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REALTOR[®] Spotlight
BARRY LONG

Standout REALTOR[®]
DON FRICK

Partner Spotlight
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Contents

PROFILES



14 Savanna Campbell



20 Barry Long



26 Don Frick

IN THIS ISSUE

- 4 Preferred Partners
- 8 Meet the Team
- 10 The Dog Days Continue
- 14 Partner Spotlight: Savanna Campbell, Signature Agent Services
- 20 REALTOR® Spotlight: Barry Long
- 26 Standout REALTOR®: Don Frick
- 32 Cover Story: Jeff & Julie Abel



32 Jeff & Julie Abel
COVER STORY

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THE Dog DAYS CONTINUE

The response to our Dog Days of Summer August issue was incredible, and we hope you enjoyed meeting the four-legged members of our Real Producers family.

We loved seeing all the amazing pups, and we're not done yet. If you missed the August issue, recently welcomed a new puppy, or have another furry family member you'd love to introduce, we'd be thrilled to feature your precious pets in future spotlights throughout the year.



Whether you're a top-producing agent or one of our trusted preferred partners, simply scan the QR code to submit your dog's photo and story. We can't wait to meet even more of the pets that make our Real Producers community so special.



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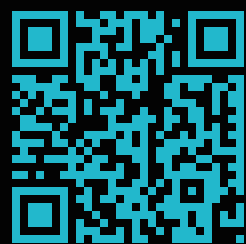
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Lily Archer Joins First American Title

Please join us in welcoming Lily Archer to the team.

Hi, I'm Lily Archer!

Relationships and connection are my favorite part of both life and work. I love getting to know people, helping where I can, and creating genuine friendships along the way. I'm an extroverted introvert at heart - equal parts goofy, calm, social, and homebody.

Outside of work, I spend most of my time with my fiancé Paden, our dog Benji, and the people I care about most. I'm someone who values kindness, growth, and showing up fully in the things and people that matter to me.

Connect with Lily on your next closing.

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Savanna Campbell

SIGNATURE
AGENT SERVICES

PHOTOS BY ERIN WAYNICK,
ERIN WAYNICK PHOTOGRAPHY

As a REALTOR® and owner of Signature Agent Services, Savanna Campbell helps agents streamline their businesses through transaction coordination, marketing, and operational support. Here, she shares the story behind her business, what drives her, and her passion for helping others build successful businesses by design.

Q: What is your origin story?

A: I had a front-row seat to what strong support can do for an agent's business. I also saw the opposite. Often, people don't understand what a transaction coordinator should provide, and many agents were not receiving the level of partnership, communication, and leadership they deserved. A few agents who trusted my systems approached me about supporting their transactions, which is when the idea began to take

shape. I saw an opportunity to elevate the standard of operational support in our industry.

In November 2023, I launched Signature Agent Services to provide high-level transaction coordination, marketing support, and database management. We empower real estate agents and teams to build intentional, sustainable businesses that allow them to focus on relationships and growth.



Q: What do you bring to the table that no one else can?

A: First, we prioritize making agents and their clients feel heard. Clear communication and proactive updates create confidence, and confidence creates a better experience for everyone involved. Second, we customize our support to align with each agent's

unique strengths, goals, and brand to allow agents to authentically serve their clients while still operating with structure and consistency. Finally, we highlight our agents and protect their client relationships. Our role is to elevate their brand, not replace it. Throughout the transaction, we help clients feel informed, valued, and



connected to the community their agent has built. Agents love it because they gain true leverage without sacrificing the personal touch. Clients love it because they feel supported, informed, and cared for every step of the way.

Q: Have you had an “aha!” moment that changed the game for your business?

A: After more than a decade of developing systems and helping agents around me build bigger, more sustainable businesses, I began to notice that their wins felt like our wins. Watching them grow, hire leverage, increase production, and step into leadership was deeply fulfilling, which is when it clicked. We were helping agents intentionally build businesses that aligned with the lives they wanted to create. The true game-changer was understanding that when you give agents structure, clarity, and operational strength, you give them the freedom to create the businesses and lives they envision.

