



**NARI MILWAUKEE, INC.
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
NARI MILWAUKEE FOUNDATION, INC.
CHAPTER COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD**

NARI Milwaukee, Inc.'s Executive Committee is nominating NARI Milwaukee, Inc. in partnership with the NARI Milwaukee Foundation for the Chapter Community Service Award.

Television station WITI FOX6 News in Milwaukee has a Contact 6 division that reports on consumer concerns and complaints with local businesses. Typically, the consumer has been allegedly cheated, treated poorly or lead into a scam. The consumer has lost money, didn't receive service or received a poor-quality product for the price. The consumer has made no progress with the business to resolve the concern. They call Contact 6 who investigates the concern, so the consumer is heard and warn and protect others from similar circumstances.

Unfortunately Contact 6 frequently reports on contractors who have deceived consumers in some way. Although not NARI members, these contractors and reports continue to give contractors in the community a bad name. One of NARI Milwaukee's goals is to help the community understand and know not all contractors are the same. We strive to not only tell, but demonstrate, every day to consumers that NARI is a community of remodeling industry professionals and a trusted resource to them. NARI Milwaukee is a friend and resource to Contact 6 for information on what consumers should expect from their contractor, what a good contract looks like and how to work with their contractor to name a few. Contact 6 helps us share our vision that NARI is the premier local remodeling resource homeowners should know and choose.

On February 26, 2018 Contact 6 reporter Jenna Sachs was going to do another report about theft by contractor – a non-NARI member. These reports typically peak the interest of our NARI members and become the talk of the association for the coming days. Upon seeing this story, it hit our association harder than most. This story was about a man, Erich Berger, who is battling brain cancer. He wanted to remodel this kitchen for his family and instead of a kitchen remodel he was robbed of a \$21,000 down payment by the contractor. The family now didn't have enough money to complete the kitchen remodel with another contractor. They were simply out

of luck. Obviously, the theft by contractor impacted the NARI membership, but the cancer component is what really struck our attention.

In the past two years NARI Milwaukee has developed a relationship with Wisconsin based Aurora Health Care's Aurora Cancer Care Foundation that raises funds for innovative research and individualized care for cancer patients. These two strong local organizations, NARI Milwaukee and Aurora Health Care, had an overall mutual goal – grow branding and awareness in new community circles resulting in organizational support financially and otherwise. A partnership on the 18th annual NARI Milwaukee Tour of Remodeled Homes was established with NARI Milwaukee naming the Aurora Cancer Care Foundation the events official charity. The partnership added on a Friday night kickoff event to the Tour called the NARI Aurora Cancer Care House. This is a VIP event at a NARI Milwaukee member high-end remodeled home. The event showcases the talent of NARI members, the possibilities in remodeling and is geared toward top corporate and individual donors to attend raising money for cancer research. In two years, NARI Milwaukee has raised over \$25,000 in donations to support the efforts of the Aurora Cancer Care Foundation.

With NARI Milwaukee's connection and passion for cancer care and obvious advocacy for professionalism and ethical conduct of contractors, we knew we had to help Mr. Berger in some way. NARI Member, Jason Cyborowski owner of J&J Contractors I, LLC also saw the story. The story hit very close to home for Jason as his father and co-founder, Jerry Cyborowski, had recently been diagnosed with cancer. When Jason saw the news story from Jenna Sachs regarding the Berger's, how Erich Berger was fighting cancer, and how they were taken advantage by a non-NARI member, he felt an obligation to try to help. The next day Jason called Diane Welhouse, Executive Director of NARI Milwaukee, who also saw the story and they agreed NARI needed help.

Jason reached out to Jenna Sachs to let her know his company J&J Contractors and the support of NARI was going to help this consumer. Jason was able to pull together the support of NARI member suppliers, sub-contractors, and their own staff to give the Berger's the kitchen they thought they were getting. Jason agreed to charge the Berger family the remaining \$20,000 balance of the initial contractor's contract to give them the kitchen they had originally expected.

Josh Brown, NARI Milwaukee Immediate Past President and Director on the NARI Milwaukee

Foundation was part the project. Josh's company, Bliffert Lumber and Hardware agreed to provide some free materials and some at cost. In working through the project with Jason, also a NARI Milwaukee Board member, Josh recommended they should present this community service project to the NARI Milwaukee Foundation for support as well.

