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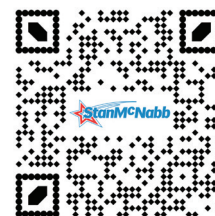
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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Life's short; eat dessert.

The fall holidays bring food of connection, made with love.

WE DUST off the artificial pumpkin decorations and pull orange and purple wreaths from storage. We pull out rakes and sweaters as the weather drops like the leaves do. The weather feels therapeutic and makes you want to go for a walk on your lunch break instead of sitting in a car with the air conditioner on full blast. Along with the flannel and pumpkin spice latte, we bring out the dinner plates. And this time, it's the heavy hitters: turkey, gravy, stuffing, potatoes, veggies, and pie. You may even sit in the gentle breeze on the front porch with your favorite aunt and carve pumpkins together. We make memories that still pop up every time we taste pumpkin seeds and sweet potatoes.

Our taste is just one of our five senses, but it's oh so powerful. It can make your mouth water and your stomach growl. It can bring back cherished memories. Hands of love gently merge spices and ingredients together. It makes its way from the pot to paper as a recipe that lasts generation after generation, creating a new cook to take the throne as Nanny with a recipe no one can beat.

We took food from just something to give us energy and keep us alive to something that brings us together. It gives birth to much more than just a tasty dinner; it creates what we're all looking for: connection.

This issue of Good News is a special food edition. We're featuring cooks, generations of family, the connection between cook and customer, and hard-working business owners who give us delicious food options on every street in our towns...

Life's short. Eat dessert.



Wesley Bryant
Wesley Bryant,
 MANAGING EDITOR

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— Kay Bartley, Good News reader

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GOOD NEWS

There is enough bad news out there. Good News is hearing about your neighbor's successes. It's listening to your five-year-old niece tell a story that seems to go on forever; she stumbles over her words, but it's worth listening to. Good News is everywhere. It's in our community; it's in our homes; it's in our future.

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PHOTO BY BROOKE SNYDER



▲ Shakia Craig

GOOD HEALTH NEWS

Dreams of walking in true freedom

Healing, overcoming, and learning a new way of life.

By Amanda E. West // Photos by Brooke Snyder

WE HAVE an extensive waiting list. Before we're able to help, ladies will overdose and die. They are no longer here to reap the benefits of Blue Monarch," said Shakia Craig, the officer of community relations and development.

"We don't know what kind of situation we're sending not only the woman but her precious babies back into," said Kate Cataldo, the operations director. "We try not to hang up until we've connected them to some type of resource, but unfortunately, we don't have the space available to take every woman who calls."

Hearts ache for those on the list, but the people of Tullahoma can be grateful to know that a program exists in Coffee County where women learn to overcome addictions hand-in-hand with

their children, so they can heal and move forward together. Craig, a graduate herself, said, "I was broken, heavily addicted to drugs, and living in poverty. I was a single mom who wanted better for myself and my children. I was surrounded by chaos and saw no way out. Since coming to Blue Monarch, I no longer need drugs to exist. I'm there for my children, and they don't have to worry when mom is coming back. We are a family now. I have a career and a home. My babies have consistency— which is a very important piece that was missing."

Blue Monarch focuses on more than addiction. Craig said, "We focus on rebuilding the whole family. We address every aspect of recovery so ladies can walk in true freedom as women and moth-

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“We focus on rebuilding the whole family. We address every aspect of recovery so ladies can walk in true freedom as women and mothers.”

– Shakia Craig

ers. We have served over 880 women and children, but honestly we don’t know how many generations have been impacted. We are eager to serve more.”

“We put just as much emphasis on the child’s recovery as we do the mother,” said Cataldo. “Because the children have been through significant trauma, we have a child life specialist that walks with every child through the recovery process. The mother may have been raised in an environment of addiction and abuse, so she has never seen what it’s like to be a sober mom and doesn’t know what a healthy family unit looks like. Every woman meets with a master-level counselor, and we have group therapy sessions and cognitive behavioral therapy. We teach life skills such as gardening, cooking,

and budgeting. We promote healthy eating and fitness. We provide mentors and tutors for every child we serve.”

The residents of Coffee County, and others, have embraced Blue Monarch with open arms. Craig said, “We cannot turn the lights on without our community. We’ve added eight new cottages and most recently an eight-family home. We have expanded our granola business (www.outofthebluegranola.com), and have grown from 50 acres to 108 acres, adding a farmhouse, three barns, and two horses.”

“Blue Monarch is not an easy program, but it is rewarding if you stay the course. Don’t give up. Persevere. You gotta trudge forward, and all will be well once you get to the finish.” **GN**

For more information go to
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GOOD COMMUNITY NEWS

If you dream it, they will come.

Grab a front-row seat and watch the miracles unfold.

By Amanda E. West // Photos by Brooke Snyder

IN 1995, Susan Binkley was running a high-profile horse hotel and selling her artwork at a gallery in Nashville. Becoming the founder and president of Blue Monarch, a nonprofit for women seeking to escape addiction and heal alongside their children, was not a journey she thought she'd embark on. But one night a dream grabbed the heels of her cowgirl boots, and that dream set her and hundreds of families on a different path. "God has always spoken to me in my dreams," says Binkley. "I guess it's the only time I slow down long enough to listen. In the dream, I was required to sit down at a big table and read a thick book. The book was basically a business plan that described how to run a program like Blue Monarch, and it even described how the women would be employed by producing a product they could sell. After I woke up, I made jokes about how I'd intercepted someone else's dream. It was powerful, but I thought it had nothing to do with me."

In April 2003, following the plan from Binkley's dream, Blue Monarch bought a 50-acre fully furnished farmhouse that had previously operated as a bed-and-breakfast. The book she'd envisioned in her dream has now developed into an intensive self-help program for women. For many this is the first time they've been free to dream about a brighter future for themselves and for their children.

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At the insistence of a friend, Binkley began a blog in 2014 called "From My Front Row Seat" where she draws back the curtains allowing readers to peek into the struggles and view the inspiration found among them. "I often say God has given me a front row seat at the greatest show on earth because I get to see miracles happen right before my eyes. Now I also get to share those stories with you." Binkley's inspirational stories bound in book form will be available to the public before their 20th anniversary celebration in April.

The Blue Monarch program is thriving and now owns 14 houses and 108 acres. And with an extensive waiting list, they need a multipurpose facility, an onsite daycare center, and a more convenient location for the commercial kitchen where the ladies work baking homemade granola. "Every time we have an event, we have to rent tents," said Binkley. "We need classroom space, space to tutor the children, office space... there are so many things we could do better if we could spread out. I also have organizations [that] contact me [and] want to use our program as a pattern. More space would allow us to teach others how to replicate what has worked for us here at Blue Monarch."

Binkley has been featured in multiple magazines. In 2018, she was selected as a Teacher's Insurance and Annuity Association Difference Maker 100 Honoree, and this year the University of the South presented her with an honorary doctorate in Civil Law. **GN**

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GOOD NONPROFIT NEWS

Finding hope at HorsePlay

From silence to sentences;
a good horse can make all the difference.

