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LIFE AS A HIGH-END REALTOR

Following the strategies of Realtors Rupert and Karen Irby as they try to make their mark in the upscale market in Naples.
BY JUSTIN PAPROCKI

"There's opportunity here—you just have to see it. Put a little money into it—well, the Naples version of 'a little money'—and this could sell quickly."



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Personalized in the truest sense of the word, the spaces in which Sheryl Bleustein creates are vividly original and flawlessly reflect the passions, pursuits and lifestyles of her clients. "I never do anything twice," asserts Bleustein. "Every project is a new canvas where I can turn each client's unique dream into a reality." With an obsession for detail, Bleustein-created interiors are infused with custom crafted luxuries, such as electric cabinets and drawers for a gourmet chef; a sumptuous vanity that opens up as jewelry storage; and an extravagant closet for a watch collector. An industry icon for more than 30 years, Bleustein's innate sense of proportion, eye for exquisite details and finishes, and relentless quest for perfection has earned her a position as one of the most sought-after interior decorators in South Florida and commissions for discerning clients worldwide. "I love, love what I do," enthuses Bleustein. "I will do anything and everything for my client." Delivering luxury residential interior design services to an elite clientele, from celebrities to CEOs, Bleustein places great importance on attentive, one-on-one service of the highest quality, believing the process is as critical as the result: "It is my goal to achieve a beautiful home that is as luxurious to live in as it is to look at; and I want this to be an enjoyable journey for my client," she says.



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*– Jack and Judy Remondi
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If you are interested in contributing or nominating REALTORS® for certain stories, please email us at Andrew.Regenhard@realproducersmag.com

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Bill Earls and his wife Sonia helped us celebrate at our Launch Party on October 7, 2020.

Dear SWFL Real Producers and Partners,

We sure have a lot to be thankful for this year. With the pandemic, it's made me and everyone, I think, really reflect on what we're grateful for: our loved ones, our health, our livelihoods. I am also very grateful for the fantastic members of the *SWFL Real Producers* community! It's such a privilege to curate Realtor®-centric content for you all and to bring this exciting publication to our area. I love meeting all of you and having an opportunity to share the stories of some of our top-producing rockstars in the industry. You are an inspiration! And I love meeting and working with our wonderful industry partners who make this whole thing possible. Thank you all!

We have something else to be thankful for this month: on October 7, we were fortunate to be able to FINALLY pull off our magazine's big Launch Party — something that had been planned for early in 2020, but got put on an *extremely* long hold. What is it they say? Better late than never...and good things come to those who wait!

An amazing time was had by all at our fantastic listing property in Livingston Woods. Thank you to Cintron Custom Homes for providing this terrific location as a venue for us to gather. We had great food, drinks, music, laughter, and exciting raffles and giveaways, including donations to charitable organizations. Thank you all for coming and making this the event we'd hoped it would be!

I want to especially thank our wonderful partners who sponsored the Launch Party — Platinum Sponsor: VidClose; Gold

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Check out the photos from the Launch Party on pages 22 to 27. Thanks again to all who came and all who made it possible and memorable. We look forward to seeing you soon at our next event!

Once again, thank you all, and I hope you and your families enjoy a happy Thanksgiving!

Very respectfully,

Andrew Regenhard
Owner/Publisher
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INFLUENCE

INVESTMENTS

By
Shauna
Osborne

Amidst the turmoil of a devastating pandemic, Pentagon-released UFO videos, and treacherous murder hornets this year, it's been easier to forget that 2020 is an election year. By the time this article is published, our country will likely have elected our next leaders, the impact of which will disseminate to policy, foreign relations, the economy, and beyond. Based on some 90 years of market data analysis, studies have identified patterns that recur during election cycles, confirming that they have a significant bearing on the markets.

The *presidential election cycle* is a theory based on the market and economic conditions historically prevalent during certain years of a U.S. president's term. Developed by a stock market historian, this model is used, among other factors, by some investors to predict stock performance during election cycles.

Timing.

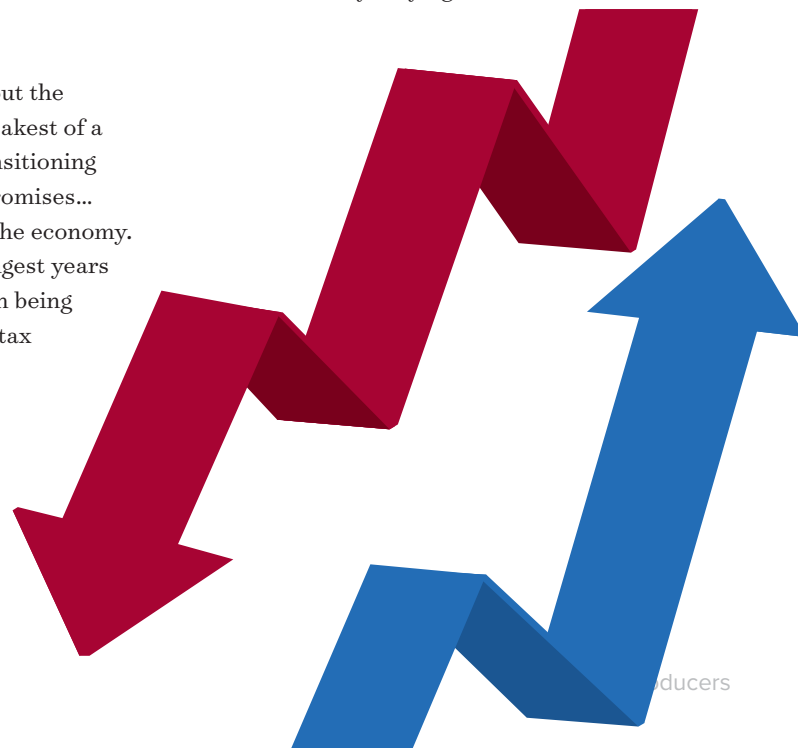
Generally, the stock market ebbs and flows throughout the presidential tenure. The first year tends to be the weakest of a president's term, as the spotlight is generally on transitioning out of campaign mode and into fulfilling campaign promises... likely, social welfare and tax law issues rather than the economy. Historically, years three and four comprise the strongest years for the market, as leadership begins to focus again on being elected and, thus, strengthening the economy; more tax cuts and job-creation activity occur then, as well.

Party.

While many voters have strong opinions on party, the stock market — and your portfolio — remains ambivalent. Which party is in power seems to have no bearing on stock holdings, with Democratic leadership showing only the slightest gain in

the Dow — about 9% annually versus 6% for Republicans. When party *does* make a difference is when leadership changes hands: stock market returns are nearly 2% higher when the same party or president retains control of the White House.

Curiously, the stock market has shown an astounding ability to predict our country's next leading party. If the market is up in the three months prior to the election, expect a win for the incumbent, but if it's down, prepare for new leadership; this pattern has held in 86% of the U.S.'s 22 national elections. As we all know, though, 2020 has been anything but typical, so from where I sit as I write this in late August, this election is anybody's guess!



