

# Good News

exchange

## Our HEROES

*Tony Metcalf*

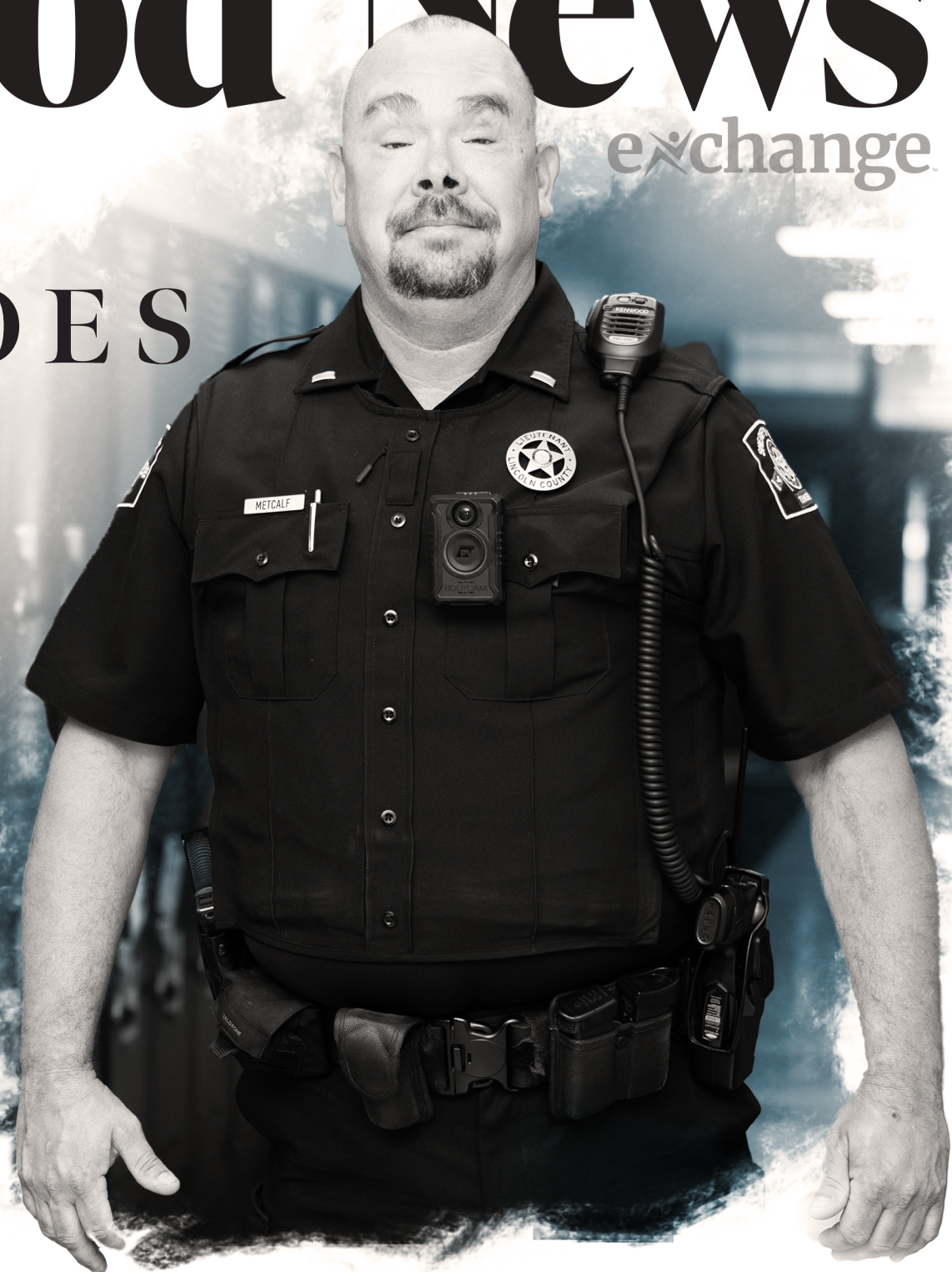
**More Than  
a Uniform**

**“Pinning”  
Fayetteville  
on the map**

Fashion from  
Fayetteville takes  
on the globe.

**A Lincoln  
County couple’s  
commitment to  
their community.**

Larry and Angela  
Phelps come  
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and his wife Kara  
family started dairy  
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behind the scenes,  
agriculture.  
light on many people  
-energy, high-pro-  
farmers do a lot of  
in terms of raising  
care of cattle, being  
problems, and wear-

rk goes into dairy  
a. The Nash family  
of 2020. "We'd al-

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**good**   
times roll

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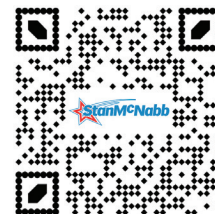
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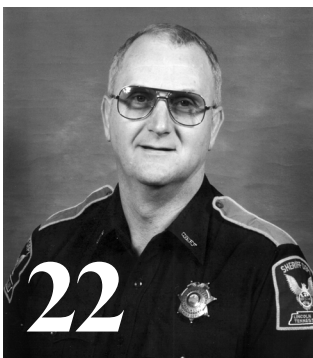
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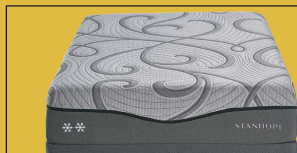
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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

# Saluting Our Local Heroes

## A Tribute to Courage and Community

WE ENCOUNTER unsung heroes who walk among us without recognition. They may not be wearing a cape and a mask, but they're a hero regardless. Their unwavering commitment to service and sacrifice makes our communities safer and more compassionate. They're the Batman to our Gotham and the Captain Marvel to our universe.

In these pages, you'll find stories that illuminate the courage, resilience, and selflessness of our local first responders and those who help them. These individuals are tirelessly dedicated to ensuring our well-being, often in the face of adversity. They are the reassuring voices on the other end of emergency calls, the steady hands that rush to accidents, and the compassionate hearts that offer solace in moments of crisis.

But this issue goes beyond spotlighting the heroes in uniform. It also sheds light on the incredible people who support and stand beside our first responders—the families, friends, and community members who pro-

vide the unwavering support and love that keep our heroes going.

The past few years have tested our communities and our country, but through it all, our local heroes have risen to the occasion, reminding us that hope and humanity will always prevail. They embody the true essence of community, where the well-being of one is the concern of all.

