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TABLE OF CONTENTS



16
On the Rise
Joy Bishop




22
Partner Spotlight
Craig Sharp
Homes



28
Top Producer
Steven Myers



34
Celebrating Leaders
Chris Ketzner and
Shay Kvassay



40
Making a Difference
Stephanie McCurdy



46
Partner Spotlight
George Brockman,
Achosa Home Warranty



52
Niche Agent
Mandi Serrioz



59
Ask The Expert
Equisset



64
Commercial Corner
NAI Martens



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▶ publisher's note

By this time of year, you are either seeing incredible results from your New Year's resolutions or you've long forgotten about them and have moved on to the normal day-to-day grind. I hope it's the former, but by and large, it's the latter for most of us.

I just finished a fantastic book called *Atomic Habits* by James Clear. He's the habit-forming guru!

It teaches, instead of focusing on lofty goals, whose results we oftentimes are not in control of, to focus instead on the systems and processes that we typically have much more control over. If we shift our attention to the marginal changes, those tiny gains compound over time. We also form some spectacular and solid habits without realizing it.

Think of the three-degree change in the flight path of a plane while leaving the west coast. Those small degrees either land the plane in NY or DC. Or, how the temperature change from 20-31 degrees leaves an ice cube unchanged, then viola, that next degree makes all the difference. One question I found helpful for those whose goals include health or fitness is, "What would a healthy person do?"

I had several ah-ha moments, but here are a few that really stood out:

- You do not rise to the level of your goals. You fall to the level of your systems.
- We often dismiss small changes because they don't seem to matter much at the moment.
- Never miss twice. If you fail one day, try to get back on track as quickly as possible.
- A lack of self-awareness is poison. Reflection and review is the antidote.
- The secret to getting results that last is to never stop making improvements.

So whether this applies to your weekly touchpoints to your sphere of influence, cold calls to failed FSBOs, meal prepping healthy food, or making family life more of a priority, there is some golden nugget in your daily habits that can make a huge, positive impact on your life.

This book has certainly changed how I think about and plan my goals. And for an avid goal setter, vision board maker, office walls covered in whiteboards kind of gal, that is huge! I hope you enjoy it as much as I did and I truly hope it helps you break some bad habits, and commence some new ones. If you have read a book you loved, please share it with me!



Your friend, publisher and fellow REALTOR®, **Samantha Lucciarini**

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▶▶ on the rise

Written by Lindsey Wells
Photography by Darrin Hackney Photography

Joy Bishop

IMPACTING THOSE AROUND HER POSITIVELY

We've all heard the saying, "Be the change you want to see in the world." For as long as she can remember, Joy Bishop has wanted to impact those around her positively. A REALTOR® with Keller Williams, Joy built her group on a foundation of serving and giving back, an idea that was quickly recognized by some of the community's finest agents. Now, Bishop Realty Group comprises five team members that each possess the same giving mindset and servant's heart.

Joy's path to a career as a licensed REALTOR® was a natural one, as she grew up watching her parents rehab older homes and eventually got into investing in, staging, and flipping houses herself. Needless to say, real estate has always been in Joy Bishop's blood. She obtained her license in 2016, and the rest is history. Joy worked as a solo agent for the first three years before bringing on her first partner, Daphne Malone, in 2019. "Daphne was the very first, and it just grew organically," Joy said. ...

“

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"I've never recruited, but the idea was to attract people that had the same mindset." It wasn't long before other agents began to notice the positivity exuding from this new team. "We've attracted some really amazing community leaders that are also agents. They make me incredibly proud." Presently, Bishop Realty Group is comprised of Joy, Daphne, Kelsey Kiker, Brooke Reynolds, and Hailey Treas, a group focused not on how much money they make but how they can better the community.

The group's primary focus as of late has been on helping those who have been affected by COVID-19. "There are so many people who have been devastated and lost jobs, so we're doing a lot with ICT Food Rescue to make sure that people don't go hungry," Joy said. "Then there is a new organization that helps women get back on their feet and offer them a new future. Those are the relationships we're focusing on right now."

While their work in the community is of utmost importance to this power team, they are equally focused on their partnerships within the real estate community. Because they do a lot of preparation on each house before it hits the market, Bishop Realty Group is giving back by creating jobs. "We don't just put a sign out in the yard," Joy said. "We're able to offer jobs to contractors, cleaning crews—you name it. We're able to make an impact in the local community because we're partnering with a lot of people."



Joy runs a 100 percent referral-based business, which was undoubtedly brought on by her and the group's laser focus on customer service. "Our clients become like family. That's the biggest compliment when I have people sending me their brothers, sisters, parents, and in-laws. That's huge that they trust me with their family," she said. "We really value the relationships that we build and try to be of service to people well beyond the sale of the home."

Joy's own family also holds a special place in her heart. She and her husband, Jimmy, have a 14-year-old daughter named Ava. "She's a freshman in high school, and she is the most independent, creative force of nature. I can't even imagine what

she's going to do when she's an adult," Joy said of her daughter. Because Jimmy frequently travels for his job, it's difficult for the entire family to get together for quality time. "We have a crazy, chaotic life where we're always trying to see each other," Joy said, laughing. She and Ava share a knack for creativity and enjoy painting, pottery, sewing, and photography.

For an up-and-coming REALTOR®, Joy offers this piece of advice: "Never give up—you're going to feel like giving up many, many times. We see people at their best, and we see them at their worst. As long as you understand that it's an honor to help people through that journey, then I think that you can stay focused on the right things, and it'll keep pushing you forward."



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The Baja Plan

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▶ partner spotlight

Written by Heather Pluard
Photography by Kelly Remacle Photography

Even since he was ten years old, Craig Sharp has been building new homes. He started learning the trade alongside his father at Sharp Construction. After graduating from Emporia State University in 1992, Craig took over the family business, renamed it Craig Sharp Homes, and built a solid reputation for offering outstanding properties while being at the forefront of new design.

