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**Neil
Kearney**

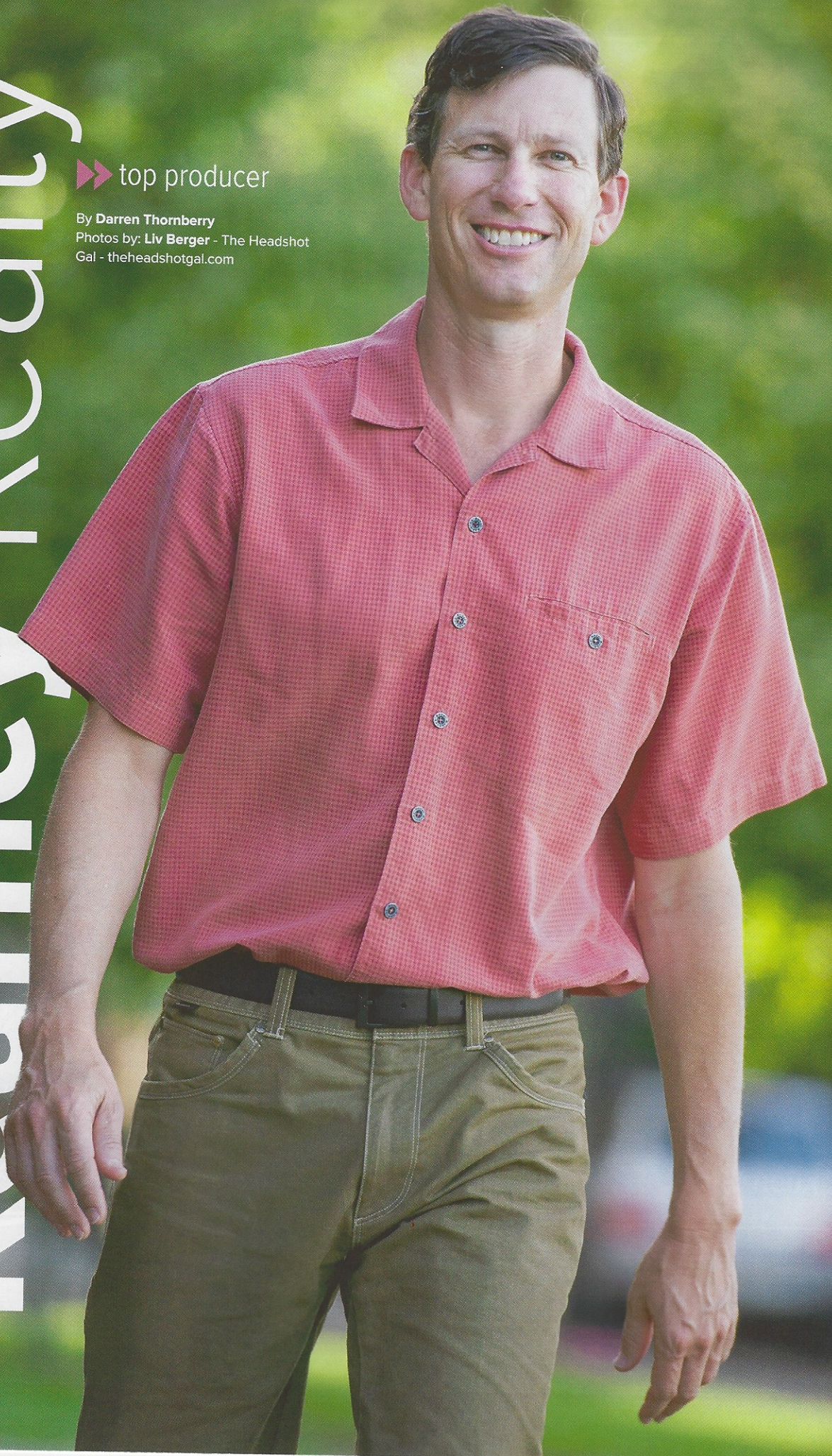


OCTOBER 2019

Kearney Realty

▶ top producer

By **Darren Thornberry**
Photos by: **Liv Berger** - The Headshot
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Integrity is the Legacy

There are many clichés about surviving hard times (think lemons and lemonade), and people are fond of saying that they all have a kernel of truth in them. But a cliché is nothing like the true human story you're about to read. The story of Neil Kearney, broker/owner of Kearney Realty, can't be reduced to a cute sentence with a sappy message. It's much more than that. It's about a man with a work ethic as strong as steel who has weathered some deep personal storms but remains joyful, with an attitude of service that has been his ethos for decades. Kearney is widely known. He specializes in residential real estate throughout Boulder County. Neil graciously spent some time with Real Producers to talk about what makes him tick. Guess what: It isn't real estate.

