



DAN HOWELL

Over an alternately hazy and foggy weekend in early June, the *Custom Builder* Advisory Board congregated in the famed Hamptons, summer playground of New York's powerful and beautiful people. Frank and Roy Dalene of Telemark Construction, one of the top custom building firms in the rarefied market that is Long Island's East End, hosted the meeting. The venue: the home the Dalenes are most proud to have built, a magnificent two-year-old oceanfront contemporary, below, that stands as testament to the power and artistry of a singular architectural vision shared by client, design professionals and

builders—and executed with absolute precision and uncompromising attention to form, material and detail. (True, a basically limitless budget made this monumental achievement possible, but as we got to know the house and appreciate its near perfection, the eight-figure budget actually made sense.)

Our agenda: Conceive the best-ever conference program for the 1997 Custom Builder Conference and Expo, slated for March 6–8 in Orlando, Florida. As might be expected of a successful group of your peers willing to



travel from as far as California, Texas, Wisconsin and Oregon to devote a June weekend to further the cause of custom homebuilding, the meeting was focused, fascinating and tremendously profitable. (Sitting in the most amazing home most of us have ever had the pleasure of visiting certainly inspired the quality of our communal effort.) More specifically, the fact that the Dalenes were able to “borrow” the house for the weekend on

the strength of an ongoing maintenance contract with the client led to a seminar topic everyone liked: “A New Revenue Stream: Maintaining the Homes You Build.”

For Group Publisher George Fields, Publisher Paul Gillen and I, the meeting became an intensive course in the business and professional issues that most affect, interest and concern American custom homebuilders—from marketing to financing and growth strategies. The Advisory Board's invaluable ideas and ongoing contributions are certain to help us craft the smartest, most focused and most profitable event ever for America's custom builders. We'll fill you in on the details in the coming months and look forward to sharing a history-making conference with you next March.

On behalf of the entire *Custom Builder* staff, George, Paul and I express our sincere thanks to Frank and Roy Dalene and to the other Advisory Board members who contributed to our meeting and to next year's CBCE: John Barrows, Carol Baye, Mike Bearcutt, Susan Edwards, Greg McCaffery, Dennis O'Conner, Mary Schroeder and Ray Tonjes.

Laurence E. Oberwager

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