"I love bringing new housing concepts to the Wichita area," Craig says. "Modern design is trending all around the country, and we have a lot of really cool things on the drawing board for our neighborhoods here. Streamlined elevations, angled or flat roofs, and square corners are hallmarks of the exterior. Inside, we're incorporating flat cabinet doors, fun light fixtures, clean walls without baseboards,

and other interior features that lead to a smooth, simple, classy style. We're also building updated versions of the farmhouse and mid-century styles that have been in the market for a few years."

Regardless of which style his clients seek, Craig says almost all of them have certain features on their 'must-have' lists. "Everyone wants a cool outdoor living area," he says. "We are also building a lot more swimming pools and cabanas than we used to, as well as designated home office spaces that fit today's work-from-home needs. We can build whatever clients want in whatever style they choose, and we offer tremendous flexibility in all of our floor plans."

...





Of the 61 homes Craig Sharp Homes sold last year, about two-thirds of them were custom built. With an in-house architect and designer on staff, they're experts at turning a client's sketch into the final product of their dreams. Craig also likes building spec homes in multiple subdivisions. "Model homes help drive new ideas and products into the Wichita market," he says. "It's easier for people to adopt trends and make significant

decisions when they can see the product. Many of our clients start with us by buying a spec home first and transitioning to a custom home later. We absolutely love referrals and repeat customers. There is no bigger compliment than when a client buys three or four homes from us!"

REALTORS® are an integral part of that process. "I cherish my relationships with my real estate partners,"

Craig says. "We include them throughout the home-building process and try to make their lives as easy as possible by getting information to them quickly and being available for any questions that come up. They can call me anytime, and I make sure I take care of them."

The same goes for all of Craig Sharp Home's clients. "I'm always available to homeowners because my goal is to build long-term relationships with them," Craig

says. "Everyone at Craig Sharp Homes works hard to maintain the great reputation we've earned. Our skilled staff and wonderful subcontractors take pride in their work, and most of them have been with me for years and years. There is an incredible amount of loyalty between us, which helps control scheduling while ensuring quality. We're proud to offer a one-year warranty on all our homes that is provided by an impartial third-party vendor."

Craig is projecting a record year for 2021. "I'm passionate about growing the business and expanding throughout the Wichita area," he says. "It's an honor to work with people on one of their most important and worthwhile investments. My two sons, Chase (20) and Zach (18), both flip homes and are in the new construction side of the business. It helps to know the nuts and bolts of how things work, and I think you are a much more successful builder if you grow up doing it as I did."

Outside of work, Craig loves spending time with his sons and his fiancée, Nicole. They enjoy traveling, boating, and embracing the lake life. Craig also likes to play a round of golf when time allows, which isn't often. He's excited for next month's Spring Parade of Homes, where he'll be showcasing the modern new home concept in the Talia Community. For more information, please visit www.craigsharp.com.

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▶ top producer

Written by Dave Danielson
Photography by Kelly Remacle Photography



Too many times in the world today you'll hear people talk about what can't be done. But in a time of seeming disbelief, it's refreshing when you see a positive force at work.

One who personifies that spirit is Steven Myers.

As Team Leader with eXp Realty, Steven works each day to make a difference. For those he works with, Steven supports the success of others ... helping them realize possibilities.

"The love I have for what I do has evolved through time," he says. "One example of something that means a lot to me is the opportunity I had to work with a guy who had been a

homeless veteran for 10 years. He never imagined he would own his own home, yet that came true. Those are the things that keep me going. There's more to it than commissions ...

•••

and awards. It's about getting to know people and working with them on their housing dreams."

Taking Flight

Steven got his start in the business in 2017, after picking up much in the way of valuable experience on other paths through life.

As he grew up, Steven earned his Aerospace Engineering degree with honors. He worked for 12 years in the field, rising to serve as Director of Program Management. In time, the corporate path wore thin.

"I knew I didn't want to live that corporate life out," Steven remembers. "I also wanted something that didn't cap me out on my income. I had started buying rental property in 2013 and 2014. In the process, I started flipping and that became a passion for me. My bosses at work told me I need to make a decision about what I wanted to do. So I got my real estate license."

