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**Jenni Comer**  
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**Ellen Buchanan**  
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**Wendy Ross**  
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**Zachary Cohen**  
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**Philip Andrews**  
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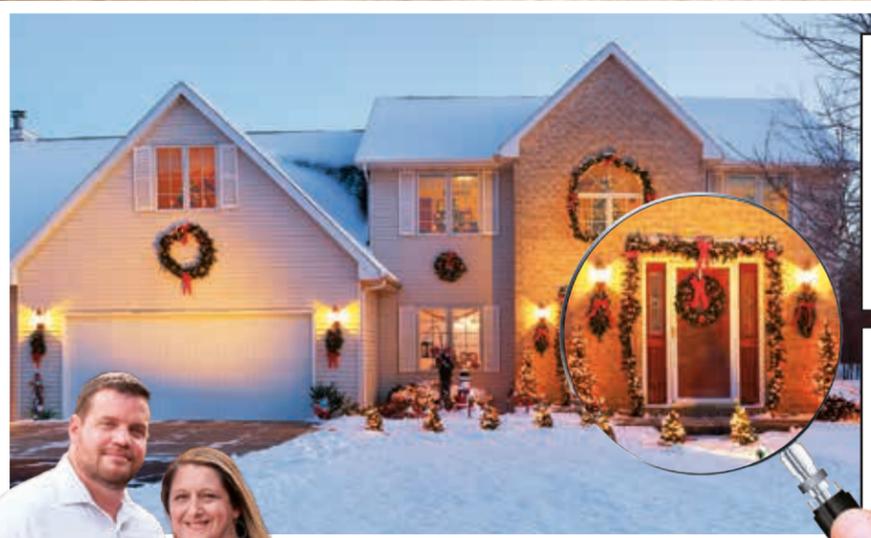
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# 'Tis the Season of Joy, Giving, & Connection



Dear Real Producers of Richmond,

The holidays are upon us, and as the world sparkles with festive lights, it's a time to cherish family, friends, and meaningful connections. It's also a season of giving, a magical time when we come together to share our joy and gratitude.

The holidays offer the perfect backdrop for strategic gifting, an opportunity to reflect on our client appreciation efforts. As the year comes to a close, it's a great moment to review your client gifting strategies. Are you continuing with what's been working, or is it time to shake things up and explore fresh options?

For creative inspiration, consider checking out cutting-edge closing gifts at [www.strategicgifting.com](http://www.strategicgifting.com). They offer innovative branding and client-gifting ideas that can help you stand out and deepen your client relationships.

Living in joy is not just reserved for the holiday season; it's a mindset that we can carry with us throughout the year! On a personal note, I want to express my heartfelt joy over this community as we celebrate our 2nd anniversary in print!!! Thank you to the amazing agents who have graced our pages and shared such inspirational stories, as well as our incredible partners who have made this publication and all of our fantastic Real Producers events possible!

We are celebrating two years in print this month and have come a long way since our inaugural issue in December of 2021! This year, I also feel blessed to have **Jenni Comer** join our team as

our associate publisher. As a top producer herself, Jenni brings years of experience in real estate, as well as an intimate knowledge of our Richmond Real Producers community. I'm excited to see what the future holds with Jenni onboard!

We're looking forward to seeing all of you again at our next big event in early 2024! Keep an eye on your inbox for an exclusive invitation; we can't wait to create more cherished memories together.

Happy holidays to you and yours!

With gratitude,



**Kristin Brindley**  
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### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

What new and creative client appreciation ideas could you explore to strengthen your connections in the coming year?

