



A PUBLICATION OF KELLER WILLIAMS REALTY, INC.

# outfront

MARCH/APRIL 2009, VOL. 6 NO. 2

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Onward to No. 1! pg. 4

Health Insurance Is Here pg. 5

SHIFT Tactic #6: Catch People In Your Web pg. 6

New KW Commercial Power Players pg. 12





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Dear Associates,

**Standing before you at Family Reunion last month and announcing for the first time that Keller Williams Realty is now the third-largest real estate company in the United States was among the greatest thrills of my professional life.**

I knew as Mo Anderson and I prepared for the State of the Company Address that there were many reasons for our company's solid gains in market share, but as I witnessed the power of your collective enthusiasm, there was no question in my mind how we as a company made it to this point – just as there is no doubt in our minds that it's only a matter of time before we announce that we are second-largest ... and then the largest real estate company in the United States.

From the very outset, we've viewed this market as an opportunity, and never has that been more apparent than it is right now. By all accounts, as you well know, 2008 was an extremely challenging year. But companywide, we outperformed the industry. For those of you who have managed to face the realities of the market and adopt a winning mindset (tactic No. 1 in *SHIFT!*) this has been the greatest opportunity for growth that you have ever known.

The market centers that have made the most of this market have faithfully committed to the Keller Williams model. For associates, it's been a matter of taking advantage of all of the education and the resources that we've developed to give you an edge over your competition. But more than ever before, it also means pursuing the profit share opportunity that is available to every member of this company.

Building your passive wealth through profit share pays, and it can serve as your own bailout plan during market downturns or periodic dips in production.

Since 1996, we've profit shared more

than \$238 million with our associates, and during 2008 alone, we profit shared more than \$30 million – during a time in which our competitors rolled back commission splits, closed offices and reported serious financial trouble.

It's awesome that more than 20,000 of us are currently receiving profit share, but can you imagine what our company – and your checkbooks – would begin to look like if *all* of us sharpened our focus on building our downlines?

Never has there been a better time to start doing so. There are great agents in your local markets whose companies are out of time and out of money, and many other agents who aren't getting near the support they need to seize the current market. They are more receptive than ever before to hearing about Keller Williams Realty, and we can help them.

We realize that there are a lot of myths surrounding profit share, so I urge you to attend one of the new profit share classes which are being taught in your market center.

As Mo reminded us at the beginning of the State of the Company Address last month, every problem has a purpose. The problem of the shift has fueled our purpose and clarified the Keller Williams difference, which has positioned us for another powerful leap forward.

Yours in growth,



Mark Willis  
CEO, Keller Williams Realty

Letter from  
the CEO



“

From the very outset, we've viewed this market as an opportunity, and never has that been more apparent than it is right now.

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**outfront**

March/April 2009 vol. 6 no. 2  
OutFront is a publication of  
Keller Williams Realty, Inc.

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Job Inquiries: ([jobs@kw.com](mailto:jobs@kw.com))

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## Seizing the shift to gain market share



Mark Willis and Mo Anderson after the historic announcement.

Photo by: Michael Galisteri

Emphasizing during his keynote address at Family Reunion last month that “Life is 10 percent what happens to you and 90 percent how you react to it,” **Clint Swindall** may as well have been setting forth the theme of the entire event – or for that matter, summarizing how Keller Williams associates have responded to a seismic shift in the real estate market.

Indeed, back when the real estate market started to shift, Keller Williams Realty stood as the fifth-largest real estate company in the United States. By January of 2007, Keller Williams Realty officially claimed the No. 4 spot. Last month, during Family Reunion 2009, **Mark Willis**, CEO, brought nearly 7,000 cheering attendees to their feet with the announcement that Keller Williams Realty has now climbed to the third-largest real estate company in the United States.

Sharing her story of personal adversity in 2008, **Mo Anderson**, vice chairman of Keller Williams Realty, opened the State of the Company Address with a testimony to the fact that every problem has a purpose. And the problem of the shift in the real estate market has further crystallized both the

“purpose and the promise for Keller Williams Realty,” Willis emphasized.

“While we cannot escape the trends of the industry, we have definitely outperformed it,” Willis said, noting that compared to the National Association of REALTORS®, which lost 140,000 of its members, or a decline of 10.5 percent between December of 2007 and December of 2008, Keller Williams Realty's total active agent count declined by about 7 percent.

KELLER WILLIAMS HAS SHIFTED!				
The Top-ranked Real Estate Franchises by Agent Count				
RANK	COMPANY	2008	2007	%
#1	Coldwell Banker	101,170	109,167	-7.3
#2	Century 21	95,390	105,461	-9.5
#3	<b>Keller Williams</b>	<b>72,794</b>	<b>78,441</b>	<b>-7.2</b>
#4	RE/MAX	69,108	85,737	-19.4
#5	Prudential	62,000	68,000	-8.8

“Comparatively, Keller Williams did more than 30 percent better than NAR.”

Citing the 2008 *REAL Trends* 500 report, Willis added, “Keller Williams was the only real estate franchise that experienced a positive growth in the total number

of sides, the total number of offices and the agent count per office. Every other franchise went backward. Between 2003 and 2007 Keller Williams increased its U.S. market share by more than 161 percent, while only one other network gained, and their increase was less than 20 percent.”

Comparing Keller Williams Realty to the 10 largest independent firms in the country over the last five years, Willis enthusiastically noted that “Keller Williams grew by 65 percent more in associates per office, 61 percent more in transactions per associate and 32 percent more in sales per office.” “This is your money, your production, and it thrills us,” he said.

From the very outset, the shift in the real estate market has been viewed within Keller Williams Realty as an opportunity, and never has that been more apparent than it is right now. “The promise of the shift for our market centers who nail the model, and grow in this market, is greater than in any other market, because this is when the best agents and brokers gain market share,” Willis emphasized.

Now is the time to “gather ourselves, get focused, follow a plan of action and charge.” kw

"THE FIRST WEALTH IS HEALTH."

- RALPH WALDO EMERSON

# HEALTH PROVIDERS PROGRAM



At Keller Williams Realty, you're more than just an associate with our company, you're our family. And to us, that means fulfilling our mission to help you build careers worth having, businesses worth owning and lives worth living.

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Through MyFranchise Association and H & H Employee Benefits, the Keller Williams Realty Health Providers Program includes options for:

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- a. Includes options through major national carriers, including: Aetna, Golden Rule, Assurant, etc.
- b. Customizable plans that work for you and your family
- c. Requires an underwriting process

## 2. LIMITED MEDICAL COVERAGE\*

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- b. Guaranteed issue
- c. Covers pre-existing conditions
- d. Offers six different plans for reimbursements on basic medical expenses
  - i. Doctors Visits
  - ii. Prescriptions
  - iii. Certain costs associated with emergency room visits
  - iv. No deductibles or co-pays
  - v. Can be coupled with a Catastrophic Medical Plan

## 3. CATASTROPHIC COVERAGE\*

- a. Offered through American National Insurance
- b. Requires an underwriting process

## 4. CANCER COVERAGE\*

- a. When purchased with Limited Medical Coverage, this is guaranteed issue and covers some pre-existing conditions after first 12 months and requires no underwriting process.

*\*The Limited Medical, Catastrophic and Cancer Coverage options should not replace your existing Major Medical Coverage without careful evaluation. Please take the time to evaluate your current coverage and your options.*

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- Exercise and Strength Training Information
- Financial and Credit Management Information
- Nutrition and Diet Information

## TACTICS TO LIVE BY



# SHIFT REVOLUTION

**It's gonna be alright!**

## Internet aficionados tap trends, sharpen strategies

by Jennifer LeClaire

*Tactic #6 in **SHIFT: How Top Real Estate Agents Tackle Tough Times** sets forth a perspective and a strategy for Internet marketing based on “three areas of focus: creating and maintaining an Internet presence, lead generating for traffic, and converting those leads to appointments.”*

Emphasizing that “Internet consumers” now constitute the vast majority of home buyers, and as such are not a distinct niche, *SHIFT* points out that an Internet presence is no longer an option for real estate professionals. The goal set forth in Tactic #6 was to make sure that “technology earns its keep.”

**Cal Carter**, associate and market center tech coordinator for the Daphne/Fairhope (Ala.) market center, and **Chuck Roberts**, associate and team leader at the Monroe (La.) market center, are two agents who are doing just that.

Both tech-savvy agents who took the lead in learning the Web-based ropes, Carter and Roberts have discovered that successful Internet lead generation initiatives dovetail with other tactics from *SHIFT*. Key among them: #2 Re-margin your business (expense management); #3 Do more with less (leverage); and #4 Find the motivated (lead generation).

An agribusiness professional turned real estate agent, Carter's first foray into Internet lead generation took shape back in 2004 when he sold \$10 million

worth of North Georgia real estate – all through Internet leads.

He's continued to build upon his success, selling \$11 million last year in Orange Beach, Ala., during a flat market where he notes, “nobody was buying anything.”

