



**THE 22ND
ANNUAL GEORGIE AWARDS**
Where Inspiration Comes Home

» by **SUSAN M BOYCE**

Over 2,000 square feet of outdoor design garnered The "Dwell" on Despard garnered Urban Core Ventures a gold in Best Outdoor Living Space.

Powered by passion, fueled by innovation and driven by commitment to excellence, the 22nd Annual Georgie Awards took place on February 1st in Vancouver. As always, it was an exuberant evening filled with the glitz and glam that's a true celebration of the best of the best in BC's dynamic residential building industry.

"Tonight we honour the CHBA-BC members who build, renovate, develop, design, sell, decorate, landscape and market the best of the best projects in all of British Columbia," said Rob Capar, president of the Canadian Home Builders' Association of BC (CHBA-BC). "Finalists and winners exemplify the high caliber of expertise and hard work associated with our member companies, as well as the fact that BC is a true leader of innovative design and quality construction."

CELEBRATING INNOVATION

The evening began with a surprise win in the Best Townhouse Development category for Lonsdale Contemporary, a four-unit development by Alchemy Construction. Already zoned for duplexes, Alchemy combined two single-family lots, then shifted each of the two new front-to-back duplex units off-centre to create an unanticipated, open courtyard that's already become a social hub of this new mini-neighbourhood.

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Rob Capar, CHBA-BC president

Compact sophistication at the Recycled Shipping Container Housing Development by Atira Women's Resource Society, winner of Best Innovative Feature and Best Environmental Initiative.



Dramatic curb appeal and community ambiance garnered gold as Best Townhouse Development for Lonsdale Contemporary by Alchemy Construction.



Inside, open floorplans feature living room bump-outs for extra space and natural light, basements with wider-than-average terraces surrounded by greenery and enhanced affordability that tackles affordability and appeals to a diverse range of buyers. "There's already a great sense of community developing here," says Mark Isaac, president. "But yes, it was challenging to take what are technically duplexes and treat them as townhomes."

Top honours for Custom Home Builder of the Year went to Clay Construction. Owner Larry Clay credits his company's tech-savvy, proprietary business systems for managing every aspect of construction, a customer-centric approach to design and building and his personal commitment to over-delivery as significant factors in the award. The company's innovative transformation of a single, 50-foot wide Kerrisdale lot into two 25-foot lots, each now home to a

2,000-square-foot single-family dwelling may well have been the tipping point in this intense competition.

Priced at less than \$2 million each, a figure almost unheard of in this venerable Vancouver neighbourhood, where even a teardown frequently comes with a price tag of \$3 million or more, these homes are showcases of creative design. One is über modern, boasting industrial loft features like floating tread staircase with steel and glass balustrade, angular kitchen and totally minimalist ambiance. The other feels like a reinterpretation of the classic French country manor: antique white kitchen cabinetry, coved ceilings and a sunny, 300-square-foot attic office. “It’s gratifying to receive acknowledgement that even a small builder can compete, and win, at this level,” Clay says.

CUSTOMER SAVVY

Longtime Georgie heavy-weight, Portrait Homes took top honours in five categories including a Grand Georgie for Hampstead at Silver Ridge as Residential Community of the Year and Single-Family Production Home Builder of the Year.

But, as always, it was the two highly coveted Customer Choice Awards Powered by Avid™ — in both multi-family and single-family categories — that Portrait principal Rob Grimm was most delighted by. “Every member of our team is passionate about customer service... about looking after our homeowners the way they deserve to be treated.”

He recounts a heartwarming story about a young homeowner who had bought in one of Silver Ridge’s earliest phases and called one blisteringly cold Sunday to ask for the name of a good furnace servicing



Innovative, low impact densification helped Clay Construction win Custom Home Builder of the Year.

Clay Construction’s reinterpretation of the classic French country manor located in Kerrisdale.



company as she had no heat. “Her furnace was long beyond the warranty period, but Wayne, our service manager, immediately popped by and managed to get it working for the weekend — saving her the cost and hassle of an emergency call out. It wasn’t until several weeks later that I found out she’d just come home from the hospital with a newborn baby. That was a good day.”

CELEBRATE THE OUTDOORS

Already recipient of six Vancouver Island CARE Awards, Urban Core Ventures wowed the judges for the Best Outdoor Living Space category with The “Dwell” on Despard — a 5,000-square-foot, single-family residence featuring a modernist, linear design and over 2000 square feet of outdoor areas that include a resort-style infinity pool and hot tub.

ENVIRONMENTAL HONOURS

After striking gold in the Non-Profit Sector category at the Real Estate Foundation of BC’s (REFCA) prestigious Land Awards last



Living room at Portrait Homes' Hampstead, winner of Residential Community of the Year

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Rob Grimm, Portrait Homes



Hampstead, the latest phase of Silver Ridge by Portrait Homes, features exceptional environmental savvy.

year, the Recycled Shipping Container Housing Development by Atira Women's Resource Society garnered gold for Best Innovative Feature (New or Renovation) and Best Environmental Initiative. The project transformed a smaller-than-average, single-family lot in Downtown Eastside Vancouver into 12 stylish, studio suites for women on fixed incomes. Canada's first multi-unit housing development designed and built from recycled shipping containers (it's estimated there are 24 million empty containers worldwide), the project was completed in half the time and for approximately 50 per cent of hard construction costs that traditional construction methods would require.

“This small budget, local project for a marginalized portion of the community showcased what can be done when public, private and non-profit sectors partner to address a social issue that exists in all communities — large and small, urban and rural, nationally and internationally,” noted CEO Jack Wong, REFBC's CEO, in a prior interview.

For more information about the Georgie Awards and a complete list of the 2013 winners, visit georgieawards.ca.