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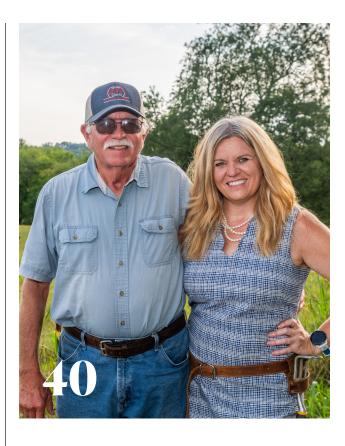
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# Sprouting from soil, served at supper

Farm-to-table plants seeds generation after generation.

O UR 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** 

From our publishing partner



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Wesley Bryant,

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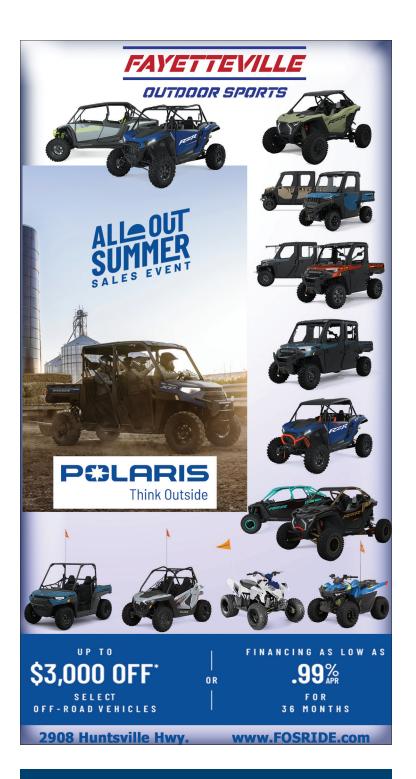


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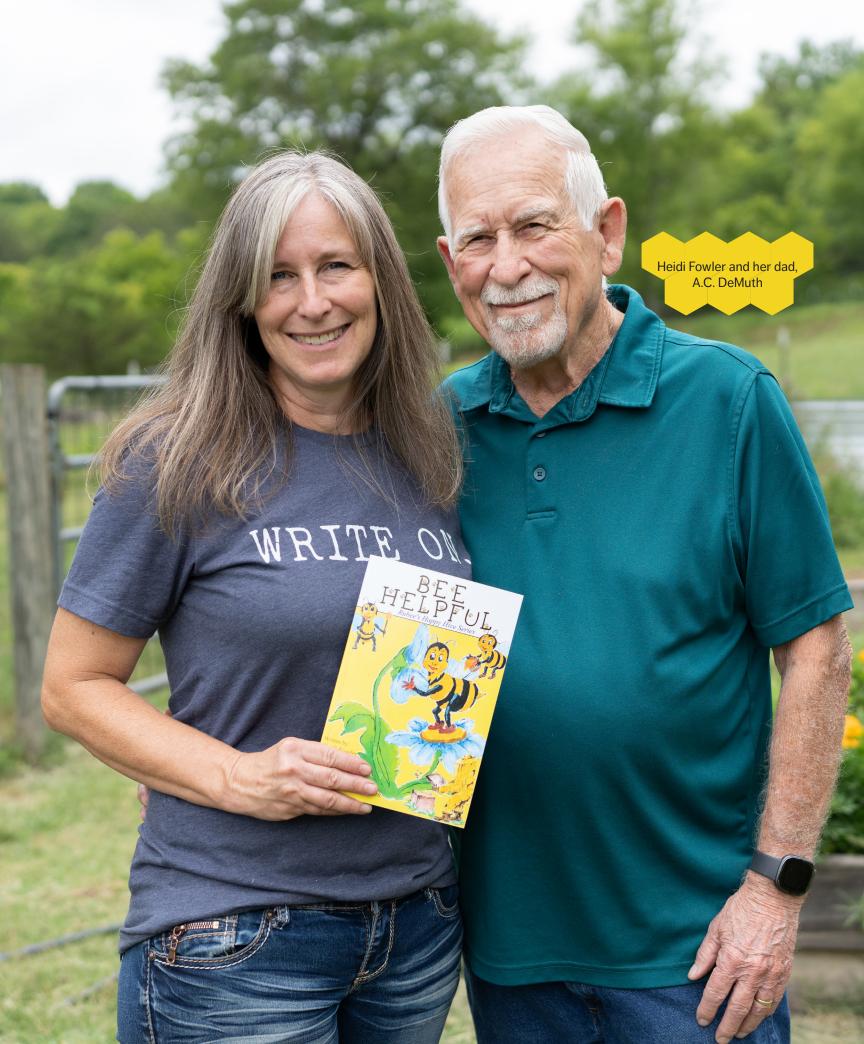
Heidi Fowler's path blends nature, storytelling, and a passion for sharing life's wonders.

By Tina Neeley // Photography by Brooke Snyder

The gentle breeze whispered, "Come on out," as the branches' unfurling leaves waved at her, coaxing her from the open back door. New ferns spilling out of her mama's concrete urns gently billowed, and freshly mown grass signaled the end of winter's imposed rest. As she kicked off her shoes, her tender feet laughed, tickled by the sun on her face and minions of gentle sword-like pricks of the blades that surrendered under her steps.

A few steps away were her favorite flowers. Stooping, she picked the year's first dandelion bouquet, sure of where Mama would put them — in Granny's old honey jar. But as she rushed to the door with her blooming surprise, she saw it.

"Maaa-maal" she screamed, dropping the flowers and the stowaway honeybee in a heap on the porch.





"God has a plan. There's a reason for the animals we have and the systems in nature. He has the answers within His creation, and we just have to tap into them."

