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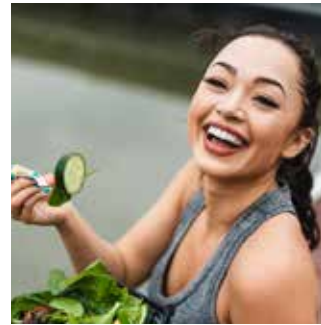
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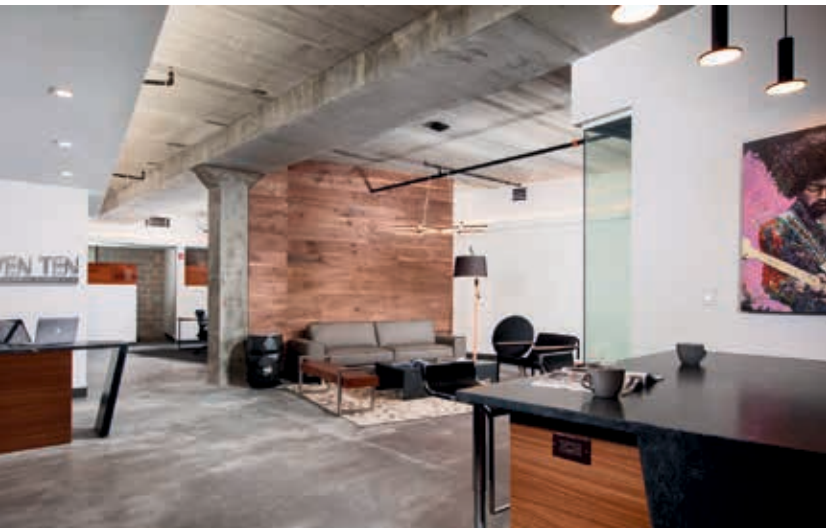
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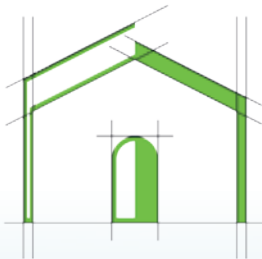
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► publisher’s note

PREPARING FOR THE FALL MARKET: Key Strategies for Success

Dear Real Producers of Naples,

As we transition from the relatively slower summer months to the bustling fall season, when temperatures moderate and snowbirds begin arriving for the winter, it’s the perfect time to reassess our strategies and prepare for the busy real estate period ahead. September presents a unique opportunity to evaluate our approach and ensure we’re positioned for success in the Florida market.

The fall season often brings a shift in buyer and seller behavior. To stay ahead, it’s crucial to understand the latest market trends and adjust your strategies accordingly. Analyze recent sales data, track price movements, and identify areas of high demand to tailor your approach for the coming months.

With hurricane season in full swing, preparing properties for potential storms is essential. Advise your clients on safeguarding their homes, from securing insurance to implementing preventive measures. This proactive approach not only protects your clients but also demonstrates your expertise and commitment.

As we approach the final quarter of the year, it’s a great time to take the opportunity to review your goals and set new targets. Reflect on your accomplishments and outline actionable steps to achieve your year-end objectives. Maintaining momentum and staying focused will help you close the year on a high note.

Speaking of ending the year on a high note ... we’re thrilled about our upcoming Awards Gala on November 8th at Elite Jets. This special event will be a celebration of excellence, bringing together the top talent from both Naples and Fort Myers real estate. If you haven’t yet RSVP’d, be sure to do so soon. This evening promises to be a memorable celebration of our industry’s finest. We look forward to celebrating with you!

Very respectfully yours,

Andrew Regenhard
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► from the desk of the president

WHY FLORIDA IS THE BEST ECONOMY FOR A HOME PURCHASE

By Gia Arvin, 2024 President of Florida REALTORS®

NAR's national settlement has gone into effect and the good news is, real estate continues to fly off the shelves here in Florida. As the market adjusts and we see more inventory amidst continued higher interest rates, national economist Dr. Lawrence Yuen reminds us a lot of life happens over the course of two years:

- 7 million babies will be born
- 3 million marriages will take place
- 1.5 million divorces will occur
- 4 million net new jobs will be created
- 50 million people will switch or change jobs
- 7 million people will turn 65 years old
- And 4 million will die

All of these matters influence decisions about where and how people will live, changing circumstances ... and all call for new and different housing options and homeownership opportunities.

