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Cover Story: Alex King

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RP

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Zachary Cohen
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The Key is RELATIONSHIPS

Dear Fort Myers Real Producers,

February is a month we celebrate relationships — typically, the romantic ones. For me, this February 14th is a special Valentine's Day, as Klarissa and I are excited to be planning our wedding.

On the professional side, it's a great time to reprioritize relationships for 2023. In the real estate industry, as well as all the ancillary industries that serve it, relationships are the key to success. We depend on creating real and lasting connections with others; that is how we are able to sustain our businesses and propel them forward. As we move fully into what promises to be a fast-paced 2023, filled with, no doubt, lots of challenges, as well as lots of opportunities, I encourage you to take a look at all of your relationships — personal, with friends and family; professional, with co-workers, clients, vendors, mentors, mentees and coaches; with service people; and with neighborhoods and communities of all sorts — with an eye to enhancing and strengthening them. What and how can we do better this year than the year before?

Here, at Real Producers, one of the core elements of our mission is to connect this community — via introductions and opportunities to gather and meet one another in more intimate and casual settings — to learn from each other and strengthen

all of our business partnerships. *The RP Experience* podcast, launched in 2022, is another way we're focusing on relationships in this community, connecting names with faces and businesses; and sharing valuable information with each other. We've heard many different, creative, memorable ways Real Producers stay connected with and do special things for their sphere. This year should be one where we take our efforts up another notch!

Speaking of connecting, we just celebrated the launch of *Fort Myers Real Producers* in 2022 at our big launch party on January 19th at The Club at Renaissance. Thanks to all who came out and attended! Look for pictures of you and your friends on our social media and in next month's issue.

We'll have another exciting Fort Myers Real Producers event in the spring, so stay tuned!

Very respectfully yours,

Andrew Regenhard
Owner/Publisher
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From the Desk of the

PRESIDENT



YOUR BUSINESS PARTNER IN 2023

By **Mike McGraw**, president of Florida Realtors®

As the voice for real estate in Florida, Florida Realtors® knows that business owners, entrepreneurs, and Realtors® are doers — they get the job done. As your professional trade association, our commitment is to support the American dream of homeownership, build strong communities, and shape public policy on real property issues. Through it all, we are here to make you successful. Florida Realtors is your business partner.

In 2023, we'll focus on four foundational areas: advocacy, professionalism, the Realtor heart, and protecting our environment. These four areas highlight the spectrum of our profession and, collectively, will move us forward.

As your advocate, Florida Realtors is committed to advocating for insurance reform, attainable workforce housing, policies which safeguard Florida's waterways and our unique and amazing environment, and the protection of private property rights. We know these issues are important to you, and we want to hear from you in 2023. Please join us for a cup of coffee and some cool cars during our **Coffee, Cars and RPAC tour**. Details are being finalized, and you will find all information at www.floridarealtors.org.

Successful Realtors are educated Realtors. To maintain and build on your success, Florida Realtors provides products, tools, and services to support you and your business. These efforts work to advance increased professionalism in all sectors of our industry.

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Florida Realtors offers a range of education programs. However, we realize that some practitioners lead the way in education, innovation, and successful businesses. To recognize these distinguished individuals, Florida Realtors is launching the **Florida Realtors Board Certified Realtor program** in January of 2023.

Keep an eye out for exciting details about this new program.

Florida Realtors are the heart of their communities, and the association wants to tell your story. Thousands of Realtors offered their services or their funds when Hurricane Ian struck, and the Florida Realtors Disaster Relief fund has paid out over \$700,000 to families who needed support following the storm. In 2023, we look forward to celebrating the Realtor heart with the entire industry.

Finally, in 2023, Florida Realtors' new Community Engagement Committee will build on the strength of our annual **Cleanup Florida Waters campaign**. The event runs the entire month of July. Last year's cleanup effort was incredibly successful, with 40 participating boards/associations. Nearly 2,000 Realtors and volunteers were involved in clearing 8.185 tons of trash and debris from Florida's beaches, canals and waterways. Want to join us this year? Visit www.floridarealtors.org/events for more information.

