

Good News

exchange

The gift of Christmas

The holiday spirit shines through Karen Welch

Dianne and Paul Goodell

Home for the
Holidays

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Heartwarming stories at home

Experience the good this holiday season

LIKE THE cozy warmth of a heated blanket, Good News and the holidays are in the air once again. The season of festive lights, crackling fireplaces, and familiar carols is upon us, inviting a sense of togetherness that warms the soul. As the vintage Christmas record spins on the player and marshmallows swirl in steaming hot chocolate, it's a time when family and friends gather to create lasting memories.

Home for the holidays is a special feeling. It's the time when loved ones from far and wide journey back home, coming together to share in the glow of holiday decorations. Volunteers wrap gifts for those in need, schools close their doors, and students anticipate a well-deserved break. Whether or not the snow graces our Christmas Day, the spirit of peace and love is ever-present.

In this holiday season, we want to celebrate those who elevate the holiday experience for everyone. Our community is filled with stories of love, generosity, and second chances, and Good News is here to share them. As you navigate your own traditions this season, we encourage you to share the love, positivity, and good news with our community. It's the best gift we can give one another. Grab the blanket, start the fire, and pour the hot coffee. It's time to go home for the holidays.

From all of us at Good News Magazine and Exchange Media Group, we extend our warmest wishes for a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays. May your year conclude with joy, and together, let's spread happiness and goodwill throughout the world. **GN**


Wesley Bryant,
MANAGING EDITOR

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GOODLIVING

CHAPTER 1 OF 3

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

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Photography by Brooke Snyder

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▲ Caudle family

Finding the Lost Residents of the Poor Farm

LINCOLN COUNTY WOMEN TRACK DOWN UNMARKED GRAVES

By Paige Cushman
Photos submitted by Danielle Caudle



BEFORE THERE was food stamps and welfare, there were poor farms.

People with mental and physical disabilities, those without financial or familial support, or those who were unable to work stayed on publicly owned properties. They maintained them as they would any family farm.

“Everybody helped, and everybody had a job,” the late Ralph Hastings, a local historian who has since passed, said in an old video tour of Lincoln County’s historic Poor Farm.

The Lincoln County Poor Farm was established in 1876 and remained operational until 1961. Hastings had an uncle who managed the 239-acre farm. He spent much of his adult life sharing stories from the farm about how the women would dress up on Sundays, how they made molasses from sorghum cane, and how residents would spend their summers canning fruits and jams.

“They enjoyed themselves,” he said during the tour. “Most of them didn’t have much family, but they fit in real well, and this was like their family. It was a good life.”

He reflected fondly on the residents he came to know at the farm. He recalled a young boy who never healed properly after breaking his back and a personable train porter who had a stroke that didn’t allow him to continue to work.

Hastings said most people who came to the farm stayed until they died. Sometimes, that meant they worked on the farm for a

year. Sometimes, it meant they worked for 50 [years]. Then, they were laid to rest at the farm’s cemetery.

“I suppose over 200 people are buried over there, but there’s no name on any grave,” Hastings said.

That’s where Danielle Caudle and Angela Ziegler step in.

In 2021, Caudle relocated to Lincoln County with her husband and five kids for her husband’s work. At the time, the Lincoln Country Poor Farm was used as an organic flower farm and the cemetery as a meditation garden. Caudle and her husband were looking for a farm where her family could live and work, not exactly a meditation garden. But when she pulled onto the property, which greeted her with an adorable little stream and a rickety bridge, Caudle said she knew it was meant to be.

“So this was not really what we were looking for at all,” she said. “We saw the pictures, we showed up, and we were all sold immediately.”

She loved it so much that she convinced her mother, Angela Ziegler, and her father to sell their farm in Louisiana and move onto the poor farm in Lincoln County.

It’s no wonder the previous owner turned the cemetery full of unmarked graves into a meditation garden. Caudle described it as “the most peaceful place you could ever imagine.” There’s nothing but good energy that comes from the farm. This is not the set of some horror movie or paranormal investigation.



▲ Danielle and Jimmy Caudle and their children

“Everybody that is local here, they all talk about how well the people on the farm were treated and we don’t ever want, for the dead that are here, to make it something that it’s definitely not.”

- DANIELLE CAUDLE

“We’ve had people contact us about coming out to do paranormal readings and that sort of thing, but we have never had anything like that on the farm,” she said. “Everybody local here — they all talk about how well the people on the farm were treated, and we don’t ever want, for the dead that are here, to make it something that it’s definitely not.”

To honor the farm’s history, Caudle and Ziegler have now set out to find the names of those who were buried there.

“I mean, [residents at the farm] sat down and ate as families,” Caudle said. “They talked about going to town on Saturday nights when they weren’t working. They would hold religious services there. They had a true family.”

And Ziegler loves some family history. Caudle said that even as a young girl, she remembers her mom digging into their genealogy and traveling for research.

