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HEART OF THE COMMUNITY:

How Real Estate Leads the Way Home

When a storm approaches, our minds immediately turn to the immediate details—what level is the storm, where is the eye going, should we evacuate? But once the sky clears, the true measure of a community isn't found on a radar map or tracking report; it's found in the resilience of its people.

In real estate, we spend our daily lives analyzing market trends, negotiating contracts, and staging homes. But through my own firsthand experience in Hurricanes past—and in the personal conversations I've had with so many of you throughout this recovery—I've seen how quickly the core definition of what you do shifts when disaster strikes. You aren't just facilitating transactions; you are protecting the very idea of home.

In the wake of Hurricane Isaias, the role of a REALTOR® takes on a weight that no textbook or training seminar can fully prepare you for. In our conversations over these past weeks, I've heard story after story of how you stepped straight into the chaos: putting your own stress and personal loss aside to check on clients, organizing emergency repairs, connecting displaced families with temporary shelter, and handing out supplies before the debris had even been cleared.

You are often the first call a panicked homeowner makes. Through every text message, phone call, and face-to-face chat I've had with you, I've seen how you show up—not just with local market knowledge, but with genuine empathy, tangible resources, and a steady sense of reassurance. You remind people that even when a structure is damaged, the heart of a home remains intact.

Recovery from Hurricane Isaias is not a quick process. Long after the news cameras leave and the immediate relief efforts fade, the quiet work of rebuilding continues. In my conversations across our network, it's clear that your leadership is what truly shines during this phase—helping neighborhoods piece themselves back together, supporting local businesses, and patiently guiding families back onto solid ground.

To every agent, broker, and vendor partner who has rolled up their sleeves, opened their hearts, and served as an anchor for our community: thank you. Living through this alongside you and listening to your experiences has filled me with immense gratitude. Your resilience, kindness, and dedication remind us all of why we do what we do.

We don't just work in real estate here; we care for the people who call it home.

If you or any organizations you work with have ongoing relief efforts or fundraising initiatives, please reach out to me directly. I want to make sure we get Real Producers involved nationally and help spread the word to support your efforts.

With deep gratitude,

Liz Biswurm
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TOP 300

2025

BY THE NUMBERS

WHAT DID THE TOP 300 DO LAST YEAR IN RESIDENTIAL REAL ESTATE?

Source: Paragon PAR MLS

$4,536,601,838

TOTAL VOLUME SOLD

11,284.50

TOTAL NUMBER OF TRANSACTIONS

$553.92

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Florida INSURANCE AGENCY

Wadih El Khoury

Helping Pensacola buyers feel at home with their insurance decisions

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DEAN FAGOT | HOMEGROWN VISUALS

Systems, Service, and Community First: How Wadih El Khoury Redefined Insurance for Pensacola Realtors

Buying a home gives buyers plenty to think about, but insurance should never be a source of confusion. Instead, it should be a conversation that helps clients move forward with clarity, confidence, and peace of mind. That is precisely the role Wadih El Khoury and Florida Insurance Agency aim to play for local homebuyers and the Realtors who guide them.

Born in Lebanon, Wadih moved to Pensacola in 1999 and has now called the area home for 27 years—longer than he lived in his city of birth. This is where he built his career, raised his family, and laid down deep roots in the community.

His journey into insurance actually began with technology. Armed with a Computer Science degree from the University of West Florida, Wadih recognized an industry in need of better systems and streamlined processes. That challenge drew him into insurance, leading him to join Florida Insurance Agency in 2001. Today, as the agency's owner 25 years later, his focus remains on utilizing technology to make internal operations seamless—giving his team more time for what matters most: human connection, personal judgment, and genuine client care.

Founded in 1993, Florida Insurance Agency has expanded to include offices in Pensacola, Pace, and Lakeland, providing comprehensive independent coverage—including homeowners, condo, flood, auto, commercial, and umbrella policies—across the state.

A Reputation Built on Trust and Early Communication

For top-producing real estate agents, introducing a vendor is a direct extension of their own reputation. Wadih and his team take that responsibility seriously. Their agency motto, "Our policy is great service," means taking the time to educate clients, return calls promptly, and look beyond just the price tag to ensure proper protection.

For Realtors, Wadih's message is straightforward: bring the insurance conversation into the transaction early. "A buyer deserves time to understand their options, ask questions, and consider insurance as part of the overall cost of ownership," Wadih explains. "Early communication gives everyone room to address property details or

documentation long before closing day.”

Whether a buyer is navigating a primary residence, a beachfront condo, or an investment property, Florida Insurance Agency helps simplify complex logistics, ensuring buyers feel protected and agents experience smooth closings.