What about Florida? Here are a few factors to consider when it comes to the state's thriving economy and future forecast, according to our own chief economist, Dr. Brad O'Connor, and his research department:

- Florida ranks number one in the U.S. for new business applications in a given month. (Source: April 2024, U.S. Census Bureau, Business Formation Statistics)
- Florida ranks second in *Chief Executive* magazine's CEO Survey of Best States for Business for the past 11 years straight. (Source: *Chief Executive* magazine, 2023)
- The state's business tax climate ranks fourth in the U.S. (Source: 2024, The Tax Foundation)
- Florida's Gross Domestic Product, or GDP, reached \$1.62 trillion as of the fourth quarter of 2023 — our economy grew 5 percent from 2022 to 2023, compared to 2.1 percent in California and New York's 0.7 percent. (Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis) Florida ranks as the number one economy in the U.S., according to the 2024 Best States Rankings by U.S. News and World Report. The state is also ranked number two in growth and number seven in employment. (Source: 2024, U.S. News & World Report, Best States Ranking)
- Florida's job growth in 2023 averaged 1.1 percent higher than that of the U.S. The state gained a total of 222,200 jobs over the year as of May 2024, an increase of 2.2 percent. (Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics)
- Florida's statewide unemployment rate was 3.3 percent in May, better than the U.S. unemployment rate of 4 percent. (Source U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics)

Take time when speaking to your friends and neighbors to tout the incredible success of our home state. As you greet buyers from outside of Florida, use this information to emphasize why the Sunshine State is the place to buy today!

Want more up-to-date research or local real estate market statistics? Visit FloridaRealtors.org/research for an array of tools which include interactive Market Data, Market Statistics (PDF reports), Home Buyers and Sellers profile, and much, much more. As a Florida Realtors member, you are granted exclusive access to the most innovative and effective research databases in the country.



Gia Arvin, broker-owner of Matchmaker Realty in Gainesville, is the 2024 president of Florida REALTORS®, the state's largest professional trade association. She is active in her residential brokerage and is a leader in regional, state, and national real estate associations. Gia was the 2011 president of the Gainesville-Alachua County Association of REALTORS® and the 2017 Florida president of the Women's Council of REALTORS®, among multiple other previous leadership positions.



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FUELING

PEAK PERFORMANCE

By Carlene Marie

What if the secret to your peak performance lies in your daily food choices? As I share in the “Mindpower” space, you know well the power of cultivating your conscious awareness, and this also extends to how we mindfully fuel our bodies and our brains. Simple, mindful shifts in your diet can significantly impact your energy, cognitive function, mood and, ultimately, your performance.

“Your brain is only as good as the fuel you provide it,” says Theo Compernelle in his book “Brain Chains.” As high achievers, the foods you choose to fuel your body play a pivotal role in helping you achieve your peak performance. By making mindful nutritional choices, you really can boost your energy, sharpen your mind, and maintain a positive outlook.

ENERGIZE WITH SMART SWAPS

The foundation of sustained energy lies in balanced meals that combine complex carbohydrates, lean proteins, and healthy fats. Small changes can optimize your energy levels. Instead of sugary cereal in the morning, try oatmeal topped with fresh berries and nuts for a steady release of glucose, preventing energy crashes. Swap white rice for quinoa or brown rice at lunch or dinner for more fiber and nutrients, helping you stay full longer and maintain consistent energy.

BOOST COGNITIVE FUNCTION WITH BRAIN FOOD SWAPS

Your brain requires specific nutrients to function optimally. Omega-3 fatty acids, found in fatty fish like salmon, walnuts, and flaxseeds, are essential for maintaining cognitive function. Instead of chips, opt for walnuts as a snack.

Add grilled salmon to your salad to get brain-boosting omega-3s. Antioxidant-rich foods such as blueberries, dark chocolate, and green tea protect your brain from oxidative stress and improve memory and focus. Replace your afternoon candy bar with dark chocolate and switch soda for green tea. These small swaps can significantly enhance your mental agility.

ENHANCE MOOD WITH NUTRIENT-DENSE CHOICES

Your mood is closely linked to your nutritional intake. Foods rich in vitamins, minerals, and amino acids can significantly impact your emotional well-being. Folate, found in leafy greens, citrus fruits, and beans, helps produce serotonin, a neurotransmitter that regulates mood. Choose spinach or kale for your salads instead of iceberg lettuce. Snack on citrus fruits like

oranges or a handful of almonds, which are high in magnesium and are mood-improving. Omega-3 fatty acids reduce inflammation and promote a healthy brain environment. Incorporate more fish into your meals or consider a daily omega-3 supplement to keep your mood stable and positive.

