

# *The* Light

How a family of  
native New Yorkers found  
happiness in New Jersey  
—and how you can too.

# *at the end of the* Tunnel

*Presented by*

*Rabney Rabney, Esq.*

*Sales Associate*

*3rd Generation Native New Yorker*

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## Dedication

This book is dedicated to my son, Zan, who was born at Roosevelt Hospital on the Westside of Manhattan and the reason we began to consider a move. He is also a constant source of joy in our lives. He takes us back into areas we have left behind and forward into territory that we never would have visited. It is also dedicated to my life and business partner Fran, a second generation native New Yorker, who insisted that we look at Maplewood, NJ as a possible option even if we drove here planning to rule it out. Without her vision and willingness to keep an open mind, many of the best things in my life would not exist today. She also gave up her limited personal time to sit with me and support me while I wrote this book instead of going to a NJ strip mall.

# My Story

If you are one of the many New Yorkers who currently knows deep down that it is time to make a change but are struggling with the idea of leaving NYC, then I am writing to you. The need for change may be a result of many different things. It may be caused by finances, the birth of a child or the simple desire to have more space inside and out. You know that there are other places to live besides NYC but just can't possibly see yourself living anywhere else. As a third generation native New Yorker who has been there and as a top producing REALTOR® who has helped many happy people make their move from NYC to NJ, I will share my experience and what I have learned to help you sort through the myths and overcome your psychological barrier so that you too can make the move with ease and excitement.

We moved to Maplewood, NJ twelve years ago from the Upper Westside of Manhattan. At that time, we were looking at Manhattan pre-schools for our son. My partner Fran, a second generation native New Yorker, and I loved living in the city and spending summer weekends at our beach house on Long Island. I really did not want to move. In 2002, however, we knew the time had come for our family to make a change. We moved in order to find the right place to raise our son, a place with good schools and a community of open-minded people. It also had to be a place where Fran and I could be happy.

We liked what we had read about Maplewood but as native New Yorkers we drove to NJ thinking that we would probably rule it out. After all, it was NJ. While we couldn't have ever imagined ourselves living in the suburbs, this was not what we had imagined the suburbs to be like at all. In fact, it is often said that the area in which we live is a suburb filled with people who swore they would never live in the suburbs.

When we got to Maplewood, we knew we would stay. As we drove through the tree lined streets of beautiful old homes and the town with the

independently owned shops I said to Fran if we were looking for a weekend home and found this town we would be trying to get here on Thursday and stay until Monday. It was like a Norman Rockwell painting.

At that moment, I experienced a psychological shift. I realized that we could live there all the time and have easy access to Manhattan and all that it offers by direct train or a short car ride. It got even better when we learned that most of her neighbors were just like us, people who had recently left NYC.

In a past life, I practiced law in NY for over twelve years. For nine of those years I had my own practice in Lower Manhattan. I currently work as a REALTOR®, in partnership with my life partner Fran who was formerly a Senior Vice President in the Music Business, focusing on International Sales and Marketing. We focus on Essex County and surrounding areas. We are grateful because when we moved out here we had a chance to completely redesign our lives.

Our combined skills and training make for an awesome real estate team that has been very effective at both marketing homes and representing buyers. We pride ourselves on the fact that much of our business is referrals from past clients and friends who have been beyond satisfied with our services. Many of our buyers have been from NYC.

If you're thinking that it might be time for you to make a move, read on. In this book I will explore the beliefs that we had and have heard from others about moving from NYC to NJ, and highlight the reasons why we never looked back.

I can't *possibly*  
live anywhere  
but NYC!

“When one door of happiness closes, another opens; but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one which has been opened for us.”

~Helen Keller~

## Belief N<sup>o</sup>. 1

### **I need to be close to everything that the city offers.**

Yes, NYC has so much to offer and while it may be great to have everything at your doorstep, let's be realistic, NY is a big place and not everything the city offers is at your doorstep. To fully take advantage of the city, you have to often take some form of transportation to get to a particular restaurant, venue or event, even to visit a friend. If you drive your own car, then you need to find parking when you get there.

