



## A Life Well-Lived

By: Nicole Allen

*Dennis Franks — a genuine force of nature whose inner glow uplifted, inspired and transformed.*

Early on, his blueprint dripped with perseverance. Determination was a characteristic that forged his paths, both known and unknown. Whether you reflect on his performance as a player or as a coach, Dennis Franks excelled at each role on the football field and in life. Athletically, his mentors praised him while his teammates and students admired him. His energy was infectious. Some 40-plus years later, very little had changed; his peers commended his relentless optimism while tens of thousands of people all over the world were deeply moved by his existence. Dennis' charisma was all-encompassing.

As Dennis transitioned from young adult to worldly man, his rough edges were refined. He married the love of his life, Nancy. And, once his career as an athlete ended, he learned how to evolve and adapt his skill set, God-given talents and competitive physique for a different type of playing field — one centered on family and business. The beauty of Dennis' story is he repositioned his star qualities to garner a new lease on life. He effectively flipped the script to discover his second calling.

**For 30 years, Dennis championed the heart of Market America by being the zealous face of all things good, encouraging, hopeful and motivating to the entirety of the business, helping to lead the organization to its current success domestically and abroad.**

From inspiration to empire may be the best way to describe the evolution of Market America with the benefit of Dennis' influence. Once he had crossed paths with JR and Loren Ridinger, the ensuing bond between Dennis' family and theirs was organic and unbreakable. Most of all, it was exponentially beneficial to the growth of both JR's confidence in the brilliance of his Plan and the synergy that currently unites the countless UnFranchise® Owners (UFOs) globally who associate Dennis with immeasurable dedication, relentless enthusiasm and overwhelming love. For 30 years, Dennis championed the heart of Market America by being the zealous face of all things good, encouraging, hopeful and motivating to the entirety of the business, helping to lead the organization to

its current success domestically and abroad. He was always present and eager to go the extra mile whenever necessary. The significance of these traits in a professional setting is evidenced in the many quotes shared throughout the next several pages.

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Without question, for three decades, Dennis Franks was committed one thousand percent to Market America and growing the business, and yet, family first all the while oozed from his core. If he wasn't with his family, he was sharing photos and stories of his loved ones. Affectionately called "Diesel" by the youngest in his clan — grandchildren Izzy, Cruz and William — Dennis was utterly enamored with his immediate family, including Nancy, their daughters Lauren and Katie as well as sons-in-law Eddie and Daniel. They took precedence over anything else and meant the absolute world to him.

**From training UFOs and cheering on staff to speaking with local business owners and entertaining audiences as the guitarist and vocalist for the Honey James Band, Dennis was full of energy, passion and compassion.**

Fortunately, with Dennis, there was always more than enough love to go around. He actively believed in people and engaged with intention at every opportunity. From training UFOs and cheering on staff to speaking with local business owners and entertaining audiences as the guitarist and vocalist for the Honey James Band, Dennis was full of energy, passion and compassion. He had a deep belief in living each moment to its fullest. In doing so, he brought a fullness to many of our lives. He gave his all and, even in his passing, leaves the impression of his illuminating smile in the hearts of all who knew him.







**JR Ridinger,**  
*Founder, Chairman  
& CEO of Market  
America Worldwide |  
SHOP.COM*

“

Dennis believed 100% in our mission and the UnFranchise® Model from the beginning when there was nothing but a concept or idea. He gave up everything to join me in making Market America a success. He immediately moved to Greensboro to help start this company. He was my “other half” and confidence. He was the ultimate UnFranchise Owner and executive and led by example. His boundless love and belief in people resulted in positively influencing tens of thousands of people and generating thousands of success stories. It has been the greatest honor of my life to have this great man join and follow me for 30 years. He is irreplaceable! Nancy, Katie, and Lauren have always been our family, and we grieve with them.

”



**Loren Ridinger,**  
*Co-Founder & Senior  
Executive Vice  
President of Market  
America Worldwide |  
SHOP.COM*

“

I miss you, Dennis. I just wish we had one more chance to hear your voice, just one more time to get that Dennis hug or that Dennis pep talk or one more time to laugh with you. I wish I could rewind time. I know we will never be the same. There will never be another you. We will never be the same, and I don't know how we will ever get over this heartache. It's been 30 years together, and we have done more in 30 years than most people ever do in 10 lifetimes — we did it. You gave all of you — every single bit of you. Thank you for all you gave, all you did. There will never be the perfect words to tell you, but we will show you. I love you. We miss you and love you so much, and it hurts so bad.

”



**Marty Weissman,**  
*Executive Vice  
President of Market  
America Worldwide |  
SHOP.COM*

“

I cannot put into words what the passing of my friend and partner, Dennis, has meant to me personally and to Market America. Over the past thirty years, we may not have agreed on everything, but when it came down to it, we were brothers and always did what was best for the company and our UnFranchise Owners. It was a mutual love and respect that we had for one another. I will forever miss him.

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**Steve Ashley,**  
*President & COO  
of SHOP.COM*

“

Dennis was real and told it like it was. If he saw something you needed to improve, he would use it as a coaching opportunity. I remember years ago, when I had my first solo presentation at [our event], he came over to me and told me, “Steve, the fact you got up is great. However, there are some things I want to work with you on with speaking because you are raw, and I know you want to get better.” For years, I used to seek his input after my presentations because I knew I would get great advice to get better. Finally, over the last couple of events, he sought me out and told me he didn't have any more coaching points because he was now learning from my performance. I remember my eyes watering up, not just because I felt accomplished but also because I wanted to learn more. It was his way of making me better because he saw the best in people.

