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East Texas Real Estate Group

Rising Star: Ronnie Withers Dwell Realty

Partner Spotlight: Collin Phaup Goosehead Insurance -Phaup Agency



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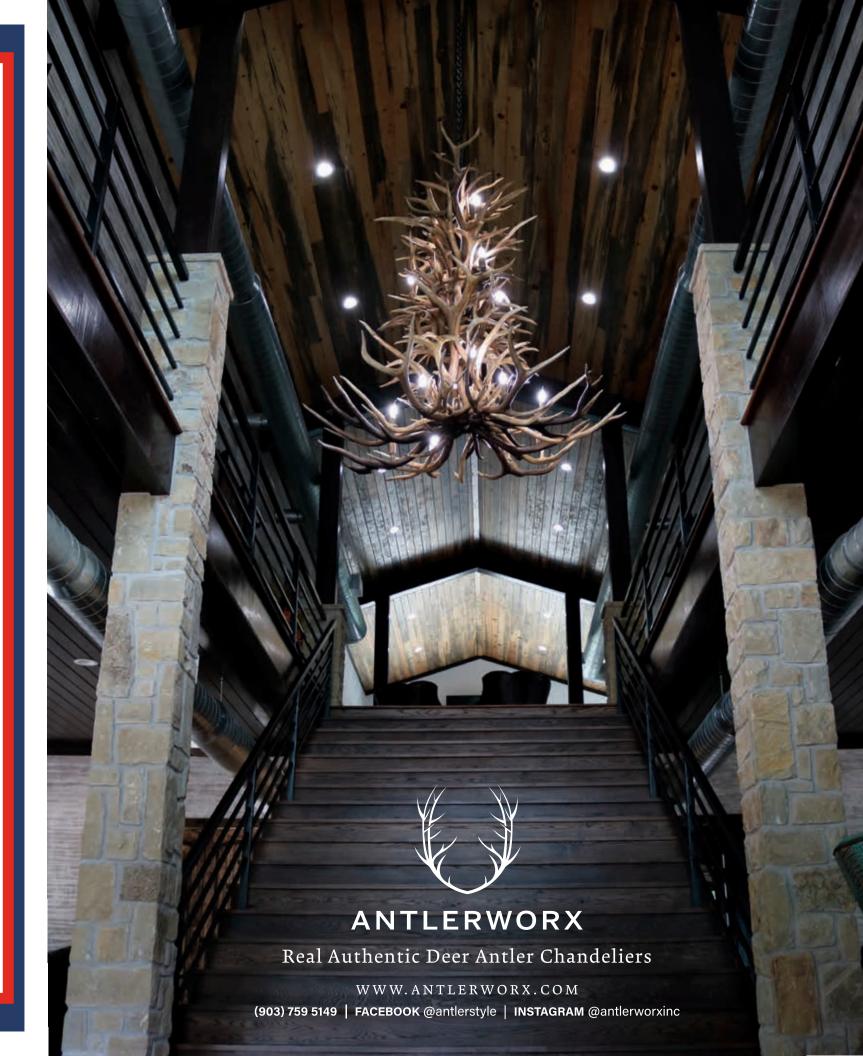
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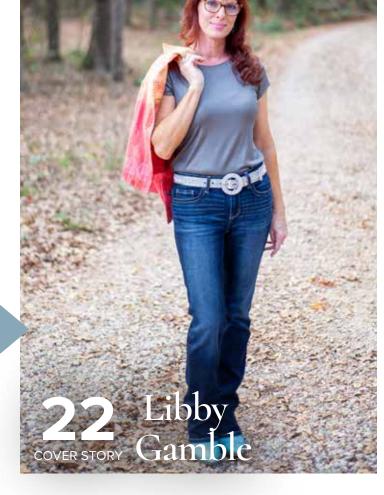
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Meet The **Team**







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WHAT IS REAL PRODUCERS?

Welcome to East Texas Real Producers!

Providing a platform to celebrate and unite the top real estate professionals across East Texas BY CHERIKA JOHNSON

It's my honor to bring this community to our East Texas area and to celebrate everything that makes you all an outstanding part of the East Texas Real Estate Community. I look forward to highlighting your accomplishments, encouraging your dreams, and recognizing you for your continued excellence in serving your clients.