As you read through these stories of resilience, dedication, and unity, I hope you'll be as inspired as I am by the extraordinary individuals who call our community home. Our heroes don't wear capes, but their actions and unwavering commitment to the greater good make them shine brighter. Is it a bird? Is it a plane? Is it Superman? No. It's someone better. It's our heroes, right here at home.

Thank you for joining us in celebrating "Our Heroes." May their stories serve as a beacon of hope and a reminder that even in challenging times, the strength of our community lies in the kindness and courage of its people. **GN**

Wesley Bryant,  
MANAGING EDITOR

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# Exciting Changes Coming to the Good News Section!

We've always believed in building stronger communities through positive stories, and our magazine sections have been a cornerstone of that belief. Issue after issue, we've featured heartwarming stories in three dedicated segments: Good News, Good Living, and Good Times. These sections have celebrated the positives of our community and the incredible moments that make it special.

But, like any good story, ours is evolving. **We've been listening closely to your feedback, and we're thrilled to announce some exciting changes that will allow us to better serve you and our beloved community.**



## Shining a Brighter Spotlight on **Local People**

Our readers have shown us that they want more stories about the local heroes among us—those individuals who work tirelessly behind the scenes, making a real difference in the lives of others. We're pivoting our Good News section to focus exclusively on local people who are shaping our community for the better. With that comes a new way to describe our three sections. You can now enjoy Good Living, Good Stories, and Good Times every month.

## Highlighting Six **Local Difference-Makers** Per Month

You can expect to read about an average of six remarkable individuals in our community each month. These stories will delve into the lives, achievements, and contributions of our neighbors, friends, and unsung heroes. From the volunteer coach who inspires the next generation to the small business owner who supports local causes, our revamped sections will cast a brighter spotlight on these incredible local people.

## You Help Make the Magazine

We're committed to bringing you the most inspiring stories from our community, and we believe that you, our readers, are our greatest resource. If you know of someone who deserves recognition for their positive impact, we encourage you to share their story leads with us. Visit our website, where you can submit your suggestions, and help us uncover the hidden gems in our community.

## All About **Local People**

With these changes, it will be solely dedicated to celebrating the accomplishments, resilience, and compassion of our local people. This renewed focus on our community members allows us to build stronger connections and promote positivity on a larger scale.

We're excited about this transformation and the opportunity it provides to foster an even closer-knit community. By sharing stories of local people who make a difference, we hope to inspire and connect our readers on a deeper level.

Thank you for being part of our community and for your continued support. Together, we'll continue to make our community an even better place to live, one positive story at a time.

*Do you know someone who  
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CHAPTER 1 OF 3

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

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Submit a positive story on our website:



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Photography by Brooke Snyder

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# “Pinning”

## FAYETTEVILLE ON THE MAP

### FASHION FROM FAYETTEVILLE TAKES ON THE GLOBE.

BY TINA NEELEY // PHOTOGRAPHY BY BROOKE SNYDER

**F**AYETTEVILLE FEELS far removed from the high fashion runways of Paris, New York, and Milan, but it's closer than you think. Within Lincoln County lies the inspiration for Juan Guerrero Designs, and from concept to production, much of the process takes place here under Juan Guerrero's direction.

Inspiration and a passion for learning set Juan Guerrero on the journey from his childhood home in Baja, Mexico, to his home today in Fayetteville. He attended Berkeley University in San Francisco as part of an international student program focused on language studies. As he focused on English, he picked up optional marketing and visual arts courses, and the spark of his future career ignited.

“So that's kind of when everything started. When I finished the program there, I was supposed to graduate with a third language; I picked Italian. And that's how I ended up living in Florence, Italy, for a year and a half, and I graduated there,” he said. “Then, after I graduated, Gap sponsored me to work for Banana Republic, and I came back to the U.S. and worked as a visual specialist and a merchandiser. I was in charge of window displays and styling the mannequins and the whole image of the store based on their concept for the season. I did my time with them and decided to move on. After a couple of years of thinking about it, I decided to create my own brand because I developed a good eye for textiles. I was





PHOTO SUBMITTED BY JUAN GUERRERO



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY JUAN GUERRERO

also a personal stylist for some customers at Banana Republic so that started the ball rolling.”

In 2015, Guerrero quit his Banana Republic job. He had a plan and a vision but needed the skills to pull it together. He enrolled in fashion school in Los Angeles at the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising, and the pace picked up in 2017 when he launched his brand.

He was invited to a fashion competition in his home state, Baja, Mexico. Regardless of the outcome, he knew the experience would be helpful, so he competed and won. Next came the opportunity to represent Baja at the National competition in Mexico City. He was one of the top five designers selected to represent Mexico with his designs at a Fashion exhibit in Barcelona, Spain, in 2019

“That was pretty awesome because it validated everything,” said Guerrero. “To have celebrities and people who are fashion icons giving me good reviews got me excited. 2019 went very well. It was excellent, then I got a lot of offers and collaborations for 2020, and things started to happen fast.”

So Guerrero returned to Mexico City and began working on new projects with connections made in



Spain. He was living his dream, and then the global pandemic struck. Things came to a screeching halt. Stores stopped approaching him to sell his collections, and some closed permanently. He was quarantined in Mexico for over five months, then moved to Fayetteville, where he already had family.

So he designs now from his studio inside Mercantile on Market, and the question is not, “Why Fayetteville?”

Guerrero said, “Why not Fayetteville? I always lived in big cities and got used to the rush, but being here gave me a break. It made me appreciate the surroundings more. [People] see me in the city, but I don't want to be there. I want to sell my product in the city because the market is bigger, but when it comes to being in a relaxed state of mind, the environment here allows me to do that. I love driving and seeing the hills and all [of nature], recharging my batteries. It puts me in a stage where I'm drawing and coming up with something. That's how everything starts.”

He maintains a showroom in Mexico City for work with fashion magazines and for celebrities and their personal stylists to view his collections. He works here on designs, marketing, and production. His work reflects his passion for quality, detailing, and personal expression as he pours his heart into every garment he creates. Custom designs for area residents are growing, too. Guerrero utilizes social media and online platforms to connect with clients worldwide, showcasing the beauty of his creations and inspiring others to pursue their dreams.

His impact goes beyond fashion as he finds joy in mentoring and inspiring young minds interested in design. He enjoys sharing his experiences with local kids, showing them that they, too, can pursue their passions and live their dreams, no matter where they come from.

