

Barry Knight

By CHARLIE JUDD

Barry Knight was elected in a special election in the 81st District of the Virginia House of Delegates to complete the unexpired term of Delegate Terry Suit. He recently sat with Charlie Judd and offered the following interview for Capitol Connections Magazine:

CC: Who is Barry Knight?

BK: I'm a farmer from Virginia Beach and have been married to Paula for 25 years. We have three sons aged 19, 16, and 14. My father's family arrived in Virginia on the 'second set of ships' to Jamestown in 1608. And my mother's family received a land grant of 600 acres from the King of England in the mid-1600's, and we never left. In my teens, I went to work on a farm after school and during the summer. I saved enough money to buy a farm down the road, married, started our family, added a couple more farms, and began what is now my life's work as a hog farmer. We raise about 20,000 hogs per year for meat processing. Monday morning, I walk out my back door at home, board my helicopter—which I pilot myself—and fly to Chesterfield County Airport to come to Session. Friday evening, I fly home. Then on Saturday mornings, I'm pouring coffee at our country 7-Eleven to greet and listen to folks.

CC: So, you asked for this job, now, what do you want to do for the people of the 81st District?

BK: I plan to remain active, to listen, and to communicate. I want to be the people's representative. I want to carry their views. I want to vote their conscience. And, I want to help them when I can. Ten days after I was sworn in, the residents in the district that front the ocean realized the permit for the bulkheads had expired in 2006. I realized that the deadline for submitting bills had passed, so I wrote the bill myself—it's called a "blue cover," and it passed the House and the Senate, and I think the Governor is going to sign it.

CC: As a member of the General Assembly, what do you want to do for the people of Virginia?

BK: Serving in the House of Delegates means representing the people of the 81st District AND the people of the Commonwealth of



Photo by WandaJudd.com

Virginia. Most of the legislation we work on here is for all of Virginia, so it is important that we work together and always keep the 'big picture' in mind. I have found my fellow members to be very nice and helpful to this freshman. I said earlier I intend to listen—not just to constituents - but to my fellow delegates. I believe everyone here cares and wants what's best for the Commonwealth. We all are looking for solutions to transportation. We need to put more money in people's pockets and we'll do that by protecting and creating jobs. I am committed to supporting our military installations, and protecting our natural resources.

CC: Any closing thoughts?

BK: Being a member of the House of Delegates is a most humbling experience for me every day. But I remember where I came from and I know who I am. Look at the pictures on my walls here. I have my grandfathers, my wife and kids, downtown Pungo, and even a couple of pigs. I arrive in the building here before six AM to chat in the cafeteria with other Delegates. There are a lot of smart people here, and I am learning from them. After hours, I roam the halls in the Capitol in awe of the significance of Virginia. I read the plaques, names on statues and portraits because I want to get to know those who came before me. This was the birthplace of our Country. I want to 'soak it all up.'

Charlie Judd is a Marketing/ Development Consultant based in the Richmond area. He can be contacted at cej@j4com.com. [V]



Photo by WandaJudd.com