

Good News

exchange

Linda O'Connell

Ensuring the Spirit of Giving

Transforming
Christmas shopping
into a magical
experience

Home for
the
Holidays

ISSUE 2 2023

A PUBLICATION OF
EXCHANGE MEDIA GROUP

SUBMIT A STORY



education that comes
celebrating Dairy
his father Steve, his
and his wife Kara
family started dairy
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agriculture.
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problems, and wear-

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a. The Nash family
of 2020. "We'd al-

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Bobby Hayden Jr.
See more on page 14

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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

From our publishing partner



"As a Navy vet turned business professional, I'm thrilled to bring "Good News" magazine to the Hendersonville area. Please join me on this journey of spreading joy and optimism. If you're passionate about your community or promoting your business, let's connect!"

Matt Scott

Publishing Partner

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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 Steve Zak

◀ Isaias Vargas



“LOVE YOU BACK TO LIFE”

BOBBY HAYDEN JR.'S NEW ALBUM CHRONICLES HIS INSPIRING JOURNEY.

BY SARA HOOK // PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEVE ZAK

HE SPENT nearly 10 years on the streets of Los Angeles as a person with an addiction, but now Bobby Hayden Jr.'s Cardboard Box Ministries helps people across the United States find hope again. The faith-based recovery ministry moved to Hendersonville only four years ago, but the program has been working with people experiencing homelessness and people with addictions for over a decade. Hayden said it all started when he first began sharing his story.

At the young age of 8, Hayden was already becoming famous as a singer. He appeared on several national television shows, had a contract with Ed Cummings and the Gerald Purcell Agency, and became a rock and roll star. Hayden said it gave him a desire for fame, but it did not end well.

“My five minutes of fame took me down a road that was just full of despair, drugs, and self — mostly self,” Hayden said. “It was a very trying part of my life, but without that, I wouldn’t be where I am right now.”

Hayden’s sister rescued him from the streets, taking him back to Indiana, where he recovered from his addiction in the process of becoming a Christian. Cardboard Box Ministries followed soon after, as Hayden’s experiences with addiction and homelessness are the basis of what he does.

“I had a lot of compassion for people who were homeless and battling addiction,” Hayden said. “In about 2010 or 2011, after starting to go to church, my faith was being expanded. And when I told this story to people who were suffering from addiction, I noticed that they would lean in, and their lights would go on. They understood what I was trying to tell them.”

Hayden’s story is powerful, but so is his music. He often plays at graduations for organizations like the Nashville Rescue Mission, as well as in the churches and recovery meetings he visits.

“The ministry’s growing through the music because it gives us a different way of communicating with people who are broken,” Hayden said. “They hear the music, and they like it, so what that does is it opens a door.”

Currently, Hayden is working with producer Mark Fain to produce a new album called “Love You Back to Life,” which chronicles Hayden’s journey through homelessness and addiction. Hayden said several prominent artists have collaborated on the project.

“There are lots of musicians that live here in Hendersonville [that] have battled with addiction and [saw] what it did to their friends,” Hayden said. “They’re all for getting a positive message out.”



Those aren't the only things Cardboard Box Ministries does — they also help place people in recovery homes and meet one-on-one to help those recovering from addiction move forward. Hayden said the ones who are the most difficult to talk to are often the ones who do the most after their recovery.

“We're finding that the ones with the hard hearts, once they get involved, they are the ones that realize how wrong they were,” Hayden said. “It affects them in such a way that they look to start helping other people. And when they become involved in other

people's recovery, it strengthens their recovery. So it's a revolving circle of success and victory.”

Change comes from making a person feel wanted, listened to, and encouraged because, often, there was a love that was missing. Hayden said when he had an addiction, he had begun to interpret correction as rejection, and it was only love that broke through that.

“They tried to preach the hell out of me, they tried to incarcerate the hell out of me, and they tried to beat the hell out of me. But when this man by the name of Jesus came along, and



THEY TRIED TO PREACH THE HELL OUT OF ME, THEY TRIED TO INCARCERATE THE HELL OUT OF ME, AND THEY TRIED TO BEAT THE HELL OUT OF ME. BUT WHEN THIS MAN BY THE NAME OF JESUS CAME ALONG, AND I WAS INTRODUCED TO HIM, SOMEHOW THIS MAN LOVED THE HELL RIGHT OUT OF ME.

