

# IMPACT MARYLAND MONTHLY

*with Eric Verdi*

"HOW TO THRIVE IN EVERY KIND OF MARKET"

DECEMBER 2021



## 48 Hours of Anxiety

*Technology is NOT always Accurate*

I finally arrived home at 11:33pm after talking to the Cops... 8 Hours earlier I was relaxing in Ocean City.

*The following is a Story of Technology FAILURE... Misunderstanding... and the end to 'The Best Friday in I don't know how long'....*

It was 3:30pm on Friday Nov. 26<sup>th</sup>, the day after Thanksgiving, and I mentioned to Susan that "this is the most relaxing Friday I have had in I don't know how long" and within an hour my Friday took a complete U-Turn.

In real estate, Fridays are anchor days. Most settlements occur on Fridays and on Friday you are also planning for the weekend – for marketing promoting for your sellers, for preparing showings for buyers, for 'all the things.'

As a real estate agent, and more specifically Broker/Founder of Impact Maryland Real Estate Fridays are 'fireman days.'

Having done this for 19 years and I've probably overseen 2500 transactions I can tell you WITH 100% certainty that EVERY transaction has a fire to put out.

Could be a little brush fire – like an inspection issue, or the seller left paint in the house and that buyer didn't want it. Or it could be a 5-Alarm fire where there is a major issue – like water gushing out of radiators at final walkthrough or a seller 'hiding' mold on a house that one of your purchasers just bought.

**This Friday was unlike any I had recently.**

On Thanksgiving night we went to one of our Beach Houses – The Astoria – with our good friends The Sipes for a relaxing weekend.

At Impact Maryland Real Estate we live by the philosophy that "Stories are the Currency of our Society." That's why we say, 'We Don't Sell Homes; We Sell Dreams.'

### **HEADLINES**

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If you have friends, neighbors or family members who, like you, are a savvy homeowner who is concerned about how to maximize the value of your investment, and you think they would appreciate IMPACT MARYLAND MONTHLY, I'd be happy to make that happen...and, have it come as a gift from you. Here's how it works: Simply shoot us an email ([subscribe@ClientProfitSecrets.com](mailto:subscribe@ClientProfitSecrets.com)) with your name and the name and address of the person whom would enjoy this newsletter. I'll include a note explaining that it is totally free because you arranged for a free subscription.

Friday started out with an amazing Breakfast at Barn 34 – which included one of the best breakfasts I’ve had in a while and ALSO a kicka\$\$ Bloody Mary’s ever. Big Shrimp, a Crab Leg, Celery... just an amazing start to a Friday.

Then Susan and Kelly went to the Outlets while Geep and I started checking off our list of ‘things to do’ at the Beach House.

Stopped by a Mattress Store, Home Depot, WalMart, and Ace Hardware. We came away with some necessary items for the condo, and got new mattresses for the ‘kids room’ at our place. Geep and I went to Mattress Warehouse (or some other generic name for the 1000 Mattress Stores) and prices out some memory foam mattresses. Our current mattresses in the kids bunk/trundle were pokey, they had springs and weren’t the most comfortable, so we wanted to make those beds more comfortable.

We priced out 3 Mattresses there and with the ‘Sale’ – you know you ALWAYS see the 50-80% off signs in front of those mattress stores – they were \$1200. Geep said he had just bought a mattress for Avery – his daughter – that was a memory foam from WalMart and we should check that out.

Off to WalMart we went.

Geep was spot on, the same mattresses at WalMart were about \$700 total – SCORE!

We make a couple more stops and headed back to the place to piddle around and fix things. I touched up the paint on the walls. I cleaned some. The girls got back from shopping. Alex and Peyton were playing basketball outside and Madden on Xbox.

Just a very relaxing day.

At the beach, the days revolve around meals. And we knew that evening we were going to go to Longboards – one of our absolute favorite places – for dinner. The Sipes, especially Geep, love to order insane amounts of food (it’s a running joke. We get food the first day there and the Sipes have leftovers in the Fridge for the rest of the trip).

