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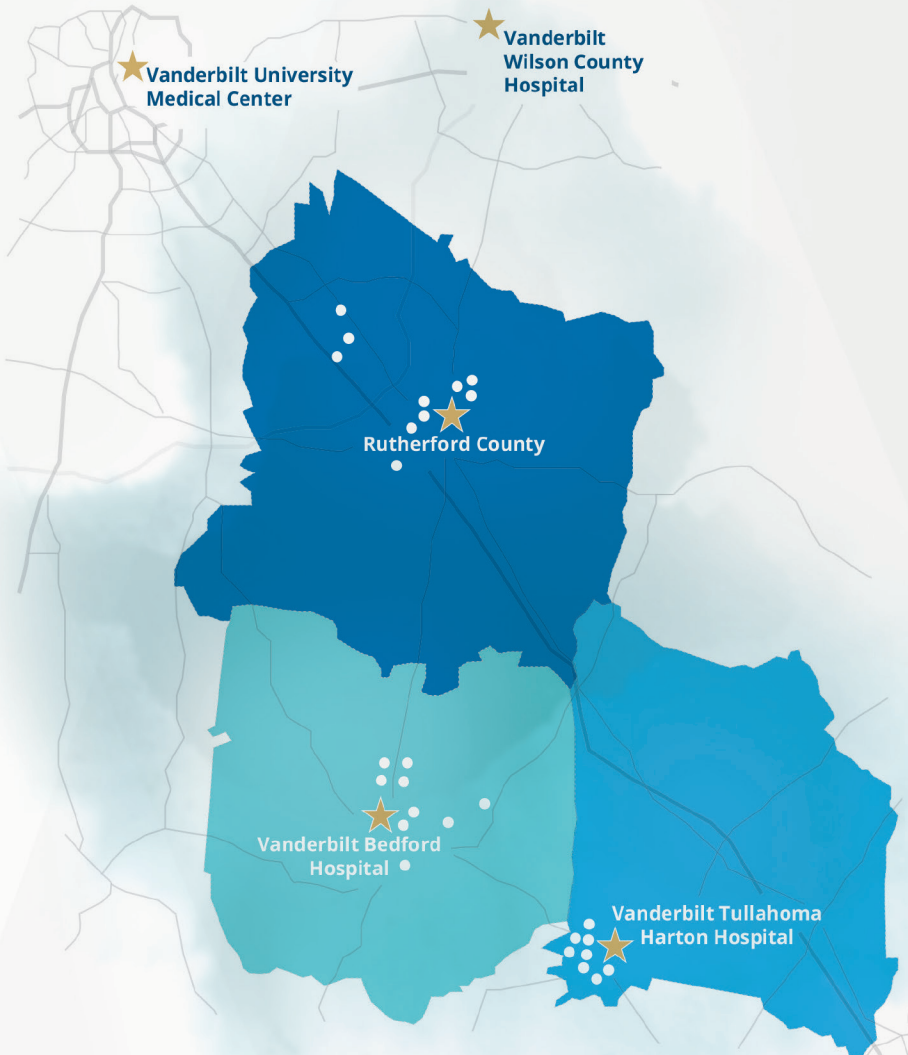
ISSUE 9 2024

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Rutherford County



Adult

- Behavioral Health
- Cardiology
- Eye Institute
- High-Risk Prenatal Care
- Optical Center
- Orthopaedics
- Radiology/ Outpatient Imaging
- Surgical Weight Loss
- Women's Health



Pediatrics

- After-Hours
- Allergy and Immunology
- Cardiology
- Diabetes
- Endocrinology
- Gastroenterology
- General Surgery
- Genetics
- Nephrology
- Neurology
- Ophthalmology
- Orthopaedics
- Otolaryngology (ENT)
- Plastic Surgery
- Primary Care
- Pulmonology
- Radiology/Outpatient Imaging
- Rheumatology
- Urgent Care
- Urology

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Coffee County



Adult

- Cardiac Rehabilitation
- Cardiovascular/ Interventional Cardiology
- Emergency Care
- General Surgery
- Hematology
- Internal Medicine/ Primary Care
- Obstetrics/Level II NICU
- Ophthalmology
- Orthopaedics
- Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapy
- Podiatry
- Pulmonology

- Radiology/ Outpatient Imaging
- Sleep Disorders Center
- Spine (new)
- Sports Medicine
- Urology (new)
- Women's Health and OB/GYN
- Wound Care



Pediatrics

- Cardiology
- Endocrinology
- Primary Care

Bedford County



Adult

- Cardiology
- Dermatology
- Emergency Care
- General Surgery
- Infusion Clinic
- Laboratory Services
- Orthopaedics
- Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapy
- Plastic Surgery (new)
- Podiatry
- Primary Care
- Radiology/ Outpatient Imaging
- Respiratory Therapy
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2212 Hwy 41A N, Shelbyville, TN 37160
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A Stunning Patio, Gazebo Property



3 bedroom, 2 bath 1734 sqft home on 11.54+/- acres features a 24x30 shop with electrical and office space, 40x52 implement shed attached. Small animal barn in back all fenced. Patio with Gazebo Property could be divided also.

