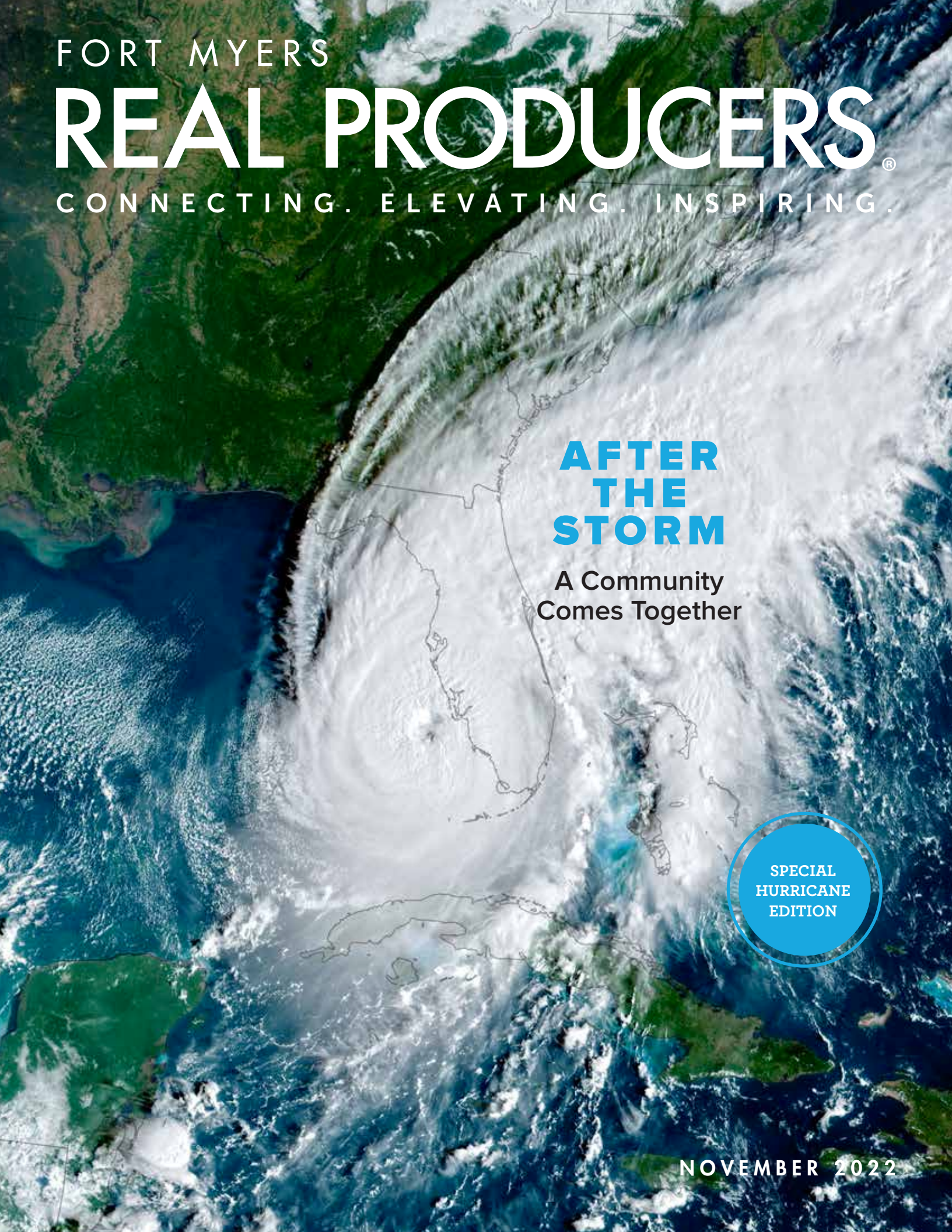


A satellite image of a large hurricane, likely Hurricane Ian, over the Gulf of Mexico. The storm's eye is visible in the center, surrounded by dense, swirling white clouds. The surrounding ocean is a deep blue, and the landmasses of North and Central America are visible in shades of green and brown.

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If you are interested in contributing or nominating REALTORS® for certain stories, please email us at SWFL@n2co.com.

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Naples Real Producers collected donations and delivered supplies to hurricane-stricken areas in Fort Myers.

