

Good News

exchange

Ella Moyers

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behind the net

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118th Lincoln County Fair Daily Events

Friday, September 15 • Gate Admission - FREE

Lincoln County Fair Cruise-In 5:00 - 9:00 P.M.
Adult Cornhole Tournament 6:00 P.M.

Saturday, September 16 • Gate Admission - \$22 ARMBAND DAY, ALL YOU CAN RIDE

Gate Admission includes - Admission to Fair, Rodeo, and Armband Rodeo 1:00 P.M. - Closing 7:30 P.M.

Sunday, September 17 • Gate Admission - \$8

ARMBAND DAY, ALL YOU CAN RIDE FOR \$20 1:00 P.M. - 5:30 P.M.
ARMBAND DAY, ALL YOU CAN RIDE FOR \$25 1:00 P.M. - Closing 1:30 P.M.
Quarter Horse Races, Pony Races & Mule Races 6:00 P.M.
Rodeo

Monday, September 18 • Gate Admission - \$8

Pageants • Fayetteville Lumber Stage • Junior Miss • Miss Teen • Fairest of Fair 7:00 P.M.
Non-Sanctioned Truck & Tractor Pull 7:00 P.M.

Tuesday, September 19 • Free Gate Admission & Parking Inside the Fairgrounds Sponsored by Ariens Co.

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Harness Races 7:00 P.M.

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Wednesday, September 20 • Gate Admission - \$8

Harness Races 2:00 P.M.
Power Wheels Derby 6:00 P.M.
Stock Demolition Derby 7:00 P.M.
Pro Wrestling • Fayetteville Lumber Stage 7:30 P.M.

Thursday, September 21 • Gate Admission - \$10

Harness Races 2:00 P.M.
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Monster Trucks 7:00 P.M.

Friday, September 22 • Gate Admission - \$12

ARMBAND DAY, ALL YOU CAN RIDE \$25 3:00 P.M. - Closing
Harness Races 2:00 P.M.
Sanctioned Truck & Tractor Pull 7:00 P.M.
Ariens Co. Gravely Mower Giveaway 8:00 P.M.

Saturday, September 23 • Gate Admission - \$12

ARMBAND DAY, ALL YOU CAN RIDE (1:00- 5:30 \$20 • 1:00pm- closing \$30)
Harness Races 1:00 P.M.
Power Wheels Derby 6:00 P.M.
Demolition Derby 7:00 P.M.
Trailer Giveaway - Grandstands
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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Chasing dreams, creating legends

The unbreakable spirit of our hometown sports

OUR HOMETOWN sports is not simply a spectacle of athletic prowess; it is a celebration of the human spirit — an embodiment of the unwavering bond that emerges when we come together to support our own. Behind every cheer and every thunderous applause lies a resolute belief in the power of unity and camaraderie. It is through the collective spirit of parents, siblings, and friends that we create an atmosphere where young athletes thrive and carry the torch of sportsmanship with pride.

In the heart of our hometown sports, we witness the captivating dance of hard work and determination that unfolds on the field. Our athletes, like tireless warriors, pour their hearts into each practice, seeking not only victory but personal growth and excellence. Their unwavering commitment sets them on a path to success, inspiring not only their teammates but an entire generation of dreamers who aspire to follow in their footsteps.

In the spirit of sportsmanship, our hometown sports transcends mere competition

and embraces a culture of respect. As athletes compete, they embody the values of integrity, humility, and compassion, leaving a lasting impression on their fellow teammates and opponents alike. In both triumph and defeat, they stand united, bound together by the shared pursuit of greatness and the cherished memories that will endure for a lifetime.

We celebrate not only the remarkable achievements on the field but also the unwavering support and encouragement that courses through the veins of our community. Each athlete, with every sprint, throw, and goal, inspires us to strive for greatness in our own lives, armed with the knowledge that through teamwork and dedication, we can conquer any challenge that comes our way.

As we delve into the inspiring stories that grace these pages, let us remember the importance of fostering a culture of teamwork, hard work, and sportsmanship within our hometown sports. Together, we form an unbreakable bond, a tapestry of love, and a legacy of excellence that will forever define the spirit of our community. **GN**


Wesley Bryant,
MANAGING EDITOR

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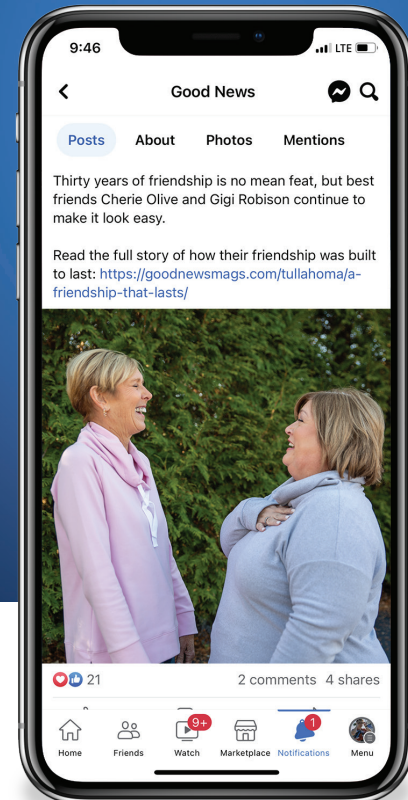
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CHAPTER 1 OF 3

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

- 14 Going the extra mile
- 18 Facial paralysis and Facebook posts
- 22 Love, sweat, and home runs

Submit a positive story on our website:



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Photo submitted by Hilary Hardin

◀ Winnie Riggins, Etta Winset, Hilary Hardin, Adalyn Cantrell, and Piper Ogle



Going the extra mile

The owner of Stovall's Body Shop on 55 years of excellent service

By Paige Cushman // Photos submitted by Stovall's

IT COULD be the speedy service. It could be the family name or the devotion to God and country. Whatever it is, it's working for Stovall's Body Shop and Wrecker Service. The Fayetteville staple has been around for 55 years, bringing in decades of repeat customers, out-of-town visitors, and just about anyone stranded in Lincoln County.

"They are open always to help you when you need them — even when you're stuck in line at Long John Silver's," one Facebook reviewer said.

Bill Stovall was 21 years old and working at a local body shop when his boss told him he was going to Lewisburg for a couple of years. He asked if Stovall would run the shop during his absence. But the 21-year-old didn't want to just watch over the shop.

"I said, 'Well, if I'm gonna run the shop here, I'd just soon own it,'" Stovall recalled, laughing.

His parents mortgaged their house and helped him go into business on October 1, 1968. Fifty-five years, a lot of long hours,



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a whole lot of dedication, and thousands of prayers later, Stovall is still answering the phones at his body shop.

“I’ve always enjoyed working on cars or doing anything mechanical even when I was young — bicycles, tricycles, wagons, anything, you know,” Stovall said. “I enjoyed the work, you know?”

