



FRENCH QUARTER
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

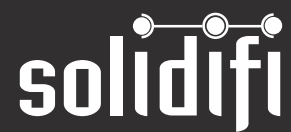
EXTRAORDINARY

EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE

ISSUE 06
SUMMER 2017

solidifi

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VALUATION AND CLOSING
NETWORK MANAGEMENT

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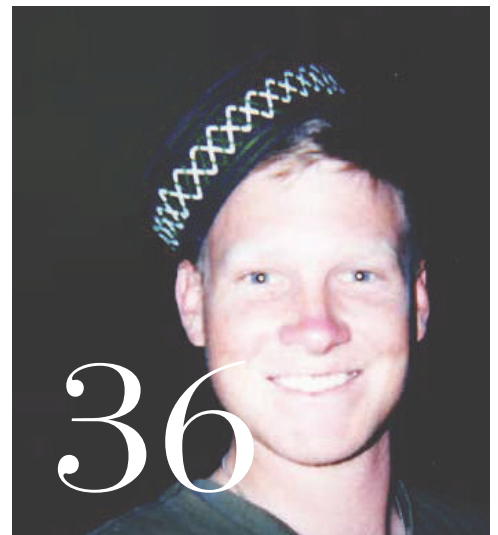
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THE MARK OF DISTINCTION

Solidifi's Extraordinary distinction is revered by the entire industry. Win awards, attend receptions, and receive free but effective marketing for your business. We appreciate all that you do.

DO YOU HAVE YOUR PIN?



SANDRA PENDERGAST
EXTRAORDINARY APPRAISER
BOSTON RECEPTION

IT'S A LIFESTYLE

The Extraordinary designation is a recognized symbol of excellence throughout the industry and a source of pride for those outstanding professionals holding this title.

Ever year since the launch of the program in 2013, field professionals have strived to reach a tier of excellence that Solidifi, and the industry as a whole regard with prestige.

Every month our entire network is benchmarked against specific key metrics,

and operational standards, looking for those individuals who demonstrate high levels of Solidifi's top three values –outstanding performance, customer service and commitment to quality.

These independent business owners are committed professionals going above and beyond for the lender and homeowner. We hold our Extraordinary partners in the highest regards and treat them as such.

BUILDING LIFETIME PARTNERSHIPS IN BUSINESS

At the heart of what we do is a commitment to partnership and collaboration. Our goal at Solidifi is to empower our independent panel of professionals so they can perform at the highest level and build on their business success. We build lasting, symbiotic and respectful partnerships and are honored and proud to be working with the best of the best.





DRIVEN BY PASSION

KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

SCOTT TORRE

SEATTLE, WA
INDEPENDENT APPRAISER

A strong interest in real estate as well as wanting to work in an industry which offered great opportunities for success were both a focus of Scott Torre's since he was young. Driven by this passion, becoming an appraiser was a natural career choice. Scott started in a small office in Pierce County where he worked for a year. Then he moved into the fast-paced market of Seattle in the late 80's and has never looked back. Scott feels his 28 years of experience have given him unique skills which help him to analyze the market. Over the past three decades he has worked with buyers, sellers, builders, developers, and brokers. He has even been involved in his own real estate projects from both a buyer's and seller's position.

WHAT IS ONE PLACE YOU THINK NO ONE SHOULD GO WITHOUT SEEING IN YOUR AREA?

There are so many great places to visit in Seattle. The San Juan Islands, Mt. Rainier, and the Olympic and Cascade Mountains are just a few. These are all icons of our area. The Pike Place Market, Space Needle, and Century Link Field — home of the Seahawks, are also spots to be enjoyed.

IN YOUR OPINION WHAT IS THE BEST RESTAURANT IN YOUR AREA?

There are lots to choose from, but if you want a steak, the Metropolitan Grill is my favorite. Aqua, Anthony's and Salty's are great seafood restaurants and the 5-Spot on Queen Anne Hill is a great throw back restaurant that always has a great themed menu.

IN YOUR OPINION WHAT IS THE BEST PART ABOUT LIVING IN YOUR AREA?

The best part of living in Seattle is the abundance of beauty. Each hillside neighborhood has diverse views of the Mountains, City and Puget Sound Waters. Lake Union is located in the middle of the city with seaplanes coming and going. It is a really active city with unlimited places to see and things to do.

WHAT HOBBIES DO YOU HAVE?

When I have free time I enjoy being outdoors, fitness and working out. Not to say that I don't enjoy some of the great Micro Breweries that Seattle is known for.



SCOTT TORRE

EXTRAORDINARY
APPRAISER 2017

INTEGRITY & HONESTY

SAN DIEGO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

TOM McCART

SAN DIEGO, CA

INDEPENDENT APPRAISER

Tom McCart has been an appraiser in California for over 40 years. After graduating from college with a BA in Business Admin and a minor in Computer Programming, a relative introduced him to the idea of becoming an appraiser. It wasn't long before Tom was following that career path. With over four decades of appraisal experience, Tom possesses an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the lending community and the San Diego County marketplace. Tom's motto is "Integrity is telling myself the truth. And honesty is telling the truth to other people." With 40 successful years and counting, it's proven to be a motto to do business by.

WHAT IS ONE PLACE YOU THINK NO ONE SHOULD GO WITHOUT SEEING IN YOUR AREA?

San Diego has been a tourist attraction for the past 75 years. Here are my suggestions to visitors: The San Diego Zoo, The USS Midway Museum, San Diego is the home to Comic-Con International, Balboa Park, La Jolla Cove, The Coronado Bridge for great views, The Gas Lamp

Quarter, Old Town State Historic Park, Seaport Village and the Coronado Ferry.

IN YOUR OPINION WHAT IS THE BEST RESTAURANT IN YOUR AREA?

Best restaurants? Wow a huge choice. My favorites are Island Prime, Jakes in Del Mar, Point Loma Seafoods for the best fresh fish and lobster and Ruth's Chris Steak House for beef.

IN YOUR OPINION WHAT IS THE BEST PART ABOUT LIVING IN YOUR AREA?

The weather and diverse atmospheres; from beaches, bays to the Laguna Mountains. You can take a walk on Mission Beach in December in the morning and go bob sledding in the afternoon on the snowy slopes of the Laguna Mountains.

WHAT HOBBIES DO YOU HAVE?

I enjoy upland hunting. I am a private pilot and have enjoyed many trips with my family up and down the CA coast.



TOM McCART

EXTRAORDINARY
APPRAISER



THREE DECADES OF SUCCESS

ALAMEDA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

DOUGLAS CLARKE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA
INDEPENDENT APPRAISER

Before completing his Bachelor's degree in Finance with an emphasis in Real Estate from San Diego State University, Douglas Clarke did an internship at a residential appraisal firm. He enjoyed his placement so much that he decided to become an appraiser after graduation, applying to a local firm right out of college. Five years later, he opened his own firm. Douglas has been an appraiser in Alameda County for 29 years now. After almost three decades in the business he's seen his share of ups and downs, but still loves the profession, especially conducting analysis and the challenge of completing orders as quickly as possible with exceptional quality. His clients appreciate his passion for real estate, strong work ethic and ability to consistently produce thorough, insightful reports.

**WHAT IS ONE PLACE YOU THINK NO
ONE SHOULD GO WITHOUT SEEING IN
YOUR AREA?**

I live in the east bay, which is around 40 minutes from San Francisco. When in the immediate area, I recommend San Francisco's Pier 39, the business district on Market St, Golden Gate Park, museums, the areas known as Little Italy, Chinatown and Haight & Ashbury, and the theatre. There's something called "Hop On Hop Off", and for one fee you can ride a double decker bus with a docent all day long, learn about the various locations, get off and walk around, get back on the bus and move to the next location, all for a small fee. Another fun thing to do is rent a bike and ride over the Golden Gate Bridge. When in California in general, my first choice to recommend is Yosemite National Park, and my second choice is Lake

Tahoe in northern California. In Lake Tahoe, there's snow skiing in winter and biking and hiking around the lake during the summer. My second choice would be to go to Monterey. There's golf, the ocean, great food and good hotels.

**IN YOUR OPINION WHAT IS THE BEST RESTAURANT
IN YOUR AREA?**

My favorite restaurant is Cattlemen's. They have the best steaks for the money. My second favorite restaurant is BJ's Restaurant. I love their Totanka Stout beer. Their desserts are pretty decadent, too.

**IN YOUR OPINION WHAT IS THE BEST PART
ABOUT LIVING IN YOUR AREA?**

Number one is a strong economy. Second is the great weather. Silicon Valley is within one hour from the East Bay (of San Francisco), 45- 60 degrees in the winter, 70-90 degrees in the summer. Within 30 minutes is San Francisco, two hours to Monterey and three hours to Lake Tahoe and Yosemite.

