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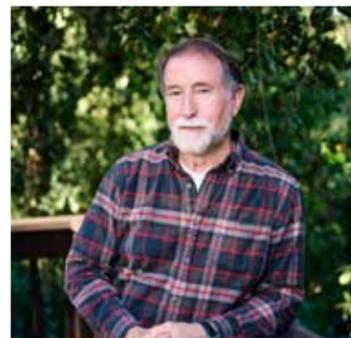
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Publisher Note

The world moves fast. Life does not pause for reflection, and most days feel like a constant forward motion. But every once in a while, something slows you down. For me, it was a recent weekend spent with a mix of old friends and new. As conversations unfolded, I found myself reflecting not just on where we all are now, but on the shared history that brought us there. The laughter, the memories, the unspoken understanding. It was a quiet reminder that life, at its core, is deeply special because of the connections we build.

That weekend stayed with me. It reminded me how meaningful it is to reconnect with people who have known you in different seasons of your life, and how powerful it can be to form new relationships that feel immediately grounded and genuine. Those moments of connection do not happen by accident. They are built over time, through effort, vulnerability, and mutual respect.

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Real estate is no different.

This industry is full of highs and lows. Wins that feel exhilarating, losses that sting, and obstacles that test your patience and resolve. In the rush of transactions, deadlines, and negotiations, it can be easy to forget that behind every deal is a human being with their own pressures, goals, and stories. When we take the time to truly know one another, not just as professionals but as people, everything changes. Empathy increases. Trust deepens. The work becomes more purposeful.

At *Silicon Valley Real Producers*, our mission has always been to elevate the culture of our real estate community. To create space for relationships that go beyond transactions, and to remind one another that how we treat each other matters. Community is not a nice extra. It is the foundation that allows us to weather challenges and celebrate successes together. To our readers, both agents and professionals, thank you. Thank you for prioritizing this publication in the midst of incredibly full schedules. Thank you for sharing in our mission and for choosing to engage with this community. I also encourage you to support our advertising partners. Every vendor featured here has been vetted and referred by top agents. They understand the demands of a real estate transaction and are committed to serving you with integrity and excellence.

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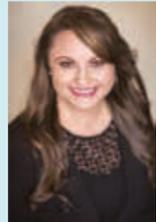
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Olha Melokhina Photography

5 Ways to Look More Relaxed in Headshots

BY OLHA MELOKHINA

You can have the best headshot photographer money can buy, but if you don't look relatable and engaging in your photos, they won't have the impact you're hoping for.

When you feel relaxed before and during your headshot session, it's much easier for your personality and professionalism to come through naturally.

Here are a few simple things you can do to make your upcoming headshot session worthwhile.

1 / Give yourself time to ease into the session.

Arriving a few minutes early allows you to settle in before the camera comes out. Take a few deep breaths, stretch your shoulders, or listen to your favorite playlist on the way to the studio. Starting unhurried helps your body and expression relax naturally.

2 / Engage with your photographer.

You'll likely already have a sense of your photographer's style before the session, but chatting for a few minutes beforehand can make a big difference. Asking questions or sharing how you want to feel in your photos helps build trust and puts you at ease.

3 / Release tension in your body.

Small adjustments can make a big visual difference. Drop your shoulders, unclench your jaw, and gently shake out your hands between shots. Physical tension often shows up in photos, so consciously letting it go helps you look more open and approachable.

4 / Think about your character.

Since headshots are meant to reflect who you are, it helps to focus on a quality you want to project. If trust is important in your work, quietly repeat something like, "I make people feel confident working with me." That mindset subtly shows in your expression.



5 / Dress accordingly.

A headshot session isn't the time to experiment with a brand-new outfit or hairstyle. Choose something that looks polished but feels comfortable. When you feel good in what you're wearing, confidence comes more naturally.

There you have it — five simple tips for a more relaxed and successful headshot experience. And remember, it's okay to enjoy the process.