314 Ernest Campbell Rd Shelbyville, TN 3716
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501 Gray Road, Lynchburg, TN
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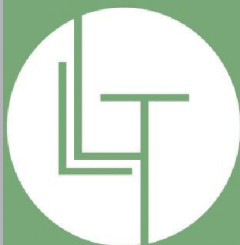
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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Sprouting from soil, served at supper

Farm-to-table plants seeds generation after generation.

OUR FOOD nourishes us, from the soil beneath our feet to the table where we gather with family and friends. The hot sun beams from the sky into the field of sprouting seeds. Farmers rise early, tending to their crops with the same care and dedication that their families have shown for generations. The connection between the land and our plates is a story of hard work, love, and survival — a story growing more vital as we seek healthier, more intentional ways to nourish our bodies.

The beauty of farm-to-table lies in its simplicity. Cooks transform fresh, seasonal ingredients into meals that are delicious and rich in nutrients, just like nature intended. Each dish tells a story of the farmer who harvested the tomatoes, the hands that crafted the cheese, and the cook

who brought it all together like magic. When we eat farm-to-table, we're not just enjoying a meal; we're participating in a movement that values relationships over transactions.

When we focus on farm-to-table, it also reconnects us with the seasons, reminding us that food is more than a commodity — it's a gift from the earth that should be savored. There's a certain joy in eating what's in season, knowing that the flavors are at their peak and that you're supporting local farms that are the backbone of our communities. The people in this issue bring us closer to nature, yes ... but also closer to each other. This issue of Good News is a return to our roots — a celebration of the land, and a recognition of the hands that toil to bring us the freshest, most nourishing foods. **GN**

Wesley Bryant,
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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GOOD NEWS IS PUBLISHED BY Exchange Media Group, Inc.

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Prime location in Shelbyville. Downstairs is currently being used as a large boutique with dressing rooms. A half BA is downstairs with efficiency kitchen with sink, microwave, & refrigerator. Large extra space in the back for storage with two washer & dryer hookups. Upstairs is currently being rented with a large living area, 2 BR, & a BA. When current owner bought they redone all electrical, plumbing, windows, siding, flooring, BRs, & roof. **MLS#2692672. \$849,900.**



5 BR, 3 BA brick home in the heart of Shelbyville with mother-in-law quarters. Large K w/NEW appliances. Huge living/sunroom w/sliding glass doors. MBR w/large closet & BA. BRs are a great size w/ closet space. Outside is a 5 bay carport, a barn for storage or animals, a she-shed for storage, & a 2nd home. The mother-in-law space has BA, & K (no stove). Large covered patio w/ceiling fans off the back. This home sits on 1.5 acres. Roof is only 2 years, HVAC 3 years, & replacement windows throughout. **MLS#2649401. \$499,900.**



2 bedroom, 1 bath barndo, but has the potential for more. Open LR, DR, and K. BR w/ tiled walk-in shower, & double vanities. 9 stall horse barn w/ wash bay, as well as a very large lien to for all storage needs, and an outdoor wash rack. Large front field with pond, and paddocks are in the back. This piece will be surveyed off a larger portion at this address to be 2.5+- acres. **MLS#2690822. \$329,900.**

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Cook Family Farm swarming with activity following aunt's generous gift

By Amanda E. West // Photography by Ashleigh Newnes
and submitted by Ashley Cook



ASHLEY POTTS blew a warm breath across the cover of a book, arousing dust particles into the air. Overwhelmed by a mixture of anticipation and sadness, she studied the other items that belonged to her beloved aunt, Nancy Edwards, still packed neatly inside the cardboard box. Now that her aunt was gone, her notes and beekeeping equipment had been passed on to Ashley.

“My aunt got into beekeeping to help with the pollination of strawberries, blueberries, and blackberries. I remember traveling to Ohio with her to a convention full of classes and trade fairs. I will always remember that trip. I was 17 at the time. After she passed, a beekeeper friend of hers tried to help out, but it was a large undertaking for him to manage her hives and his. She was the kindest woman and made such a huge impact on everyone she met,” recalled Ashley.

