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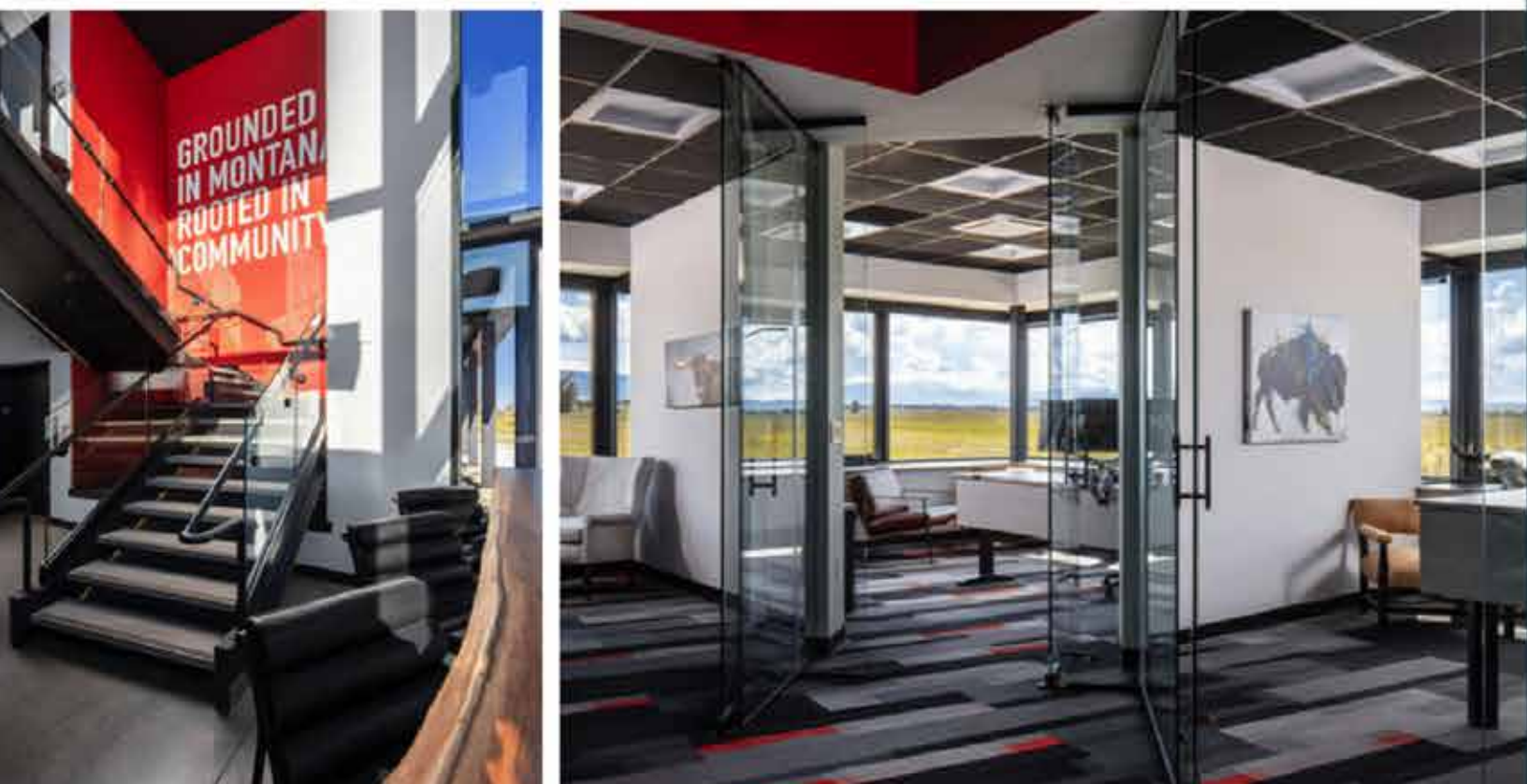


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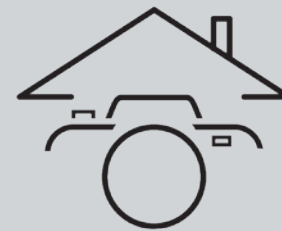
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# Stepping into 2025



**E**very new year, I enthusiastically declare: “This is going to be my best year yet!” And you know what? I genuinely believe it every single time. Yet, I often fall short of my well-intentioned resolutions.

