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Rising Star
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BOLD Real Estate

Partner Spotlight
WENDY MCMAHON
HWA Home Warranty of America

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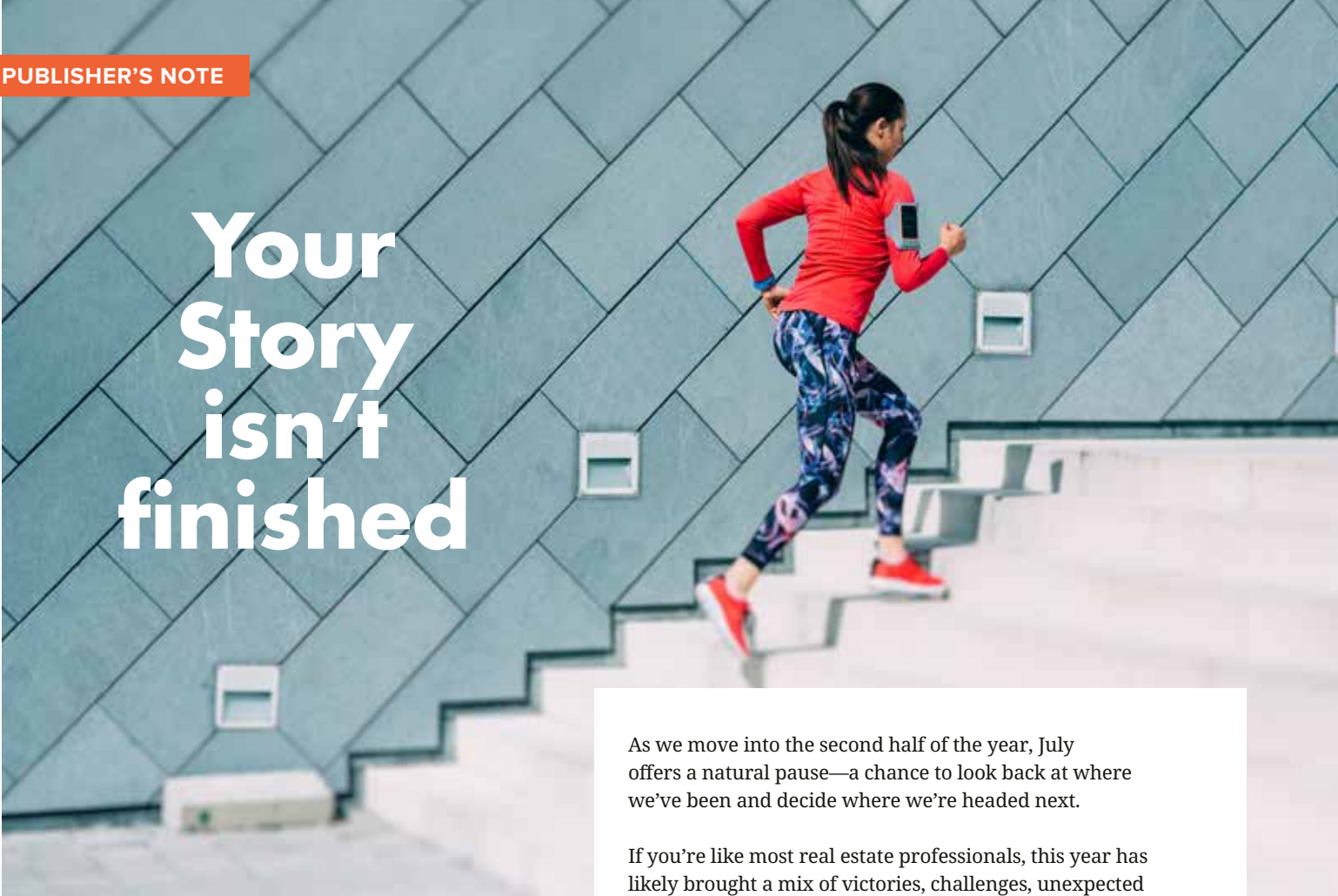
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Your Story isn't finished

As we move into the second half of the year, July offers a natural pause—a chance to look back at where we’ve been and decide where we’re headed next.

If you’re like most real estate professionals, this year has likely brought a mix of victories, challenges, unexpected detours, and lessons you didn’t see coming. The reality is that success isn’t built during the easy seasons. It’s built in the moments when you choose to keep moving forward despite the distractions, disappointments, and demands of everyday life.

