

WORKSPACE: RON MOODY

After 42 years, appraiser starts second firm, enjoys life Downtown

By Karen Brune Mathis
Managing Editor

Ron Moody is a numbers guy. He knows what to look for and what they mean.

Moody has been a real estate appraiser for 42 years. At 63, not only is he still working, but he branched off from a partnership that carried his name for more than 30 years to start Moody Appraisal Group.

"I like working with numbers. I like talking to people. I like figuring out solutions," Moody said from his new office on the ground floor of the AvMed Building on the Southbank.

Moody focuses on Northeast Florida and specializes in real estate appraisals for residential, commercial and industrial properties as well as for special purpose uses, such as churches, and for litigation support. That includes eminent domain appraisals and complex real estate cases.

Over the years his company has appraised many high-profile structures, including the former Independent Life Building, which is now Wells Fargo Center, and the Jacksonville Landing.

At his seven-member Moody Appraisal Group, established Jan. 5, he created three appraisal teams that focus on courtroom and litigation support; banking and credit unions; and residential appraisals, which include mortgage loan purposes, estate appraisals and divorce cases.

The son of a U.S. Navy sailor, Moody was born in Philadelphia and moved around, but through the moves attended schools in Jacksonville, graduating from what was then known as Forrest High School, class of 1969.

He went to Florida Junior College, now Florida State College at Jacksonville, for two years. Then it was on to the University of North Florida, which began as a two-year, upper-level college. Moody was in UNF's first graduating class in 1974.

Moody found his career by taking a program elective at UNF, "a very basic real estate course." First he was intrigued and then he fully embraced the program and graduated with a degree in business, focused on real estate.

During his fourth year of college, he worked for appraiser Stewart Steeg and upon graduation, joined Steeg and Lampe

Appraisal Associates and stayed five years.

He then helped establish Broom, Cantrell, Moody & Johnson followed by Broom, Moody, Johnson & Grainger Inc., for which he eventually was CEO. Two years ago, it aligned with Valbridge Property Advisors, a national commercial real estate appraisal and advisory services firm.

His current staff includes Mary, his wife of 44 years, a retired Orange Park hair stylist. She is the receptionist.

The couple moved from Fleming Island in Clay County to the San Marco Place condominium tower on the Southbank three years ago.

They had purchased a unit seven years ago and when they realized how much they liked it, they bought another unit on another floor. They moved Mary's mother into the first condo.

It coincided with the Broom, Moody, Johnson & Grainger firm move in the fall of 2012 from Southside to the top floor of 121 Atlantic Place on the Downtown Northbank.

Moody found himself living and working Downtown. Now at 1300 Riverplace Blvd., he is next door to home.

It's a different lifestyle.

In San Marco Place, the 142 neighbors can arrange for quick get-togethers at the click of an email.

He and Mary walk to V Pizza, bb's, Ruth's Chris Steak House, Aardwolf Brewing Co. and other Southbank destinations. They're next to the Skyway, which they take to the Downtown Northbank.

On Saturday mornings, they walk the bridges and head to San Marco for breakfast at Beach Diner or Panera Bread. They take in movies at San Marco Theatre. They are avid Jacksonville Jaguars fans and enjoy live theater performances. There also are festivals on the Northbank.

"A lot of the baby boomers and young professionals are trying to embrace this lifestyle," Moody said.

Moody said he didn't completely understand the pent-up demand from those cohorts who enjoy Downtown living, "where you live, work and play."

"It is a fascinating idea whose time has come," he said.



Ron Moody created Moody Appraisal Group on Jan. 5. Along with bringing half of his staff from his previous company, he also hired his wife, Mary, as the receptionist. They will celebrate their 45th anniversary in May. She considers him a workaholic.

Photos by Karen Brune Mathis

While Moody misses the golf course near his former home, he still plays once a month. He doesn't miss the commute, now easily saving \$400 a month in gas. "And it's hard to say how much time you save in traffic," he said.

Moody wakes up each day at 4:50 a.m., although he sets his clock 10 minutes ahead.

On a typical day, he works out in the condominium's on-site gym and heads to the office between 6:30 a.m. and 8 a.m., working until 6-7 p.m. He works half-days on Saturday. Mary claims he's a workaholic.

He and Mary have four adult children, with three in Jacksonville. Of their eight grandchildren, five are here.

Moody doesn't plan to retire. "I'm not sure you're supposed to stop. I'd like to go as long as I can go," he said.

kmathis@jaxdailyrecord.com
@MathisKb
(904) 356-2466



The informal printed sign is holding a place on the reception wall while Moody waits for the official one.



Art by Monica Foye, Ron and Mary Moody's daughter, is a focal point in the reception area. Foye created The Art Garage Jax at 2683 St. Johns Bluff Road with her husband, Eddy. It provides art classes and events for children and adults. Foye has a gallery of her original paintings and also works on commission.



Moody continues to unpack in his office, but among his first arrangements is the collection of family photos.



Moody is a member of the Appraisal Institute, with a designation of MAI, and a designated Senior Residential Appraiser. He is a state-certified general real estate appraiser and a Florida real estate broker. He was the 1997 president of the East Florida Chapter of the Appraisal Institute. He also is a past president of the Jacksonville Chapter of The Society of Real Estate Appraisers in 1983.



Moody was a partner in a log cabin development in Maggie Valley, N.C.