“Whenever I did my own family’s research, I would come to a dead end, and I couldn’t find people,” Ziegler said. “I realized that other people may be doing the same thing, and I just wanted to help them.”

So, she and Caudle spend their free time scouring public records, local reports, and the grounds of their farm. The previous caretakers compiled the most comprehensive logbook of Lincoln Country Poor Farm residents to date. And there’s a lot of small-town folklore swirling around. Caudle said the duo tries to find documentation to corroborate what they’re told.

They know about Mr. Tom, the oldest person that they’ve found to have been buried at the farm. He lived to be 101 and died in 1921. Then there’s Jesse, the youngest. He was 22 and died in 1937 of tuberculosis. Dell, the youngest female identified, died at 26, and her death certificate says she died of epilepsy.

“Mom’s got about 40 people nailed down for sure [who are] buried here,” Caudle said.

Stories of a Native American man nicknamed Tony Dago have circulated. He reportedly was killed when he and a couple of other men on the farm were sawing down trees, and one fell the wrong way. He’s been identified at the cemetery, along with Ms. Abby, who arrived at the farm sick and, according to her death certificate, died within 10 minutes of being there.

While studying genealogy, many use FindAGrave.com. You can find cemeteries around the world and share information about them online. Ziegler’s ultimate goal, she said, is to be able to fill in the poor farm’s cemetery on the site.

“So, people doing genealogy research, if they’re looking for someone, they might find them here instead of reaching a dead end,” Ziegler said.

The family appreciates any information or stories that may help them identify more of the poor farm residents. While they love to show people around, the farm is private property. So, Caudle asks those who’d like to visit or have any information to share to contact her first at dmz3413@aol.com. **GN**

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A Quiet Life Takes Flight

Dr. Cecil E. Byrd's influence
on the community lives
on today.



Dr. Byrd and his wife Lucille

By Tina Neeley // Photos submitted by the family of Cecil Byrd

THE DECISIONS and actions of past generations shape Lincoln County and Fayetteville's landmarks, institutions, and culture. Though they are no longer here, their work, even down to their smallest decisions, left a lasting impact. Their stories and legacies continue today as a vibrant thread in the tapestry of our community, and their influence can be seen in every corner, silently testifying to their commitment to improving the lives of all around them.

Dr. Cecil E. Byrd is among the many who quietly and positively contributed to our area's quality of life.

The young veterinarian, a Texas native, moved to Fayetteville in 1944 with his wife, Lucille, and their 1-year-old daughter, Patty. The city's sole vet,

"Dr. Byrd was a great veterinarian and a really good physical diagnostician. He could quickly figure out what was wrong, and I learned an awful lot from him."

- Dr. Farris Beasley

Dr. Ross Whitaker, had passed away a few weeks earlier. Although he'd planned to work with Dr. Whitaker upon his arrival, his plans soon changed, and he established the Fayetteville Animal Clinic across the street from today's Cahoots.

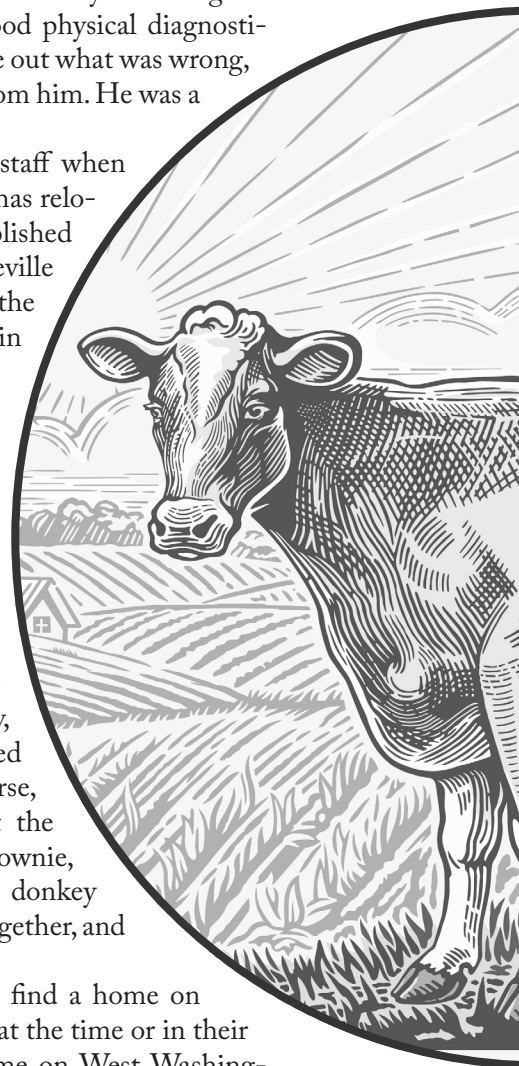
Dr. Farris Beasley joined Byrd and Dr. Tom Bullington in the practice in 1959.