We live in Essex County, NJ, which unlike Bergen County, has direct train (no need to change trains) service into NYC. Depending on the time of day that I travel, I can leave my home and be in Penn Station in 30 minutes. That is better than some NYC residents can say. If I choose to travel by car, depending upon where I am in Manhattan, I can be home in as little as 30 minutes as well. When I get home, I park my car in my driveway which is included in my monthly housing cost.

## Belief N<sup>o</sup>. 2

### **I am just a city person. If I leave NYC it would have to be to a different city.**

I believed this for a long time and I have heard this from many friends—not that any of us were ever serious about moving from NYC when we believed this. If NY is the city you love, if your friends and family are here, why would you want to leave and move further away from there?

When I moved out of the city, I was shocked that I didn't miss living in the city at all. In fact, the first few times that I went back I really noticed how dirty and noisy it can be in most areas. I couldn't even hear a cell phone call if I was standing on the street. I never recognized the intensity of it until I moved out.

Although I have been living out of NY and in this community for twelve years now, I still have moments when I can't believe the beauty of my daily surroundings. Whether it's after a snow fall and the bare trees are blanketed in white, the spring when everything comes back into bloom or the fall when the colors are at their most beautiful, I often just take a minute to appreciate where I live.

## Belief N<sup>o</sup>. 3

### **Most people would live in NYC if they could — it's the best place to live!**

Let's be honest, New Yorkers do believe that to some extent. That's what I always thought. NYC was the center of the universe until it wasn't the center of my universe anymore.

Once I moved here I learned that there were some really great people living outside of the city and quickly recognized that my new community offered even more of what I needed than I was getting on the Upper Westside. It was diverse and welcoming. It offered my son space to play and space to be who he is meant to be. Many of the people who live here are just like your neighbors in NYC, in fact they were your neighbors.

Moving out of the city provided me with an incredible psychological freedom. If I could live outside of Manhattan and be happy, I could now possibly live anywhere.

## Belief N<sup>o</sup>. 4

### **I love my building and my apartment, it's my home.**

I get that, I do, but home is where we make it. It is where we have our family, our pets, our friends and community. Imagine more bedrooms, more bathrooms, more closets, outdoor space, a good size kitchen, a full dining room, a finished basement, a second refrigerator, etc. at a fraction of the price of your NYC place.

When we left Manhattan we sold our two-bedroom, two-bathroom apartment and bought a five-bedroom, four and a half-bathroom house. In today's market we could get our Maplewood house for about \$450,000 less than that NYC apartment would cost to buy. We also got a fireplace, a yard, a finished basement, a family room, attic storage, a three-car garage and an office. We could grill on our large deck, watch our son play on the swing set, drink wine in front of the fire and have fun big dinners in our dining room. Imagine the good times that you can have and the memories that you can create in your new home.

## Belief N<sup>o</sup>. 5

### **I like being able to walk to things, I don't want to drive everywhere!**

Yes, this may be an adjustment. I spend more time in a car now than I did in Manhattan. In fact, when I moved here, I hadn't driven a car in nearly ten years. If you move here, you will want to have a car.

Having said that, however, many towns are walking towns and you won't have to drive to everything all the time. You can choose a house that is close to the town or train station if this is important to you. Montclair, Maplewood, South Orange and Millburn are especially good choices if this is a big concern for you. Our towns have shops, restaurants, coffee bars, movie theatres and direct trains to Manhattan that are very close to many homes.

You can also choose to take a walk in nature. Essex County is home to South Mountain and Eagle Rock Reservations, nature preserves where you can take hikes in the woods just minutes from your house. This really appealed to us. We choose our first home very close to the reservation.

But it's  
New Jersey —  
*it's not cool!*

“Why Are New Yorkers So Depressed? Because the light at the end of their tunnel is New Jersey!”

~Found on the Internet~

## Belief N<sup>o</sup>. 6

### **I can't stand the thought of living in New Jersey... or worse, saying that I do.**

We all know that NJ has long been the butt jokes, especially for New Yorkers. I shared one with you above and I'll share another with you now: NJ is a state where people go to a landfill next to a turnpike on alternate weekends to cheer a team from New York.

