

# I Love My Job!

An Interview with Derek Van Mol, owner of Van Mol Restoration



Ryan and Mary Holine



*Where did you grow up? What street do you live on in Belle Meade? How long have you lived in the neighborhood?*

I am one of those perhaps rare “native Nashvillians”; my family lived on Beacon Drive and the West Meade area. Most of my growing up years, however, were spent at the corner of Bowling Avenue and Golf Club Lane. My wife and I and my two daughters currently live on Lynnwood Blvd, where we moved just last year following a complete renovation of the home. Since my Van Mol Restoration business is here in Nashville and my wife Marcie Allen’s business is based in New York, we divide our time between residences in Belle Meade and Brooklyn.

*Tell us about yourself and your family...*

As to my family: I am married to a truly amazing woman, Marcie Allen, president of MAC Presents, a New York City-based music sponsorship agency. Two daughters, Mary Holine in the fourth grade, and Ryan in the first grade at Harding Academy – are the light of my life and of their step-mom, “Miss Marcie.” When they are with us, we enjoy attending all of their sports activities and traveling when schedules permit it. We are very fortunate to have many family members in Nashville as well: my dad and mom, John and Debbie Van Mol, as well as my sister, Millicent Cash, and her two girls, all live fairly close by and we get together quite often. Marcie was primarily raised by her grandparents, the late “Hoss” Allen and his wife Nancy. And we both consider ourselves fortunate that one of her grandmothers, Ginny Freeman, also lives close by here in town.

*What are your hobbies/interests? Volunteer work?*

My honest confession at this stage of my life is that hobbies are rare – I am consumed with my new company and my family, Marcie and the girls. We are hopeful that there will be time for Titans football games this fall and Predators games over the winter, but my laser focus these days needs to be building and promoting Van Mol Restoration, a brand new venture that has the mission of turning houses into homes through innovative design ideas and quality construction techniques – all without breaking the bank or the budget. The first comprehensive project for Van Mol Restoration was our own home on Lynnwood, and it has turned into the real-life version of the company’s vision for its clients’ homes.

My wife and I volunteer regularly. She is in the music industry and is very dedicated to TJ Martell Foundation and Musicians on Call. After Hurricane Sandy, we volunteered regularly to aid the residents of the street in the Rockaways called Beach 119. The highlight of that volunteer experience was delivering over 500 Thanksgiving meals to them when they were all displaced from life as they knew it.

*Tell us about the events that led up to where you are now... (where did you go to school, what has been your career path?)*

So how does a “digital guy” who has spent nearly 20 years in communications, video production and selling high-tech IT products and services wind up as a licensed general contractor with a passion for creating highly livable and comfortable living spaces? Like so many Nashville business people, Montgomery Bell Academy was my high school background, followed by a communications degree from the College of Charleston in South Carolina. But as I traveled more and more between Nashville and Brooklyn on the weekends, I became thoroughly intrigued with what I call the “Williamsburg neighborhood” look in Brooklyn. I noted practical, fun and funky ways of using not much space at all to create comfortable living, and it seemed to me that such an approach might find favor among young professionals buying their first or second homes in Nashville’s emerging neighborhoods.

*Based on your career experience, what advice (whether general or specific) can you offer to the residents of your neighborhood?*

My advice may sound like one of the most common platitudes. But there is a really good reason that some pieces of wisdom rise to the top. I want people to be able to wake in the morning or come home after a long day at work and really be PRESENT and engaged with the life happening inside their home. I want the house to feel like a home. My advice is don’t wait to feel at home. Learn how to be present and engaged with as many moments as possible.