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Rob Yontz ★★★★★
Admittedly I am a VERY difficult person to impress. My background is in Reliability Engineering and the Military, so I don't operate in the world of being very good at your job, being highly professional in your actions, being on time, and meeting high quality standards is a reason for kudos - its simply MEETING expectations. Bentley hit it out of the park. I am (way) out of state and the attention to detail, the thoroughness of the report and its details, and the timeliness to deliver it is impressive. Bravo Zulu Bentley.

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DAN

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PASTOR

**Weichert, REALTORS—
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LIVING THE AMERICAN DREAM

Dan Pastor's path to real estate success was anything but conventional. Born in Romania, he came to the United States in 2000 as an exchange student, lured by the promise of the "American dream." He found a wife here, but little did he know that his decision to stay in the U.S. would eventually lead him to a thriving career in the fast-paced world of real estate at Weichert, REALTORS—Advantage Plus.

Dan began his career in the corporate world, where he spent several years working in finance. When his employer, GE, decided to close their Knoxville office and move operations to Ohio, however, he found himself at a crossroads. He had always had an interest in real estate, but he wasn't sure... In the end, he took the severance pay and decided to give real estate a trial run. The transition was not without its challenges, though. "The biggest struggle was, of course, the accent and the language barrier," he explained. "And, I was not a salesperson."

Overcoming this hurdle required Dan to develop a new skill set. "I learned to talk to people and help them see the value I can bring as an agent," he said. "I'm not necessarily the most talkative, but I can bring support in different ways. You have to make a connection, but then you have to follow up with reports and show properties and stay in touch. You have to do things behind the scenes to get the deal closed. It takes both aspects to be successful in real estate." Fortunately, Dan had plenty of support when he was starting out. "It helped that I have a fairly large community of friends and family who helped kick start my real estate



Location: Bradens Furniture

“MY BROKERAGE HAS VERY GOOD MENTORS AND CLASSES THAT HELP NEW AGENTS.”

career," he remarked. "Also, my brokerage has very good mentors and very good classes that help new agents. There's my broker, Jeff Grebe, and then I had a really good mentor, John Sadler (retired now), and they helped me have a very good foundation and helped me grow my business from there."

With a strong support system and a willingness to learn, Dan began to thrive in his new career. One of the keys to his success, he believes, is his analytical mindset. "I think I'm pretty good at doing reports and data, the MLS, using computers and software, and analyzing properties and comparables," he said.

One of the key lessons Dan has learned is the importance of not putting too much stock in a first impression. "I would say not to judge a person by the first appearance or the first few seconds,"



“
THE BIGGEST STRUGGLE WAS, OF COURSE, THE ACCENT AND THE LANGUAGE BARRIER. ALSO, I WAS NOT A SALESPERSON; HOWEVER, I LOVE TO CONNECT WITH OTHERS, RUN ANALYTICS AND SHARE REPORTS.
 ”

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he explained. “Because when you deal with real estate and clients, you may meet somebody in town, and you cannot make your opinion when you first meet them. You might be sitting in Market Square enjoying your evening and some random person you meet turns out to be a multi-millionaire who wants to sell their house.”

Dan’s new openness and willingness to connect with people from all walks of life has undoubtedly contributed to his success. As he reflects on his journey, he’s grateful for all the opportunities that have come his way. In the future, he would like to learn more about the building aspect of the industry, perhaps getting a builder’s license and venturing into new construction.

Also on his bucket list are deep sea fishing and skydiving. By the time you read this, he will most likely have checked deep sea fishing off his list. As for skydiving—it’s all a matter of whether he can overcome his apprehension and actually go do it!

Dan is most proud of his son, who will turn 17 in November. “He’s doing really good in school,” Dan reported. “He’s in sports, and he’s on the STEM engineering path—he’s not looking to follow my foot-steps into real estate.” (laughing)

When he’s not working, Dan enjoys listening to Christian music—and country music, since living in East Tennessee. He enjoys reading, and he recently began *The Psychology of Money* by Morgan Housel. He often drives to a park to sit by the water to read and relax (with his phone put away). He also enjoys getting together with friends from church a couple times a week. “We play soccer and other sports, or we meet at the church and play table tennis in the gym there. It’s good to stay active and also to fellowship with friends.”

For Dan and his family, it definitely sounds like the American dream became reality!