By Amanda E. West // Photos submitted by Mr Joe Blanton

AS A toddler, 7-year-old Hope Smith babbled like others her age, then, on the autism spectrum disorder, and became non-verbal. When Hope and her adopted sister Allie, who has cerebral palsy, began taking therapeutic riding lessons at HorsePlay Inc., a miracle took place. “I thought HorsePlay was really just for the physical aspect which Allie needed,” said their mother Kim Smith. “I wasn’t thinking of the emotional impact it could have on Hope. At first she was terrified of the horses. She couldn’t respond to us or demonstrate that she understood we were even around.”

Smith said that everything changed after a second session. “We started noticing the connection she had to a horse named Peck. It was almost like he knew right away this child had no words. But no words were needed. He met Hope right where she was. I’ve never seen an animal bond with a child the way Peck has bonded with Hope. He was the one who first introduced us to our child who’d been locked inside a world of her very own.”

At 5 years old, Hope said her first sentence. Hollie Holder, director of HorsePlay said, “When Hope first came to HorsePlay Inc., she bonded with Peck, one of the best horses God ever created. Over the course of eight weeks, she started saying ‘walk’ and ‘Peck.’ Hope not only speaks in complete sentences now, but she’s also bubbly and kind. She shares encouragement with other participants who are afraid to ride, and her compassion towards other riders is admirable.”

Three years have passed. Hope has found her voice, and the effects of time and age have taken their toll on Peck’s health. “He’s getting older and sometimes doesn’t feel well,” said Holder. “We put the needs of

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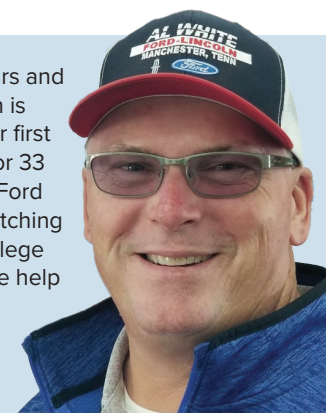
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our horses ahead of riding, so on his bad days Hope has to ride a different horse. Before she leaves for the day, she always visits Peck, brings him sweet notes for his stall, and prays for him to feel better.”

Hope’s 8 year old sister Allie is also finding her unique voice — sign language. Holder said, “I love that HorsePlay is not only helping Allie with therapy, but she’s taking the role of teacher. She is teaching us how to sign words, and she’s not afraid to correct us if we make a mistake. I love how confident she’s becoming.”

Sessions at HorsePlay currently span eight weeks and are free to participants. With increased funding and more volunteers, Holder said they could extend lessons. “We want to serve as many children as possible. I get to watch these children grow in confidence, move past their fear of animals, strengthen muscles, learn to follow directions, express themselves, and take on more responsibility with each lesson.”

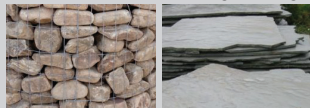
As Hope now says, “That’s good stuff. Good stuff.” **GN**

For more information or to donate, go to: www.horseplayinc.org

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mozzarella stuffed bread sticks served with marinara sauce

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HERE'S TO A HAPPY LIFE.

PHOTO BY BROOKE SNYDER



▲ Lea Hibdon, Lydia Hibdon, Josette Amsilli, Eli Hibdon

THE SKY'S THE LIMIT

Local athlete keeps moving forward with his gaze set high.

By Julia Eads // Photography by Brooke Snyder

IF THERE is anything former Tullahoma Wildcat football player Brandon Painter has shown and proven to be a worthwhile objective it is this: “keep moving forward.”

Painter played middle linebacker on the team that rallied its way to the title of state champions. The feat made history as it was Tullahoma High School’s first-ever TSSAA Class 4A State Championship football title. Painter expressed what it felt like playing at Finley Stadium in Chattanooga on game day. He shared, “Supposedly, Tullahoma and Elizabethton had sold the most tickets out of all the games played that weekend, and it showed. It was breathtaking being on the field and feeling supported by our community like that. It was an amazing experience.”

Painter continued, “I think the game meant a lot to not only the team and the coaches but also the community we’re in. In some ways, I feel like it meant more to the community than it did to the players. Football brings our community together as a whole, and I can see where it gives the community something that they can get involved with and take pride in.”

Though Tullahoma sports teams have always had an overwhelming amount of support from the community, there were many times in Painter’s athletic career where it was



an audience of one. During Painter’s junior year of high school he had a severe injury. He shared, “I tore my ACL junior year.” This painful and devastating injury put Painter on the sidelines for some time.

However, as soon as his doctors cleared him, Painter was out on the field conditioning, practicing, and doing whatever he could to recover and heal. During the COVID shutdown, most days Painter was out on the field pushing a sled all by himself. His goal was to keep pushing forward to return to his team stronger and better than ever. And he did just that. Painter was able to rejoin his team as a starter during senior year, becoming a vital part of it.









The young man that faced many heartaches and setbacks during his adolescent years, including losing his father in sixth grade, has gained a special grit. He has preserved through loss and devastation. Yet he has only allowed those things to make him better. He embodies the Tullahoma Wildcat's coined phrase: GRIT (Greatness, Relentless, Intensity, and Toughness.) These characteristics, now built into his DNA, will accompany him as he proceeds in his educational pursuits at Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU.)

Painter disclosed that he would be studying aerospace technology and engineering at the university. He shared, "I had a few offers from Division III schools, but I declined them to pursue an education at Middle Tennessee State University. Most of the schools did not offer what I really wanted to study, so that played a big role in my decision. In the end, I decided I wanted to focus on education before football, so I committed to Middle Tennessee. However, I will be trying out for MTSU's football team this spring as a walk-on, as I feel like my job's not done yet. I want to keep playing football." **GN**

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All sandwiches are served with kettle chips and pickle spear on your choice of white or wheat bread.

Aunt ME's Chicken Salad - \$11.50

In-house made creamy, white meat chicken salad with chopped celery, onions, pecans, Granny Smith apples and sliced grapes, blended with Hellmann's mayonnaise, served with leaf lettuce and sliced tomato.

Grandaddy's Pimento Cheese - \$9.00

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Nanny Graham's Chicken Salad Plate - \$12.00

A scoop of our in-house made chicken salad made with all white meat chicken salad, celery, onion, Granny Smith apples, grapes and pecans, blended with Hellmann's mayonnaise, served on a bed of lettuce with seasonal fresh fruit.

Caroline's Blackened Chicken Caesar - \$11.50

Grilled Blackened Chicken on a bed of spring mix tossed with in-house made Caesar dressing and fresh croutons.

May Grace's Strawberry Poppyseed Salad - \$10.50

Spring mix topped with candied almonds, and sliced strawberries. Served with in-house made creamy poppyseed dressing. Top any salad with grilled chicken - \$2.00

KIDS

Pancake Plate - \$5.50

One large Buttermilk pancake served with choice of Applewood smoked bacon or Tennessee Pride sausage.

Egg Plate - \$5.50

One egg cooked to order with choice of Applewood smoked bacon or Tennessee Pride sausage.

