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NOVEMBER 2026

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A NOTE FROM THE PUBLISHER



Providing a platform to celebrate and unite the top real estate professionals across Acadiana!

Fall is here, and we have a lot happening at Acadiana Real Producers!

BY DRAKE ABSHIRE

First up, mark your calendars for **October 29th from 4-7 PM** for our **2nd Annual Pickleball Tournament!** Last year was such a hit that we knew we had to bring it back. Whether you're ready to compete or just looking for a fun afternoon with other members of the Real Producers community, we hope you'll join us. We're looking forward to another great event and another chance to spend some time together outside of the office.

We're also excited to welcome our newest Preferred Partner, **Southern Septic**, to the *Acadiana Real Producers* family! They're here to take care of all your septic needs, offering everything from **pump outs, inspections and maintenance contracts to commercial and residential sewer system installs and sales.** We're excited to have them as part of our Preferred Partner community and encourage you to get to know them!

And as always, **we want to hear from you!** Our magazine is all about recognizing the people who make Acadiana real estate

such a great community, and many of the people we feature start with a nomination from someone just like you. If you know a Broker, Rising Star, or someone else doing an awesome job and deserving recognition, let us know. Your nominations help us shine a light on the people who are making an impact.

We appreciate this community more than ever and are looking forward to a great final stretch of the year. We'll see you on the pickleball courts!

Thank you always,



DRAKE ABSHIRE
Owner/Publisher
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FAQ

ALL ABOUT ACADIANA REAL PRODUCERS

Real Producers magazine started in Indianapolis in 2015 and is now in more than 130 markets across the nation.

Q: WHO RECEIVES THE MAGAZINE?
A: The top 300 real estate agents in Acadiana. We update our mailing list annually to ensure Real Producers reaches our area's top-producing agents.

Q: WHAT IS REAL PRODUCERS ALL ABOUT?
A: Real Producers is a platform that brings together the most elite individuals and affiliates in Acadiana real estate. Every month we share stories of some of the area's most recognizable names in real estate, as well as the rising stars in the industry and the Preferred Partners that are highly recommended by top agents. Beyond the magazine, we host exclusive events that bring titans of real estate together.

Q: HOW DO YOU GET FEATURED IN THIS MAGAZINE?
A: You have to be on the top 300 list to be a featured agent. We welcome nominations for other real estate agents, businesses, brokers, owners, or yourself. Office leaders can also nominate real estate agents. Though we can't guarantee a feature, we strongly encourage you to meet our team and attend our private events so we can get to know your story.

Q: HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO BE FEATURED AGENT?
A: Absolutely nothing! Real Producers is not a pay-to-play model. We share real stories of Real Producers – no price tag attached.

Q: WHO ARE THE PREFERRED PARTNERS SHOWN IN THE MAGAZINE AND AT EVENTS?
A: The businesses that sponsor the magazine and attend our events are some of the best vendors in Acadiana in their category. Find them listed in our index. We partner with businesses that top agents have recommended to us, so every single business you see in this publication has earned its "stamp of approval." Our team also vets every business to make sure they are a good fit and bring value to our powerhouse network.

Q: HOW CAN I RECOMMEND A BUSINESS?
A: If you've enjoyed working with a local business that isn't part of our Preferred Partner network, please email us their information at drake.abshire@n2co.com or holly.griffin@n2co.com.

Q: CAN I SUBMIT AN ARTICLE OR IDEA FOR REAL PRODUCERS?
A: Yes, we would love to hear from you! Email your ideas to drake.abshire@n2co.com or holly.griffin@n2co.com.



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THE CONTENT LAB



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What a turnout! We're so grateful to everyone who joined us for **The Content Lab**, an inspiring day dedicated to helping real estate professionals elevate their businesses through social media.

A special thank-you goes to our **Main Sponsor, Procept Marketing**, for helping us bring this event to life and creating an experience where our realtors could learn, connect and get inspired. We also want to recognize our **Supporting Sponsors: Trahan & Sons Heating & Cooling, Nexa Mortgage, Lending House & Numa Films**. Your support made this event possible, and we truly appreciate your partnership.

And, of course, thank you to all of the realtors who showed up ready to learn more about how to curate their businesses, build their brands and make an impact on social media. Your enthusiasm and participation made for an incredible day!

We're already looking forward to bringing more opportunities like this to our real estate community. **Thank you for making The Content Lab such a success!**





THE UNWRITTEN RULES



OF BUILDING A BRAND PEOPLE REMEMBER

Real estate has always been a relationship business. The difference today? Many of those first impressions happen on a screen long before they happen at a closing table.

