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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Go on vacation here in Bowling Green

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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CHAPTER 1 OF 3

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

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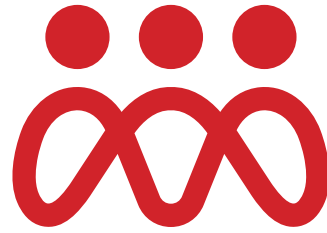
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Photography by Amanda Guy

◀ Kenny Beckman



COMMUNITY *connection*

Kenny B's story of community spirit
and local love on the airwaves

By Haley Potter // Photography by Amanda Guy

“HEY, IT’S Kenny B, live from the Bowling Green Bypass. Thanks for starting your day in our neighborhood,” echoes a phrase that has become a staple for locals dialing into WGGC’s vibrant morning show on their way to work, where Kenny B and Sadie fill the airwaves from 6-10 a.m. on weekdays. Kenny’s voice, more than just a well-known sound in the community, radiates with positivity, ready to infuse every listener’s day with an uplifting energy and community spirit that sets the tone for their day.

Kenny Beckman, the youngest program director and on-air host in

the Bowling Green area, has become synonymous with heartfelt broadcasting and genuine community engagement. Married to Morgan Hoover, the nightly news anchor at News 40, Kenny’s life is deeply intertwined with the community, both professionally and personally. With a bustling household that includes two young children under 2, the Beckmans are a constant presence at local events and sports games, embodying the community spirit they advocate for on-air. Kenny’s journey at WGGC, which began three years ago, has been marked by a strong dedication to leveraging the power of live and local radio for the greater good.



Kenny Beckman



“

Being a presence in the community is our number one thing. Showing up to events and letting people know we're here to serve them is what it is all about.

-Kenny Beckman



Kenny's day-to-day responsibilities are steeped in the mission to keep the community connected, informed, and entertained while fostering a sense of local pride and togetherness.

At the heart of Kenny's day is a dedication to "local, local, local" content.

He explained, "We're that local presence of a country show. We are doing our live and local morning show, updating people on local events and things to bring the whole family out to."

This approach has resonated deeply with listeners, drawing them closer to the station and, by extension, to each other. Kenny's mission goes beyond entertainment; it's about building a community network that supports and uplifts its members.

Kenny's philosophy reaches into every aspect of WGGC's programming and community involvement.

"Being a presence in the community is our number one thing," he said with pride. "Showing up to events and letting people know we're here to serve them is what it is all about," Kenny stated, highlighting the station's commitment to being more than just a voice on the radio.

This mission is evident in segments like the Neighborhood Watch in the morning and partnerships with local businesses and nonprofits to spotlight community initiatives.

The community's response to Kenny's efforts has been overwhelmingly positive.

"It's totally well received," Kenny shared. "We hear all the time the feedback of not only community leaders like our people working in politics here but people who are ahead of local nonprofits, such as Relay for Life and United Way," Kenny said.

This feedback underscores the significant role WGGC plays in fostering community spirit and involvement, a mission near and dear to Kenny.

One of Kenny's proudest achievements is the station's ability to make a tangible difference in people's lives. He recounts a particularly touching story: "We found a kid in need whose story touched us. He actually just lost his legs and later found out that Jelly Roll's music carried him through his hospital visits [and] through a very depressing time. We were able to hook him up with tickets and the experience to go see Jelly Roll." That is what Kenny loves about his job and his role as an on-air personality in this community. This story showcases local radio's power to entertain and profoundly impact lives.

Kenny's vision for WGGC is one of continued community engagement, support, and positivity. "We wanna make sure people know we're here to serve," he said proudly. "They can hop on with us as that live and local morning show." Through his leadership, WGGC has achieved high ratings and has become an integral part of the Bowling Green community's fabric.

Kenny Beckman's impact on Bowling Green goes beyond his role at WGGC. Through his dedication to local content, community involvement, and positive storytelling, he has helped create a more connected, informed, and supportive community. His work serves as a powerful reminder of the role local media can play in enriching the lives of its audience and the importance of giving back to the community that supports it. **GN**





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BiG Local Club & BiG Local Fest

Local entrepreneurs investing in local entrepreneurs

By Amanda E. West // Photography by Adin Parks

NAVIGATING THE ins and outs of launching a successful business and building a recognizable brand is a daunting task. Most entrepreneurs would rather invest valuable time in creating the finest quality products and meeting the demands of potential customers than become bogged down in the nitty-gritty details.

With this burden in mind, co-founder Wayne Hills enlisted his friend, Scott Wells, who worked for a major technology distributor, along with fellow entrepreneurs Amy Miller and the owners of South Cow, Patrick and Laurie McKinney. Together, they formed the BiG Local Club, and although Wayne's wife, Miranda, and Amy's husband, Eric, aren't involved directly, their encouragement and unwavering support have helped tremendously. The leadership of the BiG Local Club offers 80 years of combined experience in marketing and retail sales and understands the steps to grow a thriving business.



