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Publisher's Note

As the year comes to a close, I can't help but smile looking back on how far we've come together. What began as an idea just one year ago has blossomed into a thriving community of top agents, trusted partners, and genuine friendships — all built around the mission of Real Producers: connecting, inspiring, and celebrating the best of the best in North Alabama real estate.

November's Boots & Boogie celebration at Hays Farm was truly a night to remember! From the music and laughter to the incredible energy in the room, it was everything I had envisioned and more. Thank you to everyone who showed up ready to celebrate, dance, and toast to what we've built together.

Our very first Real Producers event was a resounding success — and it set the tone for an exciting year ahead.

This month, I'm also thrilled to welcome two new vendor partners to our growing Real Producers family:

- **Katherine Frisby with Victorian Finance, whose team brings exceptional service and care to every client they serve.**
- **Mike Hammock of Hammock Homes, a trusted home inspector known for his professionalism, precision, and dedication.**

Both of these partners embody the spirit of Real Producers — excellence, integrity, and relationship-driven business — and I'm so excited to see the connections they'll build within our community.

As we head into the holiday season, I want to personally thank each of you for your support, enthusiasm, and belief in this mission. This year has been proof that when great people come together, incredible things happen.

Wishing you all a joyful December filled with peace, laughter, and time with those you love. Here's to an amazing 2026 ahead — and to continuing to build something truly special, together.

Warmly,
Deanna Eliashevsky
Publisher & Owner
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Laura Rogers

BY DEANNA ELIASHEVSKY

CONFIDENCE, CRAFT, AND COMMUNITY AT HAYS FARM HOMES

If you spend even five minutes with Laura Rogers, you'll sense it — that mix of calm assurance and genuine warmth that makes people instantly comfortable. It's the same quiet confidence that's guided her through nearly three decades in real estate and made her a trusted name in new-home construction across North Alabama.

"I've never been one to sit still for long," Laura says with a grin. "Every day in this business brings something new — a person to learn from, a challenge to solve, or a home that becomes someone's dream come true."

Finding Her Fit

Laura entered real estate early — barely twenty — in Colorado, where she was taken under the wing of a seasoned broker who saw potential in her drive and professionalism. "She was ready to slow down and wanted someone she could trust with her clients," Laura recalls. "She taught me how to truly care for people, not just transactions. That mentorship shaped everything that came after."

By 2005, Laura had returned home to Atlanta, Georgia, where she joined a builder and found what would become her lifelong specialty — new construction. "From that first day on a job site, I knew I'd found my lane," she says. "Watching an empty lot turn into a family's home never gets old."



There's beauty in the process — in every blueprint, every beam, every detail."

Rooted in Legacy

Today, Laura leads sales for Hays Farm Homes in Huntsville — a master-planned community unlike anything else in the region. The land itself has a story: it's been in the Hays family for generations, and now their vision is unfolding through careful planning, craftsmanship, and connection to the past.

"To help bring that vision to life is incredibly special," Laura says. "This isn't just a development — it's a legacy. It's land where the Hays family grew up, where they raised their kids, and now it's becoming a place where new families will do the same."

Her passion for the project shines through. Last year alone, Laura closed more than \$21 million in sales, but she's quick to credit her small, tight-knit team. "We all wear a lot of hats," she says. "Everyone supports each other, and that makes every win feel shared."

Grace and Grit

Those who know Laura will tell you she's both steady and strong — qualities that were tested in new ways when she faced a breast cancer diagnosis.

"I've always believed that happiness is something you create," she says softly. "That belief carried me through treatment and recovery."





It reminded me to keep choosing joy — even on hard days.”

Now cancer-free, Laura has turned that experience into advocacy. She recently organized her first local fundraiser for breast cancer education and survivor support, held on October 11, and plans to make it an annual event. “If my story inspires even one woman to schedule her mammogram, it’s worth it,” she says.

A Life Well-Built

When she’s not walking home sites or meeting with clients, Laura is happiest outdoors with her husband,

Chris, a construction management professional, and their three children — CJ, a mechanical engineering student at Auburn University, and twin daughters, both in high school.

“We’re a lake family,” she laughs. “Boating, camping, hiking, hunting, trail riding — anything outside. It’s where we reconnect.”