-BOBBY HAYDEN

I was introduced to him, somehow this man loved the hell right out of me,” Hayden said. “What God wants to do is love this troubled world through us. So I’m just a vessel with a story.”

While he would like his music to become more known and reach more people, Hayden ultimately just wants to give people a better chance at becoming better. Cardboard Box Ministries will be victorious if even one person is helped.

“It’s all about the one person that’s standing right in front of you,” Hayden said. “I mean, sure, I would like the ministry to

grow, but this is about that one broken person who, if I can just get them to a point where they’ll listen a little bit and receive love, consideration, and compassion from our ministry, it could be the difference of them overcoming what they’re battling.”

Without charge, the ministry would love to attend any church or recovery meeting in Hendersonville. Contact Bobby Hayden at bobbyhayden55@yahoo.com or call (931) 374-5124. **GN**



SEEING MUSIC IN COLOR

The synesthesia
sensation of
Isaias Vargas

*By Belle Butler
Photography by Steve Zak*



Vargas's musical journey began at the age of 4, while he was watching Barney on television. The sounds of the show awakened a curiosity for the violin. At that young age, he started violin lessons and demonstrated an aptitude for quickly grasping notes and melodies. Vargas was indeed a prodigy in the making.

But his talent extended far beyond only learning notes. He possesses a rare gift known as perfect pitch, a musical superpower allowing him to instantly recognize and name specific pitches or notes without any external reference. Vargas's father, Jacob, realized that his son's musical interest was more than just a passing hobby — it was a rapidly developing talent.

Isaias demonstrated another extraordinary ability — synesthesia, a phenomenon where one type of stimulation produces an additional sensory experience. In his case, he sees colors when he hears

musical notes. The A chord, for instance, creates shades of pink, representing happiness and love. A minor key brings out purples while magentas and hot pinks dance with the F chord.

This unique combination of perfect pitch and synesthesia sets Isaias apart and has helped to create a truly exceptional talent. For Isaias, music is an auditory, visual, and emotional experience. A vivid color in his mind accompanies each note he plays or hears.

Isaias Vargas is like a regular disciplined teenager; he comes home from school and does his homework. What isn't so typical is his regimented violin practice for an additional 2-3 hours. This hard work has paid off. He's not just a teenager with an extraordinary talent for music; he is a musical prodigy whose journey is a testament to the power of passion and dedication.

▼ Jacob and Isaias Vargas



IN THE diverse world of music, some folks casually enjoy tunes, and then there are individuals like Isaias Vargas, whose connection with music transcends the ordinary. From the cumbia rhythm to the guitar solos of Guns N' Roses, Vargas has an insatiable appetite for music and becomes one with it. With the ability to master any instrument, Vargas is not your average teenager. His talent is a unique blend of perfect pitch and synesthesia, making him an artist who paints melodies with colors.

Isaias has mastered various instruments, expertly playing the saxophone, viola, stand-up bass, trumpet, and cello. He even has plans to conquer the electric guitar next. Watch out, world!

From jazz festivals, parties, weddings, restaurants, and malls, Isaias' talents aren't confined to his practice room. He brings an undeniable energy to every performance, leaving audiences amazed.

His versatility doesn't end with instruments. Isaias also displays an impressive ability to navigate across different genres. For example, he seamlessly transitions from "Welcome to the Jungle" to the infectious beats of cumbia and then effortlessly slips into the intricate world of classical music. Such adaptability is the hallmark of a true musical maestro.

Like many of us, one of Isaias' challenges is adequately expressing himself. However, he possesses a unique gift that allows him to communicate through music in ways most of us can only dream of. As he continues to make his mark in music, we can eagerly anticipate more opportunities to enjoy his live performances.

While he has yet to record an album, there is no doubt that his musical journey is full of promise. Audiences can look forward to more mesmerizing performances and perhaps the future release of his own compositions.

