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exchange

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ISSUE 8 2024

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- Muhammad Ali

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Where champions are made

Our hometown courts and fields introduce stars to the game.

THE CROWD fills the stands, row after row, of people in our high school's colors. The family in front of you sits down with a fresh hot dog from the concession stand. It's still steaming with a drizzle of ketchup laced across the top from end to end. It smells so good you think you "just might have to go to the concession stand and get your own." On the way there, you run into your old favorite teacher. You run into your old high school crush, wave, and maybe catch up. In the background, the scoreboard keeps ticking up, and the crowd's roar gets louder. The moths and other critters dance around the floodlights tens of feet in the air.

We've all experienced what it feels like to be at a high school football game under the Friday night lights. We know what it feels like to get the jitters as the first play begins — the excitement when our team scores the first touchdown. For towns across the country, sports like high school football bring us together. It gives cheerleaders the experience of a lifetime, pushing them to perform impressive stunts, flips, and lifts. The band students learn to perform in front of hundreds of people and how to work together to

make art. Hometown games are a perfect mixture of fun, family, nostalgia, and teamwork.

Healthy competition teaches things you can't learn alone at a desk. It shows the band, the players, and the cheerleaders how to have discipline. It shows them how to treat others. It pushes them to be humble and show sportsmanship. Because while we win today, next week may hand us a rough defeat. These qualities help make our town a better place. And the good news is — our town isn't the only place building up the next generation of young leaders. Schools across the nation, from California to Maine, are showing students what it means to be a team player.

As we grow older, we run out of time to do the things we love. We forget what it feels like to sit in the crowded stands with a warm hotdog in our hand and balance Dr. Pepper in our lap after sitting down. There's a hidden treasure in our county, and we shouldn't take it for granted. Hometown sports have shaped who we are, and they'll shape the next generation — and the one after that. Our hometown courts and fields introduce stars to the game.

This is where champions are made. GN

Wesley Bryant,
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Wesley Bryant

REGIONAL PUBLISHER Jack Owens

LEAD LAYOUT ARTIST Brianna Brubaker

SENIOR LAYOUT ARTIST Melissa Davis

LAYOUT ARTIST Ben Adams

LEAD PRINT AD DESIGNER Todd Pitts

JR. PRINT AD DESIGNER Jane Morrell

LEAD PHOTOGRAPHER Ashleigh Newnes

PHOTOGRAPHER Brooke Snyder

FREELANCE PHOTOGRAPHERS Amanda Guy, Adin Parks,

Sarah Bussard, Chad Barrett, Robin Fast, Gretchen Clark

LEAD WRITER Tina Neeley

STORY WRITER Jeriah Brumfield

FREELANCE WRITERS Amanda West, Sara Hook, Paige Cushman,

Kali Bradford, Gabriel Huff, Dave Lenehan, Richard Klin

FOOD CRITIC Shannon Beebe

STORY COORDINATOR Haley Potter

PROOFREADER Michelle Harwell

JR. PROOFREADER Kaitlin Rettig

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT Cindy Baldhoff, Faith Cashion,

Amanda Cox, Tony Glenn, Kevin Hines, Mark Mahagan, Kevin Maples,

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A large, stylized yellow sunburst graphic with multiple rays emanating from the top left corner, set against a solid red background.

NO

Alyssa Archer breaks barriers
on the wrestling mat.

By Jeriah Brumfield

Photography by Brooke Snyder and submitted by Alyssa Archer

LIMITS

ALYSSA ARCHER'S phone buzzed with scholarship offers after she placed fifth at state this year, rising up from last year's sixth-place win. But her journey to the top of the wrestling mat wasn't always easy. It came with perseverance, a strong will, the mindset to defy expectations, and the unyielding support of a coach who believed in her. Wrestling has taken her everywhere — from Iowa to Missouri, to Georgia, and now to Kentucky, for her newest and biggest adventure yet.

It seemed like it was just yesterday when she'd dominated the state wrestling championship, her name leaving its mark in the minds of her peers. College coaches from across the country were contending for her talent, their messages flooding her inbox. It was chaotic for the unassuming teenager who, only two years prior, had stepped onto the wrestling mat for the first time. Joining the wrestling team was more out of a desire to stay healthy than a burning passion for the sport.



Alyssa Archer



“

It's a hard sport. You're gonna get hurt, but at the end of the day, it's worth it. It's fun. The relationships you make are lifelong and life-changing.

-Alyssa Archer

The initial flurry of offers was both thrilling and overwhelming. Still basking in the afterglow of her state competition, Archer received calls from coaches offering athletic scholarships and full academic rides. But beneath the excitement lurked a deeper struggle — the reality of the challenges she'd faced while on the school's women's wrestling team.

