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IN THIS ISSUE:

GIVING BACK
THE SOZO BOX

RISING STAR
CAITLYN GUICE

PUBLISHER Q&A
ERIN GREEN

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GEAUX PREAUX PEST
CONTROL

JULY 2024

GET TO KNOW...

John Griffin

What made you decide to become a loan officer?

I was in a season of change and had a close friend who was successful in this space. I was traveling internationally in the corporate world and wanted to pursue a career that allowed me to spend more time with my family and still enjoy the same level of reward. Couple that with a natural affinity to take the complex and communicate it in easy-to-digest language, the mortgage business just seemed like the right fit.

What is your favorite part about being a mortgage loan officer?

The serving, no question. Being able to serve families with one of the most important transactions they'll make in life is an honor and a responsibility I take very seriously. It goes beyond clients, as well. Knowing the execution of my job also plays a major role in the success level of my business partners drives me just as much as seeing a family achieve their dream of homeownership.

What is the best advice you would give to an agent when it comes to the lending side of the transaction?

Always ask. So many agents do a great job of staying abreast of lending programs and products. However, my expertise goes well beyond products. It's about structuring and finance management and that's where having a partner that doesn't cookie-cut, but rather treat every customer as the unique individual they are is rare in today's lending world. Never assume.

What are your favorite hobbies?

I love sports and anything outdoors. I'm competitive by nature and have stayed active in multiple leagues up until moving here. Additionally, if it involves hunting or being on the water, you can count me in.

What is an interesting fact about you that other people may not know?

I'm a father, first and foremost, of 2 amazing daughters - Mylee & McKenna. As a former soldier in the Army, I try to seek out veterans of all Armed Services to assist with home ownership. And I may have spent a summer as Batman in the Six Flags stunt show, many moons ago!



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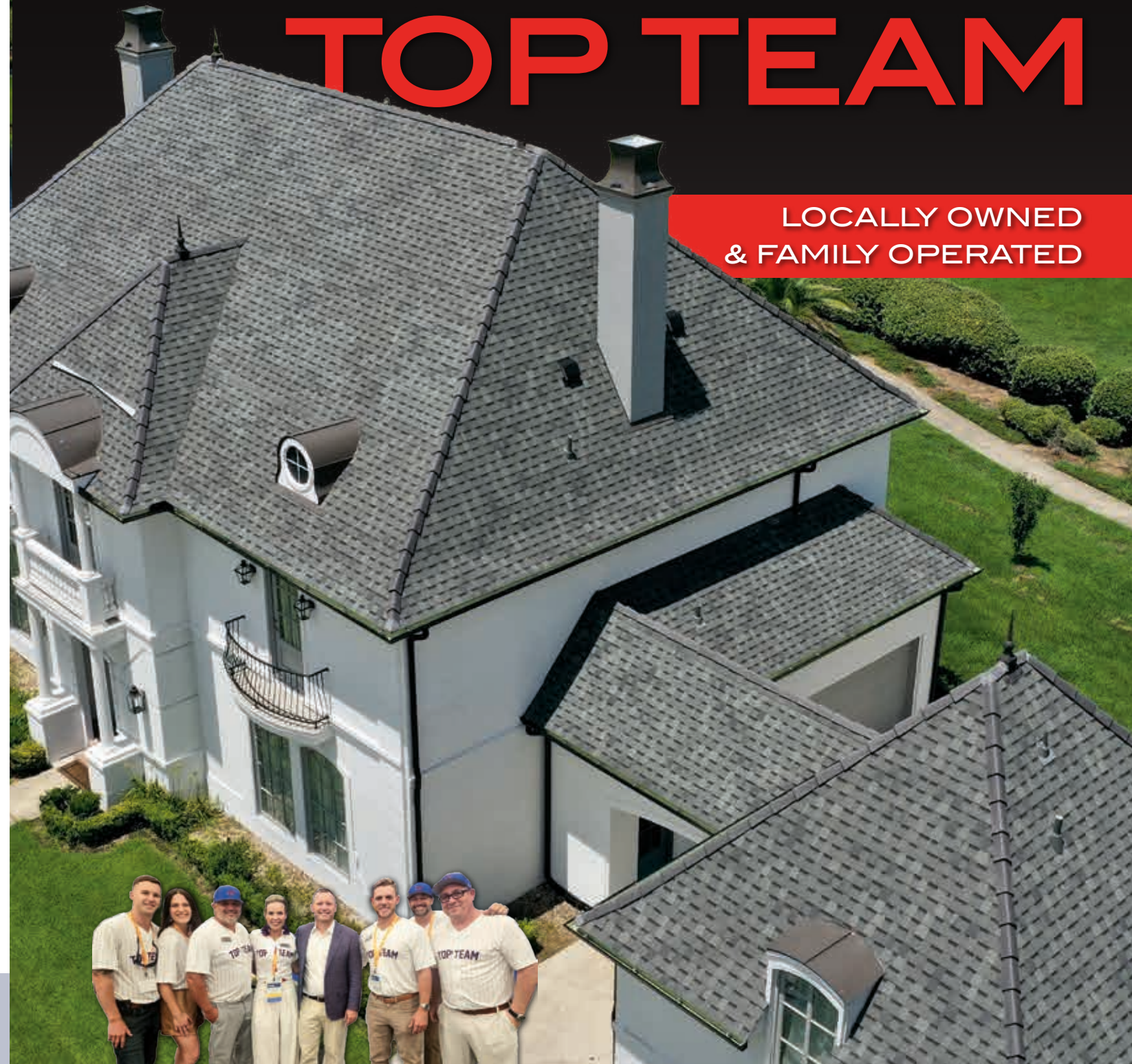
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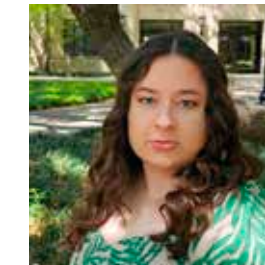
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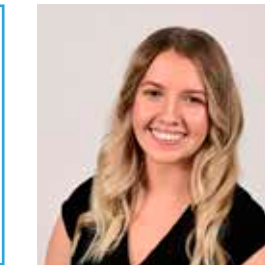
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THE SOZO BOX