"We had [more than] 250 Grade A dairies in Lincoln County. We covered Lincoln, Moore, and Marshall Counties and all the way down to Huntsville. He was a very conservative businessman who taught us to be conservative. We didn't waste a lot of money on frivolous things, and he was a good teacher for us in that respect. Dr. Byrd was a great veterinarian and a really good physical diagnostician. He could quickly figure out what was wrong, and I learned an awful lot from him. He was a great man," said Beasley.

Seven doctors were on staff when Byrd retired, and the clinic has relocated twice since Byrd established it on Fire Hall Hill. Fayetteville Animal Clinic is one of the largest veterinary clinics in Tennessee today.

"He just loved all animals," said Byrd's daughter, Bonnie. "A lot of our pets growing up were mostly from farmers who couldn't pay their bills. They'd say, 'Doc, I just don't have the money. See if you can find a home for it.' So we got a lot of our cats and dogs that way, and we even got a cow named Brownie, who was, of course, Brown," said Bonnie. "But the man said, 'If you take Brownie, you have to take Lulu, the donkey because they've grown up together, and I can't separate them.'"

And so the cows would find a home on whatever farm Byrd owned at the time or in their pasture located at their home on West Washington/Highway 64. Bonnie remembered the police calling once in the middle of the night.



She said, “The officer said, ‘Doc, we think your cows got out because they’re walking the center line on Highway 64 heading toward your house. So Mother and Daddy both got in their cars, and one pulled in front of them and one at the back of them with their flashers on. I remember I stood there for the longest time with the gate open to our pasture, waiting for the cows to come home.”

Byrd’s passion for the animals in his care enabled his three daughters, Patty Byrd Fuquay, Cecilia Byrd Harris, and Bonnie Byrd, to obtain college educations.

Bonnie said, “It isn’t until your parents pass away that you realize how fortunate you’ve been. Daddy was a great businessman. He’d buy a farm and have a family who needed a home to live there and work the land. After four years, he’d sell it, and that would be our college money. A year later, Daddy would do it again for the next girl’s college money. That’s one of the many things he did for each of us.”

Byrd, a Fayetteville Alderman for many years, was known as a straightforward man who stuck to his word.

John Ed Underwood served as an alderman in Byrd’s final terms and alongside him on the public works committee.

Underwood said, “I enjoyed working with him, and I think anyone that worked with him appreciated him because he was a straight arrow.”

Byrd was the airport board chairman for many years, and although he was not a pilot, he was always fascinated with flying.

Bonnie said, “He was always interested in planes. If we passed a small airport, he would pull in so we could watch them take off and land. He never pursued taking lessons, but he subscribed to an aviation magazine and loved it.”

During his time on the airport board, an empty peach tree field became the Fayetteville Municipal Airport, and the airport authority named the field in his honor after he died in 1991. His passion for flight contributed to a boost in economic development, tourism, emergency response, flight education and training, and recreation — an overall improvement in the community’s quality of life.

Wouldn’t he be proud to know his grandson, Todd Harris, Cecilia’s son, is a pilot for Southwest Airlines today?

“It isn’t until your parents pass away that you realize how fortunate you’ve been. Daddy was a great businessman.”

– Bonnie Byrd

The influence of previous generations may not always be easy to see, but it’s always there, shaping the cities we live in and the lives of its residents for tomorrow. GN





Elma Beasley, Dr. Farris, and Bonnie B. Byrd



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By Tina Neeley // Photography by Brooke Snyder

GAIL GODWIN said, “Good teaching is one-fourth preparation and three-fourths pure theatre.” Tim Hobbs has utilized theatre in the classroom throughout his Fayetteville City Schools (FCS) career and heads up a recent system-wide drama program that opened the door to his dream job. It’s opened the door, too, for students to gain experience and build life skills available uniquely through theatre.

Hobbs graduated with a certification to teach drama and obtained

his elementary education certification teaching at Ralph Askins School and Fayetteville Middle School for 25 years. He assisted with middle school productions and brought drama to the classroom to reinforce lessons while capitalizing on the benefits of theatre.

“I’ve always tried to incorporate theatre into my classrooms any way I could. In fourth grade, I taught the Revolutionary War. So when we talked about the Declaration of Independence, I’d do a complete room transformation.

I had coats and made tricorne hats for my students to wear, and I dressed the part with a white wig. I tried to get them in there and make things relevant,” Hobbs said.

In his 26th year teaching in FCS, then Director of Schools Bill Hopkins asked Hobbs to consider leading a system-wide theatre program.

“I said, ‘You know what, I don’t even have to think about it. The answer is yes, no question,’” said Hobbs. “This is the dream job I’ve always wanted.



▲ Melanie Pitcock and students at rehearsal

Tim Hobbs ►

That love for theatre never leaves once you catch it. You get that bug. After 26 years, I had the opportunity, so I said, 'Yes, I will take it.'

