

Agent Spotlight
DEANNA ARCE
Sophie, Rucker,

& George Arce

Preferred Partner STAGED UPSTATE LLC

Tips of the Trade:
QUANTELLA SIMMONS-KINARD

Photo By Carolina House Shots





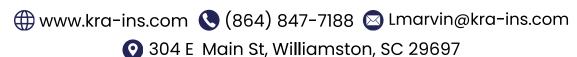


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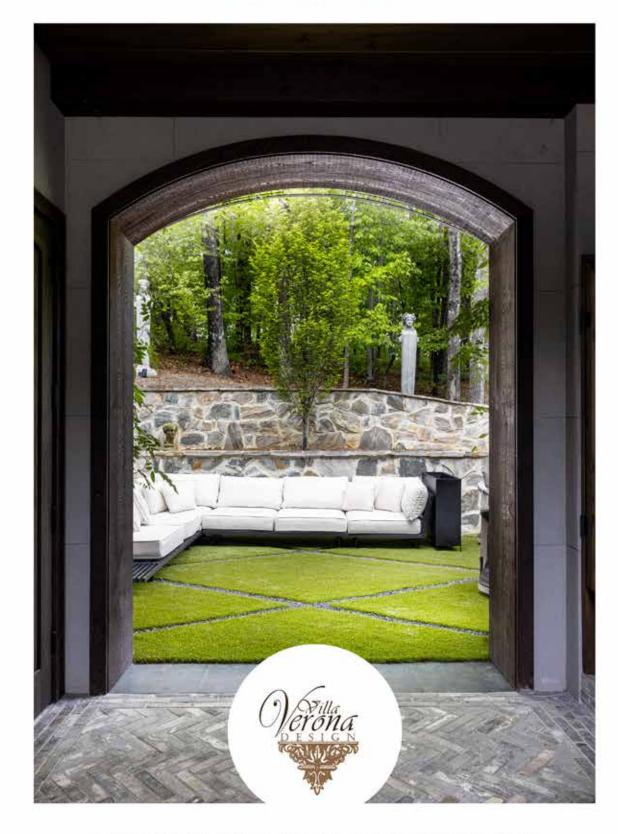
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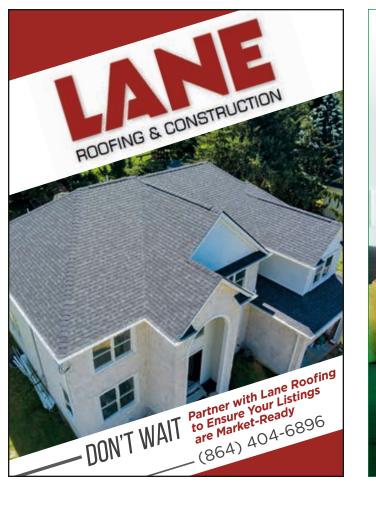


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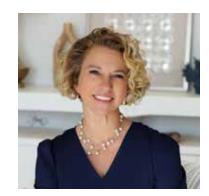
Barbara 20 Van Matre COVERSTORY

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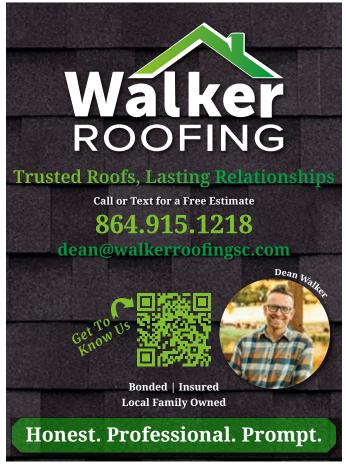
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& National Pet Month!

Dear Upstate Real Producers,

As we usher in the blooming beauty of May, we extend our warmest wishes for a Happy Mother's Day! We hope this month brings you renewed joy, prosperity, and a sense of new beginnings.

In the spirit of celebrating not only the season but also the companionship that enriches our lives, this edition of *Upstate Real Producers* Magazine is dedicated to our beloved Mother's and furry friends. We're thrilled to showcase the endearing bond between realtors and their pets, as we celebrate National Pet's Month.

Our pages come alive with the playful paws and wagging tails of our industry's finest - the pets of our esteemed realtors. In this special feature, we bring you heartwarming tales of companionship, loyalty, and the joy that these four-legged family members bring to their homes.

