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# PUBLISHER'S NOTE

In the November issue of this publication, its Publisher and founder, Mark Van Duren, wrote this: "Roughly two and a half years ago, I was given the opportunity to start the Real Producers magazine here in Colorado Springs."

Well, my introduction to Real Producers is somewhat similar, only my statement would read "Roughly two and half years ago I was given the opportunity to write articles for Real Producers magazine here in Colorado Springs."

It was and is an opportunity, and was and is a privilege.

My career background is mostly in radio and television, starting with CBS News in New York City, where I walked in off the street with a degree in communications one day and went to work that day. The job was "desk assistant" ("go-fer") at WCBS Radio; NewsRadio 88 as it was known then, located at CBS corporate headquarters. I was eventually promoted to Supervisor of News Operations and Programs. It was the corporate flagship station and one of the first all-news radio stations in the nation. What a beginning! From there I became a journeyman radio and TV guy, moving around the country into new opportunities as they came along. I was a news person, sales person, sales manager and general manager of various radio and TV stations in a variety of markets. I co-founded and operated a small national event marketing company and in that capacity helped create one of the largest Italian festivals in the country in Los Angeles featured annually on Jimmy Kimmel Live! to this day.

Sustaining me throughout my life and career is my family, now four adult daughters and a son finding their way in the world, nurtured selflessly by their mom.

Working with Mark Van Duren as a mentor and boss has been an inspiration. He is a man of strong faith and is a force of nature! Mark provided me the opportunity to write about our growing community and, more importantly, interview and write about some incredible agents and partners.

There are new horizons ahead, with more responsibilities with this growing publication. I look forward to the opportunity and privilege of meeting each of you in the coming year.

Robert O'Brien  
Publisher  
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*Real Producers*



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# Kelly Miller

**H**ello, I am Kelly Miller, and I was born and raised in the upper Midwest. I spent the first 12 years of my life living in North Sioux City, South Dakota, a very small town, which boasted only a Post Office and a liquor store. North Sioux City was so small they didn't even have a hospital, so I was actually born in Sioux City, Iowa. Of course, the two cities were literally blocks apart. So, as a family, we spent most of our time in Sioux City since we didn't even have a grocery store, gas station or high school in our tiny little town in South Dakota. And speaking of my family, I come from a very large family. I am the 8th of my parents 10 children. I have 6 sisters and 3 brothers, so there weren't too many dull moments in our household! And, as hard as this may be to believe, both of my parents were the 8th of 15 children in their respective families! I've got aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews that number into the triple digits!

I'm blessed to be able to say that both of my parents are in great health. My dad, Jimmie is 90 years old and my mother, Genevieve is 86 years old. To this day, my dad still chops wood and donates it to those less fortunate in their small Western Wisconsin community. Mom and Dad spend a lot of their evenings playing cards, dice games and dominos. They may be getting on in years, but they still share a competitive spirit that has both of them striving to win no matter what game they're playing or who they're playing with!

And while I'm of long lives, I'm super fortunate to have had three grandparents who lived long lives – 93, 97, and 100 years old. My Maternal Grandmother always said she wanted to live to be 100 years old so she could get a personalized letter from the president, and she happily accomplished that goal receiving her birthday card from President Clinton in 1998. Based on that family history of longevity, I expect that I may be around a while. I have been married to my husband David, for 22 years. He is a great dad to our 4 children, Dustin (40), and his beautiful wife, Lynnette, Brandi (37), and our rock star real estate agent son-in-law, Jesse, Michael (22) and Annie (20). He is also a wonderful "Papa" to our 5 grandchildren, Jalyn 17, Lily 11, Sean 11, Adilyn 7, and Logan 6. We also have a furry family member, Jackie, who is an adorable Mini Australian Shepherd and is typically the highlight of everyone's day.

...

▶▶ top producer





• • •

As a child, I lived in a home that was approximately 800 square feet. Yes, at one time, there were all ten kids and my parents living in that home in South Dakota. When I was in the 6th grade my father, who worked in the newspaper industry, got transferred to the Minneapolis Star and Tribune newspaper, which was located in Minneapolis. At that time, there were still 5 of us kids at home, so when we moved into our new 1,500 square foot home in Fridley, MN, well we thought we had hit the big time.

I enjoyed growing up in the Twin Cities, in spite of the bitter cold winters and the mosquito-filled summers. When I became a young adult, I had an experience that would make a lasting impression on me as I was beginning my journey into the world of the working adult. A minor illness led me to a doctor's appointment where I met a medical doctor

who gave me a piece of advice that I think about to this day. After conducting his exam, he spent a few minutes talking with me, and in a sort of fatherly way, he told me to "always work on being educated in everything you do because Knowledge is Power". I decided then to take his words to heart, and my entry into the working world was to always be the best at any job I had and also to work to help others to be the best they can be.

I worked in a manufacturing facility as a Production Manager for 23 years, and I played a major role in helping the company achieve its ISO 9000 certification. ISO 9000 is a set of international standards, which document the quality of the training systems. What I'm most proud of during my 23-year career was building a training program that was implemented at each of the company's manufacturing

sites worldwide. Proper training of the employees became my focus, and this was where I put my efforts in helping the company become more successful. After working 60 to 70 hours a week, which was not uncommon, I got burned out. Seeking my next career opportunity, I opened a couple of businesses. One business was a tanning salon called A Knockout Tan, and the other business was a beauty salon called Kelly Jeans. I enjoyed my time in the salon world but after a few years, I felt it was time to take on a greater challenge. I sold both salons and decided

to get my real estate license. With my strong training background, I began to document everything I did in my real estate business and I eventually began to build my team. Today, 16 years later, I no longer handle the day-to-day management of the team. I've passed that task on to my son-in-law, Jesse, who's now the Team Lead. I'm super proud of Jesse

as he's grown the team to now include 10 licensed agents, our office manager, a marketing individual and an administrative assistant. This high-performing team generated over 38 million dollars of revenue last year and continues on the same trajectory for 2019.