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CAMERON LOCKARD

Curiosity, Craft, and a Calm Hand in a Complex Market

BY IAN BROOKS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY OLHA MELOKHINA PHOTOGRAPHY

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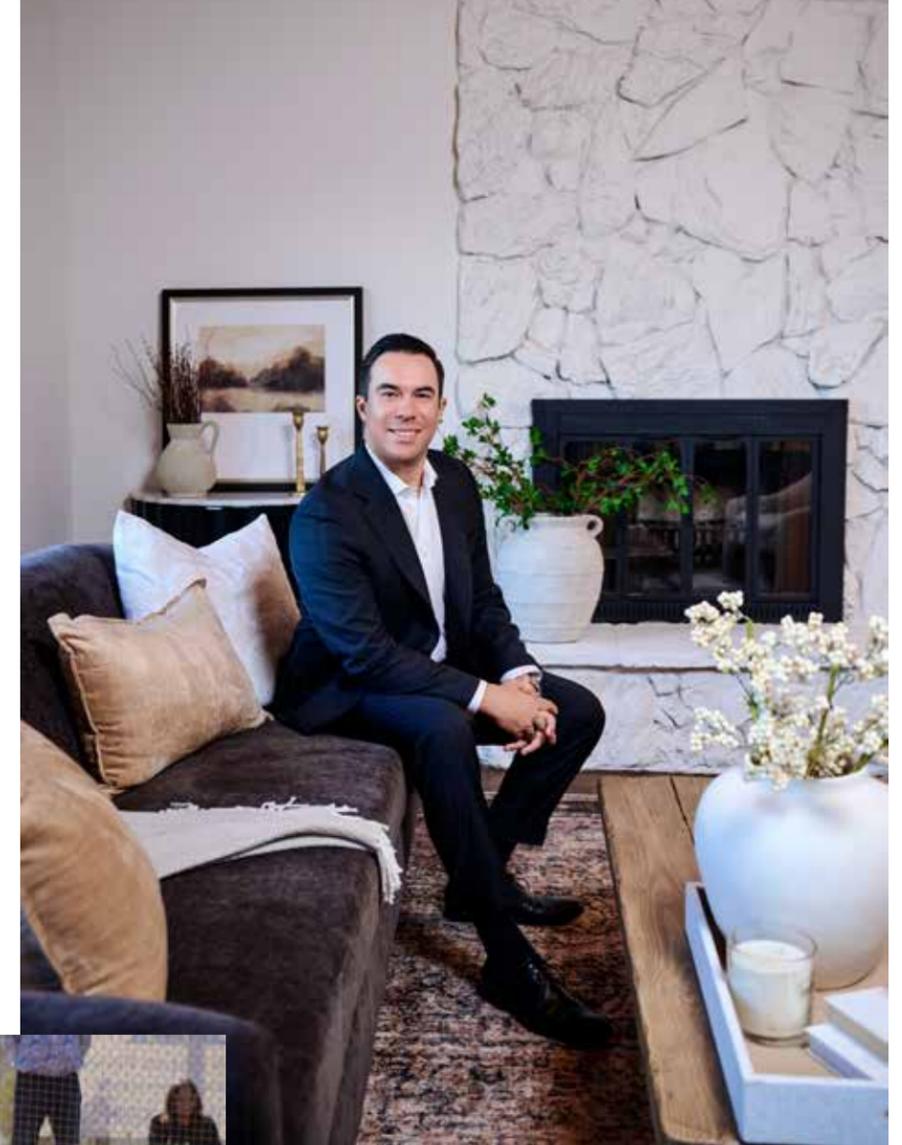
For Cameron Lockard, real estate was not a lifelong plan so much as a thoughtful response to timing, curiosity, and opportunity. Graduating

from college in 2021 during the height of the pandemic, Cameron initially intended to pursue law school. After years of remote learning and uncertainty around when in-person education would return, he made a pivot. Entering the workforce felt like the right next step.

At the same time, Cameron noticed something else. While many industries were slowing, real estate was surging, fueled by historically low interest rates and heightened demand. That contrast sparked his interest. Through family connections, he reconnected with Matt Tenczar, someone he had known since childhood. A conversation led to an opportunity, and in July 2021 Cameron began working as an unlicensed assistant. What started as an entry-level role quickly became a passion. By October 2022, he was licensed and officially a team partner.

What drew Cameron in was not just the pace of the market, but the nature of the work itself. Each transaction felt like its own puzzle, with unique variables, personalities, and solutions. No two days were the same. Some were spent analyzing data behind a desk, others touring properties, walking neighborhoods, or attending networking events. That constant variety kept the work engaging and challenging.

Cameron's first full year as a licensed agent came in 2023, during a period of significant industry change. Rising interest rates and regulatory shifts slowed the market dramatically. Transactions were harder to come by, and uncertainty became part of daily



