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Kathi Combs-Byrd

Southern Indiana Realtor of the Year

**Kathi Combs-Byrd Named Southern Indiana’s 2017 Realtor of the Year**

*Local Agent Honored for Service to Clients, Colleagues, Community*

**Clarksville, IN:** The Southern Indiana REALTORS’ Association (SIRA) has announced that lifelong Indiana resident and Jackson County native Kathi Combs-Byrd of Schuler Bauer Real Estate Services has been named Realtor of the Year for 2017. She will receive her award on Friday, December 8, at 7 pm at the Horseshoe Casino, Elizabeth, Indiana.

Unlike many realtor awards that celebrate only sales volume, this award is multifaceted; it recognizes one realtor each year who stands out in every one of the following areas:

* Realtor spirit and ethics
* Civic activity
* Business accomplishments
* Southern Indiana Realtor Association (SIRA) participation
* Participation in state-wide and nationwide realtor associations.

Recipients are not only top performers on the job, but they also give back to both their colleagues and their community. Combs-Byrd excels in all of the above. Her motto is, not surprisingly, “Pay It Forward.”

**PAY IT FORWARD**

Combs-Byrd attributes this motto to the amount of support she has received from others. She credits her entrance into the real estate field to her mentor and former boss, Kenny McKeand. Coming back to Seymour after graduating from Indiana Wesleyan University, she took a position in McKeand’s optical shop, eventually becoming manager. McKeand, the optician, witnessed her easy interaction with customers, how she won their trust, and her knack for listening to their wishes carefully.

“They’d tell Kathi what they liked and how they wanted to look. She’d listen, then go and find them the perfect frame for their face, time after time,” McKeand recalled. “With a talent like that, I thought she could do something bigger than manage an optical shop. I suggested real estate.”

Combs-Byrd credits her eventual transition to real estate to McKeand’s continued support and encouragement. Today, she has accumulated over 20 years of success in real estate sales, new construction, property management, appraisals, and commercial sales and leasing.

One of her first real estate brokers was the late Donn Bisop of Century 21 Donn Bishop Real Estate. He was a significant role model for her as a leader at work, in his church, and in his community, serving them all with care and humility. Under his mentoring, Combs-Byrd went on to become a consistently top-producing and award-winning agent at Century 21, Coldwell Banker, and now at Schuler Bauer Real Estate Services in New Albany and Seymour, Indiana. With so many people who demonstrated their belief in her and who contributed to her success, she now looks for opportunities to “pay it forward.”

**HELPING OTHERS**

In addition to helping train and support new agents at the various real estate offices where she has worked in the past, she particularly enjoys assisting new buyers to find their first home. “What I like most about real estate is helping people and working with them as a team,” Combs-Byrd said. “Seeing that smile on their face at the closing and knowing they are happy makes it all worthwhile!  I feel in my own small way I am helping to make a difference in the lives of others since owning a home is considered an essential part of achieving the American Dream.”

She wants *everyone* to find a home, not just people. Combs-Byrd has been active in animal rescue all her life, including previous volunteer activities with the local Humane Society and Red Skye Animal Rescue.

“I am a huge animal lover and try to help pets find ‘forever homes,’” Combs-Byrd declared. “Adoption of a rescue is one of the greatest gifts you can give. You can get 10,000 times more love back if you decide to adopt. ‘Adopt, Don't Shop!’ is my motto.”

She follows in the footsteps of Donn Bishop and, most of all, her parents, America and the late Vernon B Smith, as an active participant and leader in many civic and professional organizations. From them, she says, she learned her strong work ethic and Christian values, especially integrity and dedication.

Combs-Byrd committed that dedication to serving on the boards of many associations over the years, such as the local American Red Cross, Girls INC, the Jackson County Board of Realtors, the Chamber of Commerce, The United Way, Red Sky Animal Rescue, Leadership Jackson County, and the PHI BETA PSI Sorority, (which raised money for Cancer Research). She continues to help and lead by participating in the XI Beta Alpha Sorority, serving on the Board of Directors of SIRA, and volunteering at the Northside Christian Church in New Albany, where she is a regular attendee. She has held memberships in the Indiana Association of Realtors and the National Association of Realtors since 1992. Her Real Estate background not only includes residential sales, new construction, and relocation, but she also has exntensive experience as a commercial broker, former Indiana Residential Appraiser, and previous property management.

Kathi (AKA “Katbyrd”) and her husband, Travis Byrd, live in Sellersburg with their two children, Alexis, 21, and Camryn, 17, and her beloved rescue Yorkshire Terrier, “Bozkat.” She commutes daily to Seymour, where she helps run the Schuler Bauer Convenience Center that Schuler Bauer opened in April 2017. Kathi sells real estate all the way from Jeffersonville Indiana to Seymour, Indiana!

Call or text Kathi today at 812-521-9200 for all of your real estate needs! You will be glad you did!

[Insert boilerhead verbiage on the Southern Indiana REALTORS’ Association here.]