Florida Realtors is your business partner, and we celebrate your success, your advocacy for your industry, and your critical role in your community.



Mike McGraw

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To learn more or to inquire about being a guest on *The RP Experience*, email andrew.regenhard@n2co.com.



RECAP OF EPISODES 52-54

EPISODE 52
BUTCH BACON

As a young man, Butch Bacon, preferred partner and owner of Dominion Contracting Group, was quickly gaining experience in many aspects of the construction business. Butch served in the Marine Corps from 1986 to 1990, after which he worked as a technician for Eastern Airlines until they went out of business. Butch discovered he had a passion for building and repairing things, and went on to work for Gulf Stream Homes from its inception in 1998 until 2005. When he began noticing the market shifting, Butch decided to start his own company. Today, Dominion Contracting Group does everything from kitchens, baths,

and flooring, to complete renovation of both commercial and residential properties. Butch explains that Dominion Contracting Group is a full-service remodel restoration company that does dryouts when a flood hits, but most of the company's focus is on kitchen and bath remodels.

Butch relates his experience doing missionary work and traveling around the world, but says he has always considered Naples to be a wonderful spot. In this episode, he shares what he enjoys and appreciates most about the day-to-day operations of Dominion Contracting Group.



Butch Bacon (left) with Andrew Regenhard

EPISODE 53
DAN DIEKNEITE

Dan Diekneite, a Realtor with William Raveis Real Estate and a top producer in the entire state of Florida, was born and raised in St. Louis, Missouri. His family had vacationed in Florida since he was a child and, eventually, Dan moved to Naples for the lifestyle and quality of life. He obtained his real estate license during his junior year of college and, after graduation, entered the real estate business full-time, beginning in an assistant/marketing role, and quickly transitioned to real estate sales.

In this episode, Dan shares his love for boating and the Florida beaches, and discusses the impact Hurricane Ian has had on the local real estate market.

He advises people looking to buy in Southwest Florida to look for a home without damage from flooding and to choose a new construction home if possible. He predicts which areas in Naples will be most popular for people to move to post-hurricane, and also touches on predictions about interest rates and what he has heard from lenders about what can be expected by the end of summer 2023. Dan emphasizes the importance of staying in touch with clients and keeping up-to-date with email marketing. Career-wise, he says, the best advice he's received is to dress for success since it helps build trust and also creates confidence while conducting business.



Dan Diekneite (left) with Andrew Regenhard

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EPISODE 54

DEAN SHACKLEY

Top producer Dean Shackley is a Realtor on the Caine Luxury Team at Keller Williams Realty. Before moving to Florida, Dean worked 15 years in construction sales and management. He had always dreamt of a career in real estate and decided to relocate to Naples with his family. In 2021, his first year in business, Dean closed an impressive \$14 million in sales by working hard and putting in the effort in the selling process and building up his clientele.

In this episode, Dean talks about the congenital heart defect he was born with. No stranger to operations and procedures, in 2020, Dean underwent open heart surgery.

Sharing the experience and subsequent road to recovery after his surgery, Dean describes how his life changed forever and how blessed he feels to have gotten a second chance at life.

Dean's best advice to anyone who is starting out in real estate is to stop listening to people and, instead, put your head down and get to work. He states the importance of looking the part and being professional when representing clients and says for breaking into selling luxury real estate, it's all about holding yourself to high standards and looking the part.



Dean Shackley (left) with Andrew Regenhart



ANDREW REGENHARD

Andrew Regenhart is the owner and publisher of *Naples Real Producers* and *Fort Myers Real Producers* magazines. Born and raised in Wisconsin, Andrew moved to North Dakota for flight training and used to be a flight instructor. He later had an opportunity to do defense contracting and worked in Washington State for a few years. Once his father became terminally ill, Andrew decided to move to Naples, where his parents were living, to be closer to them. A friend introduced Andrew to Real Producers, and he decided to start up a franchise of the REALTOR®-centric publication in SWFL, where he has been growing the company by leaps and bounds for the last three years.





