

Good News

exchange

Miriam Carrick

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ISSUE 2 2024

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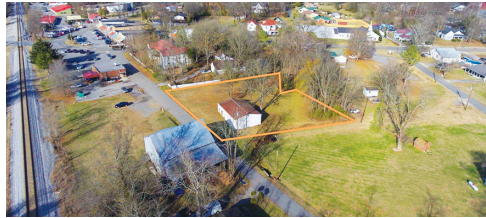
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This property features open fields and scattered woods, long winding road leading back, 4 bedroom soil septic site and lots of wildlife. Convenient to Murfreesboro, Franklin, & Chapel Hill. Ideal place for a secluded home, but close to town!

0 Old Nashville Dirt Road, Shelbyville, TN
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0 Hinkle Hill Road Bell Buckle, TN 37020
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Pristine & Rolling 300+/- Acre Farm



This property features a House, Studio/Bunkhouse, Shop, Barns & More!!! Generator hook-ups and city water w/spring available. Farm has 2 Hay Barns w/sheds, open equipment barn and cattle working barn, fenced and cross fenced throughout property, 6 waterers and more. Simply breathtaking views of Downtown Lynchburg! Very Secluded - Home half mile off Goosebranch Road.

501 Gray Road, Lynchburg, TN
\$3,350,000 MLS# 2586908

Completely Renovated Home in Riverbend Country Club!!



This stunning home features 3 beds, 2 baths, hardwood & tile flooring, recessed lighting, custom made shaker style cabinets, farm sink in island, wine cooler/fridge in kitchen, all stainless steel appliances stay, huge walk in closets throughout home, tiled shower w/rain heads & body sprays in primary bathroom, plus a roomy air jetted tub, barn doors in utility room. Exterior features a composite cladding siding, oversized heated & cooled 2 car attached garage and 29x36 deck for entertainment and outdoor living space!

240 Riverbend Country Club Road, Shelbyville, TN
\$749,900 MLS# 2589395

Unrivaled Cabin Situated on 153+/- Acres



This secluded and private renovated cabin has 3 bedrooms, 3 full baths, soaring ceilings, stone fireplace (wood burning), brick fireplace in basement, covered deck out back, miles of trails, tree stands will remain as well as shooting houses, excellent hunting for whitetail and wild turkey, food plots, mature hardwoods and barn has cooler room for hanging your harvests, spring water & much more!

249 Coffey Road, Petersburg, TN
\$1,450,000 MLS# 2563618

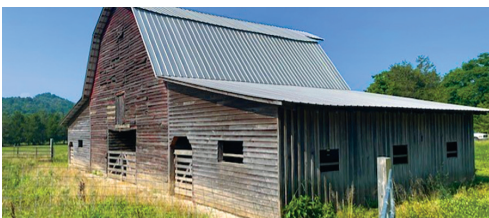
Remarkable Property Nestled on 57.5+/- Acres



This beautiful 3 bed 2 bath home is in the southern side of Bedford County. This property has so much to offer. High Speed internet, Multiple different building locations, City water but also has 3 extra wells for livestock, crops, irrigation etc. HVAC and roof are just 6 yrs old, Property is fully fenced for livestock. Property has some of the best hunting and loaded with wildlife. Brand new siding on the home and brand new attached carport as well. Don't miss your opportunity to own this beautiful farm.

708 Amos Gammill Road, Shelbyville, TN
\$675,000 MLS# 2580020

Picturesque Setting in the Hills!



This awesome 75.9+/- acre farm is located in the Southern Middle Tennessee area, just North of Huntsville and South of Murfreesboro and Nashville. This secluded, private property includes a small cabin like home built in 1880, nice barns and is completely fenced and cross fenced. On the farm is a well, small creek, pond, county water, open fields, pastures and tracts of woods. This farm will make a great get away retreat for hunting or a wonderful place to live off the grid.

1039 Hemphill Road, Petersburg, TN
\$799,000 MLS# 2544350

Country Tract Ready to Build!



Scenic and secluded 45 +/- acres with approved perk site that is marked on the property. Trails have been cut through the woods to view entire property. Utility power and water are available at the lane entrance. The land will be sold pending the survey 45 +/- acres to be divided off larger tract of land owned by seller.

0 Sims Spring Road, Lewisburg, TN
\$567,000 MLS# 2576340

Mini Farm Paradise!



This beautiful, private 19.84+/- acres is located at the end of Wells Hollow Road and features 16.84 wooded acres and 3 acres of pasture surrounding the bottom of Knob Hill. Amazing for hunting with wildlife throughout the property! Make this your get away or hunting farm!

