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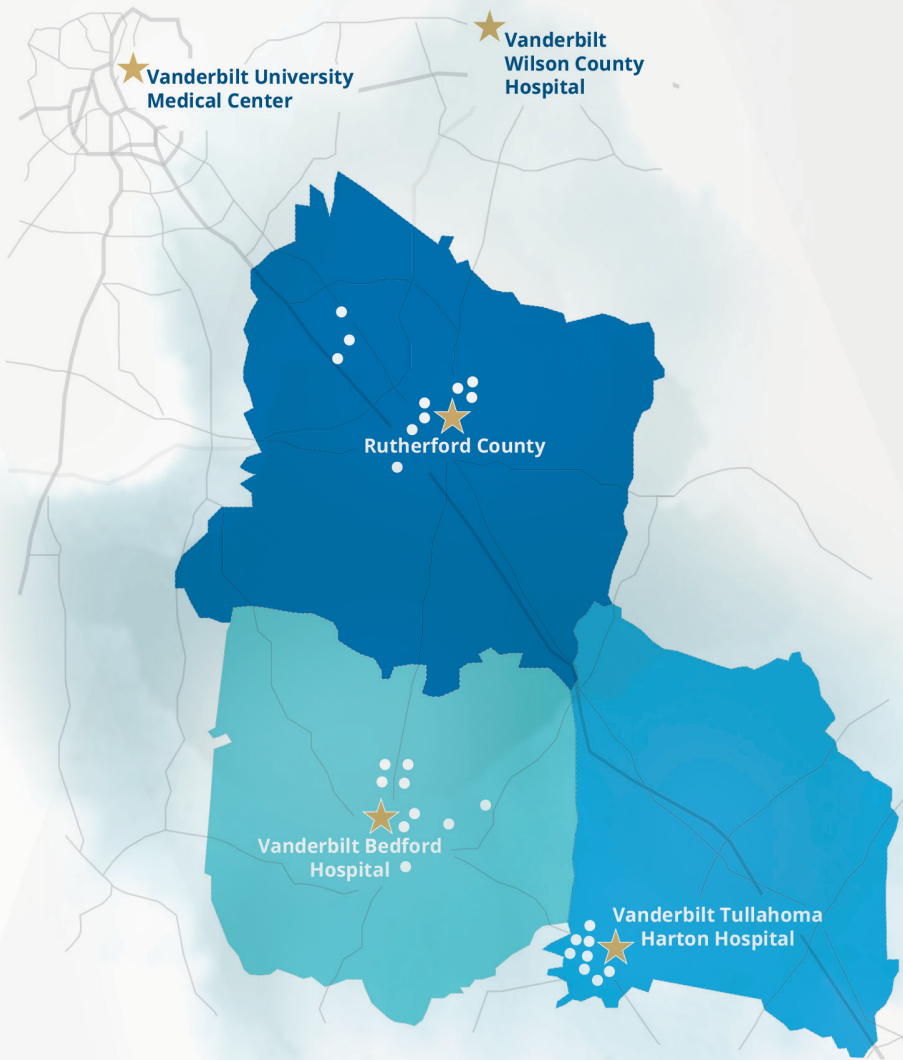
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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Go on vacation here in Franklin County

Start a road trip without your GPS.

SUMMER IS coming. And surely your home will sit empty for a week in this heat. The playful cheers of the kids on summer break go missing for a week that was planned for a year. The dishes sit in the cabinets, waiting for their family to come back home. The doormat sits excitedly to welcome you to the front door. The cool air hits just right over the threshold, pushing its way to the door to fight the heat that keeps increasing by the day. Our furry friends are excited to see our faces instead of the house sitter's. We catch the smell of home for just a moment, and soon, our noses will go back blind to our scent. We're finally home from vacation.

We exchange "I need to forget, so take me to Florida" for "Florida was fun... but it's good to be home." We go back to our work friends. We get to have lunch at our favorite spots again. And we get to drive on roads without the GPS on our phones.

We should explore the world that was created for us. It's exciting to plan a vacation, pack for it, and dig through snacks on the six-hour drive. Those butterflies creep up when the fancy sign starts to get closer on the trip. We jump out in the hotel parking lot and stretch our legs before our first step. The dopamine is on a never-ending conveyor belt. But still, there's nothing like that welcome mat outside our door. The feeling of coming home cannot be matched.

Marketing messages and year-long anticipation pull us away from home for a short time. But I'm convinced every week — even working nine to five — can be a vacation. Our community is packed with things to do that we overlook. I encourage you, reader, to start a list of your home vacation spots. Your home has more fun than you realize, sitting just beyond your backyard. We'll start your list in this issue of Good News. Welcome home to a life of vacation — every day. GN

Wesley Bryant,
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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GOOD NEWS IS PUBLISHED BY Exchange Media Group, Inc.

