

BROKERS WEEKLY

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FAVORITE THINGS

Men and women we admire most

By ALICIA HARTGROVE

Barack Obama made history last month becoming the nation's first black president. In celebration of President's Day — and that historic feat — Brokers Weekly asked you who you most admire in American history.

Marilyn Kaye, president of **MLBKaye International**, said the historic figure of yesterday she looks up to the most is Abraham Lincoln, because he abolished slavery. President Obama is her favorite American figure of today.

"I like Obama because he is for equality and everyone is entitled to freedom. He is a prime example of staying up on things," said Kaye, who said she would like to ask President Obama why the FICA scores need to be 700 to get a loan.

"My dad has a little 'toilet book' in his bathroom all about Abraham Lincoln. He is amazing," said **Amy Casey** of **Barak Realty**. Casey would like to ask Lincoln why he never gave up after so many rejections and failures.

Deeb Sankary at **Platinum Properties** looks up to the seventh president, Andrew Jackson. "He is known historically for creating a strong executive branch... He was self-made and strong-willed, two attributes I admire most, and once famously said, 'One man with courage makes a majority.' Given the chance, Sankary would ask Jackson 'Since you did not have a father growing up like me, what was your source of strength and security to lead yourself and this country?'"

Deanna Kory of the **Corcoran Group** said that she most admires Eleanor Roosevelt, for stepping out of her role as first lady and into the role of an advocate for women and the poor.

Jamella Swift of **Citi Habitats** said Harriet Tubman, the abolitionist and conductor of the Underground Railroad "was fierce." "If she were alive today I would love to ask her



SHIRLEY BENFANTE



what she thought of the progress that the country has made with race relations and the strides that African-Americans have made 60 years post the Jim Crow era," said Swift. "I would also request that she share her feelings on the first African American president, our present day beacon of light, Barack Obama."

Bob Brooks of **Century 21 NY Metro** thinks Thomas Jefferson was a great American. "He was a leader, a renaissance man, an inventor, entrepreneur, and a man of vision," said Brooks.

Independent broker **Marsha Roslyn** related the question to the commonly asked "Who would you want to have dinner with?" She said she's always answered Eleanor Roosevelt, Abraham Lincoln, and Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom because of all the changes they witnessed. Roslyn would like to ask Queen Elizabeth II how she adapted to her role as queen.

Presidents are not the only people in history brokers have looked up to.

"Now this may seem too cliché, but it is very timely for me. My favorite historic figure is Martin Luther King Jr.," said **Melanie Swanson** of **Century 21 NY Metro**.

Swanson said her mother, having recently given birth to one of her siblings, went barefoot to see MLK's "I have a Dream" speech. Swanson has two other connections to MLK: she attended Spelman College in Atlanta, Ga., the sister college to Morehouse College where MLK was educated and she knew MLK's two sons, Martin III and Dexter. "By fate, his two sons were very close associates and frequently spent time in my freshman dormitory! I saw Dexter in New York City about 10 years ago and everyone thought I was crazy to approach him. When he remembered me and gave me a hug it was confirmation," said Swanson.

Jacquelyn Leahy of **Mark David & Company** said her favorite figure is Paul Revere. "His great talent was connecting people, and he launched the American Revolution by way of building a solid rapport with people in every town from Boston to Concord and beyond.

Few people know that William Dawes fashioned a similar midnight ride on a different route, but had a fraction of the response because he didn't take the time to build relationships. Paul Revere reminds me that as long as I keep people my top priority—success is inevitable," said Leahy.

Lynn Whiting at **Argo Corporation** admires Henry Bergh, the founder of the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, because he was a "force for good and an incredibly compassionate man."

"Animal welfare is something that is important to me," said Whiting who has been involved with rescuing cats. "He was a wealthy man who dedicated the later part of his life to the protection of animals... He got laws passed and lectured around the country." Whiting would have liked to ask him what prompted his interest in animal protection.

Thurgood Marshall, the first black judge, is **Shirley Benfante** of **B.P. Vance Real Estate's** favorite historic figure. She added that she grew up with Clarence Thomas who was the second black judge in America. "If I could ask Thurgood Marshall one question it would be 'what do you think of the current banking system,'" said Benfante.

Henry Justin of **HJ Development** said his favorite historic figure is General Patton who commanded the Seventh Army in WWII until 1944 then was given command of the Third Army in France. "I admire General Patton because he continually preached to his troops that only the highest standard of excellence would be allowed," said Justin.

Citi Habitats' James Johnson stayed local when picking his favorite figure, Frederick Law Olmsted, the landscape designer responsible for Central Park in Manhattan, Prospect Park in Brooklyn, the landscaping surrounding the US Capitol, and many other famous public spaces around the country. "My question would be 'What do you think of Central Park today? Is it different from what you imagined it would be 136 years later?' "Of course we, New Yorkers, love the park, but Olmsted was famously known as a perfectionist and I would love to hear whether he thinks his work has withstood the test of time," said Johnson.

Andrew Carnegie is **Sasi Elya** of **Citi Habitats'** favorite historic figure because of "his business skills and success." She would like to ask him for his opinion on the current economic situation.

Tom Holmes at **Barak Realty** said Benjamin Franklin "because he wrote a now-famous formal letter to our entire government when considering forming our first national bank, warning all that we must never trust banks, bankers without powerful regulation at the risk of being impoverished at the hands of self-serving scoundrels."

Holmes said, "Interesting perspective watching the current bunch of scoundrels holding billions of taxpayer funds to protect their expected losses of credit card debt and refusing to lend us our own funds."

Mary Lou Currier, of **C21NY Metro**, also said Ben Franklin was her favorite "He was a writer, thinker, inventor, discoverer, diplomat, raconteur, and one of the men who drafted the Declaration of Independence," said Currier. "A true Renaissance man."