But the celebration doesn't stop there. Join us in applauding the pets of our exceptional professionals in the real estate realm. From the seasoned Top Producers to the promising Rising Stars, these furry companions have been by their side, offering support and love in every endeavor.

In this edition, we're excited to shine a spotlight on our exceptional Preferred Partner Staged Upstate LLC. These businesses embody a commitment to excellence and have proven to be invaluable allies in the real estate landscape. Join us in exploring the diverse offerings of these trusted partners, each contributing to the overall success and satisfaction of our readers. Get to know the businesses that share our dedication to delivering quality services and products, ensuring your real estate journey is both seamless and rewarding.

As you flip through the pages of this edition, may you be inspired by the tales of devotion, resilience, and the joy that

pets bring into our lives. From all of us at *Upstate Real Producers* Magazine, we wish you a month filled with love, laughter, and the delightful company of your cherished pets.

Happy Mother's Day and Happy National Pet's Month.

Warm regards,

Robert Smith- Co-Owner/ Advertising Sales **Sierra Smith**- Co-Owner/ Publisher







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WRITTEN BY: QUANTELLA SIMMONS-KINARD ASSOCIATE BROKER AND TEAM OWNER AT REAL BROKER

The Journey of Being a Mother and Real Estate Entrepreneur

In the modern world, many women are embracing the dual roles of motherhood and entrepreneurship, navigating the challenges and rewards that come with it. Balancing the demands of running a business with the responsibility of raising a family is no easy feat, but with determination and perseverance, many women are finding success and fulfillment in both aspects of their lives. Here are my top 3 tips for my fellow real estate Mom-preneurs (and reminders for myself)!

1. Time Blocking & Making the Minutes Matter

Juggling the demands of running a business, attending meetings, and meeting deadlines while also being present for their children's milestones, activities, and needs requires meticulous planning and prioritization. Finding ways to make the most of every minute, whether it's delegating tasks, setting boundaries, or optimizing schedules, is essential in maintaining a healthy balance between work and family life.

2. Communicate

Communication is also key in maintaining balance. Open and honest communication with family members,



employees, and business partners can help mothers navigate challenges and seek support when needed. Setting realistic expectations and boundaries, as well as being transparent about limitations and constraints, can prevent misunderstandings and reduce stress in both personal and professional relationships.



Another important aspect of balancing motherhood and entrepreneurship is self-care. It is easy for mothers to put their own needs and well-being on the back burner when they are constantly striving to excel in both roles. However, it is crucial for mothers to prioritize self-care, whether it's taking time for themselves to relax and unwind, engaging in activities they enjoy, or seeking support from friends and family. By nurturing themselves, mothers can ensure they have the energy and motivation to effectively manage their business and family responsibilities.

Moms, you are appreciated, valued, and cherished for the amazing work you do both at home and in the real estate world. Thank you for all that you do, and may our days be filled with love, joy, and appreciation- not just Mother's Day but ALL DAYS!

Do you have a tip you would like to share with your fellow Realtors? Reach out to us at robert. smith@realproducersmag.com

May25



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Celebrating MOTHERHOOD with Unconditional Love

WRITTEN BY: AMY PORTER

Barbara Van Matre & Her French Bulldogs

As we celebrate National Pet Month and Mother's Day this May, there's no better way to honor both the bond between a mother and her children than by highlighting the joy of motherhood, in all its forms. For Barbara Van Matre, a passionate real estate agent for Bluefield Realty, the heart of her home beats in time with the paws of her two French Bulldogs, Chloe and Luna.

Barbara, originally from
New Orleans and now a proud
member of the Greenville
community, describes her two
fur babies as "sweet little goofballs"
who add laughter and love to every
corner of her life. After spending several
months traveling and renovating her
house, Barbara is excited to dive back
into the real estate world, all while being
greeted each day by Chloe and Luna's
unconditional love.

