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ISSUE 3 2023

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...ation that comes celebrating. Dairy is father Steve, his and his wife Kara only started dairy here in Tennessee. Both is a way to ob- behind the scenes, riculture. shot on many people energy, high-pro- farmers do a lot of in terms of raising care of cattle, being robbers, and wear- & goes into dairy 3. The Nash family of 2020. "Well al-

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

# First, do no harm.

Thank you to the people who swear to heal our hometown.

**T**HE FIRST sounds of life are screams and cries of joy. Oxygen fills little lungs for the first time. The lights above are bright. And the beeping machines from every corner of the room can be overwhelming. None of us remember, but I imagine it's quite jarring to go from the warm womb of safety to the cold room with tile floors and gray curtains. The heroes hold close and wrap the screaming new life in a blanket, then place the happy but confused soul into the mother's arms.

And generations later, back in the same building with the same tile floors and curtains, we walk the same halls again. The overhead buzzing is just as bright as ever. Just like the beginning of life — not always, but often — we're back in that room. This time, surrounded by the next generation of heroes who took the same oath and covenant.

From the minute we open our eyes until they're closed forever, we're guided by angels wearing scrubs and stethoscopes. Healthcare providers know that their work is never over and never easy. Long days and sad tragedies are

typical for our healthcare providers. What keeps them going is the love in their hearts. Not just for their family and friends but for the strangers they help every day. I know this because I've watched my mom, the best superhero nurse on the planet. (Sure, I'm biased.) People like my mom are good at what they do because they are love. They don't do it for money. That's just who they are. They have a warm embrace for their patients that can not be matched. Healthcare professionals in our hometown prove it to us every day — they show the "I'm-here-for-you-unconditionally" kind of love. The best way I can describe it is a mother holding her newborn baby. The same way Mom held me on May 9, almost 30 years ago.

We encounter healthcare providers at the beginning, the middle, and the end of our lives. And without them, this journey would be much shorter. We only get one journey with each other, and they help us make sure it counts.

This issue of Good News is for healthcare professionals. Thank you for fulfilling this covenant to the best of your ability and judgment. GN

  
**Wesley Bryant,**  
MANAGING EDITOR

From our  
publishing  
partner



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# GoodLiving

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Photography by Chad Barrett

◀ Veronica Bratton and Dora Purvis



*Dwayne Marshall*

*Chick-fil-A*  
DWAYNE MARSHALL  
Owner/Operator

*Chick-fil-A*  
Timberlake Rd.

# A labor of Love

## Youth baseball league president makes multi-generational memories

By Paige Cushman // Photography By Sarah Bussard

**I**N THE heart of Timberlake Township, hundreds of young athletes and their parents eagerly await February, when registration for Timberlake Dixie Youth Baseball League opens. They're preparing to spend all spring perfecting their pitch and practicing sportsmanship in the dugouts.

Behind it all, there's a man who's been serving more than just delicious chicken biscuits for the past 30 years.

Dwayne Marshall, the dedicated owner of a Chick-fil-A franchise, acts as a cornerstone for the Timberlake Dixie Youth Baseball League.

Marshall isn't just the president of the Timberlake Dixie Youth League; he's a dad, a grandpa, and a boss to many. He grew up in and around the Lynchburg area.

"I basically played Dixie Youth Baseball my whole life, through school and everything," Marshall said. "I







PHOTO SUBMITTED BY DWAYNE MARSHALL

remember the coaches, and I remember the good memories and the good times, and I just want to pay it back that way.”

A professional race car driver for over 40 years, Marshall spent a lot of early adulthood traveling and away from family. But once he became a dad, he returned to the field.

“When I became a dad and had sons, as soon as they got old enough to play, I started coaching their teams,” he said. “Naturally, when my kids were playing, I got involved because they were playing, and I wanted to have more of a hands-on role, cutting grass and making decisions for the betterment of the league as a board member.”

So Marshall became a board member for the Timberlake Dixie Youth in 1994. Marshall remained while his sons graduated and stopped playing for Timberlake Dixie 12 years ago.

He has now been part of the league’s leadership for almost 30 years, and he’s currently serving as league president and the district’s director of umpires.

“Now my grandsons and granddaughters are coming through the program, so I’ll be there for a while,” Marshall said.

With four grandsons and two granddaughters, baseball has become more than a sport for Marshall; it’s a family tradition.

“I’ll be honest with you,” he said, “I find the energy when I look into my grandkids’ eyes. That’s all I need.”

With around 400 young athletes playing on 25 to 30 baseball and softball teams a year, the volunteers at Timberlake Dixie stay busy. Some days, Marshall is

out grooming one of their seven fields (which are not maintained by the city or county, just volunteers). Other days, he organizes umpires, prepares for board meetings, and talks to parents. He said his board members and fellow volunteers do a good job pitching in. Regardless, being league president is no joke.

