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Contents

PROFILES



12 Baron Harris, Krystal Falls Construction



18 Trent Montgomery

IN THIS ISSUE

- 6** Preferred Partners
- 8** Meet The Team
- 10** Publisher's Note: Cheers to the New Year
- 12** Partner Spotlight: Baron Harris, Krystal Falls Construction
- 16** FAQ
- 18** Rising Star: Trent Montgomery, Trina Griffith & Company
- 24** Cover: Jessica Holmes, East Texas Preferred Properties



24 Jessica Holmes
COVER STORY

If you are interested in nominating people for certain stories, please email us at: Cherika.Johnson@n2co.com

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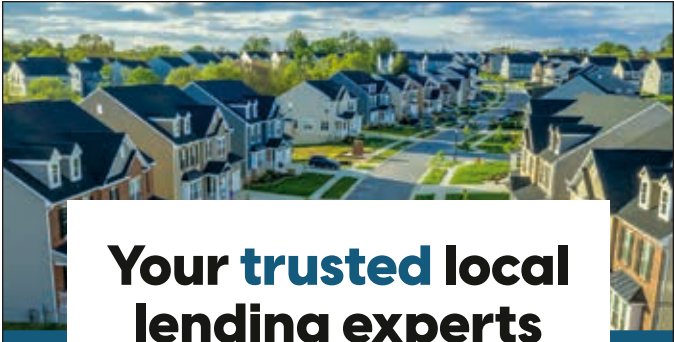
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CHEERS TO THE NEW YEAR

CELEBRATING THE CLASS OF 2026 TOP 300

As we welcome a brand-new year, there's a renewed sense of excitement, possibility, and momentum across the East Texas real estate community. A new year always brings fresh goals and bold visions, and here at *East Texas Real Producers*, our focus for the months ahead is clear: creating more powerful, meaningful, and exclusive opportunities for our Top Producers to connect, collaborate, and grow together.

Networking has always been at the heart of what we do, and in 2026, we're raising the bar. Our goal is to continue curating high-level, relationship-driven events that go beyond exchanging business cards. We're focused on creating intentional spaces where conversations lead to collaborations, partnerships are strengthened, and agents leave feeling inspired, encouraged, and connected to a community that truly understands their journey.

One of the most exciting milestones to kick off the year is the introduction of the new *East Texas Real Producers* Class of 2026 Top 300. If you've earned your place on this prestigious list, congratulations—this is no small achievement. Top 300 badges and lists should be hitting mailboxes toward the end of January or early February, serving as a tangible reminder of your hard work, dedication, and production excellence. Be on the lookout, and be proud to display this exclusive recognition.

To celebrate this incredible accomplishment, we'll also be planning a special event honoring the new Class of 2026 Top 300 agents. Details will be announced soon, and we hope it will be a memorable celebration of excellence, community, and achievement.

Before we turn the page completely, we'll also be hosting our final Cover Celebration in January—an opportunity to celebrate the last covers of 2025 with a dynamic networking event. Be sure to check our Facebook pages and keep an eye on your email for event details.

Here's to a year of connection, celebration, and continued success.

With gratitude,
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Baron Harris

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**BUILT ON LEGACY, TRUST,
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WRITTEN BY CHERIKA JOHNSON • FEATURING PHOTOS BY LANEY SCHROEDER

For Baron Harris, construction is more than a business—it's a reflection of legacy, responsibility, and pride in building something that lasts. Inspired at an early age by his father, BJ Harris, Baron grew up watching firsthand what dedication, precision, and hard work could accomplish. His father's passion for building and operating heavy machinery shaped Baron's appreciation for hands-on work and planted the foundation for a career centered on craftsmanship and accountability.

Baron's professional journey began in landscaping, where he specialized in building koi ponds and water gardens. That early work required vision, patience, and problem-solving skills that naturally evolved into a full-scale construction career. Over time, those outdoor projects gave way to larger residential and commercial builds, leading to the formation of Krystal Falls Construction LLC, a company that has now served East Texas for 15 years.

Today, Krystal Falls Construction is known for its versatility and reliability.

Baron and his team handle dirt work, concrete, asphalt, fire and water restoration, insurance claim repairs, and new construction, serving both residential and commercial clients. This broad scope allows the company to step in at nearly any stage of a project—from early site preparation to final restoration after unexpected damage.

