

# James Lane

— Real Estate —

Winter 2023

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AMIR KORANGY

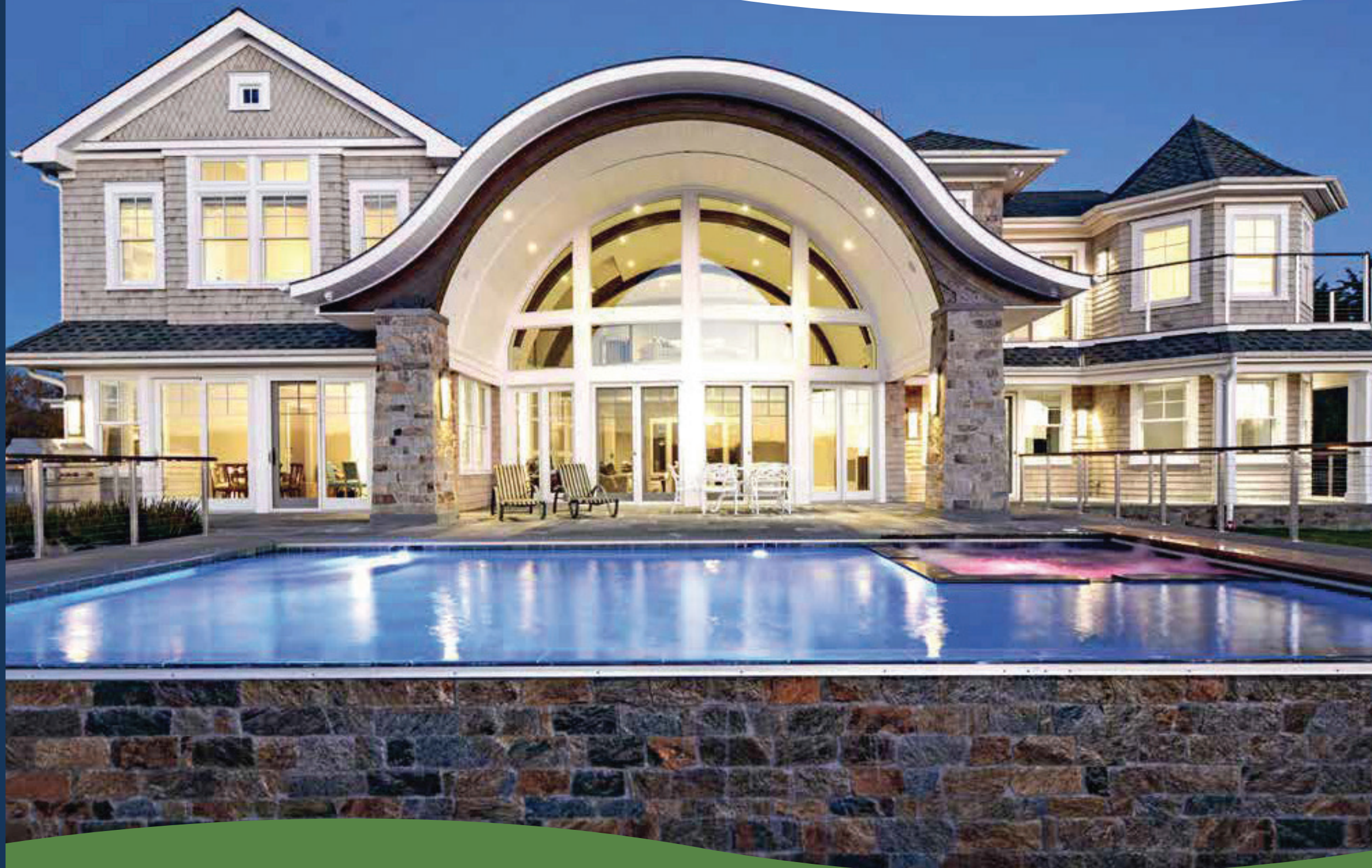
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# The Oakley-Leicht Team

