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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

The impact of ‘shop local’

Together we can ensure that their legacies continue, our economy is kept stable, and our community continues to thrive.

THE ECONOMIC Policy Institute reports that for every dollar spent at a locally owned business, 68 cents of it stays in the local economy. Compare this to 32 cents staying in a local community when spending money at a chain store. The University of Florida conducted an analysis that showed how local businesses help fight high unemployment rates. When large companies lay off workers, local businesses are able to provide employment opportunities and maintain a consistent workforce. This is critical in sustaining our community and keeping money flowing within it.

Our locally owned businesses have helped our community become what it

is today. The long-standing staples in our community have created bridges between the generations. People who were once shoppers at a young age are now the mature employees who always greet you with a smile. And as new decades come and go, their smiles never fade. And the young shoppers they smile to will one day be in their shoes.

We should all continue to make an effort to support our local businesses. Not only does it help create a stronger economy for our town, but it also helps preserve the memories and traditions of generations before us. Together we can ensure that their legacies continue, our economy is kept stable, and our community continues to thrive. **GN**

Wesley Bryant,
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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GoodLiving

CHAPTER 1 OF 3

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

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From 'SMALL
TOWN BOY'
to
TENNESSEE
LEGEND

8TH ANNUAL NIGHT OF
MUSIC AND GIVING BENEFITS
LOCAL NONPROFITS

By Amanda E. West // Photography by Zach Birdsong

Tickets to the eighth annual Dustin Lynch and Friends Benefit Concert held at Lynch's alma mater, Tullahoma High School, sold out quickly as fans flocked to see the triple-platinum award-winning "Small Town Boy" this past December. With roughly 750 attendees in the audience, Lynch performed with Nashville-based songwriters Randy Montana, Brent Anderson, and Lanie Gardner.

Together, they raised a whopping \$40,000, which the trio later split between three local nonprofits: Haven of Hope Counseling, Special Olympics Tennessee, and the South Jackson Performing Arts Center (SJPAC). Lynch also requested concert attendees bring an unwrapped toy to donate to the annual drive for the Tullahoma Fire Department, benefitting local children in need.



▲ DUSTIN LYNCH



▲ Dustin Lynch and members of the Tullahoma Fire Department

Born and raised in Tullahoma, Lynch took to the stage at SJPAC and regularly performed in the South Jackson Goes Country show before graduating from Tullahoma High School in 2003. In 2011, he signed with Broken Bow Records, and his debut single “Cowboys and Angels” topped the charts a short time later. Inspired by country music legends Garth Brooks and Alan Jackson, Lynch is a flawless blend of a traditional country sound with his own modern twist.

With multiple hits inspired by his hometown, including an album released in 2020 titled “Tullahoma,” songs such as “Momma’s House,” “Dirt Roads,” and “Good Girl” have made Lynch more than

a local celebrity — he’s a Tennessee legend. To date, Lynch has released six albums plus 17 singles, with eight of those singles reaching number one on Country Airplay. He performed his hit single “Small Town Boy” in the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade in 2017, and on Sept. 18, 2018, he was inducted into the Grand Ole Opry. As a songwriter, Lynch co-wrote “Somebody Somewhere,” a song by Canadian country rock artist Dallas Smith, as well as the 2013 single by James Wesley, “Thank a Farmer.”

“One of the first stages Lynch ever sang on outside of church and school was at SJPAC. Over the years, Dustin has been very kind and even though he has moved away, his roots are here in Tullahoma. In

fact, he wrote many of his songs about our town. During the COVID-19 shutdowns, Dustin even hosted private Zoom parties to keep things going for us at SJPAC. He’s always open to doing whatever he can to help,” said Greg Gressel, executive director and chairman of SJPAC.

SJPAC offers a wide variety of programs to people of all ages and provides an open door to up-and-coming performers who dream of following in the footsteps of Dustin Lynch, or to anyone who enjoys dabbling in the arts. According to Gressel, the donated funds will enhance the Performing Arts for Children and Teens (PACT) and Theater Enrichment Arts Curriculum for Homeschoolers programs.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

May 30–June 2: “The Great Gatsby.”