“The Greatness of a Community is Most Accurately Measured By the Compassionate Actions of Its Members.”

—Coretta Scott King

Publisher's NOTE

Dear REALTORS® and Preferred Partners,

This issue is dedicated to commemorating not Hurricane Ian... but *us*, our SWFL community, who came together in strength and with resolve to assist those affected in the aftermath of the storm. Our entire community really joined hands and pitched in to support each other and help with the many cleanup, relief and rebuild efforts. Here at Real Producers, we received \$5,000 of donations that allowed us to purchase food, water and supplies that we then delivered all over Fort Myers. Thank you SO much to everyone who donated that allowed us to make an impact and contribute to the many relief efforts going on in our community. We appreciate you all so much! Please check out our hurricane special feature on page 30, where we highlight several members of our real estate community who shared their stories with us of loss, hope and the incredible power and servant hearts of our beloved community.

November is also a month where we recognize those who have served our nation. This month, we celebrate Veterans Day, honoring those brave men and women and their families who have given so much of themselves and have made such tremendous sacrifices for their fellow countrymen. As many of you know, I have a soft spot for veterans, having spent quite a bit of time with

them in my previous career as a military contractor. I have the utmost respect for these American heroes and am proud to call several of them my closest friends. Please check out our article on Dr. Evelyn Lewis and her Veterans Health and Wellness Foundation in this issue. This is a very worthy cause to donate to so that those who have served receive the health care they and their families deserve.

November is also a month we focus on gratitude. This year, after having just gone through Hurricane Ian together, we really have even more reasons to be thankful. The impact on our community has been devastating, but the reminder is there to truly appreciate what is most valuable in our lives — our families, friends, and loved ones. As we get ready to head into the holiday season 2022, we are so grateful for the special people in our lives, for our community, and for all of our blessings. Our hearts and prayers are with each of you who has suffered losses from the hurricane. It is moments like these we can fully embody and appreciate the meaning of community.

For obvious reasons, our big *Fort Myers Real Producers* Launch Party at The Club at Renaissance has had to be postponed. We will plan on rescheduling it as soon as is reasonable, and will send you information on the event once we have a new date.

I am grateful for this inspiring Real Producers community and look forward to seeing you all again soon.

Happy Thanksgiving to all!

ANDREW REGENHARD

Owner/Publisher

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Post Hurricane Issues in SWFL Real Estate

After Hurricane Ian, many people, unfortunately, will find themselves without a place to live. If you are a tenant, whether in a residential or commercial property, it is vital that you understand your rights. After a catastrophic event like the one that Southwest Florida just endured, we, at Woods, Weidenmiller, Michetti & Rudnick, LLP, can help you shift through your questions and concerns. For example:

1. What happens to your Lease upon a “Casualty” event?
2. What maintenance requirements was the Landlord required to undertake and any obligations that the Landlord may have had to make storm preparations on the Property?
3. What obligations does the Landlord have to make the Property habitable or if a Landlord is required to make other living arrangements if the Property is deemed uninhabitable?
4. How does insurance come into play (i.e., renters insurance, landlord insurance, etc.)?
5. Can my Landlord “constructively evict” me?
6. What will happen to your Security Deposit? How do I get that refunded?

The first step every tenant should take is to review their Lease. For example, typically, a lease will have language that, should the Property be substantially impaired as to affect the habitability of the Property, the Tenant can provide written notice to the Landlord that they are terminating the Lease. As every lease is different, this should provide you with the most streamlined answers to your questions. That said, if the Lease is silent as to such issue, below are a couple statutory provisions that every Tenant should be aware of, and which will govern how the parties should proceed:

RESIDENTIAL

Florida Statute 83.63 Casualty damage. “If the premises are damaged or destroyed other than by the wrongful or negligent acts of the tenant so that the enjoyment of the premises is substantially impaired, the tenant may terminate the rental agreement and immediately vacate the premises. The tenant may vacate the part of the premises rendered unusable by

the casualty, in which case the tenant’s liability for rent shall be reduced by the fair rental value of that part of the premises damaged or destroyed.”

