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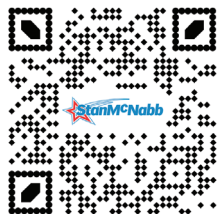


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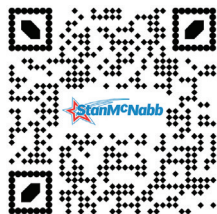
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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

The women of Franklin County

The foundation of centuries and centuries

THE TEST of history has proven that women have been foundational, like a sturdy rock that can withstand a storm. They overcame obstacles century after century, constantly adapting to the needs of the world while — for many years — receiving little to no recognition. Eventually, they protested and made political maneuvers to earn the right to vote and catch up to other American citizens. They were not the first or last group of people to have to fight for rights, but they won nevertheless.

When I think of women, I think of bravery, determination, compassion, comfort, and strength. I could list a million different words to describe the power women have and deserve, but they all mean the same thing: a role model.

Because of women, we have many things that make our lives better.

Because of them, we have experienced the first fire escapes, bullet-proof fiber, word processing technology, and the first computer algorithm, to name a few.

Another thing that has made my life better is the opportunity to create this magazine in your hands. Women write our stories, conduct our interviews, take our photos, edit our words, proof our words, design our pages, and manage the complex process of getting an idea on paper and mailed to your home. If you're like me, this is a blessing that I never knew I needed but am forever indebted for having.

This issue celebrates women in our community. We are thankful and appreciate everything you do to make our lives better, our homes safer, and our world brighter.

Thank you. GN


Wesley Bryant,
MANAGING EDITOR

From our readers



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GOOD NEWS

CHAPTER 1 OF 3

This section of the magazine covers local positive news you may have missed.

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY BROOKE SNYDER



This girl is on fire!

Mackenzie Caldwell makes history at the Winchester Fire Department.

By Paige Cushman // Photography by Brooke Snyder

AT ONLY 20 years old, Mackenzie Caldwell has made Winchester history as the first full-time female firefighter at the Winchester Fire Department.

While she's incredibly humble about the achievement, it's evident that it took a lot of long hours, hard work, and determination for her to be in this position. They've had other female volunteers, just never any full-time ones.

"I'm proud of myself for getting that position, but it wasn't a race or anything to become the first female," she said. "That wasn't why I did it."

Growing up in Oregon, first responder jobs piqued Caldwell's interest. After moving to central Tennessee with her family, she began considering teaching and firefighting. She became a volunteer firefighter while pursuing a degree in education. But when it came down to it, firefighting had her heart.

"It's the comradery, the community, the adrenaline," she said. "And it's something to give me a purpose."

When Caldwell does something, she doesn't do it halfway. She went to Winchester Fire Department and asked what it would take for her to go full time.

"Once I find something I'm passionate about, I don't want to shorthand myself by not pursuing it and not putting in the effort," she said. "When I started going to the fire service, I didn't have a clue about any of it. I just showed up at the station and asked them to show me the ways."

Now, Caldwell is one of about 15 full-time firefighters in the department. When she's not working 24-hour shifts, strength training, or pursuing her fire science degree, she takes technical courses in Swiftwater Rescue and Burn-Building Training.

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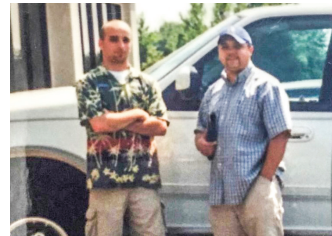
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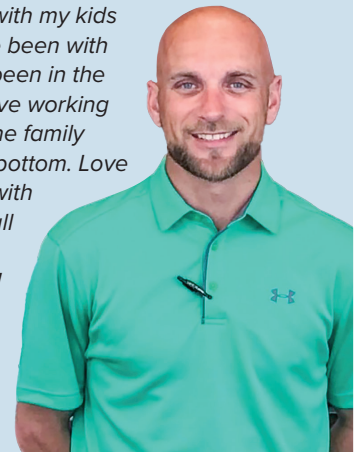


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“Don’t be scared of what you don’t know...”

-Mackenzie Caldwell



◀ Mackenzie Caldwell

“I may not be as strong as some of the guys, but I focus as much as I can on expanding my knowledge,” she said. “I have basically dedicated everything I do toward firefighting.”

While she doesn’t have the physical strength that some of her peers do, her petite size makes it easy for her to wiggle into places others wouldn’t be able to. She said that search and rescue in confined spaces has kind of become her niche.

“The fire services in the Winchester Fire Department have opened up a lot of opportunities for us to step outside of just being a front-line firefighter,” she said. “They’ll help me grow as a person and also grow my department.”

Caldwell said she’s learned a lot from the men she works with.

“I’m 20, and I haven’t gone out and experienced too much, so they’ve helped me with life lessons,” she said. “I’m proud of becoming a part of a second family.”

But since Winchester doesn’t have any other female firefighters, she has found inspiration from other women at conferences, training, and other departments. Recently, she and Makayla Long of the neighboring Tullahoma Fire Department were two of only five women at a 30-person training.

“There’s not a ton of us, at least in the small towns that I work in, but there are obviously other women out there who are doing some great things in fire service, and just seeing them is inspiring,” Caldwell said.