Many of you know Rob Mooney from Cypress Roofing. We've enjoyed getting to know him at our events and monthly partner breakfasts. So when we heard about his mission to bring some joy to families facing cancer, we had to find out more, so we as a community, could find a way to support him in his cause.

Just under a year ago, Rob and his wife Carly founded The Sozo Box, a box infused with faith and hope, to help those diagnosed with cancer.

The Journey.

In 2021, the Mooney's 10-year-old son, Abram was diagnosed with a rare form



CANCER SUCKS!



of cancer. Carly said there was a tumor found in Abram's sinus cavity touching the optic nerve, and close to the base of his skull. Upon receiving the news, the family immediately rushed to St. Jude in Memphis, Tennessee for treatment; treatment that included 33 rounds of radiation. Once they returned to Baton Rouge, Abram had to continue with another 18 months of chemotherapy.

After many prayers, in November of 2022, Abram 'rang the bell' to celebrate he had defeated cancer. This may have been the end of their fight, but it was only the beginning of their mission to be there for others facing the fears and uncertainty that cancer can bring.

Inspiration.

While on the way to Memphis, Carly says they were listening to a teaching on faith and the speaker was discussing the word sozo, the Greek word

for salvation. Sozo was first used in The Bible in Matthew chapter 1, verse 21 about saving, healing, making whole, and delivering. She states that in that moment sozo filled their hearts and the word became part of their journey with Abram.

During his journey to healing, Abram often said, "Fight with faith, what you are facing," a phrase which would later become the motto for The Sozo Box.

Carly felt her heart pulled to create boxes could be thoughtfully delivered to the families of those who have been diagnosed with cancer. In June of 2023, she answered this tug and set out to start their non-profit and began delivering boxes to St. Jude in Baton Rouge about once a month, but now The Sozo Box has grown to shipping deliveries all over the United States and into Canada.