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There is no question the Internet is the perfect way to search for real estate. Instead of looking through pages of jumbled pictures of homes, many without prices, now you simply enter where you want to live, amenities, how much you want to spend and voilà, there they all are.

You can see multiple photos, probably even a video or a virtual walk-through, you can google (oops, did I say Google) its exact location, check out the neighbors and the school system, all while enjoying a latte in your living room. We all get it. It's amazing

that the latest figures show that 95% of buyers use the Internet when searching for a home. It's hard to believe it's not 100%. And the web companies know this and charge a lot to allow you access to these buyers. But is investing a lot of money to attract buyer leads the best marketing strategy for your business?

Remember, most high-income producers spend their money developing the listing side of their business. Having more listings means more signs, more open houses, more 'Just Listed' mailers, and you got it ... more Internet leads.

Now more than ever, because of the Internet, the agent who controls the listings controls the buyers. Without spending anything on SEO rankings, getting 'likes' on Facebook, Zillow referrals, or exposure on thousands of individual IDX sites – listings make them all FREE.

Not long ago, Gary Keller of Keller Williams fame, interviewed Kristian Peter, a top-producing agent in the KW network. She said, "Right now, we've got about 110 listings, so we generate an awful lot of buyer calls and web leads that come directly from our website and third-party sites." She continued, "On a monthly basis, we get about 2,000."

Where's the magic? The Internet or the listings? Did you notice Kristian didn't say anything about paying to generate all this traffic? She's getting 2,000 calls by virtue of her listings! Get the listings and you'll get the calls.

There are a lot of ways to turn your business to the seller side and list more. One of the surest methods is targeting a select area, regularly contacting everyone in that area with something they look forward to receiving, and branding yourself as the leading Realtor® in that area. It's called farming ... real estate's version of target marketing.

Once you establish yourself as the number one agent to 1,000, 2,000, 3,000 or more homeowners, you will get more seller calls, more referrals, participate in double-sided commissions, and maximize your Internet leads.

By Tony Spano, a real estate marketer who works with REALTORS® to grow their businesses.



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SWFL REAL PRODUCERS LAUNCH PARTY

OCTOBER 7, 2020

Our big Launch Party on October 7th was a huge success! Thank you to all our Real Producers and industry partners who came out to Livingston Woods to help us celebrate! We were excited about the amazing turnout and opportunity to bring everyone together.

A big thank you to Cintron Custom Homes for lending us their beautiful, new, luxury property for the party. The location couldn't have been better! Shout out to our fabulous caterer, Carolina Catering Company. And most of all, thank you to our wonderful sponsors. We couldn't have done it without you!

If you missed this event, we hope you can join us for our next one!

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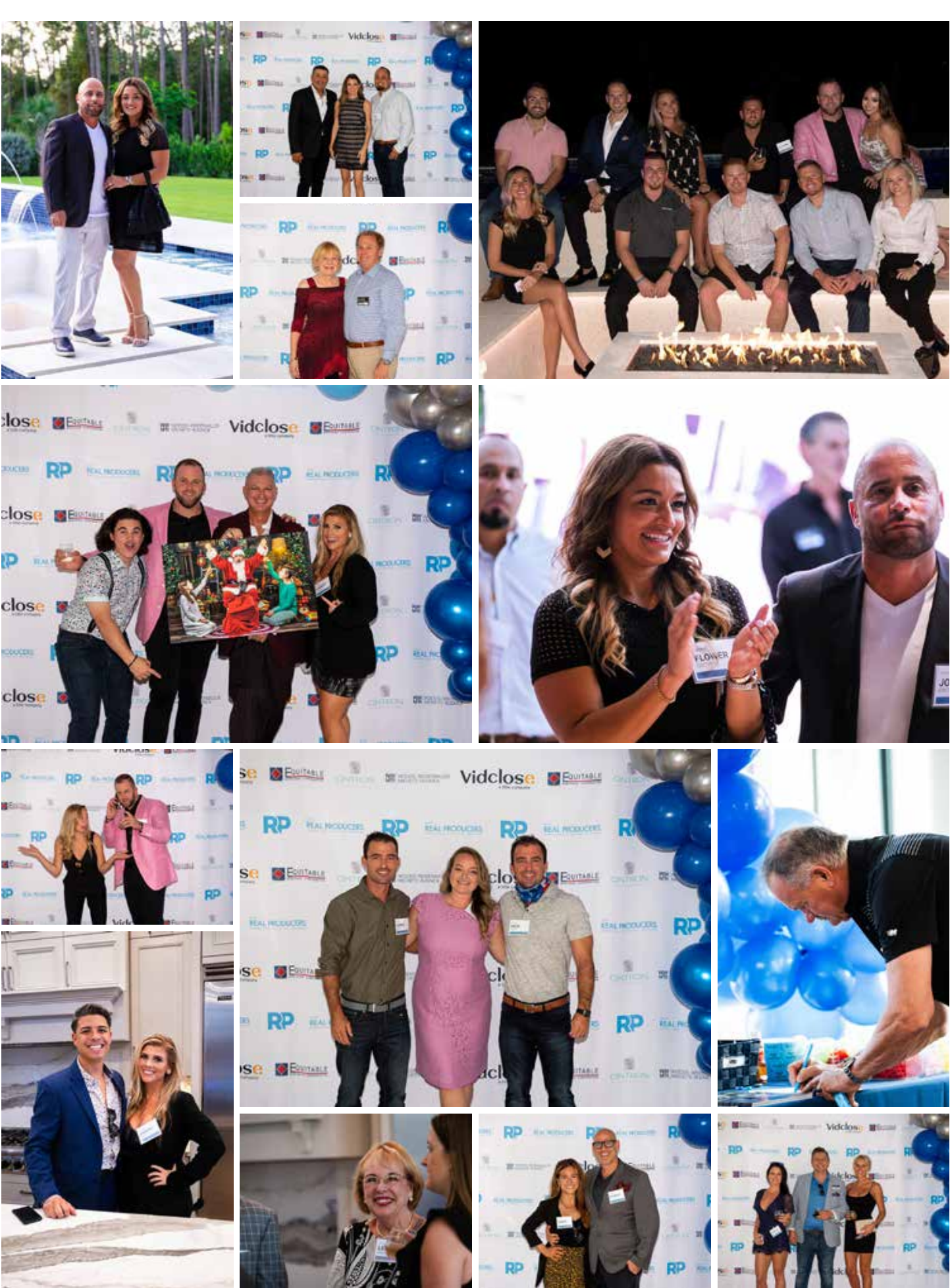
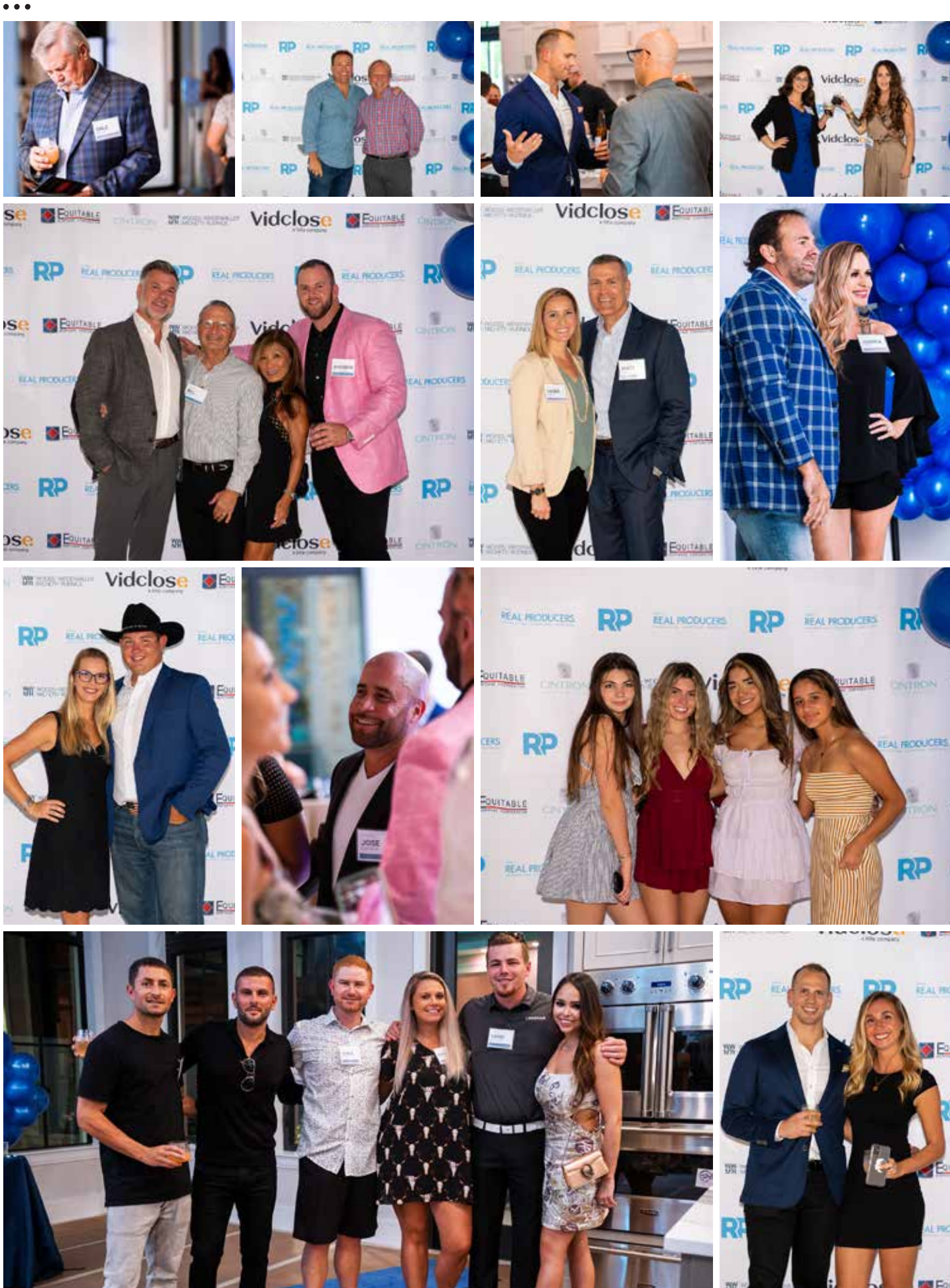
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ERIC & TYLER MANRING