For Realtors, that flexibility matters.

Krystal Falls Construction regularly assists agents by providing job estimates prior to listing or repairs required as a condition of closing, helping transactions move forward efficiently and with confidence. Whether a property needs concrete work, grading, restoration after a fire or water loss, or repairs tied to an insurance claim, Baron understands the urgency and precision required in real estate timelines. In just one year, Krystal Falls Construction completed 150 transactions, a testament to both demand and trust. That growth didn't come from shortcuts—it came from consistency, communication, and delivering exactly what was promised.

Baron maintains an A+ rating with the Better Business Bureau, but accolades are not what motivate him most. For him, the greatest recognition comes from repeat customers and referrals—the homeowners, investors, and Realtors who call again because they know the job will be done right.

Family plays a central role in Baron's life and business. He is supported by his wife, Mitzie Harris, and is a proud father to Destiny Lawrence, Madelyn Willis, Jonathan Willis, and Emma Harris. His family also includes Kenneth Lawrence, son-in-law to Destiny, and Gerald Harrison, Madelyn's boyfriend. Their support and encouragement fuel his commitment to excellence and integrity.



One of the most meaningful influences in Baron's life was his mother, Annie Harris, whose pride in his work continues to guide him.

"Before my mother Annie Harris passed away, she would always tell me how proud she was of the accomplishments I had made by building up my business. She informed me that the community of Diana and the city of Longview knows my business very well and speaks very highly of Krystal Falls Construction LLC." Those words carry weight. They represent not just success, but reputation—earned through years of honest work and community presence.

Running a construction company for more than a decade has shaped Baron through experience. From managing crews and timelines to overcoming challenges and leading through growth, each project has reinforced the values instilled in him early on: show up, do the work right, and stand behind it.

Baron defines success through trust, relationships, and long-term satisfaction. A project isn't finished simply when the work is complete—it's finished when the client feels confident recommending Krystal Falls Construction to others. Many customers return for future projects, and many become friends, which Baron considers the ultimate measure of success.

In an industry where reputation is everything, Baron Harris has built more than structures. Through Krystal Falls Construction LLC, he has built a company grounded in integrity, capable service, and community respect—one project at a time.

For Realtors looking for a dependable contractor who understands deadlines, transactions, and the importance of clear communication, Krystal Falls Construction remains a trusted partner across East Texas.



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FAQS

ALL ABOUT EAST TEXAS REAL PRODUCERS



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

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

Q: What Kind Of Content Will Be Featured?

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

Q: Who Are Our Partners?

A: Anyone listed as a "Preferred Partner" in the front of the magazine is funding and fueling this community



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

Q: Does Real Producers Have Events?

A: Yes! Along with the magazine, we will host quarterly events exclusive to this community, where you--the best of the best--get together at local venues

to socialize, mastermind, deepen our connections, and better our businesses. We will communicate about events through the magazine and on social media. Stay tuned for info on our launch party this Fall!

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

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

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TRENT MONTGOMERY

A LIFE OF SERVICE: SAVING LIVES & BUILDING FUTURES

I first met Trent Montgomery at Silver Grizzly Café in downtown Longview, a locally owned spot where the lattes are art, and the conversation flows easily. What started as a casual chat between two East Texas natives, quickly became one of those conversations that won’t leave you—the kind where you realize you’re talking to someone whose life is as full of purpose as it is of stories. Trent, a lifelong East Texan, has spent the better part of 14 years serving his community as a firefighter and paramedic, and in the past two years, he’s been building an equally impressive presence in real estate alongside his wife, Haley.

WRITTEN BY
DAWN SIMS
PHOTO
BY LANEY
SCHROEDER

“I used to go with Haley to meet her clients,” he said with a laugh, remembering how his journey into real estate began. “I was intrigued, but I never thought of it as something I would actually do—until I had some time off. I got injured at work and was also on paternity leave, and I realized I could combine my love for people with a career that allowed me to be home more.”