Q: Who is your biggest cheerleader or mentor, and what's the one nugget of wisdom you'll never forget?

A: I am incredibly grateful for the people who have stood beside me during both the hardest and most rewarding seasons. Even at her young age, my daughter is one of my biggest motivators. She is the reason I care so deeply about building a life and business with intention. She reminds me that success is not just about production. It is about presence, legacy, and who you are becoming along the way. The nugget of wisdom that has stayed with me is: build something you are proud of, even on the days no one is watching. Character, consistency, and care will always outlast quick wins.

Q: How do your values show up in your work?

A: Every morning starts with the question, “How can we create more

clarity, strength, and leverage for the people we support?” The answer is that we consistently review and refine our systems, stay current on market trends and industry shifts, and remain close to the realities agents are navigating in real time. Because I am also actively involved in real estate and teach classes on mindset, customer experience, and systems, I have the privilege of hearing what agents are facing. Those conversations keep me grounded and allow me to design solutions that are practical, relevant, and impactful.

Q: How do you manage when the pace gets crazy?

A: When the pace gets intense, I come back to self-care and discipline. I believe motivation naturally rises and falls, so I rely more on discipline and healthy boundaries than on feelings. Protecting my time, honoring my priorities, and knowing my worth help me show up consistently for the people who depend on me. If we are not steady ourselves, it shows. When I take care of my health, mindset, and schedule, I can lead with clarity rather than react. And when days are hard, because they will be, I allow myself to acknowledge them. I do not allow a hard day to become a hard week. My calendar keeps me organized. My support system keeps me grounded. And my drive to help others grow keeps me moving forward with intention.

Q: What piece of advice would you give to someone starting?

A: Get clear on your purpose. Everything changes when you understand why you are here and who you are called to serve. Production and motivation can fluctuate, but purpose becomes your anchor. When you know your mission, your decisions become clearer. The rooms you step into become more intentional. The models and systems you build have meaning behind them. My purpose is to empower and build up moms and young professional women

to step confidently into their purpose through teaching and leadership. When you build from purpose first, success becomes sustainable. And your world truly begins to bloom. ❖

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BARRY LONG

THE GROUP

STORY BY JACKI DONALDSON
PHOTOS BY ERIN WAYNICK,
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After three decades working in the wireless industry, Barry Long received a phone call and learned he was out of a job. A short time later, the company realized it had made a mistake, hired him back, restored his vacation time, gave him a relocation bonus, and even handed him a raise. Then, about a year and a half later, it happened again.

Barry now sees that tumultuous season as a springboard. “Sometimes the best things in my life happened right after the worst things in my life,” shares Barry, who started in real estate at age 50 and found a career that has brought him the greatest fulfillment to date.

Born in Pomona, California, Barry moved to Colorado in third grade and has considered it home ever since, aside from his military service and a few years living elsewhere. He worked

for nine years as an optician before beginning what would become a three-decade career with corporate Verizon, AT&T, and Samsung. As an account manager, he spent his days visiting 50 to 70 retail stores, introducing new technology, promotions, and products. His success, however, had very little to do with sales pitches. “I tell people I was a professional friend maker for 30 years,”

Barry says. “The numbers follow the relationship.”

Looking back, Barry can see that his career in wireless and even his childhood prepared him for real estate. As an only child whose family moved frequently, he attended a different school nearly every year. Starting over became routine, and making new friends wasn’t optional.

Years later, he still believes genuine relationships are the foundation of everything.

After his first layoff, Barry quietly began studying for his real estate license. He didn’t want another corporation determining his future. When the second layoff came, he was ready. “I was having way more fun in real estate helping clients,” he says. “I was getting thank

you cards and Christmas cards from clients. I worked in wireless for 30 years. I never got a thank you card.”