My son just couldn't understand why the Giants play in NJ but the team is called the NY Giants. I can't understand why when a major world wide event occurs at Giant Stadium it is publicized as coming from N.Y. New Yorkers love to make fun of N.J. when it's convenient but also love to call it New York when it suits their needs.

Honestly, most New Yorkers probably know very little about New Jersey but love to make fun of it just because they can. Yet they are happy to attend a concert, sporting event or take a trip to the Jersey Shore given the opportunity. When we first moved here, we didn't know much but within two weeks of living here I knew that we had discovered NY's best kept secret (talk about a NY point of view).

The truth is that people in NY give a lot more thought to NJ than the other way around. NYers think people in NJ have some kind of inferiority complex about not living in NY. That is simply not true. People who live in NJ, for the most part are extremely happy here and only think about NY when we have a reason to go there.

## Belief N<sup>o</sup>. 7

### **I've heard New Jersey is ugly.**

NJ has a reputation for being industrial, but clearly that is not the entire state, and even NY has some unattractive parts to it. The truth about NJ is it also has parts that are gorgeous. Not only do we have the entire Jersey Shoreline which is world famous, but we also have some amazing towns.

I am focusing on the area where I work and live. Towns like Montclair, Maplewood, West Orange, South Orange and Millburn/ Short Hills which not only offer beautiful homes in a variety of price ranges, but also consist of parks, golf courses and nature preserves. If you are at all uncertain about the beauty of this area, please contact me. I would love to have the opportunity to change your mind. You can reach me through my website at [NJishome.com](http://NJishome.com).

## Belief N<sup>o</sup>. 8

### **My neighbors will probably be people who've never left New Jersey.**

So, we have touched on this one already but just in case you are still concerned, your neighbors will be people just like you. Many of them will have lived in NY at some point in their lives and some will be native New Yorkers.

We have all sorts of life exposure and interesting jobs. Our area is home to TV journalists, award-winning Broadway performers, film and TV actors, musicians, doctors, lawyers, corporate executives, stay at home moms and/or dads, as well as most other professions.

Many of us have traveled the world and some of us have not but it is rare to find someone in the towns in which I work who has never left NJ. Please don't forget that we are only about 30 minutes from Manhattan.

## Belief N<sup>o</sup>. 9

### **I can't stand the thought of eating at chain restaurants and shopping in malls.**

Neither can I, and I promise you that you will not have to eat in chain restaurants. The food was a really big deal for me too. We're very serious about food — the night of our son's birth, we had Shun Lee West delivered to the hospital! But there are many great restaurants in these towns offering all kinds of food. Our family goes out for dim sum locally almost every weekend. And many of the restaurants are BYOB which is great because you can drink what you like without the mark up. As for shopping, when we first moved here, I considered "mall" to be a four letter word. In fact, for the first several years that we lived here, I told my son that I was allergic, but I admit I got past it and now go when it works for me.

If you just can't stand the thought of the indoor shopping experience, you can easily do your shopping in Manhattan. Before you do, however, you may want to consider The Mall at Short Hills which is like shopping on Madison Avenue and 57<sup>th</sup> Street. They have restaurants, no food court and really great stores. It's a similar experience to the Time Warner Center, but larger and of course there's plenty of parking. If you are not averse to the Time Warner Center, you will likely be fine with The Mall at Short Hills.

Then of course we have the strip malls. You know those outdoor parking lots shared by several stores. It sounds bad, but it's not. It's incredibly convenient! Five minutes from my home is a Whole Foods and a Target in a huge shared parking lot. I go, I park, I shop, I put my bags in the car and come home where I once again park in my driveway... all hassle free.

There are also lots of independently owned stores throughout each downtown and shopping locally and supporting local businesses is a great way to help the community to thrive.

## Belief N<sup>o</sup>. 10

### **Homes in the suburbs all look alike and lack character**

Before I came to look at Maplewood, I had no idea how NJ's suburbs looked or the type of houses that were available in there. All I knew was that many people were moving from the Upper Westside and Parkslope to Maplewood and Montclair. My knowledge of NJ was limited to some time I had spent down the shore with my grandparents as a child growing up in NY. I had my vision of the suburbs, but mostly from what I knew of certain parts of Long Island.