The NARI Milwaukee Foundation, Inc. is the charitable arm of NARI Milwaukee, Inc. The NARI Milwaukee Foundation exists to provide a pathway into the remodeling industry while being a trusted resource to the community. As the industry's leading advocate enhancing the remodeling trades through an extensive network of donors and volunteers, the Foundation is an advocate for the professionalism of the remodeling and construction trades; supports the quality of life through home improvement for the community; and supports advanced industry education through scholarships for college and trade school as well as NARI educational and certification opportunities. The foundation typically assists with two community projects in the year and had an opportunity left. Jason and Josh presented the Berger story to the Foundation Board of Directors. They told them what happened to the Berger's and how NARI member companies were pulling together to help them out donating and selling at cost materials and labor to achieve the \$20,000 fee to the family, so they could get the kitchen they deserved. They asked the Foundation for any possible financial support of the project. This project fit into the goals of the Foundation by supporting the quality of life through home improvement for the community. To everyone's delight the Foundation agreed to cover the \$20,000 cost of the project by J&J Contractors and their supporting suppliers and sub-contractors so the Berger's were not burdened with the expense.

NARI Milwaukee President Chris Egnor, MCR, CR, CKBR, UDCP, CRPM, CCP, NARI Milwaukee Foundation Secretary, Dave Amoroso, and Jason Cyborowski, J&J Contractors I, LLC coordinated with Contact 6 Jenna Sachs to do a surprise presentation to Erich Berger on the remodel of his kitchen as planned by NARI Milwaukee members lead by J&J Contractors and financial support by the NARI Milwaukee Foundation. The moving story and link to the video story is below.

J&J Contractors general contracted this job for the Berger's and got started immediately. They remodeled the entire kitchen with cabinets, granite countertops, tile backsplash, electrical and plumbing. This project would have normally taken up to nine weeks to complete. The efforts by the NARI member contractors completed this project in just two weeks. The attached document

shows before and after pictures of the project.

Besides the kitchen remodel J&J Contractors went above and beyond to install new flooring throughout to eliminate thresholds that were trip hazards for Mr. Berger who was now using a walker. They also installed new grab bars in the bathrooms. They built special washer and dryer lift boxes to make it easier to do laundry and a new coat of paint throughout the main living area.

These NARI Milwaukee members participated in the project. Milestone Plumbing, Inc. provided free plumbing labor, The Tile Shop provided tile backsplash material at discount, Able Kitchen and Bath Showplace donated plumbing fixtures, Bliffert Lumbar & Hardware provided new cabinets and trim materials at cost, Carpet Factory Outlet provided flooring labor and materials at discount, and Grande Appliance and TV provided a new free microwave. J&J Contractors I, LLC had their in-house laborers, carpenters, designers, and company owners donate all their time to get this project done.

Jason also enlisted these prospective NARI Members to contribute. Jason want to show these contractors that NARI is not only a community of ethical professionals, but an organization that cared about the community they reside in. Plumb Bob Carpentry provided carpentry labor, Soto Tile Flooring provided tile backsplash labor, Absolute Marble & Granite, Inc. provided granite countertops at a discount and AJ Electric provided electrical labor.

This story generated much recognition of the NARI member J&J Contractors I, LLC, the fellow participating NARI members and the NARI Milwaukee Foundation in the media and community. Below are several stories and links to the story's video component.

We ask that you consider honoring NARI Milwaukee, Inc. in partnership with the NARI Milwaukee Foundation for the 2019 Chapter Community Service Award.

Thank you for your time and consideration.
The NARI Milwaukee Executive Committee

'He went to turn himself in:' Contractor shocks customers by turning himself in to authorities

Contact 6 WITI FOX6 Jenna Sachs

February 26, 2018 MENOMONEE FALLS -- A seemingly reputable contractor shocked his customers by turning himself in to authorities and admitting he stole their money.

Erich Berger of Menomonee Falls wishes his kitchen looked like the rendering provided by the contractor he hired but work never started.



Rendering of Erich Berger's kitchen remodel that never materialized.