Barbara is quick to share how the girls—who follow her from room to room, snuggle on the couch, and offer their ever-present companionship—bring



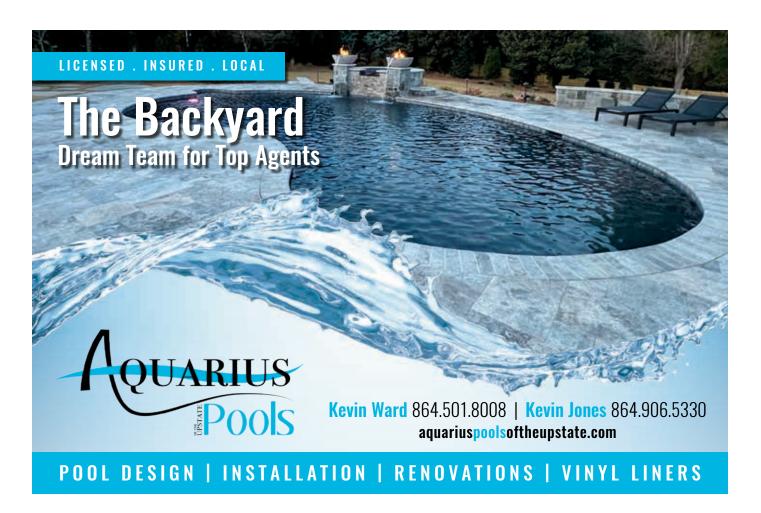
warmth and joy to her every day. "They have their zoomies and snore like full-grown men, but they also sit by my feet while I eat, staring at me as though they can magically guilt me into giving them a bite," Barbara laughs. "But honestly, I wouldn't trade them for the world."



Her bond with Chloe and Luna is more than just playful moments; it's about the deep connection they share. As a mother to her grown son, Quinton, Barbara knows the value of family, and she treasures the time she gets to spend with her two French Bulldogs. "It's just the three of us, but they bring me so much happiness," she says. "There's nothing like coming home and being greeted with that excitement and love. They've taught me what true, unconditional love looks like—and I think we could all learn something from that."

For Barbara, Chloe and Luna are more than pets—they're a source of joy, laughter, and companionship. As a mother to Quinton, and as a proud pet mom, she knows the value of a loving home and the importance of the relationships we nurture. This Mother's Day, we celebrate the unconditional love that pets, like Chloe and Luna, bring into our lives.







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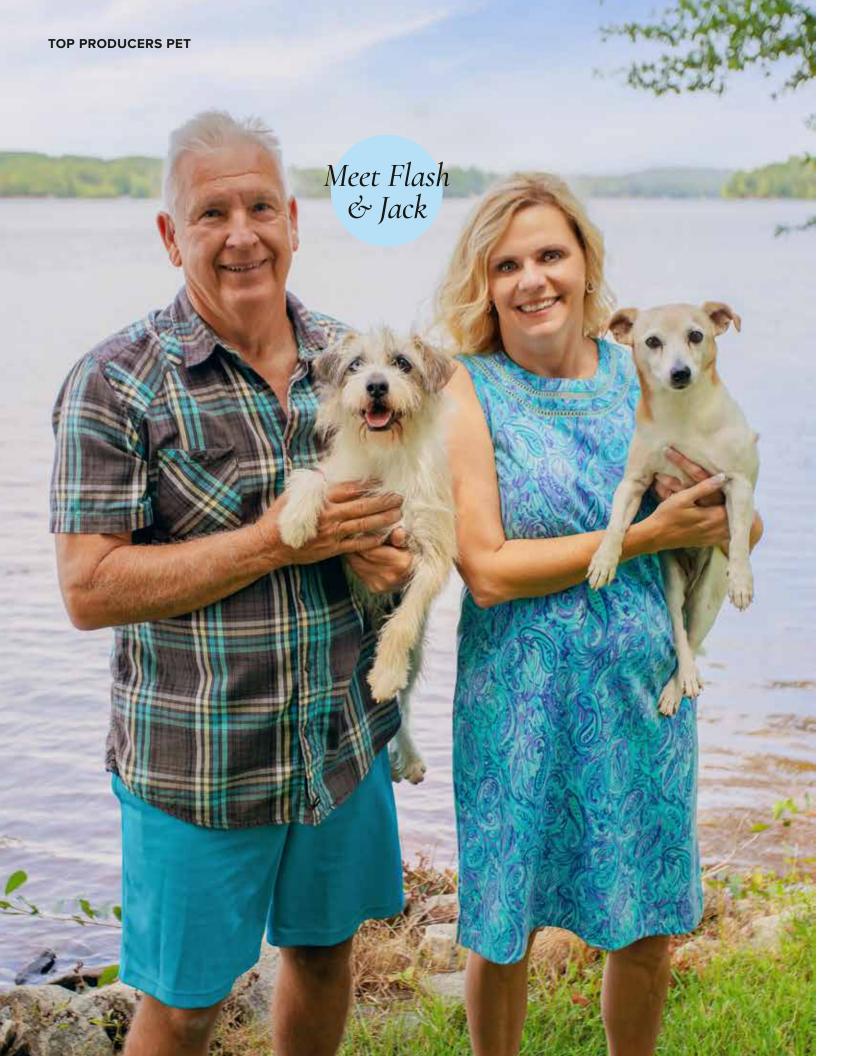
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Celebrating the Bond Between PETS & FAMILY



