

EFA

ENVIRONMENTS FOR AGING

2019 Remodel/ Renovation Competition

Shell Point Retirement Community – The Crystal — Dining FORT MYERS, FLA.

Submitted by: **Wegman Design Group, Inc.** NAPLES, FLA.

Cost per square foot: N/A



Built in 1969, The Crystal Dining, Shell Point's oldest and most popular restaurant, needed a fresh take.

The team started with a comprehensive programming and planning phase. The original buffets and two service stations were removed, and new exposed kitchen with top-of-the line cook stations were added, bringing the executive chef action into the dining space.

The name was simplified to just "The Crystal" and focus shifted to the sparkle of the nearby water rather than a chandelier. The design supports that with new color palette and coastal casual theme.

Design details include high wood acoustical ceilings, with different types of decorative lighting adding energy and a quality feeling. Booth seating with tropical inspired white screens and plants break up the large dining space. The space now opens up more to the outside with better views and more



natural light. Included in the remodel was the addition of an outdoor covered patio. This creates the ability to have a multitude of different dining experiences at different times of the day or on different nights or by just sitting in a different section of the restaurant.

To the right side of the display kitchen, above the banquette, are large scale black and white commissioned photos of the iconic crystal chandelier once seen in the space, providing a nostalgic note. On the left side, a large aerial map highlights the amazing coastal location this campus is well known for.

Overall the design promotes quality dining with easy access to nutrition and variety in an engaging atmosphere.

Design team: Lori Wegman, president; Meghan Kolund, design director
Photography: Joshua Fuller (before); Amber Frederiksen (after)

Juror comments:

- An amazing transformation of this dining space! They introduced an entirely new service style with the display kitchen. This must have improved food quality and adds the element of staff interaction with residents. Moving the service area away from the window and opening up the view to the outside was extremely creative. The way they enhanced the entry experience was also dramatic and much more welcoming and modern. I thought this project was exceptional and I'm sure the residents and staff love the change.
- Lovely update of a locally well-known dining venue into a new, fresh experience. Every surface was redone, remodeled, and looks great.
- Very nice mix of use in application of tile and wood elements. You can tell the design details have been carefully reviewed with regards to higher toe kicks around service areas and application of flooring with regards to maintenance and durability. Looks like one of the latest high-end restaurants I would want to check out. Kudos to the design team!
- Simply stunning makeover of a stuffy and dated dining room.



BEFORE

The skillful use of light, pattern, materials, and forms provide visual interest, contrast & depth, without sacrificing legibility.

- This renovation is one of the most impressive makeovers in terms of aesthetics. The new dining space doesn't read as a senior community. The team took the time and care to re-brand while also paying homage to the legacy of the space by memorializing the chandelier. I also like how it ties to the landscape and plays off of the geographical location.

deliver intimacy and privacy, avoiding tables that feel exposed in the middle of a room by providing variation in seating and table types, ranging from a large gathering table to two-tops, rectangles, squares, and booths. "We attempt to incorporate intimacy in every dining space we create," she says.

Technology is helping to update the dining experience, too, McRoberts adds, noting that point-of-service kiosks at the entry to restaurants and even the ability to order food from resident units prior to arriving allow residents to avoid a two-hour meal and help operators quickly turn tables.

Next, acoustics and lighting are key. "The acoustics have to be spot-on, or residents will go to another venue. If the lighting's not bright enough that they can read the menu, they'll go to another venue," McRoberts says, urging that these elements can't be an afterthought and rather should be addressed right from the beginning of a project. Wegman agrees, adding that acoustics are the source of most complaints she hears. "Solutions start all the