► featured
agents
By Lindsey Wells

Carrying On a Real Estate Legacy

While Tyler and Eric Manring have worked in real estate for 17 years, their familiarity with homes and the housing market stretches back to their childhood. As the sons of a successful Naples real estate agent named Thomas Manring, their father's passion for the industry became their own. As Realtors® with Compass Real Estate, the mission of the Manring Brothers is much bigger than merely selling houses; they are dedicated to the satisfaction of their clients and making the community a better place, in honor of their father's legacy.

...



Tyler Manring (Photo by Mary Beth Koeth).



Eric Manring (Photo by Mary Beth Koeth).



Photo by LaCasaTour

• • •

Eric was in Connecticut, working as a tennis professional when Tyler dove head-first into the real estate industry after college in 2003. “I was working my butt off teaching tennis, and my little brother, who had just graduated from college, was making twice as much money as me and working half as much,” Eric says, laughing. He promptly stopped teaching and joined his brother in real estate. Both Tyler and Eric followed their father’s lead, and soon realized the different sets of skills they brought to the table worked very well together.

Perhaps the success of the Manring Brothers team can, in part, be attributed to the deep roots the Manring family has in Naples. Tyler and Eric moved to Naples in 1986. One of the things that separate them in the local market is their network of professionals and knowledge of the area. This enables them to offer their clients much more than just help in buying or selling real estate.

“Since we have grown up here, we can give referrals to our clients for just about anything, whether it be flooring or electric, because we personally know someone that does just about anything,” Tyler says. “We help them from the beginning to the end, past closing and beyond. We really try to collaborate with our clients throughout the entire process.”

“There is literally not one neighborhood that we don’t know,” Eric adds. “If you were to say a road name, I typically know where it is or what neighborhood it is. When you’re buying in Naples, you’re not just buying a house; you’re buying a lifestyle and the amenities that come with it. You have to know the communities inside and out. We help guide people so it’s the right fit for them and their family.”

When their father passed away in 2012, Tyler and Eric started the Tom Manring Foundation in his memory. Thomas Manring was much more than just a real estate agent. Before

getting into real estate, he was an educator. He also loved tennis and spent 30 years as a tennis professional. They combined their father’s love for tennis and education to create an annual fundraising weekend to raise money for student-athletes and donate money in the form of scholarships to students at Florida Gulf Coast University. To date, they have raised \$100,000 since the foundation’s inception. Their next fundraising event is set for January 29th to 30th, 2021. For more information, check out www.tommanringfoundation.org.

Between the two of them, Tyler and Eric have eight children. Tyler and his wife, Lindsey, and their five kids live in the neighborhood where the Manring brothers grew up. “That was the neighborhood where we used to run the streets and grow up as kids, and I always wanted to find a house back in that neighborhood,” Tyler says. Eric and his wife, Lita, have three kids, and their youngest is keeping them busy. “She’s talking up a storm, I tell you,” Eric says, laughing. “And now, we can actually understand her!”

• • •



Eric and Tyler inherited a love of tennis from their Realtor father, Thomas Manring, who spent 30 years as a tennis pro.

