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- A DELIGHTFUL DISRUPTION

▶▶ publisher note

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▶ **LOCALLY-OWNED FRANCHISE BUSINESS**

Most real estate agents we talk to don't know Real Producers is actually a nationwide company with almost 100 markets in place. Things are going really well – primarily because real estate agents love what we do. We are truly passionate about working with REALTORS and the real estate industry.

▶ **DISTRIBUTION**

The publication doesn't go to the public; it is ONLY mailed to the top 300 Lubbock real estate agents and Real Producers partners. Our distribution is about 350.

▶ **IT'S ALL FREE FOR TOP REALTORS®**

What's great about our program is everything we do is free for real estate agents. The publication itself, the features we do, and our events are all free. It's completely paid for by the affiliates we are referred to (lenders, inspectors, title companies, etc.).

▶ **WE BUILD RELATIONSHIPS**

Whether the market is up or down, relationships between top agents have always been important, and with all the disruptors in today's market trying to eliminate the real estate agent from the transaction (Zillow, internet mortgages, etc.), relationships between real estate agents have never been more valuable. We truly want to help build relationships within the real estate business.

▶ **DO YOU KNOW "OF" SOME REALTORS® BUT HAVEN'T MET THEM?**

We've found many real estate agents know "of" one another but sometimes haven't even met, despite doing several deals together. Agents love that we provide a platform for top real estate agents to get to know each other better and collaborate. This happens both through the publication as well as through quarterly events.

▶ **EVENTS WITH LIKE-MINDED**

At our quarterly events, real estate agents connect with other top agents and meet some of the best affiliates that support the publication (lenders, inspectors, builders, etc.). It's a good chance to build relationships and collaborate with other like-minded agents as well as with other top businesses in the industry.

▶ **A LITTLE ABOUT HOW IT'S DONE**

1. We meet with top-performing agents to get feedback on our publication.
2. Discuss different agents who might make great stories. All of our agent stories are from nomination. There is a waiting list for most of the categories, so make sure your nominees are on the list!!! We generally feature a Top Producer, a Rising Star, a Spotlight REALTOR®, and a Partner story.
3. We only work from a referral. So, we ask about which businesses you work with that we should reach out to who are the very best at what they do (Builders, Lenders, Title / Closing Attorneys Companies, Inspectors, etc.) – ones who are dependable that you know you can count on. We love your referrals to real estate agents and vendors.

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Please feel free to contact us at any time! We are anxious to hear from you and learn from you.

I feel very fortunate to live here and be involved with the wonderful and caring real estate community in the Hub City!



Lucky me, I live in Lubbock!

Kathy McCandless Pettit

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THE Whisenhunt GROUP AT Keller Williams



top producer/cover story ◀◀
By Lindsey Wells

Photo by Jacie Leigh
Photography



From left, Carrie Ford, Amanda Leach, Ruben Trujillo, Cole Whisenhunt, Sarah Posey, and Hannah Ives

LEADING IN REAL ESTATE WITH SERVANTS' HEARTS

"Only a life lived in the service to others is worth living."
- Albert Einstein

It's a special thing when a group of entrepreneurs joins forces with one bottom line in common: to serve others. Such has been the case with Cole Whisenhunt and his group, Whisenhunt Group at Keller Williams Realty. A love for people and Jesus Christ has propelled them to the top of the real estate game in West Texas, and they are looking ahead to even bigger things in the coming year.

At the end of the school year in 2014, Cole was coaching and teaching at Estacado High School before switching gears and joining the world of real estate. He waved goodbye to the graduating class of 2014 during their graduation ceremony, and



Photo by Jacie Leigh Photography

...



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Cole's family. Nash, Abbi, Crosby, Cole and Liza Whisenhunt
Photo by Aric+Casey Photography



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three days later, his real estate career began. Now, Cole is passionate about growing his team and pushes not only for professional growth in each agent, but personal growth, too.