COMMERCIAL

Florida Statute 83.201 Notice to landlord of failure to maintain or repair, rendering premises wholly untenantable; right to withhold rent. “When the lease is silent on the procedure to be followed to effect repair or maintenance and the payment of rent relating thereto, yet affirmatively and expressly places the obligation for same upon the landlord and the landlord has failed or refused to do so, rendering the leased premises wholly untenantable, the tenant may withhold rent after notice to the landlord... If the landlord does not complete the repair or maintenance in the allotted time, the parties may extend the time by written agreement or the tenant may abandon the premises, retain the amounts of rent withheld, terminate the lease, and avoid any liability for future rent or charges under the lease...”

Simply put, a Landlord cannot use Hurricane Ian as an excuse to evict you. Florida law has strict statutory provisions regarding evictions that apply here just like

in any other situation. The landlord cannot engage in “self-help” either (i.e., change the locks, keep the electricity and water shut off, or deprive the Tenant of basic living necessities). The risk of loss for the Property will likely be the Landlord’s, while any personal property will likely be the Tenant’s loss. It is important for the Tenant to inquire with the Landlord and receive copies of any and all active insurance policies that they may have.

The attorneys at Woods, Weidenmiller, Michetti & Rudnick, LLP, are here and ready to assist you in reviewing your lease, answering your questions, and letting you know what your rights and remedies may be.



Born and raised in Naples, Florida, Samuel Colburn is an associate attorney at Woods, Weidenmiller, Michetti & Rudnick, where he concentrates his practice in the areas of commercial and residential real property transactions, as well as corporate and commercial lending.

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EVELYN LEWIS, MD, MA, FAAFP, DABDA

The Veterans Health and Wellness Foundation

SUPPORTING VETERANS COAST TO COAST

By Ellen Buchanan

To care for [those] who shall have borne the battle...

—President Abraham Lincoln

“There are about 250,000 people that transition from being a service member to a Veteran each year. I see the vast majority of those people don’t need the help we provide, but there are some out there who desperately need the services we render,” Evelyn Lewis begins.

Evelyn Lewis is a medical physician and a 25-year Navy Veteran who has seen the struggles of Veterans and their families from varying vantage points. After witnessing so many

Veterans struggle to understand that they were eligible for healthcare benefits and how to navigate the system to access their benefits, she was determined to give back to a community she felt was so desperately in need of support.

In 2014, Evelyn founded the Veterans Health and Wellness Foundation (VHWF), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to helping Veterans and their families access and navigate the healthcare system so they can receive the VA benefits they are entitled to. In addition, she also offers assistance to those navigating the civilian healthcare system and in need

of advocacy if they are not eligible for care through the VA. Although Evelyn is based in Georgia, VHWF assists veterans across the country.

Meet the Founder

Dr. Lewis has had an interest in medicine since she was a little girl. Her father was a physician, and her mother was a nurse in his office. She remembers sitting in her dad’s office after school, doing homework and watching patients come and go.

As she got older, she gained a real, personal understanding of the work her parents were doing while serving the community. Observing her

parents and their dedication cemented her desire to follow in her father’s footsteps.

Evelyn graduated from Spelman College and was awarded a Health Professional Scholarship through the military and joined the Navy. She served and remained active for 25 years, retiring in 2003. She obtained her doctorate from the Chicago Medical School – Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science and ultimately served at medical clinics from coast to coast, hospitals here at home and abroad and on board the USS Simon Lake assisting active-duty service members and Veterans with a host of medical challenges. While assigned to the National Naval Medical Center (currently known as Walter Reed National Military Medical Center) during the height of the Iraq–Afghanistan conflict, she cared for the service members who returned with various injuries, illnesses and diseases, cared for their families, delivered babies, and witnessed the seemingly insurmountable challenges faced by Veterans.

“In the 25 years I was in the military caring for service members, Veterans, and their families, it became very clear that many of them didn’t have an understanding of what their benefits were, what they were eligible for, and then how to advocate for themselves,” Evelyn explains.

Evelyn has taken a creative approach to the work she does, as well, going above and beyond simply educating Veterans and their families.

She also educates physicians and allied healthcare professionals on how to best serve the Veteran community, a program she believes has the potential to make a significant impact in the lives of the 13-plus million Veterans who get some or all of their healthcare outside of the VA healthcare system.

