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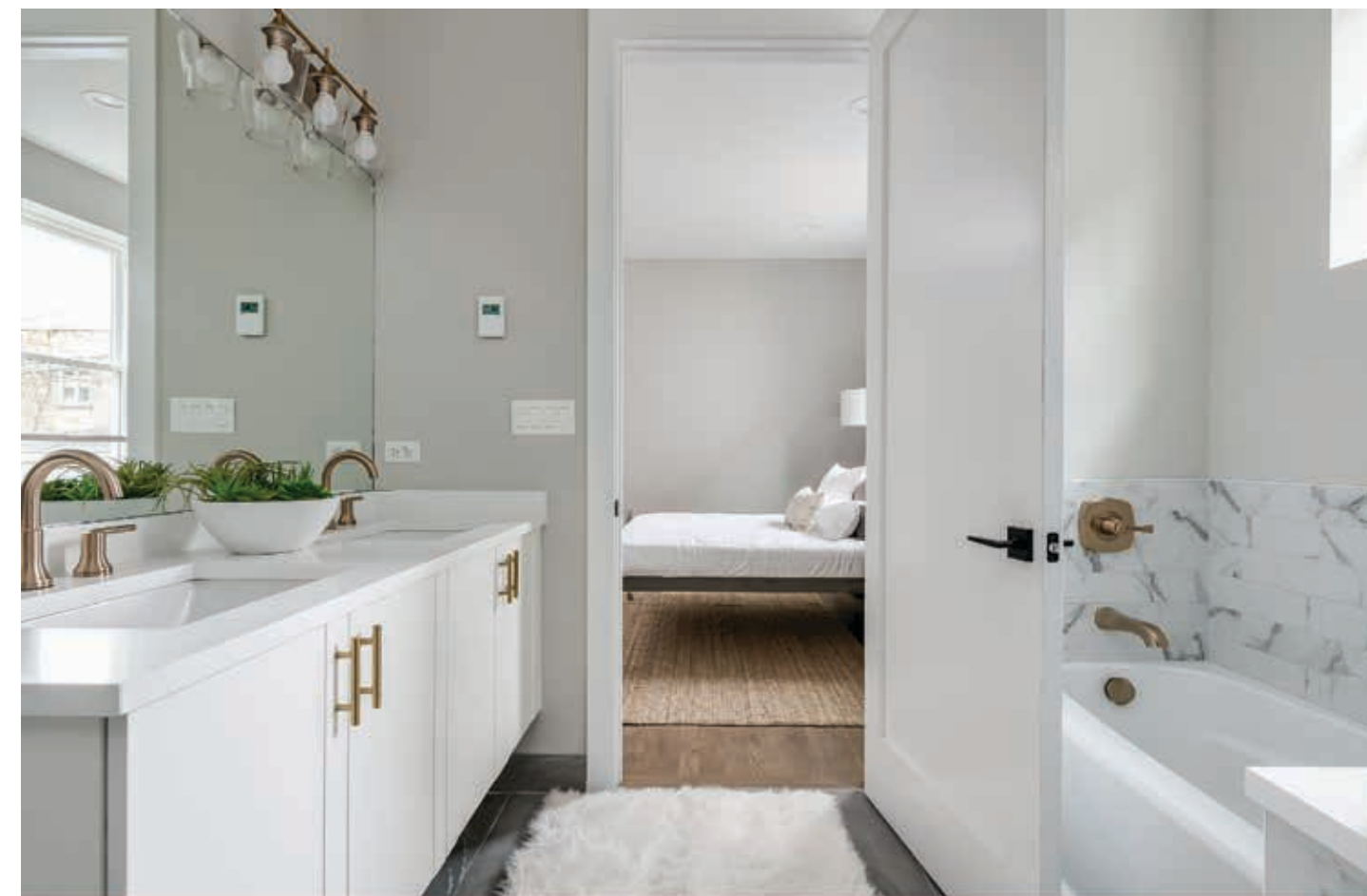
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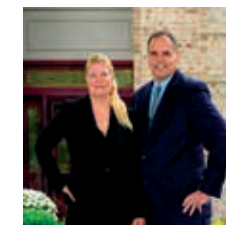


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Publisher's Note

We're excited to bring you our first special Power Couples issue. The featured couples were nominated by our Preferred Partners, and all rank highly in the DuPage standings.