Through his journey, Guerrero has learned the value of creativity, perseverance, and the importance of giving back. As he continues to grow his brand and spread his creative vision, he remains an inspiration for those who dare to dream. **GN**

---

FOR MORE INFORMATION, FOLLOW @JUANGUERRERODESIGN ON INSTAGRAM AND FACEBOOK OR VISIT HIM AT MERCANTILE ON MARKET STREET, 123 MARKET ST. E., FAYETTEVILLE.





# Fayetteville Public Utilities *answers the call*

*Fayetteville Public Utilities (FPU) has a longstanding history of answering the call when there is a need.*

From restoring local utilities to responding when disaster strikes miles away from home, FPU's heroic utility workers readily volunteer to face challenging situations to ensure others have the electric, water, wastewater, natural gas and telecom services they need and enjoy.

In the midst of a storm, most people seek shelter and wait it out, but for utility workers, a storm can mean leaving their families and braving the elements to restore services. FPU employees are often the first to respond during natural disasters and emergency situations. They work long hours in dangerous conditions and challenging circumstances to restore utilities and bring relief to those impacted.

Not only are FPU employees among the first to respond at home, but they also provide mutual aid assistance to other communities and states. Through the years, FPU crews have voluntarily responded over 25 times to assist with restoration efforts when other utility providers have been impacted by devastating storms.

"When disaster strikes, our crews have a reputation of answering the call," says FPU CEO/General Manager Britt Dye. "They gladly volunteer to help their friends and neighbors as well as fellow utility providers in their times of need. Whether that means working on a stormy night to restore power and internet services, braving extreme temperatures to repair a water leak or reporting after hours to replace a natural gas service line, FPU crews realize the importance of paying it forward and will put their own needs aside to lend a helping hand by doing what they do best."

*Top left:* Electric crews working to restore power at fairgrounds after March tornados. *Middle:* Water crews working to fix a water leak on Highway 64 in May. *Bottom:* Journeyman Lineman Billy Cobern works on changing a utility pole.







Top: Electric crews from FPU leaving to assist with restoration efforts in areas impacted by Hurricane Idalia. Middle: Hurricane Idalia crew, from left: Casey Peel, Austin Grimes, Kyle Richardson, Zach Barnes, Brandon Young, Derian Morales, Travis Martin, Todd Gleghorn. Bottom: FPU CEO/General Manager Britt Dye and crew preparing to provide mutual aid assistance.



*"At the end of the day, we want to ensure our crews go home to their loved ones the same way they showed up for work."*

*-FPU CEO/General Manager Britt Dye*

"No weather-related event or emergency situation is ever the same," adds Dye. "Utility work is dangerous enough when the environment is favorable but working in uncontrolled conditions offers new challenges and hazards. Whether assisting communities in need or serving our friends and neighbors in Fayetteville and Lincoln County, safety is always our top priority. At the end of the day, we want to ensure our crews go home to their loved ones the same way they showed up for work."

A hero is characterized by courage, nobility and outstanding achievements, and FPU's electric, water, wastewater, natural gas and telecom crews are heroes in every sense of the word. From outages caused by storms or traffic accidents to a homeowner digging into buried utilities, FPU crews report to work every day unsure of what they will face but always prepared no matter the circumstances to provide the services that keep lights on, homes comfortable, water flowing and people connected.

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*A force for good*

# WITHOUT FORCE

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*Former Sheriff Jimmy Mullins served  
with a quiet resolve for a better way to enforce the law.*

By Tina Neeley // Photos submitted by Myla Bryant

**F**OR OVER two decades, former Sheriff Jimmy Mullins dedicated his life to law enforcement, ensuring justice and safety for the Lincoln County community. From heartfelt rescues to challenging situations faced head-on, he brought quiet dignity to every call.

A career in law enforcement was not a choice he made lightly; it was a calling and a desire to bring a different approach to how people were treated and respected in his line of work. Mullins witnessed the actions of some police officers in earlier years and their treatment of people as they

responded to calls, leaving a deep impression on him. He knew there had to be a better way.

“It was a childhood dream; I thought, ‘I’d like to be in law enforcement.’ Over the years, I’d seen things police officers did, [and] the way they acted and mistreated people back in the ‘70s. Some of them wanted to be bullies, but I knew it could be done differently, and people could be treated better,” he said.

The first step to fulfilling his childhood dream was becoming a member of the sheriff’s volunteer program. When a new





Former Sheriff  
Jimmy Mullins





Jimmy with grandson, Wesley

sheriff was elected in 1998, Mullins struck up a conversation with him at church and soon after received a call from the sheriff for a fitting for a deputy uniform.

“A lot of things can happen, and it depends on how a person looks at it; just one or two decisions can change where you are today,” said Mullins. “If we hadn’t gone to church where the first sheriff I worked for attended, and if I hadn’t talked to him, I might never have even got in.”

Although he sometimes left law enforcement for civilian work, Mullins always returned to the sheriff’s office. The desire to make a positive difference stayed with him as he rose through the ranks, becoming a chief deputy, sergeant, and finally, the elected sheriff of Lincoln County.

## What kept drawing him back?

“Well, I enjoyed it. When someone’s stolen a farmer’s cows, and you can call him to come get them, or if someone had a chainsaw stolen and you recovered it and solved some other crimes at the same time,

it’s satisfying. But it’s not satisfying when you can’t solve a crime or help somebody,” said Mullins.

Helping the people of Lincoln County and restoring to them what others tried to take away was important to him. Although many more generations are now here than when he was in office, he knew the people he served, and they knew him.

“My granddaddy was bad to ask people who their mama and daddy were, and he knew a lot of people that way,” he said. “I’m bad about that, too, and I know a lot of the people that live here. I hated when we moved to Michigan [as a child] because I wanted to be down here on Grandpa’s farm. There’s a bunch of good people here in Lincoln County, and I used to know a large section of the county.”

Throughout his career, Mullins faced challenges that tested his resolve, but he never wavered in his commitment to serve the community. On one of his earliest calls as sheriff, a Giles County father abducted his child. Finding the man and taking him and the child into custody without incident or force reaffirmed his calling.



Jimmy



Son Heath and grandson Mason, with Jimmy

“He was in a field close to the river at a gravel pit. I got out of the car and started walking, and I spotted him just standing there with the baby in his arms, gazing out into the field. I eased up on him as close as I could without spooking him, and I told him, ‘Lay that baby down and move away from him.’ And he did. He put the baby down, and I radioed the ambulance and some more help and eased on toward him. I secured him, and he didn’t give me any trouble. I picked the baby up and had the daddy walk ahead of me toward the car [where more help arrived].”





