

Recognizing great renovators

Renovation, custom home builders crowned

GALE BEEBY
REAL ESTATE EDITOR

Looking at the before and after pictures presented by the companies nominated for this year's Renovation and Custom Building Awards made me wish I had oodles of money and a bad house.

Oh well, I have no money and a perfectly wonderful condo, so I'll just have to dream about the perfect home renovation until I win the lottery.

But it was Jim Cunningham and Brendan Charters of Eurodale Developments who felt like they won the lottery after being named Renovator of the Year during the award lunch held last Friday during the opening of the National Home Show.

It was their commitment to excellence and professionalism that took them over the top, said Stephen Dupuis, the president and CEO of the Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD).

"Eurodale partners Brendan Charters and Jim Cunningham represent the new generation of professional renovators, combining design savvy with solid technical and business skills," Dupuis said. "This award demonstrates their commitment to satisfying their clients and their success in this respect typifies BILD's overall objective in creating the award in the first place."

"I can't believe we won, especially after being shut out earlier in the competition," Charters said from the podium after receiving the award. "It's a great honour to be recognized by our peers."

The awards presented before the "big one," included Best Renovation Under \$75,000, which was given to Capoferro Design Build Group for the second consecutive year. W.C. Meek Design and Construction Ltd. was the winner of the



GALE BEEBY PHOTO

Brendan Charters, right, and Jim Cunningham of Eurodale Developments.

Best Renovation \$75,000-\$150,000 category.

Probuilt by Michael Upshall was the winner in the Best Renovation \$150,000-\$300,000 category for transforming an unfinished basement into a useable living space. In the Best Renovation \$300,000-\$500,000 category, Woodcastle Homes Ltd. won for a massive demolition and four additions that improved the exterior and interior feel and flow of a bungalow.

Northern Edge Construction won the Best Renovation more than \$500,000 category for a project that included a custom addition featuring a residential elevator, glass flooring and hot-water in-floor heating throughout.

In the very competitive category of Best Custom Home, a stunning four-level, 23-room mansion featuring an elevator, a home theatre and an eight-car lift in the garage by Ambassador Fine Custom Homes Inc. was crowned the best of the best.

"We had the most submissions ever for our annual renovation and custom building awards as well as the best overall showcase of projects in years," said Dupuis.

"Whether it's a kitchen, bath, basement, addition or custom home, all of the projects are design magazine quality."

A quick glance at Eurodale's resumé reveals that the firm made headlines last year after building an inventive modular Dream Home in eight days for the 2010 National Home Show. The home was also the first in show history to be removed and re-used.

Charters is a trained carpenter responsible for the firm's customer relations, while Cunningham, a trained architectural technologist, makes sure projects are managed effectively and efficiently.

The Renovator of the Year award is bestowed to a company who sets the standard for the rest of the sector in their leadership and commitment to customer service, as well as contributing to the overall image of the renovation industry.

Homeowners looking for renovation inspiration can see before and after photos of all of the entries by visiting Destination Renovation at the National Home Show, on through Sunday, at the Direct Energy Centre, Exhibition Place. More at www.nationalhomeshow.com.