Social media isn't about becoming an influencer; it's about becoming familiar. The agents who consistently show up with authenticity, value, and personality are often the ones who stay top of mind when someone needs a Realtor.

Here are a few "house rules" worth remembering before you hit publish.

Show Your Face

People don't hire logos; they hire people. Yes, your listings deserve to be featured, but your audience also wants to know the person behind the business. A quick market update, a behind-the-scenes look at your day, or a glimpse into your life in the community can help build familiarity. The more people feel like they know you, the more likely they are to think of you when it's time to buy or sell.

Lead with Value

Not every post needs to be a sales pitch. Some of the most engaging content simply answers questions your audience is already asking. Explain the home-buying process, share simple homeowner tips, highlight local businesses, or bust a common real estate

myth. When people learn something from your content, they begin to see you as a trusted resource, not just another salesperson.

Progress Beats Perfection

It's easy to delay posting because the lighting isn't perfect or the video isn't exactly how you envisioned it. But consistency will always outperform perfection. Your audience doesn't expect a Hollywood production. They want authenticity. A helpful message shared today is far more valuable than the "perfect" video that never gets posted.

Be the Local Expert

Anyone can report national housing headlines. What sets you apart is your knowledge of the community you serve. Showcase a local coffee shop, celebrate a neighborhood event, introduce a small business owner, or highlight what makes your city a great place to live. Buyers aren't just investing in a home; they're investing in a lifestyle.

Start Conversations

Social media was designed to be social. Reply to comments. Answer direct messages. Congratulate your clients. Celebrate another agent's success. Engage with local businesses and community organizations. Relationships aren't built through broadcasting—they're built through conversations.

Protect Your Brand

Every post contributes to your reputation. Before sharing something online, ask yourself one simple question: *Would I be proud if a future client saw this?* You don't have to be polished every minute of every day, but professionalism, kindness, and authenticity never go out of style.

At the end of the day, social media isn't about chasing followers or going viral. It's about building trust one post, one conversation, and one relationship at a time. Trends will change, algorithms will evolve, and new platforms will come along, but people will always remember the professionals who consistently show up with value, personality, and a genuine desire to serve.

Content Lab Challenge

This month's assignment: Post one piece of content that has nothing to do with buying or selling a home.

Maybe it's your favorite local coffee shop. A behind-the-scenes look at your day. A lesson you learned from a client (without sharing personal details). Or a spotlight on another local business.

The goal? **Help your audience get to know the person behind the profession.**

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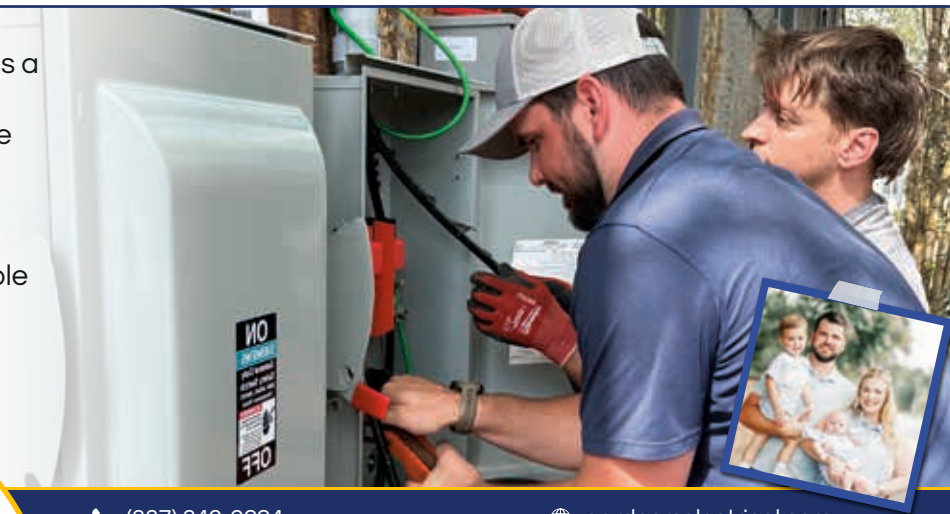
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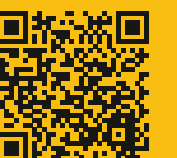
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Where ARE THEY NOW?

LATONIA RIGGS

Since we last featured you, what has changed the most in your business or personal life?

