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PUBLISHER'S NOTE



A Night Worthy of the Top 300

I am over the moon after the 2nd Annual Real Estate Awards Gala!

The lovely duo of Shepherd Insurance Group, Tats Shepherd and Heidi Holle-Williams, absolutely knocked it out of the park and are deserving of ALL the kudos. From the moment guests walked into the Wichita Marriott, it was clear this was going to be a night to remember.

What made the evening so special wasn't just the black-tie elegance, the seamless execution, or the incredible energy (though all of that was perfection). It was the people. Seeing so many familiar faces—agents who have been part of this community for years—alongside so many new ones stepping into the spotlight was truly something special. The room was

full of connection, celebration, and genuine admiration for one another.

This event is a reflection of what makes our community so unique. It's not just about production—it's about people, relationships, and the impact you're making both in and out of real estate.

To everyone who attended, supported, sponsored, and celebrated... thank you. You are what makes this platform so powerful. And as you flip through this issue, I encourage you to take a moment to thank—and do business with—the incredible sponsors, listed below, who helped bring this vision to fruition.

I'm already counting down to next year.

With Gratitude,
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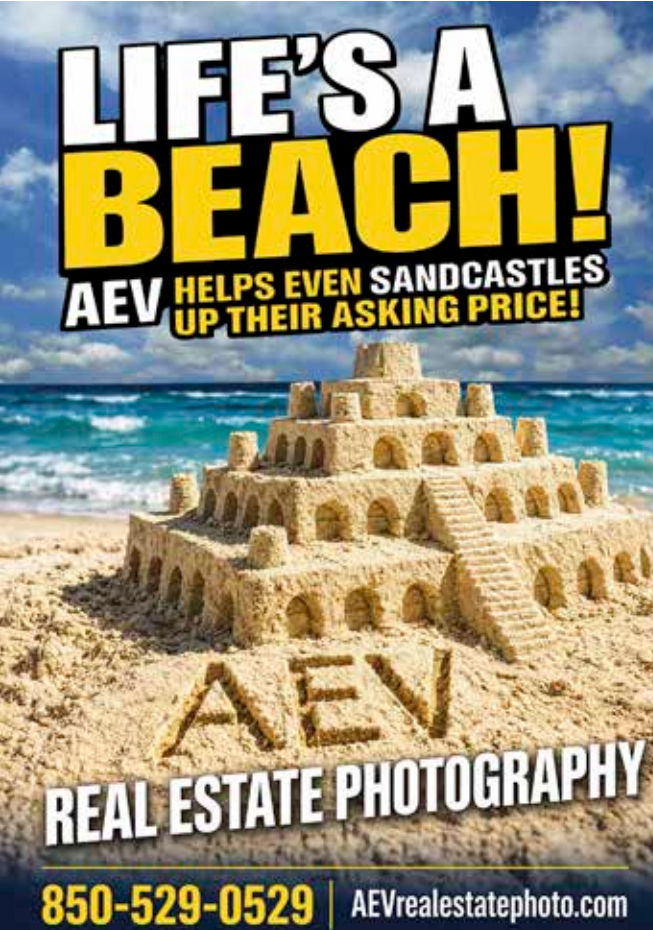
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Aubrey HALEY

Blazing New Trails

In the world of real estate, some professionals simply sell properties. Others build careers rooted in passion, purpose, and a deep connection to the land itself. For Aubrey Haley, an Associate Broker with Coldwell Banker Plaza and Coldwell Banker Select, real estate is more than a profession—it's a lifelong calling shaped by family influence, hands-on experience, and a love for

helping others navigate life's biggest transitions.

A Foundation Built on Family and Experience

Aubrey's journey into real estate didn't begin with a license. It began long before that, rooted in family ties to the industry. Her mother worked in mortgage lending, and her uncle was a residential appraiser. As a teenager, Aubrey spent time after school and during summers helping her uncle

assemble appraisal reports. In an era before digital convenience, this meant printing photos, mounting them by hand, and physically compiling documentation for each property.

That early exposure gave her more than just familiarity with real estate. It gave her an appreciation for the details that make transactions successful. She also gained experience working at her mother's bank and later in a loan processing role, learning how financial systems support property ownership.

Later, while working in a title company's closing

PHOTOS BY KIM STIFFLER
WRITTEN BY DAVE DANIELSON



department, she received hands-on training that would prove invaluable. Though she didn't realize it at the time, these experiences laid the groundwork for a future career that would combine technical knowledge with compassionate service.