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▲ Jerry Little
Photography by Brooke Snyder

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COFFEE, COCKTAILS, AND *Unexpected Sisterhood*

A GROUP OF WOMEN EMBRACE THE UNPREDICTABLE
BEAUTY OF FRIENDSHIP IN THEIR GOLDEN YEARS.

By Jeriah Brumfield // Photography by Brooke Snyder and submitted by Sherri Bell

THREE YEARS ago, on Aug. 11, 2021, Angela Averett planted the seeds for a harbor of connectivity in the Franklin County community. Her simple post on the Nextdoor app aimed to connect newcomers, particularly women, seeking friendship and inclusivity. This initiative flourished into what many know as the Golden Friends. Something magical happened as these women gathered over extraordinary moments and clinking glasses.

The women began to form bonds, and the barriers of age, background, and class

began to fade away. A wave of inclusivity, connectivity, joy, and the soothing comfort of kindred spirits emerged in its place. The Golden Friends evolved from a simple idea into an intimate community where everyone who joined found solace in the warm embrace of genuine connection.

Jennifer Whites, drawn in by Angela's original Nextdoor post, felt an immediate connection. Sharing the same Southern roots as Angela, with both women hailing from Atlanta, they bonded quickly.

Group member Barb Seilheimer's invitation to watch "The Golden Bachelor"

sparked unique bonding experiences, like wearing wedding dresses in public and striking a pose for thrilling photoshoots. Nights like these, along with their famous potlucks and trips, strengthened their connection and shaped the group's identity.

An illness eventually forced Angela to step back, and she later died, but her legacy lives on through her beloved friends.

The women later renamed their group from "Cocktails and Conversation" to "Coffee, Cocktails, and Conversation" after transitioning from evening restaurant meetups to coffee shop adventures. From



▲ Anita, Bretta, Patti, Robin, Rebecca, Jennifer, Debbie, Missy, and Sherri



▲ Minnie, Anita, Marcia, Sherri, Patti, Jennifer, Bretta, Barb, Callie, Rebecca, and Debbie.

“

Friendships in your golden years have the potential to quickly add unexpected dimensions to your life. By the time you have reached your golden years, you have a different sense of what's important, and you treasure those things that are particularly valuable. Judgment slides away, and acceptance is more common.

- Callie Adkins



▲ Anita, Debbie, Jan, and Barb

there, the group began gathering at the new coffee shop on the Winchester square.

The Golden Friends are 14 women in their late 50s to early 70s, united by life stories, mutual hobbies, and a passion for living life to the fullest. Whether discussing their love for their grandchildren, taking on new cooking adventures, or bonding over book recommendations, the judgment-free atmosphere gives everyone a safe space for authentic connection.

Potlucks are for celebrations of culinary adventures. Festive celebrations become heartwarming gatherings, like their first Christmas together, where they filled the air with holiday cheer. That year, the group extended the same cheer that flooded their hearts to children in need through the special gifts they donated to a local elementary school.

The group cherishes Thanksgiving and New Year's gatherings, where gratitude and excitement travel from the table to the

living room. For a brief moment, spouses become honorary members of the "Golden Circle." These special moments, brimming with tasty meals and merriment, quickly become the ties that bind and strengthen their sense of belonging and community.

"I moved around a lot growing up and never had a true best girlfriend. And now I have over a dozen, all of whom would answer my call at any time of the day or night for anything — large or small. And there are no words to explain the impact that feeling has on my life," emphasized group member Sherri Bell.

In moments of adversity, the group forms a circle of strength, offering shoulders to cry on and ears that listen without judgment. Callie Adkins shared how the group helped her navigate grief and isolation, expressing the impact on her mental and physical well-being.

"I lost my son very suddenly four years ago, and then my home. Holidays are hard. This past December, I was

dreading pulling out my Christmas decorations," said Callie. "So, three friends came over, and we made it an event. I fixed lunch, and they went to town decorating. My place has never looked so good during the holidays!"

The magic this group shares isn't merely anecdotal. Research consistently shows how impactful healthy relationships are on health and well-being. Be it family, close friends, co-workers, or community, strong connections lead to healthier decisions and improved mental and physical health. The Golden Friends prove the positive influence of social connections on well-being in every interaction.

"Not only does it provide more opportunities to spend time with friends, but knowing there are people who truly care about your well-being — and you reciprocating — is invaluable," Callie added. "It means you are not alone. You will have the support you need to navigate the hurdles life throws your way."