Keeping Her Promise

Today, Evelyn resides in Georgia, where she runs VHWF virtually.



Evelyn Lewis, M.D., founder of Veterans Health and Wellness Foundation

...

“
WITH A REASSURING
LOOK REFLECTING
COMMITMENT,
COMFORT, AND
COMPASSION, THIS
ALLOWS VHWF TO
SERVE VETERANS
FROM EVERYWHERE.



“Just an update...my dad is doing better and they are in the process of buying a new home through the VA loan. We are forever thankful for your help.” —Veteran in Texas

“The VHWF has assisted me with my doctor visits, with communications about my drugs and procedures, and assisting me with the process of submitting my exam paperwork to the VA that no one else has done, even after I relocated to Florida. As a disabled vet, they are a great asset to my well-being and health care.” —Veteran in Florida

“I want to thank the VHWF and their program for helping my father, a retired master chief. I, too, being a disabled navy veteran, tried to help my father in receiving his disability benefits which he is entitled to, however my knowledge was far out of scope. Dr. Lewis and Janice picked up my father’s case and have helped tremendously. First, the help in reducing the mental anguish that accompanies this frustrating process, giving the veteran the relief of a team. Second, the verbiage involved... Many of us don’t know the correct language that the VA is looking for, and it’s heartbreaking when repeatedly denied benefits due to language. I have been so impressed with their services that I have referred multiple other veterans and families in their direction. Thank you for your service and commitment to our veterans.” —Veteran in Hawaii

“With a reassuring look reflecting commitment, comfort, and compassion, this allows VHWF to serve Veterans from everywhere... When I say from everywhere, it literally is from everywhere,” she says.

VHWF does not charge Veterans or their family members for any of

its work; sponsorships and donations help fund the services so Veterans can reap the rewards. VHWF is a small group, but one that is deeply devoted to serving those who protect our nation’s values.

“Our organization is here to help Americans realize we made a

promise. To paraphrase President Abraham Lincoln, we will care for those who have borne the battle. And if we look at what’s going on with Veterans and their families today, we are not keeping our promise...”

“I get to enjoy my life and do the things that I do because they have provided the ability for me to do this... It might sound cliché — ‘Oh, they’re over there fighting for my freedom’ — but that’s exactly what they’re doing ... whether here at home or on foreign soil.”

The Veterans Health and Wellness Foundation (VHWF) is a 501(c)(3) organization. Call 833-924-4376 or visit MyVHWF.org for more information or to donate.



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» leader of the month

GLEN

Lessons in Leadership

By Zachary Cohen
Photos by LaCasaTour

STEGEMANN



Another lesson Glen learned on the baseball diamond was about failure. The best hitters fail seven out of 10 times they step to the plate. Becoming acquainted with failure is part of the game.

“My success in business has always been linked to not letting failures define me,” Glen continues. “You can’t let failure beat you. You have to accept it, learn from it, and get better. The same goes in business.

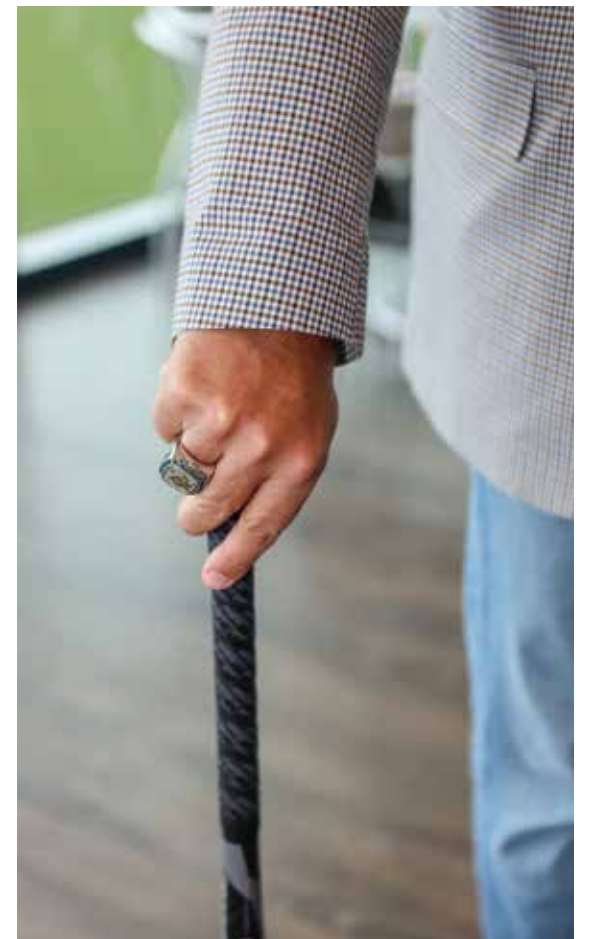
“ You can’t let failure beat you. You have to accept it, learn from it, and get better.