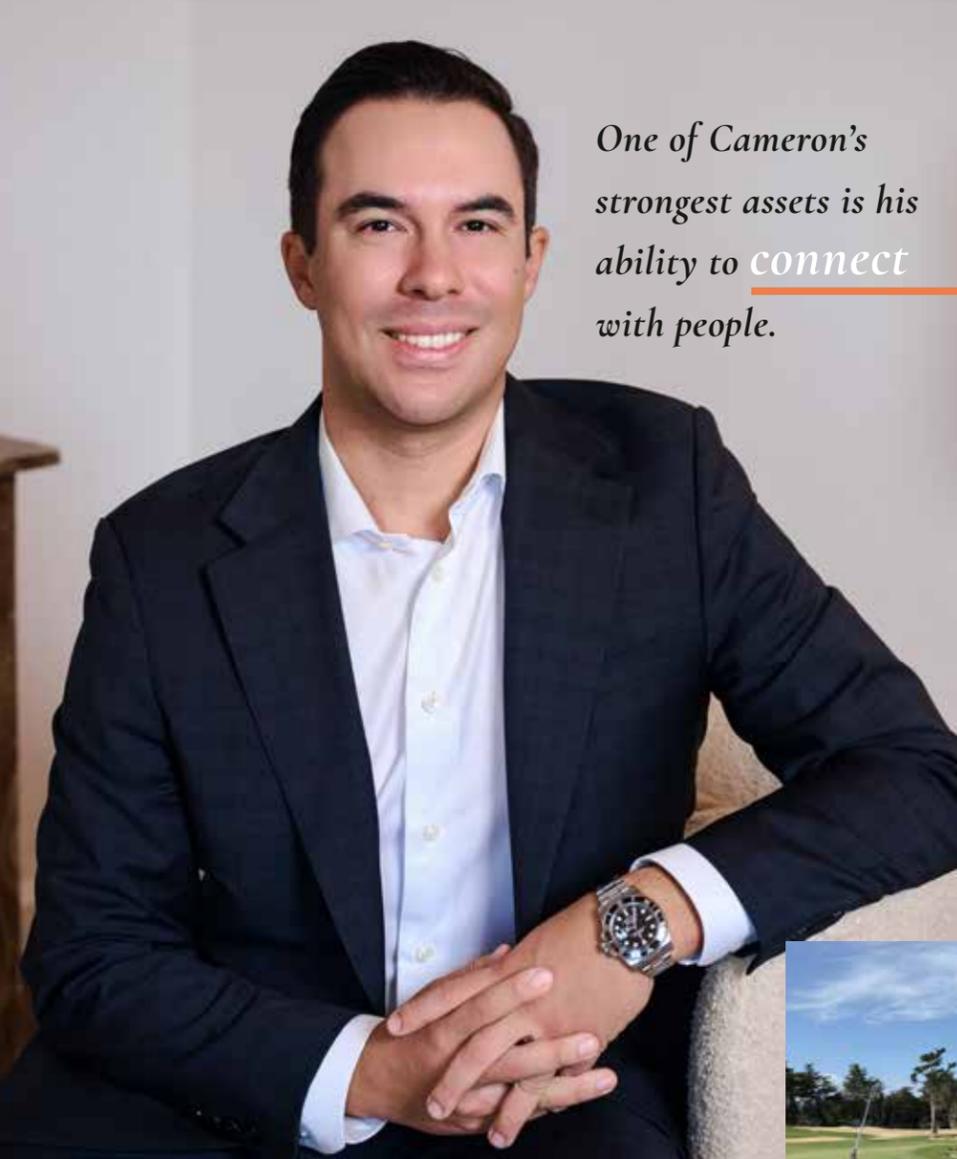
life. While challenging, that year proved formative. The slower pace forced Cameron to develop stronger financial habits, focus on fundamentals, and build

discipline that would support long-term growth. In hindsight, he views that period as a blessing in disguise.

Before real estate, Cameron was a student at Chapman University in Orange County, earning a degree in Political Science with a pre-law focus. Although he did not pursue law school, the education translated seamlessly

into his real estate career. Contract law, analytical thinking, and attention to detail are central to his daily work. That academic foundation gave him confidence navigating complex agreements and advocating for clients with clarity and precision.

One of Cameron's strongest assets is his ability to connect with people. A natural networker, he has built a strong sphere of influence that led to early referrals and opportunities. Still, he credits much of his professional growth to mentorship. Working alongside Matt Tenczar has been the most influential experience of his career. Observing how Matt handles a wide range of real estate scenarios in real time allowed Cameron to absorb decades of experience in just a few years. That partnership set a clear standard for professionalism, strategy, and client care.



One of Cameron's strongest assets is his ability to *connect* with people.

That commitment is especially evident in how he supports sellers. Through Compass Concierge, Cameron not only helps front the cost of pre-listing improvements, but personally manages every vendor and step of the process. His hands-on approach ensures projects stay on track and that clients achieve the highest possible return on their investment before going to market.

Setbacks are inevitable in real estate, and Cameron relies on the community to navigate them. While the industry is competitive, he values the relationships he has built with peers who understand the pressures of the business. That shared support helps maintain perspective and resilience.

What keeps Cameron motivated is the responsibility of the role itself. Buying or selling a home is one of the biggest financial and emotional decisions most people will ever make. Being the calm presence in moments of stress, staying solutions-oriented, and guiding clients to the finish line is what makes the work meaningful.



A pivotal moment came when Cameron signed his first listing. It was not just the milestone itself, but how he leveraged it. He used that initial success to build a database of buyers and sellers, create a pipeline for future business, and reinvest in farming and marketing campaigns. That strategic mindset confirmed he was building something sustainable, not just chasing individual wins.

Like many newer agents, Cameron learned quickly that time is one of the most valuable resources in the business. One lesson he wishes he had learned sooner was how to be more intentional with it. Early on, it is tempting to entertain every conversation and opportunity. Experience taught him how to evaluate where his time and energy would have the greatest impact.

When it comes to earning trust, Cameron leads with preparation. He

believes that deep market knowledge can outweigh years of experience. By knowing the data, comps, and nuances of a specific area better than anyone else, he positions himself as a credible advisor. That preparation allows him to speak confidently and help clients feel secure in their decisions.

Cameron wants clients to feel genuinely cared for and completely confident throughout the process. In a fast-moving, high-stakes market like Silicon Valley, transactions can feel overwhelming. His goal is to make them feel seamless, strategic, and even exciting. He approaches each deal as a trusted advisor who is deeply invested in the outcome.

Looking ahead, Cameron's goals are both personal and professional. In the near term, he aims to purchase his first property in Silicon Valley before turning 30. Over the next five years, he plans to deepen his expertise, expand his network, and continue refining how he shows up for clients, while also prioritizing balance and personal growth.

At his core, Cameron's why is simple. He is driven by helping people move forward. Whether that means finding the right home, building long-term wealth, or navigating a major life transition, he sees his role as a trusted guide. Making one of life's biggest decisions feel clearer, smarter, and more human is what drives him every day.