“So obviously, you get up and go to work in the morning,” he said of his busy schedule. “Hopefully, you have an hour or two each afternoon to get something done at the ballpark. I’ve got good board members, and they’re quick to step up and volunteer, just as I do, to make sure that the kids have a good place, a well-maintained ballpark.”

But for Marshall, it’s a labor of love and a multi-generational commitment. As a Chick-fil-A store owner, Marshall said he knows how valuable it is to be visible as a helpful and involved member of the Lynchburg community.

“It is my way of giving back and serving in the community,” he said. “They’ve been good to me.”

Currently, four of Marshall’s grandkids — the ones who are old enough — are involved in the Dixie Youth Baseball program. And for Marshall, that’s the whole point. That means parents and grandparents in Central Virginia can have more peace of mind knowing Lynchburg kids are stepping up to the pitch rather than getting into trouble.

“In the world we’re living in now, I want to feel like on Friday nights, instead of a kid being on the street, they have an opportunity to be on a baseball field,” he said. “Not just my kids, but all kids.” **GN**





# TRANSFORMING MENTAL HEALTH CARE

One Lynchburg facility plans to transform local mental health care with a new crisis center.

By Paige Cushman  
Photos submitted by Chad Barrett

**N**ESTLED IN the heart of Virginia, Horizon Behavioral Health is orchestrating a quiet revolution in mental health care. A plan for a new crisis receiving center (CRC) has garnered support on a local and national level. The powerhouse mental health initiative will offer a place where anyone experiencing a mental health crisis can receive immediate help and get connected to long-term support.

"We offer a variety of services to individuals across the lifespan by providing a continuum of community-based treatment, prevention, early intervention, and aftercare services for persons affected by mental health, intellectual disabilities, substance use, and co-occurring disorders," Gabriella Smith, the director of communication and community engagement at Horizon, said. "The crisis receiving center will bring new services to Horizon and serve as an entry point to our wrap-around service options."

Matthew Martsook,  
Sherri Walker-  
Thacker,  
Melissy Lucy,  
Alva Harold,  
Sandy Farmer,  
and Gabriella Smith



▲ Melissy Lucy, Senator Newman, and Senator Peake, with respective law enforcement partners from the Amherst Police Department, Bedford Sheriff's Office, and Lynchburg Police Department

Construction will begin in 2024, with a planned opening in 2025. According to their website, the CRC services will include walk-in mental health evaluations, 24-hour observation, residential crisis stabilization, and detox services. Individuals can access the CRC voluntarily or be brought to the center by a police officer under an emergency custody order or temporary detention order. This is an essential resource for local law enforcement officers who may spend hours in a hospital emergency room waiting for a mental health unit or a residential facility to open up.

“I think a big part of this is just making sure that we're listening to the needs of our community,” Smith said. “A big part of that is monitoring data that we can recognize. ‘Okay, this is where the greatest needs are for our community members. What can we do to support them and bridge that gap where people fall into the cracks?’ And a big part of that is that crisis piece and not being able to receive services and immediate care in that way.”

Data shows the implementation of this type of facility should divert individuals away from psychiatric hospitalization, reducing the strain on emergency depart-

ments and law enforcement agencies that often have to intervene in mental health crises. This is particularly important given the increased demand for mental health services across the nation. By providing an effective alternative, Horizon could prevent problems from escalating, potentially saving lives.

“The CRC is very, very exciting because it’s an additional resource to assist individuals who need immediate treatment and response in relation to a mental illness,” Smith said.

In a statement, Horizon CEO Melissa Lucy said community partnership made it all possible.

“The vision for this crisis receiving center would not be a reality without collaborative partnerships among key community organizations, law enforcement partners, and support from local and state representatives.”

Horizon employs various evidence-based practices, making its approach unique in the industry. They offer therapy and outpatient services, case management, psychiatric evaluations, school-based services, and more, providing an all-encompassing support network for individuals and families.

“We are able to provide all of them to the entire family here through one organization, which overcomes a huge barrier for a lot of families,” Smith said.

Their multi-faceted approach helps tailor treatment plans to suit the specific needs of each client who may come for help working through substance abuse issues, mood disorders, trauma, and more. Horizon has several locations for patients to visit in person and has begun offering telehealth options to make their care even more accessible.

We strive to make sure that our services are very accessible, they’re consumer-centered, cost-effective, and outcome-based,” Smith said.

According to a slew of written testimonies, going through their programs has been life-changing for clients.

