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Cover Story

THE VOGEL GROUP

Life by Design: Living
the Dream on The
Emerald Coast

RISING STAR:

THOMAS CANADA

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

PILLAR TO POST
HOME INSPECTORS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<p>07 Preferred Partners</p>		<p>09 Publisher's Note: What Is Real Producers?</p>		<p>12 Partner Spotlight: The McLendon Team at Pillar to Post</p>
	<p>18 Cover Story: The Vogel Group at Scenic Sotheby's International Realty</p>		<p>22 Coaches Corner: How to Hire the Ideal Team Player</p>		<p>24 Rising Star: Thomas Canada and The Victory Team</p>

COACHES CORNER

Confrontation

Harness the might of confrontation to supercharge your journey. Don't shy away from challenging conversations. Instead, identify who's been holding you back and set the stage for constructive dialogues.

Confrontation doesn't mean aggression; it means being calm and clear. State your thoughts precisely while respecting others.

The key to success is clarity. Know what you want and where you're going. Visualize your desired outcome and let it guide you.

Embrace confrontation to unlock your potential. Deals become attainable, and relationships strengthen. Confidence grows, and success follows.

So, I challenge you: Confront, confront, confront! Face obstacles head-on, and watch them crumble. Your journey to real estate greatness begins with one courageous conversation. Seize your destiny and let nothing deter you. Your success story awaits.



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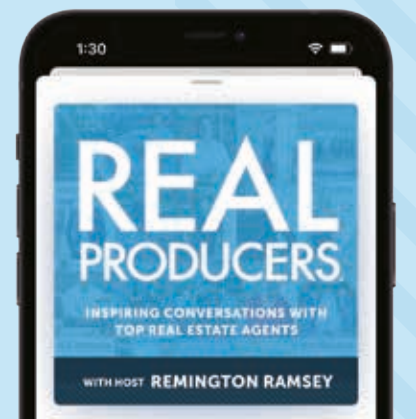
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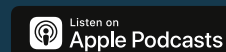
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publisher's note

By Cindy Bell | Photo by Captured by Courtney

WHAT IS REAL PRODUCERS?

Welcome to Emerald Coast Real Producers!

Can you believe it? Here we are already reading the *second* edition of the relaunch of *Emerald Coast Real Producers* magazine! It's once again my honor to bring Real Producers back to the Florida panhandle area and to celebrate everything that makes you all an outstanding part of the Emerald Coast Real Estate Community. I look forward to highlighting your accomplishments, encouraging your dreams and recognizing you for your continued excellence in serving your clients.

But it's probably time to officially introduce myself! I'm Cindy Bell, the proud owner and publisher of *Emerald Coast Real Producers*. I'm a licensed real estate agent in both Alaska and Florida, but recently decided to semi-retire from the production side of real estate to focus on the behind-the-scenes magic that is YOU!-- our esteemed top agents and our fabulous preferred partners along the Emerald Coast! Fun facts about me: I'm a mom of five almost fully grown amazing kids. I'm a grandma ("Gigi") to four beautiful grandbabies. I'm married to Jeff, a retired law enforcement officer and the love of my life. I'm a published author, a podcast host, a certified master coach, a motivational speaker, and am truly living my best life right now!

But back to business... Real Producers started as a simple idea in 2015 in Indianapolis and has spread across the nation like wildfire. The Real Producers community is now available in over 130 locations and is changing the way the real estate community interacts across America. As we embark on this journey together, I promise to create platforms to

connect this community and forums to recognize and celebrate what makes each one of you iconic. In years to come, I hope to interview every one of you so that I can share your success stories in future issues. I also look forward to celebrating you at our events, providing tools and connections to help you grow your business, and representing your passion for this industry that we all share.

HERE ARE SOME QUICK FACTS ABOUT REAL PRODUCERS:

DISTRIBUTION: This magazine will arrive in the mailboxes of the TOP 300 agents along the Emerald Coast each month. These 300 agents are determined through compiled MLS data from 2022. If you are receiving a hard copy of the publication, it is because you belong to an elite group and represent the best of the best in our industry!

CONTENT: This publication is all about YOU, the Emerald Coast real estate community. We will be writing personal and unique stories about members of this community, giving you a platform to inspire greatness in others. As we grow, we will continue to add fresh content focused entirely on the top agents and our Preferred Partners. We have NOTHING to sell to real estate agents as it is absolutely FREE to be featured in this publication. To be featured, the agents must be nominated by a peer, leader, or influencer in the local real estate market. We always encourage nominations and love to hear about agents who are making a huge impact in our market.

