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Behind the Scenes
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FAQ

ALL ABOUT MICHIANA REAL PRODUCERS



Real Producers magazine started in Indianapolis in 2015 and is now in over 120 markets across the nation and continues to spread rapidly.

Q: WHO RECEIVES REAL PRODUCERS MAGAZINES?

A: The top 300 real estate agents in the Michiana area (St Joseph, Elkhart, Kosciusko and Marshall Counties in Indiana along with Berrien, Cass and Van Buren Counties in Michigan) and our Preferred Partners.

Q: WHAT IS THE GOAL OF THIS MAGAZINE?

A: We believe that we are better together. When we surround ourselves with other successful, like-minded people, we grow to new heights. *Real Producers* is a platform that brings together the most elite individuals in Springfield real estate.

We take the top 300 real estate agents and RP-vetted businesses in every market, and we build an exclusive community around that group. We share their stories, successes, market trends, and upcoming events — really, anything that will connect, inform and inspire, we put in our monthly publication.

Q: DOES Real Producers HAVE EVENTS?

A: Yes! We will have specific networking events throughout the year.

Q: WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR BEING FEATURED IN THIS MAGAZINE?

A: It's really simple. You have to be on the top 300 list, and we take nominations seriously. You can nominate other real estate agents, businesses, brokers, owners or even yourself! Office leaders can also nominate real estate agents. We will consider anyone brought to our attention who is in the top

300 because we don't know everyone's story, so we need your help to learn about them. We cannot guarantee a feature, but we encourage you to meet with one of our team members, support *Real Producers* and attend our private events to increase your chances.

Q: WHAT DOES IT COST A REAL ESTATE AGENT/TEAM TO BE FEATURED?

A: Zero, zilch, zippo, nada, nil. It costs nothing, my friends, so nominate away! We are not a pay-to-play model. We share **real** stories of Real Producers.

Q: WHO ARE THE RP-VETTED BUSINESSES?

A: They are one of the best businesses in Springfield in their category, and you can find them listed in our index! We don't just find these businesses off the street, nor do we work with all businesses that approach us. Many of the top agents have recommended every single business you see in this publication. We won't even meet with a business that has not been vetted by one of you and "stamped for approval," in a sense. Our team will further vet every business to make sure they are a good fit and bring value to our community. Our goal is to create a powerhouse network, not only for the best real estate agents in the area but the best businesses so we can grow stronger together.

Q: HOW CAN I RECOMMEND A BUSINESS?

A: If you want to recommend a business that works with top real estate agents, please email or message us!

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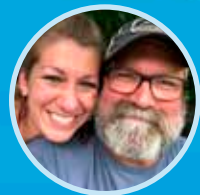
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WELCOME to the Top!



▶ publisher's note

By Jeff Bliler

Quarter 1 is one of my favorite times of the year! Why, you may ask? Well, because it means a new top 300 for 2023! **Congratulations** if you are receiving this magazine. If you have received the magazine you find yourself in the Top 300 REALTORS® in Michiana for the year 2023. There is a section called "The Real Update" in the back that explains who we are and what we do. However, once you read all the stories each month, you will have a pretty good idea of what we are all about.

Every year, we reset the distribution to run for 12 months and be sent **for free** to the Top 300 Greater Michiana real estate agents from the year before. This is based on closed volume. For 2023, the cutoff was right around \$5.5 million in closed volume for the year 2022. If you are receiving this, give yourself a pat on the back! That was a great year for you last year, despite all of the craziness that each of you had to navigate over the last couple of years.

My challenge for you this year is to enjoy the process and the journey, even when times get busy or hard. The journey is what shapes us to become the best versions of ourselves. Too often, we are in machine mode and forget

to slow down and enjoy the ride. There will be plenty of time to hustle and get after it, but each month as you receive your copy of *Michiana Real Producers*, take a minute to reflect on the month before and learn about a few of your peers and our **preferred partners** who make this platform **free** for you as a top agent.

