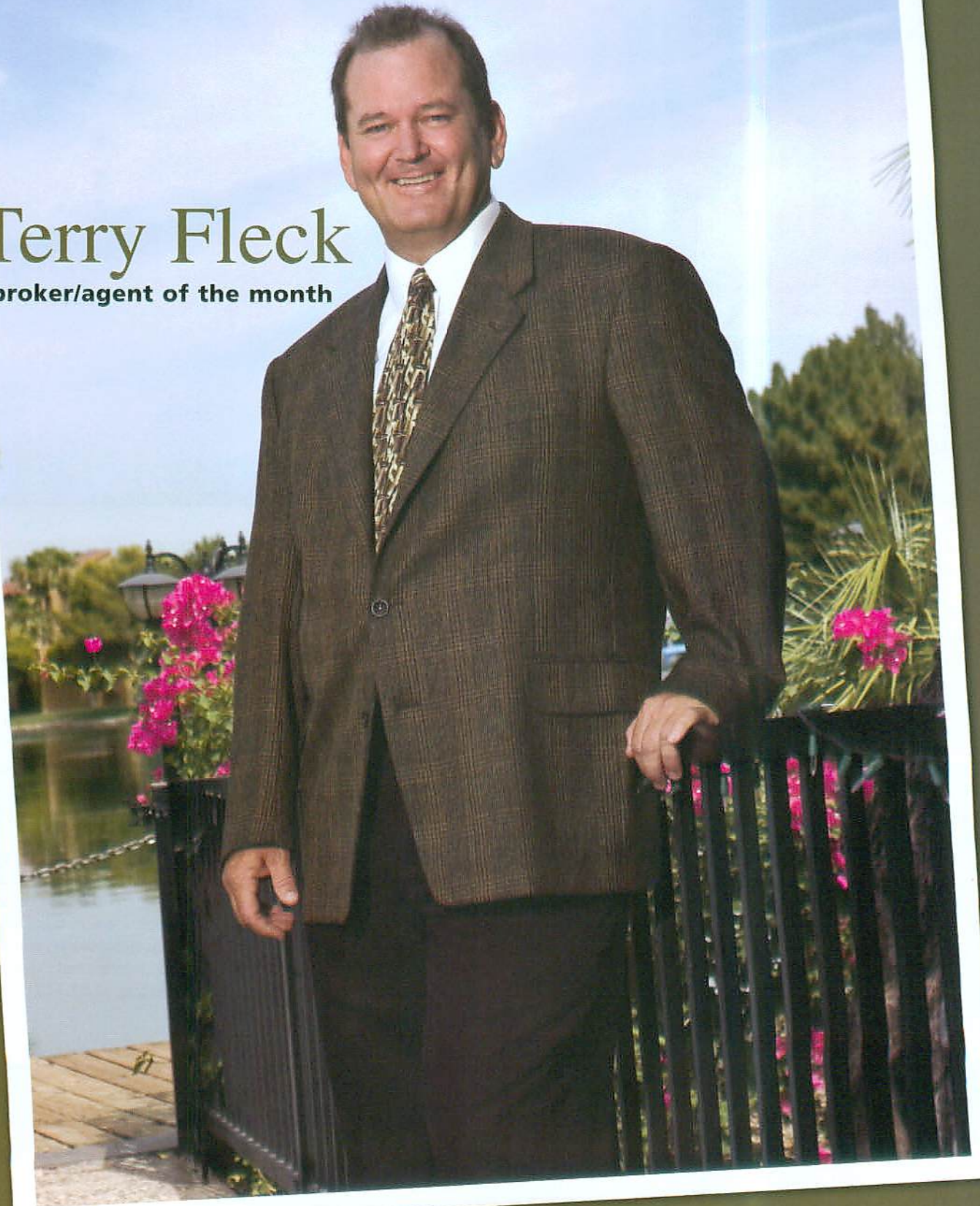


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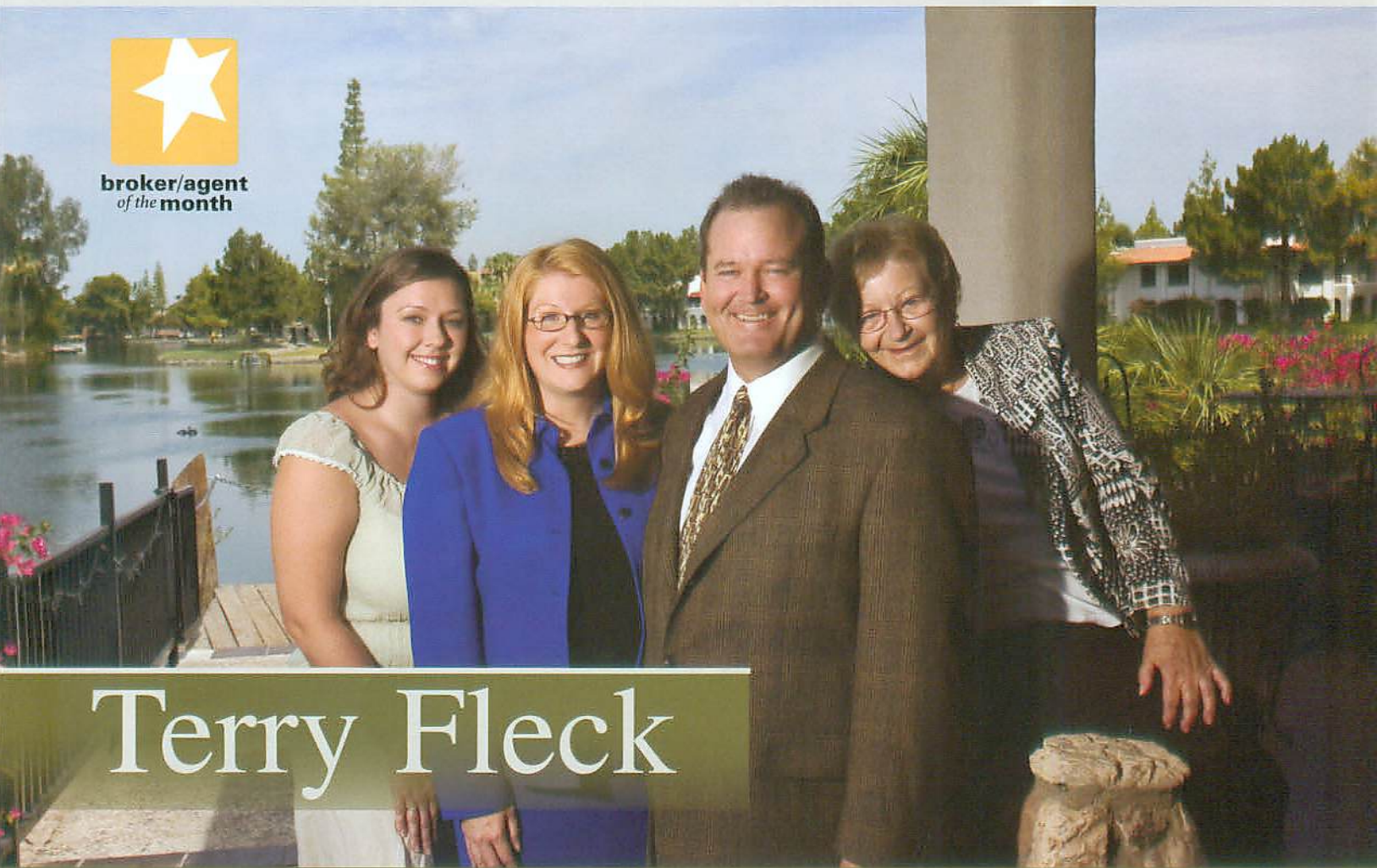
# ***BROKER★AGENT***<sup>™</sup> magazine

**Terry Fleck**  
broker/agent of the month





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of the month



# Terry Fleck

Terry Fleck, a REALTOR® in the Valley for twenty years, has experienced the kind of success and client loyalty that can only be generated by a determined work ethic combined with business savvy. His operation also includes a thriving property management business, run by his partner, both professionally and personally, Susan Austin.

Fleck came to Arizona with Lockheed after serving in the Air Force for four years. He ended up settling near Williams Air Force Base. After he left Lockheed, he entered the real estate profession, sensing the potential in the Phoenix metro market. Now after working in the business for two decades, he works throughout the area, all the way up to Peoria and Happy Valley at times, though he knows the SouthEast Valley best. "I know this area extremely well and handle all kinds of listings. To serve my investor clients however, I go anywhere in the Valley to ensure they get the right property for their situation."

In addition to servicing an extensive investor customer base over the years, Fleck has always owned his own properties and managed them personally. He began to provide similar support for clients, and it eventually grew into a large business. Once he met Austin,

who was in sales in a different industry, it made sense for her to take over the property management in 2005. Austin is good at systems and organization, a key asset given their goals for growth on that side of the business.

