



by Laura Barron
photography by
Thompson Photographic

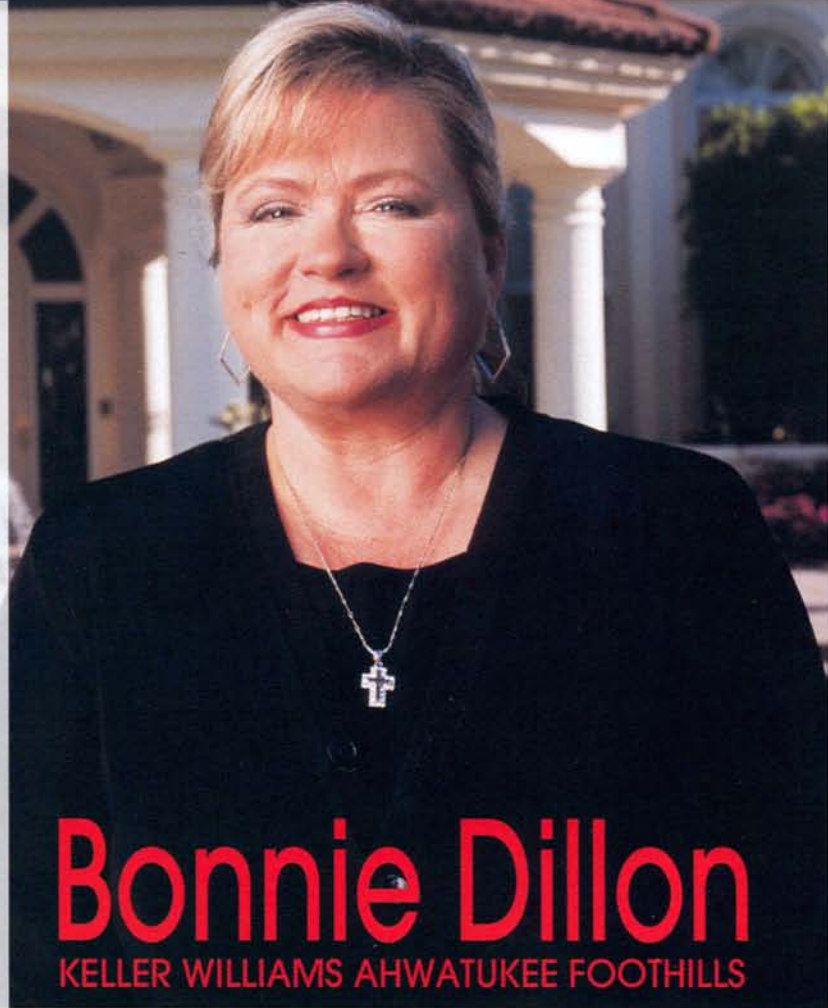
professional profile

Luxury homebuyers in the East Valley are in for a treat when they work with **Bonnie Dillon**. Not only is she creative and resourceful when it comes to buying or selling high-end homes, she's had an impressive and interesting "pre-real estate" career that gives her invaluable expertise. Since joining KELLER WILLIAMS AHWATUKEE FOOTHILLS, her success trend continues—for the last four years Bonnie has seen, listed or sold every house at \$500,000 or more in Ahwatukee Foothills.

As a resident of Arizona for more than 20 years, Bonnie chose to move her family here from Wisconsin. "I was looking for a good place to complete my Master's degree and to raise my children," says Bonnie. After researching a handful of cities, she chose Phoenix because it felt like home. "Everyone here was from someplace else, so I didn't feel so much like a stranger!"

The family moved west and Bonnie completed her Master's degree in Adult Health in 1982. She then became vice president of business development for CATHOLIC HEALTHCARE WEST (parent company of St. Joseph's Hospital), where she remained for 12 years. Despite her success, she grew tired of the "corporate world," and left Catholic Healthcare West to start her own radio show. With a goal to be more independent, Bonnie created a program called "Health Alternatives," which ran on KTAR—a popular Phoenix talk radio channel.

"The radio program was designed to educate and consult people on alternative health issues," explains Bonnie. "It was great fun and I learned a lot!" During the course of her show Bonnie interviewed luminaries including the Dalai Lama, Tibet's spiritual leader and Nobel Peace Prize-winner, and Deepak Chopra, a prominent doctor, author, and lecturer on health and spiritual issues. At the same time, Bonnie ran a separate tour company called Healthy Journeys that led small-group tours focused on experiencing alternative health practices and to be "pampered" in exotic locations. She organized and led tours to Bali to study Indonesian healing techniques, to the French and Italian Riviéras for a "Healing on the High Seas" cruise, and to India. The trip to India trip was particular interesting, Bonnie explains, because actress Lindsay Wagner and her children were participants. Bonnie arranged for the group to practice yoga with India's "Mother of Yoga" and to visit with "His Holiness" the Dalai Lama.