So about 2pm the Sipes decide that they want lunch/carryout, Susan and I pass as we want to wait for dinner.

The Sipes order from another one of our favorite places, Shottis Point. Geep and I make the trek down to Shottis to pick up our order, however when we get there the food isn’t ready, so we decide to have an Orange Crush at the bar while we wait.

Geep, he isn’t much of a drinker, but we he does he is like an 18-year-old college freshman.

I have 2 sips of my Orange Crush and look over and Geep is sucking the last of the juice out of bottom of the glass.

We sit at the bar for the next 10 minutes just laughing and being stupid. Just talking about nothing, but talking about everything – you know those conversations that mean nothing but are good for the soul.

That was much needed.

We get our food and head back to the place.

I sit down in my favorite spot, the recliner right next to our gas fireplace, put on a comfy blanket and try to take an afternoon siesta while everyone else is doing their thing. Geep is in the recliner next to me, also trying to take a nap.

I might have gotten 15 minutes before the kids got loud or something else woke me up, but it was an AWESOME 15-minute Siesta.

It’s now about 3p and the girls are talking about a walk on the beach or something before dinner. Kelly Sipe and I measure our days at the beach by our coffee to wine/Miller Lite ratio. We have coffee until between 4-6p then we switch over. So, we get another coffee, before ramping up for the evening and dinner at Longboards.

It’s about this time I tell Susan... “Babe, this is the most relaxing Friday in I don’t know how long. I really needed this today.”

## **JINX... DOUBLE TRIPLE JINX**

About 4:30, I get an email from one of our great lenders that our client just notified her that she was switching lenders.

Let me be clear. Clients, our buyers have EVERY right to use whomever they want when buying a home. I tell everyone that ‘I can play in the sandbox with anyone.’ As long as they do a good job, are responsive, and are on the same team. Buying a home is VERY stressful and there are 1000 moving parts and the key players... Buyers, Agents, Lenders, Title Companies all need to be pulling in the same direction.

We encounter hiccups daily, and if everyone is pulling in the same direction, then it is usually handled quickly without the client knowing.

But if everyone isn’t pulling in the same direction, then EVERY minor issue is amplified beyond where it should be because working relationships are HUGE in real estate.

My partner Stacy stepped in, as I was away, and tried to diffuse the situation and explain to the buyer why it was important to use the lender on the pre-approval letter for a myriad of reasons.

## **The time to ‘shop’ lenders is NOT 3 days after you get a contract.**

There were about 20 phone calls and 80 text messages after this change of direction by the buyer and the stress level from EVERYONE ended up being WAY higher than it needed to be. When I talked to the new lender on Saturday to ensure that our client would get to settlement on time and that he would deliver everything he promised HER, I went away feeling good about the conversation.

And then when I followed up with him 3 days later to make sure everyone was moving smoothly, he LIED directly to my face (well a conversation over the phone), which there is one thing I can’t tolerate is deceitful business practices.

Needless to say this was over 2 weeks ago and I am dealing with issues daily because of this new lender.

The client ultimately decided to go in her own direction – which is her choice – but it has made for a way stressful situation.

## **That was the start of the chaos.**

Then we get ready to go out to eat at Longboards. A little distraught about the last 2 hours, but nothing I don’t deal with on a daily basis.

We get all dressed up and call ahead to get a table, but they are so busy, we still end up waiting.

While we are waiting I get a notification on our Ring at home at 6:33pm and I take a peek. There is a Cop at our house walking around.

Starting to freak out a bit, “Why is a Cop at our house on a Friday evening at 6:33?” We are at the beach. My parents are home with Anthony (as he had soccer that weekend).

## **I get on the Ring and talk to the Cop.**

Long story short, he says that a “missing” Apple watch is pinging at our location. He said the owner last remembered having it at a Panera earlier that day.

