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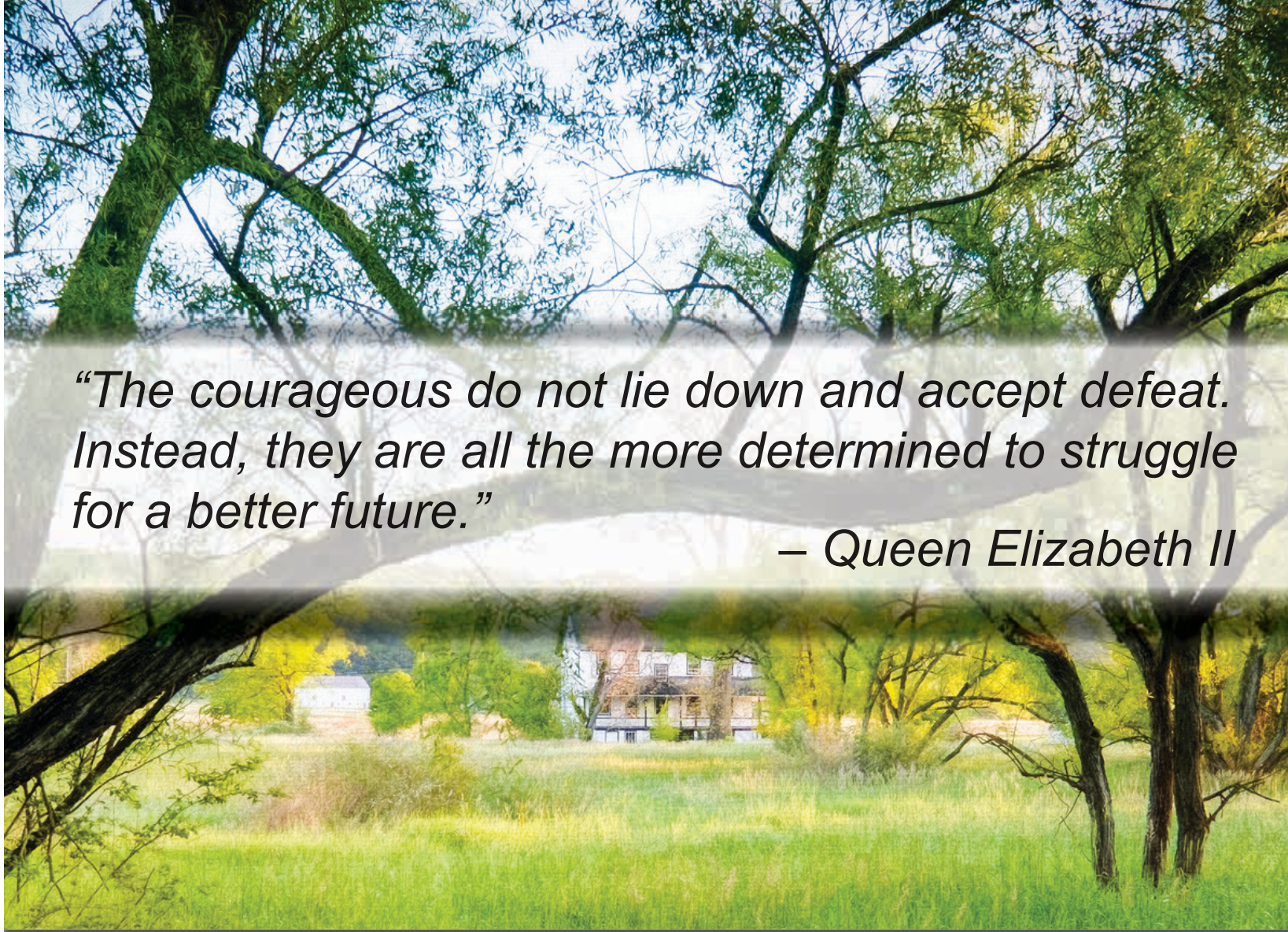
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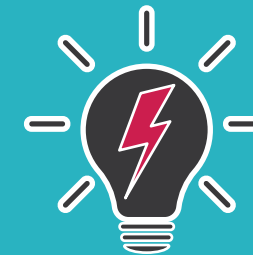
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publisher's NOTE



HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY, CAPITAL REGION REAL PRODUCERS!