A Leap Into Real Estate

After stepping away from the workforce to raise her children, Aubrey found her way back into the industry in 2016. While working at Coldwell Banker in a front desk and listing coordinator role, she began observing agents as they came and went. Inspired by their work, and encouraged by colleagues who saw her potential, she decided to pursue her real estate license.

She became licensed in 2017 and never looked back. Today, she continues to grow her career, now with nearly a decade of experience in real estate and over ten years with the same brokerage family. Her dual licensure in Kansas and Oklahoma allows her to serve a wide range of clients across state lines.

A Passion for People and Land

At the heart of Aubrey's work is a genuine love for people. She finds meaning in helping clients at all stages of life, whether they're pursuing a new passion or passing along a family legacy to the next generation.

Her connection to the Wichita area runs deep, allowing her to serve multiple generations within families. For Aubrey, real estate is all about honoring the blood, sweat, and tears landowners pour



Her connection to the Wichita area runs deep, allowing her to serve multiple generations within families.



selling—it's about helping people invest in something enduring. As she puts it, land is a finite resource that carries generational significance. Whether it's farmland, ranches, or homes on acreage, she believes land ownership creates a sense of belonging and opportunity to build something lasting.

Commitment to Expertise and Ethics

Aubrey takes pride in her commitment to expertise, particularly in the highly specialized field of land transactions. She has invested significant time, travel, and resources into advanced training through organizations connected to the real estate industry, including professional development through national land-focused programs.

Today, Aubrey is an Associate Broker with G7 Ranches, which specializes in all types of land sales

into their property. She thrives on being a guide, a problem solver, and a connector of people.

She often compares her role to that of a film director, coordinating multiple moving parts and managing complex emotions to ensure everything comes together smoothly. That sense of orchestration, combined with her energetic personality, keeps her engaged and motivated in an ever-changing industry.

Specializing in Land: A Personal Calling

In recent years, Aubrey has focused her career on land and homes on acreage. It's a niche that aligns closely with her lifelong love of horses and rural living. This specialization allows her to work with clients seeking something more than a typical suburban home: a connection to space, freedom, and legacy.

Her work in land real estate goes beyond buying and



across the heartland. She thrives in serving ranchers, farmers, and land owners across the prairies of Kansas and Oklahoma.

She is also working toward earning the Realtors Land Institute Accredited Land Consultant (ALC) designation, a prestigious accreditation recognized across the industry. She will be one of only a few professionals to be recognized. Her goal is to be among the best in her field, offering clients a level of service that goes beyond standard expectations.

Her approach is rooted in ethics and responsibility. She believes strongly that real estate professionals should only operate within their areas of expertise. For Aubrey, representing a client means fully understanding their needs and the complexities of the property at hand. That philosophy guides her work every day.

Family, Balance, and Support

Behind Aubrey's career is a strong support system in her husband, Sean, and four daughters. With three of her children grown and one still at home, her family has been a constant source of encouragement.

Her husband's support has been especially meaningful, allowing her the flexibility to travel for training and pursue her career goals. Together, they made a shared commitment to her professional growth, understanding that her success would also bring fulfillment and happiness.

Her family's support has enabled her to fully embrace



the demands of her career while maintaining a strong connection at home. It's a balance she values deeply.

Building a Legacy of Service

When asked how she hopes others describe her, Aubrey doesn't hesitate. She wants to be remembered as someone who is energetic, passionate, and authentic. Her enthusiasm for her work is evident in every interaction,

and she takes pride in being someone people can rely on.

Beyond her professional achievements, Aubrey's story reflects a broader mission: empowering others to pursue their dreams, whether that means owning land, building a home, or navigating a life transition with confidence.

She often thinks about her own family history—

ancestors who ventured west and helped shape the Kansas landscape—and sees her work as part of that continuing legacy. In her own way, she is still blazing trails, helping others find their place and build their future.

For Aubrey Haley, real estate is not just about property—it's about people, purpose, and the power of helping others turn their goals into reality. ▀



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PLANET HOME LENDING

WRITTEN BY DAVE DANIELSON

In today's real estate market, having the right lending partner can make all the difference.

For Realtors and homebuyers alike, the team at Planet Home Lending believes successful home financing begins with something simple but powerful: putting people first.

As a direct lender, Planet Home Lending operates with minimal overlays and underwrites loans according to true agency guidelines. That approach helps create a smoother path from pre-approval to closing, allowing loan officers to focus less on unnecessary hurdles and more on helping clients achieve their long-term goals.

But for Branch Manager Michelle Crubaugh, the company's real strength goes beyond the technical side of lending.