Whether it be firefighting, teaching, or anything else, Caldwell advises young women:

“Don’t be scared of what you don’t know of, even if it’s nerve-racking to go and try a new thing. If it’s something you want to do, there’s nothing holding you back from starting somewhere and giving it a try.” **GN**



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◀ Brittney Graves

“Do your best” echoes throughout the halls of Clark Memorial

Brittney Graves works hard to balance student needs

By Amanda E. West

THE SCHOOL motto, “Do your best,” not only echoes throughout the festive halls and colorfully decorated classrooms of Clark Memorial in Winchester, but it’s also demonstrated by one of their newest and most beloved teachers, Brittney Graves. She works to balance the needs of nonverbal students with particular challenges and with those who learn at grade level. “I teach in an inclusion pre-K classroom to 3 and 4-year-olds with and

without mild to severe disabilities,” said Graves. “We can have a maximum of 20 students a day in the class, which consists of 10 typical students and 10 atypical students. The concept of the classroom is to have typical students demonstrate age-appropriate skills to those who are delayed. I also use the small-group or one-on-one method because I have students with below and above-average cognitive skills.” Last year, Graves displayed her

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“Loving the students, even on the hardest days. Seeing their smiles, silly dances, [and] little high-fives. Their hugs [and] their growth makes everything worth it.”

-Brittany Graves



dedication by teaching a classroom full of students during the day and then attending classes at night to earn her teaching certification.

“My two assistants and I work hard to balance poty training, de-escalating meltdowns, teaching to the needs of each student, and collecting data,” said Graves. “We are also teaching the class how to use American Sign Language (ASL) so that each student has a universal way to communicate. I currently have five nonverbal students in my classroom. I am not fluent in ASL by any means, but I’m learning as I teach. It’s fun to see the excitement of my students when they realize they can understand each other without words.”

“There are a lot of requirements other than actual teaching, between the amount of paperwork, [Individualized Educational Plan] meetings, data collection, etc. It is sometimes hard to find the ability to balance it all. I know it will level out in time; it’s just tricky when you’re new.”

When asked about the easiest part of teaching, Graves said, “Loving the students, even on the hardest days. See-

ing their smiles, silly dances, [and] little high-fives. Their hugs [and] their growth makes everything worth it.”

Graves credits her mother, Angelina Graves-Martin, for making the biggest positive impact in her life. “She raised me and my two younger sisters by herself for a large part of our lives. She made many selfless sacrifices for as long as I can remember just to help provide opportunities for us in life. She’s always been our cheerleader and our rock. She has truly given the three of us the confidence and support we need to become the women we are today.”

“Teachers, assistants, cafeteria staff, janitorial staff, or anyone who works directly with students on a daily basis are to be admired,” said Graves. “It takes a lot of patience, time, and commitment to do the jobs we do. It’s definitely not about the money with these careers.”

The future looks bright for Graves, who plans to earn her master’s or doctorate in early childhood education. Besides living each day by the school motto, Graves said it’s best to “inhale confidence and exhale doubt.” **GN**

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Katie Sherman is in hog heaven.

Local pork producer credits success to her village of women.

By Amanda E. West // Photography by Brooke Snyder

AS A highly dedicated wife, mother, and beloved co-worker, Katie Sherman is a woman who deserves to be recognized. When Sherman began working for one of the country's top 25 pork producers, Tosh Farms, it was very much a "man's world." Hired as the first female manager 21 years ago, Sherman recalls, "About 10% of our 40-person team was female, with only me in production. But now, women make up about 25% of our 500-plus employees. Over the years, Tosh Farms

has evolved, but our core values: energy, knowledge; transparency, commitment, and community focus, [which] promote an environment full of opportunities, have not changed."

"I manage a farm in Huntland, oversee some of our Kentucky farms, and help with our leadership program," said Sherman. "I enjoy raising pigs. They play an important role in our lives. But my favorite part of the job is helping others realize and develop their talents. Sometimes,

it's very physical when I'm working in the barns. Basically, I do my best to help meet the needs of our team in whatever capacity I [can]. It's never boring!"

"Being a mom is rewarding but hard work," said Sherman. As the regional sow production manager, she has excelled in this demanding career because of the village of women who help along the way. "My life is filled with amazing family and friends, but there are some extraordinary women that really stand

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“I’ve lived in a few other places, but there is nowhere better! I am thankful that we are blessed to raise our children in such a wonderful community, surrounded by family and friends.”

-Katie Sherman

out. My mom, Patricia Rieben, steps up daily. She takes our girls to and from school every day and stays over when I’m out of town for a night or two each week. Along with her, our aunts, Peggy Gray, Michelle Sutton, and Sandy Lee, and my mother-in-law, Becky Sherman, have helped over the years with school field trips; carpooling; school projects; orthodontist appointments; meals; overnights; and fun, memory-making activities when I am out of pocket. It’s hard being away from my kiddos, but I never have to worry because they are always with someone who loves and cares for them. It’s easy to get bogged down, but these ladies offer sound advice from different perspectives, hugs, and prayers that reenergize me when I’m waning.”

Sherman also has the support of her devoted husband of 20 years.

“Clayton supports our three children, as well as me and my career. That said, he works the third shift for CSX and has a herd of 150 brood cows that require daily care.”

