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Reflecting on the 2025 RP Awards

Welcome to our July edition of *Colorado Springs Real Producers*. As of writing this, we recently wrapped up the 2025 RP Awards — this is our fourth time hosting this event and I'm so grateful for the opportunity to lead it. While this event is not perfect, I'm proud of what it has become and I will continue working to make it better.

A percentage of you who attended the event heard the accusations that one of our winners used AI bots to earn votes. There is no truth to this. I stand behind the results and the winner of the award. I filmed a video that goes into more detail on this if you're interested; it was posted to my personal Facebook page on April 28th. Also, thank you to all of you reached out to me in support after I posted the video.

I have an ask of all of you:

Please don't wait to purchase your ticket for the 2026 RP Awards. We had 350 guests at the event — however, 2 weeks prior, 1/3 of our guests had not purchased their tickets. Another 30 guests reached out to me after I had announced that the event was sold out. If you've ever hosted a large, formal event like this, you know how important it is to know your headcount ahead of time. Purchasing your tickets at least 3-4 weeks out will save me therapy levels of anxiety. And, of course, please be respectful of our voting process and our winners.

Thank you,

Brian Gowdy

Publisher | Advertising Sales 719-313-3028 | brian.gowdy@n2co.com



Brian Gowdy and his friends, Jodi (right) and Kara (left) at the 2025 RP Awards.

Reflections from The Editor

Lately, a new vision for my life has been quietly taking shape. While the possibilities excite me, I've often hesitated to make the necessary changes—sometimes out of fear of others' opinions, and sometimes because of my own inner resistance. Why do I hold back from something I clearly desire? Most often, it's fear—fear of what fully embracing this new version of my life will require of me. I've made excuses and I've settled for less than I truly want.

Eventually, I reached a point where holding myself back became more painful than moving forward. I had to choose to stop settling—and then, I

had to back that decision with action. Some days, I make bold moves; other days, I take the smallest of steps. But I've learned that what matters most is not the *size* of the step—it's that I keep stepping. As I read this month's edition, I was inspired by the courageous choices each of these individuals made to walk their own aligned path. I hope you enjoy reading their stories as much as I did and that you find seeds of inspiration to apply to your own life.



Tabby Halsrud, Editor cosrealproducers content@n2co.com



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H&H FENCING

AND LANDSCAPE SOLUTIONS

Allen McGriff & Brendan McGriff

BY TABBY HALSRUD • CASA BAY PHOTOGRAPHY

Founded in 2015, veteran-owned H&H Fencing and Landscape Solutions offers fencing and landscape design and installation services as well as yard cleanups. Originally from Oregon, Founder Allen McGriff was stationed at Ft. Carson three times, where he ultimately chose to retire at the end of

his 20-year military career. He started doing handyman work, intending it to be a side gig, but ended up creating a business called Handyman Helper. Allen worked as a handyman solo for five years before his oldest son Brendan decided to join him. Brendan motivated Allen to focus the company

on fencing and grow the business.
They rebranded to H&H Fencing,
where the H&H stands for Honest
and Hardworking. After four years of
growth, they rebranded again to H&H
Fencing and Landscape Solutions. Now
they boast six fence installation crews
and two landscape crews. With the



growth into landscape came another key member to the team, Jose, the landscape division supervisor and designer.

Allen's vision for the company is to be there for his customers when they buy and sell their homes, to build a legacy that can be passed down through his family lines, and to provide a great quality of life for his teams and their families. Their competitive advantage is that they are able to complete projects more efficiently and to a higher standard than other companies, often in less time, by having the right tools, quality equipment and great systems in place. Allen is proud to take great care of his customers and ensures that the job is done right the first time. If for whatever reason it's not. H&H will redo it to the customer's satisfaction. Allen believes that this level of care and attention to detail is what helps his business grow through word of mouth. H&H also offers a 3-year craftsmanship warranty to correct any issues that arise after the job is done. Allen prides himself on taking great care of his team members too, and creates a safe space where his crew can speak up and correct him as needed, even if in front of a client. For Allen, it's about getting things done right.

As H&H expanded into landscape design and installation services, Allen and Jose have built two high performing crews who align with the company's



high standards. Allen is motivated to help clients create a yard that their kids and pets will enjoy playing in. He believes that the yard is an extension of the home and he wants his clients to enjoy their outdoor living spaces just as much as the indoors. Allen believes that if you "Improve your Yard you Improve your LIFE!!"

Allen wants agents and clients to know that there are no regulations or licenses in the industry so research is important before choosing a vendor, including checking to see if the business is insured and registered with the Secretary of State. Allen asserts that just because a

company is the most expensive doesn't mean they are the best, but if they are the cheapest, they may be cutting corners somewhere and that often, those shortcuts won't be visible to the client. Allen added, "Just because we can finish a job in 2-3 days that may take other companies 2-3 weeks doesn't mean that the result is inferior or that it should cost less. Know that you're not paying for the time. You're paying for experience, the resources, and the right tools and equipment."

In summary, Allen shared that he is grateful for his clients, admitting, "They are the reason we are where

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we are." He appreciates the support he has received from his wife and the constant motivation from Brendan to continue to grow their business. Allen was proud to share that H&H will be looking to volunteer their time to assist with volunteer projects as a way to give back to the community. Outside of work, Allen enjoys playing the casino game of craps. He has a YouTube channel called Random Roller 68, where he shares strategies for the game. He hopes to share how fun craps is while educating viewers on strategy and bankroll management. He shared that gambling is always a risk and should be treated as an entertainment EXPENSE.