Real Producers started as a simple idea in 2015 in Indianapolis and has spread across the nation like wildfire. The Real Producers community is now available in 130 locations and is changing the way the real estate community interacts across America. As we embark on this journey, I promise to create platforms to connect this community and forums to recognize and celebrate what makes each one of you iconic. In years to come, I hope to interview every one of you so that I can share your success stories in future issues. I also look forward to celebrating you at our events, providing tools and connections to help you grow your business and representing your passion for this industry that we all share.



Here are some quick facts about Real Producers:

DISTRIBUTION: This magazine will arrive in the mailboxes of the TOP 300 agents in East Texas each month. These 300 agents are determined through compiled MLS data from 2024. If you are receiving a hard copy of the publication, it is because you belong to the elite group of the top 10%.

CONTENT: This publication is all about YOU, the East Texas real estate community. We will be writing personal and unique stories on members of this community, giving you a platform to inspire greatness in others. As we grow, we will continue to add fresh content focused entirely on the top 10% and our Preferred Partners. We have NOTHING to sell to real estate agents as it is absolutely FREE to be featured in this publication. To be featured, the agents must be nominated by a peer, leader or influencer in the East Texas real estate market. We always encourage nominations and love to hear about agents that are making a huge impact in our market.

PREFERRED PARTNERS: Anyone listed as a "Preferred Partner" in the index of this publication will also be a part of this exclusive community. You will see them advertised in every issue, attending our private events and being a part of our online community. We do not cold call businesses off the street to join us, nor do we allow any business that approaches us to be a part. One or many of you have recommended every single one of these Preferred Partners that you see in this publication. Our goal is to give you as many resources as possible to add to your arsenal so that you always remain that trusted referral source to your clients and customers.

EVENTS: Along with our monthly publication, we will be hosting various social and educational events throughout the year. Our goal is to bring the best of the best together while supporting our local communities. And we fully intend to have a good time doing it! We will be communicating information on upcoming events through the publication and social media.

CONTRIBUTION: If you are interested in contributing, nominating REALTORS for certain features, know of additional top-notch affiliate partners who would be a great fit for our community, or would simply like to learn more, please reach out to me anytime. I look forward to meeting with every one of you in the future. I would also like to give a HUGE THANK YOU to the Preferred Partners who jumped on board with us so that we could bring *East Texas Real Producers* to life. Also, a huge shoutout to my team that pulled this together without much guidance. You all are incredible, and this first issue is dedicated to you!

I appreciate you all and look forward to seeing you all at our networking events soon!



CHERIKA JOHNSON

Owner/Publisher - *East Texas Real Producers* Cherika.Johnson@n2co.com 903-399-3139

Cherika John



ALL ABOUT EAST TEXAS REAL PRODUCERS

Q: WHO RECEIVES THIS MAGAZINE?

A: The top 300 agents in East Texas based on volume for the previous year and our Preferred Partners. There are thousands of agents in the region and you, in this elite group, are the cream of the crop. Just to be included in this group is an accomplishment that testifies to your hard work, dedication, and proficiency.

Q: Do Real Estate Agents Have To Pay For Magazines Or Events?

A: NO! The magazine and events are FREE to agents and funded by the partners who advertise.

Q: What Kind Of Content Will Be Featured?

A: This is all about you. We'll do personal and unique stories on members in the community, providing you with a platform to inspire others. As we grow, we'll add fresh content focused entirely on you. It costs absolutely nothing for a REALTOR® to be featured. We are not a pay to play model; we write real stories, about Real Producers, and we're always accepting nominations. We will consider anyone brought to our

attention—we don't know everyone's story so we need your help to learn about them!

Q: Who Are Our Partners?

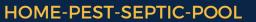
A: Anyone listed as a "Preferred Partner" in the front of the magazine is funding and fueling this community and is an essential part of it. They are the top professionals in their industry. They will have an ad in every issue of the magazine and attend our events. One or many of you have recommended every single Preferred Partner you see in this publication. Our goal is to create a powerhouse network, not only for the best REALTORS® in the area, but the best affiliates as well, so we can grow stronger together.

Q: Does Real Producers Have Events?

A: Yes! Along with the magazine, we will host quarterly events exclusive to this community, where you—the best of the best—get together at local venues to socialize, mastermind, deepen our connections, and better our businesses. We will communicate about events through the magazine and on social media. Stay tuned for info on our launch party this Fall!

