

Your HOME FRONT

2019 Edition

CONDO & HOA LIVING
NEWS COURTESY OF

**RESIDENTIAL
REALTY GROUP, INC.**

RRG

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... plus a whole lot more!



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ENTERPRISING WOMEN 2019

Joan Magill & Louise Hood recognized by BBJ

When Joan Magill and Louise Hood partnered through Residential Realty Group AAMC® (RRG), they didn't set out to be trailblazers and trendsetters—but that's exactly what they are.

Today, thanks to the leadership of Magill (Founder, Partner and Broker) and Hood (Partner and CEO), RRG is one of the region's largest residential property management firms.

Specializing in both condo associations and HOAs, RRG offers valuable input to Board of Directors on topics ranging from accounting and management services to rental and sales. With a seasoned staff with over 100 years of combined experience, RRG specialists don't merely know the industry, they live it. They also have the accreditations to show for it, CAI and National Association of Home Builders among them.

But it's the company's culture that Magill and Hood believe truly sets RRG apart. With a commitment to long-term clients and staff, as well as personal, hands-on approach, RRG has earned numerous awards.



At Residential Realty Group (RRG), we take our fiduciary responsibility very seriously, putting the interests of our clients first. Our 30 plus years of managing condominiums and homeowner associations has given us the advantage of seeing first hand how this form of ownership has developed, and the priorities that are important to the residents living in the associations. RRG was one of the first dedicated community property management companies to be established in Baltimore when condominium management was new. We are the professionals' preferred management company.



Get to Know RRG

DRIVING FOR GOOD

After a busy day of meetings, phone calls and plenty of paperwork, Toni Butler takes comfort in knowing she only has a three minute drive between the office and her Glyndon, Maryland home.

Truth be told, the stone's-throw commute is only the second-best part of being behind the wheel. The first: getting to drive her dream vehicle.

A member of not one but two local Jeep clubs, Butler has used her treasured SUV as a four-wheeled force for good: participating in parades, using it to pick up food and other items for families in need—it's enough to make the weekends fly by.

"I love to feel the sun shining on my skin and the wind in my hair," Butler says. "The Jeep club is a close-knit family and is always willing to help anyone in need. During emergency snow events they help nurses and doctors get to work on time and they've collected donations for families all over."

But when the weekend is over, it's back to the business of RRG, Butler's home away from home for the last 15 years—the last 10 as one of our firm's managing agents.

From overseeing property inspections and maintenance to addressing homeowner feedback, Butler's days are seldom boring.

"It's a great feeling coming to work with people you know and care about, but who can also give you great ideas and lend a hand in whatever you need help with," Butler says.

"It's a great feeling coming to work with people you know and care about."

"The owners are phenomenal; I love my coworkers. There's a reason people stay here for a long time. It really is like a family."

Family: It's a word Butler knows a little something about. The mother of two boys, Butler's current husband, Allen, has three sons of his own. For Butler, the resulting dynamic has become one of life's great blessings.



TONI BUTLER
Residential Realty Group Managing Agent



Toni with her husband, Allen

"Allen is African American, so we're a mixed family in the truest sense," she says. "But the boys were all around the same age, so they became inseparable. They're still that way, and I just can't imagine feeling prouder of their continued accomplishments. Two work for the Department of Defense, one works for a fire and sprinkler installation company, one works in food management and catering, and the other is a financial advisor."

A graduate of Franklin High School in Reisterstown, Maryland, Butler spent five years as a beautician before transitioning to corporate furnished housing following the birth of her first son. Eager for a new challenge in 2004, she joined RRG as an office assistant.

Today, Butler manages some of the firm's most exciting properties, including Summer's Run in nearby Odenton, a 138-unit townhome community, and Chestnut Gable, a condo association with 336 units.

"What I enjoy about the properties I manage is how booming the areas are—there's a vibrancy to the communities that's really refreshing," Butler says. "That's one of the things I really love about RRG: seeing these places blossom and knowing you get to play a part in making that happen."