Jimmy with wife, Marie

### **It was rewarding work but not easy work.**

He said, “We had to put in a lot of hard work, from 10 to 12 hours a day, six days a week. Of course, you’re on call all the time, and it didn’t pay a whole lot, but it was a regular paycheck,” he said.

It was inevitable that some calls involved traumatic incidents, but Mullins refueled and refocused by finding a moment to sit in silence. He had to keep moving forward.

“Most things are what you make of them,” he said. “I believe that most officers are out there to help. I was there for 22 years and some odd months. I never used a nightstick or blackjack and never shot anybody. I slapped two people. One hit me with his fist, and I slapped him. I didn’t let my people abuse anybody when I was chief deputy or sheriff, and they knew we didn’t put up with that. I guess I was lucky, though.”

Mullins believes his story isn’t unique. Still, his non-violent career shines even brighter when today’s national news replays endless footage of violence in city streets, including officers using excessive force. Law and order standing on the shoulders of solid character and higher standards provide security to everyone in the community.

Childhood dreams and a desire to see positive change are more important today than ever, and the bonds of Lincoln County residents make us stronger together. Communities with that kind of support and stories like Mullins’ may not be unique, but they’re priceless. GN



Jimmy with daughter, Myla





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Forget the scales. Get ready to plan your

# holiday parties and dinners

By Tina Neeley

**T**HANKSGIVING AND Christmas are getting closer, and it's time to plan for parties and get-togethers. Old standards served alongside new recipes on family buffets with family china, and finger foods and sweet treats on paper plates balanced on our knees are all welcome this time of year. The extra pounds, not so much. It's the closing months before New Year resolutions threaten our diets. Forget the scales and prepare for your next gathering with these seasonal favorites. **GN**



## *Easy Baked Turkey*

Submitted by Martha Hemphill

1 turkey, dressed  
salt, to taste  
1/4 stick butter, softened  
7 c. water  
1/4 c. cooking oil

Rub salt over entire turkey inside and outside. Rub butter over entire surface. Place turkey in a roasting pan with water and cooking oil. Cover top with heavy foil and seal edges. Place in cold oven, turn heat to 500° and bake for 1 hour. At the end of the hour, turn heat off and leave turkey in oven overnight. Do not open oven door! By morning the turkey will be tender, and you will have enough broth for gravy and dressing.

## *Green Bean Casserole*

Submitted by Emma Hardin

3 cans French style green beans  
1 can water chestnuts  
1 can cream of celery soup  
1 pkg. sharp cheese, 8 oz., grated  
1 can French fried onion rings

In a large mixing bowl, combine green beans, chestnuts, celery soup, and cheese. Pour into a casserole dish. Bake at 350° for 25 minutes. Top with onion rings before serving.

## *Pumpkin Pie*

Submitted by Kristy Adams

3 c. pumpkin, cooked  
3 lg. eggs  
2 c. sugar  
1/2 stick margarine  
3/4 t. salt  
2 t. nutmeg  
1 t. butter flavoring  
1 t. vanilla flavoring  
2 pie shells, uncooked

In a mixing bowl, combine pumpkin, eggs, sugar, margarine, salt, nutmeg, butter flavoring, and vanilla flavoring; mix well. Pour into pie shells and bake at 350° for 1 hour.

Submit your recipes to be included in Good News Magazine and the Exchange Cookbook:  
[www.southernaprons.com](http://www.southernaprons.com)



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# Good Stories

## CHAPTER 2 OF 3

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

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- 46 To have and to hold — a Lincoln County couple’s commitment to their community

Our stories are based on submissions from local people.

Submit yours here:



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Photography by Brooke Snyder

◀ Angela and Larry Phelps





*Our*

**HEROES**





**I**N THIS edition of Good News Magazine, we proudly present a collection of stories that pay tribute to the unyielding courage and unwavering dedication of our local heroes — individuals who selflessly run toward danger, provide comfort in

times of crisis, and tirelessly give their all to protect and serve our communities. These are the stories of those who exemplify the true essence of heroism, whether it's offering a lifeline during emergencies, upholding the law, or simply lending a helping hand.

Join us as we shine a spotlight on their remarkable journeys and the selfless spirit that binds our communities together in times of need. These are the inspiring stories of our local heroes. We thank you for your contribution to our communities. **GN**



# More than a uniform

TONY METCALF AND LINCOLN COUNTY'S STUDENT RESOURCE OFFICERS MENTOR, INFLUENCE, AND PROTECT STUDENTS AND ADMINISTRATORS.

**I**n Tony Metcalf's career as a student resource officer (SRO) and now as the lieutenant in charge of the SRO program, he loves the kids. He and his team are often superheroes to the youngest students, mentors to all students, and a reassuring and comforting presence to parents and the community.

The little ones are heartwarming.

"They're just cute, and it tickled me so much because the students are so serious about this big bad wolf. And they want him to stay in jail," said Metcalf.

He reassures them. He has the big bad wolf, and they are safe. At times, they may ask again, "Do you still have the big bad wolf?" And like a confident protector... of course, he does.

SROs are more than protectors.

"We try to be their mentors. We try to bring kids in and talk to them, or if they need to talk to us, our administration lets them come. We want to help them with their problems," Metcalf said. "We're telling [our SROs] all the time, you're not just the SRO. You could be more like a father figure to a child. There



are a lot of things you could say to these children that they don't hear, and that's the reason you have such a good relationship with a lot of them. That one good contact may outweigh all the bad things they might be going through at home. That does make a difference; I believe that."

Metcalf began making a difference through a career in law enforcement at the city of Fayetteville in 1999, and he became an SRO when Officer Karen Gardner retired. It was a time when Lincoln County High School had one full-time officer, and the other officer



OUR HEROES



TONY  
METCALF

*"We try to be their mentors. We try to bring kids in and talk to them."*

- Tony Metcalf

covered the remaining six county schools. Today, there's one in every county school.

Metcalf and Sergeant Jarrodd Barrow try to go to each school throughout the week, and often more than one school each day, checking on the



OUR HEROES



▲ TONY METCALF WITH MRS. AUDREY AND MRS. CINDY'S PRE-K CLASSES



SROs in the building and ensuring the officers and administration have everything they need.