## A Winning Formula In Partnership

By Ty Wenzel

**T**he Oakley-Leicht Team won't share their secrets for success, but we can almost see the materialization of the specific talents and knowledge that Patty Oakley and Brian Leicht bring to the table as a power team for Saunders & Associates. It's in the blending of their history. Leicht brings 30+ years of direct real estate sales experience to the table while Oakley's 18+ years as a high-ranking executive in the pharmaceutical industry, and her being privy to their sales and marketing methodologies, make for one powerful team. We asked them to elaborate on their partnership and their thoughts on the future of Hamptons real estate.

**When asked about teams in the Hamptons, your names come up often. Some words used to describe you are integrity, tech savvy, great marketers, and more. Why do you think your team is the best on the East End?**

**Patty Oakley:** Both of us bring over 30+ years of individual sales experience to our careers. We know how to sell and know what works and doesn't work. We are committed, support each other's ideas and value what we both bring to the table. We mutually respect each other and are in total sync with the A-Zs of our business and family life. We truly love what we do and find it very rewarding when we are able to find our clients and customers the right property for their needs. It means a lot to us that we are a very respected team among our peers. We are on it 100 percent and that matters! This all translates into success.

**Brian Leicht:** I think Patty and I bring an enormous amount of experience to the table. I have been selling Hamptons Real Estate for over 30 years now. While it is hard to comprehend where that time has gone, it has allowed me to develop a strong knowledge of how to manage many phases of a real estate transaction. Over that stretch of time it has been very beneficial to have developed strong relationships with people that are also connected to real estate. There are many moving parts of a transaction and having the forethought and experience is something you can only have with time. I believe it is paramount to work with a real estate team that has their client's best interest at hand and a team that has the tools to successfully navigate the complexities of a real estate transaction. The industry has certainly changed the way things are done especially with marketing and advertising. Most people start their search online. Patty and I have a strong online presence with different search engines, ads, and local advertising. Saunders also has a great marketing team that continues to impress with new ideas with a fresh approach to current advertising trends.

**How did you become a team? What do you both individually bring to it?**

**PO:** Brian was given a desk next to mine in the Southampton Village office. Having just moved over from another brokerage and seeing that I was busy he asked me if I needed any help. Feeling a bit overwhelmed and knowing that he was a strong broker, we started to help each other out and the rest is history.

We both bring much skill, experience and trust to our team. We literally work almost 24/7. Seriously, you can reach us up until midnight to 1 AM and then around 5 AM – but if you need us at 5 AM, call

Brian. I am the up-late one! Brian keeps spreadsheets for everything, so I am going to say he is super organized and always on time. I am the one who is running in 10 different directions, so being energetic may be how you would describe me. Collectively, our goal is the same.

**BL:** As Patty mentioned, we sat next to each other in the Saunders Southampton office and at some point started helping each other out with customers and appointments. We are now heading into the fifth year as a team, and I wouldn't have my business model any other way. Having a partner with the same work ethic, integrity and trust is priceless. Because this is a 24/7 business, it is equally comforting to know that our business can continue uninterrupted when one of us needs time off.

**Are you local to the East End? If not, how did you land here?**

**PO:** Yes, I am originally from St. James on the North Fork and summered most of my life at my family's bayfront summer home in Southold. I landed in the Hamptons when my husband and I were newlyweds and he joined a medical practice in Southampton. We have now been residents living in Water Mill for over 26 years.

**BL:** I have been living here full time for about 35 years now. As I am sure a lot of people who now call the Hamptons home, I would visit and stay with family for the summer and fell in love with all that the East End of Long Island has to offer. I eventually met my wife and live here full time.

**What were your backgrounds before entering the luxury real estate market?**

**PO:** I was offered a sales position job straight out of college with Glaxo Smith Kline Pharmaceuticals. I spent over 18 years with them and rose to the senior executive level.