"It's about how we treat people," she says. "Our goal is to remove stress from the process and help clients feel confident every step of the way."

A Team Built on Experience

Crubaugh brings more than two decades of mortgage industry experience to her role. Before joining Planet Home Lending seven years ago, she served as an underwriter, processing manager, and national operations manager—positions that gave her a comprehensive understanding of the lending process. That background now shapes how she leads her team.

"Our philosophy is simple," Crubaugh explains. "We work when agents work—nights, weekends, whenever we're needed. Real estate doesn't run on a nine-to-five schedule, and neither do we."

Another key advantage for clients is that Planet Home Lending services more than 90 percent of the loans it originates. That continuity gives homeowners confidence that the company helping them secure their mortgage will likely remain their partner long after the closing table.

Relationships Over Transactions

While loan products and rates are always part of the conversation, Crubaugh emphasizes that the team's focus remains on relationships rather than transactions.

Every borrower's financial picture is unique, and the team takes time to understand each client's goals before recommending solutions.

"Sometimes people come to us thinking they're not ready to buy," Crubaugh says. "Instead of turning them away, we help them create a plan. That might mean improving credit, organizing documentation, or preparing for a purchase down the road. Planet Home Lending added our proprietary Down Payment Assistance loan in 2025 to our product lineup. It has been a gamechanger and has helped many of our clients go from renters to homeowners. And has been very popular with our realtors and their buyers."



Pattie Durham and Ike

The goal is not simply closing loans—it's helping clients build long-term financial stability through homeownership.

Ask the Expert: Q&A with Michelle Crubaugh

To better understand the team's approach, we asked Crubaugh a few questions about today's lending environment.

Q: What makes Planet Home Lending different from other lenders?

Michelle: We're a direct lender that underwrites to true guidelines with minimal overlays. That allows us to look at the full picture of a borrower's situation rather than creating unnecessary barriers.

Q: Why is communication so important during the mortgage process?

Michelle: Buying a home can feel overwhelming. Clear communication keeps everyone—buyers, Realtors, and lenders—on the same page and helps remove uncertainty.

Q: What advice would you give someone who thinks they may not qualify for a mortgage?

Michelle: Don't assume you can't buy. Many people are closer than they think. Sometimes it's just a matter of making a few adjustments or creating a plan.

Q: How does your team support local Realtors?

Michelle: Realtors need dependable lending partners. We focus on strong pre-approvals, fast responses, and solving challenges early so transactions stay on track.

A Collaborative Team

Supporting Crubaugh's leadership is a dedicated group of professionals who share the same commitment to service. Pattie Durham is an important part of the branch team, contributing to the collaborative environment that helps ensure clients and Realtor partners receive consistent support throughout the lending process.

"This isn't my team," Crubaugh says. "It's our team. Everyone here brings something valuable, and we work together to make sure our clients succeed."

By combining experience, accessibility, and a genuine commitment to service, Planet Home Lending continues helping more families move closer to the dream of homeownership.

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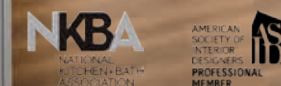
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ASHLEIGH CASPER

DRIVEN BY
HER HEART

PHOTOS BY JENNIFER RUGGLES
WRITTEN BY DAVE DANIELSON

AS A REAL ESTATE AGENT WITH SUNDGREN REALTY, Ashleigh Casper is building a career defined by energy, adaptability, and a genuine passion for helping others navigate life's biggest decisions.

An Unexpected Opportunity

Ashleigh's path into real estate began with a strong academic foundation. After graduating from Butler Community College with an associate degree in marketing, she continued her education at Wichita State University, earning her bachelor's degree in marketing and business management—with honors.

"I was so excited to start using my degree," she recalls. "I had this vision of what my career would look like."

That vision led her to interview for a marketing position with a real estate team shortly after graduation in 2022. Just three days after finishing college, she stepped into the role, ready to apply everything she had learned.

At the time, becoming a licensed real estate agent wasn't part of the plan. But as she immersed herself in the industry, something shifted.

"I had always thought about real estate in terms of investing," she says. "But I never considered actually getting licensed."

Encouraged by her team, she took the leap. By November 2022, Ashleigh had earned her real estate license—and stepped fully into a career





she hadn't seen coming, but quickly grew to love.

Embracing the Unexpected

One of the first things Ashleigh discovered about real estate is that no two days are ever the same. "I used to hear that all the time," she says with a laugh. "And now I know it's completely true."

From navigating negotiations to solving last-minute challenges, the unpredictability of the business has become one of her favorite aspects of the job. It keeps her sharp, engaged, and constantly learning.

