

Where Real Estate Meets Creativity & Connection

BY GEORGE PAUL THOMAS
PHOTOS BY PHILIP ANDREWS

MARY
SOROKA

If you’ve ever met Mary Soroka, you already know she’s the kind of person who makes you feel like an old friend five minutes into a conversation. Warm, creative, and genuinely interested in the people around her, Mary’s not your average real estate agent—and she doesn’t want to be. With her natural artistic flair, love for connecting with others, and her loyal border collie Luna riding shotgun (sometimes literally), Mary brings authenticity and good energy to everything she does.

Her Richmond Roots

Born and raised here, Mary’s Richmond roots run deep. After earning a Bachelor’s degree in Interior Design from Marymount University, she graduated in 2008—smack in the middle of the recession—and found herself in furniture sales instead of her dream design job.

“I started in a small local gift and furniture shop, then worked my way through Lazyboy, Ashley Furniture, and eventually Haynes,” Mary recalls. “Retail wasn’t what I hoped to be doing after college, but I at least felt like it was related to interior design in some way, and it gave me a good foundation.”

It was at Haynes Furniture that fate stepped in. While helping stage a model home, Mary met two local real estate agents who saw her potential and planted the seed: why not try real estate?



“I didn’t know the first thing about real estate,” she admits. “But I knew I wanted out of retail. So I took a week off work, crammed for the licensing exam, and got my license in a week and a half. Then all I had to do was figure out how much money I needed to save before quitting my steady-paying job for a life of commission...not surprisingly, it wasn’t enough, but I knew I had to go for it, and I haven’t looked back.”

And just like that, in 2013, Mary stepped into a brand new world—one that allowed her to blend design, connection, and entrepreneurship in a way that finally felt like home.

Putting People First, Always

As part of the Mission Realty Team at REAL Brokerage, Mary’s focus has never been on the sale—it’s about the people.

“I strive to make sure the experience when working with me doesn’t feel transactional,” Mary says. “I want them to know they can call me any time, even if it’s years after we closed. They become part of my tribe.”

It’s a mindset that’s served her well. In 2024, Mary closed 36 transactions totaling \$13.2 million in volume, earning her the Top Producer in Units for her team. For 2025, she’s aiming even





higher, with a \$20 million goal already in motion.

Beyond the numbers, she's making a mark as a New Agent Mentor, helping the next wave of real estate agents grow with integrity and confidence.

Ceramics, Cats & Maybelle the Sunshine Bus

When Mary's not helping clients find their dream homes or mentoring new agents, she's fully immersed in a life brimming with creativity, color, and a little controlled chaos.

At home, she and her husband, Nick, have created a space that's equal parts cozy, quirky, and hands-on. Their pottery studio—yes, right at home—is where the two spend hours crafting beautiful ceramics from scratch. “We both love working with our hands,” Mary says. “Pottery has become such a grounding creative outlet for us. There's something peaceful about the process—getting messy, working the clay, and creating something useful and beautiful.”

Their home is also filled with furry companions—five, to be exact. Luna, their sweet 9-year-old border collie, is the heart of the pack. She's been known to tag along on home showings and was even featured in the pet edition of Real Producers. The Soroka household also includes Blix, Wolfgang, Frankie, and Atticus—affectionately known as Lil' Nakes, a hairless Sphinx cat who keeps things interesting and the thermostat high.

And, of course, there's Maybelle—Mary's vintage 1976 bright yellow VW Westfalia bus. Owning Maybelle was a long-held dream that finally came true a few years ago, and now, she's a staple in Mary's life—and often a source of smiles for anyone who sees her cruising around town.

“She's pure sunshine on wheels,” Mary says. “She's old, a little temperamental, but totally magical. When I take her out, people wave, smile, and share stories about their own VW buses. It's like an instant community.”

When she's not working or throwing pottery, you might find Mary gardening, painting, crocheting, or off on a trip overseas with Nick, as she loves to travel. Their weekends are often a mix of nature, art, and simple joys—campfires, antique store finds, and a well-placed hammock.

“I think our life is a little unconventional, but it's full of all the things we love,” she shares. “I think that balance—of hustle and creativity, of work and play—is what keeps me energized and connected to what really matters.”

Mary's home and hobbies are a reflection of her outlook on life: colorful, heartfelt, and unapologetically authentic. And just like her pottery, her perfectly imperfect

VW, and her travels overseas, every little detail of her life tells a story.

Creating Real Estate Magic for the Long Haul

Mary's vision for the future includes a blend of imagination and heart. She and Nick dream of building unique, creative structures on their property to offer guests one-of-a-kind experiences. And maybe one day, she'll be flying them there herself—earning her pilot's license is also on her to-do list.

In the meantime, she's focused on growing a fulfilling business with deep client relationships, steady growth, and a collaborative mindset.

“I believe in running my business with a spirit of contribution and collaboration, both with my clients and colleagues. Leading with sincerity and authenticity—both personally and professionally—creates the meaningful connections I strive for.”

For those aspiring to be top producers, Mary shares some heartfelt advice: “Focus on relationships over transactions,” Mary says. “Success comes from how well you serve others. Mindset is everything. This business is easy—if we can get out of our own way. If we want more, we have to become more, which means working just as hard on ourselves as we do on our business.”

