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AUGUST 2026

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Kem Cobb

ELITE REALTY



Partner Spotlight
**MEADOR
INSURANCE
AGENCY**

**CELEBRATING 2
YEARS IN PRINT**

**DOG DAYS
OF SUMMER**

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COVER STORY
Kem Cobb

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Cheers to Two Years

Hello, Real Producers!

This month marks two years in print for *Blue Ridge Real Producers*. Over the past 24 issues, we've had the privilege of sharing the stories of the remarkable real estate professionals and preferred partners who make this community so special. In this issue, we look back at this past year's 12 amazing covers for a trip down memory lane.

This year's cover story features Kem Cobb, who built her business on the powerful belief that relationships come first. Her story is a reminder that when you genuinely invest in people, success naturally follows.

We also feature Bill Meador of Meador Insurance Agency, whose commitment to educating clients, serving as a trusted advisor, and supporting the real estate community has earned the confidence of agents throughout our region.

We hope you'll enjoy our Dog Days of Summer articles. We invited agents and preferred partners to introduce us to the four-legged companions who brighten their homes, offices, road trips, Zoom calls, and everyday lives. Inside these pages, you'll meet dogs with big personalities, important office titles, unforgettable stories, and the life lessons they've taught the people who love them.

As you enjoy this issue, I encourage you to support the preferred partners whose businesses make this publication possible. Their investment allows this magazine to remain complimentary for our area's top-producing agents while strengthening the relationships that make our industry so unique.

Here's to another year of celebrating inspiring people (and pups), amazing businesses, and the relationships that make the Blue Ridge real estate community exceptional.

Warmly,



Betty Lee, Owner
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Top 300 REALTORS® sold in 2025

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And the Stories Still to Come

As we celebrate our second anniversary in print, we invite you to take a look back at the past year's 12 covers, featuring the remarkable real estate professionals and preferred partners who shared their stories, inspired our community, and helped make our second year one to remember.

Now we're looking ahead to the next 12 issues—and we need your help.

Do you know a top-producing agent with an inspiring story to tell?
Do you know a trusted industry professional who would make an exceptional preferred partner for our platform? We'd love to hear from you. Please send your nominations and recommendations to betty.lee@realproducersmag.com. Together, we'll continue showcasing the people, partnerships, and businesses that make the Blue Ridge real estate community stronger every day.



Caroline Belle

NADINE BLAKELY
Nadine Blakely Homes,
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The Plus One
Behind many successful real estate professionals is a loyal companion and mascot who never misses an opportunity to brighten the day. This four-legged sidekick offers plenty of encouragement, unconditional love, and a reminder to pause and enjoy life's little moments. Every workday is just a little better with a best friend by your side.



Nova & Apollo

VERONICA TURCIOS SMITH
Real Broker LLC



Paws on Deck
Nova and Apollo are my two Portuguese water dogs. They are siblings and are 2 years old.

Co-Brokers
My dogs are basically the co-brokers of the business. They supervise every Zoom call, insist on attending home-office meetings, and take their job as emotional support managers very seriously. They may not have real estate licenses, but they definitely think they run the business. Between supervising emails, stealing office chairs, and demanding mid-day walks, they keep me laughing every day. Honestly, they're the best coworkers I've ever had.

Welcome Committee
They've taught me patience, loyalty, and how important it is to make people feel comfortable the moment they walk through the door, just like they do. No matter how stressful the day gets, they're always the happy little reminder waiting at home that we don't have to take life so seriously.

Grace

JOSH CLINE
KW Lynchburg

Dino Energy
Grace is a 2-year-old long-haired dachshund. Her personality is best described as a T-Rex.

On the Job
She serves as my unofficial Chief Architectural Inspector. With her low profile and high energy, she specializes in “ground-level structural assessments” and tests the durability of premium flooring. More than anything, her spunky personality keeps my energy high and reminds me that a house isn't just a collection of blueprints and square footage; it's a home meant to be lived in, enjoyed, and filled with life.

Adapt & Overcome
She's taught me that patience, adaptability, and a little spunk can get you through any situation. Real estate transactions can be unpredictable, but watching my dog navigate a world built for giants with absolute confidence and joy has been the ultimate masterclass.