**BL:** I went to school for landscape design and architecture and eventually started a landscape company up the island that quickly accelerated to operating a larger business employing about 15 people. It was years later that my focus returned to the Hamptons with a complete change of career and ultimately into real estate.

**Are you keeping some of the methodologies you used to get through 2020-2021 going forward, and if so, what are they?**

**PO:** Our business became pretty crazy during the Pandemic. The last couple of years have been very busy for us. Unlike many agents, 2021 and 2022 were two super strong years for us. Looking back, I cannot say we really did anything different other than not going to the office as much as we had in the past. With life now turning back to a form of normalcy, we are starting to spend more time back in the office. It is nice to see our fellow colleagues and brain storm with other talented agents.

**BL:** I would never have been able to predict the affect the pandemic was going to have on our business here. I was planning to hunker down, ride it out, and the complete opposite happened. Our business went from a crazy rental market to a crazy sales market. Since 2019 it has been exciting, challenging, and tiring all at the same time. Our methods and business



Photo courtesy Saunders & Associates

points have pretty much stayed the same throughout. Our attention to our clients and customers has always been paramount during the pandemic and will continue to be a large part of our business model.

**You've closed an amazing amount of homes!**

**BL:** As the market moved from a busy rental market to a busy sales market, we have been very fortunate to close on a large number of homes. 2020 was a terrific year and we have continued to maintain the same number of transactions throughout this year.

**PO:** We have a number of new properties coming to the market in 2023 and are looking forward to another great year.

**With all the talk about recession and interest rates having gone up so dramatically, how do you think this will affect our region? Or does it not matter that much in a luxury market?**

**PO:** Southampton inventory remains low but we are seeing new listings come to market every day. Correct pricing is key now, more than ever. The market is efficient. It is very simple: if you are priced right, you will sell. This is nothing new but something we forgot when Covid hit and the market went out of control. Many homeowners listed their houses over the last six to eight months with prices that are too strong. For those that have not sold it is a clear indication to them that they need to reassess their price and goal for their property. Some buyers have recently put a pause on their purchase with the rise in interest rates and are going to rent this summer with hopes of purchasing in 2024. While others have cash aside, waiting for the right fit. Historically, the Hamptons market has always been a solid place to invest while diversifying one's portfolio. There is no longer a sense of urgency because people are settling back into their lives as they were before Covid. There seems to be a return to normalcy. We have definitely seen an earlier uptake of rentals for the summer of 2023. July seems to be the most popular month while August has been committed to European travel. We do expect 2023 to be busy and already have buyers and sellers lined up to join into the luxury market here in the Hamptons.

**BL:** There is always a lot of talk about the potential negative affect that higher interest rates and the over-all health of the economy has on our market, but I don't really think it hits too hard in this luxury market. There are many buyers still looking to purchase. The inventory supply is really the key factor right now. It is still too early to tell how the over-all market will adjust, and it might take the first quarter for things to shake out to give us a better sense of direction. We are very optimistic and looking forward to work-

ing with our clients in 2023.

**Why Saunders? What makes them the best agency for your team?**

**PO:** Having worked for a corporation for so many years, I came to Saunders to truly be a part of a "Higher Form of Realty." I realized that what mattered to me was representing a firm that knows who I am and supports my efforts. Anyone can get their real estate license and try to sell and list a home. But what matters is your support system to achieve that goal. Andrew and Colleen Saunders are very approachable and truly have the agents best interest and needs in mind. We work for the only firm that has an award winning in-house marketing team. Our admins are here to help do paperwork, such as prepare listing agreements and leases. Legal counsel is able to answer legal questions and get answers to questions about property issues, zoning, etc... It is all about doing what is best to help the agent set up for successfully representing clients.

