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Good Times

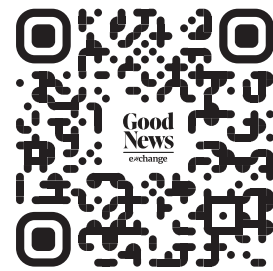
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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

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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Good Living

▲ Will and Connie Johnston
Photography by Robin Holcomb

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Exploring Lebanon's vibrant wine scene

By Richard Klin // Photography by Robin Holcomb

LEBANON BOASTS many attractions, including Working Man Winery, which is run by the husband-and-wife team of Will and Connie Johnston. Like many proprietors of small businesses, the Johnstons came to the wine business in a roundabout way — they simply loved wineries and enjoyed visiting them. Then Will, according to Connie, started studying winemaking. Around six years ago, he started producing wine in one of their spare bedrooms. And then from there, the endeavor spread to their bonus room.

Connie, originally from Ohio, is also a real estate agent. When the couple moved to Lebanon, she was struck by an imposing building that dated back to 1933 and was right in the middle of two streets. To Connie, the building had the potential to make a great winery. They ended up buying the building, and with the building also came a little white house.

“I didn’t know what to do with the white house,” Connie remembers. “We turned it into an antiques store. And we rent space.”

Will said he sources all the juices and grapes from different states.



Will and Connie Johnston



cause we love meeting people and the stories! People come in here and they'll talk for hours and tell us their stories, and where they came from and what they're doing. It's a variety of young and old — 21 and older, of course."

"People ask, 'Where is your vineyard? Where do you grow the grapes?' If we waited for the grapes to grow, we'd be dead!"

This is true with a lot of wineries. In specific states, only a certain type of grape is grown. Tennessee has very sweet grapes, so you'd only have a lot of sweet wines. Some of Working Man Winery's grapes are from Tennessee, but the majority of its grapes and juices come from Washington and California. Work-

ing Man Winery has 10 varieties of wine, from dry to sweet. The sweets really aren't heavy. As the Johnstons described it, "They're kind of crisp."

Running the winery has also led to a full-fledged immersion into the Lebanon community.

"Lebanon's a really cool small town. They have a square and so many new restaurants. Things are really new and fast here. We get a variety of people — it's so fun. That's why we love doing it — be-

Connie and Will are also members of the Lebanon Wilson County Chamber of Commerce and part of the Historical District Society. There was a historical tour at Christmastime, and the winery had around 150 people who came through.

Working Man is only open on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, but it manages to fit in a varied schedule. There is a large outdoor courtyard and yard area, which is also



Lebanon's a really cool small town. They have a square and so many new restaurants. Things are really new and fast here. We get a variety of people — it's so fun.

– Connie Johnston

dog-friendly. Local bands and musicians perform on a weekly basis, and the Johnstons are hoping to build a stage for summertime outdoor concerts.

“Keith Urban hasn’t come by yet,” joked Connie, “but I expect him sometime soon!”

The winery doesn’t serve dinner but does have charcuterie boards and serves pretzel bites and finger foods. Working Man also has wine tastings, called “wine flights,” and is just starting bingo. The winery has utilized local businesses

to sponsor the bingo so that the community can become involved with the winery, and local businesses benefit as well. Another attraction is “Sip and Paint.” People will come in and have a flight of wine while there is an artist who teaches them how to paint.

“Distilleries and breweries are popping up everywhere,” Connie notes.

This is a nationwide phenomenon, and the winery is part of this trend as well. One explanation for this newfound popularity is that younger people are looking for

something that they can experience instead of just buying.

It’s easy to see why that experience is such an attractive option for so many people. Working Man Winery offers outdoor space, wine and food, music, and the chance to meet interesting people. Your dog is warmly invited to stay and hang out at the winery with you.

The winery is a good starting point for those who wish to experience more of Lebanon. And it is fair to say Keith Urban is always welcome. GN

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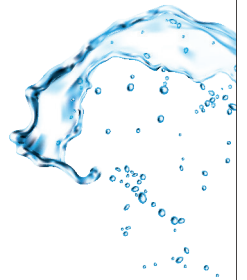
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From Katrina *to compassion*

Examining the roots of the Volunteer Network

By Amanda E. West // Photography by Robin Holcomb

THOSE WHO lived along the Gulf Coast braced for impact or fled further inland despite gasoline shortages and lanes of traffic that steadily crept north. As a nation, we held our collective breaths, awaiting updates from weather reporters, friends, and family. On Aug. 29, 2005, the infamous Hurricane Katrina collided with the heart of New Orleans as a Category 3 storm, breaching levees and causing catastrophic flooding and chaos throughout the region. It has since earned the title of the costliest natural disaster in United States history.