“When you’re buying in Naples, you’re not just buying a house; you’re buying a lifestyle and the amenities that come with it. You have to know the communities inside and out. We help guide people so it’s the right fit for them and their family.”

...

When asked what they hope to be remembered for, Tyler and Eric answered almost in unison: “Treating people the right way.”

“We want to be remembered for the good things, and I think that’s part of the reason we started the Tom Manring Foundation, to create a legacy. It’s something we can leave behind and say, ‘Look at the good I’ve done. I didn’t just talk about it, and I didn’t just do things for myself; I actually went out there and gave back to all the amazing people that have given to us,’” Tyler says. “Naples has been so good to us, the sport of tennis has been so good to us, so it’s nice to give back to both of those communities.”



Eric and Tyler Manring lead the Manring Brothers Real Estate team at Compass. (Photo by LaCasaTour)

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An advertisement for Lennar Castalina. It features a man in a dark suit and tie in the foreground, smiling. In the background, there is a large, modern house with a pool and patio area. The text includes the Lennar logo, the project name "CASTALINA", location information, price ranges for twin villas and single-family homes, a hashtag "#BuyFromBurnham", the agent's name "DAVID BURNHAM" with the tagline "I MAKE DEALS HAPPEN", contact information, and the address of the Welcome Home Center.

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An advertisement for Masquerade & Balloons Galore. It features a central graphic of a red masquerade mask with black feathers, surrounded by colorful balloons and confetti. The text includes the company name, a description of their services, a list of products, and contact information for two locations: Naples and Ft. Myers.

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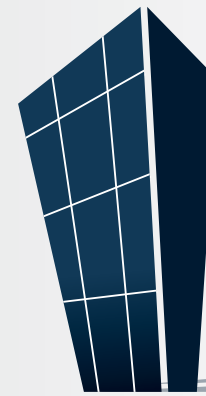
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The Real Tours team (from left to right: Cameron Huber, Giancarlo Taliercio, Hannah Brasacchio, Michael Berio, Tiffany Noel, Morgan Winiecki, Shane Antalick, Austin Swan).

REAL TOURS

» partner spotlight
By **Lindsey Wells**
Photography by **Sandy Windham**

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Searching for the right real estate marketing company is often comparable to searching for a life partner. If you find that a company doesn't meet your standards or help propel your business upwards, you'll be traveling a rocky path until you tell them to hit the road. However, if they fit your marketing needs and drive results, then it will be a successful relationship.

Still not convinced? Almost 90 percent of all homebuyers look for homes online before ever contacting a real estate agent. People in this area are searching online *right now* for a new place to call home. With those numbers in mind, it doesn't make sense not to partner with a professional real estate marketing company that will put your business in the spotlight.

...



Michael Berio and Tiffany Noel, co-founders and owners of Real Tours.



Michael Berio and Tiffany Noel with their sons Austin, Jacob, and Logan.

...

Real Tours, an award-winning Florida real estate marketing company, combines art with technology to produce the most immersive and visually engaging property marketing available. Before starting the business in 2016, owners Michael Berio and Tiffany Noel said a career in this industry was never on their radar, as far as long-term jobs go. But once they delved into the technology and began to see the difference they could make in the real estate industry and the lives of their Realtors®, this business became their passion.

Real Tours specializes in real estate photography and videography. They also offer aerial (drone) photography

and videography, in addition to a variety of other services. A full list can be found on their website at www.realtoursswfl.com.

Michael's interest in real estate marketing was piqued when he discovered the Matterport camera, a camera for 3D virtual tours. "At the time, it was brand new technology, no one had really heard of it. That's when picture slideshows were considered a virtual tour," Michael says. "We would go into these offices and try to sell them the technology, and I would show everyone the difference between what they considered a virtual tour and this new 3D tour. It would blow people's minds."

With Matterport Virtual Spaces, viewers can walk through the home as if they were there, creating better experiences, happier customers, and more revenue. "With COVID-19 going on, these services

have been outstanding. We've seen a phenomenal number of people sell their house sight unseen just because they have ways for people to walk through the house without being there," Michael says.

"The Real Tours difference is that our clients are getting that quality work which helps them sell their homes quicker because we are a one-stop shop; we have everything that anybody could need, with the quality that you would expect, and our customer service is incomparable to anyone else's," Tiffany says. "We do complimentary consultations because we have tech-forward services that a lot of people are not familiar with. We take the time to walk our clients through that and explain how everything is utilized so that they are using it properly, and they're able to gain success from it."

Not only are Michael and Tiffany partners in business, but they're also partners in life, too. Happily engaged, they had plans to get married in July, before the coronavirus reared its ugly head and threw a wrench in their plans. However, with their business growing by leaps and bounds, the timing of everything seems to have worked to their benefit. "Real Tours has just been growing incredibly, so we're putting those plans to the side until we can get to a point where nothing will be disrupted when we leave," Tiffany says.

Part of the success of Real Tours can, no doubt, be attributed to the fact that Michael and Tiffany are just as passionate about their clients as they are the members of their team. Seeing the success and development of the Real Tours team has been one of the most rewarding aspects of the business, Michael says. You'd be hard-pressed to find any stuffy, conference-room team meetings in this company; one way that they maintain a positive work atmosphere is by holding meetings during bowling matches or hatch-et-throwing contests.

The Real Tours team is also passionate about serving the community and is well-known for going above and beyond the call of duty for their clients. One example of this is when they surprised a client in need with a brand new bed and mattress. Organizations they have partnered with in the past include Habitat for Humanity, Project KLM, the Muscular Dystrophy Association, and Community Cooperative, to name a few. "We really try to pay it forward within the community," Tiffany says.

At home, Michael and Tiffany have three sons: Logan (10), Austin (seven), and Jacob (three). They can often be found on random family adventures and enjoy going to the park and out to eat.



