

Meet

Central Illinois'

GUTTER Gal



"Thank you for calling Gutters & More, the home of Gutter Topper."

Most people are not surprised to have a woman answering the phone. However, when told that the person coming out to give them their free no-obligation estimate will be Kristine, some eyebrows are certainly raised.

Kristine Stone Rainey is the owner of Gutters & More, and she has been a part of Peoria's construction community for over 20 years. Affectionately referred to as the "Gutter Gal" by many local contractors, Kristine estimates, schedules, meets with the customer, and is virtually involved in every facet of her business. Kristine says, "Many times when I arrive on the scene for an estimate, I see a look of skepticism on my prospect's face because of my gender. On the other hand, there is much satisfaction when departing with the order and my new customer's confidence."

Upon her graduation from Monmouth College in June of 1979, Kristine found

Peoria's job market not up to her expectations and enlisted the help of an employment recruiter. Shortly thereafter she was placed with a start-up company, Baker Aluminum, whose first day in business was also Kristine's first day on the job. She stayed for 14 years. In January of 1994, Kristine and her husband purchased the assets of her employer, changed the name, and the rest is history.

Now known as the Gutters & More Companies, Kristine's staff consists of 21 employees working throughout Gutters & More, Illinois Valley Gutters, Gutter Express, and G&M Vinyl Fence and Deck. All of the workers are employees; there are no sub-contractors. All workers are fully insured for the homeowner's protection.



When asked to list her accomplishments, somewhere close to the top is the fact that her employees earn a livable wage and participate in a company-provided healthcare program. Neither is usually the case with her competitors. Gutters

& More Inc. has been recognized by *Qualified Remodeler Magazine* as one of America's Top 500 contractors; it is also recognized as a woman-owned business entity (WBE) through the government housing program.

To Kristine's credit, the Gutters & More Companies boast a past customer list of over 14,000 clients who have made their purchases either directly from Gutters & More or through their builders or local home improvement contractors.

The Gutters & More Companies are small job specialists who service what

they sell. Gutters and downspouts, while not inexpensive, cost typically far less than your average home improvement project. Kristine states that while the majority of her business is seamless gutters and downspouts in two sizes and 15 colors, of which the materials are purchased locally and fabricated on site, **Gutters & More** is also the area's exclusive distributor/installer of the **Gutter Topper** leaf protection system. **Gutter Topper** is a cover, not a screen. It's rocket science when it comes to keeping the leaves out of your gutter. The system eliminates gutter cleaning forever—guaranteed. It also serves as an early ice release system when those certain conditions exist, which helps to prevent costly interior repairs.

Gutter Topper attaches to the front of your existing or new gutters with no additional brackets. The back of the **Topper**, which is made of heavy gauge aluminum, is then tucked under the second row of shingles. The rain will now enter your gutters from the front rather than from the rear, leaving where the gutters and the roof edge meet protected. **Gutter Topper** comes in eight colors that are designed to match the color of your roof.

"Each year, the **Gutters & More Companies** handle in excess of 3,000 requests for estimates in regards to our products," states Kristine. "And I'm proud to say that we set an appointment with each and every one of them. We do not install our products over the phone; therefore, we do not sell them over the phone." Many consumers take their homes for granted and request pricing over the telephone. Many competitors do this because they do not have the people to do the job properly. Kristine says each house needs to be looked at to provide maximum value and keep the customer's interest at heart. While the

estimates are free and with no obligation, the gutters and downspouts are just a little bit more. Typically each prospect is provided with a price, a diagram of how the job is to be installed, and point of sales information in regards to the products and the company at the time of the estimate.

customer with the types of services typically provided by the boy next door or neighborhood handyman. While it may cost a little bit more to have **Gutter Express** visit your house, you may rest assured that the job will be professionally done and the workman will be fully insured.

Kristine says, "Gutters and downspouts do very little to beautify one's home. They're like noses. They're not very attractive, but everybody needs one." Having said this to hundreds of homeowners over the years, Kristine can now say how much fun it is to be associated with a looker. She's talking about vinyl fencing and decking sold and installed by her newest



While the scheduling of outdoor work is not an exact science, **Gutters & More Inc.** prides itself on having a full-time office, sales, and service staff to meet its customers' needs. While in today's world most of us have answering machines, Kristine says it should not be where the process starts.

Kristine can be found several days each month at Peoria's **Riverwest Construction Site** attending progress meetings for each of the general contractors involved in this exciting development. Because of the size, as well as insurance and bonding requirements, many competitors would just not be able to work on a job of this magnitude. To **Gutters & More Inc.** it's a feather in its cap.

While **Riverwest** is the company's largest undertaking to date, the residential homebuilder, remodeler, and local consumer are the heart and soul of the business. After numerous requests for gutter cleanings and smaller repairs, **Gutter Express** was created to serve the



company, **G&M Vinyl Fence and Deck**.

G&M Vinyl Fence and Deck is in the midst of its third year as **Heritage Vinyl Building Products Distributor/Installer**. **Heritage** is by far the most recognized line of vinyl fencing materials, featuring over 30 styles of fencing, porch railing, and decking options.

So the next time you're considering **Gutters, Downspouts, Leaf Protection, Vinyl Fencing, and Decks**, let a woman help you out. Call **Gutters & More** at 309-694-4000 and ask for Kristine, also known as the **Gutter Gal**.