When the Rev. Regina Girtten enrolled in the seventh grade, her father had just retired from the military, and the entire family had settled into

their permanent home in New Orleans. No longer considered a “military brat,” Girtten was thrilled to finally be able to establish roots she wouldn’t have to dig up now that her father would no longer be receiving marching orders every couple of years.

While she was earning a bachelor’s degree at Belmont University a few years later, Hurricane Katrina struck, and her family experienced substantial damage to their home and much of their belongings, forcing them to rebuild. While chaos erupted in her beloved community in the hurricane’s aftermath, Girtten purposed in her heart to help others walk through similar tragedies with the help of what she and her business partner would later call the Volunteer Network.



Jamie Tyner and Regina Girten



“

Rallying around your community after a disaster allows not only the individual to heal and recover, but it allows the community to have ownership of healing collectively as well.

-The Rev. Regina Girten

Through the years, Girten has served in a variety of areas within ministry, including leading youth and children and working with unhoused individuals. She was the executive director and co-founder of Fireflies, a nonprofit organization that fosters creative arts and sports in Sierra Leone, West Africa. She earned a master's degree from Memphis Theological Seminary, and the United Methodist Church appointed her to serve at Providence Church four years ago. She has also served as co-chair for the county's long-term recovery group, Recover Wilson. She has a husband, Jeff, and is a mother of two.

In March 2020, just as they'd done before Hurricane Katrina, the nation braced for another storm sweeping in over the horizon. This time, it wasn't a hurricane but a pandemic that would

come with ripple effects that caused many businesses and schools to temporarily shutter doors. When a tornado also struck Tennessee during this time, the Mount Juliet Police Department created an online portal where prospective volunteers could register to help with recovery efforts, which resulted in 4,000 people offering to help.

In the aftermath of this tornado, Girten joined forces with the director of local good from Cross Point Church in Mt. Juliet, Jamie Tyner. Together, they began seeking ways to help their community in the event of another disaster. They helped mobilize and serve on the long-term recovery group, Recover Wilson, which assisted community members who could not survive on their own in not only the tornado of 2020 but also the subsequent flood of 2021 and the

tornado of 2022. Recover Wilson was able to help over 300 residents.

Through these efforts, Tyner and Girten saw the need for a volunteer management space in Wilson County and created the Volunteer Network, which has since partnered with 44 organizations that have logged an astounding 1,600 hours of volunteer service and currently have 1,000 registered volunteers. It falls under the 501(c)(3) umbrella of United Way of Greater Nashville as an initiative of Hands On Nashville. The coordination efforts of the Volunteer Network also resulted in the creation of the Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster that, according to Girten,

offers a preparedness structure that is ready when/if another disaster strikes.

“This community mobilization effort will prop up future long-term recovery groups needed after any future disasters,” said Girten. “Volunteer Network now partners alongside Wilson Emergency Management Agency and our first responders. Communities don’t typically have these structures in place until after they’ve experienced a disaster. The sheer amount of bridges that have been built and relationships that have developed as a result of the tornado in 2020 is probably the most significant event that

has happened so far. You never want a disaster to bring people together, but it inevitably does and has.”

Girten continued, “Rallying around your community after a disaster allows not only the individual to heal and recover, but it allows the community to have ownership of healing collectively as well. It is important to help others during and after a disaster because each person impacted affects the entire community. And because, as we often say, ‘We are better together.’” GN

For more information, visit www.volunteernetworktn.org.



A century of **IMPACT**

THE LEBANON WILSON COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
CONTINUES TO SERVE THE COMMUNITY.

By Sara Hook // Photos submitted by Lebanon Wilson County Chamber of Commerce

TO TRULY understand what an organization does, you have to look at its impact. What does it do for the community? What does it do for entrepreneurs, educators, and families? How has the world changed because of it? For the Lebanon Wilson County Chamber of Commerce, that impact is obvious. There are 100 years of history to draw from, and the work done has undoubtedly contributed to making Lebanon and Wilson County such a wonderful place.

