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TABLE OF CONTENTS




07
Preferred Partners



08
Publisher's Note




10
Top Producer



14
Up-and-Coming Real Estate Agent
Ryan Moberly



18
The Gift of Safety



21
How Long Will It Continue?



22
Jill McFeron's Black Forest



28
Real Estate (r) Evolution



30
Know Your Neighborhoods
Briargate



34
Sponsor Spotlight



38
Welcome to Fountain Valley!



40
To Stage Or Not To Stage For The Holidays



42
Real Producers Event



45
Video Marketing for Real Estate Agents



46
Top Agents

RP If you are interested in contributing or nominating Realtors for certain stories, please email us at IndyTopProducer@gmail.com.

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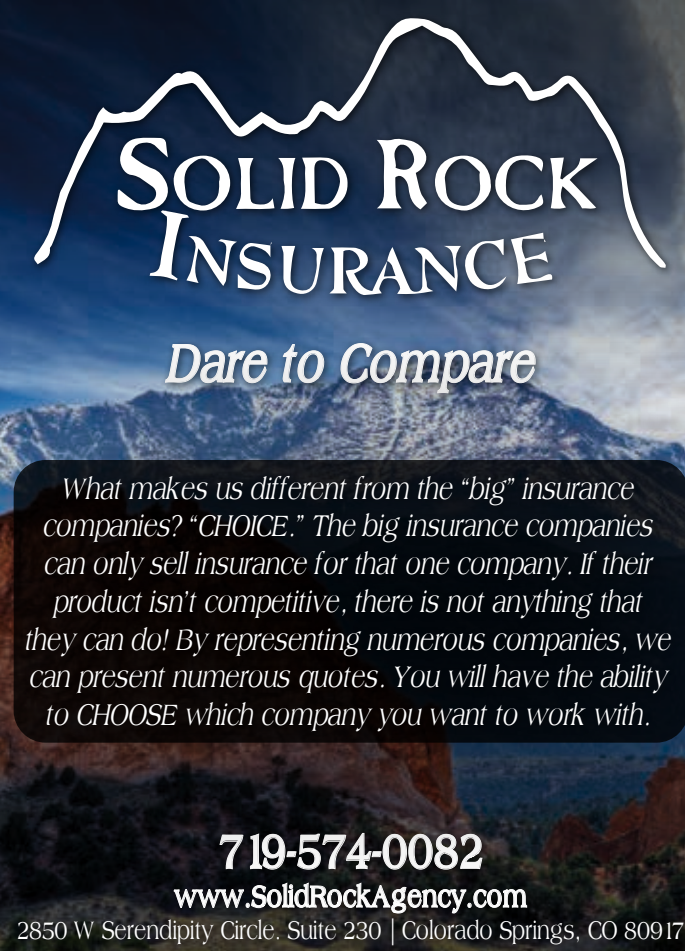


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N^{TE} Publisher's

It's that time of year again... gift giving, family traditions, lights, decorations AND 2018 business planning! December marks the end of 2017 and what a year it has been for just about all of you!

We wrap up our first year with Real Producers and want to **THANK YOU** for your support! The response has been overwhelming, as there really is nothing in the marketplace that caters to the elite Realtors! From sharing your personal stories to what makes one reach for the stars, this publication is unique and we hope you enjoy reading it as much as we enjoy publishing it.

As we close out the year, I want to thank all of you for your kind words and emails. I am always open to suggestions and ways we can continue to improve the magazine to best suit YOU. As most of you know, I select the stories based on recommendations from your peers and sales volume. Our service to all of you is always free and that's what really makes us different. As you read through the magazine, keep in mind all the partners we



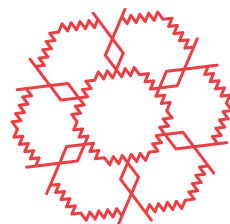
feature are vetted by us, for you, and come with multiple recommendations from your peers. Don't hesitate to contact any of our partners and let them know you read about them in the magazine! We only work with the BEST!

We held an event at **Lexus of Colorado Springs** in October and you can read all about it in this issue. Ed Baur, the General Manager, was a gracious host and I want to thank him for opening the dealership for the event. His staff was ready to serve all our needs and even gave us a chance to test drive the newest cars! Randy Jensen, the owner at **Broken Bones BBQ**, catered the food for our event and it was outstanding. We will be hosting another event with **Classic Homes** sometime in February 2018, so look for the invitation.

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Let's make 2018 the best yet!

Mark Van Duren
PUBLISHER
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Angela FUGATE



When I think back on my life and how I got here, I always think back to 4-year-old me looking at new homes for our family in Orlando, FL. I had a Polaroid camera around my neck and I was snapping photos of the model homes inside and out. I grabbed all their floor plans and studied them, drawing my own blueprints and sketched design ideas with all the features a 4-year-old needs. From a princess room for my cat, Jasmine, to a backyard with a softball field in it, my designs included all the normal stuff.

Fast forward to my high school years: My parents had divorced, my mom and I had moved back to her hometown of Cleona, PA (let's just call it Hershey - no one knows where Cleona is!) I was excited to say the least - who doesn't love chocolate? It was not an easy transition. My mom worked two and sometimes three jobs to make sure we had food on the table, I watched her work from sun up to sun-down every single day and that's where I get that drive and work ethic from. I was not an amazing student. In fact, I barely passed! I knew I wasn't going to college because honestly, I am a terribly slow reader. I joined the Air Force and really began to develop a passion to help those who serve.

My passion for taking old things and giving them a new lease on life really got off the ground after I finished my enlistment. I got my Real Estate license and bought my first home, an old farmhouse from 1904 with a wrap-around front porch. I renovated it top to bottom, learned a lot about electricity and horsehair plaster, and sold it.

I worked for Superior Homes in Lancaster, PA where we designed/built modular homes for families in NY, NJ, DE, PA, and MD and that's where I learned the ins and outs of custom construction. I met my now husband, Josh (also prior Air Force) who was living in Colorado Springs and I thought about it for about 2 months and decided "this is going to be my new home." Josh, an Arabic linguist, Intel analyst, and the smartest man I know, was working for a Department of Defense contractor. I got pregnant with our daughter, MacKenzie and a year later our son, Jackson.

While I was pregnant with Jackson, I started working for a company called New Home Star. They had just started helping builders find solutions by outsourcing their sales team and I was the first recruit. I worked for a few builders and basically ran out of homes to sell, so I ended up walking into builder offices with my friend Lisa Kilby and some huge Hershey's Chocolate bars. Sure enough, we opened the door for NHS to start negotiations with Challenger Homes.



That was when everything really changed in my life.

I started marketing outside the box and using social media, and I ended up with some amazing results that allowed both companies to grow. We helped hundreds of military families realize their dream of homeownership over the next few years at Challenger and afforded my family the freedom of allowing my husband to quit his job and stay home with the kids, complete his MBA, and build our first NEW HOME - of course it was a Challenger.

This prosperity also fueled my adrenaline junkie and fast car addiction, so if I have a few hours to myself you will likely find me at the racetrack or on a windy mountain road, grabbing some g's with some friends. I'm one of those people who is always looking for the next challenge or opportunity, so I made the leap into the mainstream real estate market and opened a brokerage. We named it after the two most important people in our lives - our children - and MacKenzie Jackson Real Estate was born.

We focused on outside-the-box social media marketing, taking the best care of clients, and doing things no one else would dream of doing. We are truly a family brokerage. Our team of Realtors are my family and that's evident from the second you set foot in our office. We all really love what we do and who we work with. Most of us have been military ourselves so it's only natural that we tend to attract a lot of amazing military and first responder clients.

When we aren't out showing, staging, remodeling, building and selling homes you can usually still find us together. Whether it's attending each other's children's sporting events and extracurriculars, racing go-karts, hitting the gun range, Sunday dinners, the bottom line is that we are family! Larry Knop, Jean-



nette Stevens, Wanda Wood, Jean Murray, James Sherrell, my husband and I are truly blessed to be able to serve the Colorado Springs community every single day and look forward to watching our city continue to grow and thrive for decades to come.

When it comes down to it, we are in the people business and taking care of people is what we do best! We now have Revolutionary Homes, where we use our construction background and design knowledge to help our buyer and seller clients renovate and help our investor clients. They can visit our design center and order all of the materials for their next project from the comfort of our office. We also offer home staging to take our listings to the next level. We just apply the same values I learned way back in the Air Force. Integrity first, service before self and excellence in all that you do. That's the secret to success.



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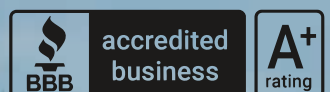
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▶▶ up-and-coming real estate agent

Ryan Moberly



I am a Colorado Native born at Memorial Hospital 32 years ago. It always makes me happy to brag about how my family migrated here. My grandpa on mother's side came to Colorado Springs with the Air Force and worked at Norad, and my father's family came when the town was starting to boom and my grandfather was in construction. Both families landed in the Widefield area in the same church. I love telling people that my grandpa was on the crew that built the Air Force Chapel, it shows a couple things who I am and how I got here, and the types of things that make me proud to be a Colorado Native and the imprints that my family have made in the Colorado Springs Community.

As a child growing up I loved spending time with my grandpa on my dad's side, he was always interested in investing whether that be in real estate or the stock market. The numbers always interested me, it's no wonder that now I still share the same interests and started my real estate career in 2010 by purchasing my very own investment. After graduating from Mesa Ridge High School in 2004 I did what all kids were told to do- and went to college. I received a full ride academic scholarship to CSU Pueblo, and quickly realized I had no clue what I was doing there let alone what I wanted to do, but I was heavily into skateboarding and loved filming and editing so I transferred back up to the Springs to study under the great Dick Chase and Sharon Hogg in

the amazing Telecommunications program. I graduated college magna cum laude with an Associates of Applied Science in Telecommunications in Radio and TV productions and landed the best job at KOAA 5/30.