Clay's PB & Jelly or PB & Banana - \$6.50

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Orange Juice - \$3.50

Chocolate Milk - \$3.00

SINGLE SERVE BEVERAGES

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Sundrop, Stewart's Root Beer, Stewart's Orange Cream Soda, and RC Cola

Sundrop in Ice Cold Cans - \$1.50

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Cherry Sundrop Float - \$5.50

Cherry Sundrop served over our exclusively made Cherry Sundrop Gelato, with chopped cherries topped with fresh whipped cream and a maraschino cherry.

RC Cola Float - \$5.50

Fountain Royal Crown Colas served over vanilla ice cream topped with fresh whipped cream and garnished with a mini chocolate Moon Pie.

Stewart's Root Beer Float - \$5.50

Stewart's Root Beer served over vanilla ice cream topped with fresh whipped cream.

Sunkist Orange Soda Float - \$5.50

Fountain Sunkist Orange soda served over our exclusively made Sunkist Gelato topped with fresh whipped cream and a gummy candy orange slice.

Milkshakes and Malts - \$5.50

All of our milkshakes and malts are made to order by hand. Your choice of chocolate, vanilla, or strawberry blended with whole milk and topped with fresh whipped cream and a maraschino cherry.

Ice Cream Sundaes - \$6.50

Your choice of 2 scoops of chocolate, vanilla, or strawberry ice cream, covered in your choice of chocolate syrup, caramel syrup, strawberry or pineapple purée, topped with fresh whipped cream and a maraschino cherry.

Single Scoop Legacy Creamery Gelato - \$3.50 (Each topping: .50¢)

Single Scoop Ice Cream - \$3.00 (Each topping: .50¢)

Classic Banana Split - \$8.00

One scoop each of chocolate, vanilla, and strawberry ice cream, topped with chocolate sauce, strawberry and pineapple purées, nestled in a fresh banana topped with whipped cream, diced peanuts and a maraschino cherry.

Miss Daisy's Blondie Sundae - \$8.00

Daisy King's beloved Blonde Brownie recipe, a tollhouse base with chocolate chips and pecans served with vanilla ice cream and smothered in caramel sauce.

Sundrop Cake - \$5.50

Our signature dessert, a moist and lemony delicious Bundt style sponge cake covered in a Sundrop glaze, or order it Tullahoma style with George Dickel Whisky glaze!

Miss Barbara's Orange Cream Cake - \$5.50

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Two children study the curly tendrils wrapped around a metal lattice. They wrap the tendrils higher on the lattice to help it grow tall.

GROWING MORE THAN FRUITS & VEGETABLES

Tullahoma recreation program coordinator Aaron White came to Tennessee for the agriculture and expertise of the farmers in the area. He's staying to create and promote family and youth activities at the C.D. Stamps Community Center and the Tullahoma Community Garden.

By Paige Cushman // Photography by Brooke Snyder

“ I CAME FROM a bigger city, so I didn't have access to knowledge like that at all,” he said. “I was passionate about the resources here.”

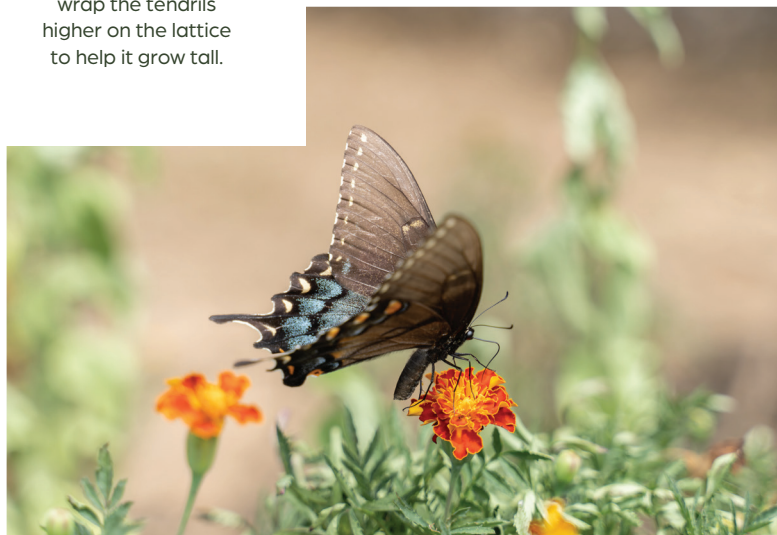
When he began in February, all he had to work with was a severely neglected garden and a basketball court at the community center.

“All I knew was: it's important to grow food, it's important to work together, and there's something important about getting your hands in the soil – it brings people together,” he said. “And that was going to be the key to the programming that I wanted to bring here.”

When he got hired, there weren't any family or youth programs through the city of Tullahoma that involved the garden. White began the Let's Plant Program – one workshop in April and one in May – to encourage families and kids to do what they could to grow their own food. He noticed that the families involved weren't only learning a lot, but the kids also thought it was cool to work on the garden.

“The kids wanted to see something happen at that garden. Most of them didn't have something at their own house,” he said.

Around the same time, Cub Scout Pack 358, led by Joseph Spellman, volunteered his troops to meet there every Thursday and help clean up the garden. Lemon balm – an herb that's part of the mint family – had taken over the garden. White would provide mason jars for them to pull weeds and take them home.





“They took ownership of that,” he said.

While both White and Spellman were passionate about making use of the garden they were no experts. Luckily, gardener Bob Yasui of Petalland Flower and Herb Farm was willing to offer an incredibly knowledgeable helping hand.

“I did not know them at all, and we are all extremely different people,” White said. “But we come together for a common goal: to see kids leave the garden with actual food and so much excitement.”

With a little extra manpower behind him, White was able to start a seven-week summer day camp program. Sixteen families brought their kids to participate. They planted cucumbers, peppers, herbs, and tomatoes.

“There’s something about when you see something that’s kind of in ruin, and you see it come back to life,” White said. “That’s tangible, actual, not talking the talk but seeing it for yourself. I knew that was going to be the staple of that center, moving forward.”

They learn to plant seeds, pull weeds, water the garden, etc. Yasui will pluck a tomato off the vine and pop it into his mouth while telling the kids how they grow.

“Kids feel like you’re supposed to grow a garden and watch it like a museum,” White said. “But Bob really encourages them to eat and enjoy what they’ve grown. That trips them out that abundance can happen like that.”

There are funny moments – the kids are afraid of the ghost pepper plants, and they dare one another to tend to

“

We come together for a common goal: to see kids leave the garden with actual food and so much excitement.