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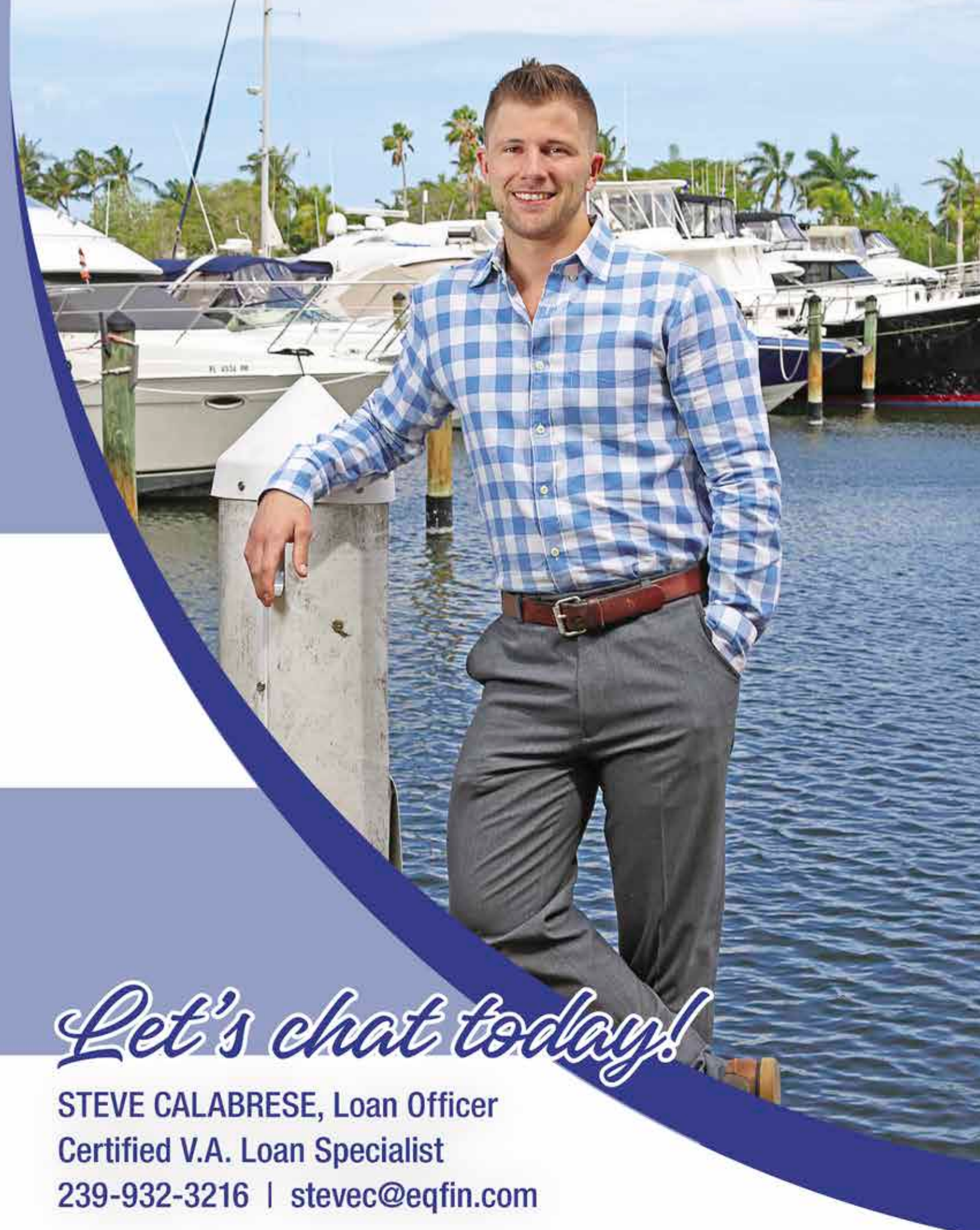


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▶▶ leader of the month

By Lindsey Wells

Photography by Sandy Windham



ROBERT NARDI

Creating A Boutique Brokerage

“To be an excellent Realtor®, you have to have two qualities to succeed in this business: one, you have to genuinely like and care for people. And two, you have to have the patience of Job.”

Robert Nardi knows a thing or two about real estate. After all, he has spent the better part of the last two decades in the industry in Naples, after a lengthy career in the technology sector. After working for a large, worldwide real estate company for five years, Robert opened his own firm, Nardi Realty, and his small company has since grown to employ 18 associates.

Originally from Cleveland, Ohio, before real estate, Robert worked at a law firm as a customer service manager, where he

oversaw the firm’s help desk. After 11 years with that company and a short stint in Minnesota with a different company, sunny Naples began calling his name.

“My cousin lived here, and she said to me, ‘You should come and check out Naples. It’s beautiful here. You don’t want to be in the cold anymore, do you?’” Robert recalls. It turns out, he had grown somewhat tired of the cold. His husband, Dr. Jeffrey Larkin, was also able to secure a job in Naples, as partner at a pathology firm, so they packed up and headed to Florida.

Robert earned his real estate license in 2002, and by 2005 was making a six-figure commission. He wasn’t entirely satisfied with the brokerage he was working under, though. Robert longed for a boutique brokerage where customer service was at the heart of its operations. “This was a career for me,” he says. “This wasn’t just something I wanted to do as a hobby.” In 2007, he took a leap of faith and started Nardi Realty, and his clientele followed him.

...



“I HAVE A FIRM THAT PEOPLE CAN SUCCEED IN. WHEN THEY COME TO MY OFFICE, I GIVE THEM MY SUPPORT AS A BROKER. I’M AVAILABLE 24 HOURS A DAY, SEVEN DAYS A WEEK. I WANT PEOPLE TO SUCCEED, AND THAT’S MY WHOLE GOAL.”



...

“We treat every customer like they’re our only customer, and that’s really important to me,” Robert says. Equally as important to Robert is the success and development of the agents on his team. “I have a firm that people can succeed in. When they come to my office, I give them my support as a broker. I’m available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. I want people to succeed, and that’s my whole goal.”

Arts and arts education is another crucial thing in Robert’s life. Having previously lived in New York City, Robert was a professional entertainer years ago and has carried that love for theater with him to Naples, where he has donated to and worked with several local theater companies, including Artis-Naples, Theater Zone, and The Naples Players. He has also served on the board of directors for Naples International Film Festival and continues to support the organization as a viewer.

When he isn’t working, Robert and Jeff are avid travelers. The only continent they haven’t yet visited is Australia. “We’re fortunate enough that I have my own business, and Jeff can take off quite a bit as a partner in his firm, so we travel at least eight weeks out of the year,” Robert says. Some of the exotic places they’ve been include the Galapagos Islands, the Maldives, India, Japan, Hong Kong, Europe, and Russia.

Locally, Robert can usually be found spending time with his husband, singing karaoke, cooking Italian meals at home, and/or dining out. Luckily, when going out and socializing, it seems that Robert and Jeff meet wonderful people along the way, and many have become great friends. “If someone knows you sell real estate in Southwest Florida, you become very approachable. Somehow, they refer you to other friends, etc.,” Robert

says. And, as mentioned in the beginning, it does truly come down to enjoying and genuinely caring about people, which is a testament to Robert’s success in a very customer service-oriented industry. “I’ve been very blessed to have come across so many good people in my life and, of course, I enjoy what I do. It is not an occupation but a vocation for me.”



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GREG ECONOMOS

Enjoying the Journey

The paths each of us take in life are leading us forward. And as we strive toward our goals and the milestones, it's good to take note of the victories along the way.

One who exemplifies positivity and professionalism while helping others reach their potential is Greg Economos.

As Broker Associate with William Raveis, Greg is this month's Rising Star, and he is definitely enjoying his journey in the business.