“There has been a lot of growth during my lifetime in Franklin County, but I love that we still have a small-town feel with agricultural roots and conservative values. In the last few decades, I’ve seen a major increase in activities, such as Farm City Day, the Farmer’s Market, and festivals geared toward family and supporting local businesses. I’ve lived in a few other places, but there is nowhere better! I am thankful that we are blessed to raise our children in such a wonderful community, surrounded by family and friends.” **GN**

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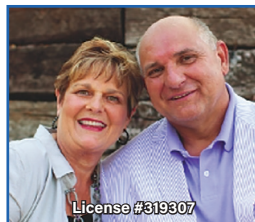
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Good Living

CHAPTER 2 OF 3

This section of the magazine covers local people or businesses you need to know about.

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- 56** Faith: Carrying the torch for Mimi

Our stories are based on submissions from local people. Submit yours here:



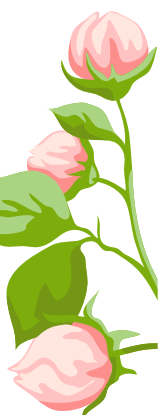
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PHOTOGRAPHY BY BROOKE SNYDER



Franklin County Garden Club: Blooming where they're planted for the past 94 years

By Amanda E. West // Photography by Brooke Snyder



FRANKLIN COUNTY has changed over the years, but the mission of its garden club hasn't changed a bit. Established in 1929 by Elizabeth Drake of EB Drake Nursery, the club passionately beautifies the community and promotes gardening to others. Lola Eslick joined the club 11 years ago and has served as president for the past six. Eslick said, "I have a favorite quote that I learned from another member; it is 'bloom where you're planted' because I realized it pertains to people as well as to gardens."

Acting on that advice, garden club members bloomed exactly where they were planted, and teachers and students at Clark Memorial Elementary School can't stop smiling about that. Members worked tirelessly to infuse new life into drab and neglected spaces around the school's exterior.

"It was the largest project our club has ever taken on," recalls Eslick. "There were two stages to this project. Two members of the club who are very passionate about children recognized this school needed our expertise. We realized we couldn't complete it without the help of our community partners. We worked with the teachers at the school as well as partnering with the Rotary Club, a local paint company, and a restoration company that would restore the historic Carrick Academy Bell. We worked with our partners to trim bushes, replace landscape fabric, provide a new flag, repair the light for the school sign, and plant a flower bed. We named this phase 'New Face,' and entered the bed into the National Garden Club Plant America contest and won \$1,000."

"Upon completion of this project, the school was so impressed with their 'New Face' that they brought to our attention the inner courtyard surrounded by the school building. A teacher survey indicated it should be transformed into an outdoor classroom. It is approximately a 3,500-square-foot area that was neglected and overgrown. We asked Boy Scout Troop #185 if they could provide the labor, and two of the scouts chose this project to complete the requirements for their Eagle Scout Badge. Home Depot, Discount Plumbing and Electric, Crowns Nursery, Walmart, Action Graphics, and Daniell the Printer partnered with us to complete the tasks."



▲ Janie



Preston ▲



▲ Baelyn



Eslick said they removed worn-out flower beds and replaced them with an easy-to-maintain pollinator garden. Two outdoor chalkboards were installed, three picnic tables were donated, and new brick pavers were added, along with a 16-foot aluminum bench donated by Broadview Elementary School. A local high school construction and welding class built a weather station with a sundial that measures temperature, rainfall, and windspeed. At the suggestion of the music teacher, a colorful PVC pipe organ was built from donated items. Final additions include eye-catching banners, whimsical crocheted yard art, a visit from a tree specialist for the memorial apple tree, and a nameplate to honor the memory of a student who died 20 years ago. Teachers now have a welcoming space where their students' imaginations will bloom right along with the flowers.

"After completing this project, we held a celebration of the new and improved outdoor classroom, and three National Garden Club children's books were read to the students and siblings, then donated to the school library," said Eslick. "The books, written by Brenda Moore and illustrated by Emily Lackey, are "The Saved Seed," "The Frightened Frog," and "Networking

with Nature." Others can purchase them through the National Garden Club for \$10 each or a bundle of three for \$15."

Now that the projects at Clark Memorial are complete, the garden club is focusing on its yearly "The Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl" contest. "The Forestry Service and National Garden Club sponsor this contest. Children from first through fifth grades are invited to participate in this annual drawing contest. One winner from each grade will go to the nationals for further judging within the state. The winner will receive a trip to Washington, D.C., and \$50." The club also sponsors a seed library. "The seeds are free, and all we ask is for you to return the seeds from your success to us in the fall."

"Our goal is to introduce youth to gardening and hope they will become our future gardeners and beautify our community. We are very lucky to have master gardeners and four landscape designers that share their knowledge with our club. We couldn't accept large projects like the one at Clark Memorial Elementary School without the great partners from our community." GN

If you'd like to join, contact eslickla@aol.com.





▲ Danica,
London



▶ Kathleen Slater,
GG Preble,
Lola Eslick



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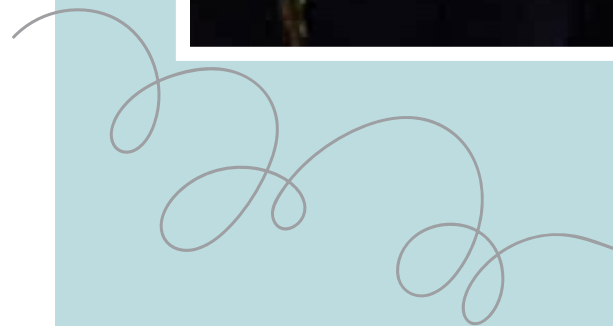
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Family and Community Education Club