WRITTEN BY: AMY PORTER

For LeAnne, Flash and Jack aren't just pets – they're family. They bring joy, love, and laughter to her household every day. As we celebrate Mother's Day this month, LeAnne reflects on the unconditional love her pets give her and her family. "They're always there for us, and their presence is a constant reminder of the importance of love and connection," she says.

As a real estate agent, LeAnne knows that home is where the heart is, and for her, that means being surrounded by her family and the pets that make it complete. Whether it's a day at the beach or a cozy evening at home, Jack and Flash are never far from her side.

A Mother's Love for Her Pets

LeAnne's experience as a mom to both Colt and her fur babies beautifully aligns with the essence of Mother's Day: nurturing, caring, and unconditionally loving. Jack and Flash, with their unique personalities, have not only brightened LeAnne's life but have shown her that love doesn't just come from humans—it can come from the pets who become part of our families.

In closing, LeAnne says, "I may not always be the first to jump into outdoor fun, but when it comes to my family and my pets, I wouldn't change a thing."





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PHOTOS BY: CAROLINA HOUSE SHOTS • WRITTEN BY: AMY PORTER

For Lara Fransen, home staging is more than just placing furniture—it's about creating a vision. As the founder of Staged Upstate LLC, Lara brings years of experience in real estate and a keen eye for design to help homeowners and realtors showcase properties in their best light. Based in Seneca, SC, Staged Upstate specializes in transforming vacant homes into inviting, beautifully staged spaces that appeal to a broad range of buyers.

A Mother's Love & A Family's Inspiration

As a mother, Lara takes great pride in the accomplishments of her two children. Her daughter, Ashlyn (23), has built a successful career in human resources in Greenville, while her son, Carter, is a sophomore at Clemson University studying mechanical engineering. Lara has thoroughly enjoyed watching them grow into amazing young adults. "The teenage years flew by, but they were some of my favorite moments as a mom," she shares. "Now, seeing them navigate adulthood with confidence is incredibly rewarding."

Lara grew up in metro Atlanta, the third of four sisters, raised by an electrician father and a stay-at-home mother. Education and perseverance ran deep in her family—an impressive fun fact: all four sisters graduated as valedictorians from the same small Christian school! These strong family values, combined with her passion for creativity, have shaped Lara into the determined and hardworking entrepreneur she is today.

A House Full of Love—And Lots of Fur!

Beyond her human family, Lara is also a proud pet mom to a lively crew of three dogs and two cats—all with big personalities.

Xena, a 9-year-old Great Dane/ Golden Retriever mix, is the wise old soul of the house.

Peach, a 4-year-old Pittie, brings boundless energy and affection to the family.

Ellie, a 1-year-old Great Dane, is the household comedian, known for her daily antics that keep everyone laughing.

Mofo (Mo) and Subie, the feline members of the family, rule the house in their own mischievous way—especially when they decide to race through the halls at 4 AM!

"Our house is always lively, and there's never a dull moment," Lara laughs. "They all have their quirks, but I wouldn't trade them for the world." With May being National Pet Month, it's the perfect time to celebrate the unconditional love and joy pets bring to our lives—something Lara knows firsthand.

Bringing Homes to Life—One Room at a Time

Lara's passion for home staging began in 2017 when she consulted with investors on a historic flip in Pendleton, SC. Recognizing a growing need in the market, she launched Staged Upstate LLC in June 2024 to provide expert staging services that highlight a home's best features, enhance its marketability, and maximize its sale potential.

With a background in real estate and commercial construction, Lara brings a unique perspective to home staging. She understands both market trends and design principles, allowing her to create inviting spaces that speak to potential buyers. "I can make a mobile home look like a million bucks," she says with a smile. While Staged Upstate works with homes of all price ranges, their expertise shines in properties







whether it's a family moving, children selling an inherited home, or an investor preparing a fresh flip for market.

