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## LANSE ROBB

LANDVEST | CHRISTIE'S

Deal Maker With A Purpose

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## Deal Maker With A Purpose

Over the past 30 years, the landscape of real estate has drastically changed – from flipping through MLS books to scrolling down endless lists and from knocking on doors to sending out e-blasts. For real estate powerhouse and LandVest Broker Lanse Robb, how and why deals get done hasn't changed much, though he is glad the days of cold-calling are a thing of the past for him.

The Beverly Farms native is at his best when he's solving complex property puzzles that benefit everyone involved. Throughout his career, Lanse has become a community expert. He is the go-to broker for ABC's Channel 5 Chronicle program

and has been dubbed "the Rolls Royce of North Shore Brokers."

But for Lanse, success and awards are just a small piece of the puzzle. Getting a multi-million dollar, split-use property with several people involved to the table – that's the real prize. While many of his friends and neighbors are in or eyeing retirement, Lanse still seeks more complicated deals.

"Some of [my friends] are retiring. I don't even know what that word is," he said.

Even after three decades, he said there's still so much to learn.

### Do Your Homework

Lanse knows firsthand the value of learning from the best. In 1991, with his sights set on a career in real estate with the region's best firm, a young Lanse knocked on the door to the LandVest office in search of an opportunity. He was turned away and told he would need some experience. Two years later, he knocked again ... and didn't take no for an answer.

"I figured my only hook was that I can offer the relationships. I said I can't guarantee you anything more than that, and they said, okay, you're hired."

LandVest President, the late Robert "Bordo" Borden, took Lanse under his

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wing from that day forward. Bordo told him, "There's an opportunity, you can start from scratch and make no money, but you get to work under me." Lanse was sold.

Over the years, Bordo taught him the tenets of business he still holds in high regard today: Do your homework and always communicate.

"You can't just show up," he said.

Bordo taught him to learn about people and their interests before he arrived at the door.

"This was before the internet, so it was hard to get that... We had to go figure out how to do it without the internet."

Lanse did his homework – without Google or Facebook – and knocked on doors, using his car as a satellite office to jot down notes, network and spend valuable time becoming an expert on the region. To this day, he operates the same way; there's just less door knocking and more calls and emails.

While cold calls weren't his favorite way of doing business, the work he



put in then laid the foundation he has continued to build upon, creating a successful career as the overall top-ranked broker in Essex County for residential sales above \$1 million with an unprecedented \$819 million in residential real estate sales.

He still spends most of his days in the car and on the phone, brokering deals and making the puzzle pieces fit together.

"The office is the North Shore," he said.

If it's a relatively calm Wednesday or Thursday, his office is likely on a ski lift. He may opt out of FaceTime, but he will always take the call because his search for another great deal never stops.

"Focus on getting the deal done, and if you can't get the deal done, live for the next deal. Live for a better fight."

### Highest and Best Use

Looking at a completed puzzle is satisfying, but only because of the work that went into putting it all together. Lanse has worked with families for decades, helping them find the highest

and best use for vast properties across the region.

"That's what keeps me interested that there's still deals out there that are big enough and complicated enough that you're not just selling a house," he said. "A lot of our deals are really complex; we sell pieces like the main house at one point, then additional land later on and gift some of this to a trust... So it's a multi-generational job."

One of his favorite projects spanned 20 years and was worth every moment. The renowned Crane Castle was donated in the 1920s, but the family kept the sprawling 600 acres surrounding the home.

"We worked with the family for over two decades," Lanse said. "Finally, the family said we've got to sell it, and by that time, there were 15 or 20 people that were going to benefit from the sale of the property. So we designed a disposition plan for the family and gave them options."

The family opted to list the property on the open market, which made some community members nervous.

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But Lanse and five other members of the LandVest team turned the deal into a win-win-win. They connected the sellers with a buyer from the West Coast with no interest in turning it into a development. Instead, their vision was of a community-supported agriculture farm, where members pay to harvest and purchase local, seasonal food directly from a farmer each week.

“The town was thrilled, the conservation-minded abutters and people on the North Shore were thrilled, and the family was thrilled. That’s what makes it really fun – when you can pull that off and actually get paid to do that.”

He points to his assistant of 15 years, Sophie, and his colleagues as integral to his success.

“There’s no way we can do what we do without great people around us,” he said. “It takes an army to get a lot of these listings done.”

Real estate is the only career Lanse has ever known.

“It’s all I can do besides manual labor,” he said with a dry smile.

There’s no such thing as a cookie-cutter transaction, and that’s what Lanse loves about real estate. Even after 30 years, every transaction brings with it an opportunity to learn something new. As a member of the Corporate Board of the Peabody Essex Museum, the oldest continuously operating and collecting museum in the United



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States. In that role, Lanse builds relationships with corporate partners to bring awareness and garner support for the museum.

He gets his work ethic and passion for preserving art and history honestly. His mother, Anne Bell Robb, is a renowned artist known for capturing small vignettes of landscapes, homes and historic places across America and abroad. Much of her work is recognized as it has been printed on notecards or even hand-stitched into rugs. At 84, she is still capturing scenes in acrylic with no intention of slowing down.

This year, the family decided to donate one of Anne’s original Ansel Adams prints from her

collection to the PEM. Anne worked under Dr. Edwin Land at Polaroid testing photography film results alongside Ansel Adams, a photographer known for his black-and-white photos of the American West. Anne studied alongside Ansel at times. She took one of only two photographs of him, with an at the time state-of-the-art double-lense camera, which now hangs in Lanse’s dining room. The family is excited to see the original artwork hanging at the PEM – at its highest and best use for the community.

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