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Jake Serpa

Building a Business with Discipline, Heart, and Purpose

BY DIANE ROWE
PHOTOGRAPHY BY OLHA MELOKHINA PHOTOGRAPHY



FOR JAKE SERPA, real estate was never just a career choice. It was a natural extension of a life shaped by discipline, accountability, and family. Growing up around property management, Jake was exposed early to the realities of owning and operating real estate. He learned that behind every property is responsibility, behind every deal is trust, and behind every success is consistent effort. Those early experiences planted the seed for what would later become his own path in the industry.

When Jake officially stepped into real estate, his first year proved to be both energizing and humbling. Becoming his own boss forced him to confront what running a business truly means. Every decision mattered. Every day required intention. There was no safety net, only the work he was willing to put in. That reality did not intimidate him. Instead, it felt familiar.

As a former professional soccer player, Jake had already lived in a world where preparation, resilience, and performance were nonnegotiable. Soccer taught him how to push through pressure, how to rebound from setbacks, and how to stay focused on long-term goals without losing sight of daily execution. He carried that same mindset directly into real estate, treating his business with the seriousness of a professional craft and approaching each client relationship with care and precision.

The influence of his father continues to guide him every day. His dad was not only his biggest mentor, but also his example of what it means to work with integrity. He taught Jake that independence comes with responsibility and that success is earned

through effort, not entitlement. Since his passing, those lessons have taken on even deeper meaning. They show up in how Jake works, how he treats people, and how seriously he takes the trust placed in him.

One of the clearest moments of validation came when Jake committed to growing his business through social media. Rather than chasing quick wins, he chose consistency. He showed up day after day, sharing insight, building genuine connections, and refining his voice. That effort translated into real traction, with his platform now generating more than 1.5 million views every month and growing to around 12,000 followers. For Jake, it was never just about the numbers. It was confirmation that discipline compounds and that showing up authentically creates real momentum.

Trust, he believes, is built the same way. There is no shortcut. Jake shows up every day excited to work, committed to improving, and focused on delivering value. People recognize sincerity and consistency, and over time, that recognition becomes trust. He understands that real estate is a detail-driven



As a former professional soccer player, Jake had already lived in a world where **PREPARATION, RESILIENCE, AND PERFORMANCE** were **NONNEGOTIABLE.**

At the center of everything is how he treats his clients. Jake approaches each transaction as if it were his own. He treats his clients like family, understanding the weight of the decisions they are making and the trust they are placing in him. His goal is simple but powerful. He wants clients to feel confident, supported, and genuinely cared for, knowing that their best interests are always his priority.

Looking ahead, Jake is clear about where he is going. He aims to grow his business year over year and establish himself as one of the leading real estate agents in California. At the same time, he is committed to making an impact beyond transactions. Through social media and community connection, he continues to expand his reach, strengthen relationships, and build something that lasts.

Jake's journey is defined by discipline, heart, and purpose. He is building more than a business. He is building a reputation rooted in effort, integrity, and genuine care for the people he serves.

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business, and one of the biggest lessons he learned early on is that every task matters. Being your own boss means owning every outcome, good or bad. That accountability has sharpened his standards and strengthened his results.

Setbacks are inevitable in real estate, but Jake approaches them with perspective. His athletic background taught him to maintain a short-term mindset when things do not go as planned and to avoid complacency when they do. Wins are appreciated, losses are learned from, and both are temporary. That balance keeps him motivated, focused, and grounded in a competitive environment.



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Matt McCormick

CENTERED ON SERVICE

BY CHRIS MENEZES • PHOTOGRAPHY BY OLHA MELOKHINA PHOTOGRAPHY

There's a point in every career when the work reveals what truly matters. For Matt McCormick, that realization came early in real estate, the first time he watched clients become emotional while making major decisions about their future. After nearly three decades in corporate leadership, the depth of that moment was unlike anything he had experienced—and it clarified the kind of work that aligned most with his values. It wasn't just about real estate. It was about service.

Matt spent years inside Fortune 100 companies, developing the habits that now define his approach to real estate: discipline, preparation, and accountability. Straight out of Santa Clara University, he joined Nestlé, an opportunity he describes simply as “incredible and surprisingly hard to leave.” Over time, he learned how to operate at a high level, lead teams, and earn trust through consistent performance. Those skills became the framework for the business he would eventually build.

Life, however, had its own timeline. Fifteen years earlier, Matt and his best friend, Mike Dougherty, had planned to start a financial wealth management firm. Mike's cancer diagnosis—and the years that followed—changed the course of Matt's life. “That experience deeply influenced how I think about time, purpose, and building something that truly helps people.”





Around the same period, repeated corporate relocations revealed the gaps and frustrations families often experience when moving. Those transitions exposed a pattern he couldn't ignore.

Eventually, he shared an idea with his wife, Kathy, that would shift everything. "With decades of business experience, firsthand knowledge of relocation challenges, and a strong desire to serve others more directly, entrepreneurship felt like the natural next chapter."

When Matt entered real estate, he carried assumptions from the corporate world. He expected top-producing agents—many earning seven figures—to operate like CEOs. Instead, he found a very different landscape: a business built on relationships, long-term follow-up, and databases maintained over decades. That discovery reshaped how he saw the profession and his place in it.