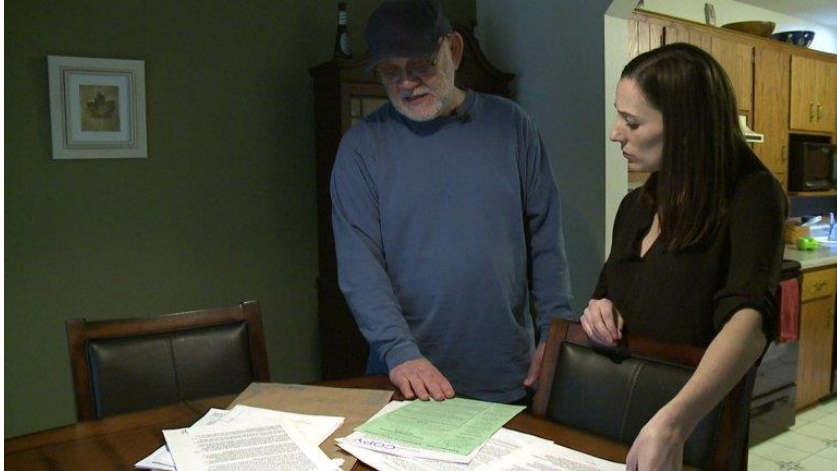
"He came out and gave us an estimate. Came out and did all the measuring and everything," Berger recalled. "He just said he got in over his head and he didn't have the money to start the project."

The bad news didn't stop there.

"He went to turn himself in at the sheriff's department. He was going to be charged with theft by contractor and he thought he was going to have to go to jail," Berger said.

It means Berger, who has brain cancer, is out \$21,000 and has nothing to show for it.

"We could have gone to other contractors, but we just don't have the money to do it now," Berger said.



Eric Berger discusses his troubles with Contact 6's Jenna Sachs.

The contractor Berger hired once had a showroom in Pewaukee. The storefront served as the showroom for Buendel, LLC, which is owned by Gregory Cash.



Closed storefront in Pewaukee that used to house a showroom for Buendel, LLC.

According to court documents, Cash sent some clients a text message in Aug. 2017 that read in part:

"I am just now leaving the Waukesha County Sheriff's Office where I have voluntarily given a statement...I underestimated the costs of several large projects that were running simultaneously and got behind financially. As a result, I am now guilty of theft by contractor, which is a felony."

Six civil and two small claims cases have since been decided against Cash in Waukesha and Milwaukee counties. All told, he's been ordered to pay nearly \$800,000.



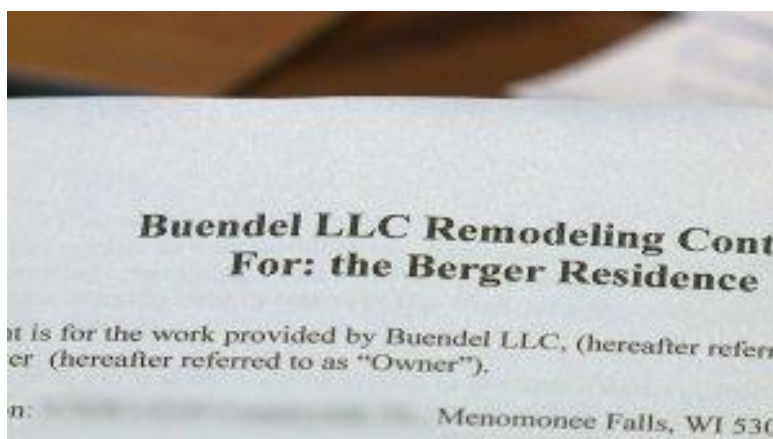
The Waukesha County Sheriff's Department confirms an active investigation is underway.

In an email to Contact 6, Cash wrote -- in part:

"I will pay back the people I have damaged... There isn't anything I once had that I haven't lost through this experience, but none of the losses can compare to the feeling of knowing what other people have suffered through no fault of their own."

"There's not much you can do," Berger said.

Berger says Buendel, LLC had an 'A' rating with the Better Business Bureau. Cash was experienced, and his paperwork was thorough.



"When he came here, he was very professional," Berger said.