Sound familiar?

As we stand on the cusp of a new year, I’m guessing many of us feel that same surge of optimism. We boldly claim our future successes and vow to leave the mistakes of the past behind. It’s a shared desire—to do better, be better, and achieve more. But here’s the real question: do we have a workable plan in place to make it happen?

For *Montana Real Producers*, stepping into 2025 marks the beginning of our first full year in business. Reflecting on 2024, I can confidently say it’s been a year of explosive growth and growing pains. I’ve learned plenty of lessons—some the hard way. I’ve learned exactly what NOT to do, but I’ve also gained clarity on what’s truly worth celebrating.

And that brings me to you.

Yes, YOU are the heart and soul of what makes this magazine so special. As one of the top 10% of real estate agents in Montana, you are part of an exceptional community of professionals in your industry. Through your support—whether by attending events, sharing your stories, or nominating your trusted business partners and fellow REALTORS—you’ve helped elevate not only this community but each other as well.

I’m excited to share more of your incredible journeys in 2025 and to continue to connect you in new ways! Here are a few save the dates for our upcoming in person events:

**Tues, Feb 4th @ City Vineyard, Bozeman**

**Wednesday April 9th @ Tres Bonne, Missoula**

**Thursday April 10th @ Whitefish Lake Restaurant, Whitefish**

Here’s to turning resolutions into results-- together!

With immense gratitude,

**Rachelle Schmid**

Owner/Publisher

(253) 232-8243

rachelle.schmid@realproducersmag.com

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# Alden Antonucci

Xtreme Restoration & Construction



## The One-Stop Restoration Shop

BY ZACHARY COHEN | PHOTOS BY ARNICA SPRING PHOTOGRAPHY

**W**hen disaster strikes and leaves homes or businesses in shambles, it can feel like everything has been turned upside down. That's where Xtreme Restoration & Construction steps in; their team is prepared to help get you back on your feet. Whether you're dealing with water damage, mold issues, fire damage, ice dams, or in need of trenching, the Xtreme Restoration & Construction team has your back.

"Our motto is that we are a one-stop-shop," Owner Alden Antonucci shares. "And, of course, we are quality-driven. Our response time is amazing. Why I do

what I do is because I enjoy the service and labor industry and helping other people. We get a call with a problem, and we are the solution."

### The Entrepreneurial Spirit

Xtreme Restoration & Construction isn't the first business Alden founded. His first business venture came shortly after returning from a mission in Brazil in his early 20s. First, he founded a mattress store. Then, he turned his attention toward carpet cleaning with Xtreme Carpet Cleaning in 2010.

"When I started that, it was 2010 and during the recession when the

economy was terrible. That business is still around, with multiple locations and franchises. That's something I'm proud of," Alden shares.

Along the way, Alden has founded two other businesses, Big Sky Outdoorsman and Xtreme Power Sports, but his greatest success has been with Xtreme Restoration & Construction, the restoration company he founded in 2017.

"In 2017, we had a really bad snowstorm, so houses were leaking from ice dams and all the snow. People were calling on the carpet cleaning side because their houses were flooding





“

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with water. Our number one rule is if your carpet is wet, we won't clean it because we don't want liability. So we'd say, 'Call the restoration company.' The restoration companies were so backed up and couldn't do the work. There was such a demand, so we started that business," Alden explains. "That's where it all began."

#### **Xtreme Restoration & Construction**

Over the past seven years, Xtreme Restoration & Construction has become the top restoration outfit in the Bozeman area. The company has grown 20-30% year after year. While they've expanded their services, water mitigation remains their specialty.

"Anyone who has had previous water damage, it shows its face in some manner—mold, insulation issues, flaky paint, sheet rock damage, or structural

## **Family Spotlight**

Alden and his wife, Ana, have four children: 12-year-old triplets Elizabeth, Victoria, and Samuel and 10-year-old Daniel. They enjoy power sports, traveling to Brazil, outdoor activities, sports, and music.

## **Fun Fact**

Alden speaks five languages: English, Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, and French.

issues, all of which we can handle," Alden shares. "We're known as the one-stop-shop. If you have an ice dam on your house and call another competitor, they tell you to call someone to get the ice dam out, and they'll dry the house. We do everything. We remove the dam and get rid of the water. The construction crew comes through to make the repairs, and we deal with all your insurance needs."