"You have to be quick on your feet," she explains. "Every situation is different, and at the end of the day, you're always working toward what's best for your clients."

That mindset has helped her build confidence in a fast-paced industry, allowing her to adapt and grow with each new experience.

A Purpose Bigger Than Sales

While the pace and variety of real estate energize her,

it's the people who truly drive Ashleigh's passion. "It's my clients," she says. "I get to help people make some of the biggest, most important decisions of their lives."

For many, buying or selling a home is both a financial milestone and an emotional journey. Ashleigh understands the weight of those moments and embraces the responsibility that comes with guiding clients through them.

"That's what fulfills my heart," she says. "Being there for them through the process." Her approach is rooted in service rather than sales. She focuses on listening, understanding, and advocating for her clients—ensuring their needs always come first.

Grounded in Family

Outside of real estate, Ashleigh's world revolves around family.

She is the oldest of three siblings, with a close-knit bond that includes her parents, Tonya and Steve Casper, her younger brother Austin, and her sister Annaliese. Time spent with them is a constant in

her life, providing both support and balance amid a busy schedule.

"I adore my family," she says. "We spend a lot of time together."

That sense of connection and loyalty carries over into her work, shaping how she builds relationships with clients and colleagues alike.

A Life Beyond the Office

When she does find free time, Ashleigh's interests might surprise people.

"I'm actually kind of a gearhead," she says.

Growing up, she spent countless hours alongside her dad, working on cars, rebuilding engines, and learning the ins and outs of automotive mechanics.

"YOU HAVE TO BE QUICK ON YOUR FEET. EVERY SITUATION IS DIFFERENT, AND AT THE END OF THE DAY, YOU'RE ALWAYS WORKING TOWARD WHAT'S BEST FOR YOUR CLIENTS."

She even worked at a tire shop during high school, gaining hands-on experience that fueled her passion for all things mechanical.

Today, she continues to enjoy working on vehicles and attending car shows, embracing a hobby that reflects both her curiosity and her work ethic.

She also has a love for the outdoors, particularly hunting, and spends time training her yellow Labrador, Maverick, to become a hunting companion.

"It's a big part of my life," she says. "Between my family and my dog, that's where most of my time goes."

Learning and Growing Every Day

As someone still early in her real estate journey, Ashleigh approaches each day with a willingness to learn and grow. She understands that success doesn't happen overnight—and she's comfortable with that.

"My advice to anyone getting started is to trust the process," she says. "It can feel overwhelming at first, but over time, you build relationships and confidence."

That perspective has been shaped in part by the mentorship she's received along the way. She credits her colleague and role model, Jeremy Sundgren,

for playing a pivotal role in her development.

"He took a chance on me," she says. "Getting to work alongside someone with that level of experience has been incredible."

Building a Reputation That Lasts

Looking ahead, Ashleigh is focused on building a career defined not by transactions, but by relationships and reputation.

When asked how she hopes others would describe her, her answer reflects both her personality and her purpose.

"Calm, cool, and collected—but also bubbly," she says.

"Someone who always puts their clients first." It's a balance that allows her to connect with people while maintaining the professionalism and focus needed to guide them through complex decisions.

At the heart of it all is a simple philosophy: do work you love, and success will follow.

"Life is too short," she says. "If you love what you do, it doesn't feel like work."

For Ashleigh Casper, that mindset isn't just an idea—it's the foundation of a career that's only just beginning, and already full of promise. ▀



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HUFF'S

TREE SERVICE



ROOTED IN EXPERIENCE

PHOTOS BY KIM STIFFLER
WRITTEN BY DAVE DANIELSON

For Michael Huffman and William “BJ” Belshe, the story of Huff’s Tree Service isn’t just about building a successful business—it’s about growing something meaningful from the ground up. As Wichita natives and lifelong friends, the two co-owners have turned a shared work ethic, a bit of early hustle, and a defining moment in their hometown into one of the area’s most respected tree care companies.

Today, Huff’s Tree Service stands as a leader in professional tree care across Wichita, known not only for its scale and capabilities, but for its commitment to doing things the right way—every time.

From Backyard Hustle to Industry Leader

Like many entrepreneurial stories, this one begins in high school. Huffman and Belshe started out mowing lawns and tackling small landscaping jobs, learning early what it meant to earn their own income. But everything changed in 2005 when a massive ice storm swept through Wichita, leaving a trail of broken branches and damaged trees across the city.

With a Ford Ranger and an eight-foot trailer, the pair saw an opportunity.