▲ Community members applaud the band '68/80



▲ A child rides a mechanical bull at the BiG Local Festival

Wayne explained, “I have 25 years of experience in sales and working with small businesses, as my family owned a small business during my early 20s. So, supporting local and small businesses is personal to me. Today, more so than ever, local businesses have more competition from out-of-state and out-of-country ‘Goliath’ competitors due to e-commerce or large chain stores that have scale on their side and a global reach.

“This exploits the lower cost of living in emerging markets, which reduces their labor and product costs, enabling these larger chain stores to keep prices lower. We founded the BiG Discount Club to fight back against this ever-growing Goliath in our community. By banding local businesses and community members together with a common goal of strengthening our community, we can support local entrepreneurs and our locally employed neighbors.”

Joining the BiG Local Club is easy. With several plans to choose from depending on your needs and budget, members immediately reap the benefits of a support system that currently includes 100 other business owners and a pool of consumers who are passionate about “supporting local.” As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, membership is tax deductible.

“At BiG Local Club, our mission is to empower and uplift our vibrant local businesses by providing essential resources like business education, grants, microloans, digital and print advertising opportunities, and business consulting,” said Wayne. “We also organize public and private events that bring together small businesses and Southern Kentucky consumers, which create positive change while forging stronger network connections and driving economic growth for our local community.”



▲ Children playing foosball at the BiG Local Festival

“

At BiG Local Club, our mission is to empower and uplift our vibrant local businesses by providing essential resources like business education, grants, microloans, digital and print advertising opportunities, and business consulting.

-Wayne Hills

Here's what you need to know:

Membership for Business Owners: Join the club for a nominal fee and gain access to a network of fellow entrepreneurs, resources, and exclusive events. Plus, be eligible for grants and microloans to help your business expand and explore new innovations.

Consumer Perks: As a consumer, you can benefit from joining the BiG Local Rewards program, a product of the BiG Discount Club — a sister company. When you become a member, you'll gain access to discounts on products and services offered by businesses in the network. This program is a win-win for both buyers and sellers. With the recent launch of their new app, members can now save even more with various discounts, freebies, and chances to win cash prizes.

The BiG Local Event: A Beacon of Support

The founders of the BiG Local Club are not content with merely creating a space for collaboration — they're actively investing in the community. Enter the BiG Local Event, an annual gathering held in April that serves as a fundraising powerhouse offering an exciting kids zone packed with inflatables, over 60 vendors, 15 food trucks, three live bands, and Mortal Kombat on a 50-inch screen.



▲ Community members enjoying the BiG Local Festival

This event funded:

Grants and Microloans: Small businesses within the BiG Local Club network can apply for grants or microloans to fuel growth. This keeps funds within the community, provides jobs for our neighbors, and creates a stronger Bowling Green for all.

Amplified Entrepreneurial Voices: Beyond financial support, the BiG Local Event provided a platform for up-and-coming entrepreneurs to showcase their products and services and spread the word about who they are and what they offer. They also connected face-to-face with potential customers, igniting a buzz about their products.

The BiG Local Club isn't just about dollars and cents. It's about fostering a sense of community pride. When local businesses thrive, the entire neighborhood flourishes. Whether you're a seasoned entrepreneur or a budding startup, the BiG Local Club and BiG Local Rewards App welcome you with open arms. Join the movement. Be part of something BiG. **GN**

For more information, visit www.biglocalclub.org and www.biglocalrewards.com.



Mandi Hill and Lauren Bratcher

CELEBRATING OUR DIFFERENCES *one event at a time*

Y'allternative Events brings inclusion and diversity to Bowling Green.

By Kali Bradford // Photography by Adin Parks

INCLUSION AND diversity play a pivotal role in hosting an event. By embracing these principles, an event can create an environment of acceptance, foster innovation, and expand opportunities. When diverse voices are heard, events provide valuable insights, perspectives, and experiences.

No one knows this better than the dynamic trio that makes up Y'allternative Events. Since 2023, Lauren Bratcher, Mandi Hill, and Jessicka Kinser have been on a mission to “create enchanting spaces where diversity and inclusion thrive.”

“We are committed to curating unique, alternative, and mystical gatherings that celebrate the richness of human experience,” explained Bratcher. “Through a careful selection of vendors and a dedication to unity, we aim to provide a platform for underrepresented

voices, minority-owned, women-owned, LGBTQ-owned, and independent businesses, ensuring they shine in the spotlight. We believe in the power of the extraordinary, and our events are a testament to the magic that happens when all are welcome. We prioritize these minority voices when it comes to choosing vendors. We also accept donations of items such as winter coats to pay for admission to our show. Through the Yuletide show, we were able to donate over 200 gently used coats to the Salvation Army to distribute among our houseless citizens.”

The Bowling Green-based business began with Bratcher and Hill meeting and becoming friends. The two quickly realized that they shared many of the same interests, values, and passions.

“Mandi became involved in my nonprofit, Kentucky NORML, and assisted with planning the Inaugural

“

Our goal is to create a platform highlighting the talents of artisans and handmade vendors who often don't receive as much recognition. By showcasing their unique crafts to the community, we hope to give them a well-deserved spotlight and increase awareness about their work.