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MIKE Monge

For the Love of Southwest Florida



“I love where I live. This is my home. I was born and raised here, and this is where I’ll stay,” Mike Monge begins. “No one loves Southwest Florida more than I do.”

Mike fell in love with the land of Southwest Florida as a young boy. Some of his earliest memories are of catching hundreds of lizards per day and selling them to the local pet store — his first entrepreneurial venture.

As he got older, Mike continued to explore the natural beauty of Southwest Florida. He became an avid spear fisherman and bow hunter — two pastimes that continue to be his passions. Those hobbies would eventually lead him to real estate, a career that has also become a passion project.

The Road to Real Estate

By 2018, Mike had a family and was running an online business. He began spearfishing with his neighbor and longtime friend, Jack Mancini, who happened to be a real estate agent.

“By that time, I had known Jack for over 20 years... I took him diving. I taught him how to bow hunt. And we went to dinner one night with his wife and my wife, and all these people came to the table to talk to me. Jack said, ‘You know more people than I do. You have to get your real estate license.’”

Mike resisted the idea.

“I had no desire to do that,” he laughs.

After a few months, however, Mike warmed to the idea. He wanted to put both of his children through school at Evangelical Christian School in Fort Myers and needed extra funds to cover tuition. So in 2018, Mike began his real estate career, planning to use it for “pocket money.”

Taking Flight

As a Florida native and a people person by nature, Mike’s business took flight quickly. He landed seven listings in

...



Photo by LaCasaTour

his first four weeks on the job, and his business only grew from there.

“I’ve never advertised,” Mike says. “It’s been all word of mouth, and the business continued to grow.”

Soon enough, real estate became his full-time job. No longer was it pocket money; it became his vocation.

“I’m a people person. I love people. It’s not about sales; it’s about serving people. When you get the transaction side out of the way and bring humanity, when you’re genuine, that’s what makes you a good REALTOR®. Serving people — that’s where the magic happens.”

Over the past four years, Mike’s people-first strategy has been a big success. He left Jack Mancini’s team in 2021 to go out on his



Mike Monge and his wife, Ashley (Photo by LaCasaTour)



Ashley Monge is a licensed agent on Mike’s team, the Mike Monge Group at Domain Realty. (Photo by LaCasaTour)

“I’m a people person. I love people. It’s not about sales; it’s about serving people.”

own and now has a small team of his own, the Mike Monge Group at Domain Realty.

“We have over 300 agents at Domain, and I’ve been number one every month last year, except March. And we have good agents,” Mike says proudly. “I’m crushing it right now. It’s blowing up. I’m working hard, grinding.”

Mike’s wife, Ashley, recently left her job in health care to join the team. She’s Mike’s assistant and a licensed agent. The group has three buyer’s agents.

“It’s fun. I’m having a lot of fun with it, but I’m also working more than I ever have in my life.”

For the Love of Southwest Florida

Mike is proud of being a native. It serves him in his business, but most of all, it serves him in his personal life. He continues to enjoy the riches of the area. He’s an avid outdoorsman, hunter, and fisherman.

“I live the Southwest Florida life,” he says proudly.

“No one loves Southwest Florida more than I do.”



Photo by LaCasaTour

Mike is also a devoted Christian and a family man. He and Ashley have two children, Elijah (19) and Macy (15).

“It’s been a fun ride, but also I’ve worked hard. No one’s given me anything. That entrepreneurial spirit was always within me. Growing up, we didn’t have much of anything, and that put a drive in me to be who I am today.”

“I’m blessed, and I have a lot to be grateful for. I have a beautiful family, a family that loves the Lord. We try to live the right way and treat people the right way. I’m very blessed and fortunate to have what we have today and to be right where we are, here in Southwest Florida.”



Mike is an avid spear fisherman.