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524 Highway 82 E, Bell Buckle, TN - CUSTOM: One owner 3 BR 3 BA brick home with 2 BR 1 BA tenant house on 62+ acres with large pond with pier, older barn & 2 older chicken houses for barn use or storage. This property is great for farm living or possible development property. **\$1,499,900 MLS# 2562991**



100 Logan St., Shelbyville, TN - REDUCED! One owner 3 BR, 2.5 BA custom brick home. Downstairs has a large master suite with a walk-in-closet. Kitchen with breakfast nook, formal DR, and LR are all very spacious. Join Riverbend Country Club to get all of the amenities. **\$579,900 MLS#2559687**



1945 Eugene Reed Rd., Woodbury, TN 37190 3 bedroom, 2 bath split bedroom style. Primary bedroom has an attached bath and large walk-in closet. 2 car attached garage and fenced in backyard. Just minutes to Woodbury, and 30 minutes to Murfreesboro. **\$289,900 MLS# 2595123**

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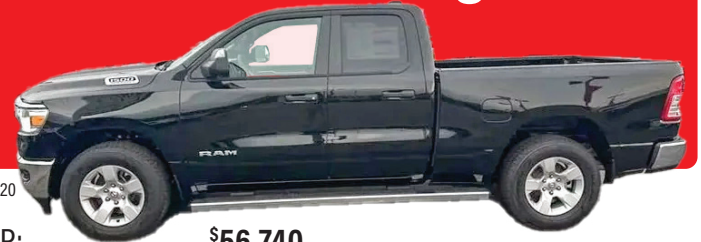
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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Heartbeats of Our hometown

We celebrate the silent heroes among us.

IN THE quiet corners around us, away from negativity, thrive the true heartbeats of our community — the local charities and the selfless individuals who support them. It's in these spaces, often unnoticed, where the most profound acts of kindness blossom, nurturing the soul of our town the way gentle rain nourishes our earth.

These charities are the sturdy bridges over turbulent waters for many among us. Behind each food drive, each fundraiser, and each helping hand are people like those featured in this issue. They are the pillars of our community, often foregoing recognition and reward, driven by a simple yet powerful desire to make a difference. These are our neighbors, our friends, perhaps even strangers, who embody the purest form of love — giving without expecting anything in return.

The beneficiaries of these charities are not just faceless names on a list. They are people with hopes and dreams, often finding themselves in situations beyond their control. The support they receive is more than just material aid; it's a message that they are not forgotten. Their community stands with them in hours of need.

This cycle of giving and receiving creates a harmony that resonates through our streets, echoing in the laughter of children at a community center or the grateful smiles at a food pantry. It's a reminder that, in the hustle of everyday life, the most impactful moments are often the quiet acts of kindness.

Good News Magazine thanks you for keeping our hometown's heart beating. **GN**

Wesley Bryant,
MANAGING EDITOR

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Good News

CHAPTER 1 OF 3

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

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Photography by Ashleigh Newnes

◀ Samantha Shreve

STRONGER THAN CANCER

Samantha Shreve chooses to see the light after an unexpected diagnosis.

By Tina Neeley // Photography by Ashleigh Newnes

LIFE WAS good; it was normal, something Samantha Shreve, then 29, didn't realize was so precious. As a dental assistant in a local office, catching up with patients was normal. As a mom to two girls, ages 3 and 5, running them wherever they needed to be was normal. Sharing household chores and inside jokes with her husband, Colton, was normal until "normal" suddenly disappeared when she could no longer ignore the pain in her leg. A few tests and doctor appointments later, cancer sent "normal" packing.

"I never thought it would be cancer until I was told that I was going to an orthopedic oncologist, and





Samantha Shreve



*"I trust God.
He created me
for a purpose."*

— Samantha Shreve

it hit me that something could be really wrong," Shreve said. "I was trying to understand what could happen and praying it wouldn't. When it did, it was like a whirlwind. I started treatment the very next week, so I didn't have a lot of time to process it."

The diagnosis flung the young wife and mother headfirst into a different world, but she didn't go alone. It sounds cliché to say her life flashed before her eyes, but it's true. But something bigger was also true.

She said, "Before I was diagnosed, something was pulling at my heart; it was the Lord, and I knew [it]. I've always been a Christian. I've always loved Him, but I've never thought about Him this hard before. And now I know it's because He

was trying to prepare me for what was about to happen."

It was strength training, equipping her for the fight of her life.

"I'm thankful that it happened to me, and I think the Lord built me strong to handle this disease. People tell me all the time that I have inspired their faith, and I want the Lord and His love to be seen through me," said Shreve.

Your prayers make her stronger, and she believes your prayers for her have the power to draw you closer to God.

"I trust God. He created me for a purpose. Maybe that purpose is to lead you to Him, or you find your prayers for me get you one step closer to the Lord and restore your faith," said Shreve. "We're all going

to pass from this world, and my hope and prayer is that I see every person who has prayed for me in heaven."

She draws even more strength from her husband.

Samantha said, "My husband is my rock. He really listens, he cares, and he prays for me. We've found our power in prayer. He brings me back to the center and [assures me] we're going to get through it. I have to remember it's not always going to be this way, whether I stay in remission or if I'm called home to the good Lord."

Her faith gives her clarity and the ability to see God's goodness surrounding her. Relationships are stronger. She sees it in how their families have rallied around them, ready to help at a moment's notice.

Following her initial treatments, doctors declared her cancer in remission. For 15 months, the family eased back into "normal," and just as they were getting back into their old routines, a pain in her side alerted her that something was wrong. It was a familiar pain, and soon "normal" hit the road again. Shreve had relapsed, and the cancer spread. It's now being treated with chemo pills and is shrinking.

"I was surprised it came on as quickly as it did. And I think deep down, I always knew that I might relapse, but I felt that it would be way on down the road," she said. "It was just a little time of normalcy — my energy was back; we were going places and doing things, able to be back in church participating in programs. When I relapsed, I didn't know how

things would go and whether we'd be able to keep some normalcy."