Last month, our *East Texas Real Producers* community gathered to discuss what it means to thrive even when life is still lifeing. The conversations were honest, encouraging, and a reminder that none of us are navigating this journey alone.

As you read this month’s issue, I encourage you to celebrate your progress, not just your accomplishments. Progress is showing up when you don’t feel like it. Progress is making the call, attending the event, serving the client, and taking the next step even when the path isn’t perfectly clear.

The year isn’t over. There is still time to grow, to pivot, to improve, and to accomplish goals that may feel just out of reach today. If you feel stuck, consider reaching out to your broker, a mentor, or an agent who can act as an accountability partner to help keep you focused and help you finish the year stronger.

Keep showing up. Keep learning. Keep connecting. Most importantly, keep moving forward. We’re cheering for you.

Cherika Johnson
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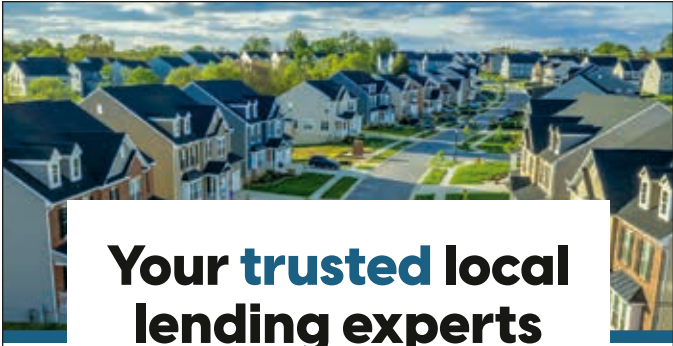
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5,400



TOTAL
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AVERAGE
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PER AGENT



18



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VOLUME
PER
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SALES
VOLUME

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BUILDING A BUSINESS WITHOUT LOSING WHAT MATTERS MOST

WRITTEN BY CHERIKA JOHNSON
PHOTOGRAPHED BY LANEY SCHROEDER

For many people, real estate begins with a love of houses. For Colton Sherwood, it began with something even more important: family.

Today, Colton serves clients throughout East Texas as a REALTOR® with BOLD Real Estate Group, helping buyers and sellers navigate one of the biggest decisions of their lives. But just a few years ago, his path looked very different.

Before entering real estate, Colton spent his career in higher education, serving at institutions including East Texas Baptist University, Texas Tech University, and Southwestern Seminary. While he enjoyed the work, the traditional 8-to-5 schedule often left him feeling like he was missing important moments at home.

When his son, Will, was born, everything changed. “Becoming a dad changed my perspective on time, family, and what truly matters,” Colton shares. “I wanted a career that gave me the opportunity to be more present for my family while also building something meaningful.”

At the same time, a lifelong interest in architecture and design never left him. Long before real estate was even a consideration, Colton was attending local Parade of Homes events as a teenager simply because he loved studying homes, layouts, and craftsmanship. “I probably got a few funny looks showing up as a high schooler,” he laughs, “but I genuinely enjoyed it.”

Then came a conversation that would alter the course of his career. A friend from church suggested that he consider real estate. The idea immediately resonated. Colton began studying at night after his son went to bed, eventually earning his real estate license. Six months later, he took a leap of faith and committed to the profession full-time. Looking back, it remains one of the best decisions he has ever made.

Although Colton is entering just his third year in the industry, his production and consistency have already earned significant recognition. He has been named a Top 300 *East Texas Real Producers* agent every year since entering the business. During 2024, he received Top Producer honors four

times at his previous brokerage and has continued that momentum at BOLD Real Estate Group, earning Top Producer recognition and a Gold Club Award while finishing 2025 ranked among the Top 10 agents within the brokerage.

Still, ask Colton how he defines success, and the conversation quickly moves beyond production numbers.

“Success is faithfully becoming who God called you to be and doing what He entrusted you to do for His glory,” he says.

That philosophy influences every area of his life and business.

While many agents focus heavily on transactions, Colton focuses on relationships. He believes trust is built long before a contract is signed and long after the closing table has been cleared.

“I lead with connection before conversion,” he explains. “A lot of agents chase attention. I’m focused on building trust, community, and long-term relationships.”

His faith is also central to how he serves clients.

Not as a marketing strategy or branding message, but as a genuine framework for how he communicates, manages finances, treats people, and approaches challenges. Clients quickly recognize that authenticity.