Isaias' talent is not just a personal triumph; it's a gift to the world, reminding us of the power and beauty that music can bring to our lives. So, whether you catch him at an upcoming event or follow his live recordings on social media, be prepared to embark on a musical journey where notes and colors unite to create something truly magical. Isaias Vargas is not just an artist; he's a phenomenon, and his story is just beginning. **GN**



Enjoy a collection of live recordings on Isaias' social media accounts:



www.youtube.com/@Isaiasviolin



[@isaias_vargas01](https://www.instagram.com/isaias_vargas01)



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Annual Hendersonville HolidayFest

MILLIONS RAISED TOWARD LOCAL CHARITIES

By Amanda E. West // Photography by Steve Zak

LYND A EVJEN and a group of local business owners came together in 2007 with an idea to incorporate a Gingerbread competition into the annual Sumner County (SC) Christmas Parade. From those humble beginnings emerged the much-loved annual HolidayFest, which has now contributed an astounding \$3.9 million to local charities. Events, spanning from July through February, infuse countless dollars into our local economy, as well as provide affordable, family-friendly events to over 25,000 people right here inside our county.

Evjen said, "HolidayFest connects people, businesses, government, and service organizations. Our activities have two primary benefits: to monetarily help worthy nonprofit causes while bringing substantial business and tourism dollars to the community. HolidayFest does this by attracting thousands of visitors to celebrate the spirit of the season."

HolidayFest has a board of 18 members, including several honorary chairs and five executive board members. Over the past 18 years, these members have worked alongside 250 charities to raise funds and awareness of needs within our community.

LYNDA EVJEN





In 2022, HolidayFest raised \$158,000, and with over 15 scheduled events, this year is expected to make an even more significant positive impact. Events also contribute to local food banks providing nourishment to over 5,000 families. Nonprofits who will benefit this year include Community Child Care Services Inc., Mary's Magical Place, Live. Love. Nashville, Christmas 4 Kids, Hendersonville High School, Special Needs Sports Foundation, Wreaths Across America, CASA, Monthaven Arts and Cultural Center, the senior citizens center, Football for the Cure, P22 Project, Habitat for Humanity of SC, The Care Cabinet, COMPASS, SC Museum, and the Gallatin Shalom Zone.

This year, the "Sleigh Bells Ring" themed Christmas parade will usher in the season with William Michael Morgan as grand marshal and Holly Thompson as emcee. Morgan is a country music singer-songwriter,

and a native of Vicksburg, Mississippi. His single, "I Met a Girl," hit No. 2 on the Country Airplay chart and earned a Billboard Top 5. He has performed over 50 times on the Grand Ole Opry and was featured in the Country Music Hall of Fame in 2017.

Previous grand marshals include Charlene Tilton, Brenda Lee, Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee, and Diamond Rio. Honorary chairs since 2006 include national award-winning singer-songwriter Kelly Lang, country music superstars Lori Morgan, Louise Mandrell, Julie Roberts, John Carter Cash, and Ricky Scaggs, along with legendary bluegrass singers Marty Stuart and the Isaacs.

Festivities kick off months before the holiday season, with the Gentlemen's Committee Poker and Celebrate Tennessee in October. It will end in February with Monte Carlo Night at the Hendersonville Senior Center.





Upcoming activities for December include:



BOAT PARADE AT MALLARD AND SAUNDERS FERRY PARKS

Dec. 2



ULTIMATE PARTY FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

Dec. 3 - 22



MAIN STREET PARADE AND TREE LIGHTING AT MEMORIAL PARK

Dec. 3



GINGERBREAD COMPETITION AT PARK PLACE BENEFITS HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Nov. 30 - Dec. 6



ST NICHOLAS BALL

(funds raised go to Special Needs Sports and Project 22)

Dec. 9



APPALACHIAN DINNERS

(supports SC Museum)

Dec. 10 - 12



MADRIGAL DINNER

(supports Hendersonville High School Choir)

Dec. 14 - 15



LAYING OF REMEMBRANCE WREATHS

(Wreaths Across America)