-Lauren Bratcher

Kentucky Cannabis Conference in Frankfort, Kentucky,” Bratcher explained. “Then last August, when my husband and I opened our retail location, One Love Hemp Dispensary BG, in downtown Bowling Green, Mandi worked with us on that as well. Our families are close, so it wasn't long before she introduced me to her sister, Jessicka, and we realized that we had met each other years back and shared many of the same friends.”

Looking for ideas to drive foot traffic to the newly opened dispensary, Bratcher suggested hosting a Halloween-themed event at the store, which would lead to the beginning of Y'allternative Events.

“I thought we should put together a little costumed meet-up at my store, and then we would all leave together and walk the square for ‘Scare on the Square,’” she said. “I suddenly had so many requests to be a vendor. I quickly became overwhelmed. So, I approached Mandi and Jessicka with the idea of doing a small pop-up vendor event. They were eager to team up with me, and the 2023 Witches’ Bazaar was born. We had a blast, and so did our vendors. Many of them pleaded with us to do another vendor show indoors, maybe for the holidays. We realized we had something special and decided to do a Yuletide Holiday Market, which was a resounding success.”

In less than a year, the group has hosted several successful events, including the Yuletide Holiday Market in December

2023, the 2024 Kentucky Cannabis Conference in Frankfort, the 420 Music Fest at White Squirrel Brewery, and the most recent Flora and Fauna Spring Market at the Greenwood Mall in Bowling Green.

Bratcher said the public's response has been positive. They hope to continue to grow and promote the amazing talent in and around Bowling Green.

“Our goal is to create a platform highlighting the talents of artisans and handmade vendors who often don't receive as much recognition,” she explained. “By showcasing their unique crafts to the community, we hope to give them a well-deserved spotlight and increase awareness about their work. Additionally, our initiative aims to make a positive impact by supporting individuals who are less fortunate, thereby contributing to a more inclusive and supportive society.”

In the future, Bratcher said the plan is to continue to be involved in the community, promoting Bowling Green’s talent and bringing new events to the community.

“We love helping emerging artists feel seen, appreciated, and encouraged,” she said. “We have been presented with opportunities to plan a grand opening, a music festival, and a few other private events. Subscribe to our email list at yallternativeevents.com and watch for more of our inclusive events popping up all over Kentucky.” **GN**





Experience flavor
at home

Submit your recipes to be included in Good News Magazine
and the Exchange Cookbook: www.southernaprons.com

You don't have to go far for destination foods.

SAVOR THE essence of a hometown getaway with heartwarming flavors that celebrate locally available ingredients. From comforting classics to tempting treats, give yourself a break and bring the charm of a small-town vacation right to your kitchen.

If you want the taste of exploration you find on vacation, try a new-to-you recipe from your dream destination's cookbooks. Or plan a meal resembling your favorite summer vacation spots. Have fun creating an authentic atmosphere that takes you miles away without ever leaving home.

So, kick back, relax, and let your taste buds embark on a journey without leaving home. These recipes are your staycation ticket, where every bite reminds you of the charm and flavors that make your hometown truly special. **GN**

Banana Pudding

Submitted by Nancy Parkerson

2 eggs, separated
1/2 c. + 3 T. sugar
pinch of salt
1 T. flour
2 c. milk
1 t. vanilla
3-4 bananas, sliced
1 box vanilla wafers

In a saucepan, combine egg yolks and sugar. Add salt, flour, and milk. Cook over slow heat until thickened. Add vanilla. Pour into a baking dish, alternating with bananas. Add wafers. Beat egg whites with 3 T. sugar in a medium mixing bowl. Cover pudding and brown at 350°.

Fried Chicken

In memory of Margie Inez Drake

2 pkgs. Italian salad dressing
2 c. biscuit mix
2/3 c. club soda
1 egg, beaten
1 fryer chicken, cut up
oil for frying

In a small mixing bowl, combine 1 package of salad dressing with the biscuit mix. In a small mixing bowl, combine soda and egg. Dip chicken in egg mixture, then baking mix mixture. Set chicken pieces on a rack to drip. Fry in a skillet of deep fat for 3 minutes. Place in a baking dish and bake for 350° for 30 minutes. You can also just deep fry for 20-25 minutes.

Strawberry Lemonade

Submitted by Morgan Hargrove

1 c. strawberries, chopped
1/4 c. lemon juice
1/2 c. sugar
1 can frozen lemonade concentrate
1 can water
1/2 c. powdered lemonade mix
2 bottles strawberry sparkling water
1/2 c. strawberry soda

Place chopped strawberries in a medium bowl with lemon juice and sugar. Let sugar dissolve to make a syrup. Add lemonade concentrate and water. Stir in lemonade mix. Pour into a large pitcher. Add 1 bottle of sparkling water. Mix well. Add remaining sparkling water. Stir in strawberry soda.

Where courtside meets class:



Enjoy basketball with an elevated twist

GOOD NEWS IS COMING TO DINNER!

We will feature a local food critic's thoughts as they dine in Bowling Green. This month Eve Vawter visited Pub by Novo.

