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MEET THE BATON ROUGE

REAL PRODUCERS TEAM



Gina Miller
Owner/Publisher
225-337-3277



Kurt Miller, Sr
Contributing Editor



Carolyn Foley
Ad Manager



Breanna Smith
Writer



Aaron Cox
Photographer



Brady Crane
Videographer




If you are interested in contributing or nominating REALTORS® for certain stories, please email us at gina.miller@realproducersmag.com.


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...GOTTA LOVE IT.

Hello, February.

Groundhog Day is on the 2nd. Hey Groundhog...I am hoping you see your shadow this year! It's only been cold for a minute and I've got some sweaters and layers to wear before I'm ready to swelter in the heat of Louisiana. And don't we need a good freeze to kill off all the mosquitos and other pesky flying objects, anyway? See your shadow.

We've got Mardi Gras, Lincoln's birthday on the 12th, mine on the 13th and Valentines' Day on the 14th.

The month of all things LOVE.

This is our Power Couple issue. Together, these individuals love one another AND they love their community. They work together to give and serve and it's powerful. They were nominated by their peers based off this very thing.

Their gorgeous images were taken at the location of our Preferred Partner, Onsite Design's new offices. They will be housed on the second floor of this newly renovated historic Old Goodwood home. Built in 1852, the ground floor will serve as a clubhouse for all residents and an exclusive event venue in the near future. The front porch overlooks the hedge-lined Great

Lawn, perfect for morning yoga, an afternoon picnic or an intimate evening event.

Our Rising Star, Kelly Mitchell is easy to love and a perfect fit for this issue. Two minutes with her and you're begging her to be your best friend forever. Tonya Toups Gautreau is our Industry Leader for this issue and another one that desires to give back to her city and the agents she leads at Keller Williams First Choice.

Our Partner Spotlight is a fun one. I can't wait for you to read about Charles Blaize and Darby Baronet from MFB Title Solutions. Aaron and I had so much fun shooting their photos at Electric Depot and The Pink Elephant Antiques of Government.

We are gearing up for our next event. You can see from the photos in here that our first event was beautiful and enjoyed by all who could attend. We look forward to getting together and seeing your faces and celebrating those who've been here, as well as the new ones who've joined us this year as a TOP 300 REALTOR® in our area! Congratulations!

LOVE,
Gina





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» industry leader
By Breanna Smith | Photos by Aaron Cox

TONYA

Toups Gautreau

BORN WITH IT. BUILD WITH IT.

Tonya Toups Gautreau was given the gift of leadership – it was one she recognized at an early age and has worked hard to develop into a career dedicated to helping others achieve the goals they set in their wildest dreams.

Growing up, Tonya wanted to be front and center during dance class. Not so the audience could see her better, but so her fellow dancers could easily follow her lead. When she joined school clubs, she sought leadership positions, and this has continued throughout her adult life.

“I genuinely believe that my God-given purpose is to lead others in a direction and along a path of growth and that my role as the team leader allows me to fulfill this purpose daily.”

As the Company CEO and Team Leader of Keller Williams First Choice, Tonya works with 242 agents – including some recent independent broker mergers, rainmakers for mega teams, and individual agents, - to provide one-on-one coaching to ensure they meet their goals in business and in life.

“My role, simply put, is to help agents understand the science

of growth, coaching them to use proven methods to gain big results, and raise their business acumen and business IQ.”

When it comes to taking your career to the next level, Tonya is the go-to for guidance counseling. But it's not all business coaching. She's a firm believer in the Keller Williams mission to have careers worth having, businesses worth owning, lives worth living, experiences worth giving and legacies worth leaving. And whatever an agent needs to do to implement that mission in their own lives, Tonya is there to help them make a plan and follow it. No matter the goal, whether growing volume, building a portfolio or generating multiple streams of income, she's ready to help agents turn their goals into achievements.

“Helping guide them and increase their business knowledge has been a benefit for me. That fills my cup, to see agents grow in that area.”

As Team Leader, Tonya doesn't work on transactions day-to-day and instead focuses solely on helping her team grow one solution, one agent, one goal at a time. In her five-and-a-half years in the role, the company has grown by more than 250%. But business isn't the only thing that has grown in that time—she and her husband Cade Gautreau

have welcomed two sons into their family, after their marriage in 2016. She and Cade value their time with their three sons ages 15, 3 and 1 more than anything.