*“It was so worth it. I never thought that I would own my own home. And here I am, having just bought my own house.”*

*“This day, to me, means opportunity. To not have to sit behind four walls but instead be given the opportunity to work on myself with individuals and peers supporting me along the way was an eye-opening experience. It’s given me a second chance at life.”*

*“Even out of all of my friends, my therapist was the only person who stood by me, even when I messed up. She always had hope left for me, and I knew she had faith in me. Knowing that gave me a lot of comfort.”*

*“I wouldn’t have reached out for help on my own. But it is such a blessing to know that there are people that want to help and can. To have a case manager who knows your needs and knows that you wouldn’t reach out on your own means the world to me!”*

Smith said it’s inspiring to sit down with their clients and hear about their journeys with substance abuse and mental illness.

“It’s amazing to see the resiliency in some of our clients and just kind of hear and understand the hardships that they went through,” Smith said. “And then all of the hard work and intentionality that it takes to really turn their life around, not only for themselves but often because of the love that they have for their family members and especially wanting to be able to provide for their children.” GN



Dora Purvis and  
Veronica Bratton

# Providing hope for the FUTURE

A retired teacher's mission to help today's teens

By Paige Cushman // Photography by Chad Barrett

IN AN age where the fast-paced digital world often overshadows real-life connections and heightens mental health crises, Dora Purvis, a retired teacher with over 30 years of experience, has set out to provide a better and biblical option for today's teens.

Purvis's passion for teaching has evolved into a genuine concern for the mental health of the youngest generations. Whether it be social media, a lack of outdoor activity, or exposure to environmental and pharmaceutical toxins, Purvis said her students were struggling more and more.

"I have this strong burden for the kids, especially when I taught in the public

schools," she said. "But it's not just the public schools; it's all over the world. I mean, all over, even among the home-schooled children. The mental illness among children has been so terrible and nothing like when I was their age."

Purvis said the world her children grew up in is vastly different from the one she experienced as a child.

"I never had to deal with social media where people are verbally attacking you or had a greater opportunity to be nasty to you behind your back," she said.

According to a World Health Organization study, 20% of adolescents may experience a mental health problem in any given year. Depression, anxiety,



I have this strong burden for the kids, especially when I taught in the public schools. But it's not just the public schools; it's all over the world. I mean, all over, even among the home-schooled children.

-Dora Purvis

and behavioral disorders are among the leading causes of illness and disability among adolescents. Globally, one in seven 10 to 19-year-olds experiences a mental disorder, accounting for 13% of the global burden of disease in this age group.

To address these concerns, Purvis joined with Veronica Bratton to create Hope 4 the Future, whose mission statement reads: Hope 4 the Future is a nonprofit, nondenominational Christian organization that focuses on bringing the good news of the Gospel to our youth. Our mission is to partner with local churches and Christian organizations to reach the younger generation with the gospel, to disciple them, and to bring community transformation.

Purvis began teaching at 14 years old when she was given the responsibility of teaching Sunday school and serving as a bus captain at her local Baptist church. She has worn many hats throughout her teaching career, from home-school teacher to public school teacher.

Bratton spent the last 21 years working with a mental health facility for troubled teens. She believes that to have the best outcomes when treating mental illness, the spiritual component must be addressed. Bratton inspired Purvis to move forward

with her vision to start [Hope4thefuture.net](http://Hope4thefuture.net) because she believed our hope could only be found in Jesus Christ.

"I really love to see children learn. I love to be able to teach them what I know and learn," she said.

After over three decades of teaching, Purvis decided to retire at 57, but her retirement was not the end of her work.

"I felt like I was done teaching," she explains. "I needed something more."

With Hope 4 the Future, the goal is to host events with live music, speakers, and vendors at local public schools in neutral settings accessible to all. These events will feature people sharing their testimonies of transformation, particularly their struggles with depression and mental health, according to Purvis. The initiative aims to unite community resources, volunteers, and Christian organizations to support youth in need, emphasizing mentoring, counseling, and employment opportunities in and outside the church.

"We're gearing it from middle school through college age, although anybody in the community can come," Purvis said.

Their first event of this caliber is called Beat the Blues and is scheduled for Jan. 21, 2024, in the Robert S. Payne Elementary School Auditorium. The



program will begin at 3 p.m., but Purvis said there will be vendors to get information and resources from beginning at 2:15 p.m., and again after the event, and also through her website [Hope4thefuture.net](http://Hope4thefuture.net).

She hopes to expand Hope 4 the Future throughout Central Virginia and beyond. "I'd love to take it as far as the Lord wants it to go," Purvis said.