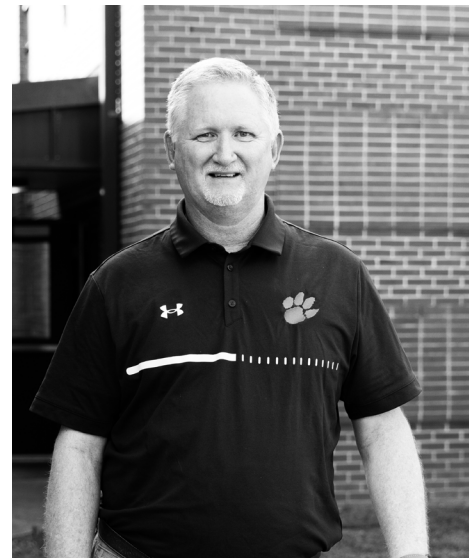
Hobbs moved to Fayetteville High School last year as the drama teacher and program director, and theatre is now an option for students at Fayetteville High School, Fayetteville Middle School, and Ralph Askins. The results have been transforming.

The high school formed a drama troupe and worked on productions in

the classroom, the first of which was "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," performed for the elementary students.

"They loved it because it was up close and personal," he said. "We used the stage in the gym, so the [high school] students were mingling with the other students. It was audience participation, and the kids absolutely loved it."

Hobbs focused on fourth and fifth grades last fall, and the students produced "Charlotte's Web" for their peers





and the community. The high school and middle school students teamed up for four performances of “Disney’s Lion King, Jr.,” which was double-cast to allow more students to participate.

“I have athletes who were able to come out and audition. And a football player who’d never sung before in front of his parents played one of the lead roles,” said Hobbs.

Students might never discover their interests and passion for theatre without the program. While wrapped up in a production’s many layers, they’re seamlessly acquiring skills for a lifetime.

A 2021 story on wetheparents.org lists 21 evidence-based benefits of drama and theatre education. Among them are building self-confidence and self-esteem, boosting reading achievement, improving social skills and critical listening skills, reducing problem behavior, and developing problem-solving skills.

“Last year, I had students who would come in shy and reserved or would sit back and wouldn’t really want to participate a lot in class. But after a few weeks, they were one of the first to raise their hands wanting to participate,” he said.

Back row: Shaniya Tate, Harmony Ussery, Alayah Emmons, A'Mhyla Furr, Jordan Sullivan, Jillian Jones, Kalliana Holden, JJ Brown, Brent Hall, John Caldwell, and Anakin Cornwall
 Front Row: Tim Hobbs, Eve Jones, Olivia Small, Laila Phelps, Ruby Wright, Everly Holloway, Jack Pitcock, Case Taylor, Asher Allen, Sadie Gentry, Savannah McSperritt, and Sophie Phillips



"They've also signed up for drama this year, so I know it's building confidence."

Students are hard at work on productions for the 2023-24 school year. The theatre arts class is building and painting sets and working on publicity, while the drama class is rehearsing shows for the students and the community. Ralph Askins' music teacher, Lisa Adams, is helping with music, and Melanie Pitcock, kindergarten teacher and former dance teacher, is working on choreography.

According to Hobbs, there will be three productions this year, with one

at each school. Ralph Askins will show "Annie Kids" in September, and the middle school Christmas production will be right before school lets out for the holidays. The high school's larger production will be "The Wizard of Oz" in the spring.

And it's just the beginning.

"We're working hard. Our goal is to have this opportunity for students in grades pre-K through 12 in FCS to learn more about theatre and the fine arts," he said. "It's been proven that where there are drama programs, scores improve; data shows it. We want to give

everyone the opportunity to participate, so just reaching all students and helping them grow that love for the fine arts is the goal."

The enthusiasm and support for the program from the central office, the administration, the parents, the faculty, and the community have contributed to the program's ongoing success. Hobbs further credits his parents, wife, and children (who never miss a performance) for their help with costumes and sets.

He said, "It's a dream come true. Never give up on your dreams." GN

"WE WANT TO GIVE EVERYONE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE, SO JUST REACHING ALL STUDENTS AND HELPING THEM GROW THAT LOVE FOR THE FINE ARTS IS THE GOAL."