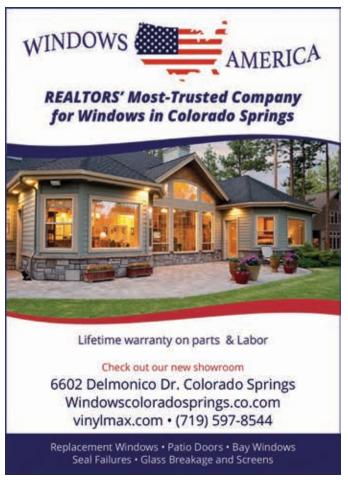




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Anne Marie Smith Pikes Peak Association of REALTORS® **CASA BAY PHOTOGRAPHY**

From Data Entry to Leadership: Anne Marie Smith's 45-Year Journey of Service at PPAR

When Anne Marie Smith first walked through the doors of the Pikes Peak Association of REALTORS® in 1979, she had no idea she was stepping into a lifelong calling. She was 19 years old, fresh out of business school, and had just been hired to input membership data into PPAR's very first computer. It was a humble start that laid the foundation for a remarkable 46-year journey defined by perseverance, heart, and an unwavering commitment to people.

Today, Anne Marie serves as Chief Executive Officer of the Pikes Peak Association of REALTORS®, a role earned not through shortcuts, but through decades of quiet leadership, meaningful growth, and a deep belief in the organization's mission. Her story is one of a slow and steady climb—rising through the ranks while raising a son, earning a college degree later in life, and continually choosing service over recognition.

A Foundation Built on Belief

Anne Marie's path began with a simple job offer—but behind that opportunity was a mentor who saw more in her than she saw in herself. Al Unser, then CEO of PPAR, was the one who gave her that first job. He encouraged her to pursue her education and believe in her own potential; encouragement that stayed with her for decades.

"I took his advice to heart," Anne Marie recalled. "While raising my son, I started taking college courses one or two at a time. I'd take breaks when I needed to, especially during his high school and college years, but I never gave up." In 2008—nearly three decades after starting at PPAR—she completed her degree from UCCS.

"There wasn't one big moment that changed everything," she said. "It was a series of opportunities, people who believed in me, and a deepening passion for what I do."

Learning from Every Seat at the Table

By 1985, Anne Marie

had worked in nearly every position at PPAR everything except CEO. This breadth of experience became one of her greatest assets. She understood the intricate workings of the organization from the inside out, from data entry and member services to human resources and executive leadership. Every role taught her something new, and every challenge became a chance to grow.

One of her proudest early milestones was being named Vice President of Member Services and taking on the HR function within PPAR. "That role showed me how rewarding it is to serve not only our members but also the team I worked alongside every day," she said. "It was a proud moment to realize that our staff and leadership truly worked together to put members first."

Still, the road wasn't always easy. Anne Marie had to learn how to balance the sometimes competing needs of members, staff, and leadership. She leaned into vulnerability and transparency as her leadership style—choosing to lead by listening and building trust. "I learned to prioritize relationships making sure people felt seen, heard, and valued," she said. "That's what makes this work meaningful to me."

Finding Her Voice

If there's one piece of advice Anne Marie would give to her younger self, it's this: Speak up—your voice matters. Early in her career, she often stayed behind the scenes, content to quietly get the work done. "I told myself that was enough," she admitted. "But looking back, I realize I stayed silent in rooms where I should have spoken up. Part of it was the culture—staff were expected to be seen, not heard. That mindset held me back longer than I'd like to admit."

Eventually, she found her voice and an ability to lead not just by example, but by influence. "Leadership isn't just about doing the work," she said. "It's about using your voice to shape the future. Today, I know that being heard is part of being valued."

Family: The Heart Behind Her Why

Behind Anne Marie's professional dedication is a deeply personal motivation: her son, Andrew. By the time he was five, she found herself navigating life as a single mother. "Andrew became my why," she shared. "He was the reason I got up every day, put one foot in front of the other, and gave life my best effort."

Today, that love and legacy continue with her three grandchildren—Bradley (12), Nora (9), and Colin (2), who are her greatest joy. Whether she's watching Bradley play lacrosse, cheering on Nora at softball games and 5Ks, or laughing with little Colin, her family

keeps her grounded in what matters most. She enjoys family trips that provide an opportunity to slow down and make memories with the people she loves most.

Leading With Heart

Now as CEO of PPAR, Anne Marie brings a lifetime of wisdom to her role. She's not just leading with experience—she's leading with heart. "I find joy in seeing things come full circle—starting with a challenge and ending with meaningful results," she said. "I love collaborating with our board to move important objectives forward. But most of all, I find joy in knowing that I showed up fully and gave it my very best."

What she loves most about PPAR isn't the title or the milestones—it's the people. "I love the work we do, the people I get to do it with, and the constant opportunities

for growth and challenge," she said. "But more than anything, I find true fulfillment in knowing I'm contributing to something bigger than myself."

Her goal is to create a culture where her team feels safe, supported, and empowered to do their best work. "It's an opportunity and a responsibility to make PPAR stronger than it's ever been," she said. "And I'm honored to be part of that mission every day."

A Quiet Creative Side Outside of her leadership

role, there's a quieter, more creative side to Anne Marie that few people know about. She finds peace in watercolor and drawing—something she doesn't often talk about, but that brings her immense joy. "There's something really grounding about slowing down, putting color to paper, and creating something just

"I started at the bottom and worked my way up to CEO—not because it was easy, but because I love what I do."

for the sake of creating," she shared. "It's a reminder that not everything has to be about productivity— sometimes it's enough just to enjoy the moment."

A Life of Authenticity

If there's one thing Anne Marie hopes this article captures, it's her authenticity. "I started at the bottom and worked my way up to CEO—not because it was easy, but because I love what I do," she said. "I believe in the mission, I believe in the people, and I'm grateful for every step of the journey that brought me here."

Being featured in *Colorado*Springs Real Producers is
more than just recognition—
it's a reflection of the impact
she's made. "I don't do what
I do for recognition," she
said, "but it's humbling and
meaningful to know that
the effort, the heart, and the
commitment I've poured into
this organization and our
industry matter to others."

For anyone wondering what it takes to build a career of meaning and leadership, Anne Marie Smith is living proof that it begins with humility, grows through hard work, and thrives on the courage to speak up and lead with heart.