Q: How Can I Recommend A Business Or Feature Story?

A: If you are interested in contributing, nominating REALTORS® to be featured, know of top-notch affiliate partners who you believe should be a part of our community, or would simply like to network; email or call us. I look forward to hearing from you! **Email:** Cherika.Johnson@n2co.com





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IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF FAMILY COLLIN PHAUP

the 'OG' of Goosehead Insurance in East Texas

WRITTEN BY DAWN SIMS



When you grow up in a home where both mom and dad have deep roots in service-driven careers, it's no surprise when you fulfill a calling inspired by the footsteps of your family. For Collin Phaup, owner of Goosehead Insurance in Tyler, Texas, his journey into the insurance world might have started with a simple question to his mother—but it's unfolded into something far more meaningful: a legacy of connection, integrity, and transformation.

Collin's story begins right here in East Texas. After meeting his wife, Crystal, in 2004 and returning home from college in Dallas, he did what he had always known to do—get to work. "I've had a job since I was 16. My dad had one rule—never quit one before you've got the next one lined up," he shared. So, with that classic work ethic in his back pocket and the guidance of his two greatest mentors—his mom, a 40-year veteran realtor in Tyler, and his dad, a long-time Farmers Insurance agent—Collin found himself at a fork in the road.

"I asked my mom if I should follow in her footsteps or take the insurance route like Dad," Collin said with a laugh. "She told me, 'If you want to have a wife and a life, go with insurance." What neither of them realized at the time was how Goosehead's real estate-focused model would keep Collin closely tied to both worlds—working the long hours of a realtor, but in the name of insurance.

That deep affection for the real estate industry never faded. "I grew up going on showings with my mom and sitting in open houses. Those are some of my favorite childhood memories," he said. It's this foundational love for the business and community that now fuels Collin's commitment to supporting local agents—not just by writing policies, but by helping them build long-term, thriving businesses through client-focused service.

Tyler has always held a special place in Collin's heart, and it's also where he chose to launch something bold. "Tyler is the biggest little town," he shared. "Starting a business in the same place my dad did was incredibly meaningful. I had the best of both worlds—his guidance and mentorship, but the freedom to do it my way." Stepping away from his father's company to launch the first Goosehead Insurance agency in East Texas was quite the mix of bravery and belief—choosing to take flight without knowing where he'd land. "I guess I was either a genius or a madman," he laughed. "But I know that one of the two tenets of courage is vulnerability, and I leaned into that."

These days, Collin jokes that he's "the OG—the original goose." And in true trailblazer fashion, he's grown his agency from a team of five to twelve, even in the middle of the most challenging insurance market the industry has seen in decades. "It's been tough," he admits. "But this kind of environment separates agents from professionals. A good agent wants to sell you a policy—but a true professional helps you buy the one that's right for you."

And for Collin, that starts with education. "An educated client is a happy client," he says. "I've learned that the best way to avoid problems is to make sure there are no surprises from the beginning." Experience helps too—despite the fact that, as he jokingly says, "I'm so young and fabulous, no one believes I've been in this business for 28 years."

Still, no amount of planning can prepare you for certain calls. Collin recounted one of his toughest moments—a devastating house fire that destroyed a friend's \$750,000 home. "It was a complete loss, but thankfully, the family made it out safely," he said. "I missed his first call, but called him back quickly. I told him, 'We can replace items. We can't replace people.' That moment hit me hard and reminded me why we do this work. It's not about policies—it's about people."

That heart-forward mentality extends far beyond the walls of his agency. Collin supports several organizations that reflect his passion for mental health and community service, including Next Step Community Solutions, Azleway, CampV, and Starbrite Therapeutic Equestrian Center of Tyler. If money were no object, he'd start a nonprofit focused entirely on youth mental health and addiction recovery—a cause close to his heart after losing a cousin to addiction. "I'm already trying to walk that path while running the agency," he shared. "It's about more than business. It's about impact."

Collin's team and family have long been his top priorities. He lives by a few key quotes—"No pressure, no diamonds" and "You grow into the conversations that are happening around you"— and has made it his mission to pass those lessons along to both his children and his agents. "I've learned more from failure than success," he said. "You can't control everything, but you can control your attitude and your effort." He wants them to remember that what you do in life's small moments when no one is watching is telling of who you are and what you'll do in the big ones.