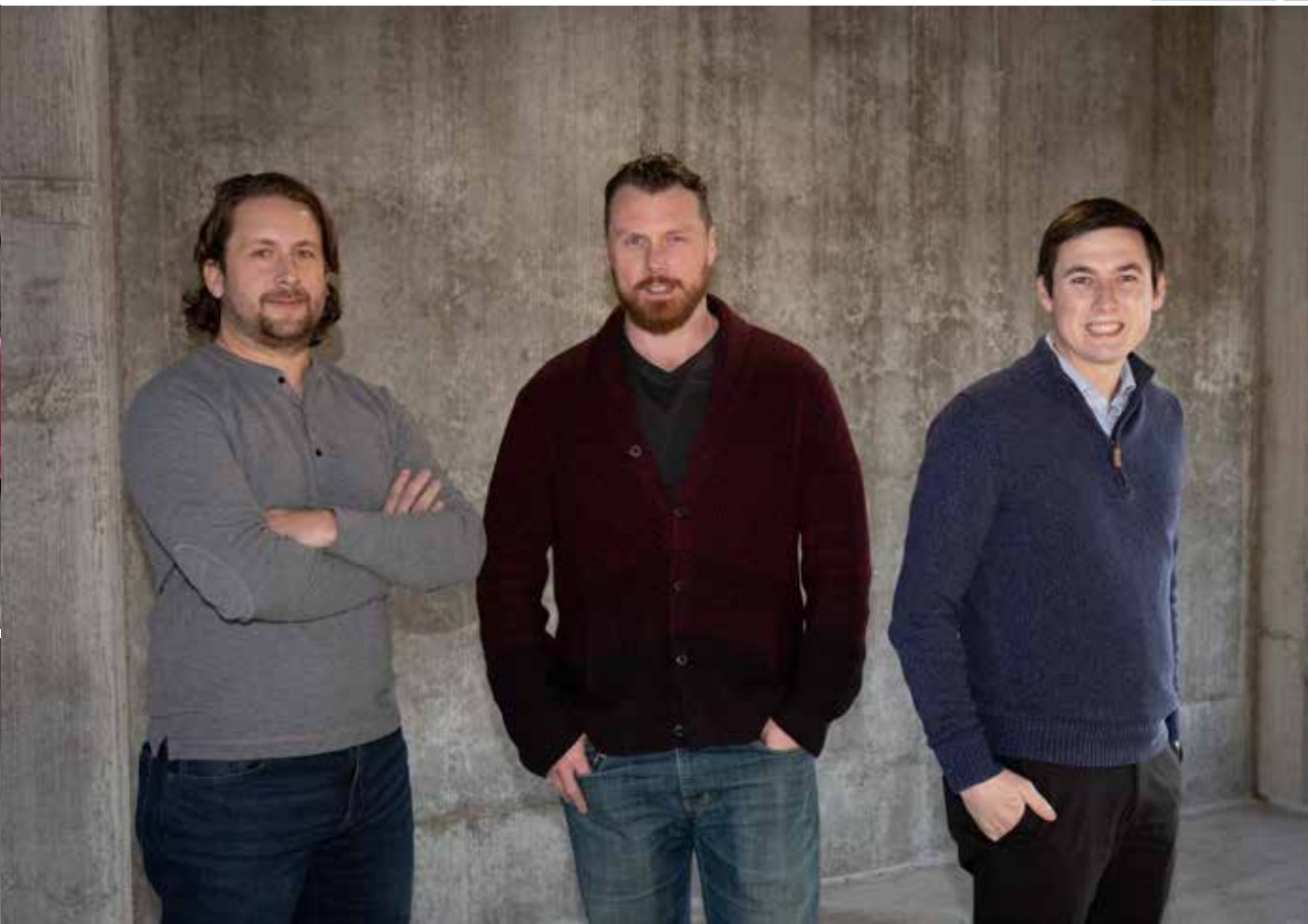
Answering a New Call

While Steven had never necessarily pictured himself as a real estate agent, there was something about it that was compelling.

"Through the process of helping people, I realized that I really enjoyed it a lot more than I thought I might," he remembers.

The transition into real estate wasn't without its hurdles.

"It was very challenging. I thought it might be an easy transition. It wasn't. I thought I knew a ton because I had invested in real estate, but I soon discovered I had a lot to learn. It was a very sobering experience," Steven says. "A friend in the business pulled me aside and mentored me on the basics of real estate with contracts, and that helped me get some traction."



“I WANT PEOPLE TO SEE THAT I'M REAL, GENUINE AND THAT I'M HERE TO WORK IN THEIR BEST INTERESTS.**”**

In the process, Steven drew from his time living in larger metropolitan areas.

"I started to build my niche in real estate and created the Urban Cool ICT Team," he says. "When I was in the corporate world, I moved away from Wichita for eight years in an urban area. So when I moved here, I bought a house in one of our great urban neighborhoods. At first, some of my friends wondered why I wasn't living in the suburbs. At that time, my realization was that there were a lot of people here who didn't necessarily see all of the cool things that Wichita has to offer in these areas."

Leading the Way

Today, Steven enjoys his transition into his role as Team Leader. He has four agents, two client care staffers, and one assistant.

"I really love seeing agents be successful and coaching them and

providing mentorship for them. With what I do, my hope is they can come in, make a good living and not have to go through all of the hardships. It's something I focus on now with our team. I don't want our newer agents going through that pain ... choosing between Zillow leads and eating out."

Steven is entering a rewarding chapter in his career.

"I've really enjoyed building out our team," he smiles. "In time, I'm going to start slowly pulling myself out of production. Going forward, I'm trying to take more of a mentorship role and help people get their own start in the business. As part of that, I'm always available to help guide them."

Fulfilling Life

Away from work, Steven enjoys the time he can spend with his children — his 17-year-old daughter, Abigail, and his 12-year-old son, Evan.

In his free time, Steven likes to work out, travel, hike, and spend time in Colorado. He's also a big Kansas City Chiefs fan.

When you talk with Steven, it doesn't take long to realize that he has a vision for making things happen — yet with a genuine, laid-back demeanor that puts the people around him at ease.

"That's important to me. I want people to see that I'm real, genuine and that I'm here to work in their best interests," he emphasizes.

There's no doubt that they realize that — while Steven helps them realize new possibilities in life.

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CHRIS KETZNER SHALYN KVASSAY

handling with care

What does going above and beyond mean? Clients rely on guidance to achieve their dreams. But that goes well beyond the mere transaction. For them, the way they get there definitely matters.

Two local leaders who live that ideal are Chris Ketzner and Shalyn (Shay) Kvassey.

As leaders of New Door Real Estate, Chris and Shay put the utmost emphasis on handling their clients' paths to homeownership with care.

"We try to treat clients the way they would want to be treated," Chris says. "Our clients don't know how hard we work to make things look smooth for them. It's not about the money ... it's about how they're treated and that they know that we care."

Starting Their Paths. Joining Forces.

Chris has been a REALTOR® since 1993, while Shay got her start in 2008.

Prior to entering real estate, Chris had attended college with an eye toward graphic design.

"From there, I left for cosmetology school. It seems that I always had a knack for that, even in high school. I co-owned a salon for several years."

In time, Chris started her family, welcomed her first child into the world, and worked from home.

"My ex was a builder, and I did a lot of the office accounting, along with decorating the houses," Chris says. "Then I had two more children and went through a divorce."