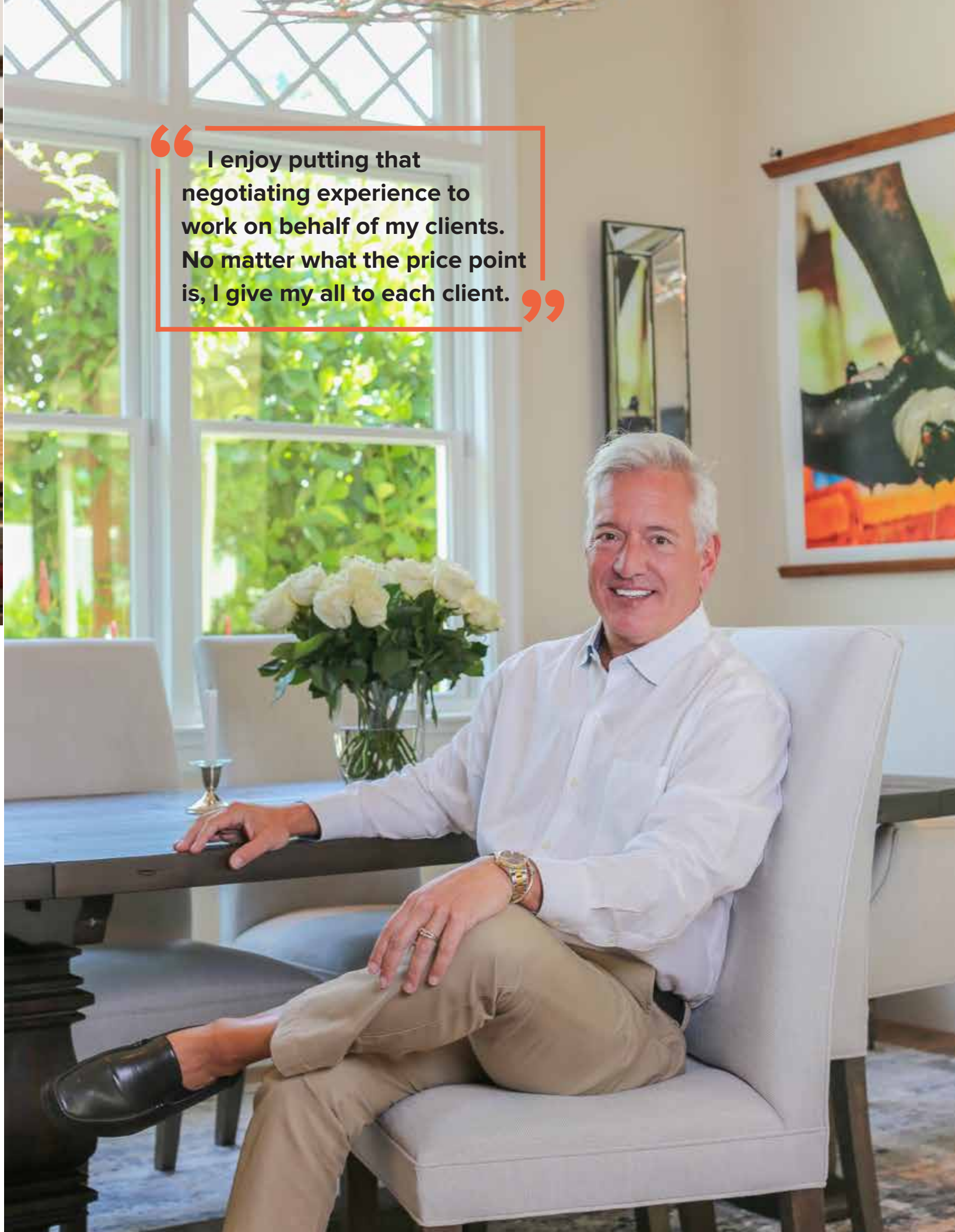
"Our paths through our lives can change, and there's not a right or wrong direction to take to your future," Greg emphasizes. "The key is to be passionate in the pursuit of what you're doing."

Man of Many Talents

Through time, Greg has gained — and shared — a wide range of diverse talents and gifts.

Growing up in Washington, D.C., Greg attended Duke University, where he earned his biomedical engineering degree. ...

“ I enjoy putting that negotiating experience to work on behalf of my clients. No matter what the price point is, I give my all to each client. ”





Greg Economos worked in the entertainment industry for many years, including at SONY Pictures where he oversaw brands such as the *Smurfs*.

From there, he worked for a time in marketing research and as a media buyer. In addition, he earned both his MBA and law degree until the call of the entertainment business in Los Angeles beckoned.

After working for an LA law patent firm for a couple years, Greg finally found his way into entertainment as VP of business and legal affairs for the company responsible for bringing Mighty Morphin Power Rangers to the world. From there, he moved to Sony Pictures Entertainment, where he made his mark in business and legal affairs, eventually, after 17 years, running the consumer products department overseeing brands for iconic entertainment franchises such as *Spider-Man*, *Ghostbusters*, *Smurfs*, *Breaking Bad*, *Wheel of Fortune*, and *Jeopardy* and was responsible for billions of dollars in global retail sales.

“It was while living in Los Angeles for so many years that the real estate bug hit me,” Greg recalls. “I had my bro-

ker’s license for 15 years, and that’s where I started buying and selling multi-million dollar properties.”

From Coast to Coast

Three and a half years ago, Southwest Florida gained a little more sunshine when Greg moved to Naples from California, and he earned his Florida Broker’s Associate license.

“We had bought property here in Naples about seven years ago, and always loved the area so decided to move here permanently,” Greg recalls.

At first, Greg joined Downing Frye but, after a year, decided to join the ever-growing William Raveis team, where he’s been for almost two years.

“There are so many parts of what I do that I enjoy,” Greg smiles. “From working with clients to real estate design and development, it’s definitely been a fun journey. I’ve always been very passionate about real estate. In Los Angeles, I did it more as a hobby. And it was helpful, because, in one 10-year period, I moved seven times. Now, it’s a great feeling to have it be my profession.”

Endless Appeal

The Naples market holds endless appeal.

“Naples is such a terrific area with endless beach activities, tennis, boating, golf and, of course, a fantastic real estate market. It’s a great small town with big-city amenities,” Greg points out.

Greg’s positive, can-do spirit helped him hit the ground running. And his reputation for results continues to mount, including deals in the coveted Port Royal area while still serving other areas from Pelican Bay to Aqualane Shores.

The passion Greg has for what he does runs much deeper than numbers.

“It’s about finding a property for a client I know they’ll be happy in. It then truly becomes a home by creating an environment with its design and décor — I assist in design if they want,” Greg explains. “Finding a home here is a major decision for clients. Sometimes, their second home can be even more important to them than their primary residence because this

is the place where they come to relax. As a result, it really needs to be special for them.”

Another meaningful part of his work involves his peers in the industry.

“I do some listings, along with a lot of work on the buyer’s side. In the process, one of my favorite parts of the business is working with other agents. It’s always my goal to build the best possible rapport with my colleagues,” he says.

