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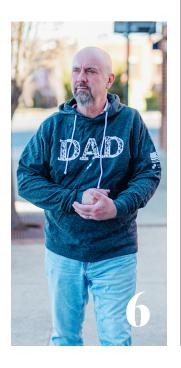
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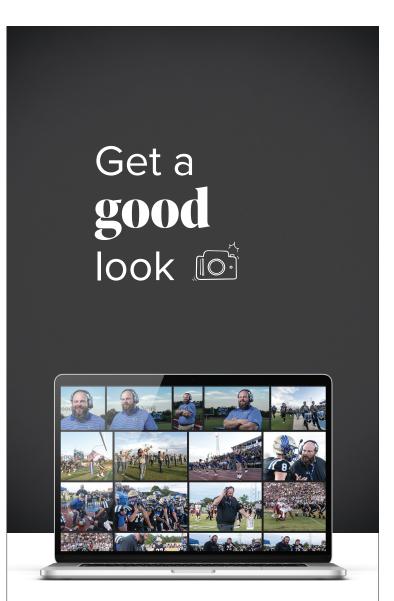
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We wish we could publish all the photos we have, but we have too many! Browse our online gallery for free or purchase photos to be mailed to your home. All proceeds from photos go to local nonprofits.



goodnewsmags.com/photos



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Shop Local

Every receipt is a vote for dreams to stay open.

HEN YOU choose a locally owned business over a national chain, you're not just spending your money, you're planting it. And the roots of that investment reach deep. Every dollar counts, and it lifts our neighbors.

According to the Economic Policy Institute, 68 cents of every dollar spent at a local business stays in your community, compared to just 32 cents at a chain. When the community gets to keep the cash flow internal, it doesn't lose revenue to corporations and competitors.

Imagine a little shop tucked between a bakery and a barber. The owner opens the doors each morning with her hands wrapped around a warm mug of coffee. She sweeps the sidewalk and turns on the glowing "open" sign. Years ago, she dreamed of creating a shop that felt like home, where people could find handmade goods, gifts that mean something, and real connection. That dream became her reality not because a corporation backed her, but because her neighbors did.

Because people like you stopped by.

Every time someone chose her store, she was able to hire a part-time worker, fix a leaky roof, or sponsor a Little League team. When large companies laid off workers, her steady foot traffic kept her doors open and jobs in place. Because the people in our community are not just people looking for a profit. They're friends. Neighbors.

When our community is full of local businesses, it brings our home to life. It makes the gloomy gray sky look like a bright sunrise after a stormy night. It adds beauty, like a local flower shop with blooming colors. Without each other, those flowers wilt. Without our financial support, our shops close their doors. When the glowing neon sign turns off for good, the storm rolls back in.

Sure, shopping local can sometimes mean paying a couple of extra bucks. But our community and the people in it are worth it. This issue of Good News is about shopping local, and it celebrates the people who keep our community alive. **GN**

Wesley Bryant, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF







CCORDING TO the National Father-hood Initiative, children raised with an absent father have the odds stacked against them: they are more likely to face addiction, teen pregnancy, and obesity, and they are more likely to end up incarcerated. In the United

States, over 17.6 million children fall into that category, including 42% of Lynchburg's own children — but local fathers are fighting to change those numbers. Led by Dave Frett and the Dare2Dad program, local fathers are growing in communication, co-parenting, emotional maturity, and overall connection to their families.

The idea for Dare2Dad came to Frett during a leadership meeting of FIVE18 Family Services, where Frett served as connect team director. One of the missions of FIVE18 Family Services is Vision 30 — the idea that by 2030, all kids in Lynchburg and its surrounding counties would be safe in their homes. The organization had already been focusing on kids and on single mothers, but Frett realized that to make that vision happen, they would need to target fathers as well.

"Seeing the way that children are hurting and families are breaking down, I knew that we as an organization and as the community, if we were going to achieve this goal, we needed to put an emphasis and a focus on dads," Frett said.



▲ Dave Frett works in his office.