Dec. 16



MONTE CARLO NIGHT

(funds go toward Hendersonville Senior Center)

Feb. 10



Other HolidayFest fundraisers included Pig Fest in October, which has an annual attendance of around 15,000 and raised funds for Mary's Magical Place, Live. Love. Nashville, and other local nonprofits. Featuring barbecue and corn hole competitions, the Kentucky Headhunters, Dillon Carmichael, Clint Park, Ben Chapman, and Charly Reynolds, this event was "Hog Heaven." In November, the Sparkle Noel Dinner and Fashion Show raised funds and awareness for The Care Cabinet, which provides hygiene products to local students. Also, in November, Monthaven Art and Cultural Center held its yearly Christmas Tree Elegance cocktail reception and silent auction.

Community Child Care Services presented Breakfast with Santa at the Bluegrass Yacht and Country Club. Participants received breakfast,

individual photos with the big guy himself, and took part in thrilling holiday activities. Attendees were asked to bring a new and unwrapped gift, which was donated to children in foster care. Tickets to this event were also provided to dozens of underprivileged children. Fogbee's Santa Bike Brigade also donated toys to children in local foster care.

"HolidayFest is important to our community and does so much for charities. We support and honor the efforts they all make to help our county be a wonderful place during the holidays," said former County Executive Anthony Holt. **GN**

For a detailed list of events, go to www.holidayfesttn.org





Tasteful traditions

Rekindle the flavors of food and family this holiday season.

A LONG WITH December's hustle and bustle, our kitchens come alive with the spirit of the holidays. As friends and families gather, delightful treats take center stage, each dish a connection to cherished traditions. A medley of flavors accompanies these festive celebrations. From rich cocoa by the fireside to the potluck dishes that adorn our tables, these recipes capture the essence of family, love, and togetherness during this special season. GN



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.

Submit your recipes to be included in Good News Magazine and the Exchange Cookbook: www.southernaprons.com





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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- 32** Ensuring the spirit of giving
- 36** Down but never out
- 40** Unleashing potential

Our stories are based on submissions from local people.

Submit yours here:



goodnewsmags.com

Photography by Steve Zak

◀ Zachary Durbin

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 animal figurine and a vase of red flowers. In the foreground, a white sofa is draped with a thick, textured grey blanket. Several pillows with various patterns, including a red and white striped one, are scattered on the sofa. To the right, a low wooden coffee table holds a small cup and some decorative pumpkins. The overall atmosphere is cozy and festive.

Home for
the
Holidays





LINDA O'CONNELL

Ensuring the Spirit of Giving

By Richard Klin // Photography by Steve Zak

Christmas 4 Kids transforms Christmas shopping into a magical experience.



CHRISTMAS AND the holidays can be especially tough for families lacking resources. And it's especially hard for underprivileged kids, who are often non-participants in the gift-giving and receiving. Christmas 4 Kids seeks to ease that difficult stretch.

The organization was founded four decades ago by the late Conway Twitty – yes, that Conway Twitty. “Basically, he and his bus driver, Billy Parks, decided they were blessed individuals, and they should just put some kids on their bus and take them Christmas shopping. So that’s what they did. They put four or five kids on the bus, took them Christmas shopping, bought them what they wanted for Christmas, and that was that. The next year, they did the same thing,” explained Linda O’Connell, the organization’s president.

Since then, Christmas 4 Kids has grown by leaps and bounds in a way that Mr. Twitty probably would not recognize. Linda O’Connell states, “We work with local schools and send information to the school guidance counselors. We will take approximately 400 elementary kids, 5 through 10 or 11 years old, in Sumner and Wilson counties. We send information to each school, and their enrollment and their free and reduced lunch numbers determine how many kids get to come from each school. We send information to the guidance counselor that says, ‘Okay, this year you can send 10 kids, or you can send 30 kids’ – whatever their number is.”

The criteria for inclusion is that the kids have to be low-income or recipients of free or reduced lunch. Christmas 4 Kids is genuinely a needs-based organization.