When I first drove out here, I could not believe how many beautiful homes were in these towns. Most of the homes are older Victorians, Tudors and Colonials which give the neighborhoods incredible character. Depending upon the type of home you choose, it will feel similar to living in a very large pre-war apartment or brownstone. Some neighborhoods do offer more contemporary homes, so if you prefer post-war style and more open and loft-like space that could be an option for you.

Our wish list  
when we were  
*shopping for a  
home*

“Home is not where you live, but where they understand you”

~Christian Morgenstern~

## Requirement N<sup>o</sup>. 1

### **A diverse, open-minded and welcoming community.**

As Upper Westsiders, we could not imagine ourselves living in a homogeneous environment. One of the best things about NYC for us, is the diversity of the people. Additionally, we're a family of two moms who are raising a son and it was essential that our child be seen as the person he is, not the boy with two mothers. In our community, we not only found diversity, but we found a place that strives towards integration.

The demographics of each community differ from town to town just as they do in the NYC neighborhoods. I recommend that you do your research and visit towns to find the place that feels like home to you.

## Requirement N<sup>o</sup>. 2

### **High quality food had to be readily available.**

We couldn't move to an area where we could not easily get organic food. We wanted it for our whole family, but our son was 2 ½ at that time and it was non-negotiable. Fortunately, we have very easy access to Whole Foods as there are a few of them throughout Essex County where we can easily park, shop in wide aisles, bring the shopping cart to the car for loading, bring our bags home and park in our driveway. There isn't any struggling with bags, trying to get a cab or waiting for delivery.

Additionally, there are many food co-ops run by people in the various neighborhoods, as well as farmers markets that travel each day to a different town from spring to early winter. There are also some really great privately owned food stores throughout the towns, as well as delivery services.

## Requirement N<sup>o</sup>. 3

### **A yard for our son to play outside.**

We were not leaving NYC without getting a backyard large enough for a swing set. Our son was 2 ½ and we needed an easy place for him to play. When we found our home we were really pleased because not only did we get a great yard that's shaded by very old, tall trees, but it is also on a cul-de-sac. Kids in the neighborhood play in each other's yards and play in the street out front together. Like many NY kids, when we were moved here our son was thrilled to have a "playground" in his backyard.

# Requirement N<sup>o</sup>. 4

## **The public schools had to be good.**

At the time that we moved, our son was in pre-school and we were able to send him to a school that worked well for us at a fraction of the NYC pre-school prices. In fact, he had more days of school for a lot less money. He went to pre-school here for three years before entering public school, so that was a good amount of money that we were able to save.

Since I am sharing our experience, in talking about the public schools, I will focus primarily on the school that our son attended as an example of what the schools offer. Maplewood and South Orange share a school district. Our son went to an elementary school in South Orange where he thrived. It was one of the six elementary schools in the district. They are each a bit different. We were active in the school and had the opportunity to be there often. His teacher was extremely dedicated and respected and appreciated each child for their individual talents and attributes. She worked with them as a group and also addressed their individual abilities. She was available to us via email daily if we need her and we spoke with her on the phone frequently.

In addition to the wonderful library and curriculum, an active PTA supplements what the children experience. There is a wide range of additional offerings which include monthly concerts for the kids at lunch time, after school enrichment classes, a school variety show in which they can perform and a diversity fair which celebrates the different backgrounds of our community.

The district also contains two middle schools, but when Maplewood and South Orange students reach high school, they all attend Columbia High School. Columbia frequently has more National Merit Scholarship Semi-finalists than other high schools in NJ. For example, in 2012, Columbia had five students as semifinalists, while only 22% of all high schools had any Merit Scholarship semifinalists at all.

I could probably do an entire book about schools because it's an important topic for anyone moving with children, but I'll stop here. For more information on schools please go to my website [NJisHome.com](http://NJisHome.com) where you'll find more details, including other Essex County School Districts.