June 1: Step back to the “Roaring ‘20s” for this yearly “The Great Gatsby” themed Gala. Enjoy the matinee and stay for the Gala.

June 3-7: PACT Summer Drama Camp.

June 4: International Folk Festival, with folk artists and dancers from four different countries.

June 21-30: PACT Show: “Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.”

July: The auditorium will “go dark” while crews install new seats and restore the original floors to their former glory.

“The updated seats will have a 1920s look with a modern-day comfort and feel,” said Gressel. “Everyone is invited to ‘Take Your Seat at South Jackson.’ Celebrate a loved one, honor an arts lover, or give a gift to someone who has everything with a seat donation that leaves a legacy for only \$300.”

July 20: Annual Ice Cream Social on the patio with Big Band Music.

For dates and times of events or to book your tickets before they sell out, visit www.southjackson.net.

“We are very excited to have received this gift from Dustin,” said Gressel. “The money will go directly to help build both of those programs. We believe talent is distributed equally, but access to use those talents is not. So, we at SJPAC strive to make it possible for all youths to use their talent and creativity to express themselves through the arts.”

This summer, don’t drive to Nashville, Huntsville, or even Atlanta to watch a world-class production, enjoy family-friendly entertainment, take part in a community-wide ice cream social, or enjoy international music, dance, and one-of-a-kind cuisine. Check out what’s happening right here in your own backyard at SJPAC. **GN**



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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 including Bedford, Coffee, Lincoln, and Franklin 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 those with special needs 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. Call the main office located in Shelbyville at (931) 684-8681 and staff will check to see if you fall within the guidelines of any of their programs. 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.

“ *We serve our entire community of those with special needs and of all abilities. We help them work, achieve their personal goals, strive for independence, and connect them with resources.*

-Anita Teague



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 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**

The CDC supports 11 counties in South Central Middle Tennessee including Bedford, Coffee, Lincoln, and Franklin 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. And then this change near the end: But a call to their office is different. Call the main office located in Shelbyville at (931) 684-8681 and staff will check to see if you fall within the guidelines of any of their programs. If not, they will recommend other resources that might meet your needs.

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Exploring Tullahoma:

Whiskey legacy and natural wonders

By Haley Potter and Belle Butler
Photography by Ashleigh Newnes
and Brooke Snyder

TULLAHOMA STANDS out as a perfect spot for business enthusiasts, especially those with an appreciation for the taste of smooth Tennessee whiskey. This city, with its deep roots in whiskey production, is a testament to the state's enduring legacy, inherited from Scottish and Irish immigrants who introduced their distilling practices to the region.

Tullahoma is a top-tier spot for explorers and outdoor enthusiasts. It offers a unique blend of nature's charm, historical touring, exquisite food, and iconic distilleries, creating an unforgettable experience.

The Tennessee Whiskey Trail, launched in 2017 by the Tennessee Distillers Guild, showcases 26 distilleries, ranging from quaint local setups to large-scale global

enterprises. It's a celebration of Tennessee's whiskey culture, highlighting the craftsmanship and dedication that define this industry.

Central to Tullahoma's whiskey fame is George Dickel's Tennessee Whisky, a brand that embodies over a century of distilling heritage. Here, tradition is key, with methods like the "chill charcoal mellowing technique" preserved over 150 years. The distillery, located in the scenic Cascade Hollow, continues to produce whiskey "the hard way," emphasizing quality and attention to detail.

George Dickel Distillery not only offers tours and tastings but also hosts the "Front Porch Music" series, blending local culture with its whiskey-making legacy. Nearby, businesses like Piggy's Place Bar-B-Que,







London's Sports Bar, and Whiskey Trail BBQ and Steakhouse benefit from the distillery's draw, offering culinary delights to visitors. Camping and lodging are also available close by.

Larry Nee, a lifetime fan of George Dickel, grew up in Tullahoma and enjoys being a tour guide at the visitor center. Larry said everyone at the distillery, from the crew to the visitors, is wonderful.

"Everyone has a great time," he mentioned.

Visit www.georgedickel.com for more information on reservations, hours of operation, tours, and special events.