Cash tells Contact 6 his financial problems started when he opened in 2014 when, he says, a bank told him he would get an additional loan for his showroom that never materialized.

The bank denies Cash's claim.

Cash says he worked hard but experienced many setbacks like the injury of his project manager in a motorcycle accident.



Gregory Cash moves out of his Oconomowoc home.

In a conversation with Contact 6, Cash admitted fault and emphasized his hope to pay his clients back.

Berger was one of the last clients Cash took on before turning himself in days later.

"He probably needed the money," Berger said.

He wonders whether his health was a deciding factor.

"Cause I'm ill, I think maybe he felt bad about that," Berger said.

Contact 6 talked to the Waukesha County District Attorney's Office about Cash. They're waiting for this investigation to wrap up and may file all charges together as part of one case with multiple counts.

It's important to note it's extremely rare for someone to actually admit to theft by contractor. In fact, cases like this can be very hard for prosecutors to prove, so the fact that Cash is admitting to it is a big deal.

This story and video interview can be found here:

<https://fox6now.com/2018/02/26/he-went-to-turn-himself-in-contractor-shocks-customers-by-turning-himself-in-to-authorities/>

“Everybody is stepping up to the plate:” Contractors team up to help Menomonee Falls man battling cancer

Contact 6 WITI FOX6 Jenna Sachs

May 28, 2018 MENOMONEE FALLS — A man fighting cancer lost more than \$20,000 to a contractor who never started the project.

But, that's not where the story ends.

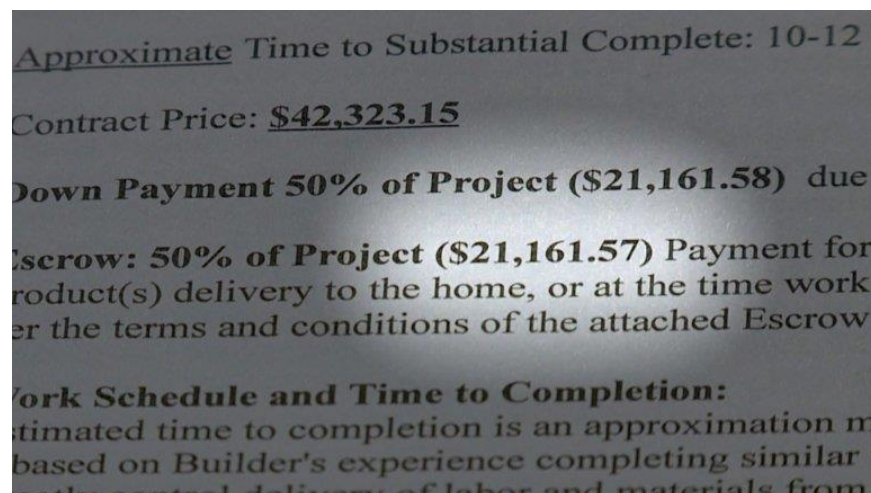


Erich Berger

In February, FOX6's Contact 6 shared Erich Berger's story. Berger had given \$21,000 to contractor Gregory Cash down payment for a kitchen renovation that never started. Berger is battling brain cancer.

"We could have gone to other contractors, but we just don't have the money to do it now," Berger told Contact 6 at the time.

Cash turned himself into law enforcement shortly after taking Berger's money and confessed to Theft by Contractor.



It was the homeowner's misfortune that motivated an act of kindness.



Jason Cyborowski, Owner of J&J Contractors I, LLC NARI Milwaukee Member

Jason Cyborowski of [J&J Contractors I](#) saw the Contact 6's story.

"My father has cancer also and honestly when I watched the piece I started crying and I just was like, I need to help this family somehow, someway," Cyborowski said.

So, Cyborowski met with Berger and offered to do his kitchen project at a steep discount. He agreed to do the \$42,000 renovation for the \$21,000 Berger would have paid Cash when the project was finished.

"It was very nice that they offered to do this for us," Berger said.



After meeting Berger, Cyborowski wanted to do more.

"He just has a very kind and gentle soul," he said.