Our real estate team in Colorado knows of my Minnesota background. But, one of the things that most of them don't know about me is that I once belonged to an archery club while living in Minnesota. I competed in target shooting and was only one of a few women that participated in actual competitions. Early on, I set a goal for myself to always be in the top 3 at any event I participated in, and I'm happy to say that I achieved that goal. I grew to love the sport and would practice 1 to 2 days every week to improve my skills. I became a

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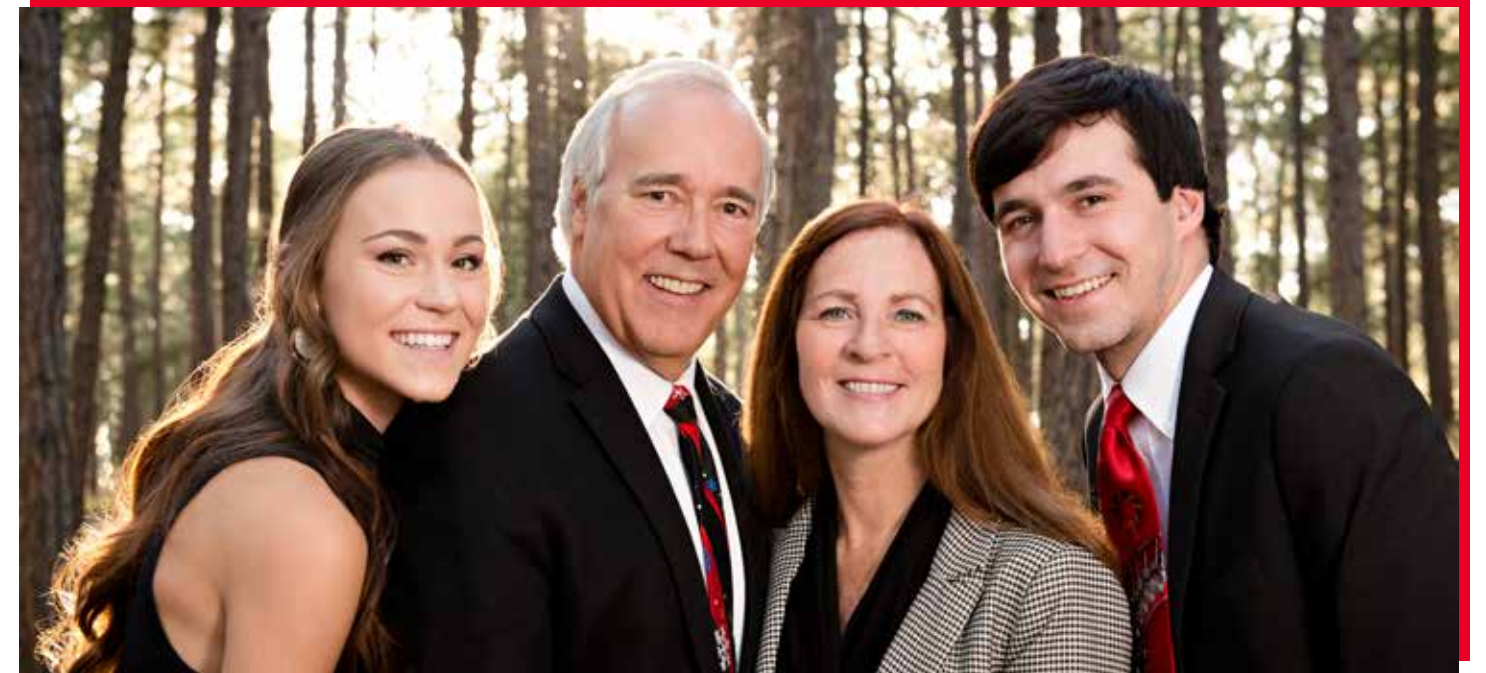
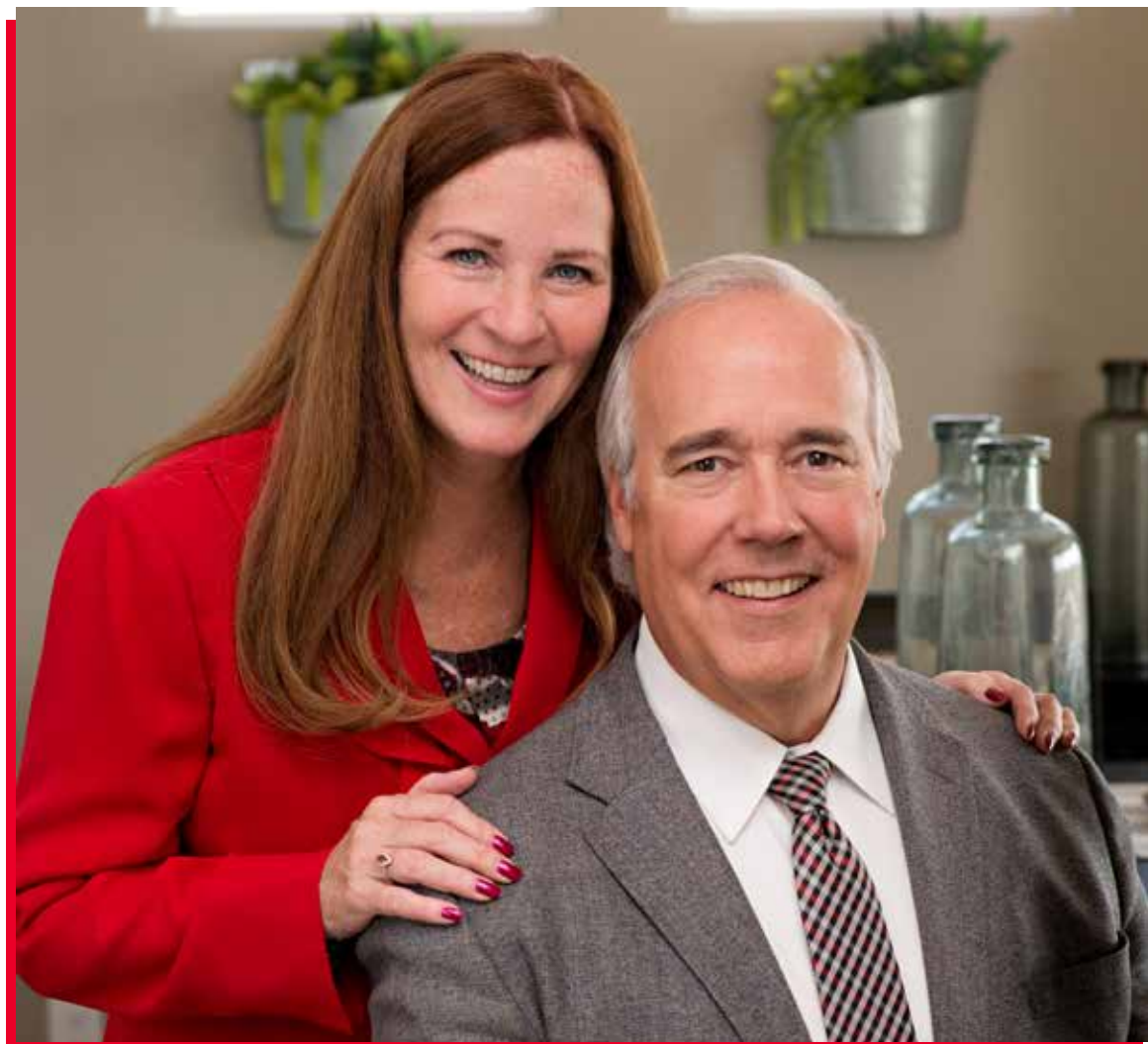


...  
big fan of the sport and learned to take good care of my Warthog compound bow. Yes, I invested in all the top gear and learned to “talk the lingo” of the local archery groups.

