

# Absolute

Living

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ENJOYING  
BEING IN  
THE RACE  
EVERY DAY

TURNER J.R. WOODARD

THE  
PICKLEBALL  
CRAZE

LET'S BRUNCH:  
WORLD FLAVORS

INNOVATIONS  
IN OUTDOOR  
LIVING

PIPER GTS





# Enjoying Being In the Race Every Day

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Turner J.R. Woodard

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*Turner J.R. Woodard has built a life full of absolute WOW! He has forged long-standing relationships and championed memorable life experiences, while balancing his unique vision to see what others haven't, taking risks and amassing capital through success along the way. Turner is excited to now bring his one-of-a-kind vision and unique approach to several new real estate projects in Carmel, Indiana.*

**R**eminisce some 30 years ago when Turner first stepped inside the Rich Furniture building in Carmel looking for lamps for his downtown Indianapolis office. "Carmel was not what it is now," says Turner, "but I never forgot the building and how unique it was—the light that streamed in, the wraparound balconies, the four-story atrium and how the building cascaded down from Rangeline Road." In the decades since, Carmel has grown into a dynamic and vibrant city, known as an art and design mecca with an affinity toward business. This style, the mix of art and business just fits Turner.

Today, Turner is excited to be part of a new and innovative Carmel as the Rich building's new owner. Still enamored with the building's distinct features that include a glass elevator, floor-to-ceiling windows, and a huge skylight atop the atrium that floods the space with natural light, Turner saw the building as the perfect renovation reuse project, right in the heart of Carmel, and at the right time. After a six-month total renovation effort, Turner now calls the upscale building home to his business operations, where he runs Turner James Investments



and Turner John Management and numerous other enterprises and special projects. The building is also home to his auto and private event showroom where part of his automobile collection is on display. The showroom also houses the fully restored and operational bar from the old Canterbury Hotel in downtown Indianapolis, which was under his ownership from 2010-2015.

Turner isn't new to this type of risk-taking, adaptive reuse real estate venture—in fact it's become his specialty. In 1992 he purchased and saved the city block-sized Stutz Factory in downtown Indianapolis, which was slated for demolition, and developed it into one of the nation's first and largest small business incubators and artist colonies. After 30 years of ownership, Turner sold his majority stake in the Stutz Factory to Somera Road, enabling the new owners to start modernizing its infrastructure. Although the sale of the Stutz afforded him venture capital to pursue his new projects, he remains involved as a minority

owner in the Stutz to help ensure the property's long-term success. He is currently working with the new Stutz ownership group on a museum there to display his Stutz car collection, which will be open to the public.

"The past becomes the future. I call my real estate redevelopment style adaptive reuse, a process that alters a building or property originally used for one purpose into something new that is productive and beneficial, rather than opting for demolition," he states. "With adaptive reuse, I learned that saving a building can have a real positive effect on a neighborhood and its residents to preserve its history and spirit," he says. Turner credits his mother, Edna Woodard, and her involvement with Indiana Landmarks, for his early interest in preserving old and historic buildings.

This affinity for the past, while living in the present and looking toward the future, is what continues to draw him to adaptive reuse projects. With the inspiration and help of his son Turner John (TJ), Turner recently acquired the 80,000 square foot Horton Fan Factory on Carmel Drive, just south of the Rich Building. "I find it interesting going from factory to factory after selling the Stutz and now buying Horton." One option under consideration for the property is to divide the space into 5,000-10,000 square foot boutique business areas. "I get a lot of joy out of turning buildings into something special and unique. Horton is a blank canvas and I'm excited to see where the development goes."

With a past in motor racing, Turner occasionally still dons his race suit and straps on his racing helmet whenever he can. "I love to drive, then came collecting cars, and then came racing them." He recently moved and expanded his race team operations, Team Woodard Racing, from the Stutz Factory into the Horton Factory in Carmel. Having the wherewithal to buy cars or go motor racing wasn't always easy to come by. In the early days, he would need to raise money through sponsorships and he even took a job selling cleaning chemicals and toilet tissue to property managers and building owners to help pay the bills and then came McDonald's!



Ironically, calling on property owners is where Turner credits really gaining a keen insight into all types of properties and how to manage them from the ground up. Now Team Woodard regularly competes in the Sportscar Vintage Racing Association throughout the U.S. at storied racing venues like Indianapolis Motor Speedway, Road America, Watkins Glen and others.

Turner continues to diversify his real estate portfolio with projects spanning Indianapolis, Speedway, Carmel and beyond. On the north end of Mass Ave, the Villages at Valley, a new urban residential work-live development, is in the works. In Speedway, he purchased the building housing Sarah Fisher's Speedway Indoor Karting Center last year, and in Carmel, he recently gained ownership of the Keltner Business Plaza, and the Horton Fan Factory, in addition to the Rich Furniture Building and for over 20 years, Wasatch Lake cabin rentals and lodge have been in the Woodard family.

