MOUNTAINS, LAKES & ATHENS

DECEMBER 2026

# REAL PRODUCERS®

## YEAR IN REVIEW














CONNECTING. ELEVATING. INSPIRING.

Our team provides quality
**RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL**
assistance always and
**FOREVER.**

FOREVER
EXTERIORS

REALTY DIVISION:




**OUR EXCLUSIVE SERVICE INCLUDES:**

Video assessments. Exterior inspections.
Onsite Maintenance repairs. Excellent communication.
Full service Insurance claim handling.
Roofing, siding, gutter replacements and repairs.

**833-4EVER-00**

**FOREVEREXT.COM**

# Contents




## PROFILES



**18** M-Power Solutions & MPower Global



**22** Strength In Stepping Away

## IN THIS ISSUE


**6** **Preferred Partners**
**10** **Meet The Real Producers Team:**
**14** **Technology Corner:** Your AI Advantage
**18** **Partner Spotlight:** M-Power Solutions & MPower Global
**22** **Strength In Stepping Away**
**25** **Cover Story:** 2026 Cover Story Year In Review
**34** **FAQ:** All About Mountains, Lakes & Athens Real Producers


If you are interested in nominating people for certain stories, please email us at: Nick.Stevens@RealProducersMag.com




Local & Long-Distance Moves • Commercial Moves & Labor-Only Moves

Senior Moves & Storage Solutions

sMOOth MOOves



Packing, Unpacking, & Supplies

SQUARECOW MOOVERS

(706) 229-7639

squarecowmovers.com

Make Every Showing Unforgettable

What We Provide:
Vacant Home Staging
Model Home Staging
Pre-Listing Consulations
Turn-Key Furnishing Packages: STRs, Offices, Student Housing, Senior Living

Contact us now to elevate your listings — and your commissions.



SET THE STAGE®
ATHENS LAKE COUNTRY

706-750-9975
sara.tintle@wesetthestage.com
**setthestagealc.com**

setthestage_athenslc SetTheStageALC

# Preferred Partners

This section has been created to give you easier access when searching for a trusted real estate affiliate. Take a minute to familiarize yourself with the businesses sponsoring your magazine. These local businesses are proud to partner with you and make this magazine possible. Please support these businesses and thank them for supporting the REALTOR® community!

**ACCOUNTING - CPA**
**Robin M Rudisill, CPA PC**
(470) 253-4507
www.rmrcpafirm.com

**CLEANING - RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL**
**Home Clean Heroes**
(770) 554-2224

**CUSTOM HOME BUILDERS**
**Great Home Endeavors**
(470) 968-7238

**Windsor Custom Homes of Georgia**
(470) 946-3767

**CUSTOM WINDOW COVERINGS & PATIO SCREENS**
**Bloomin' Blinds of Cumming & Johns Creek**
(404) 360-0906

**DOCK BUILDER**
**Dock Cares**
(706) 897-6449

**HANDYMAN SERVICES**
**Local Handyman Northeast Georgia**
(770) 823-3014

**HARDWOOD FLOORING**
**FATHER & SON FLOORS LLC**
(470) 214-9300

**HOME BUILDER - CUSTOM**
**Brown Haven Homes**
(828) 735-4184

**HOME INSPECTION**
**Abernathy Home Inspections**
(404) 996-7690

**At Ease Home Inspections**
(706) 224-4333

**Blue Ridge Home Inspections**
(706) 633-3377

**HOME ORGANIZING/STYLING**
**Styl Home Enhancements**
(617) 633-5050

**HOME STAGING/BUSINESS STAGING/INTERIORS**
**Set The Stage Athens Lake Country**
(706) 750-9975

**HOME WARRANTY**
**Fidelity National Home Warranty**
(770) 639-8956

**INSURANCE: AUTO/HOME/LIFE**
**Brightway Insurance, The Caldwell Agency**
(706) 969-0053

**Clear View Insurance Agency**
(770) 998-6469

**Comparion Insurance-Zach LaFontaine, Agent**
(770) 713-1737

**LONG TERM RENTAL / PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**
**Real Property Management Excel**
(678) 999-4696

**MORTGAGE / LENDER**
**Southeast Mortgage-Bacarri Rambo Loan Officer**
(229) 400-2222
southeastmortgage.com/bacarrirambo

**MORTGAGE BROKER**
**GFS Home Loans**
(678) 522-5548

**JOHNS CREEK MORTGAGE, LLC**
(678) 632-0080

**Stockton Mortgage**
(770) 757-2773
adambuice.com

**MOVING & HAULING**
**Square Cow Moovers**
(706) 229-7639

**MOVING/DELIVERY/STORAGE**
**Greater Athens Storage LLC**
(678) 863-2928

**PHOTOGRAPHY**
**Stanley Real Estate Media**
(706) 499-0514

**PRINT, SHIP, & MAIL**
**The UPS Store 4342**
(404) 374-9859

**PRIVATE MONEY LENDING**
**Lillibell Financial**
(303) 819-6059

**PROPERTY DATA | CALL CENTER | VA'S**
**M Power Solutions, LLC**
(410) 936-3675
www.supermpower.com

**REAL ESTATE COACHING**
**Jessica Wade Real Estate Coaching**
(770) 540-3641

**REAL ESTATE MEDIA**
**Social4Business**
(706) 580-2349

**ROOFING & GUTTERS**
**Ascend Roofing and Contracting Inc**
(404) 757-9824

**Glory Roofing, LLC**
(706) 656-0391

**ROOFING AND RESTORATION**
**Elite Roofing and Restoration**
(678) 781-1998
www.eliteroofingga.com

**ROOFING, SIDING & GUTTERS**
**FOREVER Exteriors**
(414) 248-6275

**SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING/ MANAGEMENT**
**Kadima Collective**
(678) 960-8479

**WEBSITE | SEO | SOCIAL | AI | AUTOMATION**
**MPower Global**
(725) 226-2447
www.mpowerglobal.ai




BrownHaven HOMES
CUSTOM HOME BUILDER

Real Estate Professionals: Let's Build Success Together

CHECK OUT SOME OF OUR RECENT BUILDS!