-Heidi Fowler

OOR BEES. Seeing them raises our adrenaline, and rightfully so, especially for the many allergic to their stings. Some of us put a healthy distance between them and us and enjoy the fruits of their labor. And yet others care for them, understand them, and protect them.

Heidi Fowler cares for the bees and for the children who misunderstand them.

The California native connects nature, life lessons, and her understanding of God's plan for his creation. Her earliest connections date back to her childhood.

"God has a plan. There's a reason for the animals we have and the systems in nature. He has the answers within His creation, and we just have to tap into them," Fowler noted.

Her childhood on her family's small homestead sparked her love of animals, gardening, and cooking from scratch. And home-grown meals aren't the only thing she cooks up from scratch. Fowler is a children's book author.

"I told stories before I could write. I've always loved writing and have written stories since I could put sentences together," she said.

She told her first stories before she could write, but her first published works were poems in print before she graduated high school. Then, life got busy, leaving little time for writing. With her training in early childhood education from Taft College in California, she worked in preschools and operated a day care. Even though writing seemed on the back burner, her experiences were at work, teaching her things that now inform her writing processes.

Fowler shared, "Working with children is very rewarding and challenging at the same time. Young

children are curious about all things in life and eager to learn. It's easier to learn when they don't realize they are learning. Telling a good story gets people engaged. When you inject the lesson into the story, the education happens organically."

"Bee Helpful," Book 1 in "Rubee's Happy Hive" series, is Fowler's first book, followed by Book 2, "Bee a Good Steward" and Book 3, "Bee Truthful." Geared towards ages 2 through 8, the books in Rubee's Happy Hive series and an upcoming series, "Grandma's Garden", are available on Amazon.

Her years of beekeeping made writing her first book series a labor of love.

"Beekeeping is an experience I wish everyone could have. Bees are absolutely amazing and are one of the most misunderstood creatures that widely impact our food system. Once you learn how they live and work, you see them in a new way, so I decided to start with bees for my first series," said Fowler.

Sharing the creative process with her father, who illustrates the stories, is a bonus.

"My father is an excellent artist, but this isn't the type of art he's used to doing. My mother was the cartoonist, and my father did landscapes and portraits. He stepped out of his comfort zone to do these. I'm glad he did. I love working with him on these books. Better than my happiness, he told me he's found what he wants to do now — illustrate books. That makes me smile."

Writing and illustrating the books were one thing; pursuing publication, which can be a long journey for many authors, was another. But for Fowler, it was easier than expected, thanks to her Lincoln County community.

She said, "The wonderful thing is that at least three people stepped in to help me find a publisher. I'm so





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Come



Eagle Spirit Karate transcends physical training, shaping and empowering students for life.

By Tina Neeley // Photography by Brooke Snyder





▲ Dre Young and Josh Wright

HAT'S YOUR karate IQ? Is it informed by the wise instructor from "The Karate Kid," Mr. Miyagi, or the or the Netflix series "Cobra Kai"? Perhaps you still enjoy reruns of "Walker, Texas Ranger," and its karate action scenes. Or maybe your mental association of the word "karate" is to "black belt." Television, movies, and streaming services may be your only exposure to the martial arts, but it doesn't have to limit your appreciation for it.

Step into Fayetteville's Eagle Spirit Karate (ESK) to the sound of bare feet slapping padded floors and intense "Osu!" here and there, meaning "to persevere whilst being pushed." That's not just a vocalization popularized by Hollywood; it's kiai, a martial arts spirit shout propelled by an explosive burst of energy. Sensei Terry Mitchell guides the class through their choreographed movements, with each strike and block executed with purpose and control. Despite the common misconception that the main goal is advancing rank, as evidenced by the color of the uniforms' obi (belt), much more takes place in the space of class.

Mitchell explained, "Eagle Spirit Karate is a family-oriented dojo. We maintain the traditional art of Okinawan karate and kobudo (traditional Okinawan weapons training). We emphasize self-respect and respect for others."

This combination is at the heart of the ESK Trias karate system, developed through the expertise and teachings of Hanshi Terry Sanders in Shorei Ryu, Sensei Dan Marrs in Shorei Goju Ryu, and Sensei Lorraine Lewis in Shuri Ryu. Each system was passed down by "The Father of American Karate," O'Sensei Robert Trias.

"I have been blessed with two great instructors who placed emphasis on different aspects of the art. Marrs Sensei focused



▲ Terry Mitchell



Eagle Spirit Karate is a familyoriented dojo. We maintain the traditional art of Okinawan karate and kobudo (traditional Okinawan weapons training). We emphasize self-respect and respect for others.

-Terry Mitchell

on sparring while Lewis Sensei focused on kata and its bunkai (application)," Mitchell said. "I've also had the opportunity to meet and train with Hanshi Terry Sanders, the current Style Head of Shorei Ryu."

The focus and discipline instilled by martial arts are practical tools to improve learning in students diagnosed with developmental disorders, including people with autism or with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorders.

"Their parents and teachers have seen major improvements in their ability to concentrate and focus on tasks at hand," Mitchell pointed out about their success.

But it's not a one-size-fits-all program when training these students.

He said, "As instructors, we must adapt our teaching methods and tailor them to the needs of the student. Each student is different and motivated in different ways. There is no cookie-cutter process. Teaching students with special needs takes a great deal of patience, but seeing the positive results from their training is very rewarding."

While few students ever achieve their black belt status, the dedication and training of those who do reap the benefits in all areas of life. ESK student Sensei Natasha McDonald is one of the success stories.

McDonald, who started with ESK as a 7-year-old, is now 21 and holds the rank of Sandan (third degree black belt).

