



EXCEEDING CLIENT'S EXPECTATIONS

EVERY STEP OF THE WAY

# MONTANA BUILD

by ADORA MAGUIRE

When Paul McElroy confidently strides into the room to greet me, he naturally extends his arm out to shake my hand. We both immediately pause, and lean away from each other, while leaning into the awkwardness of the new normal of a COVID-19 greeting. This was tough for McElroy; he believes in the good faith and sturdy promises of a solid handshake.

McElroy is the owner of Montana Build, one of the few true design/build outfits in the Flathead Valley. He arrived in Montana in the early 1990s, relocating from Florida and seeking a wholesome environment in which to raise his family. He had learned the trade, initially from his father, and then gained even more skills as the youngest regional manager in North America for Taylor Woodrow Homebuilders.



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—Paul McElroy, Owner, Montana Build



#### A BETTER WAY TO BUILD

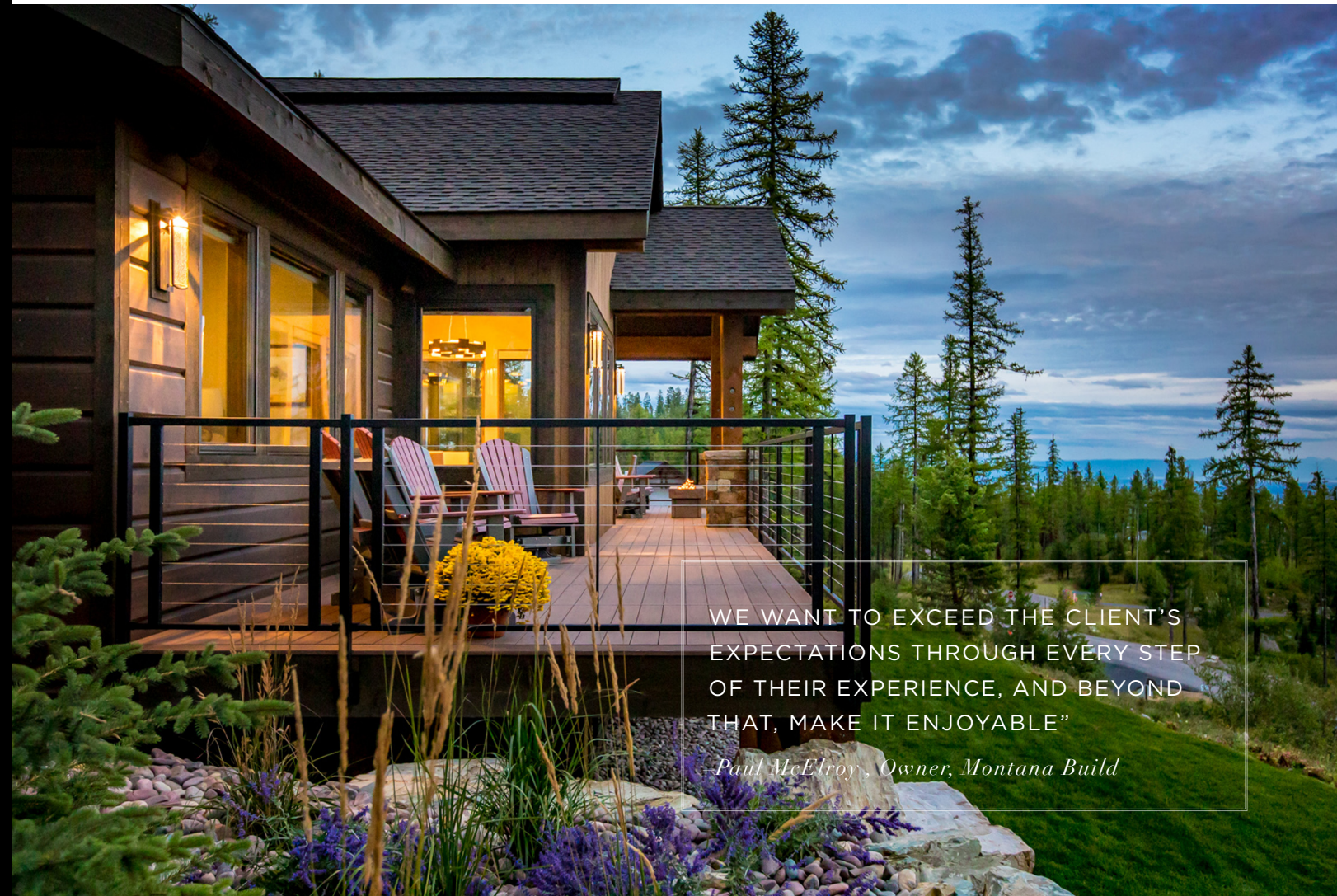
Every project is personal to McElroy, and he spends as much time as he deems necessary to familiarize himself with the land, the orientation of sun, wind, adjacent properties, and the needs and desires of his clients, prior to drawing a design. Yes, he wants to build lovely homes, but in his way of thinking, it needs to be functional and truly livable at its core. McElroy's commitment to quality and skilled craftsmanship involves recognizable features and finishes, and yet, each project is completed with the unique and singular details that fulfill the clients' visions for their homes.