At 20, Tonya got involved with Baton Rouge's Best Dressed Ball. She was awestruck by the influential women involved with the philanthropic event benefitting the American Cancer Society. She thought to herself, ‘one day I'm going to do something like



that.’ One day came sooner than she expected when during the very next meeting, as she tucked herself away in the corner, one of the ball founders came up to her.

“She looked at me and said ‘would you consider modeling for us in the event's show?’”

Later that year, she walked down the Best Dressed Ball runway and helped gather silent auction items. She was hooked. Two years later, an opportunity for a leadership role came and her dreams of “one day” took off.

“I was backstage a lot, so I shared my perspective one day about [making the runway process] more streamlined.”

She was asked to serve as the backstage assistant, managing models and



ensuring the show went on as smoothly as possible from behind the scenes. And as they say, the rest is history.

She served as the Publicity Chair in 2004 then Ball Chair in 2008 and 2010 with motivation and advice from one of Baton Rouge's greatest non-profit fundraisers Julie Dickinson – one of the women in the room when she thought “one day.”

In 2012, she accepted the role of Production Director with the caveat of serving for just one year.

“I’ve been the production chair ever since,” she said laughing.

The job of writing a 70-page script every year and managing all that goes into one of Baton Rouge's most notable nonprofit fundraisers is enough to make some run and hide. But Tonya runs toward the challenge full-speed and full of excitement.

Over the years, the production has grown tremendously, raising more than \$1 million for the past three years and becoming one of the top American Cancer Society fundraisers of its kind in the nation.

Leadership isn't a title – it's action and example. A good leader never stops listening and never stops learning.

One of Tonya's favorite books is “Leaders Eat Last,” and the title has become a model for her leadership style – a delicate balance of selflessness, confidence, grit and humility. She limits herself to four books at one time, each in a different category – business, personal growth, inspirational and lagniappe. She has learned a lot from her mentor and coach Misti Herring, an Executive Head Leadership Coach for the Mastery Group of Maps Coaching.

Tonya has led within various organizations and companies – as Director of Business for St. Michael Hospice, and as a yoga instructor for Yoglates. “When I look back, leadership has played a role in my life every step of the way.”

Fifteen years ago, she fell in love with Keller Williams, and with a little push from her friend



I genuinely believe that my **GOD-GIVEN PURPOSE** is to **LEAD OTHERS** in a direction and along a **PATH OF GROWTH** and that my role as the **TEAM LEADER** allows me to **FULLFILL THIS PURPOSE DAILY.**

Tim Houk almost six years ago, she sought after the opportunity to lead as CEO and Team Leader of Keller Williams Realty First Choice – and lead she has. This year, she's focused on building leaders within her team and welcoming a few additional mergers and acquisitions to the Keller Williams brand.

“In 2021, one of my goals is to help increase the leadership lid of those around me.”

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MFB TITLE SOLUTIONS

The Blaize & Baronet Way

By Gina Miller
Photos by Aaron Cox

“Everyone loves the easy closing, but everyone really appreciates a tough closing made easy.”

With 22 years as a mineral and property title lawyer, Attorney Charles Blaize blessed the real estate industry by transitioning to commercial and residential title.

“I was used to doing title opinions from severance to the present, and a 30-year title presents a lot less defects in the chain,” Blaize said. “My oil and gas exploration clients expected the title to be cured to drill a well, so my mindset is, and always will be, how do I make this deal close?”

MFB is a title company backed by a full-service law firm. The attorneys of Mayhall Fondren Blaize handle a wide variety of complex litigation and mineral law issues and represent their clients to all four corners of the State of Louisiana providing sound legal advice, experienced negotiating skills, full-service litigation needs, and effective dispute resolution. In addition to title and transactional matters, the attorneys have experience in handling federal and state litigation and arbitration for clients involving a number of property law issues. With offices in Baton Rouge and Houma, and more than 60 combined years of Louisiana general litigation and property law experience, MFB Title Solutions has a history of successful representation of its clients in all of their Louisiana legal needs.

Blaize has an extensive mineral title practice which gives him a different perspective when dealing with underwriters and banks. “There is not always a cure, but there is always another path to test. REALTORS® appreciate the out of the box thinking, but communication is the key,” he said. “I am often told that the lawyers appear inaccessible, so I always try to return calls personally and timely.”

Blaize appreciates the interaction with his clients prior to the actual closing. “Every closing attorney dreads the closing where the buyer or seller is apprehensive or uneasy with the actual closing. Our goal is to ensure conscientious and reliable services with every closing ending in a pleasant experience.”