We have an amazing time growing this product and service, but this is just the beginning. After eight years, Real Producers is now in over 125 markets across the country and rapidly growing. If you have REALTOR® friends in different parts of the country, ask them if they have Real Producers yet in their market. There's a good chance that they do, and if they are receiving the publication on a monthly basis themselves, congratulate them and say, "Welcome to the top!"

Enjoy!

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Steve & Sara Bizzaro

Home Happens Here: Behind the Scenes with the Bizzaros

Partners in life and business, Steve and Sara Bizzaro's names are synonymous with excellence in Michiana real estate. Their brokerage, Howard Hanna SB Real Estate, continues to accelerate with the couple's dedication to customer satisfaction, agent growth on all levels, and professional integrity.

"I truly enjoy watching our agents grow, and helping our established agents navigate any challenges that come up," Sara explains. "We are a collaborative team so any challenges we have, I have too."

A Thriving Partnership

In 2021, the Bizzaros' brokerage was honored as the Top Office in Units across the Howard Hanna Franchises at a national level. In 2022, the franchise achieved the prestigious title of Top Office in both Units and Volume. At the local level, their office's consistent, exceptional service has not gone unnoticed either, with four consecutive years of being voted in the top three for the People's Choice Awards in the *South Bend Tribune*.

At the helm of Howard Hanna SB Real Estate, Sara leads the charge as

President and CEO, running the office with gusto. In January, Sara was nominated REALTOR® of the Year by SBAR.

"We are a true community of Realtors," Sara beams. "We laugh, cry, and work hard together. There is a strong team atmosphere in our office, and we walk in each day knowing that it's a great place to get any support we need."

Steve's client-centric approach is all about taking care of the customer and building lasting relationships. His own dream team of four, The Bizzaro Group, absolutely thrives on market knowledge and staying current on real estate trends to help clients win. The tight-knit group includes Steve's daughters, Gabrielle Iams and Emma Brothers, and his assistant and transaction coordinator Lena Makay.

"All of our business is repeat or referral-based," Steve says with pride. "We are detail-oriented and tenacious on behalf of our clients; we also understand the importance of exceeding clients' expectations in our industry and we don't take that lightly."

▶ top agent

By Jess Wellar
Photos By Megan Williamson Photography



Complementary Backgrounds

Before their impressive real estate careers, Sara honed her skills in finance and management, working in accounting at the Notre Dame Bookstore for over five years. Meanwhile, Steve brought over two decades of experience in international sales and management in the manufacturing sector. It was a career change rooted in the community and family that led them both to real estate in the mid-2000s.

“Instead of traveling so much, I really wanted to stay local to be with my family and work in the community,” Steve reflects. “I always had an interest in real estate and obtained my license in 2005.”

Likewise, Sara left her accounting role in 2007.

“When I had my girls, I decided to look for a career that would utilize my experience in finance and management, but would allow me flexibility to spend time with my family,” she explains. “And I found that opportunity in real estate.”

A Collaborative Culture

The Bizzaros decided the timing was right and opened their own brokerage, Howard Hanna SB Real Estate, in 2019.



Since then, Sara has been the driving force behind the office’s operations, fostering a culture of collaboration and excellence with the agents, while Steve leads the charge on sales. The bustling brokerage includes a roster of 40 agents with a wide range of experience — from newcomers to seasoned agents that have been in the business for over 25 years.

Sara describes the office as a “vibrant, exciting hub of activity,” complete with a dart board, ping pong, and a space where agents can come together to share and learn.

“We have fulfilled the vision to create a culture where everyone feels valued and supported,” she emphasizes. “And we’re always actively looking for talented agents to join us as well; but they have to be the right fit for our culture and not just an agent to fill a seat.”

Beyond the Brokerage

Outside of their busy work lives, the Bizzaros revel in family time. Their large, blended family includes Steve’s children, Gabriel and Severn, stepchildren Erin and Brandon, and Sara’s two daughters: Emma and Courtney. Steve also has three grandchildren that he absolutely



adores and Sara describes their entire brood as a “boisterous bunch that loves to laugh.”