My life quickly changed shortly before being hired at KOAA, because my first child Rylin Moberly was born in 2007. I was 21, so I had to grow up really fast. I was thankful to have a job, any job as a matter of fact, but I realized I needed a better paying job with benefits because having a child is expensive and I couldn't afford to chase my dreams in the TV industry, so I called Dennis Neal up- my most favorite supervisor. I had cut grass for him for seven



“ I swear if it wasn't for my wife and our love for Christ there is no way I could have finished school, I was so burnt out. After a year I finished school and passed the test and my career launched in the month of February 2016.

years part-time through high school and college, I'm sure causing some of his gray hairs. I landed a job as a night custodian at Janitell Junior High, and quickly moved up to a head custodian position at French Elementary for the next seven years, learning a lot of maintenance, quickly springing me into my future as an investor.

I was also doing part-time maintenance for my cousin, Scott Gray who owned and managed properties here in the Springs. He is a very wise man and a great mentor, not only did he teach me real estate, but shared the love of Christ with me as well. We bought my first piece of real estate at the age of 23, a 4 plex on a FHA 203k streamline loan written by Bryan Yaninek, the great.

After closing my father and I spent most if not all our free time fixing it up, and I am so grateful for his time and help because it was no easy task. We spent \$40,000 preparing it, Lord knows what that would have cost if I hired a general contractor. After the work was completed, my son and I moved into one of the units and rented out the other three.

During my time as an investor and working my 9-5 job I had no clue who I was in relationships and where I fit in, in this world. Being surprised with a child at 21, I was extremely confused on who I was, and what I believed in at this point. I was mad at a God I thought I knew and was confused and frustrated at where I was and how I got there. I had only been a successful individual my whole life up until this point. I was an eight-time letterman,

one of two freshmen who made the varsity soccer team and I wrestled varsity all four years of high school. Graduating high school with a 3.8, top 10% of my graduating class, I was also a pretty good skateboarder. I was sponsored by Northshore skate shop or on the flow team, we would say.

I was good at everything but never great at one thing, I was Mr. Popular. I did everything right, and nothing wrong was what I was thinking. I went up to a Christian retreat with my cousin Scott and dedicated my life to Christ after realizing the mess I had made of my life. The transformation was rough at first, but it prepared me to meet the love of my life, Jennifer. Some might say we moved too fast but I don't care because the Spirit was very clear that I was going to spend the rest of my life with this woman. Shortly after we met she was shipped off to basic training, further strengthen our relationship because I am a very emotional man, and the distance was hard for me.

After returning from basic we quickly got married and started our family. Monica Shea helped us purchase our first home together :) Monica also helped us sell our townhouse as well. Also Scott assisted us in the sale of the four-plex and we purchased an eight-plex on a 1031 exchange, during all the transfers of real estate, my wife gave birth to Wyatt Moberly in 2012 and Skyler Moberly in 2014.

After our family grew to 5 we realized our finances couldn't keep up, diapers, formula and doctor visits are very expensive! Jen-



nifer always believing in me and pushing me to become more in life urged me to pursue a different career than the job I had at the district. Which was really hard for me. I had 13 years put into my PERA retirement account and was stressed to leave the comfort of a steady paycheck, and benefits. I started studying for my real estate license, it was a no-brainer this is the route I had to go with the past and how many times we've refinanced, and transferred real estate, I had become efficient in the process. Monica Shea helped get me started and still is a huge motivating factor in my life because she is an amazing agent, and a good friend. I have to be honest I did not do well with the school, we had way too much going on with my 9-5, our investments, and three children. I swear if it wasn't for my wife and our love for Christ there is no way I could have finished school, I was so burnt out. After a year I finished school and passed the test and my career launched in the month of February 2016.

A month or so before graduating I met Jen Patterson. She was selling the home across the street. She convinced me to hang my license with Tom Lazzaro at Sellstate Alliance Realty. I am so thankful For Jenn because Tom's splits worked perfect for my situation, and trying to find my way into real estate full time was nearly impossible. I was surrounded by great agents Jenelle Meyers my managing broker, and Carrie Lukins was my mentor. While I was at Sellstate, I met Danny Cruz and we immediately hit it off, we are very like-minded, spiritually and pretty much everything and I am honored to call him my friend, this man is responsible for most of all my success. We studied me and my style and developed a business strategy that fit my style and personality. He is an amazing man, I am a very stubborn and hard headed individual, but he remains patient and actually cares about my business and helping grow it.

I have an extremely large sphere of influence here, but it was hard for me to work full-time and to put our plan into action. It was at the rookie seminar where the Lord showed me our next step. Tiffany and Brian Canady were the guest speakers. There they described how they took their leap of faith into their full-time real estate career. After the seminar, I immediately called my wife and said the Lord showed me what we have to do. So we built a plan of action similar to what I had learned from them. With faith in our Lord, I quit my job and our best source of income. It was the best decision we've made, it turns out I am pretty good at selling real estate. I transferred my license over to Re/Max Real Estate Group after meeting Bryan Vail and Dave Kearcher and realizing that I have the same mindset and business strategy as Remax.

I fit in really well with Remax and I do not see me working for any other brokerage unless I decide to start my own one day way in the future. I have closed 26 deals thus far, and my goal is to finish my first full-time year somewhere between 30-40 deals. It blows my mind to think Jesus has trusted me with this many clients transactions in my first full-time year, and I am very thankful for my clients, they are the best. A huge driving force of my business is the Homes for Heroes Program. With my wife's and my family background in the Military, my wife being in the army reserves, my family's and my background in the school district, and all my friends falling into these hero categories, I have become very passionate about the program.

Not only am I serving heroes here in Colorado but on a national scale with the H4H Foundation. Every time a Hero closes a deal with me they are also helping other heroes around the nation. It has been an honor working beside H4H this year, and being able to give back to my heroes. It has also provided me the opportunity to serve in the community. Besides my life story, I am also the youth pastor at our church, and I love teaching the love of Christ to the next generation. We landed in the best church where we do life together. We attend the Pleasant Valley Baptist Church on the west side of town. One month after attending we had Pastor Pat and his wife over for dinner. It was unlike anything we had ever been a part of. Studying under his teaching pushes me to my spiritual limits and makes me meditate on Gods word more than I ever had. I also have become really good friends with Theron Drake, he swims for the Para-Olympics and slaps the bass for our church. Hanging out with the paralympic swim team has become something we love to do as a family. I love coaching my boys in soccer and wrestling. I love snowboarding, it's my favorite thing to do. Rylin and Wyatt are both on shred sticks now, and hopefully, Skyler will be on skis this year. Last but not least, we are die-hard Denver Broncos fans. I am honored to be a resident in this lovely town of Colorado Springs, and am looking forward to what Jesus has in store for the next chapters of our lives.

The Gift of Safety



A Quick Primer for Realtors on “Staying Safe” in the Field First in a three-part series on personal safety.

San Antonio real estate agent Janice Tisdale ended up in a life-threatening situation when she agreed to meet a prospect and his banker at a \$750,000 house in a remote subdivision.

“Where’s your banker,” asked the Realtor when it was obvious that her client came alone. The client told her the banker couldn’t make it, Tisdale told the ABC News’ TV show *20/20*.

“*This felt weird; it didn’t feel right,*” revealed the Realtor.

Tisdale had shown this prospect several homes in recent months but she still felt uneasy around him. Still, they began touring the property. “I could feel the hair on my neck standing up...I felt really uncomfortable,” she said, “and at that point I told the client that we needed to leave and I started out the door”

Tisdale said that while reaching down to pick up the lock box from the porch, the client struck a blow to her head with a heavy object. The client had been carrying a “tire thumper” (truck drivers use the wood devices to check air pressure in their tires.) in his boot and was waiting for the right time to attack.

Amazingly, Tisdale was not knocked-out and managed to escape with a bleeding scalp. The client is now serving a 60 year prison sentence for aggravated assault.

Ask yourself how many times have you shown a property by yourself to a prospect you had just met or only knew for a short time? What did you really know about them?

Is there anything Janice Tisdale could have done to prevent what happened to her from happening?

18 • December 2017



Robert O'Brien



Nikki Carroll,
Training Director,
Range Manager,
Magnum Shooting Center

What did she do wrong?

Mark Beldon, a 21 year Army “medically retired” veteran and self-defense instructor who served in the Army Special Forces (Green Beret) and was awarded the Purple Heart and multiple Bronze Stars (for valor), says: **“The number one thing she should have done is go with her gut.”** She had a bad feeling and there’s a reason for that. That 6th sense has helped me in a lot of situations.”

Another basic safety tip Beldon mentioned is **she should have done a background check** on the client. We don’t know whether or not she did but Beldon thinks that should be “pro-forma” for a Realtor prior to spending time with a prospect.

Beldon added other items to his “safe showing” list:

- “The Realtor in the story above should never have shown her back

to the client”

- She could have told the client she expected other interested parties to stop by to look at the property.
- “It bothered me that she did feel uncomfortable with this client from the very beginning. I realize she wanted a commission, but was what happened worth it?”
- She should have let others know where she was going and who she was meeting and arranged to have them call while she was showing the house and also expect her to call her contact by a certain time.”

