

Making it HAPPEN

Santa Rosa Real Estate Agent Judith Palmer Helps Others “Find a Way.”

Judith Palmer has led a varied and full life. Like many of us, her life path meandered through many locales and experiences before landing her where she is today, as a successful realtor with Creative Property Services.

By Jim Brumm

Judith was born in Kewanee, Illinois, “the hog capitol of the world,” she said, laughing. When she was 14, she moved with her parents to Las Vegas, where she attended high school. Coming from a small town (even today, Kewanee, Illinois, has a population of less than 13,000), life in the city was a big adjustment for Judith, but she is a fast learner.

She married young and started a family. Her marriage ended, and at age 23 she moved to California and found work as a cocktail waitress at a restaurant called Oscar’s, in Oakland. “I made a new life,” she said. This was the beginning of the strength and perseverance she found deep within her, the strength that has carried her so far. During this time she ended up co-owning a couple of cocktail lounges and a restaurants, managing them while raising her family. She was active in Brownies and was president of the PTA.

As a single mother, though, she found that life was full of challenges for a women alone. “It was difficult to get credit in your own name back then if you were female,” she said. “I was determined to better myself.”

Judith went back to school, studying economics. She landed a job doing the books (by hand) for The Federal Home Loan Bank, and, later, selling government bonds and securities at Bank of America.

Judith married a securities trader and the two moved to his property in Sebastopol. She was commuting to San Francisco each day. One day she was in a horrific car accident in which she sustained a head injury, broke her back and pelvis. Bedridden, even after her recovery she was unable to do the long commute to the city each day. Her husband bought her two horses as a gift. The horses were both pregnant and when the foals were born, Judith and her husband decided to make their love of horses into a business.



“I began studying them, it became a passion,” said Judith. “We wound up getting more horses, we started managing and breeding them. We moved to a 160-acre ranch in Idaho where we bred horses and grew barley and dairy alfalfa.”

In 1984 Judith returned to Sonoma County and continued raising horses. Eventually, her marriage ended and she sold her ranch and left the horse business. “I got out of the horse business and I didn’t know what to do with myself,” she said. “I worked retail for a while but my friends kept telling me I should get into real estate. I thought about it and realized I was good with people. I had been great at horse sales but never realized it could apply to other things.”

Judith joined Creative Property Services in Santa Rosa, and found that her personality, her passion and her vision matched the business completely. “It was a perfect fit,” she said. “I love homes, I love people and I have a very creative side to me. Real estate turned out to light my fire like my horses used to.”



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Judith lights up when she speaks of her work. Full of energy, she exudes optimism and smiles easily. Speaking of her vision for her work, she said, “Everybody says the same thing: integrity, honesty and so on. I *know* I have those things. I want to connect with people; I want to learn what they need and want, and help them find

that. I started in a slow market, but that’s been good for me. It made me work harder. I like the challenge of hearing peoples’ dreams and helping make them come true.”

I had met with Judith at an open house at a town home she was selling—her own town home, as it turned out. Tastefully decorated in rich hues and unique, eclectic furniture, Judith’s touch showed everywhere. As we spoke several prospective buyers arrived and Judith jumped up to greet them. Everyone commented on the interior design; several asked if the furniture was part of the deal. I watched as Judith put them all at ease, engaging them with laughter and genuine interest in their situation.

When the clients left, Judith sat down with me again and I commented on what I had seen in her interactions with the prospective buyers. She smiled and said, “I think I connect with people very well and I think it’s important to work with an agent you can connect with. I believe that when people meet me they sense I care.”

She paused and looked around her beautiful home, then turned back to face me. “I don’t want to just sell people a house and forget them,” she said. “I want them to be in my life; I want them to be my friends. We work together for one purpose: their satisfaction. People need to feel secure and comfortable in their home. I help them find that.”

Judith mostly specializes in residential properties, finding homes for families, but she is also an expert in equine properties. If you have a horse, or want to find a property that would be good for horses, Judith is your realtor. She is also not shy about marketing and will spend the money it takes to market and advertise a client’s home widely. She has nurtured strong contacts with selected lenders she knows are honest and dependable, along with contractors, landscapers and other professionals who may be called in when someone buys a home.

Judith Palmer knows what it’s like to pick up and move and start over. She knows what it’s like to find a home and feel

safe again. And most importantly, she knows how to guide her clients through the morass of decisions, paperwork, fears, anticipation and frustration that is buying a home. She’s the perfect ally to have in your corner because she truly understands what it’s like, and she knows the best way to make it happen.

“I’m very spiritual,” she said. “I think my inner spirituality guides me and keeps me on track. It makes me want to help people realize their dreams. I’m a survivor,” she added. “I’ve been through a lot and I surround myself with positive people and positive thoughts. Even when it’s a difficult situation, I’ll find a solution. I’ll find a way.”

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