Together, the family enjoys lively Sunday dinners, rooting for their favorite sports teams, and spending time with their two Labradoodles, Henry and Tucker. The Bizzaros are dedicated to contributing to their community as well, actively engaging with numerous local charities.

“We are directly involved with La Casa de Amistad as Steve is on the board, but our office has been strong supporters of the Ronald McDonald House of Michiana, Women’s Care Center, the Salvation Army Kroc Center, and just about every golf outing you can imagine, thanks to Steve!” Sara adds with a chuckle.

On the Horizon

Looking ahead, the Bizzaros plan to continue leading a successful brokerage that attracts top talent while cherishing the moments spent with family. Travel plans are also on the horizon, a well-deserved break after years of dedicated service in the real estate industry.

As they continue to grow their brokerage and make an impact in their community, the Bizzaros say they will remain steadfast in their commitment to excellence. With “Excellence, Innovation, and Integrity” as their tagline, they look forward to making many more meaningful connections.

Steve offers some great advice to aspiring agents in closing, based on personal experience.



“Remember that this market, like all others, is about the data,” he concludes. “Understanding what is coming your way in the real estate market will help you position yourself to better serve your clients, and that’s what we are here to do; take excellent care of our clients”

His wife nods her head in agreement.

“I would also say that it’s important to take everything in stride,” Sara adds. “Have a plan when you are jumping into the business by choosing the right company who can help you do that ... joining a team like ours that is ready to learn and dive in is going to help you thrive.”



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▶▶ rising star



JEFF BINKLEY

Photos By Megan Williamson Photography

How many years have you been a realtor?

I have been a Real Estate agent for 3 years now.

What is your career volume as a realtor?

My career volume is \$13,621,155

What was your total volume last year?

Last Years Volume \$5,301,500

When did you start your career in real estate?

I began my career in 2021

What did you do before you became a realtor?

I chose my career path right after High School. I worked for 6 months doing food delivery and saved every penny to be able to afford my license and start-up fees.

What are you passionate about right now in your business?

I often find my passion and attention divided between a few important missions.

Firstly, McKinnies Realty's mission is to serve and not sell. The expanding advocacy of *Homes For Heroes* and my involvement in the community is unbelievably rewarding and a good example of my passion for serving.

Secondly, witnessing first-time home-buyers ditch their expensive apartment is a mission everyone enjoys! When working with first-time home buyers, I take extra care to make sure that the "location, location, location" is a desirable one, especially knowing it won't be a forever home.

What has been the most rewarding part of your business?

One of the most rewarding days of my business, in my whole 3 years, came last week. A past client called and expressed that her Kid was moving from across the state and asked if I would be willing to assist them.

If you find yourself in a commission or referral-based job you will be able to separate the two accomplishments. While yes, I need to pay my bills and this likely means a commission check... the acknowledgment that you

did a good job for your past client and that they trust you enough to WANT you to help their kid is ever rewarding. Truly, a compliment of the highest kind.

What was your biggest challenge as a realtor?

The biggest challenge as a Realtor is that sometimes the commitment that is required can be challenging. My schedule is often dictated by my clients and their best availability. This is why I have a house rule that every client has to invite me to their first cookout—Although I need to enforce this better. Haha!

How does real estate fit into your dreams and goals?

My personal goal is to continue to increase my Rental portfolio. Having owned investment properties in Saint Joe and Elkhart County is a competitive advantage when assisting my investor clients.

“
When working with first-time home buyers, I take extra care to make sure that the “location, location, location” is a desirable one, especially knowing it won't be a forever home.
”



What's your favorite part of being a realtor?

My favorite part of being a realtor is the everyday interaction with my clients.

Define success.

This is what is beautiful about success. It is mostly subjective. For many of my first-time homebuyers, jumping from an apartment to a home and beginning to build equity is a success.