WHAT HOBBIES DO YOU HAVE?

I take three spinning classes each week, other gym exercises the other two days, bicycling all year round, hiking in the nearby hills when we can, started learning about the stock market in depth in the last couple years, and six months ago I started flying remote control airplanes and cars.



DOUGLAS CLARKE
EXTRAORDINARY
APPRAISER



A STRONG REPUTATION

MARICOPA COUNTY, ARIZONA

ANDREW TURLEY

PHOENIX, AZ
INDEPENDENT APPRAISER

Andrew Turley has been an appraiser in the Maricopa/Penal area of Phoenix for 15 years. As an appraiser Andrew has an overarching goal; to produce and share accurate data within the real estate/lending industry to ensure he is doing his part in stabilizing the economy in regards to residential property values. His reputation for producing extremely thorough and accurate property assessments has led to Andrew being asked to direct and manage a national fraud and loss mitigation review project, provide expert witness legal testimony in Federal Bankruptcy Courts, and to appraise and consult on three of the highest-assessed and valued residential properties in all of Arizona.

WHAT IS ONE PLACE YOU THINK NO ONE SHOULD GO WITHOUT SEEING IN YOUR AREA?

It's quite a drive outside Metro Phoenix, maybe an hour, but Sedona / Oak Creek Canyon are incredible destinations for hiking, vistas, archeological sites, music/ art festivals, and great food.

IN YOUR OPINION WHAT IS THE BEST RESTAURANT IN YOUR AREA?

Steak 44 and Hopdoddy, no question, best steak and burger restaurants in the area.

IN YOUR OPINION WHAT IS THE BEST PART ABOUT LIVING IN YOUR AREA?

"Arcadia" (East Phoenix / Central Scottsdale) is Centrally located with quick access to the grid of all major freeways, proximity to the airport, ballparks, best restaurants in town, and the highest rated schools.

WHAT HOBBIES DO YOU HAVE?

I'm a father to three energetic children, so naturally being a parent to their sports and academic interests. When I do have discretionary time, which is limited, I enjoy remodeling SFR's, jogging, charity work, and other entrepreneurial endeavors.



ANDREW TURLEY

EXTRAORDINARY
APPRAISER



THE UNIQUE CALIFORNIA MARKET

ADRIAN HORVATH

Adrian Horvath has made a name for himself by following his gut.

“You learn a lot of stuff from experience. I’ve learned to be more mindful.”

As an appraiser in California, he doesn’t have much choice. It’s a hard charging, fast changing marketplace that time and again defies the conventional wisdom. And over the last decade, Adrian has become an astute observer of the trends that guide the Golden State’s unique real estate market.

Begin with the basics. In the appraisal world, California is anything but ordinary. For starters, the state doesn’t experience seasonal trends the way other markets across the nation do. Typically, the buy/sell cycle of a market can be traced back to seasonality, with downtime occurring in the winter before ramping up in the spring and carrying on through the summer months.

Not so in California, says Adrian.





SUMMER 2017

CONTINUED >

"This is the seasonal effect here: we don't deal with weather. Some of my busiest months are the strangest: October, December, February. Compared to appraisers in other parts of the country, it's weird."

Additionally, he said, unlike in other states, California residents seem less inclined to own properties, instead preferring to be more flexible.

"I don't know anyone in California who owns a house. That's the conclusion I've come to." His gut is right. It's borne out by the data. The latest figures released by the US Census Bureau this past April, states that homeownership rates in California were pegged at just 54.6%, dramatically lower than the national average of 63.6% for the same time frame.

"It's just one of those things. No one seems to own anything here," said Adrian.

Compare this to another state like Texas, where Adrian recently travelled. Far from just another market, it was like stepping into another world.

"I'd never met so many people who owned their houses outright compared to California. Here, no one ever really seems to pay their house off."

The homeownership rate in Texas is around 61%.

And if the California market is guided by its own quirks, it's no surprise that working as an appraiser in the state is an experience unlike any other.

"Most of the stuff that's happened to me on the job is outlandish, to say the least," said Adrian. "Some people don't even believe me."

Like the time a woman mistakenly thought he was spying on her while taking photos of an adjacent property. Sitting in his car to review his work, the woman and a friend snuck up on Adrian and tried to snatch his camera through the window.

"I thought, oh my God what is this lady doing?" he recalls. "A piece of advice: after you take the comp photos, drive a few blocks to write your notes. Just take the picture and get out of there."

Or another time, toward the end of an inspection, Adrian ventured into the home's basement – a rarity in California properties – to find offensive symbols and clothing hanging up on the wall, items the homeowners had neglected to mention. Adrian was a little stunned.

"Thankfully, it was the end of my inspection because I probably would have been really nervous going through the rest of the house."

But through all of the challenges California has presented this appraiser, he's soldiered on. Adrian began his career in the District Attorney's office for the County of Los Angeles, but soon transitioned to the Assessor's Office. Once there, he was able to get trained as a residential and commercial appraiser, exercising his love for math and analysis, skills that are invaluable to his daily work.

"You gotta think outside the box. Things aren't always that straightforward or that easy."

It's that attitude that has driven Adrian to succeed in the industry. For all his hard work, Adrian was recognized as an Extraordinary Appraiser by Solidifi for all his effort and dedication in California. A large part of that success has been his strong relationship with Solidifi.

"I've always considered Solidifi to be the Google of the industry. With their tech, Solidifi trusts that I know my area, I know my boundaries, and they do a great job of keeping me where I'm most knowledgeable. They identify the best appraiser for an area. It's more modern thinking. None of this old school stuff. It's fantastic," said Adrian.

"Jason (Smith, CEO) reminds me of Elon Musk," he added. "Someone who really thinks outside the box."

Adrian and other distinguished Extraordinary Appraisers like him know that Solidifi's unique approach to the industry, one that rewards appraisers' ingenuity and independence, is the best way to tackle the challenges of any marketplace.

"Loyalty is very important to me, and Solidifi has been very loyal. As our relationship has gotten stronger, I've given priority to Solidifi over others."

With the strength and stability of Solidifi at his back, Adrian is ready to take on California's ever-evolving market.

"It's so dynamic, and the cycle continues. I'm astonished," said Adrian.

There are a few factors that he's keeping his eye on, like increasing interest rates, low inventory, and the lack of available land for new developments in various counties across the state. Like he's done in the past, Adrian will continue to apply his razor sharp mind, but listen to his gut.

"I'm not just a robot. I'm curious about things," he said. "That's where I get my insight."

“

YOU GOTTA THINK
OUTSIDE THE BOX.
THINGS AREN'T
ALWAYS THAT
STRAIGHTFORWARD
OR THAT EASY!



ADRIAN HORVATH
EXTRAORDINARY
APPRAISER

ARCHITECTURE SAVVY

LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

JOSE IBARRA
LOS ANGELES, CA
INDEPENDENT APPRAISER

Jose Ibarra, an appraiser for 13 years in Southern California, was attracted to the appraisal profession by the freedom and flexibility it would provide him along with the ability to work from home which would allow him to be available to his family if need be. With a college business degree, an AA in architecture and 10 previous years of customer service experience with AT&T, appraising is a profession that leverages all of Jose's skills and experience.

**WHAT IS ONE PLACE YOU THINK NO
ONE SHOULD GO WITHOUT SEEING IN
YOUR AREA?**

Living in Southern California we are truly spoiled. So many interesting places to see and things to do, but my family enjoys the LA County fair in nearby Pomona, which takes place every September. One of the largest fairs in the country, they have every variety of fried food you can imagine and hundreds of vendors, exhibits and carnival rides. The End of Summer concert series always promises interesting and entertaining outdoor performances in the late summer evenings.

**IN YOUR OPINION WHAT IS THE BEST
RESTAURANT IN YOUR AREA?**

I love Mexican food and great restaurants. Javier's in Newport Beach and Red O in Los Angeles are two of my favorites. Both have great Mexican food and drinks with a beautiful ambience and maybe a star sighting if you're lucky!

**IN YOUR OPINION WHAT IS THE BEST PART
ABOUT LIVING IN YOUR AREA?**

The best part about living in my area is that we have great weather 95% of the time and a multitude of options for entertainment, all within an hours drive.

WHAT HOBBIES DO YOU HAVE?

My hobby is a never ending challenge – home improvement! When I have the time you can usually find me working on my house. As an appraiser I enjoy seeing different architecture and design styles, and I am often inspired to incorporate them into my home improvement plans. Updating and refurbishing my living spaces gives me a sense of accomplishment and allows me to be creative while at the same time improving my house. Like most homeowners I get a great sense of accomplishment when I finish a project and get to enjoy it with my family.