As she continues to build Staged Upstate LLC, Lara remains inspired by her favorite quote from artist Camille Pissarro:

"Blessed are they who see beautiful things in humble places where other people see nothing." That vision, combined with her passion and expertise, is exactly what makes Staged Upstate a game-changer in the home staging industry.

CONTACT STAGED UPSTATE LLC

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listed under \$400,000—a crucial segment in today's competitive real estate market.

Hard work and determination are the foundations of Lara's success. She thrives on problem-solving, creativity, and an unwavering commitment to delivering excellence. "My two least favorite phrases are, 'No, we can't' and 'That's the way we've always done it.' I truly believe that with

enough effort, any problem is figureoutable," she explains.

Defining Success with Passion & Purpose

Lara's definition of success is simple: integrity, affordability, and reliability. "I want people to associate Staged Upstate with these three attributes," she says. Her ideal clients are homeowners with vacant properties who need to sell quickly and for top dollar—





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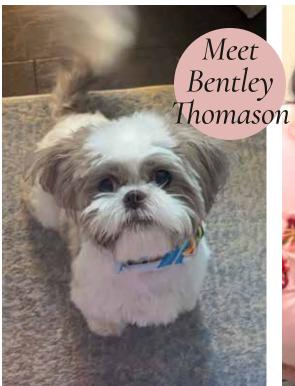


TOP PRODUCERS PET

COOLEST LITTLE GUY in Real Estate

WRITTEN BY: AMY PORTE





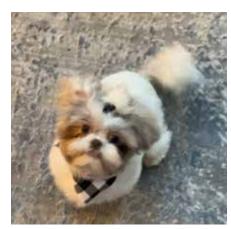


In the world of real estate, Tameka Thomason of RE/MAX HALO knows the importance of finding the perfect home—not just for people, but for pets too. And at the heart of her own home is Bentley Thomason, a lovable 4-year-old Shih Tzu who fills every day with joy, resilience, and unconditional love.

Bentley is no ordinary pup. Though partially blind, his adventurous spirit knows no bounds. When Tameka's family had the opportunity to restore his vision temporarily through surgery, Bentley embraced life with newfound excitement, taking in every sight around him. While his eyesight is gradually fading again, his bright personality and unwavering confidence remain as strong as ever. He navigates the world with enthusiasm, never meeting a stranger and always eager to make new friends.

Tameka and her daughters, Cierra and Madison, cherish their time together, whether it's competing for the title of household Uno champion, exploring the city, or simply enjoying each other's company on a relaxing drive. Bentley fits seamlessly into their lively and loving family, bringing a special kind of warmth that only a devoted pet can provide. His gentle nature, obedience, and boundless love make him the perfect companion—not to mention the coolest little guy around!

As we celebrate National Pet Month and Mother's Day, Bentley reminds us of the powerful bond between pets and their owners. Whether it's finding the perfect home for clients or creating treasured moments with family, Tameka knows that home is where the heart—and paws—are.





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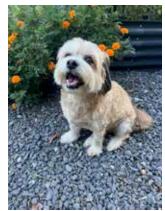
The Furry Heart of Home

DEANNA ARCE OF NEST REALTY & HER BELOVED BABIES!









WRITTEN BY: AMY PORTER

or Deanna Arce, home has always been more than just a place—it's a feeling. As a dedicated real estate professional with Nest Realty, she helps families find the perfect space to call their own. But at the end of the day, her own home wouldn't be complete without the unconditional love of her three dogs: Sophie, Rucker, and George.

Sophie, the queen of the household, is a 7-year-old Havanese with a sunbathing habit and a love for belly rubs. She may tolerate her younger brothers, but there's no doubt she runs the show. Rucker, a 4-year-old Golden Doodle, is the gentle giant of the pack—often mistaking himself for a lap dog. He's Deanna's personal weighted blanket, offering comfort and calm after a long day. Then there's George, the 3-year-old Aussie Doodle, who is equal parts loving and mischievous. With a heart full of affection and a mind full of clever tricks, George keeps everyone entertained while sneaking his way into trouble.