He said, "We're getting ready to add several more people to the division, hopefully. They moved me to lieutenant over the division because it's getting as big as our patrol division."

Reserve officers attend many sporting and extracurricular events, creating even more support for students, administrators, families, and the community.

Like Metcalf, the officers feel compelled to connect with the children.

"We try our hardest to build the best rapport with the students and the staff in each building, and we visit other buildings. That makes this job what

it is; you build a good rapport with these people," he said. "I love children, and that makes it a lot easier to get out and do your job. And the kids love seeing us. You're more like a rock star when you walk in there with these little ones. They think you're the greatest thing ever, so it's very rewarding. I'm not sure everybody can do it, but I have a great group of folks I'm working with, and they do a great job. Each one of them fits their building so well."

Even when situations arise that require a firm response, the goal is the same.

"We try very hard not to [have to take them in], but it's tough love.



OUR HEROES



You're still trying to help them," he said. "If we can step in now, we might not have to when they get to be the age of 18. I've seen it spiral out of control by then."

Graduation isn't the end of the officers' relationships with the students. It's for life. Before you know it, the next generation is in school, and the legacy grows with them.

"It's amazing; they're adults with their own children, and you see them out. If it's one you've had to deal with or work with, it's rewarding to me to see them successful. It makes your heart swell because you are a part of that," said Metcalf.

And the administration's support of the program undergirds its success.

Metcalf and his team appreciate the excellent working relationships and the positive feedback they receive from everyone.

The folks dropping the kids off realize we're here, and they wave and tell us thank you all the time,"

he said. "It's rewarding to know that you've got everybody's children, and they trust you to do what you need to do for the kids."

Thank you, Lieutenant Metcalf and all your staff, for watching out for our children. We appreciate you! GN

*"It's rewarding to know that you've got everybody's children, and they trust you to do what you need to do for the kids."*

- Tony Metcalf















## “She was our mama.”

KAREN GARDNER LIVED TO LOVE LINCOLN COUNTY'S CHILDREN AND COMMUNITY.

**I**T'S ONE of our most basic needs, present from birth: the need to belong. To feel seen, heard, understood, and cared for is a critical part of our development at all ages. Karen Gardner saw the people in her community — really, truly saw them and cared for and about them. She spent her life serving and caring for others as if responding to a call audible only to her.

And though she constantly served those outside her home, those inside never felt left out.

“Mama was more dedicated than anybody I can imagine. She was there until the job was done, no matter what time it was, and you couldn't have talked her out of it to save your life. My mama belonged to the community. She loved the community, the children of Lincoln County, and Lincoln County just as much as she did us,” said Kim Gardner Baker, Gardner's daughter.

In the '70s, karate kick-started Gardner's career in the direction of law enforcement.

Baker said, “In 1974, she got her black belt. Back then, that wasn't something women did. Then, she started teaching karate here in town. She did it for free because she wanted to



help kids and get people involved in karate because it was good for your mental state, discipline, and all that. And she wanted to do it for free to help other kids get that experience.”

Gardner spent several years at Amana with a term in the United States Army at Redstone Arsenal sandwiched in between. The single mom’s official service to her country ended when a tour in Korea would be the next assignment. But her service to her community was just beginning.

She signed on as a volunteer officer with the Fayetteville Police Department (FPD) while working at Amana. The many unpaid hours she spent with the FPD clarified her true calling, and in 1988, Gardner took a 50% pay reduction to become a full-time officer. It was a small price to pay, and she moved from patrolman to investigator, where crimes against children, especially, moved her.

During this time, she enrolled in training with her daughter, Baker, for a position as a foster parent. Baker couldn’t complete the course then, but Gardner moved forward, motivated by her caregiver’s heart. Her daughter ultimately became a foster parent, but Gardner beat her to it and went on to adopt two of the children she fostered, Charlie Gardner and Brianna Warren.

“Living in a small town like this, you don’t realize what some kids go through until you get involved with the foster care system, and then you see how blessed you are to have a good family,” Baker said.

But Gardner saw it and spent her life doing something about it.

When Lincoln County began its school resource officer (SRO) program, Gardner was among the first to sign up, moving from the FPD to the Lincoln County Sheriff’s Department (LCSD).

“It was perfect,” Baker said. “She loved kids, so it was perfect. She was a patrolman and SRO, mainly at the school. Now, they’ve got SROs in every school, but when Mom was there, she had to do [several] schools. I told him they had to get five or six officers to take my mom’s place.”

Carman Smith, former director of health and safety at Lincoln County Schools, saw Gardner’s dedication firsthand. Gardner’s passion for her job impacted more than students.

“When I took the job, we didn’t have SROs in every building. We had Karen, and we had Bill Wood. Karen trained me on what being an SRO was sup-



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY KIM BAKER

▲ KAREN’S RETIREMENT PARTY

*“Mama was more dedicated than anybody I can imagine.”*

- Kim Gardner Baker



OUR HEROES





OUR HEROES



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY KIM BAKER



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY KIM BAKER

posed to look like. It was, ‘Yes, I’m a police officer, but this is about the kids,’ and not everybody can be an SRO,” Smith said. “She set the standard for me that I used for the rest of my career managing the SROs. She helped build the program from the ground up and was an integral part of getting it in place and setting the standards. She set the bar on what it’s supposed to look like.”

Lieutenant Tony Metcalf, who manages the SROs today, took Gardner’s SRO position upon her retirement and spent many years before that on the force with her.

“Karen Gardner was the salt of the Earth. She took care of more people than most anybody I know. Karen’s been a mama to more kids, even those that had parents. She was our mama. She took care of me when I started in law enforcement, and she was good to me. But she was always looking out for those kids,” said Metcalf.

And she couldn’t stop looking out for those kids when she retired as an SRO. She found her way, sometimes literally, back into the schools as a substitute

teacher. Even with vision problems and a walker, she was there for the kids.

When she passed away in Maury County Hospital last year, her fellow officers escorted her home.

