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ISSUE 2 2024

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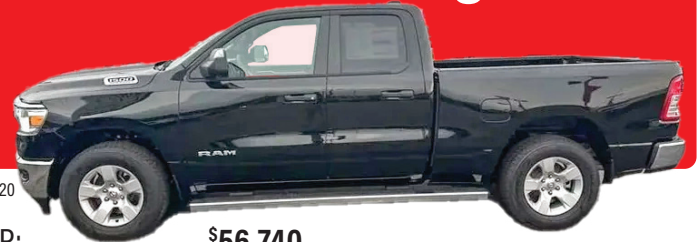
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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

# Heartbeats of Our Hometown

We celebrate the silent heroes among us.

**I**N 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.

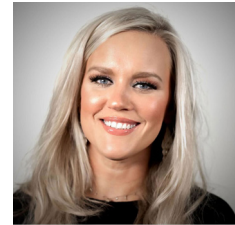
The beneficiaries of these charities are not just faceless names on a list. They are people with hopes and dreams, often finding themselves in situations beyond their control. The support they receive is more than just material aid; it's a message that they are not forgotten. Their community stands with 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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CHAPTER 1 OF 3

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

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- 20 Faith, surrender, and lasting change
- 26 Painting portraits of healing and redemption
- 32 Share the love

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Photography by Ashleigh Newnes

◀ Stephen Mason and Kenny Green

# FINDING JOY IN WORK

---

Food truck owner  
Lisa Womack  
works for herself  
and the public

By Sara Hook // Photography by Ashleigh Newnes  
and submitted by Lisa Womack

---





Lisa  
Womack

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“

*I have to thank my customers. I do know that without them, I wouldn't be where I'm at now.*

*-Lisa Womack*

**C**OFFEE COUNTY is home to many great places to eat, and not all of them can be found in the same place every day. Local food trucks sell everything from burgers and tacos to barbecue and waffles.

This past year, a new specialty sandwich truck joined the roster. The Sammich Shack opened in May 2023 and flourished with the community's help. Owner Lisa Womack said she enjoyed cooking and working with the public, and after being unable to work for a time in 2021 due to illness, she decided she did not want to go back to working for other people. Since her kids were grown, she didn't have much opportunity to cook at home. Starting a food truck was the perfect solution.

“I wanted to do things that [were] going to make me happy, for me to enjoy my life,” Womack said. “Luckily, by the grace of God, this has been great.”

Part of the draw was the idea of making her own hours and working on her own time, but Womack said at the end of the day, it doesn't really work like that.

“When you get down to it, there's actually a lot [that goes] into operating a food truck. In order to keep the customers coming and [keep] them happy, you have to stay open,” explains Womack.

While she had worked in restaurants, Womack had not owned or operated one before opening The Sammich Shack. In the end, she said, it is a seven-day-a-week job. The food truck uses home-made sides and sauces, and Womack said a lot of thought goes into where she wants to set up each day.

“You really don't see the backside of it unless you get in it. It's a lot of prep time, so even when I'm not open, I'm actually still



doing things to get ready for the next day or to get ready for the following week.”

The Sammich Shack offers patty melts, Reubens, and paninis, among other sandwiches. Womack's favorite menu item is the sloppy joe grilled cheese.

“A lot of the sandwiches you may see somewhere else, but the sloppy joe grilled cheese... that's mine,” Womack said.

Although the food truck has been open less than a year, it became popular fast — something Womack said she did not expect. Womack didn't advertise the truck on their first day, hoping to get into the swing of things slowly, but after their first post on Facebook, the community showed up in force.

“The very next day, we sold out,” Womack said. “We had so many people standing and waiting for us to open, and that came throughout the entire day. It was very overwhelming.”





Lisa and Alan Womack  
with Kayla Stephens



Womack said that thanks to two close friends, her husband, and her customers, The Sammich Shack has been successful. Her friends pushed her to get started, her husband helped set everything up, and the community made the food truck successful.

“I have to thank my customers. I do know that without them, I wouldn’t be where I’m at now.”

Starting a food truck was more than just a whim for Womack and her family. The hard work she has put in to start her business will hopefully pay off for a long time, as she said she wants to be doing just as well, if not better, in one year and all the years following.

“I plan on doing this till I can no longer do it. I’m 47 years old now, and I hope to be able to do this until after retirement.”

We are not guaranteed tomorrow, as Womack said, and it is important to enjoy the life you have. While the work has, at times, been overwhelming, she said it has all been out of joy.

“I’ve absolutely enjoyed every minute of every day we’ve done this truck. I’ve enjoyed working with the public. I can’t complain one bit about any of it,” said Womack. **GN**



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# FAITH

SURRENDER AND LASTING CHANGE



# Mosaic Men's Recovery program rebuilds lives one mosaic piece at a time.

By Jeriah Brumfield // Photography by Ashleigh Newnes

**T**HE SUBSTANCE Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration designates Aug. 27 to Sept. 2 as Overdose Awareness Week. However, the pervasive threat of overdose confronts many local community members, neighbors, and family members daily. The community is committed to proactively tackling the challenges affecting its residents. One noteworthy initiative born in this charming town is the Mosaic Men's Recovery program.