Drew White, who served with the Tenth Special Forces Group and the Special Forces Sniper group and who is now Founder/CEO of American Professional Home Inspection and is a self-defense instructor in Colorado Springs, emphasizes **“situation awareness”** as “step one” in practicing self-defense before you need to defend yourself from an attacker.



Drew White in his military days

“Don’t be a soft target, and that requires planning,” says White. When showing a property, White recommends:

- Turn on all lights
- Open windows (yes, even when it’s cold!)
- Leave front door open (see above)
- Walk *behind* the client (“that’s what cops do”)
- Create a personal-space perimeter that’s as large as possible. Beldon says that even if you are carrying a gun, “if a person is close enough, they can get to you before you can draw.”

White and his business partner are offering a **FREE** full eight-hour “Close Quarters Defensive Techniques” class in February for up to ten Realtors which he says is an \$800 per-person value. For more information on how to register for the class, call American Professional Home Inspection at 719-648-4098.

By the way, when asked which pistols White recommends to clients, he says there is only one; “the **Glock 19.**” One website’s description: “*The GLOCK 19 9mm Caliber Safe-Action Pistol* {“Safe Action” means Glock pistols are designed with three independent safety mechanisms to prevent



One of four state-of-the-art indoor shooting ranges at Magnum Shooting Center



A Sig Sauer .45

accidental discharge} *features a 15-round magazine. Measuring just 6.85” in length and weighing only 29.98 oz. when loaded, the compact design and light weight of this gun make it suitable for concealed carry”*

According to a 2012 article appearing in the Daily Real Estate News, “The number of assaults against real estate professionals is on the rise, with the nature of attacks becoming more violent and sometimes deadly.” The article goes on to say that in 2010 fatal injuries among real estate professionals reached the highest level since 2003, which included 63 fatalities. Additionally, “In 2010, 940 real estate and rental leasing professionals were victims of nonfatal assaults. That number has steadily risen over the last few years, up from 620 in 2009 and 170 in 2008.

Increasingly, real estate firms are taking personal safety very seriously, arranging for training by professionals in areas such as:

- Guns: Training in the safe use of a firearm and the selection of the right pistol for you
- Martial Arts
- Knives: How to use a knife for defense
- Mace, pepper spray and Taser training

To a person, the experts interviewed for the article emphasized the importance of not just training but **ongoing training.** What’s important, they emphasized, is gaining “muscle memory,” so that the person defending themselves in the event of an attack can react properly, automatically, based on the situation. Which brings up another key aspect of defending oneself, and that is **“situational awareness.”** Another way

to say it is a *good defense is to not put yourself in a situation where you need a good defense.*

Nikki Carroll, Training Director/Range Manager for Magnum Shooting Center in northeast Colorado Springs, says that for the beginner, training should come before the gun. “90% of accuracy is how comfortable the pistol feels in your hand,” points out Carroll. So, if a person does not already have a gun, they will use one provided by the training facility, along with the safety equipment which includes eye and ear protection.

Once a person has some training, then purchasing a handgun comes next. A pistol has to be something you actually will bring with you and not be something that is too heavy or too uncomfortable to handle. New pistols range in cost from a few hundred dollars up to many thousands of dollars but the average seems to be in the \$500 range.

Ms. Carroll has been training Realtors since before Magnum Shooting Center opened. Several large real estate companies in the Springs use Carroll’s training. As for the cost of training, it typically runs \$75 per person plus \$19 for gun rental. Discounts are available for larger groups and classes are scheduled taking into consideration the working hours typical for a Realtor’s schedule.

According to Carroll, “the five fundamentals involved in training for the safe and effective use of a firearm are:

- Aiming (“sight picture”)
- How to grip the weapon
- Trigger press/control
- Stance
- Breath control

- Full follow-through” (yes, that’s six but who’s counting?)

Classes are one thing, Carroll explains, but the rest is up to the student, and that means practice, practice, practice. “A person won’t want to practice if firing the gun is uncomfortable, which is why it is so important to fit the gun to the user; as I said, comfort in handling the pistol is the single most important aspect of accuracy when shooting.”

Ms. Carroll points out that besides carrying a pistol, having a sturdy flashlight is also essential. “People are using their phones as flashlights, but a phone cannot be used as a weapon, whereas a solid metal flashlight can be useful in defending oneself. “There are tactical flashlights with serrated-like rims around the lens of the flashlight and those can be used to strike a would-be attacker.

She is also a fan of carrying a knife either in addition to a gun or, if a per-

son feels uncomfortable using a pistol, as a primary defense tool. Carroll encourages individuals to take the Spontaneous Knife Defense (“SKD”), taught at Magnum by West Side Krav Maga.

Carroll began our conversation with the statement “Our goal here is to educate everybody in firearm safety.” At Magnum, with several state-of-the-art indoor shooting ranges, a large classroom and ongoing classes and training, plus signs and rules regarding safety throughout the facility, you get the very real sense that she and the folks at Magnum take safety and ongoing training very seriously.

It seems obvious to this reporter that as a Realtor you have a real responsibility to yourself to take “the safety thing” very seriously. Whether you choose a gun, martial arts, a knife, mace, Taser, pepper spray or a combination of these options, make a New Year’s resolution to add personal safety training and equipment to your professional Realtor tool kit. Then, as professional trainer Douglass Davis (Davis Training), says “It’s all about training, training, training and more training.”

Finally, why not give “The Gift of Safety” to that special someone...or to yourself this year? It certainly would be the gift that keeps on giving.



A knife can have a devastating effect on an attacker



A tactical flashlight has a special rim around the light lens which can disable an attacker when applied with force.

Please contact Real Producers @ rmobrienob@gmail.com if you have a story you can share about encountering a dangerous situation in your role as a Realtor. You can remain anonymous if you wish.

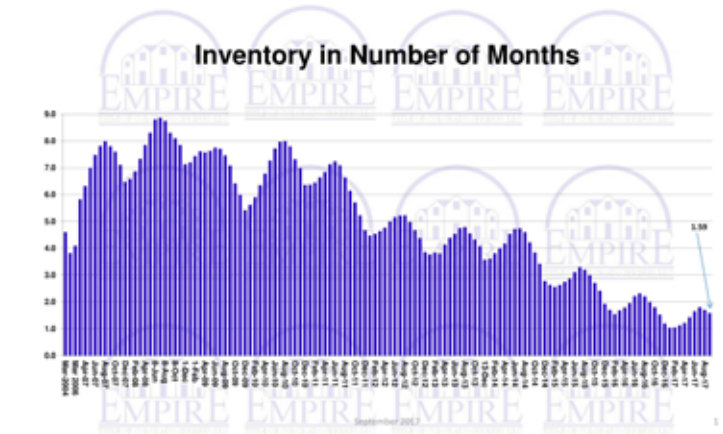
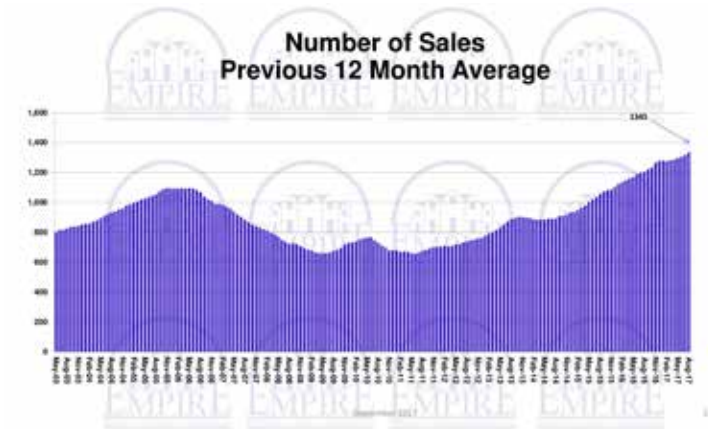
How Long Will It Continue?



By Bill McAfee, President – Empire Title of Colorado Springs, LLC

One question I always get is “how long will this market continue.” If any of us knew the exact answer to that question, we would be wealthy beyond our wildest imagination. Some may have more insight than others or have access to better data, but there are some underlying factors in our market that give it a strong probability of continuing in the same direction at least for the foreseeable future. One must always throw in the caveat of something unforeseeable, however. Economic uncertainty in smaller countries can have an effect on our entire world economy. Unstable governments might attempt to cause harm to the US and others. Weather-related disasters can cause disruption in our economy. Interest rates may rise, but that appears unlikely in the near term. Inventory levels are at 1.59 months in our Multiple Listing System (MLS).

(See slide number one)




Inventory Levels are based on demand and supply. I won’t bore you with the gory details, but this formula is a great leading indicator and predictor of our market. Four to six months would be normal in our MLS. If the months of inventory is less than four to six months, that will translate into a strong seller’s market with high mobile demand. Keep in mind that markets can vary in price ranges, location and condition. Two factors make up the inventory calculation: 1) number of homes sold over the last 12 months; and, 2) how many homes are there available to sell. The pace at which homes are selling on a 12-month running average is 1,345. This is the most homes sold in over 20 years. (See slide number two) The number of homes available for sale on a 12-month running average is 1,850. We have not seen a number this low in over 20 years. (See slide number three) Take these two factors together in addition to the interest rates, job market, and a beautiful place to live: we may have a market that is likely to stick around for a while.