I hope you have had more than your fair share of luck this year! Maybe you won on a scratch-off, or a listing seemed to fall out of thin air?

Or perhaps you're feeling less than lucky this year? Can't quite seem to get out of a rut?

For most of my life, I believed in blind luck. I was floating through the winds of time, hoping for clear skies and a smooth ride. I suppose it was easier that way, believing that life happened to me instead of having complete control. Then, one day, I heard someone say something life-changing, "Hard work makes luck."

By realizing the amount of energy we expend into our business directly reflects on that business's output, I realized that I was in complete control of my future. This simple paradigm shift allowed me to focus on creating and moving toward goals rather than living a reactionary lifestyle.

Many people work an average of 40 hours per week, with a limited ability for advancement. They might be uncomfortable with change, tending to stay in one place until the job becomes intolerable. These types of individuals may only have "average" luck in life. Instead, they tend to look at people who are better off financially with envy, excusing their hard work and success as being "lucky."

Unfortunate circumstances will happen; however, how you react is critical. Overcoming obstacles is how we create opportunity.

As Real Producers, we have the knowledge and experience to run our businesses and be as successful as we choose through hard work and determination. So, even in times of "bad luck," I encourage you to persist. Keep putting one foot in front of the other, keep on track, and keep grinding.

And when that "good luck" hits—in actuality, your resiliency paying off—capitalize on all you've worked hard for.



With gratitude,

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BARRY BALLARD

BALLARD & SON CONSTRUCTION LLC

» partner spotlight

By Emily Williams

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GOING THE EXTRA MILE



Barry Ballard grew up around construction. His dad owned an excavation business, and Barry often helped him work.

“Running equipment back-hoes and dozers is something I have been doing since I was nine or ten,” he shared. “That was our quality time growing up.”

As an adult, Barry went on to work for a company that installed soda equipment at McDonald’s restaurants across the country. He was assigned to the company’s Northeast territory and traveled throughout the region to complete installations.

“I enjoyed seeing the countryside, all the small towns, and the big cities, too,” Barry said.

Not only did he get to see the country, but Barry also picked up valuable communication skills he’s carried with him throughout his career.

“You have to talk to the managers and explain what you’re doing, so I got a lot of people skills out of that job,” Barry explained.

When Barry and his wife decided to start a family, he gave up the position due to its intense travel schedule. Then, his brother-in-law, who also worked in the construction industry, introduced the idea of egress windows.



“He said that on the new construction side, the code changed, and every foundation needed an egress window,” Barry remembered.

This state requirement ensures that occupants can exit a basement living space in an emergency.

“At that point, it didn’t fall on anybody to put the window in or hang the well on the job site,” Barry added. “It didn’t fall on the foundation, guy; it didn’t fall on the framer. So, they asked me if I was interested in putting the window in and hanging the well, and it would be contracted through them.”

Barry jumped at the chance.

“I rode around with the sales rep of the window and well manufacturer, and as I’m riding around going from one job to the next, the rep said, ‘Listen, you seem like a pretty smart guy. Why don’t you watch this video?’” Barry shared.

The video showed the egress window installation process for existing basements, and the sales rep wanted to know if it was something that Barry could do. “After I watched the video, I thought, ‘This is easy. This is a no-brainer,’” Barry remembered.

And with that, Ballard and Son Construction was born.

Barry recalled his first job. “It was a little nerve-wracking,” he admitted.

That first year, Barry completed one or two egress window installs. The following year, it was five or six, and it has grown from there. Last year, Barry completed around 38 installs in total.

“Eighty percent of the installations we do are on finished basements,” he remarked. “We restore everything, and it looks like the window was there from the beginning.”