The Sozo Boxes are filled with items that helped the Mooney's on their own personal journey. Each box caters to specific age ranges and includes Rhema cards, hand-made bracelets from their family and volunteers, and Carly said that inside every box you can find the book of Psalm 91. She said this book was gifted to her moments before they received the diagnosis of Abram. "My heart soaked in every word as we stood on these verses and believed for healing in Abram's body." Every item is well thought out, and having been down this road themselves, The Mooneys carefully select items that they feel will provide comfort to those facing this difficult season and remind them they are not so alone.

Rob and Carly have big plans to expand the Sozo Box and help reach more families. They are involved in several outreaches for St. Jude affiliates by serving staff, and giving boxes and gifts to the kids. There are plans to get a website up and running in the next couple of months to make it easier for people to send box requests, along with venturing out to New Orleans and delivering boxes to their hospitals.

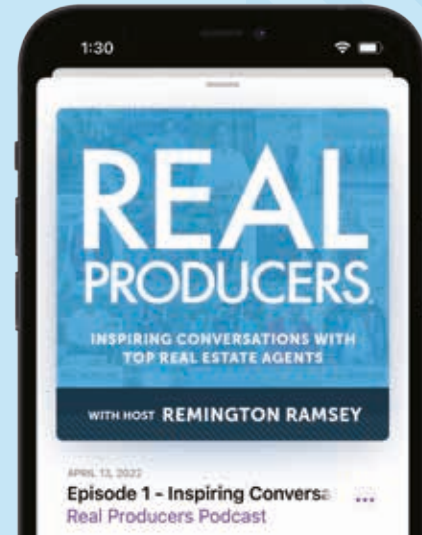
Please visit their Instagram @thesozobox and help us spread the word so others can not only get involved, but remember The Sozo Box if they hear of anyone with a family member facing cancer. There is no doubt that they would be encouraged by this gift. "Our prayer is that others will fight with faith, what they are facing."



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Caitlyn GUICE

TOMBOY, GIRLY-GIRL & EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN

From the moment she was born, Caitlyn Guice has been a contradiction to life's expectations in every sense of the word. Each day, she lives her life in her most authentic way, letting her life be proof that you don't have to draw inside the lines, but instead, embrace all aspects of who you are.

Before Caitlyn was born her father began praying she would be a boy. He hoped to have a child to take fishing and hunting, and presumed he needed a son to make this happen. He had understandable doubts that a girl would be disinterested in learning the ways of the land; the ways he loved and the ways he looked forward to teaching his own child to love.

His wish came true in the form of a precocious little girl unafraid to get dirty, but drawn to all things glittery at the same time. Caitlyn was the best of both worlds. Her earliest memory is of when her father came home from fishing one day and set the ice chest down on their back porch. Caitlyn took a fish from the ice chest, and began to play with it like a doll.

"I picked it up like a baby, I dressed it and fed it," she laughs. "My dad looked at my mom, and said 'should we let her do this?' and she was like 'if you want her to go fishing with you, she has to get used to the smell!'"

From then on, Caitlyn was glued to her father's side, and grew up learning the ways of Louisiana's countryside. She learned to fish in the rivers and hunt deer in the woods. Her father was well known in Ascension Parish, so wherever she went throughout her childhood, she was known as Goosie's Daughter, the tomboy. "I love the peace and quiet of the deer stand, it's where I feel at home," she relates. "When I was 17, I killed a 9-point buck, the biggest one I had shot yet. I'm a Louisiana girl through and through."

Caitlyn graduated from college with a degree in Chemistry and Biology, intending to continue her work with the land that raised her. However, what was waiting for her in her career was not fish hooks and camouflage, but something no one on the outside would have expected: Jewelry.

In 2020, she connected with one of the managers of Kay Jewelers in the Mall of Louisiana. "I had lost my previous job in the food industry the year before. I had a four year degree from college, but I could never find a position in my field." She continues, "I was always looking for something where I could utilize my experience in sales." Because of her infectious personality and drive to be successful, the manager called her up when a part time job opened. "Eventually, they moved me up to full time. And then the next February, they promoted me to Third Key. I had experience in sales, so I really enjoyed my work with them."