Long-term interest rates are tied to the 10-year government bond a note. Experts in the near-term are not expecting much increase. Our local job market is steady and the military definitely has a massive impact on our economy. It does not appear that there will be any cutbacks in the military, and the cybersecurity component of our market continues to expand. Colorado Springs is a beautiful place to live, especially if you like the outdoor life. Denver and Castle Rock are affecting our market like never before. Due to the prices of homes and low energy prices, many people are choosing to make the commute from Colorado Springs to Denver. Denver’s job market is stimulating and driving our housing market. How long will this continue to last? Based on the factors I have just described to you, this is likely to continue for at least a little while. If I knew the exact answer, I would not be writing this article right now. I would be sitting in a cabana somewhere enjoying a cool adult beverage, or at least a nice frosty lemonade with a little umbrella sticking out of the ice.

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



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its high density of Ponderosa Pine. It has an average elevation of 7,369 ft. It is popular for its “black squirrels” commonly known as the Abert squirrel. It is also home to mule deer, elk, chipmunks, voles, black bear, bobcats, badgers, coyotes, foxes, and porcupines, and turkeys.

What is the history of Black Forest?

Arrowheads and charcoal pits indicate that Native Americans occupied the area at least 800 years ago. The first known occupants were the Ute and Comanche Indians who used the dense Ponderosa to provide them with protection, fuel, and timber. The Kiowa appeared around 1800. Then the Arapahoe and Cheyenne joined forces to drive the others out in the 1840s. They were last Native Americans to inhabit the area. Settlers began to occupy the region in the late 1850s and Black Forest became a center of activity because of its lumber.

General Palmer was the first major landowner where he purchased 43,000

acres and opened up sawmills. It is said that nearly every foot of lumber used in Denver was taken from these mills and that more than one billion board feet provided the ties for the Kansas Pacific, Denver, and Rio Grande Railroads. The milling reached its height in 1870 when over 700 teamsters and 1,000 lumberjacks were employed for railway work.

Ranching and farming also became significant during this time with the raising of cattle and sheep and the growing of alfalfa, corn, hay, potatoes, and beans. However, the farming was difficult with the unpredictable weather, grasshoppers, hail, blizzards, and floods. The Drought of the 1920’s and the Great Depression of the 1930’s stopped most of the farming in the area. Black Forest becomes the “summer” home market once the smaller farmers left, the larger ranches consolidated, some of which are still intact today. Others sold their least profitable land which happened to be exactly what most homeowners want: they sold off their treed property because it didn’t offer optimal grazing. During the 40’s and 50’s, summer cabins were erected on the “unusable” ranch land and by the 60’s, more and more people lived “year round”. Today, Black Forest is a rural community which consists of lots subdivided into 2.5, 5, and 35-acre parcels, resides in four school districts, and maintains its country living image.

Where is Black Forest?

Black Forest is located approximately 5 miles northeast of Colorado Springs. It encompasses 200,000 acres (127.6 sq miles) that is, per the realtor maps, bordered to the north by Douglas and Elbert County Roads, to the west of Highway 83 (excluding certain subdivisions), to the south by Woodmen Road, and to the east by Elbert Road. It is the home to around 13,000 people and known for



JILL MCFERON'S BLACK FOREST

Jill McFeron



•••

The Black Forest Fire and its aftermath:

In the fire of the summer of 2013, approximately 15,500 acres burned, 511 buildings lost and two lives perished. Over 35,500 people were evacuated in Black Forest, Elbert, and Douglas Counties. It remains the most destructive fire in Colorado history. With that said, the area has rebounded marvelously with rebuilding and tree clean up. The burned lots have recovered some of their value but are not as expensive as the untouched, treed acreage. The ravaged lots' location is key, because of the proximity of the fire, these lots are still valuable because they lie so close to the city and now have amazing Front Range views. Why do they leave dead trees on otherwise cleared lots?

These are called snags and are critical to some of the wildlife. These snags provide housing for small animals and birds. Some birds, such as the brown creeper will only nest and reproduce in a snag. These birds spiral up the dead tree looking for insects and spiders which are their favorite food.

Other birds in Black Forest are the stellar blue jay, red-shafted flickers, western tanager, nuthatches, eagles, and hawks.

Fun Facts about Black Forest:

Only about 1/3 of the Black Forest is actually treed.

We are home to haunted houses. In fact, Black Forest is supposedly one of the most haunted places in World.

Not everyone is "locked and loaded" but probably most!

There are two stories on how the forest's name was derived:
1) Indians named it after seeing it from afar, as it looks like a black shadow over the land or


2) the Germans settlers named it after their beloved "Black Forest"

We are a perfect mix of hippies, yuppies, bicyclists, and horsemen.

If you have any questions over anything "Black Forest", please reach out as I would love to share my 25 years of knowledge.

Warm regards.

Jill McFeron has been the premiere Black Forest realtor since 1998 with having sold over 500 Black Forest Properties. She is the "go to" agent for appraisers, developers, lawyers, and lenders alike who are working on properties located in this area.

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Real Estate (r)Evolution

By **Danny Cruz** – North American Title



It goes without saying that technology is changing the way real estate agents are marketing their business and interacting with their clients. However, a disruption in the industry only achievable through recent advancements is threatening to change the way buyers and sellers transact altogether. The emergence of companies like OpenDoor and OfferPad have undoubtedly inspired larger players like Zillow and Redfin to join the bandwagon. Many industry professionals have now been familiarized with Zillow Instant Offers which allows potential sellers to receive a “cash offer” on their home and close on the day of their choosing. Redfin Now and the others have very similar models. The bottom line with these new online alternatives is this: sellers now have the ability to sell their homes without having to stage, prep, photograph, and inspect their home, nor do they have to encounter the uncertainty of whether or not the buyer on the other side is going to walk away or delay closing. What is the cost? Most programs will range anywhere from 6-10%. Not surprisingly, there is a flood of questions erupting from the industry. How do they determine value? What about title and other closing costs? Is there any negotiation involved? And, more importantly, where does the real estate agent fit into this picture? All of these questions and more are addressed at each of these individual companies’ websites. But the one question the industry should really be asking is this: how should agents be changing their business models to adapt?

Regardless of whether or not the industry approves, the hard fact that agents must face is that these alternatives are rising because a demand for a different kind of experience, some would even argue a better experience, exists. Going

through the specifics of what each of these online real estate transactions offers to the consumer, it is easy to pick out the “problems” that they are aiming to solve. They all promote a hassle-free, stress-free, and easy transaction that gives control back to the buyer and seller. Flippers and investors have actively worked business in this manner for decades, but with technology advancing as rapidly as it is, more and more sellers are considering alternatives that could potentially net them a little less with the promise of convenience. Is it not all that different from how every other industry is evolving? Of course, advancements like these almost always come with turbulence, but the end result is being achieved. Thus, as agents look at the next ten years, the wise will pay attention to these disruptors and take a lesson. They will adapt and streamline processes. They will listen to the pains more closely than the paycheck. Ultimately, they will thrive when their colleagues who scoffed end up closing shop. This discussion is one that many agents aren’t too keen on having; after all, the reality of yet another alternative to buying and selling real estate with an agent can be a bit unnerving. Here is the good news: these major tech disruptors are not in Colorado... yet. However, with the national recognition Colorado Springs has been receiving, undoubtedly there are targets on this market. Thus, while there is no need to panic, it would be in the industry’s best interest to begin preparing for their arrival.

The Fast(er) Agent

One of the key values of these so-called iBuyers is the speed and convenience with which consumers can navigate their way through a traditionally burdensome and stressful process. This is where agents have the greatest opportunity to demonstrate their value to today’s consumer. Through effective internal systems and processes built upon technology and a solid team of partners, agents truly can offer an “Amazon Prime” type of experience from the time they receive a lead to post-closing follow-up. It should be easy for prospects to discover a quality agent, for clients to get a hold of their team through the contract phase, and for buyers to remember their agent when it comes time to sell. Yet, so often they get lost in the chaos and mess of communication only to arrive at the closing table with a feeling of uncertainty as they push blue ink to a thick stack of legal documents, never to work with

that agent again. The time is now to improve upon the customer experience through technology.

The Smart(er) Agent

Undoubtedly, the number one factor in any given transaction that leads to future repeat and referral business is trust. Any successful, seasoned agent can attest to the fact that trust is what causes a client to buy or sell again, send their closest friends and family members, and refer their neighbors. No matter how technology changes, consumers in general will always depend on a trusted advisor to get them to the closing table. So what can agents do that a tech company can’t to gain trust? Know the local market better than the competition. Know how to negotiate and advise consumers as to what is in their best interest. Know how to consult and comfort as their clients go through one of the most significant purchases a consumer can make. The bottom line is this: don’t pretend to be a trusted advisor, truly be one.

The Loud(er) Agent

Now for the real challenge: how do agents communicate their value in such a noisy world? It goes without saying that there are many false and sometimes outright insulting misconceptions about the real estate industry. True, there are some who taint the image of real estate agents in the eyes of the public, but fortunately, there are many more who continue to provide their clients incredible service time and time again. It is this group of agents that buyers and sellers are looking for. But the game has changed in recent years. While referrals are (and will continue to be) a leading source for how great agents get exposure, the rise of technology has impacted the means by which agents receive referrals and new busi-

ness. For many seeking out an agent, research has shown that their search is beginning online. Meanwhile, few real estate professionals have adopted a marketing strategy that caters to today’s consumer.

