

WHEN I COMPLETE THE DAY ON JULY 23, 2009 I WILL HAVE SERVED 20 YEARS WORKING at WEST USA REALTY for CLAY FOUTS, THE BEST BOSS I HAVE EVER HAD WHOM I ALSO CONSIDER TO BE A FRIEND.

HOW DID I GET HERE? AN AGENT THAT I KNEW, WORKED FOR WEST USA AND CAJOLED ME INTO COMING OVER AND TALKING TO CLAY.

Well everyone knows that Clay is a great salesman and after an hour with him, I went across the street and got my license signed by my current Broker and brought it over to Clay to hire me. So, I went to work as a salesman and in about 3 months received my first paycheck. It was hard to believe that he would give it ALL to me but he did.

However, I personally was in the middle of a divorce, had lost my car and house and I was living with my daughter, Robyn. My son-in-law lent me a pick up truck to drive, that only ran part time. It was a roofing truck so it had racks on it and a loud muffler. The worst of times for me but I always had faith that I would come back and make it all good.

Soon I got an opportunity to go to work as a manager at a C-21 office and I took the job. Clay was on vacation and did not know that I had left. He got back and noticed that I was not there to do the sales meeting and found out that I had quit. So he called me to come and talk to him which I agreed to. At this meeting, he asked me how much I was being paid and then told me he would pay me a thousand a month more to come into management at WUSA. I had only been gone 9 days and **suddenly** I was back.

Then I was talking to Clay one day and telling him about the truck. He told me to go to Sunland Lincoln, pick out a new car and he would sign for it. Unbelievable—he hardly knows me! So I went and got a new Mercury Sable and he signed for it. Of course I paid for it and started the uphill battle to re-establish myself in more ways than one.

And then it came to be that I met Bernadette, who became the greatest major happening in my life and so we were married. (this proves my sales ability)

After 15 years with WUSA, Clay and Diana and Ron and Debbie wanted Bernadette and me to have dinner with them in a Cave Creek restaurant to celebrate this long association. It was a very memorable evening that included a fantastic bonus.

A couple of years later, Clay and Diana went to Hawaii and brought back 2 large pictures of the sunken battleship Arizona at Pearl Harbor for me. I have them on my wall in my Mesa office. I told him then, that I want to go there before I die and it is a mission of mine to go where World War II began on December 7, 1941 when I was 7 years old. Well, about a year later (No, not when I was 8) Ron came into my office to summon me to Clay's office to see Clay. He told me to get ready to go on vacation. Then Ron laid out 2 airline tickets to Honolulu with reservations for 1 week at the Hilton Waikiki Hotel! I lost my breath on that one--because of the love, caring and thoughtfulness of it all.

The vacation in Hawaii is not the defining reason that I love working at WUSA. It is because of the wonderful caring family atmosphere of the company and their way of doing business. WUSA has MANY employees as well as AGENTS that have been here for years and years who can also relate great stories about being here; and the caring thoughtful dedication of Clay and company. He is always thinking of the agents and trying to make life better for all. I am absolutely amazed at the number of agents that have been here longer than 10 years and many of them just as long as I have been here. Why? They must think as well of WUSA as I do!

I was telling one of the agents that I soon would be here 20 years in July and he said "Really? Well I have been here 20 years in August and it's a great place to be!" Then In 1990 we took over Tradewinds Realty in Mesa with over 200 agents and have a very large number of those agents still with us encompassing about 19 years.

And I recall another great event that happened in 1994 at a very large WUSA company Christmas party in a hotel ballroom. It was my 60th birthday and Clay gave me a birthday present. It was wrapped in a refrigerator box and presented to me. Probably a pony or something, so I unwrapped it---and out stepped 2 gorgeous belly dancers. They placed me on a chair and danced around me for about 15 minutes. Wow!

I have only touched on a few highlights of my 20 years at WUSA and I get really emotional as I write this short recollection of life at WUSA. There were many more events and I would have to write a book to cover it all.

Oh well, here I go for another 20 and yes Clay, my heart could stand another surprise like that, but only one dancer this time!
And, I'm going for 20 more with Bernadette too!

Bob Stephens
Managing Broker