STAY HYDRATED FOR OPTIMAL PERFORMANCE

Never underestimate the power of hydration. Water is essential for every bodily function, including energy production and cognitive performance. Dehydration can lead to fatigue, difficulty concentrating, and irritability. Instead of coffee or sugary drinks, make a habit of drinking water throughout the day. Add a slice of lemon or cucumber for a refreshing twist.

As I often say in my coaching practice, small hinges can swing big doors. These small shifts can create massive impact. Your daily food choices directly influence your energy, cognitive function, and mood. By making mindful shifts — like swapping sugary cereals for oatmeal, chips for walnuts, or soda for green tea — you set yourself up for sustained peak performance. “Success is not the result of one big decision but of many small choices,” said Stephen Covey. Let your daily nutritional choices be those small, impactful efforts that propel you toward your goals. Embrace these changes and watch your performance enhance in every way. As Theo Compernelle reminds us, “Your brain is only as good as the fuel you provide it.” Make every choice of what you consume a step towards your peak performance, your results and, ultimately, your very success.



Carlene Marie is a Certified Master Mindpower Coach and Certified Health, Wellness & Life Coach. She specializes in private and group coaching, keynotes, workshops and publications helping high performers cultivate mental toughness and emotional resilience. With extensive expertise in unlocking human potential, Carlene Marie’s programs empower and guide toward lasting change for optimal success in every area of life.
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KRISTIN & JONATHAN

VAN HEUKELOM

▶▶ featured agents

By Zachary Cohen
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THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP

Before relocating to Naples in 2016, Kristin Van Heukelom worked as a brain injury specialist. While moving to Naples provided a change of scenery and the gifts of living in a tropical paradise, one thing it didn't offer was ample job opportunities in her profession. So she stayed home and homeschooled her kids for two years as she figured out her next steps.

By 2018, Kristin's need to find work had escalated. As her previous relationship broke down, she needed work to anchor her and provide stability for her family. That's when she turned toward real estate.

"I was left with absolutely nothing," Kristin reflects humbly. "I needed to

find a new career out of necessity. It was do or die back then. I barely had basic belongings and didn't know where my next paycheck was coming from. I needed work, and real estate was it. I got a Groupon card for my course, studied my butt off, and gave it 110 percent. Everything I do, I do it 110 percent, and this would be no different. Why real estate? I had nothing else. I had to provide for myself and my kids, and this was how I was going to do it."

Kristin launched her real estate career with the drive to succeed — and succeed she did. She put her all into her business, leading her to attend a Tony Robbins workshop in 2019. That's where she met Jonathan,

who happened to be her seatmate. At the time, Jonathan was working in window sales, and while he was successful, he struggled with burnout.

"My employer sent me because they saw the benefit in the Tony Robbins approach and suggested I go down for the workshop," Jonathan explains. "I was living in British Columbia. It was a long trip. I'd never been to Florida before, and I initially didn't want to go. But I went, and it was the best decision I ever made."

Kristin and Jonathan immediately hit it off. Jonathan began traveling back and forth between British Columbia and Florida — even during the COVID-19 shutdown. By 2021,

he left his job, sold his house, packed his entire life into three suitcases, and moved down to Naples full-time. Shortly after, he joined Kristin in real estate, forming Team 239 with Local Real Estate.

Three years later, Kristin and Jonathan are thriving in real estate and in their relationship. In 2023, they sold an impressive 33 transactions for \$22 million.

Working together as a husband-wife team has the potential to present challenges, but Kristin and Jonathan have

found a process that helps them stay connected and excel in business.

“My strengths play off her strengths,” Jonathan explains. “Kristin is really great with building the business and putting systems and processes in place. She knows her contracts inside out and upside down. She stays up-to-date on current trends. While that’s not a weakness of mine, it’s not my focus. I’m the connector, the people person, the problem solver.”



WE DON'T WANT TO RUN A REAL ESTATE EMPIRE.
WE WANT A FAMILY-AND-FRIENDS
APPROACH TO OUR TEAM.

