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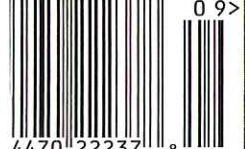
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NICHE MARKETING

Brokers with specific expertise — from horse farms to eco-sensitive construction to bona fide antique houses — help buyers find the right fit



THIS 12-ACRE Amherst, New Hampshire, horse farm is listed for \$1,795,000 by Wetherbee Farm Real Estate. It has a renovated 1920s farmhouse, a new 10-stall barn, and an indoor arena.

Written by **LARRY LINDNER**

ASK GLADYS FOX WHY A BUYER LOOKING for a property that can accommodate horses needs a seasoned equestrian as a real estate agent, and she'll tell you that someone without the right background could inadvertently steer you toward a barn that lacks the headroom for, say, a 17-hand horse. Ask her what a "hand" is, and she'll inform you that it's 4 inches, and you measure to the withers. Follow up with the obvious question about withers, and she'll explain they're a horse's shoulders, just in front of the saddle.

At which point it becomes pretty clear that Fox is right — you do need a realty office with people knowledgeable about horses to make an educated horse property purchase.

It's not just the horsey set that needs knowledgeable specialty agents. Fox's company, Wetherbee Farm Real Estate in Boxborough, Massachusetts, is one of several agencies in the region that cover a specific niche. There are a lot of niches to fill, given that New England of-

fers more varied housing stock than perhaps any other area of the country — waterfront properties along hundreds of miles of coastline, an unusually high concentration of historic houses, imaginatively designed spaces in conservation-minded cities that would rather retrofit an old commercial building as residential lofts than tear it down. No wonder there are a good number of specialty real estate brokers, agencies, and guides to help buyers find the property that suits their fancy.



GOING GREEN Perhaps you want a home with environmentally friendly features, both to cut down on your carbon footprint and save money on utility bills. Or maybe you want to buy some land and build your own green home on a solar-warmed, south-facing slope. A real estate agent certified by EcoBroker International can help you find what you want. Just plug in your desired location at their website to search for an EcoBroker for that area.

Certification requires that real estate agents take courses on energy and the environment. Like many EcoBrokers, A.J. Bellville, co-owner of

Coldwell Banker Bellville Realty in Brattleboro, Vermont (buyvthome.com), says that even before he became certified, he had familiarity "with solar energy, wind power, south-facing house orientation, air exchangers, and some of the green building materials." EcoBrokers tend to know green builders in their locales, too, for those who want to build from scratch. Bellville suggests not being too taken with the word "green" as a home descriptor. "There are shades of green," he says. A home may have eco-friendly features, but not be green through and through. *EcoBroker International*, 800-706-4321, ecobroker.com.



UNUSUAL URBAN SPACES A firehouse, a church, a 100-year-old mansion divided into a two-family. These are just a few of the repurposed, often funky spaces that real estate agent Paul Campano has brokered for adventurous home buyers — people who, for instance, want to go from the upstairs bedrooms to the first floor via a fire pole, or who would enjoy working at a kitchen tabletop that stands right where an Episcopalian altar used to be. Campano, an agent at Keller Williams in Cambridge, Massachusetts, brokers properties all over Boston and its close suburbs. His listings are special enough that they landed him a spot on WCVB-TV's (Boston Channel 5's) *Chronicle*. *Paul Campano, Keller Williams Realty, 955 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA; 617-304-3686, adaptivemass.com.*



HORSE PROPERTIES Whether you're looking for a small family home with a two-stall barn on a couple of acres or a large commercial enterprise with paddocks, tack rooms, and riding trails galore, Wetherbee Farm Real Estate is the brokerage to help you conduct your search. Owner Gladys Fox, a real estate agent for more than 25 years