Of course he’s not the only one keeping the lights on — it’s a family affair. His dad worked there after he retired. One of his brothers still works there full time, and the other helps with paperwork when he comes into town from Clarksville. Stovall’s wife worked by his side until she retired earlier this year, and his son and grandson are there basically around the clock.

Stovall’s Body Shop and Wrecker Service has only glowing reviews and a lot of fiercely loyal customers.

“Amazing guys here. Late-night tow and the friendliest and quickest service you can ask for! Would hands down, over any other, recommend them,” one review said.

“The best in Lincoln County. Great people and beautiful work,” another one reads.

A quick Google search would show you hundreds of the same types of comments. Stovall said it’s just part of the job.

“If you’re a Christian and you treat people like they wanna be treated, you usually come out on the fair end,” he said. “If you’re fair with people, they’ll be fair back with you.”

For many, their service is more than fair. They have wreckers running all hours of the day, seven days a week. They offer collision repair, vehicle lock-outs, car storage, heavy-duty towing, and storage units.

They meant to celebrate the shop’s 50th anniversary five years ago but never had the time. And things aren’t slowing down now.

“We don’t have a lot of time for celebrating,” Stovall said. “Most of our time is for working.”

As for his and his family’s success, his outlook is simple: “If you treat your customers fair and you’re good to God and your country, everything else will take care of itself.” **GN**

HH Lincoln Health celebrates a year of improved healthcare

HH LINCOLN Health (HHLH) celebrated its one-year anniversary as part of the Huntsville Hospital Health System with a ribbon-cutting event in July. The president of HHLH, Mary Beth Seals, reported that the system has worked diligently to expand services, update facilities, attract more physicians, and provide high-quality care. Other accomplishments included improvements to the facilities, partnerships with other hospitals, investments in the future of healthcare, and community engagement. **GN**

New coffee shop & bakery added to Petersburg’s square

HEAVEN’S NECTAR, a delightful coffee shop, recently opened on Petersburg’s square, fulfilling owner Carol Lee’s dream of combining her passion for coffee and cooking. With a delectable menu featuring soups, salads, sandwiches, lunch specials, baked goods, and specialty coffees, customers can also savor her unique blend of coffee called Heaven’s Nectar. To top it off, whole cakes and pies are available for pre-order for your next special occasion or just because. The coffee shop operates from Monday to Thursday, 7 a.m. to 2 p.m., and Friday to Saturday, 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. **GN**



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▲ Hadley Hardin with her mom, Hilary

Facial paralysis and Facebook posts

A local educator's inspiring journey with Ramsay Hunt Syndrome

By Paige Cushman // Photos submitted by Hilary Hardin

WHEN HILARY Hardin taught middle school English, students weren't always happy to see her. Now, as the librarian for South Lincoln School, she's their superhero, or at least a smiling face during a difficult school day.

"It's like the paparazzi when I'm walking through the hall," Hardin said.

But her smiling face — one that hundreds of students have come to know and love — changed last July.

Hardin and her family were camping last summer when she began to experience some ear pain. She assumed it was swimmer's ear until the pain and a nasty bout of vertigo became worse. At first, she was given treatment for a bad ear infection. But her symptoms continued to worsen.

She developed shingles over her head and in her mouth, which caused her scalp and tongue to feel like they were blistered or scalded. Her face began to droop, her vertigo made it impossible to

walk, she had double vision, and she could not eat normally with shingles in her mouth. She was getting increasingly nervous.

In June of 2022, right before Hardin got sick, pop singer Justin Bieber posted about his facial paralysis due to Ramsay Hunt Syndrome (RHS) — a rare disease that develops when a shingles outbreak damages facial nerves by your ears. During a conversation with her sister and brother-in-law about her symptoms, Hardin said, "That's it, that's exactly what I'm experiencing."

Within days she received her RHS diagnosis and began steroids. Doctors told her the paralysis could go away within seven days, but for Hardin, it didn't.

"When my face was completely paralyzed, it felt like somebody poured a bag of sand into that side of my face," she said.

She couldn't close one of her eyes. She had to tape it shut. Her normally bright smile and round cheeks were sagging. She was nervous about what her students would think when she returned

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“I kind of struggled with feeling led to [post updates about my face], and then the minute that I did, it was therapeutic and cathartic for me.”

-Hilary Hardin

to work. Society told her to focus on self-acceptance, but “when you are looking at yourself and your eye won’t close, everything is drooping down, you can’t speak, you’re slobbering, you feel really ugly,” Hardin said.

Even with some of the more difficult symptoms like vertigo, ear pain, and double vision behind her, the facial paralysis messed with her head. Not long after she had begun experiencing symptoms, Hardin took to Facebook for encouragement. She asked her friends and family to share their favorite scriptures — something she said helped her more than anything — and promised to keep everybody updated on her health journey.

“I kind of struggled with feeling led to [post updates about my face], and then the minute that I did, it was therapeutic and cathartic for me,” Hardin said. “But I would think, ‘That was so stupid. Nobody is going to watch that. Why would you do that?’”

While the onslaught of support and scripture was encouraging, she’d shame herself, saying it was a curse that she felt the need to share everything with others or that she was seeking validation or approval. But after receiving hundreds of positive comments and building an online commu-

nity that’s followed her through months of struggle and hurt, Hardin realized God had a plan for her. In one Facebook post, she quoted 2 Corinthians 1:3-4, which reads:

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.”

It’s taken months of massages, speech therapy, botox, doctor’s visits, and Zoom calls with her physical therapist, but now, Hardin can see the difference.

“If I look at where I was in October or where I was in November or December to now, I’m so much better,” she said. “In recovery, it feels like somebody scooping out more and more sand every day. But I still feel like there’s a little sand in my face.”

