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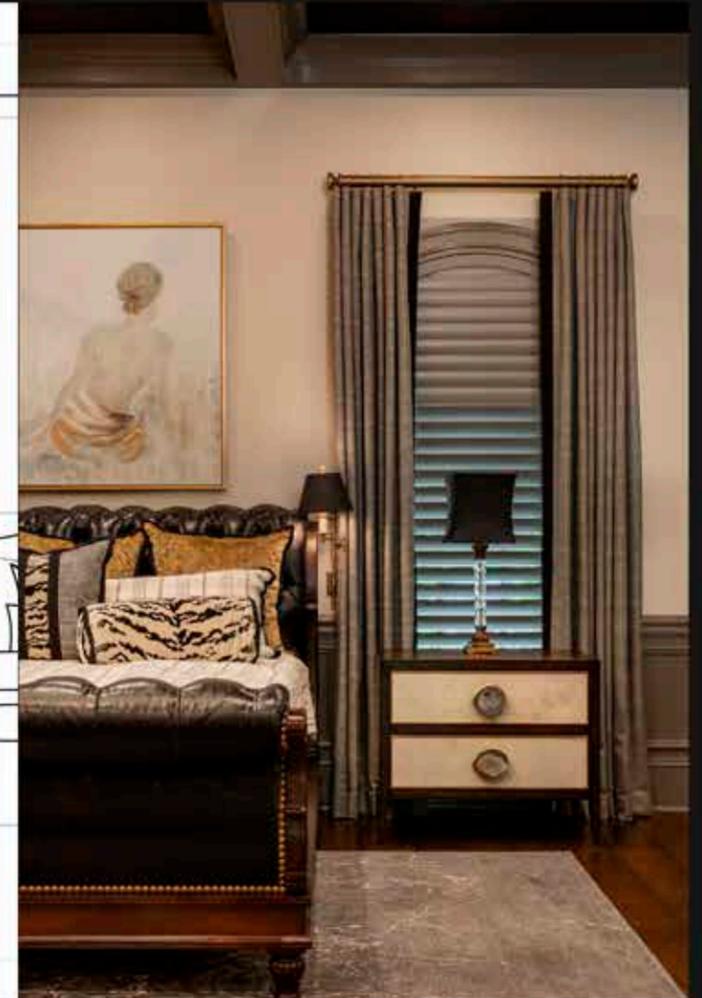
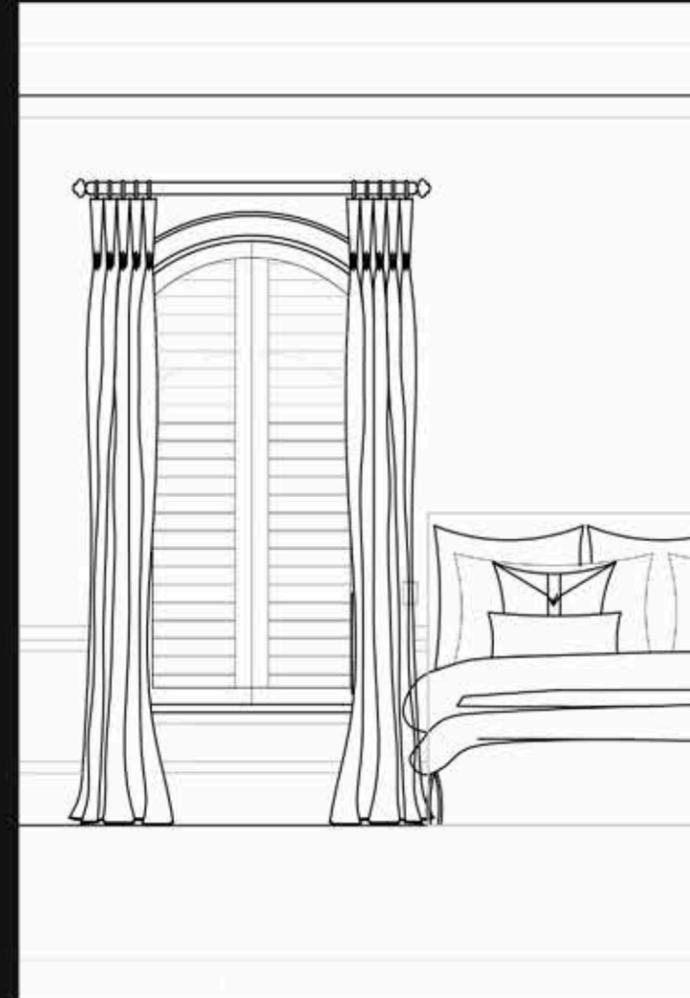


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Grace Loveless **18** COVER STORY

