

ISSUE XXIII | SPRING 2026

OCEANFRONT NAVIGATOR

Our seasonal lifestyle newsletter focuses on finding fulfilment in our daily lives and optimizing our **Return On Life**.

Kirk & Kelly Wakefield

Living Their Values, Together

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**"Family: where
life begins and
love never
ends."**

In this **Spring 2026** edition of OceanFront Navigator, we are proud to feature our clients **KIRK AND KELLY WAKEFIELD**. The theme that comes through is simple: **family comes first.**

It's a philosophy that has shaped their careers, their parenting, and the many decisions they've made along the way.



Hard Work from the Start

Kelly grew up in Penticton, British Columbia, in a family where hard work was simply part of everyday life. Her father ran an orchard, collaborated with the Summerland Research Station, and operated a weed-control business serving local railways and businesses, while her mother worked as a nurse. With five children in the household, three brothers, one sister, and Kelly, everyone was expected to contribute.

Money wasn't always abundant, but the lessons were rich.

"When the household needed support, everyone pitched in," Kelly recalls. "If money was tight, we all contributed. That's just how our family worked."

From a young age she worked wherever she could, helping with the orchard, lifeguarding, and at the barn. At the same time, she developed a passion that would shape much of her youth: horseback riding.

Her father was well known throughout the community for helping anyone who needed it, regardless of background or circumstance. Payment didn't always come immediately. Sometimes it arrived later in the form of produce left on the doorstep.

Those early years instilled values that would stay with Kelly throughout her life: responsibility, resilience, and a deep appreciation for community.



Building Character on the Ice

Kirk's story began in Montreal, where he was born into a family with two brothers and a sister. When he was thirteen, his father, who worked for Northern Electric, came home one day with unexpected news. The company was transferring him, and the family had two options: Toronto or Vancouver.

The decision was put to a family vote.

Vancouver won!

Sports quickly became central to Kirk's life, particularly hockey. He played competitively throughout his teenage years and eventually reached the Junior A level with the Nor-West Caps. Known for his physical playing style, he earned the nickname "**The Hammer**" for his willingness to battle along the boards and never back down from a challenge.

The competitive mindset that defined his hockey years would later shape his professional life as well.

A Chance Meeting in Edmonton



Both Kelly and Kirk eventually found their way to Edmonton in their early twenties.

Kelly's move came after a phone call from a friend who encouraged her to come west after completing a year of nursing school. She packed up her car and drove to Edmonton with little more than determination and a willingness to work hard.

Kelly had taken a bartending course while in school and soon found herself working multiple jobs, bartending, waitressing, and taking shifts wherever she could. Within a year of working almost seven days a week, she had paid off her outstanding loans.

"It taught me that if you work really hard and appreciate the opportunities people give you, things tend to work out."

Kirk had also relocated to Edmonton after realizing university wasn't the right fit at the time. A friend encouraged him to join him there, and Kirk soon began working with Family Fitness Centers managing memberships and operations.

It was during this time that their paths crossed.

Kelly was working at a private lounge in West Edmonton Village where Kirk and his friends became regulars.

Kelly jokes that their relationship began because she kept serving him drinks. Kirk remembers it differently:

"We were friends first," he says. "But eventually it just felt natural. Our values were the same. There was no pretending to be someone else."

Their relationship officially began with an unlikely milestone. Kirk was an avid racquetball player and when he finally invited Kelly to play, she took it as a sign that their relationship was becoming serious.

"I thought, if he's taking me to racquetball, that's commitment," Kelly laughs.

The match itself was not exactly competitive.

"He absolutely crushed me."

What mattered was the realization that they were building something real.

"One game," Kelly jokes. "One commitment."

Seven years—and two promise rings—later, Kirk finally proposed.

They married in 1989.

Building Careers

Around the same time, both of their careers began to take shape.

Kelly's bartending experience unexpectedly opened the door to a corporate career. She was approached to interview for a sales role.

"I told them I had no sales experience," she recalls.

Their response surprised her.

"Well, you seem to be selling a lot of food and drinks here."

Kelly accepted the opportunity, starting as a sales representative and eventually moving into **account management**. What began as an unexpected opportunity grew into a successful **corporate career that would span decades**.

Kirk's career path took a different turn when a lawyer referred him to London Life, giving him an opportunity to explore the **Insurance and Wealth Management field**. What initially attracted him was simple: a guaranteed paycheck.

