

A Focus on Quality and Relationships

An Interview with David Jones, President, Connemara & Company

EDITORS' NOTE Before assuming his current role, David Jones served as Senior Vice President of Connemara General Contractors. He also served as Superintendent of Pollard Properties, Inc. where he was responsible for custom residential and commercial divisions field management. Prior to this, he honed his skills as a carpenter for Sanders Construction. Jones is the Zoning Administrator for the Town of White Stone and has served as a member and



David Jones

Chairman of the Lancaster County Planning Commission. He has also been a member of the White Stone Town Council and the Vice Mayor of the Town of White Stone. Jones serves on the Board of Directors of Historic Christ

Church and is a past member of the Rappahamock General Hospital Foundation Board. He is a member of the Northern Technical Center, Union Bank Advisory Board, Tangier Island Foundation Board, and Bon Secours Advisory Board. He is also the Chairman of the Essex County Planning Commission.

COMPANY BRIEF Connemara & Company (connemararealty.com) is a trusted, experienced, creative, and professional team out of the

Northern Neck of Virginia. The company provides realty, construction, and development services for its clients. Connemara is known as the premiere residential builder in the Northern Neck.

Will you discuss the history of Connemara & Company and how the company has evolved?

I was working with a premier, high-end, home building company in Lancaster County along with a man named Bill Hope, and when the head of the company decided to retire, Bill and I decided to start our own company as equal partners. This was in 1994 and we are excited to celebrate our 30th anniversary this year. We hit the road running in 1993 doing light commercial and high-end residential which is what we still do to this day. Our mainstay is high-end residential, but we have also done local hospitals, nursing homes, and the local resort, Tides Inn. We have gone from having six people to more than 25 employees today with revenues of roughly \$20 million a year.



Connemara & Company homes and finishes (above and opposite page)



Our focus is on quality and relationships. When we start working with a customer, we consider them to be a part of our family. We do not have a one- or two-year warranty – our warranty is that if there were any issues with our craftsmanship, we take care of it and take care of the customer. This has been a key to our growth and success.

How broad is your focus geographically?

We like to work in what we call the Northern Neck, which is the counties of Lancaster, Northumberland, Richmond, King George, and Westmoreland. We have ventured out a little further for special projects, such as a \$10 million home that we are working on.

Will you elaborate on Connemara's commitment to quality?

That is an interesting question since quality is a word that is used often in the industry, but you can really only know quality when you see it. When I take a potential customer to one of our homes, I let the work we did at that home speak for itself. I show our customers what they will get from working with us by seeing what we have done in the past and the level of the work we are known for. One hundred percent of our work comes from word of mouth – we do not advertise. We do not talk about our quality – we show our quality through our work.

Are there certain common characteristics to a Connemara project or is your work customized for each client?

We build custom homes, and they are all different. There are many good home builders in

this market, and it is not always easy to tell who built a specific home. As I mentioned earlier, I think that where we stand out is our focus on quality, relationships, and standing behind our work.

As you have grown the Connemara team, how important is it to bring people into the company who fit the culture and values of Connemara?

This is very important. When we interview people, we tell them what we expect and what we stand for, and we have very little turnover here. We take the time to train our team on the way we do things, and we also listen to how they like to do things. When you build a relationship with your team and you invest in your people, it leads to strong results. We are a diverse company and don't focus on gender, race, or ethnicity – we focus on character and integrity.



Did you always know you had an entrepreneurial spirit and desire to build your own company?

When I graduated from high school, many of my friends went away to college, and I did not. Reality set in for me that I better do something for myself or when my friends came back from college in four years to start their careers, I was going to be considered the class clown. I decided that I was going to use those four years when others were in college to do the best I could and work hard, which I think I did. I did not know if I would be successful, but I knew that I was going to try to be successful.

As Connemara celebrates its 30th anniversary, are you able to take moments to reflect on what you have accomplished?

Absolutely. I have said many times that the first day that I wake up and am not excited to go to work will be when I stop. I enjoy the process and get great satisfaction when we build a home. I have certainly been blessed by God, my office personnel, and all other co-workers for the success of Connemara. ●