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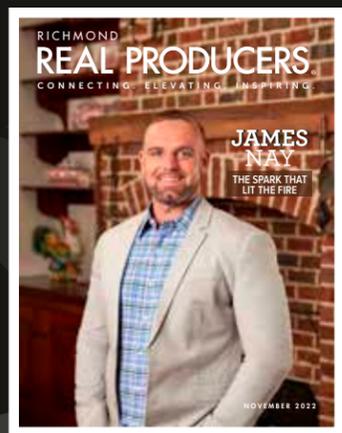
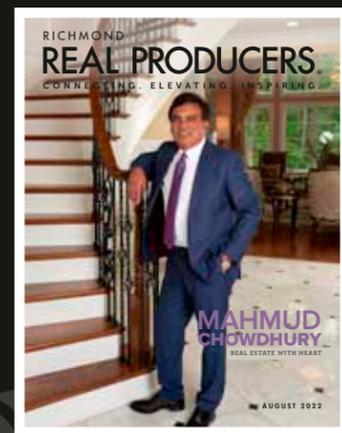
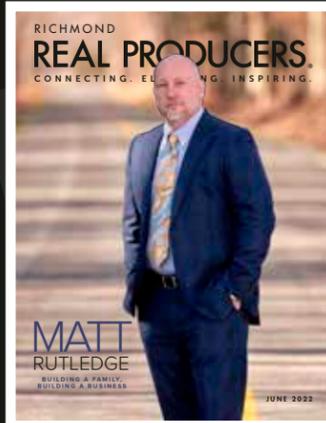
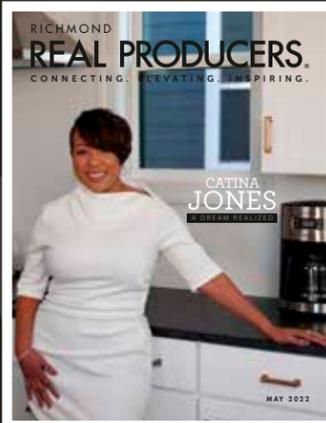


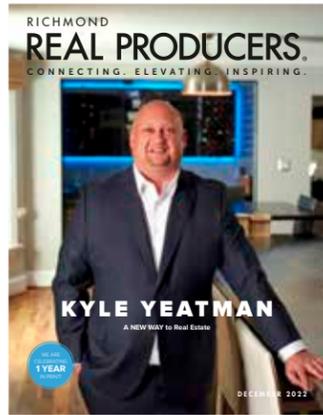
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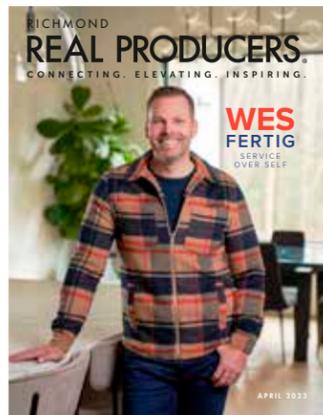
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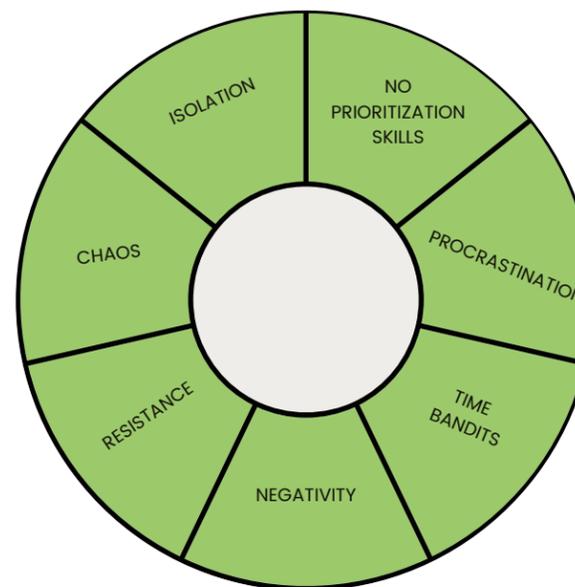
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## 7 HABITS OF THE FAILURE CYCLE



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Professional business coaches are trained to identify “failure cycles.” In fact, we have discovered **7 habits** which most often contribute to this cycle as illustrated in the graph. Grab the next *Real Producers* magazine to read Part Two of “The Failure Cycle” for a detailed discussion of the first three of the seven identified habits.