"We as a family really thrived here in Lynchburg," Purvis said. "I remember when I first came to the Lynchburg area, everybody was friendly, kind, helpful, and not bothered when you asked them a question. I would go for walks, and people would wave at me. I thought that was really weird because that's not what my experience was in my previous home in San Jose, California." Lynchburg was a breath of fresh air. It has been an oasis compared to the many other cities where I have lived. That is why we have lived here for nearly 15 years now.

And now, Purvis has found a new way to give back to the community she loves. **GN**

*Visit [hope4thefuture.net](http://hope4thefuture.net) to get involved or learn more about upcoming events.*





# Savor the flavor of well-being

Balance tradition and health with our hometown-inspired recipes for a nourishing start to 2024

AS WE step into the new year, explore the tastes of hometown healing through recipes built around healthy ingredients. A soup loaded with healthy vegetables flavored with your favorite herbs hits the spot on the coldest of days. How about adding something to your morning oatmeal to mix things up a bit? Trying one new dish a week from a low-carb cookbook or experimenting with an ingredient exchange in your favorite recipes are options that aren't overwhelming. Facebook groups offer tips.

Whether you want to maintain a healthier lifestyle or simply enjoy delicious, wholesome meals, these recipes offer a delightful blend of tradition and well-being. Enjoy dishes that celebrate the flavors of home while supporting your goals for a healthier you in 2024. GN

## Vegetable Soup

*Submitted by Annie Mills*

1 whole chicken, cooked, deboned  
3 carrots, chopped, cooked  
1 pt. lima beans  
1 can garden peas, drained  
1 pt. corn, cooked  
1 red pimento, chopped  
1 onion, diced  
several potatoes, cut up, boiled  
black pepper to taste  
crackers for serving

In a large pot, combine meat from chicken, carrots, lima beans, garden peas, corn, and pimentos. Cook together slowly. When thickened, you can freeze this, if desired. Then, add onions, potatoes, and black pepper. Serve with crackers.

## Whole Wheat Bread

*Submitted by Lula Parker*

3 1/2 c. whole wheat flour  
1 pkg. yeast  
1/4 c. sugar  
2 t. oil  
1 1/4 c. whole milk, heated

Mix 1 1/2 cups of flour, yeast, sugar, and oil in a large mixing bowl. Mix thoroughly and stir in milk. Place dough into a greased bowl, cover, and let rise in a warm, dark place until it has doubled in size. Add remaining flour as you knead. Roll in a jelly roll style. Seal each end and turn under to fit loaf pan. Cover loaf pan with a towel, check the dough and let rise to near the top of the loaf pan. Preheat oven to 350° and bake for 25-30 minutes.

## Cheesy Roast Beef Sandwiches

*Submitted by Lawayn Mitchell*

1 c. blue cheese crumbles, mashed  
1/2 c. sour cream  
1/2 c. mayonnaise  
1 t. salt  
1/4 t. black pepper  
6 onion rolls, halved  
1 bunch arugula  
1 lb. deli roast beef

In a medium mixing bowl, combine blue cheese, sour cream, mayonnaise, salt, and pepper. Divide half of the mixture evenly among the onion rolls. Top each with arugula leaves and roast beef. Spread top halves of rolls with the remaining blue cheese mixture and place on sandwich.

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

# Dare to finish the race

Unleashing the power of endurance

By Jeriah Brumfield


**S**TAR OLYMPIAN Usain Bolt is known as the fastest man in the world, and his reputation was cemented when he won the gold medal in the 100-meter race at the 2008 Beijing Olympics and 2012 London Olympics. He set a world record for both races, running 100 meters in 9.69 seconds in Beijing and 9.63 seconds in London, and set a new record at the World Championship in Berlin in 2009, running 100 meters in 9.58 seconds.

Bolt's championship-winning race from Beijing showcased his incredible speed and talent. He got off to a strong

start, immediately taking the lead over his competitors, which he maintained for most of the race. With about 25 meters left, Bolt pulled away even more and looked poised to break a new world record (at the time) as he crossed the finish line first within 9.69 seconds. He held his arms out in celebration while slowing his stride after crossing the finish line, knowing he had just achieved greatness.

His record-high performance was remarkable not only because of his speed and prowess but also because of the endurance and mental fortitude it took





him to achieve greatness in the face of adversity. His success story didn't come without a cost.

Many people don't know that Usain Bolt was born with scoliosis and has experienced some health issues affecting his performance on his road to beating world records. His right leg is half an inch shorter than his left, and his spine curves to the right, but he adjusted his movements to accommodate the effects of his diagnosis.

Bolt understood the power of endurance first-hand. He didn't allow his diagnosis and the issues it caused to interfere with his dreams. Endurance pushes us to keep going when we want to give up on our dreams and aspirations.