Combined with a deep appreciation for market knowledge, pricing strategies, negotiation, and economic trends, Colton brings both heart and expertise to the table. He enjoys helping clients understand the process, educating them along the way, and ensuring they feel confident in every decision they make.

“What I’m most passionate about is helping people navigate one of the biggest financial and personal decisions of their lives with confidence and clarity,” he says.

One transaction in particular continues to stand out. His favorite real estate experience involved helping a young single mother become a first-generation homeowner. “She didn’t think it was possible,” Colton recalls. “Being able to help her and her son achieve homeownership was incredibly rewarding.”



Those moments reinforce why he entered the profession in the first place. For Colton, real estate has always been about more than just property.

It is about people. It is about family. It is about helping create the spaces where life happens. “I care about story, identity, and home,” he says. “Many agents operate from urgency and numbers. I’m focused on helping people find a place where their story unfolds.”

Outside of work, Colton remains deeply invested in faith, family, and community. He and his wife, Maddie, have been married for eight years and are raising their five-year-old son, Will, who will soon begin kindergarten. Together, they are actively involved in their local church and participate in a young families class where they enjoy building relationships and encouraging others.

When they’re not serving clients or spending time at church, you’ll often find the Sherwood family exploring the outdoors, enjoying good food with friends, traveling, fishing, hiking, or simply creating memories together.



Photo
by Helen
Hoffman



Colton also has a creative side that surprises many people. He enjoys drawing and has developed impressive artistic skills over the years.

Maintaining balance between business and family remains one of his highest priorities. He intentionally sets boundaries by scheduling most showings during the week and creating separation between work and home life whenever possible.

“My phone has a bedtime just like my son,” he jokes.

At night, he puts it away to be fully present with his family and to ensure work does not consume every hour of his day.

That discipline has become especially important as he continues building a growing business.

When asked about the biggest challenge he has faced in real estate, Colton points to

“ I CARE ABOUT
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balancing professional growth with personal priorities.

“Real estate can easily become a nonstop career,” he says. “You have to learn discipline, communication, and healthy boundaries.” Those lessons have helped shape not only the REALTOR® he is becoming but also the husband, father, and community member he strives to be.

Looking toward the future, Colton hopes his legacy extends far beyond sales statistics or awards. He wants to be remembered as someone who served others with integrity, cared deeply for his clients, and contributed positively to the communities around him. “I would love to leave a legacy of doing real estate in a way that puts people, integrity, and community above transactions,” he says.

Most importantly, he hopes others see the values that guide his life.

“If people can say I led with integrity, loved my family well, served my community, and helped others grow, that would mean far more to me than any sales number or award.”

Those words perfectly capture who Colton Sherwood is. Steady. Trustworthy. Faithful.

And in a profession built on relationships, those qualities may be his greatest strengths of all. ▀





Wendy¹MCMAHON

WRITTEN BY BELLA RUBIO
PHOTOGRAPHY BY BELLA RUBIO

In an industry built on relationships and relentless change, few professionals embody the spirit of longevity quite like Wendy McMahon. With 35 years in real estate-related industries, she has built a career defined not by shortcuts, but by perseverance and an instinctive ability to connect with others. She

may be a powerhouse, but spend a few minutes with her and you will find someone smart, warm, and delightfully humorous.

Her career began soon after high school when she was working at a retail store where she was “*offered a position as a receptionist for a mortgage wholesale lending*

company.” That single opportunity opened the door to a lifetime of learning, growth, and reinvention. From that front desk, Wendy absorbed everything she could. She watched, listened, and learned the rhythms of an industry that would eventually

become her home. Her work ethic quickly propelled her upward, earning her a promotion to Account Executive of Sales for South Texas in the subprime lending sector. When that market collapsed, she didn’t falter; she pivoted, believing that every step she had taken

prepared her for an even greater opportunity ahead.

From there she moved into title, opening a lender division in Dallas and later launching a branch in Las Colinas, focused on foreclosures, where she would stay planted for the next eleven years. When her escrow officer retired, Wendy reinvented herself once again, transitioning into home warranties, where her experience and client-focused approach quickly set her apart. “*I learned all about home warranties and what’s important to the agents and clients and earned my way to managing territories in Dallas and East Texas,*” she says.