"We have watched her grow from a little girl to an excellent martial artist, instructor, and exceptional young lady," Mitchell said.

Through her years with ESK, McDonald progressed, graduating high school, college, and nursing school while dedicating herself to karate. Her personal journey reflects ESK's dedication to developing skilled martial artists and well-rounded individuals who contribute to the local community.

"Her training instilled self-confidence, self-discipline, and tenacity. These traits were very beneficial in her academic achievements and will greatly assist in her professional pursuits," stated Mitchell.

Although she was shy and unsure of herself as a child, her 14-plus years at ESK taught her self-confidence in all areas of life. The instructors' support undergirds her through life's ups and downs.

McDonald shared, "Sensei Jurgen and Sensei Terry are more than just teachers—they are family. They comforted me when I lost my mother as a child and celebrated with me when I graduated high school and college. They have had a significant impact on the woman that I have become over the years, and I am truly grateful for them both."

According to Mitchell, though rooted in ancient art, ESK continually adjusts its teaching methodology and curriculum.



"Our curriculum has evolved over the years. We still hold to our traditional roots and the art of Okinawan karate, but we also use modern training methods," Mitchell said. "Our black belts have trained and are currently training in other systems such as Jeet Kune Do, Kali, Wing Chun, and Brazilian jiujitsu, and they bring this knowledge to the dojo and share it with our students."

The ESK Trias karate system is a comprehensive approach emphasizing self-protection, self-respect, and self-discipline. Within its framework, the sound of bare feet slapping against the floor and the resonant "Hoa!" symbolize the beginning of a journey — not just about mastering martial arts, but about unlocking one's fullest potential in every aspect of life. **GN** 

Eagle Spirit Karate is located at 2715 Huntsville Hwy., Fayetteville. For more information, call (931) 438-2403.



 Terry Mitchell, Natasha McDonald, and Jürgen Mohr

▼ AJ Williams





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### James "Skip" Parkes knows the value of not letting them get away.

By Tina Neeley // Photography by Brooke Snyder and submitted by Skip Parkes

A S THE late afternoon sun cast its last shadows over the Kentucky woods, she limped into the open field, her young fawn following along playfully.

"Take my coat off," James "Skip" Parkes said to his grandson-in-law, Jim Cortner, who watched over Skip's shoulder through binoculars. The small wooden hut blended naturally with the surroundings, camouflaging Skip, Cortner, and the resort's hunting guide. Almost immediately, a buck approached from the left and another from the other side.

"How about the right one, Jim?" Skip inquired as he set his sights on it.



Informed of its broken antlers, Skip quickly but smoothly swung his rifle to the left, zeroed in, and pulled the trigger, dropping the buck where it stood. The trophy deer, which scored right at 200 on the Boone and Crockett Club scorecard, was the second taken by 94-year-old Skip within one month last year. The other, harvested in Texas, was a nontypical deer, scoring 233 5/8 with 27 points and a 28-inch spread.

His love for hunting is exceeded only by his love for his late wife, Martha, who passed away in September 2023. An avid hunter and fisherman since childhood, he missed several hunting seasons due to caring for his wife. He believed his last hunt was already behind him, but Cortner had other plans.

"I encouraged him. He can still go a little bit. He didn't think he could, but he realized he can still [hunt] a little," said Cortner.

His days of climbing with a tree stand are behind him, but today, blinds with only a few steps up and a propane heater make hunts accessible. For everything that's changed since he began deer hunting, the thrill of shooting the big bucks has never diminished.

"You can't wait. Anytime you get a chance, you better get it right then because they get away in a hurry — just disappear," Skip declared about deer. But it's as much about true love, too. He knows about matters of the heart, his record rivaling his hunting career.

It was a high school double date. His good friend, Colman Riddle, insisted he go with him, but experience taught Skip a thing or two about blind dates.





"I'd learned there's always a good-looking girl, and, of course, he's dating her," Skip said, threatening to beat Riddle with a baseball bat if it turned out to be the case. "I met the girl I married. We both fell in love that night and were together for the next 75 years."

Marrying Martha, the boy who'd grown up hunting and fishing with his family became the husband and father who often filled his free time outdoors year-round. Hunting and fishing were part of the rhythm of their days. Martha always got up early to make sure the love of her life had a good breakfast before he left for the outdoors, never complaining.

Skip recalled his earliest white-tailed deer hunts on Carter's Mountain in Franklin County when the state's first deer hunting season opened. Hunters were allowed to harvest two deer, signaling that the deer populations across the state were growing, according to the Tennessee Wildlife Federation's website.

"You'd sit for days — snow, wind, rain — and wouldn't see a deer for hours upon hours, from daylight to dark, and may not see any," he said.

Herd management successfully led to more frequent sightings and larger deer, and Skip continued to pursue them. He shoots only bucks, and his passion feeds others. Tennessee's Hunters for the Hungry partners with area