Real Estate is one of few professions that provides a way to create a business with your partner. The spouses we feature come from different vocational backgrounds. Retail and medical sales. Options brokerage and hardware sales. Multimedia marketing and securities trading. All noble pursuits, it is real estate that created a way for two people with totally different work backgrounds to work together.

So as we feature three special couples in this issue, we celebrate all of the awesome and successful couples in the *DuPage Real Producers* community!

Happy Valentine's Day!!

Joseph D'Alessandro
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Written by **Lauren Young**
Photography by **Katherin Frankovic**

MEGAN
& TOM
McCleary

Real Estate “Junkie” Falls In Love





^ Meet the McClearys, left to right: Tom, Anna, Libby, Sean, and Megan

“

In the early days, we had to get used to being together more, and it was challenging to define our distinct roles.

“I would say I’m a real estate junkie,” says REALTOR® Megan McCleary. “I fell in love and have a passion for it.” What started as a second career has now become a passion for Megan and her husband and business partner, Tom, who manage the McCleary Group as a team.

“One day, I was sitting on the porch with a good friend, and shared with her that I had been thinking about getting into real estate,” she describes. “She thought it was the perfect fit for me. I told Tom about my plans, and he

agreed that it was everything I loved all wrapped into one.”

Before coming together as a couple, and partners, Megan and Tom came from different backgrounds and career paths. Megan was born and raised in Rochester, New York and graduated from the University of Dayton with a degree in Business Marketing. Tom grew up in the suburbs of Detroit and followed a degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Michigan with an MBA from the prestigious Wharton

School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania.

The two met on a blind date, set up by a mutual friend. After dating for nine months, they had a six-month engagement and have now been married for 22 years.

“Before I entered into real estate, I had a successful business career in multimedia advertising sales, working in both corporate America and internet start-ups,” says Megan. “I used to sell print ads, Internet advertising, and web design services back in the day. It’s because of my years in marketing that I have a deep understanding of the importance and value of marketing for real estate.” Megan’s unique combination of drive, business acumen and community experience, along with a little bit of serendipity, propelled her into real estate success.

After that porch conversation with her friend, she put together a business strategy and poured energy into launching the McCleary Group. She also made a deal with her husband, Tom, that eventually pulled him into the business with her.

“The deal was when I retired from 30 years of working in the financial markets I had to get my license and help her business,” says Tom. “The business is really her ‘baby.’ We’ve been at the same brokerage for our entire real estate careers.”

“Our name has changed over the years, but our team has largely stayed the same,” explains Tom. “We went from Prudential Rubloff to Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Koenig Rubloff, and now Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Chicago.



While we are a team from the sense of running the business, Megan is the only agent that writes and negotiates all sales transactions.”

Though Megan is the one who founded the business, Tom plays an integral role in day-to-day operations. It’s a balance of responsibility they’ve had to discover.

“In the early days, we had to get used to being together more, and it was challenging to define our distinct roles,” says Megan. “Now we are a well-oiled machine and work very well together. We actually don’t see each other as much as you would think. I am often out with clients or negotiating, while Tom manages the infrastructure, works with inspectors, and establishes new business opportunities.”

Megan has received notable recognition for their achievements. In 2019, she ranked #16 of all agents for DuPage County by sales volume. That same year she was recognized by Crain’s Chicago Business as one of Chicago’s Notable Residential Real

Estate Brokers, and was named the #1 Agent for Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Hinsdale. In 2020, Megan was ranked #39 of all agents in Illinois by sales volume by Real Trends, and ranked in Chicago Magazine’s Top 100 REALTORS® at #42 of all individual agents by sales volume.

Together, Megan and Tom stay active in local charities, organizations, and schools. They have become involved in Greenhouse Scholars and Megan serves in the Infant Welfare Society, which she has been connected to for many years. “I love these two organizations because they both support people from low income, underserved communities,” says Megan. “Greenhouse Scholars is an incredible organization that provides multiple layers of support. The goal is to get highly-talented but drastically under-resourced students through college. It’s an incredible organization that provides mentoring, peer networking and much needed financial support.”

