

Commercial Executive

magazine

NATE NATHAN

Nathan & Associates, Inc.

Perfecting the Art of Mixing
Business with Pleasure

Featured Brokers

Larry Downey
and
Jerry Jacobs

Cushman & Wakefield

Professional Profile

Geoffrey D. Harris

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Nate Nathan and

By Christia Gibbons



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Associates

Perfecting the Art of Mixing Business with Pleasure

Nate Nathan is a big ol' softy, which might come as a surprise to those who know him as a fierce competitor.

He has Dr. Seuss characters painted on his office wall, a box of toys for the children of his associates to play with when they visit their parents and a glint in his eye. Around the firm, his glass-walled office is called "the lodge."

"This is a kid-friendly joint," Nathan says. "This place is like me and the Coral Reefer Band," he says referring to personal favorite Jimmy Buffett.

"Someone once said we don't have



meetings, we have happy hour.”

Nathan is a man who introduces people to their wives, takes associates and their spouses on trips to Hawaii and rents a yacht off Coronado so his team can see the fireworks from the bay on the Fourth of July. The employee manual is a puppet book with photos.

Amy Waters, his executive assistant, says Nathan loves his job. “If I had a dollar for every time he says that,” she wishes.

He’s also the guy that brokers multi-million-dollar lands deals for such master-planned communities as Verrado in the west Valley and DC Ranch in the northeast Valley. Currently Nate Nathan and Associates has more than 250,000 residential lot listings and yearly sells land for more than 10 million square feet for retail and industrial uses.

Nathan is the kind of guy that when he was just starting out in the real estate business and was asked to “stack” a meeting for a rezoning hear-

“Family and health are first, fun is second. Third is business”

Nate Nathan

ing, he successfully rounded up supporters by offering free beer, Kentucky Fried Chicken and a bus trip to the meeting.

With hair down to his shoulders, Nathan says he couldn’t get hired at a big firm so he started his own with a \$30,000 loan from Joe Lampe on the condition that in the future he’d give young people the same opportunity, and Nathan has lived by that philosophy ever since. (And, he paid back the loan in nine months).

Nathan really got his

start, though, in Chicago with parents Sarge and Pooky who, he says, taught him that truth was always the way to go. “If I don’t know what to do, I think ‘What would Pooky do.’”

A surfer boy at heart, the Midwest transplant participated in water polo at Arizona State University and actually took Surfing 101 at Big Surf in Tempe as part of his college education. He lifeguarded at the Mountain Shadows Resort. He continues to wear his hair longish.

Mornings start about 3 a.m., with a spinning class and weight lifting between 4:30-6:30 a.m. Bedtime is 9 p.m. and sleep about a minute later.

College friend and Nathan associate Ray Rodey says he doesn’t know how Nathan does it all. “He’s afraid to sleep,” Rodey speculates. “He doesn’t want to miss anything. He wants to compete, to succeed, win a deal and

A trip to Nathan’s Web site is a travel log of sorts as photos rotate showing various members of the office gang on jet skis, floating in a hot-air balloon, sailing, and riding horseback. “When you hire me you hire 14 others,” Nathan says. “Where I go they go.”

These office photos end up on holiday greeting cards, posters and T-shirts.



Truth, Honesty and Integrity

I handle everyone the way I want to be handled

succeed at being a dad.”

Nathan doesn't invest in any of the projects he brokers and stands for truth, honesty and integrity. "You're looking at the marketing department," Nathan says of himself.

Those who know him say his boys come first. Nathan has been married 16 years to Tally and his sons are Max 14 and Brenner, 11.

"Family and health are first, fun is second. Third is business," Nathan says. "When I'm with my kids, the phone is off."

While Nathan insists there's no boss at the office and success comes from his associates, they say he's the driver.

"He dictates and generates the office karma," says Valerie Haupt, who is an associate researcher and

has worked at Nathan and Associates for 14 years.