Tell us about your family.

I come from a family of 6. I have a twin brother, an older brother, and a younger sister.

My twin is pursuing a degree and career in computer technology, like my older brother.

My sister is working incredibly hard to become a Teacher.

My mom and Dad are high school sweethearts, and started dating at Goshen High School!

Favorite books?

I just read the "boring" books! The Quick and Easy Way to Effective Speaking by Dale Carnegie, Atomic Habits by James Clear, and Stephen R Covey has some heavy hitters as well



“

This is what is beautiful about success. It is mostly subjective. For many of my first-time homebuyers, jumping from an apartment to a home and beginning to build equity is a success.

”



Are there any charities or organizations you support?

Homes for Heroes. I have the privilege of presenting the Teacher of The Month Awards at both Beardsley and Laville Elementary. I also am on rotation for Fire Houses, Police Stations, Healthcare buildings, etc.. Getting to honor these heroes and give thanks for often thankless jobs is an honor I take very seriously!

What are your hobbies and interests outside of the business?

In my free time, I am reading financial news, and watching podcasts, and when the weather fixes itself it will be time to disc golf! Oxbow Park, Rum Village, Baugo, George Wilson, and more...

We have such a great concentration of courses in the area that you have to try it at least once!

Given your status and expertise, what is some advice you would give the up-and-coming top producer?

My tip to the next up-and-coming top producer is to conduct yourself and your transactions with good faith. Be fair and truthful with other agents because your paths will cross again and communicate with the other agent when issues arise!

In closing, is there anything else you would like to communicate using this Michiana Real Producer platform?

To be successful with your clients, be sure to communicate... before AND after the transaction. They entrust us with, at times, hundreds and hundreds of thousands of dollars... that is a big honor and the sellers deserve your follow-up care—however, you might define that for you and your business.



DEWAYNE

CHUPP ROOFMAXX

By Jess Wellar
Photos By Megan Williamson Photography

REVITALIZING ROOFS AND WALLETS

With a stellar Google Star Rating of 4.9 (virtually unheard of in the home service industry), Roof Maxx of Elkhart has earned the trust and admiration of countless homeowners and real estate professionals by redefining the cost of roof repairs. Moreover, the company recently secured a coveted contract with Property Management INC (PMI), one of the largest property management companies in the U.S.A., further solidifying their reputation as a trusted industry leader in roof rejuvenation.

Roof Maxx's innovative, environmentally-friendly treatment not only saves homeowners thousands of dollars but also helps reduce landfill waste by prolonging the lifespan of asphalt shingles.

"Roof Maxx is an asphalt shingle roofing industry disrupter — shingles can once again last longer," explains Dewayne Chupp, the proud owner of Roof Maxx of Elkhart. "And our treatment is safe for humans, pets, plants, and the environment, making it a win-win for everyone."

Humble Beginnings

Growing up in the Amish community of Shipshewana, Indiana, Dewayne learned the values of character, discipline, and serving others. With a humble educational background

that ended at eighth grade, Dewayne relied on his innate common sense and a thirst for knowledge to navigate life's twists and turns. He also notes his tireless work ethic was instilled from an early age.



▲ partner spotlight from roofmaxx





“My father had a contract with Maple Leaf Farms growing up and we lived on a duck farm, so we gathered 2,400 eggs each morning,” Dewayne reminisces. “Our alarm was set for 5:30 every day and there weren’t a lot of vacations since the eggs had to be picked up every morning.”

From roofing homes to selling products and diving into personal development, Dewayne’s professional path eventually led him back to the roofing industry. Recognizing the increasing need for a solution to the rapid deterioration of asphalt shingles due to the infusion of cheaper limestone substitutes, Dewayne seized the opportunity to join Roof Maxx



when he learned about the solutions the fast-growing business offered.

“When the chance to become a Roof Maxx dealer came along, I knew it was meant to be,” he recalls. “It was a solution nobody had, and the need for it was immense.”