Relentless Pursuit

Greg puts his relentless energy to work — focusing on finding the right solutions for his clients.

“In real estate, my success is really measured by the satisfaction of my clients. That, to me, is the most important part of what I do,” Greg says. “I’ll work on simple deals closing in less than 30 days and other more complex deals taking close to a year

to finalize. In either case, when my clients are happy, and both sides leave the deal feeling satisfied, that is the true measure of my success.”

Away from work, Greg is involved in the community in other ways, too.

One of Greg’s big passions is animals. He supports Humane Society Naples and served as emcee for their first-ever “Dancing with the Local Stars” event, which raised over \$300,000. He’s also continued to find ways to add value during the pandemic by supporting groups providing food to residents in need and is very involved with the Duke Alumni Association.

In his free time, Greg loves spending time with family and friends on the beach, as well as boating and travel. Cooking is also one of Greg’s passions and with the pandemic, he has branched out with new recipes. He also enjoys the many fine dining and outdoor choices Naples has to offer. “We’re really lucky here,” he says. “Naples has some of the best high-end restaurants.”

Growth and Gratitude

As Greg considers his remarkable start in the business and the promising future to come, it’s

clear he brings a deep sense of gratitude to his work.

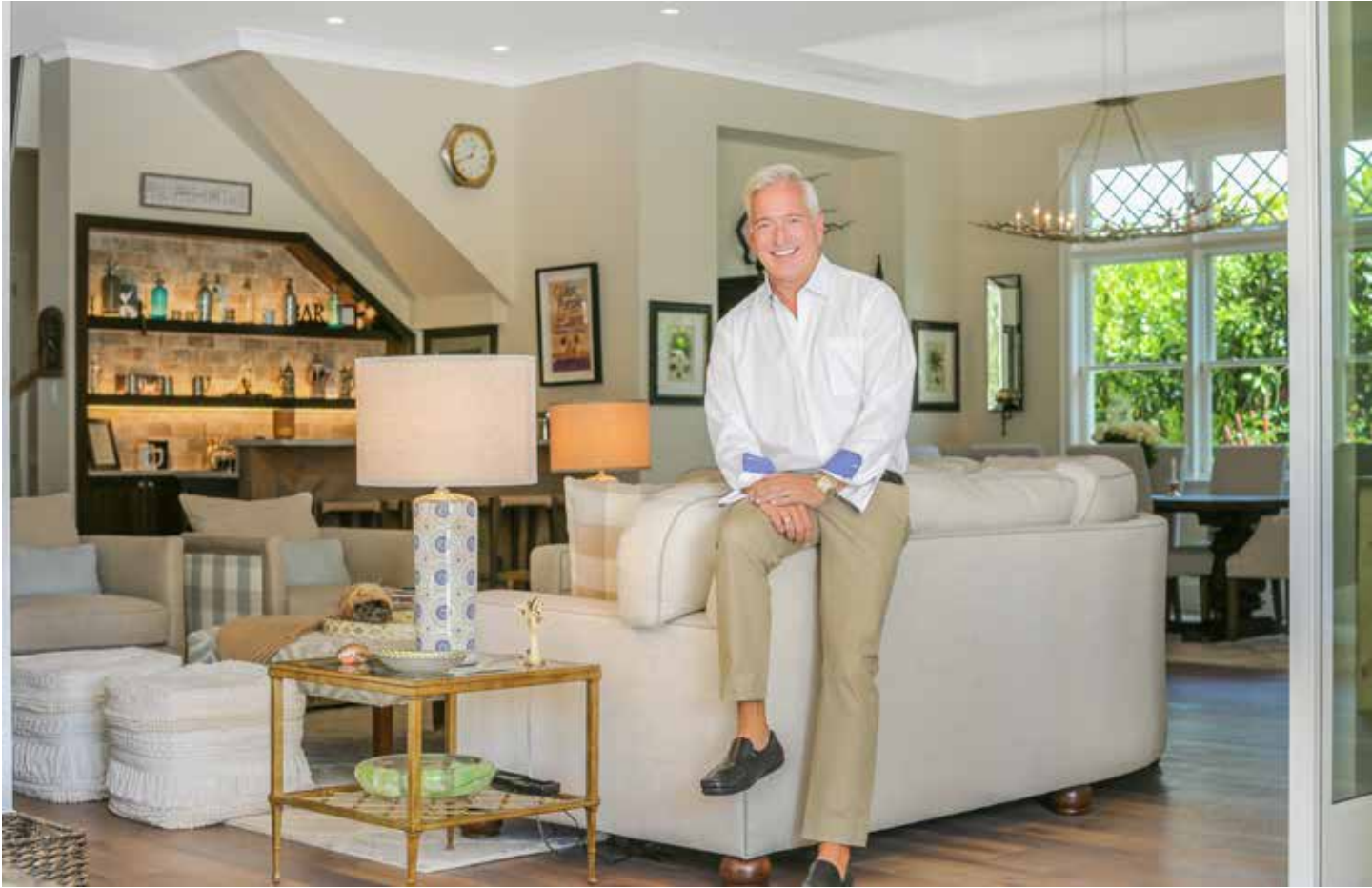
“While real estate wasn’t my initial field, it’s been rewarding to see how my 30-plus years in law and business has helped what I do now,” he says. “I enjoy putting that negotiating experience to work on behalf of my clients. No matter what the price point is, I give my all to each client.”

It’s not unusual for Greg to be burning the midnight oil until dawn — emailing clients or agents at 5 a.m.

In the process, one of the most rewarding parts of Greg’s rewarding path is about growth.

“I find every person I meet and work with is someone new I can learn from for the future,” he says with a smile. “It’s exciting to learn and grow. This is a real passion for me.”

Greg is clearly enjoying his journey.



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▶▶ cover story

By Lindsey Wells

Photography by John Paul Buchanan

DAVID GRUNINGER

DRIVEN BY REAL ESTATE





Shown here with his McLaren, David Gruninger is the founder of the Southwest Florida Supercar Club.

A passion for automobiles stemming from his childhood is, in a way, what led David Gruninger into the world of real estate almost seven years ago. Now a Private Office Advisor with Engel & Volkers Residential, David eats, sleeps, and breathes real estate, using his college degree in business marketing, plus his familiarity with Naples communities, to find the best deals for his clients.

As with many young boys, David's love for cars developed from playing with toy cars as a child. "My parents gave me these Matchbox cars, and I'd leave them all around the house, and my mom would step on them and scream at me," David says, laughing. Having always possessed an entrepreneurial spirit, after college David created a company called Elite Auto Solutions, an auto

detailing company that serviced most of the gated country clubs in the area. He built solid relationships with his clients in these affluent neighborhoods, never giving them less than white-glove service. "It started with just maintaining their cars. We eventually became friends; they'd call me and say, 'Hey, we're coming into town, can you open our house for us?' I then became a full-time



... car detailer, part-time home watcher. That's really what stirred up my passion for real estate."