That mindset has carried him through some big milestones and meaningful memories. At home Collin and Crystal are raising their three children—Matthew, 25, who recently joined the agency as a third-generation insurance professional; Katelyn, 15; and Colleen, 10. At work, Collin has found joy in helping his team rise to their own potential, taking a step back from sales himself to focus on growth and mentorship.

Collin even makes space for a little creative expression. "I waited until I was 40 to get a tattoo," he said with a grin. "I chose a lion and a rose—because I'm a Leo, and of course, for the Tyler Rose." But the one that holds the most meaning



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is a Calvin & Hobbes scene inked on the back of his calf. "That cartoon was something my dad and I always shared," he explained. "He gave me a 3-volume, leather-bound collection of the Sunday comics, and after having a vivid dream about it, I knew I had to do it." His voice softens as he adds, "I've been grieving the living loss of my dad to dementia for seven years now." This tattoo, a scene on the back of volume 2 from that collection keeps Collin's connection to the man he will never forget.

When he's not working or mentoring, you'll likely find him outdoors—hunting. golfing, or traveling with his family. He keeps things light-hearted and real, describing himself in three words: unique, humorous, and inspired. And even with all he's accomplished, Collin still sees himself as someone who's just getting started. When asked what kind of legacy he hopes to leave, he doesn't hesitate: "One of connection," he says. "That's what matters most."

In tough professions like real estate and insurance, I often tell people that you have to truly love what you do to see the beauty in it. Through all of the story-telling, laughing and emotional moments shared on the day I interviewed Collin, it was evident that









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Cheerio, England - Hello, East Texas!

Romie Written by Edward allen Featuring Photos by Laney Schroeder

WITHERS

FUN FACT: there are on average 110 more sunny days in Tyler, Texas, than there are in England. That makes Tyler real estate agent Ronnie Withers "a lot happier and a lot nicer" than when he resided in the UK, where in his words, it is "cold, wet, gray, and depressing 99.786% of the time."

After he and his wife moved to Tyler, the couple took a walk down a neighborhood street and waved at a woman sitting on her front porch on her phone—what happened next, according to Withers, was shocking, particularly to Withers, who relates in one of his first videos how in England, many people go to great lengths to avoid eye contact and interaction with strangers: the woman put down her phone and shouted from her porch the iconic "How ya'll doing?" Texas greeting. (Check out his video "5 Reasons I Moved from England to Tyler" and catch Withers' self-deprecating attempt at a Texas accent at the 2:32 mark—it's priceless.) Withers relates this experience he had within the first couple of weeks of his move to Tyler to demonstrate the sense of community he and his wife immediately experienced.

Withers also points out that while the average home in Tyler sells for the mid-\$300's, the average cost of a home in the UK is around \$550,000; furthermore, the average home in Tyler, Withers mentions, is around 2100 square feet while the average home in England is 860 square feet, the size of a very modest apartment in East Texas. These facts are the cornerstones of his assertion that the reasonable





cost of living in Tyler is almost incomprehensible for a UK transplant.

In this first video on his YouTube channel posted over two years ago. Withers lauds the quality of life in Tyler, with its myriad of accessible parks and lakes and the presence of its religious community and specifically extols the Tyler area for its strong Catholic community (he and his wife are devout Catholics), and for the fact that with the number of churches in the area, how it's hard not to get invited to a church once one relocates there.

Let's face it: Withers is sold on Tyler, and he is experiencing great joy in selling Tyler and the Tyler area to his clients.

The journey of Ronnie Withers is one that restores one's faith in the American dream. Formerly a police officer in the UK, Withers used his time awaiting the laborious immigration process to prepare for and pass the real estate exam; he then settled in the Tyler area after marrying his wife Gracie, whom he met while studying in the States.

Fast forward a couple of years, and you'll find Withers a proven real estate agent for Dwell Realty in Tyler, a firm with a total sales volume of \$166 million, about \$8.5 million of which can be attributed to Withers. Recognized by Dwell Realty as a "Platinum Agent," Withers has also been named an "Elite Sales Agent."

