

## Mary Thompson's Story

Written by Angela Newman

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Mary Thompson, owner of Mary Thompson Appraisals located in Georgia did not grow up where she currently resides, but today is well known for her expertise in the Lake Lanier area. As a young girl she lived near the city of Chicago with loving parents and a Catholic upbringing. She was expected to do chores around the house but was not paid for any of it unless it was over and above her normal responsibilities. Then when she turned 13, her parents decided to send her to an all-girls boarding school on the Mississippi River for four years. Many of you are probably asking yourself, 'Was Mary a problem child and that's why her parents sent her away?' She assures me that was not the case. It was actually a good experience for Mary and she learned a lot of valuable lessons while attending this school; how to live with other women and fend for herself, respect for nature and elders and how to manage money successfully through a checking account system set up through the school.

She reminisces about the good ole days of growing up in the 50's and 60's and what a simpler, better time it seemed to be. She recalls, *"We ate dinner together at the dinner table every night, we vacationed together and in my humble opinion those were the best years to grow up. This may make me ancient in the eyes of some of your readers, but those years sure produced some awesome and successful people as they learned how to fend for themselves in many, many ways."*

Mary's mother was a college graduate and a straight-A student so college was very important to her parents. As Mary says, *"It was not even in the realm of discussion not to attend college."* She majored in education and minored in psychology although her career path was in neither one. Instead she landed a job in the insurance industry and worked there for 17 years before moving to Georgia. This is where she became intrigued with the Real Estate industry and became an agent selling real estate. After two years of demanding schedules, she changed direction a little bit, to appraising homes instead of selling them. This allowed her more flexibility and a new challenge almost every day which is very important to Mary since she tends to get bored easily.

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Before moving to Georgia and starting her own business, Mary recalls some of the memorable discussions she had in her career as a new manager and student teacher. *“I once supervised an all male department when I was in my 20’s and they were in their 50’s and 60’s. I earned their respect when I sat down with each of them to give them their first performance review. I told them like I saw it; I did not sugar coat anything but was not mean in any way, just factual. Almost all of them told me it was the best honest review they had ever had.”*

Most of us can probably recall a time or many for that matter, when we were faced with a new challenge requiring us to step out of our comfort zone and face the situation head on regardless of how nervous or frightened we were. Mary distinctly remembers such a time while working as a student teacher. She was only a few years older than the students she was teaching so earning their respect was not easy and they tested her ‘big time’. She recalls, *“One day when our class was wrapping up I asked them all to sit on the bleachers in the gym. I told them (as I was shaking in my gym shoes) that I knew I was only a few years older than the juniors and seniors in High School, but I am here to do a job and if they work with me we can have fun in class.”* The class ended up being the best one she taught; both the students and Mary learned something about courage and facing fears head-on, even if you are shaking in your shoes. *“I was so glad I had the courage to do that as it would have been a miserable semester of student teaching!”*

Mary’s perseverance and willingness to face challenges and take risks has proven to be true throughout her life. After climbing her ladder in the insurance industry and starting her own appraisal business, she expanded her interests which have helped tremendously especially during the economic times we are facing. It was during this time that Mary started two other businesses that have provided income; a pet sitting service and building custom slide shows. But her accomplishments do not stop there. She has had the opportunity to be interviewed by the Weather Channel (not many of us can put that on our resume) and authored a book titled, *“The Squeaky Wheel Gets the Grease”*. With Mary’s ambition and talent, we are sure to hear more about her and the businesses she runs in the months and years ahead.

Her advice for women climbing their pink ladder: *“A ladder has several rungs. Don’t try to skip the rungs along the way as you will undoubtedly miss an important life and business*

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*lesson. And always be true to yourself and your gut; as a woman we all know our gut is the best radar made!"*

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You can reach Mary at any one of her businesses below.

Appraisal Business [www.maryappraisals.com](http://www.maryappraisals.com)

Pet Sitting [www.wesityourpet.com](http://www.wesityourpet.com)

Custom Slide Shows [www.customssc.com](http://www.customssc.com)