

LOCAL

Lifestyle

MARCH 2026

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Dear Friends and Neighbors,

March carries the first true hints of Spring. The light shifts, gardens begin to stir, and there's a renewed sense of momentum in the air. After the quieter winter months, everything feels ready to bloom.

It's a season of fresh perspective. We open windows, clear out what no longer serves us, and make room for what's next. There's something energizing about this time of year—a reminder that growth is natural, change can be beautiful, and new beginnings are always within reach.

In real estate, March often marks the start of a more active season. Buyers step into the market with intention, and homes show beautifully in the longer days and brighter light. If you've been quietly considering a move, this is a wonderful time to explore your options and position yourself thoughtfully.

As always, I'm here as a resource—whether you're ready to make a change or simply curious about what your home might be worth in today's market.

Wishing you a March filled with renewal, momentum, and a little extra sunshine.

Warmly,

Andrea Scott

Cutest Pet Contest

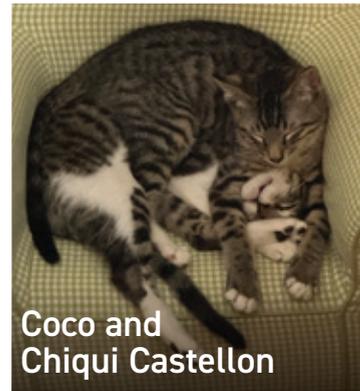


Jordan Peck

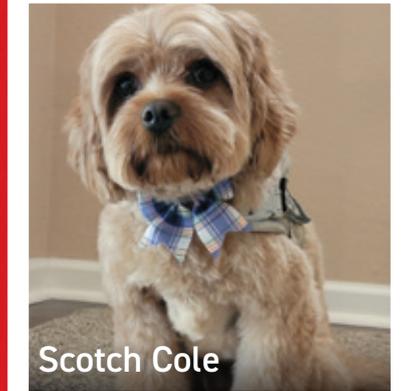


Please send a photo of your pet with "Pet Contest" in the subject line to: Andrea@Alamo.RealEstate to have them featured in the next magazine.

If you sent a photo and it hasn't been featured, please send again with "Pet Contest" in the subject line.



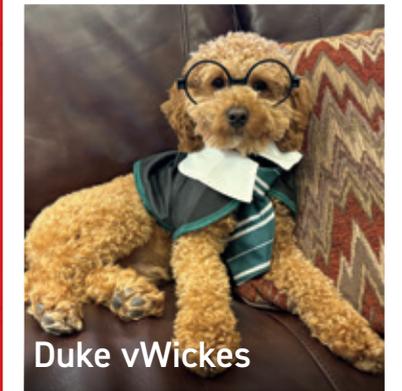
Coco and Chiqui Castellon



Scotch Cole



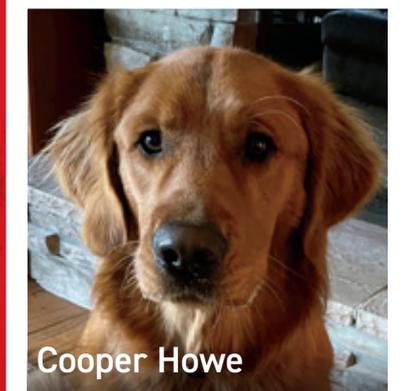
Davy Dwight



Duke vWickes



Charley Swindel



Cooper Howe

CHICKEN & WILD RICE CASSEROLE

INGREDIENTS

Casserole

- 3 tablespoons olive oil or butter
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 3 large carrots, roughly chopped
- 3 large celery stalks, roughly chopped
- 6 ounces cremini mushrooms
- 1 cup dry wild rice blend (gluten-free if needed)
- 1 teaspoon dried parsley
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 2 lbs boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into bite-size pieces

- 2 cups chicken stock
- 1/2 cup dry white wine (or additional stock)
- 1 cup grated cheese (optional: cheddar, Gruyère, or Edam)
- Fresh parsley, for serving