The group has tons of fun planned for the future. Cruises, trips, and adventures are on the horizon. Along with even more thrilling adventures, the Golden Friends are inspired to continue uplifting and supporting each other.

The Golden Friends group proves that genuine bonds can form between people even in the most unexpected circumstances. They exemplify the power of genuine human connection, and their story reminds us that friendship can bloom in unexpected places.

So, grab a cup of coffee, reach out to some of your fellow community members, and see what beautiful connections await you. GN



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Huntland United Methodist Church

**A look inside Huntland Methodist
Church's treasured grocery giveaway.**

By Jeriah Brumfield // Photography by Brooke Snyder



▲ Sandy Allen



▲ Brittany Hill

AN ABUNDANCE of conversations ripples across the church parking lot, punctuated by the rattle of car trunks opening. Every third Saturday, Huntland United Methodist Church (UMC) buzzes with anticipation as its monthly food giveaway unfolds. Positive energy fills the air as volunteers, with faces full of smiles, compassion, and servanthood, sort mountains of groceries. Waves of laughter and heartfelt thanks wash over the crowd, creating an air of human connection that transcends any social or economic divide.

As the food delivery truck from Hope Hohenwald, which is connected with Second Harvest Food Bank, screeches to a halt, volunteers joyfully rush to grab boxes and begin sorting mountains of fresh, crisp apples; sweet potatoes; plump, juicy tomatoes; and dairy products like cheese and milk. One of Huntland UMC's members, Jeff Hill, arrives at the same time in his forklift from the local farmer's co-op to unload the pallets of food from the truck.



A transformation happens as the diverse array of visitors converges around the bounty. As a sense of unity washes over the crowd, strangers become neighbors, sharing anecdotes and smiles. Here, friendly faces and open hearts pave the way for a genuine connection, where each interaction brings unity, care, and a belief in God's love.

The food giveaway began long before the current pastor, Randy Brown, arrived at Huntland UMC. However, the determination and giving spirit of the volunteers never wavered. The Rev. Allison Gilliam, the church's former pastor, was instrumental in starting this ministry.

It all began with a collaboration between volunteers from Huntland UMC and Westside Church of the Nazarene in Tullahoma and its Family Food Ministry. In the early days of the pandemic, Westside Church had leftover food from its giveaway in Estill Springs at the drive-in theater. That's when Wendy Johnson, a volunteer with the Nazarene Church, reached out to the Rev. Gilliam. Together, they rallied a group of church members to distribute food in Huntland.

For Huntland UMC's first giveaway, it contributed 40 packages of freshly cut chicken paired with delicious farm-fresh corn, a generous donation courtesy of Gary Horton. En route to the event, he

made a pit stop at his farm to harvest the corn that would complement the chicken.

This program has become table-laden for countless individuals and families, offering food security and nourishment across Middle Tennessee and Northern Alabama. They went from serving 40 families during their first giveaway to serving up to 407 families at a recent food giveaway.

The volunteers, many from other churches, are just as diverse as the visitors they serve.

"Several of our members, such as Christie Beiler and Ed and Rondalynn Gill, are now volunteering at other food giveaways throughout the course of the month. We are also very grateful to one of the local food trucks for showing up every month to feed the volunteers," said Brown.

The program's ripple effect is evident as some recipients, inspired by the church's generosity, become volunteers themselves.

"There are some people who have been recipients of the food giveaway who need the food, but they also want to help in the distribution."

The early morning line of cars snaking around the church grounds points to the struggles many people in the community face.

"There are people who sit in the cars for two or three hours before the distribution starts because there's such a big need."

This initiative reminds one woman and her family that they are not alone.

"She told me, 'My husband passed away not long ago, and I'm helping my daughter raise her children, and this really helps us to get through the month,'" Brown recalled.

Stories fuel dedication in volunteers who find purpose in lifting others' spirits and pouring into a cause bigger than themselves. Many arrive early, their hands eager to sort and pack and their hearts brimming with the desire to make a difference with each box of food they unpack.

Their mission to pour into the community is far from over. Brown envisions building a network of continuous support that empowers individuals and families to reach their full potential. Within the church's reach, people all over Tennessee and beyond will share countless stories of hope and gratitude.

"It's important for our church to be visible in the community. We want to be known in the community so that if there's an opportunity where we can meet a need, that will happen," he said. **GN**

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An elderly man with short, light-colored hair is smiling warmly at the camera. He is wearing a grey t-shirt and blue jeans. He holds a blue fishing rod with green and gold accents in his right hand. The background is a workshop or garage with wooden walls, various tools, and a red boat. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

**My dad took me fishing
at a young age and
introduced me to catching,
cleaning, and cooking.**

- Jerry Little



CHILDHOOD MEMORIES AND LEGACY WATERS

Jerry Little reflects on cherished memories at Woods Reservoir.