– Aaron White

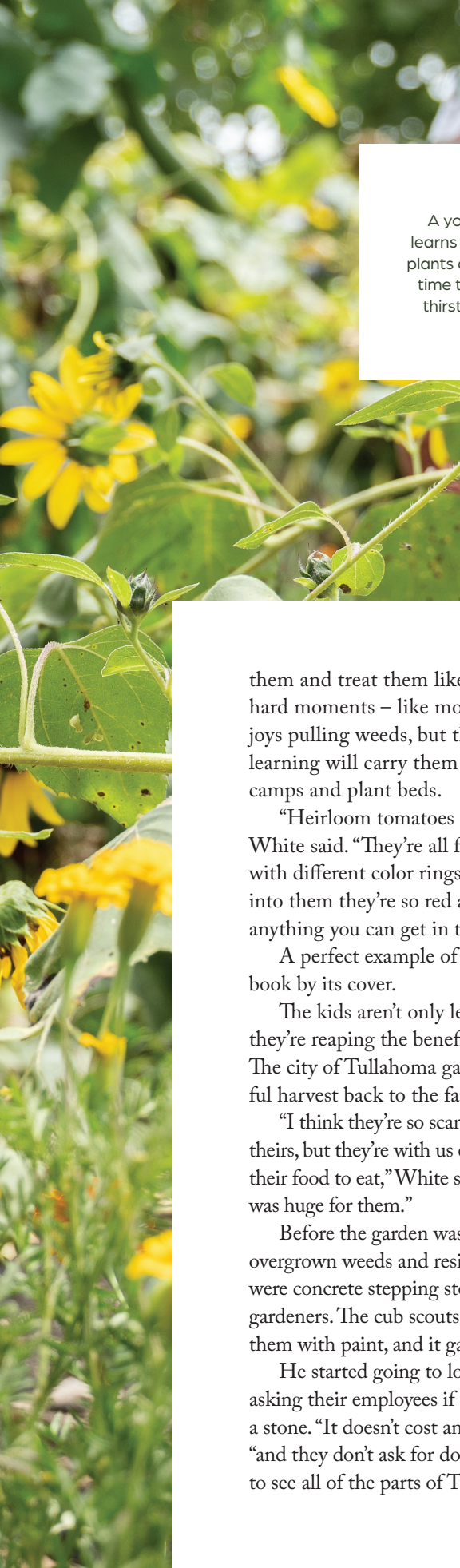




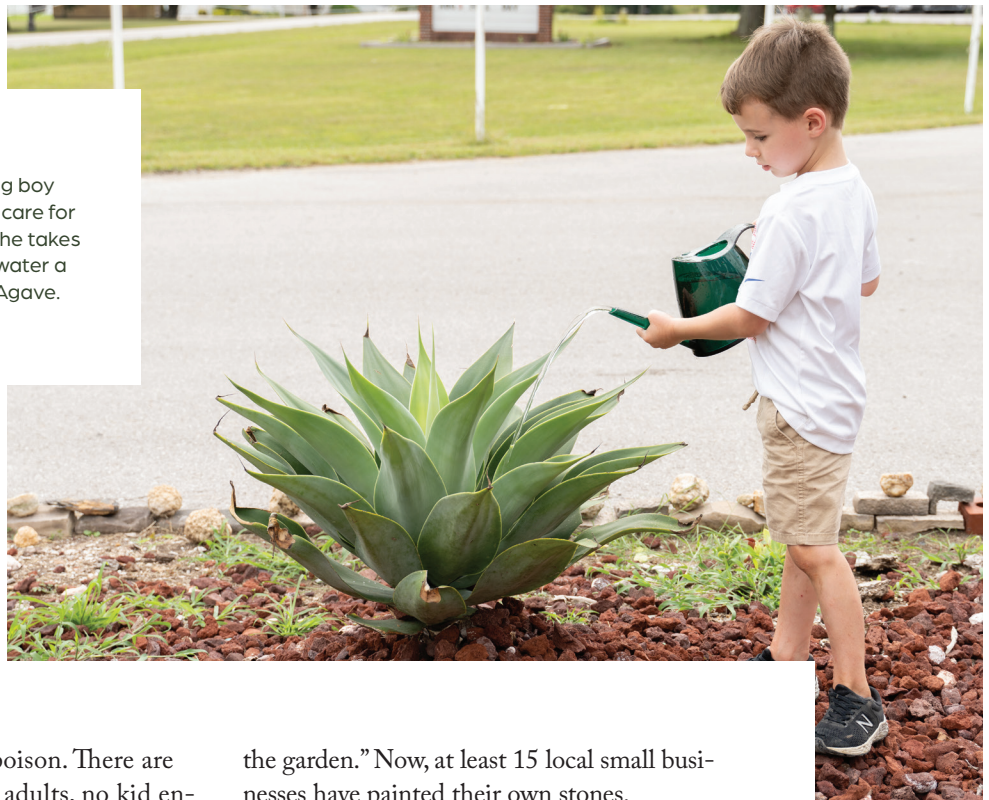
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The vision is to have a community garden that represents the diversity of the people here in the city of Tullahoma.

– Aaron White



A young boy learns to care for plants as he takes time to water a thirsty Agave.



them and treat them like poison. There are hard moments – like most adults, no kid enjoys pulling weeds, but the life lessons they’re learning will carry them past the summer camps and plant beds.

“Heirloom tomatoes trip them out,” White said. “They’re all funky and massive with different color rings, but when you cut into them they’re so red and taste better than anything you can get in the store.”

A perfect example of why you can’t judge a book by its cover.

The kids aren’t only learning and working, they’re reaping the benefits of their hard work. The city of Tullahoma gave their first bountiful harvest back to the families involved.

“I think they’re so scared to eat as if it’s not theirs, but they’re with us every week. This is their food to eat,” White said. “Learning that was huge for them.”

Before the garden was revived, among the overgrown weeds and residual herbs there were concrete stepping stones left by previous gardeners. The cub scouts personalized a few of them with paint, and it gave Spellman an idea.

He started going to local businesses and asking their employees if they wanted to paint a stone. “It doesn’t cost anything,” White said, “and they don’t ask for donations they just want to see all of the parts of Tullahoma reflected in

the garden.” Now, at least 15 local small businesses have painted their own stones.

“We want the community to slowly be represented in this garden,” he said.

This fall, with the help of a brand new after-school program, they’re growing pumpkins, zucchini, multiple types of squash, and more. White’s current project is an arbor with pole beans growing throughout.

“Pretty soon, kids will be able to walk underneath that and pull beans from it while walking underneath it,” he said.

White said that eventually they’d like to move more garden beds into local parks and other areas so that they can be accessible for even more Tullahoma families.

“The vision is to have a community garden that represents the diversity of the people here in the city of Tullahoma,” he said. “We envision a variety of vegetables, herbs, and flowers being grown here that tell a story of humanity that brings people together in relation to food and sustainability.” GN



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The Fellowship of the table

Seated around a table, we share more than a meal; we share our lives.

By Julia Eads

ONE OF the most sacred places in the world is a seat at the table. A seat at the table means you belong. It means come as you are and don't worry about what you lack. Come, bring what you have even if it's just yourself.

A quaint mountain town, Buena Vista, Colorado is home to the nation's largest dining room. With a population of merely 2,900 people, the small community gathers yearly to share a meal on the main drag in town. At dawn on the day of the event, the streets are shut down and an army of local volunteers hustle around to set up rows of tables and chairs. By dinnertime, the tables are carefully set with white linen. They are festive and ready for an evening of breaking bread, laughing, drinking, and being merry. The town of 2,900 ends up serving dinner to closer to 5,000 people. Why? Be-

cause they understand the sacredness of sharing a meal. At their banquet table, all are invited, all are fed, and all are welcome. Everyone has a seat. The town practices hospitality that doesn't look past differences but embraces them. They welcome and prepare for not only themselves but for strangers and bystanders as well.

