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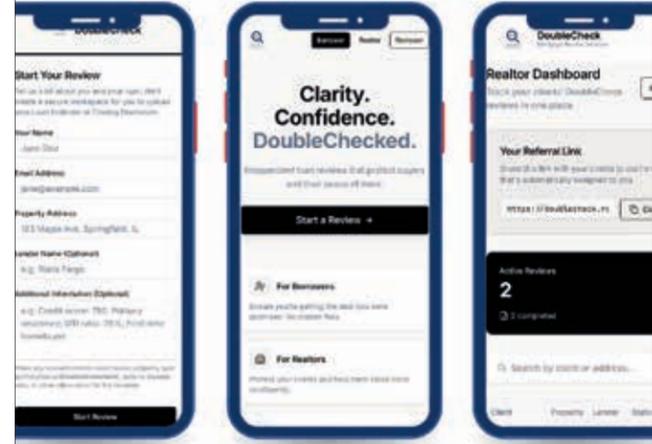

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STORY BY KATE SHELTON
PHOTOS BY JULES KENNEDY PHOTOGRAPHY

For half a century, Northern Colorado Carpets has been more than just a flooring company—it's a trusted cornerstone of homes and businesses across the region. This year marks their 50th year of excellent customer service, a journey defined by craftsmanship, integrity, and deep community roots.

Northern Colorado Carpets

Started by Doc Krasusk in 1976, Northern Colorado Carpets has helped generations of residents create spaces that feel like home and outfitted businesses with style and functionality. Now with Doc's son, Derek, at the helm, the business has evolved to meet modern styles and provide the latest in flooring technology. Despite their growth and success, the team has remained steadfast in their commitment to the highest levels of customer satisfaction and quality work, proving that when a business is built on trust and service, it truly stands the test of time.

"Making it 50 years is a big deal," says Derek, current owner of Northern Colorado Carpets. "We're really proud of that and excited for this milestone. Small businesses don't often make it this long, especially when the second generation takes over, but Northern Colorado Carpets was built to last. That's because my dad set it up to do business right—customer service first, the rest following. His foundation has allowed us to be so successful. We're ready for the next 50."

Northern Colorado Carpets is a locally owned flooring company that has proudly served the region for 50 years, building a reputation for quality craftsmanship, trusted service, and strong community values. Known for its wide selection of flooring solutions and personalized approach, the company has helped shape countless homes and businesses throughout Northern Colorado. With a commitment to excellence and building relationships, Northern Colorado Carpets continues to stand as

a reliable, hometown name in the flooring industry. "There's so much competition in the flooring industry in Northern Colorado," Derek states. "For us to stand out against them and last as long as we have, that's something. We've stayed the course, and we know what we do well. We've stuck to the same values we've always had. I think that's what's helped us last. People have trusted us for years and continue to."

Floors are in the Krasuski blood. Doc's dad owned a

flooring store in Loveland; Doc grew up working there and ripping out carpets in the summer. Doc went to college and started his career at Lockheed Martin. "It didn't take me long to realize I wasn't made for an office job," Doc shares with a big laugh. "I came back to Northern Colorado and decided to get back to what I knew: floors." Doc saw an open space for rent in a home store in Fort Collins. He jumped at the opportunity and founded Northern Colorado Carpets in 1976. The company grew quickly,



Pictures left to right; Shari Ayala, Derek Krasuski, Misty Hollabaugh





“Making it 50 years is a big deal. We’re really proud of that and excited for this milestone.” —DEREK

supported by the community. By 1983, the business was ready for so much more. Doc built an impressive showroom, creating a space for customers to see their options and design spaces in person. The company occupies the same building to this day.

Like his dad, Derek joined the U.S. Army after high school and served for the next eight years as a Ranger. When he was ready to retire, he returned to his roots.

“I’m so proud of everything Derek has done with the business,” Doc remarks. “He’s really taken it and grown the thing, while still maintaining the service and quality work we’re known for. I can’t think of anything else I’d want. He loves it, and I love watching him continue the legacy.”

These days, Doc is largely retired. He lives in the Ptarmigan neighborhood and loves it. He spends his days golfing and enjoying

watching his hard work pay off. Derek runs the business and the team, calling on his dad for an experienced perspective when he needs it.