She relishes the spontaneity and creativity swirling in the office.

"It's the energy. There's an amazing energy in this office every day," she says. "Nate sets a tone. Basically you look out for him and he'll look out for us."

She describes her co-workers as friends who all feel lucky to be working with Nathan and the office environment as one free from politics

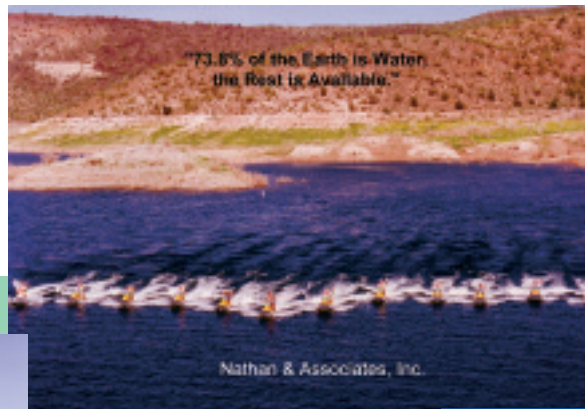
and performance reviews. Nathan will just tell someone if they need to work harder, Haupt says.

"He chooses not to make a big deal of anything unless it is and the man can't keep a secret, he can't hold back," she says. "He has the ability to open people up and bring out their strong qualities."

While some people may need corporate structure, Nathan does not, Haupt says. "Basically he keeps it simple and works hard, hard, hard."

"He has a great personality, spunk and energetic," she says. "He has the ability to see something in all of us and gets it all together."

Waters, his executive assistant, says an office



joke is that “if it’s 3 p.m., someone is probably putting on a pot of coffee,” as the office seemingly runs on high-octane all the time.

With Nathan for nearly 19 years, Waters says the office’s success and staff loyalty comes from the environment Nathan creates.

If a child is sick, needs a chaperone for a field trip or is in a play, his or her parent isn’t stuck at an inflexible office. “It’s very important to Nate that we have that ability to have that balance,” she says. “This environment is about caring for people and wanting them to be successful.”

Rodey said he admires Nathan’s enthusiasm. The two met at ASU and played water polo together before Rodey went off and ran his own brokerage firm in Colorado. He joined Nathan and Associates 16 years ago.

“Passion, it just oozes out of him in whatever he does, whether being a dad, taking care of employees, guiding us,” Rodey says.

Outside the office, Nathan is the cool cucumber who gets the deal done. The brokerage world might be surprised at the softer side, Rodey says, “the side of him that is incredi-

The office slogan:
**“73.8 percent
of the Earth
is water.
The rest
is available.”**



bly warm and kind.”

John Graham, president of Sunbelt Holdings, a real estate development, management and investment company, tells of how Nathan introduced him to his wife.

“It’s the only deal he’s done with me that I didn’t have to pay a commission,” Graham says. Nathan was the best man. The two have been close friends for 20 years.

People might not know how big a “softy” he is, Graham says. “Nate has truly one of the biggest hearts and is one of the most emotional people I’ve ever met. I’ve seen him cry.”

Referring to his friend as “the secret sauce,” Graham says whether it’s driving his kids to school or taking them on vacation, Nathan is “the singular, the most devoted parent to his two boys I’ve ever seen. He’d never let business or anything on earth get in the way of taking care of his two boys.”

Nathan could be summing up his approach to life and success in and out of the office when he says, “I handle everyone the way I want to be handled.” ●

www.nathanandassociatesinc.com

- (1) April Williams (2) Casey Christensen
(3) Jodi McMaster (4) Scott Hintze
(5) Courtney Buck (6) Amy Probst
(7) Valerie Haupt (8) Jennifer Nuss
(9) Ray Rodey (10) Amy Waters
(11) Nate Nathan (12) Dave Mullard
(13) Shannon McLaughlin
(14) Joe Colucci (15) Sean Gillespie