But once he entered the industry, his competitive instincts took over.

"It felt like another game," he says. "Once you're in it, you don't want to fail—you want to succeed."

After a year in Edmonton, Kirk realized the best way to build a long-term career was to return to a place where he already had strong connections.

He arranged a transfer back to North Vancouver and encouraged Kelly to do the same.

She did.

Kelly moved first through a corporate transfer, and Kirk followed six months later.





A Busy Family Life

Their daughters, Brittany and Cassandra, arrived in the years that followed, and life quickly became a whirlwind of work, school, and sports. Hockey became a central part of their daughters' lives, and soon Kirk found himself back on the ice, this time as a coach.

"I watched a practice once and thought I could probably help," he laughs.

That moment turned into years of coaching youth hockey. Kirk also coached soccer and softball along the way. Kelly supported the teams in her own way, organizing fundraising, volunteering, and serving as the team's first aid provider. She was also deeply involved in Brownies and Girl Guides, helping ensure the girls had balance beyond sports. Between the two of them, they managed demanding careers, practices, tournaments, and travel schedules that sometimes felt impossible to coordinate.

"We honestly don't know how we did it," Kelly says. But they were always there.

For the Wakefields, supporting their daughters' ambitions was never just about sports. Education was always part of the plan.

"We wanted them to grow into strong, independent women," Kelly explains. "Women who never had to rely on someone else for their future."

That commitment meant significant investments, not only financially, but emotionally and physically as well. Hockey required travel, training, tutors, and constant coordination between academics and athletics. The result was the women their daughters became.

After an academic scholarship to Johnson & Wales University (RI), Cassandra built a career in the United States and now serves as an Assistant Vice President at Citizens Bank in Boston, where she was recently recognized with the prestigious Credo Award for leadership and impact.

Brittany works in the mental health profession.

Looking back, Kirk believes the structure and community sports provided played an important role.

"When kids are involved in different activities, they build different communities," he says. "That gives them support and perspective. It helps them grow."

A Career Pivot with Purpose

After decades in the corporate world, Kelly made a bold decision.

She left her long career to pursue something that felt more meaningful, working directly in healthcare and patient care.

Returning to school later in life, she began working in care facilities, supporting patients and families during difficult moments such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I realized I wanted to spend my time helping people." For Kelly, the transition felt like coming full circle.

Returning to school not so scary

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At the age of 53, Kelly Wakefield decided to do a 360 and start a new career.

She had been working in various roles in business since the age of 21, but last year found herself at the end of a contract and considering her options.

"I thought what do I want to be when I grow up?" she recalls with a laugh.

Looking back over her years in business, she thought about what she liked best and realized it was working with people and helping people.

"That's what directed me to this," she notes about her decision to enrol in Capilano University's Health Care Assistant



North Shore resident Kelly Wakefield decided to return to university at the age of 53 and took on a whole new career. PHOTO SUPPLIED



A Legacy of Care

Kirk's career followed a different path through Wealth Management, where he built his own firm, spent decades advising clients and building trusted relationships.

As he approached retirement, one priority stood above all others: ensuring those clients would be cared for long after he stepped away.

"These people weren't just clients," he explains. "They were relationships built over forty years."

Rather than simply selling the business to the highest bidder, Kirk planned a thoughtful six-year transition designed to protect those relationships.

He's grateful today that he began the transition when he did. During this time, both Kirk and Kelly faced unexpected health challenges and are navigating cancer diagnoses together.

Through it all, they have approached the experience the same way they've approached life, side by side, with resilience, optimism, and deep support for one another.

Today, the Wakefields are focused on the things that matter most. Family. Their daughters. They are proud of their daughters' ongoing successes.

They are looking forward to their daughter's wedding this summer in Boston!



Advice from Kirk and Kelly

"Don't wait for retirement to start living," Kirk says. Take time off in your 40s, 50s, and 60s. Put it in your calendar and treat yourself every quarter if you can. People worry that stepping away will hurt their business or career, but in reality it rarely does. Life moves quickly, so make time for the things that matter along the way.

"Live life. Don't just exist," Kelly says. If there's something you want to do, plan for it. Put money aside and make it happen. Enjoy your life while still being a good person and taking care of the people around you.



THANK YOU

Thank you, Kirk and Kelly, for letting us share your story.

We look forward to connecting with you
in our next edition of the Navigator.

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