



Elder-Jones
GENERAL CONTRACTOR

Construction Communicator

SUMMER 2021



This is a very special edition of our Construction Communicator, as 2021 marks our 50th year in business. Elder-Jones was incorporated 7 years before I was born, and although I've heard our company's story a million times, I thought it best for John Elder to tell it from the start. He was pleased to be back writing the President's Corner one more time. ~Justin

With this being Elder-Jones' 50th year in business, the request was made that I once again contribute to the Elder-Jones Construction Communicator newsletter. This time to look back at our corporate history, a recollection of many significant

President's Corner

A LOOK BACK AT OUR FIRST 50 YEARS



changes along with several constants. I was a 'mid C' scholar at Winona State College the summer of 1966. That summer I worked with Ray Jones in the construction department at Superior Oil Company, a business owned by my dad, Jim Elder. My job was to assist Ray tracking new service station construction projects. Occasionally Ray and I would discuss the possibility of someday starting a construction business. As things would eventually happen, my father sold his oil company after which he and Ray formed Elder-Jones, Inc. I joined in a year later, then became Ray's partner after acquiring my dad's interest in 1975.

Ray and I first worked at two desks pushed back-to-back in the basement of his house. We shared one phone that we passed back and forth as needed, which at the time was not often. My vehicle was a 1967 Bug. I recall being reimbursed 7 cents a mile when using it for company business. At that time, we were handling

drawn into more commercial than residential work. Ray established relationships with McKee Oil company, building gas stations, and with Perkins, building restaurants. I developed accounts with Murphy Oil, converting their stations from service bay outlets to convenience stores, and with Evenson's Hallmark card shops.

The next evolution involved building retail stores in new and existing shopping centers in the Twin Cities. We were kept busy at Burnsville Center, Eden Prairie Center, Ridgedale, Southdale, Rosedale, and Maplewood Mall, among others. Several of the retailers we worked for expanded into other regions of the country and invited us to bid on out-of-state work. This development significantly defined what Elder-Jones would become:

Continued on next page



John Elder, circa 1979



Ray Jones, circa 1979

both residential and commercial projects—new homes, house remodels, public government bids, and small commercial jobs.

Over time, we were

WHO WE ARE

Elder-Jones, Inc. is headquartered in Bloomington, Minnesota, and provides nationwide general contracting services in 49 states, Puerto Rico, and Canada.

Our Bloomington office also serves as headquarters to our associated companies: Elder-Jones Building Permit Service, Inc and Elder-Jones of Canada, Ltd.

Providing Uncompromised Service Since 1971

PRESIDENT'S CORNER CONT.

a national retail construction company, and part of a formative new construction industry.

During the first years of business, we had no periodic financial statements; Ray and I had to wait until fiscal year end while our CPA firm compiled the numbers to determine whether we had made a profit. Ray and I would wait for results with our fingers crossed and generally the news was favorable. As the company grew, we developed an administrative department that handled billings, payables, payroll, insurance, licensing, and monthly financial statements. In 1984 the company acquired its first computer, which in time, along with cell phones, greatly enhanced communications as well as company and project efficiency. That was also the year I purchased Ray's interest in the company.

Prior to being able to send information electronically, we had to reproduce dozens of project plans to ship to subcontractors and suppliers when bidding projects. Now plans are sent electronically with the push of a computer key. Before cell phones, calls were taken at our switchboard with messages handwritten on pink message slips. Today voicemail and texts greatly speed the flow and accuracy of information.