- Tim Hobbs





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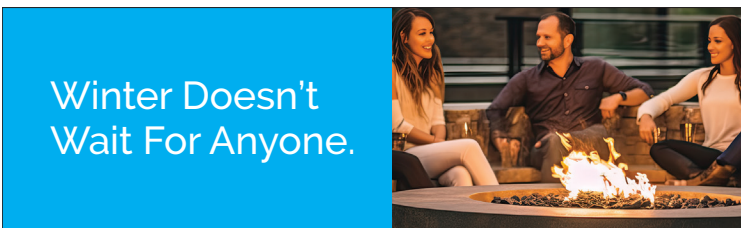
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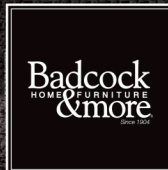
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Holiday Ham with Cider Glaze

Submitted by Donna Simmons

5-6 lb. ham, cooked, rump or shank
2 c. apple cider or apple juice
1 c. honey
1/2 c. cider vinegar
1/4 c. Dijon mustard
2 t. chili powder
1 T. butter
1/2 t. apple pie spice

Score ham with diagonal cuts in a diamond pattern and place on rack in a shallow roasting pan. Bake until it registers 140°, about 1 1/2-2 hours. In a large saucepan, combine cider, honey, vinegar, mustard, and chili powder. Bring to a boil; reduce heat. Boil gently, uncovered, for 15 minutes, stirring often. Remove half of mixture to a small mixing bowl. Stir in butter and 1/4 teaspoon pie spice. Set aside for sauce; use for glaze. Brush ham with glaze the last 20 minutes of cooking. Serve remaining sauce with ham.

Gingerbread Cookies

Submitted by Donna Simmons

3 c. AP flour
1/2 t. baking soda
1 t. baking powder
1 1/2 t. cinnamon
1 1/2 t. ginger
1/2 t. nutmeg
1/2 c. molasses
1/2 c. butter, melted
1/2 c. sugar
1 egg, lightly beaten
1 1/4 c. confectioners sugar
1/4 c. milk

In a large mixing bowl, combine flour, baking soda, baking powder, cinnamon, ginger, and nutmeg. In a small bowl, combine molasses, butter, and sugar. Add to flour mixture. Add egg; mix until smooth dough forms. Divide dough in half. Flatten between wax paper. Refrigerate for several hours. Press dough to 1/4" thickness. Cut into the desired shapes. Bake at 350° on a greased cookie sheet for 8-12 minutes. In a medium mixing bowl, combine confectioners sugar and milk. Spread onto cooled cookies.

Hot Cocoa

Submitted by Angela Putman

1/3 c. cocoa
1/3 c. sugar
1/3 c. water
5 c. milk
1/4 t. vanilla
dash salt
whipped cream for garnish

In a saucepan, combine cocoa and sugar; add water. Bring to boil and cook 3 minutes, stirring constantly. Lower heat and slowly stir in milk. Heat but do not boil. Stir in vanilla and salt before serving. May top with whipped cream if desired.

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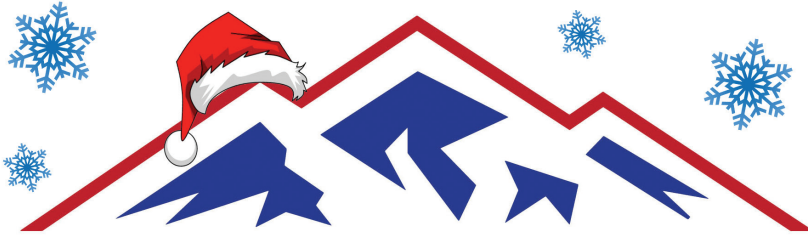
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CHAPTER 2 OF 3

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

- 38 Home for the holidays
- 40 The gift of Christmas past
- 44 The true meaning of Christmas
- 48 Christmas dinner for all

Our stories are based on submissions from local people.

Submit yours here:



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Photography by Brooke Snyder

◀ Karen Welch

A warm and inviting living room scene. In the background, a light-colored wooden bookshelf is filled with books and decorative items, including a small figurine of a horse and some dried floral arrangements. In the foreground, a white sofa is draped with a thick, textured grey blanket. Several pillows are scattered on the sofa, including one with a red and white striped pattern and another with a plaid design. To the right, a low wooden coffee table holds a small cup and some decorative pumpkins. The overall atmosphere is cozy and comfortable, perfect for the holidays.

Home for
the
Holidays





KAREN WELCH

The Gift of Christmas Past

By Tina Neeley // Photography by Brooke Snyder

The spirit of Christmas at Kudzu's



WITH THE summer sun bearing down and the harvest season still several calendar flips away, he looked for it while he worked in his gardens. He picked it before the first tomato and teased his granddaughters with hints of its location. After Thanksgiving, they'd pile into the pickup and drive to where it waited — the perfect Christmas tree. Once carefully cut, every family member placed a hand on it and carried it to the truck and into their Christmas celebrations. Karen Welch's grandfather created holiday memories around the tree that have grown to play a starring role in "Christmas at Kudzu's Antiques and Gifts."

Like her grandfather, Welch is planning for the perfect tree while others are packing theirs up for the year. But instead of the fields, she looks over her trees, deciding which one will be the star of the shop's next holiday displays and which others will join it for the season. Each year, Kudzu's welcomes shoppers with current styles and vintage treasures nestled among the trees, each with its own theme.