Eve Vawter
foodcriticbowlinggreen@gmail.com

Pub by Novo

2425 Scottsville Rd.
Bowling Green
(270) 715-6686
www.pubbynovo.com



Pub by Novo sets the standard for upscale sports entertainment.

PUB BY Novo is known to be “not your average sports bar,” which is perfect for someone like me who is a huge sports fan. And by “sports,” I mean having a TV on playing sports while I ignore the game and just eat all the snacks. Go, sports team!

The parking lot was crowded, which, as you know, is always a great sign. The hipster restaurant is painted a moody gray with industrial chic accents and cozy tables. As for the bar seating... Well, let's just say it's reserved for the hardcore sports enthusiasts who take their game-watching way more seriously than someone like me.

We ordered cocktails — the “Aperol Breeze” (yes, I've decided rainy April is the start of Aperol season in Bowling Green) and “The Spritz,” which consisted of vodka, champagne, peach, and lemon. Both were absolutely delightful, and I could have consumed many more, but I had to leave room for food.

We couldn't resist indulging in the Pub by Novo “Board,” a delightful assortment of cured meats accompanied by delectable marmalade, creamy pimento cheese, and an array of tantalizing accompaniments.

We could have stopped there. And I mean, what Bowling Green needs is a place that just serves boards and charcuterie and maybe popcorn — because, snacks! Our absolutely wonderful waitress, Annie T., was so enthusiastic about the menu that we had to keep eating.

The “Pub's Hot Chicken Sandwich” was spicy but not so mouth-blistering you couldn't eat it. It was accompanied by perfectly tot-ed tators. My companion ordered a chicken Caesar wrap, which was paired with parmesan truffle fries for an upcharge. Both were delicious, and the portions were huge. The menu also has items like tacos, sliders, pizzas, wings, salads, and a kid's menu, and judging by the number of kids in the restaurant, they are very welcome.

Pub by Nova is a perfect place whether you want to catch a game or have a romantic dinner with your partner. One thing to note is that the atmosphere and music are loud, so it's not the ideal location for quiet conversation, but if you enjoy DMX blaring while you eat some elevated bar food — which I do — then this is the place for you. **GN**





GOOD NEWS

CHAPTER 2 OF 3

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

- 36** A unique blend of history, education, and beauty
- 40** Stay and play
- 44** A day at the park

Our stories are based on submissions from local people.

Submit yours here:



goodnewsmags.com

Photography by Amanda Guy

◀ Justin Jennings



VACATION

in Bowling Green





JUSTIN
JENNINGS

A UNIQUE BLEND OF HISTORY, EDUCATION, AND BEAUTY

Lost River Cave is Bowling Green's natural wonderland.

By Richard Klein

*Photography by
Amanda Guy*

LOST RIVER Cave is a striking 72-acre expanse right in Bowling Green. It functions as an educational and activity center, a wedding venue, and an opportunity to interact with the natural world. There are 2 miles of trails. And then there is the cave — Lost River's biggest draw.

The cave was a place of milling operations until the early 20th century and then housed a unique nightclub that started in the 1930s — cleverly described in those pre-HVAC days as the “coolest” place in town. This distinctive, very popular nightclub hosted big bands, swing, and the likes of Dinah Shore and the NBC Orchestra. But what is crowd-pleasing one day is outdated the next. The nightclub did not survive the transition to rock ‘n roll, closed down, and simply became a place to dump garbage for decades. Incredibly, people backed up to the edge of the cave’s mouth and threw out trash. The acreage became overgrown and filled with invasive plants and litter.

In the 1980s, a local professor, Nick Crawford, organized a community effort to clean out and restore the cave and the entire area. Since then, a mind-boggling total of 50 tons of garbage have been pulled out of the cave system.

The cave has been resurrected as the historic Cavern Nite Club, which features the original 1930s bar and bandstand and is the site for corporate events. According to Lost River Cave’s CEO, Justin Jennings, it is a sought-after wedding venue that hosts between 50 and 60 weddings a year.

There is a hugely popular boat tour, which began around 1998 and was the brainchild of Nick Crawford as a way to raise money for the extensive restoration.

“We operate our boat tour 363 days a year as long as the water levels will allow us to,” Jennings explained.

Educational and environmental programming and field trips are available. Over 5,000 students took part last fall. The variety of nature is wide-ranging, including a seasonal butterfly habitat.



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AND THE PEOPLE OF MISSISSIPPI
IN MEMORY OF
JAMES M. HAYNES
1854-1914
BY THE MISSISSIPPI HISTORICAL SOCIETY
AND THE MISSISSIPPI HISTORICAL COMMISSION
IN 1914

Friends of the Lost River, Inc.
In Memory of
James M. Haynes, President
John Davis, Member



“

It's very enriching to talk to the kids and take them over to the cave wall, show them a fossil, and tell them, 'This was a living, breathing creature millions of years ago.'

- Justin Jennings

“On every boat tour, people are learning more about the ecosystems we have here and how fragile it is,” said Jennings. “I tell all our new hires, ‘Where else can you do this? You operate a boat through a cave and teach people to be better stewards of the earth.’”