We would usually get together once a month where we’d feast on some of the dishes the hunters in our group would bring in. On any given month, we might be eating raccoon, rabbit, bear, pheasant, duck or antelope. I have to say that some of the wild game was pretty tasty! As I became more confident in my skills, I even decided that I was going to take a shot at deer hunting (no pun intended!). I wanted to see if I’d be able to take down a deer or and possibly some other small animal. So I set off one morning and hiked down to the river bottoms where the animals would graze to try to achieve my goal of shooting a deer. On my first trip, I made my way up into my tree stand and pulled back my bow. Seconds later, I lost my balance and fell out of the tree. It only took that one fall for me to learn that target practice and competitions were better for me than

venturing out hunting. My archery days are years behind me now. It’s safe to say that these days my time is spent building our business and focusing on my goal of leaving a successful business and legacy to my family.

My immediate family is a very artistic bunch and I’m quite pleased to see that the spirit of business ownership has taken hold of several of them. My oldest son Dustin has his own carpet cleaning and carpet repair business. Brandi has her own hair-dressing business and keeps our real estate team in check as our Office Manager. Michael is a student, majoring in Guitar. He is very gifted musically and actually plays multiple instruments. He started as a “self-taught” musician and has 3 LP’s, but has really come into his own from the skills and training he’s gained while going to school. Annie’s a Dean’s List student currently majoring in Business. She spent 14 years as a competitive dancer and still teaches dance part-time at the studio that became her home-away-from-home.



The artistic streak is very strong in the family as Kelly, Brandi, Lynette and Annie like to spend their free time creating and selling various crafts. Kelly makes jewelry while Brandi and Annie have a knack for creating multiple types of flower arrangements, hand-painted ornaments and custom home décor pieces. Lynette takes care of the sweet tooth by baking cookies, candies, cupcakes and other specialty cakes. Holiday craft shows are their specialty, and this mother/daughters/daughter-in-law crew definitely puts the “spirit” into Christmas Spirit!

We love to spend time at our cabin as a family where we play cards, hike and enjoy each other’s company and the beautiful Colorado scenery. Staying at the cabin gives us a chance to get out and support the local businesses and be a part of our mountain community. We like attending concerts every chance we get, from big shows put on by national recording artists to small intimate shows put on by local musicians at various local venues. Finally, we’re very fortunate and blessed to be able to donate some of our time to raise money for different local charities and events here in Colorado Springs. One of our favorite fundraising events is the American Warrior Initiative (AWI). The AWI events help our local military veterans and our military community. This year’s event raised \$40,000, which will be used to fund the training of a service dog for 4 local military vets. We’re proud to be associated with this important and life-changing organization.

Sometimes I have to pinch myself to make sure I’m not dreaming. I’ve been able to learn from some fabulous mentors and have focused my hard work into operating some rewarding and successful businesses. I’ve been able to hand off my real estate team to my very capable and highly motivated son-in-law. This allows me to put my energy and full commitment into building a successful brokerage. As an independent brokerage, we believe we can offer agents a much more family-oriented environment. We strive to provide our agents with the best training to help further their careers and work

with them to learn what it is that they want to achieve with their business. Stay open-minded to be “coachable”, always continue to educate yourself and be the best you can be at whatever you do!

I would like to share some of the “do’s and don’ts” I like to follow when working in a family business environment.

#### DO'S

- Define roles and responsibilities.
- Have a clear vision and ensure everyone understands the vision.
- Treat each other with respect and as a professional during business hours and days.
- Check the financial temperature of the business even when a family member runs the P&L.
- Schedule weekly or bi-monthly meetings to discuss business operations, goals and individual accountability.
- Keep business at the business.
- Always complete a yearly review of each other’s responsibilities and be honest where improvements are required and/or can be made.

#### DON'TS

- No negative family discussions in the workplace.
- Don’t call each other by family names, i.e. Mom or Dad. Use proper names during workdays and hours.
- Don’t assume because you’re a family member that you don’t have to comply with company or business rules.
- Don’t be harder or stricter with family members. Treat them as you would any business partner or associate.
- Don’t talk business during family time.

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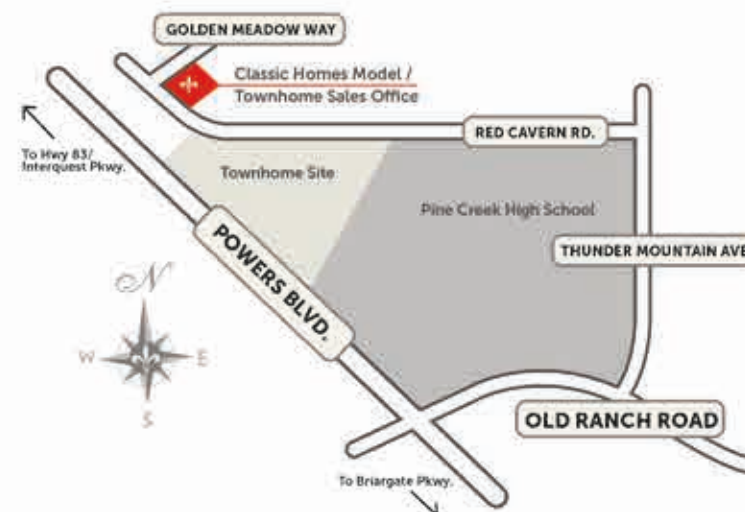
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# Jesse RISLEY

► up and coming  
real estate agent



My Uncle gave me my first life-changing experience when I was young. He had the tendency to do anything for anyone and that eventually got him into trouble. My grandmother took me to see him while he was in prison. That entire experience scared me! The check-in process is scary. The environment is cold. You have to talk with a loved one through a glass window. I made the decision right then and there that I would never end up on the other side of the glass and thankfully my Uncle made the same decision after he got out and has since changed his life for the better.