Drew DeMaree was born and raised in the Midwest and graduated from Johnson & Wales University. He has been a licensed REALTOR® since 2005 and a business

coach since 2015. Drew has been recognized as a Top 20 MAPS coach for Keller Williams Realty offices throughout the country. He has also operated a brokerage that rose to number 1 in closed sales volume in the area for three consecutive years, and founded The Freedom Companies, an independent coaching, training and events business, in 2020. Drew DeMaree, 804-937-0773, drew@thefreedomcompanies.com

# THE FAILURE CYCLE

## PART 1 OF 3

Failure allows us to grow! A simple childhood rite of passage, learning to ride a bike, illustrates why. The cycle begins with training wheels, a steady hand or fancy footwork required to strike the “perfect balance” to get started. Next, you must maintain balance while pedaling, learning to control your speed and mastering the final touch, manipulating the brakes properly to slow or stop.

Failing forward as an entrepreneur follows a similar pattern. Striking the “perfect balance” between work and family while wearing multiple hats, attempting to build your business and digging deep for the grit required in tough times is often just as painful as falling off a bike. Maintaining passion and commitment when the balance is off is difficult. Yet, finding the courage to stop doing things that aren’t working is possibly the hardest part of owning a business.

Just like riding a bike, if we make the wrong choices, take the wrong steps or create the wrong balance...

we will fall, and are often left wondering how and why this happened. Seeking the answers to these questions is when we learn that *failure teaches more than success!* Previously undiscovered mistakes are revealed allowing us to take action by making adjustments to the original business plan.

If you haven’t experienced failure, I submit that you aren’t attempting new things. Creating a new habit, developing a routine, or building an action plan is bound to result in failure on some level. The old adage “you never forget how to ride a bike” stems from the fact that when we fall off, we are taught to get back on and try again. This philosophy holds true in business as well.

Many coaching clients join our program because what they are doing is “not working” or it is working but they feel “out of balance” or “want more.” In short, a business that once was fun and exciting has become hard, stressful, time consuming, and overwhelming.

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## SERVING A HIGHER PURPOSE



# ANDY TAYLOR THE JUNKLUGGERS

By Zachary Cohen | Photo by Philip Andrews

“Let’s imagine you were left with your grandma’s house full of furniture. You have your whole house full of your own stuff, and you don’t have room for her items.”

Andy Taylor begins our sit-down with an all-too-familiar story. Unfortunately, the solution to this predicament is fairly common and sad as well. In the name of ease, most people would call a junk removal company and have the bulk of their grandmother’s belongings hauled off to the landfill.

“But given different options, how would you like to deal with her items?” Andy continues. “Would you rather throw them away to rot in the local landfill or have them donated to a family in need that can use them? That’s when it hits you. If people just knew there was an option to do this the way we do, it would be a no-brainer.”

### A SECOND START

Andy spent the first 25 years of his professional life as a sales and marketing executive. In

the latter part of his career, he worked his way up to become a VP of Sales and Marketing for an international media solutions company. But when the organization underwent a restructuring and Andy was offered an early retirement package, he accepted. “I wasn’t really looking to retire, but I saw an opportunity to write chapter two of my career. So my family and I took that opportunity and began to look for something else to do.”



Andy Taylor, owner of The Junkluggers of Central Virginia

In looking for a new career, Andy had two criteria that stood above the rest. He wanted his second career to be environmentally focused, and he wanted to be in a position to give back to the community. Andy reviewed several opportunities in detail before he came across The Junkluggers.

“The Junkluggers checked those two boxes effectively,” Andy recalls. “I was intrigued by the passion the ownership group had for cleaning up the environment and coming up with environmentally responsible solutions to household waste, which is donated, repurposed, and recycled instead of being dumped unceremoniously. By working with local charities and nonprofits, we are able to donate almost all of the reusable items or find a

new purpose for them. Our goal by 2025 is to keep 100 percent of reusable items out of the landfill!”

**DOING RIGHT BY CLIENTS, RIGHT BY THE ENVIRONMENT**

Over the past seven-plus years, Andy’s business has, in his own words, “seen incredible growth” as he has worked tirelessly to grow The Junkluggers into a household name. Still, he believes the most significant barrier to getting more business is simple name recognition. Since he can offer his more eco-friendly services at virtually the same cost (or less) as his competitors, he believes choosing The Junkluggers is a no-brainer. The proof is in the data. To date, over 65 percent of The Junklugger’s business is made up of repeat customers and referrals and their across-the-board, 5-Star rating proves that

customer service and satisfaction is, and always will be, a top priority.