Every title company can hire a marketing director, but not every company gets lucky enough to find a diamond like Darby Baronet. “She is ambitious, charismatic and uniquely qualified for her role as Marketing Director,” Blaize said. “She brings more to the table than just digital decisions and

social media presence, but an immense enthusiasm to help others and the Baton Rouge community as a whole.”

Marketing a business is not just ads and articles, it is the personality of the firm. And with Darby, MFB Title Solutions gets a truly inspirational and genuine personality. Hard work is a great trait in any employee, but when an employee promotes the firm as part of one’s self, the firm will grow as a cohesive unit. When you meet Darby, you will understand why MFB is so blessed. Darby’s grandmother, Joyce Westmoreland, has been an impactful figure in her life and has become a dear friend to Charles.

...





“OUR GOAL IS TO ENSURE CONSCIENTIOUS AND RELIABLE SERVICES WITH EVERY CLOSING ENDING IN A PLEASANT EXPERIENCE.”

A graduate of LSU Law School, Blaize spends his free time hunting, fishing and maintaining his status as the Worst Golfer Ever.

Charles and Darby are both advocates of not only loving their community but giving back to the community they love.

Darby serves on the Alumnae Board for St. Joseph’s Academy. Charles is a part of the Mercy Men’s Club, LSU Gridiron Club, Tiger Athletic Foundation, Coastal Conservation Association, GBRAR, LOGA, and the Chancellor’s Counsel – LSU Law Foundation, among various other organizations. He is a member of both the Baton Rouge and the American Association of Professional Landmen. Most recently he has assumed the role as director of membership at the City Club of Baton Rouge.

“I am extremely proud to be a school board member of the Emerge School for Autism. I have been a member since the inception of the school, and it gives me great pride and joy to see the needs of some of our most vulnerable children finally getting the education and therapy so lacking in the East Baton Rouge Parish School system.” Blaize continued, “Presently I also sit on the Board of Directors of the City Club and it has given me a real sense of the struggle that the pandemic lockdowns have put on the restaurant businesses. I try to serve on at least two non-profit boards every year, but the Emerge center is close to my heart.”

While Charles and Darby are the face of the company, many times Closing Coordinator, Connie Easterly is the voice. REALTORS®, clients, and lenders all talk with Connie to get the CD/HUD correct, set closing timeframes and deadlines, and gather personal information. MFB truly operates as a team.

Darby loves meeting all different kinds of people and creating new relationships. “Lately, I love hearing about all the new businesses coming to town – from boutiques, restaurants, coffee shops to yoga studios and of course home and furniture galleries. I’m currently obsessing over all things Gov’t Taco from the concept, the detail in the theme throughout the entire

restaurant, and of course the delicious food...especially the Buffalo Bill.”

Darby and Charles are both lifetime fans of all things LSU.

“During my adolescent years I attended LSU women’s basketball games and gymnastic meets regularly with my aunt Lisa and grandmother,” said Baronet.

Charles has been married to criminal defense attorney Marci Blaize for 25 years. They have two daughters, Abby Blaize, graduate of St. Joseph’s Academy currently attending Case Western Reserve University and studying Engineering, and Avery Blaize who attends Our Lady of Mercy.



Charles G. Blaize Jr. and Frederic C. Fondren, Krewe of Houma Dukes, 2020

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» event recap

End-of-Year Soiree and December Cover Reveal



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KELLY *Mitchell*

Peace, Love & Ambition

Minden native, and RE/MAX Select REALTOR® Kelly Mitchell is full of charm, faith and ambition – and it only takes two seconds of time with her to recognize this truth. She’s a small-town girl at heart with career proof that she has the grit to blossom in the big city real estate world.

Peace in the Storm

Kelly always wanted to be a school teacher, so she laid out her plan to attend Louisiana Tech, obtain her teaching degree, and head back to her hometown of Minden, Louisiana, to teach. However, and with encouragement from some friends, she decided to move to Baton Rouge to obtain her teaching degree from Louisiana State University. After graduation, she knew she would never move back to where she had always called home. “It was way more fun down here,” she said with a giggle.

She saw her teaching dream through, teaching kindergarten for eight years. Then, she felt God calling her out of teaching and into real estate. Kelly earned her license in 2013 and handled a couple of transactions each year while teaching full-time. She knew it was time to begin her journey as a full-time REALTOR®. In August of 2016, she did just that at Roussel Real Estate where the broker was the father of two of her former students.

Kelly knew immediately she was following God’s plan. “I knew it was the right decision because I experienced peace that only God can provide. I took a leap of faith and never second-guessed it.”