Labeling something as “overly educational” is often the quickest way to lose a kid’s interest. The students who come to this natural wonderland get educated in the best way possible — by having fun.

“It’s very enriching to talk to the kids and take them over to the cave wall, show them a fossil, and tell them, ‘This was a living, breathing creature millions of years ago.’ It’s neat to see the kids excited, learning, and developing that appreciation for nature.”

Some students form a lasting connection to Lost River and will return years later as tour guides.

“We know we’re making an impact,” Jennings said, “because this is what they want to do with their lives now.”

Justin Jennings is an example of the close connection that Lost River Cave inspires. He visited the park as a high school student, worked on several Eagle Scout projects on the land, and took a class with Nick Crawford at Western

Kentucky University. After working as a tour guide, he moved to the property-management side — a steward of the land. And now he is the CEO.

There is also a huge community component. Locals and tourists are steady visitors, taking advantage of the 2 miles of nature trails. Every October, the park hosts the scarecrow trail, a popular activity where you can see 75 homemade scarecrows and, depending on your temperament, a unique or nightmare-inducing activity.

“The urban park hosts a 5K race every year, and after the race, we all go down to the nightclub, and that’s where we hold the awards ceremony and celebrate all the participants.”

There is also a community-wide campout, where the community is invited to camp out all along the 72 acres and sleep on the nightclub’s dance floor.

Lost River Cave is a multi-pronged endeavor. It provides many educational functions, a variety of events, and the uncommon historic Cavern Nite Club. The fact that the 72 acres are well within Bowling Green’s domain makes it extra-accessible. Bowling Green is very, very fortunate to have this splendid natural resource. **GN**

STAY AND PLAY

Bowling Green's big backyard

By Amanda E. West

*Photography by
Adin Parkes*

WHETHER YOU take the kids for a refreshing dip in the zero-depth entry pool at Russell Sims Aquatic Center, with its water buckets, palm trees, beach area, and splash playground, or shoot 18 holes “above par” at CrossWinds Golf Course, you can vacation right here in our own backyard with the Bowling Green Parks and Recreation (BGPR).

Preston Miller Park offers an 18-hole disc golf course, basketball court, a 1-mile walk/run course, shaded seating, and a playground that is wheelchair accessible. Located on 17 acres in the heart of downtown, Roland Bland Park offers a place to enjoy inline skating, biking and rails, ramps, bowls, and half pipes for skateboarding. Easily accessible within our historic district, Covington Woods Park offers three covered pavilions complete with grills and electric outlets, a romantic gazebo, a large playground for the kids, regulation-sized tennis courts, and a space for croquet all within range of the Paul Walker Golf Course, which offers nine holes. If you don't have time to play a full 18, Hobson Golf Course now offers a driving range.

Stay cool inside the F.O. Moxley Community Center, offering billiards, ping-pong, and foosball tables, two high school regu-



CAMERON
LEVIS





Our main mission at Bowling Green Parks and Recreation is to enhance the quality of life for those living in our community.

- *Cameron Levis*

lotion basketball courts, and a TV room filled with popular board games. The state-of-the-art Kummer/Little Recreation Center offers two basketball courts where you can enjoy dodgeball, volleyball, and free play. Above the court is a comfortable walking track with vending machines and a welcoming space for gathering.

If you're eager to dive in and get your hands dirty, you can rent a plot in the community garden and grow your own vegetables and flowers or take part in a variety of activities at the Parker-Bennett Community Center. If you want to lose weight, build strength, increase your stamina and flexibility, or stay active creatively, join line dancing, Silver Sneakers, or access the healing qualities of a sauna at BGPR Fitness. It's a must with zero contracts, no enrollment fees, and affordable pricing.

Recreation Manager Cameron Levis said, "Summer is our time to shine in the world of parks and rec! We have so many

awesome programs and services we offer to the community during the summertime, starting with the best aquatic experience in South Central Kentucky! The Russell Sims Aquatic Center is open Memorial Day to Labor Day and offers sun, slides, and smiles to our entire community. Whether with a season pass or a day visit, anyone who comes to the water park is sure to have the best experience.

"We offer various special events like 'Journey to Neverland Night' and 'Christmas in July,' as well as full-scale concessions with everyone's favorite treats. In addition to the aquatic center, we host three different summer camp programs, including one that is specifically for individuals with physical and/or intellectual disabilities called 'Camp Happy Days.' Summer is also a time for all sorts of sports programs, such as baseball, softball, T-ball, tennis, and more."

BGPR and its staff exhibit an unwavering passion for enriching and up-

lifting the community through vibrant green spaces, engaging programs, and boundless dedication.

Levis said, "Our main mission at Bowling Green Parks and Recreation is to enhance the quality of life for those living in our community through parks and recreation. We recognize the opportunity we have to take life to the next level for those who call Bowling Green and Warren County home by providing fun, exciting, and unique experiences to engage with the community around them. My goal as a park and recreation professional is to help create the moments where people can make memories that last a lifetime in our parks. Because we approach all of our programs, events, and services with this mindset, you can be guaranteed to have a great time at anything BGPR offers!"