The driving force behind Mosaic Men's Recovery program is personal experience. A shared recovery journey between the founders, Kenny Green and Stephen Mason, underpins their compassion for those seeking recovery. Their understanding of struggles, failures, and the arduous path to sobriety fuels an unparalleled empathy for those seeking redemption.

---

Kenny Green and Stephen Mason





▲ Back: Zach, Alex, Chad, and Maurice Middle: Stephen Mason, Dustin, Kevin, Noah, Dustin, Ronnie, Allen, and Kenny Green  
Front: Cole, Thomas, Amon, Larry, Jamie, and Wesley

**We're Christ-centered.  
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biggest principle that  
we teach that helps  
our men accomplish  
what they're trying to  
accomplish.**

**-Stephen Mason**

“We always had a passion for recovery since we got sober,” Stephen Mason shared, reflecting on the genesis of the program.

Both founders are not just advocates; they are living proof that recovery is possible. The program they built is firmly rooted in their Christian faith, believing that “God doesn’t just save people from things; He saves them for things.”

Mosaic Men’s Recovery stands out in its mission to provide donor-funded residential recovery programs. Their goal is to help those without insurance, eliminating barriers often hindering access to quality recovery services.

Mason, drawing from his experience as an overdose prevention specialist, witnessed the alarming rise in overdose deaths. This pressing need fueled their passion to create a refuge for those seeking recovery.

The center of the program lies not only in its founders' dedication but also in the principles they instill in the program. Surrender, their most significant fundamental principle, encourages individuals to let go of old thinking and destructive habits, paving the way for lasting change.

"We're Christ-centered. Biblical principles are our foundation 100%. And surrender is the biggest principle that we teach that helps our men accomplish what they're trying to accomplish."

Mason reflected on his own recovery journey, quoting Thomas Edison: "I have not failed 10,000 times — I've successfully found 10,000 ways that will not work."

Mosaic's approach is shaped by the understanding that compassion is deeper when one has walked in the same shoes.

"You hardly ever get compassion fatigue if you've been in the person's shoes. When people do things that just don't make any sense whatsoever, we know they're being driven by a compulsive obsession to use drugs and alcohol, knowing this helps us serve them better."

The program ensures accountability, transparency, and a commitment to guiding individuals toward a life of sobriety and purpose.

Mosaic Men's Recovery weaves faith into its pursuits through Bible studies, worship sessions, and support from local churches. It goes beyond clinical aspects, creating an environment where men can rebuild their lives, reconnect with their families, and discover their intended roles within the community.

Stephen Mason beamed with pride as he shared success stories like Joey Smith and Cole Graham, individuals who emerged from the depths of addiction to become pillars of their communities. These stories are the living proof of Mosaic's impact on men's lives, restoring families and rewriting destinies.

The community engagement initiative Mosaic Men's Recovery undertook plays a crucial role in destigmatizing men's mental health and seeking help. By encouraging participants to contribute to community projects, Mosaic dismantles stereotypes surrounding addiction and demonstrates that recovery is not just about personal transformation but community betterment.

As Mosaic Men's Recovery celebrates its fourth anniversary, the proof of its efficacy is in more than mere numbers; it's in the statistics. With a rate of less than 5%, Mosaic stands out in an environment where relapse is a persistent challenge.

The program's success is measured by statistics and the lives it transforms. A remarkable 70% of participants are sober, employed, and plugged into a local church. Over half of them actively serve in recovery-related initiatives, paying forward the gift of sobriety.

The story of this life-changing initiative fills those involved with resilience, redemption, and the firm belief that every person, regardless of their past, can find hope and healing. As their story continues to unfold in the lives of many, it is a call to action, an invitation for everyone to be part of a journey that decreases addiction, rebuilding lives one mosaic piece at a time. **GN**

*For further information or to support the cause, contact Mosaic Men's Recovery through their Facebook page or website at [www.wearemosaicrecoverycenter.com](http://www.wearemosaicrecoverycenter.com).*



▲ Ronnie and Amon

...cation that comes celebrating Dairy is father Steve, his and his wife Kara nally started dairy been in Tennessee th is a way to ob- behind the scenes, riculture. ght on many people -energy, high-pro- formers do a lot of in terms of raising care of cattle, being robbers, and wear- tk goes into dairy i. The Nash family of 2020. \*We'll al-



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Selina Hyzer



PAINING  
PORTRAITS OF  
HEALING AND  
REDEMPTION

## A behind-the-scenes ministry transforms lives through art.

By Jeriah Brumfield // Photography by Ashleigh Newnes and submitted by Selina Hyzer

**T**heHeARTStudio serves as a sanctuary of healing, a sacred haven where paintbrushes dance, and colors knit tales that defy verbal expression. Founded by the visionary Selina Hyzer, this unassuming refuge draws inspiration from her personal struggles and divine encounters, surpassing the conventional remedies of healing.

God utilized Hyzer's own struggle, a journey through mental health challenges, and the tumultuous backdrop of her husband's addiction as an avenue for creativity and purpose. Despite her role as a mental health professional, Hyzer found herself trapped in the cage of her own battles — depression, anxiety, postpartum depression, and more — all while aiding others through traditional healing arts. However, conventional methods fell short for her, and relief came in a divine encounter on a Nashville road.

"I [have] worked in the mental health field since 2010. But the entire time I was doing healing art with all of my participants, I struggled with it myself. My own personal artwork wasn't even helping me because everything I painted to help release what I was battling internally was just projecting how I felt onto a canvas. So, there I was, trying to instruct and guide people with their own healing through art, yet I was dying inside," she reflected.


