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magazine™



Pam Gentry  
broker/agent of the month

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# Pam Gentry

by Beth Wadell



broker/agent  
of the month

On the Fourth of July, Pam hires the Sandia High School Band to put up thousands of American flags out on residents lawns so they wake up to rows of waving red white and blue.



Ask an outsider about the Uptown section of Albuquerque and they may not even be able to find it on the map, but people who live there know that the area is a gem. A real community, it's the kind of place where neighbors get together for holiday parties and wave flags on the Fourth of July. To get a better taste of the neighborhood, the first person you need to visit is the Uptown specialist, Pam Gentry of RE/MAX Masters. For Pam, Uptown isn't just a place to do business—it's also the place she calls home.

A real estate professional for over 30 years, Pam may be unique among top agents in that 80 percent of her business takes place within a five-mile radius of her home. In some parts of the city her name may not ring a bell, but in this area of young families and seniors, everybody knows Pam.

"Most other agents are surprised to hear that I handle such a small area, but I get to be a part of life for my neighbors and the parents of my kids' friends," she says. Thanks to her decades of experience as both a resident and as a real estate agent, she has an in-depth knowledge of every street in the neighborhood.

This area means a lot to Pam. The child of an Air Force father, she grew up in far off places like Panama and Japan, attending a total of nine schools by the time she graduated high school. But when her father retired in 1967, Uptown Albuquerque was where her parents bought a house—finally a stable home. In the 40 years since, Pam has never wanted to leave.

Today, her mother still lives in the family home and Pam and her husband, Carl, settled here to raise their three girls. Daughters

Shannon and Kendra graduated from Pam's alma mater, Sandia High School, and Caitlin is a senior there right now.

"As the city grows and expands outwards, a lot of people in new developments have to commute 45 minutes or more, but here we are just 10 or 15 minutes away from the University or downtown. It's a good quality of life," she says.

When it comes time to buy or sell, most residents talk to Pam. The only real estate agent with a boutique business specializing in Uptown, she has a lot to offer. In fact, her role goes way beyond selling homes.

Pam is here 365 days of the year serving as an information source and bringing the community together. On the Fourth of July, Pam hires the Sandia High School Band to put up thousands of American flags out on





Today Pam is at a new stage in her life and career. She now has the time to expand her business because her own children are growing up.

residents' lawns so they wake up to rows of waving red, white, and blue. On Halloween, she has hosted a costume contest and pumpkin carving contest for local kids at one of the parks. Year round, she sends out a newsletter with news about the neighborhoods, her favorite recipes, and updates on the local real estate market. It is very personal and very local, and that's what people love.

"When I meet new clients for the first time they usually tell me that they feel they already know me because they've been seeing my real estate signs and reading my newsletter for years," Pam says. Most tell her that they had always known that whenever they did move, they would call on Pam, the Uptown specialist. In fact, one elderly local woman even included in her will that when her house was sold, Pam should be the real estate professional. "I had never even met her before, so I really felt honored that she would trust me like that," Pam says.

Most of the homes in the Uptown area were built 30 to 50 years ago in several different subdivisions. Many of the original owners have stayed in their homes for their entire adult lives and are only now beginning to sell. For most seniors and their families, selling is a difficult process and helping them through it is a big part of Pam's job.

"It's a big transition to leave a home where you have 40 years of memories, especially when you are giving up part of your independence," Pam explains. "I talk with seniors throughout the process. It's not a

quick decision—sometimes it takes years. But when they're finally ready, I'm still there."

Pam tells her senior clients that the most important part of the decision is for the seniors to decide where to go next. "We can't talk about selling until they know exactly where they want to live," she points out. Pam helps by helping them look clearly at all of the options, whether it be a smaller house, a retirement apartment, or living with family. She has been known to take them to visit different places, and waits until they find something right. "Once they feel they'll be comfortable in the new place it's easier to start thinking about giving up the old place," she says. "I really feel like I'm helping them at this stage of their lives. It's never easy, but I can make it easier and that is really rewarding."

Wanting to better serve her senior clients, Pam earned the Seniors Real Estate Specialist (SRES) designation from the National Association of REALTORS®, something that very few real estate professionals in the city can claim. Yet as Pam explains, what she learned about seniors also helps her communication with all ages. "You need to be patient and not put pressure on people. It's essential for seniors, but I've found people of every generation appreciate it too," she says.