His rule of thumb is to treat every client as a family member. Barry always strives to go the extra mile, like leaving the job site cleaner than when he found it.

Casting a small net in a nuanced field has led to detailed knowledge that he’s ready to share with the industry. REALTORS® often reach out to him when egress window violations show up on home inspection reports. He’s always available to answer questions because he’s incredibly hands-on. Handling most jobs solo, he takes pride in every aspect of the business from start to finish.

...

“I work directly with the homeowners every step of the way,” he said. “I am the secretary, salesman, installer, and whatever else.”

He completes installs during the day and offers quotes in the evenings when most people are home from work.

Barry has spent enough time in the trade to know the nuances and the code inside and out, and he’s passionate about educating homeowners on the subject.

“No question is a stupid question,” Barry commented. “If you’re interested, you could ask me questions for hours if you need to.”

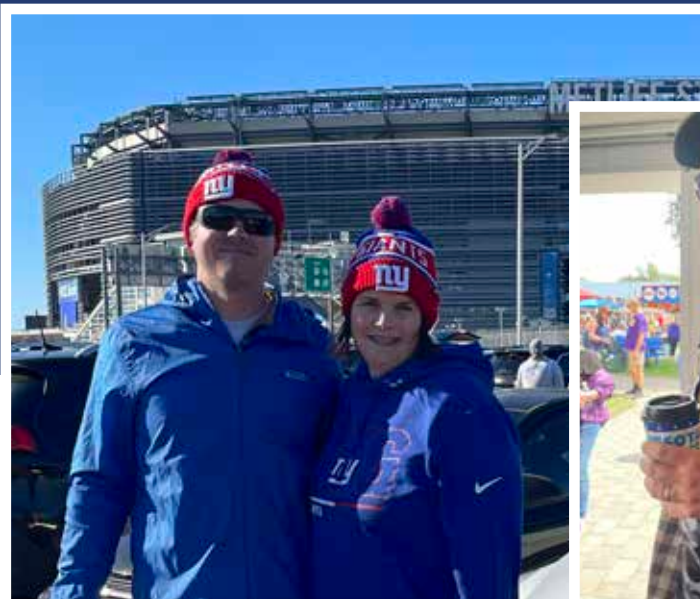
Despite staying so busy, Barry still finds time for fun. One of his favorite ways to decompress is riding his motorcycle.

“It’s my outlet,” he noted. “When I get on that thing, I can’t think about work; I just think about my destination.”

Barry’s other favorite pastimes include skiing, camping, and boating with his wife and three kids. He recently bought a new vehicle to make his job more efficient by hauling all of his equipment in one trip.

With Barry’s hands-on approach, passion for the work, and commitment to providing excellent customer service, Ballard and Son Construction has become a trusted name in the region for egress window installation. His plan for the future isn’t to be the biggest company, but the best.

“I want to be the go-to guy for my trade,” he said.



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TRANSFORMATIONAL CONVERSATIONS WITH LISA GIRUZZI

I recently met with Lucy (not her real name), a very successful salesperson who was lamenting about her lack of follow-through with leads. She knew it would positively impact her bottom line if she followed through. However, knowing that made no difference in her actual performance. She was pretty judgmental about herself and all the “character defects” she needed to work on to improve. Her list included fear of success, needing to be more organized, increasing confidence, and worrying about coming across as “too sales-y.” Upon further discussion, she stated she didn’t have a plan to address these concerns but hoped they’d resolve with time.

This is a common phenomenon among people I coach. Whether it is follow-through, closing the sale, or some other business activity that will lead to achieving their goal, people have a multitude of reasons for their inability to act. The reasons become responsible for their inaction, so that’s that; there is nothing else to explore or get curious about. They relate to themselves like fixed objects.

One of the questions I typically ask is this: “If all those reasons were resolved, what would you do?” Virtually every time, their answer is simple: some version of I’d *take action, make the call, do the thing*. Adding all the reasons for *not* doing something doesn’t make the reasons true. It does, however, add complexity and obfuscate solutions.