Shiny objects and slick new platforms tend to draw all the attention when it comes to agents revamping their marketing, while sometimes completely bypassing the message they are portraying. The information age has given consumers nearly everything that agents once guarded. Providing access to available homes on the market isn’t a benefit anymore, a thousand other platforms have that covered. Homeowners can see what their neighbor’s home sold for and discover their home value from sites using algorithms and public data. Not to mention the abundance of staging, remodeling, prepping, and other pre-list tips easily discoverable online. But even with this mass of data available, only the expertise of an agent can truly make sense of all the noise. With so many real estate agents marketing

the same content that everyone else is, it is no wonder consumers are left overwhelmed. At Inman Connect San Francisco 2017, there was a lot of talk about storytelling and content marketing that takes traditional concepts and paints them in a way that people actually care. Take a neighborhood report, for instance. Beyond the stats, there are real people, businesses, and happenings to be celebrated. Rather than restricting testimonials to two sentences on Zillow, perhaps a brief video would communicate a client’s satisfaction more effectively. Even more importantly, agents can communicate the “why” behind their business to their prospective audience in a way that wasn’t possible 10 years ago. For the agent that seizes the opportunity to tell a story and produce truly meaningful content, their voice will be heard.

(re)Focus and Respond

What all of this amounts to is this: now that major tech players have shaken up the industry and changed the game for the average agent, the end could be near for those that do not adapt their business models. For those that are unfamiliar with current marketing outlets, intimidated by new technology, or downright hate social media, it is much easier to stick with the “tried and true” familiar tactics. However, doing so sabotages future business. The discussion of all the new ways to begin adapting is a broad topic, one that

warrants whole separate article, but the key is to simply begin. For some agents, that will mean finally taking the leap into leveraging social media channels to generate leads, nurture leads, and provide great value for their clients. For others, the next step is to take a fresh look at an outdated CRM that is barely more than a spreadsheet and mass email distribution software. Now that new robust CRM’s can automate processes, manage transactions, and learn about leads before human conversation ever begins, many man hours can be reallocated to more pressing matters. Perhaps for the busy teams and partnerships that are bogged down with busywork, it is time to explore software products that will connect existing systems and solutions in such a way that the business truly feels like a well-oiled machine. Regardless of where an agent may be in their journey, there is room for technology to complement and enhance their business so that when all is said and done, buyers and sellers still choose human.

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BRIARGATE

Jason Daniels

Briargate is a wonderful master planned community located on the North end of Colorado Springs that is still growing today after 30 years. Briargate's current population is approximately 45,000 consisting of nearly 16,000 homes. With a household median annual income of \$86,300 Briargate ranks in the top three neighborhoods in the Colorado Springs area. With amazing views of Pikes Peak and the front range, award winning Academy District 20 schools, plenty of dining and recreation opportunities, and a real sense of community it is a great place to work and live.

The general Briargate area with over 9,600 acres is defined as the area North of Woodmen Road, East of I-25, South of Old Ranch Road, and West of Black Forest Road. With easy access to I-25 residents are only 15 to 20 minutes South to Downtown Colorado Springs and only about 45 minutes to an hour North to Denver.

Real estate is moving quickly in the Briargate area with low inventory issues. Sales prices and rents are up. Through mid-October the average sales price for single-family houses was \$375,000 with average of 45 days on the market. With approximately 247 single an active listings in the Briargate area and about 81 homes selling

per month this year there is about a three month supply. Homes are selling at a pretty healthy clip under \$500k while homes over \$500k+ are taking longer to sell. More home buyers are coming down from Denver due to the extreme housing shortage in the Denver area causing price to rise. Prices in the Briargate area have increased almost 10 percent in just the past twelve months. More buyers are willing now to commute back and forth from Briargate to Denver. More real estate investors are purchasing homes in the Briargate area as they are having difficulty finding properties that will cash flow properly in the Denver Metro area. Rents are also up considerably. The average monthly rent for a single-family home in the Briargate area is \$1,900.

We are still seeing plenty of new construction in Briargate in Cumbre Vista, Wolf Ranch, and Cordera communities. Three builders are currently building in Cumbre Vista, Ten builders in Wolf Ranch, and six builders in Cordera. There are also a few custom lots available in Pine Creek. You can still find a few new construction single family homes under \$400k in Cumbre Vista while new homes in the other neighborhoods are \$400k+. Pine Creek, Cordera, and Wolf Ranch are still the three most sought-after neighborhoods in the Briargate area.

Briargate is located within Academy School District 20. Education is important to the community and active parent involvement

plays a critical role in the current success of each school. Voters recently approved issue 3A in November 2016 appropriating \$230 million to fund infrastructure for new growth as well as updating existing schools. Currently there are ten elementary schools, six middle schools, and five high schools all in the Briargate area. District 20 headquarters are located right in the heart of Briargate on Chapel Hills Blvd. Overall District 20 maintains some of the highest rating and test scores in the Colorado Springs area and is noted as one of the top districts in the State of Colorado.

Not only is Briargate home to some of the top schools it's also home to several of the newest and top Hospitals in the city. Both UC Health Memorial Hospital North and Penrose St. Francis Medical Center service the area. UC Health is located near Pine Creek while Penrose St. Francis is borders the Briargate area to the South. There is a new full-service Children's Hospital under construction next to Memorial North Hospital. The new Children's Hospital is expected to be open in late 2018. This new facility will be operated by UC Health and will service the entire Southern Colorado Community. The recent affiliation with UC Health and new hospitals has attracted some of the top doctors in the United States. Briargate real estate will most likely continue to appreciate and hold its value with more doctors and medical staff moving into the Briargate and surround areas and



many large chain restaurants as well as a good mix of locally owned and unique restaurants such as the Till Kitchen, Salsa Brava, Back East Bar & Grill, Kuru Japanese Restaurant, and many more. Lulu's is a great family owned frozen yogurt shop located in the center of the Briar Village Shopping Center. Many of the restaurants are located in The Promenade Shops at Briargate and also surrounding the Chapel Hills Mall.

Whether you like shopping in an indoor mall or outdoor mall, Briargate has you covered. The Promenade Shops at Briargate is a newer upscale shopping experience with 50 stores and restaurants with household names such as Apple, Banana Republic, Eddie Bauer, Pottery Barn, Williams-Sonoma, and more. If you prefer the indoor shopping experience the Chapel Hills Mall offers the big mall feel with over 1 million square feet and 122 stores and restaurants including large anchor stores such as Dillard's Macy's, and Sears. You can also catch a flick at the newly built AMC Theatres with 13 screens and stadium seating.

Colorado Springs is home to many non-profit organizations including Focus on the Family in Briargate. Many don't know that Focus on the Family has a free tour, a welcome center with a gift shop and bookstore, the G. Harvey Art Gallery, a coffee shop, Kids' Korner play area with a three-story slide, birthday party rooms, and Whit's End Soda Shop.

Well known national companies such as USSA, Checks Unlimited, and T-mobile all have large campuses in the Briargate area. Many of the Briargate residents are honorably serving in the military either with the United States Air Force or United States Army. With five military installations there are thousands of active and retired military living in Briargate. The United States Air Force Academy borders Briargate to the West and offers additional trails for hiking and biking. From small business to large corporations to the Military the residents are diverse and from all over the country. Many employees and military personnel who relocate to Colorado Springs for work decide to stay for retirement. Bonaventure located in Cordera is one of the newest and largest senior living communities.

From birth to retirement and in between, Briargate offers a diverse, well educated, and community-centered environment to live and play. With plenty of room to grow Briargate will continue to be a preferred destination for those moving to the Colorado Springs area. Growth within Colorado Springs and the Denver Metro area will fuel the overall growth for the next decade and a bright future for Briargate.

Jason is the Broker/Owner of RE/MAX Millennium and team leader of Jason Daniels & Associates located at 9362 Grand Cordera Pkwy Suite 100 in the Cordera neighborhood. As a Colorado Springs native, he has lived with his family in the Briargate area for nearly a decade. With 15 years of real estate experience he and his team specialize in real estate sales in the Briargate and surrounding areas on the North end of Colorado Springs.

purchasing homes. The public is a clear winner as both hospitals compete with each other to provide the best quality care.

Library 21C is also a crown jewel of Briargate. Touted as the library of the future when it opened it was the first of its kind anywhere in the nation. Library 21C is a cutting-edge library that has embraced the future of online information sharing as well as the traditional media of books, audio resources, and video resources. The library promotes the arts and technology by teaching patrons on all levels of multi-media including video production, audio production, video game development and more. There is a 3D printer, multiple computer labs, and a small business resource center. Conference rooms are available to the public for educational purposes, business meetings, and community events. There is even a 400 seat venue for performing arts, presentations and large meetings.

When it's time to head into the outdoors Briargate offers many neighborhood parks and miles of trails for biking, walking, and jogging. John Venezia Community Park just opened this summer with a splash park, large synthetic turf field for organized sports, several playgrounds, picnic pavilions, inline hockey rink, basketball courts, and pickleball courts. Even dogs can get into the outdoor scene at Rampart Park with their very own dog park. Rampart Park also offers the only public BMX tracks in Colorado Springs. Those searching for an indoor fitness facility will find the local Briargate YMCA, Lifetime Fitness, Golds Gym, 24 Hour fitness, and many other gyms in the area. Residents looking to tee it up will find Pine Creek Golf Club one of the best 18 hole championship courses in the city designed by Richard Phelps.

After working up an appetite there are plenty of restaurants and watering holes to enjoy in the Briargate area. The area offers

BEV CRESWELL

If you just listen to advertisements on the TV, radio or the Internet, you may be lead to believe that all the home loans are the same, and advice or service don't matter. However, focusing only on the lowest rate or fees for a loan might not be in your best interest. In fact, it could be a big mistake. Considering this is likely your largest asset and debt, the unfortunate truth is getting smart advice, and delivery along with it, is critical. It is important to understand that not everyone's mortgage situation is the same. While you may feel that your particular financial and credit situation are "nearly perfect", the reality is it still may be more difficult than you think to get a home loan. Moreover, with the proper advice on all the loan aspects, you could save more than just shopping for the lowest rate.



mortgage require you to have both, but it varies by the loan program and your situation.