She and her teammates came from humble beginnings, sharing a cramped locker room that doubled as a storage closet. They also faced numerous issues with funding, but Archer and her fellow wrestlers never gave up.

They hustled alongside their selfless coach, Jack Gallagher, selling merchandise and securing sponsors to fund their equipment and travel. According to Archer, their success was mainly due to Gallagher's commitment to strengthening his team and the bond they'd shared in the wrestling room. This connection was far stronger than any trophy. They celebrated each other's victories, mourned over losses, and pushed each other to be their best selves.

"This year, the team was a lot closer than we were the past two years I've wrestled," she said. "I almost quit every year, but this year, the team came together. We all got along. It was great."

Wrestling hadn't always been Archer's sport of interest. In fact, she'd initially stepped onto the mat somewhat hesitantly. After taking a break from the gym, she found herself gaining weight and needing an outlet. As she entered the wrestling room, she felt that a traditionally male-dominated space was intimidating. Yet, with each grueling practice session, a sense of empowerment bloomed within her.

She found a deeper well of perseverance within herself, and more importantly, she discovered a supportive sanctuary.

Being a successful student-athlete for Archer meant navigating body weight changes, conquering mental obsta-

cles, and, at one point, taking a break to improve her grades.

"I had to make sure I didn't procrastinate in the classroom. During the week of regionals, I missed a lot of work. I was failing several classes," she admitted. "After state, I took some days off from the gym to get my work done. I was really worried about my GPA from that, but I got it done and got everything back up."

Now, Archer is ready to start a new chapter in her life. Lindsey Wilson University in Kentucky offered her a full-ride scholarship. She plans to major in English adminis-

tration and minor in sports management there, and she'll also have the opportunity to compete at a national level. Notably, she will be joining the thriving women's wrestling team in its second year.

"The school is beautiful. I love the coach. I actually competed in a tournament recently, and he came up there, not just to watch me, but he did get to watch and helped me a little bit," she explained.

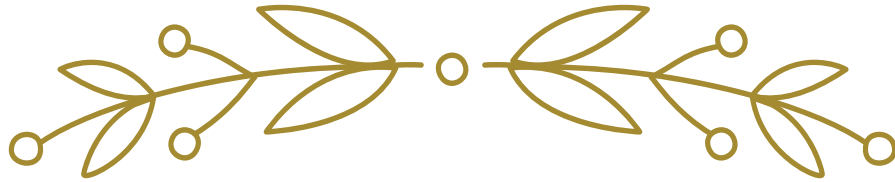
She dreams of one day using her experience on the mat to mentor and inspire the youth in her hometown.

Inspired by Coach Gallagher's example, Archer plans to one day return to Franklin County to coach the next generation of champions in club sports.

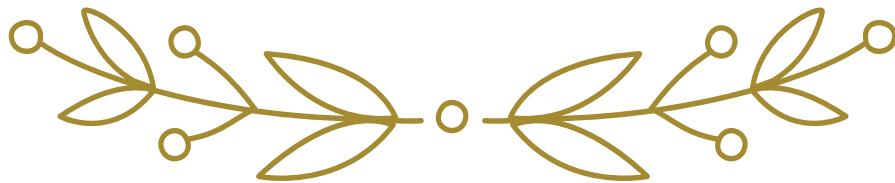
As she prepares to leave her small town for the bright lights of college athletics, Archer's message is clear: Wrestling is a sport for everyone, regardless of gender. It's a sport that creates not just champions but strong, confident individuals. It's about defying expectations and building lifelong relationships. Above all, it's about the strength and fortitude that makes champions both on the mat and in the face of every challenge life throws your way.

She said, "It's a hard sport. You're gonna get hurt, but at the end of the day, it's worth it. It's fun. The relationships you make are lifelong and life-changing." GN





A champion of walking horse traditions



Emily Cortner's journey into the world of horse shows.

By Jeriah Brumfield // Photos submitted by Emily Cortner



Emily Cortner was all smiles as she exited the big oval on Banks at the 2023 Celebration. Photo by Shane Shiflet.



▲ Holly, Jim, Emily, Robert, June, and Bob Cortner celebrated Emily's first World Grand Championship at the 2022 Celebration

EMILY CORTNER'S love for horses began almost before she could walk. As a child, she was immersed in the world of equestrian sports thanks to her father, a long-time horse trainer. Growing up in an environment where horses were a part of everyday life, it was only natural for Cortner to develop a deep passion for these magnificent animals.

"I was on a horse before I could walk," she recalled.

Her father's expertise and dedication to training provided her with a solid foundation and an invaluable mentor right at home.

The bond between a rider and their horse is essential, and Cortner's training process reinforces the importance of this connection.