Deep Roots & Community Commitment

Wadih’s dedication to the industry and the local region extends far beyond the closing table. He has actively served as vice chair and chair of the Florida Association of Insurance Agents’ Legislative Committee to advocate for issues affecting local policyholders. Throughout his 27 years in Pensacola, he has also dedicated his time to board service for the Escambia County Sheriff’s Foundation, Sacred Heart Foundation, and Capstone Learning Academy, alongside being a founding member of Wine on the Water Pensacola.

At home, Wadih is a devoted husband to his wife, Elena, and father to their twin daughters, Kylie and Kaia. Outside the office, you’ll most often find him with his family enjoying the coastal waters that make Pensacola such a special place to live.

Ultimately, success for Wadih isn’t just measured by growth, but by lasting relationships and standing behind his word.

“I want to be remembered as someone who followed through, treated people fairly, and contributed to the community he called home,” Wadih shares. “For us, that starts with how we take care of the next person who calls.”

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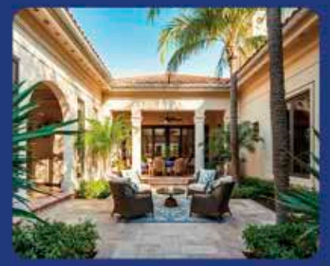

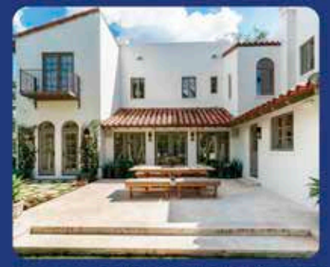

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Living by Principle, Powered by Purpose: How William Boatner Built a $125M+ Legacy

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DEAN FAGOT | HOMEGROWN VISUALS

From Fine Dining to Top Producer: A Leap of Faith

Step onto any high-end restaurant floor, and you will immediately notice the invisible rhythm driving the room. It is a world where anticipating needs before they are spoken is everything, where high-stakes pressure meets seamless hospitality, and where reading the energy of a room defines success.

For 17 years, William Boatner lived in that high-tempo environment. Culinarily trained, a certified Sommelier through the Court of Master Sommeliers, and fluent in multiple languages, William climbed the ranks to open and manage some of the area's most successful fine-dining establishments. Yet behind the professional prestige, a quiet tension was mounting.

"I realized there was an income cap and that I would always be working on someone else's watch and expectations," William reflects. "I had a three-year-old daughter that I rarely saw due to work schedules and the lifestyle that came with all of that. I needed a change that would allow me to be my own boss, help me grow, and give me an opportunity to earn a living that could provide more for my family."

In April 2017, William took a leap of faith into real estate—a world he knew virtually nothing about at the time. He had never owned a home or navigated a housing transaction, financing, or insurance. What he did possess, however, was a deep, battle-tested standard for service, an undeniable work ethic, and a hunger to grow.

Fast forward nine years, and William—now Team Rain Maker of The Boatner Group at Keller Williams Realty Gulf Coast—has built a career volume exceeding $125,000,000. From being named Rookie of the Year in 2017 to earning the Best Male Agent in Pensacola title by *VIP Magazine* in 2025 and leading his team to top regional rankings in volume and units across the Keller Williams Gulf States Region, his trajectory has been extraordinary.

Yet, if you ask William what truly defines his journey, he will not point to award plaques or volume benchmarks. He will talk about character, personal transformation, and an

> **“I genuinely love these relationships.** Systematizing how I stay in touch has been essential so I can remain purposeful about maintaining those connections.”

undisturbed five-star customer service record maintained across nearly a decade.

The Journey Inward

Growing up in Memphis, Tennessee, as a sixth-generation native, William was raised by a hardworking single mother and spent time with his father, a starving artist and musician. While his childhood was filled with fond memories, his years in the restaurant industry eventually left him feeling adrift and searching for a deeper sense of direction.

“That led me to a dark time in my life that ultimately motivated me to find myself spiritually,” William shares openly. “I began seeking masculine guidance from good Godly men in my life that I didn’t have growing up. I started attending developmental meetings and seminars every opportunity I got and absorbed it all like a sponge.”

That period of deep self-reflection completely reshaped his personal philosophy. “I now live by principles instead of feelings,” he says. “I always seek to contribute to life and to always be there for someone in need. The St. Francis Prayer sums it up nicely, and I am grateful to have adopted that philosophy.”