“To see each person on our team working to become a better person in the areas of life that matter most is a lot of fun,” Cole said. “We have people on our team that really love to serve. They realize that business is just an opportunity to be the hands and feet of Jesus, and we hope that at the end of our time with a client, they can see and feel that.”

Two new agents joined the team at the end of 2019, and Cole said the group is excited to see what 2020 has in store for them. “Our goal in 2020 is to give 150 great experiences. Rather than calling them deals or transac-



Photo by Jacie Leigh Photography

tions, calling them great experiences is a constant reminder of what we are after,” he added. They strive to live up to the team acronym, R.E.A.L.: Resilient. Encouraging. Authentic. Leader.

While he remains dedicated to bringing the highest standard of professionalism to his ever-growing business, Cole never loses sight of what life is all about, and the bigger picture remains in his mind at all times.

“This life won’t last forever. Our stuff won’t last forever. But my legacy can be left in people. It can be left in my children’s character and the way they treat people. A fingerprint can be left on our business and the way we handle things when no else is watching. It will be left with my wife in the way we cared for each other. And so on,” he said. “If people don’t know that I

love God and follow Jesus in my life, then I’m failing. I want to be remembered as someone who pointed to Christ for all the great things He did in my life and how I used those blessings to impact others. Gary Keller has a great quote that says, ‘At the end of my life, I want to be able to say, ‘I’m glad I did it,’ and not, ‘I wish I had.’ I want to go for it. Find the edge. Give God the glory.”

As a way to give back to their community, Cole and his team are starting a 501(c)3 to send kids in need to summer camps. Cole recalled his own life-changing experience at a Christian-based basketball camp when he was just nine years old.

“The path that I’m on today, and more importantly, the path my family is on today is because of a man who had a vision to share Jesus Christ each morning before basketball started and each night after basketball ended. I will always be grateful for Coach Don Eddy,” Cole said. “We want to provide the same experience for kids who want to go deeper with a talent or skill and get to have a spiritual experience while chasing their dream. If we partner this year on a great experience then please know that you are helping send kids to camp. If you have any interest in helping us sponsor kids along the way we would love to have your support in making a difference in kids lives for decades to come.” ...

Photo by Jacie Leigh Photography



“We have people on our team that really love to serve. They realize that business is just an opportunity to be the hands and feet of Jesus, and we hope that at the end of our time with a client, they can see and feel that.”

...

Cole has been married to his amazing wife, Abbi, for 10 years, and they have three children, Crosby, 6, Nash, 4, Liza, 2, and one on the way, due this summer. “We’re excited to find out the gender soon,” Cole said. “I am blessed beyond measure with these five. They are a powerhouse.”

In their downtime, Cole has enjoyed watching his children become more involved in extracurricular activities. His personal hobbies include competitive sports and activities, Texas Tech basketball, and golf.

“I want to thank everyone for making our real estate community and our industry as a whole in Lubbock so great. We have fantastic examples all around us on how to lead, love, and pursue things that are worth pursuing with an eternal perspective. I love hearing everyone’s personal and business goals. I would be so encouraged

if you would reach out and share with me what your big goals are for this year. I would love to do the same. A ship does not sail on yesterday’s wind. Let’s encourage one another to keep moving forward to live the most joy-filled life possible,” Cole said.

In closing, Cole has this advice for up-and-upcoming agents: “Think bigger. Allow yourself to dream. Get in an atmosphere that supports your goals. Be authentic. Find your lane and run down it hard. Don’t chase the shiny objects. Lastly, don’t give up and you win.”