“The Northern Colorado area is so special,” Derek stresses. “The community is full of so many great things, but it’s mainly the people. We have so many loyal customers, including homeowners, businesses, real estate agents, and contractors. So many people trust us over and over again. We take that

seriously. We are committed to always providing them with the highest level of service. We’re a family-owned business, and we’re still locally operated. That’s not going to change. I’m going to continue building what my dad started. I’m going to continue serving the community.”

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KELLY HUELSING

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HOME SWEET HUELSING: The NoCo Ambassador

STORY BY KATE SHELTON • PHOTOS BY AUDREY ROYBAL, BLUE PHOTOGRAPHY

“The way I’ve set myself apart from other agents is by helping people relocate to Northern Colorado and experience the magic of living here for themselves—I’m not just helping people find the right house; I’m helping them find the right community,” says Kelly Huelsing, a rising agent at C3 Real Estate Solutions.

As a Northern Colorado native, Kelly is more than a real estate advisor; she’s a trusted ambassador for those relocating to the region. With a lifelong understanding of the area’s unique communities and evolving market, Kelly guides buyers beyond the transaction and into a true sense of place. Helping her clients plug into their new home has fueled a business built on trust, referrals, and long-term relationships. As a result, she has become a go-to resource for those looking to call the region home. I love people, I love building relationships, and I love Northern Colorado,” Kelly shares. “All of that aligns for me working in real estate.

I get to put my marketing and business background to good use while helping people. There is no better job for me.”

Kelly grew up in Berthoud and is proud to call it home today. She attended Colorado State University, where she studied business management and journalism. Kelly spent the first half of her career in marketing, developing skills she now applies to her real estate business.

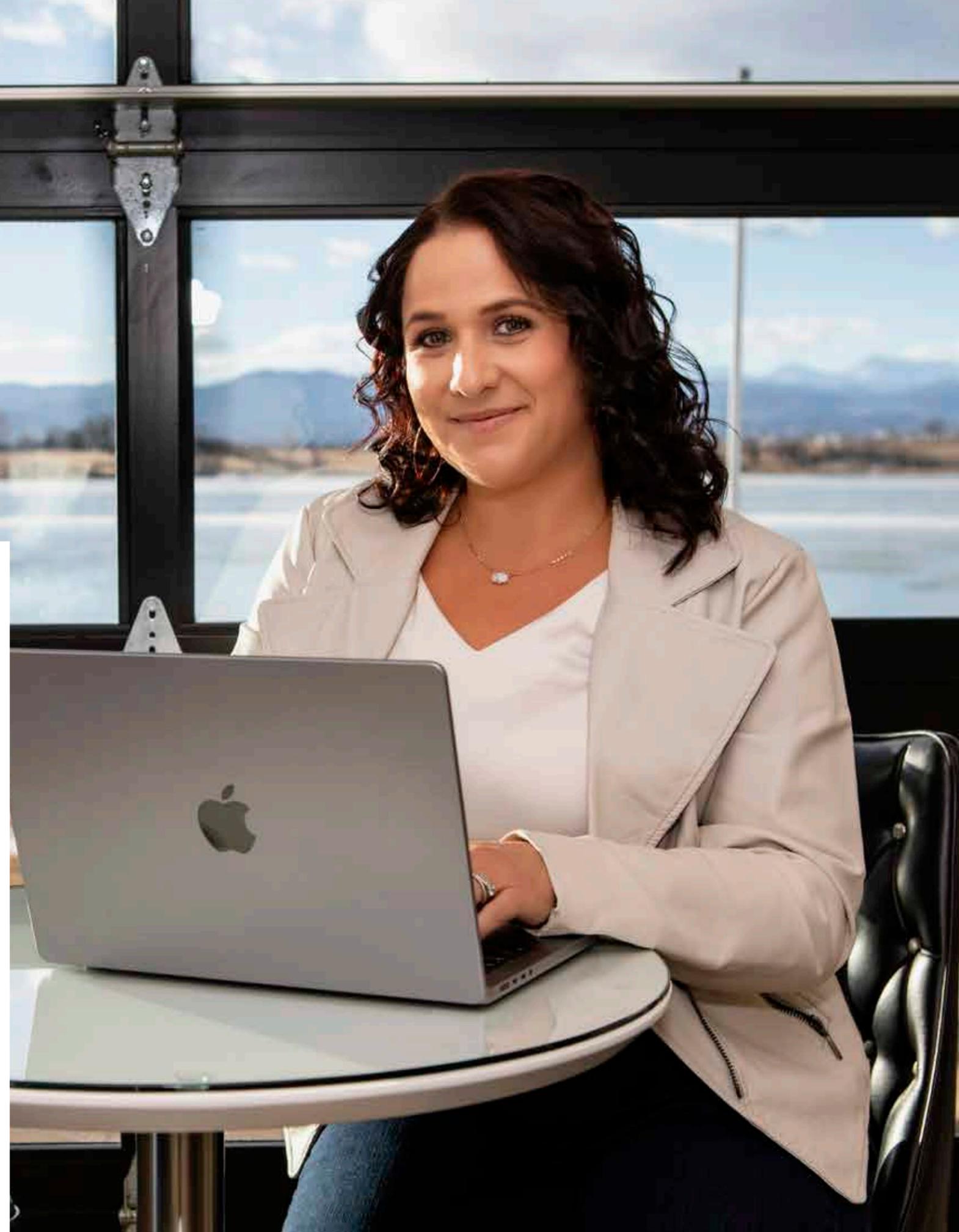
After a short stint in Texas, Kelly and her husband, Ben, returned to Colorado, living in Westminster, Downtown Denver, and Highlands Ranch before eventually settling in Castle Rock for several years. While they loved many aspects of life in the Denver metro area, they always knew they wanted to raise their family in Northern Colorado and be part of a close-knit community.

