

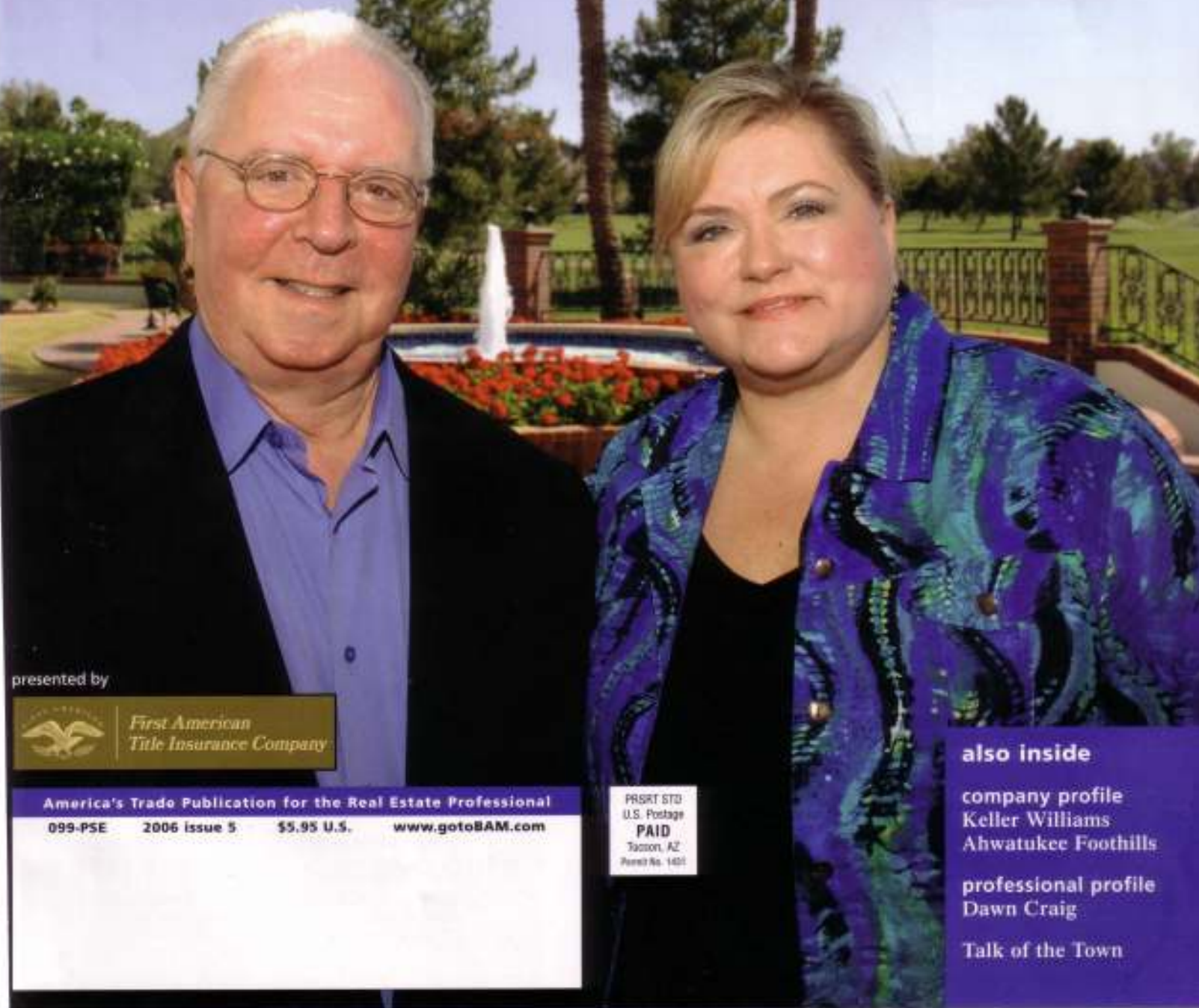
southeast valley edition

BROKER★AGENT

magazine

*Bonnie
Dillon*

broker/agent of the month



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Talk of the Town

Bonnie Dillon

by Dana Bos - photography by keith@aistrinphotography.com



**broker/agent
of the month**

Bonnie Dillon brings a wealth of life and business expertise to her role as the top luxury REALTOR® in the SouthEast Valley. Considering herself the classic baby boomer, she's had four or five separate careers, a Master's Degree from ASU, several PhD marketing courses and 30 years of business experience. "That's one thing I really enjoy

about real estate," Dillon observes. "Typically, people have had other careers before entering this field. It's diverse and interesting, really adding to the quality of the industry." Dillon's savvy and discipline have led to a thriving business.