Traditional schooling never meshed well with me, however, I thrived taking hands-on courses such as auto shop, wood shop, cooking classes, and those sorts of things. Thankfully school gave extra credits toward a degree by giving “work credit” and that’s exactly what I did my freshman year; I went and got a job at Taco Bell. It’s unheard of today, being a 14 year old with a job. I started by cleaning the bathrooms and lobby, worked my way up to taking orders and running the registers, and then finally making my way up to “the line”. It doesn’t sound like much but this is where the older employees and managers worked. With me becoming 15, about to start driving, this was a big deal and I set a goal to become a manager. Fortunately my Taco Bell career never took off but that first job taught me something... set goals. Set goals for both your personal life and business life. I set weekly, monthly, and annual goals, then reviewed them every day to track my progress.

I ended up graduating from high school with 10 extra credits but the diploma wasn’t my greatest high school achievement; meeting my wife was and will always be my life’s greatest accomplishment. I was a sopho-

## THE COIN FLIP

*Growing up I never thought of becoming a real estate agent. Like most young men I had dreams and aspirations of becoming a world class athlete and just knew that I would be a professional football or basketball player, the next Michael Jordan. The only problem, I was 5’5” and 80 pounds soaking wet my freshman year of high school.*

It should come as no surprise that I ended up getting into the real estate industry. I’m a Colorado Springs native, born and raised. Both of my parents moved here when they were young and call Colorado home as well. My father moved here from Chicago and is one of six children. I can remember him working from sun up to sun down and doing whatever it took in order to provide for my mother, brother, and myself. My Dad has always been a hardworking man doing different jobs, such as remodeling houses, driving trucks, handyman work, construction, and has a heart so big that he’ll give you the shirt off his back... just so long as you don’t owe him money. My mother moved here from Germany and is the oldest of 4 children. My Mom worked for the city/county for as long as I can remember growing up and is one of the toughest and smartest people I know; constantly continuing to educate herself in whatever she does. I sometimes joke that I got the brains (and good looks) from mom and the hard work ethic from dad. Growing up wasn’t all sunshine and rainbows. Like most teenagers and their parents we didn’t always see eye to eye. Mom told me once that when you have children they don’t come with rule books.



•••

more and she was a freshman new to the school. We would hang out with mutual friends throughout our high school careers and I must have asked her out a thousand times before she finally said yes! It was her senior year and I had recently graduated, working in construction, when I asked her to meet me for lunch at Subway. I asked her out again that day fully expecting to hear “no” again, she surprisingly said YES. I’m fairly confident the only reason she said yes that day was to get me to shut-up and quit bothering her.

At this point I’m 17, moved out of my parents’ house, had a decent-paying construction job, and was ready to take on the world. The only problem was I didn’t have a place to stay. I stayed with different friends sometimes and other times I slept in my car. I was very grateful to have that car because I couldn’t go back to my parents to admit failure. Eventually my future wife would graduate and we moved in together. Actually, what happened is my mother-in-law was moving to Oregon and bought a house for my wife and her brother. I was just happy to be moving out of my car and into a place that I could call home; Thanks Kelly!

Shortly after moving in together at the ripe old age of 19 & 20 we found out that we were expecting. It’s funny, you hear how having a child is amazing and a

*“I wake up every day feeling blessed knowing I have amazing friends, family, and a team of people supporting me.”*

life-changing experience but you’re never fully prepared to how life-changing it is until you become a parent. Jalyn came out with a full head of hair and I had no idea I could love somebody that much. The first time I held him I knew I would do anything for him. When Jalyn was 2 he became very ill. At first we thought it was just a bad cold but he began having trouble breathing and we rushed him to the hospital. We soon discovered he had croup and there is nothing worse than seeing your child in the hospital with



breathing tubes and IV’s. I felt a sense of helplessness and all I could do was pray and wish that I could take his place. Fortunately it didn’t take long for Jalyn to bounce back into being a rambunctious toddler. I can still remember him running all around the house attached to 200 feet of oxygen tubing playing with his monster trucks. My son is now 17 and 6’4”. He is an amazing young man and I am so proud of him. I can’t wait to see the man and father he will become because I know he is going to do great things.

During this period I was still a young man myself and made some bad personal decisions. I allowed the wrong people into my life. The times were hard, I had become uninvolved, and money was scarce. It got so bad that we were eating ramen and hot dogs just to get by. That’s when the darkest day of my life happened. The mother of my child, the woman I love, the key to my happiness, the reason I breathe; told me she was going to leave me and take my son with her. Don’t get me wrong; she wasn’t leaving because money was tight and the food was bad, she was leaving because of the personal decisions I was making.

If a man ever needed proper motivation, that was it. I grew up, got it together, and started to make good personal decisions. We patched things back together and 7 years af-

ter our first child was born we had our second. We didn’t want to know if it was going to be a boy or a girl and because of the proper motivation I managed to work on my relationship with my parents. I really wanted this baby to be a girl for my mom. My mom had always wanted a little girl. Thankfully we had the prettiest blue eyed baby girl and we named her Lily. She was born in ‘08 right at the start of the recession and being in construction I found myself laid-off again. Being in and out of work did give me the opportunity to spend time with Lily and there are a lot of things I never saw myself doing. I learned how to do a ponytail, brush a doll’s hair, dance lessons, tea parties with stuffed animals, and painting my toenails (Lily still paints my toenails to this day). Lily is now 11 and has grown into such a beautiful young woman. She has been dancing competitively for 8 years and I am amazed every time she goes out on stage.

Brandi and I had been together for over 6 years when I finally proposed to her. I took her to that same Subway where she finally said yes. It may not sound like the most romantic place but there was some sentimental attachment to the location. I’ll never forget how nervous I was. She began to ask me if there was something wrong and asked if I was okay. I finally mustered up the strength to say, “Brandi you said yes to me once before here and changed my life. Will you say yes to me again and marry me?” Surprisingly enough she said yes and a few months later we had the most beautiful wedding at the Air Force Academy.

I know I mentioned earlier that my mom was one of the toughest women I’ve ever known but my wife is truly a tough momma. We were young when we met and there were times she would work 2 jobs to make ends meet. She has always made sure the children are taken care of first. She gave natural birth to our daughter and I praise all women who have and who will ever have to endure childbirth. Even through my tough and darkest times she stayed with me and has stuck by my side. Come this February we will be celebrating 20 years together. Four years of persistence really did pay-off and persistence is a key personality trait in real estate sales. We have been together for over half our lives and I look forward to growing old with my best friend.