After many years in Denver and with a growing family, Kelly and Ben decided to return to Berthoud to raise

their children. “I love Berthoud,” Kelly remarks. “I’m the biggest cheerleader for our little community, and I think it’s a great place to raise a family. I’m proud to help other families experience life here, too.”

When she returned to her roots, Kelly knew she wanted to help others develop roots of their own. “I’ve always been fascinated by homes and interior design,” she reflects. “Ben and I have bought and sold several homes over the years, and we’ve seen firsthand how much it can help a family financially. I knew I wanted to do the same.” Kelly was licensed in 2023 and jumped headlong into real estate, leveraging her marketing and entrepreneurial background to build strong momentum quickly.

She hangs her hat at C3 Real Estate Solutions and is proud to be on the team. “I really love that C3 is focused on family,” she explains. “As a mom of three, my professional



and mom life is a balancing act. I love that C3 is supportive of both.”

Kelly notes that the entire C3 team has been instrumental in her growth. Ryan Magnus has been a mentor, and she’s grateful for his support. “Ryan is a huge advocate for me,” she stresses. “He’s a supporter and a teacher. He’s come alongside me to help me gain momentum. I’m so grateful for him.”

While Kelly has tapped her local network to build her business, she’s found a more successful avenue: social media prospecting. Kelly focuses on creating high-level, authentic content highlighting the beauty, opportunity, and promise of Northern Colorado. Many of her reels have gone semi-viral, and her free *Moving to Northern Colorado* guide has proven to be a successful hook. The resource covers helpful local insight, community comparisons, and everything prospective clients need to feel confident about their move.

“I invest a lot of energy into my clients,” Kelly notes. “I go above and beyond to help them really understand communities and neighborhoods. And once they’ve chosen a place, I’m still here to help them get connected, whether with schools, clubs, churches, or anything else they need. It’s those things that make a place feel like home, not the four walls they buy. I take the time to truly get to know people and understand what they want out of life in Northern Colorado.”

This strategy has paid off. Dozens of people download Kelly’s guide each week, and many reach out via private

“

I invest a lot of energy into my clients. I go above and beyond to help them really understand communities and neighborhoods.

”



messages to connect with her. With several new client consults a week, her business is gaining serious momentum, and she’s just getting started.

Kelly’s relocation services account for much of her business, but the selling side is growing rapidly based on referrals, repeat business, and solid marketing. She provides high-level design and digital marketing assets to all her clients. She also creates all of her own email marketing, website content, and social media graphics.

While supporting her clients is a priority, Kelly’s family remains squarely at the top of her list. She intentionally maintains a healthy work-life balance, building a schedule that works for both her clients and her children. Kelly and Ben’s kids—Landon (10), Rylie (7), and Jack (5)—are big into hockey, and the family spends plenty of time at the rink. In the summer months, Kelly and her mom co-own and operate a micro flower farm, Berthoud Blooms.

