

Spotlight on Local *Businesses*

Dan Sehlhorst praises Dewhurst & Associates architect design/build team

BY DAVID L. CODDON

Although he's been with the company since 1989, you can understand why principal architect Dan Sehlhorst jokes that he's a "short-timer" at the La Jolla-based design-build firm Dewhurst & Associates. After all, the family-run operation has been around since 1929.



Dan Sehlhorst In the 88 years since, Dewhurst & Associates has built a reputation as the go-to designer and builder of custom homes as well as in-home rooms and additions not only in La Jolla, but throughout San Diego County. Sehlhorst, a San Diego native, is a major part of that success. He's also a very busy man. "When you do everything here, from the initial client meeting to handing over the keys when the project's over, you've got to be able to put on a bunch of different hats," he said. When he's not in the office designing, Sehlhorst may find himself "out in the field, looking at projects both at the beginning and as they're under construction."

At Dewhurst & Associates, the process within the company and in working with clients is collaborative. Staff designers and



A La Jolla home before and after a remodel by Dewhurst & Associates

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builders are team members on projects, which Sehlhorst said he appreciates. "We're hearing the client's desires from day one, from both sides of the discipline," he explained.

"As we work through the design, Doug or Dave (Dewhurst family members who are the firm's president and CEO, respectively), whoever the project manager is, is sitting with the client, too. It gives them a chance to respond from the contractor's perspective, to provide alternative solutions and feedback.

"We kind of have a passing of the baton as far as who's leading the project goes as we go from design to construction. Other than that, we're integrated, we're participating in

both aspects."

While this relationship reflects the cohesive philosophy on which the company was built, it also is of great benefit to Dewhurst & Associates' clients, Sehlhorst said.

"When we show up for that first client interview, we kind of introduce ourselves and tell them how we operate, why we're special and what they can expect relative to our performance. We can instill a confidence in the client to start moving down the road, both giving them our history and how we're going to perform."

Dewhurst & Associates' clients and projects are as varied as there are design ideas. "We cover the spectrum," said Sehlhorst. "We've done new homes, small

additions, and (worked with) repeat clients working on the same house more than once, or worked with the same client on different houses."

When it comes to meeting clients' desires from an architect's standpoint, Sehlhorst said, he's there to serve. "I tend to put my ego in my pocket when the client comes to me," he said. "I look at the project through the same lens that they're looking through. Whether they want French Country or contemporary, it's all good."

— Dewhurst & Associates, 7533 Girard Ave., La Jolla. (858) 456-5345. dewhurst.com

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