Endurance is like a muscle that grows stronger with use. It's not something we're born with, but rather something developed over time through hard work and dedication.

It's the resilience to bounce back from setbacks and continue the race even when we fall down. Endurance is the fire that burns inside, the drive that propels us forward, even when the road ahead seems dark and uncertain.

Endurance is the courage to keep going, even when the odds are against us, and the faith to believe that victory is within reach, even when it seems impossible. It's the determination to push past our limits, reach new heights, and achieve our goals, no matter how challenging they may be.

The Bible has much to say about endurance, a common theme throughout the Old and New Testaments.

One of the most well-known verses on endurance in the Bible is found in the book of James. "Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him" (James 1:12).

Endurance is an essential part of life. It is steadfastness and perseverance in the face of adversity and is often associated with faith and hope. So, the next time you find yourself standing face-to-face with adversity, remember Usain Bolt's testimony — keep the faith and run with endurance, the race set before you. **GN**



# Good Stories

## CHAPTER 2 OF 3

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

- 32 Hometown Healing
- 34 An impulse to serve
- 38 From strangers to friends
- 42 A healing touch for those in need

Our stories are based on submissions from local people.

Submit yours here:



[goodnewsmags.com](https://goodnewsmags.com)

Photography by Sarah Bussard

◀ Dana Woody



hometown



*Healing*







# An Impulse *To Serve*

Ryleigh Tatum builds confidence beyond books.

By Sara Hook // Photography by Sarah Bussard

**T**EACHERS ARE the backbone of any community, and a shining example of Lynchburg City Schools' hard-working staff is kindergarten teacher Ryleigh Tatum. Tatum is in her third year at Robert S. Payne Elementary School, having taught second grade for two years before moving to kindergarten. Tatum said her goals aren't necessarily academic. She has worked hard to build a better foundation for her kids and create a space where they are comfortable and confident enough to learn well.

"How am I creating a space for kids to feel safe, loved, and nurtured so they can get their academic foundation?" Tatum said. "I felt really passionate about moving down just because the foundation is so critical."

Despite her love of teaching now, Tatum wasn't always on the education pathway. She moved to Lynchburg in 2019 after graduating with a theatre degree, only looking into education during COVID and earning her master's in education in 2021.



Ryleigh  
Tatum

GET YOUR





GET YOUR



CRAYONS

“In the midst of COVID, I felt really convinced that I was not doing what I was supposed to be doing, and I started a master’s degree in education two weeks later,” Tatum said. “That’s where I felt led.”

Aside from her work in the classroom, Tatum said she has goals to expand her leadership in the school and become a mentor for other new teachers. Her first year as a teacher was the first year many students had been in the classroom since kindergarten, and Tatum said her own mentors were integral to her success in that challenging environment. She said she has grown in flexibility, empathy, and communication since that first year.

“Taking on new projects or being able to help other teachers to grow — that’s something that I’d like to work toward — being in a position where I feel capable of doing that,” Tatum said. “I know that my mentors my first couple of years were so critical to me and my ability to do what I was doing.”

Teaching is one of many serving roles Tatum has jumped into. She also became a registered foster parent under much the same circumstances. Tatum said she felt convicted that she had extra and wasn’t using it, and some weeks later, she was in classes.

“Knowing that there’s so much need for that and knowing that I have the extra to do it, I was just really called into that,” Tatum said. “It wasn’t something I could necessarily say no to.”

As a teacher and the oldest of four, Tatum knew she had a gift for supporting children. She jumped right in as she



had the space in her life for fostering. She said it’s not worth acting out of fear or anxiety when you have the chance to do good.

“I’m of the personal belief that if you are hearing from the Lord and you’re feeling an impulse to do something, you’re obligated to do it and do it with enthusiasm and quickly,” Tatum said. “If we ignore our impulses to do good, and we ignore our impulses to connect with other people, then no one will grow, and no one will benefit.”

Tatum said her impulsiveness has caused some pain in her life, but ultimately, she considers it a gift. After all, if everyone ignored their impulses to do good, no one would benefit.

“Whether you go to church, or whether you believe in the Lord or not, when you’re feeling an impulse to do something helpful and to do something good and to do something that can show love to someone else in a really impactful way, there’s nothing to be afraid of,” Tatum said.

While the world has a lot of brokenness, Tatum said she wants people to look at it and figure out how to restore it together.

“The hope is unity of the city. The hope is that we can be a city of good neighbors and people who help each other,” Tatum said. “How do we all unite together to be supportive of one another, love one another, and be good neighbors despite our differences and our situation.” GN



The hope is unity of the city. The hope is that we can be a city of good neighbors.