Outside of real estate, Kelly enjoys reading, gardening, and traveling, and she’s deeply involved in the Berthoud community, including serving on her children’s school PTA board. Ben owns and operates his own production company, LARYJA Creative, and Kelly loves collaborating with him on her listing media.

At the heart of Kelly’s success is her genuine love for the region and her role in welcoming others to it. Like a true ambassador, she doesn’t just sell homes—she opens doors to communities, lifestyles, and lasting connections. Kelly’s authenticity sets her apart, ensuring her business stays busy with clients who value local insight. She has built trust through her expert guidance and helped people find homes and communities where they can grow and thrive.

Connect with Kelly at www.kellyhuelsinghomes.com, email her at khelsing@c3-re.com, or follow her on Instagram @HomeSweetHuelsing.

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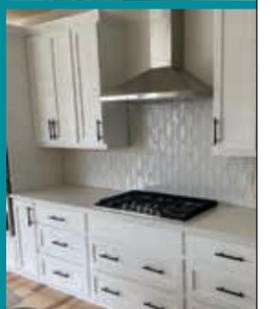
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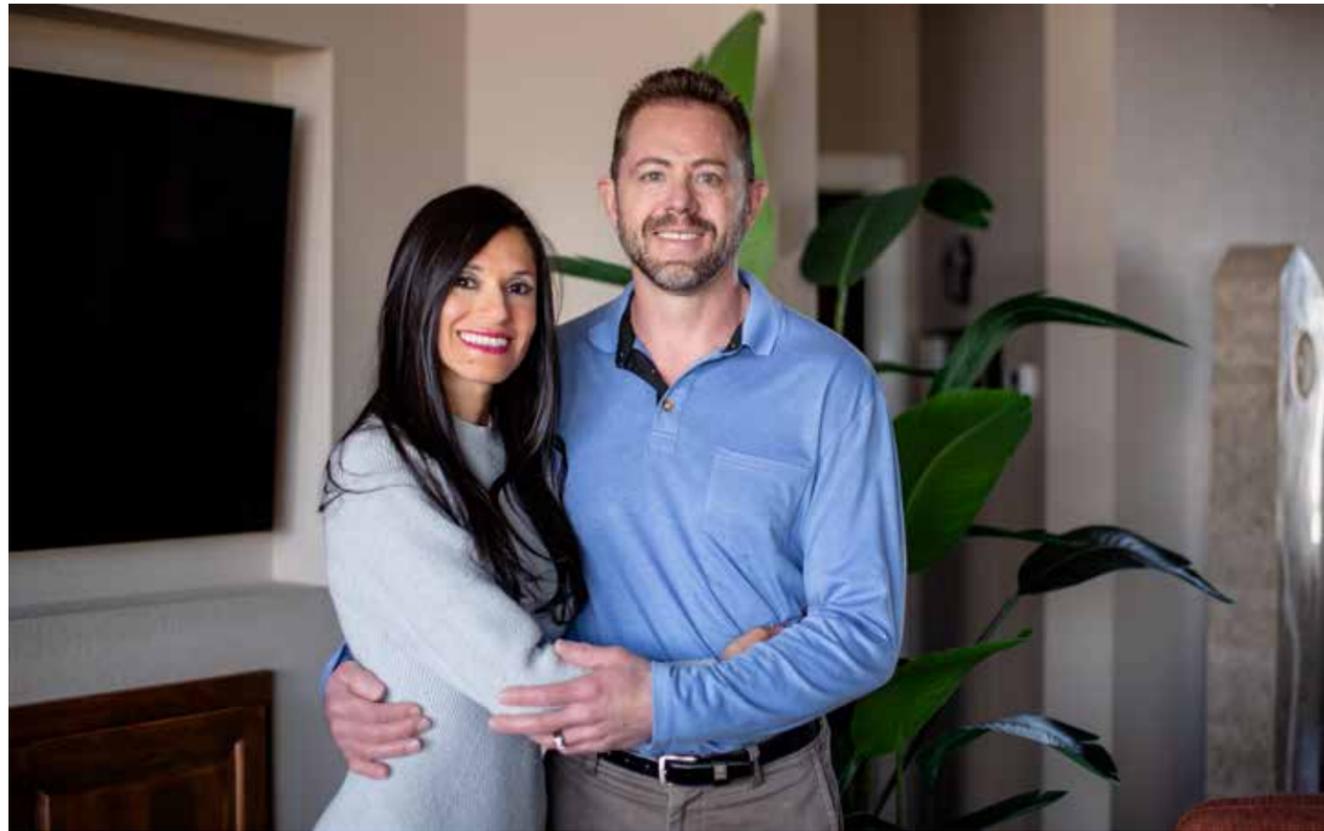
“I started my career as an occupational therapist, helping people get back home—get back to life—after a surgery or a stroke,” says Todd Maltzahn, a successful Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices agent. “Real estate is no different. I help people find home, just in a bigger capacity now. I love helping