PREFERRED PARTNERS: Anyone listed as a "Preferred Partner" in the index of this publication will also be a part of this exclusive community. You will see them advertised in every issue, attending our private events, and being a part of our online community. We do not cold call businesses off the street to join us, nor do we allow any business

that approaches us to be a part. One or many of you have recommended every single one of these Preferred Partners that you see in this publication. Our goal is to give you as many resources as possible to add to your arsenal so that you always remain that trusted referral source to your clients and customers.

EVENTS: Along with our monthly publication, we will be hosting various social and educational events throughout the year. Our goal is to bring the best of the best together while supporting our local communities. And we fully intend to have a good time doing it! We will be communicating information on upcoming events through the publication, monthly emailed newsletter and social media.

CONTRIBUTION: If you are interested in contributing, nominating REALTORS® for certain features, know of additional top-notch affiliate partners who would be a great fit for our community, or would simply like to learn more, please reach out to me anytime. I look forward to meeting with every one of you in the future. I would also like to give a HUGE THANK YOU to the Preferred Partners who jumped on board with us so that we could bring *Emerald Coast Real Producers* back to life. Also, a huge shout-out to my team that pulled this together without much guidance. You all are incredible and this first issue is dedicated to you!

I appreciate you all and I look forward to seeing you all at our launch party coming soon!

CINDY BELL
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Cindy Bell



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THE McLendon TEAM

AT PILLAR TO POST

Innovation and Trust: Your Home Inspection Choice on The Emerald Coast

“How can we make your job easier?”

▶▶ partner spotlight

Written by Carol Nethen West
Photos by Faltisek & Gloria



‘WE TRUST YOU, THAT’S THE BEST PART OF MY JOB.’

Making the Agent’s Job Easier

Mike says, “At Pillar to Post, we have a unique approach. Since our referrals come from real estate agents, and, particularly, the top producing real estate agents, everything we do addresses the question, ‘How can we make the agent’s job easier, help them make more money, and get them to closing faster?’”

Twenty-Five+ Years of Service

Mike is proud of The McLendon Team at Pillar to Post for its history in the Florida Panhandle, commenting, “We bring twenty-five plus years of experience to the home inspection business. Founded in 1998, we are the longest-continuously operating home inspection company in the region. We’ve performed close to 14,000 home inspections, so, we have a lot of experience under our belt,” he remarks.

Home Inspection Revolutionized

Mike emphasizes the company’s embrace of innovation and how it’s made an agent’s job easier, saying, “Several years ago Pillar to Post introduced some new services that, frankly, have revolutionized the home inspection industry.”

He explains, “With every home inspection we do, we create a virtual tour of the home, called “PTP360.” This technology allows us to merge the written home inspection with the virtual walkthrough of the house. With just one click, anything documented in the tour will appear in a pop-up box.”

Mike knows that after a home inspection is completed, the first question that’s asked is “How much will this cost?” To which he comments, “With every inspection we perform, you can get a detailed repair estimate, delivered in twenty-four hours, based on our report. We call it “PTPEstimate.”

A Network of Trust

When asked what he finds most fulfilling about his job, Mike shares, “Every time a real estate agent refers one of their buyers to us, they’re saying, ‘I trust you.’ He continues, “They’ve driven their clients all over town to fifteen different houses, they know about their children, their family and what their dreams are about - they get connected with people. So when they hand them off to us, saying, ‘We trust you,’ that’s the best part of my job.”



“HOW CAN WE MAKE THE AGENT’S JOB EASIER, HELP THEM MAKE MORE MONEY, AND GET THEM TO CLOSING FASTER?”



The Agent Advantage

Motivated by Pillar to Post’s position as the largest national home inspection company, Mike has crafted a concept specifically targeting top producers in the region, many of whom he already has established relationships with.

He explains, “We have developed a ‘Pre-listing Package’ that will not only eliminate surprises about the home but will also provide agents with the use of our unique technology to market their listings. They can use the “PTPFloorplan” and the “PTP360” virtual tour in the MLS listing. Plus, in our pre-listing package, we’ve already completed the wind mitigation and the four-point inspection required by insurance companies.”

Confidently, Mike adds, “Statistics show that a pre-listing package simply helps the agent sell at a figure closest to the asking price and will get to the closing table faster.”

Our Family is Our Business

When it comes to family, Mike speaks glowingly, saying, “My wife, Kay, and both of our sons, Justin and Jeffrey, work in our business. Kay is our artistic, creative person. She is renowned for her give-away baskets and beautifully decorated Christmas trees, which are the highlight of the Central Panhandle Association of REALTORS® “Festival of Trees” annual charity event. Everyone gets excited to see Kay’s creations!”