**BL:** The beginning roots of my real estate career began when there were more "boutique" style real estate firms in the Hamptons. Companies that had owners present and working closely with a "hands on" approach that help with agents and staff. Companies like Agawam Realty, Cook Pony Farm, and Allen Schneider. All of those agencies are long gone now, and combined into large corporate owned entities, except for Saunders & Associates. Andrew and Colleen Saunders have built and created a company with that "hands on" approach. There is a tremendous support team to help with all the agent's needs, from the administrative staff, the marketing team, advertising, to legal counsel. It makes all the difference in the world to have the support and tools available so that we, as real estate agents, can provide the very best for our customers and clients.

**What marketing strategies do you feel is most successful in landing new exclusives or selling the homes?**

**PO:** As I am sure you know, our business is super competitive. We prepare a lot for our potential client meetings.

**BL:** One thing we do not do is share our strategies for success.

**Where would you say is the part of the East End that you are super specialized in?**

**PO:** We represent all areas of the East End — North and South Forks, but if we had to pick an area, I would say Southampton and Southampton Village are the areas we are most specialized in.

**BL:** After all this time, I have collected a wealth of knowledge and real estate history for all of the hamlets and towns

from Westhampton to Montauk. Patty and I have the ability to work with anyone looking to do business in the Hamptons, and Saunders has offices to support our needs and the needs of our customers in all those locations.

**Are there any homes that you are particularly proud of selling?**

**PO:** So many people have touched our lives over the last five years that we have been together as a team. I am proud every time we sell a home. Big or small, each property is special, because of the client and customer we have represented.

**BL:** I am not sure if there is one home that really stands out. I think every home that we have sold brings a certain connection with it and the people that we get involved with during the sale. We have developed a lot of standing relationships with those people which has also made up a big part of our continued success and business.

**What do you love about the Hamptons?**

**PO:** I love the charm and quaintness of the villages along with the beach town vibes, the beauty of the various styles of homes, easy access to the ocean beaches, and the vast cuisine choices. The people are friendly and very caring. I truly feel like part of the community.

**BL:** My new thing is to joke about the villages that we drive through, whether its Sag Harbor, Southampton, Bridgehampton, East Hampton... or any one of the other beautiful little villages, and say "gosh, wouldn't this be a great place to live?" We are so blessed to be able to live here and sometimes it is taken for granted. What's not to love, from the ocean and bay beaches to the open farmland, it's all beautiful.

**What do you do for fun when you're not working? Is there any downtime?**

**PO:** I try to take some time for myself. This year I am taking at least 45 minutes each day for me! I love spending time with my family, they are number one! Cooking large family dinners when they are home from school are special. Taking walks to the ocean is something I look forward to every day. My husband and kids are all strong golfers and I am the weakest link by far. So this year I am committed to my golf game and plan to take more lessons.

**BL:** My downtime is going to be more centered around my grandkids now. I am very excited to be able to spend as much time as possible with them. I am also hoping to spend more time working on my New Year's goal of getting back to the gym and focusing a little attention to myself.



Photo courtesy The Real Deal

# Amir Korangy

## Is The Real Deal, Literally

By Ty Wenzel

As the publisher of The Real Deal, Amir Korangy is the mastermind behind creating what is thought of as the bible of real estate coverage. With tectonic shifts in the market that transpired during the pandemic and its aftermath, we spoke with him to gauge his thoughts on the East End market and how he sees our standing.

**Congratulations on building something that the sector**

**really needed. How and why did you start the The Real Deal publication in 2003?**

This year marks our 20-year anniversary, and since the beginning our motto at The Real Deal has always been “readers first,” so thank you for reading. There are several answers to why I started the company. One of them was that I couldn’t find a job after the tech crash. I was working for Yahoo!, when Yahoo! was the Google of the world; another reason was because there

was a clear void in the market for intelligent real estate news, which seemed like a good opportunity to me since real estate is the largest asset class in the world. Real estate, no matter how large, is always local. We always believed that covering the markets locally is where our value comes in and sets us apart.

**Were you in real estate yourself?**

I was in Brooklyn and flipping small apartments and buildings for myself. I realized real estate is what the city revolves around. The way politics runs D.C., and Hollywood runs LA. Real estate is the underlying industry that runs all major cities. Politics and Hollywood had a dozen news outlets covering it and real estate had a bunch of fluff. I thought it deserved a serious news outlet and thankfully I was right.

