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David Weekley Homes

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# PUBLISHER'S NOTE



Brian Gowdy and his mom, Lori Gowdy, braving a metal dragon in Crested Butte, CO!

Welcome to our September edition of *Colorado Springs Real Producers*. Our local real estate market is changing rapidly; as I'm typing this in mid-July, we have roughly 1,500 homes for sale and 500 price reductions. By the time you're reading this, those statistics could be quite dated!

In this edition, we feature three amazing real estate agents. We have Alan Wilaby, who was nominated to us by Benjamin Kennedy; we have Debi Volk, who was nominated to us by Lana Rodriguez; we have Maria Gallucci, who was nominated to us by Jenny Roentz. While Maria is primarily a Denver agent, she does a lot of business in the Springs, and we thought her niche around the blind and hard-of-hearing community would be a story worth sharing. (And yes, Maria was featured in *Denver Real Producers* as well).

Our featured partner this month is Laborjack. Laborjack is a staffing company that specializes in providing "hired muscle" for hands-on jobs (moving, cleaning, yard work,

etc.). They are a Colorado-founded company, and I'm betting they're going to grow across the nation. Please give them a chance when you have the opportunity!

About two weeks ago, I explored Crested Butte for the first time. My mom was in town, and the annual Crested Butte Wildflower Festival had just begun, so it was quite the adventure. My girlfriend, Jamie-Lynn, joined us as well, and the three of us had quite the time walking through the fields of flowers. If you ever have the chance to visit the wildflower festival, we highly recommend it, but be prepared to share the path with about a million insects!

If you have any ideas or feedback for us at *Real Producers*, just reach out. Here's to autumn!

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# Debi VOLK

▶▶ REALTOR® spotlight

Written by Ruth Gnirk  
Casa Bay Photography

Like a master gardener who tenderly transplants flowers, Debi Volk cares for and connects with the people she serves as they are in a time of transition. Her years of experience in the legal field give her an edge that sets her apart from other REALTORS®. She has both insight and foresight and cares deeply about each of her clients. Debi also has a genuine appreciation for everyone involved in each aspect of a real estate transaction. As a skillful negotiator with the ability to remain objective, Debi ensures that everyone at the closing table blooms.

**HELPING  
FAMILIES LAY  
THEIR ROOTS**

Growing up in her mother's hometown of McHenry, IL, Debi learned the importance of fostering relationships with people from all age groups and every walk of life. She learned to be intentional about personal connection. In her small, close-knit community, everyone knew each other, and childhood playmates remained friends for life. Debi's mom modeled loyalty by developing lifelong friendships, one of which lasted 70 years, and though she didn't know it

when they met, one of Debi's dearest childhood friendships would still be strong after 45 years. She raised her children, Christopher and Danielle, to value all people and treasure every relationship as well.

In 2000, Debi started working at a local law firm where she specialized in family law. In 2006 she transitioned into real estate law. In July of 2012, Debi and Danielle moved to Colorado Springs, where Debi

continued to feed her real estate passion by working at the front desk for North American Title. She soon advanced, becoming part of the administrative team, and her powers of negotiation earned her a spot as a closer.

Debi was passionate about advocating for families in their real estate transactions. Her skill and care caught the attention of a local forward-thinking REALTOR®. During the 2016 Christmas season, Lana Rodriguez told Debi that she was at the top of the list of people that Lana wanted to invite to become part of a new team she was creating.

Debi earned her real estate license and started working for the Lana Rodriguez Group in January 2017. Debi made a wonderful listing agent for the team, and her background in real estate law was especially beneficial to her as a negotiator. She helped between 80 to 100 families each year during her time with the LRG team, and Debi earned a reputation for keeping clients happy throughout the process.

In April 2022, Debi and her daughter Danielle, who also earned her real estate license in 2018, fulfilled a long-time dream by starting their own team, Family Tree Homes with eXp Realty. They had worked together in real estate in the past and are excited to be back together again. Debi shared that one of their goals in starting their own team as a mother-daughter duo is to change what real estate means in their marketplace, and hopefully many more. They hosted their first connecting event, a family-style gathering with the community. They plan to have various family events and drop-bys throughout the year because Debi knows first-hand that it sets a team apart when they make sure others are taken care of.