A local fundraiser generated assistance that far exceeded her expectations, and she had no idea of the support offered through the Bedford County Cancer Foundation (BCCF) until now. Her experience with the foundation inspired her to volunteer and help them help other cancer patients.

"It has been a wonderful blessing. I never knew how many wonderful people in our county struggled with cancer. It's more than I ever thought. So [volunteering with BCCF] was my way of giving back all that people had given to me. I was able to help people, and helping people is a blessing. Everyone on the board is a blessing because they've helped us. It's not easy financially. Whether it be gas, food, housing, water bills, or electric bills, just to know there are people [that cancer patients] can count on is a wonderful feeling because I understand exactly how they feel. So I think that's what I bring to the table. I understand how these people feel, and for someone to have a place to call for support is just a wonderful thing. And it's beautiful to be a part of," she said.

Supporting others out of the support she receives from God and those around her renews Shreve's strength to continue battling cancer while shining the light of God's love.

"The Lord has told me multiple times I will get through this. I trust God and know He has my best interest at heart. That's the beautiful thing with faith — you get to see and witness beautiful things, and you get a relationship with God that you never thought you'd have. I'm glad people have gotten to witness it," she said. **GN**



Samantha and
Colton Shreve

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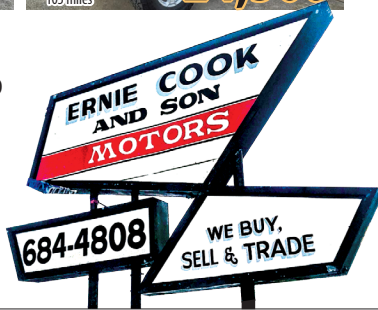
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A hub of *Hope*



The Community Development Center's programs turn challenges into possibilities.

By Tina Neeley // Photography by Ashleigh Newnes

WE OFTEN overlook the significance of basic abilities such as independence, clear sight, good hearing, problem-solving skills, and easy access to essential resources. Navigating the challenges associated with what society labels as disabilities, disorders, limitations, and conditions requires more than personal determination; it takes a supportive community dedicated to helping individuals achieve their utmost potential.

Finding assistance for those grappling with such obstacles can be daunting. However, the Community Development Center (CDC) is a central hub assisting all ages. Each program is a spoke in the center's wheel of resources.

The CDC's purposeful rotation connects lives and propels them forward. The CDC acts as a driving force, steering individuals toward a brighter and more empowered future within this dynamic wheel of change.

Originating as the Child Development Center over 50 years ago, the CDC initially focused on early intervention. This program delivers therapy to children with developmental delays and disabilities, offering support and continuing eligibility until kindergarten.

The CDC supports 11 counties in South Central Middle Tennessee and ensures that children receive personalized assistance within the familiar environment of their homes. Staff work closely with parents and caregivers to comprehend developmental milestones and implement strategies for day-to-day challenges.



The Child Development Center transitioned to the Community Development Center in the mid-'90s to support all age groups. The Family Support program, initiated during this expansion, covers six counties and provides essential funding to families caring for a member with developmental or intellectual disabilities. Operating statewide under the Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, this program addresses daily life skill challenges, offering financial assistance to alleviate costs.

Anita Teague, executive director of the CDC, said, "We serve our entire community of [people with disabilities] and of all abilities. We help them work, achieve their personal goals, strive for independence, and connect them with resources."

Resources like the Children's Center for Autism, launched in 2016, address the growing need for autism services in rural communities. There are locations in Lewisburg and Shelbyville, with a Fayetteville location coming in 2024. This program serves children aged 18 months to 12 years who are diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorders.

The Children's Center for Autism is staffed by licensed board-certified behavior analysts and certified registered behavior technicians. It provides applied behavior analysis therapy, parent training, and community outreach.

The CDC's employment services cover a wide range of support, including assisting individuals with job readiness, placement, and pre-employment transition services to students. They also help those in TennCare's Employment and Community First CHOICES program, offering support for independence skills and community navigation. A recent addition, MAPS, focuses on skills like independence and employment. This program operates across 10 counties in the center's service area.

Teague and her team understand the frustration of being tossed around from resource to resource without guidance.

"Family members get so stressed and tired because they're having to manage their household and [deal with] medical issues, therapy sessions, insurance, and all these things for their family member with a disability," said Teague.

But a call to their office is different. Staff will check to see if you fall within the guidelines of any of their programs, and if not, they will recommend other resources that might meet your needs.

The Independent Support Coordination program, established in the mid-1990s, offers case management for individuals with significant intellectual disabilities. This program operates across 17 counties. It ensures that individual desires and needs get prioritized. Additionally, assistance with disability case management services is available under the Tennessee Strong Families program.

The CDC's commitment extends to seniors through the Senior Equipment Loan program, initiated in 2017. Providing durable medical equipment across South Central Middle Tennessee regardless of income, this program operates through a collaborative effort among CDC staff.

The CDC's leadership team is composed of Teague and program managers. To ensure the seamless operation of these vital programs, leaders meet monthly and annually to review and improve them.

She said, "We work with many partner agencies, including other nonprofits in our communities, focusing on other aspects, not just disabilities. We are



“ We serve our entire community of [people with disabilities] and of all abilities. We help them work, achieve their personal goals, strive for independence, and connect them with resources.