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As a broker, working with this roof restoration team has been a huge asset. Their work consistently adds value to properties, boosts street appeal, and helps avoid inspection issues that can delay sales. I've referred them to multiple clients, and the feedback has always been positive. It's a service I trust to enhance property presentation and support a smoother sales process. - Cole Underwood



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BY KIM SANDOVAL

Experience Attainable. Innovative Homes in the Heart of Colorado Springs.

Colorado Springs, Colorado – Classic Homes is proud to announce the launch of its newest and most innovative home collection yet – the Preamble

Collection at Greenways at Sand Creek. Designed with a "less is more" philosophy, this new collection offers thoughtfully crafted homes to address the growing need for attainable homeownership in Colorado Springs.

The Preamble Collection is the perfect blend of simplicity and smart design. With seven cozy and efficient home styles available, buyers can choose between modern or farmhouse-inspired ranch homes with storage lofts or two-story layouts. Living spaces range

from 456 square feet (plus a loft) to 792 square feet, with options for a two-car parking pad, or detached and attached garages, making these homes ideal for first-time buyers or those who prefer low-maintenance living.

Collection model homes are now open on Greenways Main Blvd. Prospective buyers are invited to tour these stunning models to experience firsthand the unique designs, functionality, and charm that these homes offer. Homebuyers

curated Classic Design Paks, offering hassle-free options for interiors, complete with appliances and window blinds. Pricing starts in the low \$300s and includes all kitchen appliances, washers & dryers and window blinds in designated privacy areas – giving buyers an affordable path to homeownership without sacrificing style or quality.

will also enjoy the convenience of nine

A Community with **Convenience and Charm**

Greenways at Sand Creek provides an unmatched location for homebuyers, nestled near the Powers Corridor and First and Main Town Center. Its central placement offers easy access to employment, shopping, dining, and entertainment, all within walking distance. Residents can enjoy the convenience of trails, recreation, and attractions like a nearby movie theater and community parks, ensuring a perfect balance of urban living and outdoor fun.

A key highlight of the community, Greenways Park, exemplifies the neighborhood's focus on outdoor living. This vibrant gathering space features a pond, event pavilion, play areas, picnic spots, open fields, and even a hammock garden.

Classic Homes has hosted summer concerts in the park, bringing together homeowners and the local community. Currently being conveyed to the City of Colorado Springs, Greenways Park will soon be an asset for residents and the city as a whole.

Doug Stimple, CEO of Classic Homes, stated, "We envisioned Greenways at Sand Creek as an innovative urban-style community centered around a thoughtfully designed park. Homebuyers can explore five home collections, including the Preamble Collection, each tailored to diverse lifestyles and budgets. And we're excited to share that a sixth collection of duplex homes will debut later this year."

Diverse Options in Greenways at Sand Creek

Beyond the Preamble Collection, Greenways at Sand Creek features additional home collections, each catering to different tastes and needs.

- Preamble Collection: Cozy and modern farmhouse-style homes, starting in the low \$300s.
- Townhome Collection: SOLD OUT - with only rental opportunities now available. Two-story urban townhouses

Three fully decorated Preamble

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featuring up to 1,695 square feet and attached two-car garages.

- **Portrait Collection:** Flexible singlefamily homes with optional accessory dwelling units (ADUs) for potential rental income. Starting in the \$500s.
- **Midtown Collection:** Chic twostory and three-story designs priced

from the mid \$400s offering up to 2,100 square feet of living space.

• Classic Collection: Collection Closeout! Only a handful of ranchstyle homes boasting 1,600 to over 3,000 square feet are available. Starting in the mid \$500s.

Experience the Preamble Collection

Classic Homes invites prospective buyers and members of the community to the brand new Model Complex located at 3595 Greenways Main Blvd., Colorado Springs, CO 80922.

For more information, visit classichomes.com/project/ greenways or call 719-249-8212 to speak with a representative.

About Classic Homes

Classic Homes, a locally owned Colorado Springs-based builder, is renowned for quality craftsmanship and unparalleled customer service. The company has earned "Excellence in Customer Service" awards from the Better Business Bureau and has been voted "Best Homebuilder" by *The Gazette* for 18 consecutive years.

The Preamble Collection at Greenways at Sand Creek marks an exciting milestone for Classic Homes, providing affordable and stylish housing for a diverse array of buyers. Whether you're a first-time homebuyer, growing family, or someone seeking a simpler lifestyle, the Preamble Collection at Greenways is the start of something big.















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Meet Your Inspector

Inspections Over Coffee Inspector Jerry Forsythe

What brought you to this field?

For many years, I ran a large home appraisal branch. I was ready for a change and knew I wanted to do something where I could stay connected with the client relationships I'd built over the years, which brought me to my job as a home inspector.

What do you love about your work?

I love being out in the field (not at a desk), meeting and working with great people and seeing interesting properties.

Fun facts:

My wife and I have been married for 19 years, and we have three sons who play many sports throughout the year. I enjoy hunting, fishing, skiing, being outdoors, and spending time with my family. I also coach football and lacrosse.



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ON-CALL ASSISTANT

AIMEE GARSKE & MICHAEL SHENUK

BY BRIAN GOWDY • CASA BAY PHOTOGRAPHY

In the fast-paced world of real estate, time is a luxury many agents simply don't have. From showings to social media, the sheer number of tasks involved in running a successful real estate business can be overwhelming. Enter The On-Call Assistant, a gamechanging service co-founded by Michael Shenuk and Aimee Garske, designed to give real estate agents their time back.

A Business Born from Necessity

The idea for The On-Call Assistant stemmed from a simple yet pressing need—Michael, a seasoned real estate agent, found himself struggling to keep up with the workload. While he required assistance, hiring a full-time assistant for thousands of dollars a month wasn't a feasible solution. Instead, he began working with Aimee on an as-needed basis. The system worked so well that he realized other agents could benefit from the same model. And thus, The On-Call Assistant was born.

Overcoming Initial Challenges

Like any innovative idea, getting others to see the value in The On-Call Assistant wasn't immediate. Many real estate agents were reluctant to relinquish control, hesitant to trust someone else with the many details of their transactions. However, as word spread and agents experienced the benefits firsthand, trust grew, and business steadily increased. The company's flexibility and ability to offer both licensed and unlicensed assistance helped solidify its place in the industry.