"Family Tree Homes is much bigger than just helping clients buy or sell a home," explained Debi. "Each client we work with truly is like family to us, and our goal is to always serve them as such."



“Family Tree Homes is much bigger than just helping clients buy or sell a home. Each client we work with truly is like family to us, and our goal is to always serve them as such.”





We go the extra mile to ensure that our clients' needs are met and their expectations are surpassed. Our foundational focus at Family Tree Homes is building lasting relationships as we help families lay their roots. We are helping our clients find a home in which to build their own family and create memories they will cherish forever, and we want them to know that we are right beside them for every moment!"

Debi is thankful for her own home, with plenty of room for cookouts and lawn games with family and friends. Both of her children live less than 10 minutes away from her. Christopher and his wife Brianna, a nurse, have

two young children of their own. The whole family loves creating three-generation memories weekly. At times, Debi's mom is also able to join them.

At least once a week, Debi takes a break from the hustle and bustle of helping others. She puts her phone away and enjoys a time of paddle boarding at Monument Lake or Palmer Lake. The peaceful atmosphere helps her recharge so that she can serve her family and her community even better. She also enjoys Pilates and golfing with family and friends.

Debi gives back to her clients and the community in several ways. She believes in helping spontaneously, as she becomes aware of a need. She also supports the anti-trafficking efforts of Reclaiming Hope (reclaiming-hope.org) and TESSA (www.tessacs.org).

"I love helping people, and I am a nurturing person," Debi explained. "I do what I do, in business and in life, because it is the right thing to do. I know that when I help others, especially with their real estate needs, it trickles down so I can help my own family. I am honored to help families negotiate so that they can make a house a home, put down their roots, and live their best life!"

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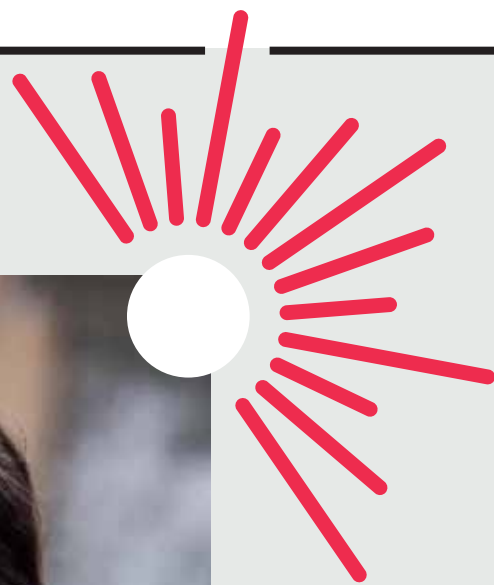


# GALLUCCI



## Providing Assistance to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community

The old adage that so much in email gets lost in translation takes on an entirely different level of meaning if you happen to be deaf or hard-of-hearing, especially if the email traffic is about something as complex as purchasing or selling a home.



“It is easy to forget how much of a real estate transaction is explained verbally, not just as words on paper. Deaf and hard-of-hearing clients are often left confused and – sadly — at a disadvantage when it comes to real estate,” shares REALTOR® Maria Gallucci.

Having a REALTOR® who is fluent in American Sign Language (ASL) and understands the deaf culture can make a tremendous difference for deaf and hard-of-hearing clients. A REALTOR® who can speak ASL is able to answer questions in real-time, translate tedious paperwork, and help a deaf or hard-of-hearing client embark with confidence on the lengthy process and legal-heavy language of real estate.

Maria is a CODA, a child of two deaf parents, and her first language is ASL. When she was 12, her parents bought a home, and Maria saw firsthand the struggles they had, not understanding the myriad of paperwork and forms with such a challenging communication barrier. Maria found herself serving as their interpreter with the sales agent. “I was able to protect my parents from being taken advantage of. It made me realize there was a need for

someone in the real estate industry who was fluent in ASL. I never want to see anyone get taken advantage of ever again by agents who are unaware or insensitive to the deaf and hard-of-hearing community.”

Entering the real estate industry over 30 years ago, Maria began as a mortgage lender. She quickly found that many of her clients could not understand the financial paperwork, she got her real estate license. Today, she is able to assist clients in both the financial and sales transaction sides of their real estate deals. This dual expertise translates well for helping the over 300,000 deaf and hard-of-hearing people living across the Front Range. Maria frequently travels from Fort Collins to Colorado Springs as well as across the Denver metro area to help this unique community. She remains among the very few licensed REALTORS® fluent in ASL across Colorado’s Front Range.