-Anita Teague

all involved in our local communities, and many of us serve on the Community Health Councils and Community Advisory Boards, which gives us avenues to learn what the needs are in our communities. The CDC's main focus is on those with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Still, by being involved, supporting other nonprofit's missions, and expanding our services to those of all abilities, we are more inclusive and meet a larger community of need.”

The CDC is the wheel that turns toward hope and carves out paths to independence and empowerment. As the center's wheel of change continues to turn, it leaves an indelible mark on those navigating challenges, fostering a brighter and more inclusive future. **GN**

For more information, visit cdctn.org or follow the center on Facebook. The office is at 111 Eaglette Way, Shelbyville, or you can reach them by calling (931) 684-8681.



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SAMUEL WILLIAMSON

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Laughter, compassion, and abundant food redefine Saturdays at Feed One Outreach.

IT'S HARD to tell what's shining the brightest — the Saturday morning sun or the smiles of those gathered outside Gateway (GTWY) Church's building on Madison Street in Shelbyville. Children laugh and dance as bubbles flow freely from the bubble machine. Hugs, handshakes, and back-pats pass through the crowd. The diverse groups interact like festival attendees, their faces defying the real reason they're here. The prayers sent up for some of those in attendance are unseen.

Before connecting with Feed One Outreach (FOO), several faces in the crowd were previously bewildered faces in the grocery store, calculator in hand, choosing the most economical and long-stretching items for their budget. Funds for rent, utilities, and medicines were short. It followed them like hungry children, demanding their attention. They were faces peeking out from tents and sleeping bags, huddled together, sharing foods salvaged from blessing boxes. They were faces who worked all week and had no money left for groceries at the end of their paycheck.

Samuel (Sammy) Williamson leads FOO, something his friend, Rocky Wiggins, always knew he would do. Wiggins and GTWY, the church the two attend, launched GTWY Outreach to serve the broader needs of local residents. Sammy flourished in his work.

By Tina Neeley

*Photography by
Ashleigh Newnes*

“He [Wiggins] told me, ‘Sammy, God told me in my heart that this was for you [and] to start it for you. He said you didn’t believe you could, but it’s yours now. And the whole time I’ve been walking with you, I knew it was yours.’ From that day on, I took over Outreach, and we formed Feed One.”

The nonprofit organization is supported and partially funded by GTWY and staffed by its members and volunteers.

Every Saturday morning from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m., excluding Thanksgiving and Christmas weekends, those needing food and household supplies shop for free from the aisles stocked by Feed America, Second Harvest, and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). With 30,000 pounds of food delivered weekly, Williamson said FOO is the largest food bank in Middle Tennessee. There’s an open shop area with soaps, dishes, towels, diapers, adult incontinence supplies, and more, and a clothing distribution on the fourth Saturday. Qualifying for the distribution is simple.

“All we ask is that you have your name, address, your monthly income, and how many are in the household. That’s all we ask because we have so much food,” said Williamson.

The program exists to meet the growing food insecurity needs of the area, welcoming anyone. Williamson strives to ensure the experience for volunteers and shoppers is compassionate and non-exclusive.

He explains, “I just believe that God put me in a position to be that person who says, ‘I don’t care if you don’t have an ID, and you’re not from America. I love you, too.’ When you see the smiles on their faces, they’re so appreciative, and they’re not apprehensive anymore. And that’s a good thing.”

The group also serves people without housing in the area, a connection established through an earlier sock distribution program.

“They call us ‘the church people,’” said Williamson.

Help is available for immediate needs, too. It’s possible to obtain items outside regular hours of operation by reaching out to FOO.

Danny and Doris Vance were instrumental in training Williamson and his wife, Erica, to work with the USDA and Second Harvest. Williamson also uses his life experiences to organize and lead the program, knowing God weaves them together and guides his steps.

“I still work and go to meetings outside of work and the church. My wife said I probably have what the world calls ADHD [attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder], but God uses it. I don’t think that it’s a bad thing. I think people have to find their calling because [their] energy is for something. I truly believe that. I knew it was my calling for a long time,” Williamson enthuses.

He’s been taking steps toward his calling since the early days, assisting his mom in Louisiana with her Angels of Mercy ministry, an organization empowering women who have endured domestic violence. He handled her emails and posters, supporting her work and planting seeds for what he does today.

But it’s not about what he’s doing.

He said, “It’s not what I’m doing; I’m following God, so if it looks like I’m walking around here free, I really am. I’m the leader, but on Saturday, I’m right there. I’m praying for people and putting boxes in cars.”

Williamson organizes the teams, matching the volunteers’ skills and gifts to the work needed. Classes on interpersonal communication, like Dale Carnegie, and other on-the-job training prepared him to lead. Even then, he sensed a greater purpose for it.