What Sets Them Apart

Unlike virtual assistants who can only provide remote services, The On-Call Assistant offers hands-on support. Their team can physically handle tasks such as sign placement,



lockbox installation, pop-by deliveries, and even property showings. With a combination of traditional assistants' administrative strengths and the physical presence of a full-time employee, they provide a well-rounded solution to real estate professionals.

Additionally, they specialize in time-consuming tasks that agents often neglect, such as MLS input, database management, marketing, and social media management. Aimee shared an example of a client who hadn't posted on social media in two years. After just two posts per week managed by The On-Call Assistant, the agent started receiving engagement and compliments on her marketing efforts.

Giving Real Estate Agents Their Time Back

At its core, The On-Call Assistant is about freedom. Whether it's allowing agents to take a much-needed vacation or simply ensuring they can focus on income-generating activities, the service empowers professionals to work smarter, not harder. Michael and Aimee often hear from grateful clients who say their assistance has been a "lifesaver."

For agents hesitant to delegate, they recommend starting small—perhaps hiring The On-Call Assistant for social media or a single showing. Once agents see how seamless the process is, they often expand their usage, realizing just how much more they can accomplish when they aren't bogged down by routine tasks.

Growth and the Future

Despite the natural fluctuations in the real estate market, The On-Call Assistant has grown year over year. Even during slowdowns, their business has thrived as agents look for costeffective alternatives to full-time staff. Looking ahead, Michael and Aimee plan to expand beyond Colorado and into new states, bringing their innovative model to even more real estate professionals in need of flexible support.

More Than Just Business

Beyond their professional lives, both Michael and Aimee are busy parents.



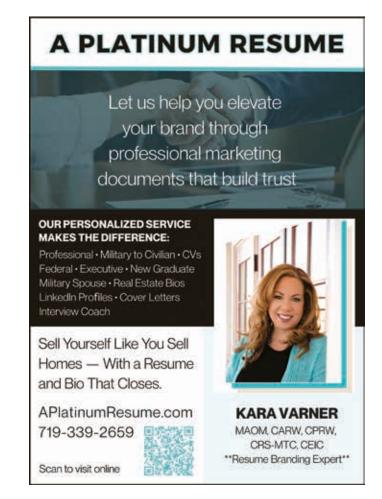
Aimee, a single mom, juggles work with supporting her two teenage children in their travel sports endeavors.

Michael, part of a blended family, manages a household with five teenagers. Both enjoy traveling and spending time outdoors, values that align perfectly with their mission of giving others the freedom to enjoy their own lives outside of work.

Get Started Today

For real estate agents looking to regain control of their time and maximize their productivity, The On-Call Assistant offers an unparalleled solution. Whether it's help with listings, showings, database management, or marketing, Michael and Aimee's team is ready to step in and make life easier.

To get started, simply text or email Aimee at (719) 602-9490 / aimee@ theoncallassistant.com with the task you have in mind and she will get started. Don't let the endless to-do list hold you back—take the first step toward a more efficient and balanced career with The On-Call Assistant. www.theoncallassistant.com







SPECIAL FEATURE



Katie Ely, Karen Britton, Catherine Adkins, Marti Bourn, Jessy Delacruz, Sarah Barber

BEAHOMES of THE CUTTING EDGE, REALTORS®

CASA BAY PHOTOGRAPHY

The BEA Hive: A New Way to Thrive in Real Estate

In an industry where the idea of a "team" often comes with hierarchy and obligation, the women of *BEA* — Bourn, Ely, and Adkins—have created something refreshingly different.

It all started with a simple bee pin. When Marti Bourn handed out those pins at the beginning of their real estate journeys, it was a lighthearted way to mark their new status as "busy bees." But as time went on and each agent grew into her own, that bee became a symbol of something more: shared hustle, mutual respect, and collective support.

When they all landed at The Cutting Edge, they noticed something fun—Bourn, Ely, Adkins. *BEA*. It stuck. Not as

a formal team, not with a designated leader, but as a cooperative group of independent agents who simply chose to work better together.

"We never wanted a structured team,"
Katie shared. "No one's in charge, and
no one owes anyone anything. But
we show up for each other—whether
that's helping at a showing, covering an
inspection, or just offering support."

Katie Ely, whose business was growing faster than she could manage alone, began referring leads to other agents who are now in the co-op. That small act of generosity snowballed. Sarah and Jessy, early recipients of those referrals, used the boost to build thriving businesses of their own. Within a year, they both purchased homes—an empowering milestone that spoke volumes about the power of community over competition.

Soon, Marti and Catherine began doing the same, and eventually partnered with Karen. Now, the whole group supports one another through partnerships, shared deals, and boots-on-the-ground help—no red tape, no strings attached.

The result? Each agent remains independent, equal, and empowered—yet also surrounded by a network of women who have each other's backs. In a challenging market, that kind of support is invaluable.

The BEA hive isn't a team in the traditional sense. It's something better: proof that you don't have to go it alone to stay independent—and that sometimes, all it takes is a bee pin and a little belief in each other to build something extraordinary.

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BEA Homes at The Cutting Edge, REALTORS®

CASA BAY **PHOTOGRAPHY**

From Grit to Grace—A **Journey Fueled by Heart**

Some people choose real estate for the schedule, others for the income. But for Katie Ely, it was something much deeper—a calling born from humility and an unwavering belief that people deserve someone in their corner.

Katie's story began in Westminster, Maryland, where she was the youngest of three kids in a single-parent home. She spent her early years climbing trees, exploring the woods, and savoring summer moments on the coast with her dad, where she first fell in love with the ocean. During these joyful experiences, Katie was soaking up lessons about independence, empathy, and resilience—qualities that would later become the bedrock of her real estate career. "I didn't grow up with much, but I didn't know it," Katie shared. "I just knew I had a mom who worked hard, siblings who looked out for me, and a world of possibility outside our door. My mom modeled a strong work ethic that has been foundational for the way I show up for my business today."