Dillon, a REALTOR® with Keller Williams East Valley, specializes in luxury properties in Ahwatukee and the entire East Valley. In the 1980s, she sold in Paradise Valley and Scottsdale, which was good preparation for a luxury focus.

Dillon's partners in the business recognize and respect her dedication and capabilities. "Bonnie has represented the sale or listing of sales for five homes for our company, Fine Homes and Estates LLC," share Gary and Lynda Breton. "She is a top professional, displaying the highest levels of honesty, ethics, reliability, support and overall knowledge of the real estate business. She has an extensive list of clients locally and nationally. We are proud to be associated with Bonnie."

Over the years, Dillon developed a small team to handle her growing volume of business. She has built a strong group working behind the scenes so that she can focus on listing and selling. One primary member is her husband, Tom. When not broadcasting NFL football games, he works on Dillon's team. "He became a REALTOR® three years ago. I got so busy I needed help and he was happy to jump in. He handles all kinds of things and keeps me sane."

Tom enjoys his new profession immensely and his respect for his wife has grown as they have worked together. "I really like the contact with people," he explains. "I've always enjoyed helping other people out. A real estate transaction is often stressful. When it's done and they are happy, that feels good. Working behind-the-scenes has been eye-opening. It's great way to learn. Bonnie is a dynamo. I didn't realize how hard REALTORS® work. She does whatever it takes and that's necessary to represent your clients well."

Dillon hired Elise Lennon as her office manager. Susan Frasier serves as Dillon's part-time buyers assistant and Molly McHugh as inspection coordinator. The group takes care of all follow up and pays great attention to the details. "They allow me to focus on leads and listings," explains Dillon. "Our system works for us. There just comes a time where you can't keep providing superior

service without creating a team. It's allowed me to build a successful business."

Elise Lennon values her place on the team immensely. "There has never been a day I haven't enjoyed coming into the office. The camaraderie and respect between the members of Bonnie's team is unlike any other group I've been a part of. We each have defined roles, yet at the same time, we willingly pitch in to help each other—whether asked or not."

"Bonnie's knowledge of every aspect of the real estate industry and her ability to 'think outside the box' make her one of the savviest REALTORS® I've ever come across," Lennon continues. "I learn something new from her everyday—and not always about real estate, sometimes about myself, too! I truly feel privileged to work alongside Bonnie each day."

Clients also recognize the team as top-notch. "I always say that the first call a person makes to Bonnie is the last," notes Rhonda Fosenburg. "Bonnie and her team are professionals in every sense of the word. They anticipate their clients' needs at every stage of a real estate transaction, and communication is their top priority. Bonnie has represented my husband and me on both the sales and buying sides. Each time the process has been flawless and truly enjoyable. We wouldn't ever consider another real estate transaction without the Dillon Team."

"She is a top professional, displaying the highest levels of honesty, ethics, reliability, support and overall knowledge of the real estate business."

Dillon enjoys the national network available to her through Keller Williams. "I've learned great things from my colleagues here. I'm never reinventing the wheel." The chemistry between Dillon and Keller Williams has worked well. She and her team were number one across the company's SouthWest region in 2004 and 2005. She has also obtained her ABR and Relocation Specialist certifications. "What drives me though," notes Dillon, "is satisfied clients and their positive feedback. That's what it's all about—getting results."

"When listing luxury properties, I believe they must be priced right and marketed in a special way. It's not as simple as looking online for the comps—a REALTOR® must really know the nuances of a custom home. Every house is unique and it's fun to represent those

"I enjoy the challenge of the luxury home market. On the buyer side, it takes a lot of effort to match the right person to the right property. The search for just the right thing really excites me. It's lots of fun."

kinds of properties." In the past six years in Ahwatukee, Dillon has listed, sold or viewed every house over half a million. She has a huge database in her head. "It takes years to build that experience, and that's what I bring to the table for my clients."

She also brings expert luxury home marketing skills. For example, Dillon will spend ten thousand dollars marketing a \$3 million luxury home. Among other things, she obtains full page color advertising in a number of local newspapers as well as international, national and state magazines.

In addition, Dillon will do more targeted marketing depending on the home. For instance, if it's in an airport community, she'll advertise in publications that focus on aviation. If it's a horse property, she knows which publications target that community. "I really individualize the marketing based on the house," notes Dillon.

