddon and Michael Teti, our lead carpenters, at the Remodeling Show representing T.W. Ellis.

Top Right: Tim Ellis learned about the latest porch windows to keep up with the newest housing trends.

Bottom Left: Eric Sneddon learned about the latest laser systems. There are four great brands—one legendary tool family—Fluke Network, Amprobe, PLS, and Fluke.

Bottom Right: Our lead carpenters learned about the latest decking systems. HiDFast was the only hidden fastening system that truly installed decking quickly. Until now. Some say EDGEfast is even speedier than the one that started it all.

We are excited to have taken advantage of this opportunity, improving our skills and knowledge to better serve you with your next remodeling project.

We are currently scheduling projects for the 2019 season. If you are ready to start your journey contact us today at 410.420.0740, and let’s get started!