“Greenhouse Scholars is a unique program that greatly helps students,” says Tom, who participates





as a one-on-one mentor. “The students are then encouraged to go back to their communities and become a positive role model to others.”

The Infant Welfare Society offers health, wellness and family services for low-income families. The Hinsdale Chapter’s annual fundraiser provides much needed financial support. Megan has been a multi-year sponsor of the event, along with having served on the board for numerous years. Megan has also been a board member of the Monroe School PTO and the Hinsdale Junior Women’s Club. In these roles, she has demonstrated her ability to lead.

When Megan and Tom are not managing their real estate business or giving back, they enjoy traveling, skiing, golfing, working out together, and spending time with their two children. Anna is a senior at Hinsdale Central. Sean is a sophomore in college, and, since he’s had more time on his hands thanks to the pandemic, is in the process of getting his real estate license.

“We love working together as a family,” says Megan. “Having each other to rely on to discuss strategy, challenges, and celebrate successes has been hard work but so much fun!”

Looking forward to the future, Megan and Tom reflect on their singular goal, passion, and mission. They have some helpful advice for other couples who may be thinking of joining forces in business.

“Residential real estate is serious business, and it should be treated as such,” Megan says. “It is important to be professional and respectful if you are planning on going into business with your spouse.”

“Together, our goal is to truly care for our clients,” she continues. “I want them to be happy with the emotional and financial decisions that come with one of the biggest purchases of their lifetime. We are here to help them move forward with confidence in that process.”

...

“

We actually don't see each other as much as you would think. I am often out with clients or negotiating, while Tom manages the infrastructure, works with inspectors, and establishes new business opportunities.



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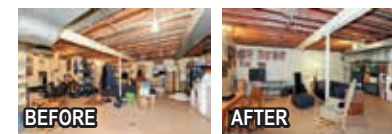
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JINA BOERMAN

OF ACHOSA HOME WARRANTY

Growing Family Businesses into Successful Brands

Written by **Lauren Young**
Photography by **Katherin Frankovic**

Marketing pro Jina Boerman has used her skills and savvy to grow two different real estate related businesses. Thanks to a background in business development and a knack for relationship development, Jina has left a positive mark in diverse settings.

Jina grew up in a small town in south central Illinois called Nokomis (population 2,102) until she was in fourth grade. Her family then moved to Ottawa, Illinois, where Jina graduated from Ottawa Township High School. After graduation, she attended Eastern Illinois University and majored in Political Science, Pre-Law. She met her husband Mike Boerman in college, and they were married in 2006.

After college, Jina spent a decade working in the fast-paced world of legal recruitment as a headhunter for law firms. “I learned such strong business development skills over those ten years,” says Jina. “We would market to managing partners and human resource departments and place

associates, paralegals, and secretaries within their firms and in-house legal departments. There was a lot of wining and dining, which I learned to do well.” Jina likes to joke that she is “very good at spending money.”

When Jina was pregnant with her second child, she was still commuting to downtown Chicago from Plainfield, sometimes a two-hour trip each way. It was an unsustainable lifestyle for a growing family. Around that time, she noticed an opportunity at her husband’s family business, Boerman Moving & Storage.

“I realized I would like to see my family at some point, so I decided to leave my career in legal recruiting,” says Jina. “My husband asked for my help writing REALTOR® ‘thank you notes’ for his family’s business. I asked him if he had ever taken any of his REALTOR® partners out to dinner to get to know them better. That turned into a focus on those relationships, and it has served them well.”

In the eight years since, the “thank you notes” turned into taking over their social media channels. Then she added website management to her responsibilities. Soon Jina had built a robust marketing department adding a marketing manager and marketing assistant. She also established philanthropic partnerships for the company. As the Boerman marketing department grew into a well-oiled machine, Jina was approached with a proposal she could not pass up: to help grow a new home warranty brand in the Illinois market.

“When looking at the new opportunity, I knew it had to have the same company values that the Boerman Moving & Storage prides itself on,” says Jina. “When I was introduced to Harry Keifer, owner of Achosa Home Warranty, I knew I had found it.”