Giving their
hearts
and so much
more

By Amanda E. West // Photos submitted by Pat Richards





▲ Barbara Mills-Brachett, Pat Richards, Mary Beth Henley and friends with quilts to donate to Journey Church



PEN HEART surgery spared his life, but the sporadic coughing that followed left him with excruciating pain radiating across his chest. Desperate to provide relief, his nurse grabbed a heart-shaped pillow lovingly handcrafted by the Franklin

County Family and Community Education Club (FCE) members. Initially intended for women who've endured a mastectomy, the donated pillow provided the right amount of comfort and support. Within the pillowcase was a note offering encouragement to whomever received it. As the patient's wife read the words, tears filled her eyes — happy tears — as she realized the FCE, a group she was a member of in Grundy County, provided the comforting pillow. The gesture enveloped her like an embrace from a dear friend. A sense of calm washed over her. The club she cherished impacted her own life when she needed it most, just as it has done for countless others over the past 100 years.

“On December 10, 1910, Miss Virginia P. Moore was the first extension agent to work with women and girls in developing canning clubs. The signing of the Smith-Lever Act legally established the extension service as the educational branch of the United States Department of Agriculture. As the years progressed and more agents were hired, clubs were organized to reach many more families with educational information,” said extension agent and county director Mary Beth Henley.

Henley began working with the 4-H program as an extension agent in 1993, then started leading the adult programs in 1996.

“I began working closely with our Family and Community Education Clubs, which were called Home



Demonstration clubs at the time. I had several members refer to me as “the home agent” because my responsibilities centered around family and consumer sciences, or what used to be called home economics.”

“My favorite project is our Charity Quilt Project. People donate cotton fabric, and our FCE members create beautiful quilts for the homeless and needy. We have made and distributed over 150 quilts over the last five to six years. These quilts are a little larger than lap quilts, so they transport easily. Members also make sleeping mats from plastic grocery bags. FCE partners with hospice and home health organizations to make foot and walker caddies. We have made “Little Dresses for Africa” from pillowcases that we sent to children in African villages. Members have made pajama pants for the Isaiah:117 house, teddy bears





I hope that if I am ever in need, someone would help me. For that reason, I try to help others when I can, where I can. Our FCE members enjoy being involved and enjoy helping people. They make a difference through their projects.

—Mary Beth Henley

for the sheriff's department, and boo-boo animals for the health department. We also partner with the public library and donate lap quilts to local veterans on Veterans Day."

According to Henley, their mission is to learn, lead, grow, and share with others in their community. To do this, they provide research-based information through the University of Tennessee Extension. Topics include Human Development, Nutrition and Food Safety, Money Management, and Family Economics Health and Safety. "Leadership development is a focus of FCE. Through shared opportunities, you can learn skills helpful in bringing growth to your community, church, local government, and family. FCE offers learning opportunities as officers, program leaders, and service stewards. Together, we build better lives for individuals, families, and communities. An example of leadership service is our long history of teaching 4-H youth. Each year, FCE provides the opportunity

to make a difference in the lives of families in our community. The focus of our national program includes improving literacy for children and adults, practicing environmental stewardship, promoting healthy lifestyles, and role-modeling ethical values."

Are you looking to join an exciting club where you can make a difference in our community? "Joining is easy," said Henley. "Currently, we have 47 members in three Franklin County clubs. FCE is a state organization, the Tennessee Association of Family and Community Education, and a national organization, the National Association of Family and Community Education Clubs. Our clubs meet monthly, usually at the Extension Office. Potential members visit the club three times before joining, and membership is \$5 for the year. Each month, clubs take up money for our Sunshine Fund, but sometimes we bring canned food or other items to donate to community projects." GN

Contact Pat Richards at (931) 691-1817,
or email patswearablesandart@gmail.com
Mary Beth Henley at mhenley1@utk.edu,
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FRANKLIN

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IN THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE



COUNTY

JUST OVER 100 years ago, women finally received what other Americans, but not all, already had — the right to vote. Now, we have the opportunity to lift up and celebrate the groundbreaking women around us during Women’s History Month. From teachers, activists, scientists, athletes, doctors, entrepreneurs, and more — women bring with them ambition, intelligence, creativity, and resilience that will be essential for our future. Their presence in the workforce and leadership can also provide chances for other motivated individuals to rise

up into positions they may not otherwise have access to.

We must celebrate the outstanding accomplishments of these incredible women in order to build a better future. It’s important to remember that empowerment is a collective effort that starts with us. Let us use this moment in history as an opportunity to honor women for their strength, bravery, and determination — for without them, the world would be far less vibrant. We can draw strength from one another and continue to make progress toward a better Franklin County because of these women. **GN**

A lifetime of **LOVE** **FOR** **FRANKLIN COUNTY**

KAYLA DONEY SHOWS UP AND SHOWS OUT TO
SUPPORT EVERYONE WITHIN THE COUNTY LINES.

By Amanda E. West

Photography by Brooke Snyder

LOCALS HAVE been calling Kayla Doney a “mover and a shaker” because of her many note-worthy accomplishments as the chamber of commerce executive director. With roots that run deep in both Cowan and Decherd, Doney is the ideal person for this trail-blazing position. Through relationships developed over her lifetime, Doney works diligently to strengthen hundreds of businesses that have called Franklin County home for decades while also rolling out the welcome mat to brand-new entrepreneurs and companies. “I love being involved in the community. Supporting and promoting local businesses are my favorite part of the job,” said Doney. “What I enjoy most is the way locals love and support each other.