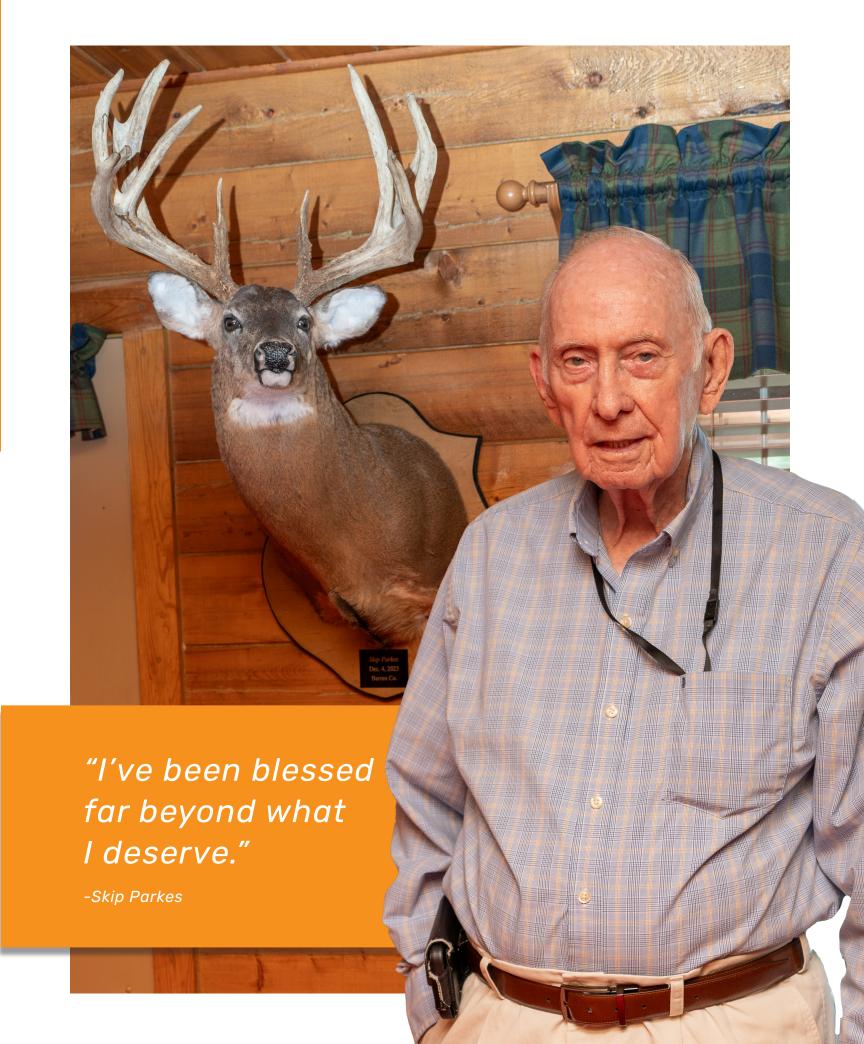
meat processors to provide fresh, lean meat to citizens in need. For more than 25 years, Skip donated his venison through the program, helping stock area food banks, soup kitchens, and shelters feeding hungry families.

The reels of his memories highlight a lifetime of trophies from local hunts and those in Canada, South Dakota, Colorado, Texas, Alabama, Illinois, and Kentucky, among others. But his memories of Martha outshine them all, and their theme song, Vince Gill's "Look at Us," provides the soundtrack. In an unforgettable display of his love and dedication to her, he took Martha to a Vince Gill Christmas concert for their 72nd wedding anniversary. The holiday songs stopped as Gill acknowledged the Parkes' special occasion and sang their song. For a moment, the world and the Ryman Auditorium belonged just to them.

As the song's last notes faded, the audience erupted in applause, all captured on video by a stranger seated nearby. Today, replaying it is bittersweet but priceless. Many hunt for such a true, lasting love and never find it. Skip might have missed the trophy of his life if he had not said yes to a blind date.

"I've been blessed far beyond what I deserve," he said. **GN** 

For more information about Hunters for the Hungry, visit https://tnwf.org/hunters-for-the-hungry/.









## Better eating, better living

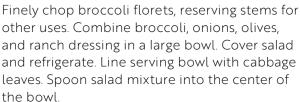
Farm-to-table connects the community to the source of our food.

OOKING WITH produce, meats, and spices from nearby farms and growers brings the freshest flavors to our tables. And choosing local ingredients benefits our community while enhancing our family meals. These local products showcase our region's unique tastes, making ordinary dishes memorable. By supporting local producers, we strengthen community bonds while giving our families the best our area has to offer. It's a straightforward approach to better eating, connecting us to the source of our food. GN

### Broccoli Salad

Submitted by Cyndi Hunter

1 lb. fresh broccoli1/4 c. onions1 can sliced olives, 2 1/4 oz.3/4 c. ranch salad dressing purple cabbage leaves



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

## Garden Tomato Soup

1 c. celery, chopped 1 sm. onion, chopped 1 med. carrot, shredded 1 sm. green pepper, chopped 1/4 c. butter 4 1/2 c. chicken broth, divided 4 c. tomatoes, peeled, chopped 2 t. sugar 1/2 t. curry

1/2 t. salt 1/4 t. pepper

1/4 c. AP flour

In a large saucepan, saute celery, onions, carrot, and green pepper in butter until tender. Add 4 cups broth, tomatoes, sugar, curry, salt, and pepper. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes. In a small bowl, stir flour and remaining chicken broth until smooth. Gradually stir into tomato mixture. Bring to a boil. Cook and stir until thickened and bubbly, about 2 minutes.

## Breakfast Lasserole

1 lb. bulk sausage, browned and drained 1 lg. bag hash browns 9 eggs, beaten 16 oz. sour cream 1/2 to 1 lb. Velveeta® cheese 5 green onions, chopped I green pepper, chopped 1 sm. jar pimentos salt and pepper to taste

In a large bowl, mix all ingredients except eggs and put into a 9 x 13" casserole dish. Pour eggs over mixture. Bake at 325° for 45 minutes. This can be made the night before and add the eggs in the morning prior to cooking.









Mr. Thomas Purnum, who teaches animal science, is married to Julia Burnum.

Agriculture teachers tend to the animals and plants when school is not in session.

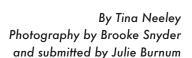


# **Cultivating Tomorrow's Leaders Today**

Lincoln County's CTE and FFA plant seeds of success.