Wisdom Comes With Age
She is my young firecracker, but her sister, who will be 17 in August, is the matriarch of the family, reminding us both to take moments to rest.

Marcie

JOSHUA KELLEY
Kelley's Electric

Friend to All
Marcie is a basset hound mix with a mix of Lab, whom we rescued at 11 weeks old from the Roanoke Valley SPCA. She is now 2 years old and every bit as playful as a newborn. She is the friendliest dog you'll ever meet.

Home Office Hound
My office is at home, so she makes very good company.

Fetch Some Fun
She has taught me to make sure to have fun.



Hela, Brutus, & Thor

KATY COOKSTON
KW Salem Professionals

Three’s Company

Hela (5-year-old female), Brutus (6-year-old male), and Thor (5-year-old male) are all goldendoodles and are positively perfect. Hela prefers staying inside on the couch with her dad, Thor will go anywhere his mommy goes and is her constant shadow, and Brutus—even though he’s the oldest—is the baby. He constantly stresses everybody out, loves to go anywhere, and has never met a stranger. He absolutely loves to bake in the summer sun and go swimming.

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Bailey Grace

ANGIE MCGHEE
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Small & Sassy

Bailey Grace is sassy, 8-year-old miniature poodle.

Chief Sidekick

Bailey Grace is my daily sidekick, loyal shadow, and constant source of joy. She’s the first to greet me in the morning, the one who keeps me company through long workdays, and the little personality that brings laughter to ordinary moments. Whether she’s supervising from her favorite spot, investigating turtles in the yard, or reminding everyone who really runs the house,



Photo by Amber Perdue, Amber Purdue Photography

Furever Family

Bailey Grace is a cherished part of our family and a bright spot in every day.

Joshua Joseph

RENEE RUTH
eXp Realty LLC — FOREST

Five-Pound Firecracker

Joshua Joseph, Yorkshire terrier, 8 years old, firecracker. Joshua approaches everything with curiosity, determination, and a healthy dose of Yorkie attitude. He is equal parts comedian, companion, and chaos coordinator. Joshua is known for his quirky habits, including his irrational obsession with doorstops, his attempts to bury treasures in places that make no sense, and his dramatic reactions to life’s smallest inconveniences. His expressive face and larger-than-life personality have earned him a loyal social media following that eagerly tunes in for his daily adventures. Despite his mischievous side, Joshua is incredibly loving and devoted. He has been a constant source of comfort, laughter, and companionship through life’s challenges and victories. He has an uncanny ability to make people smile, whether they’re meeting him in person or watching him online. His charm, intelligence, and unmistakable personality make him a beloved family member, travel buddy, office mascot, and tiny ambassador of joy. Joshua may be small, but he leaves a big impression everywhere he goes.

Chief Chaos Officer, Office Supervisor, and Unofficial Director of Morale

As a five-pounder with a larger-than-life personality, he attends Zoom calls, supervises client meetings, accompanies me on business trips, and regularly makes appearances on my social media channels. Whether he’s riding shotgun to appointments, sleeping in his carrier during work sessions, or stealing the spotlight during virtual meetings, Joshua has become a recognizable part of my brand. Clients, colleagues, and followers often ask about him before they ask about me. His funny antics, expressive personality, and ability to bring smiles to people around the world have helped create genuine connections across my real estate and music businesses. Joshua reminds everyone that success doesn’t have to come without joy. He keeps me grounded, makes people laugh, and serves as a daily reminder that sometimes the smallest team member can have the biggest impact.

Life Lessons

Joshua has taught me that the most important things in life are presence, loyalty, and connection. As a business owner, it’s easy to get caught up in goals, deadlines, and the next thing on the to-do list. Joshua doesn’t care how many deals I’ve closed, how many songs I’ve released, or how many hours I’ve worked. He’s simply excited that I’m there. That perspective has



reminded me to slow down, be present with people, and focus on relationships rather than transactions. He’s also taught me resilience. Through some of the hardest seasons of my life, Joshua showed up every day with the same enthusiasm, trust, and love. He reminds me that even when life gets difficult, I can find joy in the little moments.