Since I was last featured in the magazine, I've had the honor of serving on the Board of Directors for the Realtor Association of Acadiana (RAA) for the past two years, and I've become increasingly involved with several other committees within our association. This deeper involvement has allowed me to give back to an industry that has given me so much, while staying connected to the issues shaping real estate in our region.

What accomplishment or milestone are you most proud of since we saw you last?

Professionally, I've also expanded my expertise beyond real estate sales. I am now a licensed commercial and residential contractor, and I currently have a development underway in Evangeline Parish, in addition to building custom homes for clients who want a home tailored specifically to their vision. This growth into construction has been one of the most rewarding steps in my career, allowing me to guide clients through the entire journey — from finding land to building the home of their dreams. Through it all, I'm equally proud of my brokerage, Evolve Realty Co, which continues to thrive and produce some of the top agents in the area. Between the brokerage's continued success and my expansion into construction, these past two years have truly broadened my footprint in this industry I love.

What's next for you?

Looking ahead, my focus is on growing the administrative side of both companies so I can delegate more effectively. Building strong teams and systems behind the scenes is what will allow me to step back from the day-to-day and give more of my time and resources to the communities I love. At the end of the day, that's my ultimate goal — to be in a position to give back.



FAST FACTS:

Years in Real Estate: 9.5 years

Current Brokerage:
Broker/Owner Evolve Realty Co, still producing

Favorite Local Restaurant:
Fuji Sushi

Favorite Weekend Activity:
Going to the movies

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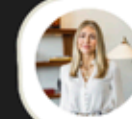
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“
I can clean up,
but underneath
it all, I’m still
a country
girl.”

PHOTOGRAPHY
BY WESLEY SUN
CHEE FORE

Real Estate Journey & Achievements

What inspired you to take the leap into real estate, and what was that first year like for you?

Real estate felt natural because, in a way, I grew up in the business. I literally spent my childhood in a playpen next to my Granna’s desk at our family construction company. Houses, building, and property were part of my world, but funny enough, no one ever taught me how to actually buy a house. That stayed with me. I wanted to learn what I didn’t know and use it to make someone else’s journey easier.

What’s one transaction or client experience that had a lasting impact on you?

There are two I hold especially dear. One of my first clients later called me to sell the home we had purchased together so they could upgrade. That felt like my first true compliment as a Realtor, and we’re still friends today. But helping my daughter and son-in-law buy their first home at only 20 really changed me. Watching them begin building equity so

young showed me just how life-changing homeownership can be, and that I am exactly where I need to be!

If you could go back and give your rookie self one piece of advice, what would it be?

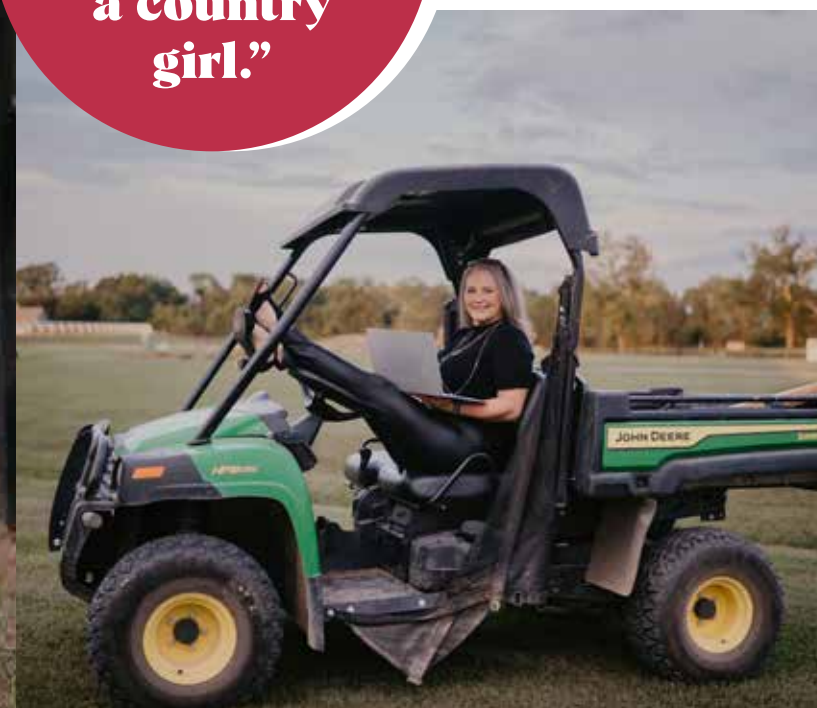
Trust the process and trust yourself. I was fortunate to be mentored by some of the best in the business, and that foundation was priceless. But even with great mentors, you have to find your own rhythm and learn by doing. I’d tell rookie me to quit overthinking every little thing and stop expecting to have it all figured out. Keep learning, keep listening, trust yourself a little more, and for goodness’ sake, enjoy the ride.