Could Ashley decipher the notes her aunt left behind and start her own beekeeping business? Armed with her aunt's bee boxes, frames, smokers, and extracting equipment, Ashley did just that.

"So in 2020, with some knowledge, I thought I'd give it a try. I wish I had my aunt's knowledge. I could have learned so much from her. I fell in love with beekeeping. Lots of people say, 'I don't know how you do that.' It took me a while to get used to the bees flying around me, but they don't bother me a bit now. We've been gifted 23 acres of the family farm, which our house, my childhood home, and our barn sit on. We also specialize in commercial goat herds, which is a mix of breeds, honeybees, and goat's milk honey soaps. One day, I hope to sell colonies of bees, but for now, we only sell the honey."

A black and white photograph of Ashley Cook, a woman with long, wavy hair, smiling warmly. She is wearing a dark tank top and is holding a clear glass jar of honey with both hands. The jar has a white label that reads "100% Pure Raw Honey" and "Cook Family Farms". The background is a plain, light color. There are large, semi-transparent yellow hexagonal shapes overlaid on the image, one on the left and one on the right, framing the woman and the jar.

Ashley Cook



“Beekeeping can be very challenging. Every time I think I have them figured out, they throw me a curveball.”

- ASHLEY COOK

Six generations of Pottses, including Ashley, have lived on her family farm in Wartrace. Most know it as “Valley Home Farm” because her great-grandparents lived in the grand home and sold berries to the public. Ashley and her husband, David Cook, started Cook Family Farm in 2017. Their commercial goat operation averages 50 nanny goats and 30 hives in six separate locations. Word is rapidly spreading, and her beekeeping business is growing. Most recently, she started a bee yard at Lynfield Gardens in neighboring Bell Buckle.

“I currently have five hives at Lynfield Gardens. I’m really excited about partnering with them. The honeybees help them with pollination of their fruit trees, blackberries, and wildflowers, which gives the bees something to forage on all through the spring and summer.”





What started out as a hobby has now become an exciting business adventure, but it isn't without its difficulties.

"Beekeeping can be very challenging. Every time I think I have them figured out, they throw me a curveball. I check each hive at least once a week to make sure the queen is still laying and they have enough room. I'm also looking for diseases. In the springtime, a hive will naturally split off about 1/3 of the population. We call this a 'swarm.' I always try to prevent this from happening by splitting them myself and making sure they aren't running out of room. The hardest part is some days, I can't keep my smoker lit. But the weather can be a challenge, too. It affects the honey flow and how

much honey each hive is able to produce each year. The easiest part is selling the honey. Seems like I never have enough."

Ashley combined the antibacterial properties of honey with the nourishing milk expressed from her herd of goats to create a luxurious soap. She also sells pint jars of honey and offers a limited amount of honeycomb.

"I make a lot of soap baskets for Christmas, but I can make them for any occasion," said Ashley. "Last year, we made small jars of honey, and my neighbor used them as wedding favors. If you visit our farm, we have an 'honor system box' set up where we provide limited quantities of items we have available. Sometimes, I have honey available at Potts Processing. We don't have a website, but we update our Facebook regularly."

The Cook's daughter, Kimber, is majoring in animal science with a minor in agriculture business at the University of Tennessee at Martin. With those credentials, there is no doubt the future of the Cook Family Farm will continue into a seventh generation. **GN**

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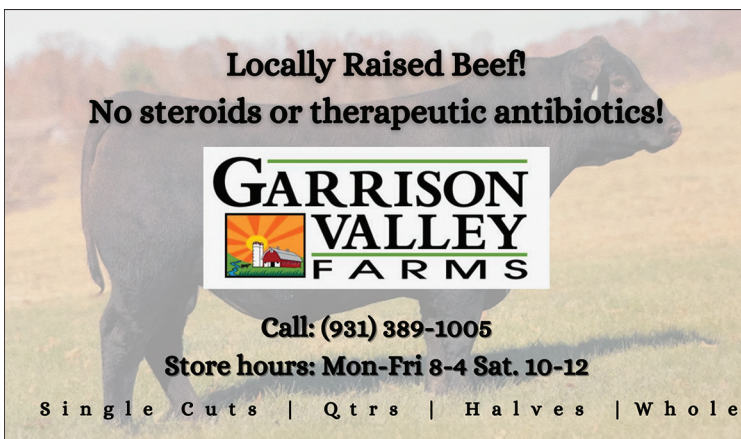


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Annual Bedford County Fair **FARM-TO-TABLE** *Dinner*

**A NIGHT OF ELEGANCE, LOCALLY
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PLUS NEW FRIENDSHIPS**

By Amanda E. West
Photography by Roxy Branch Studios
and submitted by Brandi Smith

SOFT LINEN tablecloths, colorful stemware glasses, an eclectic mix of chairs and benches, and jars bursting with zinnias were the perfect backdrop for the first Farm-to-Table Dinner sponsored by the Bedford County Fair Board. As the sun dipped below the rolling hills surrounding Lynfield Gardens in Bell Buckle last June, the yellow hue of vintage-inspired Edison bulbs strung from the trees high above the tables flickered to life. The warmed breeze carried the telltale hints of freshly mowed grass mingled with the tantalizing aroma of meticulously grown and seasoned Wagyu beef and pork chops as meat sizzled on the grills.