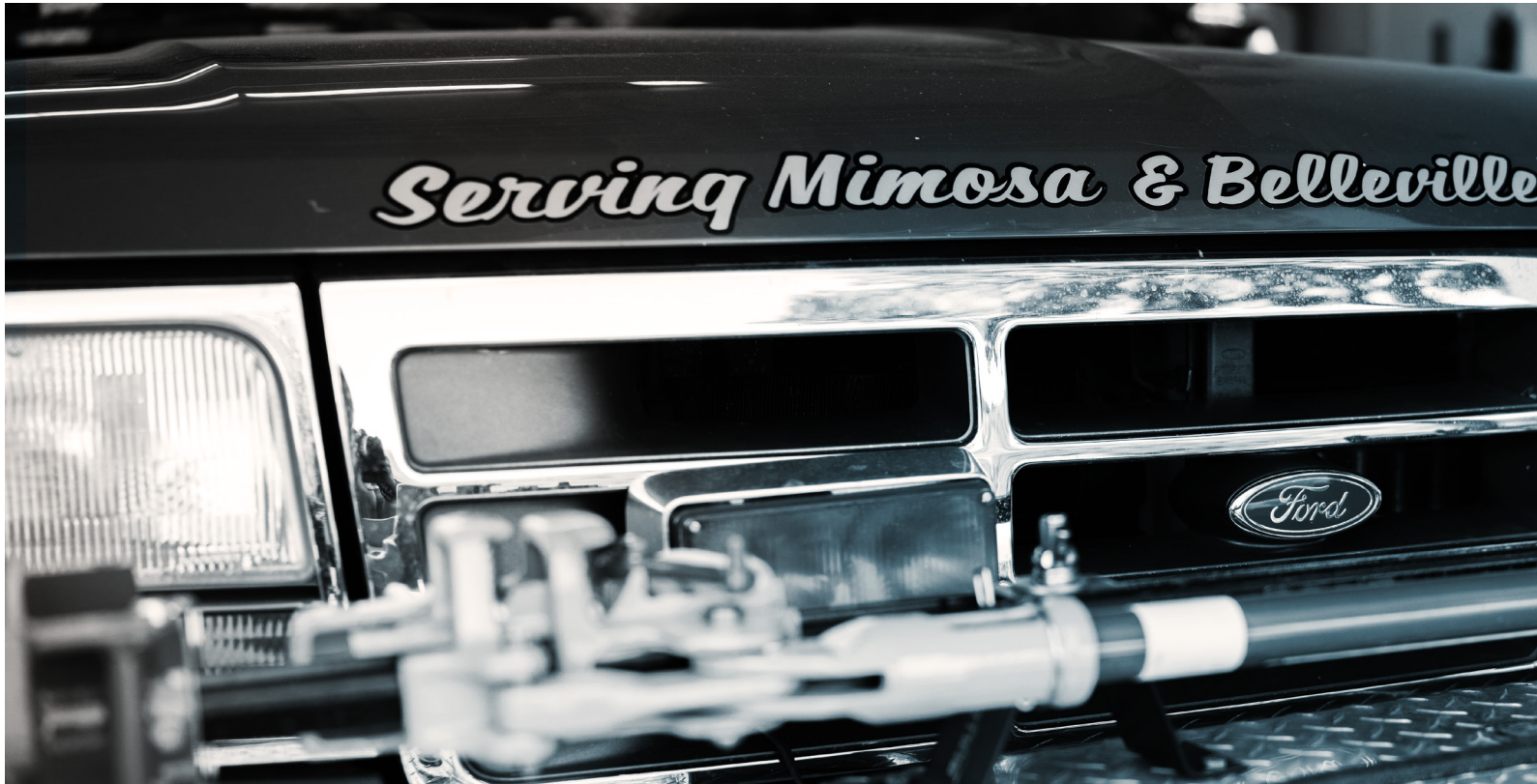
“When Mother passed away, the police officer on duty at the hospital stood watch. She had been away from law enforcement since about 2017, but Sandy Metcalf with the LCSD sent two deputies to the hospital, and they escorted us and the hearse back to Fayetteville. The Maury County deputies and city officers had all the [traffic] lights stopped for us. Then, a Lincoln County deputy kept 24-hour guard at the funeral home,” Baker said.

How fitting that so many stood watch as the one that stood watch over the children and members of the Lincoln County community came home one last time.

Her legacy lives on, though, in those she trained and influenced: her friends, family, and the students whose paths were redirected by her intervening tough love.

She was our mama. GN





# To have and to hold — a Lincoln County couple's commitment to their community.

LARRY AND ANGELA PHELPS COME WHEN YOU CALL.

**I**N OUR moment of crisis, after dialing 911, the sight of first responders bursting onto the scene brings immediate relief. Help has arrived. In small communities like Belleville, it's even better because the faces you see are likely those of your family, friends, or neighbors. Larry and Angela Phelps are among them.

Their love and appreciation for residents in the small town motivates them to respond to calls for help. Whether it be a fire, wreck, or medical call, they respond together whenever possible. They know firsthand the comfort of a familiar face when the unthinkable happens. Larry received a call requesting help at an accident scene. Angela's brother had been killed in an automobile accident.



OUR HEROES



"That next evening, the next meeting night, the captain showed up in my driveway and told me to get in. They carried me to my first meeting, and I've been there ever since," said Larry.

No wonder there's such a bond in small, rural communities.

Angela said, "You have to understand you work in your community, and your community is where your relatives live. So, that next call may be one of your loved ones. You just don't know. It's likely going to be somebody you know."

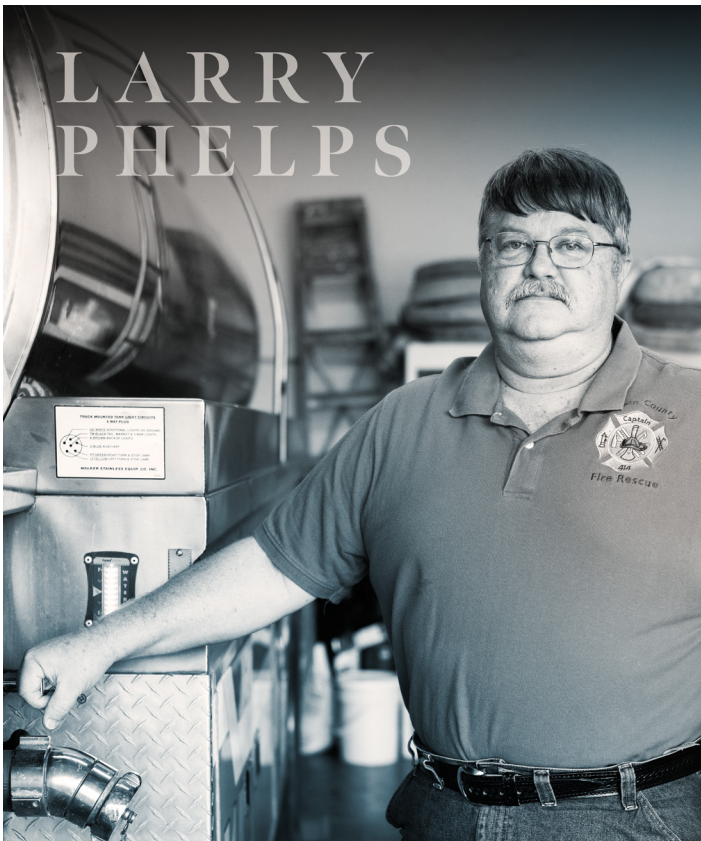
Larry agreed, "There's a feeling of comfort when they see somebody they know — the familiar face. You've got to take into consideration that most of the time when the call goes out, no matter what [the nature of the call] is, somebody's having a bad day."