Approximately 85 percent of Maria’s clientele is deaf, and with a total volume of almost \$36 million last year, Maria has secured her niche as a go-to REALTOR® for this underserved community. She helps them find deaf-friendly housing, which includes open floor plans so they can see guests and family members; visual alerts for the doorbell, phone, smoke, and carbon monoxide alarms; security systems; and outdoor motion sensing detectors.

Two years ago, Maria took her advocacy for the deaf and hard-of-hearing community even further. She built ASL Realty, a real estate company that exclusively serves the deaf and hard-of-hearing community nationwide, ensuring this underserved community is not at a disadvantage in real estate transactions. To do this, she has assembled a team of trusted ASL real estate agents who operate throughout the country. ASL Realty has created the first exclusive program to ensure real estate communications for the deaf and hard-of-hearing are consistently met with professionalism and the utmost respect. Through one advocacy push, Maria succeeded in ensuring ASL interpreters are now present at closings and any required real estate classes.

Her work ethic and passion have earned her several top sales awards, including the South Metro Denver REALTOR®





“

There truly is nothing more rewarding than seeing the smile on my clients' faces when they find the home of their dreams.



Association 5 Carat Diamond Circle Award, Denver Metro REALTOR® Association Platinum Award, 5280 Five Star Professional Award, and Home Snap Top 1% Award. She strives to help her clients find a home that feels as special and magical as the one she had as a child.

“There truly is nothing more rewarding than seeing the smile on my clients' faces when they find the home of their dreams. Even though I do over 85 transactions a year, I treat each one as if it is the only deal I am working on. A client's transaction might be the most important thing going on in their lives right now, so my job is to make sure it is a great experience and memory. For the deaf and hard-of-hearing community, my highest goal is to explain each step of the process so that they, too, can achieve the dream

of homeownership. I think it is very important to love and enjoy each and every transaction.”

In addition to serving deaf and hard-of-hearing clients in real estate, Maria also supports The Rocky Mountain Deaf School, Transform Early Healthy Deaf, The Veditz Center, The Colorado Association of the Deaf, DOVE and The Lion Project. She is currently working on a book about growing up as a CODA, and she also enjoys hiking, yoga, and spending time with her daughter and her five siblings, who all live near one another.

From her travels across the Front Range to represent deaf and hard-of-hearing clients, Maria has built well-rounded expertise in Colorado's various communities. Through her fluency in ASL, she is a true advocate for her clients.

“I am most passionate about making sure everyone has a home they love as I did as a child. I also want to make sure everyone (deaf or not) is treated with respect and not taken advantage of. Buying a home should be the most exciting thing in your life, not a stressful or regretful situation.”

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By Dawn Duncan  
Photos by Brenda Saint, b.saint Photography

# LABORJACK



Entrepreneurial dreams are imagined or launched constantly, but bringing a successful idea to fruition is significantly more challenging. For three Colorado State University alumni, however, bringing their innovative idea — Laborjack — to life has proven to be not only fruitful but impressively forward-thinking and modern in its concept and approach.

Founder Blake Craig, a licensed REALTOR®, initially recognized a high demand for good, unskilled labor in the region, particularly in the “hired muscle” area. From moving and lifting heavy or awkward objects to basic landscaping, Blake discovered there were specific areas in which people need and want trusted assistance for a transparent price. Consequently, Blake began to brainstorm how to put his idea into motion, studying companies such as Uber, the world’s largest taxi company but one that doesn’t actually own any vehicles.

“I thought if Uber could operate in this capacity, so could we. We could own zero trucks, tools, or equipment while offering the labor necessary to get pre-listing preparation jobs done efficiently,” Blake said. He ultimately decided to create an app customers could use to access information easily and book hardworking, on-demand laborers to meet their needs quickly. When Blake shared his idea with Co-Founder Josh Moser, who was still a student at the time, it clicked.

“We thought about companies in Silicon Valley and how they are known to raise millions of dollars in venture capital for their startups,” Josh said. “We didn’t have those resources, so we started by putting a free ad online — and the phone started to ring. We bootstrapped this entire operation, and it worked.”