Toasted Breadcrumbs

- 4 slices gluten-free bread
- 2 tablespoons olive oil or butter
- 1/4 teaspoon salt, or to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
2. Heat olive oil or butter in a large oven-safe skillet over medium heat. Add onion and cook 4–5 minutes until softened.
3. Pulse carrots and celery in a food processor until finely chopped. Remove, then pulse mushrooms until finely chopped.
4. Add vegetables to the skillet and cook 5–6 minutes, stirring occasionally.
5. Stir in wild rice, parsley, and thyme. Add chicken, chicken stock, and wine. Mix gently.
6. Cover with a lid or foil and bake for 40 minutes.
7. Meanwhile, make the breadcrumbs: pulse bread into coarse crumbs. Heat oil or butter in a skillet, add crumbs and salt, and toast 2–3 minutes until golden. Set aside.

8. Remove casserole from oven, uncover, and gently stir to fluff the rice. Top with cheese (if using) and toasted breadcrumbs.
9. Return uncovered to the oven and bake 15–20 minutes more, until golden and bubbly. Season to taste and garnish with fresh parsley.

Serving Note: This casserole is comforting without feeling heavy—perfect for chilly evenings, casual gatherings, or make-ahead meals. Serve it straight from the skillet and enjoy a dish that proves cozy classics can still feel fresh and thoughtfully made.



Cozy yet light, this Chicken and Wild Rice Casserole offers classic comfort with a wholesome twist. Finely chopped vegetables add rich flavor without heaviness, while wild rice brings texture. Cooked in chicken stock and white wine, it's a simple, flavorful one-pan meal finished with crispy breadcrumbs and optional cheese, plus easy gluten-free and dairy-free options.

Chocolate Éclair Cake

(No-bake classic)



This Chocolate Éclair Cake delivers all the nostalgic flavors of a bakery éclair—creamy vanilla filling, tender cake layers, and rich chocolate topping—without ever turning on the oven. Built with simple pantry staples and finished after an overnight rest in the refrigerator, it's an effortlessly elegant dessert that's equally at home at a potluck, holiday table, or casual family gathering.

Ingredients

- 2 (3.4-ounce) packages instant vanilla pudding mix
- 3½ cups milk
- 1 box graham crackers
- 1 (8-ounce) container whipped topping, thawed
- 1 can dark chocolate frosting

Instructions

- 1 In a medium bowl, whisk together the pudding mix and milk until smooth and thickened. Gently fold in the whipped topping until fully combined and light.
- 2 Arrange a single layer of graham crackers in the bottom of a 9×13-inch baking dish, breaking crackers as needed to fully cover the surface. Spread half of the pudding mixture evenly over the crackers.
- 3 Add a second layer of graham crackers, followed by the remaining pudding mixture, smoothing the top. Finish with a third and final layer of graham crackers.
- 4 Warm the chocolate frosting briefly (about 20 seconds in the microwave) and stir until spreadable. Carefully spread it over the top layer, covering the crackers completely.
- 5 Cover the dish and refrigerate for at least 8 hours, preferably overnight, to allow the layers to soften and set. Serve chilled.

Tips

- **From-scratch option:** Substitute homemade pastry cream for the pudding mix if you prefer a less processed approach.
- **Whipped topping swap:** Homemade whipped cream works beautifully in place of frozen topping.
- **Chocolate upgrade:** Use homemade chocolate frosting for a deeper, more customized flavor.
- **Refrigerate:** Store leftovers covered in the refrigerator for up to 4 days—many find the texture improves after the first 24 hours. The cake can be made up to two days ahead and also freezes well for up to two months when tightly wrapped. Thaw overnight in the refrigerator before serving.

TIRAMISU ESPRESSO MARTINI

This indulgent cocktail captures the essence of classic tiramisu in a glass, combining vodka with coffee liqueur, amaretto, Irish cream, and freshly brewed espresso. The result is a luxuriously smooth drink finished with a delicate cocoa dusting and an elegant ladyfinger garnish.