Tullahoma boasts an array of distinct natural landscapes, positioning it as a prime spot for lovers of the outdoors. Among the highlights is Tims Ford State Park, which features a vast 10,700-acre reservoir, ideal for activities like

boating, fishing, and swimming. The park is laced with picturesque hiking paths meandering through verdant forests, offering excellent chances for birdwatching and encountering wildlife.

Additionally, the Beechcraft Heritage Museum in Tullahoma celebrates the legacy of aviation in the region, offering a fascinating look at the history of flight and the impact of aviation on the local community.

Tullahoma's wealth of gorgeous scenery and rich cultural history make it a dynamic destination with something to offer for everyone. Whether you're interested in outdoor adventures, aviation history, whiskey legacy and sampling tours, or simply enjoying the region's natural beauty, Tullahoma should be on your bucket list. GN





Cheers

to good times:

Daddy Billy's neighborhood hangout



WELCOMED TO Daddy Billy's Restaurant & Bar, a local watering hole where great dining meets the vibrant atmosphere of a bar, all in one clean and cozy space. Upon entering, you are greeted by the friendly staff as you make your way to your table, taking in the vintage beer signs, soft lighting, and sports games scattered about on TV screens.

Daddy Billy's offers a relaxed setting, perfect for gathering with friends or enjoying a meal with loved ones. Did you know that they are family-friendly? No smoky haze or dingy bar vibes here! Just friendly locals enjoying a beer after work or stopping in for a quick bite, selecting from options that are sure to please even the pickiest eaters, making them a surprising destination for any outing.

Now, let's talk about the star of the show — the bourbon Sriracha wings, my absolute favorite. These mouthwatering wings are a perfect balance of sweet and spicy, with a rich bourbon-infused sauce that tantalizes the taste buds. Each bite is a flavorful explosion that somehow pairs a perfect crunch with succulent

meat, leaving you craving more. I will proudly admit that I have returned over and over again for them!

If wings aren't your thing, fear not! The menu offers a variety of delicious bar foods — from juicy burgers to sandwiches and wraps, nachos, tacos, and more — ensuring there's something for everyone to enjoy.

What truly sets Daddy Billy's apart is that while it offers a full-service bar stocked with an impressive selection of drinks (including craft beers and signature cocktails) along with tasty food options, it also boasts being Tullahoma's live entertainment destination. Live music, karaoke, bingo, and trivia nights happen weekly, serving up something for everyone to enjoy any night of the week!

Whether you're stopping by for happy hour with co-workers, treating your family to a delicious meal, or just looking for something fun to do like belting out your go-to karaoke song, Daddy Billy's promises an unforgettable dining experience. So come on in, grab a seat, and prepare to indulge in the most amazing wings in town! **GN**

GOOD NEWS IS COMING TO DINNER!

We will feature a local food critic's thoughts as they dine in Tullahoma. This month Tabitha Buckner visited Daddy Billy's Restaurant & Bar.

Daddy Billy's Restaurant & Bar

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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 A blossoming business
- 40 The power of personalized service
- 44 From radios to smart living

Our stories are based on submissions from local people.

Submit yours here:



goodnewsmags.com

Photography by Brooke Snyder

◀ Cassy Grow



Shop Local

You can make Tullahoma prosper by
supporting local businesses

WHEN YOU shop locally, you're making a statement – and not the kind that causes controversy or makes people pick sides. You're taking a stand for your neighbors. You're spending your time and money on people who are just like you. Our local stores probably don't have billionaire investors, but they can have the most important investment of all. It means more. It has a greater impact on lives. And it lasts much longer than the ink on a printed contract. You have the opportunity to be that investor. And no, we're not talking about

getting into a pricey business deal. We're talking about just showing up.

When you walk into a store, and the owner hears the *ding* from the bell above the door, you're giving the gift of love. It's a simple affirmation of a smile and burst of joy that someone walked into this local store, but it's good enough to make someone's day.

That's the statement and investment that can change a life. So visit your local businesses. Your support changes not only you and the owner but the community as a whole. **GN**



Tullahoma



Spencer Smith iQ Fitness

Achieving More With Less

Futuristic technology is accessible today
with the iQ Fitness Studio advantage.