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▶ letter from the president



TEXAS REALTORS®

By Ken Harlan, Lubbock Association of REALTORS®

I hope your 2020 is off to a great start! As the LAR begins a new year, I'd like to let you know about how the MLS Committee has been enhanced. First of all, it is co-chaired by Donna Sue Clements and Jacky Howard. When the Strategic Planning Committee met last year, it was discussed how restructuring the MLS Committee to include a public forum, like Texas REALTORS® and NAR do at their meetings, would benefit *our* membership. What does this mean for you? The public forum is an opportunity for ALL members to come and express their thoughts and/or concerns to the MLS Committee. We want everyone to feel that they can come to the forum to talk about issues, without feeling like they have to serve on the committee. Also, there are several MLS system vendors and other technology companies that would like to come to demonstrate their products to us and the MLS forum is a great place for this to happen. Now, this DOES NOT mean the association is looking to change

from Rapattoni! It's just healthy and important for the association to see other MLS systems – to make sure our vendor is up on the latest technology and ensure we have the best system for us. So, if you hear the association is looking to change MLS vendors that is simply not true. We're just looking at what other vendors have to offer and provide everyone the opportunity to see them. Finally, future thoughts on the forum are that it could be a place to bring in technology leaders for additional education to keep us all informed. So, please take a few minutes of your time to attend these forums and provide your input so that we can hear from and continue to have the best MLS in Texas!

Ken Harlan, GRI, TRLP

2020 President
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CASSIE MITCHELL

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When did you start your career in real estate?

3 years ago.

What did you do before you became a REALTOR®?

I had actually just graduated college and decided that I had zero idea of what I wanted to do for the rest of my life. I was still working at my high school job as a cashier when I got this amazing opportunity to get into the real estate industry.

What are you passionate about right now in your business?

Right now I am passionate about making a name for myself! I feel like being one of the youngest in this industry I have to work 10X harder to prove myself and to really show everyone that I may be young but I can be trusted to sell or help find their home.

What has been the most rewarding part of your business?

The people!!! Meeting so many different and interesting people. I have always been a people person and I have always believed that the best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others. I have met so many awesome people that I can't imagine what I would do if they weren't in my life today.

What was your biggest challenge as a REALTOR®?

My age. Definitely. Some people see it as a good thing that I am starting so young but then you will always have

...



...

those people who trust someone who has been doing this for years. Which is okay. I just have to work that much harder to show I can keep up with them!

Tell us about your team.

My team is AWESOME! At New Home Brokers we all work together and work closely with each other. Even though essentially we are all competing with each other, every person in my office would drop anything to help you with whatever you needed. If I ever want to go on vacation or have an emergency pop up where I need to leave town ASAP, I know my team has it covered. We are more like family than friends and it's so refreshing to be around a group

of people who support each other instead of competing with each other.

How does real estate fit into your dreams and goals?

Ever since I was little I have always had a passion for helping others. Helping someone buy one of the biggest purchases they will ever make is such a rewarding feeling.

What's your favorite part of being a REALTOR®?

My favorite part of being a REALTOR® would be just helping people find their dream home! Watching an empty house turn into a home and knowing that they will be spending holidays, birthdays and just building a life in that home makes it worth it.

Define success.

To me success isn't about what you have, it's about who you are. It's about liking yourself, liking what you do, and liking how you do it. As long as you love what you are doing every day and are happy with the person in the mirror and the impact you have on people, I think that is the true definition of success.



Photos by
Joe Baker
Photography

How many years have you been a REALTOR®?

I have actually been a REALTOR® now for about two years but I started off as an assistant and did that for about a year and a half.

What awards have you achieved as a REALTOR®?

Last year I was selected as Best of The West 2019 and was recognized as one of the Top 5 REALTORS® on social media in Lubbock!



Photos by
Joe Baker Photography

Are there any charities or organizations you support?

West Texas Home Builders Association, West Texas Auxiliary, Young Professionals Group, CASA of the South Plains, Make-A-Wish, March of Dimes and South Plains SPCA. One, in particular, I am excited about is "The Blessing Box." I have seen them in surrounding towns and thought it would be a great idea to bring it to the Lubbock area. We will set up these "Blessing Boxes" in areas with a high homeless rate and the community gets to help donate items like canned food, non-perishable items, toiletry, clothes, etc. People in need can just go to the box and grab what they need, anonymously. So be on the lookout in 2020 for them!