A Winding Path with **Purpose at Every Turn**

That early sense of independence stuck with her and she started working right out of high school—first in clerical roles, then at a car dealership, and eventually in the tax department of a national staffing company, where she built a career for over a decade. "I loved it. It was organized, structured—very much in my wheelhouse."

When she moved to Colorado Springs in 2015 with her family, Katie continued working remotely in the same role she'd held for years, but eventually she started feeling a little isolated.

"I'd go for walks downtown on my lunch breaks, just to feel connected," she recalled. "I'd wave to the same people and smile at strangers. I realized how much I missed people real, in-person connections."

Then came a conversation that changed everything. "I met a teacher who had just transitioned into real estate. She told me how much she loved helping people, guiding them through big life decisions—and I thought, 'That's what I'm supposed to do!""

From Zero to Forty

Katie doesn't ease into things she goes all in. After juggling her full-time job and studying on nights and weekends, she officially became licensed in June 2018. Within four days, she had her first buyer under contract and thirty days later, her first

closing. By the end of her first full year, she'd closed over 40 deals.

"It was intense," she shared. "I was learning as I went, sometimes crying between showings, constantly second-guessing myself. But every client I helped reminded me why I was doing this. I knew I was right where I belonged." Katie gave everything to her clients and her business sometimes at the expense of herself. It was a necessary lesson: that she serves people best when she's taking care of herself, too. "Real estate is so personal for me. But I realized I had to care for myself too, or I wouldn't last."

This new awareness prompted Katie to make some changes. She started setting boundaries and carving out time for rest. She also learned that saying "no" sometimes was an act of



love—not selfishness. She admits that she's still learning, but is better at finding balance now.

Turning Struggles Into Strength

Katie's early hustle didn't just build a business, but a reputation. Clients describe Katie as warm, grounded, and fiercely loyal. She's the one who stays on the phone until the fear passes, shows up with a check when an unexpected expense threatens to derail a closing, and drives hours just to find a client an affordable home. "I never want someone to feel like they're not worth the effort. Everyone deserves a place to call home."

She has a heart for first-time buyers, military families, and people with tight budgets or unique challenges. "I know what it feels like to worry about money. I know how vulnerable it is to trust someone with a major life decision. I take that seriously." Katie admitted those values go back to her roots. "I didn't grow up with a lot of money, so I understand what it's like to count every dollar."

That kind of heart doesn't go unnoticed. Many of Katie's clients become lifelong friends. "I get invited to weddings, baby showers... I even had one client send me photos from their daughter's graduation four years after I helped them buy a house. That's the good stuff."

And when deals fall apart or stress takes over? "I've learned to pause, breathe, and remember that it's not just about houses—it's about people."

A Career Anchored in Service

Katie joined The Cutting Edge, Realtors® because she saw more than a brokerage—she saw a community. "The collaboration, the culture, the leadership—it felt like home. I want to grow in this business, with people who care."

That same mindset fuels her involvement in Peak Producers, where she currently serves as Secretary. Giving back to organizations like Springs Rescue Mission and Dream Centers has become a cornerstone of her career. "Serving the community reminds me why I started this journey in the first place."

Katie was honored as one of Real Producers' Top 50 agents and nominated for the World Changer award—an honor she holds close to her heart. "That one meant the most," she reflected. "Because it wasn't about numbers. It was about who I am when no one's looking." But ask her what means the most, and she'll point to a client's handwritten thank-you note, or a teary hug at the closing table. "Those moments are everything to me."

She is grateful for mentors like Marti Bourn for helping her stay grounded and true to herself. "Marti showed me that you don't have to become someone else to succeed in real estate. You can be kind, you can be real—and still be excellent."

The Heart of Her Why

Behind Katie's drive is a tight-knit family she adores: her husband Dave, her son Kaleb and his wife Bailey, her stepdaughter Leya, and her greatest joy

I DIDN'T GROW UP WITH A LOT OF MONEY, SO I UNDERSTAND WHAT IT'S LIKE TO COUNT EVERY DOLLAR."



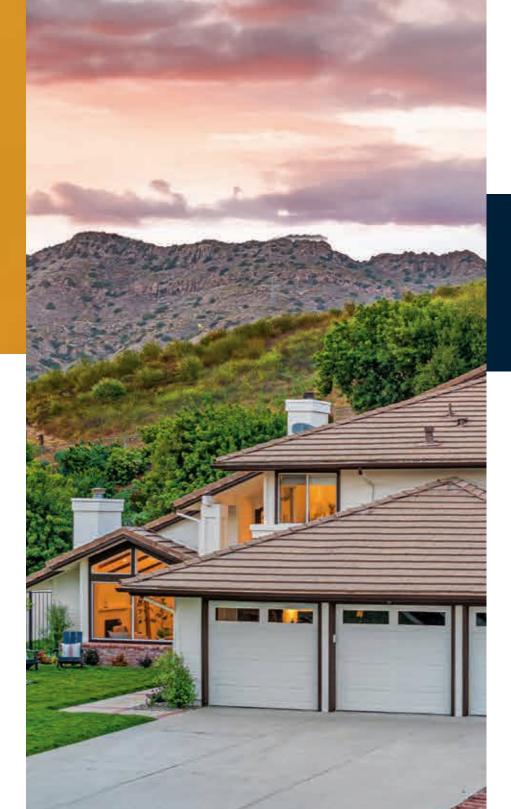
of all—her grandson Kasen, who affectionately calls her "Mammy." "Becoming a mom was the greatest gift," Katie says. "But being a Grammy? That changed everything. That little boy has my whole heart."

Outside of work, she's the first to book a beach trip, say yes to a concert, or plan a spontaneous road trip. "I love seafood, sunshine, and good company; and if country or classic rock is playing in the background, even better."