That mindset naturally carried into his real estate career. Finding a professional home at Keller Williams Realty Gulf Coast, William leaned heavily on the mentorship of leadership and colleagues. “A nod to Keller Williams International and our local office for not just being in the business of real estate, but actively engaging in their agents and growing them professionally and personally,” William notes. “I wouldn’t be here without their guidance.”

Authentic Growth: Zero Paid Leads

In an era where lead generation is often dominated by paid third-party platforms and automated funnels, William stands out by adhering to a strikingly pure business model. Since his second year in the business, he has built his multi-million-dollar production without purchasing a single cold lead.

“Everything I work is organic,” William emphasizes. “I get my referrals from raving fans who are grateful to have worked with me and for whom I solved a real problem.”

For William, managing relationships with nearly 750 past clients is both his greatest joy and his biggest operational focus. “I genuinely love these relationships,” he says. “Systematizing how I stay in touch has been essential so I can remain purposeful about maintaining those connections.”

Over time, William has also learned how to right-size his operation for maximum efficiency and personal balance. Having previously managed larger teams with multiple buyer agents and administrative staff, he streamlined his structure to focus on direct client relationships. Today, The Boatner Group operates as a lean, highly focused powerhouse consisting of William and a dedicated administrator who handles transaction coordination, listings, events, and bookkeeping.

“If you work with me today, you are getting me,” William explains. “I love the numbers side for investors and builders, I love watching the lights come on when I simplify logistics for an overwhelmed client, and I love that time has proven I can be confident in what I have to offer—from advice to execution.”

Life Beyond the Closing Table

When the sign posts are packed away, William’s focus centers entirely on his family. He and his partner, Nadiia, share a lively home filled with three children: 12-year-old Mina, with whom William loves exploring art and pop culture; 9-year-old Liam, an avid athlete currently in his sixth season of baseball with PARA in Pace; and 6-year-old Kirill, who brings endless personality to the household.

Family dinners are a sacred daily ritual in the Boatner home, where everyone takes turns cooking—a nod to William’s

> “I now live by **principles** instead of feelings.”

culinary background. Outside of work, you will often find him playing disc golf with his sons at local parks, bowling, singing karaoke, playing guitar, or diving into non-fiction literature like *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* and *Rocket Fuel.*

Wisdom for the Field

For agents working to establish their own footholds in the Pensacola market, William offers straightforward, grounded advice rooted in self-discipline and authenticity.

“Talk to as many people as you can and show them you genuinely want to help. People can smell a salesman a mile away. Offer real value and truly master what you’re talking about. Work alongside another agent for a while at a heavy commission split if you have to—just don’t be in a rush to the top.”

He often returns to a quote by Jim Rohn that governs his work ethic: *“We must all suffer one of two things: the pain of discipline or the pain of regret.”*

Ultimately, William hopes his peers and clients remember him less for the transactions closed and more for the energy he brings to every interaction.

“Life is short—do what you love,” William says. “If I didn’t work on myself as much as I did my business, I wouldn’t be here today. Trust God, do the next right thing, and everything else will work itself out.”

Taylor HELTON LEE

DEEP ROOTS AND FORWARD MOTION

How Taylor Helton Lee Built a Legacy on Faith, Family, and Rural Charm

When Taylor Helton Lee was five years old, her Saturdays followed a rhythm that would quietly write the outline for her entire life.

She wasn't sitting at home watching Saturday morning cartoons. Instead, she was buckled into the passenger seat of her grandmother Patty Helton Davis's car, riding along to real estate showings across the winding back roads of rural Alabama and Northwest Florida. What felt to a child like quality time with her grandmother—punctuated by lunches, shopping trips, and weekend fun—was actually the beginning of an informal, years-long masterclass in real estate.

"Without even realizing it, I was learning the lingo, learning my way around our entire area, and falling in love with the business," Taylor recalls. "I grew up watching how my grandmother treated people. She built an incredible business, but what always stood out was the way she built it—one relationship at a time. She taught me that your word matters, and that in a small town, you take care of folks because they aren't just clients. They're your neighbors, your friends, and people you've known your whole life."

By age 14, while her peers were settling into high school life, Taylor was spending nearly every afternoon after school at the real estate office. She learned the industry from the ground up: inputting listings, checking yard signs, managing early social media, and manually updating physical MLS binders.

Real estate was never a second act or a career backup plan for Taylor. It was her calling. At 18, she enrolled in real estate school, taking and passing her Alabama licensing exam right after her 19th birthday before later adding her Florida license. Today, with 13 years of full-time experience, over $84 million in career volume, $18.5 million sold in 2025 across 85 clients, and accolades like the Women's Council of Realtors Top Gun Award and Top 50 recognitions in both Pensacola and Baldwin County, Taylor stands as the Owner and Broker of PHD Realty. Yet, her foundation remains anchored exactly where it began.