### HANDS-ON

Even though 99 percent of his leads still come from the Internet, Carter points out that the process is not automatic. He often spends 10 hours a day following up on leads, studying Web analytic reports, making continual adjustments in order to enhance the effectiveness of his Web presence, and testing search engine optimization (SEO) strategies to ensure that his site appears near the top of relevant searches.

Calling himself a rainmaker, Carter explains, “I don't do any pay-per-click. I rely on organic traffic,” meaning that it's due to the content of his site that search engines tend to list his Website near the top of the list when prospects conduct relevant searches.

Carter's site, (GulfShoresLife.com), has seen more than 200,000 unique visitors since April 2008. He averages 20 solid registrations a day from visitors



Cal Carter



looking for more details on a listed property, and follows up with a drip email campaign designed to attract registrants back to the site and to keep in touch with visitors every week for the next 15 weeks. His active database currently numbers 5,900, and he draws in approximately 60 to 80 return visitors a day.

"Each email contains a short message that links back to the Website," Carter says. "When they click the link I can determine how many return visitors I am getting," and the effectiveness of particular emails.

Central to the success of his site: ensuring that visitors get what they want when they visit – information on the specific types of properties they are looking for, based on the keywords that they typed into the search engine.

"When people come to the site, it's easy for them to narrow down the properties by region, type or other characteristics," Carter says. "My software tracks what communities and price ranges people are looking for and automatically puts them on a property notification list if new listings meet that criteria."

While Carter is focused on high-end properties, he recently started tapping into the market for foreclosures and REOs by creating

two pages that are search engine optimized for these properties. The result: a new influx of traffic and a new niche to serve.

### ALTERNATE APPROACH

In the Monroe market center, Roberts has pursued a somewhat different approach to Internet lead generation. Utilizing search engine marketing (SEM), he bids on key search terms, in an effort to achieve a spot near the top of the side margin on search engines following specific searches for properties in his market. He then pays for every visitor who clicks on a link to his site. While there is no guarantee that a click will turn into a lead, Roberts notes that his top agents are receiving 150 to 200 leads a month from the pay-per-click.

"The landing page from the search is the most critical part of the equation," Roberts says.

Once a visitor clicks on the site, the next goal is to capture their information by gathering their search criteria, or offering some other type of information of value to home buyers or sellers. The key has been requesting no more than six fields of information.

Roughly 20 to 26 percent of the people who visit the page maintained by his search engine marketing end up registering with the site, Roberts notes.

That high conversion rate is important, considering he is spending about 59 cents each time a visitor clicks on one of his ads to find the site. Still, it's a relatively inexpensive lead generation tool. With a cost that ranges between \$200 and \$250 per month, Roberts contends that his SEM is well worth the cost. "I haven't found anything more effective for generating leads." *kw*



Chuck Roberts

Photo by: Lamar Smith

## SEVEN TIPS TO DRIVE TRAFFIC TO YOUR SITE



**1. Keep your content current.** Make sure to update your listings regularly. Changing the content will alert the search engines that your site is a living document, so to speak, and it will help your Webpage rank higher in search listings.

**2. Get linked.** The more Websites that link to your Website, the better your search engine ranking will be. Trade links with local, complimentary vendors in your area or Keller Williams agents in other cities.

**3. Send emails.** When you capture leads, send them intermittent emails to alert them when there's something new on your site so they will visit again. Be sure to follow SPAM laws.

**4. Write some articles.** Writing articles and posting them to free ezine Websites will position you as an expert in your field and also offer a link back to your site.

**5. Get free ads.** There are a number of sites, newsgroups and directories, such as MerchantCircle, that offer free listings for businesses. Be sure your information is listed.

**6. Use your URL.** Be sure to list your URL on everything – business cards, advertisements, pens, etc. Everything you send out should have your URL on it.

**7. Join community conversations.** Comment on posts related to real estate news articles and blogs, and put your name, affiliation and URL after your response.



Sara Canaday, Certified Business Image and Emotional Intelligence Consultant

*Sara Canaday is a professional consultant who has dedicated herself to helping clients chart their own course for success and achievement, factoring in every aspect of professional presence, including image, non-verbal communication, personal branding and emotional intelligence.*

“

Even legitimate, professionally - related comments or posts can leave the wrong impression if someone reads them out of context.

”

## IS YOUR CYBER-SLIP SHOWING?

# Common Pitfalls of Social Media that Could Damage Your Professional Image

by Sara Canaday

Anyone with a computer and a job has felt the powerful pull of today's brave new world of “social media” including online networking sites that allow you to expand upon personal and professional connections. But, just as you would with any powerful medium, social media users should proceed with caution.

The myriad of social media programs is growing every day. From blogging to linking to connecting, they all allow you the opportunity to grow your personal and professional life. But with those opportunities come risks: namely, the possibility of muddying your hard-won professional image and reputation.

While many of us are careful about projecting a polished, credible and professional image, social media activities – as their name implies – can blur the line between the personal and the professional, creating opportunities to misrepresent ourselves to potential clients, employers or colleagues.

### COMMON PITFALLS:

#### 1) Promiscuous linking

*Do you compete for the highest number of connections without regard for who you're adding to your network?*

Some people treat online networking programs like a high school popularity contest: the more connections you have, the better you

must be. But do you really know who you are inviting into your network? If not, you may be adding someone with a less-than-favorable reputation in your community, industry or network.

And don't underestimate the impact you might have by inviting someone who doesn't recognize you. They may be turned off or just plain creeped out. What will their reaction be should they hear your name mentioned in the future? As a good rule of thumb, if you wouldn't feel comfortable calling someone on the phone, then don't do it online.

#### 2) Oversharing your personal preferences

*Are your personal blogs, family Websites, political affiliations, and favorite bookmarks all a Google search away from the public eye?*

Certainly, everyone has a right to their own opinions, hobbies and personal lives. And social media are great tools for expanding and exploring in those arenas. But pay close attention to how accessible your personal life is to those who are interested in you professionally.



Are you publicly bookmarking political sites, or favorite blogs on topics like addiction or depression that only your family and closest friends should be privy to? If you deal with “third-rail” topics that you wouldn’t mention in a professional setting, make sure you keep them sequestered. Develop separate accounts and usernames for those items that should remain personal, if not private.

### 3) “I Found You On [www.IHateEverything.com](http://www.IHateEverything.com)”

*Do you comment on controversial blogs and message boards, and routinely write scathing op-ed pieces online, leaving your email address and full name?*

Consider your trail of breadcrumbs: could someone follow your comments from a polarizing blog back to your professional Website or even your company’s? How would you feel if you sat down for an interview only to see the pictures of you at your friend’s Fourth of July “kegger” printed out in front of your potential employer?

All of your online activity leaves a trail, and you should be careful where that trail leads. Once you’ve posted

something, it cannot be taken back. Even if you control the site and can delete it, you cannot control who saw it or how they might have saved that information.

Even legitimate, professionally related comments or posts can leave the wrong impression if someone reads them out of context. Just like the person who meets you for the first time after a hideous morning of mishaps, well-intentioned people can still give the wrong first impression.

### 4) Sloppy Sites

*Are your sites filled with misspellings, slang and a serious lack of punctuation?*

Used for professional purposes, social media can be incredibly useful and are great tools for moving you or your company forward. If you’re using these sites professionally, make sure they represent you in the same light you strive for in your physical appearance and demeanor. Aside from actual mistakes, also pay attention to your tone and attitude. Sure, you may be witty, but if your posts or comments are predominantly scathing or complaining, people will assume that you’re a generally unhappy, dissatisfied or even angry individual.

### DAMAGE CONTROL AND IMAGE CLEAN UP

Perhaps you recognized yourself in some of these descriptions. What now? How can you go about fixing some of these common missteps?



The first approach is also the most obvious: delete the offending material or connections. This is easier said than done. If you have direct access to the item, you can delete it yourself. If someone else is in control of the

content, approach them in the most polite fashion possible and ask them to remove it.

If these fail, there are companies, such as Reputation Defender and Reputation Hawk, that specialize in cleaning up their clients’ presence.

As with nearly everything in life, social media should be used judiciously. Pay attention to how you’re presenting yourself. And always make sure the benefits you garner from these powerful tools outweigh the risk. **kw**

# INSTANT IMPACT

GIVE CONSUMERS  
WHAT THEY WANT.



From:  
Gerry  
Moylan  
To: Gary Keller  
Subject: Web Section of *SHIFT*

Dear Gary,

Let me just say ... just when I thought I knew it all ...

I’m a very Web-savvy REALTOR® and thought I was doing it right when it came to my Website. Then, I read the section of your new book, *SHIFT*, where you discuss Websites. I also attended the *SHIFT* tour in Los Angeles.

I read what you wrote about not featuring how many houses you’ve sold and your picture. I took to heart your advice to: “Put what the consumer wants all over the page – load it up.”