“It’s a win-win-win situation. The customer is able to get rid of items in an environmentally friendly manner, the landfill is saved one item at a time, and the charities and their patrons are supported. Best of all, we’re able to deliver this sustainable service at a cheaper price point because we don’t have the landfill fees our competitors do,” Andy says.

Like so many others, Andy’s business was challenged by COVID-19, as the storefronts of the charities he often donated to closed down.

As his donation pipeline dried up, Andy was forced to find a creative solution. After considerable thought and planning, The Junkluggers of Central Virginia

opened ReMix Market RVA, a shop in Ashland, that sells repurposed home goods, furnishings, antiques, and collectibles. ReMix then uses those proceeds to help fund their charity of choice. Currently, that charity is Richmond’s own Better2GetherRVA, which provides support and resources to local area families with rare and complex medical issues. Meanwhile, The Junkluggers and ReMix Market continue to donate furniture and household goods to area charities and nonprofits, as well as local families in need.

“We know we’re doing things the right way. We can’t continue to fill up landfills and expect Mother Earth to handle that,” Andy declares.

“The addition of Emma Bradberry as our director of business development

has really fueled our commercial growth as of late,” Andy states. “Working together, Emma and I both continue to introduce people to this eco-friendly solution. Because that remains our biggest challenge — that people don’t know there’s an option to donate, repurpose, or recycle. For most of my competitors, just about everything goes to the landfill by default. It’s our opinion that we can’t continue to burden Mother Nature in that capacity. We need to be responsible purveyors of the environment and come up with better, more responsible, sustainable solutions.”

For more information, please visit [www.junkluggersofcentralva.com](http://www.junkluggersofcentralva.com).



Emma Bradberry, Director of Business Development



**WE KNOW WE'RE DOING THINGS THE RIGHT WAY.**

**WE CAN'T CONTINUE TO FILL UP LANDFILLS AND EXPECT MOTHER EARTH TO HANDLE THAT.**



# VENUS BOLTON



## The Stress-Relieving Dynamo

Venus Bolton describes herself as someone who has never met a stranger. Transitioning from being a wellness advisor to becoming a dynamic force in the real estate world, Venus's career is a testament to resilience, determination, and a deep commitment to giving back to the community.

After years in IT management, Venus left the conventional workspace and found success in a creative endeavor. She describes her initial foray as the "stress whisperer."

"This unique career involved helping people understand the ill effects of stress, the importance of self-care, and how to recreate the experience for themselves," Venus explains.

The venture was successful, and Venus was sought after for her expertise. However, it was primarily a way to contribute and support her family while working from home.

As life progressed, Venus began to contemplate real estate, a field she had always considered. When the opportunity arrived, she enrolled in a real estate course, albeit with some initial doubts. "My determination led me to excel and complete the course," Venus recalls. "By the end of that course, I had a newfound passion for real estate."

### Figuring It All Out

After obtaining her license in 2019, Venus began holding conversations with different brokerages, seeking the perfect fit. Venus took the time to speak to numerous individuals over several weeks, ultimately finding her place with a team that resonated with her values and goals.

In her first year at Keller Williams with the Ruckart Real Estate team, Venus had remarkable accomplishments and success, closing 24 deals in her first year, which exceeded her expectations. She modestly believed it might be a fluke, attributed to the kindness of her friends and network. However, her second year in real estate doubled her achievements, dispelling any doubts.

One notable aspect of Venus's career is her success rate in referral-based business. Over time, she recognized a pattern, in that the majority of her success was rooted in her sphere of influence. This revelation raised questions about the necessity of working

team-generated leads outside of her reach and ultimately what life beyond a team could look like. "I believe this is a testament to my professionalism and the strong, warm relationships I build with my clients," she emphasizes. "I also believe in the power of my network."