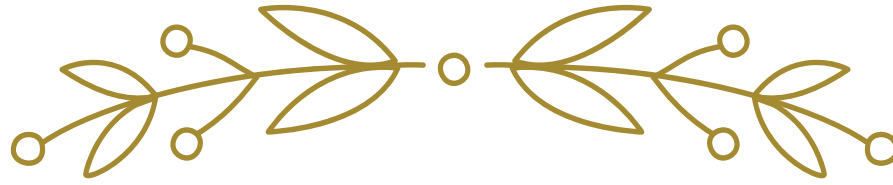
"Practicing consistently and learning each other is crucial to forming a bond," she explained.

With her father's guidance, Cortner sharpened her skills and built a strong rapport with her horses — a connection that has been key to her success in the show ring.

Cortner's achievements in walking horse shows are impressive and inspiring. Over the past two years, she has claimed titles such as World Grand Championship, Reserve World Grand Championship, and World Championship.

"I have dreamed of winning at the Celebration since I showed there for the first time at 10 years old," she said.

"In the past two years, I have won a World Grand Championship, Reserve World Grand Championship, and a World Championship. It is a surreal feeling knowing that my childhood dreams have come true," she shared.



Fulfilling these childhood dreams has been nothing short of surreal for her.

Among the many horses Cortner has ridden, one stands out: Cesar Ritz. A special gift from her parents when she turned 15, Cesar Ritz was more than just a horse — he was a beloved partner and a significant teacher.

“When I turned 15, my parents gifted me with a horse named Cesar Ritz. He was fun and feisty, and I loved him dearly. He taught me a lot about riding,” Cortner reminisced.

Cesar Ritz played a pivotal role in her development as a rider, showing across the Alabama, Tennessee, and Mississippi circuits.

Training and competing with horses is a journey filled with challenges and rewards. Cortner approaches every obstacle with understanding, adaptability, and optimism.

“Knowing that every single show will not be the absolute best one, and being okay with that helps,” she said.

Her love for riding and showing horses keeps her motivated, pushing her to strive for excellence while maintaining a positive outlook.

“I try to keep a positive outlook and know that I will do my best next time. Riding and showing horses is my favorite thing in the world to do, and that motivates me more than anything.”

For those unfamiliar with walking horse shows, Cortner highlights the remarkable camaraderie within the community. “The industry as a whole is really good about supporting each other and being there in any time of need,” she noted. This supportive atmosphere is one of the many aspects that make walking horse shows unique and special.

“

It is a surreal feeling knowing that my childhood dreams have come true.

-Emily Cortner

Among her cherished memories, one moment stands out: winning her first World Championship and World Grand Championship with Shameless SF.

“We won our qualifying class out of a field of 17, and it was a huge surprise to hear my number called out,” she recalled with excitement.

The victory in the Owner-Amateur Novice Trail Pleasure World Grand Championship class was a highlight of her career and one of the most thrilling weeks of her life.

Looking ahead, Cortner has her sights set on further achievements in the Amateur Lite-Shod division with her horse, Banks. After securing a reserve in the Owner-Amateur Lite-Shod World Grand Championship class last year, she is determined to win the Celebration together someday.

Even beyond the accolades and championships, Cortner’s story embodies passion, perseverance, and gratitude.

“Riding and showing is my favorite thing in the world,” she emphasized.

Her journey in the Tennessee walking horse industry has brought her success, lifelong friendships, and even her husband, Robert Cortner. Clearly, for Emily, the world of walking horse shows is where champions are made and where her heart truly belongs.

“I think, out of my love for the Tennessee walking horse, riding and showing are my favorite things in the world, and I am grateful for every single ride. Also, a fun fact — I met my husband, Robert, through horses. This industry has brought me my husband and some of my very best friends.” GN



▲ Emily Cortner and Shameless SF



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MINISTRY and MENTORSHIP

Andrew Ragland inspires young athletes on and off the field.

By Jeriah Brumfield // Photography by Brooke Snyder and submitted by Andrew Ragland

THE PEEWEE football field radiated with the electric energy of anticipation. Under the floodlights, it was a tableau of youthful stamina and raw potential. Cleats crunched on the turf, helmets gleamed under the golden sun, and the wind carried the smell of fresh-cut grass. In the center of it all stood Andrew Ragland, his whistle hanging loosely around his neck as he called the players in for a huddle. The cheerleaders beamed with joy and belted out another cheer. Ragland's voice was steady — a blend of authority and warmth that drew the boys in. They gathered around him as a look of nervous excitement glinted in their eyes.





Andrew Ragland



“

You have to have the mentality that it is a game for everyone. Kids grow and progress at different levels. We have to give them confidence.

-Andrew Ragland

Ragland looked at each young face, seeing more than just players in pads and jerseys. He saw future leaders, community builders, and capable individuals. In every gameplay he made, he spoke life into the players, leaving them eager to return to the field and give their best. Ragland's passion was contagious, and his belief in them was exhilarating.