Her radio show was cancelled in 2000, so Bonnie ended Healthy Journey tours to pursue her next career—real estate. "Who knows why things happen as they do," says Bonnie, "but I'm glad that this change in direction happened. I love what I do!" This is Bonnie's second career in real estate. She got her license in the early 1980's and practiced part time to help pay for her graduate degree. "We had to be a lot more creative with financing back then," she recollects. "Interest rates were in the 16 percent to 18 percent range and many people couldn't afford to buy homes."

Bonnie enjoys her real estate career today because it gives her the independence she desires and lets her use her well-honed skills in business and communication. "I really enjoy helping people, building relationships and managing the marketing aspects of my business," says Bonnie. She currently focuses on the luxury home market in the southeast Valley—primarily Ahwatukee, Tempe and Chandler.

"The thing I like the most about the luxury home market is that the homes are all very unique—each one has it's own character and I enjoy finding the perfect new owner." Bonnie's marketing strategy for these unique homes includes advertising in high-end magazines, as well as direct contact with her database. She often features her listings in *Unique Homes magazine*—she currently has a \$6 million listing on the cover of the magazine. Her database of prospects and



Susan Traver, Elise Lennon, Tom Dillon and Bonnie Dillon

past clients receives regular e-mails, direct mail and postcards from Bonnie about new listings and just solds.

Referrals from satisfied clients are the best form of advertising, and for Bonnie they currently account for 50 percent of her business. That's an impressive number for just four years in the challenging luxury-home market, and based on the positive feedback she is already getting, her referrals should continue. Here are what a few of her happy clients have to say about working with Bonnie:

- With Bonnie's knowledge of the market and dedication to her clients, we found ourselves well represented.*
—Michael and Paulette Valente
- I would like to thank Bonnie Dillon of KELLER WILLIAMS REALTY who made the most stressful situation a wonderful and rewarding experience. Her keen professionalism, encyclopedia-like resourcefulness and admirable tact helped my husband and me navigate smoothly through the maze of financing, negotiating and closing.*
—Jelena Cooley
- Serving as the agent to both parties ... we felt she (Bonnie Dillon) handled this delicate balance very professionally and fairly to both the buyer and the seller. Bonnie and her staff were very organized and polite in helping us to get everything we needed to get done to buy and sell a house. We would hire her again to handle our future real estate needs.*
—Jim and Laurie Stricklin

- Dear "Team"—It is obvious each of you takes pride in your job! We want to thank you all for your help and professionalism (as well as your patience) as we moved from "buyer" to "seller". Your quick response to our questions/issues (no matter how small) always made us feel you cared...we really appreciated it. We could always count on a smile from each of you (and sometimes we really needed one)! Thanks!*
—Milt and Shirley Brown

"When it comes to creating happy customers, I think the three most important things are having integrity, knowing your market, and always under-promising and over-delivering," says Bonnie. "The more realistic you are, the more satisfied your customers will be."

Bonnie's "team" includes **Susan Frazier**, a buyer's assistant, and **Elise Lennon**, her office manager. Bonnie's husband, **Tom Dillon**, also has his real estate license and is her partner in the business. Most people may recognize Tom from his successful 30-year broadcasting career in the Valley—as the voice of ASU and the Arizona Cardinals. He currently covers ASU sports on Fox Sports Net and has his own morning news radio show on KFAX 1100 AM.

When they aren't working, Bonnie and Tom love to travel. They take about two big trips a year—their last was to Australia and New Zealand. When not traveling internationally, Bonnie and Tom "buzz" around in their own airplane, a Piper Arrow. Tom is a private pilot and Bonnie has some flying experience herself, as a medi-vac nurse early in her career. They like to fly their Piper to places like Puget Sound near Seattle, where they can get away to a Bed and Breakfast for the weekend. They also like to visit with their four children and three grandchildren, who live in Arizona and Indiana.

With a diverse and interesting professional background, Bonnie Dillon is no stranger to success and works hard at whatever she does to make a difference. She brings her creative and innovative spirit, as well as her intelligence and experience to her real estate business. Those who benefit from this are lucky indeed! ★

Bonnie Dillon
KELLER WILLIAMS AHWATUKEE FOOTHILLS
(480) 703-2900

Bonnie Dillon
KELLER WILLIAMS AHWATUKEE FOOTHILLS