In my conversation with Lucy, we inquired into how she had achieved so much success without follow-through. She said, “Well, I do follow through at times.” Truth bomb! This is an example of how our brains filter out facts that don’t fit our narrative. In other words, the brain sees what we tell it to look for. Lucy decided that having a stack of business cards meant she was terrible at follow-through; she had a good story as to why and her mind blinded her to the truth—she followed through and did it effectively. As a result, an unnecessary problem was created by her mind.

What if having a stack of business cards just means you have a stack of business cards? Period. Without a label or attached meaning, it’s merely a fact. If you want to contact people in the stack, it becomes a creative game or a puzzle to solve. Most of the time, when the story is removed, our natural ability to create and innovate takes over.

In Lucy’s case, after our conversation, she came up with an idea for a simple solution to spend two hours on Monday mornings calling her leads and making appointments. She’s going to experiment with this idea for a few weeks and see what happens. Lucy said, “I’m not sure why I didn’t think of this before.” I know why; I see it all the time. The thinking we have about the situation looks true, so we believe it. We take our eyes off the thing we really want to accomplish and focus on the thought-created story about why we can’t have it.

Without the charge of the narrative, the problem is de-personalized, allowing fresh thinking to come forth, solutions to be revealed, and action becomes natural, almost effortless.

Ironically, many times, the solutions are things we already know. They’re common sense. That’s the power of thought. It can blind us from seeing even the obvious.



Lisa Giruzzi is a peak performance coach, best-selling author, and accomplished speaker with over 25 years of experience helping people to discover their true nature and live life powerfully — free from stress, regrets, judgments, and fear.

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BIG DREAMS, BIGGER RESULTS

Eight years ago, Brittany Coyne was working in the restaurant industry and looking for a way out. She was tired of the nightlife, but knew she didn't want to sit at a desk all day.

It was a former boss who first introduced her to the idea of a career in real estate.

"A mentor of mine sold her cafe and became an agent," Brittany explained. "She encouraged me to do the same because I was naturally good with people."

Intrigued by the idea, Brittany signed up for a virtual real estate course, but she struggled with the online format of the class.

She tried again a year later, this time attending class in person. In a classroom setting, Brittany learned the material quickly. In 2016, she passed the real estate exam and got her license.

Unfortunately, that wasn't the last roadblock that Brittany would have to overcome.

At the time, she and her husband Brian were selling the bar they owned and she was juggling multiple jobs to make ends meet. As a result, real estate was put on the back burner.

But she wouldn't give up that easily. She set a deadline for when she'd come back to it and commit full-time.

"I was running out of money and close to going bankrupt," Brittany remembered. "I was either going to sink or swim, and I swam."

Her resolve paid off. She found a niche where she excelled—working with sellers on expired listings—and focused on offering her clients the highest level of service. As a result, Brittany exceeded the goals she set for herself that year.

She attributes her success to both high ambitions and great mentors.

"My mentors not only taught me everything I know about real estate, but also taught me to think big and that you get back what you put out into the universe," Brittany said.

Then, just as Brittany was hitting her stride, COVID hit. Her options for prospecting became severely limited as expired listings dried up.

While business slowed down, Brittany's aspirations only grew more prominent. Wanting more control of her business, she decided to get her broker's license and open her own brokerage.

Many people in Brittany's life told her she was crazy.

"But then they said, 'If anyone can do it, it's you,'" she remarked.

In-person classes weren't an option for her this time around as she was now a mother of two young children, including a newborn whom she couldn't leave. Brittany knew she struggled with online learning, but knew there was no other way. So, determined to make it work, she studied late nights and early mornings with a newborn in the bassinet beside her.

Her hard work paid off and in late 2022, she officially opened Coyne Realty Group.

Brittany's motivation to dream big and achieve those goals stems from her childhood. She often struggled in school and never felt smart enough. As an adult, Brittany has been dead set on changing the narrative that her younger self spun. Unsurprisingly, one of her favorite quotes is, "She believed she could, so she did."