Withers has won the social media award from Dwell on two occasions for his prolific work on his YouTube channel: he has uploaded a video biweekly for the past two years. These videos are lively promotions of homes in the Tyler area—a recent video contains footage of his promotion of the Running Meadows West development in Flint, Texas, just "5 minutes south of Tyler." In the video, Withers peers into the camera while donning his "Eat Beef" baseball cap and in his distinctive English accent, he tells his viewers in a rapid fire presentation that if they "want to know what it's like to live, eat, sleep, work, and play in Tyler and the surrounding areas to smash the subscribe button." In this particular video, Withers embraces the rainy day in which his promotional video was filmed and tells his viewers that the little bit of rain in the background reminds him of "being back home in England" and concludes his video with his signature sign-off: "Until next

time—cheerio." A recent viewing of this recent YouTube video showed 2,300 subscribers, all of whom no doubt enjoy his fast-paced, no-nonsense walking tours of Tyler area construction and developments presented with an entertaining nod to his UK roots.

Perhaps his success can be attributed to his guest, in his own words, to be "consistently good" instead of "occasionally great." A viewing of his videos defines how Withers has now been a Tyler realtor long enough to update some of his initial videos of a couple of years ago, demonstrative of his determination to keep his viewers informed of the Tyler and Tyler area real estate climate.

Withers defines success as the "ability to leave an impact on someone else's life in a good way." And how he translates that outlook into his role as an accomplished real estate agent is



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to get people into their dream homes while removing as much stress as possible for both the buyer and seller. He feels it is his job to take his clients' stress on his own shoulders. The end result of such an approach, he reveals, is that helping other families locate

their dream home makes it possible to provide for Withers' own family.

Speaking of his own family, Withers enthusiastically credits his beautiful wife Gracie and their newly adopted infant son Alfie as his biggest inspiration



and motivation. Topping his list of activities he enjoys, he includes "hanging out with Gracie and Alfie, going to church, and working out."

A recent check of his YouTube channel shows 95 videos under the theme "Living in Tyler, Texas." One must wonder how he is able to strike a balance between his work and his obvious devotion to family. When questioned about maintaining this delicate work/family balance, Withers commented that "there are times where it'll be mostly work and when it's mostly family." He advises that "sometimes you need to just leave your phone in a different room and ignore it—unless negotiating a deal!"

UK transplant Ronnie Withers has already established himself through his work as one of Tyler's most enthusiastic cheerleaders and feels it is his calling to "to take away as much stress as possible" from his clients and help people realize that success in the real estate field should be measured upon much more than the size of a commission. He feels the key to success is to determine one or two ways of generating business and go "all in on them and stay consistent." Doing so, Withers has concluded, has enabled him to ascribe to his belief that "the harder you work, the luckier you get!"



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She grew up in Rusk, Texas, out on 50+ acres where her childhood was filled with horses, dogs, and rodeo events like barrel racing and breakaway roping. "Growing up in a small, rural town taught me the unique, slow pace of country living," she shared. "It also instilled the value of supporting local businesses." And with a mama who ran everything from a flower shop and catering business to a T-shirt shop, it's safe to say entrepreneurship is in her blood.

Libby's road to real estate wasn't part of the original plan. In fact, it came out of a season of burnout."I don't know that I wanted to become a realtor as much as I needed to get out of education," she told me honestly. After nearly two decades of serving as a teacher, curriculum specialist, assistant principal, and finally campus principal, she found herself in a system that no longer aligned with her heart. "I was ready to get out of a system that valued test scores over kids and their wellbeing." Her mom, who had been in real estate for over 20 years, encouraged her to take a leap—and she did. "I'm glad to be back in a career where I can focus on people, rather than measuring their performance."

People. That's a word she uses a lot—and with good reason. It's clear that relationships are at the heart of everything she does. "The best part of what I do is building relationships and friendships with the people I serve," she said, smiling. "It always feels strange when a transaction is complete and the daily talking and messaging with my clients slows down or ends. We've built a connection that's more than just buying or selling a home together."

That heart for connection started with her own mentors. "My mom was my biggest mentor in real estate—and in life," she said.
But beyond her mom, there was another voice of encouragement that made a lasting impact. "Yes! Kerissa Payne," she told me when I asked if anyone else had offered guidance through the years. "She's now with Keller Williams Legacy, but we met years ago at Remax. I used to call

her during the hard seasons—when a transaction was especially tough or I just needed to talk through something." She paused for a moment and then added, "She always said something to me that has stuck with me and I can hear her words even today: 'You're a good agent. You're always trying to do right by people. You are a good agent. Don't forget that." Her voice softened. "It was a simple yet great reminder that I think all agents need sometimes."