Neil, who grew up in Boulder, stayed home for his first two years of college at CU and graduated from Principia College (Elsah, IL), with a bachelor's degree in business administration. He came home to tackle an MBA at CU but decided (self-starter that he is) to work in real estate so he could fund his graduate program. This wasn't a random choice. By that time, his parents had been REALTORS® for eight years. Neil's mother Jo Kearney was already a top producer in Boulder. So he forged ahead, working and studying until he finished grad school. "I told myself I'll do it just long enough to get through school and find something else," Neil recalls. "But by the time I graduated, business was going really well!"

That doesn't mean it all just fell into place, though. When he started full-time as a REALTOR® at age 23, he looked about 15 and had to work hard to gain clients' trust. The babyface impeded overnight success!

Metro Brokers was a big part of Neil's early journey as a REALTOR®. His father John ran the office for years, and that's where Neil landed as a broker right out of college. Mother Jo was working for another agency at the time but eventually joined the family company. The Kearneys were a family force to be reckoned with, guided by Jo's motto for life: Lead with love. "Mom was very charismatic and showed love to everyone in every interaction," Neil says. "She taught me to be of service and to lead with love."

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John Kearney retired in 2008 and Neil then took over his family's business in full, going completely independent as Kearney Realty in 2012 with a small crew of agents. And it was his father John who demonstrated integrity, calmness, and consistency to Neil — three principles he relies on in business and his personal life every day.

But even when the market was wobbly and slow circa 2008-2010, Kearney got out exactly what he put in. He showed up on time, took care of his clients, asked where and how he could serve them, and worked his butt off (as he still does) to write his regular newsletter, blog, and neighborhood guide. It was only a matter of time until things changed, and change they did in ways he could not see coming.



Storms and How to Weather Them Well

In 2015, John Kearney died. Five months later, Neil's mother Jo was also gone. And in November 2018, Neil's beloved wife of 25 years, Kristy, passed away. It would be a fool's errand to try to put on paper what these family members mean to Neil and his sons Jake, 23, and Ben, 19, but suffice to say the losses are profound.

Jo's and Kristy's desks are quiet now, which has been a big transition for Neil. Kristy was with him at work three or four afternoons a week. Neil took some time off, but found that the structure and interactions in his workday were good therapy. Meeting interesting new people every day keeps him moving forward, even if he can't see all that the future holds.

"The principles of how I do business haven't changed," he says. "I've always had a deep well of joy that can't be tapped out. That's who I am. Of course, the situation is hard in some ways, but I have so much to be grateful for. I still consider myself very fortunate. It's a matter of finding new routines to express that and be thoughtful as I move on in life."

Neil's long-standing spiritual community at First Church of Christ, Scientist, has rallied around his family, and his own deeply held faith has been an anchor. And after everything that's happened, what gets him out of bed in the morning? "In the end, it has nothing to do with houses. It's about serving people in a smooth, efficient, frictionless way. I take care of the details, and I'm grateful to be able to serve."

Neil's work as a REALTOR® has included long-term volunteer positions going back to 1998: BARA treasurer, BARA President, and IRES Board of Managers and Professional Standards at both the local and state level. Lauren Hansen, IRES CEO: "Neil served as an IRES Manager (MLS Director) for over a decade and it was not only a pleasure to work with him, but a privilege. The list of adjectives I could use to describe Neil is lengthy: Fair, balanced, thoughtful, and humble would be at the top of the list. He lives and breathes high standards and his perspective was always valued by our leadership."

Neil is hands-on, to put it mildly. What he loves about real estate are the many hats that he wears on every given day. Depending on what needs to be done, he is the CEO, treasurer, marketer, photographer, writer, janitor, negotiator, trusted advisor, and more. He doesn't get burned out by his work because his attitude is rooted in gratitude. "The process is important to me," he says. "I'm an old-fashioned guy, and I keep to what I'm good at. I work within my core competencies and it keeps the ball rolling. I try to live up to the integrity that I aspire to."

