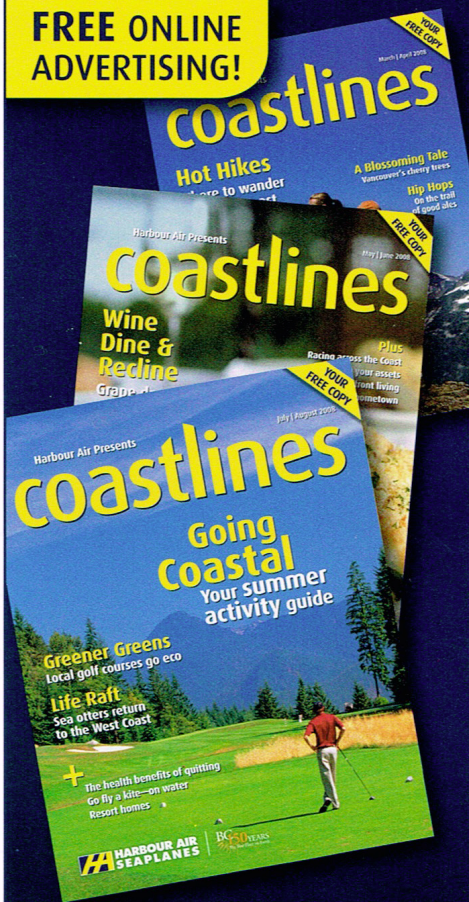


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## Shell Busey Behind the Buzz

TO SOME PEOPLE, BEING called a know-it-all isn't exactly flattering. For Shell Busey, it's a hefty compliment.

Whether you need advice on repairing a concrete patio, building a new deck or insulating your basement, Shell is your go-to guy. Drawing on over 45 years in the home improvement industry and a catalogue of suppliers and contractors approved through his HouseSmart Home Services Referral Network, he gives you—in his own tongue-twister take on this tool shed of knowledge—"The How-To, the What-To, the Where-To, the Why-To, the When-To and the Who-To."

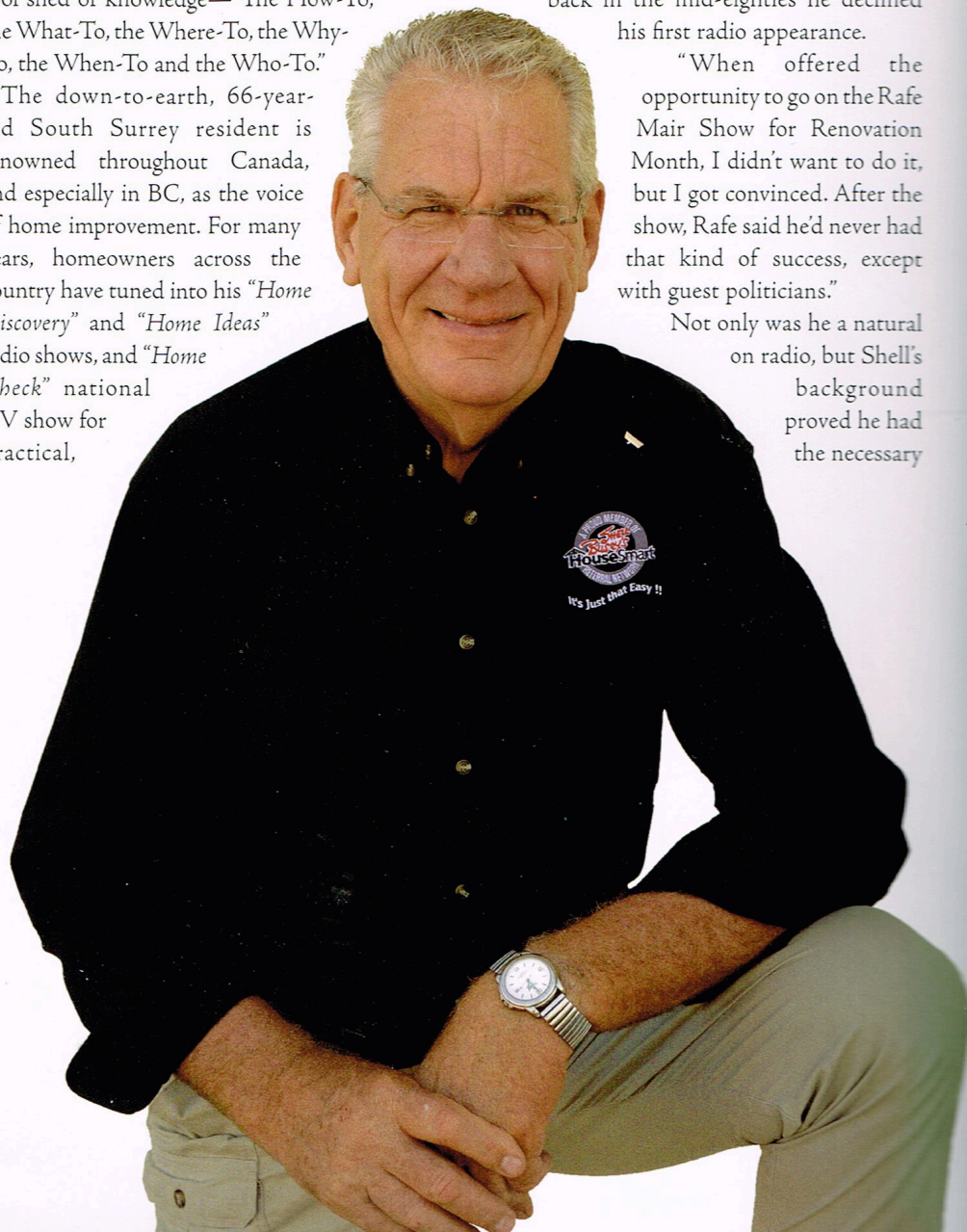
The down-to-earth, 66-year-old South Surrey resident is renowned throughout Canada, and especially in BC, as the voice of home improvement. For many years, homeowners across the country have tuned into his "Home Discovery" and "Home Ideas" radio shows, and "Home Check" national TV show for practical,

