

917 Winterwood Drive  
Matthews, NC 28105  
22 February 2002

Ms. Georgia Resch  
Long and Foster Realtors  
9171 Baltimore National Pike  
Ellicott City, MD 21042

Ms. Resch:

You most likely do not remember me but we met about five years ago when I had just passed the exam for real estate licensure and was trying to decide whether to activate that license. For a variety of reasons, most notably my antipathy for working on Sunday, I decided not to pursue a career as a real estate agent. Had I decided otherwise, I would have loved to have become as good at, and as dedicated to, the job as Jim Bimstefer is.

When I left Maryland in 1999, I planned to maintain my home there as a rental/investment property. During the course of the next 18 months, I literally called every Property Management company in the Baltimore telephone book except which specifically stated that they did not manage single family homes. I even had "contracts" with two of them and gave them funds for repairs, marketing, etc. For approximately \$6,000, I got the interior of my house painted but even that was so shoddily done that we had to repaint once we had a contract on the house.

Finally, in the summer of 2000, I listed the house for sale through a referral by the agent through whom I had purchased my home in Matthews. That November, I returned to Maryland for a visit and got the distinct impression that my house was strictly an inventory listing. Granted, I deliberately did not tell my Realtor that I was coming but, in two full days of trying, the listing office could not produce any evidence that the house had been shown and the listing agent could not even fit me into his schedule during those two days nor the following two.

Before leaving Maryland, I picked up some of the Reader's Digest sized homes magazines. Upon returning home, I picked five agents whose advertisements seemed to promise the best hope of getting the place sold. I wrote identical letters to each of them describing my plight and asking if they were interested in selling the house for me.

Each agent responded affirmatively so I scheduled another trip to Maryland and asked each of them to come to my house and show me why he/she would be my best bet to sell the property. All showed up. A couple were late and one explained his appearance by saying that he had been working on another listing. Jim was on time, dressed to the nines, and had a comprehensive presentation.

He got the listing and although it took us over a year to do the job, he was always responsive. He was always cautiously optimistic but never made any outrageous promises, such as, "We will have this place sold by ...." He always returned my calls and e-mails in a timely manner and did a lot of things that I would not have been surprised had he told me that I had just exceeded the bounds of the Realtor's responsibility. Among those, he had to struggle with the first listing agent to get the original listing terminated although it had expired several months earlier. During an unexpected cold snap, he paid for 100 gallons of oil out of his own pocket because the oil company with which I had done business for 10 years would not deliver the oil and bill it to me. He made two trips to the house where one should have been sufficient to provide access for people who had done an inadequate job the first time, including that same oil company which had to inspect a 60 year old furnace twice in one month. He worked with several potential buyers trying to arrange creative and/or conventional financing when their buyers' agents apparently could not be bothered. After the house closed, he still spent at least two days helping me recover a Cashier's Check which I had sent to a title company last May when we had a contract which would have required me to provide funds at closing.

There is a lot that I admire and appreciate about Maryland but by the time that I met Jim, I was totally disenchanted with any and everything related to real estate in Maryland. I had thoroughly decided that everyone from Realtors even to lead paint inspectors who worked in the real estate business were lazy liars. I even made two very sincere attempts to give the house away, one of which would have entailed my continuing to make the payments for a time if the new occupants would just work on the repair list. (I knew that this was not a wise move but I got that desperate.)

Over the past 30 years, I have bought at least a dozen homes, worked with several property management companies, and sold a few of those homes. If I ranked all of the real estate people with whom I have worked, none has worked as hard and as earnestly as Jim Bimstefer.

Very sincerely and gratefully,



Robert E. Thore