Her family, she says, is the heart of her motivation. “Chris has always been my biggest supporter. He’s the one who reminds me I can do anything I set my mind to. And I want my kids

to see that — to know they can build a life around what brings them joy.”

The Hallmarks of a Professional

Ask Laura what makes her different, and she’ll tell you it’s her hands-on approach. “I’m involved in every part of the process,” she says. “From the first conversation with a buyer to the last walk-through, I want everyone to feel seen, supported, and confident.”

Her background in construction gives her a distinct advantage, bridging the gap between builders and buyers with ease. “It’s about communication,” she says. “Understanding the process helps me guide clients through it — and that builds trust.”

That trust has fueled nearly three decades of success, and her advice for rising agents reflects that experience: never stop learning, and never lose sight of why you started.

“This career rewards curiosity and consistency,” Laura says. “If you love people and you’re willing to work hard, real estate can give you a life you’re proud of.”

Looking Ahead

With twenty-eight years behind her, Laura still approaches each day with fresh excitement. “I want to keep growing,” she says. “I’m proud of what we’ve built at Hays Farm, and I’m honored to be part of something that will shape Huntsville for generations.”

Confidence, compassion, and craftsmanship — those are the pillars of Laura Rogers’s success. Whether she’s guiding a first-time buyer, mentoring an agent, or championing a cause close to her heart, she continues to build what matters most: connection, community, and legacy.

Connect with Laura Rogers

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Holly McDonald

BY ASHLEY
STREIGHT

Homes, Heart,
and a Little Bit of
“Roll Tide”

Her results speak volumes: in 2024 alone, she closed \$18 million in sales, ranking #3 in Alabama for Keller Williams and #2 for the City of Madison by Real Trends. She's been in the Top 1% of Madison City & Huntsville Area real estate agents for years, and in true Holly fashion, she is still chasing to maintain that top 1% by providing excellent service to her clients.

“I love people,” she says with a smile in her voice. “Like my Pop Pop would say: I love meeting new faces, seeing where they live—or finding something they’d love to live in—and helping them close one chapter and open another. That’s an absolute honor for me.”

Holly was born and raised in Birmingham, Alabama, in a family filled with hard workers and strong women. “My mom went to college when I was in first grade and graduated from UAB nursing school when I was in fourth,” Holly recalls. “She taught me I can do hard things—even if I’m a woman.”

Her grandmother, affectionately known as Mama Diddie, helped raise her and taught her the verse Holly still lives by: ‘I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.’ That faith, she says, has carried her through every challenge, from personal loss to career hurdles.

But her most treasured influence was her beloved Pop Pop, a WWII veteran who lived to be 105 and became somewhat of a local celebrity in Huntsville. “He went to Normandy at 103 and fought off COVID at 104,” Holly says, her voice softening. “He even got to see his great-granddaughter cheer for

When you meet Holly McDonald, you get the feeling she could sell you a house, a vision, and a dose of inspiration all in one breath. The Keller Williams Madison Broker Associate, who has notched an astounding \$260 million in career sales across more than 760 transactions, laughs easily, loves deeply, and talks fast—just like someone who’s been chasing goals and closing deals for 21 years straight.

But make no mistake—real estate wasn’t just a career for Holly. It was a calling.

“I completed real estate school, took my exam, and was licensed in October of 2004 all within a six

week period,” she says proudly. “My oldest was 14 months old. I had told myself I wanted to be licensed by 30—and that’s exactly what I did.”

Before real estate, Holly was in outside sales for Nextel Communications, a career she credits for honing her gift of communication—a skill she calls one of her strongest assets. “It’s not always pretty and I don’t always have the best news to convey,” she says. “But communication is needed to get to the finish line and get the job done.”

That clear, confident voice has guided hundreds of clients through the highs and lows of buying and selling homes in the Madison and Huntsville areas.

HER FAVORITE PART OF REAL ESTATE? “Getting the all-access pass into people’s lives. Helping them find their nest—the place where they’ll laugh, cry, celebrate, and rest. Oh, and making that call to say: **“CONGRATULATIONS! YOU GOT THE HOUSE!”**



Alabama before he passed. He taught me that your word and your character are everything. That's how I try to live."