After all, the chamber's mission statement is "to coordinate the talents and energies of business, industry, and individuals to make Wilson County a better place to live, work, and raise a family." President Melanie Minter said that the chamber of commerce is a resource and a liaison for businesses, and it seeks to connect those businesses with the community.

"Our purpose is to keep businesses connected and make an impact on Lebanon and Wilson County's quality of life. Our

chamber works to support and promote all small businesses and industries. We strive for excellence in providing value to our members and our community," said Minter.

Some of that value comes from the programs the chamber has offered, like Wilson Books from Birth, Tennessee Scholars, and the Teacher Grant Program. The chamber serves on boards and in leadership roles throughout the community, making a difference in agriculture, the economy, disaster relief, and more. While the needs and programs addressed have changed through the decades, Minter said the core behind the chamber has remained the same.

"The Lebanon Wilson County Chamber of Commerce still has the same values from the past while being innovators to assist in making a difference for our community in the future," Minter said.

Minter expressed that the significant impact is the result of close work with the community, especially those who take the time to serve on boards and committees. It is those invested members who make the



Melanie Minter

“

OUR PURPOSE
IS TO KEEP
BUSINESSES
CONNECTED
AND MAKE
AN IMPACT
ON LEBANON
AND WILSON
COUNTY'S
QUALITY OF LIFE.

- Melanie Minter

chamber successful. Two of those member businesses, Cumberland University and the Lebanon Democrat, have remained with the chamber for the entire 100 years, beginning as charter members in 1924.

Executive Director Rusty Richardson said Cumberland University is proud of its history. Many of the university's past presidents were involved with the chamber, and at least one staff member is usually on one of the chamber boards. Richardson himself had just finished serving in the chamber's government relations division.

"It's been a long history together, as Lebanon has grown, as Wilson County has grown, as the chamber has grown, and Cumberland has grown," Richardson said. "The two histories are so intertwined with each other."

Currently, Cumberland University has its largest enrollment ever, and the future seems like it will bring more growth for the university, the economy, and the county as a whole. That growth will also bring growth to the chamber. Richardson said the university plans to be part of the chamber on its 200th anniversary.

The university's continued involvement is intentional. After all, the more you put into such an organization, the more you will get out of it.

"I encourage all current members of the chamber to continue to get involved," Richardson said. "Go to the ribbon cuttings, become an ambassador, go to the events, [and] go to the educational sessions because again, there [are] so many benefits there, and people need to take as much advantage of that as possible."

The Lebanon Democrat is also one of Lebanon's oldest surviving businesses. It, too, joined the chamber of commerce for its inaugural year in 1924. Publisher Joyce Taylor said the newspaper's goal matched the mission of the chamber.

"The Lebanon Democrat and the chamber share a common goal of supporting and promoting the local community," Taylor said. "Both have benefited from each other's resources and leadership in order to complete that mission over the years."

Those businesses who join the chamber now, 100 years later, will experience that same benefit. Taylor said there are leadership and networking opportunities, and the chamber works to recruit new industries to the area and give recognition to those leaders in the community.

Fostering that leadership will always be important. While the chamber is working to keep its programs relevant and up to date, Minter said the leaders keep the community moving forward.

"The Lebanon Wilson County Chamber of Commerce will always depend upon our future leaders," Minter said. "We must continue to educate and involve younger generations to remain strong. They will lead us for decades to come with enthusiasm for our community."

The past 100 years have been successful, and Lebanon and Wilson County are continuing to grow and thrive. Let's see what the next 100 can bring. **GN**





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SOUTHERN COMFORTS

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SAVORING NOSTALGIA AT RSVP AT THE CLUB



ARE YOU familiar with the saying, “The best memories are made around the table?” In the South, you will find that most of our memories include food. Some of my best memories were made around the breakfast table. My parents would have a big spread of Southern dishes. We would get together with friends; our table was always full of laughter and an occasional food fight. Yes, that happened more than once. I miss the family, the laughter, and the smells and tastes of yesteryear.

You can make memories of your own over brunch at RSVP at The Club, which is open to the public inside the Lebanon Golf and Country Club. The restaurant offers a Sunday brunch reminiscent of my childhood. My family went there and was very impressed.

When we walked in, the hostess seated us in Lisa’s section. She greeted us with a

smile and asked us what we were drinking. I like my coffee with some flavor, so she offered to make a caramel iced coffee even though it wasn’t on the menu.

