

This column highlights promotions, transfers, hirings, awards won and other key personnel moves within the suburban real estate community. Send a brief biographical summary — including the towns of residence and employment and a black-and-white photo, if desired — to: Movers & Shakers, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150. Our fax number is (313) 591-7279.

Joins Quality agency



Jerry D. Henderson has joined Quality Real Estate NW/Better Homes & Gardens in Livonia as a sales agent. Henderson, a Michigan State University graduate and U.S.

Navy veteran, had a 35-year career with Ford Motor Co., most recently as director of sales for export operations.

Remy earns GRI

Karen Remy, a Bloomfield Township resident and a Realtor with Real Estate One, Bloomfield Township, also has earned the Graduate Realtor Institute designation.

Remy, a top producer with her firm, is a member of Real Estate One's President's Council of Excellence.

Top agents named

Edith Garner and **Leslie Feraci** have been named agents of the month by ERA Bankers of Farmington Hills. "We're very proud of our top producers," said John Hosa, member broker. "Through hard work and sincere commitment to customer satisfaction, they have risen to meet the challenge of today's real estate market."

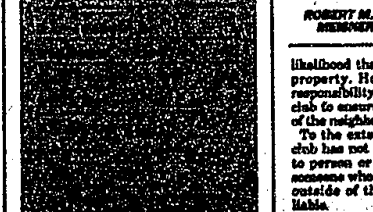
ERA Bankers also announced that **Byron Elock** has joined the firm as a sales associate.

Top agents awarded

Several Century 21 Metro One Region agents have been cited with Top 21 Sales Associate Awards. Honorees include **Vince Santoni** of Century 21 Hartford South, Livonia; **Jeff Zambler**, Century 21 M/J Corporate Transfer Service, Farmington Hills; and **Judy Nielsen**, Century 21 Dynamic Realty, Westland. Also, **Yoshiko Fujimori**, Century 21 Row, Livonia; **Steven Potoczky**, Century 21 Premiere, West Bloomfield; and **Paul Ehrler**, Century 21 Town & Country.



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REAL ESTATE

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3 generations



Generational agents: **Brandon Kekich**, **Leta Kekich** and **Sandy Blakeman** represent three generations selling real estate.

Real estate spans the generations

By David Pines
Staff Writer

Brandon Kekich, 21, a real estate agent with the Michigan Group in Livonia, had a good teacher introduce him to the business — his mom, **Leta**.

Leta M. Kekich, 47, a real estate agent with the same firm, had a good role model, too — her dad, **Morris "Sandy" Blakeman**.

Blakeman, 75, now retired, was the broker/broker of the Downriver Association of Realtors.

"It's a coincidence that we have three generations in real estate," **Blakeman** said. "It was never planned. I think every one of us is independent."

Blakeman switched to real estate after a long career in commercial photography.

Leta waited until her children had grown up and first worked as a secretary.

Brandon got started as a part-time host at a condominium development while studying business in college.

No powers and no pulling strings, the three agreed. All have made and are making their own marks in a highly-competitive business.

Blakeman is a former Realtor of the

Children sometimes take up the same work as their parents. But it's less common today that you find three generations in the same field. Here's the story of one such family in real estate.

Year for the downriver association. **Leta**, a Rookie of the Year for the downriver association, has never tallied less than \$3.6 million during any of her three full years selling.

Brandon topped one million last year and is above that figure in just six months this year.

"I really enjoy being able to provide a necessary service," **Leta** said. "I enjoy the independence of this job. I don't consider it a job. I like that it changes every day. I love the challenge."

"I love the feeling of helping people," **Brandon** said, adding that he doesn't see his relative youthful age as a drawback. "Once I start talking, people say, 'Wow.'"

"He has a great grasp of financing, an intelligent young man, computer literate," said **Mike Workman**, office manager.

"Customers loved him, and he learned quickly," **Leta** said of **Brandon**'s early efforts. "I wanted to make him my assistant, but I'm glad I

didn't because it would have been a waste of potential."

It's always a struggle to get established.