At Brown Haven Homes, we know that great Realtors are essential to matching buyers with their perfect homes. That's why we've created a referral program that rewards your hard work and your expertise.

**Bring your buyers and receive:**

- Competitive commissions on every sale (3%). Paid when your client breaks ground.
- Full commission protection – we honor your registration
- Co-op advertising opportunities
- Open houses and broker events
- Dedicated support from closing to move-in
- Access to inventory before public release

SCAN HERE TO SIGN UP FOR OUR PARTNER PROGRAM AND TO LEARN MORE!

*Prices shown above are for the base plans and the homes in the photos may included additional paid investment options.

**BROWN HAVEN HOMES ELLIJAY**
587 Highland Crossing,
Ellijay, GA 30540
Brownhavenhomes.com
706-970-2545

**BROWN HAVEN HOMES DAWSONVILLE**
837 Hwy 400 South Suite 105
Dawsonville, GA 30534
Brownhavenhomes.com
706-970-2480

**BROWN HAVEN HOMES OCONEE**
1105 Lake Oconee Parkway
Eatonton Ga 31024
Brownhavenhomes.com
706-809-6584

## Keep Your Investor Clients.
## We'll Take Care of the Rest.

**At Real Property Management Excel, we partner with local agents to manage their clients' rental properties, without taking over the relationship.**

- We protect your client relationship
- We refer clients back when they're ready to buy or sell
- We provide professional, local, responsive management

**Let's Connect and Build a Partnership**

678.999.4203
mike@rpmexcel.com



REAL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT EXCEL
a neighborly company

Serving Walton County and surrounding areas!

Mike Savory, Owner



LOCAL Handyman
NORTHEAST GEORGIA

**BONNIE SNIFFS OUT THE PUNCH LIST BEFORE YOUR BUYERS DO.**

From listing to closing, we've got it covered.




BUILT FOR REALTORS.

FAST TURNAROUND FOR REALTOR DEADLINES
REPAIR PUNCH LISTS & TO-DO LISTS
RELIABLE, PROFESSIONAL & EASY TO WORK WITH
HELPING YOU CLOSE DEALS WITH CONFIDENCE

SCAN FOR A FREE REALTOR ESTIMATE

HANDYMAN SERVICES YOU CAN COUNT ON
Decks • Doors • Windows • Drywall
Trim • Painting • Fixtures • And More

VETERAN OWNED & FAMILY OPERATED
TRUSTED. LOCAL. DETAIL-FOCUSED.

770-230-1633
localhandyman.com/northeast-georgia



# Dream it. Build It. *Live it. Love it*

*Custom Homes Crafted with Southern Excellence*



NEW HOME CONSTRUCTION
DESIGN-BUILD SERVICES
PERSONALIZED FLOOR PLANS
QUALITY CRAFTSMANSHIP
ON-TIME, ON-BUDGET DELIVERY



EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS Since 2001
WINDSOR
CUSTOM HOMES OF GEORGIA

*Serving Lake Oconee and Surrounding Areas*

470-WINDSOR
WindsorCustomHomesGA.com

*Call today to schedule a consultation!*

"I Love This Stuff!"
Henry Darby, Owner





# Real Estate Pros Deserve a CPA Who Gets It

**Smart, stress-free tax and advisory services for real estate agents, investors, and small business owners.**

Transparent pricing.
Proactive planning. Direct access to Robin — no call centers, no junior staff.




RMR CPA FIRM

**Book your first call today.**
rmrcpafirm.com
470.253.4507
robin@rmrcpafirm.com

*Life is Taxing, Taxes Shouldn't Be.*



ELITE ROOFING & RESTORATION

*Our Quality* STARTS AT THE TOP



PROTECTING WHAT MATTERS MOST.
*Inside & Out.*

ALL THINGS ROOFING
Repairs, replacements, storm damage, leak detection, emergency tarping & more.

EXTERIOR SERVICES
Siding, gutters, soffit & fascia, windows, doors & exterior painting.

WATER MITIGATION
Fast response for water damage. We dry, clean & restore.

RENOVATIONS
Kitchens, bathrooms, basements & whole home renovations.

GENERAL CONTRACTOR
Fully licensed & insured with expert craftsmanship from start to finish.

INSURANCE SPECIALIST
ASK ABOUT OUR REALTOR DISCOUNT

FREE INSPECTIONS
NO OBLIGATION. JUST HONEST ANSWERS.
678-781-1998

# Meet The Team



**Nick Stevens**
*Owner/Publisher*



**Jessica Wellar**
*Writer*



**Elizabeth McCabe**
*Writer*



**Rebecca Wilson**
*Writer*



**Dan Allsup**
*Ad and Content Manager*



**Steven Neville**
*Social Media*



**Cam Jimenez**
*Videographer*



**Allie Santos**
*Photographer*

DISCLAIMER: The articles and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the respective authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of The N2 Company d/b/a Real Producers ("N2"). Advertisements appearing in this publication are paid placements and are not endorsed or recommended by N2. N2 is not responsible for the statements, opinions, or business practices of any authors, contributors, or advertisers featured herein. Portions of this publication may include content created with the assistance of artificial intelligence (AI) tools by authors or contributors and may not be independently verified by N2.