This is truly where her love of glitter and shine began to see the light. A fast learner, she quickly became an expert in all things luxury, from the glittering gold of engagement rings to the sparkle of diamond necklaces and earrings. Pairing this inability to do anything half-hearted with her natural love of forming relationships with clients, Caitlyn enjoyed her work and decided that sales was what she was made for.

“

FOR EVERY
CLOSING I WEAR
MY SPARKLY
'CLOSING
SHOES.'

”



In April of 2022, Baton Rouge Realtor Shane Robertson, came into the store and struck up a conversation with her. “While I was helping him find a birthday gift for his fiancé, we chatted about sales and business, and eventually he told me about his career in real estate,” she remembers, “This piqued my interest because I was thinking about selling my house.

In May, he came out and gave me a CMA, and by August, I decided to put my house on the market.” Even before this process began, she already had the suspicion that real estate might be her calling. For many years, her boyfriend, her family, and her friends all recognized in her the personality that would thrive in creating relationships and helping people. She stayed connected with Robertson, who eventually encouraged her to get her license. “I got my license on March 14th, and by March 30th I had my first client.”

Caitlyn decided to go full time in July, and states that she never could have imagined having a more fulfilling job. “I never knew how much I hated punching a time card,” she emphasizes. Real estate has not only helped her to find purpose in life, but it also allows more time for her family.

When Caitlyn is not showing and selling houses, she is incubating and hatching baby chicks on their family farm in Donaldsonville. “I’ve wanted a farm my whole life, ever since my aunt had chickens, but I never thought I’d get to pursue that dream.” Caitlyn loves the farm life and the joy it brings her. “I met my best friend through the farm!”



In this career, she has been able to transfer everything she’s learned from both sides of her life. Drawing on her connections with Louisiana culture and fusing them with her experiences in luxury sales, Caitlyn has produced a thriving career that embodies the dichotomy of her love for the land with her love for shimmering things. “For every closing I wear my sparkly ‘closing shoes’ “ And I think it’s safe to say she talks about her chickens.

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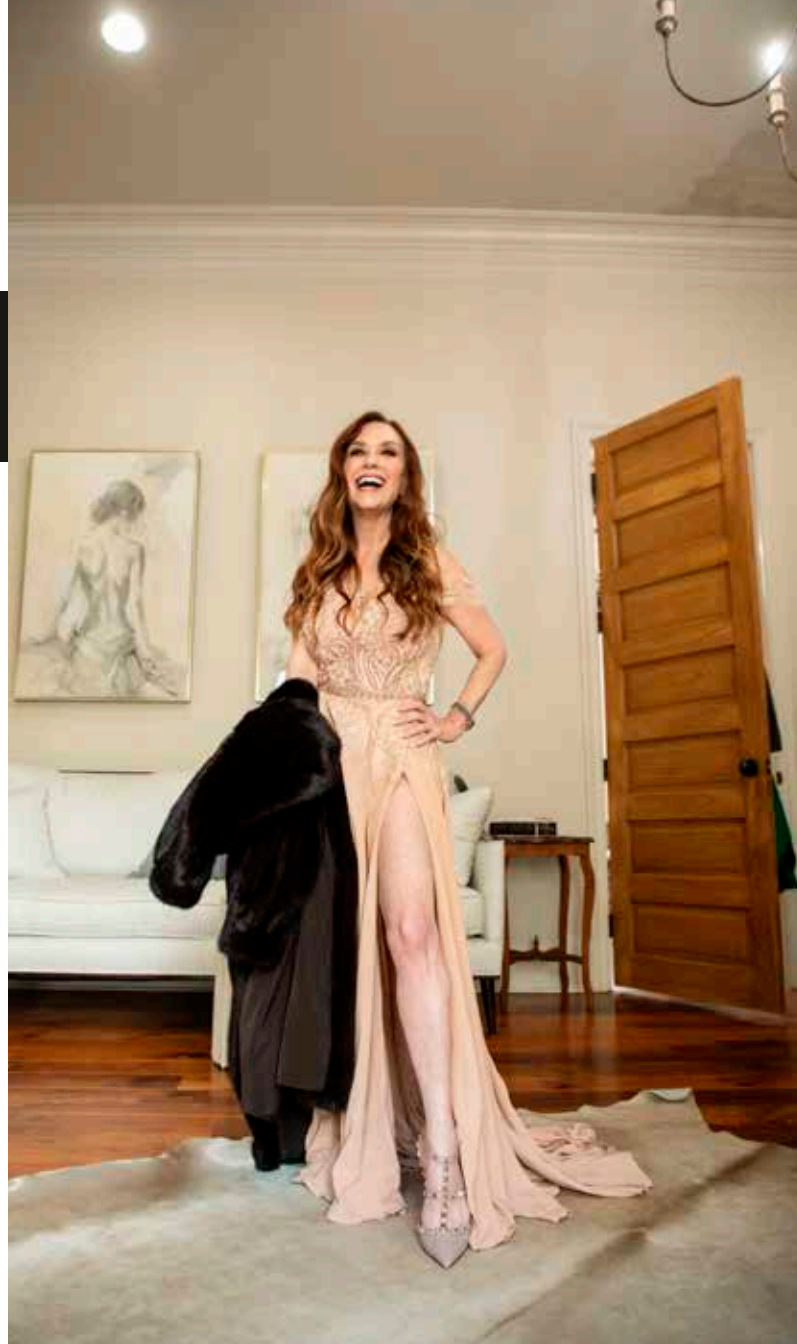
SHANNON