That clarity guided the company he built—one intentionally centered on

depth rather than volume. His team works with roughly 30 to 40 clients a year, focusing on meaningful guidance over transaction count. They also oversee investment properties for select clients, helping them understand value, performance, and risk over time.

A defining element of Matt's model is his partnership with land-use attorney Melanie Griswold. Together, they develop residential projects in Menlo Park and Palo Alto, giving him firsthand insight into zoning, construction, entitlements, and the disciplines behind responsible development. Earning his Series 65



license added another layer to his advisory approach and reinforced the seriousness of the work. "I take the responsibility seriously—especially knowing that for most California homeowners, real estate represents the majority of their net worth."

Much of how Matt works can be traced to the mentors who shaped him. He grew up around athletes, including Willie Mays, who was often in his kitchen, and his father, a Cy Young Award winner. In his professional life, he learned to listen first, view business through an executive lens, and value preparation long before a home enters the market. Those lessons inform how he communicates, how he plans, and how he earns trust.

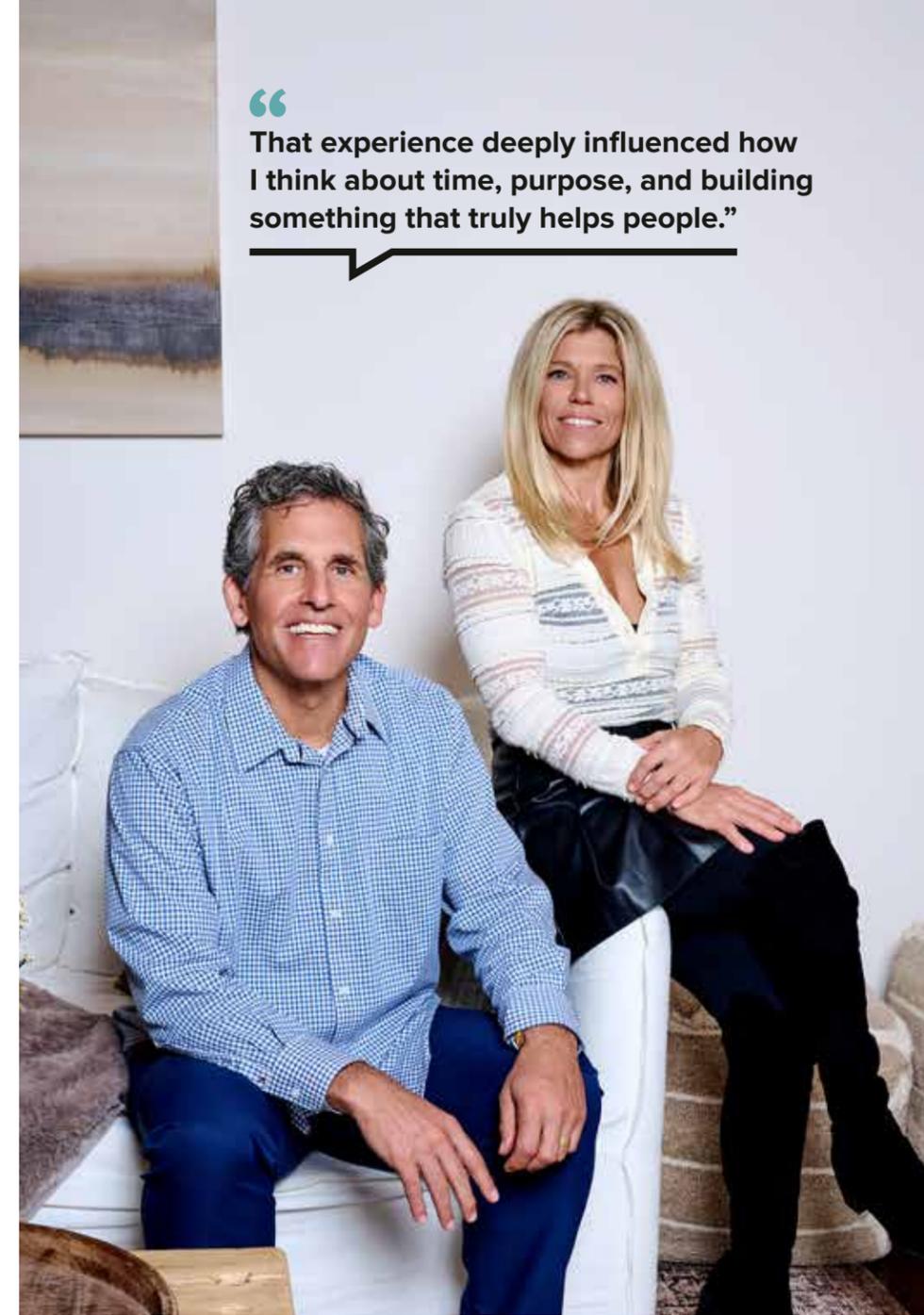
At home, Matt is centered by family, faith, and the routines that give his life balance. He and Kathy met at Santa Clara and married a year after graduation. Their daughters, Madison and Mallory, remain at the heart of his world, especially now as the family prepares to welcome their first son-in-law. Weekly traditions—taking his 87-year-old mother to church and bingo, hiking or biking as a family, catching a Giants or 49ers game—anchor him just as much as the work he does.