Around that time, Chris picked up her salon career again—along with her real estate license.

"Initially, I used my license to help the construction business," she explains. "I also worked with Security 1st Title for 11 years, which gave me great experience for real estate."

In time, Chris took a job at a local arena, where she met Shay. As they two talked, they became friends and discovered their common real estate passion. Eventually, they worked for the same builder, and then together at a top real estate company in town.

Shay attended Kansas University, then studied accounting at Wichita State.



As Shay says, “I didn’t know what I wanted to do. Then my brother got me a job at one of the top real estate firms as the mail girl. In time, the receptionist quit, so I did that and then started helping with marketing. One of the ladies there took me under her wing, along with several other team members.”

Shay remembers the way she and Chris started working together.

“I love paperwork because it doesn’t talk back,” she smiles. “I asked Chris to see if she needed help with her files and marketing at her subdivision, and her builder found out how well we worked together. It didn’t take long for us from there to start our own company in February 2019.”

Some things are meant to be, though there can be uncertainty in taking on any new venture. As Shay says, that was the case as she and Chris created their own company.

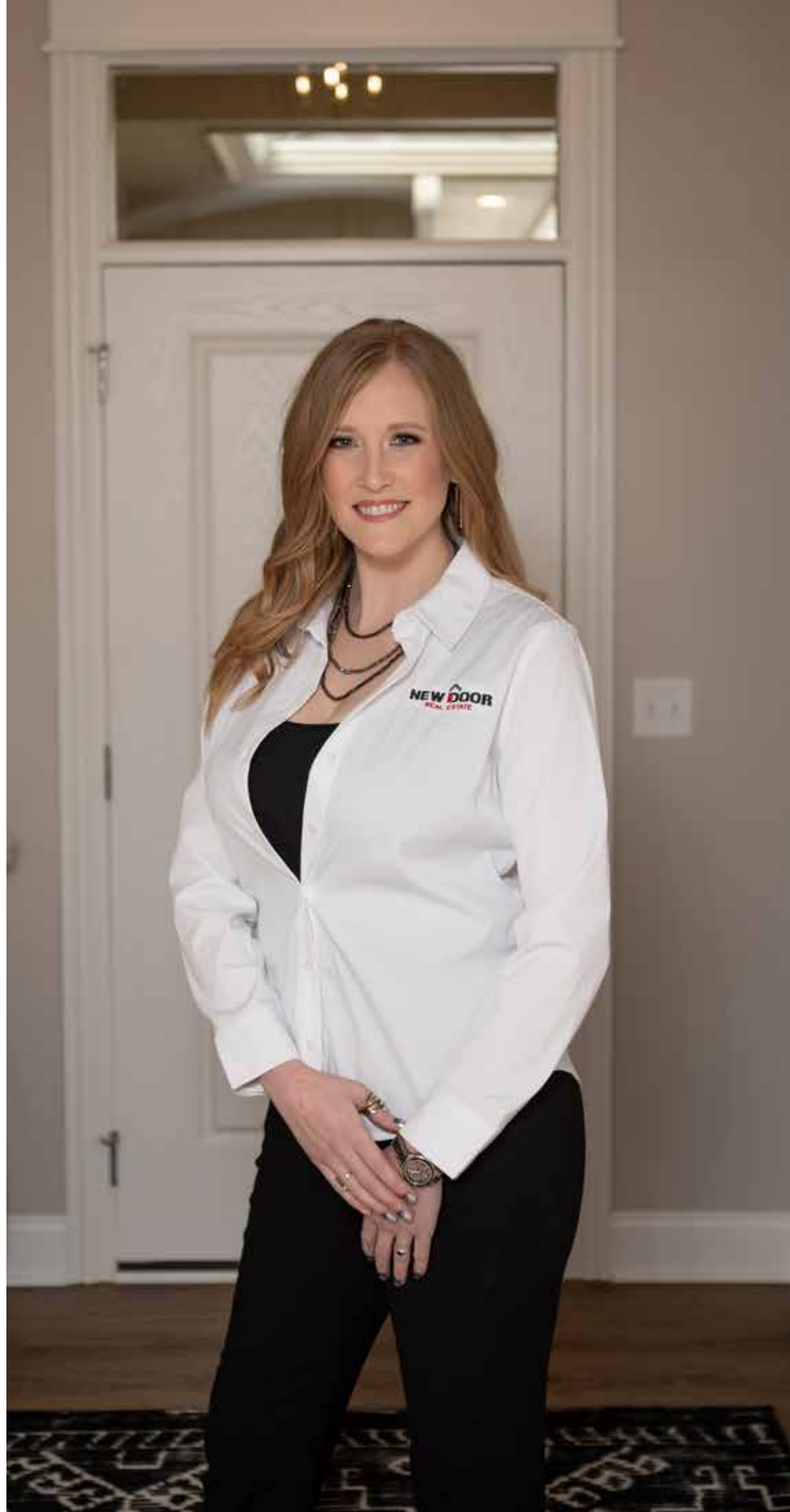
“We went out on a limb and took a leap of faith that we were doing the right thing by starting our own company,” Shay says. “In the process, we created the company with the premise that, if you treat people with respect and look out for their well-being, it will be returned to you 10-fold.”

Better Together

Today, Chris and Shay are joined on the team by Todd Harder and Bobby Armstrong.

The process of working together is rewarding.

“Chris can talk with anybody is very personable. She’s a real go-getter, while I really enjoy the details and paperwork,” Shay



explains. “We both match up where the other doesn’t particularly have a strong suit. We both care about each other very much so when decisions are made, we keep that in mind.”

For Chris and Shay, life begins with family.

Chris looks forward to time spent with her husband, Blake Byfield, and their six children—Devon (and his fiancé, Sadie, and granddaughter, Livi), Braxton, Dane, Kelsey, Megan (and her husband, Breyer and grandson Tate), and Grant.