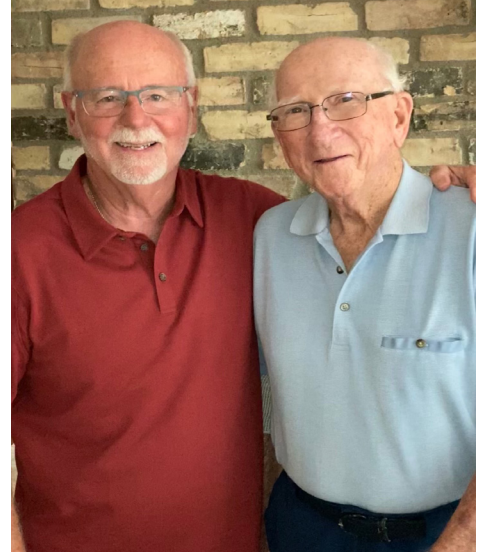
Working nationally involved new challenges: extensive travel, developing a base of subcontractors in new markets, permitting and licensing issues, communication and tracking of projects hundreds of miles away, and finding superintendents willing to live on the road extensively. In time, we met the challenges and became a significant participant working for many of the top retailers nationally.

Elder-Jones became a charter member of the Retail Contractors Association, pioneered by Dave Weekes of Weekes Construction. I was a board member, officer, and then president of the RCA in 1995. Later, Brian Perkkio was on the board, and now Justin Elder holds the office of RCA Secretary Treasurer. Since its inception in 1990, the RCA has contributed significantly to raise the standards of practice and visibility of the retail construction industry.

Other developments included teaming up with Tim Schenk to create the Elder-Jones Permit Service in 1991, expanding our construction reach by starting Elder-Jones of Canada, LTD, and becoming licensed to build in Puerto Rico. In 2000 we initiated a succession plan with the addition of Brian Perkkio and Mark Utne in management/ownership roles, followed by Dennis Hill and Justin Elder. In 2013 Justin became the majority shareholder and president of Elder-Jones.

A hunting and fishing expedition to Argentina with Bob Benda and Ron Martinez lead to our acquisition of Shrader & Martinez Construction in 2018. Ron talked with me about exit strategies he was looking at with his company as we fished the Argentina rivers for Golden Durango. When we parted ways, I asked Ron if he would like me to have Justin call to see if there was any possibility of getting together on a deal. He said he would, and it turned out to be a perfect fit as we now have the two companies successfully working in tandem with Dennis Hill overseeing our SMC operation in Sedona, AZ.

From its inception as a small company looking for identity, to its growth in



John Elder & Ray Jones, 2021

becoming a national retail construction company, there have been significant changes. But there have also been constants. Small jobs or large, there have always been project budgets to maintain, deadlines to meet, code regulations to follow, and building department inspections. Before we had computers and cell phones, communication was more difficult, but it was critical. Good subcontractors and suppliers have always been needed to assist in creating successful projects. And above all, there has always been the need for talented employees, dedicated to every project, to every client and to Elder-Jones. As a company, we are fortunate to have had a continuous mix of people creating successful outcomes. And I believe it has been a reciprocal relationship, with Elder-Jones providing challenging and rewarding jobs, and often careers, for its employees.

Ralph Waldo Emerson is quoted as saying "it is not the destination, it's the journey." Elder-Jones is 50 years into its journey, with a destination that is still far over the horizon. I like to think I can speak for those who have been part of Elder-Jones' past, as well as for those who work here today, that it has been a good journey. A very good journey.

~John Elder

Recognizing Longevity

Having tenured employees is key to the success of any business. We are lucky to have so many seasoned team members as part of our organization. As we celebrate our history, we would like to recognize some of our most long-standing employees. We are very grateful to have so many outstanding people as part of the team at Elder-Jones!



JAY SATERBAK | 41 YEARS

Which roles have you filled while at Elder-Jones? Carpenter, superintendent, project manager, director of marketing, safety director, and senior project manager.

What was your favorite project? In all of the roles there was at least one or two favorite projects as each one had its own set of challenges and provided an opportunity to use some skill sets or to learn new ones.

What do you like most about working at E-J? I enjoy a lifetime of industry connections, many lasting friendships, and a broad reach of work.



BRIAN PERKKIO | 31 YEARS

Which roles have you filled while at Elder-Jones? I started as a project manager, and in the late 90's became a partner and VP.