Josh reached out to his CSU Soccer Club teammates through group texts, and those who were first to respond

“

WE’RE PROUD OF HOW WE DID THIS ... WE USED FREE METHODS TO REACH AND TRACK THE PEOPLE WE NEEDED IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND THIS MARKET.

”



“

WE THOUGHT ABOUT COMPANIES IN SILICON VALLEY AND HOW THEY ARE KNOWN TO RAISE MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN VENTURE CAPITAL FOR THEIR STARTUPS. WE DIDN'T HAVE THOSE RESOURCES, SO WE STARTED BY PUTTING A FREE AD ONLINE — AND THE PHONE STARTED TO RING. WE BOOTSTRAPPED THIS ENTIRE OPERATION AND IT WORKED.

”

...

were the first to be hired by Laborjack for temporary jobs. “It was a basic approach, but it immediately proved the demand was real,” Josh added.

Laborjack has a thorough vetting process to select workers. Through interviews, applications and video submissions, the Laborjack team carefully selects candidates who then complete background checks prior to being placed on jobs.

The Laborjack team, which eventually included Benjamin Dunn as chief marketing officer, committed to a big picture where they continued their respective endeavors while building the company. They saved every dollar

they made, putting it back into the business to invest and innovate as a true tech platform.

“We’re proud of how we did this,” Josh said. “We used Google, Craigslist, spreadsheets, and texts: free methods to reach and track the people we needed in order to understand this market.” The mentality of delayed gratification has paid off.

After not taking any funds from the business during its first three years, Laborjack ultimately established itself as a strong, unique service offering in the Colorado market and is now proud to have launched in Colorado Springs earlier this year.

Today, Laborjack employs seven full-time employees in customer service, administration, and marketing. Additionally, in July 2022, Laborjack put nearly 300 people to work, with more than 1,800 people finding gig work through the Laborjack platform as of that month and placement of more than 700 unique contractors on jobs this year. Laborjack provides help in additional areas beyond its initial service offerings, including event and construction staffing. Their internal team also includes four full-time developers, plus several outside vendors, and the business continues to run lean, spend wisely, and make smart decisions.



When they’re not busy doing the countless things needed to grow their venture, the Laborjack team likes to have a good time. Outdoor pursuits, fitness, softball, and golf top Blake’s list, while Josh continues to play and coach soccer, pursue art, video, and photography projects, participate in outdoor recreation, and spend time with friends and

family. Both Blake and Josh are avid Minnesota Vikings fans and enjoy the Colorado lifestyle of sunshine, good food and drink, and entertainment.

With 400-plus five-star reviews on Google as of publication, a solid reputation for excellence working in the real estate arena with clients, and an intrinsic drive to succeed, Laborjack

has positioned itself to continue innovating the staffing industry and meeting the idea of “good help is hard to find” with a slick, contemporary, easy solution that proves that quality help exists and is available at the ready if you have the right tools in place.

For information:

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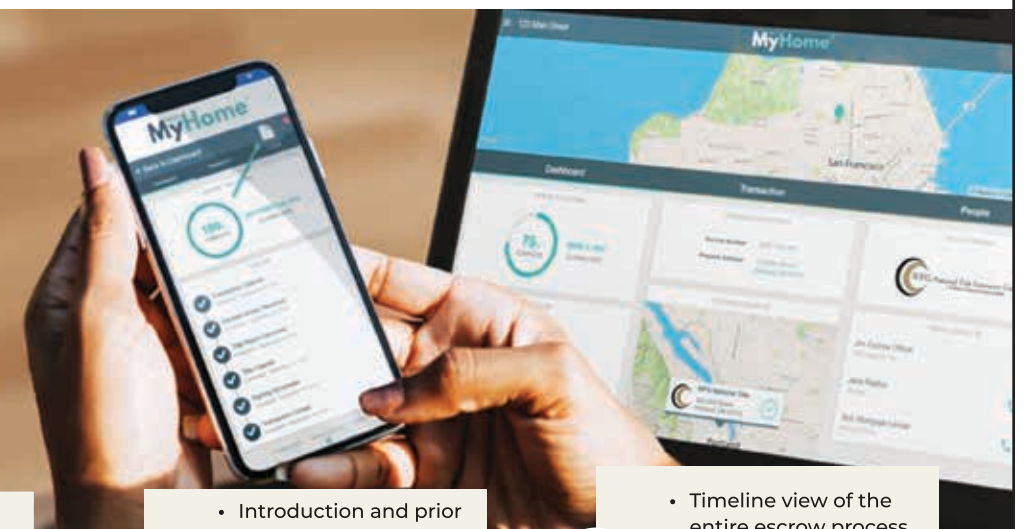