Comparion Insurance Agency

Your clients trust you to guide them home — **trust us to protect it.**

As an independent agent with access to 30+ carriers, I shop the market so your clients get the right coverage at the right price. I take the time to educate every client and build lasting relationships built on transparency and trust. When your deal closes, I make sure the protection doesn't fall through the cracks.

PROGRESSIVE · Liberty Mutual INSURANCE · TRAVELERS

Contact me for your free quote.



**Zach LaFontaine**
600 Chastain Rd.
Bldg. 200, Suite 225
Kennesaw, GA 30144
(770) 713-1737
Zachary.Lafontaine@ComparionInsurance.com

©2026 Comparion Insurance Agency, a Liberty Mutual company, 450 Artisan Way, Somerville, MA 02145. All statements made are subject to provisions, exclusions, conditions, and limitations of the applicable insurance policy. Travelers and the Travelers Umbrella logo are registered trademarks of The Travelers Indemnity Company in the U.S. and other countries.
ANP1358272 2026/05

THE N2 COMPANY




The N2 Company was named to ***Inc.'s* Best in Business list for Social Good** — the authoritative list of companies that make a meaningful impact beyond profit.

Here's the part we're most proud of: The magazine you're reading is part of that impact.

Read how THIS magazine is part of something bigger.








# Finish the Year with a Place to Call Home.

A NEW YEAR. A NEW ADDRESS.

As the year comes to a close, let's help more of your buyers and sellers make their next move.

At Stockton Mortgage, we're committed to being your trusted lending partner with fast communication, creative solutions and a seamless process for you and your clients.

**LOCAL DECISION-MAKING**
Responsive, experienced and relationship-focused.

**SOLUTIONS FOR EVERY CLIENT**
Conventional, FHA, VA, Jumbo, Renovation and Down Payment Assistance.

**A TRUE PARTNER**
We work with you — keeping you informed every step of the way

LET'S CLOSE MORE TOGETHER IN THE NEW YEAR.

**Paige Grove**
Sales Manager, NMLS 2743391
770.757.2773
paige.grove@stockton.com

STOCKTON MORTGAGE

Stockton Mortgage NMLS-6868 | Equal Housing Lender
349 B Dahlonega Street, Cumming, GA 30040














# THE REFINED NEST

## Better First *Impressions*

### For Listings in the North Georgia Mountains

The Refined Nest Pre-Listing Consultation helps sellers prepare their home before photos and showings. I walk through the property room by room and provide practical recommendations for decluttering, styling, furniture placement, lighting, and small repairs that can help the home show at its best.

## WHY AGENTS USE IT

- ✓ Helps take the pressure off hard homeowner conversations
- ✓ Gives sellers a clear, professional plan before listing
- ✓ Helps homes feel more photo-ready, welcoming, and market-ready
- ✓ Pre-Listing Consultation • $150 Staging services available by custom quote.

The Refined Nest™
DESIGN. ORGANIZE. STAGE.

*The Refined Nest | Elissa Byrd*

www.TheRefinedNest.com
706-970-8481

# Your AI Advantage

## Your Sphere Lives on Facebook & Instagram. Meta Just Gave You an Assistant That Lives There Too.

BY STEVEN NEVILLE



Every AI tool is locked out of Facebook and Instagram. Meta just changed that. On September 8 it released Muse, its own AI assistant, and a business version followed September 29. It connects to your Facebook, Instagram and Threads accounts automatically. It reads your friends' posts (including Reels!), groups, events, Instagram messages, Page stats and ad account. Nothing posts, sends or spends until you tap approve and it's free for most uses. Your sphere does not live in your CRM. It lives on Facebook and Instagram.

### This Month's Tip: Let It Work Your Sphere Every Morning

Give it one standing job. Every morning, list the friends and followers with a birthday today and anyone who posted a new job, a baby, an engagement or a move. Draft a short personal note to each in your voice that mentions the post. Read them over coffee, approve the good ones, and they go out through Messenger or Instagram. Ten minutes. Your people hear from you on the days that matter. Add last year's closings and you have a home-anniversary program too.

### Six More Jobs It Can Do Inside Meta

- **Your conversations**: Find the people you have not talked to in 90 days and anyone who mentioned a move, a new job or a growing family, and draft the check-in.
- **Your posts**: Every Monday, rank last week's Instagram and Facebook posts and tell you why the top three worked and the bottom three died.
- **Your groups**: Watch your local groups for anyone asking for an agent, a neighborhood opinion or a moving date, and draft your reply.
- **Your competitors**: Read local agents' pages, pull the questions their followers ask in the comments, and hand you a month of post ideas nobody answered, plus a look at their ads in the Ad Library.
- **Local news**: Follow the city, school district and news pages and send a weekly list of stories worth your take, caption drafted.
- **Marketplace**: Flag for-sale-by-owner listings, moving sales and estate sales in your farm area.

Let's Make This Useful for You

**Not sure where to start? Email me: steve@mpowerglobal.ai.**
**StevenPaulNeville.com | MPowerGlobal.ai**

Steven Paul Neville














CLEAR VIEW
INSURANCE AGENCY

**We find the Right Coverage for the Right Price!**

- Home or Condo Insurance
- Landlord Insurance
- Commercial
- Auto Insurance

We are continually adapting with the market & adding carrier solutions to assist each client.