Kelly didn’t second guess it one week later when she found out she was pregnant with John Woodard, her and her husband Justin’s first child, or the week after when the Flood of 2016 devastated the area. She believes with all her heart that when you’re doing what you are called to do, you will feel peace through every storm. “It was a crazy year but I was really at peace with it the whole time – I never looked back.”

Kelly also credits Lonnie Roussel, her former broker, for helping her develop the confidence to keep moving forward no matter the situation. He was a great mentor and emphasized the importance of continually filling your pipeline to be successful in this industry.

“He used the analogy of a pipe and cotton balls. You know, if it’s a long pipe cotton balls won’t come out the other end suddenly, but if you keep filling it, something will eventually come out the other end. And you know what? I don’t even know if he said cotton balls but in my teacher mind I pictured cotton balls and PVC pipe.”

Fear Becomes Fuel

Like most fledgling real estate agents, Kelly felt unsure about the idea of creating her own income. With a baby on the way, she knew failing was not an option.

“I think maybe the fear is what drove me – sometimes fear can be a driving factor – and I thought ‘I can’t fail.’” That same fear drove her to produce \$6.8 million in sales her first full year as a full-time agent.



...

Kelly kept the same attitude when she joined a new brokerage, RE/MAX Select, in May of 2020.

Despite feeling like her world was rocked with changes, she felt the same peace she had since her first day of real estate. She knows comfort with new office systems comes with time and having those systems in place will give her leverage to do what she loves to do, which is staying connected to people, networking, and meeting new people.

“People are my passion, not office work.”

Passion Builds Relationships

Her passion for helping others accomplish their goals is evident in “Kelly’s Support Local Tour,” where she highlights different local small businesses on her social media pages. She gives small business owners the floor to talk about their business, new deals and anything else they’d like to share and blasts the videos on her social media platforms with special giveaways from each shop. It was her idea to do her photoshoot with one of those businesses that she loves and supports regularly, Honey Dew Sips & Savory.

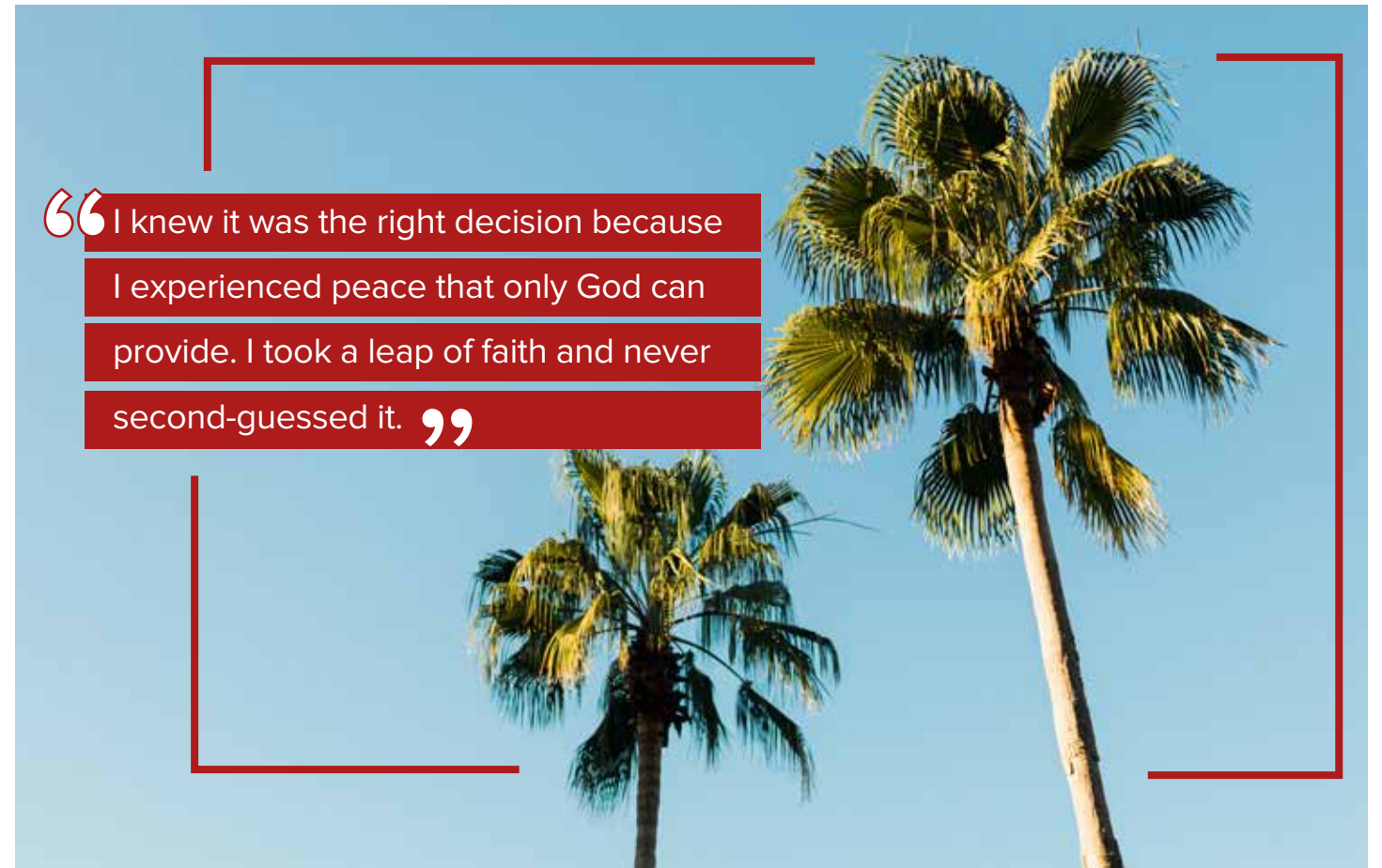
“I love supporting other small businesses, seeing people in their element doing what they love, and watching people succeed – it just makes me happy.” That passion also allows her to build strong relationships with her clients and other REALTORS®. Kelly wants to be an agent that other agents look forward to working with, and feels kindness and sincerity go a long way.