Income is also another main requirement to consider. However, when it comes to the mortgage qualifications, not all income is considered the same. Your reported income to the IRS is not the only thing considered. Your job and income history, unreimbursed expenses and other outstanding loans or debts are major factors when deciding what income may be allowed. While computers will help analyze certain aspects of your income, working with an experienced mortgage professional will help work through the "gray" areas of your tax return (income) so you get the most for your qualification. There may be a clear difference between what you are willing to pay each month and what you are qualified for from your mortgage company.

Finally, and lastly, we get to the property. While most people would think this is the easiest to consider, they could not be more wrong. Many potential buyers do not realize there are other homes

To understand more, there are fundamentally four key aspects to obtaining a mortgage: credit, cash, income and the property. Credit refers to not only your credit score, but also your credit history. A borrower may have an approval credit score but the history may disallow them or certainly raise their rate. Often this may be due to incorrect reporting from the creditors including unbeknownst judgments, erroneous or delinquent accounts. Regardless of the reason, a good loan officer can work with you to optimize your correct credit score and history, which is one of the major aspects that could influence your mortgage rate.

Cash is required not only for down payment, but for "reserves" that are required on most loans. This is where "loan structure" become important. For example, loan structure may refer (in part) to the amount you have for down payment and the corresponding amount you should have for reserves (or a rainy day funds). This amount will affect your mortgage but it will also help you plan for those unforeseen events. Today's rules for approving a



that they could consider. For example, renovation loans can be a smart choice when buying a fixer-upper home to turn into the home of your dreams. Borrowers think they cannot afford a remodel so they opt for a move-in-ready perfect house when a renovation loan presents options with little to no money out-of-pocket.

While the Internet lender or realtor may seem easier and less expensive, working with a professional who has significant experience and insights in all aspects of home finance, is a much smarter, and safer, choice. Nothing can replace a problem-solver who knows the mortgage guidelines upside down, inside out and sideways.

Top producer and an expert with Renovation, VA and FHA loans, Bev Creswell, is currently with the Home Finance Partners group at Envoy Mortgage. Throughout her 35-year mortgage career in Colorado, Bev has worked in nearly every capacity in the mortgage business but her passion is consulting with her partners and clients as a loan originator. "Bev is one of the smartest loan originators that I have ever had the privilege of working with. The level of professionalism, preparation and knowledge that she possesses is one of the best in the industry, especially for VA, FHA, renovation loans and first-time home buyers." said Scott Newman, the Area Manager for Envoy Mortgage. From the beginning of her loan originator career, Bev has helped over 3,000 clients finance their homes. As

a validation of that, Bev is a certified VA expert, a certified Renovation Loan expert and a certified instructor by the State of Colorado to provide continued education credits to Realtors for VA and Renovation loans. Now how is that for experience?

Because of Bev's knowledge and loan delivery process, homebuyers tap her knowledge to explain the process and help them get the best home of their dreams. The VA clients utilize her experience to understand their eligibility, explore all their loan options including a zero down payment loan. Regardless of the client or loan type, Bev works with each borrower, on an individual basis, to make sure they get a competitive rate and have the best possible loan structure. She realizes the importance of their loan so communication is paramount. Additionally, by being part of the Home Finance Partners group with Envoy Mortgage, she offers a loan guarantee to help take the worry out of the loan process. Obtaining a mortgage can be stressful enough so it is great to see someone help relieve that with her experience and delivery guarantee to back it up.

For years, real estate agents and builders alike have entrusted Bev with their best clients because she gets the job done! Her team stays in constant communication with the clients and buyers and listing agents to ensure a smooth transaction. With her experience and strong reviews, you need to call her to see why so many trust her with this significant event in their lives.



“Regardless of the client or loan type, Bev works with each borrower, on an individual basis, to make sure they get a competitive rate and have the best possible loan structure.”



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Cindy Linder

Fountain, Colorado

Welcome to Fountain Valley!

The friendly, affordable community just minutes from Colorado Springs.

The Fountain Valley area encompasses, Security, Widefield and Fountain, Colorado. Settled in late 1850's by pioneers that farmed and ranched along Fountain Creek. Today it's home to over 10,000 households. Fort Carson and its rich military history are the centerpiece of this popular area.

Fort Carson, established in 1942 after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, was named in honor of the legendary army scout General Christopher "Kit" Carson. Over 14,000 troops are currently stationed at The Mountain Post.

Fountain Valley is served by 2 school districts: Widefield District 3 and Fountain Fort Carson District 8. With 9600+ students, Widefield District 3 is the largest in the area. Fountain Fort Carson District 8 is just behind with 8000+ students.

Approximately half of all families in the area have children under the age of 18.

Homes come in all shapes and sizes in Fountain Valley. Ranging from that modest starter home in the low \$100,000's to a custom home, or new construction up to \$500,000. The average sales price is \$245,000 as of October 2017. Fountain Valley has recorded more homes sales year to date than any other MLS area, according to Pikes Peak Association of Realtors, with over 2200 transactions closed.

There are several great neighborhoods if you're looking for new construction by recognized builders. New home starts slowed during the recession, but demand has surged in recent years and the new home market is once again healthy. Fountain Valley also typically has remodeled or fix and flip properties available. If it's an older home with newer appointments your Buyer is looking for, you'll probably have a few updated properties from which to choose.

A strong community feel is present in Fountain Valley. Years ago, I was working with a client who had installed new sod in the front yard of a house he was remodeling. An unplanned surgery took him away from his project. I went to the property to water the new sod. The next door neighbor inquired as to my client's whereabouts. I explained. He stated he knew something was up, and had been watering the grass to keep it alive. This kind of story is typical of the area. I've experienced neighbors helping neighbors time and time again. The pace is a bit slower, and the views are postcard pretty.

Craft Fairs and neighborhood parades are not lost on Fountain Valley. There are frequent events throughout the year that the entire community enjoys. The Fountain Valley Nature Center is open for tours and school trips so all can learn more about the local "oasis on the plains" wetlands wildlife area habitat.

Opportunity abounds as a great place to call home in the Fountain Valley area. Whether it be as a newcomer to Colorado, a first time home buyer, or a move up buyer looking for a slower pace, consider Fountain Valley for your clients.



"Craft Fairs and neighborhood parades are not lost on Fountain Valley. There are frequent events throughout the year that the entire community enjoys."

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To Stage or *Not* To Stage for the **HOLIDAYS**



Robert O'Brien

A Little "How-To" Guidance

You have a home on the market in November and it needs some staging, or it is already staged and it might be on the market through Christmas, Chanukah and other cultural celebrations taking place November/December. Do you simply ignore the holidays and leave well-enough alone? Or, do you decide to go with the dominant Christmas theme or perhaps simply an autumn theme? Maybe you decide to take a multi-cultural approach and do a little of each of the major holiday celebrations taking place in December?

Realtor and former home-stager Sheryl VanDuren says the key to any good marketing photo is "no clutter."

VanDuren's key piece of advice about a home staging basic is "give every room a purpose." That would also mean a focus and a plan of action with the emphasis on simplicity and "no clutter."

As for the holidays, she says that since few prospects will see the home at night, stay away from outdoor holiday lighting. It goes without saying that no one wants to see an inflated snowman or anything else in the same category of "pink flamingos" on the lawn of a home for sale.

Sheryl notes that staging is typically created to appeal to the target market and that goes for any staging for the holidays. Also, if you've already paid to have a home staged and are paying monthly to keep it staged, you don't want to add much to the budget for that. VanDuren favors simplicity and elegance. She notes cost can vary tremendously,

from a simple consult (\$150 for two hours, as an example), up to over \$2000 for a full-furniture staging for an empty house and then a monthly fee, say \$750. Since staging eats-into profits, adding holiday "touches" should be kept to a minimum.

Long-time Sellstate Alliance Realty agent and Realtor teacher/trainer AnnaMarie Mudd says the goal is to make a home "open and inviting." She says that keeping any holiday decorations "neutral" is her preference. For instance, using poinsettias, which offer a holiday "feel" without making much of a cultural statement. "If a client is living in the house, encourage the occupants to "go light" while the house is on the market. It's their home, so I make the suggestions and they can, of course, do what they want." She adds that marketing photos should be taken *before* any holiday decorating, so it is easy to switch back to a non-holiday theme after the holidays for web-based marketing. AnnaMarie emphasizes that marketing photos should definitely be updated right after the holidays, so that it does not appear that the "house has been on the market



Anna Marie Mudd



Sheryl Van Duren

since the holidays."

Jennifer Miller, owner of home staging company Perfectly Placed Home Staging and Redesign also says that "de-cluttering" is a primary goal of her staging if the home is lived-in. As for the holidays, she suggests neutral decorations such as using pine boughs and objects with holiday colors. She adds that this year her company is offering a three-hour \$99 holiday decorating or staging consult package. "Decorating is helping the homeowner decorate for the holidays for their own purposes whereas staging is, naturally, for a home on the market."

HGTV's Kara Wahlgren suggests eight tips (abridged by *Real Producers*) or "Staging Tips for Selling During the Holidays:"

Clean and stage. "Before you decorate, your house needs to be staged," advises Amy Powers, owner of Accent Home Staging & Interiors of Atlanta. Create a cozy vibe. The less-is-more mantra of home staging may tempt you to forgo

holiday cheer this year. But a few subtle touches like a bowl of pinecones, an evergreen wreath, or a pot of cider simmering on the stove can create a warm and festive feeling in your home.