“The way I approach things is to wake up every day and be better than the day before. It’s all about the mental aspect. I have this internal drive to get better every day and help those around me get better,” Glen Stegemann begins.

Glen has been a leader in Southwest Florida’s real estate industry for nearly 20 years, but his journey as a leader began on the baseball diamond many years prior. As a young man, Glen was a standout athlete, and later in his life, he became a respected coach. Through his relationship with athletics — and baseball in particular — he gained the skills to lead effectively.

“One of the best bits of advice I got was that people who are managers or coaches wake up every day, look in the mirror, and know their way is the best way. But the most successful ones are the ones that take their way and allow input from others, massaging that into their overall plan,” Glen explains.

Glen has taken this lesson to heart. As a coach, he learned that some players responded to tough love while others needed a hug. Some needed to be challenged, and others appreciated. As a real estate broker, Glen applies the same strategy. He’s willing to listen to his agents, understand their desires, and help them get there.



Glen was assistant coach with FGCU’s baseball program when they won the ASUN Baseball Championship in 2017 and made it to the NCAA Regionals.

...

“ I have a philosophy that you can’t manage people unless you’ve done the job.

Glen Stegemann credits his many years of coaching travel and collegiate baseball with the skills needed to be an effective leader of his 280-plus agent brokerage.

You’re going to fail. You have to be able to wipe that off and move on. So all the experiences I’ve had as a player and a coach translates into business.”

Leading the Charge

Glen began his real estate career after successful stints in corporate finance and the auto industry. He was recruited to become a VP of sales for stock development in 2003.

Glen’s leadership style is to empower his team rather than dragging them toward success. So rather than jumping right into his VP role, he spent a year in sales, learning the ins and outs of the business. Only then could he feel comfortable leading the sales team.

“I have a philosophy that you can’t manage people unless you’ve done the job. So I started in sales and then moved into management soon after,” Glen explains.

With the real estate market in flux in 2007, Glen co-founded Summit Real Estate Group, a company focused on buying foreclosures, fixing them up, and reselling them. That company eventually became a full-service brokerage, Barclays Real Estate Group, in 2012.

In the meantime, Glen returned to his love of baseball. He started the travel baseball organization the Florida Prowlers and later became the manager of Team Extreme, a team that consistently ranked as one of the nation’s top travel baseball programs. That success afforded him the opportunity to to be an assistant coach at Florida Gulf Coast University from 2015 to 2017. He was part of the program’s ASUN Championship win and first NCAA Regionals appearance in 2017.

“My boys got to the age when they started playing and had a passion for it. It just made sense, and then it took off,” Glen says. “I love the game.”

A New Adventure

After over 15 years with Summit Real



...

Estate and Barclays Real Estate Group, Glen took on a new challenge in 2021, becoming the managing broker for Royal Shell Real Estate in Lee County.

“With the market shifting again, I was drawn toward a more traditional real estate brokerage,” he says. “Once I made the decision to leave Barclays, I took some time to evaluate what I wanted. I’ve always enjoyed managing people and trying to contribute to their success. I felt the culture and direction at Royal Shell fit my personality and what I wanted to accomplish.”

Royal Shell’s collaborative, success-driven, and team-oriented culture has been a perfect match for Glen’s leadership style.

“There’s this corporate-level backing with a boutique feel. My input is wanted and accepted, and that’s the situation I was looking for — to be able to have the chance to make an impact, helping coach and mentor agents.”

In 2021, Glen helped lead Royal Shell’s 280-plus agents to close an impressive 2,800-plus transactions for over \$1.6B. In 2022, they are pacing to eclipse those numbers.