What’s a personal milestone or achievement in your career that you’re most proud of?

Being selected for RAA’s Leadership Class was a milestone I’m extremely proud of. It gave me a deeper understanding of our industry: the laws, rules, education, advocacy, and everything happening behind the scenes to protect our profession. I finished the program with an entirely different perspective and a greater respect for what we do. Most importantly, it made me more intentional about continuing to learn and ultimately becoming a better Realtor for my clients.

What’s the best piece of advice a mentor or colleague has ever given you?

Possibly the simplest advice has stuck with me the most: to put it politely, know your “stuff.” Know the house, contracts, area, and your profession. None of us knows everything, and sometimes “let me find out” is the right answer, but clients can only hear that so many times. It taught me to do my homework, stay educated, and show up prepared.



People trust us with huge decisions, and we owe them that.

Challenge & Growth

How do you handle difficult clients or challenging personalities in negotiations? One step at a time. Real estate can be stressful, emotions run high, and let's face it, not every personality is going to click. I genuinely care about my clients, so I've had to learn not to let too much emotion into the transaction. Sometimes serving them best means stepping back,

looking at what's in front of us, and focusing on the next step. We don't have to agree...or be best friends...to work together and get to closing.

How do you stay resilient when deals fall apart or the market shifts unexpectedly?

Real estate can change about as fast as our crazy Louisiana weather. Everything can be going perfectly and then, out of nowhere, here comes the storm. I prepare my clients for the what-ifs, but I've learned to prepare myself too. When something falls apart, I give myself a minute, figure out what happened, learn what I can, and move forward. You can't always see the craziness coming, but you can learn to be ready when it does.

What's a challenge you're still working on overcoming in your career today?

Time management, without a doubt. You work hard to build

a business, and when clients trust you with something this important, you want to be there when they need you. My challenge is learning when to put the phone down. Real estate can become an all-day, every-day job if you let it, and I've let it. I'm learning to make room for the life I've worked hard to build. The "put the phone down" part is still a work in progress.

How do you manage stress when juggling multiple deals at once?

Coffee. Lots and lots of coffee. But seriously, I try to stay a few steps ahead. Every transaction has a moving piece (or twelve) and knowing what's coming next keeps me off the "Hot Mess Express." I track deadlines, follow up, make lists and then more lists, and tackle what needs attention first. There may be a little chaos behind the scenes, but my job is to handle the crazy, keep things moving, and make sure my clients know I've got them.

What's a misconception people have about being a Realtor that you wish more people understood?

That we just open doors. If people only knew what happens before that door opens, and everything after it closes behind us. There are comps, contracts, negotiations, inspections, appraisals, lenders, title work, deadlines, problem-solving, and endless calls, texts, and emails. And that's when everything goes right. When it doesn't, we're usually behind the scenes figuring it out. Opening the door is easy. Getting from "I love this house" to "here are your keys" is where the real work happens.

Personal Insight

What's a personal or business slogan that keeps you motivated every day?

"Failure is not an option." That doesn't mean everything goes according to plan, because I've learned more than once that my plan isn't always His plan. To me, it means you don't quit because something gets hard. You adjust, find another way, and keep moving. I may have to change the plan, take a different route, or even start over, but giving up has never really been my style.

Where do you see yourself in five years, both personally and professionally?

Professionally, I want a strong referral-based business built on clients who trust me enough to come back and send their families and friends. I've also recently stepped into a role helping train new agents, which feels full-circle after having incredible mentors myself. Personally, I want more family time, memories, traveling, and maybe a little better work-life balance. I don't necessarily want a completely different life, I just

“
Failure is
not an
option.”



want to be better at the one I'm building now.

How do you balance the hustle of real estate with your personal life and self-care?

I don't. What's self-care? Seriously, this is another one I'm still learning. I try to take one day each week and keep as much of it for myself as possible...catch up at home, spend time with family, or do absolutely nothing related to real estate. Do I still answer the phone? Of course I do. I'm a work in progress. I haven't mastered balance yet, but at least I've finally admitted I need one.