Complement your palette. Make sure your holiday collection matches your current decor. If your living room is painted a soothing ocean-blue hue, skip the clashing red garland and opt for white snowflakes or a silver glass-ball wreath.

Accentuate the positive. Too many trimmings may distract buyers, but the right accessories can draw attention to your home's best features.

Go light on lights. Use simple string lighting to play up your home's architecture or draw attention to the gorgeous fir tree in your front yard.

Be an equal-opportunity decorator. A nutcracker isn't going to offend anyone.

Mind the tree. Trim the tree in a cohesive theme such as icicle lights and silver tinsel, for example, or blue and gold glass balls.

Clear the clutter. A few decorations can stir the holiday spirit. Limit yourself to a few hints of holiday flair,

So, whether you do it yourself or hire a staging company, you have options for the holidays based on your price point and target market. The consensus seems to be "go ahead and decorate for the holidays." You can go elegant, fun, cozy, family; but there seems to be agreement on simplicity and neutrality. Candles, poinsettias, wood, ribbon, bowls of ornaments...you get the idea. Best advice for after the holidays? *Update your marketing photos immediately after January 1st!*

Wassail anyone?



Lexus of Colorado Springs

MONDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2017

Photos by **Tara Patty**
Photography Catering by **Broken Bones BBQ**

TARA · C · PATTY
PHOTOGRAPHY

Ed Baur, the General Manager of **Lexus of Colorado Springs** hosted our Real Producers Event on Monday, October 16. Who doesn't like a good meal, fabulous cars and meeting new people?

We scheduled the event at Lexus for the 4th quarter as it's a great time to start thinking about a new car for tax reasons and... just because Lexus is a great car for all your real estate needs!

We had a fantastic turnout and provided a fully catered meal from **Broken Bones BBQ**. Randy Jenson, the owner, is a partner in our magazine and just opened a new location off North Gate by the Flying Horse Community! Give **Broken Bones BBQ** a visit, you will be happy you did!

These events are a perfect opportunity to socialize and connect with peers and our business partners. Making connections in real estate is what it's all about and we enjoy hosting these events at exciting locations!

The events are always free and honestly worth your time to attend. Not only is food and drink provided, but we have a drawing at the end. Just about everyone goes home with a nice gift.

Please watch for our next event, planned for February 2018. Details will be available in the January edition.

If you are in the market for a new or gently used car...give Ed Baur and his crew a call at **Lexus of Colorado Springs** - (719) 639-2671

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Video Marketing for Real Estate Agents

Provided by **Fidelity National Title Company**

It probably comes as no surprise that 90% of homebuyers are conducting their home search online. What is surprising, however, is homebuyers typically spend three weeks researching properties online before contacting an agent, and 85 percent of buyers and sellers prefer to work with an agent who uses video. Video has essentially become the new way to get your foot in door with potential clients.

The popularity of videos has grown exponentially, due in part to the release of Facebook Live and Instagram Stories, and the steady rise of content marketing. Why are videos so popular when it comes to marketing? From a marketer's perspective they deliver a huge ROI (Return on Investment). According to Hubspot, adding the word "video" to an email's subject line boosts the open rate by 19%, increases clicks rates by 65%, and reduces unsubscribes by 26%. From a real estate agent's perspective, homes listed with video get four times the inquiries of homes listed without video. When used properly and effectively, videos can help grow your brand, raise your search rankings, generate leads, and grow your network of social followers.

Some of you may have thought about video marketing but paused because you were unsure where and how to get started, or because you do not want to reallocate your marketing budget to another channel, and/or simply do not have the time. These are all understandable reasons, but the reality is, video is only going to become a more indispensable part of real estate marketing and marketing in general. By the end of 2017, 74% of all internet traffic will have been video.

To this end, we are happy to announce we have partnered with REALTihub, an award-winning video production company that specializes in producing stunning, affordable videos for the real estate industry. Stop by our booth- Booth 3 at the Colorado Association of REALTORS (CAR) Conference for more information and to schedule your video shoot. If you will not be attending the CAR Conference please contact your Sales Representative to learn more!

Keep reading for four types of videos every real estate agent needs to add to their marketing arsenal.

When it comes to video, the possibilities are endless, but here are 4 tried and tested videos for real estate agents looking to grow their pipeline with video. Remember when making your videos to be consistent. Whether you prefer a more polished or less-scripted format, establish a style that is your own. Stay true to your brand and play to your strengths. When ready, post your videos to your Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube pages. Be sure to also include them in your email drip campaigns and monthly newsletters. Make scheduling video content part of your monthly marketing planning and know that it takes time and effort to build a steady group of followers.

1. **About Me** - If you are new to the scene, an "About Me" video can be a powerful way to connect with viewers and start building trust with buyers early on. Your "About Me" video should be a short friendly introductory video explaining who you are, how you got into real estate, your successes, what makes you unique, and what you love about being an agent.
2. **First Time Buyer and Seller Tips** - One way to attract potential buyers and sellers is to become a trusted source for insider information. Establish your brand and demonstrate your expertise by sharing tips on what to look for in a home, how to negotiate prices in a hot market, what features to emphasize to attract buyers, staging before and afters, and what to look for in agent. Your video does not need to be overly produced, it just needs to be informative and genuine. Jessica Edwards, an agent based in Wilmington, NC has built an impressive YouTube following by regularly streaming live videos taped in her car.
3. **Listing Videos** - Listing videos should be the go-to video marketing content of all agents. People love looking at homes regardless of it is in person or online. Videos are an engaging way to show off a new property and attract new leads. When creating your listing video, touch upon what makes the property unique or particularly appealing. Keep your video interesting by adding a combination of video clips, still photos, voice narration, and music.
4. **Community/Neighborhood Videos** - Another great way to attract new leads is to share videos featuring popular and up-and-coming neighborhoods. Give home buyers a glimpse of their potential new community. Help them visualize what it would be like to live there by featuring favorite local businesses, restaurants, and landmarks. Share a few talking points about why the neighborhood is special and market trends for the area. The goal is to demonstrate your local knowledge expertise and to connect viewers with your brand.

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TOP PRODUCERS STANDINGS

Individual Agents Information is self-provided, and current as of 11-13-2017

To learn how you can get your stats onto this page, please contact: Mark.VanDuren@N2pub.com

Rank	Name	Office	List Side	Sold Side	Total Sides	\$ Volume List Side	\$ Volume Sold Side	Total \$ Volume
1	Mark Ewell	Turner Associates LLC	168	0	168	\$50,334,720	\$0	\$50,334,720
2	Terry Naber	RE/MAX Properties, Inc						\$43,554,740
3	Kevin Patterson	The Patterson Group	48	18	66	\$30,644,050	\$9,756,630	\$40,400,680
4	Dean Weissman	The Platinum Group, Realtors	33	22	55	\$19,665,450	\$9,062,800	\$28,728,250
5	Nathan Johnson	Remax Real Estate Group	22	63	85	\$4,836,550	\$15,718,195	\$20,554,745
6	Mike Kenney	Kenney and Company						\$18,052,273
7	Taryn Simental	RE/MAX Properties	9	50	59	\$2,715,750	\$14,563,600	\$17,279,350
8	Dave Sanders	Re/Max Real Estate Group	35	25	60	\$7,179,950	\$8,091,186	\$16,491,090
9	Mercie Curbow	Century 21 Curbow Realty	31	26	57	\$9,090,525	\$7,258,533	\$16,349,058
10	Dan Egan	Keller Williams Clients Choice Realty	23	22	45	\$8,360,100	\$7,739,596	\$16,099,696
11	Derek Wagner	Keller Williams Realty Success	25	25	50	\$8,589,200	\$7,505,390	\$16,094,590
12	Monica Shea	The Platinum Group	21	30	51	\$7,102,200	\$8,907,355	\$16,009,555
13	Michelle Fisher	RE/MAX Properties, Inc.	36	17	53	\$10,055,500	\$5,689,100	\$15,744,600
14	Jodi Bohenna	Keller Williams Clients' Choice	29	20	49	\$8,878,200	\$6,444,637	\$15,322,837
15	Mark Salas	Best Realty, Inc.	24	45	69	\$4,985,725	\$10,101,264	\$15,086,989
16	Linda Lafferty	The Platinum Group Realtors	14	20	34	\$5,337,903	\$8,608,783	\$13,946,686
17	Mike Rosenhahn	Great Colorado Homes	15	29	44	\$4,416,000	\$9,223,552	\$13,639,552
18	Cindy Linder	RE/MAX Advantage Realty, Inc.	32	19	\$51	\$7,696,612	\$5,673,672	\$13,370,284
19	Kim Klapac	Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage	23	22	\$45	\$6,263,900	\$6,661,236	\$12,925,136
20	Trish Ingels	Berkshire Hathaway Rocky Mountain	11	11	22	\$5,863,490	\$6,659,755	\$12,523,245
21	Craig McConnell	Avalar Real Estate	32	13	45	\$8,723,500	\$3,742,500	\$12,466,000
22	Bill Hourigan	The Platinum Group, Realtors	19	13	32	\$6,810,050	\$5,621,503	\$12,431,553
23	Rob Henderson	ERA Shields Real Estate	24	13	37	\$7,697,000	\$4,503,000	\$12,200,000
24	Leighanne Potts	RE/MAX Properties	15	28	43	\$3,219,000	\$8,650,613	\$11,869,613
25	Jamie Krakofsky	Remax Real Estate Group	13	31	44	\$3,817,200	\$7,940,600	\$11,757,800
26	Cherise Selley	Selley Group Real Estate, LLC	14	15	29	\$5,140,600	\$6,310,621	\$11,451,221
27	Russ Winther	Weichert, Realtors-PikesPeakGroup	15	27	42	\$3,914,250	\$7,230,400	\$11,144,650
28	Kathy Loidolt	Flying Horse Realty	17	10	27	\$6,389,525	\$4,745,000	\$11,134,525
29	Pam Palone	RE/MAX Properties, Inc.	21	22	43	\$4,917,995	\$5,943,110	\$10,861,105
30	Craig Rogers	The Platinum Group	8	16	24	\$2,652,000	\$8,025,250	\$10,677,250
31	Blake Barcus	Bold Street Properties			18	\$5,121,551		\$10,243,100
32	Dana Williams	RE/MAX Advantage Realty, Inc.	14	18	\$32	\$4,168,500	\$5,839,711	\$10,008,211
33	Maggie Easton	RE/MAX Properties, Inc.	11	13	\$24	\$3,987,400	\$5,913,750	\$9,901,150
34	Lisa Robinson	RE/MAX Advantage Realty, Inc.	19	18	\$37	\$4,787,625	\$5,110,339	\$9,897,964