What was your favorite project? My favorite client was Disney. The project managers there were fun to work with and the stores were fun to build. Plus, who doesn't like Mickey Mouse?

What do you like most about working at E-J? The people. Everyone is great to work with!



TIM SCHENK | 33 YEARS

Which roles have you filled at Elder-Jones? Estimator, estimating manager, and Building Permit Service president.

What do you enjoy most about managing the building permit service? The lasting relationships and friendships I've made working in this industry.

What do you like most about working at E-J? The people I've worked with over these 33 years.



JOHN LUNDEBREK | 27 YEARS

Which roles have you filled at Elder-Jones? Assistant project manager, superintendent, and project manager.

What was your favorite project? Vineyard Vines in Nantucket. The location made it logistically challenging and unique to any other location, but it allowed E-J to problem solve.

What do you like most about working at E-J? That we get to be ourselves.



Jay Saterbak, 1986



Brian Perkkio, 2002



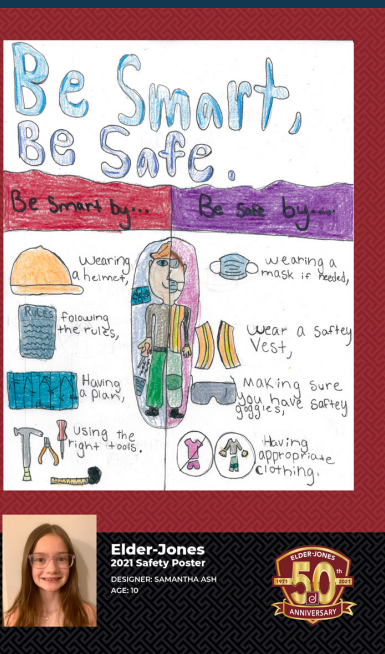
Tim Schenk, 1996



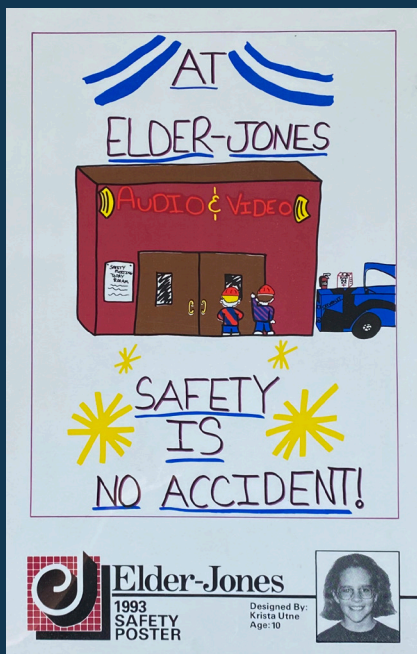
John Lundebrek, 2002

30 Years of Safety Posters

For over 30 years, Elder-Jones has been promoting their focus on jobsite safety through their annual safety poster contest. Each year, children in the families of our employees are invited to submit poster designs that follow our annual theme. The entries are voted on by employees and winners are awarded cash prizes in three age groups. One grand prize winner is also selected, whose poster design becomes our official safety poster for the year, and is displayed on all Elder-Jones jobsites, as well as in our office, as a reminder to all that safety is our top priority.



2021 winning safety poster, designed by Samantha Ash



1993 winning safety poster, designed by Krista Utne (now Krista Ash), Samantha's mom



Samantha Ash and her 2021 winning design with her mother Krista Ash and her 1993 winning design

The winner of this year's 50th Anniversary edition of the Elder-Jones Safety Poster Contest was Samantha Ash, daughter of project manager Jason Ash! Winning this contest is familiar to their family as Samantha's mother, Krista, also designed a winning poster nearly 30 years ago, in 1993! Krista's father, Mark Utne, worked for Elder-Jones for over 30 years and retired in 2017.

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