Ragland concluded, and as the players broke the huddle with a unified cheer, he stepped back, his heart swelling with pride. He knew that win or lose, these moments were shaping these boys into the kind of men who would carry the lessons they learned at Franklin County (FC) Pee wee Football & Cheerleading into every aspect of their lives. And that, more than any trophy, was the true victory he sought.

More than just a name on the roster, Ragland wears three hats — president, coach, and parent. He leads with a singular desire to help young athletes grow into skilled competitors and well-rounded individuals.

Ragland's involvement in youth sports began as a children's pastor at Decherd Church of God, and coaching felt like a natural extension of his ministry. He saw it as an opportunity to mentor local youth and help them get involved in community activities.

Now, with a family of six children keeping him busy, Ragland's motivations have evolved, but his passion remains undimmed.

“Since my family has grown so much, I no longer am in ministry but continue coaching to help the younger generation learn life lessons through sports.”

Ragland believes that pee wee leagues are the foundation for young athletes, introducing them to fundamental building blocks like competition and teamwork. But running a successful pee wee program requires more than just optimism.

“The biggest challenge is player and parent retention,” he revealed.

But even with retention issues, Ragland finds the pros outweigh the cons.

“It's rewarding watching kids grow from 5 to 12 years old and becoming a family.”

Keeping the program engaging is an ongoing quest. Ragland acknowledges that football is inherently competitive, but helping youth find their love for the game far surpasses winning championships. When it comes to coaching youth, Ragland advocates for a broader perspective.

“You have to have the mentality that it is a game for everyone,” he said. “Kids grow and progress at different levels. We have to give them confidence.”

Juggling the responsibilities of president, coach, and parent within the league takes remarkable time management skills and a clear sense of purpose. Ragland and the other coaches understand the importance of reminding themselves



▲ The 2016 Franklin County District 1 Champions

why they do what they do. Ragland said the kids are his "why," and when your actions are motivated by genuine intentions, they don't deplete your energy; instead, they replenish it.

Ragland's vision reaches beyond mere athletic skill. He dreams of a program that surpasses the basics and nurtures leadership qualities in young athletes.

"I really want to develop a competitive atmosphere where kids want to be better leaders on and off the field," he explained. "Leaders overcome adversity head-on. Football is challenging, but so is life."

Ragland pursues ambitions beyond football and cheer. He actively seeks collaboration between middle school programs, promoting continuity within the league. He also dreams of a future where youth sports receive more significant support within the county.

But if you ask Ragland about his most rewarding experience, he wouldn't hesitate to tell you the priceless connections he makes.

"FC has won several pee-wee championships since I have been president.

I have coached several great teams, but nothing compares to the relationships formed with the athletes and their families in our community and surrounding areas."

Ragland's wife, Emily May Ragland, whom he calls his "personal champion," stands by his side through it all.

"She got a master's in education while working full time," he said. "She is now the FC tennis coach and art teacher at the high school. Her dedication and compassion for her students, present and future, drives me to be better in my daily activities. I could not do what I do without her support," he said.

Together, they are a team and a united front, inspiring the young athletes they guide.

Ragland's commitment to leading the league and the young people it serves speaks volumes about the kind of leader, coach, and parent he is — one who inspires athletic excellence and the development of well-rounded, compassionate individuals. **GN**



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Since the weather was hot outside, I wanted something light and fresh to eat.

I went with the "Southerner" Cobb salad. Instead of crispy chicken, I asked for grilled chicken. The salad also came with diced tomatoes, smokehouse bacon, diced avocado, and local cheddar cheese. The rustic croutons that topped off the salad were made on-site and were so airy and melted in my mouth. I asked for my dressing on the side. For my drink, I ordered the Espresso Martini. In addition to the salad, I also ordered the "Gangster" BLT sandwich made with crispy pork belly, heirloom tomatoes, field greens, and club mayonnaise, which was also made on-site.

My first sip of the Espresso Martini was so rich and flavorful that I could've drunk quite a few. The chicken in the Cobb salad was cooked and seasoned perfectly. The bacon had a perfect smokey flavor. The lettuce was crunchy, and the avocado was perfectly ripe. When I bit into the crispy pork belly sandwich, it was thick, juicy, and flavorful inside and out. It paired perfectly with the creaminess of the club mayonnaise. Both the portion sizes on the salad and sandwich were enough to take home for later. **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 Filo's Tavern.

Shannon Beebe
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WHEN THE stadium lights blaze and the roar of the crowd echoes, true fans know the game-day experience begins in the parking lot. Celebrate your team's spirit with these tailgating recipes, which will fuel your revelry from kickoff to the final whistle.