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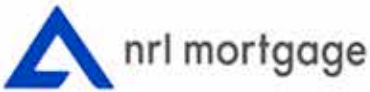
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GIOVANNI MATITA

NRL Mortgage

HIS TRUEST SELF

In 2017, Giovanni Matita faced a one-two punch of personal and professional challenges. By then, he'd been in the mortgage lending business for over a decade and built a strong career. But when his company was bought out, the team he helped build split apart, causing chaos and upheaval. He faced another breakup in his personal life, going through a divorce.

Over the next year, Giovanni went through some of the most trying days of his life, but the lessons he learned have helped him become a better person.

"I had two choices — to stuff and grind or shed the nonsense and become my true self. I learned there is ultimate strength in vulnerability. I learned a hard lesson, but it brought me to my truer self," Giovanni reflects.

As Giovanni rebuilt his life, he did so in a way that was more in touch with his purpose. He's gotten clear on the gifts he has to offer, and every day he wakes with the sole intent of sharing those gifts with the world.

"I have two innate gifts," he says. "I'm an ultimate encourager of people because I see the best in people. And I'm a great connector. I love bringing



Giovanni Matita (center) with Loan Partner Alexandra King (left), and Loan Originator Viridiana Martinez (right).



Giovanni Matita and his wife, Ashley.

people together, whether you need a plumber or emotional help. I love connecting good people.”

Keeping it Real

Giovanni began his mortgage lending career just days after graduating from college. After a year and a half on the wholesale side of the business, he transitioned into retail lending, where he’s been ever since. He’s now been in the industry for nearly 20 years.

Today, Giovanni is the producing branch manager of NRL Mortgage. He leads with positivity, authenticity, and a desire to impact his community positively.

“My objective is to know who I am, what I stand for, and how I conduct my life and business. How I do business is how I do life,” Giovanni says. “You see me in the grocery store or office, and you get the same person. I’ve humbly learned to say I know who I am as a person. We conduct business in an honest and integral way that’s high-skill but also playful and fun.”

NRL Mortgage is currently a team of five and looking to grow. Giovanni is proud to be creating a culture of cooperation, non-judgment, and expansion.



“I want to grow as big as God wants me to,” Giovanni says. “I’m creating a place for people who want to grow professionally and personally, and have an environment where they can truly be themselves. I believe in people. I want to provide a safe place for people to grow. I want to create an environment that gives people the freedom to be themselves.”

Giovanni and NRL Mortgage are also deeply committed to serving the Southwest Florida community. For example, last year, they took on the bill for the back-to-school needs of 71 foster children. When doing business with NRL Mortgage, you’re not only doing business with highly trusted

mortgage professionals but committed community members.

Giving Thanks

Outside of work, Giovanni lives a life centered on God and family. He has two children, Kate (11) and Dominick (8), and is remarried to his wife and best friend, Ashley. Giovanni enjoys going out to eat, CrossFit, attending church, and practicing self-development.

Giovanni’s life may have been turned upside down four years ago, but as he reflects on his journey, he knows he’s a better man for it. For that, he is grateful. Now, he has the opportunity to take what he’s learned and share it with his world.

“The struggle is where I found myself, and it’s where I grew closer to God. I learned to submit these mistakes to him. I developed an incredible relationship with God. God is first, and then, from there, we deal with and manage what we are doing. That has changed and enhanced me so much. I’m really focused, and excited to enhance and continue coming into my true and best self.”

NRL Mortgage specializes in the origination of residential mortgage loans. For more information, visit www.giovanmatita.com.



FUN FACT

Giovanni was born in Sicily, Italy, and speaks Italian, Spanish, and English fluently.

“In 2008, when the market crashed, I thought, ‘Who can help?’ Hispanic culture is similar to Italian culture. I taught myself Spanish and would go meet with REALTORS® in the Hispanic community. For several years, 95 percent of clients were Spanish-speaking, and I learned the language along the way.”



Giovanni and Ashley Matita with Giovanni’s children, Kate and Dominick.