The culture at Xtreme Restoration & Construction is young, energetic, and relationship-driven. Another advantage of working with Xtreme Restoration & Construction is their timeliness. They even have an immediate response team called the X-team, which typically gets to emergencies in under 15 minutes, regardless of the time of day.

"We can be the one-stop-shop for any of your restoration needs," Alden closes. "That's what we're here for."





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# TECH TIPS FROM THE TOP WITH **Sara Camiscioni**

ERA Lambros Real Estate Missoula

## HOW HAVE SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS, LIKE INSTAGRAM, FACEBOOK, OR LINKEDIN, TRANSFORMED YOUR APPROACH TO CONNECTING WITH POTENTIAL CLIENTS?

Social media has significantly enhanced my ability to connect with current, past, and future clients who are active online. It allows me to stay engaged with my immediate network and keeps me top of mind with referral partners across the country—both agents I refer clients to and those who refer clients to me.

## WHAT SPECIFIC SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGIES HAVE YOU FOUND TO BE THE MOST EFFECTIVE FOR BUILDING TRUST AND SHOWCASING YOUR EXPERTISE IN REAL ESTATE?

Building trust and authenticity with followers on social media is essential. Over the past decade, and with insights from business coaching, I've learned that showing up authentically—and in a way that genuinely resonates with me—is crucial. If it feels forced or overly sales-driven, the audience will notice, leading to a “push” rather than a “pull” marketing effect. A former coach taught me that achieving KLT (Know, Like, Trust) requires balancing 50% as the teacher and 50% as the friend. To connect as a friend, I focus on sharing three to five relatable personal themes from my life consistently, creating a warm and approachable presence online. I also believe it's important not to pressure myself to create content when I'm not feeling creative or if the content doesn't resonate with me. Could I produce more content? Sure. Could it be better? Always. However, I prioritize ensuring my social media presence feels authentic and enjoyable, which sometimes means taking a step back from creating.

## ARE THERE ANY PARTICULAR TYPES OF CONTENT—VIDEOS, STORIES, LIVE STREAMS—THAT YOU FIND RESONATE BEST WITH YOUR AUDIENCE? HOW DO YOU DECIDE WHAT TO POST?

I share a mix of carousel posts, stories, short-form videos, longer reels, and stand-alone posts. My audience consistently engages well with stories and short, easily digestible content. While I've moved away from live streams, reels have proven effective for expanding my follower base and capturing property leads. Stories, on the other hand, help me connect with followers on a more personal level. Carousel posts are designed to engage my current audience with curated, market-focused content.

## HOW DO YOU BALANCE ORGANIC CONTENT WITH PAID ADVERTISING ON SOCIAL MEDIA TO MAXIMIZE YOUR REACH?

I use paid advertising strategically, focusing on posts that are already performing well organically and have clear calls to action. If a post isn't generating strong engagement or isn't shareable, boosting it is unlikely to yield the desired results. I prioritize compelling content designed to drive interaction and meaningful engagement before investing in paid promotion.

## HAVE YOU IMPLEMENTED ANY AI TOOLS, SUCH AS CHATBOTS OR AUTOMATED MESSAGING, TO ENHANCE YOUR CLIENT COMMUNICATION? IF SO, HOW HAVE THEY IMPACTED CLIENT INTERACTIONS?

I use some automation for lead-generating content, like reels and property tours that include calls to action for viewers to request more

details. This approach helps increase property exposure by quickly delivering relevant information to interested clients. While I feel confident creating engaging posts—thanks to nearly ten years of post-secondary training in content creation—I occasionally use AI tools to refine keywords or spark fresh ideas when creativity is low.

## HOW DO YOU USE SOCIAL MEDIA TO SHOWCASE PROPERTIES IN A WAY THAT STANDS OUT FROM OTHER LISTINGS AND APPEALS TO POTENTIAL BUYERS?

Social media is an incredibly powerful tool for showcasing listings. When meeting potential sellers, I share metrics from previous campaigns—such as a property that received over 16,000 views, 30+ shares, and 15 inquiries through organic reach. Sellers appreciate these results, as they demonstrate the ability to reach an extended audience.