By Jeriah Brumfield // Photography by Brooke Snyder

THE EARLY morning sun cast long shadows across the still waters of Woods Reservoir in Franklin County. A gentle breeze ruffles the surface, creating soft ripples that shine brightly in the golden sunlight. The atmosphere vibrates with the calls of waking birds. Chirps and whistles echo across the 3,600 acres of water. Since the beginning of time, experienced anglers have cast their lines along the shoreline, their figures silhouetted against the rising sun. Some perched on old wooden docks, a look of concentration resting on their faces as they waited for a tug on their lines. Others stood knee-deep in the shallows, casting their baited lines with practiced ease, their boots leaving behind fleeting impressions in the soft mud. In the distance, a lone boat, its white hull cutting through the glassy surface, left a gentle wake in its path. Its occupant, a figure barely visible under a wide-brimmed hat, scanned the water with a practiced eye, searching for the telltale signs of lurking fish. The air carried the faint scent of pine needles and damp earth, a mixture that evoked the feeling of the surrounding woodlands. A calm breeze carried the distant sounds of traffic from the nearby highway, a stark contrast to the serenity of the scene.



▲ Jerry and Jeremy Little

Jerry's introduction to the world of fishing was not a mere pastime; it was a rite of passage, a heritage passed down from his father, Watt Little. As a young boy, Jerry, like a miniature reflection of his dad, took his first steps into the enchanting realm of the reservoir.

"My dad," Jerry recollected, "took me fishing at a young age and introduced me to catching, cleaning, and cooking."

Those early memories of special moments around the lake created the foundation for a bond that would last for decades. Jerry's childhood memories unfolded like a reel of film, each scene

capturing the essence of his connection to fishing.

Woods Reservoir became the breeding ground for these familial adventures. Watt and their next-door neighbor, Mr. Castleberry, became Jerry's mentors and companions in the pursuit of the perfect catch.

"It was a joy to watch him," Jerry recalled as he witnessed his father's skills at play. The camaraderie they forged during those fishing expeditions laid the groundwork for a family tradition that would endure across the years.

Their best trips entailed cooking bass, crappie, and other favored delica-

cies by the lake and sharing meals together as a family.

"All the trips to Woods Reservoir were good. But the ones where we actually caught and cleaned some fish and cooked them at the lake, that's about as fresh fish as you can get," he said.

"We made hushpuppies and fried taters and just enjoyed ourselves as a family. Afterward, the old folks would sit and tell us fishing stories, and [we] kids would sit around and listen."

Woods Reservoir offers plenty of bank and boat fishing opportunities, thanks to its easy accessibility and spacious waters.



Five public boat access sites and four fishing piers dot the shoreline, providing convenient launch points for anglers. The state has further enhanced the fishing experience by placing 10 fish attractors throughout the reservoir.

Over the years, Jerry witnessed many changes to the reservoir but remained captivated by its beauty. Its waters still held the magic of his childhood memories, rekindled when he took his son, Jeremy, fishing just as Watt had done with him.

According to Jerry, patience and enjoyment constitute a perfect day of fishing. He humorously added that you can

redeem a bad day of fishing with a visit to the grocery store for a fresh catch. Sometimes, the experience matters more than the outcome.

When it comes to techniques for success, Jerry provides seasonal insights. In winter, slow fishing in deeper waters is key, while spring calls for a focus on crappie and bass fishing. Jerry advises casting lines further out to maximize success.

Many might remember the local convenience store that graced Woods Reservoir's dock. For Jerry, memories of the shop bring back vivid and special memories.

"When I was a young person, it was a

pleasure to stop in and get minnows and worms, or artificial bait," he shared.

"The inside of the store was nice. They had fish mounted on the walls. They also served good food. It was just a friendly place."

Though the small shop is no longer in business, those memories will last for years through stories passed down from generation to generation.

Generations have found serenity at Woods Reservoir. Following in his father's footsteps, Jerry continues the tradition, casting memories onto the water alongside Jeremy. GN

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I LOVE THE water. It can be any type — a swimming pool, a beach, or a lake. Birds flying, wildlife drinking, and people enjoying activities bring so much joy to so many. What better way to spend an afternoon lunch or evening dinner? When I go to Drafts & Watercrafts, I imagine being on vacation; when I'm done, it's only a few miles away from home. Nestled on the serene shores of the lake, just minutes from downtown Winchester, Drafts & Watercrafts offers waterfront relaxation with delicious food and drinks. With a prime location that boasts stunning views of the water, it has quickly become a favorite for locals and visitors alike. If you get hungry while on a boat at Tims Ford Lake, you can pull right up and dock, then go back out to continue the fun on the water. The restaurant has opened for the summer season as of April 22.