What's one non-negotiable daily habit that helps you stay focused and successful?

Before I give the day to everything and everyone else, I take a few minutes for my faith. No matter how busy I am, or how late I'm running—I sit down,

read my Bible and verse for the day, and pray. I ask for guidance through the day He has planned for me. It reminds me that no matter how full my calendar is, I'm not ultimately in charge of the plan. It keeps me grounded, focused, and ready for whatever comes next.

What's one thing your clients would be surprised to learn about you?

Probably how country I really am. I can clean up, put on the Realtor clothes, talk contracts, and sit at the closing table with the best of them, but underneath it all, I'm still a country girl, Mama, and best of all, Mamaw. I'm happiest when life is simple, my family is around, and nobody expects me to wear heels. The professional version of me is real, but so is the woman who'll choose a back porch and bare feet every single time. ❧







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WRITTEN BY JESS WELLAR
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Jeremy

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YOUR
CALL
WHEN
THINGS
FALL
APART

“The mortgage industry has changed tremendously over the years, and lending has become increasingly complex,” Jeremy Castille begins. “That makes having knowledgeable loan officers who understand the guidelines and different ways to structure loans more important than ever.”

For Jeremy, those changes have reinforced the importance of doing the work upfront. Rather than simply telling a borrower what they want to hear and hoping everything falls into place, he believes borrowers deserve a clear understanding of their options, their limitations, and Realtor partners deserve confidence that a financing has been thoroughly vetted and will find its way to the closing table.

As owner of Castille Mortgage Co., and now branch manager of Castille Mortgage Co., powered by Cornerstone First Mortgage,

Jeremy points to a startling industry reality: 32% of loans in America get denied in the first round of underwriting. His goal is to make sure your client isn’t one of them.

With more than a decade of mortgage experience, Jeremy has built his Lafayette business around knowing the guidelines, doing the homework upfront, and searching for solutions when a borrower’s path to homeownership isn’t obvious. In fact, some of his most rewarding work begins when a buyer has already experienced a setback elsewhere.

“ I HAVE THE FAMILY
I ALWAYS DREAMED OF.”



“**BEING
ABLE TO GIVE
SOMEONE
HOPE
AGAIN IS
INCREDIBLY
REWARDING.”**

Unexpected Career Twist

Born in New Iberia and raised in Mississippi, Jeremy came from humble beginnings where owning a home never seemed like a realistic possibility. A serious car accident that left him unable to use his arm for a year ultimately redirected his future. Concerned he might never return to manual labor, he earned a bachelor's degree in pharmaceutical/medical device sales from Southern Miss and spent roughly a decade selling dental supplies.

When his father became ill, Jeremy moved to Lafayette to care for him. Oddly enough, fantasy football helped determine what came next. Videos Jeremy made to poke fun at friends in his league caught the attention of one member who owned a mortgage brokerage and thought Jeremy's personality would translate well to the business.

“Not knowing anything about mortgages, I got my license and went to work for him for over two years,” Jeremy recalls. “I really enjoyed the business, and eventually I knew I wanted to build something of my own, so I decided to open my mortgage company in August 2018.”

After 7 years of operating solely as Castille Mortgage, Jeremy decided to expand and partner with Cornerstone First Mortgage, which has since given his business access to extensive resources, technology, loan products, and the ability

to lend nationally. Today, his five-person Lafayette office handles residential and commercial financing, backed by Cornerstone's roughly 1,300 employees.

Finding a Way Forward

Castille Mortgage offers options ranging from down payment assistance to investor, fix-and-flip, and other loan products, but Jeremy believes his knowledge and willingness to work through difficult scenarios have become the company's calling card.

“About once a week I get an emergency call with a deal that is falling through days before closing or weeks before closing,” Jeremy notes.

Sometimes the process takes far longer than a typical transaction. Jeremy and his team may work with prospective borrowers for years to help them become eligible to purchase, and he takes their success personally. Jeremy recalls one client in particular where the borrower had been at the same company for 20 years and still made only \$15 per hour. Jeremy knew this was basically her only shot at being able to purchase a home, so he did her loan completely for free due to that being the only way to get her approved.

That determination is rooted partly in Jeremy's own upbringing and knowing what it feels like to believe homeownership is out of reach.

“I believe in being honest and transparent and treating people the way I would want to be treated,” he explains. “If there's a way to help someone reach that goal, I'm going to do everything I can to find it.”