W ITH HER tiny hand tucked inside his tan, weathered one, they walked purposefully past the colorful tents and silent carnival rides. The Earth's aroma mingled with sweet hay. She couldn't yet read the sign but recognized her destination. Being "farmer for a day" at the Lincoln County Fair was all she could talk about all summer, and she was finally here.

With wide eyes and steps smaller than theirs, she followed the students, listening to them carefully as she gathered eggs and produce and milked Daisy, the cow. She sold her crops and bought a special snack with her profits, having fun while learning about the farm-to-table journey. It was more than an agricultural lesson — it was a connection to the future.



Lincoln County's diverse employment sector comprises manufacturing, retail, health care, and public services. Agriculture, too, is a vital part of the county's economy, generating significant economic activity and supporting numerous jobs. Lincoln County's Career and Technical Education (CTE) and the National FFA Organization (FFA) programs are essential in cultivating the next generation's skilled workers and leaders for the agricultural industry and beyond.

Growth is at the heart of agriculture, and Julie Burnum, agriculture education/FFA advisor, sees it everywhere, beginning with her students.

She said, "Growth comes from getting out of their comfort zone and experiencing as many activities as possible. FFA





✓ Left to right back: Kynlea Rhea, Emma Robinson, Kylie Corbin, Kate Dunivan, Madison Robinson, and Maverick Lanni Front: Caroline Garrell



is full of opportunities, and we simply help them find each door to walk through next. While we are passionate about agriculture, we are more passionate about developing leaders for our community."

In Lincoln County, agriculture education is all about hands-on learning. Students dive into projects that allow them to grow, build, and create things that bring classroom lessons to life. Whether learning propagation techniques in the greenhouse, practicing sutures and injections in veterinary sciences, or understanding agribusiness economics, these experiences are designed to make learning tangible and relevant.

"Projects and lab activities help our students not just learn to do but do to learn, like our FFA motto states. FFA is an intracurricular part of the agriculture education program. So, while we teach our standards, we also weave extra FFA skills and activities into the students' learning," Burnum explained.

One of the standout projects in the large animal science classes is the broiler project. Students raise broiler chickens from 3 days old to 7 weeks old, learning about selective breeding, feed efficiency, production costs, and market prices. This project teaches technical skills and provides insights



into the food supply chain and the realities of agricultural production.

Speaking of reality, opportunities exist to invest in the future of agriculture education — a livestock facility on campus. Burnum said the community has expressed a desire to see this vision come to life for 15 years.

"Our dream would be to have a farm-fresh facility that would allow students hands-on work with live animals, provide a location to expand our broiler project areas, develop our hydroponic lettuce, and add other specialty food crops," Burnum shared. "A facility that would allow students to experience and develop skills in production agriculture, processing, marketing, and sales. A facility that would allow us to offer summer camps for elementary students as well. Our FFA motto is, 'Learning to Do, Doing to Learn, Earning to Live, and Living to Serve.' This initiative is a viable way to truly incorporate and expand our program to meet the ideals of our motto."

"Agriculture really touches every aspect of our daily life. Production agriculture requires people who want to serve others in ways that most people would never want to do."

**JULIE BURNUM** 

The hydroponic lettuce grown at school has already been served in the cafeteria and used locally by Sweet Feed Company and Buckley Farm. This dream facility would take these efforts to the next level, connecting students even more deeply with the agricultural community and supporting local farmers.

The FFA program also provides numerous opportunities for students to apply what they have learned in real-world settings. Students volunteer at various community events throughout the year, gaining hands-on experience and developing leadership skills. They work at the county fair, educating younger children through their Farmer for a Day program, and they maintain livestock areas. They serve at local gatherings like Pasta Premier and Farm-to-Table and help organize and host Farm Safety and Farm Days in the spring.

"Our FFA is active in competitions throughout the year," Burnum shared, "which are full of specialized knowledge and real-world settings, such as judging meat and poultry quality, milk and dairy product quality, and livestock, dairy cattle, and horse judging teams."

Burnum believes that these experiences and opportunities for growth make the students valuable assets to the agricultural industry and their community.

She said, "Agriculture is such a diverse industry, and it encompasses not just the food, but also the cotton fibers for our clothing, the timber for our lumber in our homes, [and] the beauty in our landscaping. Agriculture really touches every aspect of our daily life. Production agriculture requires people who want to serve others in ways that most people would never want to do. Production agriculturalists, locally and globally, have to understand the science behind soil, plants, animal genetics, proper harvesting, and safety. They have to be engineers, mechanics, and problem solvers."

A little more than a decade later, among the graduating class is the "farmer for the day." She's on her way to fulfilling her dream work as an agriculturalist. She has no trouble recognizing her destination thanks to the influence of a fair exhibit and a village of agriculture educators and FFA members and directors. **GN** 

For more information about Lincoln County's agriculture education, CTE classes, and FFA program, email Julie Burnum at jburnum@lcdoe.org.



◀ Leslie Copeland tending to her flowers on Buckeye Flower Farms

# Leslie Copeland harvests success.

By Jeriah Brumfield Photography by Ashleigh Newnes

ROWING UP on a farm teaches you a lot about life — hard work, commitment, respect, and the resilience to get back up when you fall. For Leslie Copeland, these lessons have profoundly shaped her life and career. Copeland's childhood on her family's Lincoln County farm instilled the values that would later become the cornerstone of her success.

"I am the oldest of four children, which meant I was the leader in my mind, and my siblings simply thought I was bossy," she recalled.

She refined her leadership skills early on, managing sibling disputes and ensuring they completed their chores efficiently.