Beyond his real estate portfolio, he keeps engaged in a multitude of alternative investments. Turner proclaims he takes on the daily approach of "enjoying being in the race every day," and admits he loves keeping busy and likes to keep projects moving forward. He operates

a myriad of enterprises ranging from Turner James Investments—his investment company focusing on real estate acquisitions and alternative investments—and Turner John Management, his property management company. He is an investor in the movie *500* by Angelo Pizzo (of *Hoosiers* and *Rudy* fame) about Indianapolis 500 mastermind Carl Fisher. Another special motor racing project he's currently invested in is Leading Lights, a U.S. patented electronic race position system that enables fans to see the race car running order while staying focused on the racing action. "We have the technology in place and we're currently set to begin actual race testing in the Kenyon Midget Series beginning this year. This innovation should certainly enhance the fan experience."

Turner's passion for history extends into his auto collection as well. "I've been passionate about cars ever since I first began driving at 16 and I've been buying and selling special cars ever since." As you can imagine, his collection is diverse and unique. It includes nine Stutz marquees, which will be on loan to the future museum at the Stutz Factory, a rare 1929 Auburn Boattail Speeder and a 1989 Lamborghini Countach 25th anniversary edition. The collection spans over

a hundred years from a 1914 Stutz Bearcat to today's modern electronic marvels. When pressed which one is his favorite, he pauses to reflect and you can see him taking a quick inventory in his mind. "I must say I enjoy them all. Each one was bought for a very special reason," he says. Sometimes it's as simple as he loves the lines and design of a particular car and sometimes it's sentimental like a 1969 Mustang he remembers from his childhood or the 1973 Rolls Royce Silver Shadow driven by his late father Hal Woodard. "In all my years of collecting cars, I've never purchased a new car... well until now. I recently ordered a 2023 white Corvette convertible."

Turner and his family's commitment to helping better the lives of people in the communities where he lives and works is very important. Many years ago the Van Riper Woodard Family Foundation was established, a charitable organization that allows his family to give back in many ways and pursue philanthropic endeavors that include projects like assisting IMPD's Mounted Horse Patrol Association raise money for a new horse barn and stables, supporting Keep Indianapolis Beautiful and of course, Indiana Landmarks. He's a past board member of WFYI and PBS, the Indianapolis Humane Society and others. Every few years, the entire Woodard family joins together to hold a road rally that zigzags across the back roads of Indiana and 10 area charities spot visual landmarks and compete to win money for their teamwork and efforts. "The road rally is a spirited event that not only brings my family together to put it on, but also brings board members and volunteers of local charities together for their common cause. It's a fun time had by all." As he now begins to expand his philanthropic outreach into Carmel, he was recently asked to host The Heroes Club in the auto and event showroom, an organization whose mission is to support Carmel's police, fire and first responders. "I've succeeded with the help of many, so paying it forward is still the best way forward," he states.

Although it may seem Turner needs to work 24 hours a day, seven days a week to get

everything done he's working on, he does make time for downtime, once in a while. "I have a few special places I go where I can truly relax and recharge. My art studio in downtown Indianapolis in Stutz II, Wasatch Lake and 'southern headquarters' in Bonita Bay, Florida are my getaways," states Turner. You can usually find him in his studio on Fridays and Sundays painting away to jazz and rock 'n roll, drinking a cold half and half (beer and Sprite). He describes his art style as "abstract enthusiasm," a mix of Jackson Pollock, Franz Kline and Willem De Kooning with a Turner twist! "My artwork is very freeing, it's filled with action and motion. It's a wonderful escape for me." Beyond his own works of art, Woodard is also a devoted art collector of many local and national artists, including a somewhat rare LeRoy Neiman and Alfredo De La Maria collection. "Art moves the soul. No matter what happens in a hectic day, taking a brief break to gaze at some favorite artwork somehow seems to hit the reset button."

Turner's other getaways are outside of Indianapolis. One is the family's country retreat, Wasatch Lake in Poland, Indiana, a 400-acre escape from the hustle and bustle of his daily schedule. Wasatch Lake is just one hour southwest of Indianapolis and is open to the public. There are 8 lakefront cabins for rent, plus a 10,000 square foot Long House Lodge designed for reunions, weddings, and parties. "Escaping back to nature makes us appreciate the beauty around us and realigns our values as to what matters. Wasatch Lake has been our family gathering spot for Memorial Day and Thanksgivings with friends and family for as long as I can remember. Hiking, riding ATV's, playing tennis and visiting around bonfires is simply the best," he adds. "Our home in Florida also serves as a gathering spot for family and friends."

Everything Turner does would not be possible without the dedication and loyalty of the team that surrounds him. "Anne Coudret-Jester, my CFO and Jeff LaFollette, Head of Asset Enhancement, as well as many others, have been part of my team for over 30 years," he



states. "It really takes a team to cover all the details of my deals. My son Turner John (TJ) (36) is becoming most helpful in the business. He scouts out and researches many of our investment deals and his ability to network and make connections has proven invaluable."

Turner also credits the support and reassurance of his family all along the way. He and his wife Diann just recently celebrated their 36th wedding anniversary and daughters Taylor (42), who lives in Colorado and Whitney (30), who lives in Florida, provide ongoing questions and encouragement. Plus, grandkids have now entered the picture, Rivington (Taylor) and Turner Jeffery (TJ), which make special events all the more special.

"I think what I want most people to know about me and I hope the readers take away, is that true absolute living can somewhat be about collecting things, but it's really about family, friends, and making memories, and along the way helping others, with perhaps a touch of WOW!"

REMEMBER: ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS!

**ABSOLUTELIVING**