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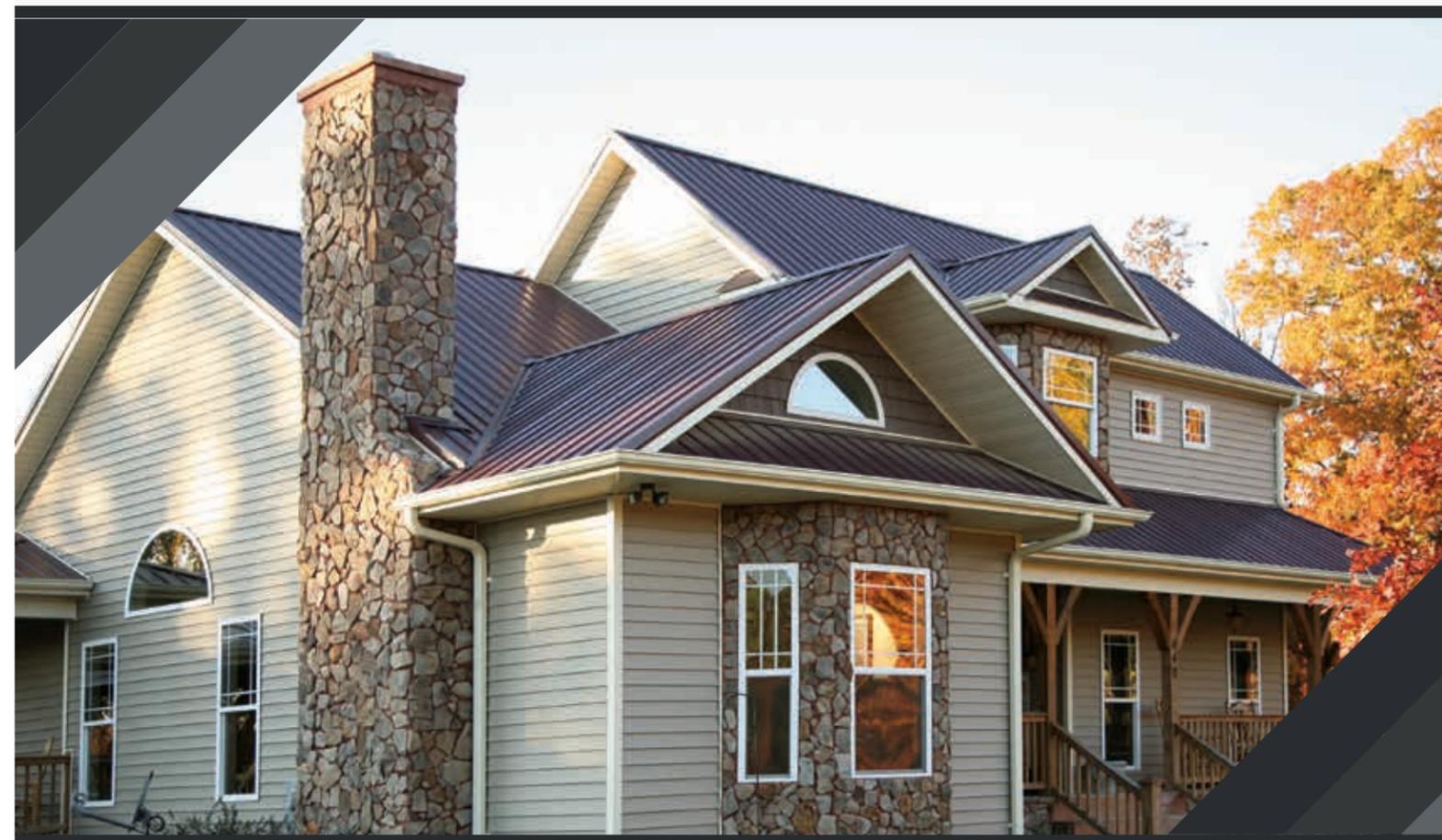
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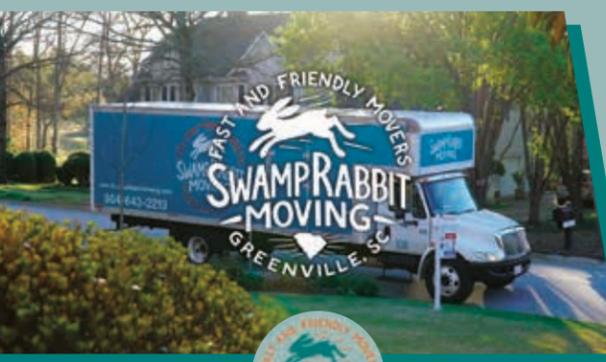
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March 2026

Happy St. Patrick's Day!

Happy St. Patrick's Day and welcome to our March 2026 issue of *Upstate Real Producers* Magazine! As we move into a season that represents growth, renewal, and opportunity, we want to take a moment to express our sincere gratitude to you—our dedicated readers. This publication continues to thrive because of the incredible real estate professionals throughout the Upstate who support our mission, share their stories, and engage with the community we are so proud to serve. Your loyalty, encouragement, and commitment to excellence are what make *Upstate Real Producers* possible, and we are truly thankful for each of you.