“There is always a solution, and how I react to a problem can set me apart from other agents and to my clients. Creating lasting relationships with other agents and my clients, along with staying humble and kind is particularly important to me.”

Small Town Soul

No matter the size of the city, you can’t take the love of a simple life out of a small-town soul.

Kelly enjoys Saturdays at home with her husband Justin and two children, John Woodard, 3 1/2 and Lucy, 18 months.



“I knew it was the right decision because I experienced peace that only God can provide. I took a leap of faith and never second-guessed it.”

“We are simple people, and our most favorite moments are being home together or going to the camp together. Seriously, a sunny Saturday at home washing the vehicles, grilling some burgers, drinking a beer, and listening to some music is the best!”

Justin and John Woodard plant a garden each spring, which Kelly puts her arts and crafts spin on to offer clients as a closing gift. It’s a jar of homemade pepper jelly or strawberry jam with a cute tag that reads:

“Spread the word to friends and fam, buying and selling homes is my jam.”

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Mike & Jen

GENNARO

Brokerage: Jen Gennaro, Realtor & Assoc., brokered by eXp Realty. Mike: eXp Commercial

Kids: Max, 12, Lucy, 10, and Emile, 2

Pets: Puddles, a Beagle/Basset mix. She's a flood puppy we rescued from the 2016 flood.

Favorite Getaway: The Blue Ridge Mountains of Brevard, NC, where Jen worked as a camp counselor for five summers. Mike joined her there the first summer after they met to work as a cook in the boy's camp kitchen because that was the only spot available. Anything for true love! We take our kids just about every year to see the leaves change.

Hobbies or what you love to do with your free time: Mike can't sit still, so he's always running or gardening or roughhousing with the kids. Jen loves to sit still and read books for hours, or cook really elaborate meals for the family. And both of us are completely enamored with our baby boy Emile, so we are constantly reading him books or playing ball with him. Jen also photographs every minute of their lives and puts it on Instagram.

Three things you are loving right now? In terms of work, we both recently switched over to the eXp family and are awestruck by the innovative technology and learning at our fingertips. Also, really loving these low interest rates! When I (Jen) am in the car and need a break from real estate podcasts, I've been hooked on this wild podcast called Chameleon, a true story of a Hollywood Con Queen who convinces hundreds of Hollywood underlings over the course of a decade to fly to Jakarta

for a fake movie. It's nuts. Also, as someone who frequently wakes up in a panic with the "real estate night sweats" (you know what I'm talking about!), we finally invested in the chiliPAD, a temperature-controlled, hydro-powered cooling (or heating) mattress pad.

Community Involvement/Charitable Organizations/Volunteer Work

We are both heavily involved in our BNI (Business Networking International) chapters and love the philosophy of "givers gain." From the electrician we use for property inspections down to our business cards and yard signs, we are able to pass business to our respective chapter members nearly every step of the way—which is a huge blessing for local, small businesses, but to us as well to have trustworthy vendors at every turn. We are also members of the Zachary Rotary Club and the Zachary Beautification Committee, and Jen raises money for the West Feliciana Humane Society through her pet adoption event open houses. Mike is on the board for the Americana YMCA.

