

Balistreri Realty *in Sapphire*

For Realtor Kathy Balistreri, helping others discover the magic of this corner of Western North Carolina is personal. To find out why she's passionate about her profession and her community, call her at (828) 883-4848 or visit laketoxawayliving.com.



Metisa Collins and Kathy Balistreri

In 1994 Kathy Balistreri, an interior designer and real estate broker, and her realtor husband left South Florida with their two children to take up residence in their vacation home on Lake Toxaway. They had forged a deep connection with the area on a visit in 1983, buying a lot on the lake and building there five years later.

It was a bold move. Kathy had deep roots in her hometown. For three generations, the family's real estate business, Balistreri Realty had been integral to the growth of the Boca Raton and Lighthouse Point communities. Kathy had grown up in the business – working summers during her teen years.

But the couple's affection for South Florida had waned in the 1990's and they had begun to crave something different, a new experience for their family.

"Boca Raton was losing its small-town feeling. We wanted something simpler," Balistreri said. "It was the right choice for our family."

For five years Kathy took a hiatus from work. She played golf at Lake Toxaway Country Club, got involved in the community, and helped her children settle into life on the Plateau. By the year 2000, her children were both at UNC Chapel Hill, so Kathy determined it was time to go back to work. She kept

her Florida license and got her North Carolina license; then launched her own business in Sapphire/Lake Toxaway in 2002. Having started selling real estate at the age of eighteen, (and during her 4 years at Florida State) Kathy learned there is more to being successful than just selling real estate... she realized she is also selling a lifestyle.

Her interior design skills have proven to be an additional asset in assisting her clients find the right property – helping them to visualize what they can do to an older home.

Population on the Plateau has risen as more and more people have left the big cities, putting down roots in rural areas, seeking a deeper connection to the land – all made possible by the increasing viability of working from home.

"Extraordinarily few homes are on the market, and that means home shoppers will really notice fewer options when they go house hunting," said Balistreri. "And it means there's more competition over the homes that do get listed. I have spent as much as four years with a client before finding a property, though the average is anywhere from two months to a year."

Balistreri sells and lists homes, businesses, and lots in all price ranges throughout the Plateau. She can be reached at (828) 883-4848 or laketoxawayliving.com.