Haley has been a successful agent with Trina Griffith & Company for over a decade, and Trent’s admiration for her work was the spark that ignited his own passion. That curiosity quickly transformed into a genuine love for guiding clients through one of the biggest decisions of their lives—buying or selling a home. “It never feels like a sales-based job when you’re focused on serving each family,” he said. “You have to be informative, available, and willing to do what it takes for each client. That’s what I love about it.”

Even in his first year in real estate, Trent’s commitment to service and his natural people skills set him apart. In 2025 alone, he closed nearly \$5 million in sales across 19 transactions. He has already earned recognition as a 2024 Rising Star with Trina Griffith & Co., a Multi-Million Dollar Producer, and leads the top-producing team in the office. Yet, when asked how he defines success, Trent is quick to set aside the recognitions.

“Success isn’t about titles or awards,” he said. “It’s about impact. If I can look back and know that I worked hard, supported my family, treated people with respect, and made a positive difference in my community, then I consider that success. That’s what really matters to me.”

Service has been at the center of Trent’s life long before he picked up a real estate license. Since he was 19 years old, he has served as a firefighter and paramedic, responding to emergencies that most of us can barely imagine. His days in the fire service were often measured in 24+hour shifts, filled with adrenaline, split-second decisions, and moments that could change lives—or end them. Yet Trent found ways to carry that same commitment to people into his new role in real estate.

“In both jobs, it’s about people,” he explained. “In fire service, you’re there on some of the hardest days in someone’s life. In real estate, you’re there for some of the happiest moments. Helping families find the right home, seeing their faces light up—that’s incredibly rewarding.”

Trent’s passion shines brightest when he’s working with first-time homebuyers. “There’s nothing like seeing their excitement,” he said. “They’re accomplishing a big dream, and you get to be part of that moment—it’s priceless. I love being able to walk with them through it, answer questions, calm nerves, and celebrate with them at the end.”

Being a husband and father has also shaped Trent’s approach to both of his careers. He and Haley have two daughters, Brooklyn, 9, and Maddyn, 2. Brooklyn is a spirited fourth-grader who’s deeply involved in travel softball, and Maddyn keeps the household lively and full of laughter. “Family time is everything,” Trent said. “Coaching Brooklyn’s team, watching them grow, just being present with them—it’s what keeps me grounded.” He also shared a sweet anecdote about Brooklyn, who believes she was named after the Brooklyn Bridge. “She wants to see ‘her bridge’ one day,” he said with a grin, “and I promised her we’ll go when she’s older. I love being a girl dad.”



Photo by Laney Schroeder

fire schedule,” he said. “At first, it was a real learning curve—finding time to study the market, meet clients, and still show up for my team at the fire department. But with good planning and the support of my wife, I’ve figured out how to make it work.”

That planning extends to his personal life as well. Trent is intentional about work-life balance, making sure he’s present at home and in his community. “When I’m at work, I give my all. When I’m at home, I slow down and focus on my family,” he said. “Structure, communication, and priorities make it possible. Having a supportive spouse makes all the difference.”

Trent’s long-term vision for real estate is just as focused and disciplined as his approach to firefighting. He hopes to grow The Montgomery Team to the point where it has a strong repeat client base, potentially open his own brokerage, and continue building his real estate portfolio. Already, he manages 34 properties with partners from the fire department, investing and building wealth while mentoring others. “Eventually, I want to flip the two careers,” he said. Despite the intensity of his careers, Trent still finds time for personal growth. He ran a half marathon in 2024, stays active, and invests in his family’s experiences - one day taking Haley on her dream trip to Italy or Brooklyn to New York. “I didn’t grow up traveling,” he said. “Being able to provide these experiences for my family is really important to me.”

There’s an irony Trent acknowledges in living this double life. Some days he’s rushing into burning homes or holding lifeless bodies; other days, he’s walking families into homes where memories will be made for a lifetime. “Both

Trent’s dedication extends beyond family and clients—he’s deeply committed to his community. He’s received numerous awards throughout his career, from his days in emergency services to real estate. Highlights include the 2014 Hometown Hero Award from KNUE Radio Station, the 2016 Longview Fire Department Rookie of the Year, and the 2021 Lifesaver Award from Parkland Hospital in Dallas. He was named a 40 Under Forty winner by ETX

View Magazine in both 2022 and 2023. And while these honors are meaningful, Trent’s focus remains on the people he serves rather than the spotlight on himself.