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Brittany has always had a natural ability to connect with others, which has served her well in the restaurant and real estate industries.

“My work interviews have always been good, and in real estate, that’s basically what you’re doing,” she shared. “A listing appointment is an interview.”

Brittany’s advice to new REALTORS® is to “Fail, and then get up and fail again, and get up stronger. You will hear a lot of ‘no’s’ in this business, but every ‘no’ you hear gets you that much closer to a ‘yes.’ Keep going.”

She also encourages the writing down of goals and revisiting them daily.

Now a mother to four children—stepson Cade, stepson Connor, daughter Paisley, and son Peyton—nothing is more important to Brittany than family.



“Outside of real estate, I am very much a homemaker and lover of all things home,” she said. “I love spending time with my husband, Brian; he’s the best cook on the planet and the best dad. I am close to my parents; they’re my best friends too.”

In her free time, Brittany loves to camp, travel, and work in her garden.

For now, Brittany plans to operate her brokerage as a one-woman show to focus on building her business and achieving her goals. Eventually, she plans to add additional REALTORS® to the team.

Her vision for the future is to develop a company that her kids can take over if they choose.

“I’m hoping by the time they’re older, Coyne Realty Group will be a name people know and trust,” she shared. “I want to show my kids that you can do anything and be anything you want in this life as long as you believe you can.”



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Dominick Marchesiello

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Achieving More Together

Before joining his wife, Christine, in real estate, Dominick Marchesiello was a successful physical therapist. Some questioned why he was leaving, but many of the hospital leaders said, “Go for it! You’ll be successful at whatever you do.”

And he certainly is. Dominick is still helping people—differently now—while building a small but mighty team of real estate specialists.

Dominick felt passionate about helping his patients regain mobility and live pain-free in physical therapy.

“Now, I’m helping people achieve their goals, whether moving into a bigger house or getting out of a bad situation,” he explained. “It’s still helping people, just with their home. What excites me is the idea that, in real estate, I’ll get out of it what I put into it.”

Leaving an established career in healthcare was a considerable risk, but Dominick was up for the challenge. First, he kept one foot in the door at the hospital by going part-time into real estate. This way, he could test the waters and maintain health benefits for the family.

“Then I realized I had to go all in to maximize the results from what we were starting to build,” Dominick said.

He started as an inside sales agent and client-care director, calling FSBOs, expired listings, and past clients to set up appointments. Next, Dominick started actually to be the one going on

the appointments and realized he was really good at that part of the role and loved it. This was when he decided to go for it and commit to real estate full-time. That was in 2019.

“I enjoy working with sellers every step of the way, from preparing the home, marketing it, advertising, negotiating, and getting to the final closing table,” he remarked. “I love going into a home and seeing the potential. Our team might spend two months giving guidance and advice to prepare a listing before we even go on the market; that’s where we’re unique.”

Currently, Dominick is the lead listing specialist and director of sales, and Christine has been wearing many hats: director of operations, coach, HR, and CEO.

“Heading into 2023, we saw the potential for me to step back and go into a leadership role on the sales end of things,” Dominick explained. “In healthcare, I was a leader on the business development side of Saratoga Hospital’s regional therapy center. I love helping things grow.”

Christine and Dominick’s passion for helping their REALTORS® succeed is another aspect of the team that sets them apart.

“Our business model is different,” Dominick shared. “We strive for a small but mighty team; we want to be *‘The Super Bowl Team.’* When you treat your team members well, and they have success in the industry,

they stay with you. That’s our goal... to help them win.”

The Marchesiello Team is a close-knit group of experts.

“Our buyer’s agents will never list homes for us,” Dominick remarked. “Many people use the buyer’s agent role to also work with sellers, but we don’t believe that aligns with our mission for our specialists to serve clients at the highest level. Everyone is unique in their role, but at the same time, everyone’s income is tied to each other. The better your team member does, the better you’ll do.”