Our Cover Feature this month spotlights Grace Loveless of Herlong Sotheby's International Realty. Grace's approach to real estate is rooted in authenticity, steady leadership, and a genuine commitment to serving her clients with care and clarity. Her ability to balance professionalism with real life has made her a trusted name in the Upstate, and we are honored to feature her story on our cover.

We are also excited to recognize Brit Ream of Bluefield Realty Group as our Top Producer. Brit's consistency, drive, and attention to detail continue to set her apart in a competitive market. Her passion for delivering exceptional results, combined with her creative and client-focused mindset, makes her success well deserved and inspiring to others in the industry.

Our Realtor on the Rise feature highlights Kelli Kettels of Distinguished Realty. Kelli's upward momentum, strong work ethic, and dedication to her clients signal a promising future. She represents the next generation of leaders in real estate, and we are excited to share her journey and growing impact within the Upstate market.

This month's Preferred Partner Spotlight features Guest & Brady, whose ongoing support and professional expertise play an important role in serving the real estate community. Their commitment to partnership, reliability, and excellence continues to make a meaningful difference for agents and clients alike.

Finally, our Tips of the Trade feature comes from Laurie Hughes of Bluefield Realty Group. Laurie brings valuable insight and practical strategies that agents can apply immediately to strengthen their businesses and better serve their clients. Her willingness to share knowledge reflects the collaborative spirit that defines our community.

Thank you again for being a part of the *Upstate Real Producers* family. We hope this March issue inspires you, celebrates your peers, and reminds you how fortunate we are to work alongside such talented professionals. Here's to continued success, strong relationships, and a little extra luck as we head into spring.

Wishing you a March filled with love, success, and gratitude.

Warm regards,



Robert and Sierra Smith
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Faith, Family, and Finding the Way Forward

From the moment Brit Ream stepped into real estate, it was clear she was never meant to approach the business halfway. Licensed in July 2013, Brit entered the industry with an innate understanding of homes, potential, and people—an intuition that surfaced even before she officially became a Realtor. At just 24 years old, while house hunting for herself personally, she confidently discussed renovation ideas and rehab loans, prompting her agent, Kimberly McCracken with KW, to recognize her natural aptitude and encourage her to pursue licensure. That early affirmation proved prophetic. Nearly 13 years later, Brit has built a career defined not only by impressive production—more than \$55 million in total volume, but by a deeply personal, relationship-driven approach that has made her a trusted presence in the Upstate residential market.

Brit describes herself as heart-forward, adventurous, creative, and meticulously detail-oriented—a self-aware perfectionist who can read a room and rise to the moment. Those qualities have shaped both her journey and her success. Early in her career, she moved between brokerages searching for the right environment, never settling where she felt unsupported or misaligned. Rather than compromise, Brit approached her next move with intention and clarity. She interviewed many brokers and narrowed her decision carefully. She involved her husband in the process, knowing the decision was going to affect both of them equally. After prayerful consideration, together Bo and Brit ultimately chose Bluefield Realty Group. The decision marked a turning point. Since joining Bluefield in 2020, Brit has found not only professional fulfillment but a sense of belonging and shared values—one she proudly credits as the best career decision she has made. Always impressed by the owner of her agency, Brit believes Michael Smith is far beyond his years when it comes to leadership skills and business knowledge.



In practice, Brit's business philosophy centers on intentionality and connection. She takes time to truly understand her clients, carefully noting what resonates with them during showings and adapting her guidance accordingly. For first-time buyers or those new to South Carolina, she goes a step further—turning what can be an intimidating process into a meaningful experience. One of her signature gestures is inviting clients to share a meal when writing their first offer, transforming paperwork into a celebration and raising a toast to the milestone, regardless of the negotiating outcome. She has found that this helps settle the nerves and puts a fun twist on what could be an overwhelming moment for her clients. It is this human-centered approach that defines Brit's version of success. While her annual volume reflects consistency and expertise, she

measures achievement most profoundly through the lives unfolding within the homes she helps her clients purchase. When clients show their first baby's nursery in the new house, Christmas morning photos full of smiles around the tree in the living room, the backyard BBQ on the porch that sealed the deal on it being "the one" - Those moments, she says are her true success stories.

Like many seasoned professionals, Brit's path has not been without challenges. As she reflects on the personal and professional obstacles she has faced, she speaks candidly about growth, resilience, and faith. Grounded by God and prayer, along with the support of her village, she is guided by a mindset that refuses to accept "no" as a final answer. Brit has learned to pivot with grace and determination. That resilience



is echoed in the mentorship she values deeply, including the steadfast support of Lisa Alexander of DelCo Realty—someone who has consistently offered guidance and encouragement, even without formal ties.