This is all very labor-intensive, but it’s only the beginning for Christmas 4 Kids. The logistics and the planning are head-spinning and even more astonishing to anyone who has organized a kid’s birthday party or sent their child on a school outing. Permission slips

“

Basically, he and his bus driver, Billy Parks, decided they were blessed individuals, and they should just put some kids on their bus and take them Christmas shopping. So that’s what they did.

- LINDA O’CONNELL



and trip details have to be sent to parents and caregivers. After this is arranged, tour buses pick up the kids at their various schools in the afternoon, transporting them to a local civic center. The first order of business is, of course, pizza, along with Santa, music, and general kid festivities.

That, though, is only the beginning. The kids again board the tour buses and trek to Hendersonville's Walmart. And this is when the logistics really kick into high gear. Each bus has a minimum of two adult chaperones who usher the children into the store. A contingent of other chaperones are there solely to help the kids shop. High school volunteers are also on hand, undertaking duties like transporting bicycles to the bus bays. After that, it's back on the buses to head back to school and waiting parents. It's like a precision military operation.

The numbers tell the story. The total number of volunteers for this one evening is around 600. There are approximately 70 bus drivers. There is assistance from police officers, firefighters, the sheriff's department, and EMTs.

As if this isn't enough, Christmas 4 Kids has expanded its scope to include middle schoolers. There is some assistance for less-affluent elementary students, and there are holiday gift cards available for high school students. But middle schoolers, like the middle child, can get a little lost in the shuffle. Christmas 4 Kids aims to fill that vacancy.

Christmas 4 Kids is undoubtedly not a chaotic free-for-all. The logistics are detailed and carefully considered. Each child is allotted \$175-\$200, and the chaperone will carefully track how much is spent. The money is for the students to use as they wish, but steps are taken to guarantee that students are not shopping for the rest of their families, leaving nothing for themselves. Buying small gifts for family members is acceptable.

Videos that are not age-appropriate are off-limits, as are most things that require a connection to the internet. You can't buy a phone because someone has to buy the service for the phone. And no live fish, which an ingenious student once tried (unsuccessfully) to purchase. The youthful spirit of rule-breaking is a constant.

Linda O'Connell and Christmas 4 Kids are working full steam ahead. There will be a benefit concert at Nashville's Ryman Auditorium in November. And then the Christmas season arrives, where fun, Santa, and pizza await. **GN**

For current information and a more in-depth sense of what the organization does, check out their website: <https://christmas4kids.org>.





LORI BOWLING

Down But Never Out

By Richard Klin //Photography by Steve Zak

Lori Bowling's journey of courage and strength

LORI BOWLING is a diligent business owner who not only runs a real estate company but also operates a transportation business that involves a limo and party bus. She's not the sort of person to be stopped by an illness, so during the COVID pandemic, she didn't let the sickness faze her. "I got sick on a Saturday and went to an urgent care [facility]. They told me I tested positive for COVID. I came home after they gave me some medicine, and I was feeling okay," she said.

That, though, wasn't the end – it was the beginning of a horrible journey. "Then, on Monday, I wasn't feeling too good, and I ended up calling the ambulance. They took me to the hospital, and they gave me an IV. I came home around six hours later and thought, 'I have got this thing whipped. I feel great.'"

Sadly, this wasn't the case. "And then 48 hours later, I took a turn for the worse, and I had to call the ambulance again. They said this time, not only do you have COVID, but also double pneumonia. But they didn't keep me. They sent me home because the hospitals were so swamped. They said for me to just to go home."

Lori decided to recover at home and selflessly warned her son, who has asthma, to stay away from the house for his own safety. The fact that she wasn't answering any texts alerted him to something very amiss. He went to his mother's house, kicked in the back door, and discovered his seriously ill mom going into cardiac arrest.



“I don’t remember much. I do remember my son kicking my door in and then helping me into the ambulance. And [I remember] him standing there, just looking in despair as those two glass doors to the emergency room closed. He didn’t know if he would ever see his mom again.”

