



P. KEVIN MORLEY/TIMES-DISPATCH

Jeff Wells (left) and Mac Pence, owners of Maury Place at Monument, prepare a breakfast setting. They opened the four-bedroom bed-and-breakfast in October.

## Bed-and-breakfast's owners pair skill sets

**A** lawyer and a car salesman bought a hotel last year.

No, that's not the first line of a joke. It's what happened in Richmond's museum district when partners Jeff Wells and Mac Pence bought and opened Maury Place at Monument.

Wells is a former attorney and Pence is president of the Pence Automotive

Group. They opened the four-bedroom bed-and-breakfast in October.

Neither has experience as

innkeepers, but they've taken several management-level hospitality courses.

The lack of experience has not hurt the effort, they said.

Because their skill sets meld so well, Maury Place is off to a good start, Pence said.

"Jeff has the people skills, the high-touch personal skills, and has an eye for the décor," he said. "Marketing and finance is what I bring to it."

To help them bring in guests, they've partnered with five other local B&Bs.

The partnership advertises and markets the properties as a group. Banding together allows them to reach larger audiences than they could individually.

But the relationship has perks

for Wells and Pence other than the pooling together of resources.

"We sit around at meetings and pass ideas back and forth," Wells said.

The partners say they've seen some early success, with weekends sold out and good responses from guests.

They've been able to attract locals who decide to take a weekend trip by heading to the Museum District.

"If people live in Richmond, they are able to escape their worries and reconnect with their spouse or partner without having to spend a lot of money to travel far," Wells said.



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