From handheld classics to shareable spreads, these dishes pack bold flavors and endless energy — the perfect sustenance for cheering your champions to victory. Fire up the grill and get ready to tailgate in championship style! **GN**

Hot 'N' Tangy Wings

Submitted by Dennis Gardner

3 1/2 lbs. chicken wings
1 c. barbecue sauce
1/2 c. hot sauce
1/2 c. honey
1 t. brown sugar
1 t. dry mustard

Clean and dry chicken wings. Cut and discard wing tips. Cut the wings at their joints to make two separate pieces. Place chicken pieces in broiler for 8-10 minutes until chicken is browned, flipping pieces once. Place chicken in a slow cooker. In a small mixing bowl, combine barbecue sauce, hot sauce, honey, brown sugar, and mustard. Pour over wings. Cover and cook on low for 4 1/2-5 hours or on high for 2-2 1/2 hours.



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



Potato Salad

Submitted by Debbie Henderson

1 bag potatoes, 5 lb., cooked, peeled, and diced
6 dill pickles, chopped
6 hard boiled eggs, chopped
salt, to taste
pepper, to taste
5 ribs of celery, chopped
1/2 onion, chopped
1 can sliced black olives, drained
mayonnaise, to coat mixture
mustard, to color

Mix cooked potatoes, pickles, eggs, salt, pepper, celery, onion, and olives in large bowl. Add enough mayonnaise to coat mixture. Add just enough mustard to color salad. Chill salad for at least 2 hours.



Calico Cheese Dip

Submitted by Nancy Johnston

4 c. Monterey Jack cheese, shredded
4 oz. can green chilies, chopped
2 ¼ oz. can sliced, ripe olives, drained
½ c. minced, fresh parsley
4 green onions, sliced
3 med. tomatoes, diced and seeded
1 pkg. Italian salad dressing mix
tortilla chips

In a mixing bowl, combine the cheese, chilies, olives, onions, tomatoes, and parsley. Prepare salad dressing mix according to package directions. Pour over cheese mixture and mix well. Serve with tortilla chips.



FRANKLIN COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

2024 Football Schedule

DAY	DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
Friday	Aug. 23, 2024	AWAY @ Coffee County Central High School	7 p.m.
Friday	Aug. 30, 2024	AWAY @ South Pittsburg High School	7 p.m.
Friday	Sept. 6, 2024	East Hamilton High School	7 p.m.
Friday	Sept. 13, 2024	Tullahoma High School	7 p.m.
Friday	Sept. 20, 2024	Moore County High School	7 p.m.
Friday	Sept. 27, 2024	AWAY @ Shelbyville Central High School	TBA
Friday	Oct. 4, 2024	Lincoln County High School	TBA
Friday	Oct. 18, 2024	AWAY @ Columbia Central High School	TBA
Friday	Oct. 25, 2024	Lawrence County High School	7 p.m.
Friday	Nov. 1, 2024	AWAY @ Spring Hill High School	TBA

HUNTLAND HIGH SCHOOL

2024 Football Schedule

DAY	DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
Friday	Aug. 23, 2024	Whitwell High School	TBA
Friday	Aug. 30, 2024	AWAY @ Grundy County High School	7 p.m.
Thursday	Sept. 5, 2024	Cascade High School	TBA
Friday	Sept. 20, 2024	Eagleville High School	TBA
Friday	Sept. 27, 2024	AWAY @ Richland High School	TBA
Friday	Oct. 4, 2024	AWAY @ Wayne County High School	TBA
Friday	Oct. 11, 2024	Lookout Valley High School	7 p.m.
Friday	Oct. 18, 2024	Moore County High School	7 p.m.
Friday	Oct. 25, 2024	AWAY @ Cornersville High School	TBA
Friday	Nov. 1, 2024	Collinwood High School	TBA

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EMMA OWENS

**ACADEMIC
AND ATHLETIC
AMBITIONS**

The emotional end of high school softball and new collegiate beginnings

By Jeriah Brumfield // Photography by Brooke Snyder

E MMA OWENS' passion for softball didn't stem from any particular event — it was ingrained in her by her mother, who had played throughout high school. Owens was fascinated by the distant sounds of her mother's cheers and the stories she shared about her time as a softball player, and she began to flourish on the dusty softball fields at her middle school. There, the entire world condensed to the size of the infield, and the sound of the bat connecting with the ball was like a beautiful symphony to her ears.

Owens, a recent graduate, isn't just celebrating her diploma. This bright young athlete is taking her talents to the collegiate level, inspired by her two supportive parents and pure love for softball.

Her softball journey started with the influence of her mom, who played through high school. Inspired by her mother's love for the game, she discovered her own passion in middle school, which developed through travel ball and high school.

Owens' athleticism isn't limited to softball. She balanced it with basketball

until her junior year and dabbled in track. But it was on the softball field where she truly found her home. Her achievements include a freshman home run, rookie of the year honors, All-District recognition, and a well-deserved district defensive player of the year title in her senior year.