Additionally, creating lifestyle-focused content that helps potential buyers envision living in the home makes the property even more appealing. Highlighting these aspects organically, without relying on paid ads, is a significant advantage in today's market.



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# Lauren Taylor

LT Real Estate

## Hometown Roots

BY ZACHARY COHEN  
PHOTOS BY ARNICA SPRING PHOTOGRAPHY

Since opening LT Real Estate in January 2023, Lauren Taylor has been on a quest to keep local boutique real estate alive and well in Bozeman. Lauren launched her real estate career in 2019. During her first four years, she worked for a boutique brokerage with a pulse on the local market. It was a model Lauren came to love, so when her broker bought into an international franchise and dissolved the boutique brokerage, she paused to reassess her path forward.

Lauren subsequently interviewed at several other brokerages. Ultimately, she decided to take a leap of faith, founding LT Real Estate.

“I had been working really hard on my end to brand myself as local and true to the Montana lifestyle. This transition conflicted with everything I’d been working on,” Lauren reflects. “LT Real Estate started with me and my assistant, and we began to grow from there.”

### Roots Run Deep

Lauren was born in Wyoming and raised in Bozeman after her family relocated to Montana when she was six. Lauren’s parents have owned and operated J&K Contractors in Bozeman since its inception; construction and real estate were common topics at the dinner table since she was a young girl.

Lauren’s dad encouraged her several times to become a REALTOR®. After almost a decade in hospitality management, she decided to heed his advice.

“I was just about to accept a job managing the food and beverage department at Riverside Country Club. I had a break in between jobs, and my dad nudged me,” Lauren reflects. “He







**WITH MY BACKGROUND IN CUSTOMER SERVICE, I HAVE A PASSION FOR SERVING MY CLIENTS. I LOVE THE RELATIONSHIPS THAT DEVELOP THROUGH THE COURSE OF GUIDING SOMEONE THROUGH THE REAL ESTATE PROCESS. IT'S BEEN A NATURAL FIT.**

knew I wasn't really happy with what I was doing, and my aspirations of going to law school were starting to feel more and more out of reach. There was a real estate class in Billings I took the week before starting at the country club. And the rest is history."

Lauren officially launched her real estate career in 2019. She balanced two jobs through June 2021, when she decided to devote herself fully to real estate.

"I haven't been that excited about anything in a long time," Lauren says.







“With my background in customer service, I have a passion for serving my clients. I love the relationships that develop through the course of guiding someone through the real estate process. It’s been a natural fit.”

**A Montana Love Story**

Fast forward to 2024, and Lauren is running one of Montana’s top real estate businesses and one of the state’s up-and-coming brokerages. Now, she’s preparing to take her boutique operation to the next level.

For Lauren, leaving an international franchise to establish her own firm wasn’t just a career move; it was a statement about her values and commitment to staying true to the Montana spirit. Montana’s real estate scene is unique, and Lauren was determined to keep her work rooted in that sense of place. Her team has since grown to eight agents, each chosen not only for their talent and core values, but also for their shared love for Montana.

“My goal has been to be authentic to, first and foremost, Montana,” Lauren explains. “I’m looking to hire people based on character, values, and based on whether or not they enjoy where they live. I have a diverse team, but we all share a deep love for Montana. We share a similar feeling and mentality when it comes to why we love where we live.”

Lauren envisions further growth at LT Real Estate, starting with opening a branch office in the Flathead Valley. But Lauren doesn’t plan to stop there. Her goal is to create a lasting legacy through LT Real Estate.

“I want to build a team of stand-out agents and, eventually, pass the torch.”

**Family Spotlight**

Lauren and her partner, Mike, have three children: Evva (12), Nora (4), and Harvey (1).



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# Reflections on the 2024 NAR NXT Conference in Boston

BY BRINT WAHLBERG, MOR BOARD PRESIDENT

From November 8th to 10th, the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) held its annual NXT conference in Boston. As the Missoula Organization of REALTORS® (MOR) local board president and a member of the Multiple Listing Issues and Policies Committee, I had the privilege of attending this flagship event. The NXT conference is a staple in my calendar, along with NAR Legislative meetings (formerly Mid-Year) held every spring in Washington, D.C. NXT, however, stands out as NAR's most highly attended annual gathering, blending association governance meetings with sessions from national and professional growth speakers.