Nevertheless, her cheeks have settled back into place (on the good days), and her eyes are as bright as ever. The students aren’t scared when she greets them in the library, nor should they be. After all, Hardin’s just a God-fearing librarian with a sparkling smile, one inspiring story to tell, and a very active Facebook page. **GN**

Ariensco partners with Fayetteville City Schools to establish dual enrollment welding program

ARIENSCO, A Wisconsin-based outdoor power equipment manufacturer, has joined forces with Fayetteville City Schools to launch a dual enrollment welding program. The collaboration aims to provide students from Fayetteville High School, Lincoln County High School, Riverside, Moore County High School, and Huntland High School with career and technical pathways, reimagining traditional education models. The initiative, supported by the Tennessee College of Applied Technology Shelbyville and the Lincoln County Industrial Development Board, has received approval and funding. The program is set to open in fall 2023, fostering community engagement and potentially inspiring future collaborative projects. **GN**

Sheriff Murray Blackwelder retires

SHERIFF MURRAY Blackwelder, who has earned a reputation as one of the best sheriffs in Tennessee, retired on July 31 after five terms and 17 years in office. Citing health concerns as contributing to his decision, Blackwelder expressed his gratitude to his supporters, staff, and family for their unwavering support throughout his tenure. He highlighted the Lincoln County Sheriff’s Department’s progress and commended his team’s dedication and professionalism. Looking ahead, Blackwelder is eager to spend quality time with his family, indulge in his hobbies, and embrace the joys of retirement. **GN**

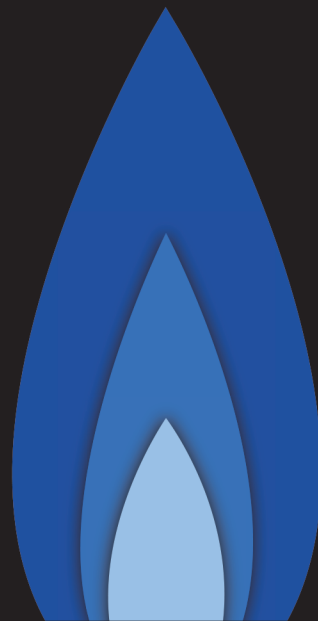


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▲ Ethan and Drew Himmelman

Love, sweat, and home runs

The resilience of a sports mom

By Paige Cushman // Photos submitted by Paul Henry

AS THE sun rises over Tennessee baseball diamonds, golf courses, and public school parking lots, parents like Tana Adams make sure uniforms are freshly washed, the fridge is stocked, and the calendar is filled out. Adams is more than a spectator at her twin sons' games. She and her husband, Ben, are steadfast supporters, cheerleaders, and confidantes. It's not always easy, but boy, is she proud.

Tana's sons, Ethan and Drew, have been in sports since they were 3. Their father, Mike Himmelman, started them in baseball as early as he could.

"Their dad could not wait until they were old enough to play sports," Tana said. "They played at the YMCA. They didn't keep score or anything, but he was just so determined. He couldn't wait for them to get into baseball."

In November of their eighth grade year, Ethan and Drew's dad unexpectedly died from a heart attack. That year, they finished the rest of their season and then quit baseball.

"That was really hard for me as the parent because we had put so much time and money and energy into it," Tana said. "But I think it was honestly the best thing for them."

It made sense to Tana. Their dad was the one who was passionate about baseball, and she knew they didn't want to play anymore. But while grappling with the loss of her sons' father, and the loss of her sister a year prior, she knew the boys needed to be doing something.

"I just didn't want them to miss out on those relationships and that drive that sports gives you, to do better and be better," Tana said. "They could quit baseball, that was fine, but we were starting high school, and they were going to have to do something other than just school."



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Ethan

Come August, they both joined the golf team. Ethan also started in robotics, and Drew joined the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA). Tana and her husband, Ben, worked with the boys' stepmom to make sure they had someone in their corner at every event possible. She said it was incredibly expensive and hot.

"There was almost always at least one of us there at everything," Tana said. "If they were at a robotics competition, we were there cheering. If they were at a baseball game, we were there cheering. If they were at a golf match, we were in the golf cart being quiet but cheering."

Ethan decided he wanted back on the baseball team the summer before his sophomore year. Unfortunately, many of his former teammates spent a year training and honing their baseball skills. Ethan had fallen behind and didn't make the team. It was hard for Tana to watch him struggle. And when they got into middle and high school, it was hard for her not to absorb their growing pains in general.

"I tried not to be that person who texts the coach and says, 'Hey, why isn't my son playing?' or 'What do we need to do to fix this?'" Tana said. "It's hard watching them find their groove."

She and Ben got Ethan a gym membership, and he took it upon himself to train morning, afternoon, and night until it was time for tryouts the next summer. His coach took him back onto the team as a pitcher — a triumph for the whole family. Drew continued on the golf team and continued with FBLA.

Knowing that academic scholarships are more common than athletic ones, Tana and her sons prioritized school through it all. Both in Advanced Placement classes, there were times when one of the twins would stay up late for a game or tournament, have homework to catch up on afterward, and still make it to a 6 a.m. workout or practice.

"There's probably times I wish I could go back to when they were little and take some things back that I said about different games," Tana said. "You can't lose sight of what it's all about. Remember to have fun and enjoy it and not put too much pressure on them because they're putting enough pressure on themselves."

Their work ethic was never something she worried about. They had always been good in school, involved in sports, and competitive with one another. They just had two goals: to graduate in the top 10 of their class and go to a Southeastern Conference (SEC) school.

They're both headed to the SEC's University of Tennessee Knoxville this fall on academic scholarships after graduating seventh and eighth in their class while wrapping up successful senior seasons. So, for parents with young athletes at home, take Tana's advice. She may know a thing or two.

"Leave the coaches alone; they know what they're doing," Tana said. "And let them have fun. Be proud of whatever they do out there. If they're doing their best, that's all you can ask for." **GN**

Fayetteville-Lincoln County Industrial Development Executive Director named one of North America's top 50 economic developers of 2023

ELAINE MIDDLETON, executive director of the Fayetteville-Lincoln County Industrial Development Board, was recognized as one of North America's top 50 economic developers of 2023 by Consultant Connect. The selection was based on her outstanding practices and success in building the community she serves. Consultant Connect featured Middleton and other recipients in June and will receive their awards in November at the ECONOMIX event in Atlanta. **GN**

Lincoln County Fair - Ridin', Rockin', and Livestockin'

THE LINCOLN County Fair returns September 16-23, bringing with it all the traditions and excitement from your favorite memories. There's harness racing, a scarecrow contest, a scavenger hunt, a rodeo, livestock shows, pageants, truck and tractor pull, and more. Of course, the midway and food vendors will also be waiting for you. Grab the fair book and mark your calendars so you don't miss your favorite events! **GN**



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CHAPTER 2 OF 3

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

- 28** It takes a village
- 32** Now these are trailblazers
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- 54** Football schedules

Our stories are based on submissions from local people.

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Photography by Brooke Snyder

◀ Will Eldridge

It takes a

VILLAGE

**The network of support
surrounding one student-athlete**

**By Paige Cushman
Photography by Brooke Snyder**





**Will
Eldridge**

FROM INSPIRATIONAL NBA athletes and talented teammates to dedicated family members and compassionate coaches, former Riverside Christian basketball player Will Eldridge had a slam-dunk support system.

His dad and two older brothers were athletes, so he started playing sports before he could remember. They'd pass the time by throwing a football around in the backyard or shooting hoops in the driveway. His brothers pushed him to be faster, stronger, and more competitive.

"They pushed me to want to be better," Eldridge said. "I wanted to be like them and, you know, I wanted to beat them obviously — we're really, really competitive."

Eldridge played football, soccer, and tennis, but basketball was his one true love.