A community coming together and sharing life around food doesn't just exist in Colorado. It happens right here in Middle Tennessee too. Therefore, we invite you to sit down and rest amid your everyday workload. A well-crafted meal will be set before you momentarily. Let the salivating smell of pot roast float up toward your nostrils bringing a smile to your face and eliciting a growl from your stomach. Did you know you were thought of and considered as this meal was prepared for you? Utmost care and

intention went into every detail. So give thanks and eat up; let this food bring the much-needed refreshment to your body.

After you've had your fill, don't hurry off. Relax and recharge. Maybe even eat dessert. A table is where all of life's demands and toils can and should be set aside for a moment. Sitting around the table is not just a place to fuel your body but also a place to connect and engage. Recline, bump elbows with your neighbor, and be vulnerable and free. Put down your phone. Tell a joke. Ask a question. You might find that connection is just the nourishment your soul needs.

In time, you will find that sitting around a table is not just about sharing a meal, but sharing life. We present to you: people hard at work in your community who make this fellowship of the table possible. Cheers! **GN**

Baked to *Perfection*

An afternoon activity turned into a small business and lifelong passion.

By Julia Eads // Photography by Ashleigh Newnes

HAVE YOU ever looked at a cookie or cake with such an elaborate design that you thought, "There's no way those can taste as good as they look."? We're talking pastel flower icing petals that look more real than a bouquet arranged by a florist and crisp, clear lettering that looks like a machine has printed the text. This type of high-caliber creative ingenuity can be seen in Sami Kay Cookie designs. And the best part is, the cookies taste as good as they look, if not better!

Appropriately, taste is one thing that Sami Kay Cookies' owner Samantha Zimmerman shared, that matters most to her! She said, "Taste, for me, is more important than the look. I've always struggled with fancy cookies, as they look awesome, but they don't always taste the best." And taste means everything to the little girl sitting cross-legged on the kitchen floor at her grandmother's house, licking a spoon as the official taste-tester would.

Zimmerman has countless memories of sitting on her paternal grandmother Madonna's kitchen floor. Sprawled out with baking pans and measuring cups, the two would bake the afternoons away, making birthday cakes, cookies, and all kinds of sweet treats. Zimmerman shared, "My grandmother had

nine children of her own, but she always made time for her grandkids. If she was doing something on the kitchen counter, she would pull a stool up and let us dig our hands into whatever it was. Though I'm sure she never used the dough we touched, she did make us feel like we were included. My grandmother saw where our interests were and nurtured them. My love of baking stems from that time spent with her and those memories on the kitchen floor."

Sweetly enough, Zimmerman's side hustle, Sami Kay Cookies, took off as she sought to serve her own daughter and friends well. Zimmerman, a mom of two, had been playing around and decorating cookies for a while before she decided to bring some in on the first day of her daughter's preschool. She said, "When you have kids, you just kind of progressively start doing stuff for them. For me, I started playing with decorating cookies and then decided to take them to my daughter Taylor's preschool on the first day of school. A few people saw them on social media and asked if I did cookies. I said, 'Sure. Why not?' That was 2019 when I first started taking custom orders. Since then, orders have consistently come. I've actually shipped cookies internationally, which is crazy."





▲ Samantha Zimmerman



Running Sami Kay Cookies and being a full-time mom and wife are not Zimmerman's only feats. This supermom served in the Army for 12 years and works as a full-time talent acquisition partner for Archer Aviation. She shared, "It is hard, you know, trying to work a full-time job, have kids, have a normal life, and give my family the attention they need. But for me, I find it [baking and creating] very therapeutic. To conceptualize an idea that somebody gives me, use the creative side of my brain, and then see the idea come to life is rewarding. I've also met so many amazing people in the community because of the cookie business, which is also rewarding."

Zimmerman continued, "I'm not going to lie... it's hard. It's stressful. There are many, many sleepless nights, because a lot of the decoration and baking takes place after my kids go to bed. After my family is asleep or in the wee hours of the morning before they wake up is when I'll put the final touches on everything. I have definitely asked myself why I am doing this. But then I get that little message from a client saying, 'Oh my gosh! It's wonderful!' or 'You've really made an impact here!' and those things keep me moving."



Wildly enough, Zimmerman has not had any formal training. She has not attended the first seminar or decorating course. She is completely self-taught. She shared, "I watched many YouTube videos on perfecting a specific technique and then just practiced, practiced, and practiced. There have been a lot of failure moments where I had to restart because the designs did not look right. But I am grateful to be able to try different techniques and grow and progress along the way."

When asked about future plans for Sami Kay Cookies, Zimmerman shared that a long-term goal would be to open a brick-and-mortar store. She shared, "Maybe when my kids are a little bit older and grown, and life isn't as crazy, I'd want to open my own bakery." For now, Zimmerman is content propping her daughter, Taylor, up on their kitchen counter and letting her join in on the baking fun. Together, the girls bake and create, making enough cookies for the cookie thieves in the house: Jaxon, her son, and Brian, her husband.



If you have yet to taste the famous Sami Kay cookies, Zimmerman provides a few opportunities to do so, as she is the host of a few different events each year. Zimmerman shared, "Sami Kay's has grown into more than just custom cookies. It's more of a way to connect." Zimmerman hosts two Ladies Night events at Promise Manor in Lynchburg. One is in February, and the other is in October. Additionally, she hosts a "Cookies with Mrs. Claus" cookie decorating class. Zimmerman said, "At this class, parents and kids can come, have fun decorating cookies, see Santa, and just laugh and play together." For more information on Sami Kay Cookies custom orders or related events, visit samikaycookies.com. **GN**

It All Begins with *Chocolate*

10 years of building relationships and making the world a little sweeter.

By Julia Eads // Photography by Ashleigh Newnes

A STEADY BREEZE graced across the lake and gently rocked the old tattered hammock hanging over the water's edge. The newly married couple swayed together hand in hand dreaming of all that the future might hold. Thoughts like, "What adventures might we go on? What relationships will we nurture? In what ways will our family grow? How will we connect to the world at large?" darted through their minds like the little white lines trailing behind the passenger jet in the blue sky above. The couple was comfortable, sure. But was there more?

Ginny was a radiation therapist; Randy was an accountant. They were each passionate about their career paths, both helping people on a day-to-day basis. However, something inside of them knew their present circumstances and ways of life were only temporary. There was more for them to do, see, and behold, but first, it would take getting a little uncomfortable.

Ironically, Ginny grew uncomfortable first as she became pregnant with their first child in 2014. She was working full time as a radiation therapist. She remembered growing weary each day with all the heavy emotions associated with caring for those fighting the gruesome fight against cancer. She adored her patients and loved connecting with people on a deeper level. However, deep down Ginny felt her time as a radiation therapist was coming to an end. She had already started making chocolate from her home at this time. Now she was ready, more than ever, to jump full time into a more creative and lighthearted role. Her discomfort at the time pulled her mind and attention back to when their family business started a few years prior.