Amazing! I had the property search box and the “What’s My Home Worth” at the top of my page, BUT that wasn’t enough. So I loaded the top of my page with extra links touting, “Free MLS Listings – Buyers Click Here” and “Sellers Click Here to Find Your Home’s Value.” And I have those links going to forms where I get their information in exchange for giving them what they want. PLUS, I rearranged my left side navigation links so that the top ones were BUYER and SELLER links. I got rid of all the vain stuff (well, pushed it lower). And guess what? The very day I made the changes, someone filled out a seller form. Over the next few days, I had buyers and sellers filling out forms.

Great nugget! Thanks for all you do!

Best regards,

Gerry Moylan  
Associate and market center tech  
coordinator,  
Wilshire (Calif.) market center  
Website: <http://www.gmoylan.com>

From: Gary Keller

hi gerry. thanks so much for your note. I am so glad you’re implementing these. the research into that section covered over two years and countless interviews and surveys. it is full of what the best are doing.

love your spirit!

onward ...  
garykeller

# Market shift realigns players, clarifies the Keller Williams difference

by Shelley Seale

**I**t's no surprise that the shifting market has shifted a lot more than home values and sales volumes. In many cases, perceptions and realizations have shifted right along with the market, sparking a far more widespread appreciation for all that Keller Williams Realty has to offer. In many cases, the degree to which a local market has shifted downward is closely correlated with a crystallization of the Keller Williams difference as individual agents, teams and entire offices decide to join forces with Keller Williams Realty.

The result is that Keller Williams Realty continues to outpace and outperform the real estate industry as a whole.

No where is this more true than in Lakeland, Fla., where **Chris McLaughlin**, operating principal of the Lakeland market center and four other offices in the Florida-North Region tells us, "There's never been a better time to structure a merger." Having completed five mergers in 2008, McLaughlin points out, "Our market is distressed, and many companies are folding up shop. Moms and pops that used to run offices want to concentrate on their own sales rather than those of associates. So the functions of any office – training, administration, technology and culture – are sorely lacking in some. We can fill that niche for many people, and we are doing so."

The Lakeland market center merged with a local Coldwell Banker office on Nov. 1, 2008, adding 15 new agents. McLaughlin expects to complete another five mergers in 2009. "Our overall market continues to struggle and our market centers are recognized in their respective areas as having an expertise in short sales and distressed properties," he explains. "Now that we're entering our third year of a shifted market in Florida, many brokers see the

logic in combining forces and joining with us. I think we're a natural fit for any company looking to improve their overall sales in this market. The Keller Williams name, technology and culture go a long way in helping us combine with other offices."

### DIVINE INTERVENTION

Connections in high places don't hurt either. When asked how he identified the Coldwell Banker merger opportunity, McLaughlin replies, "I go to church. Seriously!"

**Ed Phelps**, prior broker of Coldwell Banker Plantation Realty, was a member of the same church and a mutual respect existed between the two men. **Tom McGlamory**, the team leader of the Lakeland market

center, also had a great relationship with Phelps through their local association of REALTORS®. When Phelps' franchise came up for renewal, he called McLaughlin. Once it became clear that Phelps was not going to renew with Coldwell Banker, the talks elevated from exploratory to serious.

"I would say



Photo by: Scott Wheeler

the reasons Ed was most interested in us was that we were the undisputed leader in the market; we had awesome training for his associates on distressed properties, and our cultures were a great fit. And he knew where he could find me every Sunday!" McLaughlin adds.

### THE RIGHT APPROACH

Having folded in five separate offices, McLaughlin is well versed on the strategies for structuring successful mergers. Key among them: focus on adding quality, successful agents – not just increasing agent count. Also, any merger must preserve cash. A market center should look for a low-to-no overhead situation in an office it is considering merging into its own. A shifted market, particularly, is a time when cash needs to be preserved; a merger deal today should be structured for the least outlay in expenditures as possible, while bringing in new revenue to offset any expenses.

The bottom line is that a merger must reward success

for the combined entity, rather than continuing the status quo for each separate office. Even if the two offices have no cash reserves, McLaughlin says there are lots of ways to get creative.

Another important factor to consider is franchise agreements. "Anytime you merge with another entity that is under a franchise agreement, you have to proceed with caution," says McLaughlin. In the case of his recent Coldwell Banker merger, McLaughlin confirmed that the franchise was up for renewal before proceeding further, and exercised additional care that the merger did not take place until after the Coldwell Banker franchise had expired.

**Georgia Alpizar**, regional director for Florida-North, believes the current market conditions present a tremendous opportunity to increase agent count and gain significant market share in the region. "We are finding many independents that are struggling and feel this is a great time to join forces with Keller Williams," Alpizar says. "Generally, the owners of the companies that our market centers might merge with are very well known in the community, which helps bring more validity to our company and also brings more top producers to us."


Successful mergers tend to be significant eye-openers for agents from recently merged offices who suddenly gain access to a wealth of resources and technology. They get to grow their business and sharpen their skills while working with the same team.

As Alpizar says, "When they join Keller Williams, they just have more family members to grow with." **kw**







Ed Phelps (left) joins forces with Chris McLaughlin and the Lakeland market center

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## POWER PLAYERS

# The right models, the right culture, the right time

*Lake Norman-Cornelius market center lands seven new commercial agents*

by Jennifer LeClaire



From top right to bottom: Lee Peterson, Dee Dee Worley, Judy Newburn, Bobby Faulk, Todd Kight, Geoffrey Griffith, Paul Yancey, Larry Caudill, Austin Green, Patrick Hutchinson, Karen Tovar and Judy Sobo.

Recruiting a star performer is always a boom for business. Recruiting seven star performers to a fledgling commercial division is a veritable bonanza.

That's just what **Todd Kight**, team leader of the Lake Norman-Cornelius (N.C.) market center, has done – and he's not finished yet. Until Kight started spreading the word about Keller Williams Realty's recent splash into the commercial realm, Sperry Van Ness was the only major commercial broker in town. That's all changed now.

A commercial real estate veteran himself, Kight has been leading a Keller Williams team of 148 residential agents since March 2008. Now, he's leading a newly formed commercial team poised to put Keller Williams' name on the commercial real estate map in the region in a hurry.

“

It makes a huge impact on the local market when those Sperry signs come down and the KW Commercial signs go up.

*Todd Kight, Mooresville, N.C.*

”

“It all started when I took **Pat Neild** from Sperry Van Ness out to Mega Camp last August for an introduction to KW Commercial. She fell in love with it and decided this is where she needed to be,” said Kight. “She proceeded to refer four of her colleagues – **Geoffrey Griffith, Patrick Hutchinson, Austin Green and Paul Yancey** – who signed on with us immediately.”

Soon after, Kight also recruited **John Gessford, Karen Tovar and Judy Sobo** from boutique firms within the community.

### MOMENTUM FACTOR

Kight's plan now is for the seven new recruits to help spread the word and bring additional agents on board. “It's going to be huge. We did about \$130 million in residential properties last year, but commercial deals can each run \$5 or \$6 million. Commercial agents have the potential to cap after one deal. It makes a huge impact on the local market when those Sperry signs come down and the KW Commercial signs go up.”

Despite downward trends in some markets around the country, Kight is optimistic about the Lake Norman-Cornelius area. The Charlotte area is home to NASCAR, Lowe's Home Improvement, and is the second-largest financial services center in the country.

“Our economy and our market hasn't been hit as hard as the rest of the country,” Kight said. “We are still holding our own with maybe a 2 percent reduction in prices. So we feel good about that.” Regardless of the direction that the market takes, he emphasizes, “I've got a team of top producers; this is going to be a great year.”

# Many motivations, one decision

## New agents weigh in on their move to KW Commercial

**Paul Yancey**, a Sperry Van Ness veteran who launched his real estate career six years ago, came to Keller Williams Realty because he appreciates the firm's philosophy to grow agents and teams. "I quickly saw the potential of KW Commercial's lucrative profit-sharing programs and commission splits," says Yancey, who specializes in office and industrial properties. "I saw the opportunity to help start a new division and watch it grow nationally."

**Austin Green** says he came to Keller Williams Realty from Sperry Van Ness because of the platform and the market center's 150-plus residential agents who can refer commercial business his way. "The old ways of big splits that commercial firms are still operating under just simply don't work anymore," added Green, who specializes in retail, industrial, multi-family, medical office and tenant representation. "I'll be a much happier person at Keller Williams Realty, and have the best chance to be financially free!"

**John Gessford** brings more than 12 years of experience in residential, commercial sales and investing. He has a strong background in cash flow analysis, creative financing techniques, management and valuation. His key motivations for switching to KW Commercial from a local boutique firm: culture, national reach and the ability to play a key role in what he believes will become the most successful and competitive commercial brokerage firm in the United States. "As a longtime believer in leverage and networking, I came to KW for the ability to quickly reach a 100 percent commission platform, and build a downline of commercial brokers nationwide," Gessford adds.

**Karen Tovar** based her decision to make the move from a local boutique brokerage to Keller Williams Realty on the firm's strong national reputation, as well as the encouragement and support from the team leader, staff and agent base.