### An Unexpected Twist

Venus's path took an unforeseen turn when she was involved in an automobile accident, leading to a traumatic brain injury. Her recovery process was challenging, and during that time she relied heavily on the team to help move her business forward. This period saw her participating in brain-injury and speech-pathology therapy, striving to regain her health and cognitive abilities.

"During my recovery, my perspective on my real estate career shifted," Venus explains. "I realized that my passion wasn't just about selling houses; it was about education, empowerment, and helping people make informed decisions about their homes and the process." This profound realization inspired Venus to start a new chapter in her real estate career.





**A New Beginning**

While Venus notes she is forever grateful to have had an extraordinary front-row seat watching a high-level team operate, the accident and the subsequent therapy brought a newfound clarity to her life. She and Eddie Jackson Jr. founded Blue Ocean Realty, with a vision of creating a more boutique and concierge-focused approach to real estate.

Since launching in the summer of 2022, Blue Ocean Realty has partnered with and is currently brokered by Call It Closed International Realty to build and grow the Richmond market.

**Family Matters**

Venus's life is enriched by her husband, Quentin, and children, Paris, Jalen, Mireya, and Makinley, who have been each other's support and strength through tremendous challenges.

In 2011, Venus's daughter, Mireya, was diagnosed with a life-threatening illness, for which the only cure was a bone marrow transplant. Venus's son, Jalen, was identified as a match for his sister and was quickly scheduled for bone marrow transplant. A year later, Mireya experienced a relapse, which resulted in the immediate need for a second bone marrow transplant. After three years of active treatment and almost two years of the maintenance phase, she was transitioned to the Survivorship Clinic for annual visits. The family recently celebrated eight years of survivorship.

“With the launch of the new Children’s Hospital of Richmond at VCU this year, our family made the decision to give the gift of legacy through two named spaces in the hospital — one on the new Children’s Hospital bone marrow unit and one on the PICU unit, where our son spent his time doing what was necessary to save his sister’s life.”

Community involvement is a vital part of Venus's life. Over the years, she and her family have dedicated their time to supporting organizations serving patient families and children facing medical challenges. Their commitment to giving back is a central part of their ethos and something they plan to continue in paying forward all the love and support they received as they walked through their own personal story for almost five years.

“What we work to do is to really give back and serve in the community, a large part of it with patients’ families and kids that are going through difficult things,” she says. “We’ve done a lot of speaking at events for Children’s Miracle Network and Children’s Hospital. My goal is that a portion of the production is given back to these organizations that we know and love and are dear to us. It’s always about how we can continue to serve people and show up for them, as well as further the causes of organizations that showed up for us.”



Front row: Paris, Makinley, Mireya;  
Back row: Jalen, Venus, Quentin



# ELLIOTT GRAVITT

Sold on Service



The Providence Hill Real Estate leadership team (from left to right: Elliott Gravitt, Dawson Boyer, Caleb Boyer)

*“One thing that I want people to understand is that you can be anything you want in this business if you do it right and do it well by being gracious and kind.”*

As co-owner and principal broker of Providence Hill Real Estate, Elliott Gravitt’s career resonates in a world where achievement is often measured by transactions and numbers. For Elliott and his colleagues, Dawson Boyer and Caleb Boyer, success in real estate is defined by something much deeper — the relationships they build and the service their firm provides. Their approach has paid dividends: the brokerage has grown to 46 agents and they plan to open a second office in Midlothian sometime in early 2024.

A Richmond native, Elliott’s background is firmly rooted in teaching and coaching. Before venturing into real estate, he coached college basketball at the University of Richmond, at Lebanon Valley College, and at Lehigh University, and taught and coached at Tucker High School and St. Christopher’s School, finishing his teaching and coaching career at The Steward School. Educating was no doubt Elliott’s initial calling, but he started to feel the pull to do something different after a while.

“I had always loved sales,” Elliott shares. “Since I was a college basketball coach before I was a REALTOR®, recruiting and selling people on whatever university I was at was part of my job. And frankly, I think I just lost the steam for teaching.”