“We were just trying to make some quick cash at the time,” they recall. “Cleaning up debris, hauling branches—whatever we could do.”

What started as simple cleanup work quickly turned into something more. After months of working alongside established tree companies—often following behind crews to haul away debris—they began to see the bigger picture. Tree care wasn’t just labor; it was a skilled trade with long-term impact. That realization sparked a decision that would shape their future: go all in.

Building Something That Lasts

In the early days, the motivation was simple—freedom, opportunity, and the dream of being business owners. But as the company grew, so did their “why.”

“Back then, it was about building something for ourselves,” Huffman says. “Now, it’s about building something we’re proud of.”

That shift in mindset has defined the company’s evolution. Today, Huff’s Tree Service is built on a foundation of professionalism, education, and integrity. With five certified arborists on staff—blending both ISA and Kansas certifications—the team approaches every job with a level of expertise that sets them apart in an industry often misunderstood.

Their mission goes beyond completing a job; it’s about reshaping how tree care is perceived in Wichita. “We want people to understand the difference,” Belshe explains. “There’s a right way to prune a tree—and a wrong



way. What you do today affects that tree 10, 20 years down the road.”

More Than Just Tree Work

Huff’s Tree Service offers a full range of services, including pruning, removal, fertilization, and treatments for insects and disease. They also operate a Turf and Arbor Care division, providing lawn fertilization programs designed to complement overall landscape health.

Notably, the company chooses not to handle tree planting directly, instead referring clients to trusted

landscaping partners—another example of their commitment to quality over convenience.

“We want every part of the job done right,” Huffman says. “Even if that means bringing in someone else we trust.”

That same philosophy extends to their work with real estate professionals. The team frequently partners with top-producing agents in the Wichita area, helping enhance curb appeal, identify potential tree liabilities, and resolve issues quickly—often under tight deadlines tied to property sales.

“We understand that timing is everything in real estate,” Belshe says. “When something needs to get done fast, we have the staff, equipment, and experience to make it happen.”

Precision, Power, and Professionalism

On any given day, Huff’s Tree Service brings between \$750,000 and \$1 million worth of equipment to a job site. But it’s not just about having the tools—it’s about using them with precision.

This investment allows the team to work efficiently while minimizing disruption to a property. In many cases, clients are amazed at how seamlessly the work is completed.

“We hear it all the time,” Huffman says. “People can’t believe how clean everything looks when we’re done—like we were never even there.”

Behind that experience is a highly skilled team of 16 to 20 professionals, many of whom bring years—if not decades—of experience to their roles. The company places a strong emphasis on training and education, ensuring every crew member understands not just how to do the work, but why it matters.

Driven by Accountability and Growth

At the core of the business is the relationship between Huffman and Belshe. Best friends since the age of



five, they’ve built their company on mutual accountability, shared ambition, and a healthy sense of competition.

“We push each other every day,” Belshe says. “We’re always trying to get better.”

That mindset has helped them adapt to an evolving industry. Over the past several years, Wichita homeowners have become more aware of the importance of certified arborists and proper tree care. In response, Huff’s has continued to invest in education—both for their team and their clients.

“We’re always learning,” Huffman adds. “And we want our customers to understand the value behind what we do.”

Success Beyond the Bottom Line

While growth and recognition are important, success for Huffman and Belshe is measured differently. “For us, it’s about stability,” Huffman says. “Being able to provide steady, year-round work for our team—that’s huge.”

In what is often considered a seasonal industry, Huff’s Tree Service takes pride in maintaining consistent 40-hour workweeks for its employees. The company has also achieved long-term goals like offering health insurance and 401(k) plans—milestones that once felt out of reach.



Beyond their team, they’re committed to giving back to the Wichita community. From supporting local nonprofits like Wichita’s Littlest Heroes and Kan Vets United to investing in the

city’s urban canopy, their impact extends far beyond their job sites.

Life Outside the Workday

When they’re not working, both owners embrace the outdoors. Huffman spends his free time fishing and camping, often traveling to Oklahoma in search of everything from crappie to massive blue catfish. Come fall, he turns his focus to whitetail deer and waterfowl hunting.

Belshe shares that same love for the outdoors, often spending weekends at the lake with his family. Much of his time also revolves around his children’s activities, from baseball games to dance recitals. In recent years, hunting has become a meaningful way to connect with his kids, offering quiet moments away from the busyness of life.

“It’s that time in the woods,” he says, “where you can just be present.”

