



## Cover Story

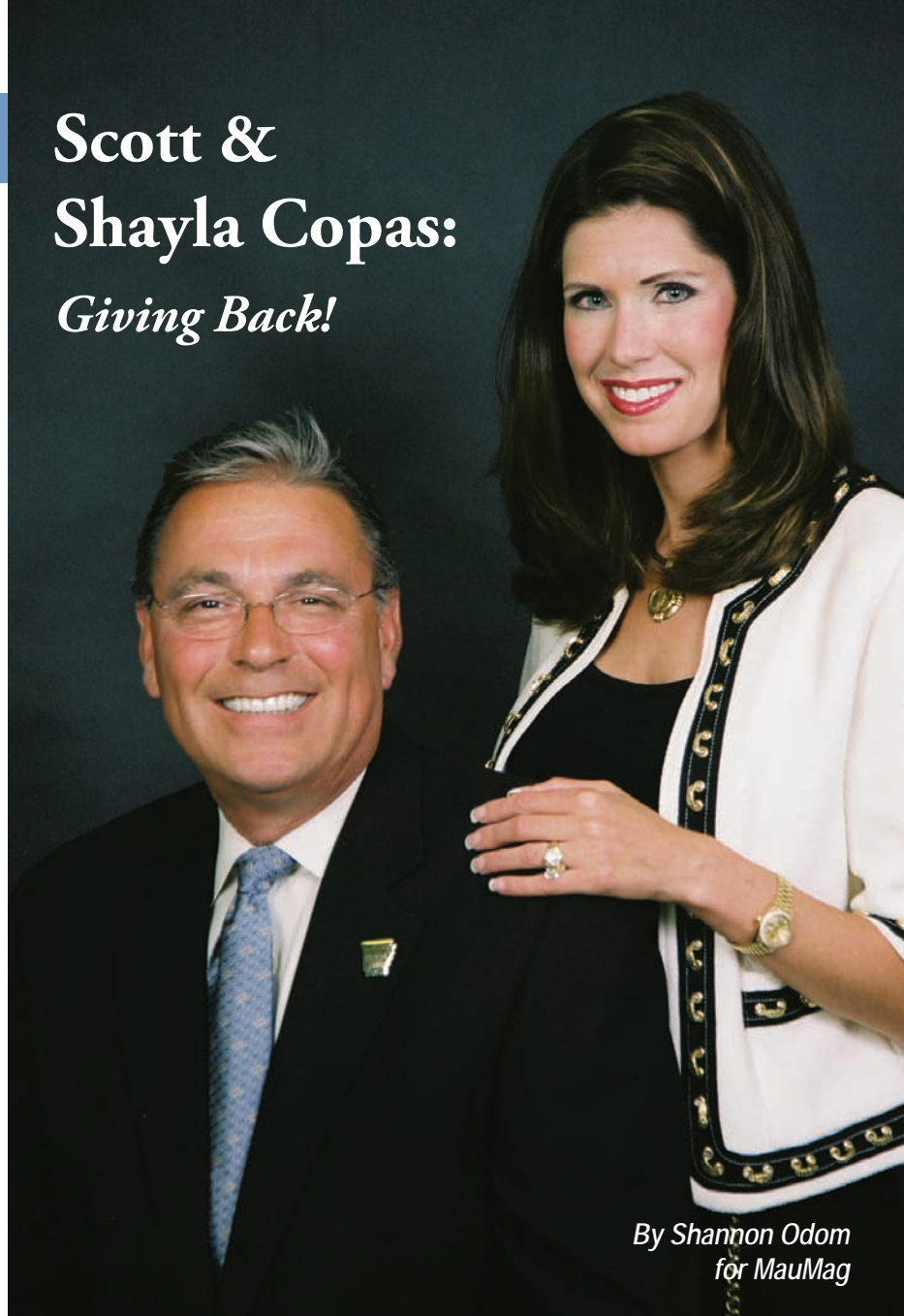
# Scott & Shayla Copas: *Giving Back!*

As I write this story, many emotions overwhelm me. After all, this couple has made a difference in the lives of countless individuals, including me. Is it possible to separate fact from true admiration and adulation? I start by doing just that, to let you be the judge.

Scott and Shayla Copas, Maumelle residents since the 1990's, are very involved- so much so it is part of their personalities. They have one daughter, Chelsey, who attends Central Arkansas Christian, and Scott has three grown children from his previous marriage. Scott was born and raised in Little Rock, a part of the first graduating class of Parkview High School. He then attended the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, majoring in architecture. After completing his freshman year, he took a summer job with a local architect. The following year he changed his major to business, thinking there was something more for him. He worked while attending college his sophomore year and quickly burned out. His first real job was with Rate Forest Industries, designing furniture and detailing furniture parts and his first job in the industry was a detailer for Arkansas Precast Corporation. An estimator position at the Baldwin Company opened up which he accepted, then quickly moved up the ladder. He made project manager in one year; the company is now Baldwin and Shell Construction Company and Scott is a major partner, with the title of Executive Vice President and thirty-one year tenure. Baldwin and Shell handles prestigious projects such as the renovation of Central High School, Barnhill Arena, the chapel at Garvin Gardens in Hot Springs, the Old Main building on the University of Arkansas Fayetteville campus, renovation of Baptist Hospital Little Rock, building Baptist Hospital North Little Rock and the largest parking deck in the State.

The biggest difference between Scott and Shayla's deeds is that Scott works primarily towards industry-related causes and Shayla towards benevolent endeavors. "She pulls me into her stuff and I pull her into mine," Scott says. "It's all worthwhile."