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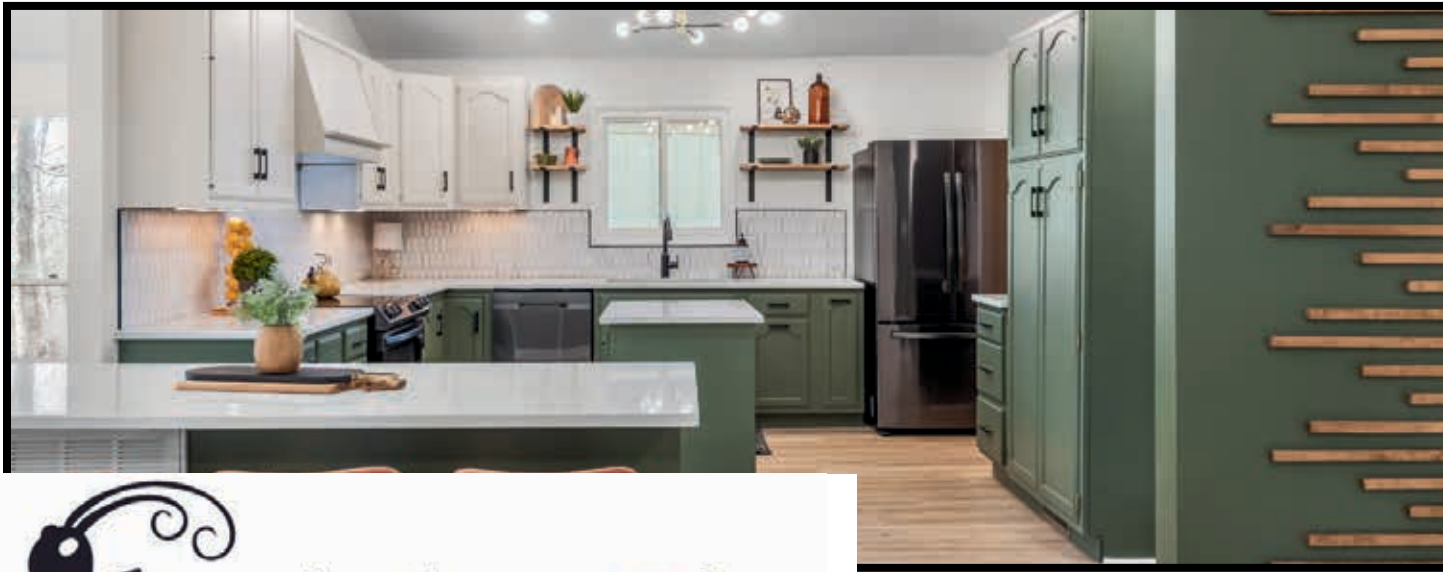
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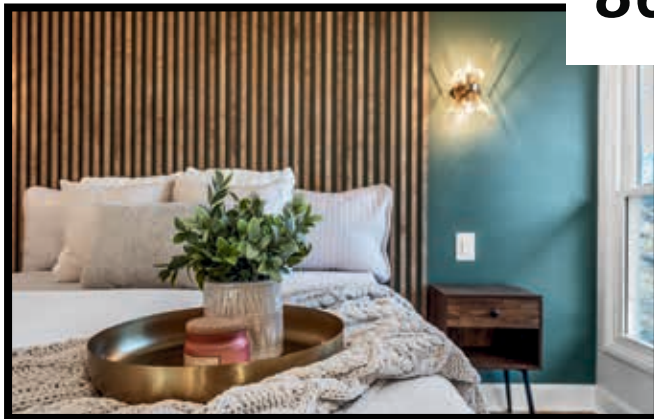
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Big Orange Country Real Producers premiered in the East Tennessee real estate market in May 2021, and several of our current Preferred Partners have been with us since our inception! This is our 41st issue, and we'd like to take a moment to recognize and thank these Partners for their longstanding support.



**Bentley Home Inspections—
Susan and Donnie Bentley**

Susan and Donnie like to say they're in the "take care of people" business. "Since I started the business in 1997, my mantra has always been 'One call does it all,'" Donnie said. With the goal of taking care of everybody, including REALTORS, they inspect to the "Bentley Benchmark." They offer *all* the services, including termite inspection and radon testing, and they pride themselves on detailed reports that are easy to read. "We have everything we need in house for all services and transactions," Donnie explained, "plus, we've got Susan!"



**Choice Home Warranty—
Maryann Azambuja**

Covering the East Tennessee market as well as Southwest Virginia and North Georgia, Maryann enjoys assisting REALTORS and homeowners in protecting their biggest investment—their home! After more than 20 years in the business, she has certainly earned her reputation as "warranty diva." But, truly, it's so much more than that. "I'm not just selling home warranties," she explained. "I'm representing the industry and providing education. It's more like being a REALTOR cheerleader. I want to do everything I can to make sure my agents are empowered for success."