Always Showing Up

If there's a through-line in Katie's story, it's this: she shows up. For her clients, her community, her family, and for herself. "I've learned that success isn't just about the numbers. It's about how you treat people. It's about showing up, doing the right thing, and building a life you're proud of—one relationship at a time. I want to be the person who makes life a little easier for someone else. Whether it's helping a client close on their first home or paying for someone's groceries in line at Walmart—I believe every small act matters."

Real estate may be her profession. But service—that's Katie's calling.





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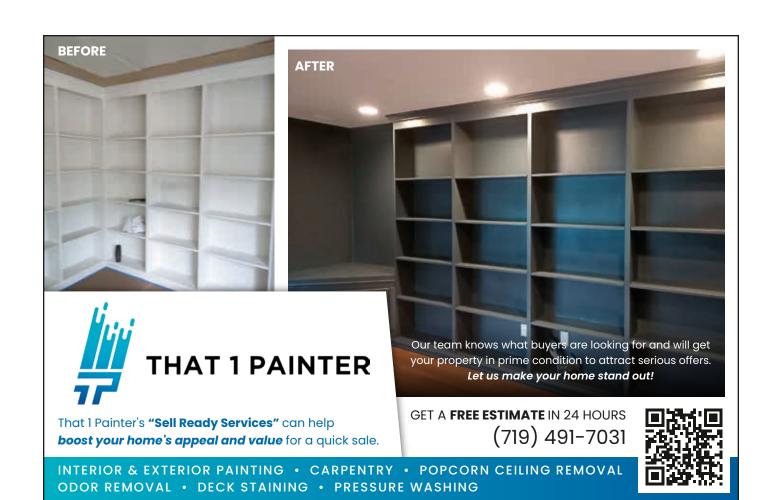
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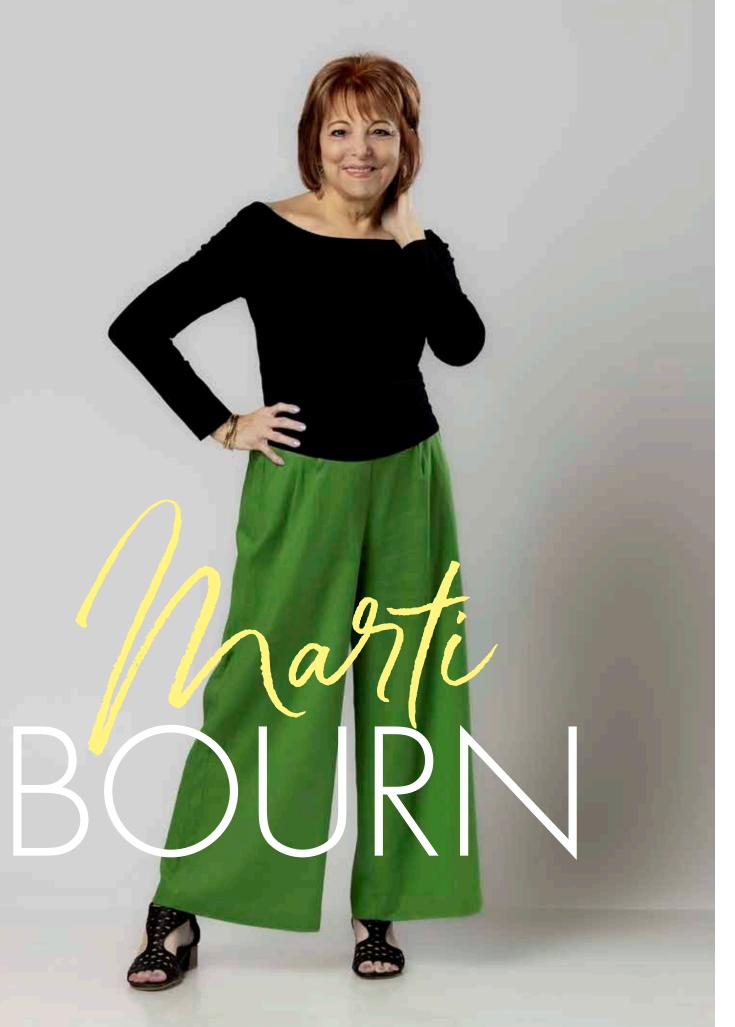












BEA Homes at The Cutting Edge, REALTORS®

CASA BAY PHOTOGRAPHY

When Passion Finds Its Path

If you had told Marti Bourn ten years ago that she'd be one of the most respected agents in Colorado Springs real estate, she might've chuckled politely and pointed you back toward her corporate office. After all, she had spent 28 years climbing the ranks in management, leading teams, earning global travel perks, and thriving in the structure of corporate America.

But sometimes life nudges us toward the dreams we've quietly shelved for "someday." For Marti, that nudge came in the form of company-wide restructuring; a moment that others might see as an ending—but for Marti, she saw a doorway. "I loved my job, but deep down, I knew there was another chapter waiting to be written. I'd always been interested in real estate and the timing finally felt right."

Reinvention with Heart

Born in Indiana, Marti grew up moving around as a military kid.

"My dad was in the service, and music was a huge part of our lives—he played saxophone in the military band and always had jazz playing at home." That blend of discipline and creativity shaped her early worldview.

But it was Colorado Springs that eventually claimed her heart.

"This is home; it's where I've spent most of my adult life, and it's where I've built the life I love."

In 2013, she earned her real estate license and dove in as an independent agent. Within just a few months, she knew she needed something more. "I'd worked in a team environment for years. I knew how powerful it was to learn and grow together."

She joined a team that was just forming, mentored by a broker



who took the time to truly teach the business. Marti didn't waste a second—she sold 24 homes her first year. "I was all in. And every year just built on the last."

A Leap of Faith

Despite her early success, Marti still battled the same inner voice many new agents face: Can I really do this on my own? A response came when she joined The Cutting Edge, Realtors®. "Amy and Gary—the managing brokers—told me, 'Marti, you don't need to be on a team. Give yourself three months. If you still want to be on a team after that, we'll make it happen."

Turns out, they were right. That leap of faith became a turning point in Marti's journey; she stopped asking if she was ready.