"I love the in-house education. I like the fact that KW truly believes in its agents, not just the bottom line," says Tovar, who has three years of experience in commercial real estate with a strong focus on land sales, shopping centers, new construction and lease rentals. "The company has high standards." **kw**



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## ELITE EDGE

# Luxury network proves lucrative

by Jennifer LeClaire



Photo by: Dennis Sievers

Linda Kepple touts the networking benefits of Luxury Homes by Keller Williams

The first agent to ever sell a million-dollar home in Peoria many years ago, **Linda Kepple**, operating principal with the Peoria (Ill.) market center, has found what it takes to keep her in the lead of the city's luxury home market – membership in Luxury Homes by Keller Williams.

“This is my second year in the program and I have seen a return on my investment many, many times over,” says Kepple. “The resources that the program offers and the relationships that I have developed through it give me a definite edge,” she adds.

The Luxury Homes by Keller Williams program is designed to raise the bar for service in the upper-tier home market. For Kepple, the benefits have included access to exclusive signage and elegantly branded marketing pieces, as well as the ability to display luxury listings on (KWLuxuryHomes.com). But possibly the top benefit is the networking potential.

“The Luxury Homes educational retreats are a great way to share struggles and successes – and meet luxury agents from other markets,” Kepple says. “After my first retreat in Austin, I referred a client to another member and received a check for \$15,000 within 30 days. At the second retreat in Houston, someone referred a client to me who suffered through the hurricane and wanted to move to my area.”

### LEVERAGING LUXURY

Beyond the networking – and the financial benefits that go along with having an exclusive breed of luxury real estate agents as a referral source – Kepple says the ability to learn from vendors who target affluent consumers and “green” trends in luxury homes has helped her speak the right language to home shoppers who come to Peoria from other parts of the country.

She also leverages the marketing assistance Luxury Homes by Keller Williams makes available to applicants who qualify for membership. Instead of hiring a graphic artist to design attractive letterhead, the program offers templates complete with the Luxury Homes logo and colors. All Kepple has to do is cut and paste her letter onto the template and print it on

quality paper.

“The resources and information I can access through the Luxury Homes program validates me when I present to high-end clientele,” Kepple says. “When I have the latest information on luxury home trends, it gives me much more credibility. I’m more comfortable doing presentations and conveying confidence that I can execute clients’ goals.”

### SOLID SIDELINE

Although Kepple points out luxury homes do not constitute her entire business, she’s made them a lucrative aspect of her business. Central to her strategy: recognize that no two luxury homes are quite alike and understand what makes each one unique.

“Know your inventory and don’t be intimidated by wealthy people,” Kepple advises. “You can’t freeze up. You may not live like they do, but you need to behave as if you do. The Luxury Homes program helps me understand what motivates and inspires affluent buyers so I can meet their needs.”

Although the 24-year real estate veteran has been selling luxury homes for as many years, she credits the Luxury Homes by Keller Williams program with helping her take her business to the next level. **kw**

“

The Luxury Homes program helps me understand what motivates and inspires affluent buyers so I can meet their needs.

Linda Kepple, Peoria, Ill.

”



## THE MAPS FACTOR

# MAPS Mastery clients go underground at Disney

And learn new insights in a special seminar

By Lisa Wahlgren

Knowing that Disney has a renowned reputation for constantly raising the bar with world-class customer service, **Dianna Kokoszka**, president of the MAPS Institute knew that there was no better way for MAPS Mastery clients to kick off Family Reunion 2009 than learning about the place that's all about making dreams come true.

At 8 a.m. on Saturday, February 21, MAPS Mastery clients boarded a bus at the Orange County Convention Center and headed off to Walt Disney World.

After a presentation on how the Disney organization manages to ensure that every employee understands the company's mission and the distinct role that they play in making the mission come to life, mastery clients were treated to a tour of the inner-workings of the Disney operation. "It was absolutely fantastic," says **Nikki Ubaldini**, regional operating principal for Florida-South and operating principal for three market centers.

"We got a great insight into how the Disney leadership paints the vision first and then continues to present every piece through everything they do. The biggest impact that this message had on my business is the reminder that we all think that we are great communicators, but we need to constantly reinforce how that vision can take us from one level of success to a huge level of significance," Ubaldini added.

"It was great to be reminded that every opportunity we have with clients and co-workers is an opportunity to WOW," adds **Theresa Bastian**, operating principal at the Olympia and Tacoma (Wash.) market centers. "There is an unwavering consistency in connecting the mission to everything they do and making sure that every employee is very cognizant of it," Bastian says. "It was a great reminder that as much as we may believe that the culture in our market center is great, we can't ever get complacent about it." *kw*



Another "wow" for  
MAPS Mastery Clients!  
Free calls with well-known  
authors/speakers.  
\* Watch for emails.



WHAT A DIFFERENCE MAPS MAKES!

## President's Perspective



Dear Team,

It didn't take long for the news to spread throughout our entire industry that Keller Williams Realty is now the third-largest real estate company in the United States. What a pleasure it has been to supply the media with some great news and then to witness the news take hold!

As Mark Willis, our CEO, made this historic announcement during the State of the Company Address at Family Reunion last month, I cheered along with the rest of you, and knew that this is just the beginning. We have a clear vision of where this company is going, and it's because of how you have responded to this market that we have grown to be the third-largest real estate company in the United States.

In the current economic climate, it is an extraordinary gift to be able to say with confidence that we do not have one ounce of fear about this market.

Among the many things that sets Keller Williams Realty apart is the fact that Gary Keller, Mo Anderson, Mark Willis and I all started as agents. That's where our hearts are and that's where we feel the greatest need to serve.

We've been in the trenches as agents, and we know firsthand the challenges you face. Key among them, of course: health insurance costs.

So despite the well-publicized uncertainty in our industry and the overall economy, we are extraordinarily grateful to those of you who have passionately pursued a companywide health insurance program, and helped us find a provider that could offer a slate of insurance options for our nearly 70,000 independent contractors – a surprisingly complex undertaking that was met with untold roadblocks.

You now have access to a health providers program through My Franchise Association, an organization we've affiliated with that offers

major medical, limited medical, a catastrophic plan and other insurance benefits. (For more information, please see the story on page 5 of this issue.)

I trust I don't need to tell you that this is an enormous benefit and a critical differentiator between Keller Williams Realty and other real estate companies. Even if you already have affordable health insurance coverage through your spouse or another plan, what a great opportunity this is to build your downline by letting your colleagues at other companies know about yet another advantage of joining forces with Keller Williams Realty.

Clint Swindall,

our keynote speaker at

Family Reunion last month, urged us to lead with: "Tell me something good!" Within Keller Williams Realty, there's no shortage of good news. Let's lead with it!

Yours in sharing the good news!

Mary Tennant  
President and COO  
Keller Williams Realty



In the current economic climate, it is an extraordinary gift to be able to say with confidence that we do not have one ounce of fear about this market.



# Keller Williams ★ 2008 ALL-STARS

## RECIPIENTS OF TOP HONORS AND AWARDS AT FAMILY REUNION 2009:

### TOP ASSOCIATE AWARDS ▶

1. Top Associate, **Brent Mitchell** 2. 100%+ Club Inductee, **Debbi Gorham** 3. 2008 Top Profit Share Earners, **Bob and Althea Osborn** 4. Tom Colwell Entrepreneur Award Honoree, **Sam Rafeh** 5. Rookie Team of the Year, **Battiste Team** 6. Rookie Individual of the Year, **Jimmy Zeidan** 7. Recipient of the Mo Anderson Award of Excellence, **Mimi Hagan** 8. Top Agent in GCI and Closed Units, **Tom Daves** 9. Top Group in GCI, **The Heller Real Estate Group** 10. Top Group in Units, **Bonanza Team** 11. Top Team in Units, **Sanders and Associates** 12. Top Team in GCI, **Miles McCormick**



### ◀ TOP LEADERSHIP AWARDS:

1. Eric Copper, No. 1 market center in units, production and profit share, **Austin Southwest** 2. Allison Gambone, Greatest market center profit share gain, **Bayside/Queens** 3. Collette Ching, Top commercial growth partner, **Santa Monica** 4. Cheryl Sadoti, Top profit sharing region, **Southeast** 5. Gene Frederick, Top region in franchise sales, **Virginia** tied with 6. Mike McCarthy, **Greater Pennsylvania** 7. Maurine Barker, Top performing region in GCI increase, **California-Northern and Hawaii** 8. Sherry Lewis, Top performing region in percent of profitable market centers, **Oklahoma**.



# Whatever It Takes

Opening Family Reunion 2009 with his annual Vision Speech and a call for great motivation and momentum, **Gary Keller**, co-founder and chairman of Keller Williams Realty, said, "The next 180 days will be the most critical in your career. If you get real and get it right, you'll catapult your career forward."