(Makes 1 cocktail)

1.5 oz vodka	1 oz amaretto liqueur
1.5 oz espresso, freshly brewed and cooled	Ice cubes
1 oz Irish cream liqueur	Cocoa powder for dusting
1 oz Kahlúa coffee liqueur	1 ladyfinger cookie for garnish

1. Fill a cocktail shaker with ice cubes. Add the vodka, cooled espresso, Irish cream, Kahlúa, and amaretto.
2. Shake vigorously for 15 seconds until the mixture is thoroughly chilled and well combined.
3. Strain the cocktail into a pre-chilled martini glass.
4. Dust the top with a light sprinkle of cocoa powder.
5. Place a ladyfinger cookie across the rim of the glass as a garnish.
6. Serve and enjoy!





St. Patrick's Day POPCORN

- ▶ 4 quarts popped popcorn
- ▶ 1/2 cup water
- ▶ 1/4 teaspoon salt
- ▶ 1 cup sugar
- ▶ 1/2 cup light corn syrup
- ▶ 1/2 cup butter
- ▶ 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- ▶ 1 teaspoon white vinegar
- ▶ 8 to 10 drops green food coloring

1

Place popcorn in large roasting pan; keep warm in 250° oven. Meanwhile, in a large heavy saucepan, combine the sugars, water, corn syrup, vinegar and salt. Cook and stir over medium heat until mixture comes to a boil.

2

Remove from heat. Stir in butter until melted. Stir in food coloring. Drizzle over warm popcorn and toss to coat.

3

Let cool and then break into pieces. Store in an airtight container and enjoy!



ALAMO MARKET REPORT

LAST MONTH V THIS MONTH

DEC 2025	JAN 2026
HOMES SOLD 6	HOMES SOLD 6 =
DAYS ON MARKET 56	DAYS ON MARKET 27 ↓
AVERAGE LIST PRICE \$2,735,481	AVERAGE LIST PRICE \$2,493,333 ↓
AVERAGE SOLD PRICE \$2,653,333	AVERAGE SOLD PRICE \$2,440,333 ↓
LIST: SOLD RATIO 97%	LIST: SOLD RATIO 98% ↑
\$/SF \$795	\$/SF \$885 ↑

Small samples create big swings but the trend is positive: days on market dropped 50% because buyers are moving quickly. \$/SF jumped 11%, indicating that the price dip is due to smaller homes selling. It is a low-inventory environment, selling now can capture serious, motivated demand before the spring/summer sellers flood the market with inventory.



ALAMO MARKET REPORT

LAST JAN V THIS JAN

JAN 2025	JAN 2026
HOMES SOLD 9	HOMES SOLD 6 ↓
DAYS ON MARKET 28	DAYS ON MARKET 27 ↓
AVERAGE LIST PRICE \$1,905,000	AVERAGE LIST PRICE \$2,493,333 ↑
AVERAGE SOLD PRICE \$2,007,958	AVERAGE SOLD PRICE \$2,440,333 ↑
LIST: SOLD RATIO 105%	LIST: SOLD RATIO 98% ↓
\$/SF \$725	\$/SF \$885 ↑

The average sold price and \$/SF both rose 22% year over year. Homes are selling at nearly the same pace—27 days versus 28—reflecting steady demand. While last year’s 105% list-to-sell ratio was unusually high, this year’s 98% signals a more balanced market. Rising values and stable absorption make this a compelling time to sell.



Why Now is the Perfect Time to List—

And Why You Need the Right Agent!

Recent data shows there are 47% more sellers than buyers in today's market, but as you know, things change quickly and Spring is right around the corner. If you are thinking "maybe I'll hold off," here's why now is actually a great time to list.

The Opportunity: Stand Out When It Counts

When competition increases, the homes that SELL are the ones that:

- **Are priced strategically from day one**
- **Are marketed professionally and creatively**
- **Have an agent who knows how to negotiate in ANY market**

Motivated buyers are still out there, and they're looking for homes that

are presented beautifully, priced right, and represented by agents who understand current market dynamics.