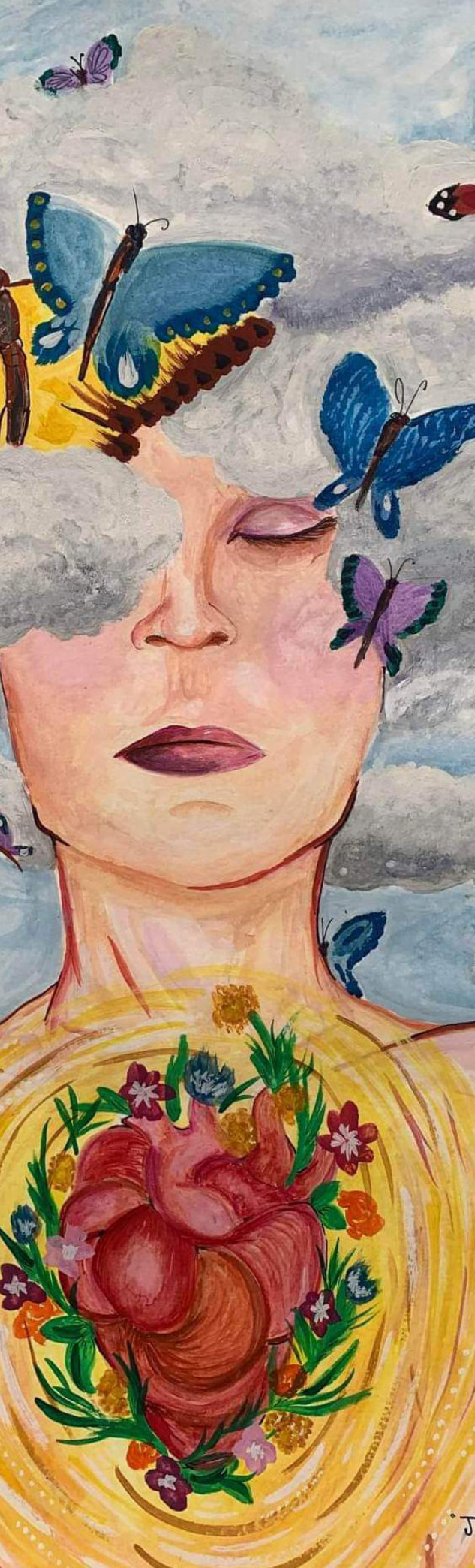
The turning point in Hyzer's life occurred not within the boundaries of a church building but on a mundane day in her car. A divine presence enwrapped her, prompting her to surrender her pain to a higher purpose. In that moment, God transformed her art from a mere projection of internal struggles to a vessel

of healing. The dark and demonic themes were replaced with a divine light, washing away her inner turmoil.

"I felt the Lord call me to birth this vision to smaller communities."

From that encounter, TheHeARTStudio emerged as a healing arts ministry, a bridge between people and God, inter-





“It’s not about getting the art perfect; it’s about the process through it. The story and the depth behind your artwork are important.”

- Selina Hyzer

laced with creativity and compassion. The unique approach involves sharing the gospel through art projects tailored to the specific needs of participants, ranging from treatment centers to nursing homes, hospice care, and even home visits.

“We are working with Jesus to share his heart with his people because they matter.”

TheHeARTStudio operates behind the scenes, avoiding the limelight to respect the sanctity of the spaces they enter. Hyzer’s team, a diverse collaboration of musicians, artists, writers, and prayer warriors, brings a multifaceted approach to cater to the community’s varied needs.

One of the distinctive aspects of TheHeARTStudio is its emphasis

on the process, not the product. It’s not about creating masterpieces; it’s about allowing God to guide the hands of participants, irrespective of their artistic skills.

“It’s not about getting the art perfect; it’s about the process through it. The story and the depth behind your artwork are important.”

The inventive projects are designed to reflect personal stories, providing a tangible outlet for participants to express their struggles, fears, and hopes.

Their ministry extends beyond traditional studio settings, conducting paint and praise events open to the public, creating an avenue for supporters to engage and experience the transformative power of art. Hyzer’s live paintings at churches and outreach



▲ Selina Hyzer, Elise Farris, Josh Hemphill, TJ Hyzer, Teresa James, and Marie Dunn

events are powerful expressions of God's messages, channeled through her prophetic artistry.