Service flows naturally from that foundation. Matt has spent years supporting unhoused residents in his community and is passionate about expanding the ways people can be cared for with dignity. One idea especially meaningful to him is creating "spa day" experiences for individuals facing homelessness—simple, restorative moments where people can feel seen and valued. It's the kind of initiative he hopes will reach well beyond his own neighborhood.

For Matt, service is not an act—it's a way of moving through the world. Whether he's guiding a family, mentoring a colleague, or offering comfort to someone who needs it, his work remains rooted in the same core value. It shapes his decisions, strengthens his relationships, and defines the legacy he hopes to leave behind.

In every chapter of his life—professional or personal—Matt McCormick stays centered on service.

“That experience deeply influenced how I think about time, purpose, and building something that truly helps people.”





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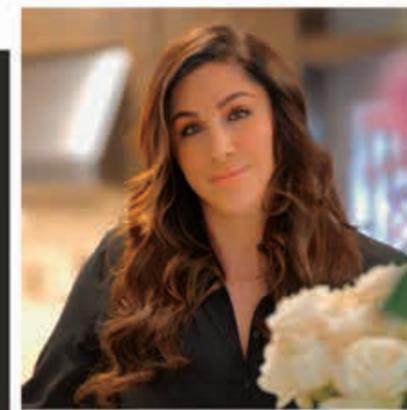
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A Woodside Hills Case Study in Strategic Collaboration

Sell

In Woodside Hills, a modern-organic estate rises not just as a luxury home, but as proof of what happens when design, development, and real estate strategy are aligned from the very beginning.

The project brought together an all-female team with a shared philosophy: homes should be built and styled to perform in the market. At the center is designer Mish Chadwick of Design by Mish (mishdesigns.com), whose design-to-sell approach reframes interiors as a tactical advantage rather than a finishing touch.

Mish's work goes beyond aesthetics. With two decades of experience spanning residential design and bespoke furniture making, Mish's background includes award-recognized work in Australia and the U.S., shaping her market-driven approach to design. Each project begins with a clear understanding of how a home will photograph, how it will feel during a showing, and how effectively its lifestyle story will land with buyers.

In this Woodside Hills estate, that philosophy translated into intentional layouts, durable materials, and curated furnishings that guide the eye and anchor each space. The home reads cleanly online, flows effortlessly in person, and invites buyers to imagine themselves living there. Every design decision was made with clarity and cohesion in mind, ensuring the experience feels elevated without being over styled.

Supporting that vision at the foundation level is Theresa Warren of Cairo Rose Group

(cairorosegroup.com), a woman-led boutique luxury builder known for taking on a limited slate of projects each year. Since founding Cairo Rose in 2016, Theresa has applied her tech and engineering background to residential construction, bringing a systems-driven approach that prioritizes coordination, longevity, and execution.





To This

From This

For this project, that meant durable finishes, precise planning, and a build process designed to minimize friction down the line. Behind the scenes, the systems-first approach reduces defect risk and creates smoother transitions from construction to listing. For realtors, that translates to fewer inspection issues, cleaner disclosures, and stronger confidence throughout the transaction.

Once the home was complete, Meaghan Anderson and Emily Baratzadeh of Quarry Lane Realty Group (quarrylanerealty.com) began guiding the property through its preparation for market. Longtime friends and experienced Bay Area realtors, Meaghan and Emily are known for their concierge-level service and hands-on approach. As of this publication, they are actively bringing the home to market, managing every phase of the listing process from pre-market coordination through buyer engagement and negotiation to ensure nothing is left to chance. Working in close collaboration with Mish and Cairo Rose, Quarry Lane Realty ensured the design narrative carried through every touchpoint. Photography, showings, and buyer interactions all reflected the same intentional story established

through design and construction. The result is a listing presented with clarity, confidence, and consistency.

Rather than treating staging as an afterthought, Mish's in-house furniture and styling strategy functioned as a sales tool. Each room was designed to create strong visual moments for digital marketing while maintaining cohesion throughout the home. Buyers experienced a seamless progression from space to space, strengthening emotional connection and reinforcing perceived value.

For realtors, the takeaway is straightforward. Homes designed with the market in mind do more than attract attention. They reduce friction, support stronger offers, and move more efficiently from listing to contract.

In Woodside Hills, strategic design met boutique development and concierge real estate execution. The result is a home that sells itself, and a reminder that when collaboration starts early, everyone at the table benefits.