Welch said, "I always use my 12-foot tree as a focal point. It's the one that will burst from the front door and will usually grab your attention. I've had as many as 21 trees in the shop. You never know what they'll be, what they'll look like, and what I might find while I'm out looking. Sometimes it's just a little ornament that inspires me, and sometimes it's huge."

But one tree's theme returns every year. It's the toy tree, and it's becoming a shopper's favorite.

"It's always different. I've wired in 20-pound airplanes and old dump trucks. I've even had rocking horses in them. The kids love it, and apparently, the adults do, too. It has the old toys and treasures they grew up with. I think the toy tree connects us all to the joy of Christmas from our childhood," said Welch.

“

You never know what they'll be, what they'll look like, and what I might find while I'm out looking. Sometimes it's just a little ornament that inspires me, and sometimes it's huge.

- KAREN WELCH



▲ Paul Goodell



▲ Charlie Pfeiffer

And who connects us to Christmas better than Santa Claus? “I always try to have Santa in the shop, free to the public — absolutely no charge. I believe that everybody, whether you can afford it or not, needs to have that joy from the magic of crawling up in his lap and talking to him.” Welch said. “Just come in and enjoy it. The kids always enjoy seeing Santa. He’s in my shop often.”

While the kids enjoy Santa, shoppers take advantage of the time to add to their holiday decorations and traditions. Welch explores the market each year but goes with whatever sparks her creativity. You’ll find current styles and trends sharing space seamlessly with treasures from days gone by, not just at Christmas but every day at Kudzu’s. It gives you the comfort of your past while grounding you in the present.

“It’s what I really want people to feel when they come in. At Christmas, it can be new ornaments, or it can be old ornaments. It doesn’t matter. I just want you to have that feeling that something great is coming, something wonderful. It’s that magical feeling, a kind of rebirth and a time of letting go of all the horrible things going on in this world right now. Enjoy the peace, joy, and hope of a fresh beginning of the new year,” Welch said.

But the reason for the season is tucked year-round into the various vignettes and displays.

“With Christ as the base, all things are possible. He opened this door for me, and I try to spread the word that way. I always keep crosses in the shop, and a full shelf in the bookroom is dedicated to Bibles, hymnals, and inspirational books. I try to keep a Christian theme throughout,” she said. “There’s a collection above my checkout area from customers who bring me little Marys. What better person for us to try to emulate than Mary? That collection is not for sale, but they’re in a special spot and start a million conversations.”

The past, the present, and hope for the future all reside at Kudzu’s and will welcome you anytime. You might enter with a heavy heart or a stressed spirit, but you’ll leave lightened, and the day (and possibly your home) will be brighter for it. **GN**

“

I always try to have Santa in the shop free to the public — absolutely no charge. I believe that everybody, whether you can afford it or not, needs to have that joy from the magic of crawling up in his lap and talking to him.

- **KAREN WELCH**





BRANDON, SADIE, AND KRISTI GENTRY

The true meaning of Christmas

By Sara Hook // Photos submitted by Velva Walker and Marisa Thornton

Lincoln County Toy Drive and the gift of giving

THE CHRISTMAS season is all about the spirit of giving, and what better way to give than to help children in the community have a wonderful holiday season? The Lincoln County Toy Drive has been pursuing that goal for over 50 years, and there is no doubt it has made this community a better place. Proof of that can be found in those who donate to the drive. Several were once recipients when they were younger, said the general manager of the Elk Valley Times, Lora Scripps.

“Now they’re giving back,” Scripps said. “I think a lot of people see the fruit of the labor in that.”

The Elk Valley Times has been a part of the toy drive since the beginning, as it was first started in 1966 by then-editor Joe Collins to provide toys for several foster children. Since then, it has grown to serve around 500 kids a year.

Scripps said donors come from across Lincoln County and beyond, even from children in the elementary schools.

“They’re putting their little dollars and their extra toys, or whatever they can find, in the bucket to give back to other kids, and I think that’s awesome,” Scripps said. “Them being able to give back like that tells me that their parents have taught them empathy and compassion and to care for other people.”



▲ The Lincoln County Toy Drive relies heavily on volunteers who shop for the 500-plus benefiting children each year.

The Fayetteville Rotary Club and the Fayetteville Fire Department are always a part of organizing the drive. The fire department always sets up a roadblock as a fundraiser, sends boxes out to the community, and packs boxes with donated toys. Fire Chief Tony Kimbrough said the responses he sees from recipients are always very special.

“We try to touch all the kids that we can, and that’s the pure enjoyment for myself and the rest of the crews that are working,” Kimbrough said. “It’s always great to see kids light up when they know they’re opening toys from under the tree.”

That benefit also goes to the parents, as they know their kids will experience Christmas even if they are in a tight spot. Scripps said many people don’t like to ask for help, but that is why the toy drive exists.

“We’re here to help,” Scripps said. “If you need it, we want you to ask.”

The Elk Valley Times typically serves as one of the sign-up locations for the drive, and Scripps said she has heard many stories from families who really need the help.