Rank	Name	Office	List Side	Sold Side	Total Sides	\$ Volume List Side	\$ Volume Sold Side	Total \$ Volume
35	Ashley Wilson	RE/MAX Properties, Inc.	19	12	31	\$6,145,000	\$3,666,249	\$9,811,249
36	Ann Heiring	RE/MAX Advantage Realty, Inc.	11	18	\$29	\$3,571,800	\$6,192,395	\$9,764,195
37	Lauren Stadjuhar	RE/MAX Properties, Inc	9	9	18	\$5,400,500	\$4,246,389	\$9,646,889
38	Sumer Liebold	8z Real Estate	11	15	26	\$4,129,500	\$5,381,828	\$9,511,328
39	Angela Fugate	MacKenzie-Jackson Real Estate	10	27	37	\$2,526,000	\$6,809,505	\$9,335,505
40	Meri Burgess	The Cutting Edge, Realtors	21	23	44	\$5,641,900	\$4,326,149	\$9,258,149
41	Chris Clark	Pikes Peak Homes and Land	22	11	33	\$6,743,700	\$2,197,000	\$8,910,700
42	Dan Donivan	RE/MAX Advantage Realty, Inc.	21	7	\$28	\$6,687,200	\$2,088,866	\$8,776,066
43	Cheryle Burgess	RE/MAX Advantage Realty, Inc.	15	11	\$26	\$4,988,200	\$3,379,362	\$8,367,562
44	Rachel Buller	Rachel Buller - Manitou Springs Real Estate, LLC	19	6	25	\$5,797,616	\$1,905,500	\$7,703,116
45	Sherry Landwehr	ERA Shields	8	13	21	\$3,607,860	\$3,924,660	\$7,532,520
46	Cheri Lesiak	Keller Williams Partners	16	17	33	\$3,540,100	\$4,060,700	\$7,504,750
47	Marnie Terry	RE/MAX Advantage Realty, inc.	11	6	\$17	\$5,029,400	\$2,322,500	\$7,351,900
48	Brett Weldon	The Springs Team Real Estate Company	11	14	25	\$2,977,000	\$4,176,600	\$7,153,600
49	Pamela Weatherford	Keller Williams Clients Choice	11	9	20	\$3,191,300	\$3,888,043	\$7,080,788
50	Ken Reynolds	Coldwell Banker	8	12	20	\$2,275,039	\$4,732,085	\$7,007,124

Disclaimer: Realtor stats are provided directly from each realtor and are in no way associated with MLS or the Pikes Peak Association of Realtors, If you would like your numbers to be considered for the standings page, please ensure you email forward them to Mark Van Duren at Mark.vanduren@n2pub.com



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TOP TEAM STANDINGS

Stats information is self provided and current through 11-13-2017

Rank	Name	List Side	Sold Side	Total Sides	\$ Volume List Side	\$ Volume Sold Side	Total \$ Volume
1	Monica Breckenridge and The Pink Team	212	170	382	\$48,684,778	\$60,201,713	\$108,886,491
2	Nathan Johnson Team			223			\$55,364,043
3	Brian Maecker	106	54	160	\$30,536,608	\$17,469,881	\$48,006,489
4	The Wheaton Team	63	34	97	\$31,743,850	\$14,866,967	\$46,832,211
5	The Kibler Group	74.7	100	174.7	\$19,131,850	\$23,921,799	\$43,053,649
6	Cole Underwood	46	45	91	\$15,126,703	\$16,686,215	\$31,812,918
7	Shawn Keehn-Dave BrownTeam	74	51	125	\$16,090,571	\$14,564,341	\$30,654,912
8	The Roshek Group	40	60	100	\$13,213,075	\$15,151,833	\$28,364,908
9	Jason Daniels & Associates	37	55	92	\$10,600,700	\$16,638,571	\$27,239,271
10	Darrell Wass Team	38	36	74	\$13,819,400	\$12,201,475	\$26,020,875
11	The Bobbi Price Team	57	29	86	\$18,396,940	\$7,401,939	\$25,798,879
12	The Sanders Team	33	56	89	\$8,847,400	\$16,712,706	\$25,560,106
13	Becky Gloriod Partners	22	21	43	\$13,902,730	\$10,781,135	\$24,683,865
14	Jerry Clark	44	31	75	\$12,634,200	\$10,723,691	\$23,357,891
15	Chris Schaller	32	44	76	\$8,657,300	\$11,558,189	\$20,215,489

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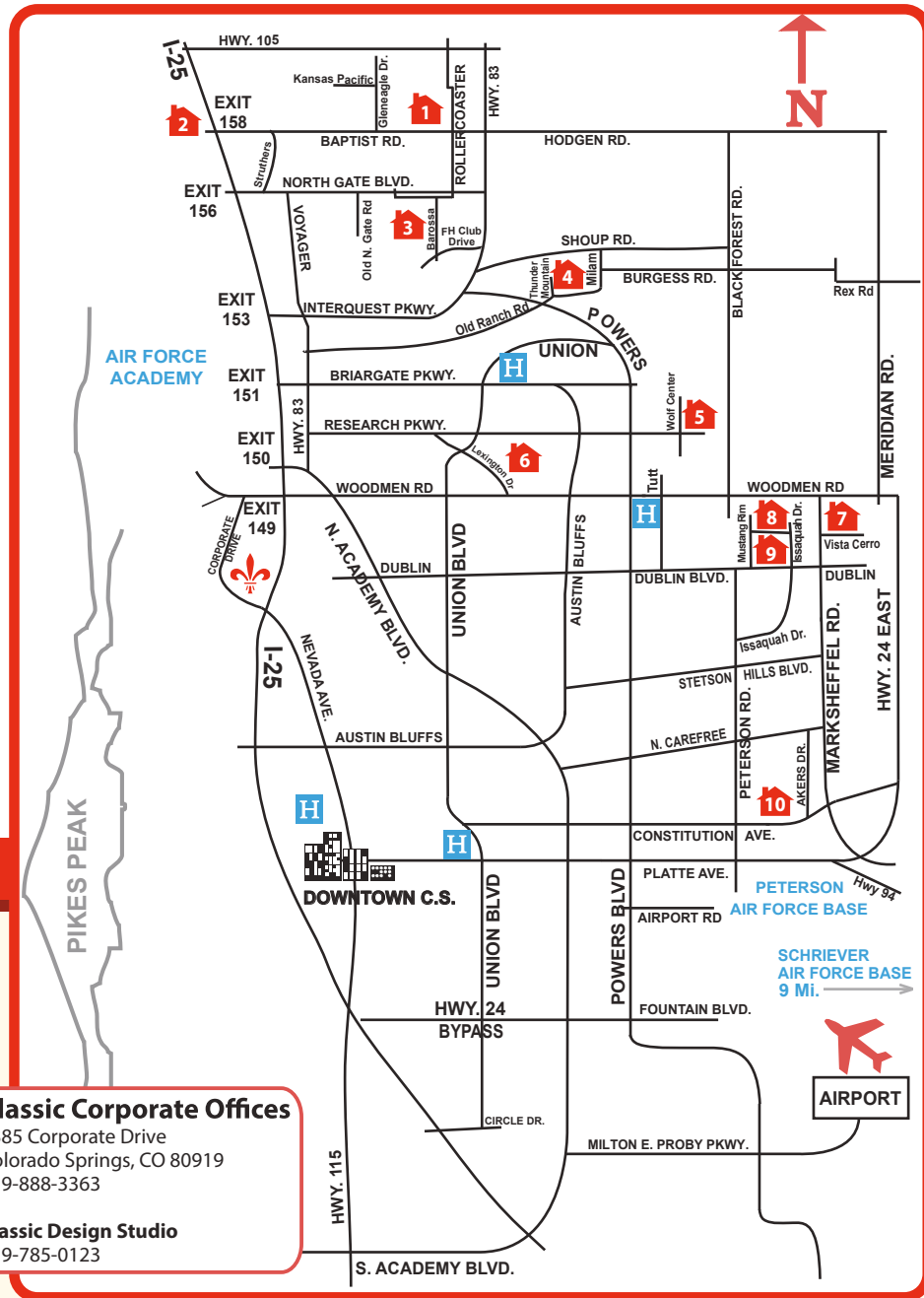
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