people. I always have. I feel so lucky that I get to help people on an even bigger scale now,”

Todd’s journey to becoming a top-performing real estate advisor is anything but typical. Before selling homes, he spent years as an occupational therapist (OT), guiding

people through some of their most vulnerable, challenging moments and helping them reclaim independence in their lives. That same deep-rooted desire to give others a happy, productive life is what drives his real estate business today. Todd brings the empathy, patience, and problem-solving skills he learned early in his career to every





transaction, proving that from rehab to real estate, anything is possible.

Todd grew up in Grand Island, Nebraska. He moved to Fort Collins to pursue an education in occupational therapy at Colorado State University. During college, he worked as a river rafting guide, delivered pizza, and eventually took a CNA role at a skilled nursing home. When his brother, a top mortgage lender in the area, offered him a job cold-calling, Todd took it. In this role, Todd learned to connect with people, sight unseen.

Todd and his brother, Scott Maltzahn, went on to start Horsetooth Financial together. While they found success, Todd wasn't ready to settle down yet. He moved to Washington State and worked as an OT in a rehabilitation center. "I loved the area, but after several years, I was ready for something else," he shares. "I got it in my brain that I wanted to learn Spanish. I moved to Colombia in 2009 and immediately fell in love."

While in Colombia, Todd met his goal of becoming fluent in Spanish.

While there, he taught himself digital marketing and website design. He freelanced in marketing and did travel OT work to support his life abroad. While living in Medellín, Todd met the love of his life, Veronica.

In 2015, Todd and Veronica decided to move back to Northern Colorado to get married and start a family. "I knew I needed to do something to support my wife and kids," Todd states. "I was ready to move on from OT, and I knew I didn't want to get back into the mortgage business with my brother. Real estate just made sense."

Todd earned his real estate license in December 2015. "Scott connected me with Marcus Valdez at Berkshire," he reflects. "We connected and hit it off right away. Marcus is an excellent mentor; he's a big part of what has got me going in this business."

One of Todd's strengths is his knack for easily talking to people. "Even back in the days when I was doing cold calls, I could make conversation," he explains. "People trust me. They want to talk to

me. I listen. That's still a big part of my business to this day. I call people for the first couple of hours every day, and it's paid off."

Todd works throughout Northern Colorado, but he focuses on Windsor. He specializes in homes that were previously listed but didn't sell and for-sale-by-owner properties. "As I see it, my primary job is marketing," he notes. "I look at the property and reverse engineer a marketing plan that will target those exact people. Putting a for-sale sign out front is no longer enough. I run targeted ads, do a lot of search-engine optimization, and leverage AI to find buyers. I've embraced AI and digital marketing. It makes a real difference. Even in this tougher market, I sell most of my listings for above asking. I've helped people who thought they could either sell alone or that their property wouldn't move. I've shown them just what good marketing can do."

Todd is also leaning heavily into social media. He creates unique videos for each of his properties and has recently launched a new YouTube/Instagram/

Facebook and TikTok channel entitled *Inside Windsor*. The channel covers local activities, businesses, schools, and, of course, real estate opportunities.

Todd averages upwards of 25 closings a year and has completed more than 160, with more to come. With the systems and training he's invested in, Todd sees that number growing quickly. With the help of two virtual assistants focusing on social media and transaction coordination, plus a sales associate, Todd and his team can offer clients explosive marketing and excellent customer service.