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NAME  
Leslie Fischer  
JOB TITLE  
Sr. Escrow Officer

I've been in the title and escrow industry for more than 9 years. The best part of my job is the opportunity to assist buyers and sellers as they make their dreams come true and embark on new chapters in their lives—whether it's buying their first home or forever home, or sellers who are upgrading or transitioning into retirement. When not working, I love being outdoors on the lake fishing or boating, or in the mountains camping and riding with family and good friends. I also look forward to visiting my family in Iowa and South Dakota. I would love to help with your next transaction, so feel free to contact me at lfischer@firstam.com

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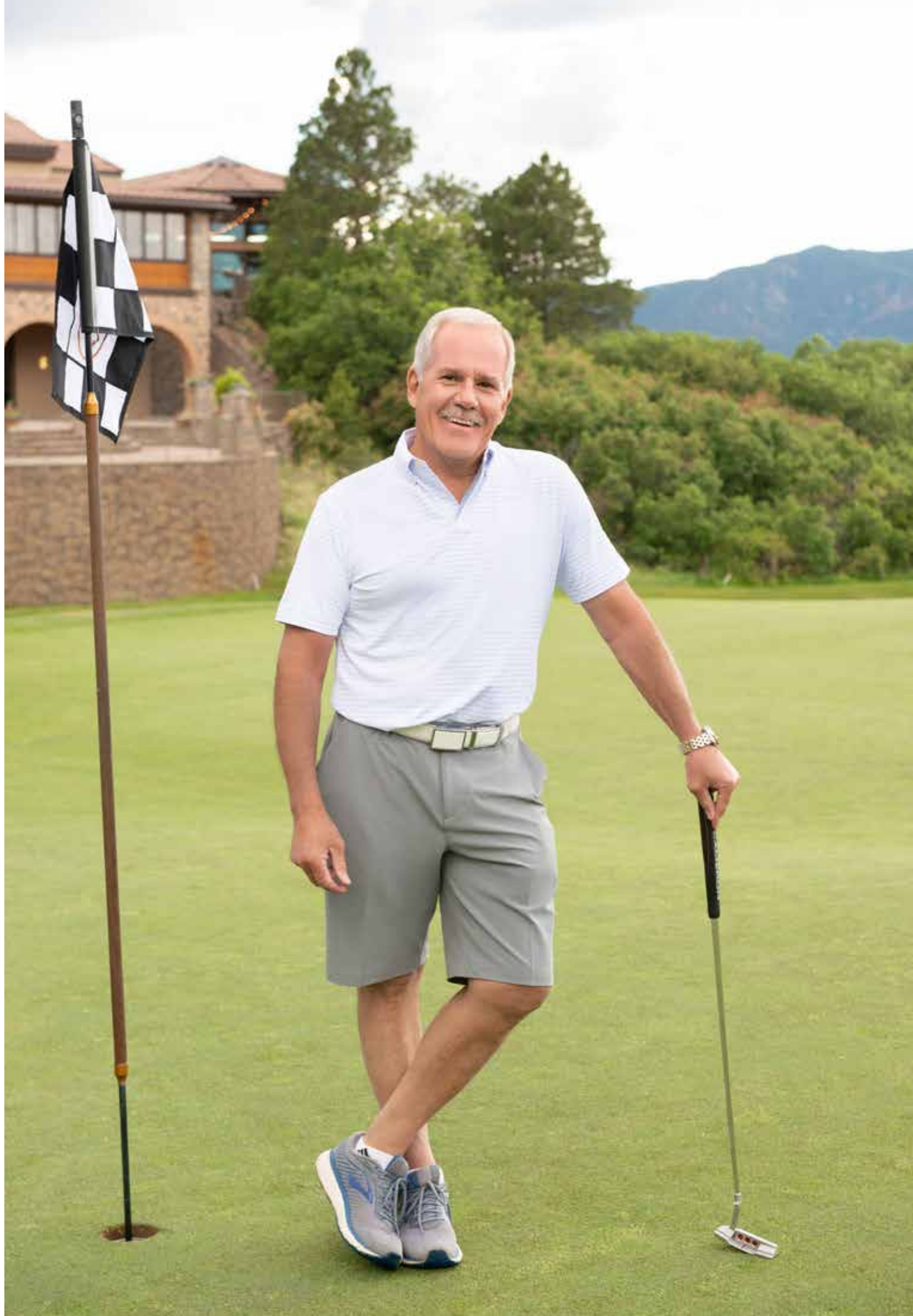
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# ALAN WILABY