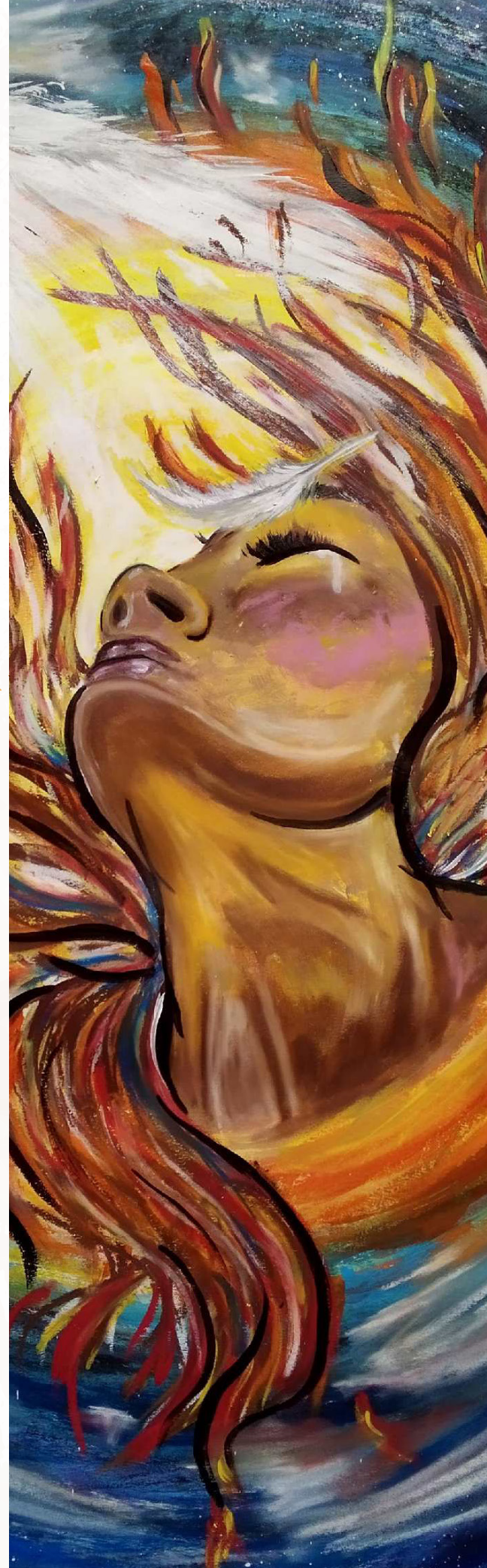
"We've had people in wheelchairs who, when we brought in music and worship, got out of their wheelchairs and danced. It's beautiful," she said.

Yet, their mission still has its challenges. The ministry often faces the difficulty of sporadic interactions with participants, some of whom they may never see again. The bittersweet reality of the ministry lies in sowing seeds of faith and healing, with the hope that God will continue the work even when they can't be present.

TheHeARTStudio is not just about creating art; it's about developing an environment where the heart encounters the divine.

Hyzer's vulnerability and appreciable passion infuse every stroke of paint, every note of music, and every prayer, creating a ministry that profoundly impacts God's love and the healing power of creativity. TheHeARTStudio is a hidden gem, quietly transforming lives one brushstroke at a time.

"His hand is on their hands when painting or drawing. He is dancing with them. It's so beautiful. We've had people who have dementia or Alzheimer's, and they cannot remember where their room is down the hall, but they can remember a scripture or a message verbatim, word for word, that we probably talked about with them a month ago, and they bring it back up." GN



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his father Steve, his  
and his wife Kara  
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# Share the love

## Nourishing communities, one casserole at a time

**T**HE ACT of preparing a homemade meal transcends the boundaries of sustenance; it becomes a gesture of empathy, a tangible expression of care that resonates deeply with those facing adversity. Amidst the chaos of life's struggles, a warm, home-cooked dish can offer solace and a brief respite, reminding recipients that they are not alone. The significance lies not only in the nourishment provided but also in the emotional sustenance offered through the time and effort dedicated to creating something heartfelt. In sharing the simple yet profound act of cooking, individuals forge connections, cultivate understanding, and sow the seeds of resilience, fostering a sense of communal support that can uplift spirits and inspire hope in the midst of life's trials. **GN**

### Golden Potato Casserole

*Submitted by Donna Simmons*

6 med. potatoes, peeled and sliced  
2 med. white onions, peeled and sliced  
1 can mushroom soup  
1 soup can milk  
1/2 stick butter  
salt and pepper, to taste

Arrange potatoes and onions in layers in a 1 1/2 qt. casserole dish. Add soup and milk to casserole. Slice butter and place over the top of mixture. Add salt and pepper. Bake in 350° oven for 1 hour and 30 minutes or until potatoes are fork-tender.

### Sunday Morning Casserole

*Submitted by Doris Kiddey*

2 slices white bread, cubed  
1 lb. ground mild sausage, cooked, drained  
6 eggs, beaten  
2 c. milk  
1 t. dry mustard  
1/2 t. salt  
pinch of pepper  
1 1/2 c. red potatoes, unpeeled, cooked  
1 1/2 c. cheddar and Monterey Jack  
cheese, grated

Place bread in a 8x11 inch casserole dish. Add sausage. In a medium mixing bowl, combine eggs, milk, mustard, salt, and pepper. Pour over sausage. Layer potatoes and cheese over mixture. Cover and refrigerate overnight. In the morning, bake casserole at 350° for 30 minutes, or until set.

### Broccoli and Cheese Casserole

*Submitted by Martha McDaniel*

2 boxes frozen chopped broccoli, cooked and drained  
1 stick butter  
1/2 lb. Velveeta® cheese  
1/2 pkg. butter flavored crackers, crushed

Place cooked broccoli into a greased casserole dish. Chop 1/2 stick of butter and the cheese into small pieces. Stir these into the broccoli. In a small bowl melt remaining butter and mix with cracker crumbs. Place on top of broccoli mixture. Bake 25 to 30 minutes at 350°.

