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Cover photo courtesy of Michelle Reed.

RP

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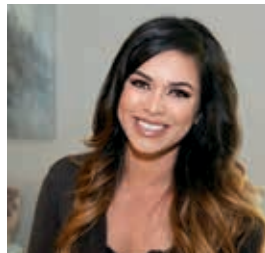
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» publisher's note



LEADERSHIP

If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.

—John Quincy Adams

Dear REALTORS® and Preferred Partners,

In the past two-plus years, I've had the privilege of launching not one, but two *Real Producers* magazines in SWFL, and my life has changed dramatically because of it. I've made the most incredible connections with this area's best-of-the-best and have learned so much from everyone who is part of our community.

As my business grew here, so did my support needs... I started *Real Producers* working by myself, and today, I have a fantastic and growing group of professionals behind me. So lately, I've been reflecting on what leadership is, what it means, and how I can best exemplify it for myself and the people on my team.

To me, leadership is a blessing and also a huge responsibility that entails continuous learning, practicing, and refining of our decision-making and people skills. It matches up with the core values of what we stand for here at *Fort Myers Real Producers* — masterminding and learning from each other to become even better versions of ourselves, so we are able to improve our own lives and the lives of others.

Growing up, I was fortunate to have two tremendous models of leadership. My father owned a small manufacturing company in Minnesota with employees he had to manage. And my mother was a senior human resources

professional working for big corporations, responsible, at times, for thousands of people in the organizations she worked for. So I got to see different types of leadership, and their examples, in addition to those of the military personnel and church leaders I've been fortunate enough to know throughout my life, have inspired me and given me templates from which to form my own brand of leadership.

Whether it's in an army, a business, or a family ... leadership takes courage. It requires that you be able to look at yourself humbly, without ego, on a continuous basis so you can truly see what needs improvement and what needs to be done. And then, it calls for bold action to make course corrections and forge ahead with vision and fortitude. When others see these qualities in you, hopefully, it inspires them. Hopefully, if they work for you, you've done a good job of creating a vision of what your organization aspires to ... and your team gets behind you and makes that vision a reality. When you're all pulling together in sync and in the same direction, miracles can happen. This is what I hope for not only for myself but for all of you reading this publication. Go out there and be great leaders, and watch the miracles happen in your life and your business!

Very respectfully yours,

ANDREW REGENHARD

Owner/Publisher
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Save the Date!

Fort Myers Real Producers LAUNCH PARTY

Thursday, Oct. 6, 2022

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Mark your calendar for Oct. 6 for the big launch party for Fort Myers Real Producers!

This is a private event exclusively for the top 500 agents in the Fort Myers area, along with a team member, and our preferred partners. If you've been to one of our past *Real Producers* events in Naples ... you'll know this one is going to be amazing!!

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LENKA DOYLE



► featured agent

By **Zachary Cohen**
Photos by **LaCasaTour**

LIVING THE (AMERICAN) DREAM

When Lenka Doyle arrived in Cape Coral in 1998, she landed in a world that was strikingly different from her native Czech Republic. She was instantly drawn to the laid-back atmosphere, but it also took time for her to settle into a new lifestyle.

“I thought, ‘Where is downtown? Where is the butcher or the bakery?’ It was an adjustment,” Lenka reflects.

Over the ensuing years, Lenka fell in love with Cape Coral. She’s also become one of the area’s top real estate agents. For her, it’s a dream come true.

“Now, I can’t imagine living anywhere else,” she smiles. “I love this town.”

NEW BEGINNINGS

Lenka met her husband, Richard, while he was playing professional basketball in Europe. Richard was born in Northern California, went to school in San Antonio, and owned a manufacturing business in Cape Coral. So when his playing days came to an end, Richard, Lenka, and their young son, Ricky, moved to Florida.

“We wanted to put our kid into a school in the U.S., growing up the American way. We felt there was no better place to get experience and opportunities. You have the support here at a high level, a possibility of achievement in life,” Lenka says.

Upon arriving in the United States, Lenka and Richard purchased a home. Soon, much of their family began relocating to Florida too. Lenka began looking for homes that would fit their needs. She’d drive around, knock on doors, and search for deals in unlikely places.

“After about the eighth home I referred to my agent, my husband said, ‘You’re really good at this. You should get your license. You can get paid for doing this.’”