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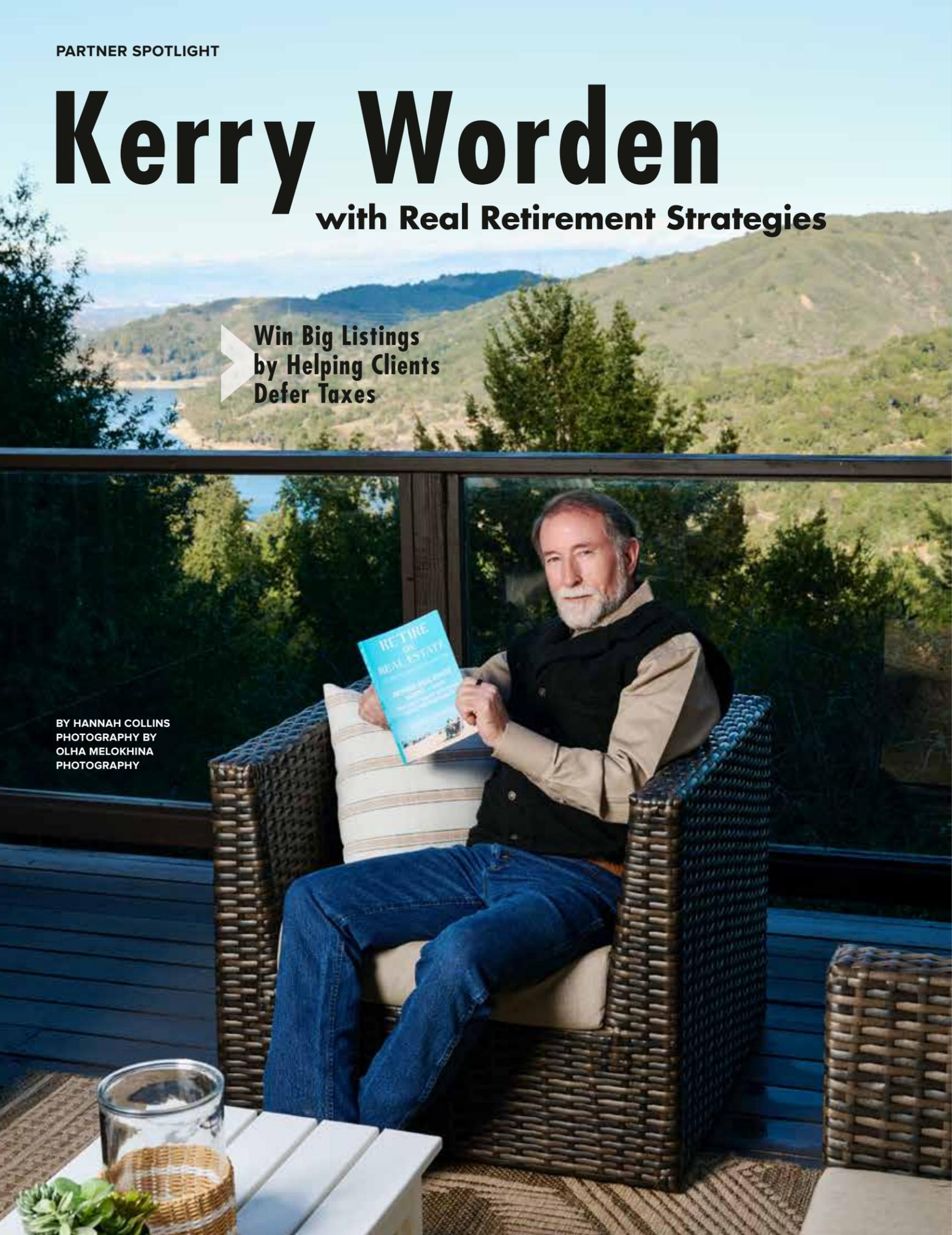
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BY HANNAH COLLINS
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For more than 35 years, **Kerry Worden** has worked at the crossroads of real estate, finance, and retirement planning. — a vantage point that gives him a front-row seat to the challenges faced by today's successful Realtors. Through his firm, Real Retirement Strategies, he helps clients and real estate professionals navigate capital gains tax deferral, retirement income planning, and mortgage strategies with one overarching goal: turning highly appreciated real estate into long-term financial security.

Kerry's primary clients are older Realtors, investors, and longtime homeowners with highly appreciated properties and complex financial considerations. Over the years, he has come to understand not only the technical aspects of planning, but also the deeper emotional ones.

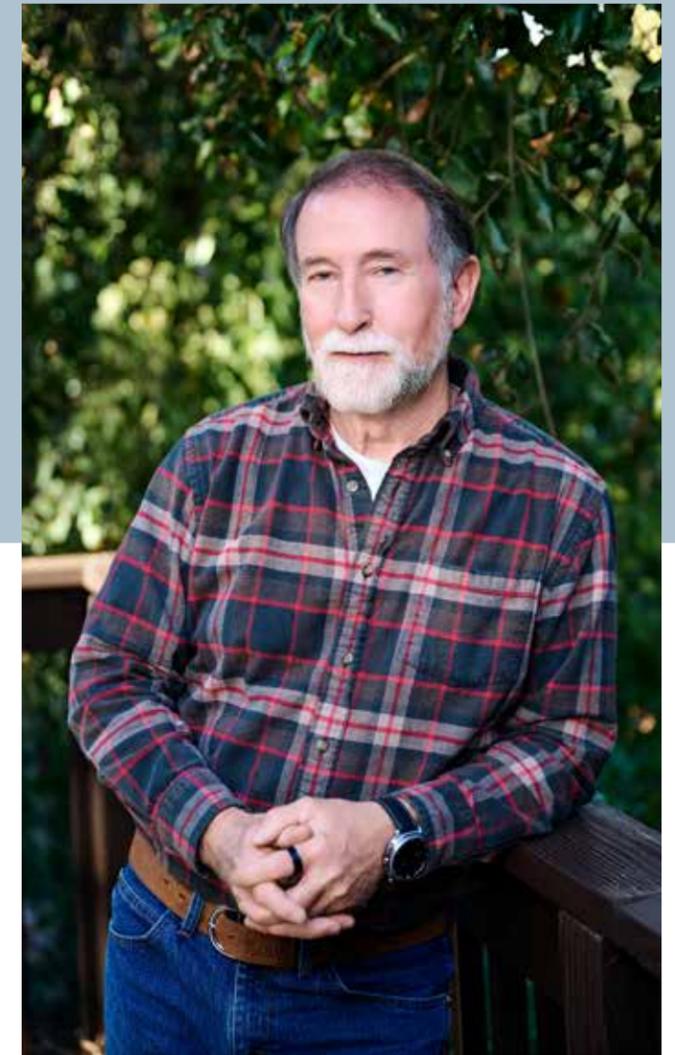
"People want their retirement years to feel secure, flexible, and purposeful," he explains. His role is to help them intentionally design that future, rather than leaving major decisions to chance.

