

# Team Spirit

**He builds houses, she sells them, and this husband-and-wife duo is booming in the busted real estate market**

By Kevin Kane

Current in Westfield

The real-estate market may be down, but a unique contractor-realtor combination in Westfield is beating the odds.

Sobczak Construction Services has been serving Hamilton County and surrounding areas for 20 years, but business has boomed recently after owner Dave Sobczak added a new in-house realtor to the team: his wife, Stacey. Dave builds the houses, Stacey sells them, and the husband-and-wife Sobczak team has used the unique arrangement to survive the economic downturn while some competitors have gone out of business.

Before selling real estate as an F.C. Tucker agent, Stacey was the founder of the once-flourishing Broad Ripple Pie Co., even finishing as a 1992 finalist for an entrepreneur of the year award. For years, she was known as “The Pie Lady,” but the sale of the company left her looking for her next challenge. She spent some time doing office work for Sobczak Construction, but three years ago, Dave had an idea to get his wife a new role in the family business.

“He said, ‘Why don’t you get your real estate license so I can build ‘em and you can sell ‘em,’” Stacey said. “People tell me, ‘What a bad time to get into real estate.’ But I’ve sold 27 houses in the last 12 months.”

The Sobczaks said their recent success stems from a few factors. First, they work hard, staying busy seven days a week. But they also find time to remain active in the Westfield community, which Stacey said allows her to do a great deal of networking. The company does residential, commercial and remodeling work, instead of focusing on one area, and they’ve scaled back their projects to remain conservative during the recession. However, Dave said Sobczak Construction now has a unique advantage with Stacey on board.

“The input she gives me from the real estate side of it ... She knows what people like and what they don’t like.” Dave said. “You can stay pretty current with what people are looking for.”

Stacey takes that knowledge with her when the couple designs and builds speculative homes. They create the floor plan and design every aspect of the house, from carpet to cabinets. That “inside information” doesn’t keep the company’s spec houses on the market very long, and it allows home buyers to build a house that will have the greatest potential resale value.



The Sobczaks are currently selling two speculative houses – one in the Pines of Westfield and one in Oak Manor. They also have a lot in Viking Meadows.

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Photo by Shane Rodimer

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Stacey said being involved with so many details is tedious, but it’s also fun and worthwhile.

“No one else is taking the time to do that,” she said. “No one should build a house without having a realtor help them, because they can tell you where you’ll get your money on the resale.”

Apparently, home buyers agree. Stacey said

her sales have increased every year since she’s started, and she’s currently among the top 10 in sales at the Suburban North F.C. Tucker branch in Carmel.

The couple said they’ve received more inquiries about new homes in the past month than throughout the rest of the year. But while

business may be booming, the Sobczaks said they don’t want the company to get much bigger than the current five-man, one-woman operation.

“We don’t want it to get that big,” Stacey said. “If it got too big, we couldn’t have fun with it.”