Harry’s focus on the customer claims experience and business ideologies fit perfectly and brought an exciting marketing and sales challenge.





Jina relaxing at home with son Luke, husband Mike, and daughter Anna

Over the past nine months, Jina has worked with over 300 REALTORS® providing exceptional customer service and bringing homeowners the power to choose their contractor in the Chicagoland area.

“It makes me feel good to see the company growing,” says Jina. “Especially with something I believe so strongly in: a company focused on serving their clients. I’m honored that Harry and Cory chose me to grow their brand and had faith and trust in me to make their name in the area. When I moved from the Boerman family business to Achosa, I gained another family.”

Jina is also an advocate for giving back and supporting her local community. She is finishing up an eight-year

stint on the board of directors for the West Suburban Community Pantry in Woodridge. “It has been awesome working with the organization, and I have even been able to incorporate the real estate community into that nonprofit work,” says Jina. “I’ve taken various agents to their big culinary event in the fall and do food drives with various brokerages. It’s been a great way to bring people together to support the needs in our area.”

Currently, Jina is in the process of becoming a court-appointed special advocate (CASA) for foster children. She was introduced to the concept by a real estate agent in Plainfield and knew it would become her next big endeavor. “My grandfather grew up in a foster home,” says Jina. “So when I heard about CASA, I knew it was

the next thing for me. I am looking forward to making a difference in the lives of foster children.”

When Jina is not working on business development or volunteering, she and her family enjoy traveling and water skiing. Even their son, Luke (10) and daughter Anna (7) don skis. You can also find Jina most Thursday mornings at various local golf courses with real estate agents from the western suburbs.

As Jina looks forward to the future, she is encouraged by the success of the real estate community in spite of this year’s challenges and is excited for the continued growth.

“We have been so blessed during 2020 to have had a good year amongst so



“We have been so blessed during 2020 to have had a good year amongst so much uncertainty. Keeping things as positive as possible, I’m looking forward to improving the home warranty industry’s reputation for excellent customer service.”

much uncertainty,” she says. “Keeping things as positive as possible, I’m looking forward to improving the home warranty industry’s reputation for excellent customer service.”

“I believe in my company’s mission and values,” she continues. “Our homeowners do not have to worry about long waits if something needs to be repaired in their home. In what could be a very stressful situation for the homeowner, for them to be able to choose their own contractor for home repairs brings more control to the process and eliminates delays.”

From her husband’s family business to her new position with Achosa, Jina feels fortunate to have developed so many amazing relationships.

“I have to credit my father-in-law. If not for his encouragement to join the family business I would not have developed the amazing friendships that I have over the years,” says Jina. I owe a lot to the moment when I moved into a real estate related business and I am forever grateful.”

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QUAID & ROONEY

Distinctive Real Estate

Kathy & Brian QUAID

“Lord and Lady” of Real Estate

Kathy and I lift each other up. We share insights and perspectives when we have a bad day,” says REALTOR® Brian Quaid, of his wife and teammate, Kathy. “Marriage is hard work under ‘normal’ circumstances. Throw a real estate negotiation in the mix and you really have some fun stuff!”

“We have always thought of each other as best friends,” he adds. “So it’s great to be able to work with your best friend every day.”

Before joining forces as REALTORS®, both Kathy and Brian took indirect paths to careers in real estate. Kathy is from Wheaton and attended Indiana University. Brian is from Elmhurst and attended Northern Illinois University. The two met through a mutual friend while Kathy was working at the Chicago Board Options Exchange and Brian was a plumbing manufacturers rep. They clicked immediately and ended up dating for four years before getting married.

While each worked in sales, Kathy held a side interest in real estate and would attend area open houses every Sunday with daughter Abby. They would go so often that Abby started quizzing the REALTORS® about home tax rates.

“One day Brian told me that if I was going to spend so much time looking at houses, then why not just become a REALTOR®,” remembers Kathy. “As I

thought more about it, it just made sense. I had been in sales since after college and figured it was just another product to sell.”