**Drake Dodson**
770-998-6469 | Drake@ClearViewIns.com
www.myagentdrake.com



## Transform Your Client's Space with Expert Home Organization

*Simplify life with personalized home organization and decluttering solutions*

- Home Organization
- Decluttering
- Senior Downsizing Support

styl

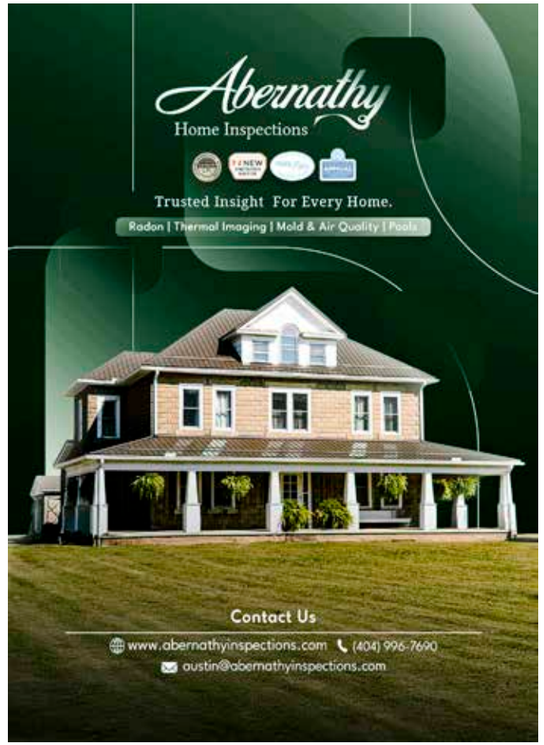
**(617) 633-5050 | mystylhome.com**
limor@mystylhome.com









# M-Power Solutions & MPower Global




## Helping REALTORS® Find More Leads, Get Found Online, and Win Back Their Time

**WRITTEN BY ELIZABETH MCCABE**

What do flipping houses, building businesses, artificial intelligence, and a dog named Bubba Monkey Bears have in common?

Steven Paul Neville.

He's an entrepreneur who loves building businesses, helping others succeed, and finding better ways to get things done. And when he's not working on his next big idea, there's a good chance he's exploring the mountains outside Las Vegas with his wife and their four-legged companion, who apparently eats healthier than most humans.

But before there was M-Power Solutions or MPower Global, there was a real estate investor who discovered that his greatest talent wasn't necessarily buying and selling houses. It was helping other people grow their businesses.

### Finding His Calling

Originally from Baltimore, Maryland, Steven built a career spanning IT, marketing, and sales before entering real estate. He and a business partner began wholesaling and flipping houses, eventually growing a successful operation.

There was just one problem. Neither of them felt particularly passionate about what they were doing.

His partner eventually pursued a career representing artists and entertainers in Los Angeles. Steven, meanwhile, realized that what he enjoyed most was marketing, developing businesses, and mentoring other real estate professionals.

"I found that I really liked the marketing side, the growing of the business side," he recalls.

That realization led to the creation of M-Power Solutions in 2018. At the time, Steven saw a need for reliable homeowner data and lead generation services, particularly among investors and wholesalers. He wanted to help real estate professionals spend less time searching for prospects and more time doing what they do best: building relationships and closing deals.

"We wanted to kind of fill that space and give something of high quality," he explains, "and just help empower and grow other people's businesses."

### Taking the Guesswork Out of Lead Generation

M-Power Solutions began by providing accurate homeowner and property data, updated daily rather than left sitting for months or years. After all, what good is a promising lead if the phone number is disconnected or the homeowner moved six months ago?

The company eventually expanded into a full-service call center, handling prospecting, caller training, lead qualification, and customer relationship management integration. For REALTORS®, that means potential buyers and sellers arrive directly in their CRM, ready for follow-up.

"They don't have to worry about trying to find data, trying to cold call themselves," Steven explains. "They can just worry about building relationships with people and trying to help them."



Steven emphasizes that finding a lead is only the beginning. "Just because you generate a lead doesn't mean that's a closing," he explains. Successful agents still need to nurture relationships, earn trust, and guide clients through the process.

M-Power Solutions uses artificial intelligence to review calls, evaluate lead quality, and provide feedback to callers. But technology hasn't replaced the personal attention Steven believes every client deserves. "We know all our clients by name," he says.

The results can be substantial. One client began working with M-Power Solutions approximately eight years ago as a one-person operation in the Dallas area. Within a year, the business had expanded from one caller to 10, eventually growing into a seven-figure enterprise with its own brokerage and investment operations. Today, that client serves the entire state of Texas and is considering expanding beyond its borders.

For Steven, watching a client achieve that kind of growth is one of the most rewarding parts of his work.

"Hearing back from clients about their success and how we've had a hand in helping them achieve that," he says, is one of his favorite parts of the business.

### From Finding Leads to Getting Found

Finding the lead is only half the job. Today's buyers and sellers search online and ask AI tools for answers, so Steven launched MPower Global in 2025 to help service-based businesses get found and work smarter, with websites, search engine optimization, social media, advertising, AI implementation, and custom automation.

One particularly interesting service involves building what Steven describes as an AI brain for a business.

Imagine having a digital assistant that can organize incoming emails, identify potential property matches, update your CRM, retrieve client information, and handle routine administrative work. That's the kind of technology Steven and his team are developing.

For one husband-and-wife real estate team, the system is designed to help manage commercial and residential transactions, organize communications, and identify opportunities without requiring the couple to spend hours sorting through information.

"It allows a lot of our clients to save a lot of time from manual work that they have to do," Steven explains, "so they can be more productive." The goal isn't to make relationships less personal. It's to give professionals more time to cultivate them.

And Steven already has another venture on the horizon. MPower Vulcan, scheduled to launch in January 2027, will build two kinds of software: ready-made tools any business can sign up for, and custom applications built for a single client, around that business's needs alone. Among its planned offerings is SignCoach, an electronic signature platform incorporating AI to explain complicated legal terminology in plain English.

Anyone who's ever stared at a contract wondering what a paragraph actually means can appreciate that idea!

