



Home builder says buyer satisfaction is No. 1

Sylvio LeBlanc has made building quality homes his business

BY YVON GAUVIN
TIMES & TRANSCRIPT STAFF

Sylvio LeBlanc of Dieppe built his first home in 1994, at 24 years old and working between stints driving long-haul trucks.

Sylvio learned the ropes "from the ground up," building several homes for himself and his wife, Josée, a school teacher, until their first child came along. By then, Sylvio had given up long-haul trucking for domestic routes on a four-day-on, four-day-off rotation, so he could be home more.

By then, "I was hooked" on house construction, said Sylvio. House construction is so "logical ... common sense" in its methods and approach, and that appealed to him, he said. He also likes problem solving and is good at that.

He likes challenges. Once you leave your comfort zone, it is surprising what you find out about yourself and what you can accomplish, he offers.

Before long, Sylvio was building more and more houses for other people, so much so that it became apparent he had to make a choice between the two professions. He chose his construction business and has never looked back.

Thus, was born LeBlanc Custom Homes Inc. — dedicated to building high quality pre-sold custom housing in Metro Moncton and south eastern New Brunswick.

Over the last 10 years, Sylvio has handpicked his teams of trade professionals and suppliers in whom he can trust to do the work and do it well. He is the chief project manager, but he still makes time to spend with clients listening to their visions for a dream home and making it happen.

Josée is the office manager and financial officer. "I couldn't do it without her; she completes me," says Sylvio.

Most of their company's business is custom homes, built with the



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Josée and Sylvio LeBlanc of LeBlanc Custom Homes Inc. are ready to help out any potential homebuyers.

buyer's wishes in mind and that's fine with Sylvio.

Giving up his prior career for the house construction business was "the right decision ... and I never looked back." I am thankful for all the opportunities and all the flexibility that my prior employer had given me over 15-plus years of employment with such a successful company, I learned a lot there. I will never forget the teachings and little nuggets of wisdom I picked up from such a diverse group of co-workers."

Today, LeBlanc Custom Homes is quite happy building 20 to 40 houses a year and just as importantly, building high quality, energy efficient homes for its clients.

"There is only one way to do something and that is the right way," he says. That's been his motto since the beginning and he believes it still.

Obviously, he must be doing

something right since the New Brunswick chapter of the Canadian Home Builders Association, which represents every facet of home construction, awarded Sylvio the title of Builder of the Year for 2009 as well as the member support award and the energy efficient community award on top of the 2008 award for building so many EnerGuide rated homes.

Sylvio believes in the association, in the R-2000 and EnerGuide 80 approach to increased energy efficiency homes and in home war-

ranties. He is the first vice president of the Greater Moncton Home Builders Association, a director in the provincial association and a director with the Atlantic Home Warranty Program, which he calls the "Cadillac of warranties in the area."

Sylvio is definitely giving back to his industry.

The Builder of the Year award recognizes the recipient as a true professional, a reputable builder of quality homes. You could even say he's a "Master residential builder."

Custom homes remain his "bread and butter" but he has built condominiums and semi-detached homes on speculation. The company has built a number of condos in the new development called Rockley Village and across the road at Sandstone Village in the Mountain Wood Estates off Gorge Road, most of which have already been sold, and he will be the lead builder, building homes and town houses in a new subdivision that is being developed off Ryan Road.

Still, he prefers to build to order. Some builders and developers got caught in the recession of 2008, developing land and building houses on speculation expecting the housing market to remain high, he explained. "Just because ABC is building 15 or 20 units, it doesn't mean that others will also do well."

The house building industry is much more professionalized and construction guarantees much more important, he said.

The banks have been tightening up their lending, basing their decisions as much on the reputation of the builder as the property and what type of warranty is offered, he said.

Warranties give peace of mind to everyone that the building is what it's supposed to be. A house is the single biggest investment most people will make in their lifetime and should be surrounded by good, sound advice from the start, he said.

Looking for a good contractor and trades people, the association would be a good place to start, he said.

His homes range from condos and first-time homes right up to executive abodes, depending on what

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Dwayne Hayes of HomeLife Hayes Realty and Sylvio LeBlanc of LeBlanc Custom Homes Inc. look over some marketing materials for the new Sandstone Village.

Proud to have provided all the landscaping for LeBlanc Custom Homes

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