Kathy was licensed in 2004 and has developed her weekend hobby into a successful passion. Since starting at Prudential Spengel she’s now leading a growing team at Keller Williams Premiere Properties in Glen Ellyn.

“I love the variety of houses and that every day on the job is different,” says Kathy. “We deal with emotions, strategy, negotiations, and act as consultants and often project managers. It gives me a lot of satisfaction to be able to work with home buyers and sellers.”

Kathy joined forces with Maureen Rooney in 2010, having both been successful individually. Each was licensed in 2004, named Rookies of the Year at their respective brokerages, and share a similar work ethic and drive. They quickly became the top team in the area and found themselves needing to add members.

“That’s when Brian entered the picture,” explains Kathy. “I had been asking him to get licensed since 2004, and he always looked at me like I was crazy. But then things started changing in his industry. I told him that we were going to bring on a buyer’s agent, and we thought he’d be a great fit.”

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WE HAVE MANY TIMES FOUND OURSELVES LAUGHING AND CRYING WITH OUR CLIENTS IN THE SAME MEETING. OUR JOB IS TO GUIDE OUR CLIENTS THROUGH THE REAL ESTATE PROCESS WITH THE LEAST AMOUNT OF STRESS POSSIBLE.

Brian earned his license in 2012 and filled the team's open role. Looking back, Brian now wishes he had been licensed when Kathy first asked him. He loves what he does and works well with clients.

Their natural connection and personal service has not gone unnoticed. The Quaid and Rooney team has ranked #1 in volume and listings sold from 2013-2020. They have been ranked in the Top Ten

of all DuPage County REALTORS® 2013-present. They have been in The Wall Street Journal Top 1,000 from 2017-2020, and have ranked nationally in the top 1%. Kathy was also a featured real estate expert on HGTV's show "Designed to Sell."

They claim that working together as family has helped them perform at a higher level than they

ever could have alone. In fact, more Quaid and Rooneys have joined the team.

"Our team is a family within a family," says Kathy. "Both Maureen and I have family members on the team, and we think it's fantastic. Children of REALTORS® either love the business or hate it, because it's a constant topic of discussion. While our daughter, Abby, became a senior

analyst at Nielsen, our son, Mack, is now a broker working with us."

When Kathy and Brian are not managing their real estate business they enjoy traveling. They recently visited Mexico and Colorado right before the recent quarantines. Thanks to their son Mack, Kathy and Brian are also landowners in Scotland allowing them to have the titles Lord and Lady. Their son





MARRIAGE IS
HARD WORK
UNDER 'NORMAL'
CIRCUMSTANCES.
THROW A REAL
ESTATE NEGOTIATION
IN THE MIX AND YOU
REALLY HAVE SOME
FUN STUFF!



actually bought it for them as a funny gift so they could have the titles. Brian especially enjoys listening to music while Kathy enjoys spending time outdoors and gardening.

The Quids are supporters of causes like Glen Ellyn Food Pantry, Alzheimer's Association, and This Run's for Jack Melanoma Foundation. Each one because of personal ties. "This Run's for Jack was founded by our friend, Sharon Marston, whose husband passed away from melanoma," says Kathy. "She works very hard to get information to young people about the importance of sunscreen and taking care of your skin."

"My mother passed away from Alzheimer's in the summer of 2016. It is such a horrible disease," she says. "Our family started the 'Crawl to End Alz,' a pub crawl to raise money and awareness for the cause."

"And we assist with the Food Pantry, because you don't realize there are people right in your backyard that need help," she explains. "It is such an easy thing to do to give a little time and resources to make life better for those around you."

As they look forward to the future of real estate, they reflect on all the homeowners they've been able to impact this year. Many have lost jobs, moved away, upsized, downsized, bought second homes, and even purchased investment properties. Even with such diverse clients, they approach them all with the same customer-first focus.

"Everyone on the Quaid and Rooney team treats clients as if they were part of the family," says Kathy. "Many of our clients are buying a home and are thrilled. But some are moving out of a house that they have lived in for 40 years or a home they grew up in. There are so many emotions to deal with in a single day."