## “It’s All About You”

*Alan Wilaby is an expert at building trust-based relationships that carry on for generations. He cares about the people involved in each transaction, including the other party and their REALTOR®, and has built such solid connections within the community that he has sold the same house four different times over the years! This former barber is so intentional about developing quality, real-time relationships with others that he gets up at 4:45 each morning to read and reply to emails so that he is free to devote his attention to real-time interaction with clients during “normal business hours.” Although he has closed approximately \$600M in transactions, he defines his success by the people he helps.*

*For Alan Wilaby, it really is All About You.*

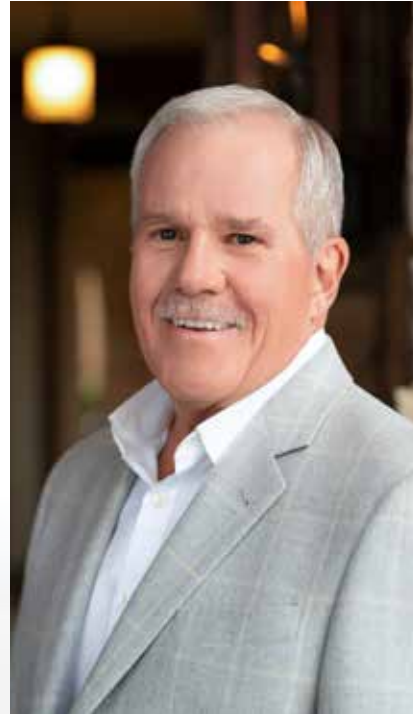
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“ My life grew from providing for my own family to helping other families achieve *their* dreams.

...

When Alan Wilaby was 9 years old, his family moved to Colorado Springs for his dad's job with the Cadet Welfare Fund at the Air Force Academy. Raised to be diligent and entrepreneurial, instead of asking for a handout, Alan found jobs painting, helping clean up around construction sites, and doing lawn work when he was quite young. His strong work ethic helped him experience the joy that comes from being industrious and then reaping the rewards.

When he found out the pre-med classes at CSU were full, he changed his major to pre-vet and planned to focus on pre-med again when there was an opening. He reasoned that pre-vet was a viable option that would allow him to continue moving toward



his goal. However, when his funds ran out, he left CSU and went to barber college. He became an excellent barber/stylist and made extra money at night by working as a bouncer.

Alan was a skilled barber and soon grew his business and reputation with over 500 clients. One of his regular clients was real estate broker Barry Boals. Alan, who bought his first house at age 21, found Barry's stories inspiring on several levels. He started thinking about getting into real estate himself.

He earned his license December 1981 and started working for Barry Boals and Associates on Jan. 1, 1982. However, Alan's first year was not what he had hoped for, with only

\$2,500 in income. Although he had the reward of connecting with many families, he also needed to make a living. The creative problem-solver was determined that he was not going to break and was not going to quit.

"I knew I was meant to help people through real estate," Alan reflected, "so I started volunteering for as many charities as I could. I sat in open houses for other REALTORS® and worked 138 days straight without a day off so that I could connect with as many people as possible. And my hard work paid off."

Alan wanted to enjoy life, but not at the expense of creating a promising future. He had the courage to invite new people into his inner

circle of friends and mentors. He wasn't trying to impress anyone; he just stayed focused on helping people achieve their goals and grew his client base one year at a time. In his second year as an agent, he closed approximately \$70,000 in commissions and not long after, he closed over \$100,000.