JOSE IBARRA
EXTRAORDINARY
APPRAISER



TACKLING NEW CHALLENGES

BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND

CINDY THURLOW-WITTMAN

BALTIMORE, MD
INDEPENDENT APPRAISER

Cindy Thurlow-Wittman has worked in the Baltimore, Maryland real estate industry for over 30 years; first as a realtor and the last 19 years as an appraiser. She finds how the market is forever changing extremely interesting and welcomes the challenges that go along with the occupation, especially having to evaluate unique and complex properties. As an appraiser she is committed to quality, performance and meeting client expectations.

WHAT IS ONE PLACE YOU THINK NO ONE SHOULD GO WITHOUT SEEING IN YOUR AREA?

If you are a visitor/tourist I would recommend visiting the Inner Harbor and Fells Point. At the Inner Harbor you can walk along the promenade, have lunch at an outdoor café, visit the National Aquarium, and take a tour of the historic ship the USS Constellation. With a short water taxi ride you can make your way to the historic Fells Point. The cobblestone streets, and 18th and

19th century homes will take you back in time. Stop in at one of the many restaurants or choose from one of the 120 bars or pubs.

IN YOUR OPINION WHAT IS THE BEST RESTAURANT IN YOUR AREA?

The Capital Grill in downtown Baltimore, which I consider the best steakhouse in the city.

IN YOUR OPINION WHAT IS THE BEST PART ABOUT LIVING IN YOUR AREA?

I like that Baltimore is rich in history, has numerous attractions, is home to the Baltimore Orioles, and is close to Washington DC.

WHAT HOBBIES DO YOU HAVE?

In my free time I like heading to the beach with my family, enjoying spa days with my daughter, and watching my son play college soccer.



CINDY THURLOW-WITTMAN

EXTRAORDINARY
APPRAISER







NATURAL DISASTERS AND APPRAISING

COMMENTARY BY MARCY SIEMINSKI,
TRAVIS SAPP & THOMAS McCART
EXTRAORDINARY APPRAISERS

“In the end, it was the flooding that did us all in.”

That’s what Marcy Sieminski remembers most clearly about Hurricane Sandy, the superstorm that ravaged the U.S. eastern seaboard back in 2012. The largest Atlantic hurricane ever recorded, the storm left scores dead, caused billions of dollars in damage, and completely upended the communities caught in its path.

“Pieces of the boardwalk ended up four major blocks from the ocean,” recalls Marcy.
“We did not get the warning we were supposed to get.”

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HURRICANES WILDFIRES & TORNADOES



TOM McCART
CALIFORNIA

Sandy was devastating. By the time the storm had dissipated in early November, nearly two weeks after it first formed, it had ripped through Jamaica, the Caribbean, and 24 U.S. states, stretching as far west as Wisconsin. The most severe damage, however, was seen in New York and New Jersey, where Marcy lives.

“Every town along the shoreline was hit. The damage was significant.”

Since 1993, Marcy has worked as an appraiser in Monmouth County, New Jersey. A resident of Spring Lake, right on the Jersey shoreline, Sandy has been a defining moment in her career. And though the storm itself has long since passed, the experience of being an appraiser in a town wracked by extreme weather is one shared by many across the country who, in the aftermath of natural disasters, must carry on. When storms, winds, and wildfires hit, appraisers often end up playing a larger role, helping to rebuild and rehabilitate communities looking for a return to normalcy.

More than 1500 miles away in Fort Worth, Texas, appraiser Travis Sapp is all too familiar with the difficulties Marcy and others have faced.

“The weather in Texas is crazy. A quick example: sometimes it won’t rain for months, and then



MARCY SIEMINSKI
NEW JERSEY



TRAVIS SAPP
TEXAS

we’ll get two years’ worth of rain in two days.”

Travis knows how to push through difficult situation. Growing up in West Virginia, his family didn’t have much money, prompting him to start earning what he could with odd jobs when he turned 13 years old. As soon as his high school diploma was in hand, he joined the military as an infantryman in a scout platoon, a placement with an important duty.

“It was our job to go out in front of everyone and make sure there was no danger,” he said.

It was spring 2001 when Travis left the military and the chill of upstate New York, where he was stationed, for the Texas heat. When he started appraising not long after his arrival, he quickly realized that the southern weather plays an important role in the job of an appraiser.

“My first summer in Texas, I wasn’t aware of how hot and humid it can be. I ended up getting heat exhaustion and was in bed for two days.”

Things quickly became more serious. Texas is part of Tornado Alley, a group of nearly a dozen states that are highly susceptible to tornadoes during the spring and summer. According to the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), in an average year, Texas is hit with

126 tornados. Some of these are mild. Other are much more catastrophic, damaging infrastructure, upending homes, and uprooting everyday life.

"Even just two months ago, a tornado tore my roof off and threw it through my neighbor's fence," said Travis. "The ground was so hard, the (rain) water drained down the highway. It wasn't uncommon to be out trying to do an inspection to find a bridge closed from flooding, or telephone poles lying in the middle of the road."

Extremely strong winds are a recurring danger in the industry. Not only do they themselves pose a great danger to homes and other buildings, but they can also make a dangerous weather event much worse. This is what happened during the California wildfire season of 2007. Between October 21 and November 6, strong winds with gusts of over 100 mph helped fan the flames of what would become known as the Witch Fire. Beginning with a spark in Witch Creek Canyon near Santa Ysabel, the fire quickly spread, leapfrogging the interstate and causing significant damage to more than a half-dozen populated areas, including San Diego County, where Tom McCart works as an appraiser.

Now 70 years old, Tom has been working in the industry for over four decades. He remembers the Witch Fire and its impacts clearly.

"Several thousand homes burned from east to west, including many high-end luxury neighborhoods," said Tom. "Residential lending came to a halt."

The Witch Fire raged for weeks. When the flames were finally extinguished, nearly 200,000 acres had burned, damaging over 1600 buildings. The cost of the first was estimated to be north of \$1 billion. All of this is, of course, is on top of the human cost, with homes, possessions, and daily life all irrevocably altered.

"I remember it like it was yesterday," said Marcy. "It took two hours to enter the area, and I wasn't even allowed in without the homeowner. Police were checking IDs to confirm your address. Luckily, her home was okay. Others weren't so lucky."

There wasn't much Marcy could do in the days following Sandy. Though her home had been spared from the brunt of the damage, she was still without power.

"Being without power for that many days was hard," said Marcy.

Unable to stay home, she hitched a ride to the nearby firehouse where her son worked. Laptop in hand, Marcy dutifully began doing what she could. Marcy went back to work.

"I was able to do what little I could. After the storm, a lot of lenders required us to go back to homes we'd visited in the last 60 days to see if they were still there. So, I began contacting homeowners, taking photos, and completing disaster reports."

Tom McCart rallied in much the same way after the Witch Fire hit San Diego County.

"I immediately called one of my friends who had many tract homes in the area and offered my services," he said. "I started to perform hundreds of home hazard inspections to determine percentage of damage."

For these three appraisers, extreme weather events like these not only alter how they perform their jobs, but fundamentally change the very communities in which they work. But most importantly, they've witnessed those same communities bounce back from the brink of disaster.

"Right after the storm, you couldn't give a house away," said Marcy. "For the first two years, lenders all required the same note, confirmation that the home wasn't damaged by Hurricane Sandy. Now that it's summertime, we're starting to see the markets pick up, even in the waterfront areas."

Down south, the story is the same: one of trial and tribulations, but also of steadfast perseverance.

"You gotta do what you gotta do," said Travis, when asked about appraising in a state so often hit by tornadoes and other severe storms. "You don't have a choice. You have to have a serious amount of perseverance. Texas has the weirdest weather I've ever lived in. I can say the military definitely prepared me mentally for the business."

Tom McCart puts it even more succinctly.

"You have to turn lemons into lemonade."

As difficult as events like these can be, communities rebuild and people move on, choosing to look toward a bright future rather than the dark skies of the past. The landscape may have changed, the homes different, but these appraisers, separated by thousands of miles, are connected by an industry that lets them play a crucial role in the lives of everyday Americans in a time of need.

"When things were destroyed, there went my livelihood," said Marcy. "But it's back together now. Just have patience. Life always returns to normal one day."

EMBRACING NEW TECHNOLOGIES

PHILADELPHIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

JOHN ROBINSON
PHILADELPHIA, PA
INDEPENDENT APPRAISER

After 23 years as an appraiser in Southeast, Pennsylvania, John Robinson is still passionate about his profession. For John the appeal is two-fold: it satisfies both his interest in real estate and he enjoys the financial numbers aspect of the job. A holder of both an engineering degree and an MBA, John is quick to embrace technologies that improve his reports and enhance efficiency; a technical edge that his clients appreciate.