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



# Good Stories

## CHAPTER 2 OF 3

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

- 36 Charity Spotlight
- 38 A lifeline for the innocent
- 42 Paws for comfort
- 46 There's harmony in tradition

Our stories are based on submissions from local people.

Submit yours here:



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Photography by Ashleigh Newnes

◀ Ivy Petty

CHA

S P  T

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# RITTY LIGHT

**"It's not how much we give, but how  
much love we put into giving."**

- Mother Teresa



# A LIFELINE FOR THE INNOCENT

DELVE INTO THE BEATING HEART OF A SANCTUARY WHERE COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND UNWAVERING HOPE RESHAPE YOUNG LIVES.

By *Jeriah Brumfield*  
Photography by *Ashleigh Newnes*

**S**ITTING AT 104 North Spring St., this unassuming building is more than just bricks and mortar; it's a haven. The Children's Advocacy Center in Coffee County is a sanctuary where an unyielding sense of hope meets the dark shadows of trauma.

Ivy Petty, the interim director, and the entire organization welcome children all over the community with a warm smile and a steely resolve, a combination born out of years spent advocating for the most vulnerable among us. Her journey with the center began in 2009 when she joined the board of directors, a role that eventually led her to this position.

Petty takes us on a journey in time, narrating the center's humble beginnings.

"Church Women United saw a need for a Children's Advocacy Center in our community. They got together in November of 2004 with under \$20 to start," she said.



▲ Ivy Petty



**“We do not charge any families for any of our services. And that’s why fundraising is so important.”**

- Ivy Petty

The center’s mission revolves around serving children who are victims of severe sexual abuse through education, prevention, and intervention.

Fast forward to 2023, and the center proudly stands as the new owner of its building, a forever home built on the foundation of compassion and community support.

“We currently are the new owners of this building, and I say new because we have paid it off. So we have a forever home at 104 North Spring St.,” Petty explained.

The center’s walls have witnessed countless stories of resilience and healing. In 2022 alone, the center received 300 referrals, a staggering number that reflects the harsh reality many children face. Out of these, 175 children underwent forensic interviews, a crucial step in providing them with a voice without forcing them to relive their trauma in a courtroom setting.

Inside this haven, a team of dedicated professionals works tirelessly. Rachel, the forensic interviewer, takes center stage during critical moments, conducting interviews that serve as a lifeline for the children entangled in the web of trauma.

Petty described the process with a mix of empathy and determination.

“It is recorded. So should it go to court, it will be admissible in a court of law as evidence, and the child will not have to testify again.”



**“Church Women  
United saw a need for  
a Children’s Advocacy  
Center in our  
community. They got  
together in November  
of 2004 with under  
\$20 to start.”**

- Ivy Petty





But it's not just about legalities; it's about sparing these young souls the agony of reliving their trauma.

"The child has already been traumatized. Why are we going to make them relive that trauma all over again, especially if their attacker is present in the courtroom?"

The center extends its arms in various ways, offering free mental health services and on-site medical care. Kim, a trauma-focused therapist, makes the journey from Ashland City every week to be a passionate guide for healing for these children. The center collaborates with partners like Our Kids from Nashville to ensure comprehensive medical support, sparing families the hardship of navigating distant cities for crucial services.

Challenges lurk in the corridors of compassion, the chief among them being funding. Petty acknowledges the uphill battle.

"Awareness is huge, and really it goes back to funding because even though Coffee County is quite large, we are a small community, and every nonprofit is vying for the same dollar," she explains.

The center's annual fundraising event, scheduled for April 25, 2024, at The Atlantic in Tullahoma, beckons the community to contribute. Whether through ticket purchases, donating auction items, or providing essential supplies, every contribution is a lifeline for the center.

"We do not charge any families for any of our services. And that's why fundraising is so important."

Petty's sentiments echo the importance of community support. The power lies in the servitude of this close-knit community. Everyone has the power to make a difference in the lives of these children and their families with small acts of kindness and generosity.

The Children's Advocacy Center isn't just a building but a symbol of resilience, community support, and unyielding hope for those who need it the most. **GN**

[Call \(877\) 237-0004 if you or someone you know would like to submit a referral to Children's Services.](tel:877-237-0004)

# PAWS FOR COMFORT

A HEARTWARMING MISSION THAT ENRICHES LIVES THROUGH FURRY COMPANIONSHIP



**“I like to say that  
the dogs are  
happy pills,  
and they’re  
never sad.”**

- Felicia Hardcastle



*By Jeriah Brumfield  
Photography by Ashleigh Newnes*

**P** EOPLE ALL over Manchester are experiencing the joys of animal therapy without owning a pet. There's nothing like taking a break to pet a fur baby, their snuggles providing you with the comfort you need to finish your tasks stress-free.

Therapy Dogs of Manchester is a dedicated group of individuals joined by a passion for spreading joy and comfort through the therapeutic presence of their furry companions. Among them are Felicia Hardcastle, the founder, and Janice Hambrock, the co-founder.

Hambrock, a proud citizen of Manchester, found inspiration for the organization through the companionship of her therapy dog, Winston. Her first therapy dog has been certified for four years. Their ability to bring comfort and calmness sparked an idea that would soon transform into a community initiative.

Upon moving to Manchester, Hardcastle discovered Hambrock's call on a local forum. She was seeking kindred spirits interested in forming a therapy dog group. With two dogs of her own, Hardcastle eagerly joined the cause.