Little did Copeland know that joining 4-H in the fourth grade would be a turning point. Through these organizations, she developed responsibility, accountability, and

# Rooted in Values, Reaching for Progress



leadership skills that would prove valuable in supporting her family, community, and the environment. From public speaking and demonstration contests to parliamentary procedure and 4-H Congress, Copeland absorbed abundant knowledge that she continues to use daily.

One significant challenge Copeland faced was halter-breaking her first market lamb. While tied to the fence, he got twisted in the lead and didn't survive the incident. This painful experience taught her about the inevitability of risk and failure.

"There were other accidents and challenges throughout the years. Eventually, I recognized things out of your control will happen. For farmers and business owners, navigating risk is a daily task, whether it's the weather, sickness or disease, market fluctuations, competition, or equipment breaking."

With enough time passing by and plenty of reassurance from her parents, eventually, she realized that it wasn't her fault but rather an unforeseen accident and risk. This level of understanding has been crucial in her business endeavors, helping her anticipate risks and develop contingency plans.

Copeland's triumphs are as vivid as her challenges. Winning showmanship classes with her cattle and sheep stands out. In livestock shows, the judge selects the winner based on the animal's structure for breeding stock and composition and structure for market stock. However, showmanship is different. It's about the showman's skills — how well they trained and presented the stock. These victories validated her years of hard work, focus, and dedication and showed her the importance of focus and perseverance in achieving desired outcomes.

Today, Copeland balances her professional life with her love for the farm.

"My dad, at age 76, is in better shape than most of us — we can thank his farming lifestyle for this," she said proudly.

Copeland, her husband, and their son live on the nearly 500-acre farm. They tend to their five acres and help with various farm tasks. What she looks forward to most is getting outside and embracing the earth with their hands.

Farm life isn't always easy. It comes with moments of physical and mental difficulty. But, despite the challenges, the farm remains a source of therapy and fulfillment for Copeland. The Ashby family, from whom Copeland hails, has deep roots in their land, with a legacy that stretches back to the early 1800s. Her third great-grandfather landed in Mimosa in the early 1800s, and her great-grandfather built the house at 165 Mimosa in 1912. This rich history fuels her commitment to continuing the farming tradition for future generations.

"Our family roots are deep in this land. My sisters, brother, and I — in some form or fashion — plan to carry on the farming tradition for our children and grandchildren."

"Our family roots are deep in this land.
My sisters, brother, and I — in some form or fashion — plan to carry on the farming tradition for our children and grandchildren."

LESLIE COPELAND

Randy Ashby and Leslie, Dain, and Carver Copeland at their home among Leslie's carefully cultivated



Copeland's professional journey has been equally impressive. She has participated in the Leadership Lincoln program, served on the library board, and currently serves on the American Red Cross Heart of Tennessee board. In addition to Ascend's strategic marketing and business development, she also leads philanthropic and community efforts, working with partners like Second Harvest Food Bank of Middle Tennessee and The Nature Conservancy of Tennessee.

"At Ascend, we have a strong belief that our success as a credit union is tied to the success of our members and our community," she emphasized.

Copeland sees exciting changes in Tennessee's agriculture. She predicts farmers will use new technologies to grow crops more efficiently and protect the environment. She believes in the importance of farmers adapting to changes and being open to agritourism opportunities while relishing the wonderful produce they provide to the community.



Copeland has worked with many excellent leaders throughout her career and learned valuable lessons from them. Through their example, Copeland understands the impact of assembling solid teams and creating a culture of integrity, trust, respect, and teamwork. Copeland's professional dream is to continue making a positive impact at Ascend while advancing community efforts that improve the lives of Middle Tennesseans.

"It's about finding fulfillment in family and farm life, nurturing those connections, and passing down the legacy of stewardship to future generations," she said.

Copeland epitomizes dedication, hard work, and community. Her inspiring journey from the farm to leadership positions in business and philanthropy showcases the values she holds dear. She is committed to making a positive impact in all areas of her life. **GN** 



# Jazzberry Farm: A Model of Small-Scale Sustainability

A local couple turns their homesteading dream into reality.

By Tina Neeley Photography by Brooke Snyder

N AN early April morning, green finial-capped shoots stand tall amid King Stropharia mushrooms, welcoming their caretaker, Don Adams. Bees make their presence known, guarding their queen in the nearby hives. The mulching and weeding of the weeks before pay off in nature's bounty. Not far away, Kathy Beebe checks on the baby goats, keeping a watchful eye on the sweet one she recently weaned from bottle feedings. She'll move on to the coop from there, collecting fresh farm eggs for her kitchen and sale. The greenhouse brimming with spring plants testify to Beebe's green thumb, and nearby, the couple's freeze-dried goods packaged for delivery to area sellers wait to be loaded. There's much more yet to do, but they would have it no other way.