## Requirement N<sup>o</sup>. 5

### **We wanted a good-sized kitchen.**

A roomy kitchen is a rare find in Manhattan, and a true eat-in kitchen is even rarer. When buying a home, we had to have an eat-in kitchen. We eat our family dinner there on most nights, and our son does his homework at the kitchen table.

This was our thing, it may not be your thing, but it never fails, when people visit each other we always seem to congregate in the kitchen. This was true for me at my beach house, it was true in Manhattan and it's true now in Maplewood. It's great to have the space for people to have a comfortable seat and a snack without being in the cook's way.



And now for  
*the bonuses!*

“The road of life can only reveal itself as it is traveled;  
each turn in the road reveals a surprise”

~Unkonwn~

## Bonus N<sup>o</sup>. 1

### **Barbecues on our back deck.**

When we first moved into our house, our next door neighbor told me that one of the first things that he did when he moved in was grill a hamburger. When we lived in Manhattan, we had a small terrace that we never used. BBQ's were reserved for summer weekends and we really enjoyed them. When we bought our house, we knew that we were looking forward to being able to have barbecues, but what we didn't realize is that having a back deck off our kitchen would be like having a kitchen outdoors.

The sliding doors from our kitchen lead to a big deck that sits beside forty-year old rhododendrons overlooking our backyard. With such easy access to the kitchen, the addition of a grill, and a stainless steel prep table we now spend as much time as possible out there. We eat dinner outside most nights when the weather permits and when time allows, we have morning coffee there as well. It's beautiful and peaceful.

Imagine coming home, changing into comfortable clothes, surrounded by trees and clean air and being able to grill out and relax. Being outside in this environment often has really improved the quality of our lives.

## Bonus N<sup>o</sup>. 2

### **We have a three-car garage and parking for seven cars in our driveway.**

No, we don't need parking for ten cars, but one of the most frustrating aspects about life in NYC is the parking. The cost of a garage space is so high that some people simply can't afford it. Trying to find parking on the street near your home is incredibly time consuming, not to mention finding parking when you actually use your car to go anywhere in NYC.

Permanently suspending alternate side of the street parking was a clear benefit of our move.

## Bonus N<sup>o</sup>. 3

### **We've met really great people and established valuable friendships.**

Why am I touching on the people again? I keep coming back to it because it is that important. Community is essential. When we left NYC we really didn't know anyone here. We had made some contact with friends of friends.

When I left Manhattan I was concerned. I was leaving my gym, my yoga community, my friends, my sister, our son's play group, etc. I was afraid of feeling lonely and isolated. I was nervous I wouldn't meet people I could relate to.

But through the years, we have made some great friendships with extraordinary people here. We met some people through our son and many through our business. We have friends whom we can trust and rely upon. I can leave my son with them and know that he's treated like their own child and they can leave their children with us. We have a solid community of people we love.

The ability to have these relationships is priceless, it made all the difference in being able to transition easily. Since it is so precious to us, we go out of our way as REALTORS<sup>®</sup> to help our new buyers create relationships as well.

## Bonus N<sup>o</sup>. 4

### **Our son plays the drums in the basement, and we can close the door!**

We did not move to NJ because we felt the need for more space. We had an apartment in NY that felt more than adequate to us and was larger than most of our friends' places. We had a two-bedroom, two-bathroom apartment with a full living room, separate dining room, breakfast room off the kitchen and a terrace that we didn't use. We could count on one hand how often we used our dining room. Our son had a good-sized room where we kept most of his things, occasionally his toys would be in the living room, but space never felt like a problem.

Once we moved into a house and he began to get older and interested in more things, we recognized how valuable it was to have more space. Our son has his bedroom, he has a playroom in the basement filled with musical instruments and it opens to the yard, there is a separate family room off the living room where he can watch TV and play video games without disturbing our enjoyment of the living room. We can sit in front of the fireplace with friends and our son can be downstairs playing music and it is our choice to hear it or not.