It's no surprise that tickets for this event sold out within a meager 12 hours! Especially since farmers, artisans, and individuals from every corner of our community contributed their unique products and worked together to forge lasting friendships, encourage camaraderie, and share their love of agriculture with others.

"Our fair board, which I am a member of, was super supportive of my dream to create our own farm-to-table event," said the director of the Bedford County Fair, Brandi Smith. "Getting to work with local farms, seeing what they offer and how we

could incorporate them into this magical evening, was a major highlight. I learned just how great our county is! I sat back and watched everyone enjoy what we created — the smiles, compliments, and the laughter — we could not have done this without the help of our youth board and fair board. They are essential to our success.”

Smith continued, “We took the bounties of our local farmers and turned it into a five-course meal with attendees from all over Middle Tennessee. Many of our guests didn’t have a background in agriculture, so they were able to learn about what our local farms offer.”

The menu included freshly squeezed lemonade made from locally

grown lemons and blackberry syrup created from berries grown at the host site, Lynfield Gardens. Smith Farms provided the lamb that was skewered between feta and olives, and Nash Family Creamery’s white cheddar was paired with an array of crackers. An assortment of creamy and tangy goat cheese from Windrow Farms paired well with jam provided by the Hartline family.

Vegetables for the salads were lovingly gathered from Swallow Hollow Farm and topped with Jack Daniel’s hickory vinaigrette. The award-winning chefs from Barking Pig BBQ worked alongside Hill-Jack Hideaway Farmstead, who graciously provided meat for the main course.

“This event was a great asset to our community. We have things available in our county that many people may not know about, such as Hill-Jack Hideaway Homestead, who provided us with Wagyu/Holstein steaks and farm fresh pork chops raised right here in Bedford County. Guests also got to see just how beautiful Lynfield Gardens is and learned they can pick their fresh flowers. Windrow Farms provided freshly made goat cheeses and A2 fresh cream butter. Nash Family Creamery brought ice cream and an assortment of cheeses. We built relationships that might not have otherwise been built.”

Dennis and Kayla White, owners of Promise Manor in Lynchburg, host a similar yearly event that



◀ Brandi Smith, leader of the Farm-to-Table Dinner Committee





“FARM-TO-TABLE
EVENTS ARE VITAL TO A
COMMUNITY BECAUSE
THEY CELEBRATE
THE CONNECTION
BETWEEN FARMERS AND
CONSUMERS. THIS EVENT
WAS MAGICAL AND
ELEGANT IN EVERY WAY.”

*Brandi
Smith*



Appetizer spread featuring ▶
lamb kebabs from Smith Farms,
goat cheeses from Windrow
Farms, cheese from Nash Family
Creamery, pickled veggies from
Meghan and Brian Bailey, and jams
and jellies from Hartline Farms.



▲ Guests enjoying the Farm-to-Table Dinner

served as the inspiration Smith needed, so she invited them as special guests. Speakers also included the president of the fair board, Matt Ledbetter, and Brandi Smith. Other special guests were Lynn Williams, who represented the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, County Mayor Chad Graham, and Shane Smith from HillJack Hideaway.

“Lynn Williams was so impressed with our event she hopes to help come up with a grant to help other county fairs host their own farm-to-table event,” said Smith. “Matt Ledbetter said this event went far beyond what he could have ever expected. Michelle Calvert loved

this event so much she has offered to host it at her farm next year.”

Mark your calendars for June 7, as the 2025 Farm-to-Table Dinner will be held on Henderson Road in Shelbyville. More information will be forthcoming from the Bedford County Fair Board as the date draws closer, but tickets will again be limited.

“Farm-to-table events are vital to a community because they celebrate the connection between farmers and consumers. This event was magical and elegant in every way. We cultivated a sense of community pride and awareness of fresh, locally sourced foods.” **GN**



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◀ Vanessa, Taylor, Lillie, Corrin, and Eric Yentz

▼ Vanessa and Lillie Yentz holding Poppy, the baby goat



All Things Farming

Yentz Family Farm rolls out the welcome mat

By Amanda E. West

Photography By Ashleigh Newnes

VANESSA YENTZ is fulfilling a legacy. It isn't just for herself or for her husband, Eric, but for their children, grandchildren, and everyone who comes in contact with the Yentz Family Farm.