One of my favorite dishes is the irresistible pulled pork nachos. These nachos are piled high with tender, smoky pulled pork, melted cheese, fresh tomatoes, creamy sour cream, and jalapeños on a bed of crispy tortilla chips. Every chip I grab has just enough of everything for an eventful union of textures and flavors, making it the perfect appetizer to share with friends and family or enjoy as a hearty meal on its own.





**GREAT
FOOD!**



**GREAT
VIEW!**

If I'm not getting the mouthwatering nachos, you can bet I'm ordering the wings. I usually order hot or barbecue, and sometimes even both. Whether you like them spicy, sweet, dry, or with barbecue sauce, the wings are always large, cooked to crispy perfection, and served with your choice of dipping sauce. Depending on the day or night, you can take in the lake's tranquil views or listen to live music while enjoying your favorite drumette or flat. Either way, you'll understand why these wings are a crowd favorite. **GN**

**GOOD NEWS IS
COMING TO DINNER!**

We will feature a local food critic's thoughts as they dine in Franklin County. This month Shannon Beebe visited Drafts & Watercrafts.

Shannon Beebe
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▲ Charlie and Joe Bondurant
Photography by Brooke Snyder

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VACATION

VACATION

in Franklin County





JOHN
LOVETT



THE LUCAS HOUSE

Reviving
Belvidere's
hidden gem

By Amanda E. West

*Photography by
Brooke Snyder and
submitted by Jane Lovett*

FOR NEARLY seven years, John and Janie Lovett watched with sadness as the old Lucas house, rumored to be one of the first homes in Franklin County to be electrified, slowly withered away behind overgrown hedges and a crumbling second-story porch. Since John is the president of the Franklin County Historical Society, and he and his wife are both active members, this grieved the Lovetts daily.

At one time, the tracts surrounding the mill were under various ownership. These included a textile factory, mercantile store, cotton gin, blacksmith shop, post office, school, and several residences, but most of them disappeared one by one. The Lovetts knew that if bulldozers leveled the Victorian home, its historical significance to the entire county would also disappear, and one of the last remnants of the village would be snatched forever from future generations.

“We were notified that the Tennessee State Museum in Nashville had been chosen to administer funds

allocated to help the struggling small museums throughout the state,” said John Lovett. “This was designated a Capital Maintenance and Improvement Grant, so we applied and were successful in securing a grant. The house had been allowed to deteriorate markedly, as had the lot itself, so we debated whether to tear it down. The fact that it was the only remaining intact building — other than the mill — in the immediate vicinity and the former residence of several generations of factory owners encouraged us to pursue saving it. Local contractor and museum supporter John Bush provided an estimate for the work. The grant will pay for the exterior stabilization, including foundation and floor structure repair, roof replacement, front porch rebuilding, and mending of the siding. We hope to have the work completed by the end of June 2024, in accordance with the grant requirements.”

The Lovetts believe a family with the surname of Rachielles who worked at Falls Mill may have

been the original occupants of the home, but in 1884, the Lucas family took ownership. In 1928, owner John Lucas died, so in 1930, E.C. Wheeler Auction Company out of McMinnville tried unsuccessfully to auction the home, mill, and 110 acres into individual lots. The “J. H. Lucas home property” never sold due to the hardships of the Great Depression, and up until the Lovetts purchased it last year, it had been owned by descendants of the same family for the last 140 years.

“After the lot was cleaned up, the house was assessed to determine a plan

for restoration. This proposed project focuses on stabilization, weatherproofing, and first-phase — primarily exterior — restoration of the Lucas house, with the intent of utilizing it as a visitor center that will highlight the history of the village and its residents. We also plan to use it as a meeting facility and event venue,” said John Lovett.

The Lovetts feel it is important to date the house accurately, so they’ve hired Dr. Maegen Rochner of the University of Louisville to conduct a tree ring study of the timbers used during the initial construction of the home

to give them an approximate date of construction. Once the contractor completes the initial work to stabilize the home and the requirements for the grant are met, they plan to appeal to their museum members to help with renovations of the interior, possibly through an “Adopt a Room” campaign.

Since 1984, the Lovetts have poured their lives into restoring the mill, with all its inner workings and intricate pulley systems that once powered textile machinery and ground corn and wheat by water power. They’ve collected and restored an extensive as-

▼ John and Janie Lovett





After the lot was cleaned up, the house was assessed to determine a plan for restoration. We also plan to use it as a meeting facility and event venue.

