

MD JOHNSON, INC

Mergers Acquisitions Transaction Management

For Immediate Release

PR NEWSWIRE

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MD JOHNSON, INC. ADVISES ON SALE OF STEWART HONDA. APPOINTED IN 1970 AS THE 38TH HONDA FRANCHISE AWARDED IN THE US.

Santa Maria, CA- January 5th, Stewart Honda of Santa Maria has completed the sale of the dealership to a local dealership group, comprised of Michael Bouquet, Mike McNulty and Pat Cusack. The new dealership entity has also relocated the **HONDA** franchise next to one of the group's domestic dealerships in downtown Santa Maria. The dealership has been renamed Honda of Santa Maria.

MD Johnson, Inc, served as the exclusive financial advisor to **Nancy Stewart** and her son, **Barry Stewart**, owners of Stewart Honda. Nancy Stewart, a Boston Native, moved to suburban Santa Maria, located 180 miles north of LA, nearly 50 years ago with a friend to take a teaching position during Santa Maria's military boom. Upon her husband Jack's death in 1988, Nancy took over the business and has operated it as one of very few female Honda dealers. Her son's Barry and Jeff have also worked in the business for many years.

The buyer's, all with long time local ties to the community, also have interests in the local Toyota, Saturn, Chevrolet, BMW and Volkswagen dealerships. The Stewart's were selective in determining the identity of a successor they would trust to take over the business and look after the customers, family and friends they have taken care of since becoming the Honda dealers in 1970. Along the way, the Stewart Family has represented many brands to its customer base in Santa Maria, including Oldsmobile and Subaru.

Mark Johnson, President of MD Johnson, Inc., commented that the sale of the dealership was "a difficult family decision", one set into motion over the past several years. "Like many auto dealers, the Stewart's were faced with being required to build a new, multi million dollar facility on a much larger parcel of property" Johnson stated. Johnson also commented that "This situation is occurring all over the country as dealerships find themselves unable to find large, properly zoned parcels of property. Selling a dealership is sometimes the most financially sound alternative to taking on zoning boards and committing to large amounts of capital or taking on large amounts of debt". When you have a great brand like **HONDA** to represent, it is incumbent upon the dealer to grow with the brand. Especially when growth is prohibited based on real estate availability, this is often the outcome".

"The buyer's have real estate and an infrastructure that will make executing a relocation and the building of a new facility more appealing. Santa Maria has some peculiar zoning challenges and other issues related to agricultural preservation that made it difficult to secure a large parcel of property zoned for a dealership", stated Johnson. Johnson further stated "the sale solved issues that at this point in the Stewart's lives, were not necessary for them to deal with" The Stewart's obtained legal counsel from Mr. Lawrence Silver, Esq., of Silver & Field and Ms. Erin K Tenner, Esq., of Tenner Johnson. The buyers obtained legal counsel from Mr. Brent Smith, Esq., of Manning Leaver, all of Los Angeles. Johnson, Silver and Smith are all members of the NADC.

MD Johnson, Inc is a merger's/ acquisitions financial advisory firm specializing in Advisory Services to automobile dealers, dealership management companies and dealership platforms. In addition to standard M and A services, the firm provides detailed Valuation and Transaction Management Services for its clients. The firm's clients include public and private dealership groups and individual owners located throughout the US. Previous press releases are archived at WWW.MDJOHNSONINC.COM