

April 2021

WILLIAMSBURG'S

Next Door Neighbors®

VOL.15, ISSUE 4

PRICELESS

Discovering the people who call Williamsburg home

ROBERT TASSONE



Mason Murawski Photography

Insurance to Ensure

By Caroline Johnson

As the president who does a little bit of everything at PORT Financial Services, Robert “Bob” Tassone spends his days doing work that doesn’t quite feel like work. After spending a dozen years with Farmers Insurance agency and opening PORT in 1994, Bob left Farmers in 2017. It was then that he began downsizing and taking care of all things with PORT Financial Services in Williamsburg by himself, which is where he has been since.

Bob hasn’t always lived in Williamsburg. He moved here in 2016 after marrying his wife, Tab Broyles. He spent the first half of his childhood in Rhode Island, and his family moved

to Norfolk while he was a teenager. Since then, he has stayed in the Hampton Roads area, moving between Suffolk, Middlesex, and Williamsburg. Bob attended Old Dominion University where he studied journalism.

"My attempts to become employed as a newspaper reporter were not successful, so while I abandoned them, I knew I still had an interest in the media," Bob says. "I was looking into working in advertising sales when a conversation with someone in the insurance industry changed my mind." After speaking with the insurance agent, Bob was told that if he was interested in sales, he should look into insurance sales because those are "the greatest salesmen in the world."

"Since I needed to earn income for my family, I took his advice in 1985 and have been involved in the insurance industry ever since," Bob shares. According to Bob, he has established a wonderful client base, found through word of mouth, referrals, personal connections and his community involvement. "If you belong to a gym and you run into people and form connections, those turn into relation-

ships that at times turn into clients."

His focus on and love for people is what has guided his work as an insurance agent since his start in 1985. "I like people and talking to people, which makes what I do never feel like work," Bob says. "I just get to talk to people and sometimes I sell an insurance policy."

Bob recognizes that life is full of bumps in the road and decisions that have to be made. He takes this approach to heart as he works with clients, always making it his mission to do whatever possible to help people be covered and prepared in case things go wrong. "I have an ethical responsibility because I have to think about my clients both today and after an accident or a house fire," Bob says. "I have to think about the person I'm talking to today and that person in the future as I configure a policy that has them covered should something happen."

He prides himself on being able to explain complex concepts in ways that are easily understandable to potential and current clients, ensuring they understand their policy and helping protect them as best as possible.

"When someone calls me on the worst day of their life and asks if something is covered, I want to be able to say yes, which is what I think about when I'm coming up with an insurance policy for them," Bob says. "When a salesman tells you not to buy anything, listen to them. They're giving you good advice."

Bob points out that for most people, their home is their largest asset, both physically and financially. Generally, one condition when purchasing a home is the requirement to have homeowner's insurance, otherwise the mortgage won't get approved. Because of that, Bob gets to work when he is called upon. "Most of the time, because people who buy their own home tend to be responsible people, there's not a lot of resistance to insuring a home properly," Bob says.

As an insurance agent, Bob makes it his priority to think ahead of the game, being cognizant that things that may often be forgotten about or unknown are included in his clients' policies to best protect them. "I think about things that go into a home policy that most people don't think about until the day

they have to call and ask if it's covered," Bob says. "I think about these things as I go about designing a policy and coverage so that hopefully, in the event of a bad situation, my clients are covered."

This care for his clients' well-being both now and in the future is what makes this a job that doesn't feel like work, as Bob truly values the importance of looking out for those he writes policies for. "I try to set things up to protect and cover my clients in everything that I do."

Not only is Bob committed to his work in insurance, but he's also committed to his community. Before his move, Bob spent 12 years as a volunteer EMT in Middlesex with an all-volunteer rescue squad. "The fellow who closed my house in Middlesex was on the rescue squad and asked if I wanted to join," Bob says. "I figured if a lawyer can be on a rescue squad, so could an insurance agent." He took classes to be an EMT and found it was a great diversion from what he was doing during the workweek. "I talk about protecting and helping people on the worst days of their life as an insurance agent, and as an EMT, some days I

was actually doing that firsthand."

Additionally, while in Middlesex, Bob served on the electoral board for 15 years. When he moved to Williamsburg, he became active in Rotary, helping raise money and assist in volunteer projects with the world's largest service organization. While the Historic Triangle Rotary typically met in person at Colonial Heritage, the group now meets via Zoom due to COVID-19. As a relatively new implant to the Williamsburg area, Bob does what he can to immerse himself into opportunities within the community to make connections and invest in his community.

His wife, Tab, is the Director of the Teacher Institute at Colonial Williamsburg. Moving here from Middlesex when the two got married in 2016, Bob found it was the perfect speed to come from his life in a more rural area. "I sold my house in the sticks to move to the city," Bob says. "It's not too city for me, though."

While he loves the location of Williamsburg, he also enjoys the opportunities for recreational activities both he and Tab enjoy. "We love being connected to history and having

things to do around here," Bob says. "My ideal day would be to go on the ferry to Chippokes Plantation State Park, walk the trails there and have a picnic with Tab and our dog." The two also ride horseback together after Bob took lessons for three years to master the art of riding and caring for horses. "I had to learn when I met her because having a horse isn't just a hobby, it's a lifestyle," Bob says.

Bob's plans for his future to revolve around continuing to do what he loves while having the opportunity to be closer to family. "I plan on continuing to do what I'm doing now until I'm ready to slow down and retire. My children don't live in this area, so ultimately we may move to be closer to them."

Between his wife, the job he adores, two children, three grandchildren and his community involvement, Robert "Bob" Tassone lives an active lifestyle. "Since we're so active, home to us is where we go to sleep," Bob says. "It's different for different people, but we're not big homebodies, and we find we live where we live because of the location and because of our feeling of safety. That's what it's mostly about for me." NDN