The couple married in 2010. Around that period, there was a





short stint of time in which Ginny and Randy were both without jobs. They worked a few odd jobs together as they figured out their next steps. While digging a waterline at Randy's parent's house, Ginny had the word "chocolate" pop into her mind. She had spent most of her college career working at a chocolate shop in Florida. Ginny shared, "I thoroughly enjoyed it [making chocolate] and knew how to do it well." The couple

had a conversation that day about making chocolate.

Nonetheless, the two ended up going the traditional route and getting jobs where they weren't the business owners.

However, Ginny stated, "Chocolate had always been in the back of our minds." In fact, in 2012, the couple revisited the old idea. They talked more seriously about the possibility of making and selling chocolate on a larger scale. After that conversation, they started making and selling chocolate from their lake home on Tims Ford Lake. Naturally, the name Water's Edge seemed to fit.

Over the next three years, a Water's Edge booth was showcased at every farmers market across the region. Occasionally, the couple would set up at the old Northgate Mall as well. Ginny also left her job as a radiation therapist and stayed at home with her first born son. She would make gourmet chocolate as he slept. Randy and Ginny operated on a small scale like this until Randy's father made a timely purchase. In 2014, Crimm's Florist was auctioned. While Randy's father went to the auction to buy a tractor, he ended up buying the whole building, flower shop, and all. Randy and Ginny were at Randy's parent's house when they received news of the purchase. While shocked, they were very excited to have a building to move the chocolate business into, as it had taken over most of their house by this time. After that, things really took off. Though Randy was still working as an accountant, he and Ginny made the most of the newfound provision. In 2015, the two officially opened the Water's Edge storefront. They were one step closer to building the life and business of their dreams.

The next step was getting Randy at the brick-and-mortar store full time. Before he would commit and surrender, he





did two things. First, he did his own exhaustive research on the chocolate industry, and second, he did some wrestling and arguing with God. Randy shared, "In 2017, God told me to quit my job. I argued with him for quite some time before I finally took the leap of faith". Ginny commented, "We have always tried to follow what God tells us to do. And this is no exception to that. We didn't know what was going to happen, and all we could do was trust that God would see us through it."

Leaving a job and a reliable paycheck to start your own business is a risk not many will take, but the decision has proved to be the adventure of a lifetime for the couple, making them trust in God the whole way through. Randy shared, "When we started, the initial goal, of course, was we needed income to provide for our family. Then it was about chocolate. But over the last few years, it's really become clearer and clearer that relationships are why we are here." Ginny chimed in, "And chocolate and ice cream are a gateway to relationships."

Randy concluded, "As humans, we're built for relationships. And if you don't have relationships your life is lacking. I think that providing opportunities and avenues for people, including ourselves, to build relationships is one of the biggest goals of our business."

The Wilson family and their lovely staff at Water's Edge are celebrating 10 years in business this November. Randy shares, "Chocolate is just the beginning." **GN**



Putting the Family in *Family Dining*

One downtown Tullahoma eatery is bringing the “family” back into family dining. The Sundrop Shoppe and Luncheonette located on Northwest Atlantic Street is the culmination of the hard work, entrepreneurship, and love that grew through five generations of the Prescott family.

By Paige Cushman

IN 2012, when she joined the family business full-time, Paige Prescott Moore had a vision for their next venture.

Her great-grandfather had started Prescott Bottling in Tullahoma in 1930.

“We’ve been here a long time,” she said.

In the 1950s, they became one of the first companies to franchise and bottle the iconic citrus soda, Sun Drop. Now the company solely does distribution for Sun Drop and several other sodas, in their five-county territory.

Paige said that her dad, David Prescott, had always wanted to open a lunch counter or bakery with some tie to Sundrop since the soda was the foundation of their family business. When Paige began working for

Prescott Bottling, they began exploring options together but many were prohibitively expensive.

In the summer of 2018, Paige had the bright idea of remodeling a building that the company already owned, right next to Prescott Bottling downtown where they’ve been for almost 100 years.

Paige brought in a local contractor who tore down paneling in the outdated building, to expose original red brick walls and beautiful tin ceilings. She wanted their restaurant to look like Gower’s Drugstore from “It’s a Wonderful Life,” she said.

“I wanted to have a place where there were family recipes [and] casual dining, where people could come sit down and enjoy one another.”



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY PAIGE PRESCOTT MOORE



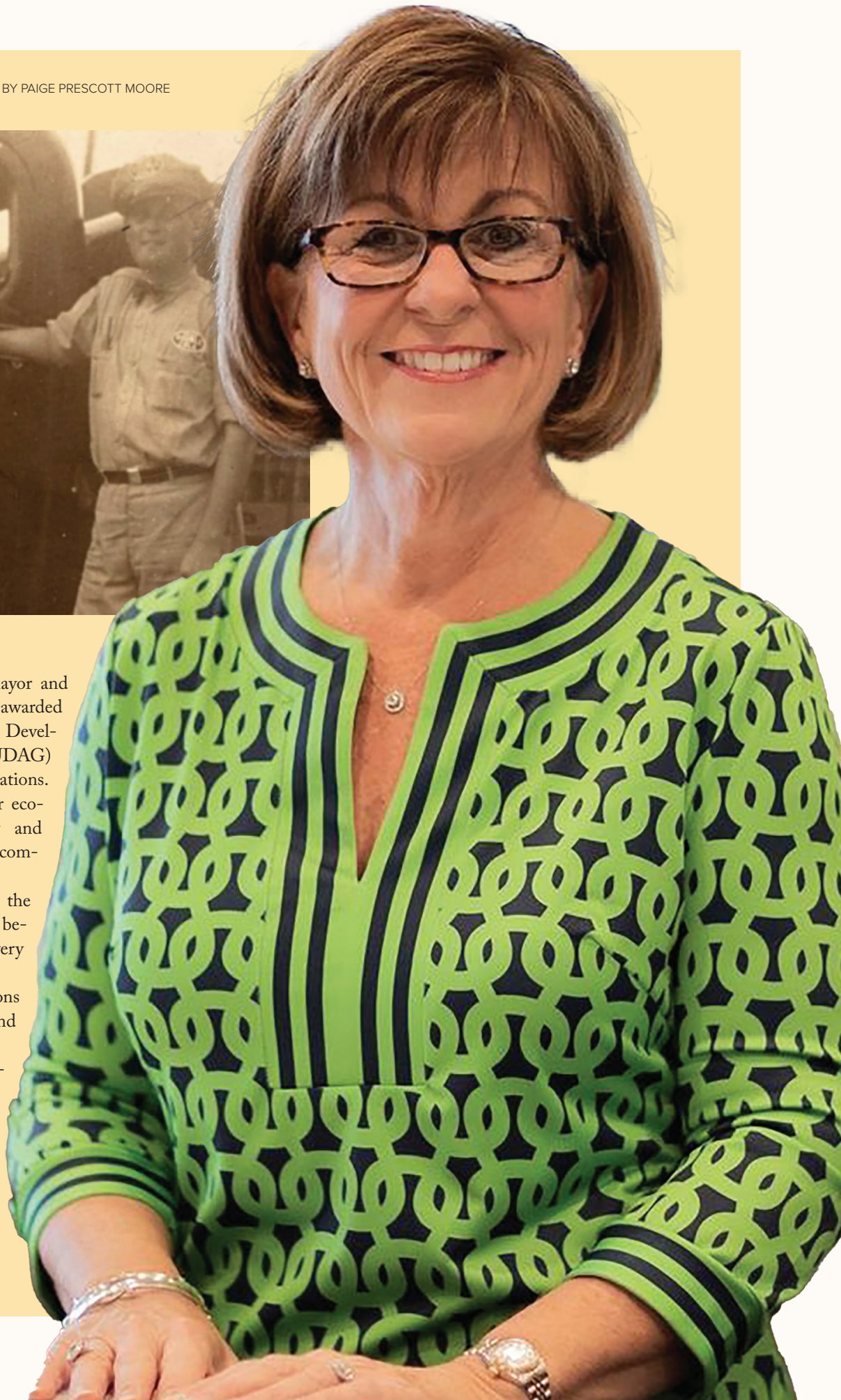
After a strong pitch to the mayor and city officials, the city of Tullahoma awarded the shop a loan through the Urban Development Action Grant Program (UDAG) to cover half the cost of the renovations. UDAG aims to help physically or economically distressed cities grow and evolve through new businesses and community initiatives.

