

## Liz Moore and Associates:

# The name behind the business loves what she does

By Jill Keech



Liz Moore, of Liz Moore & Associates, at her office in City Center at Oyster Point.

CATHERINE ROGERS

Liz Moore may have been a “come here” in 1984 when she arrived from California as a bride. But today, the name Liz Moore and Associates is a mainstay on the real estate scene, which was once a male-dominated ownership industry, Moore says.

Coming here with no local ties and a college degree in history didn’t open doors to the business.

But “I really needed a job,” she says from her desk in her firm’s attractive office.

She found work with Atlantic Homes Realty but definitely as the new kid on the block.

“I was bad at this,” Moore remembers. “I was a very slow starter. It took me six months to sell my first house.”

But she listened, and she observed and she grew as she worked elsewhere in real estate, too.

“I was very, very blessed,” says Moore, an only child who was “spoiled rotten,” she says, not in the material sense but in the abundance of love.

“That instilled a lot of confidence in me,” she says. And so she established Liz Moore and Associates in 2003.

Her husband, Roger, retired to keep the home fires burning and be Mr. Mom to the couple’s now grown son, Grayson.

“I loved my job, and Roger didn’t,” Moore says of the arrangement.

To craft her business plan “for the perfect real estate company,” Moore sought input from professionals including national business development guru

Dyan Dobbyn, local attorney Brian D. Lytle and her former business partner, Dick Thurmond.

Working with Dobbyn, a survey was generated and disseminated to 10,000 local families about their real estate experiences. Many respondents lamented the expensive last-minute surprises, unforeseen expenses, delays and the stress of making major decisions under pressure.

From the survey, Moore built her company on a “no surprises” foundation. Before listing a home, a real estate appraisal and home inspection are done on the property in question, conducted by independent professionals with the proper credentials and at no charge to the client.

“Knowledge is power, and that puts clients in a position to make better decisions,” Moore says, so they own potential deal-breaking or deal-closing facts such as appropriate pricing, an acceptable loan number to a mortgage company and what repairs need to be made and their costs.

Location, location, location was why Moore chose Oyster Point, now City Center, as the home for her Newport News office when she launched, recognizing the Peninsula’s business hub and its central location to conveniently servicing all Peninsula locations.

“Glory days” followed.

“Everything we touched turned to gold,” Moore says. “We were profitable our first year in business,” even with costs such as marketing and high overhead, with the company ranked as the #3 office in overall sold volume on the Peninsula.

By the end of its second full year, the ranking jumped to the number one office in overall sold volume.

December 2005 saw the Liz Moore sign go up in Williamsburg rental space, followed by the company’s custom-built current New Town office in August 2007, “the month the market hit the wall, and agents were leaving real estate in droves,” Moore recalls.

Glory days became a roller coaster ride.

Today Moore says the market is slowly improving and that her company had a “great” 2013 and “almost as great a one in 2014.”

Moore’s business is run as a “boutique brokerage” as opposed to the “big box” shopping experience.

“We’ve stayed small so we can better control an extraordinary client experience. I believe the larger a company gets, the harder it is to manage quality,” she says.

A hands-on president who writes personal notes every day, Moore is highly regarded inside and outside her corporate door, and has received Virginia Peninsula Chamber of Commerce Entrepreneur and Greater Williamsburg Chamber of Commerce Small Business Person of the Year awards.

“I love being in a role where I’m managing an office, and I’m actively engaged with our agents and their clients,” Moore says. “A lot of my time is spent both teaching and coaching.”

New agent Sherry Chow finished her “rookie training” in October and sold a house at full price in November.

“When I go to Liz Moore and talk with her,” Chow says, “she is very knowledgeable, and she’s a very, very good teacher. She can demonstrate things clearly. She knows how to energize people; she has vision, and she knows how to motivate people so everybody goes forward with her.”

So what does this once-upon-a-time “spoiled rotten” kid do for fun?

“Work,” says Moore.

“She definitely loves what she does,” says Chow, “and it’s contagious.” ◀

### ▶ TO THE POINT

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