When our youngest Lily was 4 I got back into construction full time. I had been working for this company on and off for about 11 years. I started off as a gofer (go for this, go for that) eventually working my way up to a supervisor position. I had a great team then much like my real estate team now. One day while at a job I got a call from my boss. We often would joke when we talked but I could tell by his voice he was serious. My boss asked me to go to another job site to assist the Fire Department. There had been an accident and they needed someone who could operate a specific piece of machinery that I ran frequently, and had the only key. When I arrived at the other job site this big piece of machinery had fallen over

the side of a ditch crushing a young man underneath. As I lifted the piece of machinery off his lifeless body it dawned on me... this could happen to me, I was just running this piece of machinery the other day, I have 2 kids and construction jobs always have lay-offs, I had reached my ceiling and needed to make a career change.

Thankfully my mother-in-law (Kelly) was in real estate. At the beginning of our relationship I wasn’t Kelly’s favorite person. I had tattoos, piercings, worked in construction, and had just made her a young grandmother. Despite all that, I still called her and asked if she thought I would do well in real estate. Thankfully Kelly has a heart of gold and is willing to give anyone a chance. She told me that she believed I could do well in real estate as long as I was willing to put in the work. Still, I was hesitant.

A couple of months went by and my construction boss mentioned that work would be slowing down again and to expect lay-offs. So I did what any reasonable adult would do in that situation and I went out with some friends to vent my frustrations. Sitting there complaining about my current life dilemmas my buddy Mike finally called me out. Mike said that I had been talking about making this career change for months now and it was time to make the leap of faith. Still I was hesitant. So Mike being Mike in all of his infinite wisdom produced a quarter and said heads you make a change and go into real estate, tails you go back to work in construction. I’ve never seen a quarter stay in the air as long as it did that night. A life-changing decision was literally up in the air. It landed on tails and honestly I was a bit crushed but as everyone knows a coin flip is always best 2 out of 3... Mike handed me the phone that night as the next two flips landed on heads. I call my boss that evening and let him know I would be stepping down. I returned all my stuff the next day. I went down to my Kelly’s office to let her know I quit my job and was ready to get in real estate. Looking back at that coin flip not only changed my life, it changed my family’s life as well.

If you are still reading this I hope you don’t see this as a Catholic confession but rather an article for inspiration. No one is perfect, so forgive yourself for your past. Past struggles teach you valuable lessons that can fuel your fire. Always work on making yourself a better person. Set goals and read them every day and don’t be afraid of change.

I’m a lucky man. Every person in this story is still a part of my life. I know they love me and I can only hope that they know how much I love them. I am so thankful every time a client hires me or one of my team members. I wake up every day feeling blessed knowing I have amazing friends, family, and a team of people supporting me.

Pictures provided by Heidi Mossman with Capture Life Photography. To schedule your own portrait session, please call 719-789-5558.

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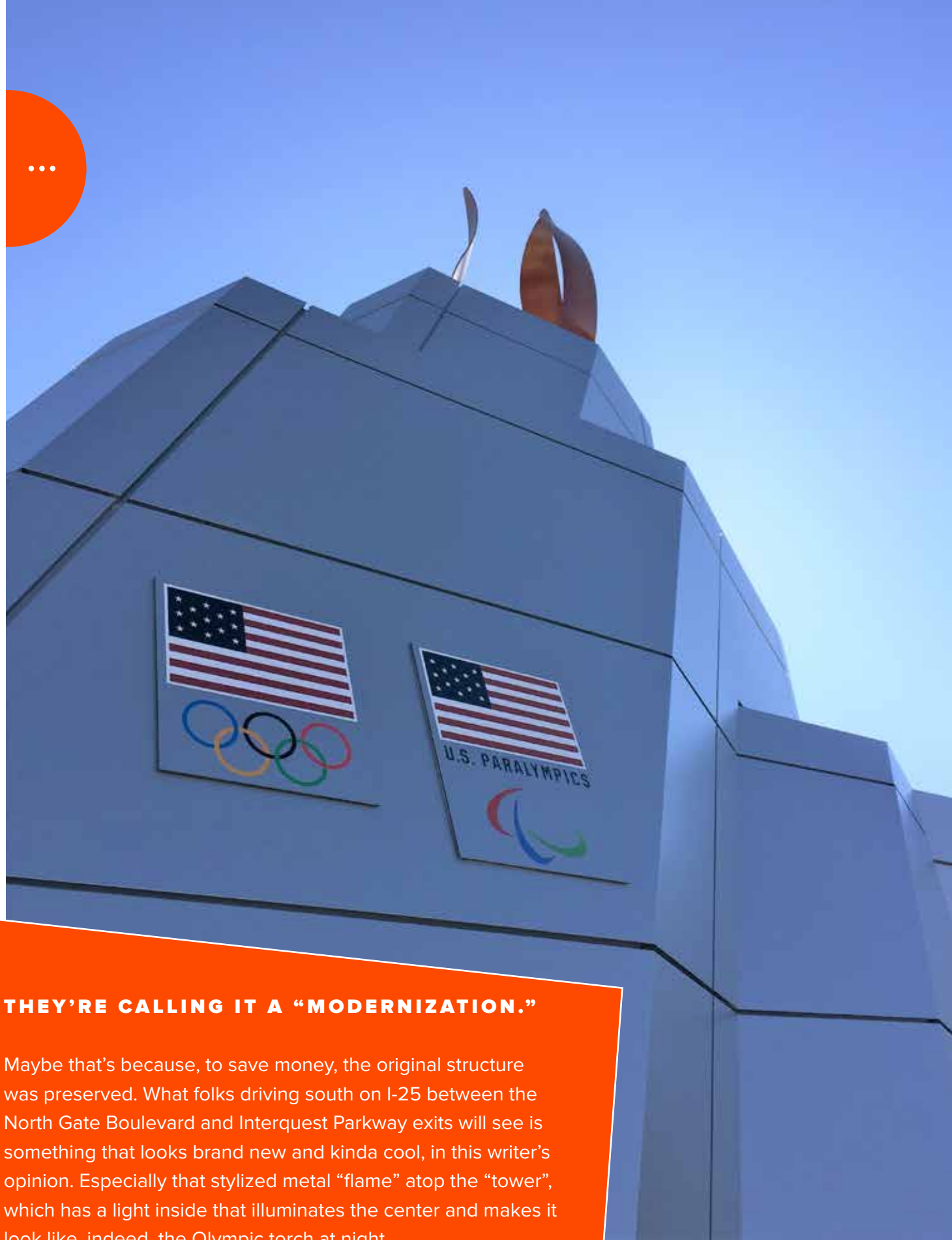
**A SIGN** FOR THE TIMES

*WHAT'S IN A NAME?*



By Robert O'Brien, Real Producers Editor





**THEY'RE CALLING IT A "MODERNIZATION."**

Maybe that's because, to save money, the original structure was preserved. What folks driving south on I-25 between the North Gate Boulevard and Interquest Parkway exits will see is something that looks brand new and kinda cool, in this writer's opinion. Especially that stylized metal "flame" atop the "tower", which has a light inside that illuminates the center and makes it look like, indeed, the Olympic torch at night.