- Ryleigh Tatum



Annie  
Chalmers-  
Williams



# From *strangers* to *friends*

Fellow Hokie gives kidney and fulfills her lifelong dream.

By Amanda E. West // Photography by Chad Barrett

**L**ITTLE GIRLS often dream of becoming famous actresses, veterinarians, or fairy princesses. But Annie Chalmers-Williams dreamt of giving someone her kidney. “Growing up, I had a friend who desperately needed an organ to live,” said Chalmers-Williams. “I saw what was happening to her and her health as she declined. I remember thinking, ‘Why doesn’t anyone help her?’ It has been on my heart ever since. Over the years, I would see people asking for a living kidney donor, and I would always think, ‘I need to do that someday.’”

During the summer of 2021, Chalmers-Williams and her husband, Travis, endured their third miscarriage. Heartbroken, they made the painful decision to accept their son, Dawson, would be their only biological child, and this opened the door for Annie to pray about donating her kidney. “It sounded like a perfect way to give life the only way I could.”

It wasn’t long before Annie came across the Facebook post of Yang Zhang, who desperately needed a kidney. “When I made the post in January 2022, I was

not sure what to expect, and frankly, I was not hopeful because asking someone to donate an organ is a very big ask,” recalls Zhang. Annie was one of 33 people who reached out. “Her first email was very personal and very touching. She talked about prior life challenges, her faith, and how that faith guided her to help me. In October, Annie told me she had completed the screening process and was identified as a matching donor. She asked for a meeting with my family. Deep down, my wife and I had not believed this would ever happen. But it did.”

Although Annie is the assistant director of substance misuse prevention for Hokie Wellness at Virginia Tech (VT), she and Zhang had never previously crossed paths. “I looked at their family photo on Facebook and zoomed in on his daughters’ little faces. I saw the way he and his wife, Amy, had their arms around each other, and I heard a voice inside me say, ‘There’s your person.’”

Zhang said life before the transplant was a challenge. Everything changed, including his daily routine. As an associate professor in the School of Public and International Affairs at Virginia Tech, the rigorous eight hours needed for home dialysis halted his full-time, in-person work and brought traveling to a complete stop. Zhang said it took a toll on his mental health. “When your perspective on life turns bleak, it becomes very easy to fall prey to negative emotions. It is very important to lean on your family, friends, and your community. Stay engaged as much as possible.”

Before his kidney failure, Zhang had received impressive research grants from the United States National Science Foundation, the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, and the Virginia Sea Grant. He is also a founding member of the VT interdisciplinary graduate program in Disaster Resilience. “I have won the Virginia Chapter of the American Planning Association Best Educator Award and the VT College of Architecture and Urban Studies’ Ut Prosim Award.”

From the beginning, Annie said her husband supported her decision, but it was difficult for her parents. “At the pre-op appointment, Zhang told my



▲ Yang Zhang

mom she had an amazing daughter. I think those words helped move my mom to a place of peace with the surgery.” Zhang experienced fears of his own. “The easiest part was the surgery. The most challenging aspect was my constant anxiety about the well-being of Annie.”

“I just love to help and care for others,” said Annie. “I never want anyone to feel alone, afraid, or left out. I always think there are ways to help, and there is always room to grow. The world is sometimes really frightening and full of terrible things, but it’s also incredibly beautiful, and I’m always awed by it. If I can do something to ease





▲ Annie and Zhang post surgery. Photo by Travis Williams

someone's suffering, even if it's something small, I want to know about it and do it. That's the only way that things really get better — people have to put action behind their thoughts and words."

Now that surgery is behind them, Zhang said, "My goals for the future are twofold. One is to take the best possible care of the kidney that Annie gave me. The other is to make the best of my life, professionally and personally. This is the best I can do to honor Annie's grace and generosity." GN

*To learn more about becoming an organ donor, go to [www.organdonor.gov](http://www.organdonor.gov)*

“

If I can do something to ease someone's suffering, even if it's something small, I want to know about it and do it.

- Annie Chalmers-Williams



# A healing *touch* for those in *need*

Dr. Dana Woody embodies the essence of community nursing.

By Richard Klin // Photography by Sarah Bussard

**D**R. DANA Woody of Liberty University is a professor of nursing with a doctor of nursing practice concentrated in executive leadership. Her background is in community nursing. It is a mission she has taken very much to heart. In conjunction with the Salvation Army, she has launched a hands and feet ministry based in Lynchburg.