Don't Wait – Position Yourself to Win

In a market like this, having the RIGHT agent isn't just helpful – it's the difference between sitting on the market and getting SOLD. The homes moving are the ones with strategic pricing, professional marketing, and expert negotiation.

My Advantage: Professional Exposure Other Agents Can't Match

When you list with me, your home doesn't just get a sign in the yard – it gets featured in my exclusive neighborhood magazine, reaching thousands of potential buyers right here in our community. That's marketing power other agents simply can't provide.

Ready to make your move this Spring? Call me today to learn how I can showcase your home and get it SOLD.



MORTGAGE RATES SINK TO A THREE-YEAR LOW WILL IT JUMP-START THE SPRING HOUSING MARKET?

Mortgage rates are finally giving homebuyers something to cheer about. In early January, the average 30-year fixed-rate mortgage slipped to 6.06%, its lowest level in more than three years and nearly a full percentage point below where it stood a year ago. The drop followed the Jan. 8 directive for Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to purchase \$200 billion in mortgage-backed securities – a move that briefly jolted the housing market awake during its quietest season.

The immediate response was unmistakable. Mortgage activity surged, with applications jumping 28.5% in a single week, according to the Mortgage Bankers Association. Refinancing led the charge, soaring 40% from the prior week and more than doubling compared to the same time last year. Purchase applications also climbed sharply, up 16% week over week.

The big question now is whether this burst of activity signals the start of a sustained recovery – or just a fleeting reaction to lower rates.

Economists caution against expecting a dramatic turnaround. If mortgage rates hover in the low-6% range throughout the year, home sales could see modest improvement in 2026, says Hannah Jones, senior economic research analyst at Realtor.com. Still, she notes, affordability pressures and the large share of homeowners locked into ultra-low pandemic-era rates suggest any rebound will likely be slow and uneven.

There are signs affordability is inching in the right direction. Redfin reports the median monthly housing payment fell to \$2,413 in mid-January, the lowest level in two years and 5.5% below last year. Yet for many buyers, the math still doesn't work.

“Buyers are extremely selective and still think prices are too high,” said Alison Williams, a Redfin Premier agent in Sacramento. Limited inventory gives shoppers the confidence to wait, she explained, while deals are often stalled by sellers unwilling to accept offers contingent on another home sale. The result: a market stuck in neutral.



That caution was evident even before the rate drop. Pending home sales fell nearly 6% from November to December, reaching the lowest seasonally adjusted level on record outside the April 2020 lockdown period.

Existing home sales offered a brighter note at year's end, rising 5.1% in December and edging 1.4% higher than a year earlier. Still, total sales for 2025 matched 2024 at just over 4 million. With inventory tightening again and price growth slowing to a crawl, the stage may be set for a more balanced spring.



Starting a Neighborhood Book Club: A Simple Guide

Looking for a meaningful way to connect with neighbors? A book club is the perfect answer.

Starting a neighborhood book club is easier than you might think. Begin by gauging interest; post on neighborhood social media groups, put up flyers at local coffee shops, or simply

invite a few neighbors and ask them to spread the word. Aim for 6-10 members to keep discussions manageable and ensure everyone gets a chance to speak. Choose a regular meeting time (first Tuesday evening, last Saturday morning, etc.) and rotate hosting duties to share the responsibility. For your first meeting, select an accessible, well-reviewed book that appeals to various tastes—avoid anything controversial or lengthy to start.

The key to a successful book club is keeping it low-pressure and fun. Don't worry about elaborate refreshments; simple snacks and beverages are plenty. Consider alternating between fiction and non-fiction to keep things fresh, and let members take turns selecting books. Some clubs vote on upcoming selections, while others create a reading list for the year. Most importantly, remember that book clubs are as much about building community as they are about literature. Even if the discussion veers off-topic into life updates and neighborhood news, you're achieving the real goal: bringing neighbors together.

With just a little organization, you'll create a cherished monthly tradition that enriches your community for years to come.



THE BEST UNDERRATED NATIONAL PARKS TO VISIT THIS YEAR

When most travelers think of U.S. national parks, iconic names like Yellowstone or the Grand Canyon often dominate the conversation. However, many remarkable parks offer equally breathtaking scenery, fewer crowds, and a more immersive experience. Below are some of the best underrated national parks to consider visiting this year.