What is the best thing about working together as a couple?

We have different areas of expertise – Mike is in commercial and Jen is in residential, so we are able to freely refer clients to each other, but team up on special projects like co-listing some unique properties to give our clients a broader marketing reach.

What are some challenges you face and how do you navigate those challenges?

"It's a problem, but it'll get solved!" Transferring brokerages and starting a team has been a



challenging experience that has made both of us better businesspeople. When everything is managed by the cloud, there's no room for error. Everything is either correct and you get paid, or it's not and you don't! Mike's challenge lately has been taking a chance at being the first agent in Louisiana to adapt the cloud model and switch to eXp commercial.

What advice would you give to other couples considering working together? In the words of the

Lebanese poet Kahlil Gibran, "Let there be spaces in your togetherness." Although we are both at eXp, and we looked at renting an office together, we chose to have separate office spaces. Jen started a team and meets with them daily out of her home office or in the eXp virtual world, and Mike set up shop at Ozark Insurance Agency. We talk constantly throughout the day, but it's always nice to see each other and be together as a family at the end of the day.

“We talk constantly throughout the day, but it's always nice to see each other and be together as a family at the end of the day.”



Brokerage: The W Group with Keller Williams Greater Baton Rouge

Kids: Rowan, 11, and Sloane, 5

Pets: 2 cats Lucy and CeCe

Favorite Getaway:

Everyone that knows us knows that we love to frequent the 30A area many times a year. The beach is our home away from home. Napa is one of our favorite places to travel to because we are wine lovers and that's where we got married, so it's extra special.

Hobbies or what you love to do with your free time:

We both really enjoy working out and staying active. In our free time you can normally find us on a patio somewhere enjoying a meal and time with friends and family.

Three things you are loving right now?

Trey: Book: *Raise Your Game* by Allen Stein. Show: *The Queen's Gambit*. drinks: Just started getting into Bourbons

Whitney: Book: My favorite to reread at the start of every year is the *Compound Effect* by Darren Hardy. Podcasts: *Women of Impact* with Lisa Bilyeu. Show: *Virgin River*

Community Involvement/Charitable Organizations/Volunteer Work:

Whitney is on the Committee for Best Dressed Ball Supporting the American Cancer Society as well as a committee member for Tailgating for a Cause supporting the Alliance for Eating Disorders.

Trey has helped raise money for the American Cancer Society through Real Men Wear Pink as well as raising money for the Bella Bowman foundation through waiting on a cure.

We are both very passionate about helping find a cure for Cancer and supporting those locally that are fighting this horrible illness. Trey recently lost his father to Jaw

Cancer, so that mission to help grew even stronger. As for the Alliance for eating disorders, this cause helps provide free clinician-led support groups and all money raised stays here locally. Eating disorders can be successfully treated, yet only one third of people ever receive treatment, due to limited access and expense. This is near and dear to my heart because it truly needs more awareness and as a mother to two young girls, I feel it's my job to be a voice. Eating Disorders have the second-highest mortality rate of all mental health disorders, surpassed only by opioid addiction.

What is the best thing about working together as a couple?

Sharing in the vision for how we want the future of our business and family to look and then taking the bold steps together to get there. It's also nice to have each other to lean on and bounce ideas around when a deal gets tricky, or if one of us needs a minute to regroup, the other can step in and help out. And of course, there's no bigger cheerleader than your significant other.

What are some challenges you face and how do you navigate those challenges?

Being in the same fast-paced industry can make it hard to slow down and have quality time together that doesn't revolve around work. We started making it a point to carve out time each week for non-work related dates and also not taking work calls or emails once we are home for the night, unless it's a very time-sensitive issue of course. We also bring different perspectives in how things should be done, which has to be handled delicately so that respect each other's ideas even if we don't agree.

What advice would you give to other couples considering working together?

It's important to voice your expectations of each other up front and be very open and honest when things aren't working. You have to have very defined roles from the start otherwise you spin your wheels but get nowhere.

Most importantly RESPECT your spouse and what they bring to the table.

Trey & Whitney WILLARD

“
There's no bigger cheerleader than your significant other.