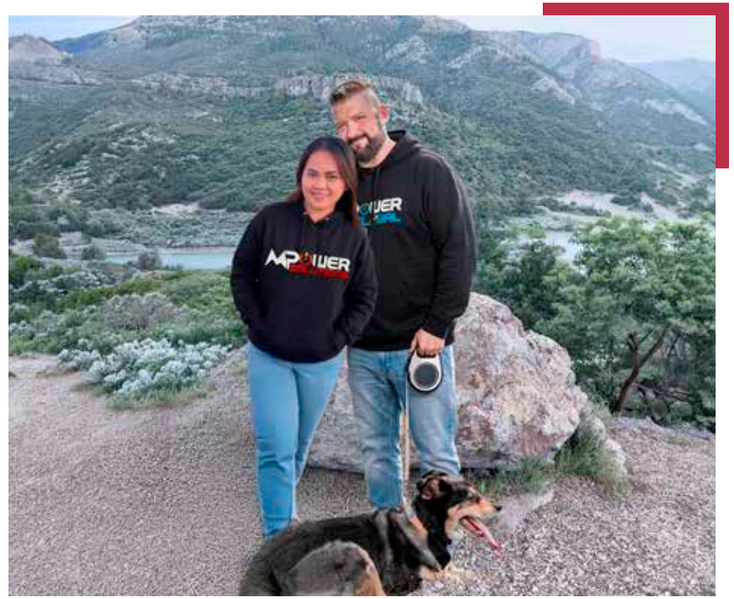
### A Little Advice for REALTORS®

Steven believes one of the most overlooked tools in real estate is an agent's own website. Not simply a profile on a brokerage website, but a modern, independently owned site designed to be discoverable through traditional search engines and AI-powered platforms. Building those sites is the heart of what MPower Global does.

"A lot of people don't understand how important it is, especially for agents, to have their own website that's theirs," Steven points out.

As more consumers turn to AI tools for recommendations and information, Steven says businesses need to consider how easily those systems can find and understand their websites. He also understands that the rapidly changing technology can feel overwhelming.

"It can be very intimidating," he acknowledges, especially when marketing, artificial intelligence, and automation are all part of the conversation. That's why he's happy



to offer consultations and guidance, even to professionals who never become customers.

Whether someone needs better marketing, stronger lead generation, AI implementation, operations optimization, or simply help understanding where to begin, Steven enjoys pointing them in the right direction.

“Anything I can do to help people out, kind of point them in the right direction, I’m always happy to do.”

**Life Beyond the Business**

In January 2026, Steven and his wife traded Baltimore winters for the sunshine of Las Vegas. They’ve discovered that living in Nevada offers plenty of opportunities for adventure, from hiking nearby mountains to exploring restaurants and trying unfamiliar foods.

And when they miss the snow? They can drive into the mountains, enjoy a little winter weather, and head back down to warmer temperatures. Not a bad arrangement!

Steven is also the proud father of two grown daughters. His oldest lives in Maryland, where she’s a teacher and budding real estate investor. His younger daughter lives in Tennessee, works in the electrical engineering field, and helps rescue and foster dogs.

“I’m very proud of both of them,” Steven says. “We’re all very, very close.”

Then there’s Bear, affectionately known as Bubba Monkey Bears. Steven describes him as a human trapped in a dog’s body. Bear refuses traditional dog food, preferring home-prepared meals featuring chicken, brown rice, and broccoli. “He’s very, very healthy,” Steven laughs. “Healthier than us!”

Bear also enjoys accompanying the couple on their adventures whenever possible. Although Steven and his wife love traveling, hiking, and exploring their new surroundings, he admits they’re also a couple of workaholics. “We’re just in a building phase of our lives,” he says, explaining that much of their time is devoted to growing their businesses.

For Steven, that’s hardly a burden. Creating something new and watching it help someone else succeed is precisely what keeps him motivated. And with three businesses, an expanding range of technology services, and plenty of new ideas taking shape, it’s safe to say he isn’t slowing down anytime soon.

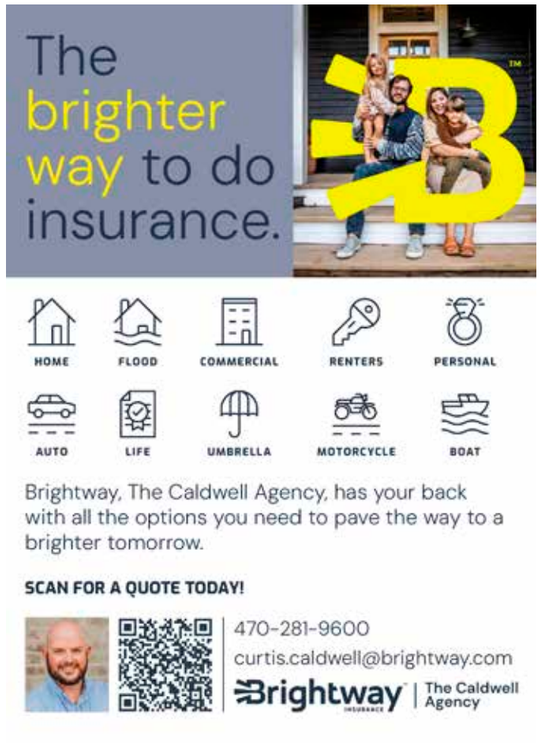
**CONTACT US!**

**Contact Him Today!**
**www.mpowerglobal.ai**
**www.supermpower.com**
**www.stevenpaulneville.com**
**725-226-2447**













# Strength In Stepping Away

## EL CAMINO REFLECTIONS

BY JESS WELLAR

As a writer juggling multiple Real Producers publications, I'll be the first to admit I have struggled to take more than a long weekend off to recharge since I first started in the franchise nearly five years ago. But thanks to an interview I had with an affable Realtor in Florida, our conversation profoundly shifted my mindset on downtime earlier this year.