The Internet also serves as a Dillon marketing platform. "My properties are on every website targeted at the luxury market." We get over ten thousand hits a week on some of our properties. She provides staging for the home as well, free of charge. She uses professional interior designers before every photo shoot. She also utilizes professional photographers to create the photos and virtual tour.

"I enjoy the challenge of the luxury home market," Dillon continues. "On the buyer side, it takes a lot of effort to match the right person to the right property. The search for just the right thing really excites me. It's lots of fun."

Most critical to business growth however is Dillon's work ethic. "On average, I work twelve hours a day. I go see every listing so I understand what's on the market. It provides a comparison for my listings. I also read as much as I can. I look at all kinds of business publications—the real estate updates provided by different companies, things from the National Association of REALTORS®.

Susie Jordan, a fellow REALTOR® at Keller Williams, has great respect for Dillon. "Bonnie and I are colleagues and partners. She is one of the most loyal, honest, and dedicated women I know. She prides herself on customer service and truly works hard to build everlasting relationships. She is always there for anyone in need, even when it is not convenient for her. Bonnie loves her family and friends very much and deserves to be recognized for her contribution to society. We need more women like her in this world!"

"I learn from my colleagues every day," states Dillon. "There are

great people in this business across all the different companies. It's important to treat each other well and learn from each other. We must realize that we are all working very hard and remember that most people are working 24/7."

In fact, that is Dillon's biggest piece of advice for a new REALTOR®. "Make sure you want to work really hard. Many think it's easy money—it's not. It's the toughest business I've ever had. Also, make sure you have enough money to start out. Like any business, it is important to have enough start up capital to get it off the ground. It will take at least a year to make a profit. It's not an easy job and not easy money."

Dillon has also built strong partner relationships over the past six years. "Jerry Chase at Title Guaranty Agency helps me and my clients so often. He is such a people person, so good with them. And he's also detail-oriented. He's good at explaining what's going on. That's the total package! I also work with great lenders. I like to give customers four to five lending options."

Jerry Chase describes Dillon as one of the finest real estate professionals in the Valley. "She is committed to providing her clients with the highest levels of dedication, service, expertise, experience, compassion and integrity and expects nothing less from the individuals on her team. Bonnie will always have my utmost respect and endorsement. I would certainly not hesitate to refer her to individuals who expect the best, because with Bonnie, that is the least you would get!"

Amidst the business success and colleague accolades, Dillon is savvy enough to remember that people are at the center of her profession. "We must keep the clients at the forefront, not their houses, not the market. Integrity and honesty—these have to come first. There's lots of money involved in this business and you must stand up for what's right. We also must focus on getting results—that's what people want. All the fancy brochures and awards won't do this for you."

"Bonnie represented me on the sale of my home in Ahwatukee," shares Kathy Quinn. "She and her entire staff make you feel as though you are her only clients. She pays attention to detail and knows how to show and prepare a home for sale. Her marketing technique worked extremely well for me."

"But, more importantly, Bonnie cared about me, the person," Quinn continues. "We were moving out of state and worried about traveling for three days with a skittish cat. Bonnie and her husband, who is a cat lover, came to the house as we were loading the car to leave. Within five minutes, the cat was in the carrier and in the car.

Bonnie even recommended a homeopathic remedy to keep the cat at ease. She is the best!"

Dillon credits her husband, Tom, for keeping her grounded. "He is my rock. He provides balance for me, always ready with a joke or a back rub." An avid pilot, he flies his airplane out of Chandler and often gives rides for charity. He's also Santa Claus for their client's children and grandchildren at Christmas, going to each home. It's always a big hit. Last year he was the Santa for the Foothills Festival of Lights," shares Bonnie. "It was great to see him in his Santa suit on a Harley."

"We like to travel," Dillon continues. "We take a few major trips a year, a cruise or international trip. I also like to read and I enjoy all of the arts. Someday I will take up painting again."

For the moment though, Dillon is very focused on her business. She concentrates on being flexible and willing to change as the market moves. She likely will expand the team. "You must recognize when you need to bring someone on board to keep providing good service. I want to hire a fulltime buyer's agent in the next year. It's a buyers market right now—buyers are taking their time and we need to spend that time with them."