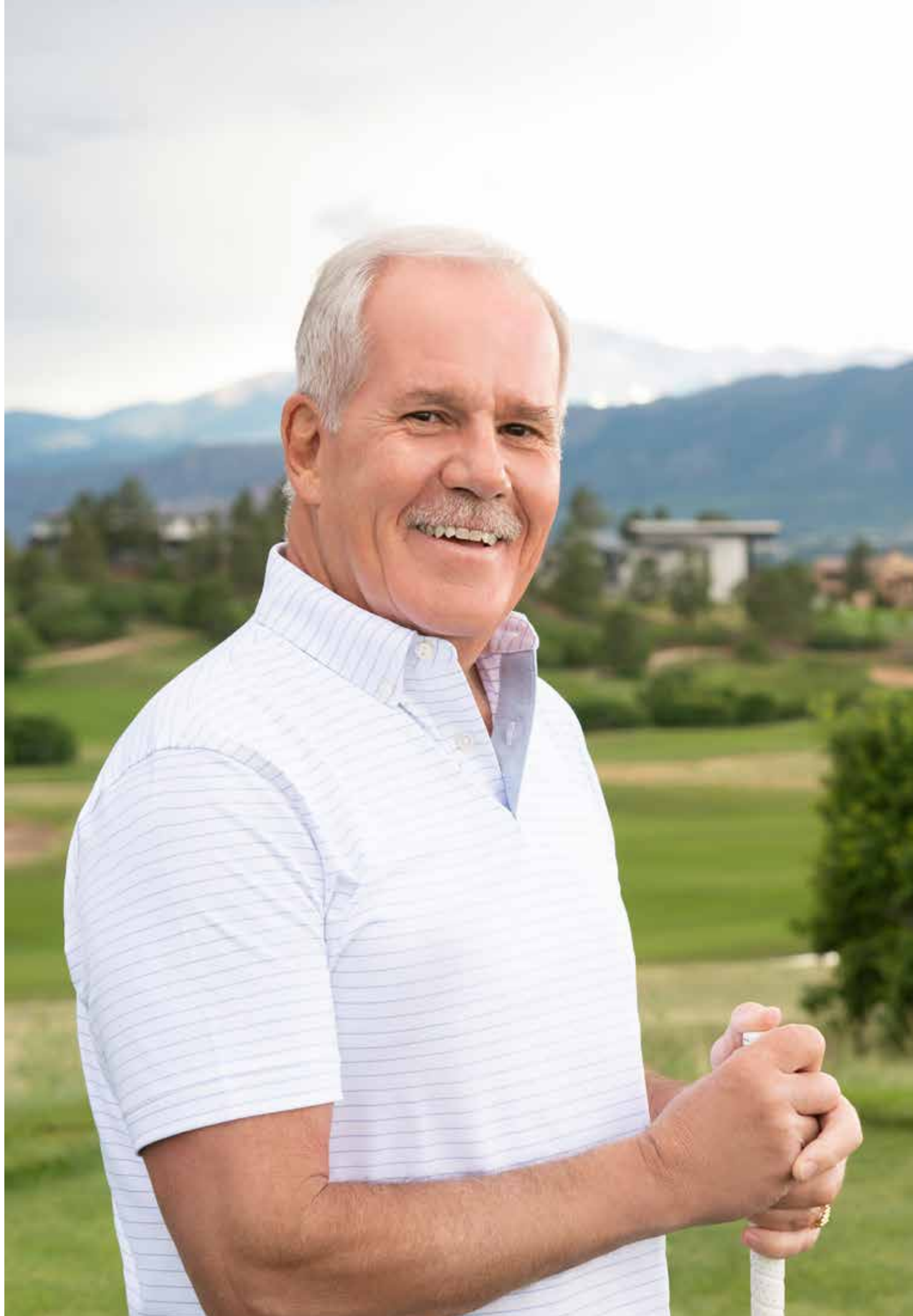
He has been thankful for the support of his amazing wife, Marge, and admits that she is his most important person. They have built their life together and have had many adventures along the way. In the mid-80s, they owned over a dozen investment properties, and in 2006 they were involved with the development of a 58,000-square-foot office space. The Wilabys discovered how important "timing" is for success in real estate investing.

"My life grew from providing for my own family to helping other families achieve *their* dreams," recalled Alan. "I made sure that what I was doing was fun, and I stayed transparent, and people really responded to that! The more I gave away, the more I received. I learned that when I stopped worrying about the next commission, I started making more money. I don't just 'dial for dollars,' but I make an intentional effort to touch bases with all my contacts in a personal way, all 1000 of them."