What are your hobbies and interests outside of the business?

I LOVE traveling. If I could somehow find a way to sell real estate while traveling I would be in 100%! I also love spending time with my family and friends, going to support our Red Raiders and writing.

How are you different?

I think I am different from the rest because I did start out as an assistant before jumping into being a REALTOR®. I have done it all from entering listings, cold calling, photography, open house, and marketing. I have learned what goes on behind the scenes and what it takes to be a successful agent. I also learned a few things that I saw worked and a few that didn't. It gives me an advantage because I know how much work you have to put into it to become successful and to show people that you are the right person they can trust.

What do you want to be remembered for?

I want to be remembered for making a difference. I don't want to just live a life and it mean nothing. I want to make a difference in the world. I want to do something that I can pass along to my kids and their kids for generations to come.

Cassie Mitchell

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Natalie (16), Jeremy (20), Nathan (11),
Andy and Chrystal Gerron
Photography by Jacie Leigh

ANDY GERRON

'It's a family thing'

Perhaps it's his passion for working with people that have afforded Andy Gerron the lengthy career in real estate that he has enjoyed for 15 years now. While his puns and dad jokes are plentiful—there is never, ever a dull moment with Andy—one thing is for sure: he values his clients as if they were family, and he treats them accordingly.



Photography
by Jacie Leigh

feel that I have a strong family atmosphere with them. Some start off as a customer or client, but over time there is a great friendship that forms."

Andy recently hired a coach to help bring his business to the next level, but his accomplishments in real estate thus far are worth noting. In just the past two years, he sold 148 properties. He has been recognized on the Gold level by EXIT Realty. He has (as of this writing) closed 706 deals for a total of \$80,755,450 throughout his career. But, when asked what the most rewarding part of this business has been, Andy didn't hesitate in his answer. "That one is easy," he said. "My 20-year-old son, Jeremy Gerron, is a REALTOR® at EXIT Realty. It is really special seeing my son grow and become an entrepreneur. I see a bright future for him."

The rewards have not been without their own set of challenges. Andy admits that staying organized is something he continually strives to accomplish. "I have put systems into place that should help me stay organized. By doing this, I have noticed my time is spent where I need to focus and stay on track for my goals," he said.

...

Andy started in real estate in April 2005 with Greg Garrett REALTORS® before moving his license to EXIT Realty of Lubbock in 2009, where he has been ever since. While he's always up for a challenge, Andy remains focused on serving others.

"Although Lubbock is looked at as more of a conservative market, each day brings something new. I really enjoy working with my buyers and sellers," Andy said. "I



Andy Geron
Photography by Jacie Leigh

“ I have 10-day, 10-month, and 5-year goals. I focus my 10-day on what I can accomplish over a smaller time frame. My 10-month and 5-year goals allow me to set a bigger vision. ”

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...

“I am a believer in writing down goals. I do not have any New Year’s Resolutions (on purpose) as those tend to be broken. It has been noted that only 3 percent of people have written goals. I have 10-day, 10-month, and 5-year goals. I focus my 10-day on what I can accomplish over a smaller time frame. My 10-month and 5-year goals allow me to set a bigger vision,” he added. In his office are two vision boards, one for what he **will** accomplish, and one for what he **did** accomplish.

Outside of work, Andy is an avid reader, having read 54 books in 2019 alone. He has been married to his wife, Chrystal, for almost 22 years, and they have three children, Jeremy, 20, Natalie, 16, Nathan, 11, and a Beagle, Woodstock, 1.5. Chrystal is in charge of a Home School Soccer League (ages 4-18) for roughly 140 kids, while Andy coaches the high school level soccer team. He is also a Deacon at Sunset Church of Christ.



The family’s pet, Woodstock

“We are a serving family. I’ll tell you this much; I thought I did a lot of serving...but you should see my kids. Every Wednesday, they are serving at Lubbock Impact. My oldest has been to Mexico (and is going again this year) for a mission trip.