While Owens' defensive skills, particularly her speed and ability to snag amazing catches, were a highlight, her contributions to Franklin County High





She's very fast. She can cover a lot of ground, and she could make some unbelievable catches.

TJ OWENS

School's team were far more extensive than the scoreboard. She describes herself as a goofy teammate, a source of encouragement, and someone who always strived to keep the team spirit high.

TJ, Emma's father, radiates with pride as he recounts watching his daughter develop into a phenomenal athlete.

"She's a petite, fast player. She would slide into home base and pop back up on her feet," TJ explained. "She's very fast. She can cover a lot of ground, and she could make some unbelievable catches. That's why she won district defensive player of the year — because of some of the defensive plays she made in the outfield."

From her enthusiasm on the basepaths to her knack for reading fly balls, he cherishes every memory of her defensive skills. The district defensive player of the year

award is evidence of her agility, undeniable skill, and talent.

Emma is an avid learner on and off the field. Math and science are her favorite subjects, and she plans to major in physical therapy in college. She was officially accepted into Motlow State Community College and can't contain her excitement to connect with new friends and embark on this new chapter of her life.

Emma finds inspiration in softball players like Ashtyn Danley, her former middle school softball teammate who now plays for the Florida State Seminoles, and professional baseball outfielder Ronald Acuña Jr., whose talent is undeniable. Danley is a talented athlete who exudes kindness and knowledge and has exceptional skills. Acuña Jr. and Danley's journeys motivate her to improve constantly.

Emma said, "In middle school, I played with Ashtyn. She's really nice, and she knows a lot about the game. And she's really good and just amazing to watch."

TJ added, "She's very encouraging, uplifting, and upbeat. She would instill confidence in all of her teammates, and she never gloated about being the best player on the team."

Although TJ felt a touch of sadness as Emma's high school softball journey came to an end, his pride overshadowed everything. With Emma's graduation approaching, the family was uncertain about her future in collegiate softball.

However, they decided to proactively reach out to Motlow State coaches and submit her film, which paid off. Emma is all set to begin her collegiate journey in the fall semester of 2024. Her signing day on June 12 was a moment of joy and celebration for her and the entire family. The thought of Emma's collegiate opportunity fills her dad with overwhelming emotion, and he looks forward to supporting her in this exciting new chapter.

He said, "I was afraid that her softball career was over, and as a 42-year-old grown man, I cried. I'm so proud that she's going to the next level, and they're accepting of her to play on their team. I can't wait to watch it."

As Emma begins her next journey, the softball community undoubtedly joins the Owens family in wishing her the very best. As she steps onto the field at Motlow State Community College, Emma carries with her the hopes and dreams of a small-town girl with big ambitions. The entire Franklin County community looks forward to cheering her on as she continues to chase her dreams and make her mark on the softball world. **GN**





EVAN KELLER

BALANCING

BOOKS AND

BASEBALL



Evan Keller's journey as a salutatorian and standout athlete

By Jeriah Brumfield // Photography by Brooke Snyder

THE CRACK of the bat against the leather ball pierced through the air. Evan Keller crouched behind the plate, the worn mitt an extension of his own hand. Keller had seen this field many times before, but this game was the highly anticipated Moore County game, the culmination of countless hours of spring practices. But the pressure wasn't a burden for Keller — it was a familiar song. With his gaze unmoved and locked onto the pitcher, his mind was a flurry of calculations — pitch type,

batter's stance, wind direction. The ball soared right into his mitt.

Keller stands out as an exceptional student and athlete who possesses character and dedication. He graduated as the salutatorian of his senior class and plans to attend the University of Tennessee, Knoxville (UT Knoxville), where he will pursue a degree in aerospace engineering. His journey to this point has been marked by a commitment to excellence, both on the baseball field and in the classroom.

Keller excels in academics and athletics thanks to his discipline and time management skills.

“Putting in the work required in the classroom and on the baseball field both take time and effort,” he explained. “You have to know how to manage your time in order to excel and be successful.”

Outside of the demands of practices and games, Keller has consistently maintained high academic standards. His achievements have set a positive example for his peers and younger students,



Going forward, one of my goals is to give back to the Huntland community, school, and sports teams.

EVAN KELLER

showing that balancing athletics and academics is possible with the right systems.

As a senior baseball player, Keller has embraced his role as a leader and mentor to his teammates. He expresses the importance of finding a balance between being direct and honest with your teammates while also keeping their morale up and helping them achieve their full potential.

Keller's favorite part of being a baseball player is the lifelong connections and friendships he has made. As a catcher, he relishes the responsibility and excitement of the position.

"Being a catcher is exciting. You are in the game every single pitch and all the moments in between," he explained.

