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Celebrating 30 Years of Building Long and Strong Relationships Thru Providing Safe and Effective Pest Control

By Kathy Hunt

Talk to David Collins about TKO Pest Control of Royersford and you'll immediately be drawn in by his warmth and enthusiasm not only for his work but more importantly for his amazing team. Yet, when Collins started his business 30 years ago, he saw it as one-man show where he would wear all the hats and do all the work to keep clients happy and pest-free. For the first three years, he did just this, juggling service calls, sales, scheduling, bookkeeping, and more. After his workload became too intense to manage on his own, he recruited his wife, Joann, to become TKO's office manager. Even then, Collins maintained a jam-packed schedule, performing all the sales and service calls in Philadelphia and the surrounding counties.



DAVID AND JOANN COLLINS

PHOTOS BY STEVE LADNER PHOTOGRAPHY



THE TEAM

It took seven years of 16-hour workdays and frequent seven-day workweeks for him to learn to delegate responsibility. It was then that he hired his first outside employee, a young man who he met working at one of his restaurant accounts who was looking for a career change. From that pivotal moment, the company began to grow, in size and geographic reach. Today, TKO has 12 employees, eight of whom are technicians. Collins' wife, Joann, better known as MiMi by her three grandsons, has been the one wearing many hats now working from her home office when she's not playing with her grandsons.

"I owe everything to my wife for helping me run the business and putting up with all the craziness around having your own business," Collins said. "You have to have an amazing partner or you'll sink, and she's a perfect life and business partner. I'm truly a Blessed Man!"

Collins' daughter, Alisha, also works at TKO as the office manager. This month, she will celebrate ten years with the company. During that time, Alisha along with

her incredible office team has modernized the office workflow for account development, customer service, and to perform efficiency studies, making the business even more efficient and productive, he said.

Collins' son worked alongside him during high school and college but ultimately chose a different career. Collins said that at that time, he didn't respect "young ideas but I really should have." Still today, Collins refers to his son for HR advice and other business practice questions.

Total knock-out on residential and commercial pest control

Today, TKO Pest Control has clients in Philadelphia, Montgomery, Berks, Chester, Delaware, and Bucks counties. The company maintains an even split between residential and commercial customers.

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(Continued from page 7)**ALISHA RANTZ****STEPHANIE CAMUSO**

The business works for a large number of Center City Philadelphia restaurants, a client base that Collins attributed to his years with renowned chef Georges Perrier and his French restaurant, Le Bec Fin. *Esquire* magazine called Le Bec Fin “the best French restaurant in America,” and for decades, the Philadelphia restaurant received the coveted five-star rating from reviewers. Perrier retired in 2012.

“I started working for Perrier about five years into the business. He was our flagship. I say ‘flagship’ because, when you get to that caliber of restaurant, that’s when you know you’re doing something right,” Collins said. “Prior to being hired by Le Bec Fin, I was already servicing many other businesses in the city. I actually contemplated getting out of the city just because of the traffic and parking headaches. My nephew Dave came to me and said he loves to be down the city, so for the past twelve years he services the city five days a week. Today, all the chefs who worked for Perrier and later moved on to or opened other restaurants use us,” he said.

In addition to restaurants, the company works with bakeries, casinos, theaters, country clubs, nursing homes, schools, office and apartment complexes, and federally inspected meat and poultry processing plants. Fully licensed, certified, bonded, and insured, TKO is a member of the *National Pest Management Association* and *Pennsylvania Pest Management Association*.

Whether ants are swarming a kitchen, bed bugs in a home, or hornets nesting in an office, the TKO team of technicians can expel and prevent the return of these and many other pests.

Arriving at a job site dressed in spotless uniforms and booties, TKO technicians are the consummate pest control professionals. After being introduced to their customer, they learn more about the suspected problem and concerns. Once they fully understand the situation, the inspection work begins. Wearing kneepads and using flashlights, they crawl on their hands and knees, searching in every nook and cranny of the building. Suspect that something unwanted resides behind a wall, beneath cabinets, or above the ceiling tiles? Rest assured. TKO will find the interloper.

After a technician has determined what and where the problem is, he speaks with the customer about different approaches for controlling or completely eradicating the pests. During their conversation, a variety of factors are taken into account, including whether children and pets live in the house. Other considerations are whether anyone in the building has health

issues or is pregnant, and if the property has any structural issues, such as a leaky roof or pipes. Facts gathered, the technician then comes up with a plan that fits the customer’s specific needs and preferences.