Pop Pop passed away just shy of his 106th birthday, but not before leaving a legacy that rippled far beyond family. At his 105th birthday celebration, people came from all over the community—and even around the world—to honor him. During that unforgettable gathering, he was knighted by the French Consulate for his service in France during the war. "That moment was incredible," Holly says. "It was like the entire community came together to celebrate not just his years, but his impact. He lived with purpose every single day."

Ask Holly what she really does, and she'll tell you with a laugh, "I'm not only a home finder, contract writer, and negotiator—I'm also a counselor."

She's been known to cry with clients, have tough conversations, and tell people the hard truths no one else will. "I read between the lines," she says. "Sometimes those talks lead to tears and hugs. But most of the time, they end with happy closings—and that's the best feeling."

Her favorite part of real estate? "Getting the all-access pass into people's lives," she says. "Helping them find their nest—the place where they'll laugh, cry, celebrate, and rest. Oh, and making that call to say, 'CONGRATULATIONS! YOU GOT THE HOUSE!' Holly says relaying that to client's never gets old.

Holly has been married to her husband, Dell, for 24 years, and family life is the heartbeat of everything she does. They share daughters Sydney (a senior at the University of Alabama and cheerleader for the Crimson Tide) and Riley (a senior in high school and competition theatre performer), plus Holly's bonus daughter Courtney, son-in-law Jason, and granddaughter Kyle Rae.



"I love meeting new faces, seeing where they live—or finding something they'd love to live in—and helping them close one chapter and open another. That's an absolute honor for me."



"We've discovered we love cruises!" she laughs. "We're all going on a big European cruise in 2026 to celebrate our two seniors. Italy, Greece, Turkey—it's going to be amazing!"

Between Alabama football games, lake weekends at Smith Lake, and church youth ministry on Wednesday nights, Holly's family calendar is as full as her heart. "Raising our girls and being their momma has been the absolute highlight of my life," she says.

When it comes to her success, Holly stays humble—and real. "I'm a business coach's worst nightmare," she jokes. "Letting go so I can grow a team has been hard for me. I like to be hands-on. I even get anxious when I go on vacation!"

But that may soon change as she looks to expand Holly McDonald & Co.—possibly with the help of her daughter, who's graduating in public relations. "She's grown up around real estate, so I'm excited to collaborate with her," Holly says.

Her advice for new agents is simple but powerful: "Learn to communicate. Don't tell clients what they want to hear—tell them what they need to hear. Educate them. Talk them off the ledge. Be honest, even when it's hard." And above all, she reminds fellow agents to be kind. "Clients come and go," she says. "But you'll cross paths with the same agents again and again. Guard those relationships. We're all in this together."

As for what she hopes to be remembered for? Holly doesn't hesitate. "For being a lover of Christ, a present mom and wife, and for doing what's right—even when it wasn't easy," she says. "For helping people and standing behind my word."

That sounds exactly like the woman her Pop Pop raised her to be.

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A LEGACY OF
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BY DEANNA ELIASHEVSKY •
PHOTOS BY MARIA MOORE
PHOTOGRAPHY



When you've been around real estate your whole life, it becomes more than a career — it becomes part of who you are. For Rebecca Lowrey

Stephens, Realtor® and Team Lead of The Rebecca Lowrey Group at RE/MAX Distinctive, real estate is in her DNA. It's the through-line connecting her childhood in Huntsville to a \$300 million career

built on faith, family, and an unwavering commitment to helping others find home. "I grew up answering phones in my parents' real estate office," Rebecca says with

a smile. "My mom's been licensed since 1988 and now serves as our managing broker, and my dad built homes and sold real estate, too. From the time I could hold a pen, I was watching



“

I love the stories behind every home — the families expanding, downsizing, relocating,

STARTING OVER.

Real estate is never just a financial decision; it's a personal one.”



deals come together and learning what it meant to serve people well.”

That early exposure sparked what would become a lifelong calling. After earning her degree in finance with a real-estate concentration from The University of Alabama, Rebecca launched her career full-time in 1999 — and she hasn’t slowed down since. Over 25 years later, she’s closed more than 1,000 homes and surpassed \$300 million in career volume, leading one of North Alabama’s most respected teams.

For Rebecca, success has never been about the numbers — though the numbers are impressive. In 2024 alone, her team closed \$60.9 million across 132 transactions, with another \$16.5 million under contract heading into 2025. They’ve been recognized as the #1 RE/MAX Small Team in Alabama, Huntsville city ranked #1 Small Team in Huntsville and #2 statewide by RealTrends Verified, and consistently placed among the Top 10 teams in the state for seven years running.

