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TABLE OF CONTENTS



05
Meet The Staff



09
Publisher's Note
Dees Hinton



10
Top Producer
Cheryl Yetter



16
Rising Star
Drew Jackson



22
Josh Smith, Smith Home Inspections



26
Giving Back
Jan Feldman - Spreading Love in India

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publisher's note ◀◀

Rain, Rain Go Away



It is March already! I hope March brings us some warmer and much dryer weather. As I write this, our area is in the midst of several days of continuous rain. Our water sources are over flood stage and some areas are having to be evacuated. I hope that everyone makes it through without loss!

Some good news about March is that it marks the end of winter and the transition into spring. Another good thing is the beginning of Daylight Savings Time.

In this edition make sure you read our "Giving Back" feature. Jan Feldman with Weaver and Associate shares the "awe-inspiring" experiences of her twelve mission trips to India. It's a great story that gives us a good perspective on how blessed we are to live where we live and do what we do.

That reminds me, Central Mississippi Real Producers is always looking for non-profit, charitable or just acts-of-goodwill that REALTORS® and ad partners are involved with to possibly feature in our magazine. You can contact me at dees.hinton@realproducersmag.com to let me know of an upcoming event or charitable opportunity.

If you would like to nominate a top producing REALTOR® for a feature in our magazine reach out to me at the same email address.

Hope you have a great March!

Blessings!

Dees

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CHERYL YETTER

Looking at the
End Game



top producer ◀◀

written by Susan Marquez

photography by Abe Draper Photography

Born in Syracuse, New York, Cheryl Yetter dreamed of being a fashion illustrator. “I went to school at the Art Institute of Fort Lauderdale, mostly to be in someplace warm after spending my childhood in upstate New York,” she laughs. But once she got there, Cheryl realized that being a fashion illustrator wasn’t what she really wanted to do. Instead, she moved back to New York to go to business school.

Cheryl landed a great job selling electronic components and microprocessors and computers. “It was a great paying job for someone so young,” she recalls. She got involved in the JC’s (Junior Chamber of Commerce) where she met her husband, Scott, who lived in Glens Falls, New York. “The chemical plant where he worked was closing and they were going to move him to Mobile, Alabama. We got married and I moved to Mobile with him.” Cheryl was able to stay with the same company. “They had an office in Mobile, and I became an outside sales rep for Alabama, Mississippi and Georgia.”

When Scott’s job moved the couple to Danbury, Connecticut, Cheryl became a stay-home mom. “I had one child with another on the way. I became the soccer mom, the room mom, and the tennis mom.” The family moved around a lot due to corporate relocations, to Atlanta, San Antonio, Connecticut, Alabama, West Virginia and finally to Madison, Mississippi where Cheryl’s husband worked in supply chain logistics with a third party supplier to build a million and a half square foot warehouse for the Nissan plant in Canton.

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“It was that move where I met Rita McIntosh. I chose her to be our REALTOR®. We had done so much moving that I knew the ropes. I wanted someone who knew the area. I really connected with Rita, and after we bought our house here, she told me I needed to go to work for her. I hadn’t worked in years, but decided I wanted to do it. I knew I could help people because we had moved so much and I was involved with buying and selling so many homes.”

Cheryl went to real estate school and got her license in December 2013. She hit the ground running in January 2014 and has been a top producer in her company for the past three years. “I think I’ve found my niche”. Cheryl has won several awards with Leading Real Estate Companies of the World, a company that allows McIntosh to be local as well as work with relocations worldwide.

The secret to Cheryl’s success is her experience in direct sales, as well as buying and selling so many times during her family’s many corporate relocations over the years. “I understand real estate, and I absolutely love it. It’s amazing how many

...



“ I understand real estate, and I absolutely love it. It’s amazing how many people don’t understand the process, and I work with them to maneuver through the process from contract to close.”