The buffet was an impressive selection of breakfast and lunch items. We tried a little bit of everything. The biscuits were fluffy and paired well with the sawmill gravy — a staple for a traditional Southern brunch. My family especially loved the fried chicken, the grits, and the Dr. Pepper glazed ham. To make brunch even more special, the restaurant offered an ice cream sundae bar with a variety of toppings.

If you are craving biscuits and gravy or have out-of-town guests who want a taste of the South, take them to RSVP at The Club for Sunday brunch. You will get the comforts of Southern home cooking without the mess. Ask for Lisa to make her special caramel iced coffee. **GN**

GOOD NEWS IS COMING TO DINNER!

We will feature a local food critic’s thoughts as they dine in Lebanon. This month Krys Midgett visited RSVP at The Club.

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Good Stories

▲ Lyndon LaFavers
Photography by Robin Holcomb

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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

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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**



Lebanon



Follow Your Dreams

Pop's last wish gives wings to daughter's dream

By Amanda E. West // Photography by Robin Holcomb



THE GREATEST legacy a parent leaves behind is sometimes the dreams they help their children achieve long after they've taken their last breath. Since she was a little girl, Beth Price dreamed of following her dad's footsteps into the exciting and sometimes unknown world of owning a business. James Howard Price was Beth's dad. Known as "Jim" to his friends, his grandchildren lovingly called him "Pop."

Born in Konnarock, Virginia, in 1935, during the turbulent years of the Great Depression, Pop wasn't a stranger to putting in more than a full day's work. From a young age, he and his older sisters helped their parents pay the bills. Even though he was a bright student, Pop left school after the eighth grade to work in a paper mill before taking a job in an iron ore mine in Morgantown, Pennsylvania. In 1955, a girl named Marion stole his heart, and 12 years after they said, "I do," they'd added four sons and their daughter, Beth, to their family.

In the late 1960s, Pop and Marion started "Prices Mower Shop," where he repaired chain saws, weed eaters, blowers, and lawn mowers in their garage. All the while, Pop clocked long hours in the mines for Bethlehem Steel. When the mine went bankrupt a decade



Beth Price



later, Pop packed up his family and brought them to Tennessee to take a job in the Gordonsville Mine.

As someone who was always searching for ways to better support those he loved, he quickly opened another small engine business in Cookeville while — you guessed it — still working full time in the mine.

The years ebbed by, and doctors diagnosed Pop with mesothelioma, and symptoms of dementia began robbing his wife, Marion, of her memories. Beth grew up watching the sacrifices they had made for their family, so now that her parents were

the ones who needed looking after, Beth knew what she had to do. Pop bought a home in Lebanon with enough room for all three of them, and, in turn, Beth would contribute toward their mortgage.

On Sept. 9, 2017, less than two years later, Pop passed away. While combing through her dad's important papers, Beth tearfully discovered he'd figured out a way to continue caring for her now that he was gone. "Follow your dreams," the note from Pop said. Turns out, he'd stashed most of the money she thought he was putting toward the mortgage, saving it for her instead.

Seventeen months later, Pop's Coffee Shop opened its doors. For decades, this quaint Victorian cottage at 517 W. Main St. has been a sanctuary for strong women, each leaving behind a legacy of strength and independence. From the Hardison sisters, Sara and Madge, who defied societal norms in the early 1900s by remaining unmarried, to Mrs. Vicie May Brown Edwards, the first female in Lebanon to receive a business license, Beth is following in their footsteps.

Patrons of Pop's Coffee Shop say the home boasts "old-world charm and modern



“
My fondest
memory of Pop
growing up was
when he would
gather all five of
us kids around
his rocking chair
before bed. He
would read from
the Bible, and we'd
all pray together
as a family.

- Beth Price

food” as they gather in view of the original colorfully tiled fireplaces and oversized windows or meander about on the covered front porch that invites guests to come and sit a spell.

“Most everything we sell is made right here in our kitchen,” said Beth. “Most of the recipes we use are either Mom’s, Grandmom’s, or my mamaw’s, with a few thrown in from friends and relatives. My mom, Marion, was Pennsylvania Dutch and an awesome cook and baker. Eighty percent of my recipes are hers. We also have ‘Sarges Banana Muffin,’ that is named after my son-in-law, Brent, who is a staff sergeant in the military. ‘Kim’s Southern Delight’ is named after a friend of mine. It has the sweetness of Southern sweet tea and is made with coffee, extra caramel, and lots of cream. Mom used to say, ‘It’s made with love; therefore, the calories don’t count.’”