## Bonus N<sup>o</sup>. 5

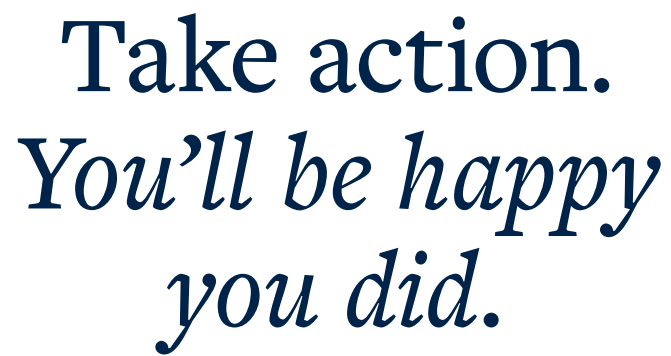
### **The town pool in the summer.**

When we moved here we knew that the local parks offered tennis courts, basketball courts, baseball fields, play grounds, ice skating and that there were even some public golf courses in the area. What we did not know is that most towns have there own pool.

This really came as a big surprise. When we first went to our town pool we didn't expect much and could not believe how nice it was. There were three separate pools for varying ages and an additional diving pool. Our son loved it just as all the kids do. There was even a summer when the local fish market ran the concession and we were able to get lobster rolls for lunch. We meet other families there and just relax. Our friends without children love using the pool too.

Between our backyard BBQ's with new friends, inviting people to visit and the town pool, our summers are full. Within one year of moving to Maplewood we sold our beach house, because we just didn't have the desire to use it anymore.

We had moved on to a new stage in our lives. We live in NJ and remain happy here.



Take action.  
*You'll be happy  
you did.*

“Fate knows where you are going, but  
it is up to you to drive there”

~Michelle Keesling~

## **I still can't imagine telling people that I live in NJ.**

Don't be concerned about what other people think of you! It's time to explore what is best for you and your family. Okay, maybe this will help you get over that hurdle. Here's a list of some Garden State natives and notable residents:

Martha Stewart (lifestyle maven)	Judy Blume (author)
Frank Sinatra (musician)	Katie Dippold (screenwriter)
Jalen Brunson (athlete)	The Bleachers (band)
Debbie Harry (musician)	Danny Devito (actor)
Jon Stewart (comedian)	Buzz Aldrin (astronaut)
Anne Hathaway (actor)	Grover Cleveland (POTUS)
Peter Dinklage (actor)	Zack Braff (actor)
Shaquille O'Neil (athlete)	William Brennan (SCOTUS)
Queen Latifa (actor)	James Gandolfini (actor)
Kelly Ripa (talk show host)	Allen Ginsberg (poet)
Joyce Carol Oates (writer)	Lauren Hill (musician)
Bruce Springsteen (musician)	Whitney Houston (musician)
Chris Rock (comedian)	Derek Jeter (athlete)
Meryl Streep (actor)	The Jonas Brothers (band)
Mike Trout (athlete)	Jon Bon Jovi (musician)
SZA (musician)	Jerry Lewis (actor)
George R.R. Martin (writer)	Carl Lewis (olympian)
Chelsea Handler (comedian)	Jack Nicholson (actor)
My Chemical Romance (band)	Woodrow Wilson (POTUS)
Thomas Edison (inventor)	Kirsten Dunst (actor)
Marc Maron (comedian)	Brian De Palma (director)
Eli Manning (athlete)	Stephen Colbert (comedian)
Bobbi Brown (makeup mogul)	Laura Benanti (actor)

So you see, it's possible to live in NJ and have a great life. It is even possible to be from NJ and be cool. Our family found our great life here, and I'd be happy to help you do the same.

If you would like more information about any of the towns mentioned in this book or any information about moving to any area in NJ feel free to contact me. You can visit my website at [NJisHome.com](http://NJisHome.com)

If you would like additional information about moving from NYC to NJ with ease please feel free to contact me. You can visit me on the web at [NJisHome.com](http://NJisHome.com).