...

people don't understand the process, and I work with them to maneuver through the process from contract to close. I especially love working with first-time home buyers. Most of my business now is repeat and referral buyers and sellers."

As she is nearing the end of her career, Cheryl says she and her husband are thinking about what will come next. "I am looking forward to retiring in about three years," she says. The family discovered the beaches of Destin and Orange Beach when they lived in Mobile, and that became their go-to place for vacation. "We love it there. We bought a vacation home there and we love going to the beach whenever we can. My career in real estate has made it possible for us to have the beach house, and to help our children purchase their homes." Daughter Amanda is buying her second home in Atlanta, and their son, Taylor, is buying a condo in downtown Austin. "This career, which I did not plan, has also made it possible for us to retire earlier. I am thankful to have found Rita and real estate."

Cheryl is currently studying to get her real estate license in Florida and Alabama and will keep her license in Mississippi. "I am always looking at the end game, which is to get to the closing table."



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▶ rising star
written by Susan Marquez
photography by Abe Draper

Drew Jackson

Rock Star REALTOR®

Rock star. Cabinet maker. REALTOR®. Drew Jackson has worn a lot of hats over the years, but the one that fits him best is his job as a REALTOR® for Havard Real Estate Group. “I like people, and I like solving problems. With real estate, I work to solve problems for people every day.”

Drew grew up in Meridian and spent his teen years in a rock band that practiced in the same spot where the new Mississippi Arts & Entertainment Experience (The MAX) is now located. He learned to build cabinets and became good at the craft by the time he met his wife. “She lived in Pearl, and when we got married, we had to decide where we were going to live. She couldn’t find a job in Meridian, so I moved to Pearl. She gave me a list of 42 places to call about making cabinetry. I called 40 of them with no success and I kind of gave up. Then one day I was pumping gas and saw the list on the dashboard. There were only two names left on the list, so I thought what the heck, I’d call them. The first one I called said they had a couple of guys who had just left, so come on in.”

That was twelve years ago. His job took him into some very high-end homes, and he began learning about the real estate market. But in 2008, he got a call from the district manager of Tuesday Morning. “She said they were opening a store in this area and she wanted me to take it. I told her she didn’t even know me, but she had heard about me from my time working at the store in Meridian.” Unsure what to do, he talked with his boss, who surprisingly told Drew he should take the job. “I had no idea what was about to happen with the economy. I took the job and learned later that the folks at my old job didn’t work for the next six months.”

...

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Life can be a set back or a set up. I think everything that happens in your life is to set you up for the next big thing.

”



was not like her at all.” Drew took the course, got his license and talked to a broker at McIntosh & Associates. “The broker asked if I had nine months of savings, and I said I didn’t have nine days of savings. She then asked how I was going to pay my bills, implying this wasn’t the job for me. I told her I planned to continue making cabinets and sell real estate part-time and she said part-timers don’t succeed in this business. I asked her if she liked money, and she said of course she did. I told her I need money, so she needed to take a chance on me!”

Drew got up early each day to build cabinets, and he kept extra clothes in his truck to change into when he needed to stop and show a house. “I’d get home at 8 or 9 at night and get the kids to bed, then I’d stay up until two in the morning doing work. My goal was to sell real estate. When your thinking changes, everything changes. I began listing and selling homes.”



...

After nearly five years at Tuesday Morning, Drew’s assistant told him about a job fair for the new outlet mall coming to Pearl. “I already had a good job but decided to check it out. I talked with a tool store coming in and gave them my resume. With my knowledge of tools from my cabinet-building days combined with my retail experience, they offered me a job, and they offered me the moon.” Sadly, the promises made were hollow ones, and although the work was easy, the job was one of the hardest Drew had ever had, due to the lack of support from upper management. “I hated my job.”

