

duPont REGISTRY

A BUYERS GALLERY *of* FINE HOMES[®]

www.dupontregistry.com

JULY 2006

MOUNTAIN PROPERTIES
Living the High Life of Luxury

NEW JERSEY
Still the Garden State

LUXURY DESTINATIONS



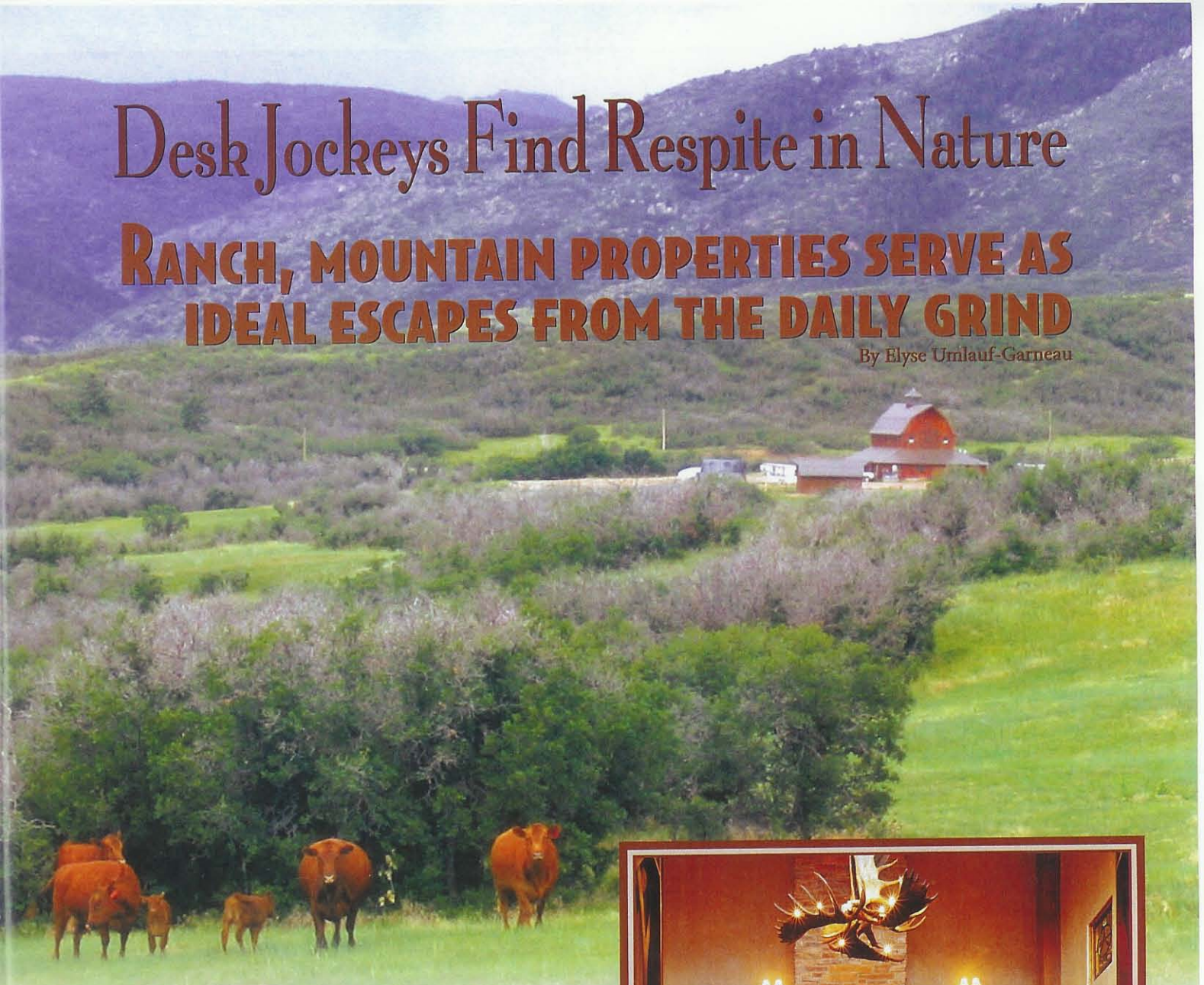
JULY 2006
\$5.95 US
\$6.95 CANADA
£4.95 UK
02419