Her most important piece of real estate, however, is the one she just moved into: a charming brick ranch, located in beautiful historic Glyndon that once belonged to her grandparents.

"It's a special feeling when you put down roots in a place you grew up coming to," Butler says. "Glyndon is a really tightknit community. Everything is within walking distance, which isn't something you find in a lot of newer towns."

The town is so small, in fact, that residents have to pick their mail up from the post office.

Not that Butler minds: It's just another excuse to fire up the Jeep.

3 New Condo Laws You Need to Know

1

Condominium Property Insurance Deductible: This is where damage to the condominium unit and common element is covered by the Master Insurance policy. Currently the deductible is the responsible party pays the first \$5,000.00 for repairs. Some Associations can only obtain insurance coverage with a deductible of \$10,000.00. The legislation introduced in 2019 is to allow the bylaws of a condominium to require the responsible party to pay the full deductible amount.

2

Replacement Reserves: As communities ages, and the cost of replacement has increased the amount the associations have placed in reserves is not always sufficient. Legislation introduced in 2019 requires communities conduct a studies of reserve items necessary for major repairs and perform this study every 5 years.

3

Condominium insurance, replacement reserves and dispute resolution procedures were among the condominium and homeowner associations topic during the 2019 Legislative Session. There were no laws enacted but looking ahead to 2020 they will probably be reintroduced.

RRG CRACKS THE TOP 5

Of the 25 companies that made Baltimore Business Journal's list of the 25 largest residential property managers in Greater Baltimore, RRG finished 4th, with more than 14,000 total units across 145 communities. Thanks to everyone who made this achievement possible—especially our clients and employees!





The Pros and Cons of Doggy DNA Testing

If you happen to live in a condo or homeowner's association—particularly one that allows pets—chances are you've heard of "Doggy DNA".

If you haven't, here's how it works: When you move into a property governed by a condo association or HOA, you provide a sample of your pet's DNA (usually through a cheek swab). If pet waste is found on the property, management can identify the culprit based on the DNA of the waste.

PROS

- It can act as a deterrent to unwanted pet waste
- Fines can offset the costs of the testing
- Reducing pet waste helps the environment
- Such programs might result in more pet-friendly associations

CONS

- It might be seen as overly intrusive
- It doesn't account for "outsiders" walking their dog on the property
- Contracting a cleanup service might cost less
- You have to pick up dog poo!

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



Residents celebrating at the community's General Manager's retirement party

A Place That Has it All

RRG'S LUXURY PROPERTY IN THE HEART OF DOWNTOWN ANNAPOLIS

After spending an engrossing few hours in and around the James Brice House in downtown Annapolis, Maryland—courtesy of a personal tour led by Historic Annapolis—some in the group head off to dinner at one of the city's many charming restaurants. Others take a walk around town, to further enjoy the colonial ambiance.

By night's end, however, they'll all wind up in the same place. Not a hotel or B&B—that's where the tourists stay. "Part of what makes Park Place so special is the city itself," says Bill Isopi, board president for the upscale condo community. "There are so many opportunities to explore Annapolis—its history as well as restaurants, wine bars, parks, shopping—many of them within easy walking distance."

"RRG has been the best financial management company we've ever worked with."

BILL ISOPI, PRESIDENT

Then again, with one brief trapeze around this magnificent complex, you might wonder why anyone ever leaves at all.

There's the recently redesigned clubroom with the warm lighting and big-screen TV, perfect for small gatherings and business meetings. There's the new outdoor patio area, outfitted with a state-of-the-art open-air kitchen and plenty of seating. And there are lots of other common areas including a pool, a

party room, a library and a fully-equipped fitness center. If you want it, chances are Park Place has it.

"The community cultivates a vibrant social life," says Isopi, a 10-year Park Place resident and frequent board member currently serving another term as board president. "Whether it's parties for Cinco de Mayo and the Kentucky Derby or organizing events in town like the upcoming scavenger hunt, people here like to hang out together."