With this idea in mind, it’s no wonder that the team’s motto is *‘Together, everyone achieves more.’*

“It’s like a perfect wheel,” Dominick shared. “If there is a break in the spoke or a bend in the rim, it becomes bumpy, sloppy, and inefficient. We’ve perfected that wheel by growing slower, taking our time, and ensuring each agent is right.”

To make sure each REALTOR® is the perfect fit, Dominick and Christine conduct an intense, three-step interview process during which they ask questions about the potential REALTOR’s® life goals, motivations, and personalities.

“Once we offer them the job, we have a Keller Williams model (30-60-90) re-interview,” Dominick noted. “This makes sure the fit is good for both sides. Then, as new agents go

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through the interview process, they see the value of the team, our results, and our reputation.”

For 30 days, they set expectations. Then, there is a review at 30, 60, and 90 days, with different expectations and goals for those benchmarks. Finally, a team member is not announced until they have passed the 90-day mark. Then, the team member becomes official.

“Christine built this starting 17 years ago,” Dominick proudly remarked. “She’s got a great reputation in the real estate community; she gives back and teaches others. During

the interview, potential agents discover how we work and what we’re all about.”

The Marchesiello Team is about specialists and systems, among other things. The specialists include a listings director, marketing director, buyer’s transaction coordinator, behind-the-scenes data entry personnel for business tracking, and more.

“We’ve built lead generation, listing, and buying systems,” Dominick said. “We have systematized every step of the way. This way, a client’s experience will be the same quality no matter the staff they’re working with.”

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Dominick’s excitement is to help each REALTOR® take the next step and grow to the next level. To do so, Dominick meets weekly with the REALTORS® in one-on-one meetings. In addition, they work together on their weekly, monthly, and yearly goals.

“We have team goals, but we also have agent goals,” Dominick shared. “We like to make it fun, so we hold a ‘team call day.’ We all come into the office twice a month and call our past clients.”

“At our annual meeting, we look at how many showings, appointments, and houses we’ve worked on in the last year,” he said. “It’s thousands of conversations and hundreds of open houses. That’s what



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excites me—the growth the agents have.”

However, with growth comes struggle. Dominick sold 90 homes two years in a row. He worked 60-to-80-hour weeks.

“When I joined our team, I felt it personally, professionally, psychologically, and physically.”

In time, Dominick realized he could rely on the team and is striving to step back a bit, allowing more time to spend with his wife and their daughters, now 9 and 13.

“Sharing the wealth with another agent is not negative,” he noted. “When they’re winning, we’re winning. It’s not about giving up the money; it’s about having more time with family, and that’s worth a lot.”

By building a small but mighty team, valuing particular skills, and sharing wealth, Dominick can enjoy more time in his happy place: Lake George.

“We have a camp in Ticonderoga, and we spend most weekends there,” Dominick shared. “I can take a call on the lake if I need to, but mostly I can spend time with my family on the weekends. I’m forever grateful for that. I can do all that and more because of the team we are building and I hope by doing so, that we are simultaneously improving the lives of our team members at the same time.”



1. Christine and Dominick at the Kentucky Derby! Dominick has a love for thoroughbred horse racing in Saratoga. One of his bucket list items was to attend the Kentucky Derby. “We were blessed to get an invite from some amazing clients and friends to attend Churchill Downs, Kentucky!” **2.** “Being at camp and boating with family is my happy place! When you’re in the middle of Lake George, soaking in the beauty and peacefulness with your family, it makes all life’s little problems or stresses melt away!” **3.** Left to right: Mom & dad (Kate & Buz), brother (David), sister (Laura), brother-in-law (Ali), wife (Christine), Dominick, two daughters, and three nieces. “I’m blessed to have my parents around the corner from us, and our extended family spends holidays at our Lake George camp.” **4.** Dominick, Christine, and their daughters, Juliana and Bianca, in Florida. “We own a rental property in Stuart, FL, and we love to go down and visit whenever we have the chance!” **5.** “Traveling, vacationing, exploring, and giving our kids amazing experiences are very important to us. This was taken on a catamaran excursion while in Aruba.”