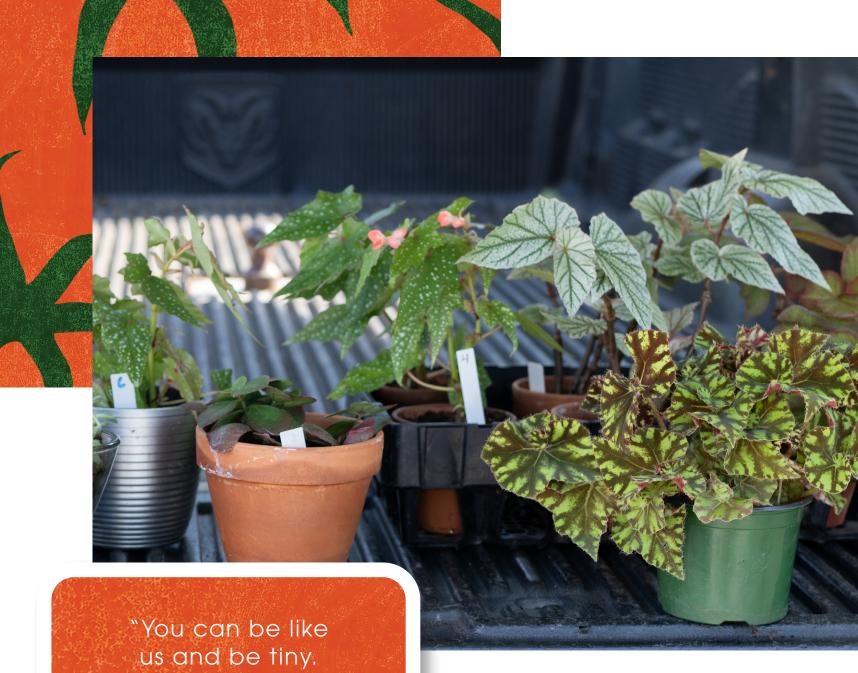
It's a snapshot of only a few hours in a day on Jazzberry Farm in Taft, where the homesteading couple grows and shares the fruits (and veggies) of their labor with the community. It's where self-sufficiency and sustainable living motivate every choice they make.

Adams is a musician who played with many famous artists and was a school band director. A musician friend suggested the farm's name, a playful nod to his former life in music and their venture into farming, which they first imagined as a pickyour-own berry farm. Beebe, on the other hand, grew up as a









"You can be like us and be tiny. Even a few pots of herbs on the back porch can find success. I tell everyone to have a garden."

**DON ADAMS** 

homesteader. Raised in a family that valued small livestock, gardening, and foraging, she brings a wealth of experience to their shared dream.

"As an older man, I've become more introverted and want to become more self-sufficient. After COVID, I've found many people interested in self-sufficiency as well," Adams shared.

With the challenge of a back-to-nature lifestyle before them, the couple moved forward, adjusting as needed along the way. Their initial goals were modest — to feed themselves well and sell any excess produce. They do both well.



The couple produces a wide variety of items via organic and permaculture practices. Their freeze-dried products, in particular, have gained significant popularity. They started with a freeze dryer for personal food preservation and soon discovered the nutritional benefits and flavor intensity that freeze-drying offers. Their products have found a niche market, from vegetables and seasonings to trendy freeze-dried candy.

"Freeze-drying makes very tasty vegetable chips. The veggies fit the farm and our philosophy, but the candy sells better. We have processed flowers and other custom foods for several customers, and they turned out great."

In addition to freeze-dried goods, they sell pastured brown eggs, shiitake mushrooms, and various fruits and vegetables from the couple's orchards and gardens. They also raise goats, rabbits, quail, and chickens, ensuring a diverse and sustainable food supply.

Life on the farm is not without its challenges. Time management is a constant struggle, and the demands of farm life are relentless. They're motivated to adjust their processes to the whims and fancies of Mother Nature and life in general.

"There's never enough time or money to accomplish all we would like to do, but that gives us a reason to get out of bed every day," said Adams.

Delicious, healthy meals from their farm-totable fuel and reward their hard work.

"We eat better than many expensive restaurants. I listened to a classically trained chef on a podcast talk about working at Michelin five-star restaurants to explore why they were rated so highly," Adams said. "The cooking techniques are the same everywhere. The top restaurants go out of their way to get the freshest ingredients. We eat like that almost every day."

Their greatest victory is that every meal is almost entirely their own — a reward for their hard work and dedication. There's joy in the simple pleasures of farm life, and their daily meals are at the top of the list.

You can enjoy a bit of five-star freshness with your meals, too. Jazzberry Farm products are available at Main Street's First Saturday, where the freeze-dried



items and plants are top sellers. You'll always find them set up in front of Bagley & Bagley. They also collaborate with other local businesses, selling their products at Buckley Farm in Fayetteville and Wise Ant General Store & Bakery in Bryson.

The couple believes in the importance of supporting local producers.

"I'd rather spend my dollars with my neighbor than with a large multinational corporation," Adams emphasized.

With every completed project comes new ideas, ensuring the farm is constantly evolving. The couple encourages others to try homesteading, even if it's on a small scale.

"You can be like us and be tiny," Adams said. "Even a few pots of herbs on the back porch can find success. I tell everyone to have a garden."

They also emphasize the importance of buying locally. Local producers offer fresher, higher-quality food, and purchasing from them encourages a sense of community.

"Buy something from Buckley Farm, Pilaroc, Taylor Made, and other local producers," Adams urged.

Jazzberry Farm is a melodious arrangement of hard work, dedication, and sustainable living. Like a well-rehearsed band, every element of the farm plays its part. Adams and Beebe's lives harmonize their past experiences with their present goals, creating a specialized blend of self-sufficiency and a commitment to community. **GN** 

For more information, visit jazzberryfarm.net, email dadams35@mac.com, and follow Jazzberry Farm on Facebook.

# Your loved ones can be in Good News Magazine.

We're looking for story ideas about people in the community.

Submit your story on GoodNewsMags.com





# Back to School - Aug. 2024







Photos submitted by folks in our community

Summer is coming to a close as the new school year begins. Friends across the county sent their children off for the first day of school this August. Parents stood on the other end of a camera while children radiated excitement.







Jackson and Caroline Spray
 BentLee Travis, Bailor Travis, and Rue Jones
 Evelyn Feltman
 Hadley and Finley Meeks

# Central High School 50th Reunion - Aug. 31





Photos submitted by Pam Patterson Layne

Central High School's class of '74 celebrated their 50-year reunion at the Lincoln County Museum on Aug. 31. More than 100 people attended, and everyone had a great time.