Angela was left at home when Larry responded to calls. It didn't take long for her to tire of that.

"I just got tired of being left behind. [Larry was] always going to training, my kids were grown, and I wanted to

*"There's a feeling of comfort when they see somebody they know — the familiar face."*

- Larry Phelps





OUR HEROES



help my neighbors, so I joined him," she said.

We are always stronger together, and in the case of married firefighters, shared experiences go a long way toward maintaining mental health.

"We've been married for almost 40 years and have relied on each other for quite some time. We know how each other feels and what's bothering you. It does help to know when someone's hurting and just being there for one another," said Larry.

Angela responds to other emergencies in her full-time job as a planning officer with the Marshall County Emergency Management Agency (MCEMA). She began part time at the Lincoln County EMA and was the deputy director beginning in 2016. She transferred to Marshall County in 2019. MCEMA responds to fires and accidents, but Angela said some of their most significant calls are for hazardous material situations and search and rescue.



## OUR HEROES

It's common for MCEMA to respond to calls for assistance in neighboring counties like Lincoln County.

Angela said, "Not only do communities have to work together, but counties have to work together. Sometimes they respond together, and sometimes they train together. Sometimes they just respond because they know you, and they say, 'Okay, I'm going to help my friend.'"

In the spirit of caring when someone else is hurting, the Phelps' are aware of today's social media's impact on reporting accidents and emergencies. Remembering that someone's loved one might learn about their crisis first from something read online is another way to care about and help those in your community.

"All those pictures don't need to be put on Facebook because you don't know if their family members have been notified. Even if they know, those pictures can really hurt someone," said Angela. "And Facebook travels faster than the speed of light sometimes," Larry said.

That's the heart of it — helping. First responders have a deep desire to help others.

Belleville Volunteer Fire Department could use more help-minded members. As people like the Phelps' look toward a retirement day, the desire to pass the torch to younger generations is strong.

Larry said, "I don't know if they realize the need is there. And honestly, there's a tremendous amount of training that comes along with the commitment that you make to the fire department. If you're willing to do it, then you have to be willing to go through a tremendous amount of training so that you're an asset and a help."

It's important for many reasons, but the main one is the comfort of knowing the community can respond to the needs of their own. And knowing you've helped your neighbor is priceless.

"When you come in, dragging and hurting all over, you wonder, Why am I doing this? What was I thinking?' But when you see that neighbor, relative, person, or child, and they smile and say thank you, it makes it all worth it. I couldn't imagine doing anything else now," Angela said.

Neighbors helping neighbors is Lincoln County at its best. GN

*"When you see that neighbor, relative, person, or child, and they smile and say thank you, it makes it all worth it. I couldn't imagine doing anything else now."*

- Angela Phelps





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# How the Good News Magic Happens: From Submission to Print

## *How does a story get into Good News Magazine?*

Nominate someone to be featured in Good News Magazine.

Since Good News launched, we have received hundreds of nominations for people to be covered. Ever wondered how a story finds its way into the pages of our magazine? Well, the answer is simple: it's all thanks to you! Not only are the stories about local people, but they come from other local people, too! Here's a glimpse into the journey of how stories come alive in Good News Magazine.



### Step 1: The submission process: [goodnewsmags.com](http://goodnewsmags.com)

We believe that everyone has a story worth sharing, and we rely on our readers to help us discover these extraordinary individuals. Submissions are made through our website and include the following details:

- A nominee's name
- Contact information (phone and email)
- The reason for the submission, along with why they qualify as a "Good News" story. This may include their contributions to the community, impactful deeds, family life, occupation, and more.
- We're not looking for you to write the story or find a superstar. We believe everyone has a story, and we only need relevant information. Our writers will do the rest!

### Step 2: Selection and theme assignment

We tell stories about local people and what they are doing to make a difference. We have told stories about charities, medical staff, volunteers, school staff, and your next-door neighbor. Again, everyone has a story. While we feature six remarkable individuals in each issue, keep in mind that our production schedule is planned months in advance. So, if someone isn't featured in the upcoming issue, there's still a chance they'll be highlighted in the future. We keep all submissions on file for potential use.

### Step 3: Interviews and photo shoots

Once a story is selected, our talented writers and photographers swing into action. We continue to be inspired by the stories submitted to us, and we complete the interviews and photo shoots several months before the issue goes to print. Our writers may conduct interviews via phone or video chat, while others prefer in-person meetings with the individuals behind the stories.





## What's next in Good News Magazine?

Currently, our dedicated team of magazine writers and editors is hard at work crafting stories under themes like “Home for the Holidays,” “Hometown Healing,” and “From the Heart.” We are excited to announce the next theme needing story submissions is “Charity Spotlight.”

### What we seek in Charity Spotlight stories:

Do you know a couple in your community who overcame adversity and decided to extend a helping hand to others facing similar challenges? Perhaps there's a group that stepped up to support local businesses during the pandemic. Or maybe you're aware of countless charities making a positive impact in the community. Behind each of these organizations, there are individuals who drive their mission, founded them, or have been profoundly touched by their work. These are the people and stories we're eager to showcase in our upcoming Charity Spotlight issue.

*Do you know someone who deserves to be in Good News Magazine?*

Let us know with a submission at [www.GoodNewsMags.com](http://www.GoodNewsMags.com) or scan the QR code. Share your stories with us, and let's continue spreading the Good News together.







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**CHAPTER 3 OF 3**

This section of the magazine covers local things to do.