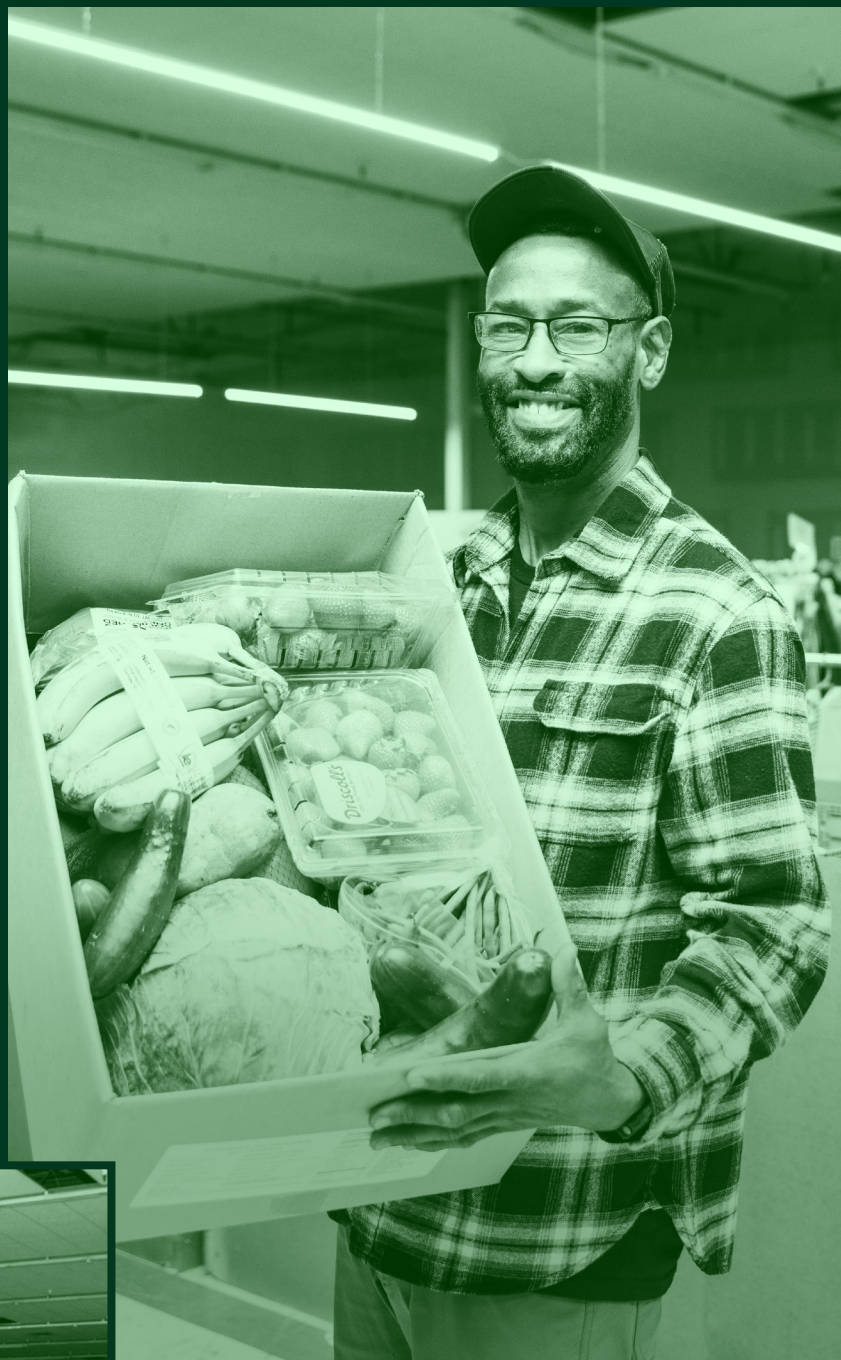
“I told my wife, ‘I just don’t think this is for my job. I think it’s God doing something.’ Way before I became the Outreach leader, I was in intensive leadership training, giving speeches and things I didn’t want to do. So I started using the same tactics to detail job descriptions for people,” Williamson said.



He capitalized on his retired volunteers' skills and work history and recruited truck drivers, security, and other logistic positions. Williamson wasn't confident in his leadership skills, but time has proven that he is where he's meant to be.

"It's been a learning experience because, at first, I was really intimidated. I wondered, 'God, how am I going to lead these people? They're not going to listen to me.' And now, four years later, they are my best friends, and they believe in everything," he said. "For these people to follow me all these years and be happy is something God's making happen, like the friendships. But those guys understood leadership. The growth was amazing, and I started spiritually seeing why God had me in charge. I was very humbled by it."

As the parking lot empties on Saturday, everyone involved is fulfilled. The hearts of the volunteers are filled with joy and peace,



ERICA AND SAMMY WILLIAMSON

knowing everyone who came today won't have to worry about empty stomachs in the coming week. FOO's assistance enables them to stretch their dollars for other necessities, perhaps empowering them to avoid homelessness and despair. And the prayers of the volunteers will go with them, multiplying the blessings of the ministry. **GN**

For more information, visit gatewayshelbyville.com/ministries or call (931) 308-8999. Follow GTWY Outreach on Facebook.

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Good Stories

CHAPTER 2 OF 3

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

- 36 From a family of string savers
- 40 Spinning heritage and spanning generations
- 44 Unexpected entrepreneur

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FROM A FAMILY OF STRING SAVERS

MIRIAM CARRICK'S KNITTED A GOOD LIFE.

By Tina Neeley

Photography by Ashleigh Newnes

IN A waiting room filled with patients and their families at Nashville's Sarah Cannon Center, a cancer center named for Minnie Pearl, Miriam Carrick did what she's always done. She's not one to mind waiting, happy to busy her hands with her knitting. Her husband, Haskell, waited his turn for treatment as she cast on and cast off with little thought or glance at the stitches that formed the dishcloth underway. But her work caught the attention of the center's employees.

"The nurses said, 'Oh, look, she knits! Let's get her. We want to learn to make caps for our patients that lose their hair.' And I said, 'Well, give me a copy of your pattern; run me off one,'" said Carrick.