Balancing two demanding careers, especially one as intense as firefighting, with a growing real estate business hasn’t been easy. “The biggest challenge has been managing the unpredictability of real estate while working such a demanding



Photo by Southern Roots Photography

“THE FIRE DEPARTMENT IS MY CAREER, AND REAL ESTATE IS MY HUSTLE. ONE DAY I HOPE TO FLIP THEM!”

roles are about serving people,” he said. “It’s about making a difference, no matter the situation.” When I left Silver Grizzly that day, as I walked the downtown streets of Longview, I breathed in the cool air in the only place I’ve ever called home, just like Trent. I saw families laughing, sharing time together during the hustle and bustle of the holiday season and despite the December chill, I couldn’t help but feel warmth. And my thoughts... they were about a man who has spent 14 years running toward danger and two years guiding families toward new beginnings. Trent Montgomery is a rare combination: a protector, a guide, a mentor, and a devoted family man. The story to be told isn’t about the lives he’s saved or the homes he’s sold. It’s about the moments in between—the ones where he shows up, fully present, when people need him most. In East Texas, that kind of heart doesn’t just stand out. It leaves a mark that lasts long after the keys are handed over and the smoke has cleared. Because in the life of Trent Montgomery, service isn’t a job, it’s a calling-and for the people whose paths he crosses, he’s someone they’ll never forget.



Photo by Southern Roots Photography

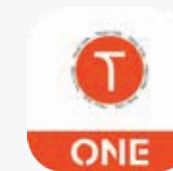
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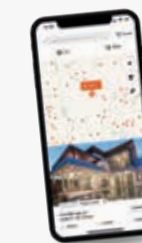
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Jessica HOLMES

A Reflection of Real Transformation & Real Estate

When I sat down with Jessica Holmes in her Kilgore office, the conversation felt less like an interview and more like catching up with a friend who just happens to run a very successful real estate brokerage. As two real estate agents, wives, and moms, we quickly found ourselves talking about the things that live in the in-between—building a business, raising a family, taking care of ourselves, and figuring out how all of it fits together. From the start, it was clear that Jessica’s story isn’t just about real estate; it’s about transformation, faith, and the intentional choices that shape both a career and a life.

Jessica is the broker and owner of East Texas Preferred Properties, based in Kilgore, and she has spent the last 13 years building a career rooted in integrity, service, and leadership. Last year alone, her brokerage closed 355 transactions totaling more than \$82 million in volume, a milestone she talks about with pride, not because of the numbers themselves, but because of what they represent—agents growing, families moving forward, and a business that supports the people behind it. Personally, she closed 12 transactions totaling just over \$3 million, but it’s clear her greatest satisfaction comes from watching others succeed.

What makes Jessica’s journey especially compelling is that real estate was never part of her

original plan. She laughs a little when she admits that she “never really thought about doing real estate.” After graduating from Kilgore High School in 2007, she was led to the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, where she focused on marketing and communications. Her early career included working as a bank teller and new accounts representative at Citizens Bank inside the Kilgore Brookshire’s, later at Citizens National Bank, then VeraBank. One of her most memorable jobs, surprisingly, was working for a small, family-owned cemetery while she was in college. It gave her a deep appreciation for legacy, for stories, and for serving people during some of life’s most emotional moments—lessons that would resurface later in her real estate career.

When Jessica began real estate classes in April 2013, it was supposed to be a side gig. At the time, she was working as an executive administrative assistant at a CPA firm in Lake Charles, Louisiana, while preparing to move back home to East Texas with her husband, Greg. She tried to find a job that would allow her to balance both paths, but nothing seemed to line up. Looking back now, she sees that season clearly. What felt like closed doors were really gentle nudges. After passing her exam in June 2013, she stepped into real estate full time with determination, faith, and no backup plan. Within a month, she had her first deal. The commission

check was just \$180, but the momentum was there, and so was the conviction that she was exactly where she was meant to be.

Those early years were a whirlwind. Jessica assisted her broker, Charlotte Mobbs of Mobbs Real Estate, soaking up everything she could, hands-on and fast-paced. She learned the business from the ground up while navigating pregnancy and new motherhood. For four years, she built her foundation there before stepping out on her own to pursue becoming a broker. Along the way, mentors like Linda Melton and Charlotte Mobbs poured into her professionally, while friendships, especially with Holly Fitzgerald—who now leads the Tyler operations for East Texas Preferred Properties and Heather Kelly, broker of Texas Real Estate Executives in Longview, became anchors of encouragement and growth.