WHAT IS ONE PLACE YOU THINK NO ONE SHOULD GO WITHOUT SEEING IN YOUR AREA?

Valley Forge National Park – The Philadelphia region is ripe with history with the city being the epicenter (Liberty Bell, Constitution Center, etc). Valley Forge is an integral part of the story. The Park is large with lots of nature and history to enjoy: Rolling hills, Visitors Center, preserved soldier cabins and memorials.

IN YOUR OPINION WHAT IS THE BEST RESTAURANT IN YOUR AREA?

Villa Vito – A great Italian restaurant tucked away on a side street in my town (315 Alumni Ave, Harleysville, PA 19438). The best things about it are the owners, the sauces/menu, the reasonable price and it's BYOB. So if your travels ever bring you near the Lansdale exit off the PA Turnpike (Exit 31), stop in.

IN YOUR OPINION WHAT IS THE BEST PART ABOUT LIVING IN YOUR AREA?

We are located on the western edge of Montgomery County with the eastern edge adjacent to Philadelphia. The pace is a little bit more relaxed than in the city and there is much more green space to enjoy.

WHAT HOBBIES DO YOU HAVE?

I get the most enjoyment from my family, so I put a lot of my energies into spending time with them. As an engineer, I also enjoy technology projects and frequently use the appraisal business (data extraction, cloud, adjustment extraction) as an excuse to tickle my inner nerd.



JOHN ROBINSON
EXTRAORDINARY
APPRAISER



CARVING A NEW PATH

KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

TED ARNOLD
SEATTLE, WA
INDEPENDENT APPRAISER

Ted Arnold's father was a home builder; consequently Ted has been on construction sites since he was five years old. Initially he thought he would follow in his dad's footsteps, however, while a student at Washington State University, Ted enrolled in a 400-level RE appraisal course. He found it quite interesting. During his senior summer Ted interned in the appraisal department for WAMU. Upon graduation in 1992 he was recruited to be an apprentice for a local firm. He never looked back. Ted has been providing appraisals in King, Pierce, and Snohomish County for 25 years and manages a firm of 30 appraisers.

WHAT IS ONE PLACE YOU THINK NO ONE SHOULD GO WITHOUT SEEING IN YOUR AREA?

If you're visiting Seattle, walk onto the ferry to Bainbridge Island. It's a short trip with some amazing views. You might even see a few Orca whales.

IN YOUR OPINION WHAT IS THE BEST RESTAURANT IN YOUR AREA?

Seattle has some amazing seafood. An old favorite of mine is the Brooklyn Seafood Steak and Oyster House. You can belly up to the bar and get a baker's dozen of local oysters. This restaurant is just a few blocks from Pike Street Market and well worth the short walk.

IN YOUR OPINION WHAT IS THE BEST PART ABOUT LIVING IN YOUR AREA?

I'm a transplant (25 years ago) and find the area truly amazing for its beauty and endless things to do. We are raising two children in the suburbs of Seattle and love to attend local sports games (Seahawks, Mariners, Sounders). Mount Rainier and the San Juan Islands are close by as well as skiing and endless hiking and biking trails.

WHAT HOBBIES DO YOU HAVE?

I enjoy fishing, snow skiing, and camping with my family. Most of our weekends are tied up with the kid's sports activities, but on those rare open weekends, it's nice to disappear up in the Cascade Mountains and spend some quality time with the kids outside cell coverage.



TED ARNOLD
EXTRAORDINARY
APPRAISER



TAKING THE REINS

WAYNE COUNTY, MICHIGAN

DAVID BARNES
PLYMOUTH, MI
INDEPENDENT APPRAISER

David Barnes partnered with his father for many years in the appraisal business. When his Dad retired, David took over the reins. An appraiser for over 28 years in Wayne County, Michigan, David's clients appreciate his ability to complete reports in an accurate and timely manner.

**WHAT IS ONE PLACE YOU THINK NO
ONE SHOULD GO WITHOUT SEEING IN
YOUR AREA?**

I think the downtown revival currently taking place within the City of Detroit is something no visitor/tourist would want to miss. The changes that have taken place over the past five years have been very positive for the region given the influx of entertainment, restaurants, and shopping.

**IN YOUR OPINION WHAT IS THE BEST
RESTAURANT IN YOUR AREA?**

In my opinion the best restaurant in the area is the Whitney in Downtown Detroit. This mansion built in 1894 has been transformed into one unique dining experience. Lots of history there.

**IN YOUR OPINION WHAT IS THE BEST PART
ABOUT LIVING IN YOUR AREA?**

I think the best part of living in my hometown of Plymouth is I get all the advantages of a small town atmosphere with the big city of Detroit just twenty minutes away. I get to enjoy the best of both worlds!

WHAT HOBBIES DO YOU HAVE?

My favorite hobby is golf. Unfortunately, given the demands of the appraisal industry, my game has suffered. I've found not keeping score helps with that.



DAVID BARNES
EXTRAORDINARY
APPRAISER



A black and white portrait of a man with a beard and mustache, wearing a suit and tie. The image is semi-transparent, serving as a background for the text.

“

THEY'RE THE
FANTASTIC PEOPLE WHO
MOLDED ME INTO WHO
I AM TODAY. I WAS
VERY LUCKY.

PAUL RYLL
EXTRAORDINARY
APPRAISER



A PATH TO APPRAISING

Paul Ryll doesn't just believe in the American Dream, he's fought for it. And now he lives it every day.

"It's been a long road to 35," recalls Paul, from his office in South Carolina. Though he now owns and operates a successful appraisal firm in Greenville, there was a time when Paul's success wasn't so certain.

Back in the late 1990s, Paul was about to graduate from high school with no idea what to do next. By his own admission, he was a little lost.

"I needed discipline," said Paul.

He enrolled at the University of Georgia, but quickly discovered that more of the classroom wasn't going to give it to him. It wasn't teaching that was missing. Paul was looking for something deeper: discipline, drive, ambition.

A mission.

In March of 2001, Paul found what he was looking for when he attended the graduation ceremony of two friends. Not from high school or college, but another institution steeped in pride, tradition, and hard work – the United States Marine Corps.

"I was blown away! I was shocked," said Paul. "And that's where my mind kept going. I had to do something with my life."

Seeing how the Marines had changed his friends for the better, Paul knew it was the right move for himself. He spoke to a recruiter and, on his 19th birthday, Paul joined the Marines. He had resolved to take control of his life by setting himself on a new path.

More importantly, he had begun to take responsibility for himself.

"It wasn't a question. I didn't want any input. I wanted to do it on my own."

Just before shipping off to basic training in May, Paul had one last semester in college. His top grade was in one course, Military History.

He spent more than eight years as a Marine. As an Ordnanceman, he was deployed to Afghanistan in the early 2000s.

"That was back right when everything was kicking off," recalls Paul.

In the military, Paul was imbued with courage and conviction. He became more disciplined, shaped his work ethic, and built on his integrity. In short, he grew into the person he always knew he could become.

But even the strongest need to rest. And by 2007, Paul started on the long road back to civilian life. It wasn't a smooth journey. He had talent and determination, but needed a place to sharpen his skills.

"The transition from the Corps. was difficult," said Paul. "When I got out, I really had no idea of the potential I had going forward. TAP (Transition Assistance Program) class helps with résumés and job interviews, but it doesn't really work for trying to figure out what you want to do with your life."

"When you come from a job where you're dealing with explosives and weapons, there's really not much to transition into," he added. For the first few years after finishing his service, Paul bounced around. He picked up a night job with

A PATH TO APPRAISAL CONTINUED



“ I FEEL LIKE I’M HELPING THE WORKFORCE. I’M AN IDEALIST, I GUESS. BUT IT’S ONE OF THE THINGS I ENJOY THE MOST.

PAUL RYLL
EXTRAORDINARY
APPRAISER

Adidas as an Operations Manager back in Greenville for a year. He moved on to a transportation company in nearby Columbia. He tended bar on Folly Beach near Charleston.

“I was just picking up as many new skills as I could,” said Paul. “I just wanted to take a step back and collect myself. It was a blast. But after that, I decided to start pushing life. I had had enough. It was time to contribute.”

Just as he did when he was 19, Paul once again took charge. When it came time to restart his undergraduate training, Paul turned to his father, Mark, for inspiration. A former stock broker, Mark Ryll worked in real estate sales during Paul’s childhood. While Paul was in the military, Mark worked as an appraiser in



Greenville. It was the extra push that Paul needed. He finished his apprenticeship and graduated Magna Cum Laude.