Located in Bristol, Indiana, Roof Maxx Elkhart is one of over 386 dealers nationwide and covers the entire Michiana area from as far south as Fort Wayne, Columbia City, Warsaw Rochester, Plymouth, North Judson and as far north as Michigan City, St Joe, Benton Harbor,

Dowagiac, Three Rivers, Sturgis, Angola and everything in between.

“We cover six different area codes,” Dewayne emphasizes with a smile.

Groundbreaking Technology

Roof Maxx is a USDA Certified Biobased Product, composed of all natural soybean-oil that quickly penetrates the top layer of shingles, restoring crucial and compromised flexibility needed for daily expansion and contraction. According to Dewayne, this rejuvenation treatment for asphalt roofs can extend their lifespan up to 15 years, with three applications spread out over every five years, guaranteed with warranty.

“One of the main reasons the asphalt shingle has diminished in size is because asphalt comes from the remnants of what’s left over from every 55-gallon barrel of oil produced,” he continues. “And in the last two or three decades, the oil refinery companies have gotten a lot more efficient in extracting more petro products out of that barrel of oil, thereby reducing the amount of asphalt left over, causing demand to skyrocket and prices to rise.”

What sets Roof Maxx apart isn’t just its innovative technology

though; it’s the commitment to caring for clients and communities.

“People don’t buy your product, they buy you,” Dewayne points out. “We’re not just in the business of fixing roofs; we’re in the business of restoring homes and lifting burdens. One of the most fulfilling things about what we do is when we complete a job and see the stress and weight lifted off of clients who couldn’t afford a full roof replacement due to rapidly rising costs.”

Beyond Business

In his downtime, Dewayne enjoys life’s simple pleasures with his loved ones. Married to wife Juanita, the couple have three children — Adrianna, Preston, and Mya — with baby number four expected in June. As the Chupp family eagerly awaits their newest addition, Dewayne says they are all looking forward to creating many more memories together.

“The last 16 years have been the best years of my life and that’s exactly how long I have known Juanita. Hands-down she has the hardest, most time-consuming job of the two of us, staying at home raising our unique, smart, funny, and loving children,” Dewayne acknowledges.

“My wife and kids enjoy her horses, our chickens, and two dogs,” he continues. “When we get time, we always love going to any beach where it’s warm and has a lot of Vitamin D. But the thing we enjoy the



To learn more about Roof Maxx of Elkhart and how it can transform your roof, visit www.getRoofMaxx.com, or call Dewayne today at 574-777-0711.

most is when everyone’s home and we get to just spend time together.”

A Bright Future

As Dewayne reflects on the overwhelming demand his business has experienced over the past five years, his gaze is fixed firmly on growth. Dewayne recently hired two full-time employees and has plans to expand the dealership to 30 employees over the next 10 years.

Moreover, Roof Maxx has made the Maxx Pledge — a commitment to making a difference in the lives of high-risk children waiting in foster care. Partnering with the Dave Thomas Foundation For Adoption,

Roof Maxx donates a portion of its annual product sales to help find forever homes for these vulnerable children. Their ambitious goal in the next six years includes helping 25,000 children in foster care by finding their forever home.

“When you think of soda, you think Coca-Cola or Pepsi, not RC Cola or the generic brands. And that is who we are,” affirms Dewayne. “Every roof we rejuvenate is a step toward a brighter, more sustainable future. And by extending the life of roofs, Roof Maxx helps facilitate real estate transactions, increases marketability, and saves both buyers and sellers thousands of dollars.”



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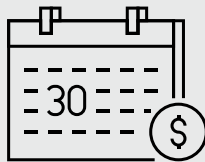


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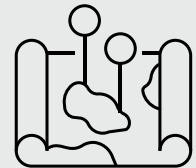
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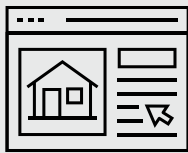
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