With a copy of their pattern in hand, Carrick's mission to further the program began. But where did her love of knitting begin?

She could barely see over the counter at the dry goods store where the clerk carefully wrapped her family's purchases and tied





“So, without any pattern and with little bitty needles about the size of baling wire, I learned how to knit, and from then on, I knitted up every piece of string I could find for my doll clothes, and I just continued to like to knit.”

- Miriam Carrick

them with string. It wasn't the items inside the brown paper she eagerly anticipated but the string around it.

An only child, she was no stranger to the hard work associated with life on the family's Normandy farm. But when time permitted, Carrick's mother and grandmother were needleworkers, busy knitting, crocheting, and tatting. When she was 8 years old, her grandmother took the ball of string and taught her to knit.

“My family was a string saver. My grandmother saved the string, and she wrapped it in a ball. There were no close neighbors who had children for me to play with, so my grandmother taught me how to knit using the string that she had saved from the packages,” said Carrick. “Grandmother had knit socks for the boys in the service, and we made a little blue sock with white heels. So, without any pattern and with little bitty needles about the size of baling wire, I learned how to knit, and from then on, I knitted up every piece of string I could find for my doll clothes, and I just continued to like to knit.”

For nine decades, she knitted. She knitted when the family moved from Bedford County to Oklahoma when she was in high school.



It's where she met her first husband, David Nelson, at Sunday school, and where their daughters, Donna and Wilma, were born. She knitted when they moved back to the family farm in Bedford County because David offered to run it for her father after her grandmother passed away. And when it was time to leave farming behind and move to town, after she decided she'd work to put her girls through college, she knitted in any spare time.

After farming, David worked for Castner Knott's and the Singer Sewing Machine Company. Carrick worked first for Bob Roberts Plumbing and Electric, then at Model Sportswear (formerly Model Matt), where she started as an order filler before moving to the ticket office and finally to engineering clerk. Carrick conducted time studies on the piecework in order to maximize efficiency. Model Sportswear was later sold to Stahl-Urban.

Her husband, David, passed away, and she was a widow for five years until a quick stop for bananas changed things. "I met Haskell when I stopped at Cook's Market and asked for green bananas.



He said to me, 'Does your husband like green bananas?' I said, 'Well, I don't have one. But I like green bananas.' And, of course, one thing led to another; we got to talking, and he asked me to go to the movie with him. Of course, we went together a good little bit, and then we decided to make it permanent. I had him for 33 years."

Before being diagnosed with cancer himself, Haskell asked her to knit a cap for his niece, Donna King, who was undergoing treatments and had lost her hair. With a

pattern and yarn from Frances Farrar at The Knit Kit, Carrick knit the unique hat resembling hair, and Haskell delivered it with love.

Later, it was Haskell's cancer that led them to Sarah Cannon's waiting room.

When Haskell went for treatments or Carrick drove a neighbor to Nashville doctor appointments, Carrick dropped off hats in increments of 50 at Sarah Cannon. Later, when she stopped driving in Nashville, her daughter, Donna, delivered them.

"I've done 2,555 so far: 2,525 to Sarah Cannon and the other 30 to family and friends," she said.

So, what's the key to such a long life?

"Somebody asked me [that], and I said it's not because I was raised with a silver spoon. I was raised on a farm, and that's hard work. And that's it; I worked hard all my life," said Carrick.

It's a good life knit together with love and hard work from a family of string savers. GN

SPINNING HERITAGE AND SPANNING GENERATIONS

FLEECE ON THE DUCK FIBER GUILD WEAVES
TRADITION INTO THE FIBERS OF TODAY.



**“We want to teach and pass
on the skills to as many
people as possible, and we
figure that when we go and
sit with those children, we’re
planting seeds.”**

- Judy Thelen

By Tina Neeley
Photography by Ashleigh Newnes

IN THE delicate threads that weave through the fabric of our history, the roots of fiber arts run deep, connecting generations and cultures in a rich tapestry of creativity. Fiber arts are an enduring expression of human ingenuity, from the basic instinct to craft warmth and protection from the elements to the artistry of intricate lace and vibrant tapestries. As strands of yarn intertwine, so do the stories of communities, each stitch a testament to necessity and artistry.

The gentle hum of a spinning wheel and the rhythmic click of needles echo the importance of fibers in shaping the very fabric of our society. In the heart of this tradition lies a local fiber guild. Skilled women gather to breathe life into these age-old practices, celebrate their artistic passion, and extend a thread of compassion into the community by creating handmade treasures for charitable causes.

In 2006, Judy Thelen and Janet Cavna attended an alpaca show in Shelbyville that demonstrated ways to use the alpaca's fibers. Owners appreciated the beauty of the fibers but often stored them away, unsure of what to do with them.

Thelen said, "We went to lunch and had a margarita, and we decided to put a sign-up sheet out to see if anybody was interested in starting a fiber guild. And that's how we started. That was in March, and we had our first meeting in April. We got several local people and



▲ Lisa Foster

some great people who had just moved to the area, who had alpacas and were interested in learning about the fiber. So we all learned together."

Fleece on the Duck Fiber Guild grew from there.

Thelen, guild member and unofficial program director said, "People wanting to spin and weave and learn what to do with the fiber is what started it, and then we transitioned into the fiber shows."

Those shows demonstrate spinning and creating with the fibers, the earliest of which was at the Tennessee State Fair.