**Can you tell us more about The Real Deal Annual Forum?**

When you talk to people in front of an audience there is a rawness and honesty to it that you can never get in any other form of engagement. The idea behind the forum was to get the biggest names in

the industry to come on stage and explain their thinking, unedited to a live audience. Each year it got bigger and now we have over 10,000 people showing up to hear what we are asking the newsmakers live.

**We are a very seasonal and luxury sector of real estate that was deluged during the pandemic, and it has altered a lot of the ways we work and our numbers. Although we see the data inching back toward 2019 numbers and with sparse inventory, what do you see happening for the East End of Long Island for 2023?**

Up or down, there are certain markets that will always endure, and the East End of Long Island is one of them. The pandemic has made it more of a permanent choice for a lot of people and the great testament to its endurance was that when the city came back to life, a lot of people chose to remain out east.

**Is this consistent for other resort areas?**

The East End is not reliant on the resort crowd, so I would consider it to be different.

**Do you have insights for rentals as well?**

I have insights on everything real estate and it’s all in TheRealDeal.com.

**You are involved in philanthropy, which we really appreciate in thought leaders. Can you tell us what you champion and why?**

I think education should be the great equalizer for children, it shouldn’t matter who your parents are. All kids deserve a worthy education. So working with schools is something we take pride in as a company. We also allow our employees to pick out causes we can support. However, I think just writing a check, while appreciated, is not true charity. True charity is your effort.

**What do you do in your downtime when you’re not leading the most important real estate publication in the world? Is there such a thing?**

Playing the piano and singing is the most meditative thing I do and I love the sound of my own voice, to a fault. I will attend any party in any part of town that’s willing to hear me play and sing.

# Todd Bourgard

## Tapped For CEO Of Long Island At Douglas Elliman

Douglas Elliman Realty announced that it has promoted its Senior Executive Regional Manager of Sales for Hamptons and North Fork, Todd Bourgard, to Chief Executive Officer of Long Island, Hamptons, and North Fork, effective immediately. In his new role, Bourgard will oversee operations throughout the entire Long Island region, totaling 36 Elliman offices and over 2,000 real estate agents located throughout Nassau and Suffolk counties, the Hamptons and the North

Fork, and Bayside, Queens.

Additionally, Melody Newberry, who has served under Bourgard as VP of Operations, Hamptons and North Fork, will also be promoted to VP of Operations, Long Island, Hamptons, and North Fork. Bourgard’s predecessor, Ann Conroy, has been appointed Chairwoman of Douglas Elliman Long Island.

“Stepping into this role is the biggest honor of my career,” said Bourgard. “The

experience of working alongside the best managers, agents, and staff in the business is so rewarding and a true privilege. I’m inspired every day by the talent in this region, the power of the Douglas Elliman brand, the strength of our operations, technology initiatives and growth efforts, and our incredible executive leadership.”

“Todd has long been an integral member of the Douglas Elliman senior leadership team, spurring our tremendous growth in the Hamptons and on the North Fork, recruiting many new top-performing agents, while retaining the great talent we have attracted over the years,” said Howard M. Lorber, Executive Chairman of Douglas Elliman.

Throughout his 25-year career in real estate, Bourgard has earned a reputation as a diligent and ethical agent and manager with an innate ability to lead, motivate, and inspire his team. After obtaining his Real Estate license in 1997, Bourgard quickly became one of the top realtors in the Hampton Bays area. His tireless, principled approach, coupled with a genuine love for his work, garnered him “Top



Photo courtesy Douglas Elliman

Producer” status over the next 17 years.

“A hands-on leader with a tireless work ethic, Todd is a consummate professional, a positive force, and a great friend,” said Scott Durkin, Chief Executive Officer of Douglas Elliman.