**58** Community Events

**64** Events Calendar

**66** Advertiser Index

Submit a positive story  
on our website:



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Photo submitted by Velva Walker

◀ Crowd at the Unity Lady Lions Volleyball game



# Central High School 50th reunion - September 8-9



Photos submitted by Paul Henry

The Central High School Class of 1973 celebrated its 50th class reunion the weekend of Sept. 8-9. It was a night of reminiscing and reconnecting with friends!



1. Sherry 2. Mac, Richard, John, and Phillip 3. Terry, Bobby, and Mike 4. Gloria and Richard  
5. Lynn, Connie, and Mike 6. Terry and Donna







# Unity Fundraiser - September 12



Photos submitted by Velva Walker

The Unity Lady Lions Volleyball team held a Teal-Out night to raise awareness about ovarian cancer and also to support the Quatina M. Wolaver Foundation of Hope. It was a fun night of volleyball for a great cause.



1. Jennifer Medley and Summer Southern 2. Unity Cheerleaders 3. Heather Knight, Jennifer Medley, and Ashton Knight













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with your smart phone to see more  
photos from Good News.

*100% of profits from purchased prints are donated  
back to the community through nonprofits.*





# Get a good look

## EVENTS CALENDAR

### October 14

#### 9:00 am **Creekside Fall Festival and Market**

McBurg  
Community Center  
81 McBurg Rd.  
Frankewing

Complete with festival activities, vendors, and food trucks.

#### 9:00 am **Rendezvous with Phil Prichard & Colonel Craig**

Prichard's Distillery  
11 Kelso Smithland Rd.  
Kelso

Meet and greet with Master Distiller Phil Prichard and Whiskey University Founder and President Colonel Craig Duncan. Taste our new releases of Benjamin Prichard's Tennessee Whiskey Barrel Select – 86 proof and Benjamin Prichard's Double Barrel Bourbon. Free tours and tastings (21 for tastings). Both will be available for bottle signings. Kid friendly.

#### 10:00 am **Lincoln County Recovery/Fall Festival**

Stonebridge Park  
44 Diemer Rd.  
Fayetteville

This year, we are going bigger and better! Come out and not only support recovery, but also pick up some of your holiday gifts!

#### 2:00 pm **Palace of Riverbend Music Festival**

Palace of Riverbend  
82 Rambo Rd.  
Fayetteville

You bring your lawn chair or blanket, and we will provide the music. Tickets are \$25. Children 12 and under are free.

### October 18

#### 2:00 pm **Intro to Photography with Melissa Jean**

Fayetteville Lincoln County Arts Center  
303 Main Ave. S.  
Fayetteville

Limited seats available so register quickly! For more information: [mjeanphoto.shootproof.com](http://mjeanphoto.shootproof.com).

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.

**Good News**  
exchange







**October 20**

**2:00 pm HeART of Sarah Home-school Parents Afternoon Off**  
 Fayetteville Lincoln County Arts Center  
 303 Main Ave. S.  
 Fayetteville

Home-school parents drop your kids off for four hours of free time! Register at: [theheartofsarah.com](http://theheartofsarah.com).

**October 28**

**10:00 am Daughter's Arise Gathering – Radiate Jesus!**  
 Christmas at the Corner  
 87 Kinnard Mill Rd.  
 Hazel Green

No registration fee required for this gathering. However, reserve your seat by registering today so we can prepare for you!

**1:00 pm Intro to Calligraphy with Melanie Laten**

Fayetteville Lincoln County Arts Center  
 303 Main Ave. S.  
 Fayetteville

Limited seats available so register quickly!


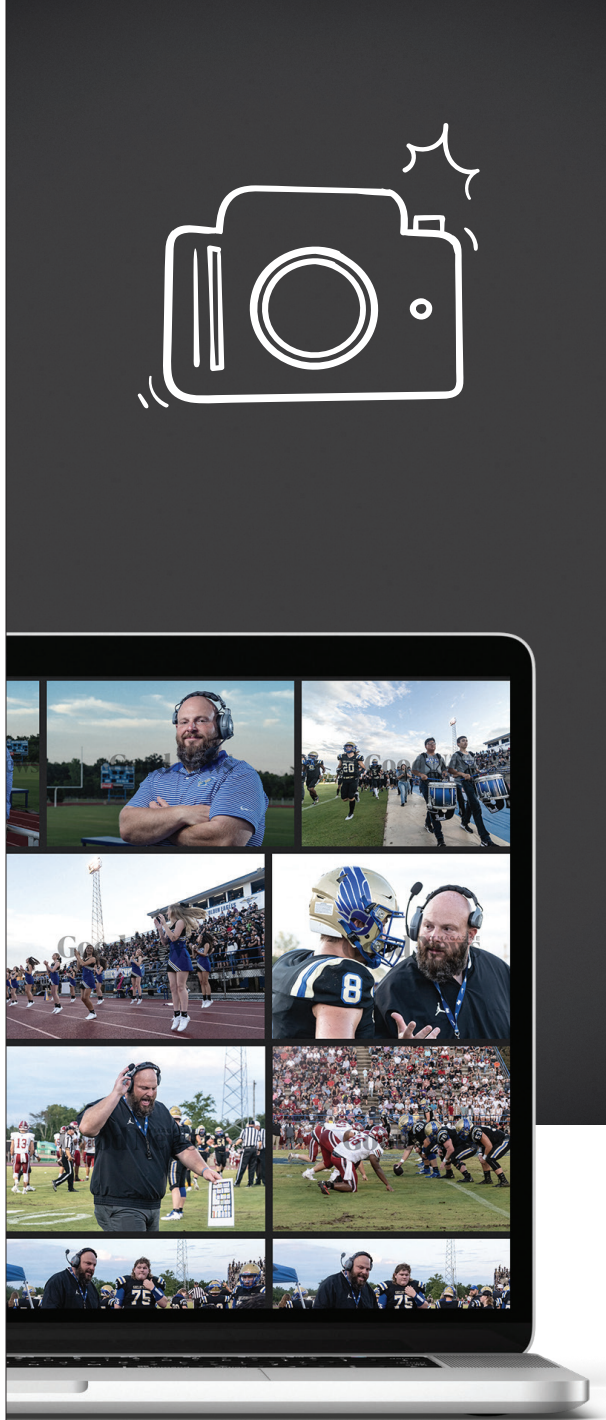
**November 2**

**6:00 pm Glass with By Your Hand Art Studio**

Fayetteville Lincoln County Arts Center  
 303 Main Ave. S.  
 Fayetteville

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