By Amanda E. West // Photography by Ashleigh Newnes



SPENCER SMITH is no stranger to Tullahoma. Raised in neighboring Moore County on what he fondly calls a “chunk of land,” Smith grew up in a nurturing environment that created his “can-do” spirit that reigns today. Eight years ago, Smith was 100 pounds overweight and taking five daily prescriptions. He was about to turn 30 and knew he needed a healthier body — something had to change.

“I started believing in myself, started getting promotions, and learned what it felt like to live again,” said Smith. “I’ve been through it and conquered it, so I know what it’s like to feel helpless and hopeless, and I know what it’s like on the other side.”

He is now a certified American Council on Exercise personal trainer with a weight loss specialist certification. He has also completed the certification for adaptive resistance training through the ARX Academy.

“After going through a transformation of my own mental and physical health, I got really passionate about sharing what I’ve learned and helping others put their overall health and fitness at the top of their list. I grew up here, so I know that it’s not always easy to get access



Spencer Smith



▲ Spencer Smith and Marcia Leech

to the latest tech and services in more rural areas. That's why I'm determined to make sure Tullahoma gets to benefit from these amazing technologies and information. To do this, I said goodbye to my corporate life in Nashville, came back home, and set up iQ Fitness Studio."

So, what is iQ Fitness? It's an innovation that propels clients into the future of strength training and weight management, and keeps clients on their personalized road to recovery beyond physical therapy. You don't have to keep track of anything because iQ Fitness tracks goals

and motivation in real time and saves your progress each time you work out. You can achieve all of this in a fraction of the time with iQ Fitness.

Candace Lawen has attended for three months and said, "This has been a perfect fit for my hectic schedule. I'm absolutely amazed that two 12 to 15-minute workouts per week have produced astounding results in my fitness journey. I've lost almost 25 pounds of unhealthy fat while preserving muscle and building the strength, endurance, and energy I needed to take care of my hobby farm and raise my large family.

Honestly, I'm astounded by the results of my hard work in such a short time."

A 75-year-old female client said, "It's a very innovative type of exercise that uses artificial intelligence and robots. The actual workout time is minimal, and it's just once a week. I've been able to accomplish things physically that I've not been able to do in years."

State-of-the-art equipment of this caliber is available in larger cities, but Smith chose to bring it home to the community he knows and loves — to the people he knows and loves. Inside the walls



“
...I’m determined
to make sure
Tullahoma gets
to benefit from
these amazing
technologies and
information.

– Spencer Smith

of iQ Fitness, you’ll find machines specializing in strength training and cardio, but these are no ordinary workout machines. You’ll also enjoy the infrared sauna therapy to help with detoxification, boost weight loss, and reduce pain in muscles and joints, which helps clients manage stress and boost immunity. Plunge into the iQ Cold Exposure tank to boost mood and motivation, reduce pain and stress, and improve sleep quality. Improve skin and eye health, circulation, and blood flow with the iQ Red Light Therapy.

“You’ll only find equipment like this in large cities, specialized markets, and professional sports franchises. Strength sessions are safe, personalized, and supervised by me, your personal trainer. Time is our most valuable commodity, and iQ Fitness allows you to become a fitter, leaner you, without spending hours in the gym each week.”

Smith also provides an entire arsenal of top-quality supplements that are highly absorbable and “clean” without containing unnecessary fillers and sugars. He also sells his own special concoction, which he affectionately named “Green Goblin Mask.”

“Health, fitness, and overall well-being at a holistic and cellular level to produce sustainable results is my goal for the community. I want to see each person who walks through my door learn to support their body in its mission to strengthen and heal, and I want to help them transform their bodies into the hard-to-kill, hard-to-injure vessels they are meant to be! The studio is an evolving space with more equipment on its way. I look forward to continuing to share the best equipment and information to support health, fitness, and well-being with our communities.” **GN**

To schedule your free demo, visit www.igfitness.studio.



Treva & Kaylee Baker

Taking the Time to Give Back

Local food trucks take time out of their holiday to serve the community.