Joshua has taught me that making people smile matters. He brings happiness wherever he goes. I try to carry that mindset into both my business and personal life every day. “People may forget what you said, but they’ll never forget how you made them feel.” Joshua lives that lesson better than anyone I know.

Little Legend

Joshua has become a companion, travel partner, office mascot, and a beloved personality in his own right. His adventures have reached thousands of people online, and often, strangers recognize him, ask about him, or tell me that his videos brightened a difficult day. He reminds people to laugh more, slow down, and appreciate the simple things in life. His personality is bigger than his tiny five-pound frame, and he has an incredible gift for turning ordinary moments into memorable ones. While I may be the one holding the leash, anyone who knows us will tell you that Joshua is really the one running the show. In a world that can often feel rushed and complicated, Joshua is a reminder that love, loyalty, and a little bit of mischief can make life a whole lot better.



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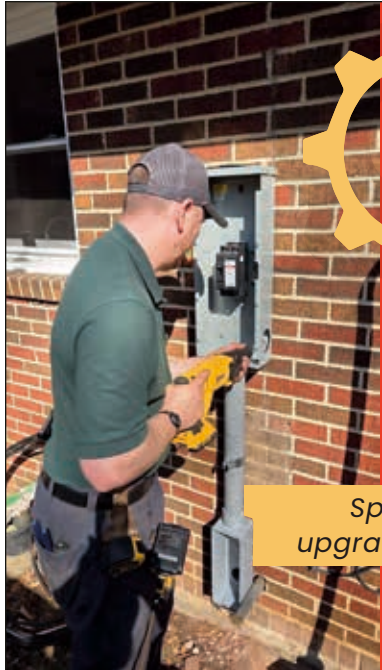
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When Bill Meador graduated from college, he knew two things: he wanted a career in sales, and he had no idea what he wanted to sell. A conversation with a local recruiter changed everything.

The recruiter asked him if he’d ever considered insurance. He hadn’t. A Roanoke Valley native and Cave Spring High School graduate, he had earned a business marketing degree from James Madison University with plans to move to Northern Virginia. Once he compared the area’s cost of living with an entry-level sales salary, however, returning home made more sense.

The recruiter arranged an interview for Bill with Liberty Mutual, and one simple observation sealed the deal. “If you want to sell something, you might as well sell something that everybody is required to have,” Bill says.

His years at Liberty Mutual provided extensive training, but the biggest lessons came from outside the office. As a young agent, he learned to build relationships by making cold calls, walking into businesses to introduce himself, and putting his business cards in as many hands as possible.

His conversations eventually led him to the real estate community, where many of the relationships he built with REALTORS® and lenders have lasted throughout his career. “What started as initial conversations built their trust,” Bill explains. “They started referring business on a regular basis, and over time, many of them have turned into close friends.”

Today, Bill leads the Meador Insurance Agency, an independent brokerage representing more than a dozen insurance carriers throughout Virginia and North Carolina. The independent model allows his team to compare coverage and pricing across multiple companies instead of trying to fit every client into a single product. “We do not work for any particular insurance company,” he comments. “We work for you as our client.”

Bill’s office gathers a client’s information during an initial discovery call, shops rates among multiple carriers, and often presents the best options the very same day. “We are able to find the perfect solution no matter the person’s background, driving record, housing location, or even the number of auto or

“We do not work
for any company.
**WE WORK
FOR YOU AS
OUR CLIENT.”**

STORY BY JACKI DONALDSON
PHOTOS BY KRISTINA ROSE, KRISTINA
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OTHERWISE NOTED)





home insurance claims they’ve filed in the past,” he shares.

That flexibility has become especially valuable in today’s insurance market, where rates and underwriting guidelines can vary dramatically between companies. For Bill, however, finding competitive pricing is only part of the job. Education comes first. “In this day and age, you can buy anything you want on the internet. Your insurance should never be one of those things,” cautions Bill, who regularly meets first-time home buyers who assume the cheapest online

quote is automatically the best choice, often without understanding deductibles or coverage limits. “If you don’t know what you need, the natural inclination is to find the cheapest option you can find,” he adds.