“

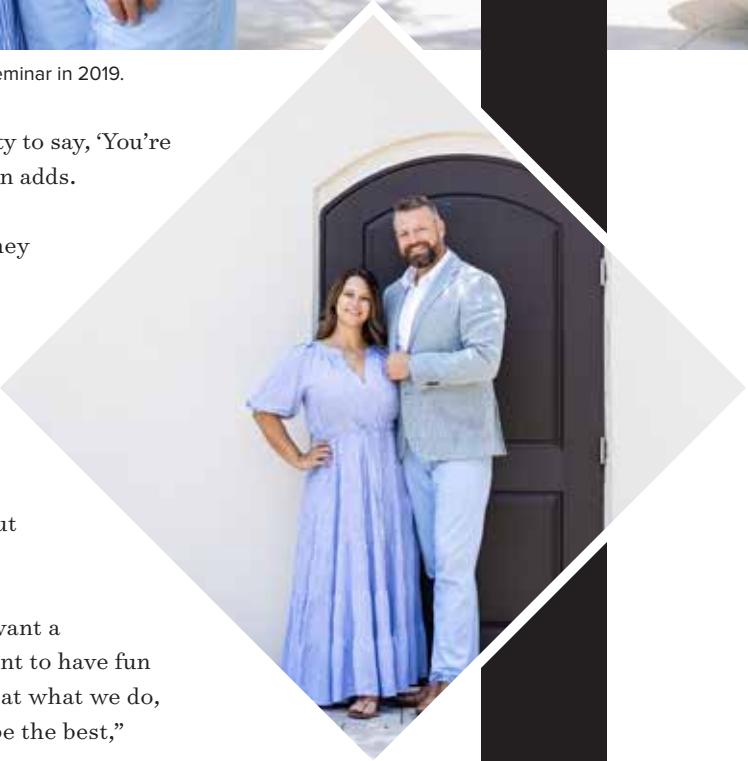


Jonathan and Kristin Van Heukelom met at a Tony Robbins seminar in 2019.

“We know our own strengths and have the humility to say, ‘You’re really good at this. Why don’t you take it?’” Kristin adds.

As Kristin and Jonathan grow their business, they are trending toward a more boutique approach to selling real estate. They are connecting with more people in the luxury segment and have worked to leverage Jonathan’s Canadian connections to support people from outside the country. Kristin has built a commanding presence on YouTube. They even plan to hold future seminars for Canadians about the cross-border relocation process.

“We don’t want to run a real estate empire. We want a family-and-friends approach to our team. We want to have fun and put that first. So while we want to dominate at what we do, we don’t want to be the biggest. But we want to be the best,” Jonathan closes.





TOGETHER IN LIFE

Outside of real estate, you'll find Kristin and Jonathan Van Heukelom together with their kids, renovating their home in Naples, absorbed in Bible study, or volunteering with the Naples Humane Society. Jonathan has two children, Jonah (14) and Avery (13), as does Kristin, Brandon (17) and Brooke (16). "Everything we do is together, and we never get sick of it," Jonathan smiles. "I could have never imagined wanting to live with, play with, work with – literally do everything with the same person every day, but I do, and I love it. We have so much fun." Even still, Jonathan will steal away some time for golf while Kristin recharges her batteries with some peace and quiet by the pool.

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By Michael Dill

the owner, they feel good about themselves. They show up, they represent the brand with pride, they do their job, they do it well, and they take care of your customers. In turn, your customers are happy and satisfied. They come back more often. They tell their colleagues and friends. They tell other organizations to bring you additional business. As the customers

are happy, they feed the business. Revenues increase, profits rise, and the business's job is to take care of the owner. That's it.

When the owner takes care of the team, the team takes care of the customer. The customer takes care of the business, and the business takes care of the owner.

I don't care what industry you're in. I don't care if you make widgets or you deliver personal, professional services. It simply doesn't matter. It always comes down to people. Take care of your people. Your people will take care of the customers and the business will take care of you.



Coach Michael Dill is an award-winning, certified business coach, global speaker, and published author. He is a proud ActionCOACH franchise partner, as well as the president of Power & Ice Wealth Creation, a strategic leadership company. Michael brings more than 40 years of business and entrepreneurial experience to his leadership, team training, and mentoring practice. To learn more, visit BusinessCoachMichaelDill.com.

It Always Comes Down to People

I recently had a speaker's bureau representative find me to place me as a speaker for an event coming up in 2025. The prior speaker had been running and moderating the event for about two or three years in a row and had industry-specific knowledge and experience. Of course, Yvon asked me, "Do you have industry knowledge?" I said, "No, I don't, but let me be clear: in any organization, it always comes down to people — how we think, how we show up, the communication or lack of communication in an organization, the culture, the leadership style, and whether people

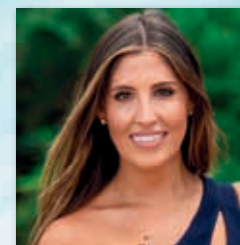
understand other behaviors and how to adapt to those behaviors. It always comes down to people."