“They may have recently had a house fire, or somebody might have recently lost a job, and they’re worried about whether or not their kids are going to get Christmas this year,” Scripps said. “I’ve seen families cry and just want to hug you when they are able to pick their stuff up, and they know their kids are going to get something for Christmas.”

The drive only works with children up to age 12. If someone doesn’t qualify, the organizers point the family toward another organization that can help. Scripps said that the spirit of giving is a part of Christmas, and the community has been remarkable with their participation.

Over 30 businesses across Lincoln County serve as collection sites for toys, and each year, the drive raises thousands of dollars. Every dollar that is collected goes toward the children. Scripps said the drive wouldn’t be possible without the help of people, businesses, churches, and schools that donate.

“These people are local people, and we could not do it without them. They are so appreciated for all that they do,” Scripps said. “One of these days when these kids get a little bit older, and they kind of look back on this, they’ll see the full picture and realize what this community’s all about.” GN

“

We try to touch all the kids that we can, and that’s the pure enjoyment for myself and the rest of the crews that are working. It’s always great to see kids light up when they know they’re opening toys from under the tree

- TONY KIMBROUGH





▲ Representatives of Lincoln County High School's SkillsUSA present a \$500 donation from the LC SkillsUSA Alumni Association to Toy Drive organizers last year.



▲ Ava Kirby



▲ Angela Steelman



WOOWOO, BASHA, BLINDSPOT, BIG DADDY, AND BLU

Christmas Dinner for All

By Sara Hook // Photography by Brooke Snyder



The Saints Motorcycle Club spends Christmas Day serving the community.

EVERY CHRISTMAS Day, families across the country gather to eat and fellowship together, sharing stories and seeing people they may not have seen all year. However, not everyone has the ability or opportunity to do that, and the members of the Saints Motorcycle Club have spent nearly a decade making sure the shut-ins of Lincoln County don't spend Christmas alone.

Basha Nassar, the president of the Lincoln County chapter, said the event started with the previous motorcycle club in town, the Currahee.

"I think it started as kind of a personal motivation; we all have elderly people in our lives that everyone's heard about — that aunt or that uncle or that mom or dad that their kids kind of forgot about, [or] they've outlived their family, and they have no one," Nassar said. "We wanted to be able to answer that call."

The volunteers usually start cooking at 4:30 a.m. on Christmas morning and finish their deliveries around 2 p.m. The food is often donated by Fayetteville's grocery stores. Nassar said while the donations are great, the real need is for volunteers.

"It's sometimes just four or five of us and 100 people [to feed]," Nassar said. "It can turn into kind of an assembly line thing, and you don't want to do that."

Having a large number of volunteers allows them to spend individual time with people, which is what many meal recipients love most. Nassar said those conversations can also be incredibly beneficial for the volunteers. Without volunteers, there is much less time to connect while meals are delivered.

“

I think it started as kind of a personal motivation; we all have elderly people in our lives that everyone's heard about — that aunt or that uncle or that mom or dad that their kids kind of forgot about, [or] they've outlived their family, and they have no one.

- **BASHA NASSAR**



The Saints work hard to reach as many people as possible. Most of their meal recipients come from a list the Lincoln County Health Department has on file, but not everyone can be noticed that way. They also advertise two months in advance, so anyone who knows of someone who would benefit from a meal can add them to the list.

“This isn’t a unique problem,” Nassar said, “It’s probably more common than you might think.”

The volunteers might serve anywhere from 30 to 190 people across Lincoln County, from Petersburg to Flintville and anywhere in between. It can be a big deal for people who may only see their healthcare professionals on a regular basis.

Nassar said the club wants to expand its reach in the future, serving more people and recruiting more volunteers who wouldn’t mind donating their time and their car.

“If we could just get more people involved on both sides of it: A, the people that are looking for the meals and may not realize that we’re doing it, and B, people that would be willing to volunteer their time and come up here with us, and come with us to hand them out,” Nassar said. “That would be phenomenal.”

The meals for older adults aren’t the only way Saints members have served the Lincoln County community. Every year, they also put on a toy run to bring gifts to kids, a Ride 4 Life event to benefit those waiting for a transplant, and a Miracle League ride to raise money for special needs athletes.

Nassar said while many motorcycle clubs do a toy run, the Saints take it one step further by sending their older, white-bearded members to deliver the toys to children’s homes by pulling a trailer with their motorcycles.

“I know that bikers tend to have a stereotype,” Nassar said. “Just know that we’re out here just trying to help the community as best as we can.”

Contact Carrie Nassar at (251) 421-0621 or message the group on Facebook to reach out about someone who needs a meal or to ask about volunteering. **GN**



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY CARRIE IVY

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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

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?