Alan has been in real estate for 40 years and six months and has helped three generations of families achieve their dreams. Once, he had 12 closings in a

...





“ I strive to make each transaction the first of many and I make it my goal to be the kind of REALTOR® that the agent on the other end of the transaction wants to work with *again!*”

...

month and nine in a single day! He has sold some of the most *and* some of the least expensive houses in his market. Alan treats everyone with the same honesty and respect and is committed to his job as a trusted advisor. He truly takes the time to learn what each client needs and wants.

It is important to Alan to be personally connected to all of his clients. Although he is always available to mentor agents in the brokerage, Alan prefers to work

as a single agent with a part-time licensed assistant. He shared that he appreciates people with knowledge and believes that while attitude is important, education helps good agents become even better. He is always willing to share his experiential wisdom and to learn from others.

Alan and Marge love to travel to Florida often to visit their daughter, son-in-law, and granddaughter. For years Alan has loved to ski. He also enjoys deepening client relationships over rounds of golf at The Club at Flying Horse.

“I strive to make each transaction the first of many,” smiled Alan, “and I make it my goal to be the kind of REALTOR® that the agent on the other end of the transaction wants to work with *again!* I will probably never quit because I genuinely love what I do. Real estate feels very natural to me because it is based on relationships. However, I have also spent time learning difficult things about water rights and selling a ranch because that was what my clients needed. And it’s all about *them!*”

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**Jason Lyman** met his fiancé while he was DJing an event!



**Liz Snow-Wheeler** used to be a rodeo queen for Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo. She was titled "Girl of the West" in 1969!

▶ around town

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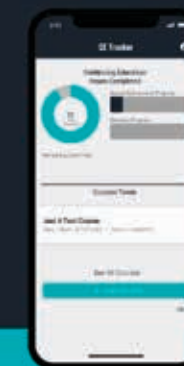
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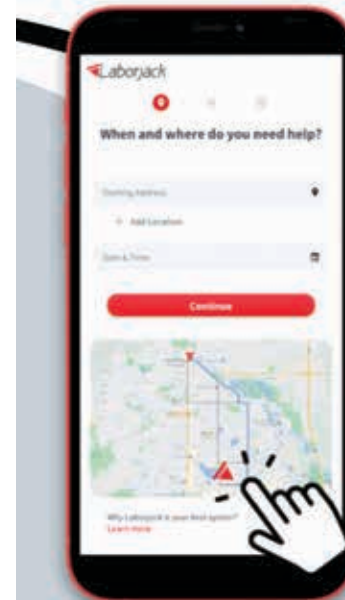
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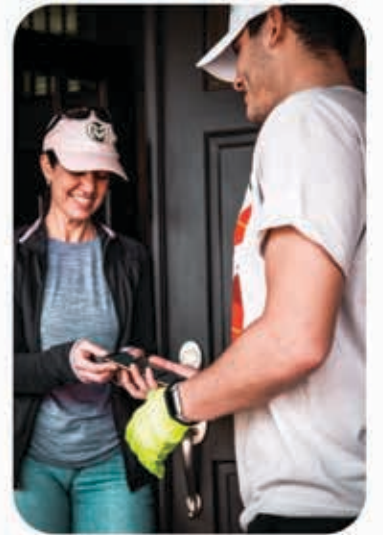
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*We believe in raising the standards of the industry, to disrupt the status quo.*

*We do this by being a part of a bigger team that protects, educates and is driven to excellence; so that we can offer high quality home inspections.*



# Fodor Billiards

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### Quality THAT LASTS

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## PREMIERONE HOME INSPECTIONS

*"If We Inspect It, We Protect It"*

### Why Us?

- 100 - Day **PREMIER GUARANTEE**, backed AND serviced by us. No third party companies to deal with. Even covers items that fail after the inspection day. No unexpected expenses/repairs for clients to worry about the first few months after moving in!\*
- We use the latest inspection technology and provide **same day reports**.
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- **5.0 Rating** on Google with over 1200 reviews!
- We understand how difficult going under contract can be in this market. The last thing buyers need is to be unnecessarily scared out of their purchase by an inspector. We use **level headed reporting** to deliver a balanced assessment of a home without using scare tactics.



5.0 ★★★★★ 1,279 Google reviews  
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