Each time Beth whips up her favorite chicken salad recipe and adds generous dollops to a flaky, buttery croissant, she’s living the dream Pop helped her to achieve. Although a flood washed Pop’s note and several pictures from inside Beth’s storage shed down the creek, she’ll never forget Pop’s words from beyond the grave.

“My fondest memory of Pop growing up was when he would gather all five of us kids around his rocking chair before bed. He would read from the Bible, and we’d all pray together as a family.” GN

Follow their Facebook or Instagram at Pop’s Coffee Shop for upcoming events.



Lyndon LaFevers

From Animal Addiction to Wedding Wonderland

A wedding venue of an
uncommon nature.

By Richard Klin // Photography by Robin Holcomb

LYNDON LAFEVERS has had a lifelong addiction — an animal addiction. Every birthday and Christmas, he had to have an animal of some kind. His parents said that he never asked for anything else. For all of his married life, which is going on 40 years, he has been collecting animals for the farm he shares with his wife, Jane, and their children and grandchildren.

Lyndon worked for the fabled “Hee Haw” right out of college, was the video program administrator for The Nashville Network (TNN), and then a realtor for RE/MAX. Still, the dream of doing something animal-related persisted. Once, one of his TNN co-workers came to the farm to get Easter ducks for his children.

As Lyndon recalls, “He said, ‘This is like a zoo! I don’t know how you have time to come and work at TNN!’ And I thought, ‘Like a zoo. That’s the farm name I’ve been looking for.’”

The spelling “LIKAZOO” ensures that this fits on Lyndon’s license plate. He oversees a full-fledged menagerie.

“I have a camel and a zebra, alpacas and black swans, emu, rhea, poultry, rabbits, Nigerian dwarf goats, and mammoth donkeys, a miniature Scottish Highland cow, miniature Herefords, and more,” Lyndon enthused.

There was another ambition as well — to run a venue where people could celebrate life’s moments. Over the years, outdoor weddings, such as a barn wedding event, became popular. But this was a dream that wasn’t happening.

In 2017, he and Jane attended a land auction for his daughter and son-in-law to watch them get a tract of land. The barn and property suddenly became available. His daughter was emphatic.

“It’s going cheap,” she told him. “You should be bidding on that. It could be your ‘wedding barn.’ You’ve talked about it my whole life.”

Lyndon asked the auctioneer for 10 minutes to talk to his wife and his banker.

And, incredibly, he said, “Right there on the spot, we put together this plan.”

The Wedding Barn & Event Venue @ LIKAZOO is the fruition of that plan and the culmination of a long-held dream. The whole family pulled together to get the old barn renovated for on-site lodging and an event space while designing and building the new wedding barn. The venue, which boasts over 100 acres, hosts bank management and other corporate retreats while giving back to the community by hosting sports banquets for the school where the LaFever’s grandchildren attend. Weddings, though, are the backbone, with around 83 since 2020.

Getting the venue into shape took a lot of effort. There was an old barn that had to be renovated. Its previous incarnation had housed a convenience center, according to Lyndon, “where people in the community bought their milk and bread.” The Cowboy Connection, a honky-tonk where the Melvin Sloan dancers of the Grand Old Opry would come to rehearse, was on another level. The barn’s next incarnation was as a paintball business.

“When we bought it in 2017, we started repainting and replumbing and changing the light fixtures and updating it.”

The whole family pulled together to get the old barn renovated for on-site lodging and functioning as an event space while designing and building the new wedding barn. And, of course, there were the animals that Jane and Lyndon brought over as they moved to the new farm. There is a display area that’s just a few acres, with an eight-stall barn and seven other paddocks. This is where the quiet emu and rhea are kept, and Lyndon brings down the camel and zebra for most events.

LIKAZOO, it should be noted, is not open to the general public, and the animals are not an automatic part of the wedding process and are not kept by the wedding area. Guests don’t see them unless they make a deliberate effort. Guests can walk down to the fence and see the animals, but they’re not at all in the wedding. Most of the guests, though, do want to see “at least the camel and the zebra.” Nobody says no to a camel and zebra!