In addition to the SRES designation, Pam has also earned the Graduate, REALTOR® Institute (GRI) designation then went on to earn the Certified Residential Specialist (CRS) designation in 1986. Since then, she

has continued to take courses to keep the designation active and is proud of the fact that less than 5 percent of real estate professionals have achieved the CRS designation. In Pam's words, "these aren't just arbitrary letters after our names—they show that someone has longevity, education, and a commitment to the profession."

Pam's rapport with seniors and others comes from being the antithesis of the pushy sales personality. Soft-spoken and low-key, she approaches people as a friend first and real estate agent second. She eagerly takes the time to advise first-time buyers or hesitant seniors, looking out for their own best interest even when that means waiting a few years to buy or sell. "I approach things not from the sales perspective but from the prospective of how I like to be treated," Pam says.

When she was growing up, Pam was a shy girl who could never have imagined herself talking to strangers all day long, much less handling a successful real estate career. "Even today my social life consists mostly of having our small group of close friends join us on the patio in our own backyard—that is our idea of a great party!"

Despite her shyness, young Pam was also hardworking and eager to learn new things. At the age of 19 she started as a desk clerk at the Albuquerque Ramada Inn, moved up through the ranks and within two years she was promoted to director of sales! "I was always looking over people's shoulders to see how they did their job and when they left I was often picked to replace them," she





# Pam Gentry

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recalls. "I liked to try new challenges and even though I hated talking to strangers I eventually learned that I would survive and I became more confident. If you do something you fear enough, it gets easier."

By the age of 21 Pam had decided that the hotel industry wasn't really her future, and on the advice of her father and a family friend she earned her real estate license in 1976. Although some clients hesitated to work with someone who looked like a kid, she had a lot of success early on with young, first-time buyers who liked working with someone their age.

As time went on, Pam stayed in business through the market highs and lows, earning a steady following. "When I had my own children I realized that this is can be a very mommy-friendly career and I never wanted to do anything else," she says. Over the years, she positioned herself as a specialist in selling the homes of popular builder Mossman-Gladden Homes and then in the rest of the Uptown region. "Other agents are surprised that I limit myself to such a small area, but it has improved both the quality of my life and my business," she says.

In the year 2000 Pam joined the RE/MAX organization because of its commitment to being a real estate company built by top

producing real estate professionals for top producing real estate professionals. "I have never been one to change companies often but after seeing what RE/MAX had to offer, I knew that they were the company for me and I made the switch," she explains.

Uptown is near the Air Force Base, and Pam is a favorite with military buyers. Thanks to her own family background in the Air Force she understands the system. Just as important, she knows what it is like to have to pack everything up and move to a new place over and over again.

Pam's childhood experiences help with non-military families, too. Pam explains, "When parents are worried about how their kids will adjust to a move, whether it's to another state or across town, I reassure them by telling them about how it was for me." When Pam's parents would announce that they were moving again, she would be devastated at first. After a month in the new home, however, she would have found new friends and be fine. "Kids are adaptable, they can adjust," she believes. "In fact, getting used to new places can be really good for them."

Today, Pam is at a new stage in her life and career. She now has the time to expand her business because her own children are

growing up. The oldest, Shannon, works at the University of New Mexico as an advisor, while middle daughter Kendra is a freshman at CNM. Caitlin will graduate from Sandia High this spring and plans to spend the summer volunteering in Latin America before beginning her studies at UNM. Taking a special mom and daughter graduation trip has become a family tradition, and Pam is looking forward to traveling with Caitlin. She also wants to continue to travel with her husband and daughters to some exciting places in the world. All of these stories and more are familiar to Pam's Uptown neighbors who follow the family's developments through her newsletter.

The Uptown neighborhood is changing, too. Downtown has experienced an upsurge in development and that new energy has spread Uptown. Driving through the streets one can feel that feeling of permanence and community that comes from a place where generations of kids have grown up and parents still remember the old days. And as these original owners gradually move on, young couples have found that it is an affordable place to raise their own families. Through all the changes that go on, Pam Gentry will be there, day in and day out, helping Uptown neighbors make the right decisions about their homes. ★