Today, she represents Home Warranty of America, overseeing territories that now stretch across Texas, Indiana, Louisiana, and key markets

including Indianapolis and Bossier City, with a primary focus on East Texas, a testament to her expertise, leadership, and the trust she has earned. What sets her apart in a competitive market is the depth of the relationships she builds. Wendy does not operate on surface-level interactions; she invests in people, learns their needs, and becomes a dependable partner they can count on well beyond the initial connection.

When we asked Wendy what sets her apart from her peers, she did not hesitate to share, “*My ability to be relatable. I cultivate personal relationships beyond the business because I don’t just sell a service; I build trust.*” In an industry where many compete on price or product, Wendy competes on something far more enduring: connecting with others. She is that person who answers the phone, finds the answer when she does not know it, and shows up even when it is not convenient. Clients do not just follow her for the warranty; they follow her wherever she goes. That loyalty, she says, is her greatest reward. “*The loyalty of my client base outweighs all of the tangible success.*”

It is a powerful statement from someone who has earned more than her share of professional recognition. Among her many achievements, one stands out: the Game Changer Award, an honor she describes as “*one of my prized possessions.*” In her very first month at



HWA, Wendy did not just make an impression; she made an immediate impact, bringing in more than 100 home warranty units and catching the attention of upper management almost immediately.

Wendy’s definition of success is not tied to acknowledgments or titles. It is the feeling she carries home at the end of the day, knowing she has given homeowners something invaluable: relief and protection. They find comfort in knowing that when life throws the unexpected their way, the out-of-pocket costs will not overwhelm them. As she puts it, “*Success isn’t about being the biggest; it’s about being available, dependable, and building relationships.*” That is the real reward for her.

That belief system has steadied her through market highs, lows, and the constant evolution of client expectations. It also powers her dedication to agent education, especially during the Texas summers when AC units give out and the pressure is on for a solution. “*Summers can be brutal if clients and buyers are not educated about the true value of a*

home warranty. That’s why I like to focus on educating industry professionals so we can make it through the heat waves together,” she says. As a homeowner, I could not agree with McMahon more. When clients truly understand the benefits of a home warranty, they are grateful for the guidance long before an unexpected issue ever appears. Taking time to educate them shows that your care for them extends far beyond the closing table, and that kind of support is what can help turn a one-time buyer into a lifelong client.

McMahon’s valuable qualities were not something she stumbled into; they were forged early on. “*I learned from a very early age to be self-sufficient and independent,*” she shares. Equally important were the lessons in community: learning when to ask for help and surrounding herself with people who lift her up. She credits her earliest professional mentors with teaching her the fundamentals of customer service and client care. She also points to the management team of KPG: Jack, Barbara, and Mike, who, in her words, “*took a barely experienced twenty-something girl and helped shape her into the fabulous sales rep you see today.*”

Wendy also gives heartfelt recognition to Sharon Harrison, the woman who introduced her to home warranties and instilled the principles that still guide her work: service, responsiveness, and doing right by the people. And through every season of her life, her closest friends,





the same tight-knit group she's had since high school, remain her support. *"They are a strong group of mothers who have navigated the highest highs and the lowest lows of life with me,"* she says, a testament to the power of the relationships that have shaped her both personally and professionally.

After speaking with Wendy, a fuller picture emerges of who she is beyond her work. She opened up about her personal life, sharing what she is most grateful for and what she is passionate about. Her greatest joy is her daughter, and she proudly shares that she recently graduated with a degree in speech pathology from Butler University. *"She has achieved things at her age I never thought possible for myself,"* Wendy says. *"Her ability to care for everyone around her inspires me."* I

"Success isn't about being the biggest; it's about being available, dependable, and building relationships."

cannot help but think her daughter's instinct to care for others is something she learned by watching her mom do the same.

She is also passionate about caring for senior dogs. In 2024, McMahon founded Jake's Half Acre Haven, a nonprofit senior dog sanctuary named after what she describes as the *"first four-legged love of my life."* Her reason is simple: *"Senior dogs often get overlooked because of age and medical complications. My mission is to give senior dogs a comfortable, loving place to live out their last days. To date, I have rescued 11 senior dogs."* It takes a rare kind of selflessness to invest so much care and time in another life, and McMahon's commitment to giving senior dogs comfort, providing safety, and love in their final days is quite extraordinary. Wendy

spends much of her career helping people protect their homes; it feels fitting that she also provides a home for those four-legged friends who need it most.