"I ended up diving into the business of appraising and started my own company. At that point, I really was a one-man band."

There was, however, one problem. Despite jumping into a promising new career, he was having trouble getting work. His résumés and reference appraisals went virtually unnoticed. Nobody was biting, nobody was calling.

One day, more than a year-and-a-half after Paul resolved to become an appraiser, the phone rang. It was a wake up call from Solidifi.

"Solidifi was actually my first customer," chuckled Paul. That's when I realized I had to get certified."

Once again, Paul went back to school. This time, earning his Masters in Real Estate and Infrastructure from Johns Hopkins University. And though he was studying, he would still complete appraisals whenever he could, on breaks, during holidays, even making the eight hour drive back to Greenville on weekends to work. It's just a reflection of the integrity and work ethic he's been building since he became a Marine and continues with to this day.

"I appraise like crazy - 14 hour days. This is nothing! Work 18 hour days overseas then try to sleep while you're being rocketed."

With that kind of grit, it was only a matter of time before Paul reached a new level of prestige. Already operating a successful appraisal firm, two years ago, he was recognized by Solidifi as an Extraordinary Appraiser. When it happened, he couldn't wait to share the news with his fiancé, Melanie.

"She knows how hard I work. She was really proud. And it's an honor to know that Solidifi sees the effort that we put in, to do the best we can to provide the most accurate, timely appraisals."

Though his successes are certainly his own, it's no surprise that Paul attributes his business success to the Marine Corps.

"One-hundred percent," said Paul, emphatically. "Learning from my commanding officers and NCOs. They're the fantastic people who molded me into who I am today. I was very lucky. Everything I've done, I've done with as much integrity as possible."

"If you love what you do, you'll never work a day in your life. That's how I feel about appraising. My favorite part is helping people, like young families and couples make better decisions to get the house they want. That's such a fantastic feeling, and to be a part of that is a big deal to me."

With the success Paul has found in the industry, this summer he'll be mentoring three new appraisers, working to instill in them that same drive that has led Paul from a military base in Afghanistan to a Master's degree in Maryland. It's his way of giving back to an industry that has given him the opportunity to succeed. "I feel like I'm helping the workforce. I'm an idealist, I guess. But it's one of the things I enjoy the most," said Paul. "This is a fantastic industry."

The former Marine even named his firm Oscar Mike Appraisal Group, a nod to the NATO phonetic alphabet's shorthand Oscar Mike, which stands for, "on the move." The perfect name for someone who has built their life on the go.

In the military, Paul learned about hard work, about integrity, and about himself. He knows what he's capable of accomplishing, and it's nothing short of extraordinary. "Everything I do, whether it comes to appraising, my personal life, anything, I try to keep those qualities in mind. It keeps me excited to do it."

Solidifi @Solidifi · Jun 20
It's not often road work has this effect in
#California



LOCAL MARKET TRENDS

As an Extraordinary distinction holder you can share
YOUR local market knowledge with the entire industry.



240,286



12,250

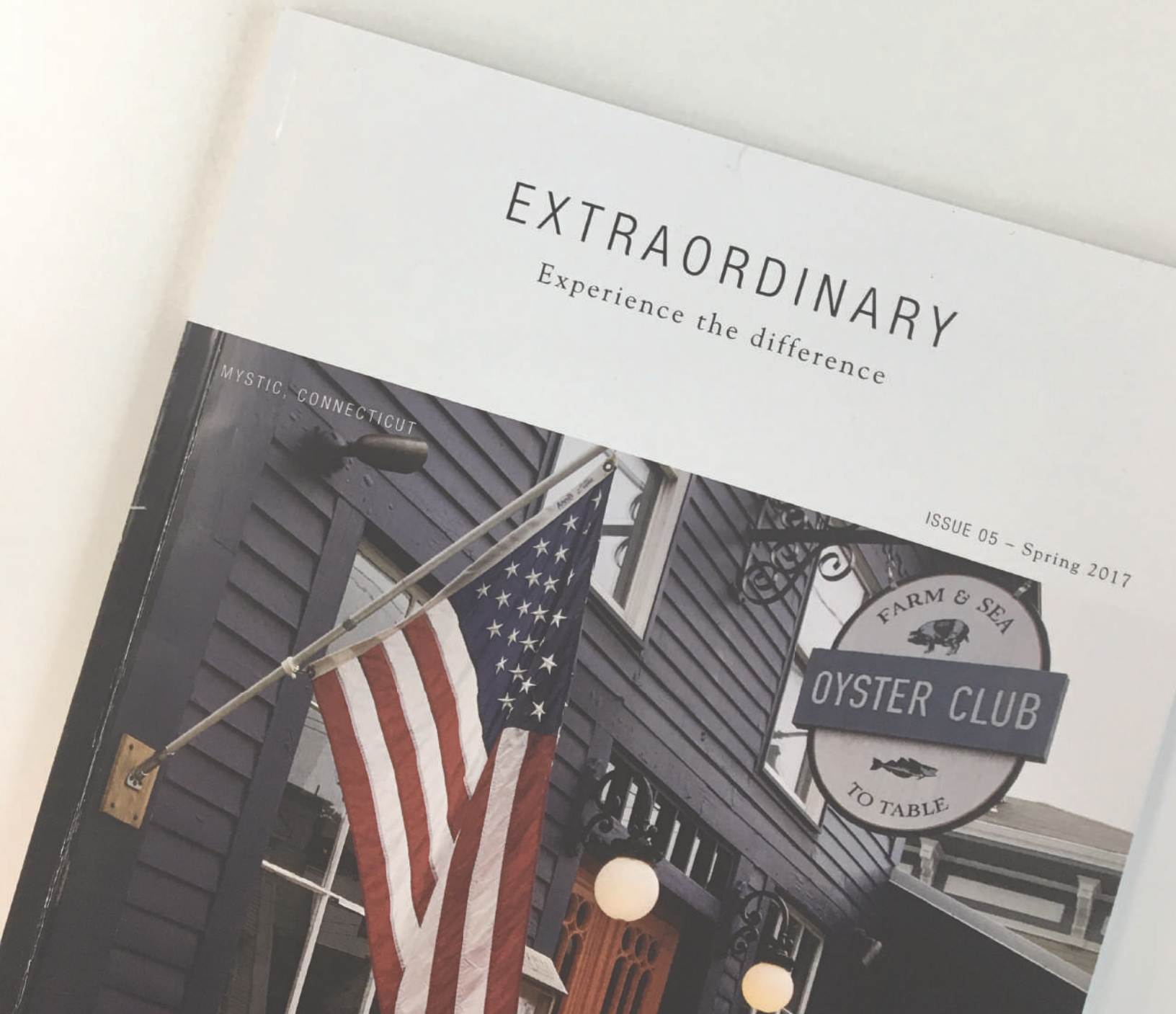


32,393

AN ENTIRE INDUSTRY WITH EYES ON YOU

YOU'RE EXTRAORDINARY. GET NOTICED.

Go to www.solidifi.com/featured-stories
to read featured stories from all of our magazines.



FEATURED STATES

Local market trends from independent extraordinary appraisers,
region stats and comments from our regional managers.



LOUISIANA



OREGON



MINNESOTA



SOUTH
CAROLINA





LOUISIANA

COME AS YOU ARE. LEAVE DIFFERENT.

POPULATION

4,681,666

MEAN TRAVEL TIME
TO WORK (MINUTES)

25.1

POPULATION INCREASE
OVER 5 YEARS

3.3%

MEAN HOUSEHOLD
INCOME

\$45,047

HOUSING
UNITS

2,024,645

TOTAL EMPLOYER
ESTABLISHMENTS

104,976

BUILDING
PERMITS

13,830

POPULATION
PER SQUARE MILE

104.9

AVERAGE PEOPLE
PER HOUSEHOLD

2.6

LAND AREA
(MILES)

43,203.90



LOUISIANA

“ IT IS LISTED IN THE TOP 10 HEALTHIEST MARKETS IN LOUISIANA AND CURRENTLY A BUYER’S MARKET.



MATTHEW BRUNDAGE
REGIONAL MANAGER

Located in the heart of the Bayou, New Orleans, Louisiana – or NOLA for short – is a lively tourist hotspot for those seeking spicy eats, thrill-seeking adventure and rich history. Drawing crowds from across the county, NOLA’s various neighborhoods have their own unique character and charm that attract tourists. It is listed in the top 10 healthiest markets in Louisiana and currently a buyer’s market. With Louisiana continuing to be a major hub for art and commerce, the stream of international buyers purchasing second homes should continue.