This role has taught him valuable leadership and quick decision-making skills, which will undoubtedly serve him well in future endeavors.

Keller is eagerly anticipating his time at UT Knoxville, both for its academic and athletic

opportunities. He matches his passion for engineering with his enthusiasm for the university's sports culture. Growing up in a family that loves Tennessee sports, Keller has orange running through his veins. His grandfather ("Pop") served on the UT Board of Trustees, and his mom, Jennifer Shadow, is an alumna who later served on the alumni council. His family's involvement with UT Knoxville fills him with pride and excitement about becoming a Vol.

Community service has always been an important part of Keller's life. He has actively participated in cleaning up his school campus, ensuring it looks its best for the new school year and visitors. He is committed to giving back to the Huntland community and its sports teams.

"Going forward, one of my goals is to give back to the Huntland community, school, and sports teams," he said.

Keller's role models include his

coaches, who have taught him essential life skills, and his Pop, whom he describes as one of the smartest and most interesting people he knows. His Pop has imparted valuable lessons, from rescuing baby camels to identifying plants and communicating with strangers. These experiences have shaped Keller into the well-rounded individual he is today.

"I hope to be the kind of person he will always be proud of."

Shadow beams with pride when discussing her youngest son's achievements.

"Ever since Evan was a little boy, he has been very driven to excel in whatever task lay before him," she said.

Shadow is particularly proud of Keller's ability to maintain a 4.0 GPA while playing starting quarterback in football and catcher in baseball. He was named Mr. Huntland High School and Best Sense of Humor,

reflecting his balanced personality and positive impact on his peers.

Shadow, who is close to completing her master's in education, believes that the dedication of all three of her sons has inspired their entire family. His older brothers, Elijah and Eathan, have also achieved academic success, and the family's support for each other has been unmatched.

Keller advises young people to "make good decisions, set a good example, never give up, stay true to yourself, and always be humble."

For Keller, being a champion is about persevering through challenges, celebrating victories, and always striving to be a positive role model.

As Keller transitions to the next chapter of his life at UT Knoxville, he carries with him the lessons learned and the connections made in Huntland. Franklin County is indeed where champions are made. **GN**





HARRISON CAMP

PROCESS

OVER

PRODUCT

Building character on and off the field at Camp Forest Football Club

By Jeriah Brumfield // Photography by Brooke Snyder



▲ Sadie Jo Stewart and Brannan Crenshaw

THE LATE summer sun blankets the soccer practice field, filling the atmosphere with exhilarating energy. A group of young girls hustles through drills, their focus sharp and their movements swift. Coach Harrison Camp's voice carries encouragement and guidance, harmonious with the sound of feet brushing against the grass. Another group works on passing drills on the other side of the field — the ball dances between their feet.

Franklin County's Camp Forest Football Club, a branch of the Tullahoma Soccer Association, goes beyond teaching young athletes how to kick a ball. Through the thrill of competition and a special bond between teammates, the youth embark on a journey of self-discovery, building soccer skills

and the core values that will shape well-rounded individuals.

The skilled and qualified coaches are dedicated to nurturing each player's potential, honing their soccer skills, and building their character. As the team competes and travels, they acquire valuable, transferable skills that will benefit them on and off the field.

Just three years ago, coaches Jim Tapp and Casey Jackson began recruiting soccer players born in 2014. Their mission to nurture their character, refine their abilities, and provide a nurturing environment for their growth back then still remains today.

Coach Camp, a former college soccer player who is passionate about youth development, is another influential coach on the team. His inten-



▲ Back row: Sadie Jo Stewart, Cadie McGinnis, Parker Hicks, Emma Toneff, Millie Eslick, Savannah Jones, Hadley Kate Waller, Addalyn Jackson, and Lily Hyden
Front Row: Hannah Tapp, Claire Getty, Brannan Crenshaw, and Suzanna Camp

tional approach to coaching focuses on helping his players master fundamental skills like dribbling, passing, and juggling the ball. As they progress, he introduces a new and attainable challenge for them to expand upon.

Currently guiding the 2014 girls team, Camp is overjoyed when witnessing their progress and how it impacts the community.

He said, “We’ve been making the transition from individual skill to team skill. Being able to string passes together is something we’ve really been focusing on. They’re learning to keep possession of the ball rather than just trying to score.”

He continued, “There was a moment in a game when we strung six or seven passes

together, and the parents got excited to see the players executing that.”

Friends and family cheered the girls on during that game as they witnessed the entire team working in unison. Focusing on “process over product” is a cornerstone of the soccer program’s process. It allows each player to develop a solid foundation for future success, embracing the journey and smaller victories more than the destination.