Montana Build strives to offer a better way to build. Optimally, a potential client or real estate agent will approach the company prior to closing a land purchase. McElroy will visit the site with the owners to walk around and hear them share their vision and dream for their home. But more times than not, he will make repeated visits to that site, each at a different time of day and in different weather conditions. He observes where the sun rises and sets, he listens to the trees in strong breezes, he watches how the light re-

flects off any water, and when he feels he "understands" the livability of the parcel, he is ready to begin his drawings.

Another attractive aspect of McElroy's business strategy is his fixed bid-only approach to pricing projects with his clients. Understandably, this takes many hours of proper sourcing and pricing of materials and services with his subcontractors. For assistance in these processes, he has a full staff. Anna Durkin is the firm's business marketing director, but with the growth of the business, her role is expanding rapidly. Durkin explains that her duties are better defined these days as a manager of client relationships. She does not hesitate to share that Paul McElroy is an artist first and that he still gets as excited at the beginning of each project as he did almost 30 years ago.

Durkin's role commands timely and efficient communication within the Montana Build team, so that they are as responsive to the client as possible. She ensures that the home build happens on time and on budget. Durkin works directly with McElroy to familiarize herself with all processes so she can translate client needs to the project managers.



WE WANT TO EXCEED THE CLIENT'S EXPECTATIONS THROUGH EVERY STEP OF THEIR EXPERIENCE, AND BEYOND THAT, MAKE IT ENJOYABLE"

*Paul McElroy, Owner, Montana Build*

"Montana Build's goal is to satisfy the unique needs of their very defined clientele," states Durkin. "We want to exceed the client's expectations through every step of their experience, and beyond that, make it enjoyable."

Tim Bishop is Montana Build's lead project manager. When asked about how he values McElroy's strategy and processes, he responds, "My highest value of our process is the constant contact we have with our owners/clients. Getting their input in the field truly helps us turn a dream home into a reality. I am introduced to the homeowner usually before we even go to contract with them. That helps me establish not only a working relationship, but a personal relationship early on. As the house is being built, it becomes a friendly encounter day in and day out. When it comes to the day of handing over the keys to their new home, I feel accomplished for giving them their dream home but also know the Montana Build team has gained lasting friends because of our involved process."

While the growth of custom homebuilding in the Flathead Valley is off the charts, McElroy admits that he's at a point in his own business trajectory to have the ability to be very considerate of each project. In fact, he prefers to not use the term project.

"These aren't projects I'm designing, they are homes," he says. McElroy enjoys building for those looking for a timeless, Montana experience in the design.

McElroy fully understands that Montana Build's clients are looking for exquisite finishes and state-of-the-art amenities, but he also knows that they want to live here to enjoy a lifestyle that embraces the lore and history of this piece of Montana. He never loses sight of the fact that the families that occupy his homes will derive as much joy and satisfaction from what they see through their windows as they do when they sit by their fireplaces and enjoy the indoors.

McElroy says that he's lived a charmed life in Whitefish facing each day doing what he truly loves: designing and building. But he won't lie, he can't wait for the day when he can look you in the eye and shake your hand again. ■

*For more information, call 406.862.4975 or visit montanabuild.com.*