While average effort may have yielded average results in the past, "average" is now ending up without a job, Keller emphasized. Analyzing the shift in the real estate market and the current state of the economy from a number of angles, Keller, along with **Jay Papasan**, vice president of publishing and Keller's co-author for *SHIFT* and The Millionaire Real Estate series, expressed no doubt that attendees would never see a worse economic crisis in their lifetimes. But it is because of the downturn that "this is the best opportunity for the biggest defining moment in your life."

Crises call for shifts in strategies, Keller emphasized. For real estate professionals, now is the time to realize that the solution is immediate action, which means:

- **Focusing on what matters**
- **Being willing to do whatever it takes**
- **Extra effort and intensity**

"You are living in the extra effort, high intensity/low overhead era," Keller emphasized.

## IT'S OFFICIAL!

### KW Commercial poised to disrupt local markets

"The timing of the launch of KW Commercial is flat-out brilliant," said **Mark Willis**, CEO. "It will absolutely, positively help you to disrupt your local market. This opportunity is yours. Seize it."

With more than 223 associate - and director-level members on board before the official launch of KW Commercial during the regional director meeting at Family Reunion last month, **Buddy Norman**, president of KW Commercial, along with the Keller Williams

Realty executive staff and regional leadership teams, marked the launch of KW Commercial into the Keller Williams family with a Red Bull® toast and a ceremonial ribbon cutting.

"We are excited about KW Commercial," says Norman, "because we can now offer an opportunity for commercial real estate agents to find a home with Keller Williams Realty. Our goal is always to provide the very best compensation model, training and support to every agent in business with us - and we are now extending that to KW Commercial." Family Reunion attendees felt the excitement as well - more than 100 associates became members during the week-long event.

Norman adds: "While other commercial firms are losing steam, KW Commercial has just begun to gain ground. With our new members leading the way, there's no ceiling to the synergy we can bring to Keller Williams Realty."

For more information on KW Commercial, go to ([www.kwcommercial.com](http://www.kwcommercial.com)).



# TechTalk

What's New from Keller Williams Realty

## KW INTRANET GETS AN 'EXTREME MAKEOVER'

Test Drive the New Site Today

As soon as the real estate market started to shift, the Keller Williams Realty support center mobilized, developing new products, programs, training and tech tools designed to ensure Keller Williams associates a leading edge in a declining market. "As a result, our associates are much further ahead of their counterparts at other companies than ever before," notes Cary Sylvester, executive director of technology.

So much so that "staying current on all that Keller Williams offers and ensuring that resources and reports are being optimized is a challenge unto itself for many associates," she observes.

At the same time, technological advances have expanded possibilities for integrated reporting and advanced search capabilities.

These are the primary factors that converged to spark

the creation of a new KW intranet and reporting system that provides a single portal for access to virtually all

Keller Williams resources. The new KW Intranet incorporates an enhanced agent referral network and streamlines access to an expanded range of reporting capabilities," Sylvester says.

Key among the benefits of the new KW Intranet: an in-depth search capability – enabling associates to comprehensively research resources on a specific topic, without needing to go to various Websites. Ultimately, an associate could enter "short sales" as a search topic, and be directed to specific resources or training offered by Keller Williams University, MAPS Institute, KWConnect, Agent Mountain, Leadership Mountain, eAgentC and Millionaire Systems.

To test drive the new intranet, go to the existing intranet and log on at the end of the "News Flash" article.



## ONE LISTING, ONE ENTRY – COUNTLESS LEADS

From your MLS to the KWLS and beyond!

When the Keller Williams Listing System (KWLS) was introduced more than two years ago, it was another first in our industry for KW Technology. Associates were catapulted into a new competitive advantage, fueled by instant access to more than 125 home search engines once listing information was entered into the KWLS, while maintaining ownership of their listings.

And now, thanks to a new relationship between Keller Williams Realty and Threewise's ListHub, in participating markets, associates no longer have to input listing data into both the MLS and the KWLS. Listings entered into the MLS can now be fed directly to the KWLS via Listhub, which pulls listing data for an entire market center. The single point of entry eliminates duplicate data entry and further streamlines the process of pushing listings to third-party home search engines, including Google Base, Trulia®, Zillow.com, Frontdoor.com and Yahoo! Real Estate.

To take advantage of the new listing feed, team leaders need to register with ListHub and then purchase the service for a monthly fee that covers the entire market center. Visit ([www.listhub.com](http://www.listhub.com)).

## KW.COM DELIVERS THE ESTIMATE – YOU DELIVER THE VALUE

A new home valuation and a foreclosed properties search tool located on the main page of KW.com is helping Keller Williams associates to connect to more prospects at the earliest stages of their decision-making process. The foreclosure search tool enables visitors to search a database of more than 1 million foreclosed properties, and provides seven-day trial subscription from RealtyTrack. The home valuation tool displays home value estimates from both Zillow (Zillow.com) and Cyberhomes (Cyberhomes.com) for any address in the United States. "We already know that consumers are going to the Web to find out how much their home is worth; now they can get that information without going to multiple Websites," says **Bryon Ellington**, chief products officer with the Keller Williams Realty Support Center. "And more importantly try and connect with our agents for a more accurate estimate."

Even though consumers frequent the Internet to conduct their own research, "they need guidance from a real estate professional," notes Cary Sylvester, executive director of technology for the support center. "By having this tool on KW.com, we hope to create a one stop shop for home sellers by giving them a snapshot of their homes' value and then connect them with an agent in their market who can help guide them," she explains.

To see the new tool, visit ([www.kw.com](http://www.kw.com)).

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT ALL THE TECHNOLOGY KW OFFERS YOU, GO TO ([SUPPORT.KW.COM](http://SUPPORT.KW.COM))

# TOP 50 PRODUCING TEAMS\*\*

\*\* Based on transmittals received for all December 2008 / January 2009 closed transactions identified with the specific team.

	NAME	CITY, STATE	GCI	UNITS
1	The Hamilton Group	Santa Rosa, Calif.	\$362,432	8
2	The Middleton Team	San Diego, Calif.	\$349,763	17.3
3	Bocage Team	Fremont, Calif.	\$315,966	53.7
4	The Sunset Team	Los Angeles, Calif.	\$313,170	8
5	The Capalbo Group	Manassas, Va.	\$307,834	52.5
6	Carol Royse Lifestyle Team	Tempe, Ariz.	\$302,523	65
7	Jennifer Young Team	Chantilly, Va.	\$301,201	66.8
8	The Delois Smith Allstar Team	Hattiesburg, Miss.	\$293,248	51
9	Bonanza Team	Englewood, Colo.	\$283,469	95
10	Guldi Real Estate Group	Waldorf, Md.	\$282,238	64
11	Seybert Team	Henderson, Nev.	\$258,353	50.3
12	Herlinda & Associates	La Mesa, Calif.	\$238,007	37
13	The Monaghan Group	Glendale, Ariz.	\$235,003	83
14	The Heller Real Estate Group	San Diego, Calif.	\$224,696	25
15	The Michael Reese Group	Frisco, Texas	\$223,385	31.2
16	Burton Group	Palmdale, Calif.	\$222,388	67
17	Buserini Group	Henderson, Nev.	\$220,489	51.1
18	Pat Hiban Real Estate Group	Glen Burnie, Md.	\$220,288	27
19	Lentz Team Associates	Eagan, Minn.	\$220,104	77.5
20	Rushforth Team	Ottawa, Ontario	\$218,256	27.8
21	Real Estate Nate	Valencia, Calif.	\$216,770	12
22	Fabulous Properties Team	Pleasanton, Calif.	\$203,733	7
23	Jana Caudill Team	Schererville, Ind.	\$199,678	17.6
24	The Clark Team	Temecula, Calif.	\$195,863	47
25	The Millman Team	Torrance, Calif.	\$195,216	22.7
26	Chapman Team	Palmdale, Calif.	\$187,055	54.7
27	The Rugolo Team	Scottsdale, Ariz.	\$186,535	47.7
28	Mike Clarke Group	Toronto, Ontario	\$184,370	24.5
29	The Gorham Group	Woodbridge, Va.	\$184,369	42.2
30	Sanders and Associates	Denver, Colo.	\$184,021	79.5
31	The Dan Wolf Team	Anchorage, Alaska	\$183,459	24
32	Nancy Villasenor Team	Palmdale, Calif.	\$183,238	46.5
33	Solwick Group	Santa Rosa, Calif.	\$179,005	27
34	The Scheiffley Team	Woodbridge, Va.	\$171,973	50.1
35	MS Gulf Coast-Biloxi Commercial	Biloxi, Miss.	\$171,088	3
36	Bruce Slaton & Company	Elk Grove, Calif.	\$170,493	37.3
37	The Elite Partners	Palmdale, Calif.	\$169,521	40.1
38	The Belt Team	McLean, Va.	\$165,692	9
39	Nastro Team	Elk Grove, Calif.	\$164,620	35.6
40	McCarty Team	Marco Island, Fla.	\$163,667	9
41	Dean Rinker Real Estate Group	Fair Oaks, Calif.	\$160,825	38.8
42	TeamWerk Realty	San Diego, Calif.	\$157,247	30.3
43	M & R Strategies	La Mesa, Calif.	\$156,984	30
44	Mayol Group	Palmdale, Calif.	\$154,540	38.6
45	The Rigeys	Sacramento, Calif.	\$152,072	46.8
46	The Livingston Group	Temecula, Calif.	\$150,334	17
47	McGregor Team, LLC	Chantilly, Va.	\$147,868	14
48	Shane & Peggy Clarke	Wellington, Fla.	\$147,690	7
49	Atchley Group	Edmond, Okla.	\$146,813	13
50	REO Team	Sterling Heights, Mich.	\$145,527	76.5