Guiding with Grace

Today, Marti leads with experience, warmth, and a deep belief in the power of service. Her ideal clients? "Everyone. But I especially love first-time buyers. Helping someone buy their very first home—that's huge. It's emotional. It's personal. And I'm honored to be a part of it." She also has a deep heart for active duty military and veterans. "Growing up as a military brat, I understand the lifestyle. I know



the sacrifices. Helping those who serve our country find a home—it's incredibly meaningful to me."

Clients often describe Marti as calm, confident, and always in their corner. She brings the same intentionality she once used to manage global teams to now manage life-changing transitions for people right here in her community.

Paying It Forward

Mentorship has been a consistent thread through Marti's life. Early on in real estate, she found invaluable guidance in Jason and Jenea Daniels. "They told me, 'We can teach you real estate, but we can't teach the heart you already have.' That meant everything."

Eventually, Marti became a mentor for new agents, pouring back into others the same belief that was once poured into her. Now, with BEA Homes at The Cutting Edge, Marti has found a perfect place to thrive: a brokerage that champions independence while offering community, guidance, and support.

The Moments That Matter

Ask Marti what she loves most about real estate, and her answer isn't about stats or sales. "It's the stories. The family selling their home of 30 years. The newlyweds buying their first place. The retired couple downsizing to a new chapter. Life is always moving—and I get to be a part of those moments."

Outside of real estate, Marti recharges through antique shopping, interior design, and music. She and her husband, Harold, love going to concerts and spending time with their pets: a goldendoodle named Laramie, a hound named Cheyanne, and a Ragdoll-mix cat named Miso. Their life is full of laughter, good food, and quiet joy.

A Heart for Connection

Being featured in *Colorado*Springs Real Producers is more than a recognition to Marti—it's a reflection of something deeper.

"This business can be competitive, but this magazine reminds us that we're also a community.

It brings us together. And I'm so honored to be part of it."

Marti is the kind of agent who makes you feel safe, seen, and celebrated—not just through a transaction, but through a relationship. "My passion is helping people reach their goals. If I can be even a small part of that journey, I'm exactly where I'm meant to be."



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CASA BAY PHOTOGRAPHY

Finding Her Place

Born and raised in Springfield, Illinois, Catherine Adkins' journey to Colorado Springs wasn't supposed to be permanent. Her husband Phil took a 3–5 year project at the Pueblo Chemical Depot and thirteen years later, they're still here—firmly planted, deeply connected, and thriving.

Catherine's professional life began in banking, where she worked her way into management. Although she enjoyed her role, she decided to stay home for a year after the birth of her son. When she returned to work, she changed course and accepted an entry-level position doing school enrollments. While she initially didn't want to be the boss again, deep down, she missed it.

That's when Phil took a leap to launch Catherine's real estate career by enrolling her in school and encouraging her to quit her job.

Bootcamp and the Big Jump

Earning her license in 2019, Catherine quickly discovered that real estate was no easy road. "To even get on the team I applied to, I had to complete a two-month bootcamp," she recalled. That meant cold calling, door knocking, taking courses through the managing brokerage, and setting a required number of appointments for other agents. "It was tough," she admitted, "but I had an amazing support system."

Her mentor Marti Bourn, along with friend and fellow agent Katie Ely, were instrumental in helping her build early success. "We all worked closely together. We hustled. And we were proud of what we accomplished."

Her first year was a whirlwind. Catherine's three children—then very young—were often along for the ride. "They didn't always love being in the car or sitting in conference rooms, but they were with me. And they got to see their mom working hard to build something from the ground up."

Just as she was getting her footing, Marti encouraged Catherine to strike out on her own. "That was even scarier than quitting my job. On the team, I had leads, structure, and support. Going independent meant I had to completely change how I did business."

With Marti's encouragement and the backing of Amy and Gary at The Cutting Edge, Catherine joined BEA Homes and made the leap to full independence. "I didn't think I could do it, but Marti believed I could. I didn't want to let her down."

By the end of her first year as an independent agent, Catherine was named a Peak Producer—an honor she didn't even know existed at the time. "Katie had to explain it to me - but once I realized what it meant, I was so proud."

It's the Grit, not the Glamour

For the first few years of her career, Catherine specialized in first-time homebuyers, particularly veterans. "I love helping people through this huge life step. It's an honor to help those who have served our country."

Now, in her sixth year, her business has evolved. More and more, her clients are past buyers returning for their next move, or friends and family sending referrals. "That's the greatest compliment: Getting



a text from someone saying, 'Hey, my friend said I have to call you'—it means the world."

Her real estate journey has become a family affair, too. Phil, now a licensed agent, helps with the business. Their kids are involved in open houses and their daughter Natalie can recite contract clauses with the best of them. The boys help with signs and setup. They are truly a team.

Catherine is proud of her journey to helping clients find an affordable home that they can grow in. She loves that there's always a fun story to tell, too, like the time Catherine found herself chasing a goat through a house in Cañon City... in heels. Catherine learned that your clothes don't matter as much as your attitude and that the glamor isn't what gets the job done—it's the grit.

"Just Me" — And That's Enough

Outside of real estate, Catherine finds joy in the everyday moments like hiking with the kids, volunteering at school, watching Natalie dance, cheering on Coy's baseball team, or helping their youngest Paul master martial arts. Sundays are sacred in the Adkins home—especially during football season. (Go Bears!)

In closing, Catherine shared that being featured with her team means the world to her. "It's very rare to have a group of agents work the way we do and support each other like the BEAs do." Catherine admits that when she was first approached about participating in this feature, she hesitated. "I'm just me. I keep to myself and get my work done." She's humble, hard-working, and deeply committed to the people she serves. Catherine isn't one to chase headlines—she's out chasing dreams for her clients.