Practice Makes Perfect

Outside of work, Glen continues to stay physical. While his two sons, Nash (24) and Spencer (22), are now grown, out of the house, and beyond their own baseball-playing days, Glen still makes time to work out daily. He also enjoys pickleball and golf, and remains involved with the Florida Gulf Coast University baseball team.

In real estate, Glen continues to draw on the lessons he’s learned as an athlete. His goal now is to help lift his entire team to greatness.



Glen Stegemann is the managing broker of Royal Shell Real Estate in Lee County.

“The way I manage my companies comes from my playing days and time as a coach at a high level. In athletics and in real estate, you have to practice. You have to sacrifice. You’re going to get out what you put in... We want our agents to become Real Producers in our market, to reach those heights, and we have the company and strategies to make that happen.”



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▶▶ partner spotlight

By Zachary Cohen
Photos by LaCasaTour

Damon Brist

FARMERS INSURANCE

THE FARMERS DIFFERENCE

In 2019, Damon Brist spearheaded the launch of the first Farmers Insurance agency in Southwest Florida. Three years later, he's running a thriving business; the Fort Myers office is in the top 25 Farmers Insurance agencies nationwide. Most importantly, Damon and his team have become one of the area's most reputable sources for home, auto, umbrella, and specialty vehicle insurance.



FUN FACT

Damon worked his way through college as a golf professional; he worked at clubs and was a PGA member from 1993 to 1996. Damon still enjoys a round of golf, but most of his time outside work is spent with his wife, Kristen, and their two children, Cooper (13) and Riley (11).

...

...

“The biggest thing I want people to know about is our tremendous value,” Damon says. “We are an A-rated company, and there aren’t too many of those here in Florida. We’re a 90-year-old, \$12 billion company with great capabilities.”

The Road to Insurance

After building a successful career in pharmaceutical sales, Damon transitioned to life insurance and financial advising in 2007. Soon after, the housing crisis descended upon the nation, affecting every industry. Damon was still able to build his business in these trying times.

“When there’s turmoil, there’s opportunity. I was able to capitalize on that and create some great opportunities out of that,” he reflects. “People were resonating with our value prop.”

Damon began teaching at medical schools around the country, educating students on how to prepare for life after residency.

“When you talk to anyone about finances, the starting point is the simple stuff. People want to know how to make a bunch of money in the stock market, but I say we shore up the simple stuff first. Are you properly insured with auto and home? Do you have an umbrella policy?”

For many years, Damon referred out business to other local home and auto insurance providers. Then, he had a realization: he didn’t want to give this business away anymore.

“This is the easy stuff — the simple things to get people on the right track. If they’re on the right track, then they can do bigger things. So why not provide that service too?”



FARMERS INSURANCE

Damon began looking for insurance agencies to purchase when he came across an opportunity to open a new office with Farmers Insurance; in 2019, he did just that.

The Farmers Difference

Today, Damon’s primary role is as an insurance provider; now, he refers out his financial advising business.

“I’ve done a full transition,” he reflects. “This is more fun. I enjoy this more. I love educating people, understanding coverages.”

Damon does a little of everything, from client communication to agency management. He’s fully hands-on in the business, helping Farmers earn a strong reputation in Southwest Florida.

“We’re pretty well known here, with good name recognition, but really it’s about the value of what we provide. Farmers is the only national insurance carrier writing homeowners insurance in Florida. The big carriers don’t provide homeowners insurance. We’re the only one that can bundle home and auto, so that’s a huge selling point,” Damon explains.

“And we’re a national, A-rated, 90-year-old insurance company. Most of the Florida companies for homeowners insurance are based in Florida and are very small. Farmers is a \$12 billion national company. Where do you want your insurance, a \$12 billion company or a \$100 million company? It’s a huge value add.”

“Lastly, Farmers gives us a ton of leeway on who we can write policies with, so it’s almost like we’re independent. To help people get the best value, it’s not always Farmers, and we get that.”

After successfully launching his Farmers Insurance agency in Southwest Florida, Damon is now ready to take his business to the next level. He has his eye on growth, both in Florida and nationally. As the business grows, however, he vows to keep his values at the front: a commitment to client satisfaction, integrity in business, and best-in-class customer service.