With over 40 years in the residential real

estate business, Conroy has worked diligently as CEO of Douglas Elliman Long Island.

“A strong and inspiring leader, Ann has been instrumental in making Douglas Elliman the number one brokerage on Long Island year after year, championing our agents, and elevating our stature in the region,” said Lorber.



# Real Estate Confab

## LET'S TALK 2023 RENTALS!

*Abbb Summer! It's one of the major reasons why we make the East End our home. The beaches, the sunsets, alfresco dining, the gardens, boating, and surfing. The experience is nothing short of epic and it's what keeps us going as we get through the doldrums of winter. It's freezing outside, the trees are naked as their branches sway and crash in the frigid wind — but the traffic is picking up, which means one thing: the Hamptons summer rental season is underway.*

### Dana Trotter, Sotheby's International Realty

The holidays are over so summer rental shopping is very active in the Hamptons. While the inventory may be fairly robust now, the best houses rent early, so locking in your summer rental now is highly advised.

### Judi Desiderio, Town & Country Real Estate

Rentals and sales are normally inversely related, so we anticipate a very good rental season since in the second half of 2022 home sales were off. All Town & Country offices have been negotiating leases since the start of this year and the momentum has continued to grow.

### Matthew Breitenbach, Breitenbach Advisory Team, Compass

Rentals are definitely picking up. I feel rentals are always there no matter the market conditions. Despite headwinds economically in the world, the demand for Hamptons real estate is 5x pre-Covid levels and that is not changing. The issue beyond economic headwinds has been pricing from sellers and landlords that is overly aspirational and not rooted in reality.

### Jake Sinacori, Nest Seekers International

The rental market has started to pick up. We are in an A-class market so no matter what, there will always be a demand for our product — the Hamptons is always in.

### Kevin Flaherty, Compass

We're off to somewhat of a slow start in the rental season, but I believe things will turn for the better. It's possible that the worst is behind us and Q4 of 2022 was the bottom of the real estate market cycle. I'm predicting prices will come

down slightly and activity will pick up throughout the season, which should stabilize things. Landlords should be open to offers and negotiate early in the season. The Hamptons will do its thing like it does every year.

### Patrick McLaughlin, Douglas Elliman

We've had activity so far for the rentals, but I don't think we'll really have a sense of the market conditions until a few weeks after Presidents Day weekend. In my experience, that's when things really start to heat up with renters beginning their search. I will say, I don't think we'll see "Covid pricing" and things will likely be a little softer now that folks are traveling again.

### Angela Boyer-Stump, Sotheby's International Real Estate

Rentals are just starting to pick up. New Yorkers seem to be waiting a bit as they wait to hear about possible five day work weeks, while out of state and foreign tenants are gobbling the inventory! I predict that inventory will be thin as we start the season and that we will see more Texans and Floridians flocking to the Hamptons for the summer. We are seeing landlords willing to negotiate to secure leases early, making tenants and landlords happy. Summer 2023 promises to be vibrant and fabulous.

### Peter McCracken, The Corcoran Group

January is a relatively busy month for rentals. This is when they really start to pick up. If the weather is looking to be a great weekend, I see a tremendous amount of people coming out from the city to look around for the perfect rental. Most want to get ahead of the game and get the best house. For me, I am already ahead of last season, which was very slow for rentals. I think most people traveled abroad and did not rent last year.

### Deborah Srb, Sotheby's International Realty

This year prospective renters will have plenty of options as the pandemic created a surge in home buying and those homeowners now are looking to capitalize on their investments. With more supply, I see homeowners are being forced to reduce prices to pre-pandemic pricing in order to ensure their homes get rented. I see the demand is same as always because the Hamptons is special and nothing has

changed as far as desire to be here.

### Bonita DeWolf, The Corcoran Group

The rentals started slowly for me about a month ago and now I have quite a few tenants looking and pinning down rentals. I think it will be a very good season if the landlords are flexible on terms and pricing. A lot of tenants don't want the full season this year as they want to spend time somewhere else now that the world has opened up again. In terms of pricing I think landlords who are realistic instead of aspirational, will do well.