Near the heart of the city, you will be able to find life-long residents Jason Carmouche and Jordan Maestri of Carmouche Appraisal Services in Metairie, Louisiana. These two gentlemen embody not only the core values of Solidifi but the very essence of what it means to be Extraordinary Appraisers. I have the utmost confidence in Jason and Jordan’s work as I know they are out to do their very best, providing the highest quality and quickest turn times possible. Thank you to all at Carmouche Appraisal Services for your outstanding job, and I look forward to a long and prosperous partnership!

North of the famed Lake Pontchartrain in the small cozy town of Covington, Louisiana, lives Extraordinary Appraiser Bonnie Parker. If you’re looking for the perfect blend of appraisal knowledge, determined work ethic and sparkling personality, Bonnie is your go-to gal! Not only is her knowledge base as rich as the history of New Orleans, but her turn time from accepting an order to client submission is among the best of Extraordinary Appraisers I have ever worked with. Thank you, Bonnie, for your dedication and hard work with Solidifi. I very much look forward to a strong, continued partnership with you!

DID YOU KNOW?

- The Battle of New Orleans, which made Andrew Jackson a national hero, was fought two weeks after the War of 1812 had ended and more than a month before the news of the war’s end had reached Louisiana.

- The world famous “Mardi Gras” is celebrated in New Orleans. Mardi Gras is an ancient custom that originated in southern Europe. It celebrates food and fun just before the 40 days of Lent: a Catholic time of prayer and sacrifice.

- Louisiana was named in honor of King Louis XIV. Louisiana has the tallest state capitol building in the United States; the building is 450 feet tall with 34 floors.



BONNIE PARKER
EXTRAORDINARY
APPRAISER

Bonnie Parker began her career as a real estate agent more than 15 years ago, but she knew it wasn't quite the right fit for her. A mother and math lover at heart who needed some more flexibility in her schedule, Bonnie was drawn to the appraisal side of the business after learning about it in her agent classes. Since making the switch, Bonnie has found her calling. Beginning in 2002, she has worked across many sides of the appraisal industry, from filing field reports to default work, in the New Orleans area.

NEW ORLEANS GETS AN UPGRADE

The big trend in New Orleans right now is upgrading old shotgun-style properties into larger single-family homes. These are properties where the floor plan is arranged in a single column, with each room lined up behind and opening into the next. Although once quite popular here in New Orleans and elsewhere across America, they've since fallen out of favor as other home styles became more popular. The median home value in New Orleans currently sits at \$173,800, an increase of 6.2% over last year, while the number of homes sold has actually dipped in the last two months, from 297 to 232. During that same time, inventory has increased, with 313 currently active listings compared to 287 two months ago. The days of market for properties has remained steady at 74 days.



JORDAN MAESTRI
EXTRAORDINARY
APPRAISER

At Carmouche Appraisal Service, owner Jason Carmouche and Jordan Maestri, CRA., use their skills to deliver exceptional work. A lifelong resident of the Greater New Orleans Area, Jason loves his career, having quickly risen through the industry to owning his own firm. Likewise, Jordan too is from the area. He earned his Certified Residential Appraisal license in 2009 and joined the firm in 2014. Along with a passionate team, both Jason and Jordan pride themselves on standing out from the rest of the pack.

THE BIG EASY IS HAVING A BREAKOUT YEAR

New Orleans is on the move with a number of new developments underway. Kailas Companies, a real estate development firm, is planning a makeover of the historic Woolworth's building. Due to be completed in 2018, the plans call for a new hotel and series of high-end luxury apartments. Additionally, Sidney Torres is planning a high-end, mixed-use development in Orleans Parish that will reportedly consist of a five-acre multi-family development with 382 apartments as well as retail space. The median home price for the city of New Orleans is \$320,000 (256 sales), roughly flat when compared to the same time period last year is \$320,000 (253 Sales). The average number of days on market is 42 for the month, a slight uptick from 39 two months ago.



JASON CARMOUCHE
EXTRAORDINARY
APPRAISER



SKIDMORE FOUNTAIN WITH
BRONZE WOMAN SCULPTURE IN
ANKENY SQUARE OLDTOWN
PORTLAND OREGON CIRCA 1888





OREGON

PACIFIC WONDERLAND

POPULATION

4,093,465

MEAN TRAVEL TIME
TO WORK (MINUTES)

22.9

POPULATION INCREASE
OVER 5 YEARS

6.8%

MEAN HOUSEHOLD
INCOME

\$51,243

HOUSING
UNITS

1,718,409

TOTAL EMPLOYER
ESTABLISHMENTS

109,875

BUILDING
PERMITS

17,510

POPULATION
PER SQUARE MILE

39.9

AVERAGE PEOPLE
PER HOUSEHOLD

2.51

LAND AREA
(MILES)

95,988.01



OREGON

“ THE MARKET HAS FINALLY COOLED DOWN A BIT, BUT WITH THE GROWTH THAT IS STILL OCCURRING IN THE CITY, WE ARE PREPARING FOR ANOTHER CRAZY YEAR.



JOSHUA LEONARDO
REGIONAL MANAGER

Portland is unlike any other city in America. On top of being one of the fastest growing markets, it is also very diverse in every aspect. One would assume, Portland, with its many sports teams would have a culture that aligns to this - but what makes it so unique is its rich artistic culture that spills over into the real estate market. No two houses are the same and the modern-day suburbia that most growing cities have come to know, is not the norm in this beautiful, riverside city.

Adding to the uniqueness, you are only located about 2 hours from the Pacific Coast and 2 hours from Mt. Hood, so you get the best mix of summer and winter. Last year, the Portland market saw some of its highest volume since 2007. The market has finally cooled down a bit, but with the growth that is still occurring in the city, we are preparing for another crazy year.

Steve Clark has been a saving grace in the Portland market. He is a true professional in the industry. From the toughest properties up in the mountains, to condos in the city, Steve is one of the most diverse property appraisers in the market. He completes every appraisal in great detail and leaves no stone unturned. Through all the business of the market, Steve has still been able to keep his turn times low and his quality high, all while asking “What can I do to be better.”

Ryan McDonough is a great partner for Solidifi. He is extremely accommodating with keeping his schedule open for us and is always able to take on more work. His office manager Linda is one of the best in the game - always keeping us in the loop through every step of the appraisal process. Ryan and Linda work extremely hard day and night to be one of the best appraiser teams in the market. They have been a wonderful asset to our panel in Portland and they have helped me grow as a professional.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Oregon has more ghost towns than any other state

- The Columbia River gorge is considered by many to be the best place in the world for windsurfing.

- Crater Lake is the deepest lake in the United States and is formed in the remains of an ancient volcano

- At 329 feet the Coast Douglas-Fir in Oregon is considered the tallest tree in the state.

- Oregon's state birthday is on February 14, Valentine's Day.

- In 1858 the richest gold find in the Cascade Mountains was discovered in the Bohemia Mining District at Sharp's Creek near Cottage Grove.



RYAN McDONOUGH
EXTRAORDINARY
APPRAISER

Ryan McDonough launched his career as an independent appraiser in Portland, Oregon eight years ago. A native Oregonian and father of two, Ryan was previously employed in the banking industry, and was introduced to the appraisal world by a friend. He was immediately interested upon finding that it coupled his desire to own a small business with his interest in real estate. Ryan strives to provide excellent customer service and high quality reports in a timely and efficient manner. He has grown his business by hiring an exceptional team and creating a fun, family-friendly office environment. He enjoys a good challenge and eagerly embraces new technology that can assist him in meeting and exceeding his clients' expectations.

PORTLAND MARKET SKYROCKETS

The Portland market continues to be a landing spot for many newcomers. Since 2010, the Portland area has seen a population increase of 8.3% while the national average is just 4.1%. Couple that with the nation's improving economy, and it's easy to see why the Portland real estate market has skyrocketed – with inventory scarce and prices rising. Oregon's price points, expansion, and growing economy attract many new residents, particularly from California due to the state's pricey housing, state tax and overcrowding.

While Portland has seen values rise at an estimated 10% clip in the past few years, it is important to remember the city's journey following the crash of 2008. Historical data indicates a decline of 18% from 2008-2011, an annual decline of 6%. While 2011 onward has seen an astounding 80% increase, an annual appreciation rate of 13%. Finally, from 2008 to 2017, we have seen an increase of 48%, or 5% annually. Economists and investors say historically, real estate in the long term will return 2.5%-3%. The Portland market has nearly doubled this rate since 2008. It has been a roller coaster of values in the Portland market.