The "new" sign is all about branding. With the new US Olympic Museum opening in 2020 (it will be the first and only one), the Olympic Training Center, City of Champions, etc. it was time to freshen-up the City's branding. Let's face it, the five interlocking rings of the Olympics' logo is worth its weight in, well, Olympic gold. No other city in America can say "Olympic City USA" or use that logo.

The \$217,000 revamp was an initiative by, in part, a consortium of interested organizations, spearheaded by Doug Price, President and CEO of Visit Colorado Springs and involved the City of Colorado Springs, the Olympic Museum, and other contributors and donors. All the money for the remodeled sign was raised by "private donations," as in no tax dollars were involved. GE Johnson was the contractor.



The "old" Welcome sign. Is the "N" upside down?

Here's a bit of arcane history and trivia, according to public radio station KRCC, "The current sign was installed in 1993, after a years-long fundraising campaign led by a group of community volunteers. In the decades since, it has garnered special attention due to a subtle typo: the letter 'N' in Colorado Springs is upside-down." Who knew?

According to [www.Coloradosprings.gov](http://www.Coloradosprings.gov), "The completion of the sign will be celebrated on October 11 when over 60 training and retired Olympic, Paralympic and national team athletes will join donors at the 'Catch the Spirit' luncheon at the Broadmoor."

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# Chris Lutyen

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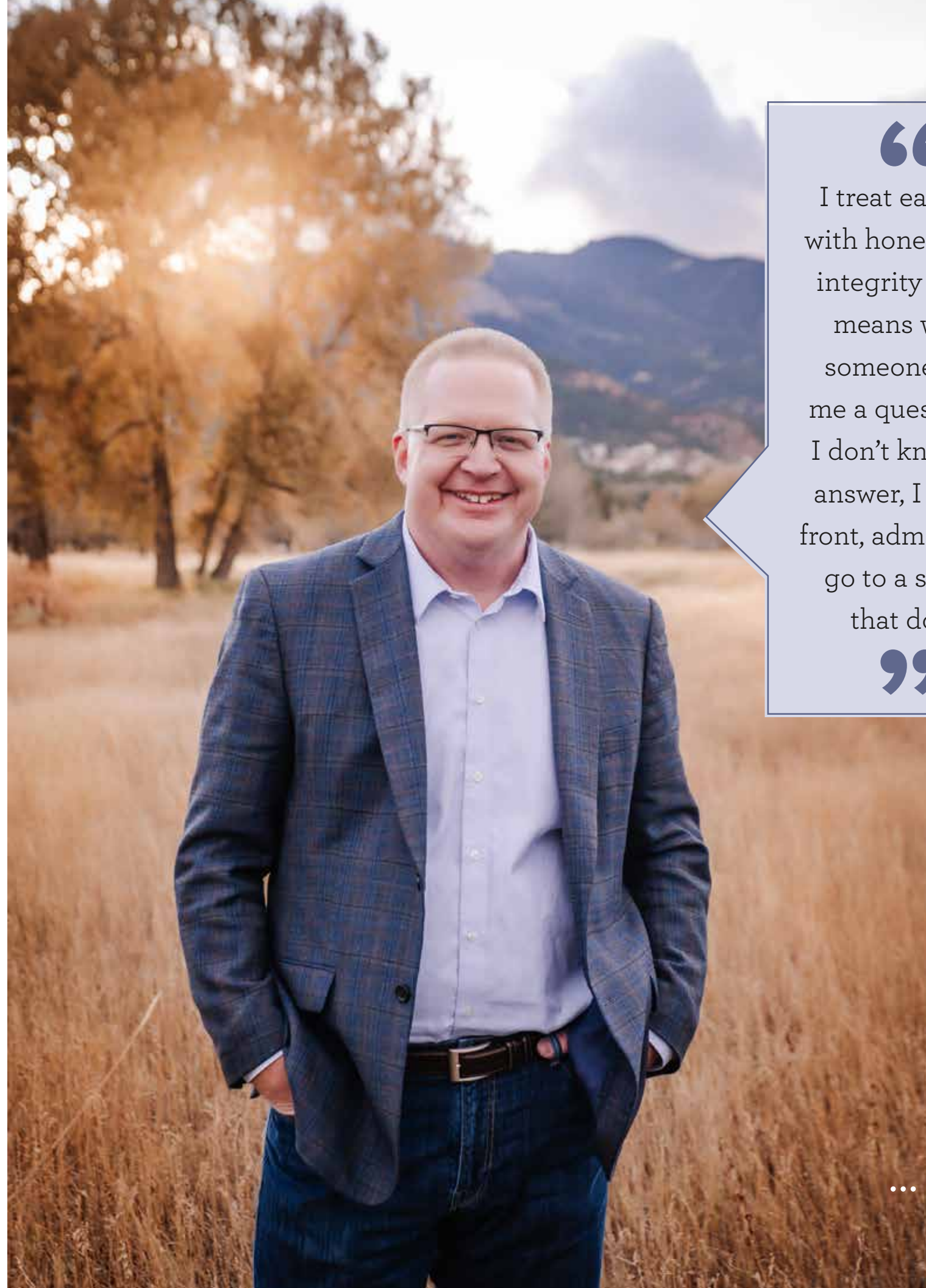
meet the   
managing broker

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I got into Real Estate in 2003 and like many others, I thought it would be easier than it was. I was used to hard labor with previous employment, but this was different, and I loved the opportunity that I had in front of me. I quit my labor-intensive job when I started because I knew if I was going to give it my all, I needed to work Real Estate full time. Unfortunately, my wife and I had little money set aside for this venture. I had to work nights to keep us afloat while I built my business. At the time it was just my wife, daughter Caitlyn and I at home but as a young family it was stressful trying to provide without the safety net of a paycheck. I feel that is why I am so passionate today about helping new agents succeed in the business; one less stress is always beneficial when you're learning.