But the real reward, she says, comes from serving people.

“I love the stories behind every home — the families expanding, downsizing, relocating, starting over. Real estate is never just a financial decision; it's a personal one,” she explains. “My goal is to guide each

client with compassion, professionalism, and a deep understanding of what really matters to them.”

Her team embodies that same philosophy. Made up entirely of hard-working women with real-estate experience, the Rebecca Lowrey Group includes seven agents, four full-time operations professionals, and a part-time assistant — all united by a culture of collaboration and care.

“Team members who feel supported can better support their clients,” Rebecca says. “We treat everyone like people, not transactions. It’s about relationships that last long after the closing table.”

Inside her office, leadership isn’t about hierarchy — it’s about heart. Rebecca leads with empathy and excellence, mentoring her team to think bigger, serve better, and stay grounded.

“She has built her reputation on a deeply personal and highly strategic approach to real estate,” says Riley Bridges, the team’s transaction coordinator. “What truly sets Rebecca apart is her calm, guided presence. Clients feel cared for and confident every step of the way.”

Marketing Coordinator Leslie Knox adds, “Rebecca isn’t just building a business — she’s building people. She sees potential in others before they see it in themselves. Her combination of heart

and high standards is what makes our team strong.”

It’s no surprise, then, that Rebecca’s leadership has created not only one of Huntsville’s top-producing teams but also one of its most admired. Her favorite quote — ‘Are you interested, or are you committed?’ — is more than a mantra; it’s how she lives and leads.

Away from contracts and closings, Rebecca’s greatest joy is her family. She and her husband, Morgan, have been married 22 years and are proud parents to Kate, Joe, and Jack, along with their dog, Luke. Whether it’s cheering from the stands at volleyball and football games or simply enjoying time together, Rebecca treasures the everyday moments most.

“Real estate is such a big part of my life, but family is the heart of it,” she says. “Everything I do is for them.”

That same heart extends to her community. The Rebecca Lowrey Group actively supports organizations such as the National Children’s Advocacy Center, Huntsville Pregnancy Resource Center,

the Children’s Miracle Network, local schools and sports programs, and most recently, NextOp Veterans. “Giving back is our way of saying thank you,” Rebecca says. “We’ve been blessed, and we want to help make Huntsville an even better place to call home.”

After more than two decades, Rebecca still wakes up each day excited to go to work. Her faith keeps her grounded; her passion keeps her moving.

“I want to be remembered as someone who cared deeply — for my family, my clients, my team, and my community,” she says. “My faith guides everything I do. Success, to me, means serving people well and making them feel valued.”

With every home sold and every dream realized, Rebecca Lowrey Stephens continues to prove that integrity and heart are timeless foundations for success — and that the legacy she’s building is one measured not just in numbers, but in lives touched.

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MEET CRAIG PAULUS OF
FOUNDATION TITLE & ESCROW LLC



A FRESH PERSPECTIVE

BY DEANNA ELIASHEVSKY
& ASHLEY STREIGHT

When it comes to homeownership milestones—signing on the dotted line, holding the keys, and taking that deep breath of “we did it”—Craig Paulus knows better than most that those moments deserve precision, protection, and a personal touch. As the State President for Alabama at Foundation Title & Escrow Series LLC, Paulus brings a rare mix of legal expertise, community connection, and down-to-earth warmth to every deal.

“Most of our clients are making the biggest investment of their lives,” Paulus said. “That’s not about gimmicks or cutting-edge tech; it’s about our clients. We don’t just close transactions—we protect our neighbors.”

Founded in 2008 in Middle Tennessee, Foundation Title & Escrow (FTE) has become one of the largest privately held title agencies in the country, growing to 21 offices across nine states. The company has completed more than 100,000 closings and has been recognized as the #1 Top Agent in the South Atlantic by First American Title Insurance Company. It’s also earned American Land Title Association (ALTA) Best Practices certification, underscoring its reputation for integrity and excellence.

“Paulus joined FTE after merging his own company, Paulus Title LLC, into the



organization in 2020—a move that blended his decades of legal experience with FTE’s growing regional influence. “Because I remain a lawyer with a separate law firm, we can provide a high level of service for our clients, especially in the commercial space,” he explained. “I also have affiliate companies that provide title research and qualified intermediary services.”