“My work prior,” Dr. Woody relates, “had been working with more of the chronic disease population. I set up the first disease management clinic for congestive heart

failure in Central Virginia. I was working alongside a local community-based hospital in their cardiology group. Although it’s a little different vulnerability, the diagnosis of congestive heart failure is definitely a vulnerable one. That taught me a lot. It taught me a lot regarding grassroots efforts. I’d done many, many initiatives in the community regarding public health concepts, like health promotion and disease prevention, working with many populations. Program development was kind of my thing!”



Dana  
Woody





Oftentimes, this population is misjudged as wanting a handout. These folks need a hand up.

- Dana Woody

“Lynchburg has a high incidence of poverty above the national numbers. Our vulnerability index is quite high. And so, around eight years ago, we launched the hands and feet ministry in partnership with the local Salvation Army here in Lynchburg,” said Dr. Woody.

Her efforts involved a lot of learning and discovery. “One of the things was not necessarily understanding vulnerability in the context of the underserved and homeless.” She and her nursing students served dinners at the Salvation Army and made a concerted effort to get to know this community.

Not surprisingly, there were trust issues within this community, and Dr. Woody and her students worked hard to gain that trust. “We had great conversations, and we had the voice of the audience. And that made all the difference.”

“One of the interesting things was that I had worked with vulnerable populations for many years, but I don’t think I really appreciated the vulnerability as it exists. We can hear about it, and we can read about it and that sort of thing. But being present is such an amazing opportunity and taught me so much.”

The hands and feet clinic is not for those in dire medical need (although people with serious medical issues can be referred for immediate help). “It’s more of an experience. They are coming in for the experience of having their hands washed, their feet washed, getting a manicure, and their nails back. For the homeless and the vulnerable, their feet are their transportation. Their feet take a beating because their shoes are too tight or too big, they don’t have proper footwear, or they don’t have socks. We manage that as well.

“They come in and receive hand care or foot care — they can pick between the two or do both. Then there’s the opportunity to have a hand massage or a foot massage or have their nails painted. Alongside that, we give them a pair of new socks, and we give them blessing bags that include toiletries.”



“Oftentimes, this population is misjudged as wanting a handout. These folks need a hand up. Our being there and walking alongside them for just a small amount of time is definitely impactful, so much so that these people come back week after week. And some year after year after year.”

It is hard to generalize about who makes up this population in need. “There’s just a huge span. I can’t say it’s one ethnicity over another. My oldest client was around 98. I’ve also had a 2-year-old with a mom. We do see more males than females. If you look at the homeless demographic, there are more homeless males than females.”

The challenges are many. “We had an unfortunate pickup in numbers with COVID. COVID changed everything. But not only that, we also had an uptick in violence. As a result of that, we did have to scale our outreach back just a bit for the safety of our students.” And the economic downturn has made things more complicated.

Dr. Woody has also taken the hands and feet ministry on the road. We have been asked to do this in several other places. We could do so much more!”

In essence, this clinic is treating an underserved, vulnerable population as human beings — human beings who deserve care, respect, and dignity. It is, in Dr. Woody’s words, “the power of presence.” And that is a very substantial power indeed. GN

# 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 is hard at work crafting stories under themes like “From The Heart,” “Charity Spotlight,” and “The Learning Curve.” We are excited to announce the next theme needing story submissions is **“Vacation in Lynchburg”**

### Submit people who provide local activities:

Do you know local people who have made a significant impact on local fun? Whether it's tourism leaders who provide opportunities or those who promote large events, we want to spotlight these individuals and their stories in our upcoming “Vacation in Lynchburg” 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.







# Good Times

## CHAPTER 3 OF 3

This section of the magazine covers local things to do.

**50** Community Events

**56** Events Calendar

**58** Advertiser Index

Submit a positive story  
on our website:



[goodnewsmags.com](http://goodnewsmags.com)

Photography by Sarah Bussard

◀ McKenzie Ohler

# Thomas Jefferson Wine Festival - Nov. 11, 2023



Photos submitted by Kevin Maples

Celebrating Thomas Jefferson, the Virginia wine pioneer, Poplar Forest hosted the Thomas Jefferson Wine Festival. Attendees enjoyed tastings, live music, food, and a discounted tour of the president's retreat.



1. Clif Coleman 2. Nadia Forte 3. Al Coleman

# Bright Nights Festival - Nov. 19, 2023



Photography by Sarah Bussard

Downtown Lynchburg launched their Christmas season on Nov. 19 with the illumination of the Bluffwalk, which will sparkle until Jan. 14, 2024. The inaugural event filled the area with festive vendors, live music, and joyous crowds, setting the perfect tone for the holiday season.