His results give Realtor partners another reason to pay attention. Since 2018, of the over 1000 loans Jeremy has closed, he reports a fall-through rate of less than 1% once a buyer goes under contract, along with hundreds of five-star client reviews.

A Pre-Approval That Means Something

For Jeremy, that exceptionally low fall-through rate represents more than a statistic. It tells agents on both sides of the transaction how seriously his team takes a pre-approval.

“When I send out a pre-approval, I want both the buyer's agent and the listing agent to feel confident that we've done our homework and that the financing is solid given everything else falls into place,” he emphasizes.

That confidence comes from understanding loan parameters and guidelines before a client enters a contract. And in an industry where guidelines, programs, and borrower circumstances can be increasingly complicated, Jeremy believes knowledgeable guidance and careful preparation are invaluable.

It's also why education remains such an important part of his approach. Buyers may arrive with questions, previous disappointments, or situations that require a little more work, but Jeremy would rather explore the possibilities thoroughly than make assumptions about what can — or cannot — be done.

His approach can be summed up by the company's longtime motto: “We treat you like family, it's a better way of doing business.” The payoff comes when that experience changes the outcome for someone who believed the opportunity was gone.

“The most fulfilling part of my work is finding a solution when a deal gets difficult, or helping a buyer who has been denied somewhere and getting the deal closed,” he shares. “Being able to give someone hope again is incredibly rewarding.”

The Life He Dreamed Of

Family makes his business motto particularly meaningful for Jeremy. He and his wife, Gio, have been together for 10 years and have three beautiful children: daughters Emma and Maya and son JonPaul.

“I have the family I always dreamed of,” Jeremy shares. “Life is fulfilling, being able to do the things for them I never got to do as a child.”

Their happiest moments are refreshingly simple: cooking and swimming in the backyard, playing sports and games together, heading to the park, and cheering on the girls at their softball games. JonPaul loves baseball, football, and wrestling with Dad,

and the family is looking forward to watching him start flag football this fall.

Jeremy is equally optimistic about what comes next professionally. As the mortgage industry continues evolving, he sees an opportunity for Castille Mortgage to grow without losing the personal service, preparation, and relationships that built the business in the first place. That means expanding selectively and finding people who share the same commitment to borrowers and Realtor partners rather than simply getting bigger for growth's sake.

“We're excited about the future and continuing to build lasting partnerships throughout the Acadiana Realtors community,” Jeremy concludes. ➤



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A Happier Adjustment

"Nothing good ever happened in claims adjustments, so to go from that world to real estate — where everyone was mostly just happy and excited — was a big adjustment!" Michelle Mouton laughs.

WRITTEN BY JESS WELLAR
PHOTOGRAPHY BY WESLEY
SUN CHEE FORE

CONTINUED ►

“

A queen is not afraid to fail, and failure is just another stepping stone to greatness!



After 20 years handling claims, Michelle was more than ready for a career where good news occasionally came with the territory. But the Lafayette native's second act wasn't quite as far removed from

her past as it might appear. Long before becoming a REALTOR® in 2016, Michelle had experience with property, an abiding fascination with houses, and the kind of outgoing personality that was never

destined to stay behind a desk forever.

A Natural Fit

Michelle originally attended UL to study microbiology after losing a friend to leukemia, then moved to

Orlando in the '80s. There, she became the marketing person for a new mall, leasing its stores and assisting with its eventual sale while learning about property options, financing, and even hotel sales. After nearly five years in Florida, she returned to Acadiana and ultimately settled into claims adjusting, although real estate never completely left her mind.

"I had always thought about this business; I even told my husband I would retire and do this some day," she reflects. "I have always been drawn to houses being built, so it felt natural to me."

Michelle finally began making good on that prediction part-time, spending three years balancing real estate with claims work before leaving the latter behind. Self-taught in what she described as a "sink or swim" environment, she immediately found herself working with land developers despite hoping her first deal would be anything but land, given Acadiana's pipelines and complexities.

The irony isn't lost on Michelle today: development has since become a major part of her business that still includes plenty of residential sales.

People Find Her

Nearly a decade on, Michelle closed 48 transactions totaling \$10.9 million last year alone while representing new construction builder Paul Heath with Heath Homes,

adding to a collection of past Top Producer and Top Recruiter honors. She was even named Best Dressed during her time at Keller Williams, an achievement that feels particularly appropriate for someone who readily admits new shoes are among the things keeping her motivated.