With everything she has going on, I asked how she manages to balance it all. She giggles at the question. "I'm not sure I've ever had a 'balance.' I've been employed full-time since I was 15 and have always been extremely motivated to succeed. I would say opening this sanctuary is my first experience focusing on something other than my career or my daughter in the last 35 years." When she does step away from work, she enjoys visiting her daughter, gardening, hiking, watching movies and old soap operas, cheering on football, and spending time with her dogs. And yes, she is still a loyal Dallas Cowboys fan "even after all these years of letdowns." She also jokes that she is "Tom Brady's biggest fan and next wife; he just doesn't know it yet."

In a career defined by connection and resilience, Wendy McMahon has spent decades proving that consistency and character still matter. She wants her legacy to reflect the value of trust, second chances, and compassion in a business that often moves too fast to honor them. *"If you don't show up, you'll never know,"* she says, a reminder that effort and accountability still carry weight. Her advice to newcomers

is just as grounded: put in the time and effort, and build a culture centered on service. Do that, she says, *"and this career will allow you the freedom to be yourself and form lasting and meaningful relationships, both personally and professionally."*

And when the conversation shifts to who she is beyond the job, her quick wit surfaces. Asked to describe herself in three words, she replies, "G.O.A.T. (Greatest of All Time), relatable, and funny." Her favorite quote, "If you ain't first, you're last," from *Talladega Nights*, is a line that reflects the same playful confidence that identifies her presence. In a career defined by connection and resilience, Wendy McMahon brings equal parts strength, warmth, and humor—the kind of combination that lingers long after the conversation ends. ▀





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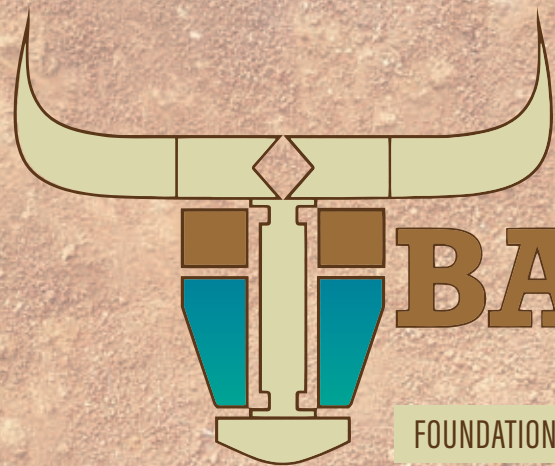
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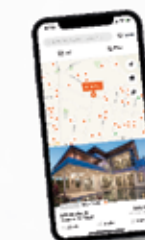
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Trina Griffith

LUXURY BROKER

THE WOMAN BEHIND THE BRAND

WRITTEN BY
DAWN SIMS
PHOTOGRAPHY
BY STEPHEN
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Every industry has its icons, and East Texas real estate is no different. Certain names carry a presence that extends far beyond for sale signs. Long before I ever sat down with Trina Griffith, I thought I knew exactly who she was. It turns out that behind every great name is an even greater story.

As a lifelong East Texan and seasoned real estate agent myself, I have known the name for years. Like many in our industry, when I thought of Trina Griffith, I pictured luxury listings, polished branding, beautiful homes, and undeniable success. If I am being honest, I always found her a little intimidating. Not because of who she was, but because of what her name had come to represent. The brand. The accomplishments. The signature black and white elegance and a gold crown that somehow seemed both timeless and unmistakably Trina. But after sitting down with her one-on-one for this interview, I realized something important. Sometimes the people we admire from afar are far different than the stories we create in our minds. What I received that day was truly a gift.

Trina welcomed me into her brokerage with a warm smile, a hug, and my favorite flavored coffee waiting for me. Immediately, the walls I had unknowingly built around this larger than life broker began to disappear. She led me into her office, and my eyes immediately wandered through the beautifully curated space around me. Every detail

had clearly been considered. Plush seating, elegant décor, carefully selected furnishings. Nothing felt accidental. We settled onto a small sofa, and as I complimented the space, her face lit up. She began pointing to different pieces throughout the office, sharing where they came from and why she selected them. Each item had a story. My own love for decorating was instantly awakened. As someone who appreciates interior design, I found myself soaking it all in like a child in a candy store. If homes tell stories, then so do the spaces we create for ourselves. And Trina's story was written in layers of style, intention, and hospitality.

