

# People

## In The News

# Real estate veteran feels freedom on open road

By Douglas Sams  
STAFF WRITER

**O**n warm weekends this spring, Jerry Monash will crank up his Harley-Davidson motorcycle and ride north toward the scenic southern Appalachian highways.

He does it for the feeling of freedom, and the sense of connection with the environment.

Thousands of riders are drawn to the hobby for similar reasons.

Any Sunday drive through the mountains, cars will cross paths with groups of motorcyclists, and many will be made up of men like Monash — successful professionals who seek an escape from their fluorescent-lit offices.

But, Monash, founder of the **Real Estate Investment Advisory Council**, Southeast region (REIAC), isn't just lucky to get away for a weekend bike ride.

Monash is lucky to be riding at all.

His senior year at the University of Miami, he hopped on his Triumph motorcycle and went to visit a friend near Coral Gables, Fla.

At an intersection, a woman pulled in front of him.

Monash slammed on the brakes, and almost avoided her, but the impact forced him to lose control. "I hit the last half inch of her bumper," he said. "My leg hit the pavement and snapped in half, just above the ankle."

Initially, he wore a cast up to his hip. Doctors said he would be back on his feet in a few months.

But, time dragged on with little improvement.

The bones of his tibia and fibula refused to knit together. Most doctors said there was nothing they could do to.

His mother eventually found a Boston surgeon who took a bone graph from Monash's hip.

Finally, the bones fused.

By then, Monash had spent almost three years on crutches.

Now, 62, Monash is still an avid rider.

And, since the crash, his professional career has taken as many twists and turns as a mountain road.

His father was a doctor and professor, his mother an artist.

Monash worked in hospital labs and thought about going to medical school.

Instead, he decided to become an art teacher and later a science teacher.

## REIAC, Southeast Regional Chapter

**Formed:** 1994

**Members:** 150

**Meetings:** Four quarterly meetings, two distinguished lecture meetings, one graduate student competition

**Alliances:** Georgia State University Real Estate Department, Georgia State University Real Estate Alumni Group

**Board members:** 25

**Purpose:** Education, networking and public service for real estate principals

**Sponsors:** Berkadia Commercial Mortgage, ATC Associates, Crown Advisors, Fidelity National Title Group, Grandbridge Real Estate Capital, Habif, Arogeti & Wynne LLP, Georgia State University, Morris Manning & Martin LLP

## EXECUTIVE PROFILE JERRY MONASH

**Born:** New York City

**Age:** 62

**Home:** Sandy Springs

**Education:** University of Miami



BYRON E. SMALL

He took a job with Miami Dade schools, at the time a terribly under-funded system.

Monash's school could afford no air conditioning. There was gang violence. A full-time cop was always on campus.

Finally, Monash had enough.

"My home was a garage apartment," he said. "I had no money. You couldn't save on a teacher's salary. I had to do something different."

Monash spent hours at the library researching new careers.

"I came to the conclusion that some of the great fortunes are made in real estate," he said. "There was unlimited potential, as long as you worked hard."

He started by selling houses. Then shopping centers.

Over the years, he kept rising in the profession.

He landed a job with Mass Mutual, eventually running their national dispositions program.

He started his own company, Broad Street Capital LLC, an adviser to European institutional investors. He later launched Lancet Realty Advisors Inc.

But he believes his decision to create the Southeast REIAC chapter was among his biggest accomplishments.

He formed the chapter in 1994. It now has at least 150 members, making it one of the largest chapters in the United States.

"We wanted to give principals a forum to share ideas, a high-level program for senior-level folks who could network with their peers," he said. "It just took off."

Real estate attorney Matthew Sours, a REIAC board member, said Monash helped grow the chapter into a powerhouse.

"His leadership, devotion and meticulousness are largely responsible for establishing REIAC as one of the region's foremost real estate associations with a membership comprised of a veritable who's who in

Southeast real estate," said Sours, with **Morris, Manning & Martin LLP**.

Monash, an executive vice president of investment services with **NAI Global**, took a winding road to his position in Atlanta real estate. But, away from work, one thing never changed.

"I've always loved speed and motorcycles," Monash said. As a kid, he only rode a few dirt bikes.

Then, at the end of his junior year in college, while backpacking through Europe, he met two guys who just bought Triumph motorcycles in England and were riding them across the country.

"They wanted some help driving, so I hitched a ride," Monash said. "We rode the Autobahn from Munich to Paris. We were going 95 miles an hour on the Autobahn with cars right on our butts. I thought, 'This is great.'"

When he got back to Miami, Monash sold his Oldsmobile and spent \$1,400 on a Triumph.

"The whole concept of selling the car was to become a hard-core biker, but the reality was that in Miami it rains every 30 minutes," Monash said. "I got wet a lot, and I eventually bought a little Volkswagen to go along with it."

Not long after that came the accident. The experience taught him a lesson he still benefits from today.

While the thrill of the Autobahn convinced him he loved to ride, a passion for the hobby alone won't keep him safe.

"I recognized I didn't know what I was doing," Monash said. "There are technical aspects to riding a bike."

So, before leaving Florida, he took a six-week course at a Daytona Beach racing school.

The training taught him how to avoid accidents. It might have prevented the one he'll never forget.

"I wouldn't have locked the brakes up that day," he said. "I would have missed the car. It was an easy accident to avoid."

Reach Sams at dsams@bizjournals.com.