# TOP MONEY MAKERS\*

\*Total profit equals owner profit plus profit share. February 2008 through January 2009

	NAME	CITY, STATE	OP	TL	TOTAL PROFIT
1	Austin Southwest	Austin, Texas	Mary Tennant	Eric Copper	\$1,173,684
2	Antelope Valley	Palmdale, Calif.	Sam Rafeh	Amy Constantine	\$924,666
3	Heritage	San Antonio, Texas	Mark Willis	David Jones Jr.	\$888,337
4	Atlanta - Sandy Springs	Atlanta, Ga.	C. Shaun Rawls	Steve Kout	\$840,515
5	Austin Northwest	Austin, Texas	Mary Tennant	Linda Bartlett	\$803,208
6	Roseville	Roseville, Calif.	Wayne Hall	Brent Grove	\$794,644
7	Dallas DFW	Southlake, Texas	John Davis	Lesli Akers	\$776,437
8	Dallas Preston Road	Dallas, Texas	David Osborn	Brett Caldwell	\$761,512
9	Houston Metropolitan	Houston, Texas	Mark Willis	Candace Caspersen	\$740,265
10	Vancouver, Wash.	Vancouver, Wash.	Patti Siebold	Brian Combs	\$663,437
11	Asheville	Asheville, N.C.	Michael Tavener	Michael Zullo	\$662,850
12	Atlanta - Sugarloaf	Duluth, Ga.	Bryan Fair	Paige Powers	\$643,431
13	Manassas	Manassas, Va.	Lee Beaver	Cheri Corrado	\$638,339
14	Albuquerque	Albuquerque, N.M.	John Davis	Tina Eberly	\$593,284
15	Metairie	Metairie, La.	Steve Dwyer	Lucy D'Angelo	\$558,944
16	Ottawa	Ottawa, Ontario	Jeff Hooper	Sunny Daljit	\$556,396
17	Summit	Summit, N.J.	Cara Moxley	Debra Ann Meckbach	\$528,756
18	Greater Portland	Portland, Ore.	Dottie Bowe	Mark Richard	\$522,407
19	Richmond West	Richmond, Va.	Tipper Williams	Michael Maloney	\$506,335
20	Charlotte - South Park	Charlotte, N.C.	Ed Arrington	Amy Hawke	\$497,246
21	Atlanta - Peachtree Road	Atlanta, Ga.	C. Shaun Rawls	Brad Feiman	\$484,458
22	The Woodlands	The Woodlands, Texas	Judith Hopkins	Diane Flicker	\$483,395
23	Exton	Exton, Pa.	Cindy Dickerman	Jason Reed	\$482,756
24	Scottsdale - Southwest	Scottsdale, Ariz.	James D. Dunning	Philip Rankin Cooney	\$479,018
25	Ballantyne Area	Charlotte, N.C.	Brenda Benson	Ann Yountz	\$466,745
26	Plano	Plano, Texas	Dick Dillingham	Scott Scribner	\$463,811
27	Atlanta - West Cobb	Marietta, Ga.	Chris Ferguson	Kim Jeans	\$461,749
28	Edmond	Edmond, Okla.	Mo Anderson	Susan Miller	\$457,984
29	Blue Bell	Blue Bell, Pa.	Michael Campo	Courtney Franklin	\$453,173
30	Denver Tech Center	Englewood, Colo.	Don Yoakum	James Slinkard	\$451,858
31	NW Tampa	Tampa, Fla.	Nicola Ubaldini	Michele R. Wright	\$432,642
32	Baton Rouge	Baton Rouge, La.	Larry Champagne	Mary Garner DeVoe	\$425,018
33	Grand Rapids East	Grand Rapids, Mich.	Karol Cooley	Jon Jackson	\$424,455
34	Conroe/Lake Conroe / Magnolia/Huntsville	Conroe, Texas	Ruth P. Smith	Amanda P. Rutt	\$406,285
35	Kitchener	Kitchener, Ontario	Jim Reitzel	Jason Shantz	\$403,464
36	San Antonio IH-10	San Antonio, Texas	Mark Willis	Wendi Harrelson	\$386,591
37	Boise	Boise, Idaho	Erica Hill	Carla Thompson	\$384,502
38	Hollywood Hills	Los Angeles, Calif.	Paul Morris	TBA	\$378,903
39	Lake Ridge	Woodbridge, Va.	Debbi Gorham	Sherry Daminski	\$368,899
40	Reno North	Reno, Nev.	Robert Clement	Melanie Kennemann	\$364,421
41	Round Rock	Round Rock, Texas	Steve Schlueter	Avis Wukasch	\$360,898
42	Lake Travis	Austin, Texas	Mary Tennant	Mary Lynne Gibbs	\$360,110
43	Sonoran Living - Phoenix	Phoenix, Ariz.	Barry F. Kramer	Mary Ann Monroe	\$359,053
44	Clarksville	Clarksville, Tenn.	Mark Kelly	Kevin Van Aken	\$356,212
45	Overland Park	Overland Park, Kan.	Judy Johns	Sheri Dyer	\$355,692
46	South Tampa	Tampa, Fla.	Kevin Chadwick	Patricia Kuhn	\$354,210
47	Bucks County Central	Doylestown, Pa.	Paul Allen	Debbie Hensleigh	\$349,542
48	Cary	Cary, N.C.	Linda Fair	Linda Fair	\$348,350
49	Huntsville	Huntsville, Ala.	Christine Petroff	Robert Simons	\$346,604
50	Atlanta - Northeast	Snellville, Ga.	Bryan Fair	Janice Baldwin	\$343,874



“

We cannot overlook the critical importance of a criminal background check.

”

*Avis Wukasch is team leader of the Round Rock (Texas) market center. Having recently been ranked among the 100 Most Influential Women in Real Estate, Avis currently serves as a commissioner for the Texas Real Estate Commission and is the immediate past chairman of the board for the Texas Association of REALTORS®. On the forefront of regulatory issues affecting real estate professionals in Texas, Wukasch is certified to teach continuing education and pre-licensure classes on agency, marketing, law and contracts.*

## What is in the background?

### How well do you really know the people who work for you?

The staff and associates of most real estate offices have access to keys that enable them to enter the homes of private citizens at will. How far have you checked into their backgrounds? How well do you know the people on the staff of the market center or those who serve as assistants to associates?

Many states have enacted laws that require fingerprinting for new licensees in order for the licensing agency to perform a thorough criminal background check before issuing a real estate license. Colorado and Texas are going through the process of checking not only new licensees but all current licensees through the FBI criminal records.

Why does this matter to us? We need to have a process in place for searching into the history of individuals who may have access to private information and the properties we have listed. We also need a policy and a process for keeping private information private.

#### DIG DEEP

We at Keller Williams Realty, are well trained in an awesome process, called RSTLM, to find the right skill set and the best behavioral match for specific roles. But we cannot overlook the critical importance of a criminal background check. If you hire a service to assist you in the hiring of employees, be sure you know and understand their screening process. If you have an in-house screening and hiring process, be sure that it includes a policy for checking the criminal

history of potential employees, with criteria for that which would cause a candidate to be disqualified. Be sure that the policy also applies to agents' assistants who may work outside of the market center.

#### FIRST THINGS FIRST

The policy for the Round Rock (Texas) market center presumes that a background check is performed only after a suitable candidate has been selected and offered a job contingent upon an acceptable report. Our policy also defines how this information will be handled and who will have access to the information. We have a form signed by the employee candidate authorizing a criminal background check. This policy, like all others, should be applied consistently in all cases.

Any policy of this nature, which your market center chooses to create, should be sent to your attorney for compliance with state and federal law. Time spent on these matters upfront may well spare you the time drain down the road of answering depositions and signing subpoenas.

# Events Calendar

Unless otherwise noted, visit ([www.kellerwilliamsuniversity.com](http://www.kellerwilliamsuniversity.com)) or ([www.mapsinstitute.com](http://www.mapsinstitute.com)) to register for these training sessions.

## Franchise Systems Orientation and Market Center Skills

OP MCA AGT TL ALC TC PC

April 20 - 24

Keller Williams Realty's foundational courses are taught during Franchise Systems Orientation week. The week includes:

**Market Center Skills:** From new market centers, to expert team leaders, take advantage of all that Keller Williams Realty has to offer in 2009. Here are the most important educational courses that are being offered in Austin, Texas in April.

