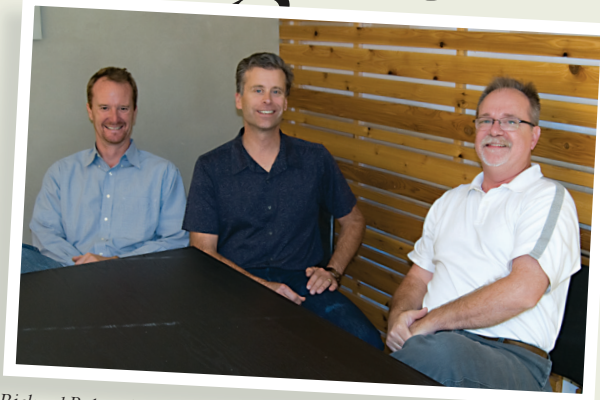


Local Architectural Firm Builds Strong Relationships

The profession of architecture encompasses both art and science: while architects strive to design beautiful and usable spaces for people to live and work in, the process also involves down-to-earth considerations of construction, materials, cost, and environmental impact.

Richard Baker, a designer with many years experience in construction, and Andrew Pawlowski, a licensed architect, are uniquely qualified to tackle both aspects of the profession through their company, Siteline Architecture. Founded in 2002, the company is involved in several high profile projects around town, including Hospice of the Foothills on Rough and Ready Highway, the remodel of a wing of the Northern Queen Inn to accommodate senior housing, and a new community center and branch library planned for Penn Valley.

While Siteline designs homes, offices and commercial buildings, and sometimes oversees their construction as well, they are also frequently called upon to redesign the interior spaces of existing buildings. As Pawlowski says, "We work really hard to get people the space that works best for them."



Richard Baker, Andrew Pawlowski and Jeff Janssen of Siteline Architecture. Not pictured is interior designer Sheelah Venegas.

Asking lots of questions and being good listeners helps. The partners view buildings as mechanisms, not just a series of rooms. They strive to combine all the information they gather into a plan which both looks and functions beautifully while also fitting comfortably onto the site.

Their own office is a prime example. For many years the building was a laundromat, Zion Street Suds, and the transformation of the interior into a workable and flexible office space involved foresight and creativity. While the partners each have their own offices with abundant natural light and privacy if needed, the central core of the space is a flexible "bull pen" for their employees. A conference room at the entrance and a kitchen in the back complete the layout. They've recently rented desk space in the central core to a

solopreneur as a means of generating additional income during tough economic times. When the economy improves they'll easily be able to accommodate additional employees.

Baker and Pawlowski started strategizing early about ways to survive the current recession. Cutting their own bonuses and salaries enabled them to keep their two employees working, but cutting back their support for area non-profits has been painful and hopefully short-lived. Since their work is almost entirely local, they feel strongly about giving back to the community which supports them. They also view it as their best form of advertising.

Another strategy for dealing with the recession came from an article Pawlowski read which suggested using down time to acquire new skills. Last January he began studying for the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED certification, which he recently completed. This opens up new opportu-

nities for the firm in sustainable design and building practices.

These days Siteline frequently competes with any number of other companies — even quite large Bay Area firms — for local jobs. However their ob-

vious enjoyment in designing and managing a variety of building types and styles, coupled with the careful management of their own business and their involvement in the community should ensure their continued success. 🍀



Remodelled garage



Hospice of the Foothills