Their mission is to spread joy, love, and kindness through the therapeutic touch of their precious fur babies. MacArthur Manor, Legacy, and local elementary schools have all benefitted from snuggle sessions. The group has plans to reach more assisted living and nursing home facilities.



▲ Winston

This organization operates as a free service driven solely by the passion and dedication of its members. The goal is not monetary gain but the enrichment of lives. The residents' reactions have been nothing short of transformative. The simple presence of these furry friends brightens days.

Hardcastle highlights the unique bonds forged between assisted living residents and therapy dogs, turning ordinary visits into extraordinary connections that linger long after the dogs have left.

"You can tell their demeanor just changes the minute that we walk into a room. The dogs interact with them and do little tricks."

The impact goes beyond the superficial, with heartwarming stories of improved moods and miraculously recovered memories.



▲ Patsy Johnson and Rosie

“We’ve also had a resident who had not spoken in almost nine months, and because of the dogs, she had a memory recall of her dogs in her younger life. The first words that she’d said in almost nine months were, ‘That’s my dog.’ You almost have to be there to see exactly how the interaction is. It’s just pure love, joy, and fun.”

The dogs, in their unique way, become agents of healing.

“I have always known the importance of having an animal. They become part of your family, and they offer great benefits. However, doing this has opened my eyes to alternative ways of dealing with medical issues or mental health issues. It doesn’t always have to be your typical pharmacy visit.”

In local schools, programs like “Reading with Rosie” have been

introduced, where children engage with therapy dogs, reading stories from a canine perspective.

Beyond the joy of reading, children are educated on good doggy etiquette to ensure a safe interaction. The aura that therapy animals bring into the classroom assists in creating a nurturing environment that extends far beyond school grounds.

Scientific research supports what Hardcastle has witnessed firsthand: the therapeutic power of animals, particularly dogs. Studies show a tangible decrease in blood pressure and healing benefits.

“To have someone be able to touch the dog, or the dog to cuddle up with them and love on them — it takes them out of that dark place, maybe for a few minutes, and brings them some light. I have to say, I think it’s better than any pill that any doctor has.”

Hardcastle acknowledges the challenges in getting the community involved. Still, the fulfillment from witnessing the positive impact on both recipients and therapy dogs is immeasurable.

Looking ahead, the group envisions collaborations with mental health organizations, recognizing the potential for their unique brand of therapy to complement conventional approaches.

The dogs revel in their roles as happiness ambassadors, showing delight with wagging tails, eager to form that connection.

“I like to say that the dogs are happy pills, and they’re never sad.”

Passion is the driving force behind this organization. The shared dedication of its members fuels a collective desire to make a difference in the lives of those they touch. **GN**



▲ Janet Carter and Sophie



**“It doesn’t matter if  
you have no money  
or a million dollars.  
You’re going to  
be treated the  
same way.”**

**- Roger Steele**

# THERE'S HARMONY IN TRADITION

MANCHESTER COMMUNITY MEMBER REVIVED MANCHESTER  
OLD TIMERS DAY

*By Jeriah Brumfield*  
*Photography by Ashleigh Newnes*

**S**TEP INTO the square on a particular day in October. The air is alive with the nostalgic hum of laughter and the unmistakable aroma of sizzling treats whirling through the breeze. The sun, casting a warm glow on the cobblestone paths, illuminates an assortment of colors. Bright banners flutter in the wind, each reflecting the richness and charm of Manchester's history. The distant melody of live music, a harmonious blend of folk tunes and timeless classics, wraps around you like a familiar embrace. The chatter of the crowd, a symphony of joyous voices, rises and falls in rhythm with the beat of the event. Everywhere you look is a feast for the senses — children with cotton candy-stained smiles, elders sharing stories about the “Good Ole Days,” and couples twirling in spontaneous dances, their laughter echoing in the air. The unexplainable energy of Manchester Old Timers Day immerses you in a sensory



▲ Rhonda and Roger Steele with Mary Todd



▲ Misty Bennett, Roger Bennett, and Haislee Smith

banquet, each sight, sound, and scent joining together to create an experience that transcends the ordinary. It's not just an event. It's a journey through time and tradition, a celebration that speaks to the very soul of this quaint town.

There's nothing like walking down the square and feeling like you've been instantly transported back to earlier years, when the Manchester community thrived on unity and values passed down through generations. This annual event brings people together to celebrate tradition and togetherness. Manchester Old Timers Day, a resurrection of a cherished local gathering, has demonstrated the outpouring of love, joy, and pride that can only be found within the spirit of a devoted community.

For Roger Steele, the chairman and organizer of the event, Old Timers Day is a labor of love and a commitment to preserving the essence of the town's heritage. With passion and determination, he has spearheaded the revival of this cherished occasion, building stronger community bonds each year.

Steele reflected on his dedication to Old Timers Day and his deep roots in the community. Having lived in Manchester his entire life, his memory packed with fond memories of Old Timers Day events from times past, he extends his involvement beyond the event itself.

"As a kid, I was always on the football team. We got to be in the parade, and we got to play all day long. You could stay there all day with a couple of dollars and have a great day."

The story of Old Timers Day's revival began in 2011 when Steele, spurred by nostalgia and community engagement, initiated a Facebook group that quickly gained momentum.