- Team Leader Boot Camp
- OP Clinic
- MCA Mastery
- Market Center Financials
- Fierce Conversations
- Time Management with the 411
- Train the Trainer 11

## MAPS Institute Masterminds

OP MCA AGT TL ALC TC PC

April 27 - 30

Skill-building seminars are led by Gary Keller, Mark Willis, Mary Tennant and a host of talented leaders. Collaborative peer-group sessions allow you to share problem-solving techniques and hard-won wisdom, while learning powerful new ways to succeed in business.

- **OP Masterminds:** April 27-28
- **TL Masterminds:** April 29-30
- **Agent Masterminds:** April 28-29
- **Productivity Coach Masterminds:** April 28-29
- **MCA Masterminds:** April 29-30
- **Tech Masterminds:** April 29-30

## FIERCE Conversations

OP MCA AGT TL ALC TC PC

April 20 - 21, July 15-16

Fierce conversations® teaches you how to ignite productive dialogue that interrogates reality, provokes learning, resolves tough challenges and enriches relationships.

**Led by:** Antoinette Perez in Austin, Texas.

## Certified ProManage Instructor Training

OP MCA AGT TL ALC TC PC

June 10 - 12

In this three-day training workshop, you will gain the knowledge and resources necessary to teach hands-on computing workshops to your associates. The curriculum will include live ProManage, as well as transition training from Top Producer 7i to the new Top Producer 8i.

**Led by:** Dean Poole in Austin, Texas.

## Team Leader Boot Camp

OP MCA AGT TL ALC TC PC

April 20 - 21, July 15 - 16

Team Leader Boot Camp is Keller Williams University's new regional training class that teaches you how to master the three P's of the team leader role: People, Production and Profit. You will learn the importance of building relationships and mastering job one – recruiting – through the best practices and scripts from top recruiters in the company.

**March 17-19:** Northwest Region and

**March 17-19:** Greater Pennsylvania Region

**March 25-27:** Maryland/ DC Region

## SHIFT into Overdrive:

## The Tactics to Succeed Now

You can't control the market, but you can control what you do!

OP MCA AGT TL ALC TC PC

In this one-day seminar, you'll discover the action steps that top agents across the country are taking and the skills you need to defy the downturn. This market shift will create new leaders – where will you be when the checkered flag flies? It's time to put the pedal to the metal!

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March 27 ..... Houston, Texas  
April 1 ..... Vancouver, B.C.  
April 2 ..... Minneapolis, Minn.  
April 3 ..... Chicago, Ill.  
April 6 ..... San Diego, Calif.  
April 13 ..... Denver, Colo.  
April 16 ..... Calgary, Alberta  
April 16 ..... Pittsburgh, Pa.  
April 17 ..... Philadelphia, Pa.  
April 20 ..... Dallas, Texas  
April 21 ..... White Plains, N.Y.  
April 22 ..... Seattle, Wash.  
April 23 ..... Portland, Ore.  
May 5 ..... Orlando, Fla.  
May 6 ..... Baltimore, Md.  
May 7 ..... Indianapolis, Ind.  
May 8 ..... Columbus, Ohio  
May 12 ..... St. Louis, Mo.  
May 13 ..... Detroit, Mich.  
May 14 ..... Cleveland, Ohio  
May 15 ..... Boston, Mass.  
May 27 ..... Salt Lake City, Utah  
May 28 ..... Phoenix, Ariz.  
May 29 ..... Las Vegas, Nev.  
June 3 ..... Raleigh, N.C.  
June 10 ..... Toronto, Ontario  
June 10 ..... Oakland, Calif.  
June 11 ..... Albany, N.Y.  
June 11 ..... Los Angeles, Calif.

For more information on the SHIFT tour or to register, go to ([www.millionairesystems.com](http://www.millionairesystems.com))

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**AGT** Agent

**TL** Team Leader

**ALC** Associate Leadership Council

**TC** Tech Coordinator

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-Carlene Kucera, Keller Williams Realty, Elk Grove, CA

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**RED DAY 2009**  
Renew | Energize | Donate

The culture at Keller Williams Realty is getting stronger all the time, and no where was that more clear than during last month's Family Reunion. Knowing that Together Everyone Achieves More, Mark Willis announced that May 14, 2009 will be designated as RED Day for every market center throughout North America – and will provide an opportunity to celebrate Keller Williams Realty's collective energy and spirit. This will be one of the biggest events ever undertaken by a real estate company and will honor our vice chairman, Mo Anderson in the most appropriate way possible. To learn more, visit ([www.kw.com/redday](http://www.kw.com/redday)).

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**5.14.2009**

### CORRECTION

In the previous issue of OutFront Julie Rainbolt was recognized for being named No. 37 to the 2008 LORE Top 200 list of Top Individuals by Sides. Her market center affiliation should have appeared as DFW Metro Southwest. Congratulations Julie!



## “I’ve never seen **anything** like this!”

by Elizabeth Millard



Dave Kratovil (right) with son, David.

Three years ago, **Dave Kratovil**, associate with the Marysville (Wash.) market center, was hit with severe, degenerative arthritis, and not long after, his wife decided to leave, essentially making him a single parent of two children.

Kratovil had gotten off to a strong start with his market center – closing 30 transactions in his first year, and 35 in the second, but the physical demands of the work proved challenging. Just when he’d scheduled another hip surgery, his son, David, began having back pain, and numbness in his right arm.

Tests revealed that David had multiple tumors along his spinal column, requiring extensive chemotherapy and intense medical intervention.

“The whole thing was a total shock,” he recalls. “When most people get cancer, they have time to think about options, but David’s situation was so severe that he was rushed right into intensive care.”

The market center immediately pitched in to help, raising more than \$3,000 in a bowling tournament so that Kratovil could make the 70-mile trek to the hospital every day, pay bills and buy groceries.

Kratovil sent an email to everyone in the market center, thanking them for all their efforts, and a fellow agent forwarded the message to KW Cares.

“Most of my life, I’ve tried to help other people, and I never thought I’d be the one getting that kind of help,” he says. “I was touched that someone else cared enough to forward that on, and when I heard from KW Cares that I would be getting a grant, I was shocked.”

He’d never thought of asking KW Cares directly, he says, because he admits that pride and ego had gotten in the way. “I’m the dad, and I’m supposed to be able to take care of my son, but that reluctance to ask for help wasn’t

doing me any favors.”

At the same time, Kratovil was dealing with his own physical challenges – still in need of two hip replacements which would add to the expense of the 14 prior surgeries.

Despite the daunting medical bills, he says that Keller Williams Realty has helped him to stay determined, positive and upbeat.

“I’ve worked for many companies, and I’ve never seen anything like this,” he says. “The level of caring is amazing to me. The company doesn’t have to offer this, and people in the market centers don’t need to help out like this, and yet they all come together when someone is in need,” Kratovil adds, noting that the efforts of his market center and the generosity of KW Cares have changed him from an associate with a casual attitude into a passionate Keller Williams cheerleader.

“I was nonchalant about KW Cares and the company when I first started,” he says. “But to see this level of caring has changed my opinion completely. It’s taken me to a point where my loyalty is beyond compare.” **kw**

“

I’m the dad, and I’m supposed to be able to take care of my son, but that reluctance to ask for help wasn’t doing me any favors.

- Dave Kratovil, Marysville, Wash.

”

# RED

# AL

## INTERNATIONAL LEADER NAMED BY NAR

**Carol Kope**, associate with the Northern Westchester/Putnam market center, was recently named the National Association of REALTORS® president's liaison to FIAIP/Italy. FIAIP/Italy is one of 76 international real estate associations with which the NAR maintains special relations and cooperating

association agreements. Kope's position will be significant to maintaining important relationships with foreign real estate associates for NAR.

She will also act as host to the president and visiting delegations during NAR's conventions and maintain an open line of communication so that members of

both organizations can benefit from the relationship. Currently, Kope is assisting the Italian association FIAIP in establishing a countrywide MLS with the French association and planning a joint trade mission for 2009 with the president's liaison to Greece.

In addition to her designation as a Certified International Property Specialist, Kope helped establish the International Real Estate Committee at the New York State Association of REALTORS® and sits on NAR's International Operations Committee.

▲ Above: Carol Kope, associate, Northern Westchester/Putnam market center



## PAYING IT DOWN AND FORWARD

Recently, the Arlington (Va.) market center took the lead in rallying support for a special cause. The first of many charitable actions, the ALC Committee put together an inaugural KW ACTS (Keller Williams Arlington Community Total Support) event. Struggling with a large mortgage, the local Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC) was the first organization to benefit from their support and, in response, the market center set out to raise money so that AFAC may be less encumbered financially and freer to use funds toward feeding those in need. Filled with food, fun and the famous, **Gayle**

**Fleming**, associate and **Kathy Fong**, associate and chair of their ALC Community Outreach Program, put together the "Pay it Down – Pay it Forward" benefit and community-wide auction. "The event spoke to our culture and about who we are as a company. It's the reason many of us joined Keller Williams Realty to begin with," says Fong.