A Lasting Legacy

Looking ahead, Huffman and Belshe are clear about how they want their company to be remembered. “We want to be the company that changed the industry in Wichita,” Huffman says. “Not just in the quality of our work, but in how we serve our community.”

By raising the standard and leading by example, they hope others will follow—creating a ripple effect that benefits both homeowners and the city’s tree canopy for generations to come.

For Huff’s Tree Service, it’s never been just about trees. It’s about growth, responsibility, and leaving something better behind. ❖



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Katie Bauer

STARTING WITH TRUST

WRITTEN BY DAVE DANIELSON

In today's ever-changing insurance landscape, clients want more than a policy—they want guidance they can trust. Katie Bauer, an Agent Owner with Shelter Insurance, has built her career on responsiveness, reliability, and a deep understanding of her clients' needs. With nearly two decades in the industry, Katie brings both experience and perspective to her role, especially when it comes to rental properties and serving landlords. We sat down with her to learn more about her journey and her approach to insurance.

A Career Built on Experience and Growth

Katie's path in insurance began in 2004, working in roles that gave her a well-rounded foundation in the industry. Over time, she advanced from supporting roles to becoming an agent, and eventually joined Shelter Insurance in 2010. Since then, she has remained committed to the company's mission and reputation.

"I've been with Shelter for 16 years," she says. "It's a wonderful company. It makes my life easier when you're representing a company with strong customer service and national recognition."

Her long tenure reflects not only her dedication, but also her belief in the value of working with a highly rated carrier that supports both agents and clients.

Q: What types of clients do you enjoy working with most?

Katie: "I really enjoy landlords the most. I like seeing what they're doing with their properties—whether they're managing long-term rentals, short-term rentals, or midterm rentals. It's

fascinating to hear about their strategies, successes, and even their challenges."

Q: What makes your agency stand out?

Katie: "We're very quick and responsive. A lot of times, people reach out with urgent needs, and we can run through everything and let them know very quickly if we can help. Our office is fully staffed, and we're easy to work with, which makes a big difference."

Q: How does Shelter Insurance compare in the market?

Katie: "Shelter has a strong reputation in the area. Local roofers and body shops often prefer working with us because our claims process is straightforward and efficient. That kind of reputation really matters when you're helping clients through a claim."

Q: What personal experience shapes your work in insurance?

Katie: "I own rental properties myself, so I have firsthand experience with that side of things. I understand the challenges landlords face, which helps me better serve my clients. I can relate to what they're going through."

Q: What do you enjoy most about your day-to-day work?

Katie: "Talking to people. I really enjoy conversations with clients and learning about their situations. It's rewarding to help solve problems and be a trusted resource for them."

Balancing Family and Life on the Farm

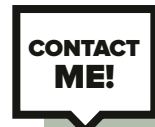
Outside of work, Katie's life is just as full. She and her husband are raising a blended family with five children, ranging from a one-year-old to a 22-year-old. One of their children is preparing to graduate from high school, while another has been accepted into a competitive dental hygiene program at Wichita State University—a proud milestone for the family.

Their home life is centered around a small farm near Cheney, Kansas, where they care for animals and manage 40 acres of land. The family enjoys

spending time outdoors, camping, and staying active together. This lifestyle not only keeps them busy but also grounds Katie in a strong sense of family and community values.

Trust, Loyalty, and a Commitment to Clients

When asked how she hopes clients would describe her, Katie's answer is simple and direct: "Trustworthy and loyal." Those two qualities define her approach to every client interaction. "I want people to know they can come to me with anything, and I'll get it done," she says. "Being someone they can count on is important to me."



Contact Katie Bauer For personalized insurance guidance or to learn more about coverage options for your home, auto, or rental properties, contact Katie Bauer at Shelter Insurance. Reach her at (316) 685-0101 to connect with an agent who is committed to r



Shelly Voss

BUILDING ... ONE BOND AT A TIME

PHOTOS BY
JENNIFER
RUGGLES
WRITTEN
BY DAVE
DANIELSON

For Shelly Voss, real estate has never been about chasing attention or standing in the spotlight. In fact, she'll be the first to tell you she's far more comfortable behind the scenes—unless, of course, she's on stage singing with her band. But in the world of new home sales, her steady presence, straightforward approach, and deep-rooted passion for the process have made her a trusted guide for buyers navigating one of life's biggest decisions.

As a supervising broker and new home sales agent with Preferred Properties of Kansas, Voss has spent more than a decade helping clients turn ideas into reality—one home at a time.