In her free time, Chris cherishes time with her grandchildren, loves throwing parties, and is a big Chiefs fan.

Recently, Shay got engaged to Chris White. Together, they operate another company, as well. Shay also feels a lot of gratitude to the rest of her family, including her parents (her father, Mike Kvassay, and mother and stepfather, Jan and Mick Crowder), and her brother, Travis Kvassay, along with her godmother, Kat.

Shay’s free time is spent enjoying family and dinner out, as well as caring for rescue animals.

As they consider their role in the lives of those around them, they set the bar high.

As Shay says, “It means so much to us knowing that we’ve done our best in getting them to the finish line.”

Truly, in the process, Chris and Shay make dreams reality through handling with care.

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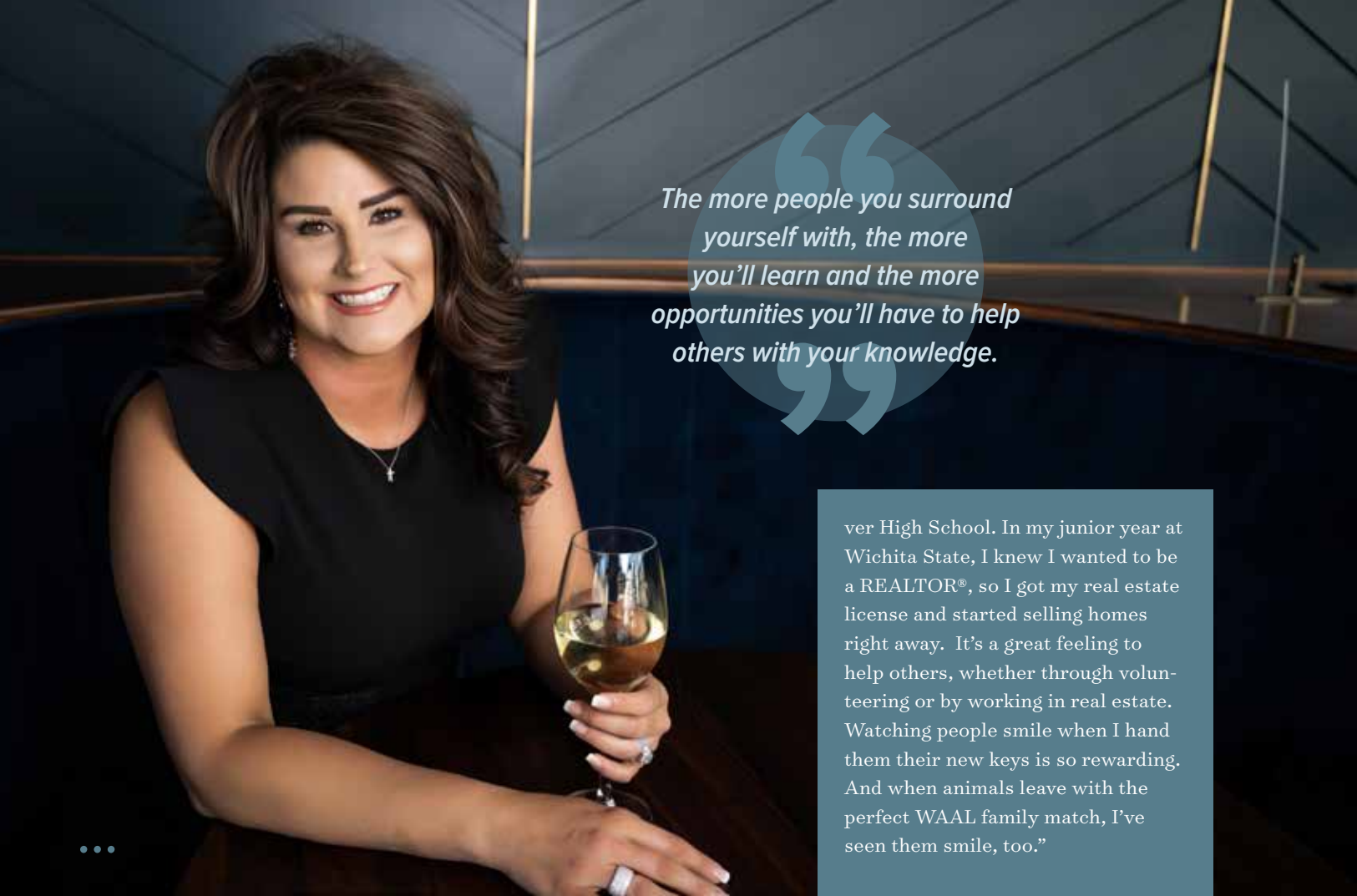
Stephanie McCurdy

Who better than a REALTOR® to find unwanted pets a new home?



Who better than a REALTOR® to find unwanted pets a new home? Especially one who loves animals as much as Stephanie McCurdy! This successful agent sold over \$7.5 million in real estate last year while helping 771 cats, 285 dogs, and nine rabbits and rodents find loving homes. And that's not all. As Vice-Chair on the Board of Directors of the Wichita Animal Action League (WAAL), Stephanie has also helped countless animals get the help they need to live healthy, happy lives in their own homes.

"WAAL is here to help any pet in crisis, and we have an amazing base of volunteers who jump into action whenever we need them," Stephanie says. "We distributed 42,000 pounds of dog and cat food last year and responded to 150 abuse and neglect concerns. Volunteers do everything from building fences to keep wandering dogs at home to spreading hay for horses and donkeys. We also take endangered animals out of shelters and place them into in-home foster care to help them acclimate to family life and find adoptive parents. And we have a program so Veterans and domestic violence victims can sur- ...



