



# BENTWATER®

ON LAKE CONROE



BUYER'S GUIDE • FOR THE REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONAL



## THE ROAD IS CALLING YOUR NAME

Imagine, the day has finally arrived, your dream of owning a gorgeous new Mercedes is now your reality. Delivered directly to your home and carefully parked inside your freshly cleaned and painted garage. There it is, sitting majestically in the spot you had always envisioned for it. You can hear the road calling your name. An endless bounty of adventure waits. In your excitement you invite your friends and neighbors over to see it. The group of you opens the doors, step inside, sink into the plush, hand-tailored leather seats and stare out the windows, only to watch the paint dry in your nice clean garage... all afternoon.

## THIS IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY

This, unfortunately, is precisely the experience you are delivering to your Bentwater buyer when the Social Membership is all that is offered in the transaction. Bentwater, much like a hand crafted luxury vehicle, was created to offer an unmatched experience and enjoyed as it was designed for. Don't get me wrong, the Social Membership category has its purpose. It is, after all, the mandatory membership level, as declared in the Bentwater Deed Restrictions. It is the least expensive membership level and offers no access or privileges to the Sports Club, Fitness Center, or 54-holes of championship golf... ever. You can sit and watch the paint dry as long as you like. We also know for certain, after 30 years of experience and all of the empirical evidence that points to this conclusion, the vast majority of people who live here longer than 6-months always end up wanting more than the Social Membership. This isn't because there is something wrong with the Social Membership, it's because there is something right with the healthy sense of community that defines the Bentwater lifestyle. New property owners are inevitably invited up into the Bentwater experience, either by the staff at the Country Club or by other property owners. You don't want to be perceived as the reason they can't fully experience it. This is your opportunity to be a hero for your client and truly act in their best interest.

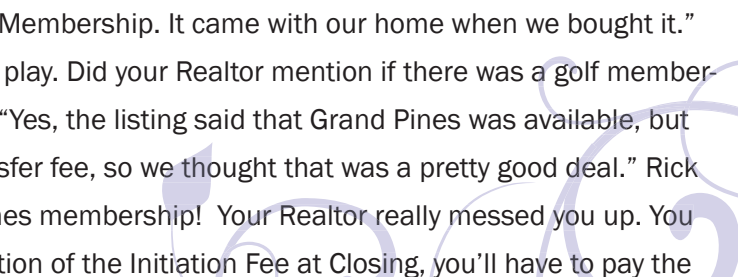


# THE CAUTIONARY TALE OF JOE REALTOR

Consider this real life scenario that has occurred more times than we can count:

Joe Realtor just picked up a new buyer relocating to the area. The buyers, Rick and Cathy Newhouse, are being transferred to the Houston area and have been searching for homes in the Woodlands and other areas north of Houston. They have three kids, from elementary to high school, and school district ratings are important to them. They always dreamed of raising their kids somewhere that offers more than just the standard suburban lifestyle... somewhere more unique. In fact, Rick and Cathy always dreamed of buying a lake house someday, but it always seemed too far off to become reality. They've been so busy raising kids and working that hobbies and activities like golf or tennis aren't even on their radar and Joe Realtor hasn't asked them about "future lifestyle desires" or the importance of "community and social involvement" during his initial meetings with them. Nevertheless, while Rick and Cathy were doing some research online they came across Bentwater.com and asked Joe to pull some listings in Bentwater and around Lake Conroe.

Joe happens to focus most of his real estate business down in the Woodlands. He isn't as familiar with neighborhoods around the lake. After collecting information on various Lake Conroe neighborhoods, Joe pulled some active listings that fit Rick and Cathy's criteria. He notices that Bentwater seems to have some unique language in its listings. Descriptions like, "Grand Pines Available. Social Included" or, "Seller to transfer Full Country Club with full price offer." He figures, "We'll figure it out, let's go do some showings." At the end of a long day driving around the lake Rick and Cathy have decided that Bentwater is definitely what they are looking for and they love the listing on Promenade (the one that happens to say, "Grand Pines Available, Social Included"). Joe is also feeling pretty good about himself, he just did a review of the Deed Restrictions and noticed that the Social Membership is the minimum required in Bentwater, and lo & behold the Seller is offering to pay the Social Club transfer fee. "What a deal!" he exclaims to Rick and Cathy. They agree, and off to closing they go. We fast forward a couple of months, Rick and Cathy have settled into their new home, they've met all of their neighbors and they are even having dinner Friday night at the Club with a couple, Mike and Sue, that they met while taking out the trash one morning. During dinner Mike and Sue ask if Rick and Cathy want to join them on the Miller course Sunday morning for a round of golf. In fact, in the short month since they have been living in Bentwater, two other couples have asked them the same question. "Well, we haven't ever gotten into golf, but we'd be happy to join you and start to learn the game." "Great, what membership level do you hold?" Mike asks. "We have a Social Membership. It came with our home when we bought it." Cathy explains. "Ok, well... you'll have to pay guest fees to play. Did your Realtor mention if there was a golf membership available when you bought the house?" Mike asked. "Yes, the listing said that Grand Pines was available, but the Seller was offering to pay the Social Membership transfer fee, so we thought that was a pretty good deal." Rick explained. "Oh man! You had a chance to get a Grand Pines membership! Your Realtor really messed you up. You can still pay the Upgrade Fee, but instead of paying a fraction of the Initiation Fee at Closing, you'll have to pay the



full difference in value between the Social Membership and the Grand Membership. That's a much larger amount. You could have had your own private golf club and all of the amenities Bentwater offers with the Grand Pines membership. That's too bad." Mike said. "We've met a lot of people over the years that didn't play golf at all and didn't plan to start. But after a while, the beautiful golf courses, the vibrant social community, and the sheer number of opportunities to participate in golf related events and activities, eventually gets everyone into a golf lesson at the Club." Sue said. "Wow. I wish we would have had that insight when we were looking for real estate in Bentwater. That's pretty disappointing. Our Realtor didn't explain any of that. How much is it to upgrade to the Country Club membership?" Rick asked. "It's double the cost of the Transfer Fee you might have paid at Closing. The Upgrade Fee is the difference between the membership level Initiation Fees, plus tax. That's why it's always better to think long term when deciding which membership to transfer in the real estate transaction. The best thing to do is call and talk to the Club's Membership Director." Mike said.