I started my business in Denver and joined a large Real Estate Firm in DTC. I was told they had good training for new agents, and you wanted a company that would educate you on how to build your business. I always remember doing my first transaction early in my career. I was fortunate to work with an agent on the other side who assisted me with a few rookie errors. She owned a Metro Brokers in Littleton and she was ever so kind

when she sent over the counter-proposal to inform me of a few simple changes and helped me correct them. She didn't stop working for her clients, but she did make sure to help a colleague in a kind and professional manner. As a Managing Broker I decided to make my mark on the real estate community by coaching and educating agents on how best to serve their cli-



“

I treat each day with honesty and integrity which means when someone asks me a question, if I don't know the answer, I am up front, admit it and go to a source that does.

”



•••

ents and yet treat colleagues with respect and professionalism. I did decently my first year and my second year was taking off when I received a referral from a good friend. The buyer was a Real Estate Firm owner looking to expand to Colorado. He was licensed in a few of the western states, but not in Colorado. After we procured a building for his new office in Colorado Springs, he offered me the Managing Broker position for this location. After being very tenacious in his pursuit, my wife and I made the decision to accept the new adventure in Real Estate. I was extremely nervous as I was still fairly new in the industry, but felt it was what I was called to do. I had managed in other fields of work and enjoyed the position. When I left the Real Estate firm in Denver, the Managing Broker mocked me and stated that I'd been in real estate all of 5 minutes, how was I going to run an office or train anyone. At the time I was offended by the comments, but as I look back now, I am extremely thankful he said it as I am determined to be the best Managing Broker I can be. I treat each day with honesty and integrity which means when someone asks me a question, if I don't know the answer, I am up front, admit it and go to a source that does.



“  
It is truly an honor to lead such an amazing team, whom I respect and admire for their dedication.  
”

In 2014, I had an opportunity to join Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage as the Managing Broker of the Colorado Springs and Pueblo offices. I have always thought of Coldwell Banker a highly respected brand in the industry and it really shows with the team of agents that I am blessed to work with every day. They work so hard, yet they don't hesitate to stop and help a colleague in need. I am inspired daily with my mentors, agents, and coworkers as we build on production power and our culture of awesomeness all while never forgetting our core values as a company or our client's needs. It is my mission to assist my agents to lead that exceptional life by focusing on our core values at Coldwell Banker so they can be better advocates for their clients and build their relationships. It is truly an honor to lead such an amazing team, whom I respect and admire for their dedication.

As I have grown my business, so has my family. My wife Jessica and I met in 1996 and have been married for just over 20 years. I am so blessed to have a partner that loves and supports me like she does. We have 4 beautiful children named Caitlyn, Matthew, Aiden and Mackenzie. This year our oldest blessed us with a beautiful grandson, Dominic. He is 5 months old and learning to try to keep up with his Aunt and Uncles. We love going on adventures with our kids, including camping and fishing. They keep us on our toes and keep us young. Our world can be a little crazy at times with our kids, but we wouldn't trade it for anything. They make me smile every time I walk in the door.

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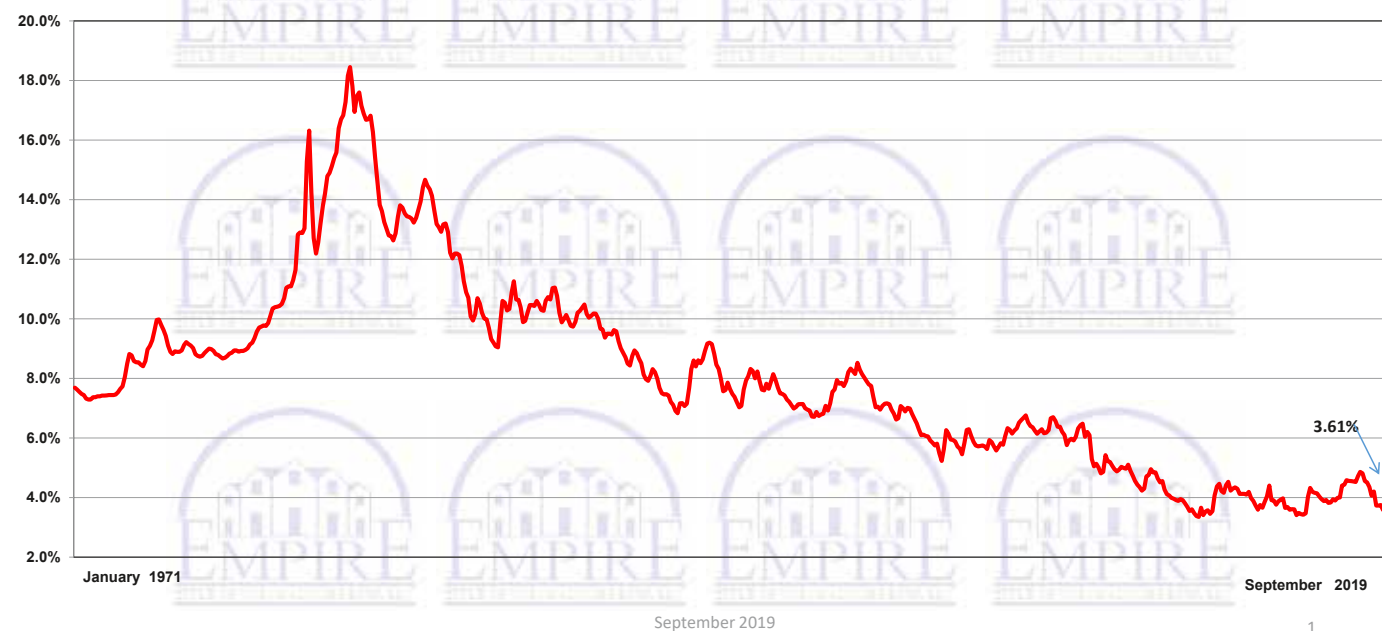
By **Bill McAfee**,  
President Empire  
Title of Colorado  
Springs, LLC

There are several factors that are going to make the last quarter of 2019 one of the hottest on record. At the time of this writing, the unemployment rate sits at 3.5% and business continues to charge at a very hot pace. Space Command and the military will be a big draw and will continue to drive our market. But the true gas on our fire will be interest rates.

Freddie Mac 30 year fixed rates are currently at 3.61% as I write this. This is the lowest since the summer of 2016 when they dropped to 3.44%. In November of 2018 they were 4.87%. This is a difference of 1.26%. This may not seem like much, but if we are purchasing a home for \$350,000 and the rates dropped from 4.87% to 3.61%, the increase in purchasing power would be \$57,000. Keeping your payment at \$1852, which is what it would be if the rate was at 4.87% on a \$350,000 home, a drop of 1.26% to 3.61% would allow us to purchase a home at \$407,000 - an increase of \$57,000 in purchasing power. As long as our income allows us to make a payment of \$1852 per month, purchasing power is red hot.