Beyond transactions, Brit is passionate about cultivating lasting relationships and giving back. She is a proud supporter of Wreaths Across America, donating a wreath for every household member—and their pets—after each closing. In just three years, she has contributed nearly 300 wreaths, honoring veterans and the sacrifices that make her career and freedoms possible. This spirit of gratitude extends into her personal life as well. Brit shares a vibrant home with her husband Bo, a PGA referee, their rescued pets, her mother Rhonda, and her special-needs Aunt Dorothy. Together, they prioritize experiences over possessions, traveling widely and collecting meaningful pieces that tell their story—turning their home into a living reflection of shared adventures and love.

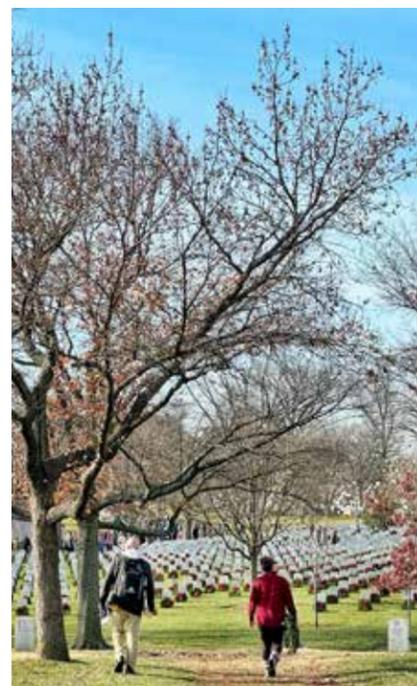
Looking ahead, Brit's goals remain refreshingly grounded. She is not driven by accolades or recognition, but by a desire to help others become property savvy and confident in their decisions. "I'm not here to win awards or be the next big agent. I'm here to help my clients win" She believes there is room for everyone to succeed in the Upstate real estate community and finds joy in

watching clients, colleagues, and fellow agents thrive. Her advice to aspiring top producers is simple yet powerful: lead with heart, treat clients like family, and focus on relationships rather than transactions. It is a philosophy rooted in who she is at her core—the oldest child and first born granddaughter - a combination that many say is a blessing and a curse - the natural leader, family problem solver, and determined executor who will always find a way, even if it means flawlessly delivering Plan Z as though it were Plan A all along.

Ultimately, Brit Ream wants to be remembered not just as a top producer, but as a strong Southern woman of faith, integrity, and unwavering honesty—someone who is passionately patriotic, loves deeply, serves sincerely, and could always be trusted to give a fair and truthful answer. In honoring her as a Top Producer, *Upstate Real Producers* recognizes not only her impressive production, but the heart, grit, and authenticity that define her legacy in real estate and beyond.

Favorite Quote

"To succeed in life, you need three things: a wishbone, a backbone, and a funny bone." - Reba McEntire



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**GRACE
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Grace Herlong Loveless has built a real estate career defined not only by impressive numbers, but by intention, authenticity, and an unwavering commitment to living well—both professionally and personally. As a Realtor with Herlong Sotheby's International Realty, Grace represents a modern model of success in the Upstate: one where excellence, kindness, and balance coexist. Licensed in 2018 and full-time since 2019, she has quietly and confidently amassed a career sales volume of more than \$135 million, including over \$32.6 million in 2025 alone. Yet, for Grace, success has never been about chasing titles or accolades—it's about guiding people forward with clarity, humor, and heart.

Before real estate, Grace worked in the corporate world with BMW, where her role in franchise development required extensive travel and long hours. While the experience sharpened her business acumen, it was motherhood that ultimately reshaped her priorities. After welcoming her first child, Grace recognized that the pace of corporate life wasn't sustainable for the kind of present, engaged parent she wanted to be. Growing up, she watched her mother, Joan Herlong, build a successful real estate career while never missing the moments that mattered most. That example left a lasting impression—and ultimately inspired Grace's transition into the industry. She saw firsthand that it was possible to be both a dedicated professional and a deeply involved parent, and she set out to build that same life for herself.

Grace's entry into real estate began behind the scenes as Director of Operations for her mother's firm during its transition into a Sotheby's International Realty franchise. With her BMW background uniquely positioning her to support franchise development, she played an integral role in helping the business evolve. After 18 months, however, Grace felt the pull toward sales—drawn by the flexibility, client relationships, and opportunity to shape her own path. Once she made the leap, there was no looking back. Today, she specializes in in-town Greenville, a choice driven as much by strategy as by motherhood. With young children and a school nurse on speed dial, Grace jokes that staying within a 30-minute radius simply makes good sense. The result is deep market knowledge, strong local relationships, and a hands-on presence that benefits every client she serves.

At the core of Grace's business is a simple but powerful philosophy: work hard and be nice to people. She is known among peers for being firm when necessary, yet consistently kind and collaborative. By cultivating strong relationships with fellow agents and staying closely connected to the local market, Grace often uncovers opportunities before homes officially hit the market—giving her clients a valuable edge. Her approach blends professionalism with relatability, offering steady guidance, honest answers, and, when appropriate, a well-timed laugh. For clients navigating one of life's biggest decisions, that balance makes all the difference.

