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PAT AND JIM EVANKO PRESENTED INAUGURAL TCNA ART TILE PERSON(S) OF THE YEAR AWARD

Orlando, FL (5/1/2008) – The Tile Council of North America (TCNA) presented Pat and Jim Evanko the inaugural Art Tile Person(s) of the Year Award at the TCNA/National Tile Contractors Association Awards ceremony at Coverings in Orlando.

Twenty years ago, an engineer and artist were asked by a friend to match out-of-date tile for a hysterical customer. This talented team matched the tile, and, after investigating the tile market, began manufacturing a relief tile line, in their garage, matching American field tile colors, thus creating M.E. Tile (McGarry & Evanko).

From 1990 through 2006, M.E. Tile grew from 6 to 142 showrooms due to strong marketing exposure in national magazines, movies, and television shows. As a result, relief tile became a prominent design in a market where it did not previously exist. Demand for this product opened the door for the growth and development of not only M.E. Tile, but many others.

“Pat and Jim Evanko’s passion, and their willingness to share their expertise, played a pivotal role in establishing the renaissance of American art tile,” commented Eric Astrachan, TCNA Executive Director. “Their tireless devotion to this industry placed American artistry on the international map and will inspire future artisans.”

In 1999, the Illinois Coal Council approached M.E. Tile to investigate the feasibility of using fly ash, a residue from coal burning power plants, to make “green” ceramic tiles. By 2005, Mr. Evanko’s research proved that significant quantities of fly ash could be used in making high-quality tiles.

In 2006, Pat and Jim sold M.E. Tile to Red Rock Tile, which continues to produce the M.E. line in Charleston, IL. “Pat’s art background and Jim’s engineering experience took them on a long and pleasant journey in the remarkable tile world,” according to the Evanko’s. In their retirement, they continue to stay active in art and tile. Jim continues his research on fly ash clays, while Pat works on her art pottery.

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