STEVE CLARK
EXTRAORDINARY
APPRAISER

Steve Clark started appraisal training in Portland in 1997 after a friend in the industry asked him if he'd like to assist him. Initially, Steve's interest was piqued at the thought of learning a new skill set. His grandmother had been a realtor and, seeing the flexibility of her schedule growing up appealed to Steve. He took the job, growing more confident in his abilities with each order. Though the basics have now become routine to Steve, the daily challenges of more complex orders ensure that he is always expanding his skills and growing his local market expertise. For Steve, the decision to train as an appraiser has been one of the most enriching and rewarding decisions of his life.

PORTLAND CONTINUES ITS HOT STREAK

Portland continues to be one of the hottest markets in the nation. The city is seeing promising construction projects spring up all over the city. The boom includes apartment buildings, townhomes, and condos, and small businesses in particular are reaping the benefits of the increased activity. Year-over-year, the median sales price for a home has increased by \$35,000 to \$385,000. When looking at a recent monthly view, 2219 homes were sold last month, down from 2494 two months prior. The average number of days on market also fell to 52 from 60 days.





SKIDMORE FOUNTAIN WITH
BRONZE WOMAN SCULPTURE IN
ANKENY SQUARE OLDTOWN
PORTLAND OREGON CIRCA 1888



MINNESOTA

LAND OF 10,000 LAKES

POPULATION

5,519,952

MEAN TRAVEL TIME
TO WORK (MINUTES)

23.1

POPULATION INCREASE
OVER 5 YEARS

4.1%

MEAN HOUSEHOLD
INCOME

\$61,492

HOUSING
UNITS

2,397,720

TOTAL EMPLOYER
ESTABLISHMENTS

148,666

BUILDING
PERMITS

19,545

POPULATION
PER SQUARE MILE

66.6

AVERAGE PEOPLE
PER HOUSEHOLD

2.49

LAND AREA
(MILES)

79,626.74



MINNESOTA

“ THE RESIDENTIAL MARKET CONTINUES TO GROW IN CONGRUENCE WITH THE AFFLUENCE OF THE TWIN CITIES REGARDLESS OF HIGHER MORTGAGE RATES.



NIROSH JAYAKUMAR
REGIONAL MANAGER

In Twin Cities, MN, 2016 was one of the busiest, if not the busiest appraisal year since the market collapse of 2008. Appraiser's in the region prepared themselves as mortgage rates were at an all-time low. The market was absolutely ludicrous; industry standard turn times over 3 weeks and an infinite amount of rare, contemporary houses seemed to be the norm in 2016. 2017 started off rather slow in comparison to last year's figures, which is directly attributable to higher interest rates and lack of properties being sold on the market. That is, until we entered late Spring of 2017, where buyers and borrowers flocked to their preferred banks in an attempt to purchase their dream house or refinance their existing property. Needless to say, the residential market continues to grow in congruence with the affluence of the Twin Cities regardless of higher mortgage rates.

Among many of my exceptional appraisers, two of my go-to Extraordinary Appraisers, Jamie Herr and Travis Schwab, constantly set the bar high with their partnership and quality. Their youth, determination and drive propels their ability to appraise as they provide a new breath of life in an ever-transforming appraisal industry.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Minnesota Inventions: Masking and Scotch tape, Wheaties cereal, Bisquick, HMOs, the bundt pan, Aveda beauty products, and Green Giant vegetables
- The first open heart surgery and the first bone marrow transplant in the United States were done at the University of Minnesota.
- The original name of the settlement that became St. Paul was Pig's Eye. Named for the French-Canadian whiskey trader, Pierre "Pig's Eye" Parrant, who had led squatters to the settlement.
- Minneapolis has more golfers per capita than any other city in the country.
- Minnesota has 90,000 miles of shoreline, more than California, Florida and Hawaii combined.



JAMIE HERR
EXTRAORDINARY
APPRAISER

After earning his Bachelor's degree from the University of Minnesota in 2006, Jamie Herr packed up and moved to Minneapolis. Two years later, he began his real estate career, which developed into a full-time appraisal role in 2010. Throughout the years, Jamie has surrounded himself with experts, gleaned experience and knowledge needed to succeed in an ever-changing marketplace. He's now a Certified Residential Appraiser specializing in residential real estate valuation and consultation assignments throughout the state of Minnesota.

COMPETITION MAKES MINNESOTA MARKET

This year's summer housing market is trending more than ever in favor of the seller. Home prices continue to increase and the housing supply continues to decrease. Over the past year, housing inventory is down nearly 20%, which equates to only 2.3 months of singlefamily housing supply. According to real estate experts, supply is at a 10-year low and cannot keep up with the demand, thus resulting in fewer comparable sales for the appraiser.

Although buying a home in today's market has become extremely competitive, an appraiser trying to find recent comparable sales has also become quite the challenge. In years past, there seemed to be a plethora of good and relatively recent comparable sales to choose from. As an appraiser in today's market, I'm finding it more and more difficult to find good comparable sales that have closed within a 0-3 month range or within my defined neighborhood boundaries.

Extending search parameters and justifying why homes are selling above list price are just a few daily occurrences I find myself facing more today than ever before.



TRAVIS SCHWAB
EXTRAORDINARY
APPRAISER

Travis Schwab grew up appraising. From an early age he began to learn about the industry from family members who worked as appraisers. More importantly, he liked what he heard, and began to pick up on the subtleties of the trade. For more than a decade, Travis has been hard at work serving the Twin Cities metro area, applying his lifelong skills to difficult and complex properties.

A TALE OF TWO CITIES IN MINNISOTA

The Minneapolis and St. Paul areas had an interesting spring market. There was a steadily decreasing supply of listings in the area. This has been steadily driving down the days on market, and driving up the sales prices. The market of homes over \$350,000 has been more stable with more listings than the previous year, causing a steadier supply and less volatile market. The market over \$350,000 feels positive, there are options for buyers, steady market prices, and new construction to balance and temper the surge this spring has experienced.

The major volatility is with the entry-level homes - inventory is much lower causing competition within that market. Over last year, listings priced under \$120,000 have decreased by 58%, homes priced from \$120,000-\$150,000 have decreased by 52%, \$150,000-\$190,000 have a 36% decrease, and \$190,000-\$250,000 have decreased 25%. Subjectively, I see buyers having trouble finding a home, struggling with paying over list price, or being priced out of a home that would have been affordable 1-2 years ago. This market is fast moving and cutthroat, the Twin Cities got used to the buyers being in charge, and it seems slow to accept the change.



PINEAPPLE FOUNTAIN
CHARLESTON SOUTH CAROLINA'S
WATERFRONT PARK





SOUTH CAROLINA

SMILING FACES. BEAUTIFUL PLACES.

POPULATION

4,961,119

MEAN TRAVEL TIME
TO WORK (MINUTES)

23.9

POPULATION INCREASE
OVER 5 YEARS

7.3%

MEAN HOUSEHOLD
INCOME

\$45,483

HOUSING
UNITS

2,210,082

TOTAL EMPLOYER
ESTABLISHMENTS

102,297

BUILDING
PERMITS

31,030

POPULATION
PER SQUARE MILE

153.9

AVERAGE PEOPLE
PER HOUSEHOLD

2.56

LAND AREA
(MILES)

30,060.70



SOUTH CAROLINA

“ THE SALES VOLUME IN THE CHARLESTON REGION IS UP ABOUT 9% COMPARED TO 2016.



KAYLA DOETTERL
REGIONAL MANAGER

Charleston and Greenville are two regions in South Carolina that have kept our appraisers busy as the orders are constantly flowing in. Charleston is the largest and oldest city in South Carolina. Charleston's median home price is around \$370,000 and as such the appraisers in this region are familiar with appraising water front homes and high-dollar properties. The sales volume in the Charleston region is up about 9% compared to 2016. According to the Census Bureau, Greenville (Greenville, Anderson, Mauldin) is one of the five fastest growing cities in the U.S. The population in Greenville saw a 5.8 population increase from 2015 to 2016. The median home value in Greenville is \$156,200 and the home values have gone up 9.4% over the past year.

Paul Lane is an appraiser in Charleston who has been a great addition to the panel. He was initially nominated for the Extraordinary Appraiser Program in Virginia and has continued to demonstrate the qualities of an Extraordinary Appraiser. Paul is someone who is very attentive to the quality of his reports and accepting of any feedback to improve his performance in any way he can. His motivation towards growing not only his expertise but also his partnership with Solidifi is commendable.

Paul Ryll is one of my go-to appraisers in the Greenville area. I can always count on him to provide quality reports in a timely manner. Paul is very knowledgeable in this region and is passionate about expanding his proficiency. For instance, he always strives to understand any revision request so that he can avoid the request going forward. Paul is always willing to help out if I am ever in a bind even if that means re-arranging his schedule to accommodate the request.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The salamander was given the honor of official state amphibian.

- Sweetgrass basket making has been a part of the Mount Pleasant community for more than 300 years. Basket making is a traditional art form that has been passed on from generation to generation.