For the next few years, David worked with a small boutique brokerage before joining Engel & Volkers in 2017, after some encouragement by the company's then broker. The rest, as they say, is history. An independent agent, David specializes in dealing with the luxury properties and communities that he

knows so well from his car-detailing days, plus from his childhood as a young golfer. David has been an avid golfer his entire life and even attended college on a full golf scholarship. Needless to say, he knows these communities like the back of his hand, something that has certainly played to his advantage as a real estate professional.

While many real estate agents strive to maintain a balanced work and home life, David has no qualms about the fact that real estate is basically all he does. "I'm a single guy. I'm not



“ I don’t care if my clients call me at 2 a.m.; I’m always there for them, and they know that. I should probably take some time off, but I’m addicted to this.



married, and I don't have kids — I do real estate 24/7," he says. "I don't care if my clients call me at 2 a.m.; I'm always there for them, and they know that. I should probably take some time off, but I'm addicted to this. For me, it's the challenge, it's the chase, it's finding deals, and it's the only thing right now that gets me excited."

David's love for cars also presented an opportunity for him to create a group called the Southwest Florida Supercar Club, a car club that gathers like-minded people for networking and community outreach. "We do a lot of local support, like Toys for Tots and rallies to different schools," David says. "We'll get a group of exotic cars together and fill them up with toys at Christmastime or after a tragedy happens. Even when the coronavirus first started, we would rally together as a group and deliver toys or support local restaurants. It's a group that I've been fortunate to create down here."

A newfound passion for David, albeit a frustrating one, has presented itself in the form of remodeling houses. At the time of this writing in September, he was in the middle of gutting his own home and rebuilding it from the ground up. "What I think my next venture is going to be through real estate is getting into building and developing properties for my clients," David says. "Throughout the years, I've gained a knowledge of what people like, and I feel like there's just so much opportunity in this area for something like that."

In the meantime, David continues to intertwine his personal hobbies and business marketing knowledge with his business to create fun, positive experiences for his clients. For him, it's not about the commission check or the bank account balance; it's about making the client happy. "And I know that's such a cliché answer," David admits. "But it's really what keeps me going and gets me motivated."

Holiday HOME PREPARATION

2020 has been quite a year, to say the least. Given the pandemic and ensuing social-distancing mandates in place for much of the year, we're all feeling more uneasy about intermingling with others and, consequently, more distant from beloved friends and family. While so much about how we live our lives has changed this year, those feelings of connection and community that accompany the holiday season don't have to. Now more than ever, we're ready – and deserve – to embrace this cozy time of love and togetherness. However you choose to celebrate the holidays, here are few easy home-preparation tips to have your space feeling fresh, festive, and ready to receive guests.



Prep your appliances.

All that scrumptious cooking and baking we do over the holidays can give your kitchen appliances a beating. Prep them for the overload with a thorough cleaning and inspection. For example:

- Check your oven's temperature reading with an oven thermometer to ensure its accuracy.
- Remove all food residue and build-up in the wash-tub, drain, and around the door of your dishwasher.
- Sharpen your kitchen knives.
- Make sure vacuum cleaners are emptied and located handily for quick clean-ups.
- Clean out refrigerator and freezer, checking for blocked air vents.
- Toilets. Let's face it: These may get the most use of *any* fixture on this list. Replace worn flapper valves, tighten all the screws and bolts, and don't forget to provide plenty of extra toilet paper and a plunger to avoid embarrassing situations!

Declutter your space.

Focus on areas guests will see, like the front porch, entryway, kitchen, living room, and bathrooms. Stash away extraneous items, easily decluttered using a laundry basket you can hide away. If possible, supply overnight guests with an empty drawer or closet space, a hamper, clean towels, and some clear, flat space for their belongings.

Keep your home safe.

Here, an ounce of prevention prevents a pound of cure.

- Always keep windows and doors securely locked.
- Don't advertise big-ticket gifts by putting boxes outside the home.
- Lock away all medications, firearms, and household chemicals.
- Never leave open flames unattended.
- Change smoke and carbon-monoxide detector batteries.
- Make sure your live Christmas tree stays fresh and well-watered.
- Replace all burned-out light bulbs.

Stock up on essentials.

A few days before having houseguests, inquire about what their favorite snacks and drinks are, and stock up on those items, as well as coffee, tea, creamer/sugar, and simple breakfast items, like cereal, milk, juice, fruit, and granola bars.

Scent your home seasonally.

Mull some wine or cider, or simmer water with cinnamon sticks, pine, orange peel, or cloves on the stove to infuse your home with delightful, homey aromas.

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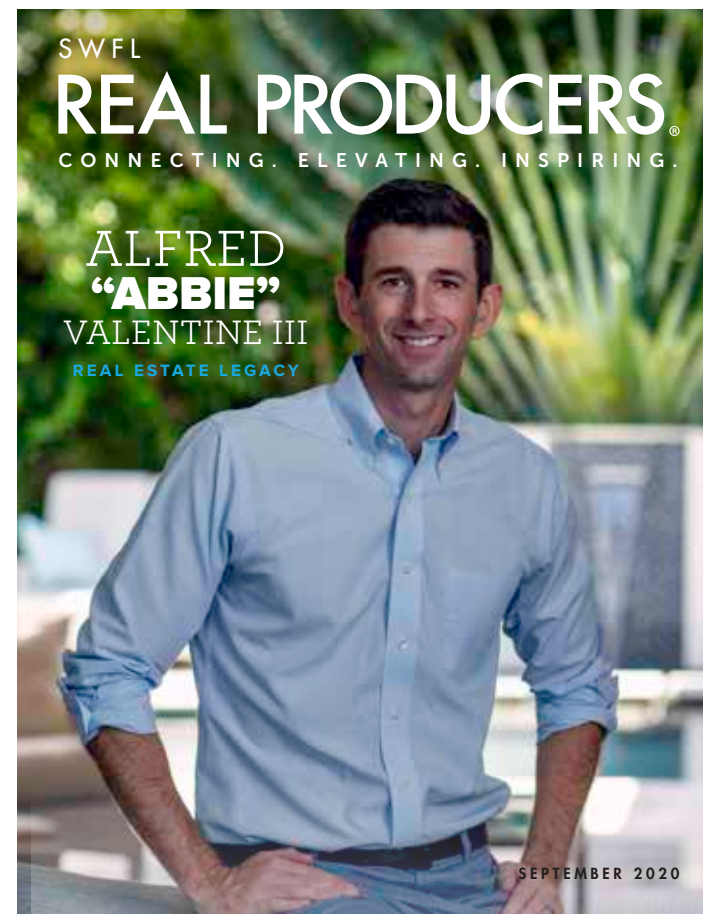
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