

# Lucky Dog Painters

*Ryan Miller, owner of Lucky Dog Painters in Sonoma County, California, brings honesty, integrity and a dash of magic to every job.*



**R**yan Miller, owner of Lucky Dog Painters in Sonoma County, California, is a man with a storied past, and an eye on the future. For several years now, Ryan and his team have been changing the paradigm of painting houses, leaving a trail of artistically stunning paint jobs and delighted customers in their wake.

Growing up, Ryan lived all over the country. He was born in Colorado, attended grade school in Tucson, Arizona, and high school in Memphis, Tennessee. As a young boy, Ryan became fascinated with the world of magic, and decided he wanted to become a performer.

“There was a magic shop in town, and that’s where I spent all my money,” says Ryan, laughing. “My parents were bridge players; they made cards boring. I read magic books and learned how to make cards fun.”

When Ryan was 17, he made some business cards and began entertaining at childrens’ birthday parties. Later, he got a job at a restaurant, doing what is called “strolling magic” at the tables. In his early twenties he was averaging five paid magic shows a week. Ultimately, he moved to Lake Tahoe and founded a company called Wise Guy Entertainment, doing stand-up comedy and magic at such revered venues as Harrah’s, Harvey’s, and Caesar’s, becoming known throughout the area as “Magic Ryan.”

Through all of this Ryan—obviously good at multi-tasking—also managed to earn a degree in speech communication from Cal Poly while teaching snowboarding and becoming a journeyman painter. He met his wife at a costume party in Las Vegas in 2009. She was from Sebastopol, and when they visited, Ryan fell in love with Sonoma County. The couple moved to Sonoma County in 2010. They now have two young boys, Cameron and Brennan.

In 2015 Ryan earned his contractor’s license and launched Lucky Dog Painters, named in honor of his loyal dog, Yanna,

who used to accompany Ryan on jobs, and who lost a leg after being struck by a car. Ryan smiles wistfully when he speaks of his late dog. “Yanna represented everything that’s great in the world.”

Because of his background as a performer, Ryan has an eye for detail and timing. He has always considered himself as an artist, and he brings that artistic eye to his work as a painting contractor.

“I have an artistic mind, which helps in my work,” says Ryan. “I wanted to start a business that emphasizes team development and great client relations, and the highest standards of the industry.”

Before taking on a new project, Ryan sits down with his client to, as he puts it, ‘learn their what and why.’ “I need to understand their vision,” says Ryan. “It’s about connecting and building rapport. I don’t ‘sell’ the job; I earn it by building trust through honesty and sincerity. I learn what they’re trying to do, and if I can help, I show them how I will approach the job. I also pay particular attention to their deadline for the job.”

Ryan and his team can do commercial or home exteriors and interiors, refinish, paint and seal decks, walkways, gates and more. With a meticulous eye for detail, they fully prep all surfaces, including pressure washing, sanding, using fillers, and priming, using only the very best possible products. All non-paintable surfaces are painstakingly masked and protected before proceeding.

“We can do the whole house, inside and out,” says Ryan. “We specialize in interior accent walls with clean lines, using extra care to protect furniture and interior areas. Because I’m an artist, I can refinish doors, brick, metal, and plastics and bring shabby surfaces back to life. We have a two-year guarantee on all our work; if there’s any problem, we’ll come back and fix it for free. If there is sheen variance, we’ll sand and paint it



again. I'm a two-coat-plus painter." He laughs and adds, "And primer is *not* a coat."

Ryan also often works with Realtors to freshen up a home before putting it on the market, fixing damage and doing touch-up work.

Ryan carefully vets his employees so his clients can be sure that the people working in and around their homes are trustworthy, honest, and polite. After interviewing a potential employee, he takes them on an on-the-job interview to be sure they understand how to do the work and are a good fit for the team.

"Yes, I'm looking for a high skill level when I hire," says Ryan, "But I'm also

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*"I always use the 'Lucky Dog System' to be sure nothing is overlooked, everything is done to the highest possible standards, and my customer is always happy. I love to serve."* - Ryan Miller

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looking for integrity, a good personality and upbeat attitude. I have created a group of nice, honest painters." He pauses and adds, "I'm tough on myself, so I have a high expectation of my employees."

Ryan has developed a set of core values for his business and his employees. "As a painter I'm a coating expert," he says. "It's my job to use the right product for the right substrate. We use all non-toxic, water-based paints and closely follow all OSHA standards. We use only the highest rated ladders, protective clothing, and



Yanna: the original "Lucky Dog."



tools. I call it the 'Lucky Dog Painter Way.' I don't rush. But I make sure every job is done right, and on time, and always follow through on my promises to my clients. I'm there Monday through Friday until the job is done. I'll never take so many jobs that I can't do my best work because of being rushed. I always use the 'Lucky Dog System' to be sure nothing is overlooked, everything is done to the highest possible standards, and my customer is always happy. I love to serve."

With his background as a performer, you won't be surprised to learn that Ryan is easy to talk to, quick with a joke or wry observation, smiles a lot, and has a generally sunny outlook on life. When he speaks of his work as a painter, his excitement and enthusiasm come through in spades, and it's easy to see that this is a man who loves what he does, and is very good at it.

"I want to fill the painting need in my community while being a good neighbor," says Ryan. He grins and adds, "I'm your good, honest, neighborhood painter. It's as simple as that. I want my jobs to look better for longer than my competitors. I even train my clients in maintenance so they can save money over time, and they can call me any time with questions."

Ryan's business is booming, but for him, it's about so much more than money. It's about knowing he's exceeding his customers' expectations and making the world a better and more beautiful place,

one job at a time. When Ryan and his team at Lucky Dog Painters come to your home, there are no tricks, no illusions—just pure magic.

"The best part is when I see the joy on my customers' faces," says Ryan. "That's when I know I've done the job right." In paint-speckled overalls, he finishes masking the chain on an automatic gate he's painting and gestures to his customer's home. "I'm building relationships here. When they're happy, I'm happy, and when they call me back for another job or refer me to their friends, then I know I've done a good job." He grins, spreads his arms, and adds, "I love it when it's win-win!"

## Lucky Dog Painters

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