Well, earlier that day my mom took Anthony to meet some friends whose parents ended up driving them to Montgomery Mall to go shopping.

I quickly get off the Ring with the Cop and call my dad to go down and check out what is going on!!!

I call Anthony to ask him if he knows what is going on... he has NO CLUE about an Apple Watch.

Then, I talk to the cop again on the phone and I tell him that my son was with friends, but no one has been at our house since 2pm that day beside a UPS delivery at 3:30. But he is pressing me and my son’s location – I am thinking that there is NO WAY Anthony either took or someone put in his bag and it is at our house. So, I give the Cop Anthony’s number to call and talk to him.

## **Anthony was at a friend’s house when the cop called.**

My Dad lets the cop in our house and calls dispatch to Ping the watch – he hears nothing.

About this time, I go tell Susan what is going on as they are still waiting to be seated... And Susan being in education and working with cops on a daily at her school knows more than me about what can and can’t be done.

Susan and I are now on a Speaker phone with the cop because she is much more calm and thoughtful in these situations as I just want to react.

She whispers to me, ‘He can’t be in our house without a warrant.’

I just mention something about a warrant and the cop’s tone quickly changed and he quickly left the house with my Dad...

## **NO PING... NO WATCH...**

The cop calls me back after and I reiterate that no one has been at our house.

He keeps telling me that it is PINGING at our location.

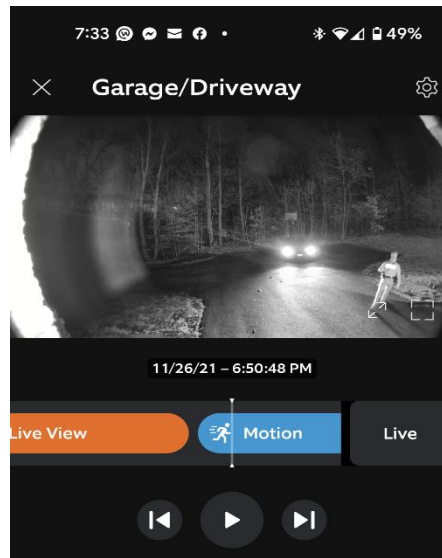
But he also tells me that they aren’t treating it as ‘stolen’ property, just ‘lost’ property. He gives me the owner’s name and number in case we find it. And also gives me the case number.

Susan gets on her sleuthing and then goes back and tracks Anthony’s day on Life360. He was no where near where the Cop was describing, and we were confident that it was either inadvertently at our house or maybe it was stolen and someone through it in our woods as they drove by.

We call Anthony back and verify everything he had told us and it matched his day on Life360.

About this time we get seated, but the Sipes know we have an issue so we quickly order our food to go and then Susan and I go back to the place to figure out the best steps.

Ultimately, we decide that I need to go home – to be the FIRST one back home to check on everything – since Anthony is being ‘accused’ of the missing Apple Watch. I



need to be the one to make sure everything is good at our house – especially since a cop was just walking through our home.

### **At 8:30 I leave OC to head back home...**

The adrenaline is rushing the entire 3-hour trip home. The mind is also racing 😊 I arrive home at 11:33. I look in the UPS shipment that was there earlier – maybe thinking that the UPS man had the watch. I search downstairs. I search both kids rooms. I search EVERYWHERE.

No Watch.

I finally get to sleep around 1:30a that night.

### **Most relaxing Friday in a while – GONE... Now MOST STRESSFUL Friday 😞**

Wake up early on Saturday as Anthony comes back home now to get ready for a full day of soccer. At 7:30a I try to call the owner of the watch to let him know that I can't find it and see how I can help. No answer. I call again at 8a – and leave a message. He NEVER returns our call.

By 8:15, I make sure all is good at our house and head back down to the beach. Now, my mind is still racing. Was that a real cop – it was an unmarked car? Why is the watch pinging at our house? What if that was some random dude?