Many factors are driving our market, but interest rates are the single biggest factor that will melt the snow this winter. Is this going to be an incredibly warm winter? I would say it's going to be more than warm; it's going to be hot!

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# Power(s) Punch



By Robert O'Brien, Real Producers Editor

**Power(s) Punch** Some call it the “Powers punch-through.” Maybe it should be called the “Voyager Connector,” because that comes first, with a major new I-25 interchange connecting Voyager Parkway to the interstate, and, it’s paid for. When that’s done...

...and the funding is secured (right now it’s not), the dirt starts flying on the *actual* Powers extension and connection to I-25. So figure if all goes well construction on the Powers extension will begin in a few years.

So, first things first, Voyager will get a direct connection to I-25 before Powers does. The new interchange (Wildcat Construction Co, general contractor), projected to begin construction in November, will also be the one that will serve as the final leg of Powers connecting directly to I-25. Construction on the Voyager phase is expected to take 18-24 months and its estimated cost is \$55 million.

Construction on what is referred to as “phase II,” which is the Powers extension, is expected to begin six months after the completion of the new I-25 interchange and is budgeted at \$70 million; while funding has not yet been secured, the expectation is that the financing will be in place when construction is planned to begin. Planning for this “final phase” of Powers, a State highway (State Highway 21) has been in the works since 1999.

Based on reporting from KOAA/Channel 5, (<https://koaa.com/news/2018/10/16/bridge-to-nowhere-in-northgate-to-open-soon/>), one

phase of the project has already been completed, which is the Spectrum Loop Bridge, connecting what was originally dubbed Copper Ridge Development (now Polaris Point) to the road called Spectrum Loop (see the map in this article where “Spectrum” is prominently labeled), “which snakes its way through the Polaris Point retail development near North Gate Boulevard and Voyager Parkway. The bridge will provide the connection between the north and south portions of the development, each spanning 100 acres. The \$6 million bridge and roadway project was funded by sales tax revenues generated by the businesses of Polaris Pointe/(Copper Ridge), known as a TIP, which stands for Tax Increment Funding; it means the people most likely to use the bridge actually pay for the bridge. The Spectrum Loop Bridge spans what eventually will be Powers Boulevard; once Powers is extended to meet Interstate 25 (Powers will pass under the bridge).



Detail of the new Powers-Voyager I-25 interchange to be south of the North Gate interchange



The first phase of the Powers extension will connect Voyager to I-25

The report goes on to say that “Developer Gary Erickson expects rapid development of the southern 100-acre portion of Polaris Pointe. ‘We opened Bass Pro Shops five years ago, and since then we’ve opened over 70 new businesses, with all new builds, which is about one and a half a month, Erickson said. ‘When Powers and I-25 intersect, it’s where all the retailers will want to be.’”

Travis Easton, Public Works Director for the City of Colorado Springs, who has been deeply involved in this project, told *Real Producers* that the two projects will eventually help facilitate traffic flow to and from the Air Force Academy, the Colorado Springs Airport (as in exiting I-25 at the new north interchange and taking Powers all the way to the airport) and Peterson Air Force Base (again using the new interchange and taking



Powers all the way). Easton points out that it is expected that the new interchange will reduce “pass-through” traffic at the Voyager/Interquest intersection by 30% and by 20% for the Northgate/Voyager intersection.

In researching this project *Real Producers* came across a CDOT plan for an interchange at Research and Powers (now an “at grade” intersection controlled by traffic signals and is a major bottleneck). As an FYI, whenever it is built (no funding at this point; we’ll keep you posted), the plan is for a “diverging diamond” configuration, like the new Fill-

more/I-25 interchange and the Woodmen/Union interchange (although that one doesn’t have a bridge). The Research/Powers interchange will have a bridge over Research.

Real Producers would like to thank Travis Easton, Public Works Director for the City of Colorado Springs, for his generous contributions to this article. It’s not as if he’s not busy! See next page: ...

“When Powers and I-25 intersect, it’s where all the retailers will want to be.”



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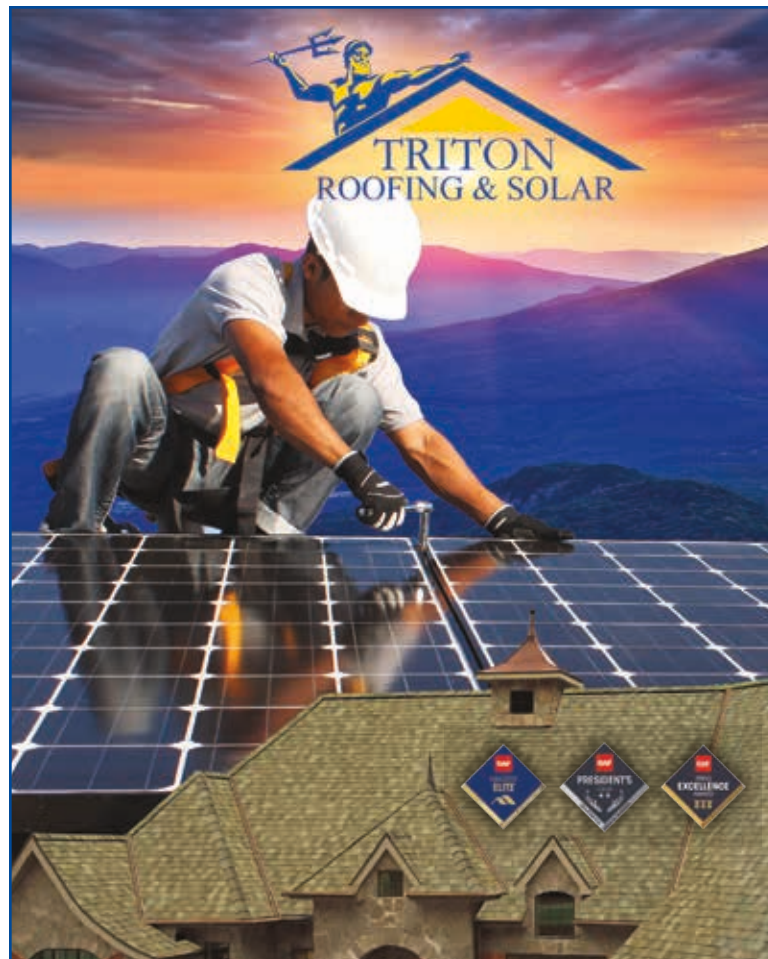
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