Vanessa is a mom to Corrin and Taylor and a grandmother to Lillie. For the past 35 years, she has worked as a licensed nurse and currently works at Vanderbilt Tullahoma-Hartom Hospital three days per week. But in 2021, with the purchase of

their 40-acre farm on Highway 64 West, Vanessa added farm owner, "woman in charge," gardener, animal caretaker, baker, events planner, accountant, project assistant, and marketer to her growing list of job titles.

Though originally from Massachusetts, the Yentzes raised their daughters in Florida. The warmer climate made it possible for them to stay involved in sports year-round. Although the Yentzes created memories and established lifelong friendships, Vanessa couldn't ignore the tug to own a farm of her very own.

"We decided we missed the seasons, and the need for wide-open spaces had been calling my name for many years," said Vanessa. "After spending a weekend touring colleges with our youngest daughter, we decided to make the leap. We were drawn to Shelbyville because of the annual Celebration, the mixture of winding country back roads, in-town amenities, and the nostalgia of the historic town square. We purchased our farm in 2021 and have never looked back. We wanted that 'small-town feel' in a community that was still large enough that we had all of the conveniences we needed. I longed for a town that reminded me of where my family farm was, and, well, Shelbyville fit the bill."



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Vanessa's love for "all things farming" began when she was a little girl.

She recalled, "My great-grandparents were the farmers in the family. At a very young age, they instilled in me the values of hard work, working to serve others, and the pride that comes from knowing that you raised that product — in some form or another — for the greater good of all."

Eric is what Vanessa calls the "project extraordinaire" because whatever new idea she dreams up, he always finds a way to bring it to life and exceed her expectations.

▼ Lillie Yentz holding a baby chick



"We are both good at building things, but he leaves the growing to me when it comes to the animals and the garden. Our farm is smaller compared to most, but our desire to build a legacy for our children and our grandchildren is large. Our foundation is rooted in providing the best goods and services that we can while ensuring that we leave a positive impact on the land and our community. We focus on pesticide-free as much as we are able. If we have to use something, we do so following organic practices. Our animals are loved like pets, and we love to share them with our guests."

After years of dreaming of owning a farm, the Yentzes now find joy in sharing their little piece of paradise and "hidden pasture" with others because, in doing so, they might be nurturing a similar dream buried within someone else.

Yentz Family Farm offers farm tours, fresh eggs, and a variety of themed dinners that include fishing, outdoor games, and seasonal activities. Baked goods and home-canned items are available at the Shelbyville Farmers Market, the roadside farm stand, or by contacting the family directly.

Upcoming events include the annual Mother's Day Brunch, which is reminiscent of an old-fashioned tea party complete with yard games, and a craft and coloring area for children. On Father's Day, they serve up Dad's favorites, such as tender and juicy barbecue, and offer photo opportunities with a vintage truck. "Farmer Vanessa" makes her appearance every other Friday with a free story time that features farm-themed books.

"Our farm tours will teach the workings of a farm, including how to grow your own vegetables and how to care for animals. A craft day, fall festival with food trucks and vendors, trick-or-treating in October, Santa visits, and other holiday events will be on our calendar. We want to create a place for families to gather and enjoy the beauty of the land so they can take time to relax and just be in the moment. Yentz Family Farm is our retirement, but it's also the legacy we want to leave for our children and grandchildren. We hope to provide the community with a location for small parties, intimate weddings, community events, and education for both the young and old." GN

For more information, visit www.yentzfamilyfarm.com or find Yentz Family Farm on Facebook.

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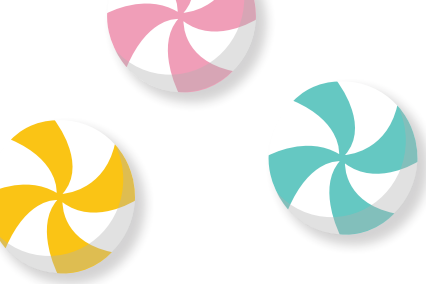
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Shelbyville Snack Shop is more than just a candy store. It's an experience designed to ignite the senses. The array of freeze-dried candies is nothing short of astounding. From classics like Skittles and marshmallows to more adventurous options like Peeps and Snickers, the store offers a modern twist on traditional confections that would make Willy Wonka jealous. Freeze-drying intensifies the flavors and provides a unique, crispy texture that's addictively satisfying and melts in your mouth.