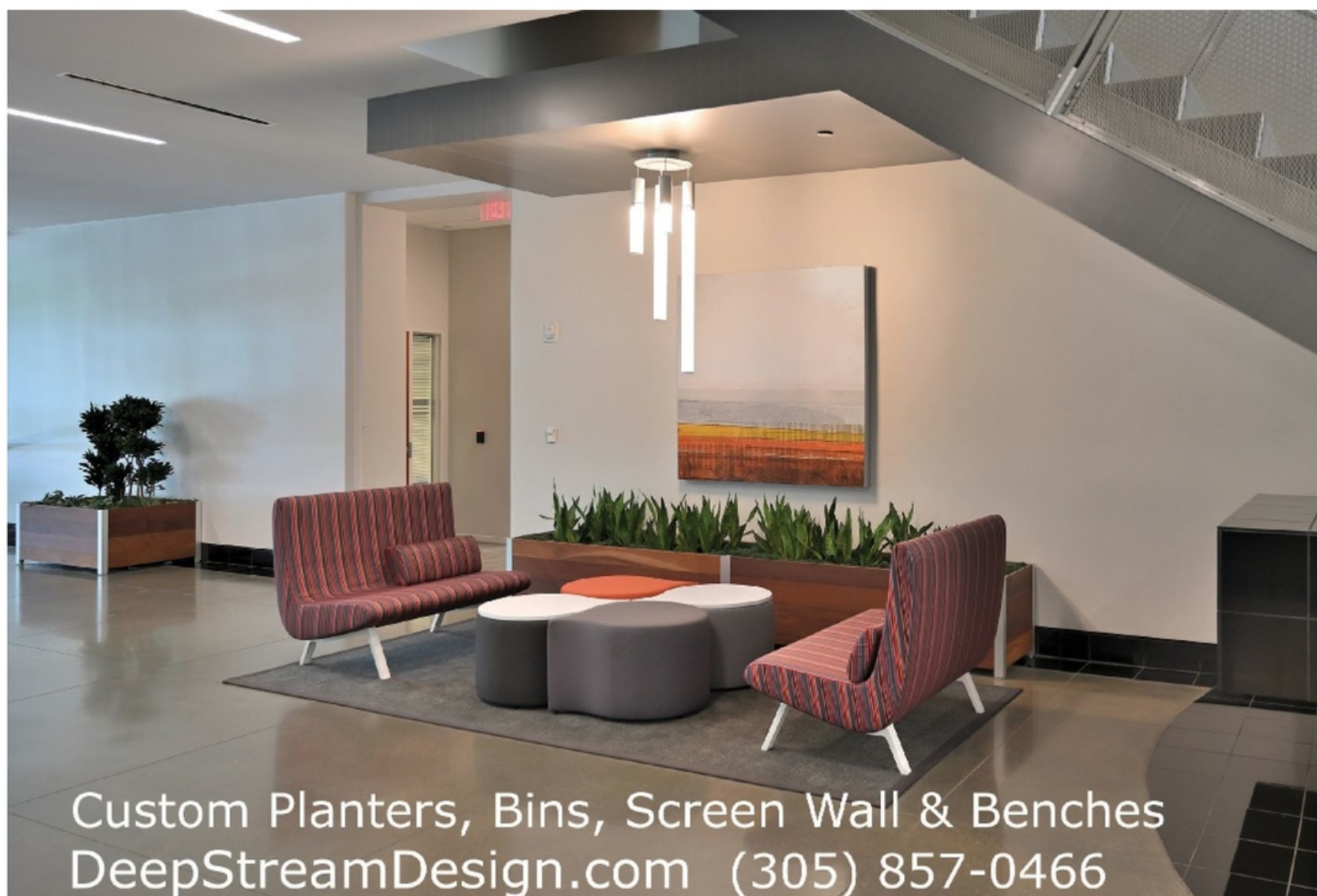
way from buffering the noise from the kitchen and adjacent spaces to absorbing sound and making conversations heard," she says.

And while the owner/operator, resident base, and location will determine if the aesthetics of a space will be a departure from the local environment or reflective of it, designers agree it should be an *experience*. Wegman says her team always involves the community's chefs, marketing team, and other stake-

holders to create a fully branded approach, determining details that include what servers will wear, the look of the menus and logo, and even signage applications. "When you do that, people feel the value of it. They feel it's something really special," she says.

The extras

Two adjacent trends will be driving the future of dining spaces, the first being the pub.



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The 105 Restaurant at Moorings Park Grey Oaks, designed by Wegman Design Group, has outdoor space with a fireplace, water fountain, and evening lighting for residents to enjoy.

McRoberts says more conservative and even faith-based clients are surprising him and introducing bars, despite some initial hesitance. "As soon as you build it, it's too small the day it opens and they love it," he says.

The spaces are also great flexible options for communities, positioned as pre-function space near the main dining room so that residents can easily flow from one space to the other. Additionally, they may take on a different form on weekends, hosting crowds for sporting events and even boasting a stadium-driven food menu. Wegman adds that she's seen pubs evolve from coffee bars in the morning with specialty espresso drinks to a venue for wine or craft beer tastings in the evening. "It's about the presentation and having something unique," she says.

Finally, outdoor spaces and al fresco dining are frequent add-ons, as well, although it's an element that's determined by the resident population and locale. "Residents' acuity levels may also affect their inclination to dine outdoors. Even if we consider the tempera-

ture perfect, it may not be comfortable for them due to medications they're on," Thoma Holec says. However, for those communities where it will work, options range from rooftop terraces and balconies to patios off main dining spaces with fireplaces, barbecue grills, and more.