**CricketPix Real Estate
Photography—Cricket Pratt**

A multitasking businesswoman, Cricket has a passion for capturing beauty and spreading kindness. With CricketPix Real Estate Photography, she wears many hats, from skilled photographer to licensed drone pilot, offering services like virtual tours and 3D virtual tours. Another unique service is virtual staging—digitally furnishing an empty room or house, or removing existing furniture and décor and adding something new and different. Through her lens, both figuratively and literally, she is set on capturing the essence of love and the beauty that surrounds us in East Tennessee.



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**InspectTN Home Inspection—
Trey Newman**

With an entrepreneurial spirit, Trey founded InspectTN with a desire to start something fresh. He wants to be known for his calmness, his honesty, and his sense of humor. "I was always told to look at successful people and do what they do," he said, "so that's how I've molded my business. This has truly become my dream job. I love being able to give someone buying a house the peace of mind of knowing that the biggest investment they're ever likely to make is a good one."



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**Melrose Title Company—
LuAnn Hileman Crass and
Erica L. McClure**

Attorneys LuAnn (President) and Erica (Vice President of Commercial) have a partnership that works well for both of them. Erica runs the Knoxville office while LuAnn runs the Roane County office in Harriman. For REALTORS, Erica advised “the sooner, the better” when it comes to working with a title company, as issues can arise at any time. “We’re happy to help with any questions about legal issues or any nuances or quirks, whether or not we get the file,” she said. “We want to make Melrose a well-known, mainstream resource throughout East Tennessee.”



Mortgage Investors Group—J.R. Huber

MIG still maintains its original mission statement—Doing the right thing for the customer and their team members—and J.R. lives that out in the everyday decisions he makes throughout the company. “We work hard to have ‘customers for life,’” he explained. He wants to be known as someone who helps others achieve their goals, whether it be clients, friends, or family. In the next few years, he sees the mortgage business evolving significantly toward virtual and electronic transactions, with REALTORS and lenders serving as trusted advisors to guide clients along the way.



Moving Time LLC—John & Krystal Moulden

John and Krystal love what they do—and there isn’t anything else in the world they’d rather be doing. They provide small, partial, in-home and complete moves, in addition to lesser known services such as hot tub moves, single item moves, donation removal, and labor only—and they offer notary service. “There isn’t much we don’t offer,” Krystal said. “If you need it done, our guys will take care of it. We want people to remember the great service they received, the careful nature of our company and how respectful our movers are.”



**On the Spot Carpet Cleaning—
Dean Peal**

For Dean, being honest and ethical is the most important thing about running his business. He wants to be known for his quality work and for treating his customers the way they should be treated. “Every house I enter, I look at it as going into my own house, whether it’s a small job or a big job,” he said. For carpet cleaning, Dean uses a hot-water extraction (HWE) process that is environmentally safe and highly effective. In addition, he uses only bio-safe and eco-friendly cleaning products, so the process is healthy and allergy friendly.

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Regions Mortgage—Janette Burgin

Serving in the mortgage industry since 2000, Janette takes a wholistic view of each client's financial situation. She works toward their long-term goals, using their home as a wealth-building tool. Her goal is to make a meaningful difference in people's lives by improving their financial situation and helping them achieve their financial goals. Originally a social worker for children, she is a huge believer in giving back to the community. A volunteer leader with Childhelp and CareCuts, she was the first affiliate to win the Association Good Neighbor Award in 2022.



ROOKIE OF THE YEAR



About Joel Reyes

Joel is originally from Bowie, Maryland, but moved to Knoxville with his family to enjoy Tennessee's many benefits and is proud to call it home. He served 6 years as an F-18 electrician in the US Marine Corps, where he learned leadership, teamwork, mission dedication, and perseverance, which he now applies to his real estate career. Honorably discharged in 2004, Joel earned a bachelor's degree in Media Communications from Asbury College and later started a technical consulting business, bringing over 12 years of experience in negotiating contracts, marketing, and customer care. He is married to Katie, with whom he has three children and a dog, and enjoys reading, camping, outdoor cooking, and attending his kids' sports events.
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THE BAILEY GROUP

L to R back row: Jimmie Lynn, Evan, Jennifer (and Jessica not pictured).

CARING FOR PEOPLE & MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Not many people can say they've ridden an elephant down Gay Street in Knoxville...but that's exactly what Laura Bailey—then co-owner of a community newspaper group—did in the late 1970s when the circus came to town. Always an adventurous and entrepreneurial woman, Laura couldn't have dreamed then where life would ultimately take her.

Over the past four decades, Laura and her husband, Larry, have become legends in the East Tennessee real estate scene, and their journey together is a testament to hard work, adaptability, and a genuine passion for serving others.

