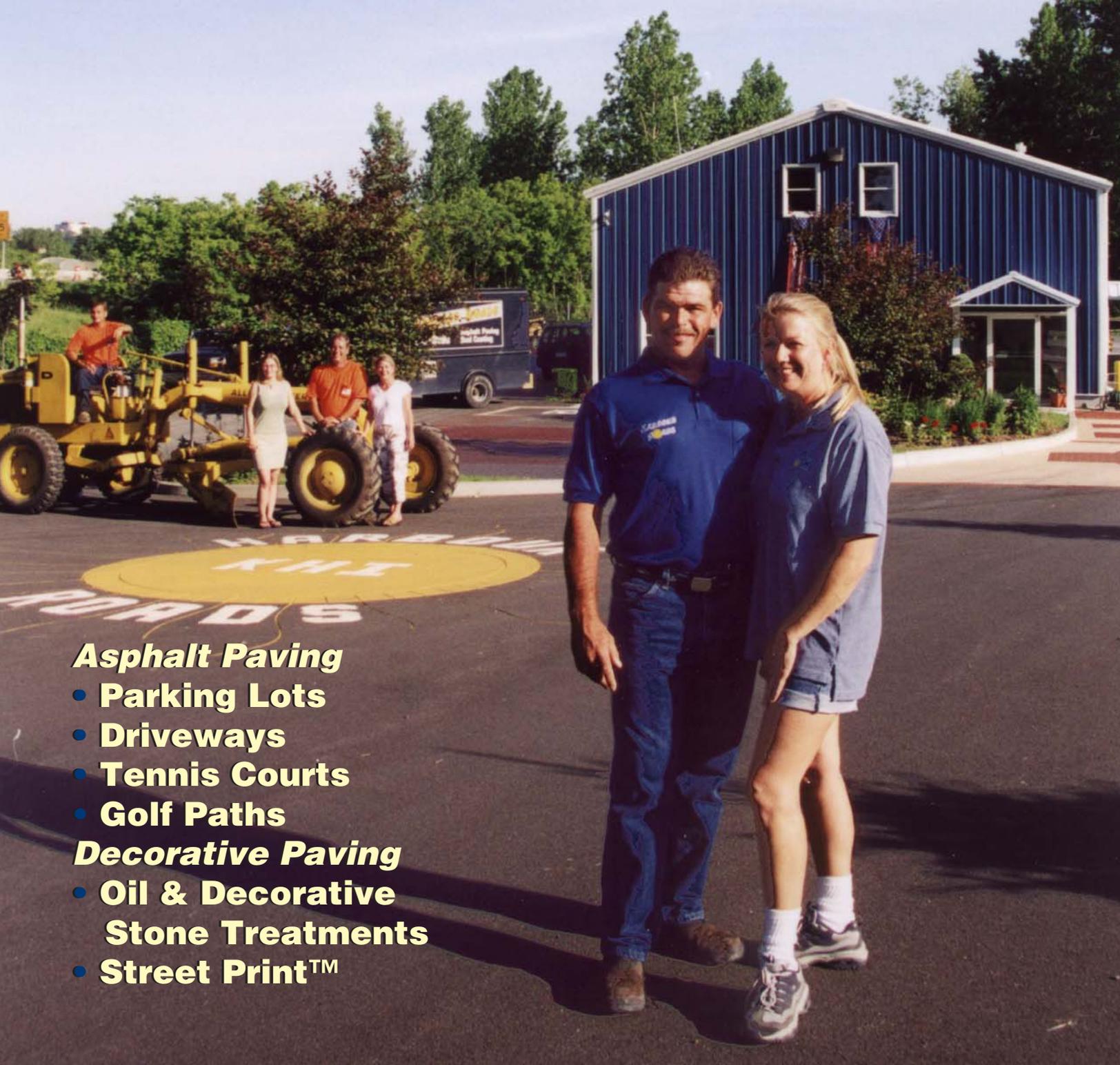


Integrity, Versatility, Experience

Kal-Harbour Inc.

HARBOUR ROADS



Asphalt Paving

- **Parking Lots**
- **Driveways**
- **Tennis Courts**
- **Golf Paths**

Decorative Paving

- **Oil & Decorative Stone Treatments**
- **Street Print™**



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When visiting the offices of the paving company Kal-Harbour, Inc., one's first sensory experience is not as one might expect. It is *neither* the acrid aroma of asphalt, *nor* a vista of tar-stained heavy equipment. Instead it is a combination of the scent of flowers and the visual impact of neat, well-landscaped grounds punctuated with samples of the company's work and products displayed as part of the parking area. The message that is immediately conveyed is: this is a company that is serious about professional appearance, neatness and attention to details.

In 1989 Kal-Harbour, Inc./Harbour Roads founder and president Laura Harbour began her business based on a certain level of necessity. After simultaneously working for a

Pictured on previous page: At Kal-Harbour's pristine facility in Watervliet, where the parking area is dotted with Streetprint™ samples, are: (foreground) Chuck Kahl and Laura Harbour; (in background by their 50-year-old Allis-Chalmers grader, l to r) staff members Scott Sacci, Taylor Belmonte, Carl Fredericks and Katherine Kahl.

paving contractor and finishing her degree in mathematics at Russell Sage College, and taking core courses in engineering at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, she found herself faced with one central, very basic question: how to earn a living?