"In 2011, I started a Facebook group called 'If you grew up in Manchester.' That blew up, and now it has over 10,000 members," Steele remarked.

The collective memories the group shared sparked a desire to resurrect the beloved event, which had been dormant since 2007. Undeterred by challenges, Steele approached the mayor and, with a dedicated team, breathed new life into Manchester Old Timers Day.

Old Timers Day has blossomed into a community-wide celebration with 128 vendors, from a modest beginning with



10 board members and 20 volunteers. However, Steele emphasized the importance of retaining the event's intimate hometown feel, steering clear of corporate influences.

"We're trying not to grow so big to where it's a corporate thing. We don't want that. We want to keep it a small, hometown kind of thing," he said.

Old Timers Day transcends the typical festival experience. The event's ethos centers around inclusivity and respect, cultivating an environment where everyone, regardless of background or circumstance, is treated with equal warmth.

"It doesn't matter if you have no money or a million dollars. You're going to be treated the same way," he remarked.

Old Timers Day has evolved over the years, adapting to the times while preserving cherished traditions. The parade, complete with tractors, horses, and mules, remains a highlight, drawing thousands of spectators each year.

For Steele and his dedicated and efficient team, including Rhonda Steele and Mary Todd, the event is not just a one-day affair — it's a year-round commitment to fostering unity, creating memories, and preserving the values that make Manchester a truly special place.

"That's one day we can come together. It doesn't matter what your politics are. It doesn't matter your race, it doesn't matter how you grew up, if you're rich or poor, everybody gets the same amount of respect. Everybody's like family." GN

Visit [Manchester Old Timers Day's Facebook page](#) for more information.



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

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

Nominate someone to be featured in Good News Magazine.

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



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

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

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

### Step 2: Selection and theme assignment

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

### Step 3: Interviews and photo shoots

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



## *What's next in Good News Magazine?*

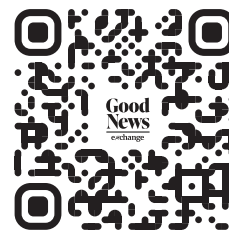
Currently, our dedicated team of magazine writers and editors is hard at work crafting stories under themes like “The Learning Curve,” “Shop Local,” and “Independence.” We are excited to announce the next theme needing story submissions is “**Dreams Come True.**”

### **What we seek in Dreams Come True stories:**

Do you have a neighbor who's chasing big dreams? Maybe someone is starting their own business, or a local musician is lighting up the stage? We're looking for hometown heroes making their mark. If you know someone turning dreams into reality right here in our community, we'd love to hear about it. Share their story with us!

*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.

**54** Community Events

**56** Charity Listings

**58** Advertiser Index

Submit a positive story on our website:



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

Photography by Ashleigh Newnes

◀ Carlee Sullivan and Ethan Singleton

# 48th Annual Chamber Awards Gala - Jan. 25



Photography by Ashleigh Newnes

The 48th Annual Chamber Awards Gala, presented by Coffee County Bank, was held at the Manchester Coffee County Conference Center on Jan. 25, 2024. The event was a fun night of networking and laughter, highlighting accomplishments from the past year, showcasing future plans, and recognizing some very worthy award recipients.



1. Amber Hartsfield and Jason Jacobs 2. Julie and Jeff Baldwin 3. Ashley Kraft and Ashleigh Becker  
4. Mary and Kenneth Duke 5. Kacy Sherrell, Patrick Sherrell, Wesley Higdon, and Jessica Higdon

# Snow Days - Jan. 15-19



1. Violet Young 2. Alexis, Western, and Gabe 3. Tristen Cordell 4. Zach Henderson and Andrea Holt  
5. Miles Walling 6. Kayden Rollins and Luke Rollins

# INSPIRE MORE GOOD

Donate or volunteer at your local charities and nonprofits.

Good News Magazine's mission is to build stronger communities through positive stories. We encourage you to donate and volunteer at local nonprofits to spread more good in your community.

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Alleviating food insecurity in Manchester and the surrounding areas.

(931) 409-6040 or  
(931) 247-5272  
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## **Good Samaritan Of Manchester Tennessee Inc.**

Focused on food assistance and operating as a food bank.

(931) 728-5122  
Facebook: Good Samaritan

## **Coffee County Anti-Drug Coalition**

Focused on substance abuse prevention and education, this coalition collaborates with schools, community groups, and law enforcement to raise awareness and provide resources.

(931) 247-4851  
[www.ccantidrug.org](http://www.ccantidrug.org)

## **Coffee County Imagination Library**

Affiliated with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, this program mails free books to children from birth to age 5, fostering a love for reading.

(877) 323-8663  
[www.readcoffeecounty.org](http://www.readcoffeecounty.org)

## **Coffee County Senior Citizens Center**

Supporting the elderly population by offering social activities, meals, and transportation services. They aim to enhance the quality of life for seniors.

(931) 455-2504  
[www.seniorcenter.us](http://www.seniorcenter.us)

## **Coffee County Children's Advocacy Center**

This nonprofit provides support and resources for children who have experienced abuse or trauma. They work closely with law enforcement and other agencies to ensure the safety and well-being of children.

(931) 723-8888  
[www.coffeecountycac.org](http://www.coffeecountycac.org)

## **Manchester Arts Center**

A hub for cultural and artistic activities, including theater productions, art exhibitions, and workshops.