While Grace has many memorable transactions, one story perfectly captures her people-first mindset. While working with two single, recently divorced clients, she noticed something beyond their housing needs. After confirming both were open to dating, Grace arranged a blind date—one that led to marriage, a family, and a three-year-old child. It's a lighthearted anecdote, but one that underscores a deeper truth: Grace sees people, not just transactions. Real estate, for her, is about connection, trust, and genuinely caring about the lives unfolding beyond the closing table.





Success, to her, is a business
that thrives without costing her
**THE PARTS OF LIFE
THAT MATTER MOST.**

Carrying the Herlong name has come with both opportunity and pressure. Grace is candid about the assumptions that often accompany it—that her success was handed to her or fueled by favoritism. In reality, she has worked relentlessly to prove herself on her own merit. Joan Herlong, by Grace's own admission, does not “feed” anyone success; respect must be earned. While her name may open a door, Grace has had to perform once inside—earning every client's trust, every win, and every milestone. Overcoming imposter syndrome and heightened expectations has shaped her resilience and sharpened her drive, ultimately strengthening her confidence and sense of purpose.

In recent years, Grace has found what she calls her true stride. By focusing on clients who are the right fit—and learning that saying no can be one of the biggest raises you give yourself—she has elevated both her performance and her happiness. The result is a business that feels aligned rather than exhausting. She doesn't experience the “Sunday scaries,” because she genuinely loves what she does. That sense of peace is intentional and protected, just like her time with family. Grace is deeply involved in her children's lives, serving as PTA vice president, driving carpools, and showing up consistently. For her, none of the professional success matters if it comes at the expense of being present at home.

Community involvement is another cornerstone of Grace's life and career. In addition to her work with the school PTA, she has served on Greenville's Community Development Advisory Committee and will begin Furman University's Diversity Leaders Initiative program in the spring. These commitments reflect her belief that leadership extends beyond business—and that giving back is both a responsibility and a privilege.

At home, Grace shares life with her husband Ryan, their 8 year old daughter, a third grader, and 5 year old son, who is in kindergarten. Weekends are filled with tennis matches, park visits, soccer games, ballet performances, and family adventures that often include travel and skiing. With both sets of grandparents nearby, family is not just a priority—it's a daily presence and a source of deep fulfillment.

When asked to define success, Grace offers a perspective that resonates far beyond real estate. Success, to her, is a business that thrives without costing her the parts of life that matter most. It's closing a complex deal at 3:00 p.m. and still making it to a class party at 3:30. It's navigating challenges with grit, humor, and a strong backbone, while modeling for her children what it means to work hard and stay kind. Her advice to other agents echoes that same clarity: do the work on yourself first. Real estate is a mental game, and alignment within is essential before growth can happen in business.

As the face of the March 2026 issue of *Upstate Real Producers Magazine*, Grace Herlong Loveless represents a version of success that feels refreshingly real. She is driven, disciplined, and accomplished—but also grounded, joyful, and unapologetic about protecting her peace. Known for keeping it real as @homeswithgrace on Instagram “Homes with Grace,” she has built a career that reflects who she truly is: kind, capable, and committed to a life that doesn't just look good on paper, but feels good to live.



Favorite Quotes

Work hard and be nice to people.

“I don't know about you, but when I go to Harris Teeter, I always make sure to get the cart with Grace's picture on the front. That way, when I yell out of my way, they know I mean it,” John Boyanoski, local roustabout

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GUEST & BRADY:

A TWENTY-YEAR LEGACY BUILT ON FAITH, INTEGRITY, AND SERVICE

A Milestone Celebrated with Those Who Matter Most
2025 marked a significant milestone for Guest & Brady: twenty years of serving communities across the Carolinas with faith, integrity, and unwavering commitment. But for partners Kevin Brady and Russell Guest, celebrating two decades in business wasn't just about looking back at what they'd built. It was about honoring the relationships, the shared victories, and the lives touched along the way.

The partners chose to celebrate this achievement with the

people who have made it all possible. Bringing together real estate partners, personal injury clients and staff that define the firm's legacy.

Memories in the Making
The evening highlighted the many moments and relationships that have shaped the firm's twenty-year journey. Through photos, stories, and shared memories, the celebration honored both where Guest & Brady has been and the vision guiding the years ahead.

Among the night's most memorable highlights was a live

finger-painting presentation by Christian artist Jared Emerson. His depiction of Christ lifting Peter from the water captured the firm's heart for redemption, service, and faith. Today, the painting is displayed in their office as a daily reminder of their calling to glorify Christ through faithful service to others.

One Shared Mission, Guided by Faith
From the beginning, Guest & Brady has been built on something greater than legal expertise. The firm exists to glorify Christ as faithful stewards

of all entrusted to them. This purpose shapes everything they do. This calling influences how they care for each client, how they approach their work as a team, and how they view their role in the community.