This year's event drew over 10,000 attendees. The three-day schedule was packed with classes, roundtables, forums, and networking opportunities, catering to REALTORS® seeking education and inspiration. For me, NXT is also a time to represent MOR, focusing on economic, political, and policy updates to bring back to our local membership.

The timing of this year's conference was particularly notable. It followed closely on the heels of the presidential election results and marked NAR's first large-scale meeting since the settlement concerning MLS rules and buyer agency fee disclosures.

## Key Highlights: Economic and Industry Insights

One of the conference's standout sessions was the Economic Issues and Trends Forum, featuring NAR Chief Economist Dr. Lawrence Yun and Deputy Chief Economist Dr. Jessica Lautz. Their insights were, as always, fascinating and highly relevant. Dr. Yun's market outlook painted a steady picture for interest rates, which he predicts will hover around 6% over the next two years despite anticipated Federal Reserve rate cuts. He forecasts home sales will climb 9% in 2025 and 13% in 2026, with new home construction leading the way. Dr. Yun also highlighted pent-up housing inventory, anticipating an eventual



increase in market activity as life events—marriages, family changes, retirements, and job relocations—prompt homeowners to sell.

Dr. Lautz's portion of the forum delved into consumer trends and industry dynamics, delivering eye-opening statistics. She revealed that the median income of first-time homebuyers has risen by \$26,000 in just a year, reflecting the growing financial challenges of entering the housing market. The median age of first-time buyers is now 38, while

repeat buyers average 61 years. Contrary to concerns of a “silver tsunami,” Dr. Lautz predicts a gradual trickle of baby boomer-owned homes entering the market rather than a mass sell-off.

Perhaps most heartening were her statistics on REALTOR® community engagement: 70% of REALTORS® volunteer an average of eight hours monthly, and 86% make financial donations, far surpassing public averages. These efforts underscore the unique value REALTORS® bring to their communities, as reflected in the 88% of buyers and 90% of sellers who chose REALTOR® representation last year—an all-time high.

## Engaging Discussions and Surprising Proposals

I also participated in several dynamic sessions, including a roundtable on the future of MLS. Industry leaders shared diverse perspectives, from enhancing buyer and seller transparency to empowering listing

agents and brokerages on web portals. One panelist even suggested NAR step away from MLS oversight altogether, leaving it to online portals—a controversial idea, to say the least!

Another notable session was a post-election analysis by Nate Silver, who presented 11 key insights into the factors shaping election outcomes. His data-driven approach provided a compelling backdrop to the political discussions taking place throughout the conference.

## Committee Work and Policy Updates

With over 90 committees, advisory boards, forums, and councils, NAR governance meetings were a significant part of the week. In my committee, we discussed compliance with NAR's new MLS rules and examined the potential regulatory landscape following the election. The NAR Clear Cooperation Rule, under recent scrutiny, remains a topic of discussion but was not on our current agenda, as it's under

review by NAR leadership for future recommendations.

## Exploring Boston

This was my first visit to Boston, and it did not disappoint. Despite windy weather, I managed to explore the Freedom Trail and enjoy a few pints of Guinness in the historic city. Boston's rich history and charm left a lasting impression, and I'm already looking forward to a return visit.

## Looking Ahead

As I reflect on this year's NXT, I'm reminded of the value of staying connected, informed, and engaged within the REALTOR® community. I'm excited to share these insights with MOR and to continue representing our local board at future events. Up next: the NAR Legislative meetings in Washington, D.C., in June 2025, followed by NXT in Houston later that year. For live updates, follow my Facebook threads—they're always a hit!





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—Henry Ford

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# STORAGE REIMAGINED

## Levrack

### Ryan Stauffer, CEO

BY ZACHARY COHEN

**R**yan Stauffer, CEO and co-founder of Levrack, has transformed a niche idea into a sought-after storage solution for high-end garages, outdoor spaces, and beyond. Born on a Nebraska farm, Levrack is the brainchild of Ryan and his high school friend Austin Stauffer. The pair developed their product line to meet a simple but pressing need: effective storage.

What started as a winter project has grown into a robust company serving clients across industries with a product designed for both functionality and style.