(931) 728-3434  
[www.millenniumrep.org](http://www.millenniumrep.org)

## **Manchester Housing Authority**

Providing affordable housing options for low-income families and individuals in the area. They manage public housing units and offer rental assistance programs.

(931) 728-2596  
Facebook: Manchester  
Housing Authority



## Duck River Watershed Society

The Duck River Watershed Society is a membership organization that is focused on increasing the Watershed's overall health and sustainability for the betterment of all who rely on it. We facilitate this through seeking out collaborative partnerships, educating those living throughout the Watershed, and engaging our members and the public, in various recreational and ecological programming

(205) 382-3955  
[www.duckriverwatershedsociety.com](http://www.duckriverwatershedsociety.com)

See more options or  
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to the listing:

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## The Learning Curve

ISSUE 3 2024

### Deadlines

Sponsored Content.....	1/29/24
Advertising.....	2/29/24
Mailed to Homes.....	3/16/24



## Dreams Come True

ISSUE 7 2024

### Deadlines

Sponsored Content.....	6/3/24
Advertising.....	7/3/24
Mailed to Homes.....	7/20/24



## Shop Local

ISSUE 4 2024

### Deadlines

Sponsored Content.....	3/4/24
Advertising.....	4/4/24
Mailed to Homes.....	4/20/24



## Where Champions are Made

ISSUE 8 2024

### Deadlines

Sponsored Content.....	7/1/24
Advertising.....	8/1/24
Mailed to Homes.....	8/17/24



## Vacation in Manchester

ISSUE 5 2024

### Deadlines

Sponsored Content.....	4/2/24
Advertising.....	5/2/24
Mailed to Homes.....	5/18/24



## From Farm to Table

ISSUE 9 2024

### Deadlines

Sponsored Content.....	8/5/24
Advertising.....	9/5/24
Mailed to Homes.....	9/21/24



## Independence

ISSUE 6 2024

### Deadlines

Sponsored Content.....	5/6/24
Advertising.....	6/6/24
Mailed to Homes.....	6/22/24

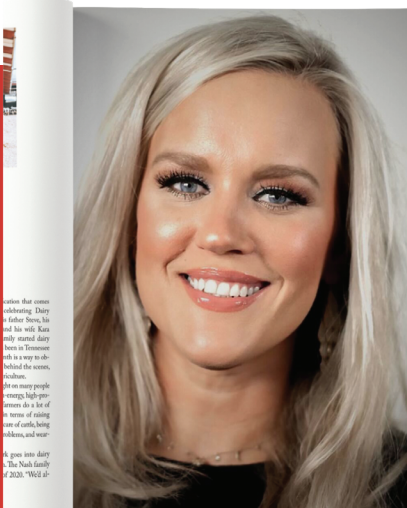


## Our Heroes

ISSUE 10 2024

### Deadlines

Sponsored Content.....	9/3/24
Advertising.....	10/3/24
Mailed to Homes.....	10/17/24



## Amanda Cox

Publishing Partner

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# HUNGRY?

*What sounds good?*

## THE STARTERS

### Kettle Chips: \$3.99

Ranch • Jalapenos (+50¢)  
Beer Cheese, CJ Sauce (+\$1.00)  
Pimento Cheese (Reg. or Jalapeno) (+\$1.00),

### Bavarian Soft Pretzel: \$5.99

Beer Cheese (+\$1.00) • Dijon Mustard (+50¢)

### Cheesy Bread: \$7.99

Includes Marinara Sauce

## THE PIZZA

### Specialty: \$10.99

Cheeseburger • Buffalo Chicken • Chicken Bacon Ranch  
The Hippie • BBQ Chicken • Nashville Hot Chicken

### Build Your Own: \$8.99

#### The Meats (+\$1.00 ea.)

Pepperoni • Sausage • Bacon • Ham • Beef  
Grilled Chicken

#### The Veggies (+50¢ ea.)

Mushrooms • Black Olives • Jalapenos  
Peppers (Bell, Banana) • Onions

#### The Others (+50¢ ea.)

Pineapple • Hot Honey • CJ Drizzle

## NOT THE PIZZA

### Reuben Sandwich \$8.99

Includes Kettle Chips & Pickle

### Black Angus Hot Dog \$6.99

Includes Kettle Chips  
Beer Cheese (+\$1.00)  
Sauerkraut, Onion or Jalapenos (+50¢)

### Pimento Cheese Sandwich \$5.99

Reg. or Jalapeno Pimento Cheese.  
Includes Kettle Chips & Pickle

### Oven Baked Wings - 6 Ct. Bone-In \$10.99

Ranch or Blue Cheese (+50¢)  
Sauces: Buffalo, Nash Hot, Garlic Parmesan, Jala-Mango,  
Bourbon BBQ, Caribbean Jerk (dry rub), CJ Sauce (+50¢)

## THE SWEETS

### Cinnamon Roll: \$4.99

### Cinnamon Sugar Soft Pretzel: \$6.49

Caramel (+50¢) • Icing (+50¢)

## THE LIQUIDS

### Craft Root Beer: \$2.00

### Bottled Coke (20 oz.) • Juices (12 oz.): \$2.50

### Monster: \$3.00

### Sweet & Unsweet Tea: \$1.50

### Lemonade: \$1.50

### Bottled Water: \$1.00

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*Manchester, Tenn*