After treating a site, the technician advises the customer about prevention techniques to stop the pests from returning. Pest control is an ongoing effort, one that can’t be neglected for months on end. If a customer slacks off, those annoying millipedes, stink bugs, hornets, and other insects will come back again. Wildlife removal services are also available if needed.

“We’re large enough to serve all your pest control needs effectively and safely, but still small enough to give your home and business the personal service and attention that you deserve,” Collins said.

Three decades of hard work brings wisdom and success

After 30 years of running his own business and often assuming multiple roles, Collins now devotes much of his workday to sales and quality control. However, if a technician calls out sick or is on vacation and an extra hand is needed, he willingly heads back out into the field.

“I have to commend my mother, Roseann Collins, a single parent from day one, who raised me with a lot of discipline and respect for others, and with an understanding that the world doesn’t just hand you things,” Collins said. “You must work, and earn not only money but the respect from others. She raised me right.”

While his personal work ethic hasn’t changed, he has learned how essential the help and efforts of other people are. “I’ve learned that the ‘team’ word is so important,” He explains. “I used to be a ‘me’ and ‘I’ guy before I believed in trusting anyone else with my reputation. Once I started doing this and I got the right team together, it’s been great. They’re all like family, and some really are family,” he said. “They took us to where we are now and will take us to new heights in the future. There’s no doubt. My people are everything.”

Three decades in business reinforced something that he had long known — not to categorize or judge anyone. “You have to take each person for who they are,” Collins said. “When I interview someone and they seem personable and like they’re great communicators, and they’re teachable, I put them in a truck, and I give them 90 days to prove they can be part of the team.”



Generally, Collins can tell within the first 30 days whether or not a new hire will work out. Even so, he provides an additional 60 days so that the person has a chance to learn, change, and “get polished a little bit.”

Collins said that he is proud that he’s been able to help his team members grow, not just as technicians but as people. “In a world where people talk about how hard it is to find good workers and good people, we’ve been very fortunate. Some of my guys are in their 20s, and when they came to us, they weren’t sure what they wanted to do in life. Today, they’re getting married, they’re buying houses, and having children ... They’re passionate. They’re professional. They have direction,” he said. “I can honestly say I love our TEAM.”

Along with top-notch employees, Collins recognizes how critical local communities are to the success of his business. The support and loyalty from residential, commercial, and public service customers have been key to TKO’s longevity. Collins and his team acknowledge their communities’ impact by supporting local fire departments and children’s football, soccer, and baseball teams.

Collins’ children were involved in sports as are his grandchildren. Plus, his son-in-law, who is a TKO team member and Collins’ employee trainer, is a youth football coach. He noted youth athletics are important to a child’s growth, and that coaches do a lot for children but don’t get paid. TKO pitches in and helps out by buying banners and other things for the local youth teams.



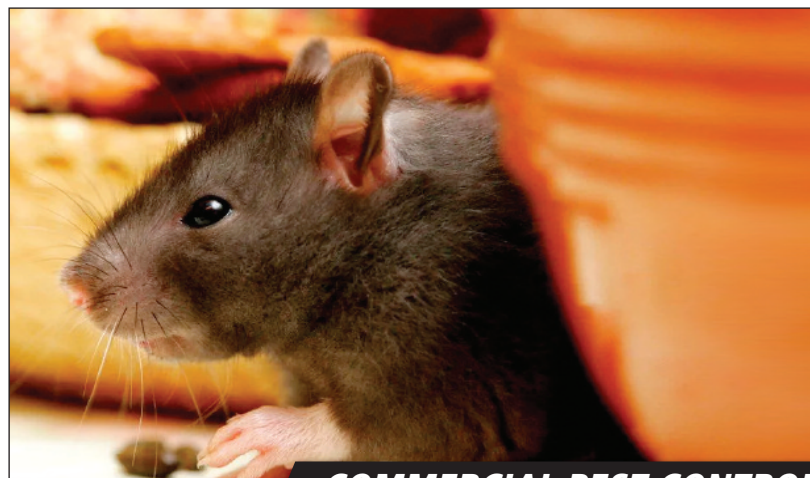
None of Collins and his teams’ efforts have gone unnoticed. TKO has over 100 five-star, online reviews and multi-year wins from the *Montco Happening List* for Montgomery County’s best pest control including 2026. There’s no doubt —

consumers recognize and appreciate TKO Pest Control’s focus on personalized, skilled, safe, and effective pest control.

TKO provides free estimates for all pest control matters. For additional information about TKO Pest Control, Inc. services or to schedule a free estimate., call 610.792.5461 or visit their website <https://www.tkopestcontrolinc.com>.



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