For more information, call Damon Brist at 239-202-2933 or visit agents.farmers.com/fl/fort-myers/damon-brist.



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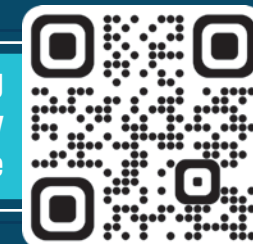
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AFTER THE STORM

A Community Comes Together



On September 28, 2022, Hurricane Ian made landfall in Southwest Florida as a Category 4 hurricane with 150-mph winds. Major damage was done to our communities not only by the intense winds but by the massive storm surge that brought a wall of sea water on land and into canals, devastating beachfronts and structures all along the coast, and sadly, causing many deaths. As tragic as Hurricane Ian has been for our SWFL communities, the resilience, determination, and faith of the people who live and work here rose to the fore. Along with government and private sector relief efforts, grassroots campaigns were immediately launched, doing everything from rescues, cleanouts of damaged homes and property of relatives, friends, and neighbors, raising money for nonprofits doing important work on the ground, and collecting and distributing food, water, and supplies.

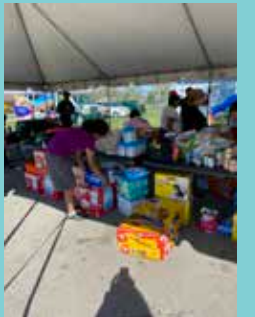
As proud as we have always been of our SWFL Real Producers tribe, it is moments like these where the real character and strength of everyone truly shines. We are humbled and in awe of the many efforts of our Real Producers, everyone pitching in to help in any way they could. In the best of times, the community relies on REALTORS® and industry partners as essential resources. Embracing that role with a huge sense of responsibility, this Real Producers community stepped up and went to work, demonstrating their commitment and value in the worst of times as well. On the following pages, we highlight just a few of the many relief efforts undertaken by members of our own Real Producers community, and stories of what some have experienced. Thank you all for your service. You are beyond incredible, and SWFL would not be the same without you!



► special feature | after the storm

SWFL REAL PRODUCERS

SWFL Real Producers raised over \$5,000 in donations for essential supplies that we delivered throughout Fort Myers. Thank you so much to everyone who donated and made our contributions possible!



CYNDI & RON MYERS eXp Realty

Cyndi and Ron Myers have been helping FK Your Diet deliver meals, recruit volunteers, and get donations. They also helped their clients who were under water — cleaning out muddy homes and lending their car to a senior couple who lost theirs.



DENNY GRIMES
Keller Williams Realty

Denny Grimes offered his moving truck to anyone in the area in need of help, and in the days after the storm, opened his office, which had water, electric, and fresh coffee for everyone.



ERIC GALLUS and MARLO SHAY RIMES
Premier Plus Realty

Eric Gallus loaded his Jeep and trailer with ice, gas, water, a generator, and tools. He helped demo a few homes and passed out supplies to the community.

Marlo Shay Rimes spent many days using her airboat to get supplies to the islands, aid in rescue efforts, and give free rides to those who needed them.



HEATHER CAINE
Keller Williams Realty

KW Cares distributed \$1.9 million in generators and supplies to SWFL, and KW agents from around the country brought industrial fans, building supplies and tools to help the community rebuild. The Caine Luxury Team served hot meals in Naples Park and gave away free clothes, shoes, and toys.



BLAKE BECKER
Becker Home Maintenance and
JOHN HUFFMAN
Huffman's Construction Group

Blake Becker and John Huffman teamed up to help with hurricane cleanup, feed the community, and deliver items to women and children in need in Fort Myers.





MARY WATTS WOLLEON
Domain Realty

Mary Watts Wolleon and her family have been reaching out to help others, serving in partnership with their church, The Springs of Bonita, as well as supporting SWFL Sunshine Foundation in their efforts to assist both victims of Hurricane Ian and first responders.



DARDA GROUP
Compass

The majority of the Darda Group's clients sustained some damage and some had substantial damage... They, also, had damage at their office in Cape Coral and are working out of a temporary location. The team pitched in to help those in need, supplying personal hygiene items, tarps, batteries, food, canned goods, cleaning supplies, water, and more.