The store's specialization in candied fruits adds a gourmet touch to the offerings. Though the pineapple, grapes, and cherries were unfortunately sold out during my visit, it's clear from the enthusiasm of the staff and the buzz among customers that these treats are highly sought after and disappear as quickly as they're created. The free samples, generously offered, are a delightful perk, allowing you to taste your way through the store and discover new favorites.

I bought my own tubs of freeze-dried Jolly Ranchers and caramel cold brew M&M's, both of which catapulted me into a new world of textures and tastes. The Jolly Ranchers retained the signature tartness but with a satisfying crunch while melting away like a frozen cloud. The caramel cold brew M&M's delivered a complex, coffee-infused sweetness that was surprisingly sophisticated and perfectly suited for a coffee connoisseur like me.

Shelbyville Snack Shop is a must-visit for candy enthusiasts and curious snackers alike. With its playful ambiance, innovative candies, and snacks from all over the globe, it's a sugar-fueled adventure you won't want to miss. **GN**

GOOD NEWS IS COMING TO DINNER!

We will feature a local food critic's thoughts as they dine in Shelbyville. This month Colby Prince visited the Shelbyville Snack Shop.

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Garrison Valley Farms' past,
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By Amanda E. West
Photography by Ashleigh Newnes

SINCE THE mid-1800s, through the Hawkins line, four generations of the Curl and Lee families have farmed the Garrison Fork River Valley in the unincorporated community of Fairfield. Don Curl and his wife, Claudia, live in Wartrace, while Whit and Rosalie Lee live near Bell Buckle. Because of their strong ancestral ties, the two families began marketing and selling similar breeds of beef cattle in the early 2000s, and in 2016, they joined together to create Garrison Valley Farms (GVF).

“Our families started to jointly market cattle to buyers in video sales where 30-100 similar cattle were put into groups and sold as small herds,” said Claudia. “Cattle were, and still

are, individually owned by Lee or Curl, but the same farm practices are used as well as the same genetics in our cattle. This makes for a perfect blend of cattle that worked well for the video sales. However, as time went on, our families took the next step and began direct marketing the cattle, thus the beginning of GVF.”

According to Claudia, a retired dietitian and co-owner of the business, her family currently owns/rents roughly 1,500 acres, and the Lee family owns/rents 1,200 acres to sustain their growing herd, which includes over 200 heifers. They raise mainly Angus cattle because of their long-standing reputation for producing the highest quality beef.




MARIA AND CLAUDIA CURL



◀ Joey Curl and Whit Lee at the Gillmore Barns at Garrison Valley Farms





◀ Emily Curl, George Lee, Ryan Curl, Whit Lee, Claudia Curl, Maria Curl, and Joey Curl at Garrison Valley Farms

“Because we are in daily contact with our cattle, we place a primary emphasis on temperament. Calm cattle aren’t just safer to be around — they generally make for a better product. We also have some Black Baldies, which is a cross between a Hereford bull and an Angus cow. We pride ourselves on selecting the very best breeding stock available. This means selecting cattle that will thrive in our Middle Tennessee climate and on our native grasses.

“We routinely incorporate the latest technology available for genetic testing and software-based qualitative analysis in our management protocol. But fundamentally, those are just tools that help to focus our own experience in the decision-making process, as there is simply no substitute for a lifetime spent raising cattle,” said Claudia.

The family said that cattle prices experience significant highs and lows, which can be impact-

“We know the quality of our product from personal experience of having raised and fed our own families with what we believe to be the most wholesome beef possible.”

CLAUDIA CURL

ed by heat waves in the “corn belt,” droughts in the West, or even wet springs in South America, as international trade can wreak havoc on the beef industry.

“While market swings can be advantageous in good years, in bad years, our operating costs and overhead remain constant. One of the main reasons we started selling directly to local customers was to streamline the delivery of what we know to be a superior product at a competitive price. Our customers value being able to find a consistently great product at a fair price. Developing a reliable customer base has taken years, but it means that we don’t have to market in a high or low market. Rather, we can consistently market our products directly to consumers based on actual costs of production rather than just on market speculation.”

At GVF, customers have the flexibility to choose whether they’d like to stock their freezer by purchasing a processed 1,400-pound steer or a single pound of ground beef. The goal isn’t to make a one-time sale but to develop repeat, satisfied customers.

“We know the quality of our product from personal experience of having raised and fed our own families with what we believe to be the most wholesome beef possible. We believe quality speaks for itself. Through building a strong customer base, our goal is to develop a business that can provide our children and grandchildren with the opportunity, if they choose, to carry on our family farming tradition. In the years to come, we hope our customers tell the next generation about how they remember buying beef from GVF when they were kids.”