## Testimonials

“We had a great experience with Randy as our agent and are very happy with the entire experience of buying our first home as a couple in Maplewood. She took the time to get to know us and kept us focused and enthusiastic throughout the process. We always felt that she had our best interest at heart. Randy was creative, diligent, energetic, kind, thoughtful and expert. We were particularly pleased with her creative approach to solving problems, often going out of her way personally to help (and get results). She was a skilled negotiator and had excellent relationships with other agents and people throughout the community. Her partnership with Fran was also a special benefit to her agency, as they worked together and drew on each other’s expertise. They were refreshingly honest, forthright, and always acted with the highest integrity. Randy kept us well informed about every aspect of our search and we knew exactly what to expect at every turn. We found a great house, the right one for us, in a perfect neighborhood, in a town that we love.”

**Ann B. (formerly of Riverdale, NY)**

“When we first contacted Fran and Randy, we received an immediate email response. They seemed very knowledgeable and were very friendly. We had previously worked with another REALTOR® and were highly disappointed in their lack of knowledge and near-impossibility to contact. Fran and Randy picked right up and spent many hours with us on the phone and on foot checking out houses. We loved Maplewood and since Fran and Randy both live and work there, they were able to show us and tell us everything about the area. If you are thinking of moving to this area, you should definitely call them.”

**Cynthia K. (formerly of Brooklyn, NY)**

“We bought and sold twice with the Lichtman-Rabney team. Their knowledge of the area and their ability to match the needs of my family with the most suitable home and neighborhood was spot on. You will not be disappointed.”

**Meredith G. (formerly of Riverdale, NY)**

“The qualities I value most in the Lichtman-Rabney Team are their kindness and helpfulness, their capacity to truly hear and respond to what the client needs/wants, and their level-headedness throughout a process that’s often extremely pressured, tense, and reactive. Fran and Randy display the knowledge, expertise, and negotiation skills expected in a top-notch broker. But/ and they go beyond those assets in their genuine approach to supporting a client in finding and purchasing a home. Clearly their priority is client satisfaction, and that takes precedence over making a sale.”

**Judy B. (Maplewood, NJ)**

“Fran and Randy helped us find our house in West Orange nine years ago and provided excellent advice and hand-holding. Randy was so patient as we searched for months to find the perfect house for us in a tight, competitive market. They were both available at a moment’s notice to go view a house and gave great, honest feedback on the property. They really know the area so when they told us to jump on the opportunity for our house, we did so and are still happy today. We have referred them to friends from Brooklyn who have also been happy with their experience. They also have great referrals for everything from contractors to restaurants! When we sell, they will be our REALTORS® again!”

**Erin H. (West Orange, NJ)**

“My wife and I have been through the selling and buying process multiple times throughout over the past twelve years. Our experience with Fran has been the best one by far. She is an experienced negotiator and highly knowledgeable REALTOR®. Her expertise goes beyond just real estate, as demonstrated in her ability to handle tough discussions, contracts and needy clients (like us). In just under one month, Fran was able to find us a home in the very aggressive Maplewood market. Under her guidance, we made offers and negotiated like professionals. We had full trust in Fran throughout the process. I would highly recommend Fran for any real estate transaction. We are certainly going to use her expertise again in the near future.”

Tony T. (Native New Yorker)

For more testimonials, please visit [NJisHome.com](http://NJisHome.com)



## About Fran

Fran embodies real estate beyond four walls. She's a top producing agent because she is committed to providing her clients with more than just the services offered by typical REALTORS®. Her outside-of-the-box view allows her to continually come up with new and interesting ways to connect homes to buyers.

Fran also strives to help clients who are new to the area create community, and hosts regular gatherings at her home, allowing like-minded people to meet perhaps sooner than they would have otherwise.

She came to the real estate business following a successful career in the entertainment industry, where she was a Senior Vice President at a record label and specialized in international sales and marketing. She quickly transitioned her business skills and received recognition in the real estate community. She loves food, wine, travel and to be outdoors in nature. What Fran enjoys most now is spending a quiet evening, cooking dinner at home.



## About Randy

Randy brings over twelve years as a practicing attorney to her real estate career. She entered the real estate in 2003, and her favorite part of the business is meeting new people and seeing that they are protected and cared for during and after their transaction.

Randy is a native New Yorker who fell in love with Maplewood, NJ in 2003, where the family lived for ten years before relocating to South Orange, NJ. She's a trained chef and her loves include her family, friends, cooking, eating and working out.

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