"We exist to be faithful stewards," Kevin explains. "That means the trust, time, and futures our clients place in our hands are treated with the care they deserve. We don't just see transactions. We see individuals navigating life's transitions. That might mean helping a family settle an estate after the loss of a loved one, or guiding new parents as they move into a home that fits the life they are building. Behind every closing is a personal story, and we approach each one with care, compassion, and respect."

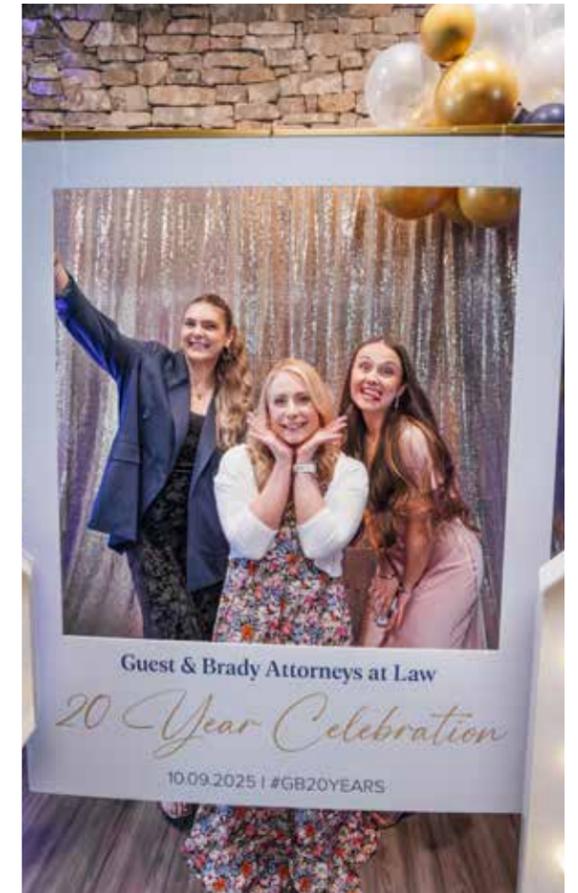
This perspective has guided the firm through twenty years of growth, challenges, and countless success stories. The mission remains the same: protecting what matters most to each client and the life moments that bring them to the closing table.

Serving Across the Carolinas
Guest & Brady has grown to serve communities throughout the upstate region and beyond, from the Charlotte area through the Upstate of South Carolina. With multiple locations across the Carolinas, the firm has become a trusted resource for realtors. For real estate agents, what draws them to Guest & Brady is more than just efficient closing services. The firm offers genuine investment in their success. With a specialized mobile home department that empowers agents to confidently expand their services, a bilingual staff ensuring seamless communication for the region's diverse clientele, every detail is designed to support agents at a higher level. That support extends to secure,

modern systems, including bank-level encryption through Qualia Shield, as well as ongoing education. Throughout the year, Guest & Brady hosts continuing education classes, hot topic discussions, and updates on new laws, giving agents the tools and insight they need to stay informed and competitive.

"Your success is our mission," Kevin emphasizes. "We have built something unique here. Agents have the backing of a proven, established firm, but still feel like our only client. That personal connection, combined with our depth of experience, is not just what sets us apart. It's what drives us forward."

On the personal injury side, Russell Guest leads a team dedicated to reclaiming lives and restoring hope for those affected by another's negligence.





"YOUR SUCCESS IS OUR MISSION."

Clients are never just a file or case number; they are supported by a collaborative team that stays fully informed and engaged throughout every step. This approach ensures consistency, continuity, and care, creating a highly personal experience where clients feel seen, heard, and supported while benefiting from the collective insight and strength of a united legal team focused on their recovery and future.

Looking Forward

As Guest & Brady enters its third decade of service, the partners

reaffirm their commitment to the values that have guided them from day one. Every client has a story. Every story is important. And their work remains deeply personal because of the people they serve.

Twenty years of trust has been built together. Your milestones have been theirs, too. And as they celebrate this anniversary, Kevin and Russell are grateful for every relationship, every success, and every opportunity to serve.

In a world where legal services often feel impersonal, Guest

& Brady stands as proof that faith, professionalism, and genuine care can create a law firm that truly serves the heart of its community.

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MEET KELLI KETTELS

WRITTEN BY: AMY PORTER
PHOTOS BY: GREENVILLE REAL
ESTATE PRODUCTIONS (GVL REP)



KELLI KETTELS embodies the spirit of dedication, compassion, and resilience in the real estate industry. Currently representing Distinguished Realty of SC, Kelli has rapidly distinguished herself as one of the Upstate's most promising talents, earning recognition as the Realtor on the Rise in our March 2026 issue of *Upstate Real Producers Magazine*. Though she officially began her real estate career in September 2022, Kelli's path to success is rooted in a lifetime of connecting with people, understanding their stories, and helping them achieve milestones in their lives. Prior to entering real estate, Kelli spent 25 years as a hair stylist, a career that nurtured her natural ability to listen, empathize, and build trust—skills that now seamlessly translate into her work guiding clients through one of life's most significant financial and emotional investments: purchasing a home.