"That was probably the sport I was best at," he said. "But I just loved everything about it. I loved the team aspect. A lot of the people I looked up to growing up were big into basketball. It was just more a part of my life than any of the other sports."

He spent his free time watching Lakers games, and he grew up idolizing players like Kobe Bryant.

"I just looked up to him, and I wanted to play like him," Eldridge said.

By the time he was in ninth grade, Eldridge was starting on the varsity team as a point guard. And early on in his high school basketball career, he made a lasting impression.

It was a home game against Riverside's rivals from Nashville. Riverside was down by two points with mere seconds left on the clock.

"My buddy, Eli, passed me the ball, and with about 10 seconds left, I hit the game-winning shot," Eldridge said.

It was the perfect way to kick off his high school basketball career as a freshman, but that didn't mean he didn't face setbacks. Until the ninth grade, Eldridge had several coaches from different leagues and levels. But he started playing under coach Troy Slone in high school.

"When I got to high school, it was completely different," Eldridge said. "You know, everyone is bigger, everyone is better, and it's just a hard transition, but having him the whole time, we formed a really close bond. We still keep in touch, and he's just a really great guy."

Slone taught Eldridge a lot about the game. He taught him a lot about winning. But more importantly, he taught him the importance of learning from the losses.

"He really made an impact on my life," Eldridge said.

Slone wasn't the only one in Eldridge's corner. Whether he was playing in Nashville, Huntsville, or Chattanooga, whether winning or losing, Eldridge's "papa," Dan Mills, would be in the stands.

"He played basketball way back in the day," Eldridge said. "I knew he would always be there, and he would encourage me. I always wanted to play well when he was sitting there."



Even with support from coaches and family, being a student-athlete isn't easy. Away games kept Eldridge out of town until midnight or later. Keeping up with schoolwork was challenging, and he felt a lot of pressure to lead his team. Luckily, for Eldridge, he was never in it alone.

Eli Wright, who helped him make that legendary play during his freshman year, was by his side, on and off the court, for seven years.

"We became really close," Eldridge said. "I guess you could say we were kind of a dynamic duo."

The two of them were team leaders together first in middle school. It stayed that way through their final season when they served as co-captains of the varsity team.

"We had a lot of pressure on us," Eldridge said. "Trying to lead the team together and keep everything positive, keeping everybody working hard and motivated was a challenge."

They made a great pair. In their senior year, Eldridge made the all-conference first team, and Wright made the all-tournament first team. They played through some very successful seasons, but no win beat the friendships they made along the way.

"I played with some of the most amazing guys," Eldridge said. "I loved playing at home, but the way trips made it — riding on the bus with everybody and cutting up — you know, those memories are gonna last forever. The team atmosphere was more like a family, really."

When it came time to leave Riverside, Eldridge had the opportunity to walk on at Freed Hardeman University but decided not to. It was too big of a commitment for



a college student without any scholarship money. He was ready to move on.

"When you sign up to play, they own you," he said. "I still love basketball more than anything in the world, but it was my time to quit. I just went to college to get my degree and to have fun."

Now, Eldridge works as a relationship officer at the First National Bank in Pulaski. He gives out loans and helps customers. And he's having a lot of fun doing it.

At first glance, a bank and a basketball court couldn't be more distinct. One is designed to celebrate athleticism, host friendly competition, and hone players' sportsmanship and skill. The other is a place to deposit checks, apply for a loan, or open a savings account. But both are vibrant arenas for togetherness, self-

betterment, and discipline. Eldridge has mastered them both.

There are two lessons he says that basketball taught him that he carries with him today:


"Failure is gonna happen. I lost a lot of games over the years, and I think that really prepares you for life because not everything's gonna always go your way. You're gonna fail, but, you know, always coming back and always working harder is what's gonna get you through it."

"Second is to rely on others. You have to rely on your team to win and to succeed. The people I work with now, they're like my teammates. I have to work with a lot of different people to make it happen. I learned from an early age that you can't do it by yourself. You gotta rely on a lot of other people." **GN**

NOW THESE ARE >>>>>> TRAILBLAZERS

Two Fayetteville High School cross-country runners offered athletic scholarships.

By Paige Cushman // Photos submitted by Fayetteville City High School

 S FAYETTEVILLE High School's cross-country program flourishes under former triathlete coach Chris Davis, two of its top athletes have signed with college teams. Their athletic (and academic) achievements are not only a testament to the potential of this young team but have paved the way for future student-athletes to consider all of their options.

Recent graduate Robbie McVey has signed with the Institute of Technology in Terre Haute, Indiana.

"He's the guy that would finish the race and would go back out on the course and encourage and help the guys coming in behind him," Davis said.

"Even when their season was over, McVey never quit running," Davis said. He described McVey as being "self-motivated." That's apparent in not only his athletic success but also his academic success. He's a member of Fayetteville High School's "30 Plus Club," for students who scored over a 30 on the ACT.



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*Robbie McVey,
Abram Smith,
and Jay Carroll*

“He was highly motivated to run fast and had a lot of physical toughness about him,” he said. “He was kind of a ‘leader of the pack’ kind of guy. He started out fairly fast as a runner, even his first year, and just continued to improve each year.”

His teammate, Jay Carroll, signed with the University of Tennessee Southern in Pulaski. The first thing that stood out about Carroll? His mental toughness, according to Davis.

“He’s one of the mentally toughest runners I’ve had,” he said.

Carroll was a multi-sport athlete. When he wasn’t running cross-country, he was playing soccer.

“One of the things that always stuck out to me about him was how scrappy he was,”

athletic director-turned-principal Spencer Perrin said of Carroll. “It didn’t matter who they were playing or what point of the game it was; he was gonna play as hard at the very first minute of the game as he was right before the buzzer went off.”

Davis’s only challenge with Carroll was reigning him in so he didn’t overextend himself. He, just like McVey, is also part of the “30 Plus Club.”

“Robbie was a little bit that way, too,” Davis said. “That’s one of the things you look for in a runner who’s gonna be successful. When they’re gungho, they’re gonna push themselves.”

For 22 years, Davis was an elite-sponsored triathlete. He’s finished top 20

in the nation for his division several times and was still racing at a high level when he started the team.

While Davis has since retired from racing, he still goes trail running, hiking, and mountain biking with his kids. Davis said that even if his runners don't continue running the same way post-graduation, they may become thru-hikers, backpackers, or outdoorsmen.

Running over roots and rocks, beside creeks and across rivers, among Tennessee's wildlife, opens up an extra avenue to enjoy nature. The physical benefits are undeniable, and debatably it's the most accessible sport there is.

Since he introduced cross-country to Fayetteville High School 10 years ago, Davis

has had two women compete in the state championships, and now two men have signed to run in college.