Lenka was curious about a career in real estate, but it would take her another 10 years to make the leap. When she first arrived in Florida, her English language skills were weak. Her son was just 3 years old, and she wanted to be a dedicated stay-at-home mom.



...



**REAL ESTATE IS
ONE WILD RIDE.
YOU JUST NEVER
KNOW WHAT
WILL HAPPEN.**



...

By 2008, when Ricky entered middle school, she was finally ready to take the plunge. With the economy and the real estate industry reeling in a recession, Lenka began her real estate career.

FINDING HER FOOTING

2008 was a challenging time to get started in real estate, but Lenka persevered. She kept her head down, stayed committed, and found success. She built her business the old-fashioned way by sending out mailers, knocking on doors, and adding a personal touch to everything she did.

Lenka found success, and as the market recovered, she rose through the ranks to become one of Cape Coral's top agents. She began her career on Alisa Knittel's team, who has been a great mentor. In 2017, she moved to Cape Premier Realty, where Alisa became her broker. In 2018, Lenka founded her team, the Lenka Doyle Team.



FUN FACT

**LENKA DOYLE
SPEAKS FOUR LANGUAGES:
ENGLISH, CZECH, SLOVAK,
& FRENCH.**

...



Lenka Doyle's husband, Richard, works with her on her team.

“It has been an emotional rollercoaster. Real estate is one wild ride. You just never know what will happen,” Lenka laughs.

Despite the rollercoaster, Lenka loves her work. Today, her team consists of her husband Richard and an assistant. She also has a coach, Krista Mashore, who she counts on for support in providing her clients with a stellar experience.

“I think it’s so important to be able to bounce things off people,” Lenka continues. “I’m big on educating myself because the real estate industry is such an evolving industry. I’m a lifelong student. You have to be able to see what’s happening and adapt to that so we can provide the services our clients deserve and expect.”

In 2021, Lenka closed an impressive 75 transactions.

GIVING THANKS

Outside work, Lenka spends most of her time with her family. Her husband, Richard, is her best friend and partner. Their son, Ricky, now lives in Atlanta; he’s expecting his first child in the coming months. Lenka enjoys spending time on the boat, walking along the beach, playing tennis, and exploring her hometown.

As Lenka reflects on her journey, she taps into a sense of gratitude to be where she is in life. She lives in a beautiful place, runs a successful real estate business, and is thriving in her personal life. What more could one ask for?

“I am really blessed to be able to live in the United States. I got my American citizenship four years ago, and I feel like I am living the American dream. I had a great childhood and upbringing, but being able to do what I’m doing here is living a dream. I feel blessed,” Lenka beams. “I love where I am at in life. I live on the water, and I love this city. I can’t imagine going anywhere else.”



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3 Listing Tips For Our Changing Market

As Southwest Florida heads into a heavier listing market, a strategic “refresh” may be in order. Newer agents on our teams need to quickly recognize buyers won’t be showing up forever, panting over properties like dogs for bones. Listings have been, and always will be, the cornerstone of this business, and relationships are still the No. 1 most profitable listing lead-generation technique. Sorry, Zillow!



1. Give the Seller Control. We want the seller to have a sense of control, yet move away from deciding WHO will list the property. The assumption is WE will list the property; the seller gets control over deciding price. When we enter a listing consult with one list price, we are likely not selected when another agent’s suggested price is higher. This is especially true in a shifting market, as sellers go into denial and list with those saying what the seller wants to hear. Although there are ways to handle this, I make it a practice to eclipse objections before they appear. Top agents go in with A, B, C list-price options, having asked the seller ahead of time what they want to net. Each list price, A, B and C, is tied to a time frame, and the seller’s ideal price always appears (usually as plan C). The lower the price, the faster the time frame to sell. A is 0-30 days anticipated to contract. B is 30-90 days, and C is 90+ days. When we show up as their agent, and they have guided control over time and price, listings are taken.

2. Convert Stats to Dollars. As the MLS adjusts, pay close attention weekly. Inventory drives. When inventory increases, sales eventually stabilize. Right now, migration is continuing to bolster our market. At some point — and we’re on our way — building catches up. When prices begin to adjust, calculate the average monthly rate. For example, if prices begin to fall 1% per month on average, we can share with the seller that “In 120 days, you may likely be another 4% down. That’s \$40K on your \$1M property. Are we waiting for something important enough to lose \$40K, Mr. and Mrs. Seller? If so, ok. If not, let’s go.”