“Our product is a combination of beauty and functionality,” Ryan shares. “We couldn’t find anything like it on the market, so our goal became to create a product people were passionate about. Shelving is boring, but we wanted to make it a lifestyle, aspirational type product.”

Founded in 2016, Levrack has quickly become a household name. As they expand nationwide, Montana has proven to be a fertile ground for their product. The abundance of outdoor enthusiasts and good design taste makes Levrack the perfect fit in Bozeman and beyond.

#### Humble Beginnings

Ryan and Austin’s journey began on the family farm in Nebraska, outside of Lincoln, where Ryan was immersed in



agricultural work and constantly dealt with the challenges of farm storage.

“We needed a better storage solution in our shop,” Ryan recalls. “I wanted something that could handle heavy-duty parts without taking up all our floor space.”

Ryan found inspiration in mobile aisle shelving systems commonly used in large-scale archives, healthcare facilities, and industrial spaces—systems designed to maximize square footage.

“That concept had been around for decades in high-density storage,” Ryan explains, “but it hadn’t been adapted for everyday consumers.”

What started as a project to pass the winter months quickly evolved into a bonafide business. By September 2016, Levrack had made its first sale, setting them on a path neither Ryan nor Austin had anticipated.





### Why Levrack

Over the years, the Levrack product has been refined and upgraded countless times. The company has grown to 20 employees with manufacturing facilities in Nebraska and Wisconsin and distribution nationwide.

“We service the military, health care, education, and high-density warehouses,” Ryan shares, “but what we love is the outdoor space, automotive, and garage design. That’s the fun stuff for us. Everyone has a cool barn or shop now, and this product is tailored for that—to work on the farm with high weight capacities but with beauty, design, and industrial flair. It makes the space better while maximizing space.”

The centerpiece of Levrack’s product is its mobile aisle shelving system, which combines industrial-grade pallet racking frames with a unique track system that gives the shelves a levitating appearance. Unlike other storage units, Levrack’s shelves are freestanding

“  
**Our goal is to be the most versatile storage solution you can find on the market. That’s the goal. We just love our customers. Even though it’s shelving, we’ve developed a community around our product that we wouldn’t trade for anything.**







“  
**Our product is a combination of beauty and functionality. Shelving is boring, but we wanted to make it a lifestyle, aspirational type product.**

and manually rolled back and forth to create an adjustable aisle, giving owners flexibility in how they arrange and access stored items, a flattering aesthetic, and high functionality. The company offers countless accessories and add-ons and provides custom designs when asked.

Ryan and Austin put a premium on durability and aesthetics.

“We designed our product with a focus on functionality and industrial flair,” Ryan says. “The frames are powder-coated black, which gives them a clean, sleek look. We also added a range of custom colors and sizes so clients can personalize their storage spaces. We’re agile with a robust manufacturing process. We care a lot about customer service.”

**Adding Value to Real Estate**

Levrack’s systems provide a unique value-add for homeowners and real estate agents. For those looking to upgrade their garages, barns, or outdoor spaces, Levrack provides a practical, space-saving option that doubles as an aesthetic upgrade.

This appeal is particularly noticeable in high-end real estate, where buyers



**CONTACT US!**

For more information, visit [levrack.com](http://levrack.com).

often look for innovative, quality features. Levrack’s sleek design and industrial strength make it an ideal addition for anyone seeking to maximize space with style.

“We’ve come a long way since 2016,” Ryan closes. “It’s been fun to watch it grow. There will be new finishes, new accessories, and new options. Our goal is to be the most versatile storage solution you can find on the market. That’s the

goal. We just love our customers. Even though it’s shelving, we’ve developed a community around our product that we wouldn’t trade for anything.”

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## COMMUNITY IMPACT SPOTLIGHT WITH

# Lindsay Fansler

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### TELL US ABOUT A COMMUNITY NONPROFIT OR PHILANTHROPIC CAUSE THAT IS CLOSE TO YOUR HEART. WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO GET INVOLVED WITH IT?

I sit on the board of the nonprofit Flathead Area Mountain Bikers (FAMB). I love riding mountain bikes in the Flathead Valley and have a vested interest in promoting open lands and recreation opportunities for myself, my family, and my clients. Being in real estate, I have a flexible schedule that allows me to donate my time and efforts to this cause. I also feel a responsibility to leave a community better than I found it.

### HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN INVOLVED WITH FAMB? WHAT ROLES OR ACTIVITIES HAVE YOU TAKEN PART IN AS PART OF YOUR INVOLVEMENT?

I have worked with this organization for four years, joining in early 2020. I currently serve as the board vice chair and am actively involved in our Fundraising and Executive Committees. In these roles, I help secure funding for the organization and provide guidance to our paid Executive Director and nine-person board.

### WHAT PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OR VALUES MOTIVATE YOU TO GIVE BACK TO THE COMMUNITY, AND HOW HAS THAT SHAPED YOUR APPROACH TO PHILANTHROPY?

I genuinely believe REALTORS® get a bad rap in many communities. Oftentimes, people view agents as opportunists who capitalize on increasing property values and changing the character of their neighborhoods, especially during the last four years of exponential growth and affordable housing shortages. By getting involved at the grassroots level to expand mountain biking and



multi-use trail opportunities for everyone in the Flathead Valley, I've been able to give back to the community that has supported my business.

### HOW DO YOU BALANCE YOUR REAL ESTATE CAREER WITH YOUR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT? ARE THERE SPECIFIC WAYS YOU INTEGRATE YOUR WORK AND PHILANTHROPIC EFFORTS?

I don't feel they need to be separate. I've gained a number of real estate clients through my participation with FAMB. It's also been helpful to the organization to have a board member familiar with land ownership, easements, and access issues. Meeting new people through the board and partnering with other organizations has directly benefited my real estate career as well.

### ARE THERE ANY STORIES OR MOMENTS FROM YOUR WORK WITH FAMB THAT STAND OUT AS ESPECIALLY MEANINGFUL?

Helping to grow this organization from an annual budget of \$35,000 to \$185,000 has been incredibly rewarding. Demonstrating competence and working hard to build the organization has also led to multiple clients and referrals. I'm proud to have earned the trust of the community through my work with FAMB.

### IN WHAT WAYS HAS YOUR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT INFLUENCED OR ENRICHED YOUR PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS AND BUSINESS AS A REALTOR®?

When I receive a referral or new client because of my involvement in FAMB, it's particularly meaningful. It shows I've earned a level of trust based on my work outside of real estate, which is difficult to achieve. Nearly all of my clients come through direct referrals from the community and past clients, and I love engaging with the community to keep my name top of mind.

### HAVE YOU COLLABORATED WITH OTHER LOCAL BUSINESSES OR REALTORS® IN YOUR PHILANTHROPIC EFFORTS? IF SO, HOW HAS THIS STRENGTHENED THE IMPACT OF YOUR WORK?

Many of FAMB's financial sponsors are other REALTORS® and brokerages. Building strong working relationships with them has made it easier to secure their financial support. They know their contributions are going to a trustworthy organization with a meaningful cause.

### HOW DO YOU ENCOURAGE OR INSPIRE OTHERS IN THE REAL ESTATE COMMUNITY TO SUPPORT LOCAL CAUSES?

I firmly believe in leading by example. I don't pressure anyone into community support just because I'm doing it. However, I hope seeing me out in the community donating my time inspires others to consider doing the same.


### LOOKING AHEAD, ARE THERE ANY NEW COMMUNITY INITIATIVES OR NONPROFITS YOU'RE EXCITED TO SUPPORT? WHAT DRAWS YOU TO THESE CAUSES?

As a frequent backcountry skier and snowmobiler, I'm passionate about supporting Friends of the Flathead Avalanche Center (FOFAC) and The Flathead Nordic Backcountry Patrol. Both organizations are deeply involved in the community and serve critical roles for snow recreationists in the valley. FOFAC provides daily avalanche forecasts and education, while The Flathead Nordic Patrol is a skilled group of volunteers assisting with search and rescue operations.


### WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHER REALTORS® WHO WANT TO BECOME MORE INVOLVED IN THEIR COMMUNITY OR START GIVING BACK THROUGH PHILANTHROPY?

Being present in your community and working with nonprofits or philanthropic groups will only benefit your business. When people see you giving back and staying involved, they're far more likely to choose you as their REALTOR® or refer you to others. Community involvement not only helps you expand your sphere of influence but also builds meaningful relationships.