BRYCE CANYON (UTAH)

Known for its surreal hoodoo formations, Bryce Canyon delivers dramatic views, especially at sunrise and sunset.

GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS (TENNESSEE)

The Smokies' vast backcountry, mist-covered ridges, and biodiversity make it easy to escape crowds. It is an excellent choice for scenic drives and moderate hiking.



Bryce Canyon National Park



Great Smoky Mountains national park



Great Basin National Park



Crater Lake National Park

VOYAGEURS (MINNESOTA)

Defined by interconnected lakes and boreal forests, It's ideal for canoeing, fishing, and wildlife viewing.

GREAT BASIN (NEVADA)

Great Basin offers ancient bristlecone pines, Lehman Caves, and exceptional stargazing.

GLACIER (MONTANA)

Its dramatic peaks, turquoise lakes, and abundant wildlife remain unmatched.

NORTH CASCADES (WASHINGTON)

Often called the "American Alps," North Cascades features jagged mountains and glaciers.

CRATER LAKE (OREGON)

Crater Lake's vivid blue waters and volcanic history make it visually striking.

YOSEMITE (CALIFORNIA)

Beyond Yosemite Valley lies a quieter park filled with high-country meadows, granite domes, and scenic back-country routes.

LASSEN VOLCANIC (CALIFORNIA)

Snowshowing in the winter, or camping in the summer, both are made great with sought after geothermal features.

CAPITOL REEF (UTAH)

Whether by vehicle or on foot, this stunning off-roaders dream provides dramatic desert scenery.

BLACK CANYON OF THE GUNNISON (COLORADO)

Sheer cliffs and depth rarely experienced elsewhere await you at this hidden Colorado destination.



Yosemite National Park



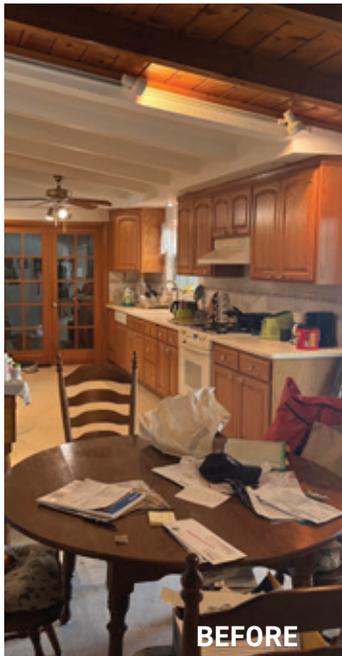
Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park



AFTER



BEFORE



BEFORE



AFTER



Think Your Home Isn't Photo Ready?

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SERVICES INCLUDE:

Fresh paint, new or refinished flooring,
new light fixtures, staging, landscaping,
decluttering, deep cleaning and so much more!