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ALEX KING

FULL CIRCLE



cover story

By **Zachary Cohen**
Photos by **Michelle Reed**

Alex King spent the summers of his childhood swimming and fishing in Fort Myers Beach, Florida, where his grandparents had owned a home since 1958.

Although Alex spent his childhood in Miami and Atlanta, his parents eventually moved to Fort Myers Beach too. Despite his love for the pristine beaches and the sublimely sunny weather, Alex never envisioned making Southwest Florida home.

Prior to becoming a REALTOR®, Alex worked in marketing for the resort industry, building a career that took him around the country, from Georgia and South Carolina to California and Nevada.

By 2009, Alex was semi-retired, doing consulting work after selling his company. When he came to Florida to visit his parents, his life took an unexpected turn.

“I’d always come into town to see my family, and that year I came down for Christmas. My sister-in-law had a friend she wanted me to meet. That’s when I met Nina. Lo and behold, this is the woman of my dreams. I didn’t know it would happen right there, but it did,” Alex recalls with a smile.

Five months later, Alex and Nina married, and Alex made Fort Myers Beach home.

“I was married right on Coconut Drive, right where I started. Never in my wildest dreams would I have imagined being back here at Fort Myers Beach.”

NEW BEGINNINGS

Alex moved to Southwest Florida in May 2009. By November 2011, he had begun his career in real estate. While searching for a new professional venture, Alex met a former top agent who became his mentor.

“A career in real estate was completely unplanned,” he reflects, “but it sounded like a good idea, and I figured I’d try it out.”

Many agents either struggle with marketing or have a distaste for the process, but not Alex. Marketing is his bread and butter, and he’s built his real estate business off creative, forward-thinking marketing strategies. With the guidance of a top agent and his well-honed marketing expertise, Alex’s

...



“
Never in my wildest dreams would I have imagined being back here at Fort Myers Beach.
”



Alex King is broker/owner of Current Coastal Realty.

...

business took off quickly. He became one of the early adopters of online lead generation sources like Trulia and Zillow and continues to leverage those platforms today.

CURRENT COASTAL REALTY

Alex started a team around 2016, growing it to 10 agents. In mid-2021, he took the next step in his business, founding the brokerage, Current Coastal Realty. With agents focusing on varied locations in Southwest Florida — Cape Coral, Bonita Springs, Estero, Naples, Fort Myers, and Fort Myers Beach — Alex is set to expand his reach.

“It was a perfect transition,” he says. We needed a bigger name than mine off the beach because that’s where we’re growing. It has allowed me to grow beyond the beach so these agents can build their own identities outside my name.”

Alex describes his team as a perfect balance of professional and laid-back. He believes his job is to ensure his agents have enough leads to make sales and achieve their professional goals. For example, he shares leads and co-lists with his agents regularly.

“They are my family, and I want them to win too. We all help each other,” Alex says proudly.

...



...

Alex's personal sales business continues to thrive as he grows the brokerage. He's been the number one sales agent by volume in Fort Myers Beach since 2017. In 2022, he closed 35 transactions for \$56 million, making him Fort Myers Beach's number one agent once again. His brokerage, Current Coastal Realty, was the top office on Fort Myers Beach with over \$100 million in sales.

THE NEXT STEPS

Outside of work, Alex spends much of his time going out to eat, walking on the beach, and traveling with his wife, Nina. Although he never envisioned

living in Florida full-time, Alex has come to love the laid-back Florida lifestyle.

Now that the brokerage has reached a place of stability, Alex is looking forward to continued growth. There's a reason that his name no longer defines his business' brand; one day, Alex hopes to be able to step back and allow other agents to step into leadership roles.

"I plan to grow the business to 40 agents in Southwest Florida and have the business run by the leaders... And hopefully, I can continue the business but also be in Italy, Japan, or Bora Bora, virtually running things."

WORDS OF WISDOM

"Our home was destroyed in the hurricane," says Alex King. "Even though we lost everything, life is good. We're alive, and we're happy."



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