Special celebrity guests included Sen. Blanche Lincoln, founder of Senate Food Cause, Malaak Compton Rock, most known as the host of "Oprah's Big Give," and Sabrina Soto, star of HGTV's "Get It Sold" and an AFAC advocate. Fleming, Fong and the entire Arlington community raised \$26,775 for AFAC. "I am so proud of my fellow associates for doing what many people said could not be done given the economy and the tough times," says Fong.



▲ Above: Kathy Fong and Gayle Fleming with guest.

Guests mingle at the inaugural KW ACTS event to support the local Arlington Food Assistance Center.

# LOVER

## KICKING OFF 2009 IN THE LIMELIGHT

**Pete Whan**, associate with the Pasadena market center, demonstrated the power of team work as the National Association of REALTORS® float decorating Captain for the 120th Rose Parade. A Pasadena native, Whan recruited hundreds of REALTORS® to volunteer more than 10,000 hours to lend a hand with decorations.

The enormous float, titled "Celebrating the Dream of Homeownership for 100 years," reinforced the critical role that real estate professionals have played for 100 years. Whan and the volunteers' work paid off in the form of the Isabella Coleman trophy for "Best Presentation of Color and Harmony through Floral Use." The Pasadena Tournament of Roses Association selected the REALTOR® float from 45 other entries.

▼ The beautiful NAR float covered with more than 50,000 flowers and foliage.



▲ Taking a break from decorating, a group of volunteers pose in front of the unfinished NAR float, which won a trophy at the Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena.

## PALM SPRINGS GOES TO THE DOGS!

Though the holidays hit many families harder than usual in 2008, the Palm Springs market center didn't forget one important member: the pets. Teaming up with Save-A-Pet, Inc., **Barbara Andrew**, associate,

coordinated a donation drive for pets by asking each agent in the market center to donate blankets, towels, food, leashes, toys and any other items that could help homeless pets in the Coachella Valley area. "The response was overwhelming," says Andrew.

"These pets are

not strays or wild, but family members suddenly found without a home and a loving family."

Following the collection, Thom Daves from Save-A-Pet, Inc., and his ambassador "Rusty" picked up the donated items. "This fund-raiser has fostered an effort on the part of our agents to identify and place other animals in homes," says Andrew, "it has been a 'win-win' event!"

▲ Above: From left to right: Michael Hilgenberg, owner and broker, Barbara Andrew, associate, and Vicki Dawson, team leader, deliver the donated items to "Rusty," the ambassador for Save-A-Pet, Inc.





## A WORD OF THANKS

Dear Mo,

This letter is to thank all of the people in my KW family and all of the market centers who contribute to KW Cares.

On June 12, 2008 I was diagnosed with stage-four cancer. Needless to say, my world was immediately turned upside down. My fellow KW agents from my market center in Wellington, Fla., and sister office in Greenacres, Fla., immediately started planning how they could help me and my family. The KW Cares committee helped me to apply for a KW Cares grant. Meanwhile my home office provided the proceeds from a successful Pot Luck Dinner, and our sister office in Greenacres also provided proceeds from a successful Bowl-A-Thon.

You dear people didn't even know me or my family, yet you helped meet our needs with a KW Cares grant. All I can say is THANK YOU FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART!

What a tremendous burden you lifted from my shoulders. I am humbled to say that through many, many prayers, God was gracious enough to heal me of my cancer, and I am back to work now, although not every day. I was proud to be a Keller Williams agent before my illness, now I am a walking billboard for Keller Williams Realty. I wish I could shake every hand and hug every neck of every one of you.

May God bless each and every one of you!

Sincerely,

**Paul McClung**, associate  
Wellington (Fla.) market center



Dear Mo:

My miracle at the Main Event, was meeting you and my new Keller Williams family! I left RE/MAX on January 28, 2009, to fly "one-way" to Florida where I had planned to sell motorcycles and then work my way back home to Seattle collecting stories for a book I was planning to write on the way.

While I do not have a wife and children who were depending on me, I was content, even confident, in my plans to fly out on February 2. My loved ones, however, were not okay with my decision. Out of respect and consideration, I decided to postpone my plans for at least 40 days.

On February 3, I was invited to a Keller Williams office near the neighborhoods that I've been working in over the last seven years. I learned many things while I was there, but most importantly to me, I learned that this is a company that lives out its core values of God and family first, work second. This resounded with me intensely as these values have always been mine as well. I also learned that I could "hang" my license for 90 percent less than I had with my previous company. I signed up.

I also saw a poster that said, "The Main Event – FAMILY REUNION 2009." ... In Florida?! Are you kidding me? I had to go! And, by the grace of God, and some help from my friends and family, I went and found that my friends and "family" grew exponentially!

May God richly bless my new family and friends!





**Dave Blakeslee**, associate  
Everett (Wash.) market center



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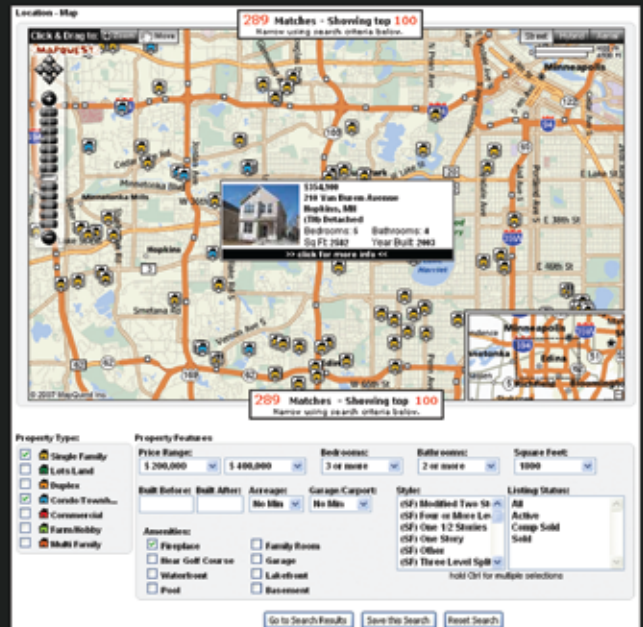
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## My Dear Family,

**What a joy it was to meet with so many of you at Family Reunion last month. Every Family Reunion is special in its own way, and our 2009 event was among the most exciting ever.**

I felt like I was going to burst with pride for all of you when Mark Willis, our CEO, announced that Keller Williams Realty is now the third-largest real estate company in the United States. Witnessing your energy and your power, there was no question in my mind that we are a company of destiny. We have the models and the systems to continue to gain market share during uncertain market conditions, and most importantly, we have you.

Our research shows that Family Reunion provides associates with a big boost to profitability and profits, and I am so thrilled to know that. What thrills me even more is your generosity, your compassion and your determination to do the right thing, and I am so proud of the legacies that you are creating.

That's what we celebrate every year at our Inspirational Brunch.

Even though I knew that the story had a happy ending, my heart sank as **Robin Phillips**, operating principal from the Greensboro and Winston Salem market centers, retold how he collapsed from a near

fatal heart attack in his hotel room in Austin, Texas, on the final day of Mega Camp last August. His heart attack revealed a life-threatening condition, which called for emergency, open-heart surgery.

No one could have anticipated what was in store for the Phillips family that day, but the way we mobilized, you would have thought that a designated care team had been practicing a rapid response plan for weeks. **Gloria Wommack**, his team leader, jumped in the back of the ambulance and rode with him to the hospital. Back in Greensboro,

Of course, we are not just role models within our market centers and our communities. During our Inspirational Brunch, we had the privilege to hear from another special guest, **Paul Desrochers**, who introduced his precious 11-year-old granddaughter, Emily, to us. Paul and his wife, Dorothy, are associates at the Ottawa Westside Ontario market center, and being in their presence reminded me how every day, we have the opportunity to model within our families how to live.

Four years ago, Emily learned about Tyler Huneault, a little boy who suffers from Sialidosis, a fatal enzyme disorder that causes toxins to build up in his body. To help raise money and find a cure for this horrible disease, she held a garage sale to sell her toys.

Since then, she's become close friends with Tyler, and her garage sales have become an annual, communitywide event, raising both awareness and more than \$17,500. Emily's story was a powerful reminder that our age or any other limiting belief should never hold us back from our true greatness.

My heartfelt thanks to Emily, Paul, Dorothy, Robin, Cathy – and to all of our special guests at the Inspirational Brunch – for sharing your stories of courage and compassion, and for reminding us all that the worst of situations can call us to the very best that is within us.

Yours in compassion,

*Mo Anderson*

Mo Anderson  
Vice Chairman,  
Keller Williams Realty



**Ninel Perez-Teague**, MCA, received word and raced over to the Phillips' home to pick up Robin's wife, Cathy, and accompany her on the plane ride to Austin. And so many others jumped in to help.

When you lead from the heart, it's contagious.



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