"We had five hours to pick it, card it, spin it, and weave a 70-inch shawl. It's

hectic, but it's fun. We had usable yarn to our weaver in 45 minutes," said Thelen.

A guild member, Susie Henderson, said, "The Tennessee Agricultural Museum invited us to farm days that they host twice a year. We had a lot of kids to come through for that. And we were invited last year for the first time to come to the Hermitage, where we had 300 kids come through in three hours."

Once a month, meetings expanded the group's knowledge, and the group added fiber festivals to their agenda. They've demonstrated at the Halls Mill Sourghum Squeeze, Piping on the Green in Tullahoma, and Dickens of a Christmas in Franklin, where they dressed in period attire.

"We would sit with our spinning wheels and spin, and people are amazed. We drew new members that way. And, when we were in Fiber in the 'Boro, we saw a need to have a children's table, so we got some crafts together for the kids, and the moms would drop them off and go shopping. We did the table for about 10 years. We want to teach and pass on the skills to as many people as possible, and we figure that when we go and sit with those children, we're planting seeds," said Thelen.

But why fiber arts?

"I've come from a long line of women who were good with their hands. Besides being able to grow — you know — food outside or flowers and things like that, they were very good at sewing and quilting. And then my grandmother taught herself how to crochet and taught me how to back in the '70s. It comes from

a long line of women who like making things," shared Henderson.

Charitable projects are often on the guild's agenda. They've crocheted and knitted blankets for the Shelbyville Police Department and Bedford County Sheriff's Department, premie hats for babies, and scarves for elementary school children. The most unusual project, Knitted Knockers, produces knitted and crocheted prosthetics for patients undergoing mastectomies and lumpectomies.

Their work reaches near and far, and some stand 10 feet tall!

Frank, the fiber art nutcracker, was the guild's entry in the 2023 Festival of Trees at the Fly Arts Center. Although not their original design, he's a testament to the spirit of the group's members. Their 7-foot snowman, Frosty, built in 2012, stood watch in First Community Bank's airport branch during the last holiday season.

They're fulfilling their mission to promote fiber arts and skills preservation by educating, sharing, demonstrating, and encouraging at public venues.

The local fiber guild celebrates the time-honored techniques that have traversed generations and serve as a vibrant bridge between the past and the present. They weave an unwavering commitment to preserving fiber arts and skills into each piece they craft, and the guild's endeavors are ambassadors of a cultural legacy as they knit the knowledge of their craft into the fabric of the community. Through public venues and within the close-knit circle of guild members, the gentle hum of the spinning wheel continues to resonate,





Lisa Butler, Stanette Neese, Lisa Foster, Ellen Treadway, Judy Thelen, Cindi Lindsey, Connie Peden, Joann Stowers, Janet Bowman, Judy Heindel, Carol Magnuson, Bea Naasz, Kathie Haber, and Susie Henderson

echoing a timeless melody that stitches together the diverse threads of our shared heritage. The local fiber guild spins a narrative that intertwines the past, present, and future, stitching the community together with a thread of enduring creativity and compassion. **GN**

Contact Susie Henderson at (931) 619-0010 for information on Fleece on the Duck Fiber Guild.



Cindi Lindsey



“I always like to hear new things and new opinions that will help me grow in the future. We’re all learning each day, and it’s only going to help us.”

- KerriAnn Brewer

UNEXPECTED ENTREPRENEUR

KERRIANN BREWER MAKES A BOLD DECISION TO SAVE A LOCAL DELI.

By Tina Neeley

Photography by Ashleigh Newnes

IN A world where most teens her age are busy navigating college decisions and figuring out life in general, KerriAnn Brewer seized an opportunity when it presented itself, proving that age is just a number when it comes to following your dreams. She never imagined herself at the helm of a bustling deli in the heart of Wartrace, and the responsibilities of running a business were not on her radar, but life is full of surprises.

The savory aroma of freshly prepared sandwiches and soups welcomes you within the cozy walls of Rock House Depot Deli. The space may be small, but it holds more than the promise of a delicious meal. It's a testament to Brewer's determination and hard work.

It's the only place Brewer's ever worked; she was an employee for a year and eight months when the owner decided she would either sell or close. She needed Brewer's answer right away.

"We didn't want to close the deli down. I knew everything, basically, so I thought I'd just give it a shot. I know a lot of people around don't have vehicles, so they don't have many choices, so that would just be one less option," said Brewer.

The transition from an employee to a business owner was challenging. Still, she diligently sought sound accounting and





legal advice, and her record-keeping skills continued to evolve as she learned. Her mom, Kim, is a strong support as well.

“I was surprised that you have to pay taxes on the majority of things because I had never experienced that. Some things have different taxes, and there was a lot to learn,” she said. “Since this was my first job, I hadn’t even done taxes as an employee, which just made it a lot harder and a lot more to learn as a new employer.”

The little girl who thought she wanted to be a lawyer now presents her case for being a lifelong learner.

Brewer said, “I wanted to be a lawyer because I feel like I’m good at looking at the other side of things, and I feel like I can provide a strong argument. But once I knew how much school was required, it was just a little too much for me. Then,

I wanted to be an esthetician, and that’s what I was planning to do until this opportunity arose. I love being here, and I love the community and the customers that come in.”

She’s continually growing and looking for ways to improve, personally and professionally.