Like many wise professionals, she values having more than one voice pouring into her life. "I've always thought it was good to have multiple people speaking into my life—people I can trust. They offer different perspectives because of their experience, not just in real estate, but in life. It's even biblical—'Seek wise counsel...' There is nothing like experience to help others."

Still, while she's learned a great deal from others, she's also made a point to do some things differently—especially from her mother. "My mom was a workaholic," she laughed. "It was a running joke in our family. If she was on the phone with you and got another call, she'd say 'I gotta go,' and just hang up. We all laughed and said, 'Honey is always zooming around in her car selling real estate!' Honey is what we call her." She admitted she fell into that same pattern during her first six years in real estate. "I became a workaholic, too. But I discovered the importance of boundaries. There is no other job in the world where people expect an immediate response like they do in real estate." She leaned in, speaking with the conviction of someone who's lived it. "I had to learn that to be my best-for my clients, my family, and myself—I had to draw those healthy boundaries. Otherwise, burnout was inevitable."

You can tell that her past in education didn't just shape her heart—it sharpened her skills, too. "As a teacher and principal, communication was everything," she explained. "I had to speak to all kinds of people—students, parents, staff—and that's definitely helped in real estate. We're constantly talking to buyers, sellers, lenders,



inspectors... it never stops." She shared a gem of wisdom passed down from a mentor during her time in education: "He told me, 'Be calm. Be the voice of reason. Talk low and slow when people are angry or frustrated.' That advice is key in this career."

Of course, real estate isn't without its challenges. "Helping my clients manage all the emotions that come with buying or selling a home—that's the biggest challenge," she said. "We do so much more than paperwork and unlocking doors." She rattled off the many hats a REALTOR wears: counselor, babysitter, contractor, mediator, comedian. "Everyone wants to be understood, but we realtors rarely get the respect we deserve because of the misperceptions reality TV shows put out about our job." Yet, even with the emotional rollercoaster of transactions, she keeps coming back to the beauty in it all. "There's always something new to learn in every transaction. I love meeting new people and getting to know their stories and viewpoints—even when we don't agree on everything. That's what makes it all so rewarding."

I asked her, just out of curiosity, what she would do if real estate ever faded into the background. She paused for just a few seconds, smiled, and said, "A mentor or life coach for high school students. Maybe even foreign exchange students. I saw such a need for that when I was in education." Then she added something that really struck

me: "I could also see myself becoming a helpful resource for senior citizens. The world has changed so fast—they must feel overwhelmed sometimes in this techdriven society. I'd love to continue helping others, just in a different way."

Her strength is her own, but she's never had to carry it all alone. Her husband Andy, whom she lovingly calls her best friend (and occasional assistant!), has stood beside

her for 25 years. "He is my constant, and I'm a better person because of him." She also has two adult children—one who followed her path into education—and a close-knit circle of friends and family who are her biggest cheerleaders. "Their encouragement in my life is monumental. I am truly blessed beyond measure."

That doesn't mean the road's been easy. One of her biggest personal obstacles? Learning to manage her energy and time. "I'm a recovering workaholic," she laughed. Leaving a salaried job for a commission-based career without a safety net was terrifying. "It was one of the scariest things I've ever done. No benefits, no retirement, no set income—just faith and hard work." But that brave step forward paid off. After five years in the business, she earned her Broker's license in 2016 and opened her own firm—East Texas Real Estate Group in 2019. When she's not helping clients, she's all about music, dancing, podcasts, traveling, and singing on her church's praise team. "I'm also a big fan of books especially audiobooks," she said. And yes, she still makes time for yoga

For those considering a career in real estate, she offers some

and long walks with her

husband and grandbaby.

heartfelt advice: "First, LISTEN. Have real conversations with agents who've been in the business for at least five years. Get a real picture of what it takes to succeed." And if you decide to take the plunge, she added: "LEARN. Learn to set boundaries with your schedule so your personal life doesn't suffer. Learn from every transaction, every client, every agent. Real estate—and life—is all about continuous learning." She also offered this final reality check: "Real estate transactions are full of legal documents that guide one of the most complex and important financial decisions people make in their lives. If that doesn't sound like fun, rewarding work to you, it probably isn't the right career choice."