### **ALL THE THOUGHTS...**

Once I get back to OC, Susan and I call the Sheriff's office to verify the case ID and what the officer told us the night before was accurate. Thank God it was! But still what about the watch?

Anthony goes to play in his soccer tournament, and we get creamed. Coach Chris – he is the head coach, I'm the assistant – calls me between games and asks if Ant is ok, because he didn't play his normal solid self. I tell him what happened and that Anthony might not be mentally there – he wasn't.

Poor kiddo was very upset.

“How am I relating this to real estate you ask???”

Well, you know about technology and real estate? All those 'estimates of value' that websites have on house values?

We had a client recently that didn't agree with our assessment of value and our pricing strategy because Zillow said their house is worth \$509k. We thought it was a \$450k.ish house. So, we do our own 'consumer' digging and look at Redfin and Realtors value. All the algorithms. And ALL 3 are different. In fact, the low estimate was \$423k on Realtor. So between the 3 websites there is an \$86,000 difference in their technology.

Because we work for the client, it is ALWAYS their choice of where to list. We can provide our strategy – which we do this everyday and have a good handle on the market – but it is there call.

We thought \$449k would get multiple offers. But they thought different. They listed at \$489k to start and sat on the market for 2 weeks until they got an offer – actually a very good offer, IMO, that would have netted them \$480k. But that wasn't what they wanted.

They sat on the market for 2 more weeks and then decided to take our advice – somewhat – they agreed to do a price improvement to \$465k. And within a week got a full price offer.

If they would have taken our advice initially and listed at \$449, they would have gotten 5-6 offer and probably gotten to \$489k, but they didn't. They started high – *listening to technology* – and this probably cost them \$20,000 in the end.

### **That technology piece... back to the watch...**

Turns out, the neighbor was helping my Dad on Sunday cut up a tree that had fallen in my Dad's lane and my Dad asked Rob, the neighbor, if the cop stopped by his house on Friday night. Rob said, he wasn't home. My Dad went on to tell him the Story and Rob said that...

### **He found the watch on Friday at CVS in New Market and had it – he had been trying to get ahold of the owner.**

This entire time from Friday at 6:30pm to Sunday at about 11am – when my Dad called me after talking to Rob – the ENTIRE STRESSFUL weekend. Wondering if my son 'stole' the watch. If someone 'put it in his bag'. If the watch was stolen and dumped at our house. If the cop was real or casing our house. The sleepless night. Anthony feeling like he did something wrong / knowing that he didn't.

### **It could have ALL been avoided.**

Technology is GREAT but not and end all be all. Although the phone was Pinging at our house, it was actually hundreds of yards away at the neighbors house.

And although Zillow might say your house is 'worth' \$509k, it might actually be worth \$450k.

There are a lot of things that Technology is good for --- valuation of houses and Apple Watches Pinging at EXACT locations aren't 2 of them 😊

Cheers,

*Eric*

## *Don't Forget to Have Fun!!!!*

### **December Quiz Question**

**Q:** Twice in the film "Die Hard," Sergeant Al Powell (Reginald VelJohnson) sings a Christmas-related song to himself. What's the song?

Everyone who texts, emails or calls in the correct answer by the last day of this month will be entered into a drawing for a \$25 gift certificate to Amazon.

### **November Question & Answer**

**Q:** What does Don Corleone have on his lap in the opening scene of the film "The Godfather"?

**A:** A Cat

Congratulations: Ryan McKenna!

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## ***Happy Birthday***

Here are December Birthdays from our friends of **Impact Maryland Monthly**. If you have a birthday in December and don't see your name on this list, please email or call us so that we will include your birthday.