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# Cindi Hayne

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## FOR THE LOVE OF REAL ESTATE

BY ZACHARY COHEN | PHOTOS BY KILN MEDIA

Cindi Hayne was born and raised in the real estate industry. Growing up in Hillsborough, California, she witnessed her father run W.W. Dean & Associates, a well-respected builder and developer.

“So while I’ve been involved in real estate professionally for 40 years, really, I was raised in the industry,” Cindi shares. “Growing up, I loved watching a piece of ground that had no personality become improved and gain a personality. Then, seeing the families move in, it was great.”

Although Cindi was exposed to real estate early on, her path to success wasn’t always easy. Her dad, a 6’6” Texan with a conservative attitude towards females in the workplace, was thrilled about Cindi joining the company but thoughtful about what role she might hold.

“It was all about the boys,” Cindi continues. “The idea of joining the

company wasn’t something that was instilled in me.”

Cindi had careers in banking and nonprofit funding before eventually joining her father at W.W. Dean & Associates. When she did join the company, she did so with an attitude of grit and determination. She was out to prove a woman could not only hang with the boys but thrive.

“I went in knowing I had to win my father’s approval as an employer in a male-centric industry,” Cindi reflects. “I also had to win the approval of the trades, subcontractors, and investors—the whole gamut.”

Cindi’s determination and success-driven attitude carried her to success. She became the first female president of the local building association, was president of the local board of REALTORS®, and was on the board of directors for the state-level REALTOR® association.

“I earned my way and gained trust. And I loved every second of it,” Cindi smiles.

After a decade in development in California, Cindi and her husband were ready for a change. They did five years of due diligence, visiting seven states to choose their next home. One place stood above the rest—Montana.

“The Bitterroot Valley just felt right. Montana felt like home,” Cindi explains. “When I came upon the ranch I still own today, I fell in love. It took us ten months to negotiate, but we made it happen and moved to Montana in 1996.”

When Cindi landed in Montana, she thought she was done with real estate, but her hiatus lasted only three months before she was itching to get back to work. When she returned to work, she decided to become a REALTOR®.

Cindi has now been a top REALTOR® in Montana for nearly 30 years. So, what have been the keys to





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**The people keep me in real estate, and I love the art of the deal. I love being able to connect with so many people from so many different backgrounds, and that makes me a better person.**







her success and longevity? She says it's all about relationships.

"The people keep me in real estate, and I love the art of the deal. I love being able to connect with so many people from so many different backgrounds, and that makes me a better person," Cindi shares. "Everyone talks about taking care of the client, and it's 100% true, but my broker-to-broker relationships are as important or more important than my relationships with the client. When we get into the heat of the transaction, my ability to communicate with the agent on the other side, knowing I have a deep connection with them, we're able to problem solve better than someone without that relationship."

When she's not selling real estate, you'll find Cindi riding horses and enjoying her 200-acre ranch. She has seven horses and plans to return to competing as an equestrian soon. She also enjoys golfing, skiing, and fly fishing.

"I love the people here in Montana, the culture, the small town, the quality of life, the four seasons, and the recreation. It's a comfortable place to be. The community support is unbelievable. The community is why it is so amazing here. I feel that every day," Cindi says.

Although she's been in real estate for four decades, Cindi has no intentions of slowing down; she simply loves the business too much.

"I'm not stopping. You'll see me out there with a walker, looking for corner pins. I love being able to grow and be challenged. I love every aspect of this business, even the frustrating parts."

### Fun Fact

"I enjoy boxing. I've even hit a carcass like Rocky. Once, I took a guy down at gunpoint who was trying to kidnap me and my late husband."

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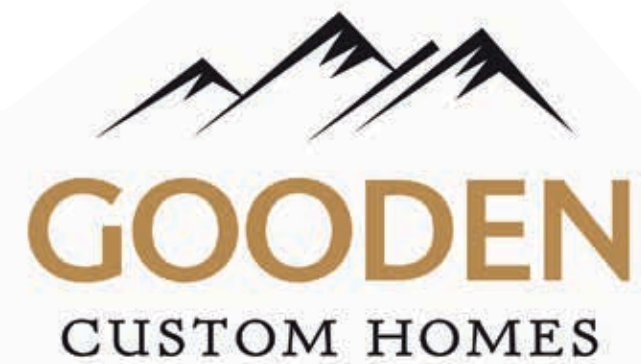
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