The day I met with Libby Gamble was a day of real talk. She did not hold back in describing exactly what real estate is about from day to day. It's not reality tv... it's simply a real estate agent's reality. As a fellow realtor, I not only could relate, but appreciated her rarity in all that she encompasses. It's her heart, her authentic spirit, and love for people that make her stand out in this business. Real estate may have started as a career change from the classroom for Libby, but it's turned into a calling to continue growing, learning and as ironic as it may sound, teaching and guiding others along the way!

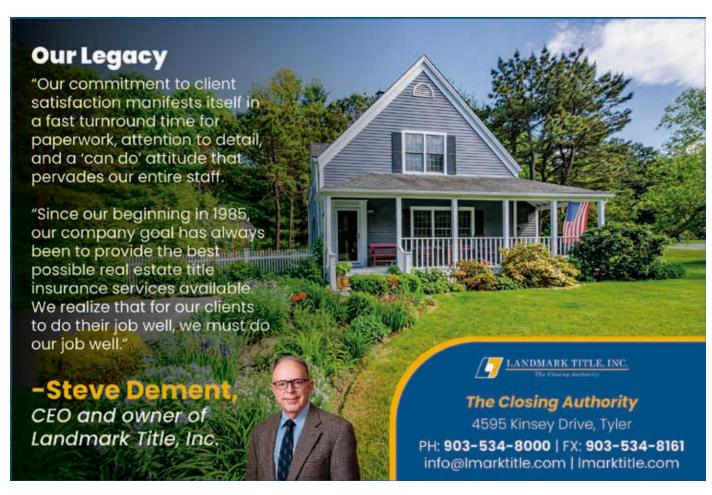






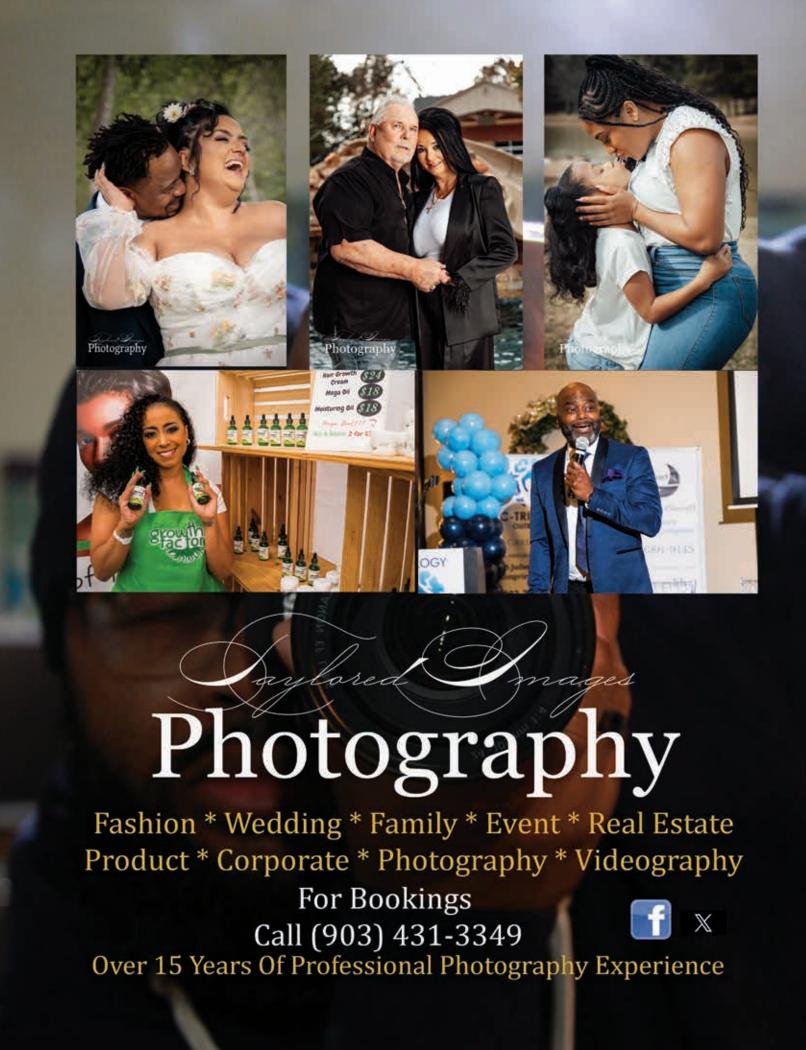


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