Bill believes those few extra dollars each month can make an enormous difference when something unexpected happens. That advisory approach resonates with real estate professionals, who trust him to help clients avoid surprises before closing day. He encourages buyers to reach out as soon

as they’re under contract and their loan has been approved, allowing plenty of time to secure the right coverage without delaying the transaction.

His agency also serves investors by insuring both short- and long-term rental properties, giving agents another resource for clients who are expanding their real estate portfolios.

Once coverage is in place, Bill’s team continues serving as an advocate long after the policy is issued. Rather than directing clients immediately to a

national claims center, they encourage policyholders to call the local office first. “We can advise and file a claim,” he explains. “However, depending on your deductible, we may advise not filing a claim.”

When claims do move forward, his team acts as a liaison between clients and adjusters, helping answer questions and pushing the process along when needed. That level of accessibility is something Bill believes has become increasingly rare. “With us, you’re not calling an 800 number and waiting for someone to

“You are calling a local 540 number. **WE KNOW WHO YOU ARE BY YOUR NAME** and not just a policy number.”

answer,” he notes. “You are calling a local 540 number. We know who you are by your name and not just a policy number.”

Meador Insurance Agency includes a team of eight dedicated professionals who handle new business, customer service, policy reviews, and remarketing to help ensure clients continue receiving competitive rates. This year, Meador Insurance Agency was voted the region’s Best Insurance Agency for the 10th consecutive year. “We don’t do anything for recognition, but the award speaks volumes,” Bill shares.

“It’s a true testament to what we do year after year.”

For Bill, the greatest measure of success is hearing the excitement from clients who discover they can improve their coverage while saving hundreds, or even thousands, of dollars. “Knowing that we provide such an important service to our local community is very rewarding,” he states.

That same philosophy extends to every referral he receives from the real estate community. Every introduction is an opportunity to strengthen not just his own reputation, but the reputation of the agent who trusted him with their client. “If anyone refers business to us, we make that person look as good as possible,” he says. “What we do reflects on them. Agents are our priority. 🏡

CONTACT US!



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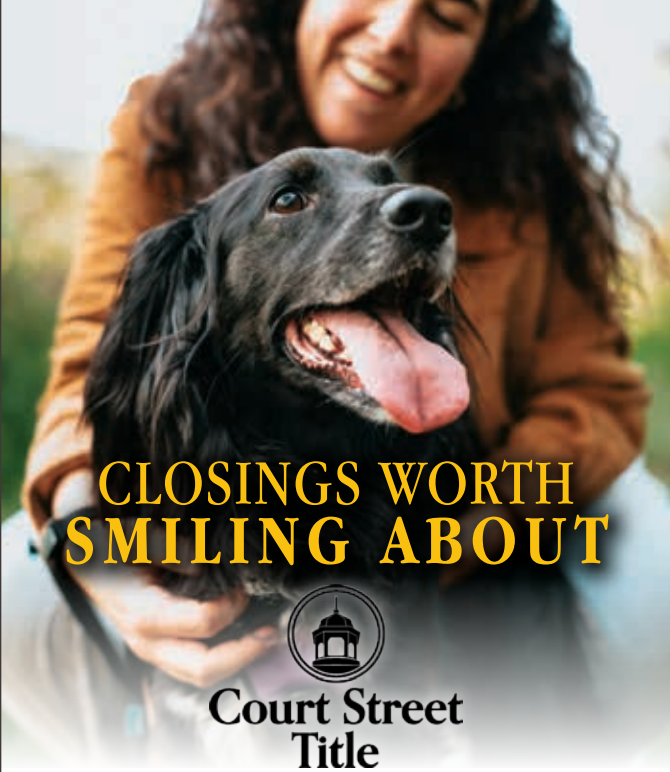
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the RELATIONSHIP Business

Relationships are not part of **KEM COBB'S** business.
They are her business.

One of Kem Cobb's recent listing appointments turned into something more than a conversation about real estate. As she sat down with longtime clients whom she has helped buy and sell six homes over the years, the conversation turned to someone Kem assumed they had never met. Before long, the couple smiled and said, "Kem, we know her. We met her at your pie party."

Throughout the year, Kem's calendar stays full with flower-arranging workshops, trivia nights, paint-and-sips, happy hours, lunches, and other opportunities to bring people together. "I love the relationship part of real estate," she shares. "I get to spend time with people I genuinely enjoy."