Needless to say, Rick and Cathy made sure to never refer Joe Realtor to anyone they knew.



The following is a step-by-step guide for getting the right membership transferred to your client in the real estate transaction. You'll be the hero everyone happily refers business to.

## FIVE STEPS TO SUCCESS

**STEP 1 (LEARN):** During the discovery phase with your client, be sure to ask the critical "lifestyle" questions. Find out specifically if they enjoy golf, tennis, pickleball or working out at a fitness club. If not, will any of this be of interest if new friends they make in Bentwater invite them into these activities? Be sure to ask them if they ever plan to entertain family, friends, or business associates who may play golf or want to use the Sports Club.

For someone looking to buy property in Bentwater, these questions are critical.

**STEP 2 (DECIDE):** If golf is of interest, in any way, try to gauge frequency of play. Use this rule of thumb: If they want the ability to play golf, but they will not be playing more than once a month, they will need, at a minimum, the Masters Golf membership.

If they plan to play golf more than once per month, the Country Club membership now makes more sense. It offers unlimited golf on the Weiskopf and Miller courses for one monthly fee.

If your client is an avid golfer or entertains guests frequently or just wants the exclusivity of a private, all natural, limited member golf club, Grand Pines is what to look for. If the Grand Pines membership is ever available on a property your client is considering, this should be very carefully considered, regardless of golf interest.

If your client doesn't play golf, has no reason to ever play golf, and doesn't want to ever learn, read them the Joe Realtor story above and make sure they at least transfer a Sports Club membership in the transaction. Everybody, and I mean everybody, eventually wants to use the Fitness Center. The Sports Club membership provides this access along with all other Bentwater membership privileges, except golf. This is a no brainer and will help you avoid the dreaded, "Why won't they let me in the fitness center?!" phone call a week after you close the transaction.

Determine the membership level your client wants transferred to them before you start searching for real estate.



**STEP 3 (SEARCH):** When viewing listings in Bentwater make sure that you carefully read the Agent Remarks, Public Remarks, and all attached documents related to the listing. This is where you will find critical language related to the transfer of a Club membership. Statements like, “Social Membership will be transferred.” Or, “Grand Pines available, Social Membership included”. Once you have narrowed down your list to a “Top Three” or fewer, you’re ready for Step Four.

**STEP 4 (VERIFY):** Always remember, there are listing agents in Bentwater that haven’t read this handy Buyers Guide. So make it a habit to verify all Country Club related details on the listing. Speak with the Club’s Membership Department before contacting the Listing Agent. Sometimes the listing may not have any language regarding the membership. Sometimes the information is wrong. So always make it a habit to call the Membership Director at the Club and go over each property in detail. Verify available memberships, transfer fee amounts, special incentives, or upcoming changes & additions to amenities or membership levels.

Once you have verified all details with the Membership Department, you’re ready for Step 5.

**STEP 5 (NEGOTIATE):** Every good Realtor has their own strategy and best practices when negotiating real estate. We’re not here to tell you how to do that. We do, however, have some very good advice that will help you get the right membership for your client. If you have done Steps One through Four, above, you’ve put your clients interest in the best position for success going into negotiations on a Bentwater property. To reiterate, the two most important pieces of information to determine are:

1. The membership level your Client actually wants. (Remember Joe Realtor)
2. The membership level the Property actually holds. (Not what the listing states “is included”. We don’t care about what is included, we only care about what your client wants.)

When you have this information nailed down, along with all of the other normal details you would take into account, you’re ready to make an offer.



## HERE IS AN EXAMPLE NEGOTIATION:

**LIST PRICE:** \$499,999 (Social Membership transfer is included at this price)

**MEMBERSHIP BUYER WANTS:** Grand Membership

**ACTUAL MEMBERSHIP ON THE PROPERTY:** Grand Membership

**BUYER'S INITIAL OFFER:** \$470,000 with Seller paying the \$28,145 Grand Membership Transfer Fee.

**SELLER'S COUNTER OFFER:** \$485,000 with Buyer to pay \$14,072.50 (50% of the Grand Membership Transfer Fee).

OFFER ACCEPTED! The Buyer gets the Grand Membership and the home they wanted.

**HERE IS THE GOOD YOU HAVE DONE:**

1. Your buyer won't call you a month from now to find out why he didn't have a chance to join Grand Pines, because he just found out that the Upgrade Fee is more than twice the Transfer Fee.
2. If your Buyer had taken the "Social Membership included" and then decided 6 months later they really want the Country Club Membership, they will have to write a check for \$32,400 to upgrade from the Social.

## NOW GO BE A HERO!





[www.Bentwater.com](http://www.Bentwater.com)

All dollar figures and membership details expressed are accurate at the time of printing and for illustration purposes only.  
Actual figures and details must be independently verified by Bentwater Yacht & Country Club, Ltd.