Winning is important, but it’s not everything at Camp Forest Football Club. The coaches prioritize cultivating a culture of encouragement and positivity. The coaches encourage the parents of young athletes to be their children’s biggest cheerleaders, offering positive reinforcement and celebrating their efforts.

“It’s important to allow them to take chances and not fear making mistakes while celebrating them for trying,” Camp explained.

Tapp’s coaching approach involves incentivizing smaller victories to provide positive reinforcement. When they reach five juggles, he generously rewards them with a Dairy Queen gift card for some well-deserved ice cream.

This perspective promotes a “growth mindset,” where the team sees challenges as stepping stones to improvement instead of roadblocks.

Camp shared how his fellow coaches have significantly impacted the program, shaping it into what it is today. Without their efforts, the magic on the field wouldn’t be possible.



It's important to allow them to take chances and not fear making mistakes while celebrating them for trying.

HARRISON CAMP

“The foundation of the team, the organization of the team, and the day-to-day operations are something that Jim and Casey have been really dedicated to. They have been instrumental in making sure that this specific team functions properly.”

Camp Forest's impact lasts long after the referee blows the final whistle. The program leaves young athletes with life lessons that resonate even after the players take off their cleats. Concepts like hard work, dedication, health and well-being, and sportsmanship are just a few of the transferable skills that they learn in practices and games.

The program nurtures not just future soccer players, but well-rounded individuals prepared to navigate life with confidence. So, if you're looking for a program that teaches more than fancy footwork and celebrates the journey as much as the destination, then Camp Forest Football Club might be the perfect fit for your child. **GN**

*Visit the camp's Facebook page for more information:
www.facebook.com/campforestfc*

▼ Claire Getty



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Rain Unlimited Inc.

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(931) 308-0998

<https://campain.org/>

Scotties Rock Foundation Inc.

Raises funds to assist Scottish terrier owners and rescue groups who have limited financial resources with veterinary care expenses through a pay-it-forward concept.

ourscottiesrock@gmail.com

<https://www.scottiesrockfoundation.org/>

Target the Future

Provides scholarships to young people in clay target shooting sports, assisting the shooters achieve their potential in both education and clay target shooting.

(615) 424-2817

<http://targetthefuturetn.com/>

Tims Ford Council

Promotes and protects the quality of Tims Ford Lake and its shoreline environment, providing a forum for discussion, education, and appropriate action concerning issues and activities.

info@timsfordcouncil.org

<https://www.timsfordcouncil.org/>

Townsend Cultural Center

Preserves a heritage museum, formerly Townsend School, and designated spaces covering the life of Anderson "Doc" Townsend.

Facebook: *Townsend Cultural Center*

Compassionate Friends Inc. Highland Rim Chapter

Provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.

<https://www.compassionate-friends.org/>

Facebook: *The Compassionate Friends Highland Rim Chapter*

Sewanee Community Chest

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

<https://sewaneecivic.org/community-chest/>



**Franklin County
Animal Control**

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

(931) 967-5389

**The Franklin County
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Invests in today's youth, tomorrow's leaders, and the future of our community by providing funds and resources not ordinarily provided to the Franklin County school system.

connect@fcedfoundation.org
www.fcedfoundation.org

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(931) 962-4472
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Finding hope in the battle with addiction

What is it?

As the first phase in the recovery process, the StepOne ServiceSM is a hospital-based, three-to-five day acute withdrawal management service. Provided at Southern Tennessee Regional Health System, it is for adults who are in the impending or early stage of withdrawal from alcohol and/or opioids.

The service:

- Requires voluntary admission to the hospital.
- Provides round-the-clock medical care by the hospitalist team and nurses at Southern Tennessee Regional Health System.
- Uses protocol-specific medications to reduce the severity of withdrawal symptoms and keep you as comfortable as possible.
- Is provided in partnership with Evergreen Healthcare Partners, LLC.

The commitment

Individuals seeking treatment through the StepOne ServiceSM must be committed to staying in the hospital until they are medically stable. Once discharged from the hospital, they must be motivated to continue addiction treatment by transitioning to a service based in the community.

An individual entering the StepOne ServiceSM will undergo:

- Telephone pre-screening
- In-person assessment
- Admission to the medical unit at Southern Tennessee Regional Health System
- Acute withdrawal management
- Individualized discharge planning
- Post-discharge follow-up

Admission

For information on how to be admitted, call the StepOne ServiceSM coordinator at 931.201.9868.

Most insurance plans are accepted, including Medicaid and Medicare.



To learn more, call
931.201.9868

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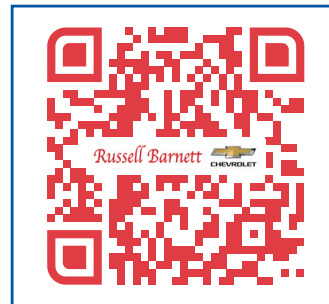
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