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Business

Bausum & Duckett celebrates 50 years as electrical contractor

Bausum & Duckett celebrates half century as one of region's best known electrical contractors

By ASHLEY S. WESTERMAN, For The Capital
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In 1960, Harold Bausum and James Duckett went into business together in Davidsonville, specializing in small residential electrical repairs.

Today, the original partners have moved on. But Bausum & Duckett Electric Co. lives on as a full-service residential and commercial electrical contractor lighting up Maryland, Virginia and Delaware as it celebrates its 50th anniversary.

From left, Tommy Luc, vice president, Tim Holt, president, and Mark Llewellyn, vice president, lead Bausum & Duckett Electric Co., an Edgewater-based company. In its 50 years, Bausum & Duckett has grown from a small residential electrician business to a full-service residential and commercial electrical contractor.

"We're here and still successful because we're dedicated to serving our customers and our communities," Vice President Mark Llewellyn said in announcing the milestone.

Expansion began in the mid '60s, when the company started commercial work. By 1973, Bausum & Duckett relocated to Edgewater, opened an office on the Eastern Shore and Duckett was pursuing a career as a firefighter.

By the early 80s, Bausum, Tim Holt, and three partners were running the company. It began a series of jobs on landmark projects that have shaped modern Annapolis, starting with the Loews Annapolis Hotel and West Garrett Place buildings and carrying forward to the Park Place and Annapolis Towne Centre complexes.

The company's reach has spread to jobs like the Wallops Island NASA Facility in Virginia, the Purdue Industries Plan in Salisbury and the Asbury United Methodist Retirement Village in Rockville.

In 2003, Holt became the sole owner of a company that boasts 100 employees and a fleet of service vehicles.

Today, B&D is feeling the effects of the recession on the construction industry.

"The biggest challenge (the construction industry has) right now is finding work," said Llewellyn. "We have been doing a lot more estimating than we used to do; four or five times more."

Llewellyn, who shared duties as vice president with Tommy Luc and John Dorsey, said that their consistently good work flow is something he must attribute to Bausum & Duckett's customers. He said the company has extended out into a few other areas but have mainly stayed with their customers.

"We've seen an increase in our service department," said Llewellyn. "A lot of people are starting to stay put and we've seen a big increase in home renovation."

Llewellyn said that staying on top of ever-changing technology and industry trends is a big part of what's kept Bausum & Duckett's doors open for half a century.

"We are smart for seeing the future coming at us," he said.

Llewellyn said that the company offers up-to-date lighting, computer networking and energy saving technology as well as paid continuing education and code update classes for their employees. They have also turned their focus on going green and have implemented the ElectriCare program, where they do preventative home wiring and electrical efficiency surveys for a flat rate.

"We do this so anyone who hires us will have confidence in us," said Llewellyn.

Gilbane Building Co. manager Bill Braughton, who works out of Gilbane Inc.'s Laurel office, has been in the construction business for 40 years and he said that the hardest part about being in the trade, recession or not, is the ability to do really good work repeatedly.

Braughton is currently working with Bausum & Duckett on their second project together, the Park Place condo project in Annapolis.

"We wouldn't have used them again if the first job didn't go well," said Braughton. "They've done an excellent job on both buildings; their prices are competitive, they're easy to work with and they don't have extras, strings or make excuses."

Braughton foresees contracting Bausum & Duckett for future projects.

"They know their resources, they have the man power and they deliver their work in a timely manner," said Braughton. "They are really nice people who are competitive and able to deliver at top quality."

Alongside top quality results and being at the forefront of technological innovation, Bausum & Duckett also make their commitment to the community a top priority. Llewellyn said the company proudly participates in partnerships with Hospice of the Chesapeake, Main Street Gym and the Annapolis and Anne Arundel County Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. He also said they also recently became involved with a Build Brigade sponsored by Homes for Our Troops and will be wiring a home for free for a veteran who lost all of his limbs in the line of duty.

Habitat for Humanity of the Chesapeake is another nonprofit organization that Bausum & Duckett partners with.

"We have worked with them for 10 years," said Joe Allwein, chairman of the board for the regional nonprofit. "Tim Holt, the owner, has been a huge support for Habitat because he believes in what we do."

Allwein said that B&D helps get materials and services donated for Habitat projects and even wires one house for free for every five houses that are built. In 2009, Habitat built 32 houses and their goal for this year is to build 50 houses.

"It is very significant to have partners like Bausum & Duckett," said Allwein. "Partnerships like these are important to help serve more families in the Baltimore region because it is very challenging to find a house for a decent price here and their continuing support throughout the economic downturn really speaks volumes of their commitment to the community."

Llewellyn said that in 50 years he wants to see Bausum & Duckett have the same success it's enjoyed in its first 50 years.

"This is a very family oriented-type company here," said Llewellyn. "We figure that in another 50 years - even though I may not be here - we are going to be here."

Ashley S. Westerman is a journalism student at the University of Maryland, College Park.

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