Wegman adds that identifying design solutions that will mimic interior environments and extend the life of the dining space for as many seasons as possible can help answer

residents' concerns about dining outside. For example, she frequently introduces hard-covered shade structures, misters, fans, sunshades and wind screens, etc., with the addition of flatscreen TVs, music, and great views. "If you build it, they will come," she says. **EFA**

Jennifer Kovacs Silvis is editor-in-chief of *Environments for Aging* magazine. She can be reached at jennifer.silvis@emeraldexpo.com.



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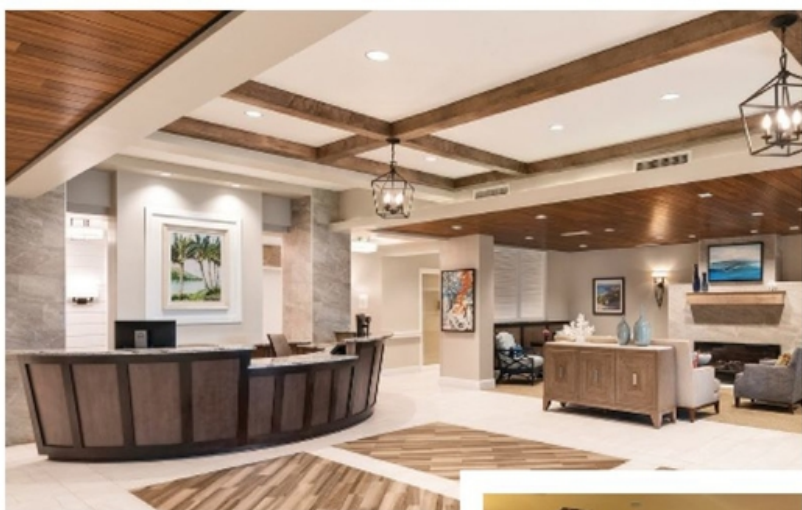


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Amber Frederiksen Photography, Inc. (after image)

Shell Point Retirement Community – The Springs Lobby

A former Country Inn & Suites gets significant renovation, becoming an assisted living residence. Challenges included making the entry and lobby an open inviting central hub for access to information, dining, health services and a place to share conversation with fellow residents in an upbeat and freshly designed space.

Wegman Design Group Inc.

(239) 596-8551

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Sam Oberter Photography (after image)

Simpson House – Dining Room

The vast and antiquated dining venue was transformed into a centrally located assembly hall and intimate wait-served dining room. A pre-function lounge was created to allow for socializing before and after events or dinner. The interior design feels modern and urban and solved the community's need to revamp its social and dining programs.



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Sarah Strunk Photography (after image)

Touchmark at Coffee Creek – Health & Fitness Studio

The basement known as “The Bunker” was a dark place where unwanted items were stored and classes were periodically held. Now, the new Health & Fitness Studio with state-of-the-art fitness equipment, aerobics/group fitness and multi-purpose studio provides residents an energetic space to incorporate wellness into their daily life.



Sarah Mechling/Perkins Eastman (after image)

United Methodist Manor of the Pee Dee – Entry Commons

As part of an integrated response to changing market demands and evolving resident expectations, this renovation transforms dark and disconnected public spaces into an open-plan gallery with a range of resident amenities. By creating a clear flow between spaces, the new gallery simplifies resident and staff navigation through the community.



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Q&A

Lori Wegman

Principal

Wegman Design Group, Inc.

Describe your business in one sentence.

We are about being masterful in design, creating environments which enrich and enhance the lives of our clients, their residents and the community at large.

What drew you to the senior living design sector?

Being a broad-based design firm, operating in the retirement destination state of Florida, it wasn't so much what drew us, as to

what we needed to do to be successful. We needed to be able to design all our projects for seniors universally. That fueled our passion to develop the credentials to design spaces that address seniors' needs at all levels of daily living, from the neighborhood store and restaurant to the skilled nursing home, providing the highest level of dignity and creativity we can muster. Our work in senior living is so interesting



that all projects now to a large degree are "senior" projects.

What's one critical question your team always asks clients in initial project meetings? Why?

We like to ask, "What do you want the resident experience to be for this space and every other space in the project?" In that question we are trying to get at the real tactile and visual

nature of the space in which we can make a difference in the design. We then look to other insights from the client or residents to learn what would make it so. We use this information to create enjoyment in everyday life through the diversity of "experience" whether for the individual in their private domain or in the areas of social engagement.

www.wegmandesigngroup.com