"We're getting stronger, and our program is growing," Davis said.

And that's not only good news to him. Perrin said it'd open doors for more student-athletes in sports outside of football and basketball to consider, and be considered, to continue to college teams.

"For whatever reason, people don't think about going that avenue or that being an attainable goal to get a scholarship," Perrin said. "What they have done now is made other colleges aware that, 'Hey, Fayetteville City potentially has some athletes here that can help our college programs.'" GN

*Isabella Martin and
Reagan McVey*





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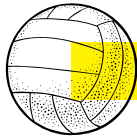


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ELLA MOYERS

LIFE LESSONS LEARNED ON THE COURT

One Fayetteville High School volleyball player reflects on years behind the net.

By Paige Cushman // Photography by Brooke Snyder

THE SQUEAK of new tennis shoes on the court. The smell of buttery popcorn from concessions down the hall. The spirit of a dozen teenage girls problem-solving, coming of age, and commiserating together.

Organized sports teach life lessons that don't come in any K-12 curriculum, job training, or lecture from a parent. Those lessons will someday make former Fayetteville High School (FHS) volleyball player Ella Moyers an excellent nurse and coach.

"As you grow up in sports, you learn to be more of a leader and take more responsibility in helping others," she said. "It taught me how to manage my time and balance my schedule."

Since seventh grade, Moyers hasn't missed a season. She's spent six years juggling practices,

school work, volleyball camps, and away games. During her senior year, she added courses at Motlow State Community College and graduated as her class's salutatorian.

"We had three games a week, and a lot of times, we had tournaments on Saturdays," she said. "I took Motlow classes, and I would be there from like 8 a.m. to around 11 a.m. Then I would go to high school and be there until 1 p.m. Then I would have either practice from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. or away games."

Moyers said it was a lot, but it was always worth it. Some of her best friends started as her teammates. And on the FHS team, it doesn't matter if you're a freshman or a senior, you play together.

“When I was a freshman, I was close with some of the seniors,” she said. “This year, as a senior, I was close with some of the freshmen. Regularly, you wouldn’t have that connection. But being on the team, you get to meet everyone and build those bonds.”

It wasn’t always friendship bracelets and locker room bonding, though. Moyers said she learned to control her emotions with her teammates and work toward a common goal.

“Obviously, you’re not always gonna get along with people that you’re around so much of the time, and being able to realize that those are only temporary disagreements and at the end of the day you’re still a team, and you still love each other — I think that’s really beneficial,” she said.

The lows were low. There are summer training camps for varsity players, and Moyers said those are some of the most challenging days for the team. They have six-hour practices with coaches that travel down to train the high schoolers.

“I think us going through that together because it was so difficult and tiring brings us closer because we had to get through it together,” Moyers said.

But the highs were high. Moyers reflected on one game at Moore County, where she scored 18 serves in a row.

“I think that was one of my bigger accomplishments that I’ve ever had,” she said. “It was pressure on myself because I wanted to keep going, and if I could have gotten 25 points, I would’ve because that’s the volleyball set.”

This type of perfectionism is common among athletes and students with salutorian-level work ethic, but it wasn’t completely lost on Moyers how big of an achievement that game was.

“It also is a really big confidence boost because as an athlete you put so much of

your confidence in your performance, and I think having a good performance really sets you up for your next game or the rest of your games,” she said.

Any student-athlete would tell you that a good coach can make all the difference — as can a bad one. Moyers had the same volleyball coach, Sharon Ruhlander, for all four years of high school. Ruhlander is one of those coaches that teaches her athletes to be respectful no matter what, to lift each other up, and to work as a team.

“She really did try to make good people rather than just good players,” Moyers said.

Moyers’s last varsity volleyball season at Fayetteville High School ended in October. She’s headed to the University of Tennessee Southern in the fall to study nursing. And while her days as an outside hitter — a position reserved for the taller girls on the team — are over, she’s carrying the lessons that come with years of conditioning, hard practices, and days-long tournaments with her. She even plans to coach middle school volleyball next season as someone who’s been in those young players’ shoes.

“Funny story — I tried out for volleyball in sixth grade and didn’t make the team, so I played soccer instead,” she said,





“I think us going through that together because it was so difficult and tiring brings us closer...”

-ELLA MOYERS

laughing. “But I practiced a lot more and learned a lot more and prepared myself. And I made it my seventh grade year.”

Moyers said it’s hard to find experienced volleyball coaches in the area. And she already has some experience mentoring middle school players during volleyball camps over the summer led by the varsity players. She even coached the middle schoolers a few times during her senior year.

“Being able to mentor them is important because coaches don’t mean to, but if you have a tough coach, they can break your spirit,” Moyers said.

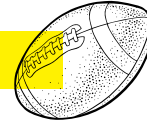
It’s clear that Moyers loves the sport of volleyball and the athletes. Her excitement for the girls she’ll coach someday is already palpable, and her advice for them comes from years of experience:

“Through the hard times, you can lean on your teammates because they probably have the same experiences you have. Just keep going because, in the end, you’ll regret not following through because it’s such an amazing experience. And getting to travel and play with the people you’re connected with — you make friendships that will last forever, and you’ll have a lot of stories to share about all the good times you have together.” **GN**





GUS HILL



A DAILY GRIND

Lessons from a University of
Tennessee Knoxville football player

By Paige Cushman // Photos submitted by Gus Hill

IS THERE anything as polarizing, emotional, or inspiring as Tennessee Orange? Not in this neck of the woods. We wear the T-shirts, the jerseys, and the caps. We show up in the stands or cheer them on from home. We support their players and scowl at their rivals. But nobody knows more than Fayetteville's own Gus Hill just how important wearing Tennessee orange is.

Surprisingly, Hill grew up cheering on Auburn — no Tennessee orange in sight. But now, as part of the University of Tennessee Knoxville's (UT Knoxville) offensive line, Hill has (most of) his family and friends changing their tone.

"I visited UT Knoxville, and it just felt like home," Hill said. "Since Tennessee is obviously my home state team, I always see friends who come

up to the games and get pictures with me, which is something that's really fun."

Hill started playing sports when he was a young kid.

"It was just like the family thing to do," he said.

Starting in the Junior Pro League, his first coach, Dr. Michael Shane Trahin, was the one to make him fall in love with football.

"I just loved hitting people," he nonchalantly said.

Hill said he was initially a better baseball player. He transferred from Riverside Christian Schools, where he played baseball, basketball, and football, to Fayetteville High School before his freshman year. Unfortunately, he tore his ACL while playing football and was forced to skip his



freshman baseball season. During his sophomore year, he visited Auburn University and checked out their football program.

“After that, it was just kind of, ‘Hey, I’m pretty good at this. Let’s be serious about it and stop playing other sports and just focus on football,’” Hill said.