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**Marc Ashley,**  
*President & COO of  
Market America  
Worldwide*

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Losing Dennis is a profound loss. Dennis made the impossible possible for so many entrepreneurs who wanted to become business owners. His smile and laughter were both infectious and inspiring. He was Market America's ‘Mr. Energy’ but he will forever be my friend, my brother, my partner and our company's Executive Vice President.

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**Lauren Franks Ifft,**  
*Dennis' Daughter*

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We were so very lucky to have such a motivational figure present in our lives every day. He would always tell me, ‘Take your shots, take your shots. And if you fail, you can always come home.’ I always took the chance because he said to take the chance and try. So I did. And I will.

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**Joe Bolyard,**  
*Executive Vice  
President of Market  
America Worldwide |  
SHOP.COM*

“

There are so many great memories of Dennis. He touched so many people's lives — from his amazing wife Nancy and their daughters Lauren and Katie down to his grandkids; his impact will live on forever. He left his mark on people throughout the world, teaching and training in the Americas, Europe, Asia and Australia. He loved everyone and fueled himself from their love. He was nonstop with everything he did, be it family, community or business centered. His love of life always elevated all those around him and left you with a smile and a drive. We will miss his insight, inspiration and positivity forever. Rest in peace, Dennis.

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**Kevin Buckman,**  
*Market America  
Executive Vice President  
of Asia Pacific*

“

Den was my lighthouse. He was always there making the good weather more enjoyable, and a beacon of light always there to remind me to stay the course during bad weather.

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**Celine Leung,**  
*Market Hong Kong*  
General Manager

“

I remember one time that I said to you “I will try my best,” and you responded right away, “Celine, do your best, not try.” That’s always been in my mind whenever there is a new challenge coming my way. I was honored to be your translator in the past 14 years when you were in HK or even on Zoom recently. Every time I got the chance to translate for you, the language and the words were not the only things I was concerned about delivering accurately, but also the energy and power in your speech. I had to keep reminding myself to do my best to transfer to the audience. Even if it was just a few words, it was always powerful. Thank you for raising me up along my MA journey. I will DO my best.

”



**Malcolm Tucker,**  
*Market United*  
Kingdom Marketing  
Director

“

When I joined the company, Dennis seemed to be a daunting figure, being an elite athlete and a very successful UnFranchise® Owner. That thought was quickly dispelled when he invited me to his office and taught me the basics of what is needed to be successful at Market America. When he flew to the UK, instead of going to his hotel to sleep off his jet lag, he worked late at the office, calling all his UK contacts. This was another insight into what it takes to succeed. Dennis was gregarious, fun-loving and the life and soul of Market America. Gone too soon. My thoughts are with his family.

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**Andrew Chee,**  
*Director of Field*  
Development for  
Canada

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The reality of your departure is finally setting in, although I still need more time to come to terms with it. They say, “never meet your heroes, you’ll only be disappointed.” Well, I have been fortunate enough to not only meet but also to do meaningful work with mine, and Dennis, you have never disappointed.

You were a leader to so many, but what I saw was that you led by being a servant to the people and to the cause. You possessed a roaring passion with the charisma to match. You were always the first to step up while the rest of us tried our very best just to keep up. You gave so much of yourself, more than the physical form sanctioned, to others even when some of us didn’t deserve it. You never failed to communicate your honest coaching tips at the right moments, and you were always the first to tell someone that you appreciated them. All you did was for the betterment of others.

Thank you for showing us what it means to truly be an exceptional human being.

The lessons you taught me will be with me until my last breath. Even in your passing, you’ve taught me that there is such a thing as “too late” and that we should never pass up an opportunity to show someone our gratitude towards them. I didn’t express often enough how thankful I am to have had you in my life as my coach, mentor, leader, partner, and friend. You have been an angel to me even before becoming one.

Rest now, Big Diesel, for you have given enough. We will continue to stay the course and fight the good fight. I will miss you forever, until we meet again.

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**Claire Ni,**  
*Market Taiwan*  
General Manager

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Dennis was so full of energy, always wearing a big smile, giving the warmest hug to people with all his love that I will never forget. His knowledge and passion for the UnFranchise™ Business is extremely admirable. Trust that he is now resting well in God’s place. You are always in our heart!

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**Jojo Soh,**  
*Market Singapore*  
General Manager

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With so much passion, Dennis shared with me the MPCP on my first day of orientation at GSO in 2013. His big smile and hugs made me feel so welcome to the Market America family and asserted that I made the right choice.

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**Vince Papale,**  
*former Philadelphia*  
Eagles player and  
teammate

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Dennis just touched and impacted so many people. He was my brother, my best friend, the godfather of my children and, for a lot of people out there, Dennis was the guy who lit the fire. That fire was the desire that you have in your belly to be the best. And they call that fire potential. His whole purpose was to help anybody that he came in touch with to reach their full potential. There’s no question that I would never have made it in the NFL without Dennis Franks.

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**Yvonne Lucado,**  
*Executive Assistant to*  
Dennis Franks

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Dennis was so many things to so many people. To me, he was my friend, confidant, mentor, my worst and my best critic. He pushed me to be my very best in all areas of my life. I honestly think he thought I was a football player, continually coaching and cheering me on. Whatever the tasks, whatever the challenge, whatever the moment — we got it done. Dennis was a fearless leader who pushed himself above and beyond to reach a goal. He didn’t know how to say no and made sure that he didn’t fail anyone. Dennis lived life. He enjoyed life. He was life to so many people. Dennis, you still live in my heart and the hearts of others. Rest in peace, my dear friend. Big hugs, Love you.

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