"We've really been backed by the City of Tullahoma from the very beginning, which is something I'm very proud of," she said.

They broke ground on renovations in January 2019 and had their grand opening in May 2019.

Since its inception, it was important to Paige that the Sundrop Shoppe gives back to the Tullahoma community.

"One thing I take a lot of pride in is that we are very involved in community affairs," she said.





At the shop, you can buy granola from Blue Monarch, a local nonprofit that employs, houses, and supports women and children in situations of domestic abuse, addiction and poverty. The restaurant employs people from Skills Development Services, a local nonprofit that helps encourage and employ individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. All of their unused food goes to Shepherd's House, a nonprofit that provides food, clothing and housing to local homeless communities. Their gelato comes from Legacy Creamery whose profits go to the Eli Grow Legacy Foundation to help fund the proposed Memorial Athletic Complex at Tullahoma High School. The produce used at the Sun-

drop Shoppe is locally sourced, and they also serve Tennessee Pride sausage.

"I just think it's important to be involved, and I think a lot of people aren't aware of some of the agencies and programs we have here in Tullahoma," she said. "I think it's nice to be able to plug them a little bit."

The restaurant serves all Prescott family recipes, and if you look at a menu you'll find several family names. The chicken salad is named "Aunt ME's chicken salad," because Paige's Aunt ME always told her she "could make chicken salad out of anything." The pimento cheese sandwich, "Granddaddy's pimento cheese," is named after Paige's father, a "pimento cheese connoisseur and purist."

"One time I tried to put onion in the pimento cheese and you would have sworn I committed a mortal sin," she said.

On the kid's menu, you can order "Clay's PB & jelly," named in honor of Paige's late brother

who was a very finicky eater, and "Paige's award-winning white chicken chili" that has won chili cook-offs in both Indiana and Tennessee.

"It's an intercontinental dish," she said, laughing. "It's really popular, and it amazes me that we sell just as much white chicken chili in the summer as in the dead of winter."

When asked what her favorite dish is, Paige chuckled.

"Choosing my favorite dish is kind of like choosing my favorite child, because they're all my recipes," she said.

Their most popular dishes are the slow-cooked french dip, pancakes, and chicken salad.

In 2020, the restaurant added scratch-made breakfast menu items available all day, and it's been a huge success, even through the pandemic.

"We made it through the pandemic so I think we'll be ok, but it has been really difficult and continues to be difficult to keep our head above water," she said. "But the reason we're still alive is because of the dedication of our employees and the community support."

During the peak of COVID-19, customers were still ordering carry out. They showed up for the Sundrop Shoppe in a way that Paige didn't always expect.

"We have a lot of repeat business [and] a lot of regulars, but every day I walk into the restaurant and see people I've never seen before," she said. "It's so fun to see."

Paige's children work in the restaurant – her daughter waiting tables and working in the kitchen; her son doing dishes – becoming the 5th generation of Prescotts to contribute to the family legacy.

"It's really fun to have found a way to incorporate my two favorite things in the world: food and people," she said. "And I've found a way to call it 'work'." **GN**





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FAITH

Go straight to the best

Martha, Mary, and the well woman knew the secret ingredient.

By Tina Neeley

TAKE A deep breath and smell the aroma of lunch cooking in the kitchen.

It was a very important meal. Jesus and the 12 stopped in to visit the home of Martha and Mary, in Bethany. Through the swirling steam of the boiling pots, Martha glimpsed Mary sitting at the feet of Jesus. Sitting was a luxury she couldn't afford with all the cooking to do. Surely Mary knew she needed her help in the kitchen.

I bet Martha really wanted to sit with Jesus. I imagine she told herself she would as soon as she finished the task at hand. She meant well, and the desire was sincere, but the tyranny of the next urgent thing forced itself before her like a spoiled child demanding to be reckoned with or else.

And while we're boldly imagining, suppose Mary really meant to help Martha or even planned to help Martha as soon as Jesus paused in His teaching. But perhaps He alluded to something that left Mary believing He'd explain it in more detail, so she lingered longer. She knew she preferred Martha's burning you-knew-I-needed-you speech over missing Jesus' words, sensing a possibility that their days with Him were numbered.

Martha was worried and anxious over lunch when the bread of life was in the house.

The Samaritan woman at the well was looking for something to control. She'd go to the well at noon, the hottest hour, to draw water in order to avoid drawing gossiping crowds. Five husbands and living with a man that she wasn't married to gave them plenty to talk about. She could avoid the heat of their condemning gazes and whispers of disapproval. This was something she could control.

She was unnamed in the story. Perhaps her lifestyle caused her to be guarded in sharing it, her shame naming her.

Strain and listen for the low screech of the wheel that lets down the rope with the bucket day after day, sweat trickling relentlessly down her back. She was looking to fill the cavernous hole in her heart until she encountered the living water; Jesus.

Look at their shoulders, Martha and the well woman, how they're keened forward under the weight of their loads.

Feel the heat - the scorching noonday sun, the steam from the boiling iron kettle pots.

What would one good, long drink do to satisfy parched lips?

Like Martha and the Samaritan woman, we stand, our hands reaching for the potholder, glancing over our shoulders at Mary as she sits at Jesus' feet, straining to hear a word of encouragement or a nugget of truth. We let down our empty buckets, tired and weary of the world's demands and so many times draw it up only half-filled or empty altogether.

But we don't have to.

Time spent with Jesus will refresh and renew our spirits and fuel us for the day ahead. He is the one thing needful, and He is always waiting for us to come to Him with our empty buckets and weary hearts.

Our time, our heart, and our presence are all He needs. **GN**

RECIPE FOR REST:

When life is too noisy, and you are dying for the smallest of breaks to catch your breath before the next wave crashes, sneak away and spend time with Father. Go back again and again and let Him refill you with His truth about you. As one glass of water can never satisfy a lifetime of thirst, He invites us to come and be filled.