From residential and commercial closings to 1031 exchanges, title insurance, and fraud prevention technology, the FTE team

handles it all. But Paulus is quick to emphasize that it’s people—not platforms—that define their success.

“It’s our amazing people,” he said with a smile. “It starts with a real person answering the phone and continues with an escrow officer who takes charge from start to finish. Great service comes from great people.”

That human-first philosophy sets the tone for a company that values connection as much as convenience. Still, technology plays a major supporting role. Foundation Title uses biometric and

knowledge-based identity verification, remote online notarization, and secure portals to keep transactions safe from fraud—tools that are increasingly crucial in today’s fast-changing real estate landscape.

To make life even easier for real estate agents, the company developed the Foundation Title App ONE, a free, powerful tool that Paulus calls a “game-changer.” “It’s the #1 real estate net sheet and closing costs app,” he said proudly. “It has 24 calculators—from seller net sheets to rent-vs-buy comparisons—and

it's packed with local property tax data. Tom Ferry even called it 'Real Estate's Secret Weapon.'

Top-producing real estate agents also have the chance to partner with FTE through strategic, title-only joint ventures. "These partnerships create new revenue streams while maintaining full regulatory integrity," Paulus explained. "It's an incredible opportunity for agents, builders, and investors who want to grow while staying compliant."

Beyond the tech and titles, Paulus's heart for helping others drives everything he does. "I love helping people and meeting my neighbors," he said. "My mom used to say life comes in chapters. I'd add that most of those chapters are defined by homes—where you grew up, where you raised your kids, where you brought your first baby home. It's a privilege to get a glimpse of that and be part of those transitions."

After more than two decades in law and real estate, Paulus has seen the industry shift through major events—



from 9/11 and the Great Recession to Dodd-Frank and COVID-19. "I've seen a lot," he said. "I did what I'm told was Alabama's first electronic signature real estate closing in 2008. That was cutting edge back then, and I loved being ahead."

But his perspective has evolved. "I don't chase the newest innovation anymore," he added. "Once-in-a-lifetime things happen all the time. I've learned that relationships, not gimmicks, drive success."

Outside of the office, Paulus's story sounds like it could be straight out of a rom-com. He met his wife, Lisa, on a cruise ship just after high school. "We had our first date in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico—it was magic," he recalled. Years later, fate (and a handwritten note) brought them back together. "Thirty years, six houses, four kids, and several Labrador retrievers later, I'm the luckiest and happiest person I know."

Their family now includes three sons—one in grad school, one in college, and one a high school senior—and a daughter they adopted when she was two. "She's just

a miracle," Paulus said. "It's like she was always one of us from the moment we met."

When he's not helping clients or leading his team, Paulus loves to travel and snowboard. "It's important to unplug and see new places," he said. "I love to play, too." As for what success means to him, Paulus keeps it simple: "Success is to take great care of the people around me. My calling is to be a Christ-follower, a loving husband, and a good dad. I don't need anything more than that."

And while he doesn't dwell on how he'll be remembered, his impact is already clear. Under his leadership, Foundation Title continues to expand its reach while supporting community heroes through partnerships



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For over two decades, Courtesy First Home Lenders has been a proud neighbor in North Alabama – helping families in Athens, Madison, Huntsville, and Florence unlock the doors to their new homes.

Our team offers a wide range of quality mortgage products backed by guidance you can trust. We know the community because we're part of it, and we handle every loan with the care and courtesy you'd expect from a friend.

Keith Balch
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Smooth Closings. Trusted Results
WELCOMING YOUR CLIENTS HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS.



The logo for Alabama Closing and Title. It features a large, stylized blue letter 'A' with a sprig of green holly with red berries to its left. Below the 'A', the word 'ALABAMA' is written in a large, bold, blue sans-serif font. Underneath 'ALABAMA', the words 'CLOSING AND TITLE' are written in a smaller, gray sans-serif font. At the bottom of the logo, there is a blue horizontal bar containing the text 'Jami Blanton' in white, followed by 'Attorney/Title Agent' in a smaller white font. To the right of this text is another sprig of green holly with red berries.

Office: (256) 217-9145

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