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Zest for Life

In the late 1990s, Shannon Andre was a full-time college student and single mom of a little girl while living in Florida and getting her feet wet in real estate at the local Better Homes and Garden Real Estate brokerage. She was also teaching more than 30 step aerobics classes each week. “I did whatever I could to make ends meet,” she recalls.

Shannon was running herself ragged, and her mom, Barbara, noticed all the way from Louisiana. Worried she may fall seriously ill or even have a relapse of the heart condition that required open heart surgery when she was a child, Barbara insisted that Shannon come home to Louisiana for a visit and slow down. During that visit, Barbara sold her beloved marquis-cut diamond ring and gave Shannon the cash to cover bills while she



recovered from a hospital stay due to exhaustion. In 1999, Shannon moved back home to Baton Rouge and started a new journey.

Thriving in the Fast Lane

These days, Shannon hits the ground running at 5 a.m. with her two boxers, Zeus and Athena, following her every step. She enjoys the brief beat of silence before the deluge of texts and calls begins. With 40 agents working at her brokerage and four adult children, there are few dull moments in Shannon's day. And that's just the way she likes it.

When she's ready to take a break, she opts for the frantic bustle of New York City. “Central Park is my happy place,” she says. “When I'm in New York, I'm in my element. It's so fast-paced, and I thrive in that environment because I think like a shark - just keep moving.” It's here, amid the hustle and bustle of the Big Apple, that Shannon feels most alive - a testament to her fearless spirit forged through a lifetime of perseverance.

She's worked since she was 12, first as a babysitter, then at the local Wendy's. In her teens and 20s, she worked in the gym nursery as a babysitter before becoming a fitness instructor. It's hard to say whether Shannon was born with the hustle or if it was refined in her early childhood experiences. “I was very sick as a child,” she explains. “I almost died a couple of times and had to have open heart surgery.” But even from the hospital bed, Shannon was a tough negotiator. “I had to gain weight for surgery, so my mom offered me 25 cents for every bite of food I took. We settled on 35 cents a bite,” she laughed. “And when the nurses would have to give me a shot, I'd always want to get something out of the deal.”



From her early days of overcoming health challenges to her relentless pursuit of success, Shannon exemplifies resilience and a relentless pursuit of joy. "Laughter is the best medicine," she says. This philosophy and her motto, do the right thing, continue to guide her through life's challenges and triumphs.