Lori found herself in a horrible life-and-death situation. “I remember a doctor in a white coat coming in and saying to another doctor, ‘We really need to put her on a vent if she’s going to live.’ This man in the white coat said to the other doctor – and I really remember this – ‘Give me 30 minutes with her, and if she doesn’t turn around, we will have to call her son and vent her.’ So, when the doctor came back – and I don’t remember much from that point, but I know that they didn’t vent me. I said I didn’t want to be vented; I’d just die if I had to.”

Lori remained in the hospital for five long weeks. “The first week or so, I wasn’t very coherent, but I knew the voice of that one doctor who was standing over me. That same person appeared again, probably after I’d been there a week or so. He appeared back in my room and stood at the foot of my bed. He called my name and said, ‘You need to keep fighting. You’re not supposed to be here.’”

Lori’s father had taught her to fight at an early age. And fight she did – with the assistance of her protector.

Who, though, was this doctor? The nurses had been wondering the same thing themselves and followed him one night, pushing the door open to Lori’s room. He was nowhere to be found – not anywhere. “You’ve got an angel holding you up and keeping you going,” the nurse concluded.

“

He appeared back in my room and stood at the foot of my bed. He called my name and said, ‘You need to keep fighting. You’re not supposed to be here.’

- **LORI BOWLING**





Lori was eventually released from the hospital so emaciated that, at first, her son failed to recognize her. Recovery was slow and gradual, but Lori was determined to regain her earlier life. When well-meaning friends got sick and couldn't help her drive her limo, she did it herself."

Lori never did discover the identity of this mysterious doctor, and maybe it doesn't matter. But she is grateful. "I know there were a lot of people who lost their lives during that time. I was one of those low, low numbers who made it through." Her father taught her well. **GN**



ZACHARY DURBIN

Unleashing Potential

Written by Belle Butler // Photography by Steve Zak



Zachary Durbin's mission to empower at-risk youth

IF YOU look at Zachary Durbin's life today as a husband, father, and owner of a successful digital marketing firm, you don't see the long journey that got him there or the kid who struggled with ADHD and was from a family with minimal means.

Durbin grew up in rural Ohio with a single mom who worked multiple jobs to make ends meet. Because his mother worked so many hours, he had a lot of unsupervised time and didn't always stay out of trouble. He remembers teachers warning that he would fail if he kept it up – messaging that sticks with a kid.

After missing 60 days of his senior year, he graduated from high school, second to last in his class. There was no money for extras, including college, so he started paving his own way.

Durbin quickly realized, with an entrepreneurial spirit, that there were gaps in the local small-town market. There was no formal wear shop, so residents had to travel 30 miles or more for special occasions like proms and weddings. His first business idea! However, securing a bank loan was difficult due to his lack of credit. Undeterred, he scraped together the resources needed to open his store on a shoestring budget.

Durbin was now living the realities of budgeting, seven-day workweeks, and the challenges of operating a small business. Though this endeavor didn't become the booming success he hoped for, it gave him invaluable lessons.

His store was in a quaint but faded city square that had once been busy but was now in decline. The struggle to attract clients and breathe life into his store prompted Durbin to explore search engine optimization (SEO) and social media marketing. These were skills he had to develop to survive in the competitive retail landscape.

Reflecting on this period, Durbin recalls a pivotal realization: even if the store hadn't succeeded, he, as an individual, had. This transformation in perspective laid the groundwork for what he would accomplish in the future.



Next, Durbin managed a tanning salon, and it was during a conversation with a client named DeDe that he recalled his passion for working with at-risk youth becoming evident. He wanted to offer them a message of hope – a message that their current struggles didn't define their entire lives.

Durbin's chance to work with at-risk youth arrived, and he seized it. Even while diving deeper into digital marketing on the side, he devoted himself to coaching young students on entrepreneurial subjects like taxes and finance. His passion for guiding others on their journey toward success took shape while his journey to success was paved.

His career significantly turned when he joined a world-class SEO company. Starting from an entry-level, Durbin earned the title of VP of Digital Strategies. His diligence and skills in marketing were now quite clear.

After relocating to Nashville, Durbin recognized an opportunity to offer boutique SEO services to companies in the area, so he founded his company, SEO NOW. What began as a one-person show evolved into a thriving digital marketing agency with a team of 11 professionals. Their services are now extended to clients across the United States.