Morgan Covert	Dec 1st	Bryan Beachley	Dec 14th	Keith Tapley	Dec 21st
Shannon Gorman	Dec 1st	Laura Haraway	Dec 14th	Angie Keeney	Dec 22nd
Cole Hamilton	Dec 2nd	Jacob Kaufman	Dec 15th	Christy Steele	Dec 23rd
Abby Cooper	Dec 4th	Veronica Lawrence	Dec 15th	Jarret Coleman	Dec 25th
Steven Barnas	Dec 5th	Jack Wharton	Dec 15th	Mike Vanwagenen	Dec 25th
Sean Tusing	Dec 6th	Katrina Hallein	Dec 16th	April Miller	Dec 26th
Lisa DeShazo	Dec 7th	Ellie Baker	Dec 17th	Paul Scott	Dec 27th
Kelley DuBois	Dec 7th	Debbie Birnby	Dec 17th	Erin Gamble	Dec 29th
Tony Abbas	Dec 11th	John Hanna	Dec 18th	Cindy Delbrook	Dec 30th
Dustin Williams	Dec 11th	Mary Kate Keefe	Dec 19th	Carolyn Dogum	Dec 31st
Cassy Roderick	Dec 13th	Claire Murphy	Dec 19th		

***Be Sure to Wish these Friends a HAPPY BIRTHDAY if you see them.***

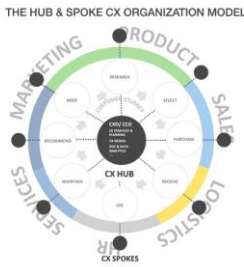
# 'Stories From The Street'

**Stories from the Street** is a series monthly articles using real life examples, told in 'story' format to give you knowledge of what actually happens behind the scenes of a Real Estate Transaction.

## Relationships Matter

*Success for the Long Game*

Life and Real Estate aren't that different after all. You have friends you can count on, you have family that you can count on. You know the one's that if you text or call them and ask them to do something – maybe an



event, a dinner, a happy hour, a game – that they are always there for you with bells on. The

one, when you are having a bad day, that you can reach out and they are always there with an encouraging word or just there to listen and provide a shoulder to cry on.

Then we have those friends that are only there when THEY need something. You can call/text and they will go days without responding and then all of a sudden POOF, when they need something, it seems like they come back to life and blow your phone up.

**Let me tell you a dirty little secret about Real Estate.**

Most real estate agents and brokerages only refer business to those companies and individuals that they receive something of value in return.

What this looks like in the real estate world is maybe a lender will pay for an agents Zillow Marketing. Or a title company incentivize a brokerage for sending settlements there way.



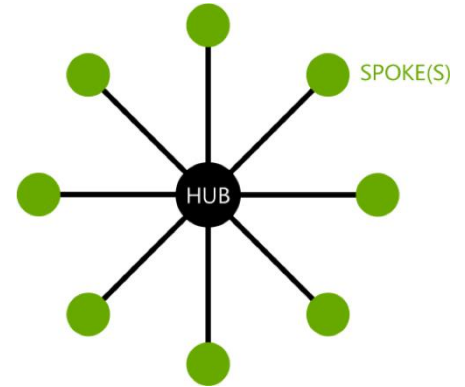
Or I have even heard of an agent, a really high producing agent, having her 'Stager' pay her a referral fee for sending sellers her way.

The client pays the Stager a marked-up fee and then the Stager pays the agent a referral fee.

Although this act might not be illegal it definitely isn't in her clients' best interest. Why not just ask the Stager to cut her fee some and pass the savings along to the client?

**Real Estate is VERY much a hub-spoke model as there are so many ancillary businesses that are involved in a real estate transaction.**

The client – the seller or buyer – typically doesn't have the time or the knowledge to have relationships with the 20+ industries that revolve around a home sale/purchase so, in most instances, the real estate agent plays a pivotable role in coordinating most everything.



There are the big – known industries. Realtor, Lender, Title Company, Insurance Company and then there are the other businesses that support real estate and although they might not be needed on EVERY transaction, they are needed more than you know.