Full Circle

While browsing shops in St. Thomas a few years ago, a marquis ring caught Shannon's eye. "Now, it wasn't the three carats like the one she had, but it was close," she says, smiling. "And I just had to get it for her."

Throughout her life and 25 years in real estate, doing the right thing remains at the forefront of her mission, and her mom has been right by her side for every step. Shannon opened Tiger Town Realty in 2007 and became the sole broker/owner in 2010. In 2022, in a decision she says she can only describe as "a full circle moment," she purchased the local Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate franchise, merging the business with her Tiger Town Realty brokerage.

Barbara is the office manager, and the dynamic duo have been told more than once that their stories and personalities deserve a reality TV show. "We cut up, but we keep it professional," Shannon says, smiling.

For Shannon, resilience, laughter and unwavering determination have woven together seamlessly to create the life she loves. Whether she's navigating the hectic streets of New York City or leading her thriving real estate brokerage in Baton Rouge, her zest for life and commitment to doing what's right shine brightly. With each step forward, Shannon honors her journey and pays homage to those who have walked alongside her, bringing successes not only measured in achievements and data but by bonds forged and the lives touched.



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Droppings: Pest droppings are a common sign. Different pests leave different types of droppings, so identifying the type can help pinpoint the pest.

Shed Skins: Some pests, like bed bugs or cockroaches, shed their skins as they grow.

Nesting Materials: Rodents often leave behind shredded paper, fabric, or other materials used for nesting.

Look for damage to property:

Gnaw marks: Rodents often gnaw on wood, wires and other materials.

Holes & Tunnels: Small holes in walls, floors, or furniture can indicate an infestation of insects like termites or rodents.

Chewed or Damaged Food Packing: Finding holes or chew marks in food packaging is a strong indicator.

Unusual Noises: Scratching or scurrying sounds: noises in walls, ceilings, or under floors, especially at night, can indicate the presence of rodents or other pests.

Unpleasant Odors: A musty smell or oily smell can be a sign of a cockroach infestation while rodent infestations often come with strong urine or feces odor.

Visible Damage to Plants: Chewed leaves or stems and

wilting or yellowing plants; all potential signs of pests.

And the obvious: Finding live or dead insects or rodents in your home is a clear sign of an infestation.

What types of pests do you handle?

We address a variety of pests that are common to the region's warm, humid climate. A few types of insects we handle include ants, wasps, bees, earwigs, silverfish, cockroaches, and beetles along with termites and mosquitos; including those that can carry diseases like West Nile Virus. Of course you can call us for fleas and ticks, spiders, rodents and various wildlife. Something every homeowner should be aware of is that though they may look cute, squirrels can cause damage by chewing through wires and insulation, raccoons are known for getting into garbage and have potential to spread diseases, opossums can be a nuisance around homes and potentially spread disease and skunks have the potential to carry rabies.

Did you think we were finished? Not quite.

Add to the list:

Moles (can cause damage to lawns and gardens).

Snakes (both venomous (copperheads & cottonmouths), and non-venomous species).

Crickets (*a nuisance especially during certain seasons*).
Aquatic Pests:
Nutria (*invasive rodent species that can damage wetlands and levees*).

The methods used can vary depending on the specific pest and the extent of the infestation.

How often should I have my home treated for pests?

We recommend 4 times a year; every 3 months. We do not have CONTRACTS. We believe our work should speak for itself. We do offer monthly, bi-monthly and one-time specials. If you have questions about cost and treatments, call us! We will do our best to work with our customers.

What should I do to prepare for a pest control service?

Before pest control arrives, homeowners should take some steps to ensure the process is as effective and efficient as possible.

Here are some general guidelines.

- See to it that we have easy access to all areas that need to be treated.
- Clean your home to reduce clutter, which provides

hiding spots for pests. Vacuum carpets, sweep floors, and wipe down surfaces.

- Store food in sealed containers and remove any perishable items from countertops.
- Inform us about specific issues you've observed and any areas of concern. If possible, it helps for you to let us know in advance the type of pests you've noticed and specifically where you've seen them.
- Make sure that all outdoor areas are accessible and free of obstacles. We treat outside, as well.