"There's no regular paycheck," **Brandon** said. "You don't get money until the seller gets money."

"That's why you have to plan your life as well as your business," **Blakeman** said.

"I picked up the phone, sent letters to apartment renters," **Brandon** continued. "Every for sale by owner in the paper I'd phone and send letters. I begged people until they said, 'O.K., let's sit down and talk.'"

All three family members are on the same wavelength when it comes to defining success.

"Self-motivation is one ingredient," **Blakeman** said. "But you must have education to thrive."

"Education is a must," added **Leta**, who holds a Graduate Realtors Institute designation.

"In the beginning, my mom said, 'Any seminar you see, you go.' I did.

She went with me and we learned a lot," **Brandon** said.

Other elements of a successful agent?

"Long hours, hard work, self-sacrifice," **Leta** said.

"Getting out of the common-man mode," **Blakeman** said.

"You have to have honesty and integrity," **Brandon** said.

A career in real estate isn't for everyone.

"I've recruited friends in the business who are now out," **Leta** said. "They didn't love it."

"Maybe they didn't want to get beeped at 10 o'clock at night. They didn't want to do an open house on Sunday."

"I couldn't go to a 9 to 5 job now," **Brandon** said.

Leta figures that she's just getting started learning the business.

"There are so many avenues I can take. I've worked for a builder. I've done resale residential. I'd like to get into investing. Then there's property management."

"I'm very proud to be a real estate agent," she said. "I'm proud of the profession. I think if you're honest, hard-working, current with laws and educated, you rise to the top."

Contact the club before you're hit by flying golf balls

REAL ESTATE
QUESTIONS



ROBERT M.
MEISNER

On the golf course abutting our condominium project, frequently there are errant balls that are hit accidentally into our condominiums and, in some instances, have caused damage to the units. The golf club is privately owned. Do we, as an association, or do any individual co-owners, have any cause of action against the golf club?

This is, of course, a very difficult question because presumably the purchasers of condominiums in the project knew that they were buying on a golf course and that there was a likelihood that errant golf balls would traverse their property. However, I still believe that there is a responsibility on the part of the golfers and/or the club to ensure, within reason, the security and safety of the neighbors and their real property. To the extent that you can establish that the golf club has not taken reasonable steps to avoid damage to person or property, it may be liable. Obviously, someone who hits a golf ball that injures someone else outside of the golf course may also be personally liable.

As a practical matter, I would have the association contact the golf club and consequently, the golf club's members, in an effort to alert them to the problem, to the extent that that has not already been done, and ask for whatever cooperation is necessary in order to attempt to eliminate the problem.

I have read recently about various embezzlements of condominium association money by management companies in various locales. Do you have any information on that?

Yes. Unfortunately, there is a major indictment of a number of management companies in the Manhattan, N.Y. area which is being processed. Also, in the Common Ground magazine of November/December 1994, there is reference to a Laguna Niguel, California, property manager who was arrested in August and charged with embezzling \$340,000 from two homeowners' associations.

Apparently, it is alleged that the managing agent began stealing money by forging names on bank signature cards and creating secret bank accounts in the names of the condominium associations.

He then allegedly transferred money to a bank where his own name was on the signature cards. He would request a cashier's check from an association account; when he obtained it, he would present a

withdrawal slip with two forged signatures that matched the forged signature cards. Afterwards, he would deposit the cashier's check into an account that he created.

The investigators claim that the managing agent avoided detection by creating phony vendor invoices that made it appear that the money was used for valid expenditures.

This is similar to the allegations made against various managers in New York.

Obviously, condominium associations should take precautions to protect their money through a proper checks and balances system.

Consult with your condominium association CPA and attorney who should be in a position to assist you with any problems that you have with your managing agent.

Robert M. Meisner is a Birmingham area attorney concentrating his practice in the areas of condominiums, real estate, corporate law and litigation. You are invited to submit topics which you would like to see discussed in this column, including questions about condominiums, by writing **Robert M. Meisner**, 30200 Telegraph Road, Suite 407, Bingham Farms, Michigan 48025.

This column provides general information and should not be construed as legal opinion.