Thanks to his laser focus on efficiency, Todd has mastered the art of a work-

life balance. He and Veronica have two kids—Sammy (5) and Tommy (4). They enjoy traveling and spending time at the park and with their church community, Foundations Church in Windsor. Todd is a proud recovering alcoholic with more than three years sober. He regularly attends AA meetings and is honored to give back to others making similar life changes. Todd also loves CrossFit, hiking, and road and mountain biking.

Looking back, Todd reflects, "I wish I had gone straight into real estate at a much younger age, but I think all my life experiences have given me a well-rounded background to serve so many more people. I love helping people and making a difference in their lives.

I'm proud to say I've been able to help people home in so many ways. For me, it's all about giving the gift of life."

Where he once guided patients through rehab, Todd now guides families and clients through one of the most emotional transitions of their lives—finding home. The work may have changed, but Todd's mission hasn't: helping people move forward, one meaningful step at a time.

Connect with Todd at todds-team.com.





Ask Sean:

YOUR REAL ESTATE QUESTIONS ANSWERED

BY SEAN DOUGHERTY
RE/MAX ALLIANCE

Who knows a good agent in XYZ area?

I hear this question often from agents. And the question is easy to answer, just not the way the asker expects.

I'm all about referrals for just about anything in life. What better way to know that you're going to get good service or products than to hear from someone you trust? But when you want to refer your client to someone out of your area, why wouldn't you want to create a new relationship that could produce future income?

If "Joe" shares "Fran's" contact information in, let's say, San Francisco, wouldn't you assume that Joe has an ongoing business relationship with Fran? And if so, do you think they may have done business together before? If Fran needs a real estate professional in Northern Colorado, who do you think she'll call? You, the new person who just reached out once, or Joe, the one she has done business with before?

Here's a better idea: Why not find an agent in that area yourself? If you are with a national or franchise

company, ask your broker how to use your company's referral network. This approach is a great way to find a professional in the region or city where your client is buying or selling. You'll also be able to select specific designations or sales levels for that agent so you can whittle down the numbers and find someone specialized in what your client needs.

If you're a single proprietor, you can use Google to find great agents or use one of the many dedicated real estate websites to find someone whose experience and specializations will work for your client.

And a third option would be to reach out to Mary Burrell, your local *NoCo Real Producers* publisher, to ask for recommendations. *Real Producers* magazines are in 150 markets around the United States, and publishers are already working with real estate professionals just like you, who are at the top of their game.

But wait, I've got one more important step: Call the agents you've found

and interview them. Ask them how they like to do business, what their hobbies are, and so on. This information will help you decide whether they'll be the best fit for your client's real estate needs, and it will begin the relationship that, hopefully, will bear fruit for years to come.

Remember, taking the extra step for your clients is worth your time and is a simple way to exceed their needs while also earning a few bucks, all from a short web search and phone call.

Please note that I am not an attorney, nor have I ever been one. This information should not be considered legal advice. If you have a specific situation, you should call your broker or an attorney immediately.



Do YOU have a burning question you'd like answered? Please scan the QR code to send us your question, and we'll consider it for an upcoming issue.

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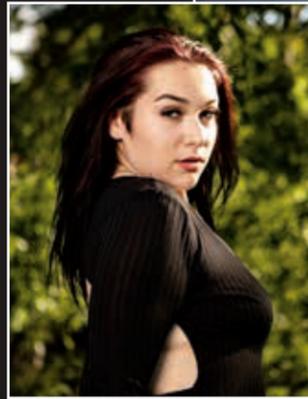
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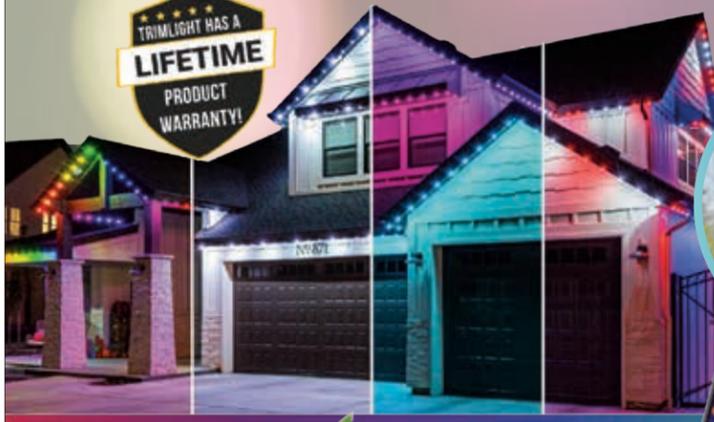
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Kelly & April Bartunek Allen

