

San Antonio CONSTRUCTION NEWS

The Industry's Newspaper



www.constructionnews.net ★ (210) 308-5800 ★ Volume 25 ★ Number 1 ★ JANUARY 2023



Steven Bankler Senior Partner Steven Bankler CPA Ltd. San Antonio, TX

As a young man, Steven Bankler learned the value of record keeping. His family owned a series of local businesses where he learned much about finance and taxes. With an undeniable interest in taxes, it was only fitting that Steven became a successful certified public accountant and opened his own firm.

Tell me about your upbringing. Where were you born? Where did you grow up?

I was born at Texas A&M. My dad had returned from the war and was finishing up his engineering degree at A&M. A few years after graduating, my mom and dad moved back to San Antonio.

What was it like growing up in San Antonio back then?

Both my mom's and dad's families were in San Antonio, so I grew up here. All of us were involved in the family retail clothing business which was started by my maternal grandfather.

What was the name of your family's clothing business?

La Feria Department Store. We had four locations, and the "House of the Bride" competed with the major San Antonio stores like Frost Bros., Joske's, etc.

What were your interests growing up?

In school, I participated in the speech and debate clubs as well as drama. I was involved in my junior high school play and drama productions in high school.

What did your parents do?

My dad not only worked in the family business, but he also invested and managed outside businesses' interests. My mom was a homemaker busy raising four kids.

Did you go to college? What did you major in?

I graduated from St. Mary's with a business degree majoring in Finance. However, my education extends far be-



L-R: Steven Bankler and his wife, Jane Bankler

yond college. I consider myself a lifelong learner attending NYU's annual tax institute for over 35-plus years. I have joined various accounting organizations that include professional development, international associations promoting international business, and an Exit Planning Exchange to further my knowledge for assisting owners in planning and executing their own exits.

What made you go into certified public accounting?

My father knew I had always had an interest in taxes and had subscribed to tax-related publications. After my college graduation, I continued those subscriptions. In addition to that inspiration, my dad encouraged me to fulfill my accounting hours, sit for the CPA exam, and open my own firm.

How were you introduced to the construction industry?

Our CPA firm had several clients in the construction industry. We decided to expand our presence in this industry.

What was your first year in the industry like?

I opened my office in 1977 and started getting contractor clients. In the early 1980s, we made a conscious decision to develop a niche for this industry. When I began doing tax seminars, we made an extra effort to include possible contractor clients. We included discussions of special provisions that allowed these companies to defer their federal income taxes.

What is it like being the financial caretaker for others?

It is a duty that we take seriously. We are a niche CPA firm. All our clients are either family-owned or closely held businesses. In addition, we do not employ students, bookkeepers, or interns. Our 15 professionals are all CPAs, which is quite unique in the business.

Are you married? Is your spouse involved in the company?

My wife, Jane, and I met on a blind date (one that she unsuccessfully tried to get out of, thankfully) many decades ago. Jane recently passed away due to complications from surgery. She was a beloved team member as our "Master Shredder," cheerleader, and a close advisor for many years at the firm. She'll be on our minds and in our hearts in everything we do.

Do you have any children? Tell me about them.

We have three children and six grandchildren. They all live in Texas - San Antonio, Austin, and Houston.

What are your interests and hobbies outside of work?

I love to golf, travel, and attend the theatre.

What is the greatest part of your job? What is the hardest part of your job?

The best part is our motto: We Solve Problems®. The hardest, but also another rewarding part, is teaching our CPA team members to trust and hone their own intuition and problem-solving skills, par-

ticularly if they've come from larger firms where they may not have been encouraged to be creative problem solvers.

What do you do to relax?

I read, go to sporting events - UTSA Football, SPURS, and my grandson's basketball/baseball games, and just hang out.

What would you like our readers to know about Steven Bankler, the man?

I grew up with my extended family who were all involved in our business. Not only did the family members work and eat together each business day (Monday through Saturday), but we also got together with all the spouses and children every Sunday for lunch.

My immediate family usually discussed business nightly at the dinner table, so all facets of my family life were interwoven with talk of business practices and innovations. In fact, not only do my two brothers each have their own businesses, but several cousins own and operate their own businesses, too. I consider myself a businessman who happens to be a CPA with a niche practice of only serving family and closely held businesses.

If you could take your family anywhere for Christmas, where would you go and why?

Egypt is on my bucket list. I'd love to visit the pyramids, Valley of the Kings, and museums, and to see how advanced the country was in 3,000 BC. -cmw