Whether it’s losing a loved one or opening your own business, we always show up and show out to support each other!”

Even though the chamber is in Winchester, Doney works hard to encourage and support everyone within the county lines. “We serve Sewanee, Cowan, Huntland, Estill Springs, Decherd, and the unincorporated communities. I will strive to blur the lines between the cities and the county so we can be more unified. We have so much to celebrate about our community, including all the hard-working individuals who make our county a wonderful place to live, work, and play. I hope our population continues to rise to at least 50,000. That’s the magic number restaurants and retailers look for when locating to our area.”

Kayla Doney



Excited and optimistic about the boom in tourism, Doney said, “I think the biggest change in the past 20 years is the number of tourists that come to our county. We have definitely grown in lake life. We have more Airbnbs now than ever, and it’s growing every year. Between the cabins at Tims Ford Marina, Twin Creeks, Fairview Campground on the Lake, and the campground and cabins at Circle E, we have more visitors taking advantage of our beautiful lake and mountains.”

Doney recalls that her mother, Stacie Bates, has been a positive role model in her life. As a native of Franklin County, Bates instilled values within her daughter, such as “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” “My mother had me at the age of 18. I was born with a cleft lip and pallet, making it difficult and stressful for a first-time young mother to work, be a wife, and provide a good life for her family. She has always been a working mom and has become very successful. She graduated with honors from Bethel University with her bachelor’s degree in business management/organizational leadership in 2016. I admire my mother for her work ethic and determination, and I strive to be the wife, mother, and friend that she is!”

Raising their three children in the same community where they created their childhood memories has been a blessing to Doney and her husband, Jimmy.

“One of my favorite memories growing up is playing basketball, softball, and cheerleading at football games. My family and I enjoy the homecoming parade and the Cowan and Decherd Christmas Pa-



“

I WANT TO BE
THE MOST
POSITIVE ADULT
ROLE MODEL I
CAN BE.

- Kayla Doney

rades. You can also catch us every year at the High on the Hog Carnival.”

Coaching youth sports, recreation league softball, basketball, soccer, and pee-wee cheer are sports that Kayla is particularly passionate about.

“My goal is to teach the kids fundamentals of each sport and make a difference in their lives. I want to be the most positive adult role model I can be.”

As we pay tribute to women who lead with integrity, who cast a vision for a better community, and who work tirelessly to promote the prosperity of others, we must think of Kayla Doney, who embodies these virtues daily. GN



One woman's **BENEVOLENT RETIREMENT**

*By Paige Cushman
Photography by Brooke Snyder*

“AS YOU grow older, you will discover you have two hands — one for helping yourself, the other for helping others,” activist, actress, and humanitarian Audrey Hepburn once said.

That discovery, coupled with a lifetime of hard work and a lot of love to give, brought Franklin County's Theresa Tucker out of retirement and into the lives of dozens of Tennessee families.

After 43 years and eight months working in credit recovery, Tucker retired from Ascend Federal Credit Union in April of 2021. She enjoyed nine months of peace and quiet at her home, but Tucker doesn't like to sit still.

“I enjoyed being at home, but I love being involved and around people,” she said.

After hearing about a job opening from a friend, Tucker became an administrative

assistant for the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce.

“After working almost 44 years, I prefer to be busy,” she said. “And I knew I could be with people and help in some way.”

Now, during what was supposed to be her retirement, Tucker helps support local businesses and put on events like the Franklin County Chamber Spring Soiree, 5K runs, and golf tournaments — anything to give back to local businesses and her community.

“It's interesting meeting people from different areas of the country who think Franklin County is the greatest place they've been,” Tucker said.

Even in her work with the credit union, Tucker took pride in helping get people's finances back on track and lending a helping hand during a stressful time in someone's life.



Theresa Tucker

“
I GET SO MUCH
PERSONAL
SATISFACTION
KNOWING THAT
I MAY JUST
BRIGHTEN
SOMEONE’S DAY
OR HELP THEM
ALONG THE WAY

- Theresa Tucker

“I get so much personal satisfaction knowing that I may just brighten someone’s day or help them along the way,” she said.

So much so that when she’s not picking up her grandson from school or working at the chamber, Tucker is volunteering with the Kiwanis Club of Franklin County, helping the community through works of kindness and giving.

“It is the children of Franklin County mainly that you’re helping and the families that need it the most,” Tucker said. “I’ve always been one to root for the underdog, and this is a good way for me to help out.”

According to the organization, Kiwanis “empowers members to pursue creative ways to serve the needs of children, such as fighting hunger, improving literacy, and offering guidance.” Kiwanis clubs around the world host almost 150,000 service projects each year. Founded in 1999, the Kiwanis Club of Franklin County is “dedicated to serving the local community through various service and fundraising projects.”

Tucker grew up in Cowan, just east of Winchester, and had what she described as a “wonderful childhood.”

“I can’t say enough good things about growing up in Cowan,” she said. “We had the best childhood.”

She grew up within a mile of almost a dozen of her best friends. They spent their time biking to one another’s houses. She loved it enough to build her family and career in the area and to dedicate much of her adult life to giving back to the community. So Tucker joined the Kiwanis Club of Franklin County over 13 years ago but couldn’t commit as fully as she would’ve liked.

“While I was at Ascend, I wasn’t able to give as much time and energy as I would’ve wanted to Kiwanis,” she said. “Now that I’m retired, I can be more involved with the kids.”