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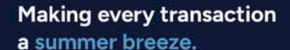






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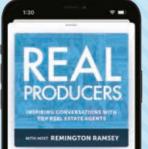
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BEA Homes at The Cutting Edge, REALTORS®

CASA BAY PHOTOGRAPHY

Finding Her Path Through People and Possibility

Sarah Barber and her husband moved to Colorado Springs from Virginia. They didn't have jobs at the time, but with her sister already in Highlands Ranch, Colorado and her husband originally from the area, it felt like the right place to start a new chapter.

While her husband began building his law firm, Sarah took a job as a barista at Starbucks, where she worked for two years. She was also teaching online at Liberty University as an adjunct professor in the School of Government. It was during this time that her interest in real estate started to grow as she and her husband began looking for their own home. She became intrigued by the whole process and curious about making a career change.

The Right People at the Right Time

Her potential path into real estate became clearer after she met Lorraine Amos, who invited her to interview at The Cutting Edge. She earned her real estate license in September 2020 and joined Lorraine's team. Under Lorraine's mentorship, Sarah learned what she calls the "science" of the business—how to navigate contracts and the technical aspects of real estate.

A little later, through an introduction by Ali Tuttle, Sarah met Katie Ely. They hit it off right away, and Katie encouraged her to go solo. Katie was looking to partner with solo agents, and Sarah saw the value in the support and collaboration. Soon after, she joined the BEAs—Katie's group of solo agents who work alongside and support each other.

Focusing on What Matters

Sarah appreciates the flexibility and variety that real estate brings. "Every day is different and I get to meet all sorts of people," she shared. She enjoys growing her business organically through relationships and regularly connects with clients through open houses, friends, and family.

Outside of real estate, Sarah enjoys hiking, cooking, visiting new places, and spending time at the beach. She's a fan of the Chicago Cubs and says that popcorn and wine is her favorite snack. She enjoys trips to the dog park with her golden-doodle and berna-doodle, and also has a cat.

Family is central to Sarah's life and she loves being a wife and mother. Sarah is a proud mom of three—ages 23, 21, and 20. Her oldest son is married and is a helicopter mechanic in the U.S Army. Her middle daughter is an esthetician locally and her youngest is recently married and living in Virginia with her new husband. Sarah recently became a grandmother and spending time with her grandson Dakota is something she cherishes, exclaiming: "I love being a grandma!"

Looking back, one of the things that surprised Sarah most about her career in real estate is the strong professional community in Colorado Springs. "I've grown as a person in so many ways," she reflected. "I've always been a dreamer, and there's no ceiling in real estate. That gets me excited. You never know who you are going to meet to get you to the next deal."



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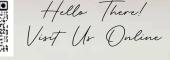


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Agent & Vendor Snapshots











1. Wayne Helm, owner of Hommati

After building a successful career in sales and marketing—including helping grow a \$100 million business—Wayne Helm pivoted during the pandemic to launch a Hommati real estate media franchise in El Paso County. With top-tier training and a willingness to ask for honest feedback, he quickly sharpened his craft and began building relationships with local agents. Wayne's unique approach focuses on selling the *agent*, not just the home, by providing high-quality media that strengthens their brand and boosts lead generation. His philosophy is grounded in dependability, innovation, and a genuine commitment to client success. Wayne's services include high-definition photography, video, and virtual tours—all powered by cutting-edge technology. His vision is to become the most trusted name in real estate media in El Paso County. Along the way, he hopes to grow his team and continue delivering unmatched service and quality. Outside work, Wayne enjoys exploring Colorado's hidden gems with his wife and connecting with people wherever he goes.

2. Jennifer 'JZ' Wood

Meet Jennifer 'JZ' Wood! Originally from Idaho, JZ has dual-citizenship and spent 13 years in Australia before landing in Denver. With a background in property management and a passion for real estate, IZ made the leap into the industry after returning to the U.S. in 2010. She built her business from the ground up, despite knowing no one in Denver, and soon found success. After relocating to Colorado Springs in 2019,

IZ rebuilt her business with the help of relationships from Denver, and within six months, she was back in action. JZ enjoys giving back to causes like Tri-Lakes Cares, Habitat for Humanity, and the Pikes Peak YMCA. She loves traveling with her husband, Dr. David Feuer, and exploring new places, the most recent being Bhutan, Asia! New Zealand and Australia are on the horizon this year to visit her two daughters who have returned downunder.

3. Candice Graham

Candice Graham grew up in Montrose, CO but longed to experience a bigger city. She moved to Denver and began working in the real estate industry at the age of 18. Her first job as an office manager ultimately opened her to the possibilities of a career as an agent, then she worked as an assistant to top producers while she attended real estate school. After a short pause to welcome her son, Candice earned her license in 2005 and later moved to Colorado Springs. She worked for various companies including Exit Realty, Richmond American Homes, and Keller Williams Hope Realty before opening 8z Colorado Springs with her cousin, Sumer Liebold in 2009. She was a managing broker until recently and is now a solo agent focusing on building a small team. When she's not working, Candice enjoys hiking, paddle boarding, playing golf, and spending time with her friends and family.

4. Rachel Morris

With a background in Criminal Justice and Psychology, Rachel Morris enjoyed

a variety of careers before shifting to property management. Her boss at the time encouraged her to pursue her real estate license, which she earned in 2018. After moving to Colorado Springs in 2020, she started selling real estate full-time and joined the Summit Group in 2022. Rachel has a heart for educating people, especially first-time home buyers, and loves seeing their joy at purchasing their first home. During her free time, Rachel loves hiking, traveling, and hanging out with her partner and 5-month-old daughter.

5. Kara Baretich

After graduating high school, Kara Baretich wanted to travel and found a job as a Customer Service Rep for a cruise ship liner. Later, she graduated from UCCS and taught elementary students until she decided to take a break and stay home with her two daughters. She met Dakota and Jenny Shafer, whose kids went to the same daycare as Kara's kids. Through her connection with the Shafers, she became intrigued about real estate as a career and two years later, decided to pursue it. She earned her license in 2017 and now knows she has fallen into her passion. She loves how different every day is and has a heart for educating her clients. When she's not working, Kara loves to hang out with her two daughters, read (especially thrillers), snowboard, ride her bicycle, and work out.









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