He finally quit and went back to building cabinets and told his family he was going into real estate. “I never had a point where I felt God gave up on us,” says Drew. “I knew in my heart we’d be OK.” A few months later, Drew’s mom asked about his plans to get his real estate license. “That wasn’t like her to get in my business,” Drew says. “I told her I’d get to it, but I had to save money for the course. She called back and said she wanted to pay for it. I didn’t want to take her money, I felt it was something I had to do on my own. But she insisted, saying ‘thus sayeth the Lord.’ That



He moved to Harvard Real Estate Group two years ago and enjoys it. “I’ve learned that buying a home doesn’t have to be hard. Often, the way people look at a situation reflects how the REALTOR® will react to them. It’s really an interesting business. I wouldn’t change anything about my career path. I learned about the inner workings of a home through my cabinet making, and about conflict management from working in retail. Life can be a set back or a set up. I think everything that happens in your life is to set you up for the next big thing.”

Drew is married to Sarah, who is “sweet and awesome.” The couple lives in Florence with their two children, Mallory (8) and Owen (4). Drew still loves music and leads worship at Move Church in Pearl. “At one time, my goal in life was to be a rock star. This is as close as I got, but I’ve very content with where I am.”

If he could give any advice to agents, it would be to stop looking at what everyone else is doing. “You have to do your own thing.” Drew’s thing is making videos for Facebook and YouTube that feature local businesses called *Mondays in the Metro*. “I enjoy learning about and promoting businesses in our area. Maybe folks watching the videos will learn something about the businesses we have here, and when the time comes to use a REALTOR®, they’ll remember my name.”





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FAIR TO ALL MY CLIENTS -

HOME INSPECTIONS

BY JOSH SMITH



▶ partner spotlight

written by **Susan Marquez** and
photography by **Abe Draper**

Because purchasing a home is such a major event in anyone's life, making sure everything is in good working order is essential. "I always try to be fair to my clients, as their home investment is my number one priority," says Josh Smith, owner of Smith Home Inspections, LLC. "For 99% of Americans, a home purchase will be the largest investment in their lifetime."

After a 15-year career doing commercial diving offshore, Smith started his company in 2016. "I have always liked construction, and I understand the value of a good home inspection." His is the only company in the Metro area that offers a warranty. "We guarantee roofs for five years, and appliances under ten years old in good working condition at the time of the inspection are covered by warranty. We enter appliances into a database for recall checks. We'll have appliances checked and repaired or replaced at no cost to the client. We also offer a mold-safe warranty."

Smith says that in the real estate industry, one day he can be best friends with agents, and the next day an inspection may not go the way they wanted to hear. "But in the end, the agents want the same thing I do, and that's the very best for the client." It's peace of mind that makes the home-buyer confident in their purchase, and happy with all who were involved in it.

The buyer's inspection is the most common type of inspection, and the most comprehensive home inspection available. "If someone is buying a home or commercial property, this inspection is what a prospective buyer will need. That way they can purchase with confidence, knowing they are getting leading technical knowledge along with top-notch customer service."





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Another service Josh offers buyers is a concierge service to set up all utilities, which helps take the stress out of moving.

Pre-listing inspections are all about the seller. It's an opportunity to correct possible issue with a property before they come up in a buyer's inspection. "First impressions make a difference," says Josh. "This inspection gives potential sellers the information they need to make their property as attractive to buyers as possible."

Smith Home Inspections is affiliated with the American Society of Home Inspections and goes by their standards and practices in all his inspections. "That way, it's not my opinion, my findings are all based on ASHI guidelines as well as state requirements."

Being a family-owned business is important to Josh. The focus with the business isn't on volume, it's on quality. "I don't want to have a huge company. I'm happy with the service we are able to provide." Josh is married to Bridget Smith, and the couple lives in Canton with their two children, Isaac (6) and Claire (3). "I grew up in Richton, so I know this area well."

Smith says he enjoys spending time with his family. "We built our house on 20 acres and I put in a pond. I love to take the kids fishing, and Isaac and I enjoy hunting together. I really enjoy just about anything outdoors."