Durbin's journey from a small-town kid who got in trouble to the founder and owner of SEO NOW is a testament to his belief in his abilities. His early setbacks and challenges forged the skills and determination to build a successful business. More importantly, his desire to make a positive impact on the lives of at-risk youth showcases his commitment to helping others do the same.

Today, SEO NOW serves clients nationwide with specialized digital marketing expertise. Durbin's story is a reminder that success is not always about where you start; it's about the willingness to learn that drives you forward. Durbin's entrepreneurial journey is a testament to pursuing one's true calling.

He is regularly invited to speak to students about achieving their dreams and shares the motto that he has lived by: "Be good to everyone around you, and the rest falls into place." This advice also includes the message, "Be more than just a dreamer and, above all, don't be afraid to lose."

Durbin shares that he is still learning because there is always room for growth. He wants to leave a legacy for his daughter and wants her to know that she, too, is capable of anything. **GN**

To learn more about Durbin's agency, visit <https://seonow.io/>.



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?

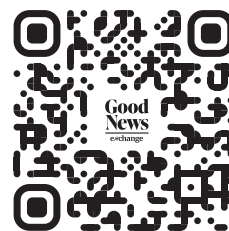
Currently, our dedicated team is hard at work crafting stories under themes like “Hometown Healing,” “From The Heart,” and “Charity Spotlight.” We are excited to announce the next theme needing story submissions is **“The Learning Curve.”**

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.







Good News

CHAPTER 3 OF 3

This section of the magazine covers local things to do.

- 48 Community Events
- 54 Events Calendar
- 58 Advertiser Index

Submit a positive story
on our website:



goodnewsmags.com

Photography by Hannah Woodcock

Pig Fest - Oct. 27-28



Photography by Hannah Woodcock

Hendersonville's Pig Fest is a yearly family-friendly festival that is a community favorite. This year's festivities kicked off with a live concert and featured local vendors. There were also great food trucks, such as Bad Luck Burger Club. Fifty teams gathered for The Backyard BBQ Competition on Saturday, Oct. 28, 2023. The festival benefited four local nonprofits: Christmas 4 Kids, Live. Love. Nashville., Grace Place, and Mary's Magical Place.



1. Clay Cardigan 2. Micheal Thomas and Jeremy Tubbs 3. Logan and Alex Yandell 4. Brian Easley



5. Ed Smith, Christian Prince, and Erik Beruvides

Tunnels To Towers - Oct. 21



Photography by Hannah Woodcock

The Hendersonville community gathered for the third annual Tunnels To Towers 5K Run and Walk to honor fallen Master Patrol Officer Spencer Bristol. The event benefited the Tunnels To Towers Foundation, which supports the families of fallen first responders. Race participants raced to the finish line, where Seth Garrett gave out medals.



1. MJ Hogan and Green Cawood 2. Ainsley Costello

4



5. Seth Garrett and Richmond Taylor.



Amy Williams and Jennifer Anderson



Scan the QR Code
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.*



EVENTS CALENDAR

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.**

Good News e×change

November 18

9:00 pm Christmas Tree Elegance at Monthaven Arts & Cultural Center
Monthaven Arts & Cultural Center
1017 Antebellum Circle
Hendersonville

Community members are invited to the Christmas Tree Elegance, featuring decorated trees by local designers and a silent auction to benefit the center.

November 23

8:00 am Indian Lake Loop
The Streets of Indian Lake
300 Indian Lake Blvd.
Hendersonville

Join the 16th annual Indian Lake Loop Thanksgiving Day Run/Walk. Pre-register at register.chronotrack.com to pick up your shirt and packet for \$30.

November 25

8:30 am Breakfast with Santa
Bluegrass Yacht & Country Club
550 Johnny Cash Pkwy.
Hendersonville

HolidayFest Breakfast with Santa returns for a 17th year with breakfast, photos with Santa, and family craft bags. Reservations are required at communitychildcarehville.org.