This agent shared with me a parable about two men who were hired to chop wood from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day. Both workers started chopping at the same time each morning and finished at the same time every night; however, one consistently chopped more wood than the other while taking an hour off for lunch every day. The second man chopped relentlessly, never taking a break during his eight-hour shift.

This hard-working man putting in an extra hour each day was baffled by his colleague's greater productivity; finally, curiosity got the better of him and he asked what was this guy doing when he breaked each day for lunch?! His cohort informed him he was simply taking a break to go sharpen his axe.

Talk about an aha moment! After that phone call, I made up my mind: the Camino, a pilgrimage with many routes that all lead to one destination: Spain's famed Cathedral of La Compostela de Santiago was finally going to happen this year no matter what!

My brother Justin and I had studied in southern Spain for two semesters back in 2001-2002 (how has it been 25 years already?!) and we both had long fantasized about making this gorgeous walk a reality someday. As a believer in God, it checked my spiritual box of course, but it was also a wonderful opportunity to spend time with our adventurous mother, Sherri.

Not that I needed any more reason to book my ticket, but seeing this World Heritage Site in Galicia had its own appeal, as the cathedral is the reputed burial place of St. James the Great, one of the 12 apostles.

I will forever be grateful to my brother, a certified travel advisor, for planning every last detail of our trip six months in advance. I can't overstate how incredibly popular the Camino has become in recent years, thanks to the movie by the same name starring Martin Sheen. Nearly half of all pilgrims opt for the traditional route that starts in France and traverses the Pyrenees in 30-35 days, with almost



100KM to go


We passed countless fortresseses, cathedrals and ancient ruins along the way.

half a million individuals making the journey last year alone!

While my mother is semi-retired, my brother and I simply didn't have that kind of time to take off, so we opted for the coastal route from Porto, Portugal that spanned 12 days of intense walking to Santiago de Compostela, Spain.

Our crew averaged roughly 15 miles (24 km) per day to cover the total distance of 180 miles (260 km) with plenty of blisters and aches along the way. At one point halfway through the trail, I asked my brother when we were going to have our much-needed 'rest day' he had promised to build into our itinerary, and he informed me that our rest day was only going to be 10 miles. Ha.

Of the three of us, I feel comfortable saying that I trained the most but it didn't matter—we all carried our backpacks with 20-25 pounds of weight and the uneven cobblestones took their toll. I certainly don't want to sugarcoat it. Regardless, I came to realize some suffering was inevitable on everyone's part, as that is essentially the human experience. But the sweet escape from screens and the pressures of daily life far outweighed any discomfort.

I actually went cold-turkey on news consumption and found myself unwinding little by little with each passing mile as worries faded from view; the only concern I now had was making sure my feet were bandaged properly and my pilgrim app was pointing me in the same direction


As a wine lover, I appreciated the opportunity to sample local vintages from the Douro Valley.

as the ubiquitous scallop shell signs I was following.

Besides the benefits of living fully in the moment while Mother Nature worked her magic, the people I met over those dozen days on the trail were a true highlight. Everyone had their reason for committing to the Camino, and as someone who interviews others for a living, I was in my glory hearing the countless motivations that left me floored and inspired.

With only the last 100 km to Santiago as the minimum distance required to receive your official Camino certificate, we encountered more and more large groups, more vendors hawking souvenirs and passport stamps, and in general, a much more commercial vibe. I am so glad we opted to start our journey in Porto and had the experience of strolling the quiet countryside, countless churches and fortresses, and rural footpaths through forests and farmland for days before the crowded circus began.

In addition to sampling the tasty tapas and fresh seafood, I really enjoyed collecting my colorful Camino passport stamps (for free!) at local churches and businesses along the route, but I will treasure the memories of the people I met and quality time with my family much more.

And now that I've been back to work for a few weeks, I'm happy to report that the aforementioned parable has held true … I've already noticed a considerable uptick in my productivity and focus. Hopefully, my Camino experience will inspire you to go sharpen your own axe in the coming year and let those deals fall into place!


Following the scallop shells so I don't get lost.


We did it! Celebrating our Camino finish at the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela




(706) 580-2349

cjimenez@mysocial4business.com

Scan Here To Get Started!

Use code "RPMLA" and get $100 OFF on your fist order.
Only for new clients.

SOCIAL4BUSINESS
VIDEO MARKETING AGENCY











From January to December, the pages of Mountains, Lakes & Athens'sReal Producers 2026 magazines have chronicled our agent's triumphs, challenges, and heartwarming moments, creating a vivid timeline of a year well spent.

COVER STORY

# 2026 Year in Review

WRITTEN BY:
BETH MCCABE

**2026 Cover Story**



**JANUARY**

## John Cook

With 24 years in real estate, John Cook has built an impressive career grounded in the fundamentals: hard work, integrity, and helping others. He has sold more than 800 homes and ranked among the top 3% of Keller Williams agents nationwide for over 15 consecutive years. A dedicated mentor and community advocate, John believes success isn't measured by commissions or accolades but by the lives you touch along the way. Guided by his motto, "Listen, care, deliver," he continues to help clients, inspire fellow agents, and make a lasting difference in the North Georgia real estate community.

**FEBRUARY**

## Nick Montgomery

At just 25, Nick Montgomery is making a name for himself in Lake Country real estate. Originally from Kansas, Nick planned to enter the military until an unexpected change of plans in March 2020 led him toward a career in real estate. His first commission was just $67, but his determination quickly paid off. Today, he leads The Selling The Lakes Team at Keller Williams Lake Oconee, helping buyers and sellers navigate the region's lakefront market. Nick isn't afraid to put in the long hours, have the tough conversations, or talk a buyer out of a deal when he knows it isn't the right fit. For him, doing right by his clients always comes before making a sale. With plans to expand his team across the Southeast, he's proving that age is no barrier to success when you're willing to work hard, embrace challenges, and go all in.