He went on to help the Fayetteville Tigers take home their first state championship in 2020, which he said: “No one expected us to do.” He also got to play under Rusty McIntrye, an offensive line coach at the time, who Hill credits for teaching him the fundamentals of the offensive line. During Hill’s senior year,

he was selected to play all-state and was actively being recruited by a couple of Division 1 schools.

“Out of nowhere, the Tennessee coach hit me up, and I went to a couple of games,” he said. “They offered me a preferred walk-on position.”

Ever since then, it’s been nonstop.

“Collegiate [football] is a full-time sport,” Hill said. “I mean, it’s nonstop, constantly doing stuff. I think that the biggest difference is just always going and like the intensity of everything. It’s next level.”

Hill estimated that players get about five weeks off throughout the year, but

going from high school to college isn’t for the faint of heart. In the beginning, he struggled with how big all the players (both on his team and his opponent’s) were and how fast everything and everyone moved.

“It’s so fast-paced,” he said. “But you just either get the hang of it or you don’t. And I got the hang of it, luckily.”

Balancing his time hasn’t been easy. Most days, Hill wakes up and is working out by 6 a.m. He stays at the training facility until 11 a.m.-12 p.m., then goes to class for three or four hours, then heads back to the facility to eat dinner and have meetings.

“It depends on the part of the year, but I only get, on average, about five hours a day that is my time, if that. That’s one thing that’s just really, really hard.”

When he’s not training or at a game, Hill is working toward his finance degree — following in the footsteps of his uncles and grandfather. “As far as a dream job or career path, I haven’t really figured that part out yet,” he said. But just wrapping up his first year at UT Knoxville, he still has time. And even if he didn’t, Hill’s learned to be quick on his feet — literally and figuratively.

Playing football for this many years has allowed him to hone his decision-making skills, as athletes often have to make split-second decisions that affect not only themselves but also their teammates. But that’s only one of the many lessons football has taught him. Hill’s advice for younger athletes is: ‘Put in the work.’

“Do your own work outside of summer workouts and outside of practice,” he said. “Get in the weight room, go out on the field, run — just work harder to become better than the person you’re playing against. Doing a little more and a little better in your position is something that can change your life tremendously.”

And not only on the field but in the classroom as well.

“Learning to study and try in high school and middle school is something I wish I [had done] more of,” Hill said. “Because now I’m in college, and learning how to study and be good in school is something that’s been pretty challenging.”

While many of these lessons don’t come easy, he’s had a few people by his side to help. Along with friends, teammates, and coaches, Hill’s family has been extremely supportive by “not only coming to the games but making sure I’m taken care of mentally,” he said. His strength coach, Rhett Brooks, stands out to him.

“He’s someone that just keeps pushing me and wants me to be my best right now,” Hill said.

Being his best doesn’t only mean rising through the ranks on the team and beating his opponents. Through his years in football, he’s learned how to form meaningful connections with people different from him — debatably the most impactful lesson of all.

“I’ve learned to become friends with everybody and anybody,” Hill said. “I’ve played with people from every race, demographic, background, and culture. Especially in college, you play with people from across the nation who have completely different lives than you. You have to learn to love them and respect them. No matter what their background is, you have to trust the person you play with.” GN



“It’s so fast-paced. But you just either get the hang of it or you don’t. And I got the hang of it, luckily. ”

- GUS HILL







DEMARION MCCRARY

RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

How one athlete turned tragedy into triumph

By Paige Cushman // Photography by Brooke Snyder

MARK TWAIN once wrote, “The two most important days in your life are the day you are born, and the day you find out why.”

A few days before the first football game of his senior season, Fayetteville High School (FHS) running back Demarion McCrary was trying to find his why. Like most high school seniors, he was weighing his options. He had a couple of offers from colleges to continue playing football. But was that the right path for him? What degree should he pursue? Where should he go? All of that decision-making came to a screeching halt when his uncle, an assistant baseball coach for Fayetteville Middle School, passed away from COVID-19.

His uncle was in his early thirties, with two young children at home. His death hit McCrary’s family hard.

“When the time finally came, I sat down, talked to my mom about it, and decided I was gonna go to the University of Tennessee Southern (UT Southern) and get my teaching degree, and I was just gonna coach,” McCrary said.

And that’s exactly what he did. While working on his degree at UT Southern, McCrary is already following in his uncle’s footsteps as an assistant football coach at Fayetteville Middle School (FMS). He even works under the same head coach his uncle did — Billy Jack Netherland.

“It’s kind of surreal. Billy Jack has been around my family for a long time, and he’s defi-



▲ Demarion McCrary coaching sixth and eighth grade Fayetteville Middle School football players

nately got that presence of: he's going to push you to be great, and he always wants what's best for you and what's best for the kids," McCrary said.

Netherland and the rest of the coaching staff at FMS welcomed McCrary with open arms.

"They just said, 'We're on board with everything,'" he said. "They loved the idea. I was young. I could relate to the kids a whole lot better."

McCrary started playing football when he was just 6 years old. Always up for a challenge, he liked how the practices,

games, and skill levels constantly evolved. Initially playing for Lincoln County schools, he transferred to Fayetteville during his sophomore year.

"Fayetteville was under new coaching staff," he said. "There were a lot of good things going on with the board and stuff like that."

The team went undefeated through the regular season in his first year at FHS. But the Tigers were accused of using an ineligible player and were kicked out of the playoffs. After a supremely successful season, it was a devastating blow to the

"... he's going to push you to be great, and he always wants what's best for you and what's best for the kids."



- DEMARION
MCCRARY



players and coaches alike. But during his junior year, the team turned around and triumphantly took home Fayetteville football's first state championship.

He remembers his senior year. The season's start was rocky. They had lost a handful of talented senior players and were starting with a few freshmen who definitely didn't have the same experience.

"I remember thinking that we weren't gonna be that good, and it was just gonna be one of those years where we were just playing to play, and it wasn't anything serious," he said.

Still, FHS won game after game for a near-perfect season but ultimately lost in the playoffs. And just like that, McCrary's time as a football player was over.

Maintaining the unbelievable work ethic and drive that got him this far, McCrary wasted no time getting into coaching. He became an educational assistant at FMS after graduation. Then, he became the running back and linebacker coach for the middle school football team and was quickly promoted to offensive coordinator. He also took over the youth league that got him started in the sport over a decade ago.

"The year before COVID hit, the league actually shut down," he said. "Once things started going back to normal [post-COVID], I contacted them."

The then-owner of the league said he couldn't run it anymore and told McCrary he had moved on, as it wasn't something he was comfortable doing since the pandemic.

"I was like, 'well, sign the rights over to me. I'll start it,' McCrary said, jumping yet another COVID-imposed hurdle.