#### **Another Path**

Elliott’s love for sales and service-oriented work led him to explore the possibilities of becoming a real estate agent. A mentor and friend, John McGurn, guided him into this new venture in 2012. For Elliott, real estate offered the perfect blend of sales and service, an opportunity to build relationships, not just transactions.

“I wanted to do something that was sales, but with a service aspect,” Elliott explains. “I love being a real estate agent as I’m able to help people through the entire transaction and beyond, in any way they may need; and a lot of these folks that have been my clients have become friends.”

Elliott’s dedication and unique approach to real estate quickly set him apart. In the past year alone, he closed 45 transactions with a total volume exceeding \$19 million. Awards and accolades have followed, including recognition



Elliott Gravitt is the co-owner and principal broker of Providence Hill Real Estate.

as one of the top three real estate agents in Richmond by the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* both this year and last.

What really sets Elliott apart from the crowd, though, is his amazing attentiveness and the unending support he gives to his clients. He believes strongly in always being an advocate for them, not just during transactions but long after they've found their dream homes.

"You don't have to steamroll and run over people," Elliott notes. "There's a way to do this business well by building strong relationships, serving with professionalism and integrity, and treating people with respect."

**Outside the Office**

Elliott has a rich life outside of work. He enjoys spending time with his wife, Emily, and daughters, Landon (15) and Fields (14). They also share their home with a furry friend, Professor Truffles, an Australian Labradoodle with a playful spirit.

The Gravitts love any opportunity to explore an amusement park together as a family, and Elliott is an avid tennis player. His passion for sports extends to cheering for the UVA Cavaliers, Atlanta Braves, Washington Commanders, and Denver Nuggets. Moreover, his active involvement in his church and



The Gravitt family (left to right: Landon, Emily, Elliott, Fields)



local nonprofits underscores his dedication to community and faith.

“Our firm is involved in a lot of charities. We really believe in giving back,” Elliott emphasizes. “Some of the things we are involved in are SHOOD (Shoes for Good), a really great organization that provides good, quality shoes to economically disadvantaged communities; Young Life; Urban Hope, which helps with housing in the East End; and Fatherhood Foundation and Angel Tree. We also support Freeman High School in their academic and athletic pursuits.

Looking forward, Elliott’s, Dawson’s, and Caleb’s aspirations are to continue growing Providence Hill Real Estate, welcoming more agents who share the same client-centric values, and maintaining a strong ethical standard in the industry.

“I used to always tell my basketball team, essentially, that ‘Inch by inch, life is a cinch. Yard by yard, life is hard!’ So when you think about a game plan for your business or for your clients, it’s just about taking small steps at a time, doing the little things right, and not worrying about the scoreboard,” Elliott smiles. “And if you do that, the large things will take care of themselves.”

Elliott Gravitt confidently flashes his iconic number one hand sign.