Client Testimonials



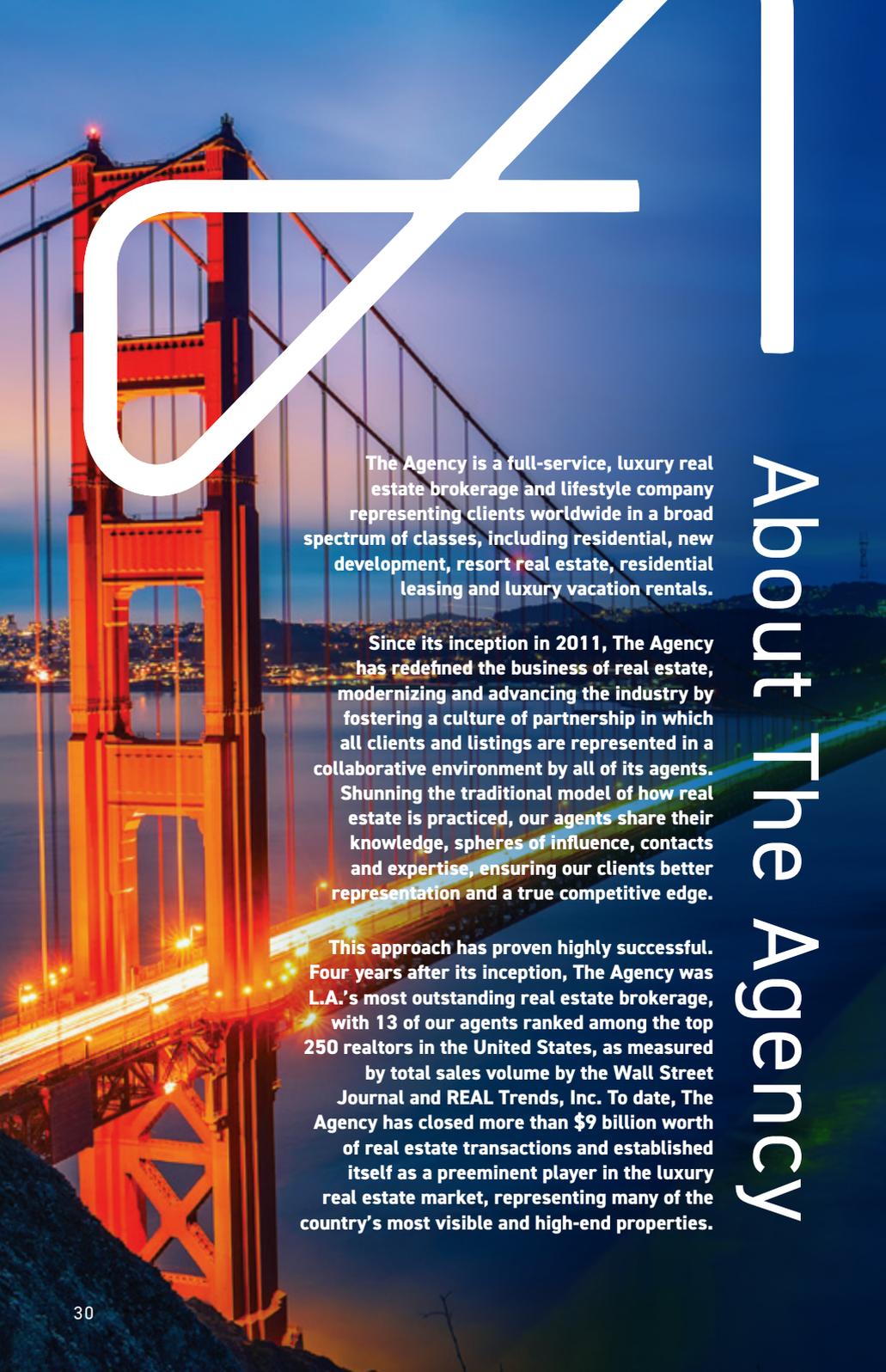
Andrea Scott did an excellent job selling our home, combining deep local market knowledge with a clear strategy on pricing, staging, and marketing that led to a strong offer and a smooth closing. They were highly responsive, kept us informed at every step, and proactively handled negotiations and any issues that came up, which made the entire process far less stressful for our family. We were very pleased with the final sale outcome and would confidently recommend Andrea to anyone looking to sell their home.

– *Kathi P, Alamo*



Andrea Scott is truly exceptional — highly experienced, deeply skilled, and the kind of realtor you feel grateful to have in your corner. She listened so thoughtfully from day one, made smart recommendations at every step, and always came with clear data and rationale to guide decisions. What I appreciated most was her ability to gently push back when needed — never forceful, always respectful — and always with our best outcome in mind. Beyond her expertise, Andrea is simply a wonderful human: kind, honest, and driven by integrity in everything she does. Thanks to her strategy and execution, we received multiple offers and closed the highest sale ever in Stonegate (Alamo) in just 5 days. We couldn't be more impressed — and more thankful. If you want an agent who will truly partner with you and deliver outstanding results, Andrea is the one.