Can I be home during the pest control treatment?

Yes! The chemicals that Geaux Preaux Pest Control uses are rated SAFE for the 3 P's: People, Pets, and Plants.

Do you provide pest control services for commercial properties?

Yes! We are Licensed, Bonded, Insured and carry workers compensation.

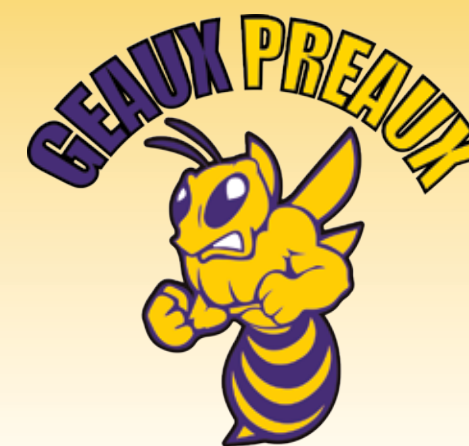
How do I schedule an appointment?

Please feel free to contact us at (225) 505-4897, our office manager will be more than happy to assist you. You can also send an email to geauxpreauxpc@att.net

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What is your role in the local real estate industry?

Executive Assistant and Property Manager

What career(s) did you have prior to this one?

I was in banking for almost 6 years.

Who inspired you to follow this career path?

I always knew banking wasn't my true calling, so with prayer about redirection, when Richard called me it was a sign. He was telling me how he was looking for someone with structure, organization, promptness, etc. Little did he know I'm ticking all these in my head. I came out and said can I give it a go and it was smooth sailing from there. I never looked back.

What are 3 qualities others would use to describe you?

Caring, Driven, Dominant/ Influential

How do you handle a stressful day?

I often find peace in texting my husband to vent, a routine that helps me decompress. Afterwards, I take a moment for myself. Stuff my face with a big bag of Chester's hot fries, and remind myself that this is just a temporary moment, not something to let affect my mindset moving forward.

Can you tell us a little bit about your family?

My husband and family are one of my main motivations my why. They mean everything to me. We make it a priority to spend time together, cherishing moments and creating memories. Every Sunday, my grandma cooks for us, a tradition since I was born. We gather at her house, sit outside, swing on her patio, and engage in hours of heartfelt conversation.

What are your top 3 local hotspots?

Empire Wingz Silly Rabbit Comedy
Club Main Lobby/ Firehaus

What are you doing on a "day-off"?

A day off for me would be a self care day. Whether that's binge watching a series on my watchlist or going get a massage and grabbing lunch with friends to catch up.

You just won \$10,000 and you have to spend it in one store. Where can we find you and what are you buying?

You can find me in LA on Fairfax in Flight Club. I am a true sneaker head.

What is it that you hope to accomplish within the next 3 years?

Starting a family, watching my non-profit Becoming H.E.R. grow, and continuing to excel in my career paths.

Anything else you might like to add that we forgot to ask?!

I'm a girly girl with a southern tomboy twist. I rock sweats and sneakers, am super competitive, hit the gym hard, and play sports with family/coworkers. Give me some wild game any day besides squirrel. I'm all in for getting dirty and hunting with my dad or enjoying a muddy 4-wheeler ride!



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DISPELLING 7 MYTHS ABOUT NAR'S PROPOSED SETTLEMENT

You can help correct the record about the association's proposed settlement to resolve nationwide claims brought by home sellers.

National Association of REALTORS® leaders have been talking to reporters and members full-time over the past month to correct the record about the association's decision to resolve nationwide claims brought by home sellers. You can help by challenging inaccurate information that you see appearing in social media posts, news articles or elsewhere.

Myth 1: The proposed settlement covers only a fraction of members.

FACT: Nearly every real estate professional who is a REALTOR®, a member of NAR, is covered by the release that NAR negotiated in the settlement. The agreement would release NAR; more than 1 million NAR members; all state, territorial and local REALTOR® associations; all association-owned MLSs; and all brokerages with an NAR member as principal

whose residential transaction volume in 2022 was \$2 billion or below from liability for the types of claims brought in these cases on behalf of home sellers related to broker commissions.

