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THE VILLE TEAM

It Takes a Ville to Build a Great Team

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**TOP 100
STANDINGS**

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▶ cover story
By Lauren Young
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THE VILLE TEAM



It Takes a Ville to Build a Great Team

Even though The Ville Team was only founded five years ago, they have survived all the market fluctuations due to the pandemic and faced other challenges while growing their team.

Longtime neighbors and family friends, Walt Burrell and Bridget Salela discovered they shared a vision for a redefined real estate firm; they joined forces to form a new kind of real estate team. Each brought their business know-how to the game: Walt is a past owner and operator of a California Closets franchise. Bridget previously owned UrGo2Girl, LLC, a personal assistance business. “It was just the two of us for about two years,” says Bridget. “Walt and I were able to make a name for ourselves quickly, getting on top agent lists and exceeding our goals.”

Usually, a team is run by one team leader, considered the “rainmaker,” who is the face of the team and gets credit for the sales and volume. Walt and Bridget had a different idea.

“I was on a rainmaker-style team. Although there might have been some positives, I only saw the negatives,” remembers Bridget. “It’s important to own your own sales and volume. This is an industry that is all about your sales history, reputation, and experience; you deserve to reap the benefits of what you have accomplished.”

“Every broker on our team specializes in a key part of real estate and earns the recognition for their successes,” adds Walt. “We have closed so many amazing deals and record-breaking sales, but what we like to brag about most are the brokers on our team and their individual achievements.” ...



Bridget Salela and Walt Burrell.

...

Nikki Genthner was the first broker to join the duo. She is also certified in home staging. From her first days, she worked closely with Bridget and Walt, creating her own sales style and making her mark in the industry. Nikki loves to introduce buyers to the Naperville area, where she has lived for many years.

“Being a part of this supportive team helped me find success from the start,” says Nikki. “The end goal of The Ville Team is to form a successful family of brokers who work together for one purpose: to provide exceptional customer service to our clients.”

From luxury properties and relocations to short sales and new construction, everyone contributes their expertise to form a true team approach and environment. Walt and Bridget are certified in luxury real estate through the Institute of Luxury Home Marketing and are members of Coldwell Banker Global Luxury. Team brokers Paul Martis, Tom Maschmeier, and Luke Salela hold credentials for commercial real estate.

“Paul and Tom have been respected leaders in commercial real estate for a long time,” says Walt. “Their experience in commercial properties adds another layer of service for our clients.”

“Personally, what intrigued me about The Ville Team, is the ‘bundled services’ approach to the business,” says Tom. “Considering the ever-changing dynamics of today’s real estate market and client requirements, it’s a real difference-maker. I have been given opportunities to assist our in-house clientele and many of our associate agents’ customers, too.”

Luke, the youngest broker at Coldwell Banker Realty Naperville and Bridget’s son, earned his real estate license at age eighteen. The Ville Team’s rental division is his brainchild. It adds more value to client relationships and offers the firm the opening to future home sales.

“The rental division has become extremely successful,” says Luke. “We frequently develop these relationships into first-time homebuyer and even investment property clients.”

Agents Amy Hill and Kristy Garcia contribute their extensive knowledge of the neighborhoods in Naperville and Plainfield. ...

“The team component allows for flexibility, and we know we can rely on and trust each other if something comes up. That benefits not only our clients, but also our families.”
– Bridget



The commercial team on The Ville Team.





The Ville Team and their families.



“It is so important to know [all about the areas] where we are selling,” says Bridget. “Our brokers are experts in the areas where they live and the surrounding communities.”

One year ago, the team brought Sylvia Gorden onboard. She rounds out the team by focusing on marketing full-time. Her attention to all things marketing and promoting the team’s listings frees up the brokers’ time, allowing them to give their full attention to their clients.

Looking forward, the challenges The Ville Team will face in the next five years might be different than the last five, but their goal is to see an even better outcome. They have big plans to grow the team into more areas of real estate while continuing to build a “true team” culture.

“Family is important as well as a good work-life balance,” says Bridget. “The team component allows for flexibility, and we know we can rely on and trust each other if something comes up. That benefits not only our clients but also our families.” The Ville Team celebrates their closing numbers with a family team picture and a get-together every January.

“Each year we take a trip as a team to celebrate our victories and show appreciation for each person,” says Walt. “Memories and bonds are formed that can never be taken away, and that makes us all so much stronger. Last year, we went to California to celebrate being in the Coldwell Banker President’s Club. We were the only team there that had everyone with us, including our marketing director. It was a fantastic week of celebrating everyone’s accomplishments and setting goals for the year to come. In October, we did it again in Cancún, Mexico!”