Her answer was to initiate a paving company of sorts. Armed with a \$1,000 and a dump truck, she set out with a vision: a consultative, customer-driven approach, targeting a particular market sector, that would eventually make an indelible mark on the Capital Region paving industry. When her second-year revenue jumped ten-fold over the first, she was able to begin investing in equipment and in more seasoned employees. Chuck Kahl, now her husband, was the foremost among them.

A THIRD-GENERATION "blacktopper," Chuck is not exaggerating when he says he started rolling blacktop at age six. He says flatly, without a hint of ego: "There is nothing about blacktop I haven't seen, there is no part of it I don't understand." His knowledge and experience is such that Laura calls him "*the* talent in the company."

Recalling the beginning years she says: "I knew how to set up the company, do the estimating, commercial and industrial bidding, and handle the administrative end. I even learned how to roll [blacktop] — after taking out a fence or two! But Chuck is *the* paver. The company would have never achieved the level of success it has without his support."

"Handling the administrative end" is a collective phrase that could easily slip by, but anyone who manages a business knows its importance. To Laura Harbour it first meant gaining knowledge from many sources including Chuck and a long-standing mentor. It meant asking leaders of successful companies how to proceed and succeed: "Do what you can do well, don't live beyond your means and invest your money back into your company" is how she summarizes part of what she learned.

It also continues to mean keeping abreast of new technologies and looking for ways of controlling costs that don't undermine quality performance. When they travel she and Chuck linger at paving projects to see if someone is doing something



Commercial parking lots of all sizes are carefully prepared and paved by the company's experienced crew.

Oil and stone driveways such as this are a distinctive service available to homeowners from Kal-Harbour, Inc./Harbour Roads.

new or different. They go to informational seminars and Laura is constantly reading about products and processes. She particularly avoids becoming enamored with spiffy, but costly, new equipment. Instead she purchases good equipment for long-term use, maintaining it in her own facilities. Both Laura and Chuck contend the Allis-Chalmers grader (pictured in the first photo), now nearly 50 years old, is still very effective for certain jobs.

MAKING WISE HIRING decisions is another critical administrative task. Applicants often complain to Laura that her process is far too rigorous. Obviously she doesn't think it is. Neither Laura nor Chuck want employees who are "just passing through." They are eager to mentor young people who are looking to learn skills, take pride in their work and maintain stable employment within a positive work environment.

Once hired, employees are cross-trained. This increases their value to both themselves and the company, and the company is less vulnerable to labor shortages. Training includes not



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only the skills to handle specialized equipment and 325-degree blacktop but also methods to protect customers' property from damage. Most importantly, safety procedures are vigorously taught, reinforced and enforced regardless of an employee's status or experience. Ultimately, this process leads to a level of performance excellence that benefits clients.

WHEN TALKING WITH Laura and Chuck it becomes evident that honesty, professionalism, integrity, and attention to detail are not just glib marketing terms, they are characteristics both embrace for the company. And they look for those same qualities in the companies they serve. Laura says: "We like to work for builders who take the same pride in their work as we do. Dean Campbell [Colony Craft Homes] and Jeff Almstead [Almstead Builders] are two good examples."

Kal-Harbour has a mix of commercial and residential building clients as well as homeowners, but the company is especially drawn to doing builders' subdivisions, individual residences and specialty jobs like tennis courts and golf course paths. Laura is pleased that "Homeowners like us. They may be spending several thousand dollars on their driveway so they deserve to know they are getting value for their money. Chuck is the first one on the job and the last one to leave so we know the installation will

be done correctly and, if properly tended to, will endure."

AS TO HER COMPANY'S status in the industry she says: "Suppliers and others within the industry refer to us for Streetprint™ and for particularly technically difficult driveways or drainage driveways where there are problems. We have come in and succeeded where other pavers have failed to satisfy a customer. We love challenges and Chuck is fabulous at solving problems."

Laura treasures her collection of client testimonials she has received as a result. As testament to their honesty they admit to experiencing the infrequent complaint. Chuck compares getting a complaint to getting a poke in the eye, and Laura says he will lose sleep until it is resolved.

Kal-Harbour offers builders unsurpassed service for their new-construction subdivision roads and driveways.

Most readers will agree that blacktop is a necessary material, but not necessarily an environmentally friendly material. And it is fair to say that not every blacktop company is environmentally conscientious. However, Kal-Harbour "takes every opportunity to protect the environment." They recycle materials when possible and take into account run-off and drainage. And years ago Chuck anticipated the need to contain materials in their supply yard; thus the company invested several thousand dollars to ensure they would not contribute to polluting the soil or ground water.

Builders and other property owners who care about excellence would do well to consult with Kal-Harbour Inc./Harbour Roads about fulfilling their paving needs. And for those among them who have an interest in fishing, a digression into a conversation with Chuck and Laura would also be informative. While they live and breathe blacktop during the paving season, they spend their winters in the clear air of the Florida Keys as professional fishermen and crabbers.

Kal-Harbour, Inc. is registered with the NY State Department of Transportation as a WBE/DBE (Woman-owned Business Enterprise/ Disadvantaged Business Enterprise) and a licensed Streetprint™ applicator. The company is a member of the Northeastern Subcontractors Association, the National Asphalt Paving Association and the Better Business Bureau.

Kal-Harbour, Inc./Harbour Roads At-A-Glance

Founder: Laura Harbour (1989)
Principals: Laura Harbour (President), Charles D. Kahl III (Project Manager), Scott Sacci (Project Estimator)
Services: Paving, Sealing, Excavation for Drainage Solutions, Precast Curbing, Decorative Paving (including Streetprint™ and oil and stone)
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