"We have found that oftentimes people just need to talk things through and look to us for guidance," she adds. "We have many times found ourselves laughing and crying with our clients in the same meeting. Our job is to guide our clients through the real estate process with the least amount of stress possible. I think we agree that that is our favorite part of this career we have chosen."



Kathy and Brian
at home with
daughter Abby,
son Mack, and
dog Rudy

BETTER TOGETHER

Carrie & Craig FOLEY



power couple feature

Written by Lauren Young | Photography by Katherin Frankovic



Working as a team has helped married couple and REALTORS® Carrie and Craig Foley realize they perform at a higher level together than they could have separately.

“We are able to bounce ideas off each other all the time,” says Carrie. “Our demanding careers take up many evenings and weekends, so it is good to have a spouse that supports you and can partner with you.”

Before they met and were married in 1997, the Foleys both grew up in the western suburbs. Craig was born in South Dakota, but moved during childhood to Villa Park and then attended Illinois State University. Carrie was raised in Naperville and graduated from Southern Illinois University. Aside from a short stint living in Wrigleyville (where they met, coincidentally, through mutual

friends), each have made DuPage County home for most of their lives.

After graduating college, Carrie took a job as a buyer for Nordstrom. “I traveled often to New York and Seattle, and I helped open all of the new Nordstrom stores in the Midwest,” she says. “I learned the importance of customer service and how retail is a balance of art and science. Real estate is very similar in that way.”

Meanwhile, Craig held many positions within a small company, managing everything from sales to distribution, finance to reimbursement. Through

these different roles, he honed a passion for sales. His diverse background gave him the ideal combination of skills for an eventual switch to real estate.

Carrie left Nordstrom after their children were born because of its demanding travel schedule. Craig was also on the road often at that time. They decided something had to give. Carrie obtained her license in 2007 to invest in real estate and rental properties. Over time, she began helping family and friends with their home sales and purchases.

“The process of connecting with people through such a meaningful





experience is what I fell in love with,” she says. She transitioned to full-time REALTOR® in 2011 and joined John Greene REALTOR in 2016. Seeing its growth opportunity, Craig left his job to join Carrie’s business in 2018. Since their move to John Greene REALTOR, they’ve received recognition for their achievements as Top Performers and through the President’s Club. They have also been the Top Producing Agents this past year within the

Neuqua Valley High School boundaries in South Naperville.

Carrie and Craig are also active supporters of their local community. “We have a good friend that is a cancer survivor so the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society is very near to our hearts,” says Carrie. “Our son had a good friend recently diagnosed with leukemia and is being treated at Comer’s Children’s Hospital, so we just donated a large

amount of food and necessities to that family and to Comer,” she adds. The family also volunteers at the Naperville Area Humane Society and supports the American Foundation of Suicide Prevention.

When not managing their real estate business, Carrie and Craig enjoy fitness and spending time with their kids: Jack (15), Hayden (14), Collin (12), Tess (11),

JG

“

Our demanding careers take up many evenings and weekends, so it is good to have a spouse that supports you and can partner with you.



and their rescue dog, Terra. Carrie is a 200-hour certified yoga instructor, both are members at the White Eagle Golf Club, and they co-own The Row House, a small group fitness center in Naperville. Craig manages the finances and Carrie runs the retail portion of the business.

Their family connection to real estate continues to expand. Sister-in-law Ryann Foley recently joined their team as a buyer's agent and their 5-year-old nephew, Nolan, says he wants to "show houses" when he grows up.

As the two look forward to the future, they reflect on the joy they get from giving the "a-ha moment" to buyers when they know a house is for them.

"I enjoy my home and view it as my sanctuary, and I want the same for my clients," says Carrie. "As much as I am an outgoing person, I actually have loved being at home this past year. This was a year for people to really discover what they want in a home so it can be their ideal respite. It's our goal to help them discover and get it."

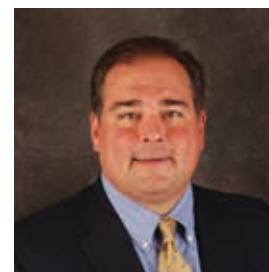


The Foley Group, left to right: >> Craig Foley, Karina Stamper, Carrie Foley, Jessica Gust, and Ryann Foley



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