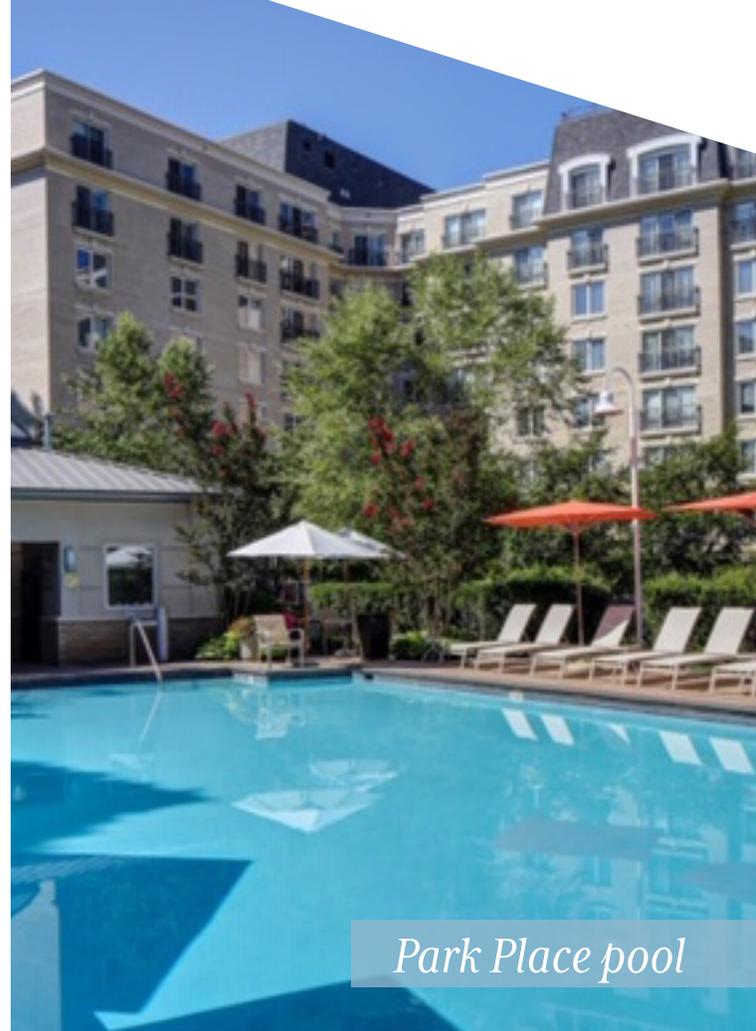
Built in 2007, Park Place looks like it has always been there—in the best possible way. Fronted by a circular brick driveway with a gorgeous baroque fountain as its centerpiece, the place almost feels like Paris. No wonder 70 percent of its units are owner occupied, over 10 percent of whom started as renters and bought into the community.

And RRG is a big reason why. As Park Place's dedicated community management association, RRG has been instrumental in helping the community grow and thrive. "RRG has been the best financial management company we've ever worked with," Isopi says. "Whatever we need, they provide it for us."

Don't let the pristine structures and surroundings fool you: the vibe here is refreshingly laid-back. Take the complex's pet-friendly policy, highlighted by the aptly named Bark Place, an outdoor dog park designed to give Park Place's four-legged residents a little room to romp. That is, so long as you're diligent about cleanup. Park Place takes its health and cleanliness so seriously, in fact, that it recently introduced a "Doggy DNA" program to help identify offending pets—and their owners—in case of a mess left behind.

Just how unique is the idea? Last month, a film crew from the BCC stopped by to profile the program.

"We want Park Place to be—and I believe it is—the most upscale address in Annapolis," Isopi says. "Our amenities are fantastic, our board is constantly committed to keeping the complex looking new, and we have a great community of people of every age group. It has everything."