1. Christine Yepsen, Erin McMillen, and Ken Arpino  
 2. Daniel Bennett 3. Lonnie Hoade 4. Kristen Prosen

# Leaving Iowa - Dec. 2 - 10, 2023



Photography by Sarah Bussard

Liberty University brought Tim Clue and Spike Manton's "Leaving Iowa" to life, showcasing a talented student cast. Director Andy Geffken calls the show "an endearing story about family," and their next production, "Titanic," arrives in February.



1. Kiser Shelton and Olivia Reese 2. Grace Eason, Josh Gilmore, and McKenzie Ohler  
3. Kiser Shelton 4. Josh Gilmore



5. Grace Eason and Kiser Shelton 6. McKenzie Ohler 7. Kiser Shelton and Olivia Reese  
8. Kiser Shelton 9. Grace Eason, Josh Gilmore, McKenzie Ohler, and Kiser Shelton

# Conference USA Championship - Nov. 20, 2023



Photo submitted by Liberty football

Over 20,000 fans were in attendance to witness history in the making on Dec. 1. Liberty University Football finished the season undefeated, 13-0, after winning the CUSA championship. The crowd sprinted onto the field during the trophy ceremony following the game. This win broke the Flames' program records for wins in a season (13), home wins in a season (8), and winning streak (13) and makes the Flames the first Football Bowl Subdivision team in Virginia ever to win 13 games in a season.

1. Liberty Football CUSA Championship Field



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.  
light on many people  
energy, high-pro-  
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-

Let the  
**good**   
times roll

We want to build stronger communities through positive, local stories. If you have an upcoming event, please submit it online. We will add it to your community's online calendar, and it could be featured in the magazine.



[goodnewsmags.com/events](https://goodnewsmags.com/events)

# 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

GOOD TIMES

## EVENTS CALENDAR

### December 30

**8:00 am Funkateers New Year's Weekend Celebration**

Hilton Garden Inn  
Bar and Grill  
4025 Wards Rd.  
Lynchburg

The CHOCOLATE CITY ALLIANCE invites you to "Party On The Mothership" this New Year's. Join fellow Funkateers for a weekend of fun and music for \$50.

### January 8

**12:00 pm Eat and Meet**

Clubhouse Sports  
Bar and Grill  
708 Crowell Ln.  
Lynchburg

Join Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance for lunch. Network with alliance staff, board members, ambassadors, and fellow guests. No registration fee; you're just responsible for your own lunch.

### January 14

**3:00 pm LOVELYH Market**

Three Roads Brewing Co.  
1300 Court St.  
Lynchburg

Three Roads Brewing Co. will host a Makers Market featuring local art, treats, and live music. For info, call (434) 386-8153.

### January 18

**10:00 am The PromisedLand Quartet Senior Life Event**

Thomas Road  
Baptist Church  
1 Mountain View Rd.  
Lynchburg

Senior Life event featuring PromisedLand Quartet at Thomas Road Baptist Church. For tickets and information, call (434) 239-9281





**January 20**

**11:00 am 2024 Animation Festival-A Celebration of Tex Avery**  
 Academy Center of the Arts  
 600 Main St.  
 Lynchburg

The historic Academy Theatre will host the 2024 Animation Festival. Admission is free, but reservations are required. For info, call (434) 846-8499 or visit AcademyCenter.Org.

**January 26**

**6:30 pm Candlelight Concert: A Tribute to Taylor Swift**  
 Academy Center of the Arts  
 600 Main St.  
 Lynchburg

A unique musical experience that will take you on a journey through Taylor Swift's music will be held in a variety of enchanting locations. Tickets available now.

**January 27**

**8:00 am Saturday Market Day**  
 Lynchburg Community Market  
 1219 Main St.  
 Lynchburg

Visit the Lynchburg Community Market, our beautiful downtown community gathering place. Find fresh produce, local goods, and see what keeps us local and proud!

**For more events and to submit an event visit:**  
[www.GoodNewsMags.com/events](http://www.GoodNewsMags.com/events)  
 or call (800) 247-7318



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## From the Heart

ISSUE 1 2024

### Deadlines

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



## Vacation in Lynchburg

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



## Shop Local

ISSUE 4 2024

### Deadlines

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



## Where Champions are Made

ISSUE 8 2024

### Deadlines

Sponsored Content.....	7/1/24
Advertising.....	8/1/24
Mailed to Homes.....	8/15/24



## Kevin Maples

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 (434) 215-8249

Email me at [kevin@goodnewsmags.com](mailto:kevin@goodnewsmags.com)

...ation that comes  
celebrating Dairy  
in Eastern North Carolina  
and his wife Kim  
...ally started dairy  
...ness in Tennessee  
...th in a way to de-  
...hical, low-carb  
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...A year into dairy  
...The Nash County  
...of 2020. "We'd al-



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Publishing Partner

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**good**  
to know  
people 🙌

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