The local group, which meets in Winchester, offers unique and important learning experiences for students in Franklin County. Kiwanis hosts a yearly Reality Store, which gives children and teenagers real-life insight into life after school. They receive a job and budget and then visit with community leaders, local business owners, and mentors who teach them the cost of personal finances, family planning, higher education, and more. Kiwanis also awards multiple college scholarships each year to high school students.

During the holidays, they set up meals-on-wheels and toy drives. Throughout the year, Tucker helps organize fundraisers like the High on the Hog Festival. All their donations go back to the Franklin County community to support more children.

“Maybe something we’re doing helps them and leads them to where they want to be,” she said. “I never do anything for recognition. I just love helping in any way that I can.” **GN**







Don't judge a book by its
COVER

THIS LIBRARY CHANGES LIVES.

By Paige Cushman

Photography by Brooke Snyder

TINA STEVENS has loved the library for as long as she can remember, and it all started with her mother.

“My mother showed us how important reading and the library were,” she said. “She was always reading a book or magazine.”

Stevens’ mother was a fine artist and once traded an original painting for a copy of “Gone With the Wind” at a hardware store.

“Of the many items lost among years of traveling, she sacrificed many things, but not that,” Stevens said.

Her family explored the country during her childhood, but by age 10, they settled in Franklin County.

“When arriving in a new town, Mama always looked for the library,” she said. “When we settled here, she was delighted to find there was a county library... I still have my original Franklin County Library paper library card with the metal insert for the charge machine.”

The first book that got her “hooked” on reading was J.R.R. Tolkien’s “The Hobbit.”

“I was in middle school at the time,” she said. “Little did I know that book was the beginning of a life’s passion.”

Still, she didn’t know she was to become an established and beloved county library director — yet.

A couple of decades later, Stevens began a career in education with the Head-Start program, then worked at a preschool. She climbed the ladder from a teacher’s aide to an administrator. And in 2006, she began taking night classes working toward a career as a teacher.

Stevens made friends with the Franklin County Library Youth Service Director during this time. She would review books for the library and help with summer reading programs. In late 2007, the youth services director stepped down from her position and encouraged Stevens to apply.



Tina Stevens

“Some friends encouraged me and said, ‘yes, you would be perfect for this job,’” she said. “I was intimidated because I grew up using that library and had a lot of respect for the ladies that worked there, and, well, I just didn’t feel I met muster.”

Despite her hesitancy, Stevens applied for the job. The library director at the time, Diane Krauth, felt Stevens was qualified and gave her the opportunity.

“My mother was so proud,” Stevens said. “I don’t believe that as the U.S. President, I would have made her any prouder. That’s how much she loved the library and the library ladies.”

During her first few years at the library, Stevens continued attending classes. But when it came time to pick a major, she realized how much she loved being the Franklin County Library Youth Services Director and decided to stay. With the support of Krauth and other library team members, she absorbed as much as possible about library science.

“I’m very passionate about what we do,” Stevens said. “We connect people with services and programs in the community, such as food and nutrition programs, healthcare, housing, clothes for a job interview, job searching, homework help... too much to list. We connect them to free online courses, learning a language, tracing family history, and planning a trip; I mean, it runs the gambit of what we do. Franklin County has a true treasure of talented, kind, and professional library staff to whom I am grateful every single day.”

After serving as the Franklin County Library Director for 34 years, Krauth retired. Stevens applied to fill the position

and was chosen to become the Franklin County Library Director in 2016. Krauth and Stevens remain close. They meet once a month at the library for the library’s Bookies Book Club.

“I feel so blessed that she gave me a chance and allowed me to realize a dream,” Stevens said. “I look to her, still, for guidance. Diane saw the library through two additions. She brought the library online. She integrated and digitized the library catalog. I have no doubt that I would not be where I am without her example, leadership, and friendship.”

Always reading and learning, Stevens still spends 60-80 hours a year on continued education. Her mission from the beginning has been to tell the library’s story — to let people know what an incredible resource it is.

“We change lives every single day,” Stevens said. “The library changed mine! I’m building on the heritage of successful women who have led the library. Strong women who wanted to make a difference in their community, knowing that literacy is at the epicenter of success. No matter what one does in life, literacy in all forms, is key. Though we were poor financially, most of the time, Mama told us we could be anything we chose, and she knew reading would help us get there.”

Recently, a woman who came into the library needed help printing something. The library team assisted her with the computer. To the lady’s surprise, she could do more than she thought.

“Someone told her she was too old to learn, so she just stopped,” Stevens said. “So the team encouraged her, just like my

“

I’M BUILDING ON
THE HERITAGE
OF SUCCESSFUL
WOMEN WHO
HAVE LED THE
LIBRARY.

- Tina Stevens

friends encouraged me all those years ago. There is no telling what she will go on to learn and do. Her life has changed course for the better simply because the public library was there, and the staff was willing to go above and beyond. You know, she may not become a millionaire, but guess what? She might.”

The library in and of itself is a celebration of women’s empowerment. It was started nearly 100 years ago by a local group of businesswomen, and it has been successfully run by women ever since. Had there not been a string of empowered and supportive women to encourage and lead Stevens, it’s hard to say if she’d be in this position. But who knows? She might.

“We’re changing lives every day,” she said. “And that’s why we stay.” GN






Spread **THE** Love

Spoon-licking favorite
has its own day.