That philosophy has shaped every stage of Kem's 27-year real estate career. Today, roughly 95 percent of her business comes through referrals, the result of years

spent investing in people long after the closing table.

Kem Cobb in Real Estate
Raised in Christiansburg, Virginia, Kem graduated from Christiansburg High School before attending college at Emory & Henry University and later Virginia Tech. She would go on to work alongside her former husband in the office equipment industry. In 1990, they opened their own company, Cobb Technologies, eventually selling their ownership interest to his brother years later. Then, Kem decided to pursue something that had been quietly calling her name: real estate.

Kem fondly recalls attending Virginia Tech football games and listening to one of her tailgating companions, broker Max Guthrie of ERA Hallmark Properties, talk about real estate. Looking for a career that would give her the flexibility to be present

for her three children, she told Max she was thinking about getting her license. He didn't hesitate. "Kem Cobb in real estate? It's gonna be great," he said.

Nearly three decades later, she still credits Max for laying the foundation of her career. "I learned everything I know from him," Kem stresses. "I learned how to do real estate the right way. He taught me that real estate is a relational business."

The Well-Oiled Machine
Max's lessons followed Kem through every chapter of her career. For years, she relied almost entirely on organic relationship-building. "I didn't even have a database for probably my first 15 years," she explains. "I could go to Isabella's for happy hour and leave with a client. Honestly, that still happens."

Eventually, coaching through Buffini & Company helped her become more

Coffee with client and close friend Brenda

STORY BY JACKI DONALDSON
PHOTOS BY AMBER PERDUE, AMBER PERDUE PHOTOGRAPHY



Kem with four of her six grandchildren

intentional. She built a strong database, committed to staying in touch with clients at least once each quarter, and confidently began asking satisfied clients for introductions. “It didn’t happen overnight, but over the years it became a well-oiled machine,” she points out.

Kem’s client events have become a signature part of that machine. For 10 years, she hosted an annual Thanksgiving pie party where clients gathered for food, conversation, and a pie to take home for the holiday. Last year, she transformed the tradition into a Christmas celebration at Oakwood Country Club featuring Santa Claus, children’s activities, a hot chocolate station, professional family photos, and a wreath for every guest. Guests also brought toys for Toys for Tots.

“It didn’t happen overnight, but over the years it became a well-oiled machine.”



Isabella’s Italian Trattoria with a client



Bouquet Party with The Flowering Fig, one of her client events

“
I told my coach
I’m going to
work very hard
on this project,
but I can’t forget
why I’m where I
am right now.

*I can never
forget where I
came from.*

Brenda and Russell
Kem continues finding new ways to bring people together because, for her, the relationships matter every bit as much as the real estate. Those relationships often extend far beyond closing day. One of her favorite examples began years ago when she met Brenda and Russell through a lead. What started as a business relationship became a lasting friendship. “I cherish that,” she comments. “This job brings so many great people into my life. Our business is all about trust.”

That trust extends well beyond the clients she serves. Through Buffini coaching and industry events, Kem has built friendships with REALTORS® across the United States and

Canada. “If one of my clients is moving out of state, I can find someone who will serve them the way I would,” she says.

Madison Heights
Relationships have also led to one of the biggest opportunities of her career. This year, Kem will represent a 177-townhome development in Madison Heights, a project that grew from a relationship she built with the developer 15 years ago. “We stayed connected,” she mentions. “This project came because of that relationship.” The community will feature patio homes, apartments, pickleball courts, a clubhouse, fitness center, a pool, and other amenities that encourage connection among residents.

Despite the scale of the project, Kem remains grounded in the business that brought her there. “I told my coach I’m going to work very hard on this project, but I can’t forget why I’m where I am right now,” she shares. “I can never forget where I came from.”

Life in Balance
Outside of work, Kem enjoys traveling with friends, participating in book clubs, leading a Bible study, spending time with her family, and fitting in regular workouts. “I have a very healthy balance between work and personal life,” she says. That balance, along with a deep faith, has guided both her life and career. “I am definitely where God meant me to be,” Kem shares. ▀

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