"I could see Terry needed help on the property management side so I took it on and helped him outsource the management needs," explains Austin. "We've grown from 46 to 130 properties in a year." Austin's sales skills proved helpful, and she got the word out that they were building this part of the business. They plan to continue growing for at least the next few years. "Terry is very successful as a REALTOR®," states Austin. "I admire his skills greatly. I enjoy learning from him and building the property management business."

In addition to frequent interaction with investors, Fleck works often with Southwest Fiduciary Inc. This company handles estates and employs Fleck to liquidate real estate assets. He's become a specialist in estate-oriented transactions—for instance, the court processes and other unique aspects associated with this kind of transaction. His specialized estate knowledge and expertise are extensive, and he often provides coaching to REALTORS® who are writing offers on such properties.

"Estates are a very different type of transaction," explains Fleck. "It's often not a normal 30-60 day escrow because the court date adds an extra step. It's critical to manage expectations and get people on same page." Fleck finds there's more detail involved in these types of the transactions as well. The attorneys with whom he works ask him to handle all aspects of the property while it is on the market, for instance utility services, repairs, cleaning or landscaping. Fleck's property management business easily supports these types of needs, and thus, he has carved out a value-added niche.

"The attorneys have a lot on their plate," notes Fleck. "They appreciate that I can handle everything, starting with appraisals and home inspections if necessary. They can say 'here's the house' and I take over from that point. The goal is to make it as easy as possible on the client." Fleck came to work with Southwest Fiduciary Inc. via a previous client. Fifteen years ago, he sold a house to Mike Dyer, an attorney. Afterwards, Dyer introduced Fleck to the company. "I see Mike often at court, and have continued to work with him on his personal transactions over the years."

While word of mouth keeps him very busy, Fleck also sends monthly mailings to stay in touch with past clients. "I found that when I'd run into a previous client, we'd spend some time catching up. A week later, I'd get a call from a referral associated with that person. I realized that I needed to proactively send mailers. There are various ways to keep contact information in front of clients, and I chose simple and to-the-point postcards to keep my information available to them. That was an important way I built my business. It's inexpensive and effective. It's one of the main things I focus on in terms of personal marketing."

At this point in his career, Fleck doesn't need to do other advertising. His business is primarily referral-based. "I'm always amazed at Terry's great memory regarding what he's sold to whom over the years," observes Austin. "When he gets a call from an old client or a friend of an old client, he'll quickly recall the specific person and property. That's meaningful to clients and their friends and family members."

When marketing a listing, Fleck considers it from a personal level, knowing every customer is different. Fleck displays a strong ability to put himself in the transaction with his clients, and that's made him very effective. "I recognize it's a stressful process. I really try to place myself in their shoes. It's a we, not a you. I am invested personally in the transaction start to finish."

Fleck's empathy and sympathy combine with a fierce dedication to the client's best interest. When working with buyers, Fleck is committed to finding the absolute best option for the client. "I make sure customers see every relevant property before they make a decision. It's not just about getting it done—it's about getting them in the best possible situation."

*"I know this area extremely well and handle all kinds of listings. To serve my investor clients however, I go anywhere in the Valley to ensure they get the right property for their situation."*



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His ethics and determination impress all around him. “I consistently see Terry focused on getting his clients the best deal,” notes Austin. “He’s never thinking about the commission. He gives his clients his all. Strong values and commitment—that’s what it’s all about.” When advising his investor clients, Fleck is not afraid to recommend renting a property versus selling it, depending on the market. “The point is to help them make the right decision. It might mean that I don’t get a listing at that particular moment, but still it’s the best thing for them. I show my customers all the options.”

Joe Schmoker of Farmers Insurance couldn’t have been more pleased with Fleck’s service. “Terry was our REALTOR® when we sold our old home and bought our new home a few years ago. We were very pleased. Terry makes what can be a stressful experience into a very enjoyable process. He has experienced everything that can possibly come at you, so he puts you at ease in every situation. His easygoing attitude and demeanor show from the minute you meet him until he brings you the key to your new home. I recommend Terry to everyone I know.”

For the vast majority of his career, Fleck has been with John Hall and Associates. “I was doing well when I joined the company and they had an attractive commission program. I was doing everything on my own, very self-sufficient, and I wanted a company where I could manage my own business.”

Indeed Fleck’s broker, Jim Sexton, is quite excited for Fleck’s recent business expansion. “Terry is experienced and professional. He’s done an excellent job branching out into property management. He recognized a need, given all the investment activity, and now manages a large amount of properties in the SouthEast Valley. He has a laid back personality that clients enjoy, and he has the follow through to get the job done. Customers really appreciate that.”