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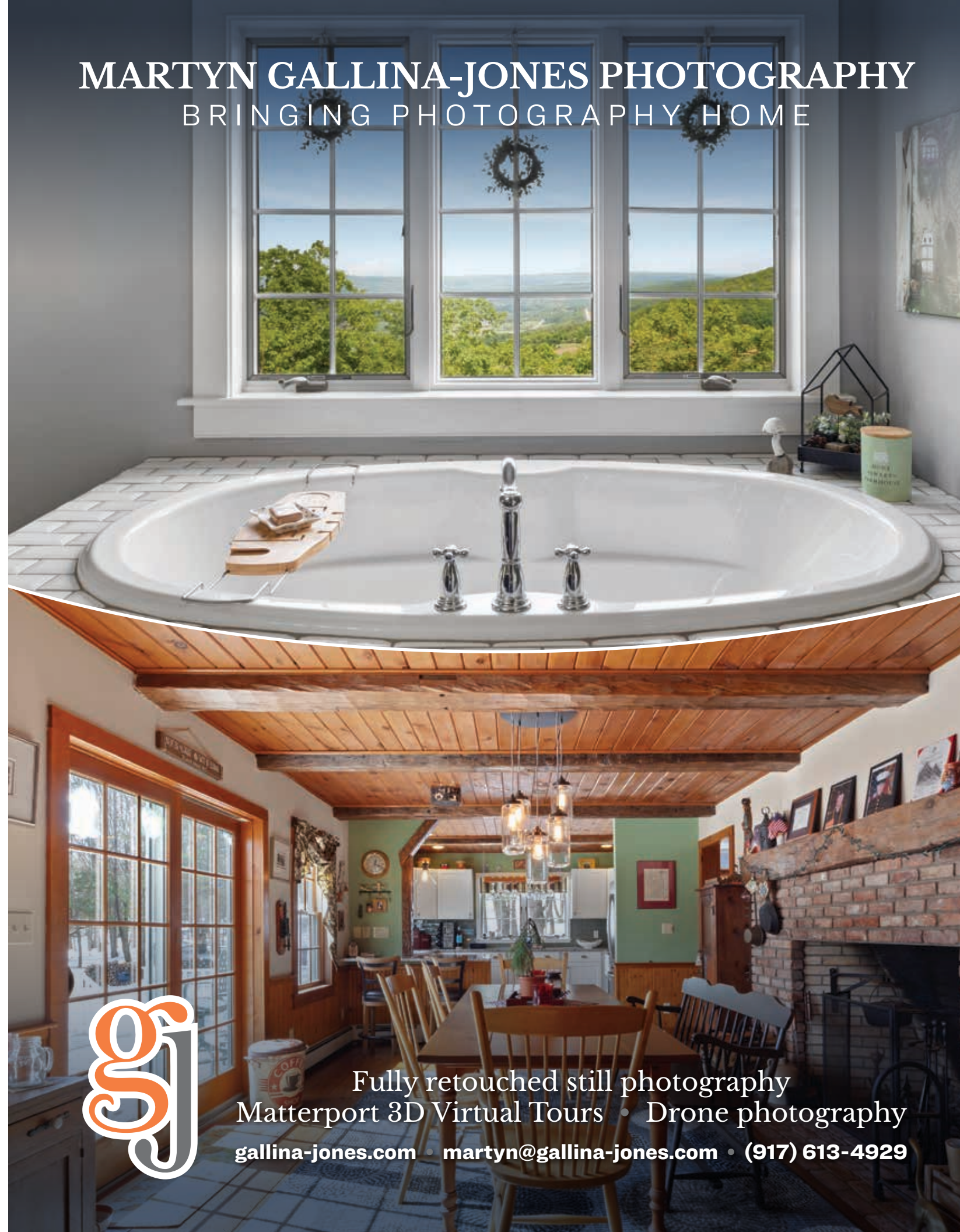


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