### Gerry Stilwell, Town & Country Real Estate

The rental market got off to a slow start but we are seeing momentum and activity is definitely picking up. I'm very optimistic that the 2023 season will be as robust as ever. Who doesn't want to be in the Hampton in the summer?

## LET'S TALK 2023 MARKET PREDICTIONS!

*The dreary news of interest hikes and our regions' lack of inventory has many nervous moving into 2023. Our question is, "does the doom and gloom news affect the luxury real estate market in the Hamptons? What are your predictions?"*

### Susan Breitenbach, The Corcoran Group

In all the 30 years I have consistently been a top broker in the Hamptons, our real estate market has always set itself apart from most of the country. 2023 I think will be a good time to buy and the market will be stable. Although there are some fluctuation and quiet times, especially after 9/11 and 2008 stock market crash, it always bounces back and has never been totally effected by interest rates. Our real estate market doesn't typically follow national trends.

### James Keogh, The Atlantic Team At Douglas Elliman

I believe we will continue to see increases in the interest rates for the first half of 2023. Unless inflation is tamed or the effects of a recession take hold. However, just like 2009, our market will be insulated from major impact. Our luxury market is not dependent on mortgages like many other markets. Also, we have three major factors holding up prices. The floor in the market by way of the Community Preservation Fund (CPF), which is more

flush with cash than ever before. The second is a lack of inventory. The Hamptons is now "year round" and many people are reliant on their Hamptons home like never before. Finally, rentals often go up as home sales slow down. Homeowners in the Hamptons (like 2009) can rent their homes as a fall back plan and hold instead of selling and driving numbers lower.

### Jackie Lowey, Saunders & Associates

The market continues to hum along, albeit not at the frenzied pace we saw during the height of the pandemic. There is a real dearth of inventory and a considerable disconnect between buyer and seller expectations, which both are drags on the market. Nevertheless, deals are getting done. I don't see interest rates as being the prime driver in our market. It really comes down to inventory and pricing. Well-priced turnkey homes are still flying off the shelf. There is definitely a slower market for homes which need work.

### Rich Dec, The Corcoran Group

There are buyers who are still eager to purchase a Hamptons home, but some prefer waiting for more inventory or until rates come down. Even though new inventory is trickling in, I do think it will take a few years to get back to the pre-pandemic inventory levels. Overall, buyer activity has declined however there are still active buyers ready, willing, and able to make a move on homes \$1.5M or less. As far as the higher end markets, we'll probably continue to see some buyer apprehension there until we get a clearer picture of the overall economy.

### Sara Goldfarb, Official Partners

Interest rates will still impact volume of trades, but with tight supply, we will continue to see "normal" velocity... We're stabilizing. The headlines across the nation will also impact the perception of the market, however, smart buyers will understand that the Hamptons is a micro-market (not macro), and will see the opportunity with sellers willing to negotiate.

### Randi Ball, The Corcoran Group

Will 2023 be another year of hearing the phrase "lack of inventory" in the luxury market? So far, it looks like inventory will once again be more of an issue in my market than the fluctuations of interest rates. I was involved in mostly cash deals

towards the second half of 2022 and I am experiencing the same so far in my 2023 first quarter deals. Hamptons real estate is simply a great financial and lifestyle investment that never disappoints. I am so ready to work hard and continue to please my clients and customers in the New Year ahead.

### Susan Harrison, Compass

I think we will see a "reset" of expectations as 2023 begins. Many buyers were on hold at the end of 2022 in a wait and see moment. The Fed has already indicated that interest rate hikes will slow down and we are already starting to see inflation tapering off. For cash buyers this is an excellent time to try and negotiate. For the last two years, given the frenetic market state, there was hardly any room for negotiation. Now, with a reset of expectations of both buyer and seller, we will start to see more deals being done.