- The first battle of the Civil War took place at Fort Sumter.

- Housed in a 100-year-old freight depot, the Cowpens museum is a showplace for relics belonging to the crew of the USS Cowpens, a famous World War II aircraft carrier.

- The walls of the American fort on Sullivan Island, in Charleston Harbor, were made of spongy Palmetto logs. This was helpful in protecting the fort because the British cannonballs bounced off the logs.



PAUL RYLL
EXTRAORDINARY
APPRAISER

Paul Ryll doesn't just believe in the American Dream, he's fought for it. A Marine for 8 years, Paul developed a strong work ethic and unwavering integrity. After TM leaving the Corps., he took a few corporate jobs before starting his education and apprenticeship toward becoming an appraiser in 2011, seizing the opportunity to build a business from scratch and grow as an entrepreneur. With a Master of Science in Real Estate and Infrastructure from Johns Hopkins University, Paul is committed to doing everything in his power to ensure the "mission" for his clients is completed quickly and exceptionally.

INDUSTRY GIVES GREENVILLE A RENEWED ENERGY

In South Carolina, Greenville is an up and coming city. Industry is flocking to the area, and construction is nearly constant with new projects beginning almost daily. On top of all this new activity, new multi-family properties are developing across the county, and downtown Greenville is continuing its revitalization efforts. Many nearby suburban areas have begun to follow suit with development projects of their own.

In April 2017, the average home selling price was \$200,500, up from \$188,000 a year ago. And while the number of homes sold also ticked up slightly from 743 to 772 over the last month, the average number of days on market stayed flat at 49 since March.



PAUL LANE
EXTRAORDINARY
APPRAISER

Paul Lane's appraising career actually began on his childhood baseball diamond. At 12 years old, Paul was an avid baseball player, and his coach just happened to work as an appraiser. The two stayed in touch and when Paul graduated college he was offered a job in the industry. After more than a decade, Paul still loves the flexibility of being able to spend time in the office while still hitting the field taking on tough assignments in Charleston, South Carolina.

THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR FACING CHARLESTON

Employment, and unemployment, continue to be the most important factors in the Charleston market. Automaker Volvo is set to open a new manufacturing plant in the area with as many as 2,000 direct jobs, and a total of 8,000 additional and supporting jobs. The Port of Charleston is also thriving this season.

These new developments are having a big effect on the local housing market. Several new master planned communities have been developed in the tri-county area over the past two years, including Summer's Corner, Nexton, and Carolina Park. In addition to these new communities, there are many more smaller neighborhoods and subdivisions that have much to offer new buyers. The Charleston market is seeing record prices, low marketing times, and strong demand. The median sale price in April 2017 was \$247,000, an increase of 5.7% over the same period last year. This April also saw 1,519 homes closed, compared to 1,276 a month prior, and a rapid decrease in the average number of days on market, from 69 to 55 days.



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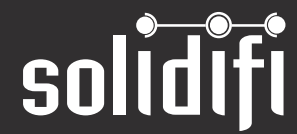
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“

“I have recommended Solidifi to colleagues.”

Michael Simerly II | IN

“They have been wonderful to work with. They are very professional and helpful and I like their portal system to send in the reports.

Dawn Aviles | IL

“Excellent communications and quick response times on questions.”

Linden F. McDonald | KS

“Great appreciation of the appraiser work.”

Manuel Carvalho | FL

“Great communication. Never left in the dark on any issues or questions I have.”

Daniel Haddad | VA

“All of the people that I’ve had the opportunity to speak with at Solidifi have been professional, experienced, and knowledgeable, which is so important in this industry. The regional manager for my area, Maria Montes, is exceptional among the already great staff.”

Karen Solicito | CT

“I have been with Solidifi for over 2 years now and do not have one complaint. I am very happy with my partnership with Solidifi.

Barry Laulicht | NY

“I appreciate the support and consistent business.”

Mark Culcasi | CA



A NEW LEVEL OF SUCCESS

ORANGE COUNTY, FLORIDA

FRANKLIN BAKER II

ORLANDO, FL
INDEPENDENT APPRAISER

Franklin Baker decided to become an appraiser because it represented an opportunity to build a career/small business in a field he was interested in, while at the same time the level of success he could achieve would be completely dependent on his efforts. To date, Franklin's Orange County, Florida based company has enjoyed 18 fruitful years and it's still going strong. One of the key's to Franklin's longevity is his analytical skills which he feels allows him to manage the challenges that vary from property to property.

WHAT IS ONE PLACE YOU THINK NO ONE SHOULD GO WITHOUT SEEING IN YOUR AREA?

Gatorland is the best local "original" tourist attraction, with exhibits getting you close to live alligators and other Florida wildlife.

IN YOUR OPINION WHAT IS THE BEST RESTAURANT IN YOUR AREA?

There are many choices of good independent restaurants in the Orlando area, but my current favorite is Nova at Lake Ivanhoe near downtown for their seafood menu.

IN YOUR OPINION WHAT IS THE BEST PART ABOUT LIVING IN YOUR AREA?

Enjoying an outdoor lifestyle in all four seasons of the year.

WHAT HOBBIES DO YOU HAVE?

My favorite pastimes are inshore saltwater fishing, cycling off-road woodland trails, and exercising my Labrador Retrievers Sundance and Cheyenne.



FRANKLIN BAKER II

EXTRAORDINARY
APPRAISER



AN EYE FOR INSIGHT

LEE COUNTY, FLORIDA

DONALD BLAKE
BONITA SPRINGS, FL
INDEPENDENT APPRAISER

When Donald Blake moved to Naples, New York with his wife in early 2001, he immediately fell in love with the area. Working as a real estate appraiser since the early 1990s in Central New York, Donald began practicing closer to home starting in 2008. Certified in both New York and Florida, his extensive experience as a realtor and appraiser is augmented by his background in the construction trade. Thanks to his expansive skill set, Donald's property assessments are known for their attention to detail and insightfulness.

WHAT IS ONE PLACE YOU THINK NO ONE SHOULD GO WITHOUT SEEING IN YOUR AREA?

Pick a Gulf beach, any one will do. From Naples, Bonita Springs to Fort Myers or even one of the numerous islands like Sanibel or Captiva.

IN YOUR OPINION WHAT IS THE BEST RESTAURANT IN YOUR AREA?

Without a doubt, Angelina's Ristorante in Bonita Springs. Likely the best Italian food, and as well, one of the finest wine selections in South West Florida.

IN YOUR OPINION WHAT IS THE BEST PART ABOUT LIVING IN YOUR AREA?

We live in an area, full time, where people come in the winter to escape the cold. While the roadways and restaurants get crowded, we do remember that we have the best summer, low traffic, white sands, sunny beaches and a 75-78 degree winter— we are living in paradise.

WHAT HOBBIES DO YOU HAVE?

My wife, JoAnn, and I go to the theater often. We travel all over to see shows, even Canada, but our favorite place is New York City. We were much closer before we moved to Naples, when we lived in Central New York, but we still visit the city at least a couple of times a year to enjoy the fine dining and the theater.



DONALD BLAKE
EXTRAORDINARY
APPRAISER



ACCURATE AND COMMUNITY FOCUSED

SPOTSYLVANIA COUNTY, VIRGINIA

PAUL DZIOK
FREDERICKSBURG, VA
INDEPENDENT APPRAISER

Paul Dziok has worked in various aspects of the real estate industry including, building, loans and rehab. An opportunity to expand into the appraisal side of things was offered to him 11 years ago. As an appraiser in Fredericksburg, Virginia, Paul enjoys interacting with different people in his community, the flexible schedule and ability to maintain a healthy work-life balance. Paul's varied background is appreciated by his clients which allows him to produce well-rounded, accurate reports on a consistent basis.

**WHAT IS ONE PLACE YOU THINK NO
ONE SHOULD GO WITHOUT SEEING IN
YOUR AREA?**

Any of the Civil War history landmarks that are numerous throughout the region.

**IN YOUR OPINION WHAT IS THE BEST
RESTAURANT IN YOUR AREA?**

Harry's Ale House. It is locally owned with fresh original cuisine and a variety of craft beers.

**IN YOUR OPINION WHAT IS THE BEST PART
ABOUT LIVING IN YOUR AREA?**

Having a definitive 4 seasons of weather, which allows for a vast variety of hobbies to suit everyone (i.e. kayaking, golf, hiking, skiing, etc).

WHAT HOBBIES DO YOU HAVE?

I enjoy golf and fishing.



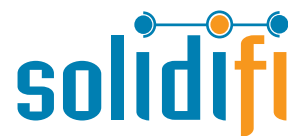
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