From the Gymnasium to the Job Site

Before stepping into real estate, Voss spent 11 years teaching physical education in Wichita, working with both middle school and elementary students. Initially, her career path was mapped out with intention—teach while her kids were in school, maintain a similar schedule, and eventually transition into something new.

That “something new” began to take shape about four years before she left teaching, when she started exploring real estate on a part-time basis. What began as curiosity quickly turned into something more. “I had always been interested in it,” Voss says. “And I grew up around it in a way.”

“

I HAD ALWAYS BEEN INTERESTED IN IT.

And I grew up around it in a way.”

Her stepfather was a homebuilder in the 1980s and '90s, and as a teenager, she occasionally found herself on job sites—helping with framing or setting roof trusses—while her mother focused on

interior design. That early exposure planted a seed that would later grow into a full-fledged career.

After initially working in resale while still teaching, a trusted colleague encouraged



her to consider new home sales. The transition proved to be a turning point.

Finding the Right Fit

In 2017, Voss joined Preferred Properties of Kansas, thanks in part to a referral from a well-connected industry veteran who believed she would be a strong fit. That first year required patience and persistence. Balancing teaching with part-time real estate, she worked through a patchwork of available listings before eventually stepping into a more consistent role in the Prairie Creek development in Andover development. Today she is at the Foxfire development in Derby.



Over the next several years, she built her business while navigating the natural ebbs and flows of new construction—where progress often depends on development timelines and new phases being released.

“**SEEING THEIR EXCITEMENT AS THE HOME COMES TOGETHER—THAT’S THE FUN PART. IT’S A LONG PROCESS, But it’s a good one.**”

Looking for more stability, she briefly explored a sales manager role with another builder. While the position offered a steady paycheck and a different pace, it didn’t take long for Voss to realize it wasn’t where she belonged.

“I learned pretty quickly that it just wasn’t for me,” she says. “I missed what I was doing before.” She returned to Preferred Properties of Kansas, where she plans to remain for the long term—continuing to do the work she enjoys most.

The Joy of the Process

Ask Voss what she loves about her work, and her answer is refreshingly honest—and free of industry clichés.

“I don’t like to say ‘helping people,’” she says with a laugh. “But I do enjoy guiding them through the process.”

That process, particularly in new home construction, is both detailed and deeply personal. Over the course of seven to eight months, buyers make countless decisions—from floorplans to finishes—transforming a concept into something tangible.

For Voss, the most rewarding part is watching that journey unfold.

“Seeing their excitement as the home comes together—that’s the fun part,” she says. “It’s a long process, but it’s a good one.”

Her role is to provide clarity, perspective, and steady guidance along the way—helping clients navigate choices and possibilities without overwhelming them.

A Straightforward Approach

In an industry where communication is key, Voss has built her reputation on being honest, direct, and approachable. She values transparency and aims to create an environment where clients feel comfortable asking questions and making informed decisions.

“I’d hope people would say I’m straightforward and supportive,” she says. “Someone they can rely on.” Because she spends the majority of her time on-site in the communities where she sells, Voss often develops ongoing relationships with buyers long after the initial transaction. It’s not uncommon for homeowners to stop by, check in, or simply say hello.

“I tell them we’re kind of like part-time neighbors,” she says. “I’m there six days a week, so you get to know people.”

That consistent presence fosters a sense of connection that extends beyond the sale itself—turning transactions into lasting relationships.

A New Chapter on the Horizon

While continuing her work in new home sales, Voss is also quietly preparing for what comes next. She is in the process of launching a boutique brokerage called Sunflower Flat Fee Realty, which will serve Wichita and the surrounding areas.

The concept is simple but innovative: offer sellers a flat-fee structure instead of the traditional percentage-based commission. With three tiers of service—ranging from basic MLS listings to full-service support through closing—along with optional à la carte add-ons, the model is designed to give sellers more flexibility and control.



“I’m just trying to create something that fills in the gaps,” Voss says. “Both now and down the road.” While the venture is still in development, it reflects her forward-thinking mindset and desire to evolve alongside the industry—while also creating opportunities for a more balanced schedule in the years ahead.

Staying Grounded

Outside of real estate, Voss values time spent with family and pursuing personal interests—including music, where she’s found her one exception to avoiding the spotlight.

Still, whether she’s on stage or on-site, her approach remains the same: show up, stay genuine, and focus on what matters.


For Shelly Voss, success isn’t about recognition—it’s about consistency, connection, and doing the job well.