From a Pest Inspector to a Home Inspector, Septic, Well, Radon, Mold and Chimney Inspectors to Structural Engineers, Home Warranty Companies, and Property Managers. To relationships at local counties and jurisdictions. Then we have the supporting trades that might need to get involved with Stagers,

Designers, Painters, Drywall contractors, Landscapers, Trash Removal, Movers, Hardwood Flooring company, Tile installers, Carpet/Vinyl/LVP installers, Carpet Cleaners, House Cleaners.

### And what about the trades?



Plumbers, Electricians, HVAC contractor (then if you have a boiler instead of a heat pump), Roofers, Siding guys, Concrete Company, Paver Company, Fence installers.

### And at the center of this is the client...

Does that client have all of the necessary contacts?

Most of the time the answer is NO. But the real estate agent, if they are good at what they do, they have a network of people that are there to help clients.

*At Impact Maryland Real Estate, we have – what we believe – is THE BEST network of contacts for our clients.*

### And, our dirty little secret...

We don't ask our network for money for the referrals of our clients.



Impact Agents are in this for the long haul and we learned something a LONG time ago. That 'Professionals Focus on the Relationship, while Amateurs Focus on Sales' and our relationship with our clients is priority #1 and our relationship with the

supporting companies and business is #1A. We know that if we take care of our clients and protect our clients and help our clients that our clients will 'take care of us.'

### What does that mean? Let me be clear.

First, at Impact, we don't have relationships with anyone because we receive money, referral fee, kickbacks from our vendor partners.

**What we receive is INCREDIBLE service for our clients.**

When our clients water heater busts, or recently we were on a home inspection with one of the inspectors that our clients use he said to us, 'Hey I don't have any water in my house, I think my well pump is shot, who is the plumber you use?'

Keep in mind that this inspector LITERALLY works with hundreds of agents locally. He, better than most, 'know the game' and that he knows how Impact works and if we refer someone in our 'Vendor Network' to anyone that we do it for one of 2 reasons: They are really good at what they do... and... they take excellent care of our clients.

We gladly referred Shelton Plumbing to our inspector and told him to make sure when you call that you tell them that Impact referred you.

When we circled back a couple of days later to check on things our Inspector couldn't thank us ENOUGH because Shelton

diagnosed the problem – it ended up being a simple fix – and he took care of the issue seamlessly.

### Did we get anything out of this?

Nope. But our Vendor Client got some business. And our friend got EXCELLENT service and results.

Know that at Impact, we are in this for the long game, and while it might be nice to get a few hundred dollars from a Stager for referring a client we would MUCH RATHER have a happy client/ a raving fan that in the long run will do business with us again AND will happily refer business to us.

### And we do the opposite of most...

In fact, instead of asking our Vendor Partners for 'things' we shower them with love and admiration. We recently hosted a Vendor Appreciation Party at our Westview office for our great Vendors. We had a lavish spread and a few cocktails for them, just as a Thank You for taking wonderful care of our clients.

As you read this, know that we appreciate YOU, whether you are a vendor, a client/friend that our #ImpactFamily loves how you support us and all that goes on in our crazy real estate world.



# IMPACT MARYLAND MONTHLY

*with Eric Verdi*

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## **Testimonials from recent 'IMPACT Maryland Monthly' Members**

We LOVE our clients and work tirelessly to get Superior Results when you hire us. We realize that your home is your most important investment we treat the entire experience knowing that it is YOUR family and YOUR life that we are involved. We don't take this responsibility lightly. The following review is of one of our Partners and is taken off our Facebook Page. If we have worked with you, we'd love your feedback. [www.facebook.com/impactmarylandrealestate](http://www.facebook.com/impactmarylandrealestate)

- As first time home buyers, my husband and I had a fantastic experience with Stacy and Eric at Impact. They were really helpful and taught us a lot about homes and home ownership throughout the process. They were also really patient and never pushed us to make decisions we weren't fully comfortable with. Stacy and Eric recommended the best home inspectors and showed up at every step of the process to add their support. We felt like we could trust and count on them and we are VERY happy with our new home. –  
Uroog F

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