“My oldest son, Justin, is our admin person – our front office guy. When you call our company, Justin is who you’ll be talking to. He’s friendly and is also incredibly smart – he’s also our bookkeeper!” Mike beams, “My youngest son, Jeffrey, is our lead home inspector. He’s been with me the longest; for over six years. He also trains and supervises our inspectors and has taken our quality of work to the next level.”

What’s Next?

Looking ahead, Mike envisions a broader role for home inspection services. He states, “Besides the three tiers of service Pillar to Post already provides, we’re exploring technologies of service

outside the usual transactional buying or selling of a home – like for aging in a home, safety in the home or childproofing, and environmental testing.”

Mike Wants to Hear From You!

The McLendon Team at Pillar to Post stands as a long-established beacon of innovation and customer-centric service in the Florida Panhandle. With a rich history, a commitment to trust, and a vision for the future that goes beyond the transactional aspects of buying and selling homes, Mike, his family, and Pillar to Post invite area real estate agents to contact them and discover all the innovative ways that can make their job easier and more profitable.

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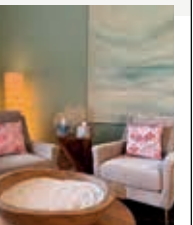


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▶▶ cover story

Written by Carol Nethen West
Photos by Faltisek & Gloria



The VOGEL GROUP

at Scenic Sotheby's International Realty

LIFE BY DESIGN: LIVING THE DREAM ON THE EMERALD COAST

The laid-back, luxurious vibe of Florida's 30A, with its crystal clear Gulf waters, sugar-white sand beaches, walk-to amenities and upscale full-time and vacation homes is a real estate market where Sarah and Mike Vogel feel right at home. Mike describes the area, "Each of 30A's little beach towns have their own architectural style and feel - Rosemary Beach has a European vibe, Seaside Beach is a quaint little beach town, Alys Beach feels Caribbean with its white stucco, and Watersound has Cape Cod style with boardwalks through the sprawling dunes. It's definitely some of the best beaches in America!"

Mike defines their total focus area, commenting, "The Vogel Group specializes in 30A but also services Destin, Miramar Beach, and Panama City Beach.

Since 2017, when Mike got his real estate license, the 30A market area has been increasingly active, with a surge of business that happened during the pandemic. "It was like getting shot out of a cannon," he exclaims. To help her husband, Mike, with the sudden demand, Sarah joined him in 2020. Mike comments, "We've been married for eighteen years. We've teamed up in several business ventures together over the years."

Mike and Sarah's journey together combines purpose, family, dreams, and faith in God's plan for their family's abundant life. Sarah comments, "We lived in Jacksonville and while Mike's job in IT took him to other parts of the country for work, I found a sports nutrition business and built a very large nationwide direct sales company. Plus, I was at home with our two young children who I homeschooled."

After eight years of growing their direct sales business, and with Mike stepping away from the corporate world to join Sarah, the couple realized they could relocate to the Panhandle area and easily work from there. They moved to their family's small Gulf-front home where they decided to build their Florida dream home. Mike became fascinated by the process



“Simplicity has always been our goal — don't make it harder than it has to be. Just serve your clients to the best of your ability, build strong relationships, invest in others, and go enjoy life too.”



“Don't be afraid to learn from the most unexpected places – don't have your guard up. Join a team and find a mentor — even if you have to give up some of your income to do it.”



of selling the family's beach house and soon realized that transitioning to a real estate career would be a good move. With a laugh, Sarah exclaims, “He was *dreaming* real estate!”

Looking back on their move to the Panhandle at a time when their children were entering middle school and with their online business success, both Sarah and Mike believe that God's hand was guiding them toward living the “Life by Design” they'd always dreamed about. Sarah says, “Through a lot of prayer, vision boards and dreaming about the life we could have together we understood that it wasn't necessarily about having a job, but being able to work while we lived our life.”

Mike and Sarah met providently in Jacksonville nineteen years ago. Originally from Alaska, Sarah first worked in her home state in her family's business. She says, “My family owns Great Clips Hair in Alaska.” When Sarah saw an opportunity in Jacksonville, she relocated, close to family members.

Mike fondly admits, “I met Sarah in 2004 in Jacksonville — when she cut my hair.”

The love story unfolds with the couple's marriage, the raising and homeschooling of their two children, Andrew and Norah, Mike's corporate IT job, Sarah's growing of her direct sales business, and the family's eventual move to The Emerald Coast.