Park Place pool



Residents enjoying the community's annual holiday party



Park Place entrance



Giving Back to Communities

PINEY ORCHARD STREET FESTIVAL

The 10th Annual Piney Orchard Street Festival was a great success and tons of fun! We're proud to be a sponsor and active participant of this amazing event that gives back to our surrounding communities.





1. RRG's very own Toni Butler (right) standing with our first raffle winner, who received a beautiful hanging flower basket. Note the identical sunglasses!

2. From left: Charlene Morazzani-Hood, Laura Baverman, Joan Magill and Toni Butler at the RRG both during the Piney Orchard Street Festival.

3. From left: RRG team helpers Allen Butler (husband of Toni Butler) and Dwayne. Note the identical shorts!

4. RRG's Toni Butler (left) and Laura Baverman with the lucky recipient of our doggy swag bag. He couldn't wait to try out his new bone-holder.

5. From left: Marie Doering, Louise Hood, Laura Baverman and Barbara Fitzsimmons giving away free bags and bubbles at the RRG table.

6. As she does every year, RRG's Toni Butler lent a hand at the POCA booth, where she sold raffle tickets for big-screen TVs, a Go-Pro, an Apple Watch, baseball tickets and more.

7. RRG was honored to be a platinum partner for this year's Piney Orchard Street Festival. Huge shout-out to Susan Swank for helping organize this incredible neighborhood fair, which drew more than 5,000 attendees and vendors ranging from rock-climbing walls and bouncy houses to all kinds of delicious food.

6 DIY UPGRADES

for Under \$100

Invest a little cash and get a big improvement in how your home looks and feels. The editors of This Old House give you their top tips.

1. Add Carved Corbels Under Your Breakfast Bar

How to do it: Check salvage yards for Victorian-era ones with patina for an extra flourish in the eating area. *Estimated cost: \$95*

2. Laundry-Room Chandelier

How to do it: Suspend a chandelier in the laundry room for a bit of sophistication in an unexpected place. White Capiz pendant with cord kit. *Estimated cost: \$80*

3. Hook Yourself Up

How to do it: Wall-mount a row of hooks above your kitchen counter to keep dish towels and measuring cups at the ready. *Estimated cost: \$8 each*

4. Make Your Sink Do Double Duty

How to do it: Fit an undermount sink with a cutting board for more prep space. Measure the length and width of the basin, adding $\frac{1}{2}$ inch to each side. Trim a piece of butcher block to size with a jigsaw. Then create a lip around its underside so that it will rest on the edge of the counter. *Estimated cost: \$86*

5. Wallpaper a Door

How to do it: Use paper and paste left over from a big job to dress up door panels, letting stiles and rails frame the decoration. For slab doors, trace a shape on the back of the paper, cut it out, and center it on the door. *Estimated cost: Nothing*

6. Turn a Closet Into a Home Office

How to do it: Unhinge the door and trade hanging rods for shelves—a deep one for the desktop and two shallow ones above for storage. *Estimated cost: \$95*

Improve Your Community!

The secret to our success is not a secret at all, we work harder and we care more! We are the professional's professional choice for association management.

We pride ourselves on giving smart and reasonable suggestions that have proven beneficial to our clients.

Contact us today for a confidential community management assessment!

Call Joan Magill at 410-654-4444 Ext. 201
Leave a message for a returned call.

Magill Generations

RRG has coordinated with **Magill Generations** to provide the Board of Directors from each community with a list of properties for sale and settled, to keep you advised of property values.

If anyone is interested in additional real estate help or advice, call Doug Magill of Magill Generations directly. Magill Generations represents four generations of Realtors® dedicated to outstanding service for our clients and Maryland homeowners and buyers, since 1936. **Call 443-324-7767**



See more online
www.rrg-sales.com



The personal touch

At Residential Realty Group (RRG), we take our fiduciary responsibility very seriously, putting the interests of our clients first. We are the professionals' preferred management company.

To submit content for this newsletter, please contact Erica Berry at eberry@truelinepr.com



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