1:00 pm Family Day at Painting with a Twist
Painting with a Twist
206 Indian Lake Blvd. #9
Hendersonville

“You’re the Coolest, Family Day” at Painting With a Twist features a penguin group painting for \$32-\$35. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit paintingwithatwist.com.



December 2

5:00 pm **Deck The Hulls Boat Parade 2023**

Mallard Point Park
Sanders Ferry Rd.
Hendersonville

Deck the Hulls Christmas Boat Parade returns this holiday season, offering free festive views from Mallard and Saunders Ferry Parks.

December 3

2:00 pm **HolidayFest Christmas Parade**

Memorial Park
151 E. Main St.
Hendersonville

The parade will begin at Memorial Park, and the tree lighting will take place at 4 p.m.

December 5

2:00 pm **December Holiday Luncheon and Pop-Up Shop**

Bella Palazzo
90 Volunteer Dr.
Suite #250
Hendersonville

Join the Hendersonville Chamber of Commerce for a festive pop-up with complimentary mimosas, lunch (tickets required), and beer and wine. Email Cadi Dark at joinus@hendersonvillechamber.com for details.



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

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



Scan for Photos



goodnewsmags.com/photos



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DATA FROM CVC AUDIT, JANUARY 2023

education that comes
celebrating Dairy
his father Steve, his
and his wife Kara
family started dairy
been in Tennessee
month is a way to ob-
behind the scenes,
agriculture.

right on many people
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farmers do a lot of
in terms of raising
care of cattle, being
problems, and wear-

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

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Mr. GoodRoof..... 3



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Hometown Healing

ISSUE 3 2023

Deadlines

Sponsored Content.....	11/2/23
Advertising	12/7/23
Mailed to Homes.....	12/23/23



Shop Local

ISSUE 4 2024

Deadlines

Sponsored Content.....	3/4/24
Advertising	4/4/24
Mailed to Homes.....	4/18/24



From the Heart

ISSUE 1 2024

Deadlines

Sponsored Content.....	12/4/23
Advertising	1/4/24
Mailed to Homes.....	1/18/24



Vacation in Hendersonville

ISSUE 5 2024

Deadlines

Sponsored Content.....	4/2/24
Advertising	5/2/24
Mailed to Homes.....	5/16/24



Charity Spotlight

ISSUE 2 2024

Deadlines

Sponsored Content.....	1/1/24
Advertising	2/1/24
Mailed to Homes.....	2/15/24



Independence

ISSUE 6 2024

Deadlines

Sponsored Content.....	5/6/24
Advertising	6/6/24
Mailed to Homes.....	6/20/24



The Learning Curve

ISSUE 3 2024

Deadlines

Sponsored Content.....	1/29/24
Advertising	2/29/24
Mailed to Homes.....	3/14/24



Dreams Come True

ISSUE 7 2024

Deadlines

Sponsored Content.....	6/3/24
Advertising	7/3/24
Mailed to Homes.....	7/18/24



Matt Scott

Publishing Partner

Join us in building stronger communities through positive, local stories. Reach an engaged audience eager to support your business. It is the perfect time to plan your marketing budget wisely and set up a successful year for your business. Reserve your spot in our magazine today!

Call me at (615) 708-1453

Email me at matt@goodnewsmags.com

...ation that comes
celebrating Dairy
...father Steve, his
...and his wife Kara
...only earned dairy
...honors in Tennessee
...only in a way to ob-
...tained the scores,
...achievement.
...life on many people
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...in terms of raising
...sons of cattle, being
...robust, and wear-
...it goes into dairy
...The Nash family
...of 2023. "We'd do



In the Face of Loss, Hope Remains

In the aftermath of a traumatic experience, the path to healing can seem long and arduous. The emotional scars of trauma can linger for years, impacting every aspect of a person's life. But with the right support, healing is possible.

That's where the Jae & Zeke Foundation comes in. We are a Christ-centered foundation committed to providing spiritual guidance, emotional support and financial assistance to people who have suffered a loss from a sudden tragedy. Generous donations help us continue to provide these critical services to those who need them most - with your help, we can make a real difference.

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