Kelli's approach to real estate is deeply personal and intentional. She takes the time to understand her clients' needs, motivations, and dreams, always striving to create an experience that is both smooth and meaningful. Known for her empathy, strong work ethic, intelligence, and sense of humor, Kelli ensures that every client feels seen, heard, and supported. She is consistently available—often beyond typical business hours—to answer questions, address concerns, and provide guidance. Her unwavering commitment to client care has already touched the lives of over 150 individuals and families in just three years, with a career volume last year totaling 49 transactions—a remarkable achievement in such a short time.

Some of Kelli's most memorable experiences as a realtor speak to her intuitive understanding of people and places. One story that remains especially poignant involves a couple searching for a home that would be a sanctuary for their family amidst a challenging chapter in their lives. Kelli, trusting her instincts and understanding the emotional weight of their search, connected them with a property before it officially hit the market. The husband, battling illness, recognized immediately that this home would be a place of safety and comfort for his wife after his passing. The husband's tears upon seeing the home underscored the profound role real estate can play—not just in transactions, but in shaping life-altering moments. For Kelli, these experiences are more than professional victories; they are deeply human connections that validate her dedication and affirm the purpose behind her career.

Kelli's journey into real estate was not without its challenges. Starting a completely new career at 45, Kelli's transition into real estate in 2022—a long-held dream she was finally able to pursue as her seven children grew older and left the home. With the ability to dedicate herself fully to her new career, Kelli embraced real estate with wholehearted energy and an eagerness to learn. She navigated the learning curve of technology, contracts, and the intricacies of property transactions with determination, trusting that her efforts would align with her calling. Mentors like Donnie Icenhour and Suzi Schoonmaker played an instrumental role in her growth, providing guidance, encouragement, and accountability. Through their mentorship and her own perseverance, Kelli

honed her skills and built a foundation of expertise that sets her apart as both a knowledgeable and compassionate agent.

She began at Mark Spain Real Estate, where she quickly became a top buyer's agent, gaining invaluable experience in high-volume sales and fast-paced transactions. When the Greenville office closed in 2024, Kelli and several colleagues sought a brokerage that aligned with their values—and they found it at Distinguished Realty of SC.

Joining Distinguished Realty became one of the most impactful decisions of her career. The brokerage's supportive, approachable environment has allowed her to thrive, offering not only strong leadership but a culture that feels like family. Surrounded by coworkers who celebrate each other's wins and step in during challenges, Kelli has found a professional home that truly lifts her up. Among those friendships, one stands out: her friend and colleague Kate, who Kelli lovingly describes as the person she can count on for anything—support, guidance, or simply a good laugh on a hard day. The encouragement she receives from her brokerage and peers has strengthened her confidence, sharpened her skills, and played a significant role in her rise as a standout agent.

Beyond her impressive professional achievements, Kelli's life is rich with family, faith, and personal passions. She is a devoted wife to Trent and a proud mother to Owen, Jacob,





“

BELIEVE IN YOURSELF, NEVER GIVE UP, AND HAVE A PASSION FOR PEOPLE. YOU'LL BE AMAZING!”

Eric, Joel, Ava, Nate, and Sydney. Their family gatherings, filled with sports events, award ceremonies, movie nights, and laughter, are a testament to the joy and energy she nurtures in both her personal and professional spheres. Kelli also enjoys design and decorating, caring for her animals, dining out, and spending quality time with friends—a balance of creativity, relaxation, and family connection that fuels her approach to business. For her, success is measured not just in transactions, but in following God’s calling, enriching the lives of others, and maintaining integrity, joy, and balance in every endeavor.

Looking ahead, Kelli’s goals are clear: to continue growing her business, serve her clients with excellence, and embrace the opportunities that arise with energy, passion, and gratitude. Her advice to aspiring real estate professionals is straightforward yet profound: “Believe in yourself, never give up, and have a passion for people. You’ll be amazing!” With her steadfast commitment to her clients, her heart for service, and her unshakable faith, Kelli Kettels is not only a rising star in the Upstate real estate market but also a model of how personal integrity, empathy, and determination can transform lives. In her own words, “God put it on my heart, so I just went for it—and He blew any expectations I had out of the water!” Kelli’s story reminds us that real estate is not just about properties—it’s about people, their dreams, and the profound moments that make a house a home.



Favorite Quotes

Philippians 4:13- I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength.

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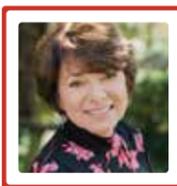
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THE POWER

OF THE PAIN

WRITTEN
BY: LAURIE
HUGHES



I have lots of agents ask me for advice on how to close more deals. In order to close more, we have to understand more about our clients.