His first practices for the league's flag-football teams started this spring. Now, McCrary helps coach three football teams, and, as if that wasn't enough, he's also taken on coaching three league cheer teams. He's hoping to instill the lessons he's learned from years in football to the young athletes he coaches now.

"[While] playing football, there's always gonna be bad days, but the good days always come after the bad," he said.

McCrary was given that advice by his coach, Kenny Morrison, when he fractured his ankle during his senior season.

"He helped me see that the bad days are only the small parts of how good the good days are gonna be," McCrary said. "It's just stuck with me ever since."

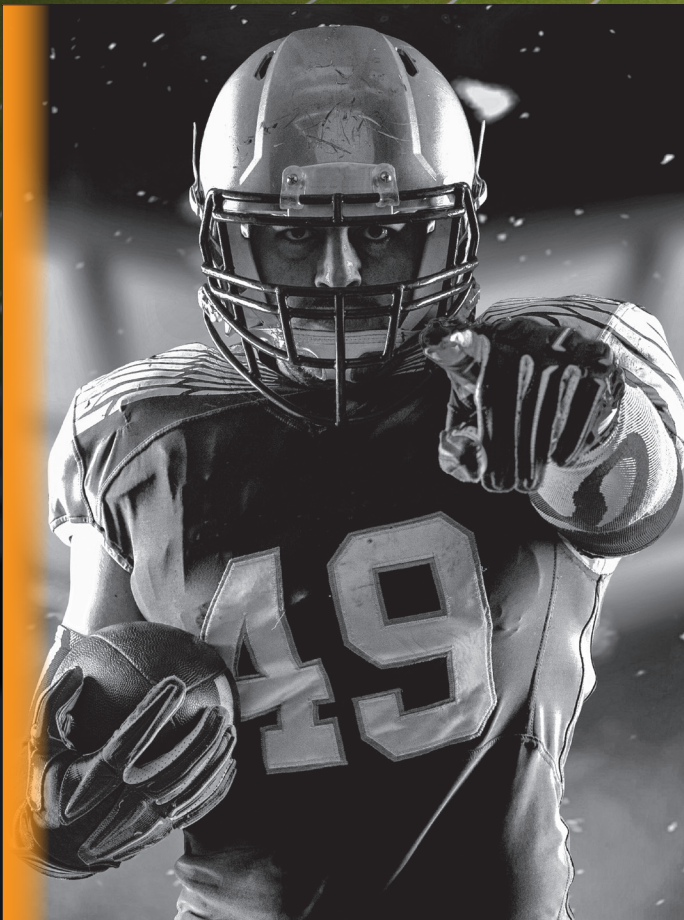
He said that once he completes his education degree (hopefully early), he wants to teach third grade and land a head coaching role, advancing from middle school to high school to college football teams one day.

If one thing's clear, through the many wins and losses, McCrary won't back down from a challenge. Carrying the wisdom and experience of his uncle and his own coaches, the up-and-coming coach is passing along a legacy of hope, resilience, and belonging to hundreds of young athletes in Middle Tennessee. **GN**

FAYETTEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

2023 Football Schedule

DAY	DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
Friday	Aug. 18, 2023	AWAY @ Upperman High School	7 p.m.
Friday	Aug. 25, 2023	AWAY @ Moore County High School	7 p.m.
Friday	Sept. 1, 2023	AWAY @ Giles County High School	7 p.m.
Friday	Sept. 8, 2023	AWAY @ Marion County High School	7 p.m.
Friday	Sept. 15, 2023	AWAY @ Cannon County High School	7 p.m.
Friday	Sept. 22, 2023	AWAY @ Marshall County High School	7 p.m.
Friday	Sept. 29, 2023	Sequatchie County High School	7 p.m.
Friday	Oct. 13, 2023	Nashville Christian School	7 p.m.
Friday	Oct. 20, 2023	Cascade High School	7 p.m.
Friday	Oct. 27, 2023	Forrest High School	7 p.m.



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RIVERSIDE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

2023 Football Schedule

DAY	DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
Friday	Aug. 4, 2023	AWAY @ FCA	6 p.m.
Friday	Aug. 11, 2023	Zion Christian Academy	7 p.m.
Friday	Aug. 25, 2023	East Central High School	7 p.m.
Friday	Sept. 1, 2023	AWAY @ Sacred Heart of Jesus High School	7 p.m.
Friday	Sept. 8, 2023	AWAY @ Cornerstone Christian Academy	7 p.m.
Friday	Sept. 22, 2023	AWAY @ Trinity Christian Academy	7 p.m.
Friday	Sept. 29, 2023	Sacred Heart of Jesus High School	7 p.m.
Thursday	Oct. 12, 2023	Franklin Christian Academy	7 p.m.
Friday	Oct. 20, 2023	AWAY @ Franklin Classical School	7 p.m.



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LINCOLN COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

2023 Football Schedule

DAY	DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
Friday	Aug. 18, 2023	AWAY @ Richland High School	7 p.m.
Friday	Aug. 25, 2023	Davidson Academy	7 p.m.
Friday	Sept. 1, 2023	Lawrence County High School	TBA
Friday	Sept. 8 2023	AWAY @ Spring Hill High School	TBA
Friday	Sept. 15, 2023	Tullahoma High School	TBA
Friday	Sept. 22, 2023	AWAY @ Giles County High School	7 p.m.
Friday	Sept. 29, 2023	Franklin County High School	TBA
Friday	Oct. 13, 2023	Cookeville High School	7 p.m.
Friday	Oct. 20, 2023	AWAY @ Shelbyville Central High School	TBA
Thursday	Oct. 26, 2023	AWAY @ Columbia Central High School	TBA



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CHAPTER 3 OF 3

This section of the magazine covers local things to do.

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Photo submitted by Crystal Guess

◀ Tony Brown with Bindi, Teresa Brown, Debbie McAlister, Stephany Wingard, James Fee, Shannon Cornwell, Connie Powelson, Patty Patrick, and Cathy Pitts

From darkness TO HOPE

Students, schools, and local organizations rally together for the cause at Blue Ribbon Walk.

By Paige Cushman // Photos submitted by Crystal Guess



W E ALL think, 'What would I do if I won the lottery?' When I have those daydreams, assisting Junior's House is always at the top of my list," Executive Director Crystal Guess, M.S., MSP, said.

Junior's House, a Fayetteville Children's Advocacy Center, provides therapy, training, prevention, specialized interviews, and many more resources for Tennessee families. And in May, Junior's House Inc. held another successful annual Blue Ribbon Walk — a tentpole event for the group's important mission.

"This walk is imperative to funding our organization and allowing us to provide free services to victims of child abuse in our community," Guess said. "The community's support of our annual walk not only assists us in raising much-needed funding but also awareness about child abuse."

Around 500 walkers join the group at the Lincoln

County Fairgrounds for the event each year. Local schools participate, bringing hundreds of students from across the district to help their classmates and other children who rely on groups like Junior's House.