**MARCH**

## Nina Burkdoll

At 20 years old, Nina Burkdoll left Thailand with two suitcases, $1,000, and a determination to build a life in America. After losing two sisters and her father, she made a decision that changed everything: stop living for others and start pursuing her dreams. In March 2021, she earned her real estate license and jumped into the business without a backup plan. She sold 34 homes her first year and went on to earn REALTOR® of the Year. By 2025, Nina had closed more than 250 homes, including 76 that year alone. Today, she uses social media to connect with clients, promote Athens businesses, and share what she's learned. Nina knows how quickly life can change. After everything she's lost, she's determined to make the most of the opportunities in front of her and encourages others to do the same.

**APRIL**

## Linda Baker & Heather Foresman

Linda Baker and Heather Foresman have known each other for years, long before they ever teamed up in real estate. Today, these longtime friends lead L|H Real Estate Group at Engel & Völkers North Georgia Mountains, and they're making quite a name for themselves! Ranked #1 worldwide within the Engel & Völkers brand in 2025, their team closed more than $147 million in sales that year. But ask Linda and Heather what matters most, and they won't talk about the numbers. They'll tell you about their clients, the relationships they've built, and how much they love helping people in the community they've always called home. With different personalities, strengths that complement each other, and a work ethic that doesn't quit, these two make quite a team!



MAY

## Anita & Bre Stephens

Like mother, like daughter! Anita and Bre Stephens have turned their shared love of real estate into a thriving family business. Together, they lead Simply Stephens Real Estate at Keller Williams Realty Atlanta Partners, a team producing more than $20 million in sales. Anita brings decades of experience, while Bre adds fresh ideas, creativity, and plenty of energy. Their teamwork is paying off! In 2025, they ranked among the Top 1% of Keller Williams agents nationwide. But for this mother-daughter duo, there's more to life than closing deals. They love helping people, giving back, and carrying on a family legacy they're proud to call their own.





JUNE

## Living on Lake Lanier Team

What's better than living on Lake Lanier? Helping other people fall in love with it, too! That's exactly what Teresa Smith, Michele Kaplan, and Mackenzie Scott do as the Living on Lake Lanier Team at Keller Williams Realty Atlanta Partners. These three women bring different talents to the table, but they share a love for the lake, their clients, and each other. And their teamwork is paying off! Last year, they closed more than $38 million in sales across 43 transactions. But there's plenty of laughter between closings, too. Whether they're spending time with family, enjoying the water, traveling, or giving back to their community, these ladies know how to make the most of life. For Teresa, Michele, and Mackenzie, real estate isn't just about finding someone a house. It's about helping them find a place they'll love calling home.



JULY

## Thorin and Lance Langley

What do surfing, snowboarding, rock climbing, and selling real estate have in common? Thorin and Lance Langley! This adventurous husband-and-wife duo doesn't believe in sitting still, whether they're tackling the slopes, catching waves, or helping clients find their dream homes. As part of The Petrillo Group at RE/MAX Town & Country in Blue Ridge, Georgia, they make a great team. Lance is the people person, focusing on meeting clients, making connections, and building relationships. Thorin handles the organizational side, bringing her strengths in strategy, problem-solving, negotiations, and contracts. Their motto, "Find Your Adventure," isn't just for their clients. It's how they live! When they're not selling real estate, you'll find them exploring the outdoors, traveling, and making memories with their two children, Kanoa and Myla. Thorin and Lance love helping others discover everything North Georgia has to offer.





AUGUST

## Jennifer Vaughan

What happens when you combine 15 years of tech sales experience, a love for lake living, and a passion for helping people? You get Jennifer Vaughan! An associate broker with Dwell Real Estate, Jennifer has made quite a splash in the Lake Oconee luxury real estate market. Since earning her license in 2020, she's built an impressive business, closing $44 million across 25 transactions last year and ranking among the area's top 10 agents. For Jennifer, it's all about relationships, personal attention, and helping families discover the lifestyle she loves. When she's not working, Jennifer enjoys boating, golfing, traveling, and spending time with her husband, Larry, and their three sons, Matthew, Jordan, and Brandon. She loves staying involved in her community and making plenty of memories with the people she loves most.

SEPTEMBER

## Marla Moulder

Sometimes, taking a leap of faith changes everything. Just ask Marla Moulder! After nearly two decades with a major real estate brokerage, Marla felt called to pursue a new dream. In 2025, she launched Georgia Dreams Realty in Sugar Hill, creating a brokerage where faith, family, and community come first. With 22 years in real estate, Marla believes agents deserve to be valued for who they are, not simply how many homes they sell. She's also passionate about giving back, founding Malerie's Hope in honor of her daughter, a brain tumor survivor. Married to Mike for 31 years and the proud mother of Malerie and Michael, Marla is building more than a business. She's creating a family legacy while helping others pursue their own dreams.






OCTOBER

## Marlena Bhatia

For Marlena Bhatia, real estate isn't just about selling homes. It's about making a difference in people's lives! With seven years in the industry, Marlena has built an impressive career, closing more than 40 transactions and $9 million in sales last year. As associate broker and sales manager at Titan Realty Advisors, she's equally passionate about mentoring agents and creating a culture of honesty, collaboration, and service. Named the 2024 Athens Area REALTOR® of the Year, Marlena believes relationships matter more than transactions. She's also deeply involved in her community, volunteering at Athens Church and serving as chair of Sleep in Heavenly Peace in Jackson County. Whether helping clients, encouraging agents, or giving back, Marlena leads with heart and purpose.