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STORY BY JACKI DONALDSON
PHOTOS BY ERIN WAYNICK,
ERIN WAYNICK PHOTOGRAPHY

When Kelly Bartunek and April Allen started talking about building a business together, the name almost chose itself. They're identical twins who grew up in Estes Park, and the mountain named Twin Sisters has always been part of their backdrop. Locals know the place well, and Kelly and April have climbed this mountain multiple times themselves. Calling their business *The Twin Sisters' Team* just made sense. The title reflects who they've always been and how they work best—side by side.

Growing up, Kelly and April had a knack for entrepreneurial ventures. Long before real estate, they were the kids setting up neighborhood stands, cleaning houses for neighbors, and selling whatever they could get their hands on. "We were always devising ways to make money or grow something together," April shares.

After high school, life took them in different directions. Kelly married her high school sweetheart at 19, and they started working jobs in Estes Park. In 2010, Kelly's husband joined the U.S. Air Force, and the next four years brought big changes, including a move to New Mexico and the birth of their two daughters. During that season, Kelly began seriously considering real estate. She liked the idea of a career that could flex around military life and, later, law enforcement.

When the Air Force chapter ended, the family returned to Colorado and settled on the Western Slope near Rifle, where Kelly's husband became a police officer. With a sense of stability finally in place, Kelly earned her real estate license online while her girls were just toddlers. She jumped in on her own, building her business in the Aspen/Glenwood MLS from 2016 to 2022. She grew a strong, thriving business, eventually becoming a top agent in her market before stepping away to start the next chapter.

April's story unfolded along a similar path. She married her high school sweetheart and



“We just go for it. We leave no stone

unturned.

”



stepped into motherhood at a young age. For several years, she devoted herself fully to raising their two children, a chapter she looks back on with deep gratitude. Throughout it all—school schedules, bedtime routines, and being present for all the small, fleeting moments—her husband, Matt, stood firmly by her side, her biggest cheerleader and unwavering supporter, encouraging her role at home and every entrepreneurial dream stirring in her heart. Even in those full, beautiful years of motherhood, that inner drive to build and create never faded.

Kelly earned her license first, and April watched closely. Within a year, she followed suit, launching her own real estate career in Estes Park and quickly finding her stride. The twins often talked—sometimes seriously, sometimes jokingly—about working together one day, even when Kelly was on the Western Slope and April was on the other side of the mountains. The idea felt like a long shot.

Then COVID reshuffled everything. April's family moved to Loveland and transitioned from homeschooling to private school. Not long after, Kelly and her family made the same move, wanting their kids to attend the same school. Suddenly, the pieces were lining up.

One holiday, the twins sat down with a whiteboard and made their case. They laid out the vision, the numbers, and the plan and mapped it out for their logical, detail-oriented husbands. At the time, no one knew for sure it would actually happen, but they had planted the seed.

In 2022, Kelly and April officially teamed up at C3 Real Estate Solutions in Northern Colorado. They weren't starting from scratch—both came in with experience, established relationships, and a deep understanding of their markets. What they needed was time to blend two businesses into one.

The first year and a half were all about building. Listings came in gradually as they worked through branding, marketing, logos, and defining how they wanted to show up publicly. Then something clicked. Referrals started coming in—then more of them. "That's our superpower," Kelly explains. "We're not lead-gen people. We're relationship people."



Their business is almost entirely referral-based, built through connections in church, schools, family life, past clients, and community involvement. With kids at different ages, their circles naturally expand in different directions, allowing them to divide and conquer while still presenting a unified front. From 2024 to 2025, their business nearly doubled. “We don’t take that lightly,” Kelly says. “We give credit where it’s due. God has led us, and He’s blessed it.”

Much of their success comes from working as true partners. Each brings different strengths to the table, making the business stronger than either could run alone. Transaction coordinator Rose Lawrence supports them, as does C3, which helped them open a satellite office in Estes Park and provided infrastructure, marketing support, and compliance to help them grow.