3. Watch the Buyer Pool. Over the last 5 years, the SWFL market has become more mortgage-driven than I can remember. When I ran Keller Williams, at one point 78% of our sales were cash. Sellers have to understand that buyers are leveraging more and that banks — in preparation for potential recession — are becoming less flexible on appraisal. As mortgage rates increase, both of these factors may likely shrink the buyer pool. Pricing will have to fall more in line, eventually. These are market facts, not our opinions. Consult with the seller on this in order to obtain a more realistic list price. If 63% of buyers are obtaining mortgages and we over-price the listing, we narrow our target market all the way down to 37%.

“With a 59% increase in inventory and a 36% decrease in sales, year over year, local industry changes are now visible. Many agents won’t survive the upcoming transition.”

—Coach Kerri

Coach Kerri is an award-winning entrepreneur and coach who develops real estate industry leaders in SWFL and Nashville.

She’s the business strategist behind many agents, teams, and brokerages, coaching more than 1,100 business owners throughout her career.



Pro Tip: When agents leave real estate because the market shifts, which they will, pay attention. It’s an opportunity to become their referral agent. Don’t let agents go “inactive.” Instead, inform them about referral companies and pick up their databases through a referral agreement. Your CRM could dramatically increase in decent leads quickly.

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►► partner spotlight

By Zachary Cohen
Photos by LaCasaTour

JOHN PRETTE

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“I just love deep relationships,” John Prete begins. “I truly enjoy the moments I have encounters with people, good people. I cherish that. We’re all connected, so I try to pay it forward, to do as much as I can for someone else because I’m very blessed in my life.”

John Prete leads by serving others. Since he took over HouseMaster of Naples in 2003, he has applied these principles to the inspection business, treating his clients and partners with kindness, honesty, and respect.

Rewind: The Path to HouseMaster

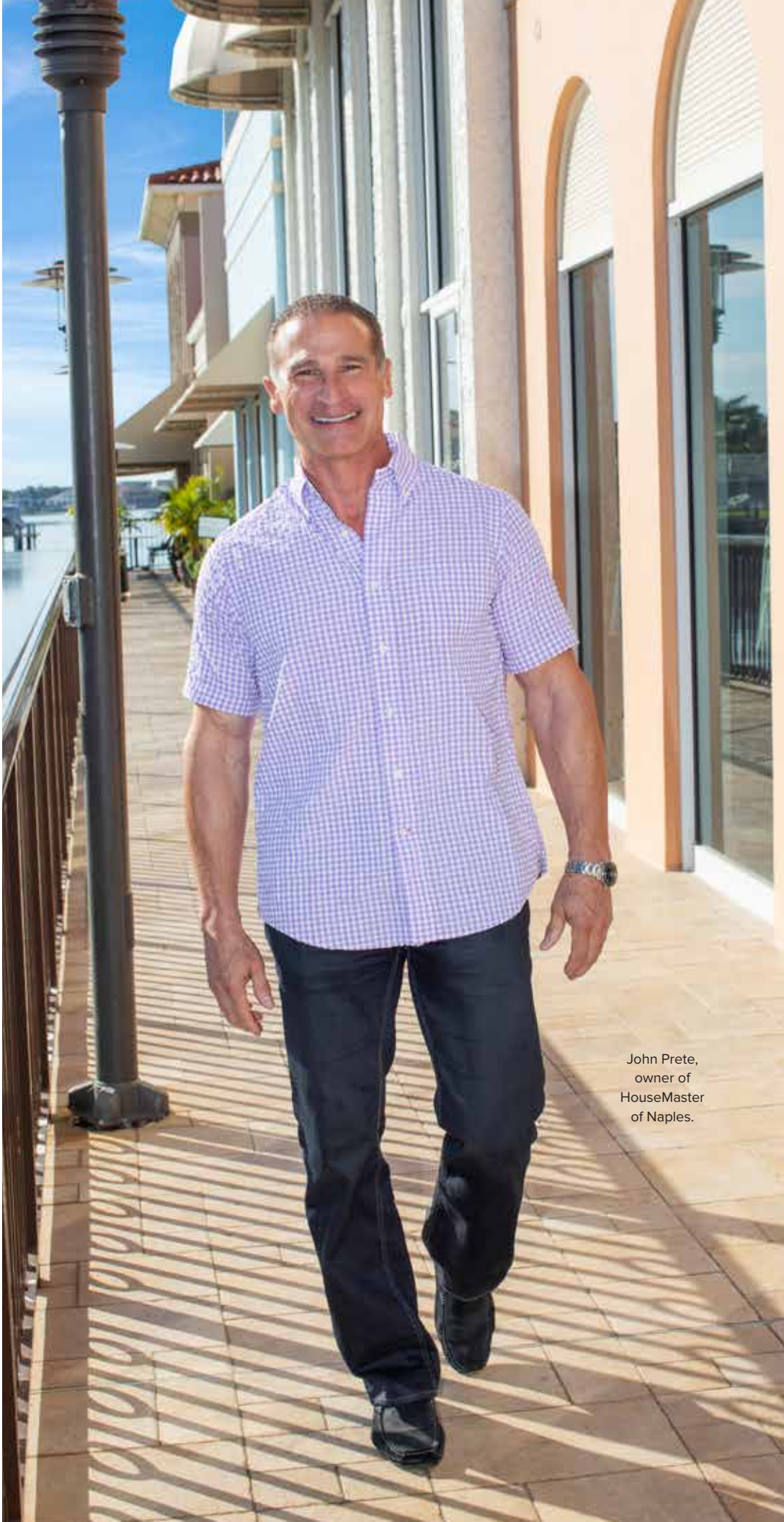
John has nearly 20 years of experience in the inspection business, but his first career was in finance. He was born and raised in Connecticut, earned a degree in finance from George Washington University, and spent 15 years in financial consulting and running a small business. In 2001, he moved to Miami, where he earned an MBA from Florida International University. After earning his MBA, however, John was left seeking direction.