And in an industry built on big moments and major milestones, that steady presence can make all the difference. ▀

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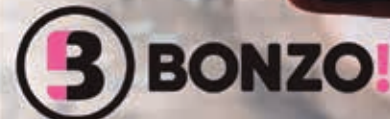


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Connie & KYNDAL BUTLER WHITE

A Family Business Built on *Trust*

PHOTOS BY ALLIE HENWOOD
WRITTEN BY DAVE DANIELSON



For Connie Butler and her daughter Kyndal White, real estate is more than a career—it's a shared calling rooted in family, trust, and genuine care for the people they serve. Together, they are part of **Heritage 1st Realty**, where they lead the **Connie Butler Homes Team**, alongside valued teammate **Queesa Masters**. What makes their story stand out isn't just their production or experience, but the rare and powerful dynamic of a mother-and-daughter partnership built on deep understanding and mutual respect.

Different Paths, One Direction

Connie earned her real estate license in April 2013, bringing with her a natural gift for connecting with people. A self-described people person, Connie thrives on relationships—walking into a room, striking up conversations, and turning clients into lifelong friends. Over the years, that ability has become the backbone of her business.

Kyndal's journey into real estate felt almost inevitable. Licensed in mid-2024, she grew up watching her mom work from home, take calls, and head out to showings—always present,

always involved. From tagging along to appointments to helping behind the scenes, Kyndal saw early on that real estate wasn't just about houses; it was about flexibility, service, and impact.

Today, Connie and Kyndal work side by side—often literally, sometimes from different parts of town—but always in sync.

Why a Mother-Daughter Team Works

Ask Connie what she enjoys most about working with her daughter, and her answer is simple: familiarity breeds efficiency.

"I know how she thinks," Connie says. "I know what she likes, what she doesn't, how patient she is, and how she handles stress. That makes it easy to match the right clients with the right personality." With their team spread geographically across the Wichita area, trust is essential. Connie relies on Kyndal and Queesa to take the systems she's built and run with them—confident that clients will be cared for with the same attention and integrity she would give herself.



“
If I wouldn't let my daughter live there, I won't let my military families go in blind either.”



For Kyndal, the partnership brings both comfort and strength. “She’s my safe space,” she explains. “To have that in business is really special. We know each other so well that it’s easy to tell when something’s off—and easy to fix it.”

What They Love About Real Estate

While they share values, Connie and Kyndal love different aspects of the job. Connie feeds off interaction. Meeting new clients, learning their stories, and building lasting relationships is what energizes her most. “Some of my clients become real friends,” she says. “That’s the best part of this business.”

Kyndal, on the other hand, loves the unpredictability. No two days are the same—early mornings, late nights, showings, paperwork, and problem-solving all mixed together. “It’s not a cubicle job,” she says. “Every day looks different, and I love that.”

Family at the Center

Family plays a central role in both of their lives. Connie has been married to her husband, **Terry Stratton**, for two years—a reunion years in the making after knowing each other since high school. She’s also a proud mother and grandmother,

with two grandsons, **Langston** (10) and **Greyson**, born earlier this year, plus a blended stepfamily that adds even more joy to her life.

Kyndal is married to her high school sweetheart, **Garrett White**. The two met in sixth grade, attended Kansas State University together, and married in April 2023. Today, they’re enjoying life with their dog and building their future together.

Life Beyond the Closing Table

Outside of real estate, one shared passion stands out: the barn.

What began as childhood horseback riding lessons turned into a lifelong family lifestyle. Horses, a pig, and plenty of time outdoors have become their version of therapy. Kyndal now teaches her nephew to ride, continuing a tradition that’s grown across generations.

“The barn just resets you,” Connie says. “You can have the worst day, but once you’re out there, the stress disappears.”

Serving with Heart—Especially Military Families

One group holds a particularly special place in their work: military and veteran families. With McConnell Air Force Base nearby, Connie and Kyndal frequently help clients relocating from across the country—or even overseas.

From video walkthroughs to detailed inspections, they go above and beyond to make buyers feel

confident, even when they can’t be there in person. Turning on faucets, flushing toilets, pointing out cracks—nothing is glossed over.

“If I wouldn’t let my daughter live there,” Connie says, “I won’t let my military families go in blind either.”

How They Hope to Be Remembered

At the end of the day, Connie and Kyndal hope clients describe them with one word: caring. Whether someone is buying a \$50,000 home or a \$500,000 one, they’re treated exactly the same—with honesty, diligence, and respect. Transactions don’t end at closing; relationships continue long after. “We genuinely care about their lives,” Kyndal says. “Before, during, and after the sale.”

It’s that mindset—family-first, people-first—that defines the Connie Butler Homes Team and sets them apart in Wichita real estate. ▀

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