The two met in church and became friends through a group Bible study. One day Larry asked Laura and her two children to go fly kites with him, and that afternoon he began to realize he might want more than friendship. They later married and added a third child to the family: their son Justin, also a well-known icon in Knoxville real estate.

Laura is a true inspiration and role model to many women REALTORS, as she became one of the first women in the industry when she earned her real estate license in 1983. "Larry and I had been struggling financially," she recalled, "and one day my father came to me and said he thought I'd be great in real estate, so I went for it. When I started, there were no fax machines, and we didn't even have a computer in our office. If you wrote a contract for somebody, you hand-delivered it to the other agent. The MLS was a huge book that came out every other week, and your job was pretty much to memorize that book. If someone called or walked into your office, you had to know what to tell them was out there."

Larry's foray into the business came later, after a successful career in sales that kept him on the road. He remembers one pivotal moment when everything changed. "I was traveling to Memphis," he recounted, "and it wasn't an audible voice, but it was almost like the Lord flipped me on the head and said, 'You need to go home and be with your family.' I loved my job, but I knew I needed to get off the road. So I stopped at a pay phone to call Laura—and then I called my boss and resigned."



“
YOU HAVE TO HAVE A GREAT
WORK ETHIC TO BE SUCCESSFUL.
—LAURA
”



“**WHOEVER COMES INTO OUR LIFE EACH DAY IS WHO GOD SENT TO US TO HELP.**”
—LARRY

A dedication to hard work has been a constant for both Laura and Larry throughout their careers. “Real estate is not easy,” Laura stressed, “and if people get into it thinking it’s easy, they’re in the wrong business. It’s a lot of hours, and it’s a lot of mental anguish at times. You have to have a great work ethic to be successful.”

A fourth-generation Powell resident, Laura remembers always seeing her family work hard. “My dad worked two jobs when I was growing up, and my mom worked, too,” she said. “All I ever saw acted out in front of me was hard work.”

But to the Baileys, success isn’t just about working hard—it’s also about building relationships and serving their community. “It’s amazing how real estate has become a portal into people’s lives,” Larry remarked. “They kind of just open up and tell you everything if they know you care about their whole story.”

This people-centered approach is at the heart of the Baileys’ business philosophy. “Justin started the ‘people over profit’ campaign when he was at our office,” Laura mentioned, “and it’s true...we really

are about people over profit, and I think agents who get into this business only for the paycheck are in it for the wrong reasons. That’s not what it’s about.”

Over the years, the Baileys have adapted to many changes in the industry. The biggest change—technology—has completely transformed how real estate is conducted, but Laura sees both benefits and drawbacks. “The good thing with technology is that everything’s at your fingertips,” she pointed out. “You don’t have to travel around to see what’s on the market; you can just go to your computer.”

The reliance on technology, however, can sometimes come at the expense of personal interaction, which is crucial in the real estate business. “Younger agents will often send a text or email rather than make a phone call,” Larry described, “but a phone call—or even a visit—can make things so much simpler and easier to understand.”

Despite the challenges and changes, the Baileys still find fulfillment in their work. “We’ve been blessed by being in this business,” Laura shared. “We’ve met so many people we would never have met otherwise.”

“We’ve always had the attitude that whoever comes into our life each day is who God sent to us to help,” Larry explained. “We both believe that.”

It’s this belief that drives Laura and Larry to approach each client’s situation with empathy and care. As Laura put it: “Maybe their parents have passed away and they have to sell the family home—we can both relate to that—or maybe there was a divorce or the loss of a child. You just have to have compassion for people, and they have to know how much you care about your job and about helping them.”

The Baileys’ impact extends to their team as well, and they speak warmly of their staff. “We’ve been fortunate and blessed to have God send good people our way,” Larry noted. “Jennifer, Evan, Jessica, Jimmie Lynn...we couldn’t ask for any four better people to be in our lives.”

“People often ask me why I’m not retired at my age,” Laura admitted, “but why would I give up something I love for something I don’t know if I’m even going to like?”

In response, Larry joked, “I told her a while back I’m gonna put on her tombstone: ‘Everything, all the time, and just a little bit more.’”

As they look to the future, the Baileys remain committed to their values and their community. “I think we’re all put here to make a difference,” Laura reflected, “and I want to be remembered for making a difference for the better—that’s truly my heart.”

Larry echoed the sentiment: “I want to be remembered for investing in people relationally, caring for people, and being a good steward of whatever I have to offer.”

The story of Laura and Larry Bailey is more than just a tale of business success. It’s one of partnership, perseverance, and a deep-rooted commitment to serving others. Through the decades of their marriage and their experiences in real estate, they’ve maintained their focus on what truly matters—the people they serve and the community they call home.

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