John’s father, Jack, had owned the HouseMaster franchise in Naples since 1995. In the late ‘90s, Jack was diagnosed with cancer and he stepped back from the business’s daily operations to focus on his health.

“When he got back to it, he decided life was too short, and he’d rather be playing more golf at 70,” John reflects. “I had just finished my MBA, and he said, ‘If you’d like to consider moving to Naples and giving this a try, let’s work something out.’”

In 2003, John took over operations of the business.

“I have always had an entrepreneurial streak in me. When my dad called, the opportunity I had been looking for ended up presenting itself.”



John Prete,
owner of
HouseMaster
of Naples.



BEYOND INSPECTIONS

Outside work, you’ll find John spending time with his girlfriend, Jennifer, traveling, or hitting the gym. “We really have a pretty basic life,” John says, “and we like it that way.”

Learning the Ropes

John was new to the inspection business but was familiar with construction. His father was a developer back in Connecticut, so John had a good sense of the construction side of the business.

“The construction part of the business — that part was kind of easy,” John explains. “But understanding real estate, how a transaction works, how home inspection fits in the process, the expectations of REALTORS® ... that was a process. There was a lot of trial and error, bumps and bruises.”

Over the years, John has come to understand how home inspection fits into the larger picture of a homebuying experience. He’s come to value working together with clients and partners. He believes communication, clarity, and transparency are essential.

“You have to learn how to work together. Education is huge. Everyone has to learn. Realtors have to learn about what we do, what an inspection is, and what an inspection is not. And I’ve learned so much from them about the transaction — how things work in their world, what’s important to them, what causes issues with clients,” John

says. “We’ll always deliver the truth, but it matters how you say it. We don’t create emergencies; we present solutions.”

Service at the Forefront

HouseMaster has an office with two full-time staff members, meaning there is always someone to answer the phone, help a client, or schedule an inspection. John understands the real estate business runs 24/7, so he also has someone answering the phones after hours. This strategy is another testament to his commitment to service.

“The inspection is three parts — before, during, and after. Before is when they call, and they get top-notch service from two people who know what they are doing and are experienced. During the inspection, all my guys have vehicles, wear a uniform, have all the necessary tools and report writing software, and the report gets delivered within 24 hours of the inspection. After is back to the office. If there is a concern or question, call the office and we are available. We have a guarantee on the inspection. We stand behind our work.”