The more people you surround yourself with, the more you'll learn and the more opportunities you'll have to help others with your knowledge.

ver High School. In my junior year at Wichita State, I knew I wanted to be a REALTOR®, so I got my real estate license and started selling homes right away. It's a great feeling to help others, whether through volunteering or by working in real estate. Watching people smile when I hand them their new keys is so rewarding. And when animals leave with the perfect WAAL family match, I've seen them smile, too."

To help even more animals find new homes, Stephanie promotes the WAAL Pet of the Week on KAKE TV at 4 pm on Tuesdays. She spends the five-minute segment introducing the animal and letting viewers know how to find and adopt pets through WAAL. Stephanie is a natural in front of the camera and has even appeared in an episode of HGTV's *House Hunters*.

When she isn't finding people and pets new homes, Stephanie enjoys spending time with her husband, Braden, and their four dogs, two of which are WAAL rescues. "I've been blessed in all things through real estate," Stephanie smiles. "I have a family who loves me and would walk through fire for me, the greatest tribe of friends who always support my crazy ideas, and the most beautiful pups you've ever seen."

To learn more about animal adoption and how to volunteer at WAAL, please visit <https://waalrescue.org>.

render their pets for us to take care of until they are in a safe situation and reunite. It's so rewarding to help pet owners succeed."

As a teacher for the REALTORS® of South Central Kansas Association, Stephanie also likes helping agents succeed. "Real estate can be a dog-eat-dog world, but I don't see how that benefits anyone in the long run," she says. "When I was a new agent, many successful people gave me their time and attention to teach me how to be an outstanding REALTOR®. I enjoy paying it forward by sharing what I've learned throughout my 18-year career. It's not about competition to me. I'm here to serve my clients exceptionally well and help others along the way."

Stephanie has great advice for REALTORS®. "Keep peddling," she says. "Your efforts will pay off in the future. When you do the right thing, the money will come, so always focus on

the client rather than the commission. Seek a mentor you can learn from, and don't be afraid to get involved. The more people you surround yourself with, the more you'll learn and the more opportunities you'll have to help others with your knowledge."

In addition to her work with WAAL, Stephanie is a Junior League of Wichita Sustainer and a board member of The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. She was in Wichita Business Journal's 40 Under 40 Class of 2013 and Women In Business awardee in 2015, Sedgwick County's Sheriff's Office Citizen of the Year in 2014, and the Willard County Citizen Activist of the Year in 2015.

"My parents instilled a desire in me to give back to the community," Stephanie says. "Even when I was little, I was always finding ways to be of service. I was born and raised in the Wichita area and went to Ando-



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▶▶ partner spotlight

Written by Lindsey Wells
Photography by Darrin Hackney Photography

BRINGING PEACE OF MIND TO HOMEOWNERS, REAL ESTATE AGENTS, AND BUILDERS IS AT THE CENTER OF ACHOSA HOME WARRANTY'S MISSION. AS A ONE-STOP-SHOP FOR HOME WARRANTY PRODUCTS, ACHOSA SERVICES THE HOUSE'S ENTIRE LIFE CYCLE FROM THE TIME IT IS BUILT AND BEYOND. BECAUSE THEY BELIEVE THAT PROTECTING A HOME SHOULD BE SIMPLE AND ECONOMICAL, ACHOSA OFFERS WARRANTY PLANS TO FIT EVERY NEED AND BUDGET.

For most of us, our home is the biggest thing we'll ever buy. And for most of us, the cost to unexpectedly repair a major appliance or system isn't exactly an occurrence we welcome with open arms. According to George Brockman, a Senior Sales Executive for Achosa Home Warranty, homes have two to three mechanical failures each year on average. "That applies to appliances, your mechanical systems, everything," George said. These unexpected costs can only be covered by a home warranty, not a homeowner's insurance policy, which is only suitable for covering the loss from incidents like fire, storms, or vandalism. "A budget protection tool to help offset the cost of the mechanical failures in a home is really the purpose that we serve."

Something that sets this company apart from similar companies is that it allows its clients to choose their own contractor versus a warranty company that sends an unknown vendor into its customers' homes.

George described it perfectly with this analogy: "Would you call Uber Eats, order a pizza, and not want to know where it's from, when it will get there, or whether it's coming from a good place or not? That's how the traditional home warranty space operates. With us, you get to call your favorite pizza place and pick exactly what you want."

Achosa helps protect its clients' most significant investment with its warranty products, including structural warranties for new homes and systems and appliance coverage for new and existing homes. The company also offers industry-leading coverage for real estate professionals, who could certainly benefit from that extra coverage for their buyers and sellers. After all, an appliance or system failure in a house could make or break a successful transaction and lose clients' trust.

George has seven years of experience in the home warranty industry. "Our company is growing really fast, so we're always talking to people we're looking to bring on," he said. "I've done a lot of training of reps over the last seven years, and one of the



“

WE TAKE CARE OF OUR CUSTOMERS
FIRST AND FOREMOST.

”



key points that I always go back to is that we are really in the relationship business. We take care of our customers first and foremost. For me, I've always had a servant's heart. Customer service was something that was always natural to me, doing everything I could to take care of people. I'm here to help and do whatever I can to help not only my customers but my peers and my company.”

In his downtime, George and his wife, Pepper, can usually be found spending time together, whether at their lake home on Table Rock Lake or doing

anything outdoors. They have two children, Emma, a student at Oklahoma Baptist University, and Owen, a senior in high school. George is also an avid Star Wars fan, or “nerd,” as he calls it. “My mom and I have been to every Star Wars movie premiere together, all on premiere day,” he said. George's mom took him to his first Star Wars premiere when he was six years old, and while George and his family live in southwest Missouri now and his parents live in Kansas City, they've gone to every Star Wars premiere ever since.

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MANDI SERRIOZ

THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

envelopes with invoices. Over 25 years later, he's still outselling and I still have a soft spot for construction," Mandi says.

Mandi lived in a truly entrepreneurial environment.