Barry earned his real estate license in June 2020 and eventually joined The Group. “Apart from my wife and kids, The Group is the best thing that’s ever happened to me,” he stresses. Barry is quick to credit his success to those around him, especially





“

Clients should ask themselves, ‘How effective a

COMMUNICATOR

is my agent with the other agent on the deal?’ That relationship is **make-or-break** a lot of times.”

business partner Kathy Beck and the collaborative culture at The Group.

Without an established client database in his first year, Barry focused on serving the people around him. He volunteered for open houses, showings, and whatever else his fellow agents needed. More than six years later, the same reminder still hangs on his whiteboard: “I haven’t earned the right to say no to anything.”

Barry believes the same relationship-first approach extends beyond clients to the agents on the other side of every transaction. In his view, one of the industry’s most overlooked skills is agent-to-agent communication. “Clients should ask themselves, ‘How effective a communicator is my agent with the other agent on the deal?’” he says. “That relationship is make-or-break a lot of times.”

Away from real estate, Barry has built another reputation as a fine-art oil painter specializing in hyperrealism and photorealism. He never formally studied art beyond sixth-grade art class



and describes himself as “mom-taught.” After his mother passed away 12 years ago, she left him her paintbrushes. He picked them up, taught himself to paint, and eventually discovered another way to serve his community.

Over the past two and a half years, Barry has raised more than \$22,000 for organizations, including NoCo Unify and the Fireman’s Ball by donating paintings to charity auctions. One painting on a Top Gun theme raised approximately \$8,000–\$9,000 at a NoCo Unify suitcase party fundraiser. He is currently represented by Loveland’s Independence Gallery and hopes to be in a Breckenridge gallery by the end of the year.

His artwork has also earned wider recognition. Barry was recently commissioned to

create the cover painting for the second edition of *Ninja Selling*, replacing the original licensed artwork with his own interpretation featuring the “Ninja Nine” rocks.

Barry also serves on the Loveland Planning Commission and the Loveland/Berthoud Association of REALTORS® (LBAR) Government Affairs Committee, reflecting his community involvement beyond real estate and art, and he is one of only nine individuals in the state who holds the title of Federal Political Coordinator for the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR). In this role, he advocates for property owners and the real estate profession as a whole by partnering directly with a Colorado member of Congress.

On the home front, Barry’s greatest joy is his family. He

and his wife, Heather, are raising their two younger sons, Cooper and Peyton. Barry also has two adult children, daughter Tiffanie and son Deven. Barry and Heather laugh about living in what he calls “the age of chaos.” Between sports practices, games, backpacks, football cleats, and the constant activity of family life, their home is always full.

After decades of professional experience, unexpected detours, and the relationships that have defined every chapter of his life, Barry approaches each day with gratitude. “I’m just happy to be in the room,” he says. ▀

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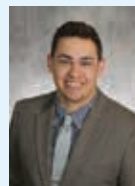
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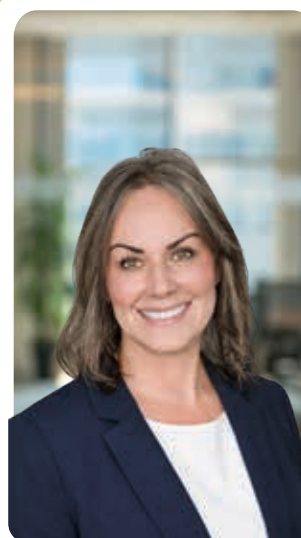
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FACTS ABOUT ALISE:

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- AFTER HIGH SCHOOL, ALISE MADE THE BOLD DECISION TO MOVE TO ALASKA WHERE SHE SPENT 23 YEARS EMBRACING THE FULL ALASKAN LIFESTYLE- SNOW MACHINING, SKIING, FISHING, HIKING, AND OUTDOOR ADVENTURES. EVENTUALLY, COLORADO BECAME HER PERFECT HAPPY MEDIUM, COMBINING HER LOVE FOR SUNSHINE, MOUNTAINS ADVENTURE AND ALL FOUR SEASONS.
- A PROUD MOM, GRANDMA, AND DOG MOM- ALISE CONSIDERS THOSE ROLES TO BE AMONG HER GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN LIFE.
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DON FRICK