Unknown to Berger, Cyborowski started reaching out to other companies and eight agreed to contribute to the project including:

- A&J Electric
- Able Kitchen & Bath Showplace, NARI Milwaukee member
- Absolute Marble & Granite
- Bliffert Lumber & Hardware, NARI Milwaukee member
- Carpet Factory Outlet, NARI Milwaukee member
- Grand Appliance & TV, NARI Milwaukee member
- Milestone Plumbing, NARI Milwaukee member
- The Tile Shop, NARI Milwaukee member

It included everything from cabinets to countertops to electric work.

"Everybody is stepping up to the plate," Cyborowski said.



The biggest donation came from the [Milwaukee NARI Foundation](#).

"They generously gave us \$20,000 to cover the rest of the balance," Cyborowski said.



Since the first Contact 6 story aired, Berger's health has declined as he started a more aggressive cancer treatment.

"The chemo kind of knocks me down some," Berger admitted.



He got a big boost in the form of a giant check.

"There is not going to be anything else that you have to pay for the work that is going to be done," Dave Amoroso, Secretary for Milwaukee NARI Foundation, told Berger when he handed him the check.

It was a surprise that had a man of few words fighting to get the words out.

"Thank you," Berger said when he received the check. "You know since I've had all this, I've never gotten really emotional until this happened. So, thank you."

Turning one man's bad experience into an unforgettable one for everyone involved.



"It's our start in trying to change the name contractors have of taking money and not showing up," Cyborowski said.

The kitchen renovation project would have normally taken nine weeks to complete. The crews' combined efforts completed it in two weeks.

This story and video interview can be seen here:

<https://fox6now.com/2018/05/28/everybody-is-stepping-up-to-the-plate-contractors-team-up-to-help-menomonee-falls-man-battling-cancer/>

'He was a con man:' Contractor accused of stealing more than \$100k from clients

September 24, 2018, by Jenna Sachs,

MILWAUKEE -- He turned himself in and confessed to stealing from his clients. Now, contractor Gregory Cash is facing the consequences.

One of the people Cash allegedly took money from is Gary Frank.

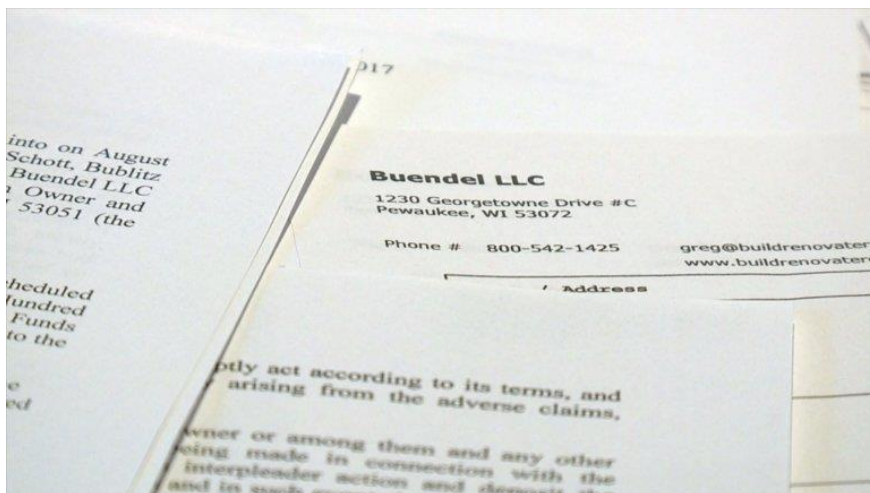
"I could never do it to somebody," Frank said.



Gary Frank talks to Contact 6's Jenna Sachs.

Frank was so focused on fighting breast cancer, he said he didn't notice a "con man" when he stepped into his kitchen.

"I was on chemo for six months. He said, 'oh yeah, my father went through cancer, so I know about it,'" Frank said.



Frank gave Cash of Buendel, LLC a \$7,500 deposit for a kitchen remodel that never started.

"Once I gave him the check, never saw him again. Never," Frank said.

He ended up paying twice over for someone else to do the job.

As it turned out, Frank isn't the only cancer survivor who lost money to Cash.

In February, FOX6's Contact 6 told you about Erich Berger, who lost \$21,000 to Cash while being treated for brain cancer.



Erich Berger paid Gregory Cash \$21,000 for a project that was never completed.