By Sara Hook // Photos submitted by Tennessee Sliders

LAST YEAR, the holiday season was extra joyful through the efforts of Tullahoma food trucks as they took time to serve those who were alone or working during the holiday. The first event was called Trucksgiving. Together, the Tennessee Sliders and Whiskey Waffle food trucks fed over 100 people with their own food, desserts from Mama B's Cheesecake, and community donations. The second event was Merry Truckmas. The Sammich Shack and Whiskey Waffle again partnered with Mama B's Cheesecake to serve over 200 community members for free. While it was a multi-truck initiative, Rebecca Cooper of Whiskey Waffle organized and planned the events.

"I've always known that you are supposed to earn money to survive but also to use it as a tool to help other people," Cooper said. "I always thought we would have to go somewhere like Nashville to really make an impact, but then it hit me. It doesn't have to just be homeless people. We can do it right here in our town for anyone who may be alone for the holidays, sick, or just can't afford a home-cooked meal on Thanksgiving."

Cooper had the idea to get the other food trucks involved, as their mobile kitchens would allow them to be in multiple places for those who might not be able to travel. Community members and businesses also stepped up and donated turkey, ham, bread, and other

foods. Some just donated money, which was split among the participating food trucks.

“We have gotten so much encouragement,” Cooper said. “The community has been great with helping us spread the word.”

As someone who grew up less fortunate, Lisa Womack of The Sammich Shack said it has always been important to her to help take care of anyone in need – especially those who need meals.

“It was definitely a no-brainer when Whiskey Waffle asked us if we wanted to participate,” Womack said. “I hope that next year, more food trucks join in.”

More food trucks are just the beginning of Cooper's plan. She said her dream is to spread Trucksgiving and Merry Truckmas to other towns, serving their communities and hopefully helping people feel less lonely and feeding them.

Serving others was the whole reason Treva Baker started her food truck, and Tennessee Sliders was happy to be involved in Trucksgiving.

“Being in a small town, the best thing to do is just give back to the community,” Baker said. “Not only that — just helping people who are in need is a great blessing.”

The ability to work with other food trucks was also a blessing.

“It has grown so quickly and so fast — our little food truck community here locally,” Baker said. “Just the help that we get from each other, [and] the support we get from each other [is] hands down amazing.”

Baker said the food trucks were set up in the homeless communities and also stopped to serve first responders and every gas station they saw open. The only goal was to bless other people.

“You give some, you take some, you give it back,” Baker said. “It’s just great to be able to help others. Hopefully, by seeing this, others will see it and step up and help people.”

There will be plenty of opportunities to do just that, as those involved want to make Trucksgiving and Merry Truckmas larger, annual events. Cooper said she is also looking to start another event to serve the Tullahoma community.

“I am not 100% sure what the next event will look like, but my mind keeps going toward kids going back to school,” Cooper said. “I think I would like to base it around making sure kids have enough school supplies and new clothes before they go back to school. I haven't got all the details figured out yet, so stay tuned.” **GN**





“

We have gotten so much encouragement. The community has been great with helping us spread the word.

- Rebecca Cooper



Legacy Creamery

Fulfilling a Dream

The Eli Grow Legacy Foundation works to bless athletes in Tullahoma.

By Sara Hook // Photography by Ashleigh Newnes



▲ Caryss Connor

IN 2016, Tony and Cassy Grow lost their son, Eli, in a tragic car accident on U.S. Highway 41A – one of the hardest things a parent can go through. The Eli Grow Legacy Foundation grew from that pain and loss as a way to honor their son’s legacy and dream, and it has been working hard to bless Tullahoma athletes like Eli.

Eli was a senior at Tullahoma High School when he died coming home from football conditioning at a facility in Franklin. Not long before that, his mother, Cassy, said he had shared with her a particular goal he had: to help other athletes in Tullahoma.

“One day, when Eli was older and made money, he wanted to come back to Tullahoma and build a training facility so that people wouldn’t need to drive to get better equipment, or they would have an opportunity in their own hometown, versus having to go somewhere outside of Tullahoma to get the same kind of training and have the same kind of opportunities that he was having,” Cassy said. “That’s our purpose now — is to help fulfill that dream.”



Tony and Cassy Grow

The idea for an athletic training facility is the main focus of the legacy foundation, and the Grow family has been working hard to make Eli's dream come to fruition on the grounds of Tullahoma High School.