When asked about the advice the couple might have for young agents new to the business, Mike discloses an unlikely story of having been mentored by a young, but very knowledgeable 28-year-old real estate agent. He says, “He knew his stuff. He'd done some commercial stuff in Nashville before coming to the beach and he taught me a lot. During that time, from 2018 to 2020, he was very invested in me. The advice that I tell a lot of people is, ‘Don't be afraid to

learn from the most unexpected places – don't have your guard up. Join a team and find a mentor — even if you have to give up some of your income to do it.”

Their five-year plan? For Sarah, it's all about family and her faith in God to help her through the uncertainty of soon becoming an empty nester with Andrew and Norah at college.

Mike responds with equal candor saying, “In five years, it's going to be the two of us doing real estate together, but having some freedom to live our life by design, right? Simplicity has always been our goal — don't make it harder than it has to be. Just serve your clients to the best of your ability, build strong relationships, invest in others, and go enjoy life too!”



Mike adds, “When someone sells their home, maybe they got into the market at the right time, and they're selling at the right time. So they can upgrade, or move to a mountain destination versus a beach destination. Whatever their goal is, I'm grateful to have helped them accomplish it. And on the buy side, it's just fun to help somebody realize a dream. Maybe they're buying their first beach house — this is awesome. For me, that's the part I really enjoy.”

Sarah and Mike are grateful for their opportunity to live life as they've always dreamed. Going forward, they are committed to trust in God and understand that their small group of two is the best way forward. Mike comments, “We're very good at what we do together. I don't necessarily see us growing any larger of a team or organization. We like the simple part — the two of us.”

How to Hire the Ideal Team Player

Wayne Salmans
The Hero Nation

“Five Indispensable Virtues of an Ideal Hire: Transforming Hiring into a Masterpiece of Business Strategy”

The greatest business hack of all time isn't a secret formula or a cutting-edge technology; it's hiring the right people. Picture this: A business akin to a well-oiled machine, each part perfectly in sync, propelling the entire system forward. This is the power of an ideal hire.

But why do so many business owners hesitate at this crucial juncture? The answer lies in fear, fueled by staggering statistics:

- The U.S. Department of Labor reveals the cost of a bad hire can reach up to 30% of the employee's first-year earnings.
- The Undercover Recruiter reports a bad hire can cost \$240,000 in expenses, encompassing hiring, pay, and retention.
- According to CareerBuilder, 74% of companies that made a poor hire lost an average of \$14,900 per poor hire.

No wonder hiring feels like navigating a minefield.

Yet, imagine if you could turn this daunting process into an art form. In “The Ideal Team Player,” Patrick Lencioni identifies three virtues of an ideal hire. I propose five indispensable virtues, honed through my experience and insights, to not just hire, but to sculpt a team that embodies excellence.

coaches corner

By Wayne Salmans

1. Hungry - They are the embodiment of desire, constantly seeking growth and improvement. Reflect on this: Have you ever tried to ignite passion in someone who lacks it? It's an uphill battle. But a team member who is intrinsically motivated is a catalyst for unstoppable momentum.
2. Humble - As my father wisely put it, “High confidence and low ego” is the golden ratio. Humility isn't about downplaying one's abilities; it's about openness to learn and an acute self-awareness. It's a trait that transforms good players into great teammates.
3. Smart (Emotionally) - Intelligence goes beyond academics. It's about emotional intelligence - the ability to understand and manage emotions, to connect, to empathize. How often have we seen a technically proficient individual falter due to a lack of emotional savvy?
4. Cultural Fit - This is the harmony of values, beliefs, and vision. Ask yourself, does this individual resonate with the core of what your team stands for?
5. Role Alignment - It's about placing people where they naturally excel. Have you ever seen a great salesperson flounder in a role filled with paperwork? It's like asking a fish to climb a tree.

Three Keys to Note:

- Hire Slow, Fire Fast: Despite a robust hiring process, true colors often show only after the first 30 days. Be swift to act if the reality doesn't match the expectation.

- Culture Over Strategy: Keith Cunningham's words ring true: “Culture eats strategy for breakfast.” A vibrant culture can overcome strategic missteps.
- Courage in Leadership: Every leadership failure roots back to a lack of courage. Are you ready to lead bravely?

A team member who embodies these five virtues - Hungry, Humble, Smart, Cultural Fit, and Role Alignment - transforms your business into an unstoppable force.

To streamline this process, I've created “The Complete Hiring Toolkit.” It's designed not just to point out the pot-holes but to equip you with the tools to fill them. Message me and I will send it to you. 469-500-3642

TAKE ACTION: The path to hiring mastery and business success is open. If you're ready to embark on this transformative journey, let's connect. Jump on a call with me at www.PickWaynesBrain.com.