NOVEMBER

## Jerrod Morse

From combat missions to closing tables, Jerrod Morse has spent his career helping people find their way home. A retired Air Force veteran with 22 years of service, 13 deployments, and more than 200 combat missions, Jerrod now puts that experience to work in real estate. As an Associate Broker with Keller Williams Greater Athens, approximately 90 percent of his business involves veterans. He's completed more than 250 VA loan transactions, helping fellow service members navigate homeownership with confidence. His commitment doesn't end at closing. As vice commander of his local VFW, Jerrod continues supporting the military community. For this dedicated veteran, husband, and father, the mission may have changed, but his heart for service certainly hasn't.





DECEMBER

## Shelley Phillips

Meet Shelley Phillips, the powerhouse behind RE/MAX Classic in Lavonia, Georgia, where hard work, teamwork, and plenty of laughter go hand in hand. From becoming a young mother and waiting tables to leading a thriving brokerage, Shelley has never been afraid to roll up her sleeves. Today, her 16-member "Sold Squad" is a local favorite, having closed 210 transactions totaling more than $50 million last year. But Shelley measures success by more than sales. She believes in mentoring agents, serving clients with integrity, and giving back to her hometown. Married to Mitch for 28 years and a proud mother of two, Shelley keeps family at the heart of everything she does. Her motto says it all: "Working for Yourself, Not By Yourself."

# WHAT'S A PROMO?

**A Promo is a unique promotional piece created for agents featured in the pages of Real Producers. A previously printed Real Producers article is transformed into a four- or eight-page leave-behind, laid out like the original article with limited customization.**

## WHY DO TOP AGENTS LOVE THEM?

A Promo is a one-of-a-kind marketing tool that highlights your personal brand and legitimizes you as an agent worth profiling. Use them to:

- Impress during listing appointments
- Send to past clients, friends, or family
- Include with holiday cards
- Attract top talent (brokers love this!)
- Farm your favorite neighborhoods

If you've been featured in Real Producers and want to make the most of your story, reach out to the publisher of this magazine for a Promo.




Envelope & Letter




Fold & Tab









MOUNTAINS, LAKES & ATHENS
REAL PRODUCERS

# All About *Mountains, Lakes & Athens Real Producers*




Real Producers magazine started in Indianapolis in 2015 and is now in over 130 markets across the nation and continues to spread rapidly.

**Q: WHO RECEIVES Real Producers MAGAZINES?**
**A:** The top 300+ real estate agents across north and northeast Georgia.

**Q: WHAT IS THE GOAL OF THIS MAGAZINE?**
**A:** We believe that we are better together. When we surround ourselves with other successful, like-minded people, we grow to new heights. Real Producers is a platform that brings together the most elite individuals in the North Georgia real estate industry.

We take the top 300 real estate agents and RP-vetted businesses in every market, and we build an exclusive community around that group. We share their stories, successes, market trends, and upcoming events — really, anything that will connect, inform and inspire, we put in our monthly publication.

**Q: DOES Real Producers HAVE EVENTS?**
**A:** Yes! We will have specific networking events throughout the year.

**Q: WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR BEING FEATURED IN THIS MAGAZINE?**
**A:** It's really simple. You have to be on the top 300 list, and we take nominations seriously. You can nominate other real estate agents, businesses, brokers, owners or even yourself! Office leaders can also nominate real estate agents. We will consider anyone brought to our attention who is in the top 300 because we don't know everyone's story, so we need your help to learn about them. We cannot guarantee a feature, but we encourage you to meet with one of our team members, support Real Producers and attend our private events to increase your chances.

To submit a nomination, please email: Nick.Stevens@RealProducersMag.com

**Q: WHAT DOES IT COST A REAL ESTATE AGENT/TEAM TO BE FEATURED?**
**A:** Zero, zilch, zippo, nada, nil. It costs nothing to agents, so nominate away! We are not a pay-to-play model. We share **REAL** stories of **Real Producers.**

**Q: WHO ARE THE RP-VETTED BUSINESSES?**
**A:** They are one of the best businesses in north and northeast Georgia in their category, and you can find them listed in our index! We don't just find these businesses off the street, nor do we work with all businesses that approach us. Many of the top agents have recommended every single business you see in this publication. We will not even meet with a business that has not been vetted by one of you and "stamped for approval," in a sense. Our team will further vet every business to make sure they are a good fit and bring value to our community. Our goal is to create a powerhouse network, not only for the best real estate agents in the area but the best businesses so we can grow stronger together.

**Q: HOW CAN I RECOMMEND A BUSINESS?**
**A:** If you want to recommend a business that works with top real estate agents, please email or message us!

**Email:**
**Nick.Stevens@realproducersmag.com**



Partner with Johns Creek Mortgage for:
*Tailored Solutions | Satisfied Clients*
*Seamless Transactions | Exceptional Service*
*Streamlined Process | Quick Approvals*

Looking for a Mortgage Partner Who Delivers?



CONTACT US
678-632-0080
JohnsCreekMortgage.com
Johns Creek Mortgage, LLC
6455 E Johns Crossing, Suite 350
Johns Creek, GA 30097

LEARN MORE

Johns Creek
MORTGAGE
Experience | Expertise
Superior Quality
NMLS #2320634 | Se Habla Español

"The Johns Creek Mortgage team took **GREAT care of me.** From their **punctuality, support, response,** and everything in between... I can't thank them enough. I will **always recommend JCM, LLC** with family and friends. **ALWAYS.**"
– Kevin S.

A PRODUCT OF
THE N2 COMPANY

9151 Currency St.
Irving, TX 75063