Let's face it, there are products and services that we deliver to our customers, to our clients, to our local community, and to the world, however, it's always the people who are doing all that.

In the cycle of business, there are four components. The owner of the organization, whoever that may be, has one job: to take care of the team, the people. It is his or her role to understand the team and create the culture,

the structure, the accountability, and the KPIs (key performance indicators). It's to create roles and responsibilities so everybody knows exactly what they need to do so they can stay in their lane and implement the process of reviewing people so they know where they stand, as well as make sure they're communicated with regularly, where you're having weekly meetings and making sure they're happy. Do whatever you need to do to take care of the team, the people.

When your team is being taken care of by the organization, by the leader, by

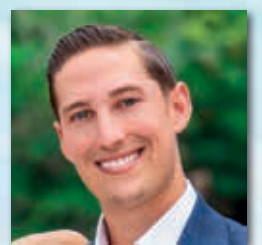


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By Zachary Cohen
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STACEY MACZULIS
LUANN VIZZONE

FirstSource Title



TRAILBLAZERS

Stacey Maczulis and LuAnn Vizzone may have arrived in Florida from different parts of the country, but their professional experiences mirror each other. LuAnn began her title career in New Jersey in 2009, and Stacey began hers in Ohio in 2011. Both rose to become top salespeople for their organizations.

In 2023, they found themselves working on the same team for another Southwest Florida-based title company. They connected, realizing they shared a similar vision.

“We discovered that we worked in similar ways and were very like-minded,” LuAnn shares. “Stacey and I are both used to working with sales teams — for her in Ohio and me in New Jersey. When we came to this area, we discovered we were one of the only sales teams of more than one or two people. We had a vision to

create a large business development team, as well as provide excellent customer service, and we wanted to bring it to Southwest Florida.”

Stacey and LuAnn officially opened FirstSource Title’s first Florida branch in February 2024. Their team currently stands at eight people and growing. Even more importantly, they are filling a much-needed void, providing local real estate agents with a level of service that many have yet to experience.

“We bring as much value to the agents as possible. Many agents didn’t have a buffer between the escrow officer and the agent,” LuAnn explains. “We were hearing the same thing from different agents — there was a lack of communication, they were not aware of major milestones such as closings, cancellations, deposits, etc. We are that person in between the escrow

officer and the agent. You can get in touch with us after hours or on the weekends. Our clients work all hours, so we make sure we do the same. We are there; we want to be your go-to person, making sure every transaction closes smoothly.”

Coming Together

LuAnn began her title career in 2009, after nearly 25 years as a health club owner. Amid the recession in 2008, she decided to sell her club and get into real estate. She got her real estate license and mortgage license before finding her footing in the title business. Over the following years, LuAnn became a top title sales rep then a partner and vice president of sales for a title company. In 2023, she relocated to Southwest Florida, where she crossed paths with Stacey.

Stacey began her title career in 2011 in Cleveland, Ohio. She, too, became a



From left to right: Amina Mokhtari, Kristen Robertiello, Beth Huffman, Stacey Maczulis, LuAnn Vizzone, Ciara Lister, Scarlett Guerrero, Ginny Marles

top title sales rep. When her company opened a Naples branch in 2022, she headed south, becoming the company’s top business development rep. Building relationships has always been at the core of her work, and it’s ultimately what led to her partnership with LuAnn.

Providing Value

Stacey, LuAnn, and their team are keenly focused on providing value to their partners. They offer lunch-and-learns, educational opportunities, unique joint ventures, and even have an attorney on staff — a rarity for a title company.

“What can we do to add value to your business?” Stacey asks. “That’s what we’re focused on. We have business developers who are out and about and can help you with all of your clients’ needs.”

Stacey and LuAnn are proud to be an integral part of their community. They stand for empowering other

“
WHAT CAN WE
DO TO ADD
VALUE TO YOUR
BUSINESS?
THAT’S
WHAT WE’RE
FOCUSED ON.”

**FirstSource
Title**

women (their whole team is composed of successful women). They even run a monthly series called “Boss Babe’z,” teaching and engaging real estate agents on topics such as self-defense, social media marketing, meditation, and more.