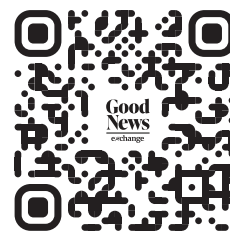
Currently, our dedicated team is hard at work crafting stories under themes like “Hometown Healing,” “From The Heart,” and “Charity Spotlight.” We are excited to announce the next theme needing story submissions is **“The Learning Curve.”**

Submit local educators online:

Do you know local educators who have made a significant impact on your life and the community? Whether it's teachers who have overcome challenges to inspire their students or those who promote lifelong learning, we want to spotlight these individuals and their stories in our upcoming “The Learning Curve” issue.

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

Let us know with a submission at 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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goodnewsmags.com/stories





Good

CHAPTER 3 OF 3

This section of the magazine covers local things to do.

60 Community Events

64 Events Calendar

66 Advertiser Index

Submit a positive story
on our website:



goodnewsmags.com

Photography by Brooke Snyder

◀ Raye Drach and Cindy Arnold

4th Annual Bear Wallow Marketplace - Oct. 14



Photography by Brooke Snyder

The Bear Wallow Marketplace event was a great way to spend a day with family and friends, as well as to support local businesses, enjoy live music, and eat delicious food.



1. Fallon Amos 2. Shelby Mullins and Tonia Johnson 3. Brianna Almy
4. Lynn Shankles and Tatum Lee 5. Julie Dunn 6. Tim Mitchell



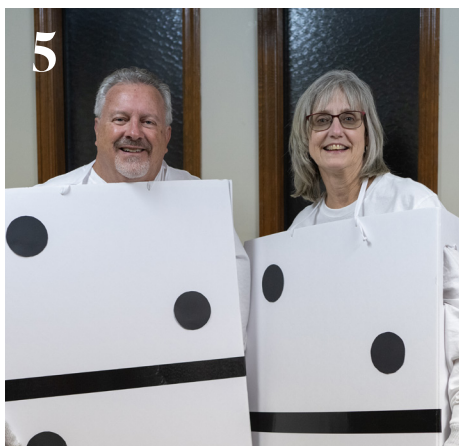
7. Jack and Kristie Sanders 8. Phil and Mel Cardin 9. Garrett and Julia Rhodes
10. Nole Oldaker-Mihalko 11. Julie Crigger and Donna Somerville

Stewarts Chapel Baptist Church Fall Carnival - Oct. 31



Photography by Brooke Snyder

The Fall Carnival was the perfect opportunity to enjoy dressing up, having unforgettable fun, and making cherished memories with loved ones and friends.



1. Carla and Briggs Gault 2. Rachel Hill and Eli Flynn 3. Anna Honea
4. Caden Jacks and Natalie Hone 5. Don and Trish Pierson 6. Jalen Wilburn, Jaclyn LaFleur, and Gracey Flynn



7. Kalye Fogg and Charla Heflin 8. Jax Wilburn and Lacie Holder
9. Grace and Brittany Pineda 10. Linda Williams and Shelia Fox 11. Ray Towry

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EVENTS CALENDAR

November 16

5:30 pm Educational Mixer
100 Main Ave. N.
Ste. 1A
Fayetteville

Fayetteville Main Street is hosting a mixer to help locals jumpstart marketing skills. Learn to do most activities in 15 minutes or less.

November 18

6:00 am Country Ham Breakfast
Andrew Jackson
Lodge #68
Corner of Shelbyville
Hwy. and Thornton
Taylor Pkwy.
Fayetteville

Tickets are \$10 and includes a drink. Take out orders available. For tickets, contact Charles Gault, (931) 433-6959 or (931) 625-9018.

6:00 pm Open Mic Night

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

Calling all performers to Open Mic Night on the third Saturday of every month! Sign up before the 18th by texting Jen at (931) 652-2391. Concessions available for a donation.

November 23

8:00 am Hayden's Hope Turkey Trot 5K
Lincoln County
High School
1233 Huntsville Hwy.
Fayetteville

Hayden's Hope Turkey Trot 5K Run / 1 mile Fun Walk on Thanksgiving morning at Lincoln County High School. Burn calories before your turkey meal. Visit runsignup.com to register.



November 25

10:00 am **Christmas Marketplace in Wartrace**

26 Main Street E., Wartrace

The holiday spirit starts at the Christmas Marketplace, and will have arts, crafts, food, and drinks. Call (615) 785-2124 for more information.

November 30

5:00 pm **Love Thy Neighbor Merchant Mixer**

Carousel Horse Antiques and Home Decor
1121 Huntsville Hwy.
Fayetteville

Local merchants will have the opportunity to mix and mingle with one another at Carousel Horse Antiques and Home Decor.

December 2

10:00 am **Antique Appraisal Fair**

Sissy's Antiques & Interiors
208 Main Ave. S.
Fayetteville

At our third annual antique appraisal fair at Sissy's Antiques & Interiors, appraisals are \$10 for one item or \$25 for three items. Bring anything, including furniture

For more events and to submit an event visit:

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