Steven & Laura Buck SMITH

Brokerage: Team Smith w/ EXP Realty

Kids: Wesleigh Smith (14)

Pets: Louie, a Chihuahua, and Angel, a Boxer mix

Favorite Getaway:

We like to go to Destin, FL, or Orange Beach, AL. Pretty much if there is a beach and an ocean we are game to go. We love going to New Orleans for quick getaways and enjoy it so much! Currently we are planning a trip to Nashville and are excited! We LOVE music!

Fun Fact, we actually met on an Alaskan Cruise many years ago when we were teens!

Hobbies or what you do with your free time:

When we are not working we enjoy taking out our party barge on all of the beautiful South Louisiana waterways. We love to stop while we are boating and watch local bands play at the Louisiana Lagniappe. We love to watch our daughter Wesleigh play on her school and/or club volleyball team. Ultimately, we just enjoy spending time at home with our family, going to church, watching sports, grilling, chilling, and hanging out in the pool. We also enjoy going to lunch/dinner around town at all of the outstanding restaurants in the Greater Baton Rouge Area. We just love to be together!

Three things you are loving right now?

We have one biological daughter and three bonus blessings (ages 4 and 6 and 6) that we love like they are our very own! So as you can imagine, our house is a busy one, but a very happy home! We enjoy going to church and doing daily devotionals to keep us focused on what is truly important. In our home there is lots of laughter, we teach Christian values, and the power of prayer! It is important to us to support local, especially in these times! We love the Greater Baton Rouge Area and want to do our part! As far as restaurants go, we have been enjoying Fratelli's Italian Restaurant in Prairieville either after church or on a date night once every week. Their food is amazing! Our other favorite

restaurants are Sno's, Mike Anderson's, Porch Light, Ruth Chris, Ruffino's, Tio Java's, and the Lagniappe on the Diversion Canal. We both have different shows that we like on TV, and we don't watch much, but we both agree on *This Is Us*, and we always watch that one together. Of course we enjoy watching LSU play, win or lose, we are still Tigers. (We both graduated from LSU) And the Saints! We love our New Orleans Saints!

You will often see us walking the LSU lakes as well. We love to be outside, that is for sure!

Community Involvement/Charitable Organizations/Volunteer Work:

We started The Christmas Give out of our garage in 2008 to help a family out at Christmas time with gifts and food. Through the Grace of God it has grown today to helping numerous in need families get adopted for Christmas! The Christmas Give also gives about 150 backpacks stuffed with tons of supplies for the homeless, and we partner with the Gardere Christian Community School to give students and teachers a new pair of New Balance Shoes. It takes the whole community to pull this "Christmas Give" off including our mortgage lending partners, title companies, cooperating realtors, Toys for TOTS organization, local schools, friends, family, and our real estate team, Team Smith. It has been a complete honor to watch this charity grow and to GIVE big to those in need at Christmas time! What a blessing to see people's eyes light up when they receive! Matthew 25:35-40 If someone is looking to get involved with local charity work, Gardere Christian Community School, The Life of a Single Mom, Catholic Charities, or The Christmas Give, or would be a great place to start!

What is the best thing about working together as a couple?

We have been married for over 20 years and have always worked together. It is exciting to go to work

together, brainstorm, and continue to grow our business. Both of us are givers, God loves a cheerful giver and we strive to be just that! 2 Corinthians 9:6-7 We are both so passionate about our clients and our team, and we take the home buying and selling process very seriously. Our real estate team,

Team Smith, is filled with 16 incredible talented and kind individuals! We love them and respected them each. We truly enjoy training them and pouring all of our knowledge into them so that they may be successful in their careers. It has brought us great joy to watch them grow over the years to