April and Kelly don’t hesitate to name their secret sauce. “We just go for it,” April stresses. “We leave no stone unturned.” The sisters invest heavily in professional

design, signage, photography, video, and strong listing presentations. They’re not afraid to put themselves out there, and that effort has paid off, especially in Estes Park, where they’ve secured a large share of the market, including work with a local builder in the area’s only new subdivision.

Giving back is also a big part of who they are. Every Christmas, Kelly and April host a benefit for Crossroads Assistance Ministry, a local Estes Park ministry that helps families with food, rent, and other urgent needs. Past events have included live reindeer at their office and drive-through “donuts and donations,” which they promote through local papers and are open to the community. Their service extends beyond events into year-round church involvement and volunteer work.

Outside of work and service, Kelly and April are rarely far apart. They hike together, chase summits, go to church, watch football, and squeeze in nail appointments when they can. And if they’re not together, they’re usually on the phone.

For both sisters, the best part of real estate is the meaning behind it. “We are helping people through some of the biggest transitions of their lives,” Kelly stresses. April agrees, stating, “We get so focused on helping people land in the right place that the paycheck almost becomes secondary.”

From childhood side hustles to top-producing real estate agents, Kelly Bartunek and April Allen have been building, growing, and showing up for people in meaningful ways. From their office, the Twin Sisters mountain rises in the distance, grounding their work in the place where it all began.

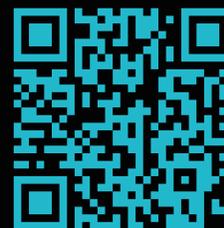
Ecclesiastes 4:9 Two are better than one, for they have a good return for their labor.

Connect with The Twin Sisters Team
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MEET MICHELLE WISE.

Michelle has been in real estate for over 10 years. Previously, she spent 18 years—and much of her life—working in management at UPS, an experience that played a crucial role in shaping her leadership, work ethic, and commitment to service. Outside of work, Michelle enjoys spending time with her husband, adult daughters, and grandsons. She can often be found cheering on the Ohio State Buckeyes, gardening, playing card games, golfing, or fishing.

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Q&A

WITH INSPECTOR CLARK HEMKER →



Q What brought you to this field?

I served in the Army for over 12 years. After my service, I spent several years searching for a career that I truly loved and felt excited about. After trying a few office jobs, I realized I needed something different. Being a home inspector had been on my mind for several years, so I finally decided to jump in and make it a reality.

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Q What do you love about your work?

What I enjoy most about being a home inspector is the opportunity to help people. I've always loved serving and assisting others. I also enjoy being out in the field, exploring both new and old homes, and interacting with clients.

Q What do you like to do outside work?

Outside of work, I love spending time with my wife of 17 years and our 10-year-old twin girls. We have two cats—Millie and Murphy—and a goldendoodle named Ruby. I coach my girls' volleyball team and am usually busy with endless DIY projects around the house. I also enjoy woodworking and have built many pieces of furniture. I grew up in Wisconsin and am a big Packers fan. I'm also into hockey—GO AVS GO!



Maximize Buying Power With These 4 Simple Credit Tips:

Now more than ever, a homebuyer's FICO can either help or hinder his or her ability to receive the best loan terms available. In some cases, it can prevent them from buying at all. Here are some tricks and facts to help homebuyers maximize their FICOs and avoid costly, unintended mis-steps:

- Have your credit report pulled and analyzed by your lender as early as possible. Checking a consumer site or looking at a credit card statement will show an inaccurate "promotional" score that can be up to 50+ points off from the "true" scores.
- Don't open new accounts or close existing accounts, unless absolutely necessary. Paying off loans, consolidating debt, or transferring credit card balances to 0% cards can have a negative impact on one's score.
- Don't rush to pay off collections. While counter-intuitive, paying off an old collection can actually lower FICOs. Additionally, many collection agencies will negotiate to delete accounts in exchange for payment. This leverage may be lost once a balance is paid.

- Make multiple credit card payments per month. Credit card companies only report once per month, when the statement is issued. If you can sneak in extra payments before that date, the bureaus will see a lower balance, generally leading to higher credit scores.

Every report is unique, so other "tricks of the trade" may be usable to boost a buyer's score and improve lending options. Either way, it's important to check and review a buyer's credit report early to ensure they're in the best position possible.



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