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“At least half of my business is flipping homes,” says Don Frick, a well-known agent at HomeSmart Realty Partners in Loveland. “I saw the writing on the wall years ago. The market was shifting. I asked myself how I could make my own business, which is the reason I got into

flipping. I knew that if I flipped houses, I could create my own listings. The market has become incredibly uncertain lately, but I’m doing better than ever.”

In a market where quality and aesthetics matter just as much as the price point, Don has built a respected reputation in Northern Colorado as the

go-to flipper. Through years of hard work and dozens of successful high-end home renovations, Don has proven he has what it takes to partner with fellow agents and satisfy clients.

Don was born in Thailand to a Thai mother and an Iowa-born father serving in the U.S. military. He grew up in New



Making Magic in Uncertain Markets

STORY BY KATE SHELTON
PHOTOS BY ERIN WAYNICK, ERIN WAYNICK PHOTOGRAPHY



Mexico and attended New Mexico Highlands University before settling in Fort Collins in 1995. He moved to Northern Colorado following his mom, as she opened Fort Collins’ first Thai restaurant. Don spent the early part of his career working in hospitality. He then went on to own and operate his own ADT security dealership for 13 years, where he built and led a successful sales team. Both roles taught him valuable skills to guide clients through every step of the real estate process. “When I was in the home security business, I was in and out of thousands of homes in Northern Colorado,” Don shares. “I really enjoyed looking at the design work in homes. When an opportunity to invest in spec homes on Boyd Lake came up, I decided to go for it. That gave me the real estate bug.”

Following that successful project, Don was hooked. He earned his real estate license in 2013 and jumped headfirst into real estate.

In 2017, Don moved to HomeSmart Realty Group and went out on his own. Ever since, he’s quietly built an incredibly successful business based on referrals and repeat business alone. “Of course, it took a little while to get business going, but at this point, all my traditional real estate is from past clients and referrals,” he states. “I don’t do any advertising, and I don’t pay for leads. It’s all word-of-mouth and my sphere. I think that speaks to who I am. I’m always out checking in on my clients and seeing if there’s anything they need. I stay in contact. They remember me when real estate comes up.”

“I’ll always work with real estate clients, but over the last three years or so, my business has really shifted into flips,” Don adds. “That’s my passion. Flips get a really bad reputation, but I’m on a mission to change that. I want people to see a house redone by me and my team and know that it’s good, quality work. They don’t have to worry that we’ve cut corners or done a bad job. They can be confident that it will be beautiful and functional.”

“I love finding those old, run-down houses—the hoarder homes that most people drive right past. **I can see what they could become.** Taking something that’s been neglected and turning it into a beautiful home is what I love most.”

A key part of Don’s success is the trusted team he’s built around him. For the past three years, he’s partnered with Alejandro Juarez, owner of Alex Remodel, LLC, to create some of the most standout listings on the market. In an industry where dependable contractors can be difficult to find, Don feels lucky to partner with Alejandro. “He’s my guy; he does great work, and sometimes, he knows what I want before I do,” Don says with a laugh. “We have the same vision, and he has incredible attention to detail. His work is top-notch.”

To date, Don has completed 34 flips. They’ve moved into larger-scale, luxury flips on lakes with property and in the older, sought-after neighborhoods in Northern Colorado. His work is beginning to be noticed; many of the listings have offers within just hours on the MLS, an incredible feat in this market. He has a goal of flipping 20+ homes a year going forward.

“I do all the design work myself,” Don notes. “That surprises everyone. They always think it’s my wife or someone on my team. I love it. My favorites are mid-century moderns. I love to get in there and restore them to their glory. It’s incredible to see the transformation.”

