

# TOP AGENT

## MAGAZINE



Karen Etter

After nearly thirty years in the real estate business, there isn't much Top Agent Karen Etter hasn't experienced. She has been a broker/owner since the early 1990s, and is currently co-owner of RE/MAX Key Advantage in Effingham, Illinois. "This is a beautiful area with a really nice lake and residential properties along the water," Karen says. "It is very much a vacation destination but there are also local residents who live on the lake year 'round."

The area's location and "small town" feel give Karen and the agents in her office the opportunity to offer services along the full spectrum of real estate, including residential, commercial, farm land, and rental properties. "We all do some of everything," she says. Karen has been involved in numerous new construction projects including the development of Lake Edward, a residential development in Effingham. Most recently, she was a co-developer of Villas on the Hill, Effingham's first condominium development designed for high-end, maintenance free living.

Karen ensures that she and everyone in her office stay ahead of the real estate industry's rapidly changing technology, which she believes offers them a competitive advantage. "Staying ahead of technology allows me market each property to the best of my ability," she says. "We're starting to use drones to highlight the lake properties to give clients an eagle's eye view of what they're actually purchasing."

She also understands that different client groups respond to varied communication styles and adjusts accordingly. "Whether it's first-time homebuyers, move-up buyers, or seniors in transition, each requires a different skill set, but at the root of it all is patience and communication. I have great empathy for my clients and what it means for them to buy or sell a home."

Problem solving is a key skill for any real estate professional, and Karen cites it as one of her greatest strengths. "I feel like there's a solution or a compromise in every situation," she says. "I love being able to work through a problem and come up with a

solution that allows my clients to fulfill their goals," she continues. "Because of my experience I've seen so many problems and worked out so many solutions I'm able to pull from a variety of resources to help solve issues that come up that could potentially compromise a deal."

Karen also draws on her own experience relocating to another state when dealing with clients. "It allowed me to experience the relocation process firsthand," she says. "I know how important it is to have someone local to call for referrals, whether business or personal. As I work through a transaction I always ask myself what is in my client's best interest because that is at the heart of everything."

Helping her clients transition into the next phase of their lives is one of the aspects of the profession Karen finds most rewarding. "Knowing what I'm doing is really having an impact on families and their ability to share memories is meaningful to me," she says. "When someone is buying or selling that means something in their life changing. I like being there to help alleviate the stress and help my clients meet their goals."

Looking ahead, Karen sees herself getting more involved with the commercial side of real estate. "It's something that has always intrigued me," she says. "I'm not intending to move out of the residential segment, but I want to add to my portfolio of knowledge so I can serve clients even more effectively."



To learn more about Karen Etter of RE/MAX Key Advantage, call 217.254.5593, email [karen@karenetter.com](mailto:karen@karenetter.com) or visit [KarenEtter.com](http://KarenEtter.com)