on-the-money advice about home repair and renovation. In addition to his on-air career, Shell has hit the road as a consultant for BC Hydro's Power Smart, providing information to homeowners through seminars and home shows, and is the author of two volumes of home improvement tips.

This year Shell celebrates 25 years on radio, an anniversary that elicits a hearty chuckle from the affable HouseSmart Guy, who hadn't anticipated a career on the airwaves. In fact, back in the mid-eighties he declined his first radio appearance.

"When offered the opportunity to go on the Rafe Mair Show for Renovation Month, I didn't want to do it, but I got convinced. After the show, Rafe said he'd never had that kind of success, except with guest politicians."

Not only was he a natural on radio, but Shell's background proved he had the necessary




inventory of information to be an authority on home improvement. The Ontario native began his career as a stock boy at Beaver Lumber in Owen Sound, Ontario and worked his way into a supervisory role with the company through various job transfers across the province. When offered a position in British Columbia supervising a group of Saveway stores, Shell and his wife Frankie didn't hesitate to move their family to Lotusland.

With an extensive list of approved companies, several large corporate partners and a comprehensive website—soon to include instructional product videos—HouseSmart is calibrated to be a one-stop shop for all home improvement needs.

When not dispensing advice on the airwaves, Shell answers the Trouble Line—a spin-off of the radio program where people share their home improvement problems

“My job is to take a complaint and bring it into reality.” When asked if dealing with grievances ever drags him down, he responds, “Every day I come to work, it's an enjoyment. No matter how difficult or relaxing a day is planned, something always comes up that makes it interesting.”

His good-natured approach to his work may stem from the adaptation of one of his own favourite phrases: “A house is a house until you make it a home.” With his wife of 43 years Frankie, serving as administrator and his daughter Monica, working in a secretarial and administrative capacity for the network, HouseSmart is a second home. Shell admits that his partner and general manager at HouseSmart, Michael Gibson “is like a son” and indeed, Michael will man the House when Shell retires. But for now, Shell will continue to build HouseSmart into the best possible home improvement resource. As he would say, “It's just that easy!” —Belinda Bruce 

## “People think the show is only an hour and half long. It's not, it's one week.”

Among his achievements throughout the 1970s, Shell travelled to Whitehorse to set up the first Beaver Lumber franchise in the Yukon and purchased a Windsor Plywood franchise in North Delta with Frankie. Imbued with entrepreneurial spirit, it wasn't long before the couple also opened their own ma-and-pa shop, Ye Olde Hardware—“an authentic old-wooden floor hardware store.” It was during this busy period, following his successful debut with Rafe Mair, that Shell was offered his own radio show. However, not long after becoming known to listeners as a home improvement resource, he was ready to quit.

“I'd have to drive to the city on a Saturday to do the radio program. My business was missing me on biggest day of week,” says Shell. “When I told the management of the radio station that I might have to throw in the towel in this radio business because my customers needed me, they offered to put the radio station in the store!”

And so, Shell broadcast the show from Ye Olde Hardware and on commercial breaks, dashed off to help customers. It's exactly this kind of loyalty and honest work ethic that has gained Shell a reputation as “Canada's Favourite Home Handyman”.

In the early 90s, Shell sold his businesses and moved into the arena of home shows and referrals. “I worked for all the referral companies—The Blue Army, Dial One, Mr. Remodeller, Mr. Build, Home 2000...” Witness to the dissolution of all those companies, Shell decided to hang his own shingle: the HouseSmart Referral Network.

Monday to Friday, via phone or email. “People think the show is only an hour and half long. It's not, it's one week.” The Trouble Line provides fodder for a new segment of the show called “The Ombuseyman” where Shell addresses consumer complaints.



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