By Tina Neeley

MARCH 1 is National Peanut Butter Lover's Day — a day to celebrate the rich, gooey goodness of a pantry staple. What better way to start the day than with a batch of special pancakes? Then, keep up the momentum at lunch with Elvis' favorite midnight snack and an extra pie to share with a friend or neighbor. Don't forget to lick the spoon! 

Peanut Butter Pie

Submitted by Helen Cook

1 c. powdered sugar
1/2 c. peanut butter
3 pkgs. vanilla pudding, 4 oz.
1 3/4 c. milk
1 baked pie crust or graham cracker crust
1 tub of whipped topping

In a large bowl, mix powdered sugar and peanut butter until real fine. Put half of mixture into crust. In a separate bowl, mix vanilla pudding with milk. Pour into crust. Place remainder of peanut butter mixture on top of pudding, holding aside a quarter cup of mixture. Cover pie with whipped topping. Sprinkle remaining peanut butter mixture on top of pie. Keeps well in refrigerator.

Peanut Butter Pancakes

Submitted by Margie Drake

1/2 c. peanut butter, smooth
1/2 c. light brown corn syrup
2 c. pancake mix

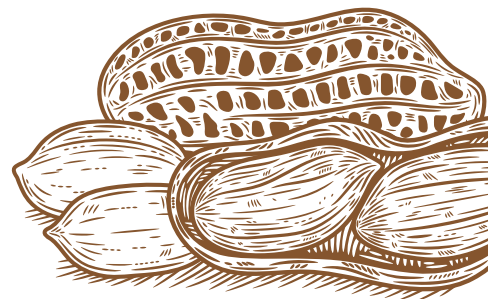
In a small mixing bowl, combine peanut butter and corn syrup. Prepare pancake mix in a medium mixing bowl, according to the package's directions. Add peanut butter mixture. Cook according to the package's directions.

Fried Peanut Butter and Banana Sandwich

Submitted by Fannie Thorpe

1/2 c. butter, softened
3/4 c. peanut butter
3 T. honey
1 1/2 t. + 1 T. ground cinnamon
2-3 ripe bananas
8 slices white bread
1/4 c. sugar

In a frying pan, melt 3 tablespoons of butter. Make sure the butter does not burn. In a small bowl, combine peanut butter, honey, and 1 1/2 teaspoons of cinnamon. Slice the bananas into quarters and add to 4 slices of bread. Spread peanut butter mixture over bananas and bread then top with remaining 4 pieces of bread. Spread the remaining butter onto both sides of the sandwiches. Grill each side in the frying pan until each side is golden. For topping, combine sugar and 1 tablespoon cinnamon in a shallow plate. Coat the grilled sandwiches with the sugar mixture. Cut diagonally and serve hot.





▲ Dorothy Wilson and Kali Bates



Carrying the torch for Mimi

By Kali Bates // Photo provided by Kali Bates

IT'S THE curse of getting older — you know — being told that we are acting like our parents by taking on their traits, actions, and beliefs. And it's true. Now, at 39, I find it happening to me, except I don't take after my parents. I am slowly evolving into who was the matriarch of our family for over 70 years — my grandmother.

Affectionately known as Mimi, Dorothy Wilson was one of the kindest and most pleasing people ever. She called us “babe” and constantly fretted about one of us getting hurt. She was always cooking, and everything she made was delicious, even if she didn't think so. Most of my childhood was spent helping her break beans, make biscuits, or watch the “Andy Griffith Show” with her and my grandfather.

However, there was another side to her that few got to see. Mimi could be a firecracker and was a stickler for presentation. You didn't present things or yourself any old way. You were clean and dressed, and the house also needed to be clean. She educated herself constantly. She wasn't going to discuss anything without studying up on it first. She wanted things done a certain way, and that was the deal. She worked unbelievably hard to make her household what it was, and she wasn't going to have anyone tell her how to run it — not even her husband of 72 years, whom she adored.

She also was fervent in her faith. Both she and my grandfather were devout Christians who served in the Methodist Church as Sunday school teachers and

helped in many other areas of the church. She knew the Bible by heart and read it every single day.

While proud to be Christians, my grandparents' faith was an action or way of being. It wasn't just about scripture, dressing up on Sundays, or believing in God. It was about acting out their faith wherever they went and in whatever they did.

Now that she is gone, I find myself acting a lot like her. I can be a firecracker. I worry too much about my children, try to cook, educate myself, and, most importantly, move in my faith. While I miss her terribly, I think about all that she left for me in my heart. Both she and my grandfather left me with faith.

Hebrews 11:1 tells us that “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”

It can't always be seen or even felt immediately when we put our faith in action. Doing the right thing or helping can take days, weeks, or even years to see fruition. There is also the chance that we may never see our good deeds make the change we had hoped for. But if we have faith, we know it will all work out for good, whether we see it or not. My grandmother was proof of this. Her faith lives on through Joan, Sherry, Keri, myself, and all of the lives she touched.

Mimi taught me that the word of God is essential, but it is also vital to carry it out through our actions and words. Our faith is affirmed in how we treat others and walk through life. So, I'm good with being told I'm just like my Mimi; I hope I can do her justice. **GN**





CHAPTER 3 OF 3

This section of the magazine covers local things to do.

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY BROOKE SNYDER

Growing IN SUPPORT

Local networking organization branches into neighboring counties

By Kali Bates // Photos retrieved from Beauties in Business Facebook Page



▲ Laura Knight and Tashonna Starr

A CROSS THE area, women meet each month to lift each other, support each other, share ideas, and give advice. With gatherings now taking place in Winchester, Tullahoma, and Manchester, the meetings are held by the grass-roots organization “Beauties in Business.”