"Growing up, I was blessed to be surrounded by neighbors who also owned their own businesses. Among them was a dentist, plumber, vending machine owner, and lawn irrigation owner. Friday nights were spent around the pool listening to them talk about business, but the conversation often turned to investing in real estate. It had a huge impact," she recalls. "I always knew I wanted to own rental properties. Now several of those business owners are developers, and they continue to set the bar high for me."

MAKING HER MARK

Mandi graduated high school in 2006, and her college career at Wichita State earned her a degree in Entrepreneurship with an emphasis in Real Estate.

Mandi started investing in real estate, and in time she joined the Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices PenFed Realty team.

After giving a presentation titled "Creating Content That Sells" for a NAR Tech Edge event, she was approached by Patty Sanders, the Managing Broker of Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices PenFed Realty.

"Another agent at the company had attended my talk and recommended me for the position of Director of Training. After speaking with Patty, we both agreed that I would be a good fit, and

► niche agent

Written by **Dave Danielson**
Photography by **Jennifer Ruggle Photography**

WHEN YOU TALK WITH MANDI SERRIOZ, IT'S EASY TO SEE THAT SHE ENJOYS WHAT SHE DOES.

As a REALTOR® and Director of Training with Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices PenFed Realty, you can tell she thrives in her dual role ... in turn, bringing the best of both worlds to those around her.

EARLY INFLUENCES

Mandi earned her real estate license in the spring of 2016. Prior to that, she had a background that honed her spark and knack at leaving a positive mark.

"I come from a very entrepreneurial family. When I was in first grade, my father was laid off from his job. Six weeks later, he had started a mobile sales business supplying roofers and framers with their residential construction needs. It was a family affair, with my mom doing the accounting side and my sister and I stuffing



“IT’S A FANTASTIC FEELING WHEN A NEW AGENT MAKES IT TO THE CLOSING TABLE FOR THE FIRST TIME. THEY’VE SPENT A LOT OF TIME AND MONEY TO GET INTO REAL ESTATE, AND I’M SO HAPPY FOR THEM WHEN IT STARTS PAYING OFF.”

... the rest is history,” she says. “I meet with all the new agents, introduce them to our programs and procedures, and then I set them up with a coach that will give them the best launch for their careers. In addition, I schedule and teach our company-wide monthly training classes. I also head our real estate school: the Career Academy of Real Estate, which offers both pre-licensing and continuing education classes for all agents, regardless of brokerage affiliation.”

In the process, Mandi is passionate about others’ success.

As she says, “It’s a fantastic feeling when a new agent makes it to the closing table for the first time. They’ve spent a lot of time and money to get into real estate, and I’m so happy for them when it starts paying off.”

In addition to managing her rentals, overseeing the new agents, and scheduling classes for the school, Mandi continues her work as a REALTOR®.

“I can’t give up selling because I’m hooked. I love it too much,” she smiles.

FAMILY FOUNDATIONS

The “why” behind Mandi’s endeavors can be summed up in one word: “Family,” which includes her five children — 14-year-old Gabi, 12-year-

old Addy, 11-year-old Rafe, 9-year-old Lexi, and 6-year-old Leo. In their free time, they enjoy travel, along with a variety of outdoor pursuits such as kayaking, fishing, and enjoying relaxing rides on the family pontoon boat.

She also has a heart for giving back. She served on the RSCK Community Involvement Committee in 2020, which was no small feat during a global pandemic. She has been involved in volunteering with the RSCK backpack drive, the Numana food project, and the Kansas Food Bank.

Mandi is driven to make a difference and add value to every role she plays in life. Whether she’s helping a family find their new home or supporting the growth of other agents through her engaging training, one thing is clear ... she’s making a positive impact ... with the best of both worlds.

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Opportunity Zones

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Submitted by **Eric Schlecht**,
General Manager of Equisset



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Equisset offers a wide range of complex financial solutions you can't find anywhere else. From a one-time transaction to ongoing arrangements, we can provide an alternative to traditional banking. We enjoy tackling challenging situations and can act quickly to ensure we get our clients to the closing table.

We all know that for one reason or another, obstacles come up when trying to get financing. At Equisset, we only look at the equity position in the asset, to determine whether we can do it or not.

We are not a traditional bank, nor a long-term lender. Equisset was started to get deals done fast so that our clients don't miss out on the opportunity.

Whether it is an opportunity purchase, needing a replacement property, investing in opportunity zones, or using us as a straw buyer, Equisset can customize one of our programs to serve you in an efficient fashion.

A LITTLE BIT ABOUT SOME OF THE PROGRAMS WE OFFER

Opportunity Purchase

Equisset acts fast, we don't let that great deal getaway because of the difficult process of getting financed. We can get the deal closed and give you time to figure out the rest later. We generally need at least 20% equity in the deal, whether that is already

in the asset, using another asset, or cash brought to closing, and Equisset can handle the rest. Equisset will take title to the asset, lease the property back to the client, with a repurchase option agreement in place to assure the parameters of the buyback.

Opportunity Zones

Equisset can be your expert in this great but confusing tool. Whether Equisset acts as a Qualified Opportunity Zone manager or helps create capital gains to invest, we are ready to tackle any situation. This has been a great tool for the city of Wichita, and we don't want the confusing guidelines to deter your chances to get involved.

Assured Replacement Property

Don't let a great offer deter your decision to sell because you don't know what to do with your capital gain. Equisset has tools to "park" your capital, allowing you to find the perfect property to deploy your gain with flexibility, alleviating the headache the IRS time constraints can cause.

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Equisset can act as an independent buyer for the property you want. In a lot of cases, a buyer with some distance to the transaction can get a fresh start in negotiating the sale of real estate.