While attending the school, Eli participated in football and baseball, although he eventually gave up baseball to focus fully on training for his quarterback position. What made Eli stand out was not his pure talent at the sport but how hard he worked. He was known for coming early to practice and staying late afterward, often spending time working with younger teammates.

"I don't think Eli felt — or Coach Olive felt — like Eli was super athletic in the beginning," Cassy said. "He went above and beyond to work hard on his own. Nobody ever had to motivate Eli. He was self-motivating. He wanted to be more physically fit and worked on his nutrition in addition to his athletic skills. He spent a lot of time with his dad, Tony, to improve his speed and agility skills."

Before he died, Eli had been accepted to play football at Mississippi College with a scholarship. Over the summer, he often trained with his brothers, who played baseball in Louisville, Kentucky, and Chattanooga. During the school year, he would go to train in Franklin twice a week. That opportunity was something he wanted to bring closer to Tullahoma for other athletes to enjoy.

Unfortunately, building a training facility like that is not an easy task. Even eight years after Eli's death, the foundation has yet to break ground — something Cassy said was predicted by the high school's coach.

"I remember Coach Olive saying, when Eli passed away, 'It would probably take 10 years to make something like that happen,'" Cassy said. "I would have hoped it would have been four years ago."



The community has been very supportive of the project, with many offering gifts such as donations of concrete, electrical work, or engineering work. At this point, Cassy said, it is mostly a matter of coordinating together with the school system and in-kind donors.

"It's going to take 100% coordination to get that together," Cassy said. "It can't be done without it all coming together at the same time."

The foundation is funded primarily through proceeds from its annual 8K, golf tournament, and profits from Legacy Creamery, the gelateria where Cassy works. Formerly known as Southern Sundaes, it was a restaurant, gelateria, coffee shop, and bakery. The creamery closed for about a year following Eli's death before reopening primarily as a gelateria. Legacy Creamery is one of only a handful of ice cream or gelato hand-crafters in Middle Tennessee, with Cassy as the gelato chef. The creamery's name was changed to connect the business with the Eli Grow Legacy Foundation, as 100% of the creamery's profits go to the foundation.

"It's something I enjoy doing, it's something that people enjoy having, and it's an amazing, authentic Italian product," Cassy

said. "It's just a hobby for me, I guess, and it's a hobby in a way that I feel like I'm contributing towards Eli's dream."

The proceeds go toward more than plans for the training center. In addition to working toward making that dream a reality, the foundation offers scholarships to one senior football player each year. That player is honored with No. 8 — Eli's number — and is chosen by coaches and players as someone who goes beyond what is expected or required of the team. The scholarship can go toward college or any postsecondary education.

"He was a leader and [a] very kind person, [an] academic student, and I guess he just left an inspiring legacy," Cassy said.



▲ Cassy Grow

Once the training facility is built, Cassy said they would love to expand the foundation and offer scholarships and internships for students interested in the sciences — especially biology or geology, both areas the Grow family works in. Those scholarships and field experience opportunities would also be in memory of Eli. In this way, Cassy said this is a way their family can share him with people who ask about his legacy.

“He grew to be a really great athlete and a very inspiring and determined young man,” Cassy said. “It brings me a lot of joy to be able to share his story.” GN

“

He was a leader and [a] very kind person, [an] academic student, and I guess he just left an inspiring legacy.

– Cassy Grow

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Good Times

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Photography by Brooke Snyder