When you meet Trina Griffith today, words like glitz, glamour, and luxury naturally come to mind. She laughs when she admits, "I've always loved shiny, pretty things." Then she quickly adds, "I love it all, but all that sparkle doesn't define me." And therein lies the true story. Because beneath the polished image is a woman whose life has been woven into the fabrics of faith, family, and purpose. As our conversation unfolded over coffee, I began to see another side

**PROVERBS
16:3: "Commit
your work
to the Lord,
and your
plans will be
established."**

of Trina. Not simply the successful broker. Not only the small-town girl from Elysian Fields. Not even the businesswoman who spoke of her agents with immense pride. I met a woman of faith. It was naturally tailored into nearly every answer she gave. Stories of prayer. Moments of trust. Favorite scriptures. Gratitude for blessings received and guidance given. Her favorite scripture is Proverbs 16:3: "Commit your work to the Lord, and your

plans will be established." After spending time with her, it became clear this is not simply a verse hanging on a wall. It is a philosophy she lives daily.

Born Catherine, but lovingly nicknamed "Trina" by her two older sisters, she grew up in Elysian Fields, Texas. Her eyes still soften when she speaks about her hometown. She loved growing up in a small 1A school where students were encouraged



to explore everything. Sports, band, art, academics. No one had to choose just one path. "That played a huge role in who I became," she shared. Her parents, both educators, had a vision for their daughters. The plan seemed simple enough. All three girls would go to college and become teachers. For her older sisters, Scherry and Tucker, that path unfolded exactly as expected. Both built careers in education, carrying on the family legacy of shaping young minds. But Trina's story would take a different route.

While she deeply admired her parents and the example they set, there was always a part of her that wondered what existed beyond the familiar roads of Elysian Fields. That curiosity became the compass guiding her toward business, entrepreneurship, and eventually real estate. Interestingly, life has a way of bringing stories full circle. Years later, her sister Tucker Dudley would make her own transition into real estate and join Trina Griffith & Company, proving that family ties and shared dreams often find their way back to one another.

She attended Stephen F. Austin State University, where she met her husband, Daren. Following graduation, she explored banking, sales, insurance, and eventually worked as Program Sales Director



unexpectedly. Sometimes all it takes is one conversation to change a life. For Trina, it was hearing someone suggest she consider real estate and seeing women thriving in professional environments that sparked her interest. The rest, as they say, is history. This December marks 32 years in real estate for Trina Griffith. Even more remarkably, 2026 marks ten years of Trina Griffith & Company.

The brokerage itself was never part of some elaborate master plan. Initially, she only intended to work independently with an assistant. But friends and colleagues began reaching out, asking to work alongside her. Those first agents—and—friends, became the foundation of what would eventually grow into one of East Texas' most respected boutique brokerages. Today, Trina Griffith & Company consists of approximately twenty-five agents, and remaining intentionally boutique has always been part of the vision. "I've always felt twenty-five to thirty agents is the perfect size," Trina told me. "It feels like family." And family is exactly how she describes her brokerage.

What struck me most was how little she talked about her own accomplishments and how enthusiastically she celebrated her agents. She beams with pride discussing their successes, their production, and their growth. "I want my agents to become the best version of themselves," she said. "I want them to be top producers." As

a broker she purposely avoids competing with her agents. Instead, she elevates them. She created the TG Luxury Agent Award to recognize excellence in luxury production, and many of her agents have achieved that distinction. A large number have also earned recognition among the Top 300 *East Texas Real Producers*. Her words revealed the heart of a leader who understands that success multiplies when it is shared.

This year alone brings significant milestones. Trina recently surpassed an extraordinary achievement of over one billion dollars in career real estate production. Her company was voted Longview Locals Love Us Favorite Real Estate Company and has been recognized among the top real estate companies in Best of East Texas for five consecutive years. Trina herself has also received repeated recognition as one of East Texas' favorite REALTORS®. Yet somehow, despite all of those accolades, she remains remarkably grounded. Perhaps that grounding begins at home.

Trina and her husband Daren have built a life centered around faith, entrepreneurship, and family. Daren, owner and



operator of Iron Lake Exotic Game Ranch in Linden, is highly respected in ranching circles for exotic breeding and ranch development. "My husband is my mentor and best friend," Trina said with a smile.