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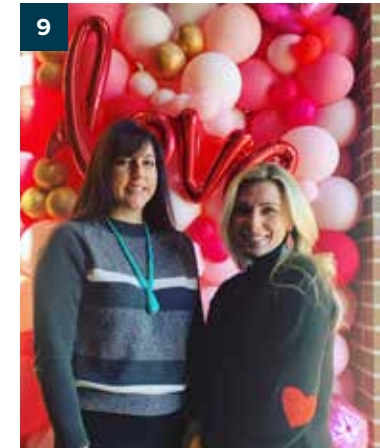
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- 10. Bobby Armstrong & Chris Ketzner
- 11. Tiffany Webb & Shana Matheny
- 12. Sarah Kriwiel



NAI MARTENS

commercial corner
Written by Heather Pluard
Photography by Darrin Hackney Photography

Putting Their Knowledge and Expertise to Work for Wichita

Knowledge is power, especially when investing in commercial real estate. The Martens Companies has spent the last 73 years building a network of six commercial real estate and hospitality companies. Providing the most in-depth, up-to-date expertise in the Wichita market, their in-house research staff and network of affiliates cover not only Wichita, but cities across Kansas, across the country and around the globe. As pacesetters in the industry, CEO Steve Martens and Tom Johnson, President of NAI Martens, are down-to-earth men who will happily share what they know to help others succeed and help the area's economy grow.

As the only firm with an international affiliation through NAI Global – and with the only full-time research staff in the commercial real estate market that monitors Wichita's economy and trends – The Martens Companies' expertise is

widely recognized. "We have systems in place to pull and aggregate market data across all six of our companies," Steve says. "It's like having our finger on the pulse of Wichita and multiple other markets at the same time. We're proud of our staff, advisors, and independent contractors. They stay on top of emerging trends to keep our clientele well informed when making commercial real estate decisions, and they're a tremendous part of our year-over-year growth and success."



"From Wichita's founding pioneers to the next-gen-tech being developed at WSU's Innovation Campus, this community has always been highly entrepreneurial," Tom says. "There are a lot of successful developers and investors across all industry sectors who positively impact the growth and prosperity of southcentral Kansas. We've been proud to work with many of these business and industry leaders as they've expanded and built a solid foundation for the next generation. We're bullish on the future of Wichita and energized about the role we continue to play in its growth."

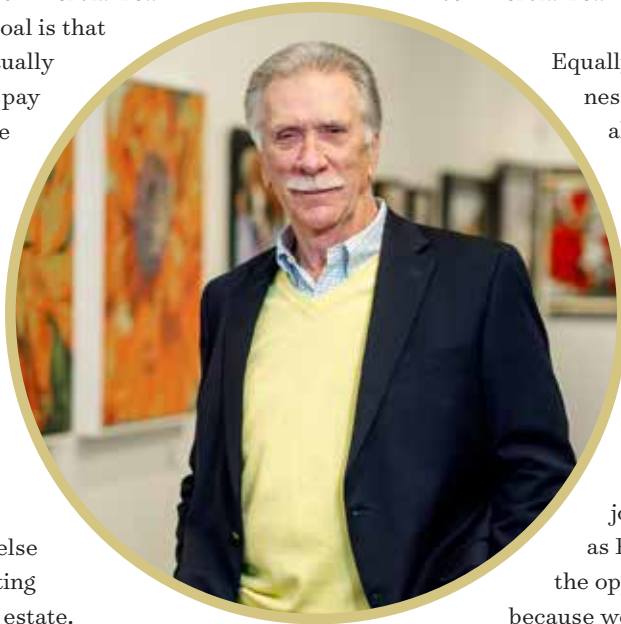


As former Presidents of the South Central Kansas REALTORS® Association, Tom and Steve understand and appreciate the value that residential real estate agents bring to the table.

“We enjoy building long-term relationships with residential REALTORS® and consider them clients, co-agents, and potential partners,” Tom says. “Whether we are helping REALTORS® get started on their own investment portfolios, or helping their clients with commercial real estate needs, our goal is that every deal is a mutually beneficial one. We pay referral fees for the privilege of working with another agent’s clients and keep that agent in the loop all along the way.”

The two have great advice for residential REALTORS® or anyone else interested in investing in commercial real estate. “It’s a primary means of building wealth, and most successful people have commercial property in their portfolios,” Tom says. “Many investors start small by purchasing rental homes, then move on to duplexes, multi-family apartments or other commercial investment properties, allowing each new deal to build on their past successes.”

“The key is finding the right deal,” adds Steve. “After you’ve identified the upsides of a property, make sure you understand its pitfalls, too. It’s complicated. One of the best things to do is find a mentor. Tom and I have both benefited from successful people opening their doors to us and sharing their knowledge and experiences. Many investors, bankers, and agents are passionate about the business. Invite them to coffee and pick their brains.”



Friends since the 1970s, Steve and Tom each had unique paths in the industry before they joined forces 10 years ago. “I was lucky because I knew from my first job that I wanted to do commercial real estate for the rest of my life,” Steve says. “My father founded The Martens Companies and I spent free time after school helping manage his commercial properties. I could envision multiple ways our city could grow if The Martens Companies could help other businesses expand through investment in commercial real estate.”

Equally passionate about the business, Tom fell into the industry almost by default. “I worked for an engineering firm in college, moved into the development and consulting side and went on to manage a couple of large commercial brokerage firms until I found myself consulting for an old friend,” Tom smiles. “When Steve asked me to join The Martens Companies as President, I was excited about the opportunities that lay ahead because we both love Wichita and we’re committed to helping others succeed.”

“Wichita is an up-and-coming area with an exciting blueprint for downtown and a lot of private sector development,” Steve said. “As our city continues to grow, we are the place to turn to for all brokerage, appraisal, consulting, property management, and hospitality management needs. We love putting our knowledge and expertise to work for Wichita!”

“As our city continues to grow, we are the place to turn to for all brokerage, appraisal, consulting, property management, and hospitality management needs.”

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