At that time, Cash told Berger he was prepared to face the consequences for his crime.

"He went to turn himself in at the sheriff's department. He was going to be charged with theft by contractor and he thought he was going to have to go to jail," Berger told Contact 6 earlier this year.

In September, Cash was charged with four counts of felony theft by contractor in Milwaukee County.

One of those cases is Frank's.

Cash told Contact 6 he will be entering a guilty plea.



Gregory Cash appears in Milwaukee County court on Theft by Contractor charges.

"The charges reflect the crimes that I committed accurately," Cash said. "I spoke with an attorney and he explained to me that what happened was theft by contractor. Intent isn't part of the law."

Cash also explained a few reasons why he thinks things went wrong with his business.

"When a few projects went bad, I got some bad reviews. I didn't have business coming in," Cash said.

Cash allegedly stole more than \$100,000 from more than a dozen customers.



Gregory Cash talks to Contact 6's Jenna Sachs at the Milwaukee County courthouse.

He said he's working to pay them back.

"I think I will be able to," Cash said.

Frank said he's skeptical and wants to see Cash serve time.

"He was a con man," Frank said.

It's expected that additional criminal charges against Cash will be filed in Waukesha County soon. The district attorney's office is preparing a criminal complaint.

This story and video interview can be found here:

<https://fox6now.com/2018/09/24/he-was-a-con-man-contractor-accused-of-stealing-more-than-100k-from-clients/>

Cancer patient gets renovated kitchen from local business foundation after being scammed

By: **Emily Thornton**

Posted: Jun 15, 2018 2:26 PM CDT

MENOMONEE FALLS, Wis. (CBS 58) – A Menomonee Falls man was gifted a renovated kitchen after being scammed by a contractor early this year.

Erich Berger said he paid the contractor \$21,000 to do the kitchen remodel but the project was never started. After getting word of the situation, another contractor, Jason Cyborowski and the NARI Milwaukee Foundation stepped in to help.

"I just felt like I had to do something about it," Cyborowski said.

The NARI Milwaukee Foundation donated \$20,000 and along with Cyborowski and several other businesses' help the remodel was completed at no additional cost to Berger.

"I'm just very appreciative that they stepped up and helped us out because I couldn't have got this done," Berger said.

According to court records, Berger wasn't the contractor's only victim. The Waukesha County Sheriff's Office says the man turned himself in for theft by contractor for his business practices. He is awaiting charges.

Berger never filed a lawsuit.

Link includes this story and a video interview:

<https://www.cbs58.com/news/cancer-patient-gets-renovated-kitchen-from-local-bussinesses-foundation-after-being-scammed-thanks-to-local-businesses-foundation?fbclid=IwAR1ThpWKiHuR8eTKGAwF2EnHljQ34t3U8lBTNRfDfg5DJuyMpRwZsuP1LUc>

Local foundation, businesses come to the rescue for Menomonee Falls victim of a criminal contractor

By: Emily Thornton

Posted: Jun 24, 2018 7:44 AM CDT

Earlier this year, a brain cancer patient already dealing with the physical effects of his disease, suffered a painful punch to his bank account when he paid a contractor big money for a project that was never started.

Today, he's enjoying a brand-new kitchen thanks to a brotherhood of skilled and compassionate contractors linked to the Milwaukee NARI Foundation.

On CBS 58 Sunday Morning, Emily Thornton shared their story. Link has this story and video interviews:

<https://www.cbs58.com/news/the-milwaukee-nari-foundation-comes-to-the-rescue-of-a-menomonee-falls-victim-of-a-criminal-contractor?fbclid=IwAR3W-hvWfHgr1p3cktZTpHZfxzBv2qCIYoFuUU FotOa6UPU5uLGVbhgTLkM>

[Click here to learn more about the Milwaukee NARI Foundation.](#)



**NARI MILWAUKEE, INC.
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
NARI MILWAUKEE FOUNDATION, INC.
CHAPTER COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD**

The following are pictures of the before and after of the Berger Community Service Project lead by NARI Milwaukee member, J&J Contractors I, LLC, and completed with NARI Milwaukee members and funded for \$20,000 by NARI Milwaukee Foundation.









