



Press Release
November 22, 2016

NextHome Southern Realty represents the second franchisee in Alabama
The brokerage to service the Greater Birmingham area

Pleasanton, CA— November 22, 2016 — NextHome is proud to announce our newest office, **NextHome Southern Realty**. The brokerage represents the second NextHome franchisee in the state of Alabama.

The Birmingham-based brokerage will be owned and operated by two married couples - real estate veterans, Jean & Ben Burford and Sharon & Randy McMichael. The brokerage will provide residential real estate sales, land sales, new construction, and investment property sales services to the cities of Birmingham, Mountain Brook, Vestavia Hills, Homewood, Hoover, Trussville, Helena, and the remainder of Shelby and Jefferson Counties.

First meeting eight years ago through church, Jean and Sharon have built a very strong friendship. They participated in church activities together, community events and eventually... starting their real estate careers around the same time.

In 2009, both women started their real estate career at *Realty South – Over the Mountain Alford*. Although they worked as separate agents rather than a team, they both helped push each other to succeed during one of the most difficult times in real estate history.

While they were excited about their new venture in real estate, the entire United States economy was experiencing a freefall of historic proportions.

Jean learned all she could about the foreclosure and Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Home programs. Many properties were being taken back by the bank because of the homeowner's inability to pay the mortgage. As a graduate of the University of Alabama who majored in real estate, Jean did not take her career lightly.

"I remember taking every lead, every phone call, every floor desk opportunity and making the most of it," said Jean. "Before real estate, I was in the insurance industry. That's where I learned the importance of lead follow up. It became the foundation of my real estate business too."

Jean began her yearly streak as being one of the top producers in the entire area, being named as one of *Realty South's* most productive agents annually.

After spending 15 years as a physical education teacher, Sharon made the transition to real estate. She credits her success in real estate to her skills she learned and used as a teacher.

"Being a school teacher requires helping students understand teamwork, leadership, and great communication," said Sharon. "Those skills translate very well into real estate and providing great service to clients."

Combined, Jean and Sharon sell more than \$10 million in sales volume annually in an area where the average sales price is \$225,000.



In 2013, Jean’s husband, Ben, came onboard the team to help with her sales. Ben took the lead on all things marketing, property information distribution, and advertising.

In early 2016, their brokerage was going through a leadership change. During that transition, Jean and Sharon realized it was the perfect opportunity to see what other options they could pursue together. Naturally, the thought of owning their own brokerage was the most appealing option.

“The four of us together makes so much sense when it came to owning a business,” said Sharon. “We have all known each other for so long, we understand what each one of us are capable of contributing to make us successful.”

“With Jean and I in real estate sales, Ben and his extensive marketing background, and Randy with his many years in the construction and building industry, we think we have the team that can lead a really dynamic brokerage,” added Sharon.

In doing her research, Jean found a real estate franchise that fit exactly what she had been looking for in a company. She was excited to share the news with Sharon, but put a spin on the unveiling.

“I told Sharon that I had found the right company to franchise with,” recalls Jean. “But instead of just telling her what company it was, I asked her to do research on her own and tell me who it was. After a day of researching it, Sharon called me and said ‘I know who it is. It’s NextHome, isn’t it?’”

The leadership team at NextHome Southern Realty have made a commitment to making the real estate transaction an enjoyable experience. With great follow up and follow through, their team remains committed to delivering on their promises.

When not selling real estate, the Burfords enjoy traveling, cooking, watching movies, playing bridge, and spending time with family and friends. The married couple of 39 years have two children and a grandson – one-year-old Charlie.

The McMichaels have one daughter, Christie, and are grandparents to Michael (age 6) and Emily (3). The couple of 40 years enjoy doing anything outdoors, as well as spending time with their family.

Please join us in welcoming Jean, Sharon, Ben, Randy and the rest of the team at NextHome Southern Realty to the NextHome family!

Interested in being a part of the NextHome Real Estate Franchise? Contact VP of Sales Charis Moreno at Charis@NextHome.com.

Each office is an independently owned and operated business.

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About NextHome, Inc.



NextHome, Inc. is an independently owned company with a focus on changing the way consumers work with local agents and shop for real estate. It owns the NextHome and Realty World Northern California & Northern Nevada franchise networks with over 260 offices and more than 1600 agents. The company closes over 7000 transactions annually worth over \$2.5B in volume.

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