In order to ensure that GVF will be here for many years to come, the two families work together just as their ancestors did. Whit Lee and the Curl’s son, Joey, manage the cattle on a daily basis while Joey’s wife, Maria, handles sales and marketing. The Lee’s son, Clay, who lives and works in Nashville, assists with the operation when he can. **GN**



◀ Edgar Kane
petting his goats
at E&D Farms

Reaping the rewards of a bountiful harvest at E&D Farms

By Amanda E. West

Photography by Ashleigh Newnes

THE TENDER sweet corn grazed young Edgar Kane's hip as he pressed his tennis shoe into the imprint his grandfather's boot had left in the soil. When the older man fed the cows, slopped the hogs, weeded his garden, or chased the chickens from the porch, young Edgar took it all in. There on that small farm, as he followed his grandfather's footsteps closely, Edgar learned to be respectful, trustworthy, and faithful in everything he would set his hand to do for the rest of his days. Whether caring for animals, cultivating a vegetable garden, or later, as he married his wife, Dawn, and raised a family while juggling a career, these valuable lessons his grandfather taught have carried him through countless seasons of his life.

"When Dawn and I first met, my brother and I raised feeder pigs," recalled Edgar. "She would come down after work and help me deliver them. When we got married, the feeder pig market went away, so we started raising sweet corn and selling it at flea markets. Then, we started adding more items and attending a few farmers markets. We also got into the meat goat market, but our children were young, and it was too much for both of us, so for a while, we stopped raising goats. Our farmers market business

Sowing More Than Seeds



EDGAR AND DAWN KANE

was really taking off, but the demands of raising a family and working a full-time job made it difficult.”

Although they put their farmstead on hold, like seeds lying dormant beneath the frozen ground, they hoped their dreams would spring up once the conditions were right.

“When my mother retired, she really enjoyed going to the farmers markets,” said Edgar. “I would plant, and my mother would pick and go to the markets. Four years ago, she had some health issues and was unable to go. She loved the markets and all the people she met there. I told her to ‘slow down,’ and she would tell me that was her social time. After that, I didn’t plant anything for about four years.”

But nothing satisfies the Kanes quite like plunking their hands into the warmed soil while planting their tiny seeds. Then, they both watch in amazement as the green leaves sprout and mature into tasty vegetables that will fill their bountiful table at the farmers markets in Shelbyville and Tullahoma. Now that Edgar has officially retired, coupled with the 15 acres his mother purchased in the 1990s, they now have the time and ample space to dedicate to their newest adventure — E&D Farms.

Edgar said, “I really enjoy growing vegetables. To me, this isn’t work. It’s enjoyable. I love being outside. What I enjoy most at the markets is our repeat customers. We know we are doing something right when, week after week, the same people come by and wait in line just to purchase what we’ve grown.”

With Edgar’s three decades in human relations and Dawn being a first grade teacher, the two are passionate about sharing what they’ve learned and helping others put their knowledge into practice for themselves.

If you’ve been considering starting a garden or farm of your own, Edgar advised, “Start small. You don’t have to have a lot of acres to sell at a farmers market. You can always expand as you go. I’ve never met a farmer who isn’t willing to help someone who is just starting out, so ask lots of questions. John Teague at the University of Tennessee (UT) Extension Office here in Bedford County is also a great resource.”

Though the warmth of summer has faded into autumn, and the nourishing dew of spring has turned to a biting frost, now is the perfect time to begin planning your spring garden. Many seed companies offer free catalogs upon request on their websites. The Shelbyville-Bedford County Public Library offers gardening classes and provides a small seed library, and The UT Extension Office offers classes. Plus, they teach essential skills to preserve your bounty.

“What I enjoy most at the markets is our repeat customers. We know we are doing something right when, week after week, the same people come by and wait in line just to purchase what we’ve grown.”

EDGAR KANE





“God gave me everything I have,” said Edgar. “If it wasn’t for Him putting me in the right place, I wouldn’t have met Dawn, and I wouldn’t have the family I have now. They are a big part of who I am, and my grandfather was a huge inspiration to me when I was younger.” GN

For more information on farmers markets or to register for upcoming classes with the UT Extension Office, visit <https://bedford.tennessee.edu>.



Bonds of 'Family' Know No Bounds

The friendship that forged a
multigenerational partnership

By *Amanda E. West*
Photography by *James Jordan*

ALMOST 25 years before Regis Philbin began asking players of the popular 1990s game show “Who Wants to Be a Millionaire” if they wanted to “phone a friend,” Donald Floyd and Wickey Parker have done just that. What began as a way for them to buy, sell, and trade livestock with each other developed into several businesses after they agreed to, as Wickey called it, “partner up.”