To be clear, NAR members are covered by the settlement unless:

- They are affiliated with HomeServices of America or one of its affiliates, or
- They are employees of a defendant in the remaining Gibson/Umpa lawsuits in Missouri. *(Note: All independent contractors affiliated with these defendants are covered.)*

Myth 2: NAR left large corporate brokerages and affiliated agents to fend for themselves.

FACT: NAR fought to include as many people and companies in the release as possible and achieved a release for everyone it could. Well over 1 million members

are covered, as are tens of thousands of businesses operated by REALTORS®. But, despite NAR's efforts, the plaintiffs did not agree to include everybody. Those that are not released — the largest companies in our industry — are no worse off now than they were before the settlement. In fact, many are better off, as thousands of their independent contractor real estate agents are released by the settlement. Additionally, NAR's settlement provides an avenue for most large corporate brokerages with an NAR member as principal and more than \$2 billion in residential volume in 2022 that were not included in the settlement to pursue inclusion in the release. But the settlement does not obligate them to opt into the settlement. These brokerages will have 60 days after plaintiffs file the motion for preliminary approval of the settlement to complete Appendix C of the settlement agreement, which is

required to opt into the settlement if they choose to do so. *(See the estimated timeline and download the settlement and its appendices at facts.realtor.)*

Myth 3: NAR requires a standard 6% commission.

FACT: You know this is untrue, but it's a myth that has persisted in the media. NAR does not set commissions — they are negotiable. The rule that has been the subject of litigation requires only that listing brokers communicate an offer of compensation. That offer can be any amount, including zero. And other rules throughout the MLS Handbook and NAR policy expressly prohibit MLSs, associations and brokers from setting or suggesting any such amount that should be included in that field.

Myth 4: NAR will raise dues to fund the settlement.

FACT: NAR will not change membership dues for 2024 or 2025 because of this settlement.

Myth 5: Brokers representing buyers now have to work for free.

FACT: Under the proposed settlement, the types of compensation available for brokers working with buyers would continue to take multiple forms, including but not limited to a fixed-fee commission paid directly by consumers; concessions from the seller (as long as such concessions are not conditioned on the retention of or payment to a cooperating broker, buyer broker, or other buyer representative); or a portion of the listing broker's compensation. NAR has long believed that it is

in the interest of the sellers, buyers, and their brokers to make offers of compensation; however, using the MLS to communicate offers of compensation will no longer be an option. Compensation will continue to be negotiable and should always be negotiated between agents and the consumers they represent.

Myth 6: The practice change will do away with offers of compensation to brokers representing buyers.

FACT: Offers of compensation are an option consumers can pursue off-MLS through negotiation and consultation with real estate professionals. The settlement also expressly provides that sellers may communicate seller concessions — such as buyer closing costs

— via the MLS, provided that such concessions are not conditioned on the use of or payment to a buyer broker.

Myth 7: NAR settled because the plaintiffs' allegations are true.

FACT: As the settlement makes clear, NAR denies any wrongdoing in connection with the MLS cooperative compensation model rule. Cooperative compensation arrangements facilitate the process of selling a home and help ensure equal opportunity for buyers. It has always been NAR's goal to resolve this litigation in a way that preserves consumer choice and protects our members to the greatest extent possible. This settlement achieves both of those goals and provides a

path forward for the industry and the association.

**At press time on April 10, in addition to HomeServices of America and its related companies, the remaining defendants not covered by NAR's settlement are: At World Properties, LLC; Douglas Elliman, Inc.; Douglas Elliman Realty, LLC; eXp Realty, LLC; eXp World Holdings, Inc.; Hanna Holdings, Inc.; HomeSmart International, LLC; Howard Hanna Real Estate Services; Realty ONE Group, Inc.; Redfin Corporation; United Real Estate; and Weichert, REALTORS®.*

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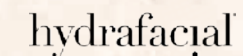
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