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GOOD TIMES

“There’s nothing to do in a small town.” We hear it often, but is it true? There are Good Times every weekend in our community. It doesn’t matter if it’s a s’more at a bonfire, a lazy day with a book by the window, or exploring the town with the people you love most—there is something to do.

ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS SAY YES.

PHOTO BY BROOKE SNYDER



A DIFFERENT KIND OF “BEECH” PARTY

There’s no sand, no palm trees, and no swimming at Tullahoma’s “beech” party, but it has a whole lot more.

By Paige Cushman // Photos submitted by Beechcraft Heritage Museum

THE BEECHCRAFT Heritage Museum – a local aviation museum – has held one of the country’s most notable and historic fly-in conventions since 1973. World-renowned pilots, speakers, historians, authors, and aircraft experts come to Tullahoma every year to share their knowledge and celebrate Beechcraft. The national fly-in is for members, aviation enthusiasts, photographers, Beechcraft fans, and the general public – not just pilots and experts. “You don’t even have to be a pilot,” Beechcraft Heritage Museum Vice President Jody Curtis said. “You don’t even really need to know about aircraft. It’s just a fun, exciting event to be at.”

The aviation museum’s 78,000 square foot facility is home to 38 aircraft, original aviation artwork, and historical artifacts from the Beechcraft Aviation Company. And next year, the museum will celebrate its 50th anniversary. The event brings in hundreds of aviation experts and enthusiasts every year. During the October celebration, you can regularly hear planes overhead in Tullahoma. In 2021, over 170 aircraft flew in from coast to coast with over 750 attendees.

“We have a national aviation event here in Tennessee that a lot of the local commu-

nity doesn’t even know about,” Curtis said.

They use local food trucks, caterers, lodging options, printers, and other help from local businesses. The event brings in a lot of tourists, making a huge economic impact for the area.

“I just think it’s a gift to Tullahoma,” she said. “We try to make it a community event.”

This year, airshow extraordinaire Matt Younkin, who is a national aerobatic performer in an aircraft that is not built for performing aerobatics, gave a seminar on his experiences. Also, the owner of one of the rarest planes in the world – The Starship – and the former president of Beechcraft did a question and answer session on the exotic aircraft. “There’s a lot of flying every day,” Curtis said. “People don’t just fly in and park their aircraft. There’s a lot of formation flying and instruction going on in the air space during the event.”

She said that the problem the museum keeps facing is that community members often think it’s a private event, but they welcome anyone who’s willing to come.

It’s a rare opportunity to be in the presence of world-class aviators and extremely rare planes. There is a \$50 entrance fee per day, but if you’re under 29 years old it’s only \$20 a day.



“We have a lot of really rare aircraft flying in from all across the country and world.”

-Jody Curtis

"We have a lot of really rare aircraft flying in from all across the country and world," Curtis said. "It's a fun and exciting event."

This was Curtis's 25th year at the "beech" party. She has been a volunteer, a director, and now is the executive vice president of the Beechcraft Heritage Museum. "I come because it's a fascinating group of people with aircraft in a small and contained area right here in Tullahoma, Tennessee," she said.

The Beechcraft Heritage Museum located on Old Shelbyville Highway is open year-round to the public from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$8 for ages 12 to 17 and 65 and over, and free for those 11 and under. **GN**



COMMUNITY EVENTS



Talent show fundraiser for the Nashville Anti-Human Trafficking Coalition

Photos by Brooke Snyder

Local teenagers gathered for good on August 19, from 7-9 p.m. They assembled together at Cafe Agape inside The Well Church in Tullahoma for a talent show. The cafe/church hosted its first Revive Youth Ministry Teen Talent Show. The show consisted of 17 acts. Performers were free to share their talents like singing, playing music, and more. The event raised a total of \$2,263 for The Nashville Anti-Human Trafficking Coalition. A donation of \$5 was suggested to view the show but not required. Refreshments and desserts were also available for purchase. All proceeds from the night went toward the cause.





Happy 27th Birthday, HOSC!

Photos by Brooke Snyder

On August 27, from 10-5 p.m., the Hands-On Science Center (HOSC) hosted its biggest birthday celebration yet! The main event was free to the public and featured water games, carnival games, crafts, bounce houses, inflatables, shows, and more! The event was made possible by Ascend Federal Credit Union, National Aerospace Solutions, Jacobs, Axient, Master of Ceremonies, and many others in the community! The HOSC exists to make learning fun for the children in our area. They are a nonprofit organization that relies on generous contributions from individuals, corporations, foundations, and public agencies. Therefore, certain parts of the event including concessions acted as a fundraiser for HOSC. Overall, the event was a hit for HOSC and the community's children. Happy birthday!



EVENTS CALENDAR

October 13

7:00 am Beech Party 2022
570 Old Shelbyville Hwy,
Tullahoma

All aviation enthusiasts are invited to our annual Beech Party! Renowned experts from all across the country, lots of flying and aviation fellowship.

October 14

**1:00 pm Fall Chamber Classic
Golf Tournament**
Lakewood Golf and
Country Club

You are encouraged to reserve your teams quickly, as this tournament fills up fast!

October 17

**6:00 pm Beauties in
Business - Ladies
Networking Night**
Casa Mexico
(across from Publix)

Ladies Networking Nights are a free laid-back gathering for female small business owners and businesswomen in general who have a desire to share their knowledge, build relationships, learn from their peers, and grow together.

October 22

**10:00 am Creepy Cryptids
Monster Market**
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Coffee County
Fairgrounds

There will be handmade crafts, food truck, cryptid scavenger hunt, Halloween costume contest, and a photo booth.





November 3

5:00 pm **Tullahoma 40 Under 40**

Lakewood Golf and
Country Club

The community
is celebrating 40
individuals under 40 who
are making an impact on
the community.

Sponsored by
Woodard's Diamonds
& Design, Ascend
Federal Credit Union,
Jack Daniel's Distillery,
Traders Bank, and Good
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November 19

8:00 am **Wobble Gobble** Downtown Tullahoma

This is a Run/Walk
5k that will run down
Tullahoma's well known
Jackson and Atlantic
Streets. That's right!
We are closing part of
the roads and rolling
out the red carpet for
you to run with your
friends on the streets of
Tullahoma. You will be
able to catch a glance at
many historic sites and
sounds in a new and
unique way.

For more info visit:
<https://bit.ly/tuwbgb>

**For more events
and to submit
an event visit:**

www.GoodNewsMags.com/events
or call (800) 247-7318



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**MONDAY - THURSDAY
10:00AM-8:00PM
FRIDAY & SATURDAY
10:00AM-9:00PM**

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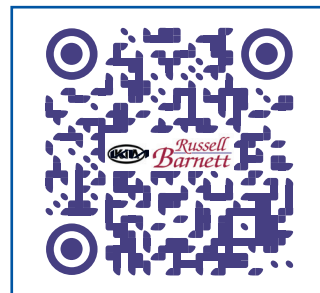
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~ Nanette Matthews



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