Closing is actually very similar to going to the doctor. I was at the doctor's office recently, and when the doctor entered the room, the first thing he did not do was tell me all about himself and his practice—his hours, location, services, or credentials. He didn't direct me to his diploma on the wall or let me know he had graduated at the top of his class or attended a prestigious university.

No, he wasn't focused on himself or his practice. Instead, he was focused on me, asking the most famous question of all: **"Where does it hurt?"**

As he asked additional questions, he listened intently for my pain. He took notes and even said "hmmm" a few times. After listening to what I had to say, he gave me a plan for improvement and then wrote a prescription.

What most of us do not realize is that when we go on an appointment, **we are the doctor.** That's right. We are there because our client has a problem. We aren't there to talk about ourselves—we are there to listen to the client and find out what the pain is, just like asking, "Where does it hurt?"

After identifying the pain, we come up with a plan, and then the prescription is the close.

But herein lies the problem: **most agents are too afraid to ask questions.**

What????!!!

That's right. They think they will be too nosy or too invasive. But you are the doctor.

What if the doctor said to you, "I want to be careful not to ask too many personal questions about your ailment"? Ridiculous, right? You would want to tell the doctor that this is the very reason you are sitting in his office and to go ahead and be invasive.

How can the doctor develop a plan or write a prescription if he doesn't know as much information as possible? The alternative is—you may die!

Therefore, when talking to a client or prospect, we absolutely have to dig deep enough to find out what the real pain is, and we can only do that by asking lots of questions.

If we analyze that doctor's office visit a bit more, we would see that the questions took about 15 minutes, while the plan of action and prescription took maybe two minutes. This should be our pattern for closing.

Asking questions is the first step in the closing process. It is vital to each and every sale because it not only helps you discover the real underlying pain or motivation for the client's move, but it also helps you determine if you even have a good prospect at all.

You're probably thinking right now, "Laurie, are you telling me that some people are not a good prospect?" That is correct.

Deviating for just a minute, there are **three components** that make a good prospect:

1 / The prospect must have the money

We all know lots of motivated buyers who just don't have money or credit, and unfortunately, we can't really help them.

2 / The prospect must have the time

Your prospect could have loads of money, but if he is across the world in China and can't meet with you, it will still result in no sale

because he doesn't have the time to see the property and make a decision.

3 / The prospect must have a need

Your prospect could have the money and the time, but if there is no need, it may be years before they buy or sell. You've heard the buzzwords before:

- "Oh, I'm not in a hurry at all."
- "I think I'll wait until interest rates come down."
- "If the cap rate works out, then I'll consider it."

No urgency means no real need, and no real need means you may be wasting your time.

Going back to asking questions—yes, we have to ask a whole lot more questions without looking like the Gestapo. If we don't ask, we won't find the pain, and without the pain, we can't solve the problem.

In fact, no pain, no gain. But for those of us in real estate, it's really no pain, no sale.

People buy in order to solve a problem they have. So we know we definitely need to ask more questions—but what kind of questions do we ask? Let's look at the following categories to help guide this process:

1 / "Occurring Now"

This lets us find out what their current situation is. We need to know this to understand what is motivating them to consider a change.

After the initial chit-chat, I usually ask, "So tell me about your current situation." People will start talking and sharing details. Remember, you are the doctor, and they are pouring their hearts out.

Sometimes they don't tell you enough, so that's where you gently keep asking questions like, "Tell me more about that." Make it hurt a little—the pain. We need to dig deep by asking what they like about their situation and what they would change if they could.

The "change" is the pain.

You've heard "no pain, no gain," right? We need the pain to hurt just a bit. That's

when we ask, "When was the last time that happened?" and encourage them to elaborate.

As they recount the incident, it brings up emotion and frustration—sometimes you can even see it on their face. I've had people begin to cry at this point. This emotion is what motivates them to make a change.

2 / "Ought to Be"

This category focuses on their hopes and dreams—what that change would ideally look like. Whether it's a three- or four-bedroom home in the mountains or a cottage in the country, they are describing the end result of their change.

3 / "Obstacles"

This question helps uncover objections before the end of the presentation: "Do you see anything that might prevent you from getting that cottage in the country?"

This is not where you overcome objections. It's simply a litmus test to see how strong a prospect you have and what may prevent them from moving forward.

4 / "Outcome"

This is what the change will do for them long-term. It's not the cottage in the country that matters—it's what the cottage represents. Maybe it brings happiness, peace, or freedom, such as no HOA telling them what to do.

In every situation, the motivation lies in the outcome they are really buying.

5 / "Other Options"

To see how strong the pain truly is, it's helpful to know if the client has other options. This is where you might hear, "Well, I'll just rent out my house."

If they have other options, the pain may not be very deep. But if there are no other options and the pain is deep, this is often when clients begin to wring their hands—or even cry.

Once you've asked the right questions and uncovered the pain, closing becomes a cinch. You can then develop a plan, just like the doctor, and write the prescription to solve your client's problem.

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