"I must admit, something feels so special seeing all of the students walking on that day knowing that they are literally helping children in their own schools receive much-needed services," Guess said.

Schools aren't the only community organizations that pitch in. Kona Ice provides shaved ice, local churches provide students lunches, and several local sponsors like Edward Jones, Bank of Lincoln County, and Jack Daniels Bottling make the walk possible each year.

"Just moments ago, a little girl was lying on the floor in my office hugging our therapy dog, Allin, telling him one thing after another," Guess said. "You can't work here and see these amazing human beings and



◀ Nora Kate Summers and Marlee Smith



◀ Karen McCulloch

not feel passionate about protecting children and ensuring that they receive the services they need. The Blue Ribbon Walk always reminds me that the community is right there with us, supporting us, cheering us on, and loving these children just like we do.”

Previously called “Andrea’s Walk,” the event began 19 years ago when former First Lady of Tennessee Andrea Conte wanted to promote the importance of Children’s Advocacy Centers across the state. After all, according to the Junior House’s website, 700,000 children are physically abused in America each year.

“I see these amazing children come to our building and talk about some of the darkest moments in their life,” Guess said. *“The events they tell, many would not be able to hear. They have to tell them because they lived them. I have an amazing staff that are here to listen to them. We always call them superheroes because they truly are.”*

Former First Lady Conte attended many of Junior’s House’s first walks, but when she and her husband left office, the advocacy center changed the name of the event to the Blue Ribbon Walk. It’s only grown in almost 20 years, with the 2023 walk being its biggest fundraiser.

Right now, Junior’s House is the only Children’s Advocacy Center in Tennessee that is also a Court Appointed Special Advocate program, which allows them to train more volunteers to help children in Middle Tennessee. The group is currently seeking volunteers and gearing up for its 20th anniversary in October. They plan to improve and expand their facility to meet the needs of over 500 families they serve annually. **GN**

For more information on how to get involved or to donate to their meaningful and important mission, visit juniorshousecac.org.

Grand Prix Awards Brunch - July 8, 2023



Photos submitted by Summer Southern

This family-friendly event was for the whole local running community and was kicked off with a 7 a.m. group run followed by brunch foods and awards.



1. Chris Poarch 2. Group of runners in the Grand Prix 3. Tim Donaldson 4. Dylan Chandler and Tim Donaldson 5. Jeremy Raiding 6. Enjoying refreshments after the race

Crafting with Jean Reed - July 3, 2023



Photography by Brooke Snyder

Paper crafters of all skill levels joined Jean Reed on the third Tuesday of the month to make colorful and creative greeting cards. Reed hosts the class on the first Tuesday of each month at the arts center. For more info, visit ficarts.com.



1. Heidi Ables 2. Jean Reed
3. Brenda Miles and Corina Segletes 4. Michelle Robinson, Brenda Miles, Corina Segletes, Heidi Ables, and Jean Reed

Get a good look



We wish we could publish all the photos we have, but we have too many! Browse our online gallery for free or purchase photos to be mailed to your home. All proceeds from photos go to local nonprofits.

EVENTS CALENDAR

August 11

12:01 am **Grocery Tax Holiday** State of Tennessee

For 2023, Tennessee's General Assembly has approved a three-month grocery tax holiday on food and food ingredients, which begins at 12:01 a.m. on August 1, 2023, and ends at 11:59 p.m. on October 31, 2023. The tax relief does not include alcoholic beverages, tobacco, candy, dietary supplements, or prepared food.

August 19

9:00 am **2023 Ardmore Crape Myrtle Festival**

John Barnes Park
30515 Ardmore Ridge Rd.
Ardmore

The Greater Ardmore Chamber is accepting vendor applications for the Crape Myrtle Festival waitlist. The Redstone Federal Credit Union Mobile ATM will be on site. Houston Ridge Blue Grass Band will be performing at 10:30 a.m. and the party band, Juice, will be performing at 2 p.m.

10:00 am **Two Trees DIY Class: Sunflower Tiered Tray**

The Farmhouse
at Two Trees
439 Smith Mill Rd.
Fayetteville

Join us for an exciting do-it-yourself class where you can create your own Sunflower Tiered Tray. Cost is \$15-\$40.



September 2

10:00 am First Saturdays
 Fayetteville Main Street
 100 Main Ave. N.
 Suite 1B
 Fayetteville

There will be something for everyone, from handmade jewelry and custom woodwork to fresh produce and food trucks.

For more information contact Fayetteville Main Street at (931) 557-5150.

September 9

9:00 am Hayden's Hope Craft Fair
 The Farmhouse at Two Trees
 439 Smith Mill Rd.
 Fayetteville

Hayden's Hope is a non 9profit providing the message of salvation and hope to the youth of Tennessee through educational and financial opportunities.

September 16

10:00 am Bank of Lincoln County Celebrating 20 Years
 Bank of Lincoln County
 307 College St. E.
 Fayetteville

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First Community Bank of Tennessee.....	34	True Discount Lotto Land.....	38
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Gallant Riverview Funeral Home.....	23		



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Fahrig, Stephen	1-800-345-5016
Kerrigan, Jimmy	1-800-345-5016

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Cline, Richard	931-438-4111
Edwards, William A.	931-438-4111
Gafford, Christopher E.	931-433-7778
Hughes, William D.	931-438-4111
Jones, William R.	931-433-2551
Loiacono, Mike	931-433-2551
Sain, Paul D	931-443-2551
Thelen, Sarah	931-227-4984

Family Practice/OB

Morrison, Theresa T	931-433-2229
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Gastroenterologist

Mallipeddi, Dayaker	931-388-8302
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General Surgery

Crump, David B.	931-433-0892
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Hospitalist

Nedumthottathil, Thomas	931-438-1100
Uzzi, Idowu	931-438-1100

Internal Medicine

Kidd, Charles A.	931-433-2551
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Neurology

Capps, Raymond	931-240-0001
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Bryant, Ginger	931-433-1102
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Pediatrics

Kidd, Charles A.	931-433-2551
Spears, W. Kyle	931-433-2551

Podiatry

Mitchell, Jeffery	615-814-0885
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Pulmonary/Sleep Medicine

Patel, Prakashchandra	931-536-4149
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Urology

Selph, Patrick	615-622-5047
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Lincoln Medical Center
Donalson Care Center & Short Stay Rehab
Patrick Rehab - Wellness Center
Lincoln Medical Home Health and Hospice
Lincoln Ambulance Services

931-438-1100
931-433-7156
931-433-0273
931-433-8088
931-438-7407

In the case of an emergency, dial 911

LOCAL SPORTS

Big Impact



Bank of Lincoln County

Where Your Money Makes A Difference



Each deposit or loan is insured by FDIC