He also has been to Florida and Detroit for mission trips. He has a Bible podcast. My daughter has been fluent in American Sign Language for several years and has translated for numerous events at church and throughout our community. Our youngest has a servant’s heart of gold as well. This is my biggest hobby: my family,” Andy said. “My family here at home, my EXIT Realty family, my church family, my home-school family, and my Chick-Fil-A (West End location) family—I spend a lot of time eating there and have over 41,000 points. For me, it’s all about family.”

Andy would enjoy hearing from you,
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Benchmark Mortgage is a community of mortgage professionals who are united by the Benchmark Core Values: relationship, positive attitude, excellence, dynamic, and success. These values drive our culture, shape our paradigm and have been the foundation of our success. The Lubbock branch opened in 2017 and is locally managed by a team of veteran Lubbock loan officers. We take mortgage lending to a different level with over 125 years of combined lending experience and by focusing on our relationships with our customers and community. For our customers: we make lending easy, user-friendly and customer-centric. Benchmark has perfected the mortgage process allowing our team to focus on people. For our community: we actively participate and give back! To date, we have donated over \$25,000 and numerous hours of volunteer service to the United Way of Lubbock, served meals with the local Paul's Project and Meals on Wheels, donated to the Habitat for Humanity and Monument of Courage, adopted a family in need and have helped raise donations for the Lubbock Animal Shelter and Lubbock Cooper Central Pantry, just to name a few. Our team cares about our customers, our realtors, our veterans, our community and has a passion for making a difference in the lives of others.



Brittany Rangel,
Tammi Wood, Cody Hedges,
Cindi Lea, Christine Covington,
Brooke Borchardt and
Amanda Luna

BENCHMARK MORTGAGE



Brooke Borchart, Tammi Wood, Brittany Rangel, Cindi Lea, Christine Covington and Amanda Luna



Our veteran's initiative, The Veteran's Homefront, is our heart project. We have chosen to be the special ops of veteran lending because we believe that our heroes who choose to serve this nation deserve the outstanding service that Benchmark has been providing since 1991. We are dedicated to doing right by the veteran and have created an educational course that certifies our loan officers. This certification ensures that we not only get the veteran in the best loan product for them but also assist our veterans with maximizing their VA benefits. To date, we have given over \$6,500,000 to Veterans, the Brain Treatment Foundation, Third Option and 22 Kill through our annual fundraiser, Boot'n & Shoot'n(BootShoot.com). We also donate a portion of every loan we fund to the Valor Mission Project. This mission is to honor the memory of fallen heroes and provide support for veterans and their families who have been directly impacted by combat injuries. The donations fund scholarships to combat veterans for treatment at the Brain Treatment Foundation.

Our Lubbock branch is co-managed by producing loan officers, Cindi Lea and Christine Covington. Our operations manager is Amanda Luna and the loan officers include Brooke Borchart, Tammi Wood, Brittany Rangel and Cody Hedges. Our branch



Donating to Cooper Central Food Pantry, from left, Brooke Borchart, Cindi Lea, Tammi Wood, Cody Hedges, a Cooper Central representative, Brittany Rangel, Haley Kowal, and Christine Covington.



Veteran Combat Mindset Event with special speaker Retired Army Captain Chad Fleming. Back row: Cody Hedges, Stephanie Kavanaugh, Brooke Borchart, Retired Army Captain Chad Fleming, Haley Kowal, Lori Gomez, Christine Covington, and Tammi Wood. Front row: Brittany Rangel, Amanda Luna, Kayla Cabello, and Cindi Lea.



Holding their 2019 Benchmark Branch of the Year Award, from left, Brian McKinney, CEO, Jim McMahan, owner, Amanda Luna, Cindi Lea, Brittany Rangel, Brooke Borchart, Christine Covington, and Stewart Hunter, owner.

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