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# Opelika Living



*The  
Callaways*

**WORLD TRAVELERS  
AT HOME IN OPELIKA**

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# THE CALLAWAYS

## World Travelers at Home in Opelika

Life is like a confusing yet beautiful drive down the chaotic streets of a big city, but you can still find your way back home. That's how it's been for Laurel Callaway; after years at Hollins College, Birmingham-Southern College, and as far away as San Francisco State University, Laurel found herself back home in Opelika. Just this time at Grand National.

Today she owns Railroad Investment Group, a financial advisory firm in Downtown Opelika. Her passion to help people to attain financial freedom stems from her personal experiences. After going through a divorce, she found herself in a different financial place than she had envisioned. Yet, it was that change that spurred her to take control of her financial future. Railroad Investment Group is also passionate about partnering with local non-profits, churches, and charities to maximize charitable giving from individuals in the community.

Laurel also serves as a Chamber Ambassador, a member of Opelika Rotary Club, The Mother's Club Study Group, Women's Philanthropy Club, and much more.

While running a business and contributing to her community, Laurel raises her son, Sewell. He is a five-year-old student at Southview Elementary School where he already loves math and he is also a growing athlete. Sewell loves to build with legos and take trips to Home Depot to explore building supplies.



Laurel and Sewell's home church is Church of the Highlands. One story they always look back on for inspiration is the account of Gideon in the Bible. Gideon was a feeble man in the weakest tribe in Israel, but God had a plan for him anyway. Because Gideon was brave and obedient, God's plan for him was accomplished and he was exalted.

"I always tell my son 'be brave like Gideon' when he is fearful or uncertain. Stepping out in faith, confidence and bravery will bring about His purpose in you and it is always greater than you imagined for yourself."

The two are travel buddies and have adventured all over the country as well as overseas together, and spend time in Laurel's fiance's cabin on Lake Huron every summer. To Laurel, valuing and comprehending different people and their cultures is vital. Especially for children.

She says, "Mom loves to travel so Sewell became my travel companion by default. He knows his way around Atlanta airport better than I do!"

The Callaways were the first to live on their street in Grand National with their ten-year-old Pomeranian, Emmet. Besides the Splash Bar where Sewell can play freely and live music is performed, one of Laurel's favorite parts of the neighborhood is that it harbored the genesis of her business partnership with Blake Henry, which led to the launch of Railroad Investment Group.

"We spent a lot of time down at the neighborhood Splash Bar planning and creating our new business; All the while Sewell was swimming," she says.

To motivate herself and her family, Laurel falls back on several mottos, one of which is "Relentlessly focus on and pursue a solution to the problem."

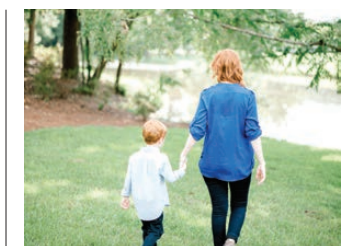
Many things are perpetual in life, problems. Laurel believes that if you focus solely on the problem itself, moving forward is impossible. It is only when you zero-in on finding a solution that you can make progress.

"My son runs around the house all the time saying 'Look, mom, I found a solution!'"

An Opelika native and an immediate member of the family that founded the Piedmont Fertilizer Company, Laurel unexpectedly found her way back to her hometown indefinitely, after planning on staying a month or two. Along with owning a business, raising a son, and much more, she is also engaged to be married this fall.

Grand National, Laurel says, is filled to the brim with acceptance and kindness, as people from all over the country have chosen to live there.

"I believe we have a unique and special place, unlike many others. It is a place that is inviting to new businesses and new families."



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