Stacey and LuAnn also serve on various committees for the Women’s Council of REALTORS® (Naples and Bonita) and volunteer with organizations such as Pace Center for Girls and Beverly’s Angels, two nonprofits that support underprivileged youth.

“The sky’s the limit for us,” Stacey says proudly. “Our goal is to get established in Southwest Florida and then grow.”

FirstSource Title Agency prides itself on delivering an exceptional closing experience — whether you are refinancing, selling, or purchasing a new home. For more information, please visit www.firstsourcetitle.com.



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NAVIGATING A SUCCESSFUL REAL ESTATE CLOSING IN FLORIDA: TIPS FOR REALTORS®

By Irina Prell, Esq., and Greisy Rodriguez



Closing a real estate transaction in Florida marks the culmination of weeks, if not months, of dedicated effort. Ensuring a smooth and successful closing is crucial for maintaining your professional reputation, achieving client satisfaction, and securing future referrals. The following are expert tips to help you effectively navigate the complexities of Florida's real estate closing process.

1 Stay Organized from the Start

Effective organization is the cornerstone of a successful closing. Maintain meticulous records of all communications, contracts, and documents. Utilize digital tools like transaction management software to streamline your workflow, ensuring that all necessary information is readily accessible to all parties involved. This approach minimizes the risk of overlooked details and promotes a seamless transaction.

2 Understand Florida's Unique Requirements

Florida's real estate market has specific legal requirements, including mandatory disclosures and the involvement of a title company or attorney during closing. Sellers must disclose any known material defects that are not easily observable by the buyer. Familiarizing yourself with these requirements helps protect against potential legal disputes and ensures compliance throughout the transaction.

3 Build a Team of Reliable Professionals

Assemble a team of dependable professionals, such as mortgage brokers,

property inspectors, title companies, and real estate attorneys. A strong network not only helps prevent potential issues but also enhances the client experience, contributing to a smooth closing. Your reputation is closely tied to the performance of these professionals, making it essential to choose team members who are knowledgeable and reliable.

4 Professional Guidance

Encourage buyers to work with real estate attorneys who can navigate the legal complexities of the transaction. Issues such as unresolved disputes, zoning problems, or homeowner association (HOA) restrictions can complicate the process. An attorney's expertise helps facilitate a smooth closing and minimizes the risk of future legal challenges.

5 Clear Title and Resolve Issues Early

A clear title is fundamental to closing a transaction. Collaborate closely with the title company or real estate attorney to address any liens, encumbrances, probate matters, or other title defects early on. Proactively resolving these issues ensures that the closing process proceeds without unnecessary delays, enhancing the transaction's efficiency.

6 Ensure All Parties Are Prepared

Regular and clear communication with all parties involved — buyers, sellers, lenders, and attorneys — is vital. Ensure that everyone understands their responsibilities and the timeline for

completing necessary tasks. Confirm that all required documents, such as the purchase agreement, inspection reports, HOA approval, and financing paperwork, are in order well before the closing date.

7 Conduct Thorough Inspections

Given that Florida operates under a "buyer beware" principle (caveat emptor), it is crucial for buyers to conduct thorough due diligence. Buyers should inspect the property meticulously, review all relevant documents, and fully understand the property's condition. Addressing potential issues early can prevent last-minute disputes and ensure a smooth closing.

8 Prepare for the Final Walk-Through

Schedule a final walk-through of the property a day or two before the closing. This allows buyers to verify that the property is in the agreed-upon condition and that any negotiated repairs have been completed. Promptly addressing any issues that arise during the walk-through can prevent delays and ensure a successful closing.

9 Be Present at the Closing

Your presence at the closing provides reassurance to your clients and allows you to address any last-minute issues. Being available to explain documents and answer questions can make the process smoother for everyone involved, enhancing the overall client experience.

10 Ensure Proper Transfer of Keys and Utilities

Coordinate the transfer of keys, garage door openers, and any other access devices with the sellers. Additionally, remind both parties to arrange for the transfer or termination of utilities to avoid service interruptions or unexpected bills, ensuring a smooth transition for your clients.

11 Celebrate and Follow Up

Once the closing is complete, take the time to celebrate with your clients. A small gesture, such as a thank-you note or a housewarming gift, can leave a lasting positive impression. Follow up after the closing to ensure your clients are settling in well and to address any post-closing questions or concerns, solidifying your relationship and paving the way for future business.