Kerry's journey into the industry began in 1990, at age 30. At the time, he was living on a sailboat and pursuing documentary filmmaking when life shifted. He fell in love with Kim, a single mother of two young girls and felt a growing desire to provide stability and consistency to the lives of these ladies. 35 years later he is still happily married to Kim, made 2 more daughters, and has nine grandchildren and counting!

The mortgage industry offered meaningful work and a foundation for building a future. What began as a practical decision soon became a calling, as he witnessed how thoughtful financing could alter the course of a family's life.

That experience gradually broadened his perspective beyond lending. Today, his work integrates mortgages, tax planning, and investments so they function

together instead of in separate silos. Where some advisors treat real estate as secondary, Kerry recognizes it is often a client's largest asset and central to long-term planning.



Listening is at the heart of his philosophy. He relies on a simple acronym: WAIT — Why Am I Talking? Before recommending strategies or products, he focuses first on understanding what matters most to the client sitting across the table. When the goals are clear, the tools fall into place naturally.

As a tax-deferral consultant, he helps position listings involving highly appreciated homes and investment properties. As a retirement planner, he helps clients evaluate the financial realities behind major real estate decisions. And as a mortgage broker, he connects clients to financing options designed to support long-term outcomes instead of short-term wins. Often, viewing a transaction through a planning lens becomes the difference between a deal moving forward or never materializing at all.

One milestone that stands out for Kerry is the publication of his book, *Retire on Real Estate: The Realtor's Retirement Plan*. The book emerged from years of teaching classes in real estate offices and walking agents through strategies they often first use for clients, then later apply to their own lives. "It's available on Amazon," he says, "but I usually tell people not to buy it. Invite me to your office and I'll bring copies."



“

I don't believe in couch-potato retirement. I believe in designing a life you look forward to living.”

Kerry works with a wide spectrum of clients — from sophisticated investors to accidental millionaires to homeowners trying simply to remain in the homes they love. While complex portfolios can be interesting, the most meaningful moments often come when he helps someone weather a financial challenge or maintain stability during a difficult time. Those experiences continue to remind him why the work matters.

Having lived through numerous market cycles and industry shifts, Kerry views change as inevitable. Rather than resisting it, he focuses on staying curious and adaptable, especially as technology and artificial intelligence reshape the financial landscape. His outlook remains optimistic. For advisors who enjoy problem-solving, education, and client relationships, he believes the profession will continue to be both relevant and rewarding, even as it evolves.

Outside of work, Kerry's love for the outdoors reflects his upbringing. The son of a wildlife biologist, he grew up on National Wildlife Refuges throughout the West, developing a lifelong appreciation for nature and open spaces. Today, much of his time is devoted to Buckeye Basecamp (buckeyebasecamp.com), a 40-acre property in Tuolumne County. The property currently includes a home that sleeps about twenty guests, and his vision is to eventually develop it into a small spa or wellness retreat. He has discovered that working on the land brings the same satisfaction as sailing, rafting, snowboarding, and other outdoor pursuits.

As Kerry looks ahead, his focus is increasingly on helping real estate professionals rethink retirement. In his experience, Realtors rarely stop working altogether. Many thrive when they remain engaged through development projects, private lending, short-term rentals, or other creative ventures that combine purpose with financial stability.

“I don't believe in couch-potato retirement,” Kerry says. “I believe in designing a life you look forward to living.”

Through his writing and in-office presentations, Kerry helps Realtors connect the work they do today with the life they want tomorrow — using real estate as the bridge between the two.

Connect with Kerry on Instagram @realretirementstrategies or visit www.realretirementstrategies.com for more information.



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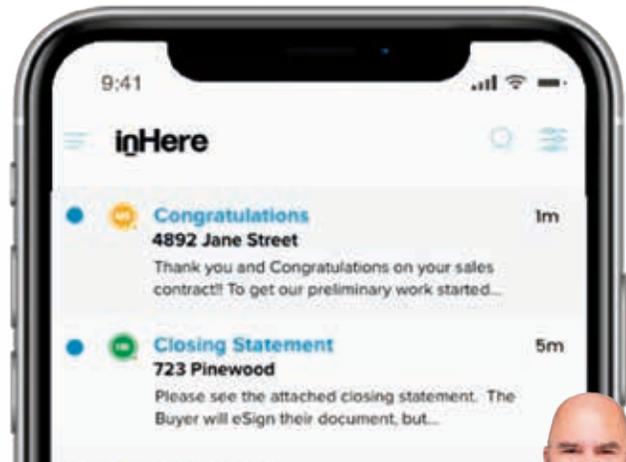


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