WAYNE SALMANS, a herald of transformation, an author, speaker, and business coach. Over the past decade, I've illuminated the path for over 6,000 entrepreneurs, recognized as 30 under 30 by Realtor Magazine, and esteemed as one of the top coaches globally. My passion is not just to guide but to empower you to build, grow, and scale your business with wisdom and efficiency. Discover more at www.TheHeroNation.com.



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THOMAS CANADA

AND THE VICTORY TEAM
SERVICE: ITS OWN RICH REWARD

“My superpower is building relationships.”

Since obtaining his real estate license in 2020, Thomas Canada, a veteran of The United States Air Force, has quickly risen to prominence among Florida Panhandle’s most respected real estate professionals. His unique team approach, rooted in building relationships and fostering a sense of community, sets him apart. As the founder/leader of The Victory Team at Coldwell Banker, a tight group of twelve dedicated agents, Thomas emphasizes

collaboration, mentorship and helping others find success in an ever-changing real estate market. In 2023, The Victory Team achieved an impressive \$24 million dollars in total volume sales, a testament to Thomas’s highly skilled leadership.

Thomas reflects on what qualities he feels distinguishes him. “I would say that I connect with people very well. My superpower is building relationships.”

Thomas’ transition from a military career to real estate wasn’t initially planned. While purchasing a Florida home in 2019, his real estate agent recognized his innate ability to connect with people and suggested he consider a career in real estate. Taking this advice, Thomas embarked on a new chapter, participating in the military’s Skill Bridge program that allowed him to



▶▶ rising star

Written by Carol Nethen West
Photos by Faltisek & Gloria

intern in the real estate industry for six months. Little did he know that this decision would lead to a remarkable start, with him selling an impressive fifty-four homes as a solo agent in his first year.

Thomas describes his military service with humility, illuminating his pledge to protect and win, "I joined the Air Force in 1998 and was stationed at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. I was there during 9/11 and was boots on the ground within a week. I did six tours total in Operation Enduring Freedom (the first stage of the war in Afghanistan and the war on global terrorism) and Operation Iraqi Freedom."

Thomas rose to the rank of Master Sergeant and, as Superintendent assigned to the 23rd Special Tactics Squadron for the Air Force Special Operations Command, headquartered at Hurlburt Field, led many teams of diverse specialties. He remarks, "I was always in charge of someone and always helping the next person to find that next landing spot."

He continues, "When I left the service, and I got into real estate, I naturally thought, 'Where's the service side of this?... the part that feels good?' I can make a good living by myself. And that's cool. But it's a lonely life. So, by my second year in real estate, I started reaching out to new agents and sharing information. I taught them what I wish I'd learned in my first week. Fast forward, I have a team of twelve agents now that works directly with me. A "collaborative" is what I like to call it. I helped a lot of those agents get their license, start, and grow... hopefully to land in the top 300."

Thomas tells a meaningful childhood story - one that includes his inspiring family. He reflects, "I was the oldest of five - four boys and one girl." He laughs and says, "I had to be the most responsible - it comes along with the title, I guess."

In their hometown of Whipple, West Virginia, where coal mining was the culture, his mom and dad instilled enduring hometown values in their children. Having an early influence on Thomas' ultimate pledge to defend and protect, his father represented miners in the community who suffered from Black Lung Disease. In high school, the ROTC program inspired Thomas and gave him a clear direction from which he's never deviated.

Now, about four times a week, Thomas loves to golf. His wife, Natalie, also a military veteran, and their family of five children take vacations whenever they can. Thomas shares, "Matter of fact, we went to Hawaii a couple of years ago. My son served for six years in the military and my wife is still a contractor for the military. We're a military family. We'll go somewhere in close proximity to a military base because it's a little bit more cost-efficient for hotels and flights." Thomas also looks forward to sharing his musician son's progress going forward in college.

Without a doubt, Thomas's call to leadership has given him drive and purpose. He continually searches for ways to serve his community to which he comments, "I've found several other pockets to serve - on the Emerald Coast Association of REALTORS® board here, where there's fifteen board members for 5500 agents in the area. And then I'm also a Florida REALTORS® director for the state of Florida. I like the education side - helping other agents develop and making decisions that positively affect our industry."



Thomas sums up his story by reflecting on his military experience and how The Victory Team aligns with the needs of new homeowners in the area. He says, "Having the internal experience of moving quite a bit and how it affects spouses and family, changing jobs and transitioning from a military career, I really wanted to dive into helping folks, because that reset is not always as easy as it looks."

As a real estate professional, I try to be that conduit - facilitating success through knowledge and training, helping others acquire knowledge of the market, and how they can make powerful decisions about their career, their families and their homes."

Real Producers salutes and thanks Thomas for his unfaltering service to our country.



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