Awards aside, Michelle's business at Real Broker is remarkably straightforward. Relationships come before commissions, and approximately 95 percent of her clients now arrive through glowing referrals. Her advice to newer agents is similarly uncomplicated: "Work your database and don't be afraid to put yourself out there," she emphasizes.

Michelle certainly isn't. She may jokingly call herself a "secret agent" on Facebook, but in person, prospective clients have a funny way of appearing wherever she happens to be.

"I'm just very out of the box and outgoing!" she offers. "I've gotten clients in many different ways. Once, for example, I was in the ER and met a girl who was having an asthma attack... And when I get bored, I talk!"

"Another client I met while she was taking my temperature during COVID testing," she continues. "I've even made a client just standing in line at Home Goods while asking if anyone wanted to buy or sell a house. You can't be shy in this business!"



“

I have always been drawn to houses being built, so it felt natural to me."



“*Work*
your database and
don’t be afraid to put
yourself out there.”

That openness is paired with serious attentiveness once someone is on board. Michelle answers calls from morning well into the evening and sees part of her job as absorbing whatever pressure she reasonably can during a major financial decision.

“I tell my new buyers and sellers that this is the most important, expensive purchase they are ever going to make,” she points out. “So I want them to enjoy the process, and I will take on whatever I can to help make that happen.”

Working Hard While Laughing Often
Calling Michelle busy would be an understatement. Her son is grown, but between a thriving career, quality time with her husband, and caring for her parents, she is constantly juggling something.

“You just have to have a good sense of humor!” she chuckles.

That humor accompanies an equally strong appetite for connection and giving back. Each year, Michelle and a group of friends from the real estate industry

sponsor children through the Department of Children and Family Services, providing Christmas gifts and a party.

Underneath that drive and generosity is something even more foundational for Michelle: her faith. It has remained at the center of both her personal life and professional path, shaping not only how she approaches her work, but also how she views the opportunities, relationships,

and successes that have come along the way.

While Michelle has never been afraid to roll up her sleeves, she is equally quick to acknowledge that she doesn’t believe she arrived here on effort alone.

“At the end of the day, I give God all the glory and credit for every door He has opened and every blessing He has placed in my life,” she shares.

That sense of gratitude also helps explain why, for all her ambition and accomplishments, Michelle’s definition of success comes down to a single word: peace. She appreciates where the journey has taken her while continuing to trust the path ahead, and she keeps a favorite reminder handy for those inevitable moments when something doesn’t go according to plan.

“I think like a queen,” she explains. “A queen is not afraid to fail, and failure is just another stepping stone to greatness!”

No Slowing Down

Away from closings and development deals, Michelle’s favorite people are close to home. She and her husband, Paul, have been married for 36 years, and their 35-year-old son, also Paul, is married to his wife, Ellen. Bandit, the family’s gorgeous, long-haired Shih Tzu, rounds out their crew.

“A big part of my life is the children in the family that all call me Nanan,” she shares. “I love spending time with them as well as my

Earth child, Kamie James, her husband Michael, and their children.”

When Michelle manages to carve out some rare downtime, she loves swimming in her pool and hanging out with family and friends, although the beach remains her favorite escape. Shopping ranks pretty high as well, particularly when another pair of shoes happens to be involved.

Looking ahead, Michelle has seriously considered earning her broker’s license and expanding further into residential development. Although she was once offered the opportunity to have her own Lafayette brokerage, ownership itself isn’t the objective.

“If I were to get my broker’s license, it would be for my clients’ benefit to expand my knowledge and possibly to do a joint venture with my biggest developer,” she elaborates.

Whatever shape the next chapter takes, Michelle certainly isn’t searching for an exit strategy. After waiting years to make real estate her full-time career, she has found too much enjoyment in the people and the properties to imagine walking away from it anytime soon.

“If I won the lottery, I would still show properties! Everyone says that, but it’s really true for me,” she concludes with a wink. “I love this business too much to stop. I plan on being 83 and still showing houses.”





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LANE TRAHAN

WRITTEN BY JESS WELLAR

with Trahan's Electrical Service and Repair

WIRED FOR THE LONG HAUL

For Lane Trahan, electrical work was supposed to be a summer job. More than 15 years later, it has become a career, a family business, and perhaps even the beginning of a third generation in the trade.

As owner of Trahan's Electrical Service and Repair, LLC, Lane leads a growing team serving residential and commercial customers throughout Acadiana,

from Ville Platte to New Iberia and Butte La Rose to Abbeville. Founded in 2019, the Lafayette-based company handles everything from lighting, fans, and added circuits to generator installation and maintenance, breaker panel upgrades, rewires, remodels, and troubleshooting. But for Lane and his wife, Kelly, the work has always been about more than what happens behind the walls.