Most people can’t see past the current state to envision a brighter future, but Don can. “I love finding those old, run-down houses—the hoarder homes that most people drive right past,” he comments. “I can see what they could become. Taking something that’s been neglected and transforming it into a beautiful home is what I love most.”

Don’s reputation for delivering quality renovations continues to grow through word of mouth and consistent projects. As more people see the fruits of his labor, he’s getting more opportunities to bring homes back to life. Don is always willing to partner with fellow agents. “If you ever need to sell a home as is, fast, please give me a call,” he shares. “I’d love to learn more and make your job easier.”

Outside of real estate, Don enjoys spending time with his family and making the most of the Colorado lifestyle. An avid golfer, he plays two to three times a week and enjoys traveling with his family. He and his wife, Cristina, are high school sweethearts who reconnected 15 years later; they have been happily married for 23 years. Together, they have four children—Alex, Devin, Reece, and Ella—and two grandchildren.

Don believes strongly in the power of karma. He always looks for opportunities to give back, whether he’s helping someone with groceries, doing a random act of kindness, or lending a hand.

In an ever-changing and uncertain market, Don has created his own opportunities by transforming homes and creating his own listings. Don’s success is a testament to his creativity, work ethic, eye for design, and commitment to delivering exceptional results. By turning overlooked properties into sought-after homes, he continues to make his own kind of magic in Northern Colorado real estate. ▀

Connect with Don and send him any potential flips at donfrick41@gmail.com.



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Jeff and Julie Abel's path to real estate began with an unexpected opportunity in Estes Park. Julie accepted a sales position with a magazine, prompting the couple to leave Colorado Springs for the mountain community they had fallen in love with years earlier. Just a few months after arriving and beginning work, things didn't work out quite as planned, and Julie found herself unemployed as the magazine was not a good fit for her.

Looking back, they see it as the beginning of a career and a life they never imagined.

Today, Jeff and Julie lead Signature Home Team with Keller Williams, consistently ranking among Colorado's top-producing two-person teams. Their story, however, began decades earlier in the hills of central West Virginia.

Growing up about 45 minutes apart, they met through 4-H, where both were active youth leaders in neighboring counties. They married in 1994 and moved to Colorado Springs three years later after the birth of their son.

Jeff spent nearly two decades in higher education, beginning as a Resident Director and becoming Director of Student Affairs

for a leadership program in Colorado Springs.

Although their work was meaningful, both felt called in a different direction. After 18 years in student affairs, Jeff was burned out and transitioned into marketing, branding, and social media consulting for nonprofit organizations. Meanwhile, Julie's career brought them to Estes Park. After the magazine opportunity disappeared, a local broker asked a simple question: "Have you ever thought about real estate?"

The timing was right. "I had nothing to lose," Julie shares. "I got my real estate license, and I have never looked back."

Jeff wasn't nearly as eager. After months of

encouragement from Julie, he reluctantly signed up for real estate classes—mostly, he jokes, to get her to stop asking. Everything changed after he attended a two-day Keller Williams training featuring nationally recognized agents Ben Kinney and Tim Heyl, where he saw the opportunity to build a business.

The couple opened the first Keller Williams office in Estes Park on April 1, 2017. Over the years, they've experimented with different business models before discovering that simpler was better.

Jeff and Julie focus on their strengths. Jeff oversees listings, marketing, social media, and content creation. Julie specializes in buyers and long-term client relationships, while Director of Operations Savanna Campbell manages contracts and behind-the-scenes operations. That streamlined approach has helped them remain in the

top 5% of producers across Northern Colorado, with approximately 75-80% of their business coming from repeat and referral clients.

Rather than filling social media with listings, Jeff and Julie have become trusted ambassadors for the community they call home. Their YouTube channel, Estes Park Living, introduces viewers to life at the gateway to Rocky Mountain National Park, while their Facebook group, Everything Estes Park, has grown to more than 34,000 members.