The upkeep and feeding of these animals is, of course, a huge part of Lyndon’s routine, and local vets have received on-the-job training in treating animals that normally aren’t part of their practice.

The word “unique” is overused. However, the Wedding Barn & Event Venue @ LIKAZOO, with its acreage and uncommon array of animal life, promises a truly unique experience. **GN**





“

I have a camel and a zebra, alpacas and black swans, emu, rhea, poultry, rabbits, Nigerian dwarf goats, and mammoth donkeys, a miniature Scottish Highland cow, miniature Herefords, and more.

– Lyndon LaFevers



Cedar City CrossFit

Stronger Together: CrossFit Fosters Community

Cedar City CrossFit brings together fitness and community

By Kali Bradford // Photography by Robin Holcomb



▲ Hunter Christian

COMMUNITIES ARE wonderful things. They are comprised of people with various backgrounds, ages, ethnicities, and beliefs. They offer support, celebrate achievements, and lend a helping hand during challenging times. It's where friendships blossom, traditions are upheld, and cultural diversity thrives. Communities provide a sense of identity and purpose, whether it's a local sports team, an online forum, or a local gym.

Even in her youth, Cheyenne Christian knew the importance and blessing of such a community. She found it at her local gym. And through that community, she flourished and grew as a human and young woman. Today, along with her husband, Hunter, she is passing that gift of community on to Cedar City CrossFit members and the Lebanon community.

Since she was a young and energetic teenager, Cheyenne knew she wanted to join the fitness community.

"I started coaching martial arts at a young age, probably about 15 years old," she said. "I would pick up



Cheyenne Christian



a few classes here and there and help with our kids martial arts classes. From there, it grew.”

Cheyenne explained that she then became involved with teaching CrossFit to the kids at the gym. After deciding to stay close and attend college locally, she received an L-1 CrossFit certification while in college. The certification would allow her to teach CrossFit classes. She added that being in the gym since she was a teen had created a sense of community that she wanted to continue to grow upon as an adult.

“I was homeschooled, and I came to the gym every day,” Cheyenne added. “The people at the gym were my people, and it was my favorite place to be. I loved the community and what it did for me as I grew up. Even as I have become an adult, got married, and now have a child of my own, it’s still the best community. The people here love each other, push each other to be better, and hold each other accountable. I just love the whole aspect of the community that CrossFit brings.”

Cheyenne’s husband, Hunter, is joining her on this journey. Hunter said he became involved with CrossFit as a University of Tennessee at Knoxville student. He fell in love with the fitness regime and said it was a great way to combine two things he loved.

“I’m a super competitive person,” he explained. “I fell in love with fitness during college, and when I was introduced to CrossFit, it was a way to combine my love for sport and fitness. One thing about CrossFit is that everybody is doing the same workout. Each person is pushing each other and trying to beat the guy beside you. I just love the competitive nature. The community of CrossFit is also unmatched. Everybody’s wanting to push each other, challenge each other, and sharpen each other.”



Getting into the business

In 2023, Cheyenne made a life-long dream of hers come true. She and Hunter became the proud owners of the Cedar City CrossFit.

“It was always the plan,” she said. “Since I was young, I’ve wanted to own either this gym or another gym. When they approached us early last year, there was a moment when we were hesitant. But we were also excited. It was kind of unexpected at first, but then it fell into place and has worked out great.”

While in a full-time position, Hunter said everything has worked out for the best. “I’m in full-time ministry at the Journey Church,” he explained. “While we’d always had a goal of owning a gym, I didn’t think it was feasible when I went into full-time ministry two and a half years ago. However, when the previous owners approached us at the beginning of last year, we decided that it was something that we could take on and both grow and be successful with. The previous owners were great to us and wanted us to take it over. It has been a smooth and successful transition.”

Balancing and growing

Hunter added that it has been a balancing act as a new business owner, having a

►
Cheyenne and
Hunter Christian

young child, and a spouse with a full-time job.

“We make decisions together and decide what’s best for the gym,” he said. “Cheyenne is the day-to-day person at the gym, coaching most classes. I coach a few in the afternoons. Outside of that, we are doing all the back-end stuff and decision-making together. So, it’s been really good.”

Cheyenne also gives credit to her staff, who help make the gym the success it continues to be.

“Absolutely none of it would be possible without our team of coaches we have,”



“

Since I was young, I've wanted to own either this gym or another gym. When they approached us early last year, there was a moment when we were hesitant. But we were also excited.