No Stranger To The Work

Born and raised in Church Point, Lane grew up with an electrician for a father and learned plenty about the trade early on. Still, he initially chose a different path, attending ULL and majoring in history. When graduation arrived and he needed a job, the familiar trade offered a temporary solution.

"I thought I would give it a shot for the summer and then I just never stopped!" Lane recalls with a chuckle. "I really enjoyed the hands-on work."

He spent roughly eight years working in new construction and service before deciding to strike out on his own. Today, Trahan's Electrical has four technicians, two helpers, and

an office operation shared by Lane and his wife.

Their responsibilities play to different strengths. Lane handles field management, scheduling, and customer communication, while Kelly oversees financials and legal compliance behind the scenes.

"It's the part no one really sees, but Kelly is great at what she does," Lane acknowledges gratefully.

Another important piece of the team is Kevin Faulk, the company's longest-tenured and most experienced technician as well as someone Lane has known personally for 15 years. Kevin once helped train Lane, bringing their professional relationship full



We treat every home as if it's our own and we pay attention to details that others might miss."

circle. Now, Lane values Kevin's amazing ability to put customers at ease while developing connections and following up consistently after each service call.

"Those relationships he builds are everything," Lane emphasizes. "Kevin makes customers feel comfortable right away, and that's important with people inviting us into their personal spaces to work."





It's the part no one really sees, but **Kelly is great at what she does.**"

Service Above Solutions

For Lane, the biggest distinction between Trahan's Electrical and its competitors isn't a particular service provided. It's how customers are treated when they welcome his team into their homes and businesses.

"We strive for professionalism, fair prices, and safety in our work, but it's our attention to the customer's needs that we genuinely care about the most and that sets us apart," he points out. "We treat every home as if it's

our own and we pay attention to details that others might miss."

An emphasis on exceptional customer relations has translated into an A+ BBB rating and a 4.9-star Google rating across more than 150 reviews. This same type of consideration and care also extends to people who may be going through a difficult season. Trahan's offers discounts to senior citizens and military members, and several times a year, the company encounters a family facing an electrical problem they simply can't afford to fix, so Lane and his crew roll up their sleeves for a favor.

The reward, he says, comes from leaving a space better than he found it: whether that means

repairing a faulty electrical system, adding functional lighting, or installing a generator that gives a family peace of mind when the power goes out.

"Seeing people happy about our work brings me a lot of joy," he adds with a smile.

On An Agent's Timeline

Lane understands that real estate introduces its own set of deadlines. Trahan's Electrical has extensive experience working with Realtors, offers free quotes, and is accustomed to navigating buying and selling schedules when an electrical question surfaces during a deal.

"I know that often, Realtors just need a number quickly," Lane



explains. "Most of the time, we don't even need to go out and visit a property; we can easily get a quote back to them within a few hours with decent photos."

When an onsite visit is necessary, Lane can typically get someone scheduled within a few days and will work to respond even faster when an urgent situation demands it.

That ability to provide a quick answer can help an agent keep a transaction moving, while the company's broad service capabilities mean Trahan's can remain a resource long after the closing table.

As electrical codes and standards evolve and smart lighting and home automation become increasingly common, Lane and his team continue adapting

while staying grounded in the fundamentals of the trade.

Beyond The Business

Away from electrical work, Lane and Kelly have been married for 15 years and are raising two children, 13-year-old Lincoln and 11-year-old Leia. Family time often means volleyball, episodes of Survivor, board games, travel, and cruises — including a recent trip to the Bahamas. Lane also enjoys disc golf and video games when time allows.

The family connection may eventually find its way into the business, too. Lincoln already talks about learning the trade and working alongside his dad someday, an idea Lane admits he thinks about often.

For now, however, his focus is on taking care of the customers

and employees already counting on Trahan's Electrical. The company recently put its fourth technician on the road, but Lane has no interest in chasing expansion simply for the sake of getting bigger.

"We're growing at a nice steady pace, and that's by design," he concludes. "I don't want to bite off more than I can chew, we're just on pace with our area as it grows while continuing to provide top quality service." ▀

CONTACT US!

To learn more about Trahan's Electrical Service and Repair, visit trahanelectrical.com. Realtors and clients can call or text 337-551-3737 to book an appointment.



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