Surprisingly, very little of their content is about real estate. "It's purely a place for people to ask questions about what it's like to visit and live here," Jeff explains. They highlight local businesses, hiking trails, community events, and everything that makes Estes Park unique. Market updates appear about once a month, but their real focus is helping people feel connected.

That commitment to the community extends throughout their business. Julie serves as a library trustee and on the Chamber Foundation Board after multiple terms with the local Board of REALTORS®. Jeff serves as treasurer of the Board of REALTORS® and teaches Keller Williams courses throughout Colorado as part of the Rocky Mountain Educational Services faculty. "We just really dig in," Julie says.

They also pour into their clients through thoughtful gifts, annual client events, and opportunities for neighbors to become friends. Every February, they host a Valentine's happy hour, while Thanksgiving brings their popular Pie Day. More recently, they've added informal monthly happy hours that bring together longtime residents, newcomers, visitors, and local business owners. For many families relocating to Estes Park, those

gatherings become their first opportunity to build friendships in the community.

Away from work, the couple enjoys exploring Colorado's mountain trails in their Jeep, traveling to Maui each spring with close friends, and spending time with family. Their son manages a café at the iconic Stanley Hotel in Estes Park, while their daughter teaches elementary school in Albuquerque.

Jeff has also become an enthusiastic whiskey collector, filling a closet with nearly 160 bottles—not, he insists, for drinking, but for learning, sharing stories, and introducing friends to something new. Julie channels her competitive spirit into karate, where she's currently working toward her brown belt.

Although their careers have changed dramatically since those early days in nonprofit and student affairs, their purpose has not. "Now, we get to help people through one of the biggest decisions of their lives," Jeff states.

The families they serve agree. "Working with the Abels has been the best real estate experience I've ever had," one client shared. "My husband and I have bought and sold many homes all across the country. We've had a long history of working with REALTORS®, but we are forever spoiled now." ❖

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I love that in home inspections, NOTHING is ever the same. Every day is a new face, a new home, which speaks to my adventurous nature."

I practice Irish step dancing with my wife at a local school and lead a HEMA (Historical European Martial Arts) group."

I appreciate this industry, and I am honored to care for our clients through this process."



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When is the “best” time to refinance? *And when should you wait?*

With 30-year interest rates remaining stubbornly in the 6s for most of the last four years, many homeowners are running out of patience. And with many of those loans in the high 6s, low 7s, and/or with temporary buydowns that are set to expire, the question of “when to refinance” is an all-too-common one.

For most, the answer can be found in a simple two-part test, which can be taken after a quick conversation with any competent lender: (1) Can you reduce your rate enough to save a meaningful amount of money per month? and (2) Can you do so with no or minimal closing costs? For example, if a homeowner with a \$600,000 loan balance can save just .25% on his rate, with 100% of the fees covered by his lender, then he could save over \$120/mo in interest at no actual cost, aside from his time. Conversely, if a homeowner with a \$200,000 loan balance can save a full 1% on her rate for \$5,000, then she would need 2.5 years to break even, and she may want to wait.

A simple analysis like this makes the decision easy: If both answers are “yes,” then now is the time. If either answer is “no,” then you might take a little more thought, or maybe a bit more time, before pulling the trigger.

And sometimes, a homeowner will be in a position where they can lower their rate, but they decide to wait, in

anticipation for even lower rates. This is a classic trap of believing that “past performance is indicative of future results,” just as a gambler will believe that a winning streak somehow increases his odds, and he’ll almost always play until he loses. But with mortgage debt, the odds actually get worse. After all, if the balance is already owed, then delaying a refinance will continue to cost more, the longer the wait: If a lower rate is already available, then rates don’t just have to go lower to save more money – They have to keep getting lower, just to save back the missed savings from not refinancing sooner. It’s a losing game.

So in short, while everyone has their own “rule of thumb,” I feel it’s worth every homeowner’s time to take this quick and simple two-part test. After all, they’ve already been waiting ... But they may not need to be.



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