Honoring Tradition while Driving Innovation

Building a high-volume brokerage in a rural market comes with a distinct set of opportunities and challenges. For Taylor, one of the greatest hurdles was learning how to honor the

"Take ownership of your listings and your clients LIKE THEY ARE YOUR OWN."

traditional, relationship-first approach of small-town real estate while fearlessly pushing the envelope on modern marketing.

“I never want to just put a sign in the yard, upload a listing to the MLS, and wait,” she explains. “I’m constantly thinking about how we can make a property stand out—professional photography, video, drone footage on land, targeted advertising, and creative social media campaigns. Some of that meant trying things that weren’t commonly being done in our market yet, which can be scary when you wonder if people will think you’re doing ‘too much.’”

Her willingness to innovate paid off, proving that agents don’t need to be in a major metropolis to deliver high-caliber, forward-thinking marketing. By pairing full-service digital presentation with an uncompromising work ethic, Taylor showed her market that rural properties, large acreage, generational family farms, and small-town commercial sites deserve executive-level strategy.

“I’ve learned that you can respect the traditional way of doing business—handshakes, relationships, answering your phone, and knowing your community—and still run your business in a very forward-thinking way,” Taylor says. “Learning that those two things can exist together pushed me further than I ever thought I’d go.”

A Collaborative Culture at PHD Realty

At PHD Realty, family ties and professional collaboration run deep. The office operates as a tight-knit family unit—literally and figuratively. Working alongside her grandmother, Associate Broker Patty Helton Davis, her brother, agent Brett Helton, agent Stacey Coker, transaction coordinator Kristy Carnley, and administrative assistant Jasmine Lawson, Taylor has fostered an environment devoid of traditional office competition.

Whether running pricing comps together, taking a co-agent on a walkthrough for a fresh perspective, or brainstorming creative ways to jumpstart a quiet listing, the PHD team treats every client as a shared priority.

“There really isn’t a ‘that’s not my client’ mentality here,” Taylor notes. “At the end of the day, we aren’t competing with each other. We’re trying to make PHD Realty better together, and our clients immediately benefit from that collective care.”

That spirit of unity extends into the household. Married for 13 years to her husband, Austin, Taylor balances her leadership role with raising their four children: Ella (12), Maggie (11), Rhett (6), and Chapman (5). Between local community involvement, active membership in the Lions Club, supporting local foster families through The Forgotten Initiative, and taking family trips across the country with a goal to hit all 50 states, life is dynamic and full.

Taylor Helton Lee, Patty Helton Davis (Taylor’s grandmother), and Brett Helton (Taylor’s brother) All work as a team

Lessons for the Next Generation

For up-and-coming realtors looking to carve out a long-term, sustainable career in Northwest Florida and South Alabama, Taylor’s advice centers on radical ownership and genuine care.

“Take ownership of your listings and your clients like they are your own,” she advises. “Pay attention to the little things, don’t assume someone else handled something, and stay one step ahead. Know your contracts, stay ahead of your deadlines, and communicate constantly. Clients hire us because real estate isn’t what they do every day—it’s what we do every day.”

Drawing strength from her high school basketball coach’s favorite quote—”*Good, better, best. Never let it rest until your good is better and your better is best*”—Taylor continually looks for ways to refine her process and elevate the client experience.

Ultimately, Taylor wants her fellow real estate professionals and community members to know that success in real estate isn’t measured solely by transaction volume or award plaques, but by how well you serve people during life’s critical moments.

“Real estate usually happens because something in someone’s life is changing—a marriage, a new baby, a job transition, a retirement, or a growing business,” Taylor reflects. “I want to be remembered for caring. Years from now, I want every client to remember that during an important transition in their life, they had someone in their corner who genuinely cared about them and treated them like family. I believe the Lord put me exactly where I’m supposed to be, and I want the way I run my business to reflect that every single day.”

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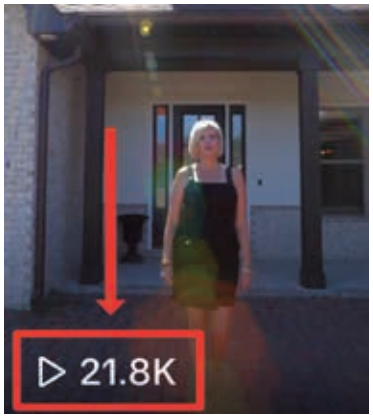
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