BGPR is also pleased to offer adaptive programs that guarantee everyone in the community can enjoy sports and recreation. It offers programs for wheelchair basketball, wheelchair tennis, and goalball, as well as a wide variety of sports through the Special Olympics.

"One of the philosophies we have is that we would never offer any event or program that we would not enjoy participating in ourselves. Therefore, you can rest assured that your experience in the park will be a good one. We, as a department, want to do our part in making Bowling Green and Warren County the best place to live, work, and play. So this summer, we look forward to seeing everyone at the park!" **GN**

For more information on all the programs offered by BGPR, visit www.bgky.org/bgpr.



A DAY AT THE PARK

Savannah Crisp's generational bond with Beech Bend Amusement Park

By Haley Potter

*Photography by
Amanda Guy and submitted
by Beech Bend*

◀ Ray Miller, Quinton Thompson, Charlotte Gongalez, Mark Cowles, Savannah Crisp, Blake McIntosh, Roy Miller, and Emeline Cave

AS YOU swing onto Beech Bend Park Road on any given summer day, the sounds of kids laughing and screaming with excitement hit you right away. It feels like stepping into a live cartoon with roller coasters rattling and carousel tunes floating around. Everywhere you look, bright balloons dance against the blue sky, and the smells of popcorn and cotton candy are in the air, pulling you right into the fun.

You are looking at Beech Bend — a place not just for rides and games but of generational memories. For Savannah Crisp, the park's human resource manager, this small, intimate amusement park is more than just a workplace; it's a part of her family history.

"My parents were here as kids; my grandmother was here as a kid," Savannah recalled with a nostalgic tone.

Last summer, she brought her grandmother back to the park.

"Walking around with her, hearing her talk about her time here in the '50s and '60s — it gave me chills."

This connection to the past is what makes Beech Bend a special place for many locals and visitors alike. Open since the 1890s, originally as a beach area on a campground by the river, it has evolved through family ownership and expansions. Today, it includes a variety of attractions, such as an amusement and water park, racetrack, campground, and multiple kiddie ride areas.

Savannah, who grew up in nearby Franklin and has been in Bowling Green since 2018, has worked at the park for four seasons. She speaks fondly of her role in bringing people together for summer fun.

"I absolutely enjoy it. People come here to get away from their daily life," she said. "It's nice to see people with smiles on their faces, having a good time and letting go."



“

I absolutely enjoy it. People come here to get away from their daily life. It's nice to see people with smiles on their faces, having a good time and letting go.

- Savannah Crisp

Families from all around the region travel to experience the clanking of roller coaster tracks and the whimsical music of carousel rides.

“Most of our season pass holders are from Bowling Green, but we also have a lot from Tennessee, especially the Nashville area,” Savannah pointed out.

The park's appeal stretches beyond the local community, attracting those looking for a weekend getaway or a brief vacation. The park's charm lies not just in its thrilling rides or the splashy fun of its water park but in its ability to maintain a personal touch in a world dominated by larger, more commercial amusement parks.

“It's a family park, a small park,” Savannah explained. “It's more of an intimate setting rather than some of the big parks that surround us.”

This intimacy is part of what draws visitors back year after year. Beech Bend's focus on family-friendly experiences — with areas specifically designed for younger children who aren't yet ready for the big coasters — ensures that there's something for everyone. But it's not just about the rides. The park operates as a family-owned business, something that Savannah is particularly proud of.

“We're still a family-operated, small business,” she said. “There's no type of corporation or anything like that.”

This small-business ethos contributes to the park's community-focused nature, putting money back into the community and maintaining a personal connection with its visitors. The park also plays a significant role in local tourism, with its campground providing a place for travelers to stay while exploring Bowling Green.

“With having the campground here, we've got a lot of people traveling, staying for a week or a weekend, and then spending a few days with us,” Savannah shared.

For Savannah, working at Beech Bend is more than just a job; it's a way to continue a tradition that her family has been part of for generations.

“It's amazing to be a part of something that my family has been coming to since they were kids,” she reflected. “To now be in a higher position here, it's really special.”

At the top of the roller coaster, there's a brief, quiet pause right before the big drop. At that moment, Savannah felt her heart pounding just like her grandmother's did 60 years ago. It's a quick second where anticipation builds, tying together their two experiences across the decades. Then, with a rush, the coaster plunges down, and the silence breaks into screams of excitement.

As Beech Bend prepares for another busy season, with an expected 1 million visitors over the



season, the sense of anticipation is clear. Season passes are already selling well, with two visits enough to cover the cost of a pass — adding to the park's value and appeal.

In a world that moves fast and where change is constant, Beech Bend Amusement Park offers a slice of nostalgia, a touch of excitement, and a chance to create new memories while recalling the old.

As Savannah puts it, "It's special — knowing that this place has been around since our grandparents were little kids."

Beech Bend continues to be a beloved spot for both locals and visitors. It's where past and present meet, creating joyful memories spanning generations. **GN**

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We're looking for story ideas about
local farmers, agricultural workers, and those who
support them for a future issue,
“Farm to Table.”