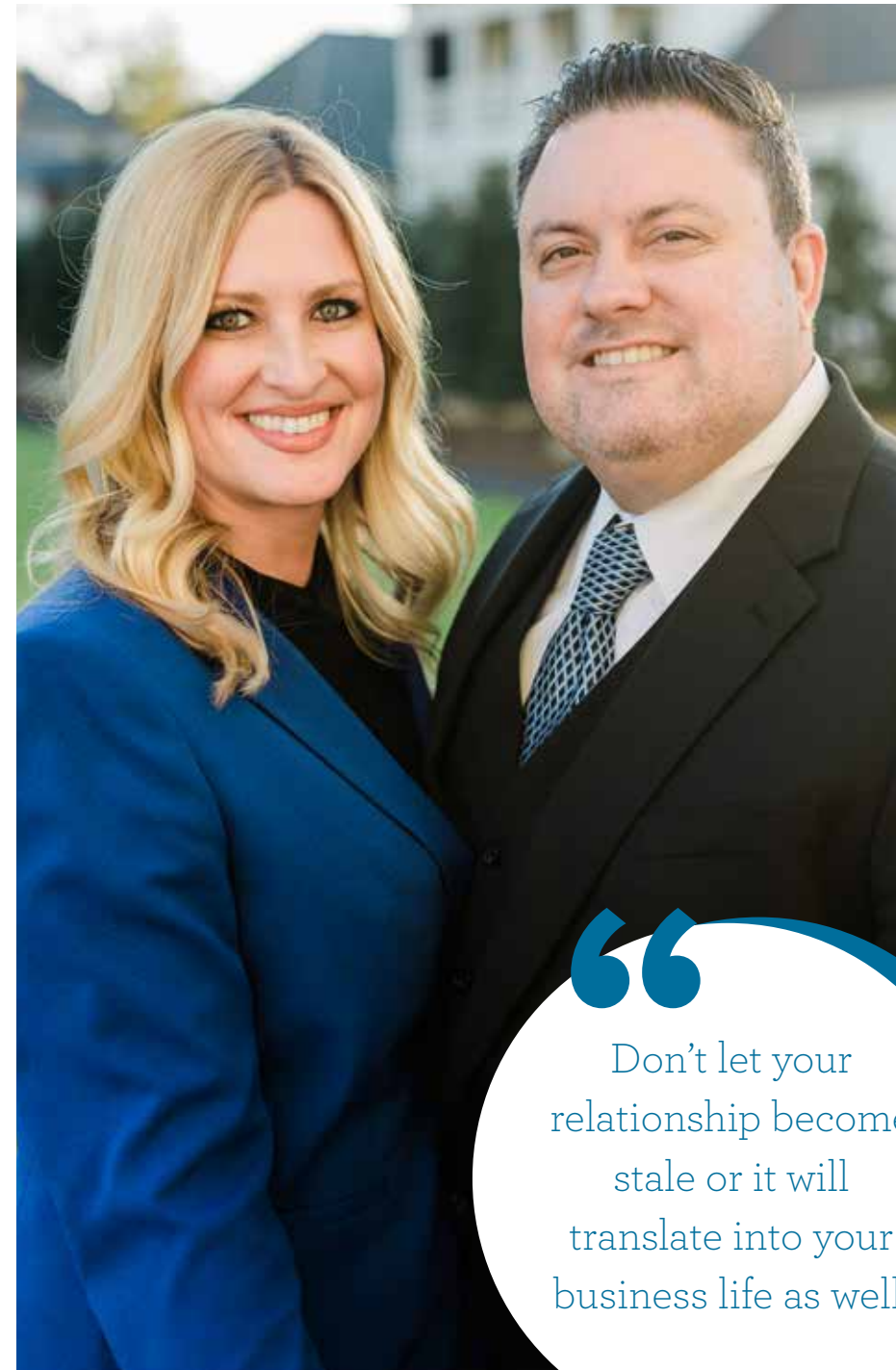
becoming fantastic real estate professionals. With our clients, it is not just a sale for us, we genuinely care about every single one of them, and they become part of our Team Smith extended family. The real estate business has given us the opportunity to connect with such wonderful people in our community and continue to follow them throughout their lives to see what cool things they are able to accomplish. Blessed is a work we often use! This year Team Smith will close around 333 homes, and we feel honored to help that many families with one of their largest assets, their homes!

What are some challenges you face and how do you navigate those challenges?

Real Estate is a business that changes daily which can offer many challenges. We must understand what is happening in the market every day, and to be able to anticipate changes before they happen. We have been blessed to be surrounded by top-notch real estate professionals on our team which has given us the ability to collaborate with them to stay ahead of the curve. We believe that you have to be working in the market every day, understand the changes in the market, and be ready to solve problems as they come to have the ability to give concierge service to your clients.

What advice would you give to other couples considering working together?

The main advice we would give to other couples considering working together is first and foremost pray together. Put God as the center of your life and ask him to bless your marriage and the decisions that you will have to make working together. You have to listen to one another and respect each other's opinions. When we are making big decisions, we either agree, or we move on from the idea. Decisions whether big or small cannot be one-sided or you will be divided. You must have full trust in one another and always continue to work on your relationship. Don't let your relationship become stale or it will translate into your business life as well. Keep things fresh and exciting in your relationship and have goals that get you excited to achieve together in your business life. Leave work at the office, and be able to enjoy the love you have in your relationship when you are home.



“Don't let your relationship become stale or it will translate into your business life as well.”



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