“No matter what, we want to do the right thing.”

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cover story

BRITTANY SKOTAK

STAYING HUMBLE

By Zachary Cohen
Photo by Michelle Reed



Photo by Michelle Reed

In high school, Brittany Skotak and her classmates each created a time capsule; the assignment encouraged them to envision their future in 10 years. Brittany chose to write about the life she imagined for herself: a family and a career in real estate.

“And that came to be. I don’t truly know why,” Brittany admits, “but I was always drawn to it.”

Beginnings

By 2011, Brittany and her husband, Nick, had just welcomed their second child to the world. Brittany had been a stay-at-home mom since the birth of her first child, but she desired a new professional adventure. When her husband’s schedule shifted, she took the opportunity to make a change.

“I always wanted to jump into real estate, but as a stay-at-home mom, it wasn’t possible. With two kids to plan a future for, I finally had my ‘why.’ I knew it was time to start on the career path I always had a passion for.”

In 2011, Brittany was licensed in her home state of Michigan. She joined a team and worked primarily on the back end.

“It was a lot of work with little pay, but I got paid in experience,” Brittany says.

A Fresh Start

In 2014, Nick was offered a job opportunity in Fort Myers. So Brittany and her family picked up their lives and headed south. Both Brittany and Nick were born and raised in Michigan.

They had no friends or family in Florida. They were beginning again with a clean slate.

That made starting a real estate business challenging. Brittany took year one to study the market, familiarizing herself with different cities, communities, market conditions, prices, and client expectations — all while homeschooling her two sons.

Finding Her Niche

In late 2015, Brittany joined Downing-Frye Realty. She had all intentions of working as a solo agent, but her opinion shifted after meeting Rick and Brenda Brown.

“It was just the two of them, and our broker knew they were looking for





Brittany Skotak with Puff, her 13-year-old Peek-A-Pom. (Photo by Michelle Reed)

someone to help them. It was just a fit. It was a great opportunity for me to learn from two highly successful people,” Brittany explains. “I learned how they ran their business, their market. I got to interface with their clients, and they introduced me to a network of people here. They took me under their wings. I didn’t know anybody here. Because of their mentorship, I was able to grow exponentially, probably faster than most.”

Under Rick and Brenda’s mentorship, Brittany flourished. By 2018, she became a team leader.

“Today, I’m the team lead of The Skotak-Brown Group. There are six of us, and year over year, we’ve continued to grow. We’ve worked hard to earn

the number one team ranking within our Downing-Frye brokerage, year over year, since 2015,” Brittany beams. “Where I’ve come in this short period of time is a big deal. Starting over in a new state with no connections to where I am today... If I can achieve what I achieved in the last seven years in the next seven, I’ll be happy.”

Centered on Family

Amid so much change in her career, Brittany welcomed her third child in January 2019. Suffice it to say, outside work, Brittany is devoted to family life. Cruze, Nixon, and Stella are now 14, 11, and 3.

“Outside of real estate, any free time that I do have is spent with the kids. My husband works from home, so he

is able to juggle with me the school runs and playdates. And that’s what we do,” she smiles. “When we do get a chance to take a break for three or four days, we try to get over to the East Coast, go to Miami. I like to shop. Good food. It’s a quick little getaway.”

As we closed our interview with Brittany, we asked one final question: “What’s one thing we absolutely shouldn’t miss about you?”

“The one thing that I don’t know people know about me, and I hope they do — I truly am a humble person, down to earth. I don’t have an ego. I work really hard, and I just try to be as friendly as I can be. But no matter what success I achieve or where I am at in my life, I know that I’m the same person. A humble, regular person from Michigan. And I hope that I always remain that way.”

“

OUTSIDE OF REAL ESTATE, ANY FREE TIME THAT I DO HAVE IS SPENT WITH THE KIDS. MY HUSBAND WORKS FROM HOME, SO HE IS ABLE TO JUGGLE WITH ME THE SCHOOL RUNS AND PLAYDATES. AND THAT’S WHAT WE DO.



The Skotak family (from left to right: Cruze, Nick, Stella, Brittany, Nixon). (Photo by Kathleen D Photography)

“

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Brittany Skotak is team lead of The Skotak-Brown Group at Downing-Frye Realty. (Photo by Michelle Reed)



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