For more information on Smith Home Inspections, go to smithhomeinspectionsllc.com.



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Jan FELDMAN

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For most of her life, the thought of going to India never crossed Jan Feldman's mind. In February, she made her twelfth trip to the country, where she does missionary work through Pinelake Baptist Church and the Cross Mission Ministries.

She stuck with it and in time the work became fun. "When you get to help people, that's a great feeling. My clients become like my family. I tell them at closing that they haven't seen the last of me! That's been special. I especially love working with young people who have never bought a house before. That's very rewarding."

Born in the Delta, Jan has lived in Brandon for over thirty years. A former schoolteacher, she finished her teaching career at Brandon Middle School where she taught Algebra and Pre-Algebra for several years. "I left teaching to go to work for my husband, Lee Feldman, who owned a business in Ridgeland," she explains.

"We are a blended family," says Jan. "One night we were eating dinner with my husband's daughter and her husband, Vicky and Tim Weaver. They said they have been praying about something and they wanted to talk to me about it. They said they felt like God wanted me to help at the real estate company she owned. I told them I'd have to go pray on that."

Jan said that working in real estate had never entered her mind. She prayed about it and talked to her other kids about it. "My youngest son, who is so discerning, told me to go for it, so I did." Feldman studied online and took a one-day crash course. "I took the test online and passed it!" She got her license in 2014 and went to work at Weaver & Associate. "There was a lot to learn, and lots of responsibilities. It was much different from teaching. I was dealing with people's money on a different scale. There was a big learning curve and I was not beyond discouragement."

While she loves selling real estate, Jan says her heart has always been in missions. "I've been on many short-term mission trips around the world, carrying on the Lord's mission. My directive has always been to get on the airplane and go tell."

In 2011, Jan went on a mission trip to Magatapalli, India. "It seemed by chance, but God always knows when we don't. We took a twelve-hour train trip to a very remote area of India. A team of us got dropped off at different locations, and my mission became a compassion trip, telling Bible stories and sharing testimonies. In situations like that, you think you're going to be the 'expert' from out-of-town, when the reality is that I came away having learned so much."

Before she left, the English-speaking pastor, Mohan, "a precious man" according to Jan, asked if she'd consider coming back to teach



••• the women. "I went back and asked the church and in 2013 I returned to India with an all-woman team. Our purpose was to teach about the women of the Bible and to point out the grace of Jesus." Jan says that people come out of their comfort zones and pour their hearts out while on mission trips. "It's awe-inspiring."

One of the most precious moments to Jan was when she felt the spirit move her to wash the feet of the women in the village. "Their feet were dusty, and they don't get pedicures like we do," she laughed. "I tried to make it a cultural thing, thinking that maybe they would be offended. When I went to the pastor and asked him about it,

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he started to cry. He said nobody has ever been that humble. I told him I needed buckets and towels, and we began washing the women's feet as a way of showing Jesus's love for them. They then tried to wash our feet! It was one of the most spiritual and sweetest moments ever. Now when I go back, they'll pat my feet, letting me know they remember."

Jan says she's made special friends in India. "They were raised with hundreds of gods. But I get to tell them there is only one true God. Through the years I've made such special friends there, and I've taught Bible studies in their homes. The work we do is very evangelistic."

The pastor in the village was a Hindu. "He realized that while he was making sacrifices to all the many Hindu gods, Jesus sacrificed for him. He gave his life to Jesus, and started a church, then a school for poor children with 450 children we get to minister to. He has also started an orphanage.

Jan established a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization in 2017 along with Andy Moore and their counterparts in Magatapalli. Cross Mission Ministries is dedicated to meeting the physical, spiritual, emotional and educational needs of women and children in the United States as well as around the world and making disciples among the unreached and unengaged groups in India, growing the hearts of individuals to meet the calling of James 1:27 (caring for orphans and widows in their distress).



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