“I hold our brokers, Jim Sexton and Marge Lindsay, in very high regard,” emphasizes Fleck. “Their whole purpose is to brief us on the industry, both locally and nationally. We’re constantly out there doing our job, and Jim and Marge are great about sharing tricky situations or mistakes others have made. They help us avoid the pitfalls. They are the best brokers and they keep us up to date at the monthly meetings. It’s fantastic.” On property management side, Fleck and Austin deal with attorney Andrew Hull often, and he keeps them up to date on that side of the business along with Sexton and Lindsay.

Not surprisingly, Fleck has found that experience is also one of the best teachers. “Some of the best lessons you learn hurt a little bit when they happen. Way back in the early days, I remember I found a woman a house she just loved, but there was a problem with the evap cooler. I told her it would be easy to fix. After she bought the home, I sent a handy man over and we discovered it wasn’t





repairable. And the guy blew a fuse while he was working on the cooler and everything in her refrigerator spoiled since she was away for the weekend. So I bought a new evap cooler and new groceries. "I learned several valuable lessons on that transaction."

Fleck's easygoing manner and sense of humor are anchors for him in a business that has many demands and unexpected stresses. He also emphasizes how important it is to love what you do. "If you don't enjoy it, how can you go out there and give it your all? I love finding a good buy and talking with other agents. I enjoy watching the market grow and change."

He also sincerely enjoys the people side of the business. "I feel like I can talk to anybody, regardless of temperament. I'm not easily ruffled, and I'm not judgmental. I don't feel a lot of stress day to day. What's life without challenges? It's exciting."

Austin agrees. "Terry's personality is so well-suited to real estate. We laugh and have a great time while we work. We're both workaholics and we love it! We take all kinds of calls wherever we are. Wherever we are going, we often stop by a client's home on

the way and take care of something. It just works for us." Charles Lail, a longtime investor client, perceives Fleck's positive mindset as a business strength. "He always sees the glass as half full, not half empty. That makes it enjoyable to work with him. He also helped me modernize my inventory, and I am more successful because of it. He shows clients savvy ways to use their rentals. He's always fair, honest and trustworthy. He'll be in the business for as long as he wants to be."

When advising new REALTORS®, Fleck encourages them to have fun in their profession and work as hard as they can. "Know your product, know your city—know the types of neighborhoods and the types of homes available. This will help you give your clients options and also enable you to spot the right home. Sit open houses. They are a good way to practice your trade. When you talk to people face to face, it forces you to articulate your points well. Open houses are like a bootcamp. If you do enough of them, you can become fluent in what you're doing."

In addition to Susan Austin, Fleck has other key partners in his business. Nicole Pavlik serves as his office manager. An ASU grad,

*“He has a laid back personality that clients enjoy, and he has the follow through to get the job done.”*

she has been with them since March 2006. “She is amazing—committed and competent,” states Austin. Fleck’s mother, Donna Townsend, recently moved from Florida to be close to her family and assist in the business. “She has an eager enthusiasm to learn and participate,” states Fleck. Charlotte Schmitt at Capital Title often supports Fleck on the title and escrow side. “She’s professional and clients say good things about her,” says Fleck. “We rely on her to keep the standards high, and appreciate the effort she puts in.”

Fleck has worked with loan consultant Brad Stallings at First Horizon Mortgage in Tempe for ten years. “He exudes the most professional demeanor possible,” describes Fleck. “He focuses on doing his job. I don’t have to micromanage it and he notifies me of any issues right away. I can count on it being done right and performed with a high service level that reflects well on me.”

On the personal side, Fleck and Austin enjoy going to their cabin in Forest Highlands outside of Flagstaff. They live in Chandler and enjoy golf. Fleck has two boys, Tyler and Wesley, 15 and 12. “They are great kids. They love sports, motorcross, videogames and most of all family time. We have a fun together.”

Fleck’s vision for the future? On the property management side, the goal is to grow to 1,000 plus properties eventually. “It’s a help to my clients and fills a needs for a high-quality property management company,” notes Fleck. “We’re good at it and see a strong future for the business.” Fleck and Austin will continue to build the business through referrals, from former clients and also from other REALTORS® whose customers need property management. “These agents are assured that their clients will always be referred back to them when they are ready to sell,” emphasizes Fleck. “We pride ourselves in being a trustworthy resource.”

Austin continues, “We plan to be big, but always act small, and we won’t lose sight of the personal touch within the world of technology. We believe in traditional values: your word is your bond. A handshake and eye contact mean everything. We want our clients to be able to talk to a live body, and we know there’s still a time for handwritten notes.” ★

For any of your  
property management  
needs please contact  
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