She shared that when they first began dating, the song "Endless Love" had just been released. "That's our song," she laughed. Then came one of my favorite descriptions of their marriage. "We're like 'Green Acres'. He loves the country and I love the city lights." Their partnership is one built on mutual respect. Trina often runs business ideas by Daren first. "If he's not one hundred percent in, I can't be."

Together, they have raised two successful sons who reflect many of the same values instilled in them by their parents. Damen is an online fitness coach with a following exceeding 289,000 followers and has coached over 25,000 individuals through his business ventures. Dax, a certified personal trainer and nutritionist, works alongside his fiancée Maddi Cook as agents at Trina Griffith & Company. Fitness, health, and nutrition have become family priorities, with everyone regularly working out

together. Like father and mother, like sons, excellence appears to run deep in the Griffith family.

Family remains at the center of everything Trina does. And while she proudly celebrates the accomplishments of her sons, Dax and Damen, there is one title that seems to make her light up even more than "Broker" or "Owner." "Coco." Her grandson is the light of both her and Daren's world. A reminder that even for a woman who has sold luxury homes, built a respected brokerage, and surpassed one billion dollars in career production, life's greatest treasures are not measured in contracts or commendation. They are measured with those whom she shares life's most precious moments.

As our conversation continued, another side of Trina emerged. Music. Her face brightened instantly when discussing it. "Music is a part of your soul," she told me. "Every song holds

a memory." It is hard to argue with her. A single melody can transport us decades into the past. When I asked what she would be doing if she were not in real estate, her answer came without hesitation. "An interior decorator or a singer." Honestly, neither surprised me. Her love for design is evident everywhere you look. From her brokerage to her personal spaces and even the staging services offered to clients, design is not simply a talent for Trina. It is an extension of who she is.

She later gave me a tour of the brokerage, explaining every renovation, every design choice, and every carefully selected detail. Her vision was simple. She wanted people to walk through the doors and feel good. To experience positive energy. To feel welcomed. As I looked around, I realized she had accomplished exactly that.

After all these years in East Texas real estate, one thing became abundantly clear to me after our conversation. The black and white brand topped with a gold crown may have introduced us to Trina Griffith. But something much deeper is what I'll remember most. The smile that welcomed me, the stories that inspired, and most of all, the warm hands that reached out asking if she could pray with me before I left.

Real Producers really are real people, y'all. Many may remember the homes we sell, the awards we earn, or the businesses we build, but long after those things fade, they remember how we made them feel. As I drove away that day, I realized the true luxury Trina Griffith offers has never been found in grand estates or elegant interiors. It is found in generosity, unwavering faith, and the kind of grace that leaves a lasting imprint on every life she touches. And perhaps that is the most glamorous legacy of all. 🏡

"If homes tell stories, then so do the spaces we create for ourselves."



MAY EAST TEXAS REAL PRODUCERS
Empowerment Breakfast Event

THRIVING WHEN LIFE IS LIFING

PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHEN TILMON WITH TILMON MEDIA

The room was full, the conversations were real, and the message was right on time. On May 28, at the City Center in Whitehouse, *East Texas Real Producers* welcomed a sold-out crowd of top-producing REALTORS® and industry partners to our Empowerment Breakfast, *Thriving Anyway: Winning in Business While Life Is Still Lifting*. What began as a morning of networking and connection quickly became something much more meaningful.

In an industry that often celebrates wins while quietly carrying personal challenges behind the scenes, this event created space for honest conversations about resilience, perseverance, and

continuing to move forward even when life doesn't go according to plan.

Attendees heard from an incredible panel of speakers, including top-producing agents LaDarius Carter and Jena Waldron, along with Goosehead Insurance agency owner Collin Phaup. Each shared personal experiences, professional lessons, and practical encouragement for navigating the realities of business while managing the demands of everyday life.

The morning also provided opportunities for agents to connect with fellow professionals, celebrate one another's successes, and be reminded that they are not alone in their journey.

From heartfelt stories and powerful takeaways to laughter, networking, and a few memorable door prizes, the event was a reflection of what *East Texas Real Producers* is all about—bringing great people together and creating meaningful connections.

A special thank you to our Event Sponsor, WWJ Surveying and Mapping, our Preferred Partners, speakers, and every agent who took the time to be in the room. Your presence helped make this event a tremendous success.

Sometimes the most important reminder we can receive is this: no matter what life is serving, we can still choose to thrive anyway.



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