- John Lovett

sortment of textile-related artifacts, which are displayed on all three levels of the mill. They also moved a large log home to the property shortly after purchasing the mill and restored it as their private residence.

Finding extra time on his hands in 2020, John lovingly crafted a complete replica of a one-room schoolhouse from logs he scavenged from a local farm and repurposed. Now, as they restore the Lucas home to its former glory, the Lovetts are interested in donations of period-appropriate furnishings and fixtures, especially those in and around Franklin County. The restoration of the Lucas house will provide another crown jewel to the Falls Mill community.

For a nominal fee, you can tour the mill and museum and enjoy a piece of heaven right here in Belvidere this summer. The Lovetts also host down-home picnics, old-fashioned workdays, and seasonal festivals on the property. **GN**

For a list of activities available this summer, go to www.fallsmill.com.

FAMILY TRADITIONS EMERGE AT THE ELK RIVER

How a Tennessee river became a second home and traditional staple for one family.

By Teriah Brunfield

*Photography by
Brooke Snyder*

AS SUMMER approaches, families eagerly anticipate the break from daily routines, preparing to embark on new adventures. Friends load up their RVs, ready to hit the open road and create unforgettable memories. It's a season of adventure. The Elk River, cascading below Tims Ford Dam in South Central Tennessee, is an oasis where cool water and inviting pools glisten under the sun. In the deeper stretches, fish dart and gleam, their scales flashing like jewels. It's a place of endless fascination, an ecosystem inviting those seeking serenity and new experiences.

For some, the Elk River is a second home, an integral part of their lives for generations. It's a place that holds memories as precious as the glittering fish that call it home.

It's no wonder that 25 years ago, Lolita Golden asked her boyfriend, Karl Jones, "When are you going to take me fishing?"

She immediately fell in love with the area. Lolita, raised on a farm in Holders Cove, found her own slice of heaven wading in the creeks on her family's land. Karl grew up in the Farris Chapel community and spent many childhood days fishing the pond on his family farm.

As Karl grew older, he and his friends explored the Elk River's stunning landscape, floating, fishing, and camping on the weekends.



LOLITA AND
KARL JONES





When I came along, he took me floating on the river and camping on weekends. He taught me how to fish with crickets.

- *Lolita Jones*

What makes the Elk River deeply personal for the Jones family is the bond Karl and Lolita shared over the water. This was well before she gave birth to their two children.

“When I came along, he took me floating on the river and camping on weekends. He taught me how to fish with crickets,” Lolita remembered fondly. “I had never been to such a quiet, peaceful spot and never caught so many fish. It was so quiet and peaceful and beautiful to observe nature.”

The couple soon married, and as their family grew, so did their river adventures. Karl built a little spot on the boat for their daughter, Brooke, with a cute umbrella, allowing her the space to enjoy the ride in her infancy. The birth of their second bundle of joy, their son, Austin, added a new dimension to their family traditions.

“We loaded them up, packed tents, coolers, and fishing poles into a small 14-foot Jon boat, and floated down the river to our camping spot. Our friends and

their children would go too, and there was nothing better.”

On weekends camping along the river became a blend of old and new, where the children learned to fish, build fires, set up tents, and appreciate the great outdoors. They bantered and played together in the river, catching minnows, skipping rocks, and swimming.

River days weren't always smooth-flowing. On one trip, the family and friends enjoyed a beautiful evening, lulled to sleep by the warmth of the air and the coolness of the water. They woke up the next morning to a massive downpour as their tent filled with water. Despite a day of continuous rain as they floated downstream to their vehicles, the families didn't let a little rain stop their shine.

“The fishing was good. So we had a good time,” Lolita shared. “We still laugh about that trip.”

Successful fishing trips are familiar to the family, and especially to Austin. Since toddlerhood, he has been reeling in catches alongside his father and close friends on the Elk River. His fishing prowess led him to join the Franklin County Junior and High School Bass teams, exploring lakes from Watts Bar to Kentucky Lake on the Tennessee River.

Before the era of COVID-19, Austin's skills earned him fifth place at Toledo Bend in Louisiana with his partner, securing a spot in the high school BASS Nationals.

Over the years, Lolita and her family have marveled at the wildlife. They've witnessed many river wonders from clouds, trees, wildflowers, and the kids wading in the water with friends.

“The wildlife we spotted is amazing,” Lolita said.

Deer, mink, snakes, fish, birds, and even bald eagles have graced their experiences.

The family and their friends now enjoy Tims Ford Lake on their pontoon boat, downrigging at night. They delight in afternoon boat rides, pulling the kids and their friends on the inner tubes.