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Good News

CHAPTER 3 OF 3

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

52 Community Events

56 Charity Listings

58 Advertiser Index

Submit a positive story
on our website:



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Photography by Gretchen Clark

◀ Carly and Olivia Carey

Arbor Day - April 13



Photography by Gretchen Clark

Arbor Day is a holiday dedicated to celebrating and planting trees. The word “arbor” itself means “tree” in Latin. The purpose of Arbor Day is to promote the importance of trees in our environment and to encourage people to engage in tree planting and care activities. It’s an opportunity to raise awareness about the benefits of trees, such as providing oxygen, improving air quality, conserving water, supporting wildlife habitats, and beautifying landscapes. The Community Tree Advisory Board organized this event, held at Karaoke Park in Bowling Green. There were free trees for all who attended, as well as prize giveaways, educational materials, and games for the children.



1. Jared and Keeghan Weaver 2. Sue Parrigin and Sharlene Grant holding Lucy
3. Amanda Janssen, and Joelle and Ainsley Rhoades 4. Tary Verst 5. Madelyne Taylor and Kyle Davenport

Summer of Love Concert - April 27-28



Photography by Mark Mahagan

The Summer of Love Concert was a spectacular two-day event that took place from April 27 to April 28, 2024, at the Southern Kentucky Performing Arts Center. This vibrant community gathering celebrated the era of peace, love, and rock 'n' roll. Attendees experienced performances that ranged from tunes to rockin' album tracks and top 40 pop hits from the '60s, echoing the spirits of legends such as Janis Joplin, Jimi Hendrix, and The Doors. This celebration of passion, innovation, and community was not just a concert but a journey through the pivotal moments of musical history.



The Art Scene - April 27

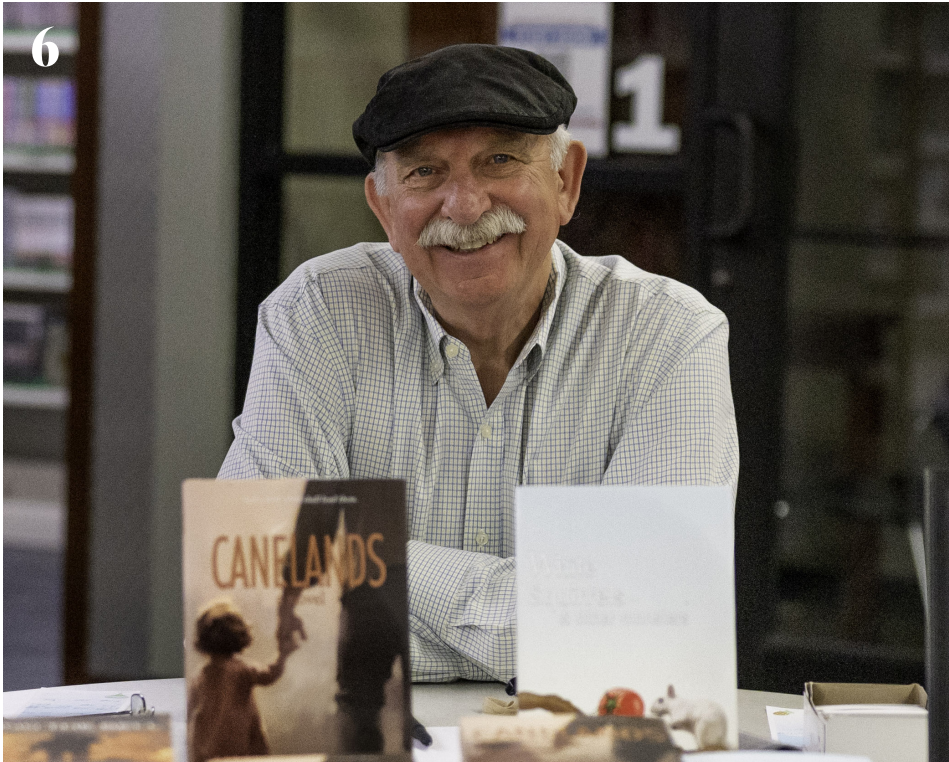


Photography by Gretchen Clark

A vibrant showcase of community talent and creativity gathered at the Warren County Public Library - Bob Kirby Branch. This event serves as an invaluable platform, celebrating diverse expressions of artistry and literature. Attendees immerse themselves in a rich tapestry of pottery, wood carving, jewelry, storytelling, and much more. This event provides opportunities for established artists and authors to engage with their audience intimately. They cultivate a sense of pride and support for the local arts scene, igniting inspiration and dialogue within the community.



1. Storm Schultz 2. Laura Fox-Ezell, Emily Witthuhn, and Maz Hudson 3. Noel Barton
4. Elisabeth Moss 5. Cammaray, Payton, and Josh Flora



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6. Gerry Harlan Brown 7. Sarah Pruitt 8. Abby Porter

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

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Offers networking, professional development, and peer recognition for marketing professionals in Bowling Green.

(270) 282-5248
www.amabg.org

Hospice of Southern Kentucky Inc.

Provides compassionate end-of-life care and support for patients and their families.