“I like social media. It can be another thing that shows you different ways to learn and grow revenue. And I’ve gotten into podcasts. I just stopped listening to the news because the podcasts are teaching me something. I always like to hear new things and new opinions that will help me grow in the future. We’re all learning each day, and it’s only going to help us,” Brewer said.

Despite the challenges, Brewer finds joy in connecting with customers.

“I love getting to talk to the customers. Some of them probably don’t [talk] with that many people on a day-to-day basis, so I like to be the person talking to them. And I love hearing them say they’re full of their stuff. That’s our goal here. We want everyone to be happy and full. You can tell that some people come down more for the service and atmosphere than just because they’re hungry. There’s not that many options [for places] to eat [in Wartrace], so I like to be the option and be there to serve people in that way,” explains Brewer.

The deli’s menu reflects both the classic and the unique, serving mainly sandwiches, salads, and soups when the weather is cold. The top three requested items are the Reuben, club sandwich, and Strolling Jim, which is made with turkey,

pesto, mayo, onions, tomatoes, and provolone cheese and then grilled in the panini press.

The space might be small, but Brewer's heart for her customers and dreams for her business are not.

"We're very small right now, and my goal is to get so big that we need a bigger space. I want to outgrow our current location because we have so many people coming in," she said.

Brewer encourages anyone wanting to be their own boss, regardless of age, to follow their dreams.

"Just go for it. There are so many things in life that, after the fact, you wish you would have at least tried. Put one foot in front of the other, find the information, find the people who know it, and create systems that work for you."

Brewer transformed an unforeseen opportunity into a thriving community hub, proving that the most extraordinary journeys sometimes begin with a single step taken with courage and determination. The deli is not just a place for a quick meal and conversation but a testament to the unwavering spirit that propels dreams into reality one hearty sandwich at a time. It's a reminder that passion and tenacity can turn the ordinary into the extraordinary, even in the face of adversity. And it's the heart of our community. **GN**

Visit Rock House Depot Deli at 401 Blackman Blvd., Wartrace, TN. Follow on Facebook for daily specials or call (931) 389-0002.



"Put one foot in front of the other, find the information, find the people who know it, and create systems that work for you."

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CHAPTER 3 OF 3

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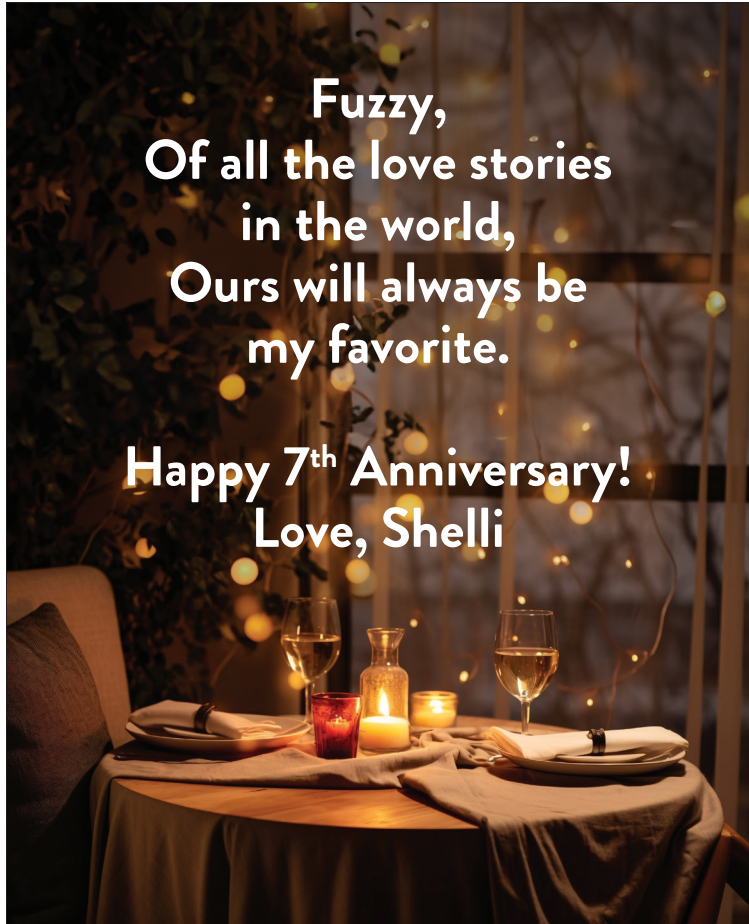


Photos submitted by folks in our community

Day. A week off school began with MLK Day, followed by snow blanketing Shelbyville in magic. Residents reveled, crafting snowmen and angels in this unexpected winter wonderland.



1. Layken Hull 2. Bristol and Barrett Hill
3. Audrey Allen 4. Codi Hall



5. Mason Priest 6. Mileigh Beltran
7. Lindsey and Keith Wortham

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(931) 684-8681
www.cdctn.org

Clothe Our Kids of Bedford County

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(931) 703-6263
www.clotheourkids.com

A Nutter Cat Rescue

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anuttercatrescue@gmail.com
Facebook: A Nutter Cat Rescue

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(931) 684-4300
www.bedfordbuildshabitat.org

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(931) 684-8160

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amy.gatewayoutreach@gmail.com

Shelbyville-Bedford County Humane Association

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(931) 684-5463

www.shelbyvillebedfordhumane.org

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