Kay Bevels Schroeder and Kay Sisco
 Barb Whitmore Hargrove and Jenny Thomas Woolf
 Ray and Cathy Layne Pitts
 Linda Williams and Joan Towry Frassrand



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.

# Friends of the **Fayetteville-Lincoln County Public Library Association**

Supports the library through various avenues as a group of volunteers.

(931) 433-3286 www.flcpl.org/friends-of-the-

# **Lincoln County Humane Society**

Shelters stray and abandoned animals in Lincoln County and provides pet adoption services.

(931) 433-3726 www.humanesocietylc.com

# **Fayetteville** Main Street

Focuses on historic preservation and economic development of downtown Fayetteville as a revitalization program.

(931) 557-5150 www.fayettevillemainstreet.com

# Clothe Our Kids of **Lincoln County Inc.**

Provides at-risk children with needed clothing and shoes.

(931) 625-6953 www.clotheourkids.com

# **Imagination Library** of Lincoln County

Provides free monthly books for registered children under ages birth to 5 in order to promote childhood literacy.

www.flcpl.org/imagination-library

# **Fayetteville Lions Club**

Provides vision care, youth programs, and other community services.

(931) 623-3763 www.fayettevilletnlions.org

# **Relay For Life of Lincoln County, TN**

Organizes community fundraising events supporting the American Cancer Society and raising money for cancer research.

www.relayforlife.org Facebook: Relay For Life of Lincoln County, TN

# Lincoln County 4-H

Provides agriculture, leadership, and community service youth programs.

(931) 433-1582 https://lincoln.tennessee. edu/4-h-youth-development/

# Lincoln County Anti-Drug Coalition Prevents substance abuse and

promotes healthy lifestyles.

(931) 433-6050 Facebook: Lincoln County Anti-Drug Coalition

# Crossroads **Donkey Rescue**

Provides refuge and rehabilitation to donkeys facing neglect, abuse, and abandonment.

(989) 619-9475 www.crossroadsdonkeyrescue.org



**Always Endure** 

Exists to remove financial barriers for adoptive families, barriers to care for patients enduring major medical diagnoses, and barriers to placement for children in foster care.

(931) 625-1861 www.alwaysendure.com

# **Camp Blount Historic Site Association**

Works to preserve Camp Blount's history, protects the site from further encroachment, and educates visitors.

campblount@gmail.com www.campblount.com

# Fayetteville Rotary Community Foundation

Engages in community service projects and supports global initiative.

(931) 675-2727 www.fayettevillerotary.com

# Crossroads Pregnancy Clinic

Exists to care for women and men facing unplanned pregnancies by providing life-affirming education through pregnancy decision counseling.

(931) 297-2424 www.crossroadspregnancyclinic.org



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at Fayetteville-Lincoln County Senior Center 908 Washington Street West - Fayetteville, TN

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# RSVP ON OR BEFORE OCTOBER 20TH 931-433-2544 hope@higginsfh.com www.higginsfh.com

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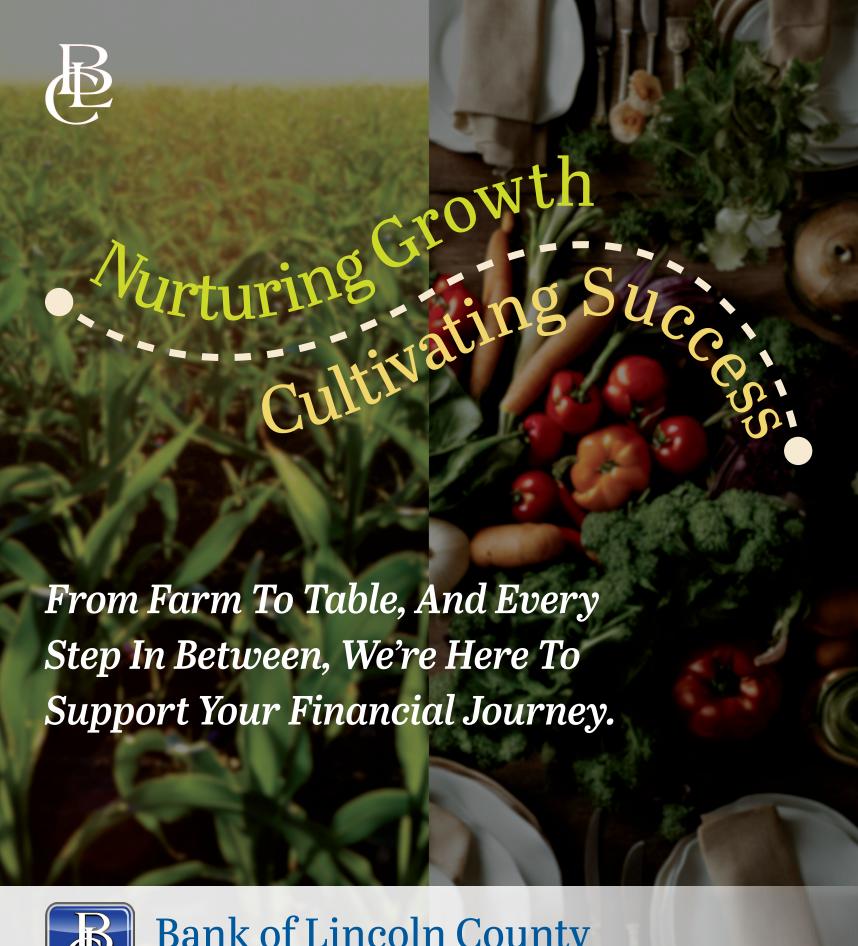


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