Closing a real estate transaction in Florida requires meticulous attention to detail, clear communication, and proactive problem solving. By following these expert tips, you can help ensure a smooth and successful closing, leading to satisfied clients and a stellar reputation in the industry. Implementing these strategies not only enhances your clients' experience but also solidifies your standing as a knowledgeable and reliable Realtor in Florida's competitive real estate market.

If you have any real estate questions or need guidance, please do not hesitate to contact the professionals at Prell-Spearing Law Firm. We would be honored to assist and provide the expertise you need. Happy closing!



Irina Prell, a real estate attorney with Esquire Land Title, brings extensive knowledge of real estate contracts and transactions to the organization. Having lived in Southwest Florida for 18 years, Irina's legal expertise is complemented by her background as a licensed Florida contractor, providing her with a well-rounded perspective on real estate matters. Known for her proficiency, professionalism, and unwavering dedication, Irina ensures that every client receives thorough and expert representation.



Greisy Rodriguez, a licensed title agent, and the Naples branch manager for Prell-Spearing Law Firm, has been passionately dedicated to the real estate title industry for the past 12 years. A Naples, Florida, resident since 1999, Greisy combines professionalism with a personal touch in every transaction, ensuring clients and business partners feel confident and supported throughout the process.



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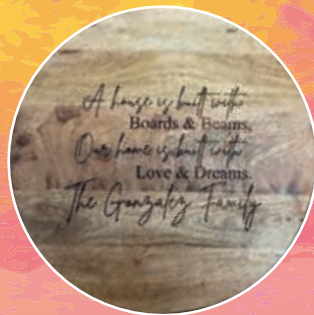
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DOWN-HOME VALUES

NICK CASSELMAN

"I'm a normal guy living a normal lifestyle rather than the country club lifestyle. That's how my business is built, and that's how I live," Nick Casselman begins.

In a city built for the luxury real estate market, Nick Casselman has taken a unique approach to building a real estate business. Rather than chasing the high-dollar listings and the luxury side of the market, he's built a top real estate business by staying true to his down-home upbringing. Nick's approach has worked on multiple levels. Not only is he a top REALTOR®, but he's living a life according to his values.

Nick was born and raised in the rural town of Ellicottville, just outside Buffalo, New York. If upstate New York gives you images of long, snowy winters and harsh living conditions, you'd be right. Ellicottville was even more intense than Buffalo; the lake effect snow often brought orders of magnitude more snowfall to the small town.

Both of Nick's parents were teachers. They raised him to put his nose down, work hard, and serve others. Growing up in Ellicottville was tough, but Nick wouldn't trade it for the world. His upbringing has made him into the hard-working, relationship-driven man he is today.





“
I WAS THE
NUMBER ONE
PRODUCER
OF RESALE
HOMES IN
GOLDEN GATE
ESTATES IN
2023, AND I
WOULD LIKE
TO MAINTAIN
THAT STATUS.



Nick Casselman enjoys beach volleyball and has a pro-size court in his backyard.

“I had to do everything growing up. I was outside shoveling rocks, cleaning up the yard, and working hard, and those values stuck with me my whole life,” Nick shares. “That helped make me into who I am.”

Nick began his professional life in commercial banking in New York. He had long dreamed of relocating to Florida, and in 2014, he made that dream a reality.

“It’s a typical story,” Nick laughs. “I wanted to be in Fort Lauderdale, so I applied to 150 jobs and got no callback. So I booked a vacation to Fort Lauderdale and introduced myself at every bank to try to get a job. Someone had an opening in Naples. I’d never heard of Naples, but I drove over, and that’s how I wound up here.”

Nick transitioned out of commercial lending and into residential real estate six years later. While commercial lending was often cutthroat and financially driven, residential real estate provided an opportunity to leverage his personable, relationship-first approach to life.

Since going full-time in 2021, Nick has had tremendous success. As an individual agent with Premiere Plus Realty, he closed 22 transactions for \$12.5 million in 2023. He also founded the Good Vibes Group, which is currently a team of three agents total, in November 2023.

One key to Nick’s success has been his use of Facebook to farm his local neighborhood, Golden Gate Estates. Over 80 percent of his transactions come from that one neighborhood, where he has become something of a local celebrity.

As he looks ahead, Nick envisions many more years of success. He aims to grow the Good Vibes Group to a team of over 10 to 20 agents.