“I had been buying pigs from Donald for a while,” said Wickey. “Then he bought a bunch of beef cattle from me. I was bringing Holstein heifers here from Pennsylvania, and after we formed our first business, Parker and Floyd Livestock, there were times we had over 100 calves that had to be bottle fed between the both of us.”

The two have now sustained a friendship that spans over five decades and has included teaming up to buy and sell real estate, operating a commercial tree-cutting business, and managing a country store called Fairfield Pike Market.





JEFF FLOYD WITH HIS DAD DONALD FLOYD



“Bedford County is home to me. Although it is growing rapidly, the core values of the people here have remained the same.”

KENNETH PARKER

▲ Kenneth Parker, Wickey Parker, Donald Floyd, and Jeff Floyd



They have also weathered tough storms, such as the time Wickey spent 10 weeks in a full body cast after the two were involved in a head-on vehicle collision in 1989. During Wickey's grueling recovery, Donald cared for him while also making sure their businesses continued to run smoothly. Several years later, it was Wickey's turn to repay Donald's kindness after he broke both of his legs while cutting timber.

"They both pitched in and helped each other during difficult times," recalled Donald's son, Jeff Floyd. "They were both willing to compromise and had a willingness to help each other. That's how they have sustained their friendship through the years."

Wickey said, "I've been here all my life except in 1966 while I served in the United States Army for two years after I graduated from Coffee County Central High School. I've been married to my wife, Pat, for 56 years. We have six children — four boys and two girls — plus 21 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren, with another on the way. I sold insurance from 1968 to 1979. Then, I went into the real estate and auction business in the 1980s. I've held many fundraisers and auctions to help raise money for others going through difficult circumstances because after I was hurt, others stepped up to help me."

Wickey's son, Kenneth Parker, said, "I learned to have a good work ethic by watching my dad. He is the definition of loyalty and forgiveness. He is loved by everyone, and his steadfast presence has been evident in all of his kids. We have a large family by blood and some by marriage, but we are all family to him. There were always extra people at our dinner table because Dad welcomed them."

Kenneth went on to say, "Even though Dad and Donald dissolved their partnerships in 2012 as they were planning for the future and knew they were getting older, their friendship has remained strong. We also credit our wives for helping nurture and encourage our relationships with each other. The bond between both of our families has always been strong, but now that Jeff's son, Blake, has married my niece, Kelsey, and they have a growing family of their own now, we are forever bonded together."



After working as an insurance agent for Farm Bureau for 20 years, in August 2021, Jeff Floyd became the agency manager of the newest location on North Main beside Dunkin'. Kenneth Parker was an agent at the Coffee County-Tullahoma office. Over the course of his lifetime, Jeff observed the friendship shared by his dad, Donald, and Kenneth's dad, Wickey, and he wondered if they could "partner up," too.

"Once the business took off in 2021, within one year, we grew enough to need a second agent. I talked to Kenneth and our home office about him coming back 'home' to Bedford County to work here with me. It took a little over a year for him to make the transition, but as of March 2024, we are finally working here together."

Taking into consideration the needs of his four children, who were deeply rooted in Coffee County, Kenneth knew a move back wouldn't be easy, but in the end, the excitement he felt at working alongside his longtime friend gave him the confidence he needed to make his decision.

"Bedford County is home to me," said Kenneth. "Although it is growing rapidly, the core values of the people here have remained the same." GN

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Fourth Friday Cruise-In - Aug. 23



Photography by Ashleigh Newnes

The “Fourth Friday” Cruise-in on the Square in Shelbyville is hosted by Celebration City Region Car Club Inc. On Aug. 23, the community came out to enjoy beautiful cars, good food, and live music!



1. Patti and Larry Watkins 2. Mike McGehee with a 1986 Chevy C10 3. A 1979 Z28 Camaro, Gene Ray, and Sheila Ray 4. Kimmy Penny in her 1947 Chevrolet 5 Window Band 5. Angela Allen 6. A 1967 Chevy C10, James Giles, Connie Giles, Norman Green, Brenda Green, and a 1994 Chevy Silverado

85th Annual Tennessee Walking Horse National Celebration - Aug. 27



Photography by Ashleigh Newnes

Despite the heat on Aug. 27, spectators enjoyed an evening of classes at the 85th annual Tennessee Walking Horse National Celebration.



1. Walker Marsh and Brooks Bobo 2. Troy Gannon and Charleen Richardson
3. Bailey Little 4. Beverly and Larry King 5. Pat and Donnie Headrick

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