Karl and Lolita take their cousins from Florida and their boys out for tubing and fishing along the Elk River during family reunions. An experience sparked a newfound passion for fishing in one of the boys, who now participates on a fishing team back in Florida.

Karl and Lolita recently switched from tents to a camper. The family embraces the added comfort of their trips, exploring and enjoying the amenities of the wonderful campgrounds in the area.

Reflecting on 25 years together in 2023, they realized it all began with a simple question: “When are you going to take me fishing?” **GN**



JOSH AND
GINGER BONDURANT



FRESH AIR, SWEET TREATS, AND FAMILY FUN

The Bondurant family's odyssey as marina owners and agents of family memories.

By Jeriah Brumfield

*Photography by
Brooke Snyder*

STEP INTO the Bondurant family's world: a serene escape where the ebb and flow of Tims Ford Lake ownership has shaped not just a marina but a legacy. With roots embedded in the waves since 1984, the Bondurants share a family odyssey of creating slices of paradise where every ripple in the water reflects the years of unforgettable memories families have made on the land.

The Bondurant family has long been known for their hospitality, quality, and the simple joys of living life to the fullest.

"We saw the need for a full-service marina where people could have a good time," Charlie Bondurant said.

Guided by the timeless principle of treating others as they would want to be treated, their interaction with every visitor who steps onto their marina is embedded with genuine kindness and respect.

A SHIFT IN TIDES: THE BIRTH OF FOREST RV RESORT

Upon selling their previous marina, Tims Ford Marina, Joe Bondurant had an idea for a new venture — a forested haven that would become the Forest RV Resort. The RV resort, located on 50 acres near the marina and state park, emerged as a seamless blend of luxury and nature.

Charlie elaborated, "We cleared only the necessary trees, creating 74 full-service spots, all paved in concrete, connecting to electricity, water, power, and sewer."

Discover the magic of Lakeview Marina, boasting 13 rental boats, two of which are double-deckers with slides attached. This promises families a day filled with fun in the sun.

The resort, bordered by walking trails leading into the state park, emanates tranquility. Fully equipped with bathrooms, laundry rooms, pavilions,



▲ Penny and Thomas



We saw the need for a full-service marina where people could have a good time.

- Charlie Bondurant

and children’s playgrounds, these spacious spots offer visitors a place to stay and an experience immersed in nature. The shaded and concreted areas of the resort allow children to cruise through the land on their bikes.

OBSTACLES AS STEPPING STONES

A major ice storm in 1996 damaged one of their docks and many pontoons, leaving the entire dock to sink — a devastating blow for the marina owners.

“We’ve gone from some things that were very devastating to many moments and friendships that hold special memories,” Joe’s wife, Ginger Bondurant, said.

Despite the hardships, the tranquil atmosphere has always served as a source of strength for the Bondurant family, motivating them to keep making their marinas a little more like heaven for visitors.

“We’ve watched some of the children grow up, from when they were born to when they were 18 and leaving,” Ginger continued.

CONTRIBUTING TO THE COMMUNITY

Beyond recreation, the Bondurants have become a hub for transient workers. From traveling nurses to Jack Daniel’s employees and Arnold Air Force Base workers, the RV park serves as a temporary home for those on short-term assignments. It warmly embraces every visitor who desires a brief escape.

A GLIMPSE INTO THE FUTURE

With plans for a second phase of the RV resort, the Bondurants prepared to dive deeper into the evolving desires of their guests. The challenge lies in finding the delicate balance between nature and modern conveniences.

“People talk about ‘glamping,’ and they rent teepees, wagons, and tents, so we’re just trying to figure out what people actually want to do,” expressed Charlie.

HARMONY WITHIN THE FAMILY

The family dynamic has been a cornerstone of the Bondurant family’s success. Charlie; his brother Joe; Joe’s wife, Ginger; their son, Josh; and other family members seamlessly complement each other’s strengths. The bonds between them create a well-oiled machine that orchestrates their success.

With Joe and Josh managing operations, Ginger in financial management, and Charlie managing marketing and sales, each role contributes to the overall success of their family’s legacy.

“We’re all involved in the lake and outdoors and helping people have fun,” enthused Charlie.

A LEGACY OF HOSPITALITY

The Bondurant family’s story is not merely about marinas and RV resorts. It has long been a narrative in Tims Ford Lake’s story. It’s a culmination of hospitality, commitment, and adaptability — the perfect blend for visitors who seek solace by the waters. After all, there’s nothing like a staycation in your own backyard. **GN**

Charlie Bondurant, Chris Nix, Ginger Bondurant, Joe Bondurant, and Josh Bondurant ▶



education that comes with celebrating Dairy as father Steve, his and his wife Kara family started dairy when they moved to Tennessee. It's a way to get behind the scenes, and support local agriculture.