### Mary Slattery, The Corcoran Group

In certain segments of our market, interest rates can certainly affect activity. But overall, due to the uniqueness of the Hamptons and an increasing desire by buyers to own a piece of our paradise, I think we will still see higher pricing and less time on market as we did in the pandemic years. We are still at very low inventory so sellers can capitalize on that and very qualified buyers can and will drive sales.

### Hal Zwick, Compass

I am a commercial specialist, and while we still see strong interest in most categories — hospitality, restaurants, commercial/ industrial, and retail — we are witnessing a changing marketplace. The bidding wars of the last two years are less, and offering prices are lower based on the rising interest rates. However, our savvy commercial clients see beyond 2023. They are optimistic that the current and coming economic downturn will be short-lived and are confident about a more robust economy in 2024 before the election.

### Jackie Dunphy, The Corcoran Group

Investors are not going to make the same kind of wild money they did during the pandemic, especially in the financial market. They are going to take any new income and invest it in real estate, which is always the safest bet long-term. As for interest rates — mortgage broker Melissa Cohn of Raveis keeps telling me: you date the rate and marry the house.

Photos courtesy each brokerage, Lena Yarmenbura, Ty Wenzel, Donna Newman



Photos by Julie Soefer

# Hilary Swank's Telluride Residence

## A Lesson In Lifestyle Design

By Ty Wenzel



Mark Zeff, Hamptons interior designer, was asked about developments that came to life during or because of the global pandemic — he did not disappoint. He shared his Telluride project which is the home of actress Hilary Swank, and husband, Philip Schneider, a social venture entrepreneur. They live in the home with their many dogs and announced in October that they are expecting twins.

“The most important new trend that was accelerated by the pandemic was for people to leave the crowded urban cities and move into the country side. Either the suburbs or really into the wilderness,” he explained. “I worked with Hilary Swank on such a project of hers. She and her husband decided to leave Los Angeles and move full time to Telluride and we worked together on their new home in the mountains.”

He feels many of his clients had a need to reinvent the way they live into building new lifestyles and even building new homes that create a new way of looking at everything. “Modern style and the introduction of the ‘passive home’ as well as being more thoughtful about where and how one lives,” he elaborated further.

These changes include unusual styles and colors that are a result of this need for his clients to reinvent themselves all over again. In particular, modern kitchen concepts and indoor-outdoor living are important style bookends. Biophilic design, which is the integration of nature into the interior environment, also gained popularity in the post-pandemic world. This movement emphasizes creating spaces that are both aesthetically stunning while promoting our well-being. As we bring nature inside, we create more calming environments that aid in build-



ing up our own mental health wellness. Globally, people continue to bring meditation and mindfulness into their lives as a necessary practice.

Homebound lives brought a harrowing demand for optimizing our outdoor living spaces and in many cases combining indoor and outdoor living on our properties. Within this need, the use of natural materials included local stones and wood. Zeff said, “The use of local

stone from the land that Swank owned is an example of the use of materials combined together in order to create a warm and comfortable home whilst still being contemporary.”

He found that the interiors feel modern while the elements of traditional natural materials being used to build and decorate speak to a new modern aesthetic. “This new direction seems to work well as it can be used anywhere.

In the Hamptons, this formula seems to work for my clients as well.”

Electric vehicles are everywhere to Zeff's delight. He said they are in every garage now from coast-to-coast with various car brands finally joining this important movement. “This brave new-world toy has taken off with car brands embracing this idea with freshly designed cars that are so inspiring,” he said. “Bye bye Tesla!”

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CURATED BY PATON MILLER  
ON VIEW THROUGH APRIL 29

**EAST END COLLECTED** returns for Southampton Arts Center's 10th Anniversary. Conceived and curated by Paton Miller, this exhibition reflects the artist's vision of the East End as an ideal environment to create work. In this seventh iteration of the popular exhibition, Miller continues to find new artists and allows them to exhibit their work and become part of the illustrious history of artists in the Hamptons.

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