- Cheyenne Christian



she said. As someone who grew up in the gym community, Cheyenne hopes Cedar City CrossFit can provide that same sense of community and family that allowed her to grow, flourish, and achieve her dreams.

“I want it to be a place where we can raise our family and grow together with everyone who is a part of this gym,” she said. “It's been special to see just how involved we can be in others' lives. There are so many different lives that we get to be a part of that are family to us. We hope to see that only continue to grow as we move forward into the future.” **GN**

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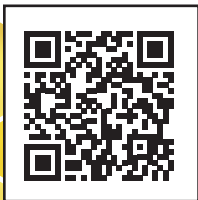




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Photography by Robin Holcomb

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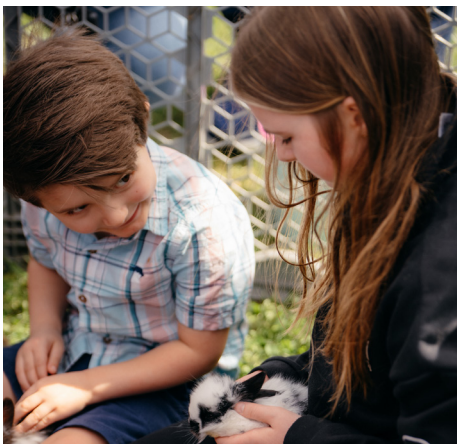


Easter Egg Hunt Extravaganza - March 30



Photography by Robin Holcomb

The Saturday before Easter, Starstruck Farm, in partnership with Bach To Rock, hosted an Easter Egg Hunt Extravaganza, a family-friendly affair filled with enchanting activities for all ages. Held on a beautiful Saturday, the event featured interactive storytime, scenic hayrides, vendor browsing, music, karaoke, and an eagerly anticipated photo session with the Easter Bunny. Music-themed activities added a unique flair to the festivities. The highlight was the age-grouped egg hunt, offering eggs filled with special gifts ensuring smiles and surprises for everyone involved.





Habitat for Humanity Dedication - April 5



Photos submitted by Leila Grossman Photography and Stuart Naylor Photography

Four new Habitat homeowners were celebrated in early April with the dedication of four homes. The construction of the townhome community, initiated last spring, was completed this month. These homeowners are embarking on a 30-year mortgage journey, featuring zero interest and no initial down payment, facilitated by the generous support of community partners through volunteer efforts and sponsorships.

Toni, Theresa, Kesha, and Jazsmyne, the new homeowners, commenced their Habitat program journey last summer following their approval. As part of a cohort, they have contributed 200 hours of sweat equity towards the construction of their homes and participated in the Habitat Academy. There, they acquired vital skills in financial literacy, home maintenance, and conflict resolution, alongside an educational component covering the legal facets of homeownership.

1. Jazsmyne Betts and family 2. Regional Lowe's leadership team
3. Theresa Bailey, Jazsmyne Betts, Kesha Herron, and Toni Cobbins 4. Theresa Bailey and family

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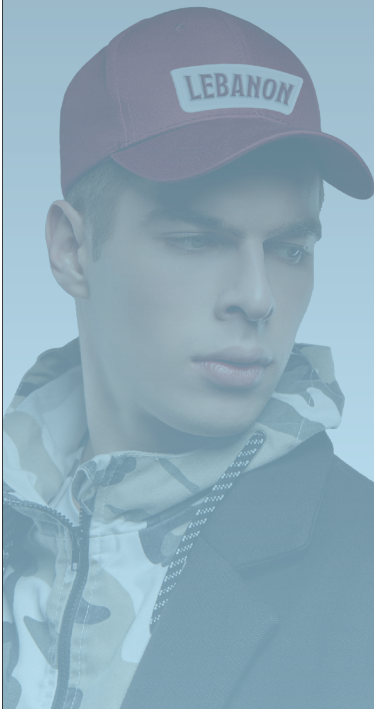
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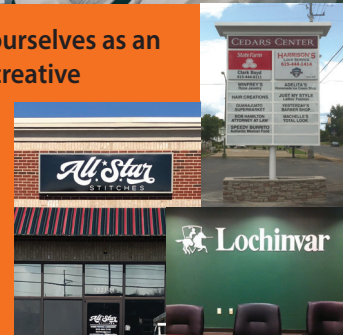
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