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www.hospicesoky.org

American Red Cross of South Central Kentucky

Helps individuals and communities prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters, as well as teaches lifesaving skills.

(270) 781-7377
www.redcross.org

Southern Kentucky Performing Arts Center

Provides a platform for a wide array of productions and fosters artistic, cultural, and theatrical experiences that encourage people of all ages to participate and learn about the arts. Home to SKYPAC.

(270) 904-1880
www.theskypac.com

Aviation Heritage Park and Museum

Ensures that the stories of South Central Kentucky aviators are never forgotten.

(270) 421-4885
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Barren River Area Child Advocacy Center

Provides support and services to victims of child physical/sexual abuse and their families in a child-friendly environment.

(270) 783-4357
www.bracac.org

Barren River Area Safe Space Inc.

Offers shelter and programs for survivors of domestic violence.

Office: (270) 781-9334
Crisis line: (800) 928-1183
www.brassinc.org

Barren River District Health Department

Provides core public health services to the community.

(270) 781-8039
www.barrenriverhealth.org

Boys & Girls Club of Bowling Green

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(270) 843-6466
www.bgcbg.org



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(270) 782-5353
www.casaofsck.org

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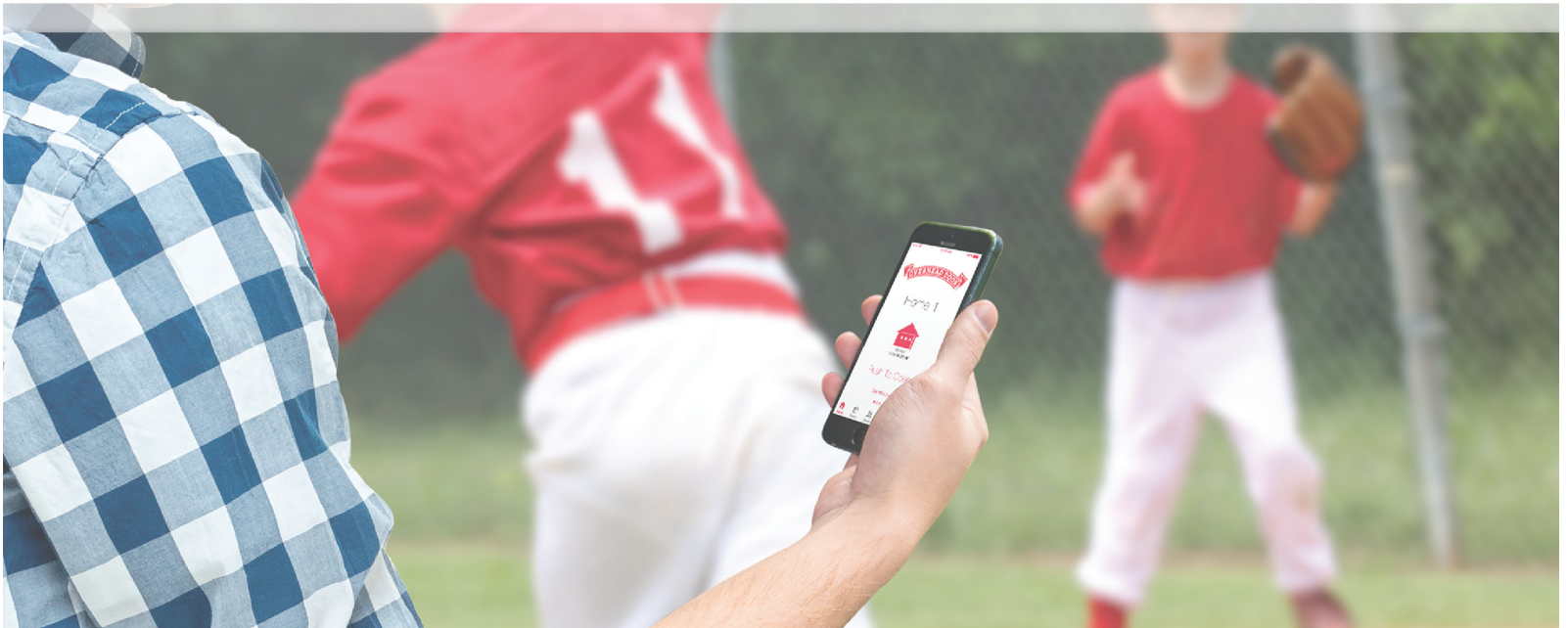
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 Our physicians perform endoscopy at TriStar Greenview Regional Hospital and The Medical Center at Bowling Green.

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Meet our Medical Specialists



Avinash Aravantagi, M.D.
 270.780.5225



Aswathi Chandran, M.D.
 270.393.4892



Cory Fielding, M.D., F.A.C.P.
 270.393.2759



Ann Monardo, D.O.
 270.783.3300



Thomas Wells, D.O.
 270.783.3300

Main Location:
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 484 Golden, Autumn Way
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Additional Gastro Clinics:
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Glasgow 405 S L Rogers Wells Blvd
Russellville 1405 Nashville Street

Office hours:
 Monday–Thursday 8:00 am to 4:30 pm;
 Friday is 8:00 am to 12 pm