◀ Dr. Monica Blake-Beasley, Preston Blake,
and Patrick Blake

The Beauties in Business - Feb. 23



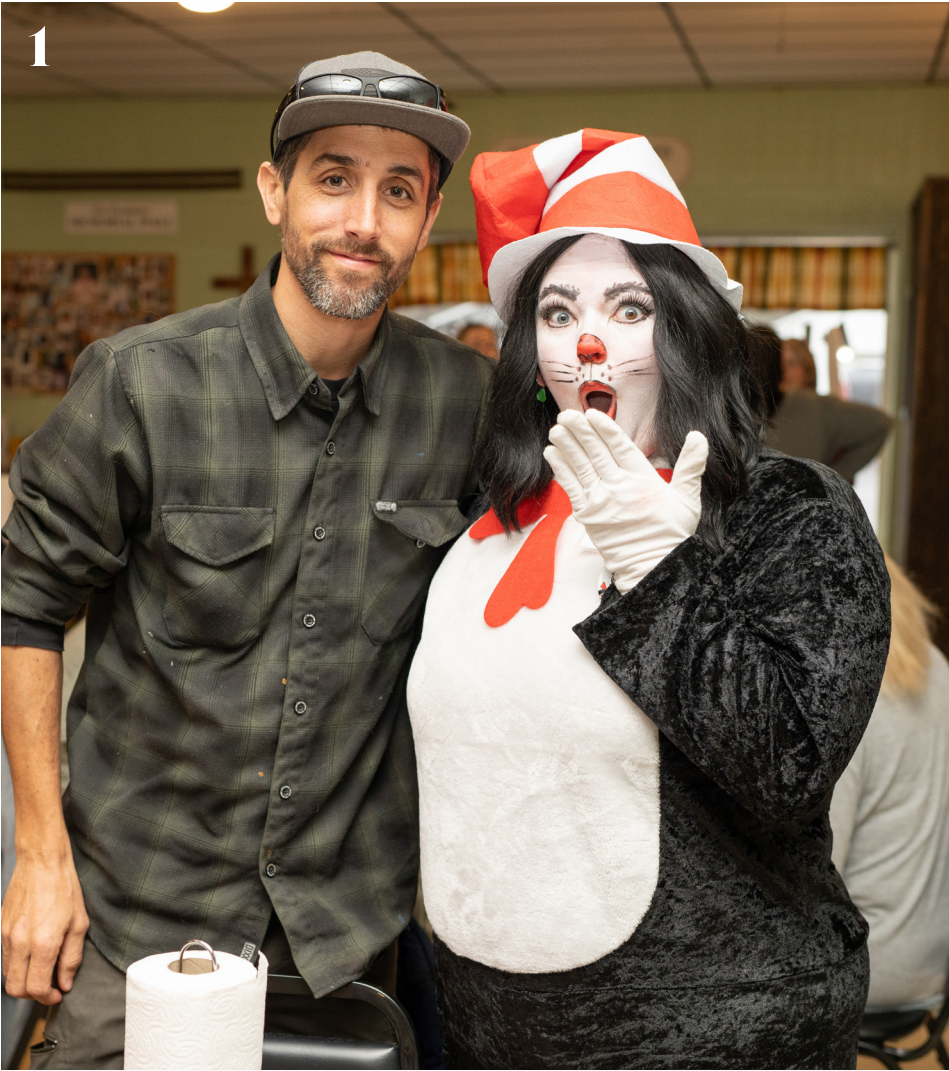
Photography by Brooke Snyder

The Beauties in Business gathered at Fuel So Good in Tullahoma. The morning consisted of networking, enjoying coffee, making connections, and growing great friendships. The Beauties in Business meet multiple times every month.



1. Dee Moon and Kelsey Woods 2. Stephanie Mayfield, Dee Moon, Kelsey Woods, Laura Knight, Lexie Heath, Hope Nunley, Tisha Fritz, Victoria Webster, Meg Glenn, and TaShonna Starr 3. TaShonna Starr, Lisa Wikoff, and Meg Glenn 4. Hope Nunley and Tisha Fritz 5. Kelsey Woods and Lexie Heath 6. Noel Burton

Damron's Restaurant - March 2



Photography by Brooke Snyder

Damron's Restaurant was booming on March 2, serving up green eggs and ham to anyone who would have them. 100% of proceeds were used for the Imagination Library of Coffee County. This program provides books every month for children ages birth through 5 years old.



1. Daphanie Gragg and Rick Vella 2. Kathy Hagler and Joyce Hiebert
3. Rosemary Crabtree, Sarah Hailey, Joyce Hiebert, and Kathy Hagler 4. Delaney, Sam, John Hollis, and Walker Epley

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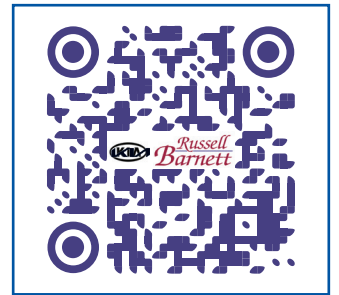
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