0 71486 02419 4

Desk Jockeys Find Respite in Nature

RANCH, MOUNTAIN PROPERTIES SERVE AS IDEAL ESCAPES FROM THE DAILY GRIND

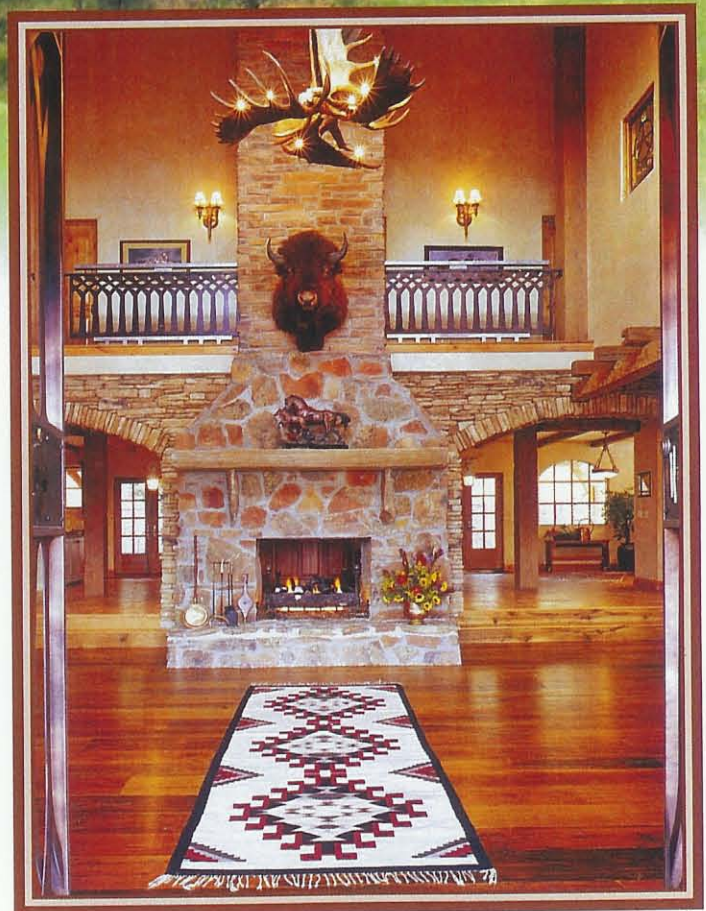
By Elyse Umlauf-Garneau



Mountain and ranch properties increasingly are getting the nod from luxury buyers looking to escape the rat race and find tranquil environments for vacations and retirement.

Ron Morris of Ranch Marketing Associates (with offices in Aspen, Denver and Beverly Hills) says that ranch life is foreign to what most people experience in their daily lives, though many long for greater engagement with nature and some physical work. It's what he calls, "That good feeling of a hard day's work well done." Morris sells ranches across the western United States.

Some ranch buyers also aim to be good stewards of the land. "They want to give something back, protect beauty and nature and leave the land in pristine shape for future generations," he comments. In the process, the land gives back to them, he believes. For instance, he recalls a childhood during which he worked a ranch and he says the experience contributed to a



healthy psyche and his strong work ethic. "Many buyers have been successful and want their families to enjoy the outdoors, appreciate the wildlife and experience the enrichment ranch life offers," he comments.

Buyers include those looking to relocate to ranch properties full time and others seeking an escape from the grind of being desk jockeys. One of Morris's clients caught island fever after 9-11 and moved to Hawaii. The same person, looking for a new experience, recently bought a 560-acre ranch. Others seek respite from the daily grind and intend to later occupy their ranches full time.

And what a respite it is. Consider one of Morris's Colorado listings, the 1,260-acre Pine Ridge Ranch. It has views of Granite Peak, the Continental Divide and the Pine River Valley, yet is only 20 minutes outside Durango. The land comprises lush meadows and tree-covered hills with over 1,000 feet of

elevation changes. The ranch's 6,375-square-foot house lacks for nothing. Ponderosa pine logs serve as its primary structural support and interior materials include slate, inlaid wood floors and custom paneling. It's wired with a Smart House security system and surrounding the house is extensive landscaping with river rock walls, gardens and flagstone walkways and patios.

Ranch prices vary widely, depending on size, type and location. Some go for \$1 million and others command \$20 million. Ranch life is a big change for most people and deciding to buy typically isn't a snap decision. That accounts for market times of one to two years. Morris says such properties tend to appreciate by five to 10 percent per year. Though many hope for ranches to generate a cash flow, Morris says most owners realize a return on their dollar when they sell. However, it's sometimes possible to offset operating expenses by pro-

ducing crops or raising cattle.

A desire for a richer life is what drives many mountain home purchases to Talking Rock, in Pickens County, Georgia. It sits at the base of the Blue Ridge Mountains and is only 60 miles north of Atlanta.

Rhoda Neighbors, of United Country Talking Rock Realty, has seen demand for property explode in the last three years and says buyers are looking for a new lifestyle and a quieter, slower pace of life. That demand has contributed to a spike in home and land prices. "In the last two years, raw land has jumped from \$8,000 to \$15,000 per acre," she says. Given Talking Rock's proximity to Atlanta, many buyers opt to relocate full-time to the area and commute to the city or telecommute.

Lifestyle is one of the primary drivers of purchases and that rural, mountain ambiance is likely to be maintained because zoning laws have made devel-

Previous page: Red Canyon Ranch is 20 minutes outside Denver. The French Country estate, being marketed by Ranch Marketing Associates, sits on 242 acres and features incredible mountain views. The property includes a 7,800-square-foot house, a heliport, and an eight-stall horse barn. **Below and next page:** Polly Leadbetter believes that Lake James, North Carolina could become another luxury hotspot.