As a mother of three—Serena, Ciara, and Ethan—Deanna knows the beauty of unconditional love. Now, with her daughters living on their own and her son focused on his welding career, the family's nearly empty nest is filled with the joyful energy of her three pups. "Pets are special because they love us unconditionally," Deanna shares. "We could learn a lot from the way a dog loves its owner."

Whether it's a peaceful day in the garden, a weekend camping trip, or simply relaxing by the lake, Deanna and



her husband, Luis, cherish their time together—and their furry companions are always by their side.

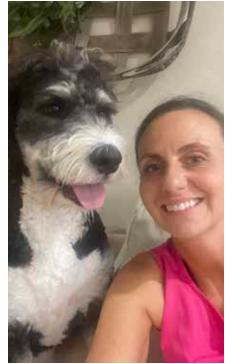
This National Pet Month and Mother's Day, Deanna is reminded that motherhood takes many forms. From raising her children to caring for her pets, she finds joy in nurturing, giving, and creating a home full of love.

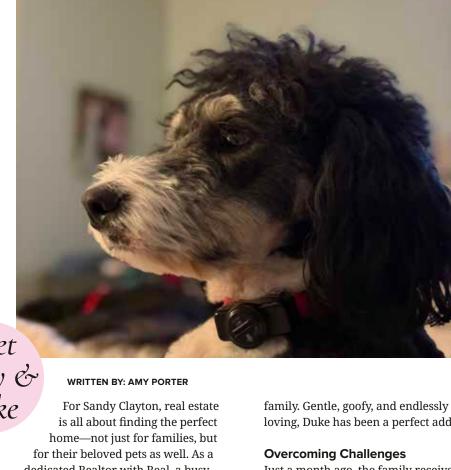
After all, whether it's a house or a heart, what truly makes a home is the love inside it.

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dedicated Realtor with Real, a busy mom of four, and a passionate dog lover, Sandy's life is a whirlwind of sports schedules, home closings, and tail wags. Through it all, her two doodles, Daisy and Duke, bring boundless love and companionship to her family.

Meet Daisy & Duke

Daisy, an Aussiedoodle, joined the family as a Christmas surprise in 2021. She's the household's loyal protector and the brains of the operation cautious with new people but fiercely devoted to her loved ones. Her special bond with Sandy's oldest son Troy is heartwarming; he's trained her to do just about anything, and she adores him almost as much as she loves her mom.

Duke, on the other hand, is the family's Bernedoodle rescue with a heart as big as his playful personality. His story is one of fate—he was abandoned near Lake Keowee, where Sandy's sister, LeAnne Carswell (also a Realtor), found him and his companion Jack. While LeAnne kept the other pup, Duke found his forever home with Sandy and her

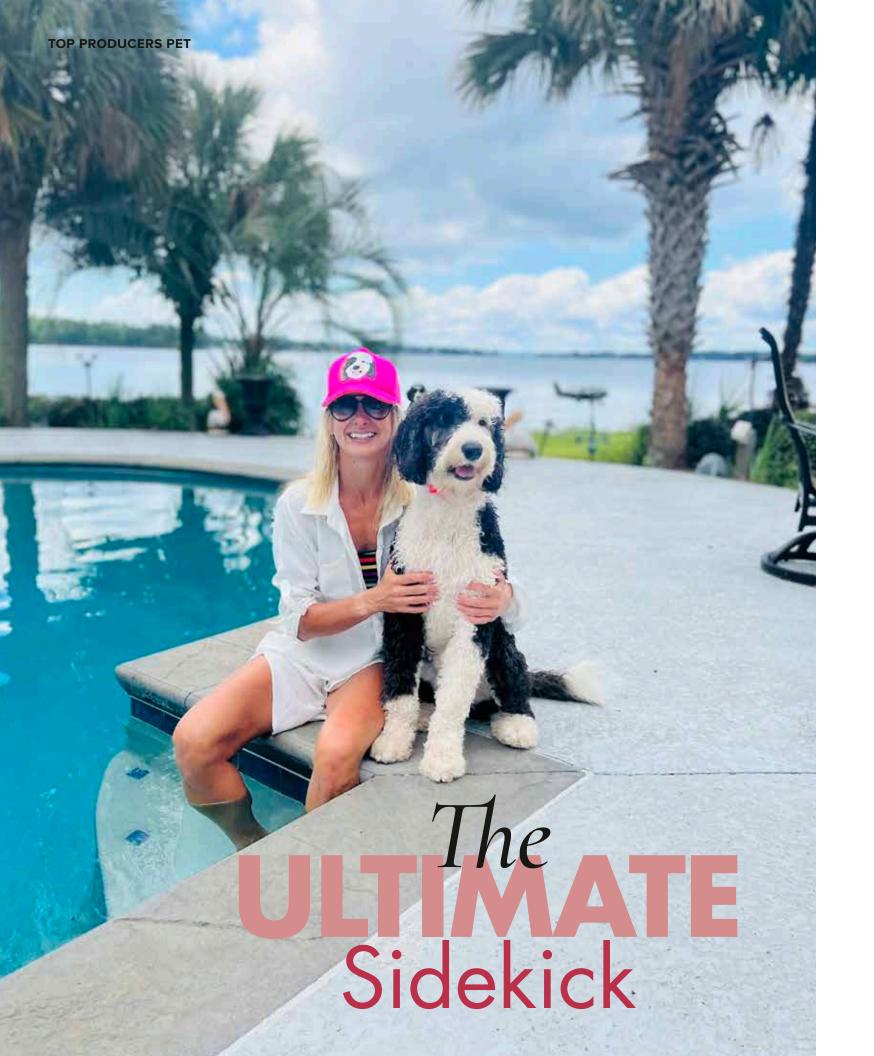
loving, Duke has been a perfect addition.

