

the business

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REAL ESTATE GURUS

FAMILY MATTERS

Brent and Mamie are the parents of three: Tommy McArthur Jr., Christi Smith and Tiffany Richmond. Though their children are married and living with their own children now, the family remains in close contact.

"Our children and grandchildren are so important to us," Mamie says. "We keep in touch as much as we can. Of course, I know all about my grandchildren and don't mind bragging on them any chance I get!"

Christi, 41, is married to Kelly Smith, and they live in Charlotte, West Virginia, with their son, Casey, 16. Tiffany is married to Travis Richmond, and they live in Nashville. Tommy lives in Brentwood with his wife, Vicki, and their children Rob, 13, and Libby, 10.

Mamie says that she made all of her children get their real estate licenses when they were growing up. But only one child decided to stay in the business – Tommy.

This year, Tommy was named president of McArthur Sanders. Now he heads up the Commercial Properties division of the company and is a certified commercial appraiser. Brent and Mamie say that Tommy is responsible for educating the other 39 agents at the company on government-related developments by attending the Williamson County planning and zoning meetings.

"We're very proud of Tommy," Mamie says. "He started out just helping me show property as a summer job in high school. Then Tommy got his appraiser's license in college, and he's been doing that ever since. It is our plan that when we retire, Tommy will continue the company for another 25 years. It's our goal that this company lives to be at least 50 years old."



McArthur Sanders *knows* Williamson County

THEY'VE BEEN BUYING AND SELLING REAL ESTATE FOR DECADES, but Brent and Mamie Sanders, owners of McArthur Sanders Real Estate, say they have no intentions of stopping anytime soon.

"We just love what we do," Mamie says. "I think I'm going to be doing this for as long as I physically can."

Brent initially began the venture with a business partner. Several years later, Mamie bought into the company, and she and Brent became co-owners. The husband-wife team now has more than 65 years of combined experience, with Brent working in the industry for 37 years and Mamie for 28. Their Williamson County based company celebrates its 25th anniversary this fall.

"It's hard to believe that we've been in business this long," Brent says. "But those who work with us know that we approach this job a little differently than most. We become a part of everything we do. It's important to us that we help our customers get exactly what they want. We're helping to create an environment for their lives – whether it's their home or their business, it's where they're going to spend most of their time."

Being different is something Mamie and Brent aspire to. They both say that relationships with customers are important to them and that community matters. That's why they've chosen to support and sponsor a number of community organizations over the years, including the Williamson County Fair, Franklin Noontime Rotary, Cool Springs Rotary, Franklin Rodeo, Page High School football team, Franklin Road Academy, Battle Ground Academy, Habitat for Humanity, various senior citizens programs and

selected projects for needy families.

The couple says that real estate is about more than just buying or selling property.

"It doesn't matter if we're working on a deal for commercial property or personal property," Brent explains. "Either way, we're dealing with people. And over time, it's the relationships that matter. At the heart of it, we love being involved in a deal and we enjoy working with people. We were raised to believe that relationships were the most important things you could grow in your life."

Mamie nods agreement and adds, "There are many companies selling real estate. But we believe that the job is about more than numbers and contracts. For us, it is about improving lives and helping people with fresh starts – whether they're selling their home to embark on a new adventure or whether they're buying that home to start in a new direction with their family. It's always going to be about people and phases of life."

STARTING OUT IN THE '80S

When the company began in 1980, McArthur Sanders Real Estate opened up two offices, one in Brentwood and one in Franklin. After a few years, Brent and Mamie say they realized that they needed to centralize their operations.

"It just made sense to us to put our office in the Cool Springs area," Brent says. "Back in the 1980s, we needed to find a nice balance in between both cities and we needed to have everything coming out of one office."

Over time, the company has honed its focus and practice. McArthur Sanders specializes in residential, farms, estates, historic, commercial

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and development properties. Because Mamie and Brent have lived in Williamson County for so long, they have extensive knowledge on the history of development in middle Tennessee.

“We know this area very well,” Brent says. “Because we’ve lived here all our lives and chosen to invest in this community, we understand the important issues that affect real estate on a daily basis. In fact, we strive to stay informed on governmental, architectural and technical developments. This helps to guide our decisions. In turn, we’re better suited to help our customers. Satisfied customers and community involvement are the cornerstones of our success.”

Brent and Mamie also say that they’ve seen a lot of shifts in the national and local real estate market over the last 25 years.

“We have been through so many different economic cycles,” Mamie says. “Of course, we’ve also seen the steady rise in the value of property, especially in this area. We hope that we bring to the table an idea about the cyclical nature of real estate. There are upswings and downturns, and you have to plan for both. But our experience gives us a longer view of the real estate market – a view that we hope benefits our customers.”

BEING TOUGH IN A TOUGH BUSINESS

On the surface, Brent and Mamie appear to be a sweet, middle-aged couple. They sit next to each other at a restaurant, laugh at each other’s jokes and listen to what the other has to say. But dig deeper and their

no-nonsense, direct-speaking, “tough side” emerges.

“When it comes down to it, you have to be tough in this business,” Mamie says. “But you can do it in a way that doesn’t compromise your integrity or your character. For us, it’s just about standing up for what is right in a real estate deal. Not everybody wants to do things the right way, but we hold high standards for ourselves and for our customers.”

While the couple has worked hard for decades and realized considerable success, they’ve had their setbacks too. Seven years ago, Brent experienced the first of many heart problems. After years of treatments, he has emerged on the other side of his congestive heart failure. But he still has to take his medicine, and doctors monitor his condition every month.

“In September 2002, I had major surgery,” Brent says. “At the time, because of my condition, the doctors felt like it was my one opportunity for success. We didn’t have much of a choice. But our friends and family were so supportive. There were hundreds of prayer warriors who were lifting me up. There must have been at least 50 people at the hospital who just came to show support.”

The couple pauses, and Brent wipes his eyes.

“You feel blessed when people from all walks of life and all denominations pray for you,” Mamie says. “It was a hardship that turned into the best blessing we’ve ever had. We just felt so much love and support. By God’s grace, it really led us to a depth of faith we hadn’t experienced.” ☺