ELISE STARR & TOM STARR
John R. Wood Properties

Fort Myers residents Elise and Tom Starr had a birds-eye view of storm surge of Hurricane Ian, which took a huge toll on their hometown and boat.



GIOVANNI MATITA
NRL Mortgage

Giovanni Matita, of NRL Mortgage, and his family all pitched in with relief efforts.



ROXANA MONTILVA
Marzucco Real Estate

Roxana Montilva and her teammates partnered with Seed to Table and Feeding Florida, donating semi's loaded with thousands of meals and water they distributed in various locations.





LISA VANDERBLEEK
RE/MAX Sunshine

Lisa, her husband Brian, and their team prepped their out-of-state clients' homes for the storm, fastening shutters and strapping down boats. They have been navigating the insurance claims processes for their clients and have also delivered extra cleaning products to those in need.

KAYLA BOYD-JONES
RE/MAX

Kayla's family of four adults, three young children, and four dogs weathered the storm at her mother's home in the Cape Coral Yacht Club area. Even though her home and her RE/MAX Fort Myers Beach office were completely destroyed, Kayla maintains a positive attitude and strong faith in the SWFL community. Here, she raises her "Ian Flag."



SUZANNE VASBINDER
Your Home Sold Guaranteed Realty

Of Hurricane Ian, Suzanne Vasbinder says, "At one point, we owned our own 'private island,' as we were surrounded by water on all sides. I've lived in SWFL for over 22 years and have never experienced anything like Ian. Moving forward, SWFL will rebuild and be stronger and better than ever!"



YASMIN SAAD
Compass

Yasmin Saad's family home fared okay in the storm, but their beachfront first-floor condo was devastated. Yasmin and her team reached out daily to those in need, providing information, resources, and a helping hand.



MIKE MCMURRAY &
Members of Royal Shell Real Estate

Mike McMurray and teammates at Royal Shell Real Estate took drone footage of everyone's properties and gave them to the homeowners. They raised almost \$75,000 for local nonprofits, purchased generators for distribution, and provided free meals to first responders and contractors.



MARC DEVISSE
Tri-Town Construction

Marc Devisse came together with neighbors and other business owners, carpooling to impacted sites and businesses in downtown Fort Myers to help with cleanup efforts. Together with Marc's restaurant, Seaside Bar & Grill, they made free food for the workers and residents in neighborhoods off Alico Road, in Fort Myers/San Carlos. Tri-Town's office also served as a donation center for dropoffs and pickups.





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Holiday

HOME PREPARATION

By Shauna Osborne

The air is crisp, the leaves are changing, and the holidays are just around the corner! The cheerful months of November and December always fly by, but a little advance cleaning and organizing can help keep holiday entertaining worries at bay. Here are a few home-preparation tips to make your space fresh, festive and ready to entertain!

Prep appliances.

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

- Check the temperature reading with an oven thermometer to ensure accuracy.
- Remove all food residue and build-up in the washtub, drain and around the door of the dishwasher.
- Sharpen 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.
- Replace worn flapper valves on toilets (and don't forget to provide plenty of extra toilet paper and a plunger)!

Organize living spaces.

Focus on beautifying areas guests will see most, like the front porch, entryway, kitchen, living room and bathrooms. Stash away easily decluttered items, which gives the illusion of clean space (even if it isn't). Supply overnight guests with an empty drawer or closet space, extra pillows/blankets, clean towels, travel-size toiletries and a flat surface for their luggage.

Safeguard your home.

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

- Always keep windows and doors locked.
- Don't advertise big-ticket gifts by putting boxes outside the home.

- Lock away all medications, firearms and household chemicals.
- Keep driveway and walkway clear of ice and snow, if applicable.
- Never leave open flames unattended.
- Make sure live Christmas trees stay well-watered.
- Utilize light timers to regulate electricity usage for decorations.

Stock up on essentials.

A few days before having houseguests, inquire about favorite snacks and drinks, 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. Stock up on essentials like paper towels, tissue, toilet paper, hand soap and toothpaste to have on hand.

Plan ahead and get organized this holiday season, so you can enjoy time spent making new memories with loved ones!

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