“Starting the team has been a direction I’ve wanted to go. My goal is to take people who are stuck and spinning their wheels and help them grow. I provide more mentoring than a lead-generation model,” he says. “Sales-wise, I foresee maintaining where I am. I was the number one producer of resale homes in Golden Gate Estates in 2023, and I would like to maintain that status.”

Outside of work, you’ll find Nick playing beach volleyball with his wife, Haley (they even have a pro-size court in their backyard), exploring the great outdoors, cheering on his Buffalo Bills, and spending time with his three dogs. Nick describes himself as a “simple man.”

“I would hope that when people think about me, they would say, ‘Nick was a great guy.’ The sales numbers matter, but not in the big picture. I just want to be known as a stand-up guy.”



FUN FACT

“During my college days, I had a mini career as a rapper, DJ, and singer,” Nick recalls. “I broke out some of my original rap songs at my wedding. I’m a pretty conservative personality, so everyone just lost it.”



Nick Casselman and his wife Haley with their miniature dachshund Noodles and golden retrievers Mayple and Matty



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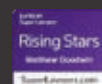
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DARLENE RODDY



cover story

SELLING PARADISE

By Zachary Cohen
Photos by Michelle Reed

2000. AS THE CALENDAR TURNED TO A NEW MILLENNIUM, THE WORLD AWAITED A NEW ERA. THE DOT-COM BOOM WAS IN FULL SWING, MOBILE PHONES WERE BECOMING MAINSTREAM (AND EVERYONE WAS PLAYING SNAKE), AND THE INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION WELCOMED ITS FIRST RESIDENTS. MEANWHILE, THE REAL ESTATE INDUSTRY WAS FLOURISHING AND DARLENE RODDY WAS UNDERGOING SOME SIGNIFICANT CHANGES OF HER OWN.



Originally from Neenah, Wisconsin, Darlene relocated to Marco Island in 1998. After many years as a stay-at-home mom, she re-entered the workforce two years later to become a real estate agent. For Darlene, it was a time ripe with the excitement of new beginnings.

“Moving to Marco was a big change. We had vacationed on Marco for years and I loved it. I loved the weather, the small-island feel, and the opportunity to play tennis and golf, and boat year-round,” Darlene explains. “But I was a stay-at-home mom, and when my kids went to

school, I didn’t want to sit at home all day. Real estate seemed like the best next step for me.” Darlene holds a bachelor’s degree in interior design, and multiple friends suggested real estate would be a good fit. So she got her license and took a chance on herself.

Darlene’s first big break was an opportunity to sell space in a mixed-use development. After selling that project out, she joined a large brokerage, where her residential sales career began to take shape.

More than two decades later, Darlene is still thriving in real estate. She’s become one of Naples’ top-producing REALTORS® year after year, closing 22 transactions for \$35 million in 2023. She also leads The Roddy Luxury Group, a small team with Gulf Coast International Properties that includes Agent Lindsey

Skott, Administrative Assistant Julie Hall, and part-time Agent Ethan Hall.

So what has been the key to Darlene’s success?

“I work well with people,” she says. “There are some agents who are pushy, but in my career, I listen to people. I let people tell me what they are looking for and then I find it for them. I’m a very good listener, and I think that’s why I’ve been so successful. Follow up if you meet someone. If I have someone walk in the door, I connect



Darlene Roddy leads The Roddy Luxury Group with Gulf Coast International Properties.

with them instantly. That’s the key to my success — communication and follow-up.”

One of Darlene’s favorite client stories is about a couple she met late at night when they knocked on her office door looking for the keys to a rental property. She not only helped them find the keys, but she also stayed in contact with the couple and showed them homes over a period of four years. Eventually, they found the perfect penthouse condo on the beach.

“That’s how I work. I go the extra mile for people,” Darlene explains.

Darlene prides herself on the concierge services she offers clients. Her role goes beyond simply selling a home; she has a partnership with a construction team, an interior designer, a mover, and more. Darlene is equipped and ready to serve a client’s varying needs when buying or selling a home.

“I love what I do. For me, to find someone a piece of paradise — it’s a dream. I feel so fortunate living down here, and now I get to sell paradise for my clientele. I always want to be successful. I always want my clients to get phenomenal service.”

THAT’S HOW I WORK.
I GO THE EXTRA
MILE FOR PEOPLE





BEYOND THE OFFICE

Darlene Roddy enjoys spending time with her significant other, Gary Skott, and her two adult sons, Zachary and Tyler. She played competitive tennis for many years, and although she doesn't play competitively anymore, she still hits the court a few times a week. She's also learning and enjoying golf.



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