Scott is one of the four original Certified Estimators in the State of Arkansas and Charter member of the Arkansas Chapter of the American Society of Professional Estimators where he served two terms as President and multiple Board terms. "Early in my career, there was no certification in the industry," he states. "This organization changed all that." He has served as President of the Arkansas Chapter of Associated General Contractors of America and currently serves on the local and national Boards. Scott developed a comprehensive membership development and retention plan in 1993 that was nationally recognized; the Arkansas AGC received the 1997 Cashman Award for the best increase in membership and membership retention of all AGC Chapters. In 1996 he chaired a committee to update the bylaws of the local AGC Chapter, which were adopted in 1998 and for which he received the "Chairman of the Year" Award. He was elected President of the Arkansas Construction Industry Council in 1997. The Arkansas Chapter of the Associated General Contractors of America bestowed upon him the 1999 Distinguished Service Award. Scott gladly serves, stating, "I did it for the industry I love. I have been very fortunate to serve. I saw so many things that needed to happen. A few contractors who treated clients unfairly, especially in residential construction, gave us all a bad name. I wanted to change that." In 2001 Scott was appointed by the Governor to the Arkansas Contractors Licensing Board, elected its Chairman in 2006 and continues to serve on the Board. "There are over 11,000 contractors in the state of Arkansas," Scott shares. "It is our responsibility to see that they are capable of doing the work as well as dealing with financial and ethical aspects of the business."



By Shannon Odom  
for MauMag



Copas Family Christmas Photo taken in front of their home in 2005. Nick, Chelsey, Shayla & Scott. Chelsey is holding Toffee the family dog.

In 2003 Scott was appointed by the Joint Education Committee of the Arkansas

Legislature to Chair the Task Force to the Joint Committee on Educational Facilities for the State of Arkansas and oversaw the assessment and valuation of all public school buildings. The recommendations presented in this report were adopted and enacted into law in the 2005 Arkansas Legislative Session. Scott worked with Senator Shane Broadway, who I spoke to about Scott's part. "I enlisted Scott's help to research the school facilities," he shared with me. "The time, effort and expertise that he volunteered to the state of Arkansas can never be repaid." The Senator explained that they were "starting from scratch with nothing to go on." "I'm very grateful," he says of Scott's contribution. "I can't even imagine the number of hours he volunteered. He provided great leadership and I don't know how we would have done it without him." Senator Broadway says they became great friends in the process. "We enjoyed each other immensely," he states. Scott calls his part in this his "greatest accomplishment" and continues to serve as an ex-officio member and consultant to the Educational Facilities Advisory Committee and Oversight Committee of the Joint Education Committee of the Arkansas Legislature. In 2005 the School Plant Management Association honored Scott by naming him a Lifetime Honorary Member. That same year the Arkansas State Senate issued a Citation honoring Scott's leadership and service. Scott's love and commitment to education in the construction industry is well known. He has long been an active supporter of the School of Architecture at the University of Arkansas, has served on their Advisory Board for several years and continues to serve on the Dean's Circle. He is a long time University of Arkansas at Little Rock Advisory Board member and program supporter. He was named "Cyber Partner" by the Cyber College of UALR in 2003 and awarded the 2006

Foundation Award from the School of Construction Management.

Shayla was raised in Washington State, relocating to Arkansas in the 1990's. She started a high-end silk floral business in Vancouver, Washington prior to her move South and now owns Copas Interiors, a residential and commercial interior design firm. She now has hundreds of clients, among them Delta Dental and Blue Cross Blue Shield. As a young woman, she struggled to attend school and start a business simultaneously, with help and support of many mentors along the way. "With the encouragement of a treasured mentor I volunteered, even then, and asked her what I could do to repay her for the guidance," Shayla states. "She said that when I was in a position to give back to do so." Shayla consistently gives thanks to those she owes a debt of gratitude. Her involvement in central Arkansas started in 1996 with the Florence Crittenton Home when she served on their Junior Board. She then encouraged Scott to serve on the Senior Board the following year. Shayla then became a member of the Senior Board in 2002 and the Executive Board in 2004. Around the time she started that work, Shayla served the City of Maumelle by founding the Miss Maumelle Scholarship Pageant in 1998. This was the same year I served as the Maumelle Area Chamber of Commerce President and I saw first hand

what a force she is. "The pageant was my way of serving the community as well as developing a scholarship program," she says. "I believe in mentoring these young ladies and basically doing what others have done for me." From 1997 to the present, she has served on several committees, including the Florence



Scott & Shayla with Senator Shane Broadway and his wife Debbie at last year's "Woman of the Year" gala. *Kendy Schimmel Photography*



Shayla & Scott with Chip & Cindy Murphy. Cindy Murphy is the 2008 Woman of the year and will be presented this honor by Women & Children First on January 12th, 2008. Shayla is co-chairing this event with Carole Smith and Angela Moody.

Crittenton Woman of Distinction, Christmas in Maumelle, Paws for a Cause, Maumelle Fourth Fest, Maumelle October Fest, Baptist Health Foundation Bolo Bash and is currently serving on committees for the Arkansas Cancer Research Center Gala, Women and Children First's Woman of the Year and the 2008 Heart Ball. She and I worked together on the Maumelle Arts Council Christmas Tour of Homes in 2005, an event she chaired. She has served on the Maumelle Arts Council Board, as well as the Help Foundation Board and the Maumelle Rotary Club Board. She also volunteered as a Girl Scout Troop Leader! This past Spring, she and



*Rafini Photography*

Shannon Odom is a freelance writer and REALTOR for EXIT One Realty Maumelle, wife of late Broker/Owner Doug Odom. She has one daughter, Allie, who attends Academics Plus Charter School. She is a Director for the Maumelle Players Board and enjoys living, working and being an active part of the Maumelle community



Shayla Copas with Carole Smith Chair of the 2008 Woman of the Year, and Angela Moody co-chair with Shayla for the same event.