As much as her professional story is about perseverance, her personal health journey is just as defining. About 12 years ago, Jessica made one of the bravest decisions of her life: she had gastric sleeve surgery. “I’ve been big my whole life,” she told me honestly. Growing up without a healthy family environment around food and wellness shaped her perspective, but the surgery became a turning point. She is quick to emphasize that it was never a magic fix. “Surgery is just a tool,” she said. “You still have to do the work. That’s where the results come in and last.”



“

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?” And I said, “Here am I. Send me!”

- Isaiah 6:8

Her goal wasn’t a number or a dress size. She laughs now remembering that she simply wanted “to be in the 100s.” But beneath that goal was something deeper. Jessica was determined not to become part of the statistic of people who regain the weight and repeat the process. She was also acutely aware that before starting a family, she wanted to be as healthy as possible. She lost over 100 pounds before becoming pregnant, walked consistently to stay active, and committed herself to disciplined eating habits that still guide her today.

A moment that lingered with me was her reflection on how the surgery changed more than her health—it changed how the world responded to her. “I felt like I was treated differently when I was unhealthy,” she admitted. The confidence she gained opened doors she’s not sure would have otherwise existed. “Had I not had the surgery, I don’t think I would’ve gone into real estate.” That confidence carried her onto camera during the early days of Facebook business advertising, when showing up online felt intimidating for many agents. Today, she confidently produces weekly content, using her voice and presence to educate and connect.

Jessica also views her health as a non-negotiable for longevity in an industry that demands constant energy. With a family history marked by loved ones passing in their 60s due to unhealthy lifestyles, she made a conscious decision to break that cycle. She wants her children, Evie and Hayden, to see healthy habits modeled daily and to grow up understanding that success means taking care of yourself, not sacrificing your well-being for your work.

Listening to her draw parallels between her health journey and her real estate career was powerful. Licenses, brokerages technology and social media are important, but they are only tools. The real work happens every day—showing up, stepping outside your comfort zone, staying disciplined, and committing to long-term growth. It’s the same mindset that built her brokerage and sustained her transformation.

Jessica’s life and business are deeply intertwined with her family. She and Greg own East Texas Preferred Properties together, a partnership that grew out of faith, trust, and a whole lotta fate. When finances were tight early on, Greg was working oilfield jobs



“

What is inside you can be seen from the outside”



“

Success is measured by impact, not applause.”

and gone often. After their daughter Evie was born in 2015, they wondered if real estate might offer a better life for their family. The decision came down to a nonprofit poker event, two \$500 gift cards, and a pact that if Greg won, the money would fund his real estate classes. He won. Today, they are building a business and a legacy side by side.

Her favorite career moment still brings tears to her eyes. In 2018, while seven months pregnant with Hayden, Jessica was named REALTOR® of the Year by the Longview Area Association of REALTORS®. As Melinda Randall read the accomplishments, Jessica remembers

thinking it all sounded familiar, never expecting her own name to be called. When it was, the emotion took over. Moments like that affirm what she already believes—that success is measured by impact, not applause.

Outside of work, Jessica finds joy in simple pleasures. Reading, traveling, spending time with her family, and binge-watching favorites like *The Office* and *Stranger Things* are her way of recharging. She’s also grown deeper in her faith, attending church regularly and drawing inspiration from verses like Isaiah 6:8 and Colossians 3:23, reminders to serve wholeheartedly and say yes with courage.

As our conversation wrapped up, I couldn’t help but feel inspired—not just by what Jessica has built, but by how intentionally she’s built it. Faithful. Determined. Compassionate. Those three words she used to describe herself are evident in every chapter of her story. Her legacy isn’t just about raising the standard in real estate, though she certainly has. It’s about kindness, leadership, and showing the next generation that success is sustainable when it begins within you. Looking in the mirror has become more about seeing an OOTD for Jessica. It’s about smiling back at who you’ve known you really are deep down and a reflection of the person you were always meant to be.



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