For Dillon, the most satisfying moments of the job occur when people find the perfect house for them and when the seller closes a transaction that went well with low stress. "I like seeing the

satisfaction on both sides. Then we all go out and celebrate as a team. So many people forget to do that. We are also blessed with many clients who take the time to thank us for our service. We all enjoy reading their cards and letters.

If client feedback is any indicator, Dillon and her team will be the premiere luxury property specialists in the SouthEast Valley for years to come. ★

Bonnie Dillon

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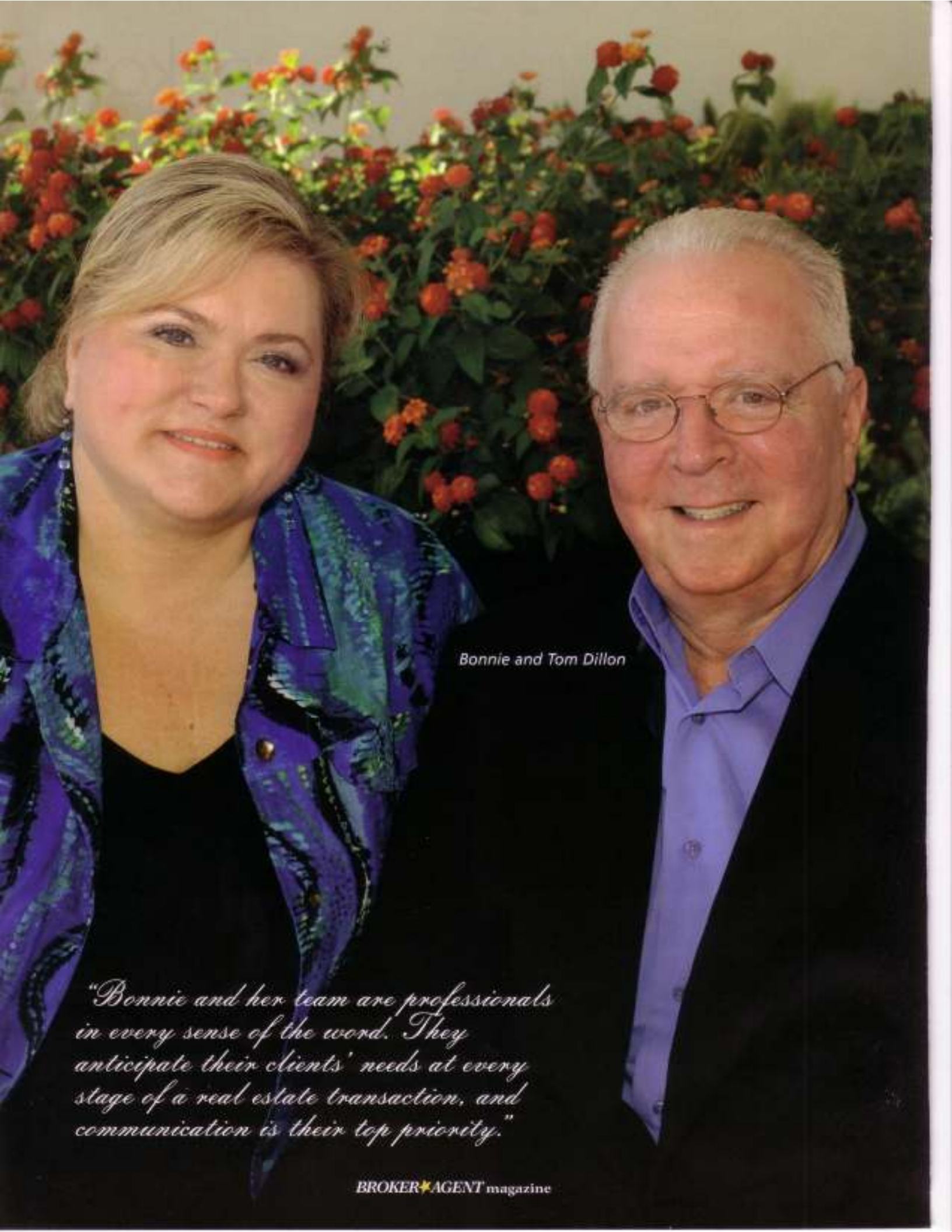
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*Left to right: Molly McHugh, Elise Lennon,
Tom Dillon, Bonnie Dillon and Susan Frazier.*

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a black top, is sitting outdoors in front of a fountain. The fountain has a white water spout and is surrounded by a brick wall and a large bed of red flowers. The woman is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera.

Bonnie Dillon

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Bonnie and Tom Dillon

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