It might not be the first thought on many people's minds, but high-protein farmers do a lot of work in terms of raising and caring for cattle, being on the farm, and wearing safety gear.

It goes into dairy farming. The Nash family started in 2020. "We'd al-



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Ain't It Funny... How Time Slips Away



Happy 40th Anniversary, Mike!

Love Ya, Sandra

This section of the magazine covers local events, charities, and nonprofits.



Good Times

▲ Jim, Jay, and Charlie Reynolds
Photography by Brooke Snyder

Submit a positive story on our website:
goodnewsmags.com



Solar Eclipse - April 8



Photos submitted by folks in the community

Friends from Franklin County and surrounding areas gathered to witness the solar eclipse, a once in a lifetime event. The eclipse happened on April 8 as darkness came over the area in the middle of the day.



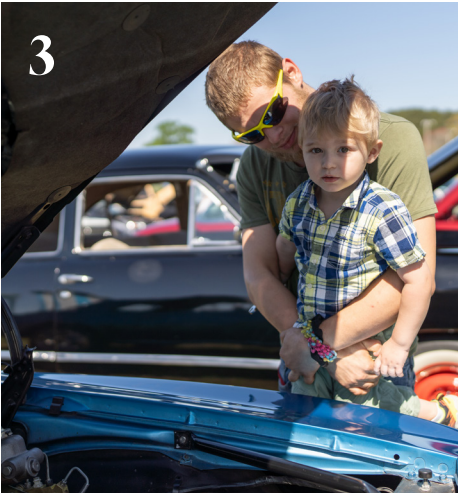
1. Delton Bolin 2. Roxi Branch and family 3. Lyndi Bean 4. Zana Wooten, Courtney Damron, and Amber Wooten
5. Knox, Dahlia, and Laura Daidone 6. Kathy Syler, Hollie Taylor, and Jillian Elliot

Pack the Park - April 13



Photography by Brooke Snyder

Pack the Park held up to its name last year. This year, Pack the Park was at a new, larger location. The event was held at the Winchester City Park on Saturday, April 13, beginning at 10 a.m. Many cars were shown to the community.



1. Bill Beaty 2. Keith Jaco
3. Dillian and Waylon Wilder 4. Millie Heineman and Lilli Anderson

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Advocates for trauma survivors, offering peer-to-peer support and resource allocation.

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www.thefullmoonhealingproject.org

Early Literacy Ambassadors

Offers free, evidence-based reading interventions to children in South Central Tennessee to break the cycle of poverty through literacy.

www.earlyliteracyambassadors.com
Facebook: *Early Literacy Ambassadors*

Franklin County Rescue Squad

Volunteers providing essential rescue services.

(931) 967-4532
www.fctnready.com/search-%26-rescue

Friends of Tims Ford State Park

Helps Tims Ford State Park improve visitors' experiences through volunteer and financial assistance.

friendsoftfsp@gmail.com
www.friendsoftimsfordstatepark.com

Almost Home Transitional Housing Program

Provides transitional housing while networking individuals and families with organizations to affirm permanent placement.

(931) 968-2503
Facebook: *Almost Home Transitional Housing Program*

Franklin County Animal Control

Helps the community by being responsible for animal welfare, licensing, and enforcement.

(931) 967-5389

Sewanee Community Chest

Provides funding for educational, youth activities, community projects, and health services.

www.sewaneecivic.org/community-chest/

Rain Unlimited Inc.

Creates a positive, safe place for teens to congregate, mentor, and offer faith-based teachings indoors as well as share God's great outdoors with youth.

(931) 308-0998
www.camprain.org

Broadview Parents Organization

Promotes parent involvement at Broadview Elementary School.

www.broadview.fcstn.net/bpo

931Cares Inc.

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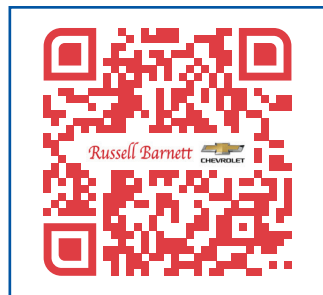


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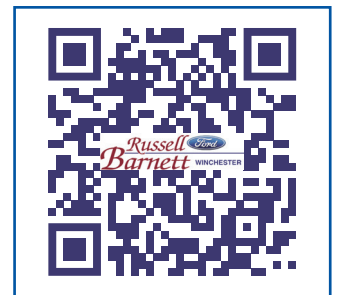
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