The local networking group began with locals Laura Knight and Cassie Fulmer six years ago. The two friends decided to create an atmosphere where women could come and be supported and grow from that support. Initially, meetings have been held on the first Tuesday of each month at Camino Real in Winchester. With women coming from all over the area to attend the Winchester meetings, Fulmer said it was the next step to extend the organization and meetings to Manchester and Tullahoma.

“With our Winchester location, it was crazy how many people were coming from Tullahoma, Shelbyville, Manchester, and everywhere in between. We are now blessed to have some ladies going to multiple Beauties’ events every month,” she said.

Both Knight and Fulmer said the meetings follow the same formats and offer the same support and growth.



▲ Kristal Walker, Pamela Barnes, Navi Blundell, Kirsten Johnson, Martina Caudill, TaShonna Starr, Jenny Pettay, Lisa Wikoff, Laura Knight, Lis Mason, Lyndsey Bender, Linda Conklin, Chelsea Greenway, Teri Romano, Trisha Fritz, Savannah Romero, and Meg Glenn

“We knew there was something magical about this triangle we have with Winchester, Manchester, and Tullahoma,” said Knight. “And if you could build a community of those women, that’s something special. We realized that these women were driving from Manchester and Tullahoma. We must expand and make this a little more doable for the mom who must drop off at soccer, catch the meeting, and get back.”

Meetings in Tullahoma are held on the third Monday of each month at Casa Mexico Restaurant. Both Fulmer and Knight said Beauties’ member, Tashonna Starr, has been tremendous in the success of the Tullahoma meetings.

“She is great,” said Fulmer. “She is our Beauties’ recruiter. We will be sitting with a group of 30 or more women, and when we ask who recommended them to attend a meeting, almost everyone says Tashonna. She is our go-to girl.”

Manchester meetings occur on the second Thursday of every month at Jefferson’s. Knight said Manchester meetings have been successful, thanks to local business owner and member Brooke Gipson.

“She is a rockstar,” said Knight. “She has got the ball rolling in Manchester.”

Knight added that they now offer monthly “pop-up” events at each location. They are not official meetings but opportunities for members who might not be able to attend evening meetings to have a chance to come out and have some much-needed support and fun.

“We do at least one pop-up each month,” she said. “The pop-ups are at different times of day in different locations. Sometimes we meet for lunch, happy hour, and even a fun activity such as group yoga or painting. These are great for members who can’t make the evening meetings. They don’t follow the meeting agenda

but offer all the benefits of coming together and sharing.”

Grateful for the group’s success thus far, both Knight and Fulmer are excited about what the future holds for the group.

“We knew we wanted a safe, laid-back place for women to come and gather that’s going to benefit them professionally but also be a heck of a lot of fun socially. We’ve just done these things over the last six years, and it’s taken on a life of its own, and we are so excited to see where it goes,” said Knight.

To learn more about upcoming meetings and events and to connect with others, follow the group’s Facebook at Beauties in Business Networking Communities, and Instagram at @Beautiesinbiz. GN



▲ Tisha Fritz, Savannah Romero, and Pamela Barnes

COMMUNITY EVENTS



A Show of Talent

Photography by Brooke Snyder

Let's Make a Note Music, Art, and Enrichment Center recently showcased Franklin County's youth at their 2022 Christmas recital. Students showcased their musical talents for all to enjoy.





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Good News MAGAZINE

EVENTS CALENDAR

February 15

5:30 pm The Rain Teen Center
1910 Sharp Springs Rd.

We provide dinner, snacks, activities, and games for kids between the 6th and 12th grades.

February 21

4:00 pm Franklin County Library STREAM
Franklin County Library
105 S. Porter St.

Join us to have fun learning about science, technology, reading, engineering, arts, and math.

February 22

10:00 am Weekly Storytime
Franklin County Library
105 S. Porter St.

February 23

5:00 pm Beauties in Business Pop-Up Happy Hour
115 1st Ave. NE

Meet local ladies, enjoy some dinner and have a fun time with some fellow Beauties.

Everyone is welcome to attend this free event, so please invite your friends! There will not be a guest speaker, but there will be great company, conversations, and a good time.

March 4

10:00 am Market Place Consignment
104 Monterey St.
Cowan, TN

March 4-March 11. We have been outfitting local families for less and enabling them for more for 29 years. What began as a service to help families make and save money has become so much more. We are thankful to partner with our community and neighbors to pass it on!



March 11

7:00 pm **The Bellamy Brothers**
w/Lauren Lucas
Franklin County
High School
833 Bypass Rd.

March 25

4:00 pm **United Way Father Daughter Dance**
Monterey Station
Cowan

Photos will begin at 4 p.m. Tickets are \$40 per person and will be on sale beginning February 1 at Citizens Community Bank in Winchester. Only 400 tickets will be sold.

For more information contact (931) 308-7308 or email jeannieamacher@gmail.com

March 26

6:00 pm **Kingsmen Quartet**
First Baptist Church
Estill Springs
218 N. Main St.
Estill Springs

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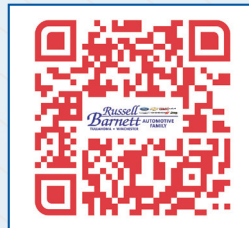
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