Just a month ago, the family received unexpected news: Duke was diagnosed with Addison's Disease, a rare adrenal gland disorder that affects only 0.01% of dogs. Having already experienced this condition with another pet, Sandy knew the road ahead would require careful management and extra love. But Duke's resilience and joyful spirit have been remarkable—today, he's thriving, and the family couldn't be more grateful.

A Full House & Full Hearts

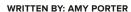
In the Clayton-Whiteside household, dogs aren't just pets—they're family. Daisy and Duke vacation with them, sleep in their bed, and bring daily joy to their bustling home. And as the kids grow and eventually leave the nest, Sandy jokes that every child who moves out will be replaced with a new dog-because, after all, there's always room for more love.

This Mother's Day, Sandy celebrates the joy of being a mom—not only to four amazing kids but also to two incredible pups who have made her family complete.









For real estate agent Toni Leopard of BHHS C. Dan Joyner Midtown, every day is a new adventure—one made even more special by her beloved Sheepadoodle, Lucy. At 3.5 years old, Lucy is more than just a pet; she's Toni's shadow, co-pilot, and an expert at bringing smiles to clients' faces.

With striking coloring that turns heads in downtown Greenville, Lucy is a showstopper who charms everyone she meets. But don't be fooled—while she's 99% angel, that mischievous 1% keeps life interesting! Whether she's dashing through the rain, snow, lakes, or pools to fetch a ball or joyfully joining Toni on home tours, Lucy's energy is boundless.

Thanks to Palmetto State K9, trainer Kate Picone Lucy has mastered off-leash training, making her an absolute dream to take anywhere. Whether she's strolling through town, running alongside Toni, or tagging along for real estate showings, Lucy's impeccable obedience and joyful spirit make her the perfect four-legged companion.

At home, Toni's pack of doodles—Lucy, and Rudie, keeps life full of fun and love. And with a new home at Biltmore, built by Brad & Cindy Thompson of First Choice Homes, there's even more excitement on the horizon.

Especially with these two mischievous masterminds and a pool in the back.

Summertime is one big Splash of fun.

Toni credits her father, "Big Tony," and godfather, Wayne McCullough, as the guiding lights in her life—mentors who have shown her the meaning of strength, dedication, and support. Whether she's running, cycling, spending time on the lake with Wayne & family, or squeezing in a workout at OTF, Toni embraces life with passion—much like Lucy, who's always up for the next big adventure.

This National Pet Month and Mother's Day, Toni celebrates the unconditional love and companionship that pets bring into our lives. Because whether in real estate or at home, family—including the four-legged members—makes every moment more meaningful.







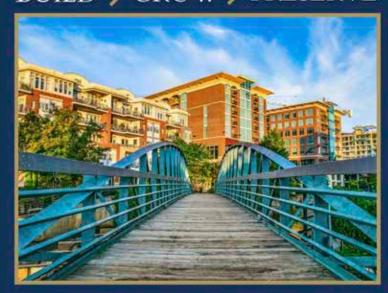
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