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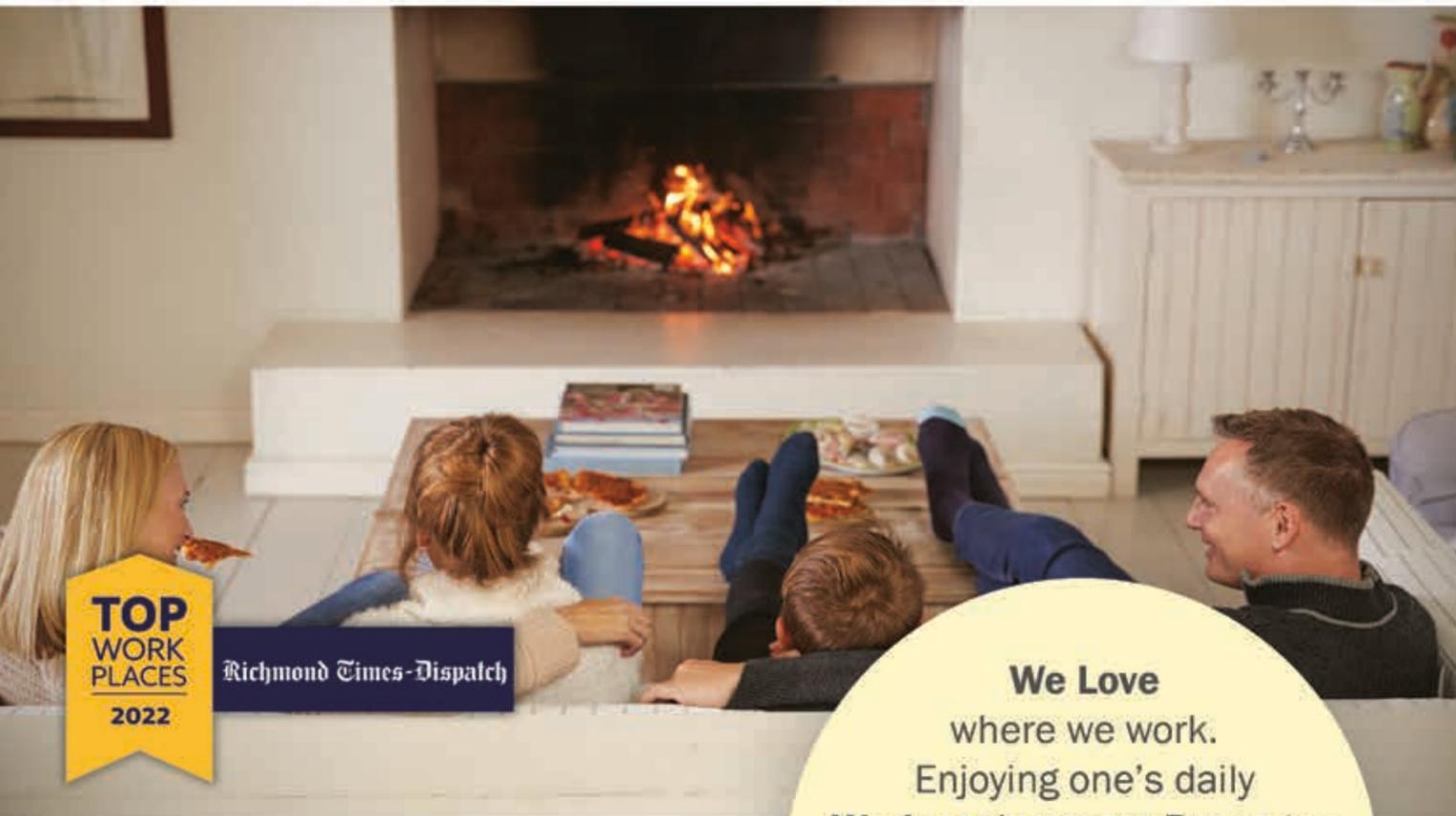
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Teams and Individuals Closed Data from Jan. 1 to Oct 31, 2023

Rank	Name	Office	List Units	List Volume (Selling \$)	Sold Units	Sell Volume (Buying \$)	Total Units	Total \$
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**Disclaimer:** Information based on MLS closed data as of November 4, 2023, for residential sales from January 1, 2023, to October 31, 2023, in Greater Richmond, Virginia, by agents licensed in our service area, which includes Hanover, New Kent, Henrico, Charles City, Chesterfield, Powhatan, Goochland, King William Counties. Numbers not reported to the MLS by the date the information is retrieved are not included. MLS is not responsible for submitting this data. Some teams may report each agent individually.

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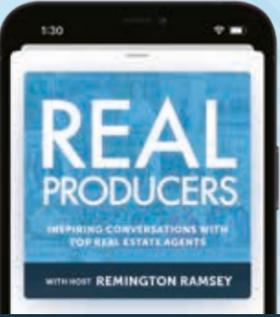
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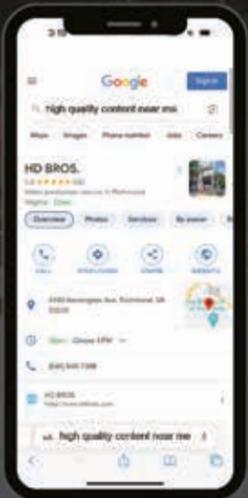


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