– *Erin B, Alamo*



About The Agency

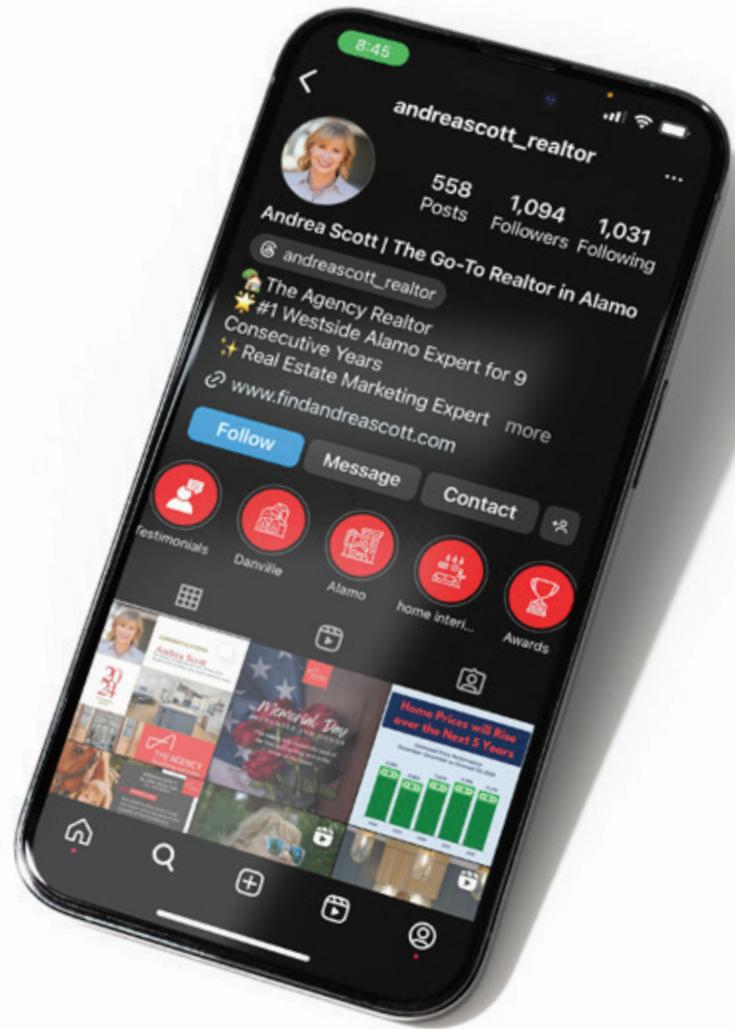
The Agency is a full-service, luxury real estate brokerage and lifestyle company representing clients worldwide in a broad spectrum of classes, including residential, new development, resort real estate, residential leasing and luxury vacation rentals.

Since its inception in 2011, The Agency has redefined the business of real estate, modernizing and advancing the industry by fostering a culture of partnership in which all clients and listings are represented in a collaborative environment by all of its agents. Shunning the traditional model of how real estate is practiced, our agents share their knowledge, spheres of influence, contacts and expertise, ensuring our clients better representation and a true competitive edge.

This approach has proven highly successful. Four years after its inception, The Agency was L.A.'s most outstanding real estate brokerage, with 13 of our agents ranked among the top 250 realtors in the United States, as measured by total sales volume by the Wall Street Journal and REAL Trends, Inc. To date, The Agency has closed more than \$9 billion worth of real estate transactions and established itself as a preeminent player in the luxury real estate market, representing many of the country's most visible and high-end properties.

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THE NEIGHBORHOOD
CONNECTION MAGAZINE

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HAVE WE MET?



Buying and Selling a Home is one of the most important decisions you make. Let me guide you through the process. Call us to set up an appointment to meet in person or via Zoom.

- 5 Star Award Winner
- Forbes Magazine Real Estate Market Leader
- RealTrends America's Best Real Estate Agents
- Top 1% of Realtors in the US
- Rancho Romero Sponsor, \$60,000 and counting
- #1 Individual Agent, Westside Alamo 2013 to Present

Cumulative, per MLS



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