He started with research, finding a good program and making sure there was no other group doing that work already. The programs he found were put together by the National Fatherhood Initiative: 24:7 Dad and InsideOut Dad. The first focuses on fathers in the community, the second fathers in jail. Frett wanted to focus on both demographics.

Dare2Dad was launched in April of 2023 in the Amherst Adult Detention Center. Two years later Frett is still there on a weekly basis, working with the fathers there. Dare2Dad has also spread into the Lynchburg Adult Detention Center and the Halifax County Adult Detention Center, as well as out into the community to fathers on probation, fathers involved in the foster care system, and fathers in their regular lives.

"Kids need both their parents. They need both their parents to be able to pour into them," Frett said. "If we're going to see strong families — if we're going to see strong children become strong adults — then the dads need to be actively involved in their lives."

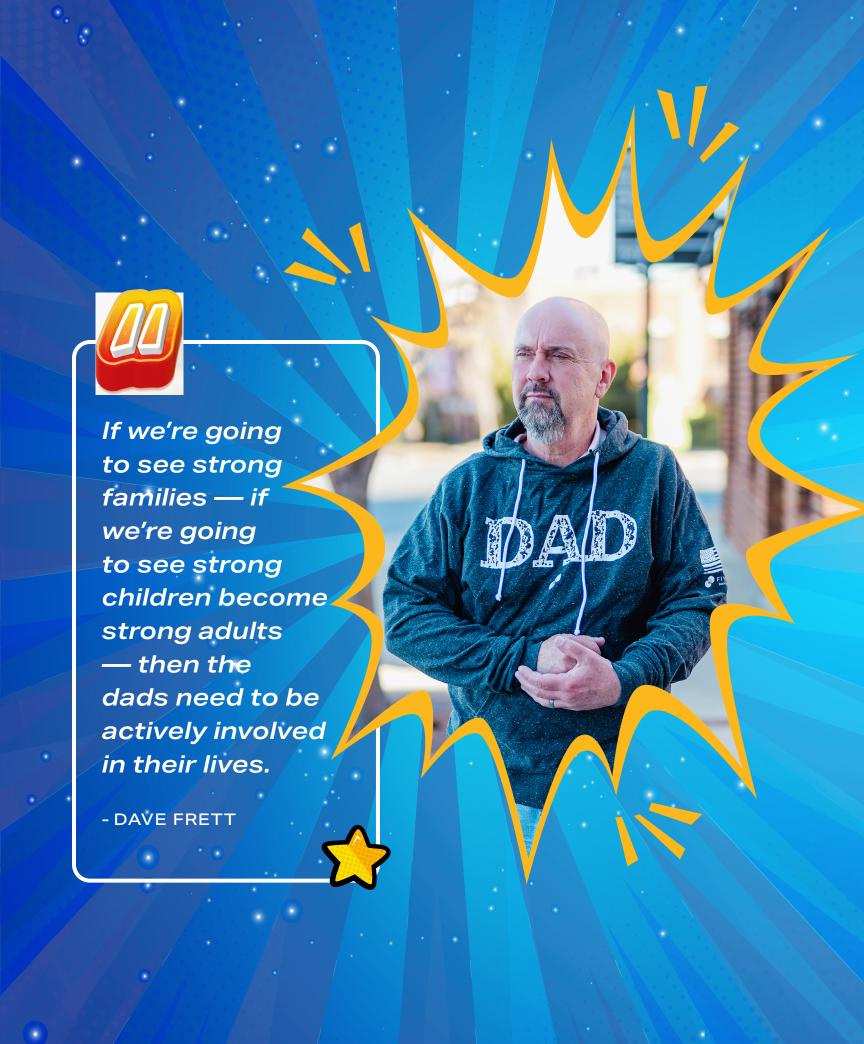
Frett has 25 years of experience being a dad, with four young men over the age of 18. Those experiences, he said, help him connect with all kinds of dads no matter what life situation they are in. His goal is to create more strong leaders in the community, and ultimately make families stronger to raise healthy and well-adjusted young adults.

"The way the family goes is the way that the community goes; the way the community goes is the way the country goes," Frett said.

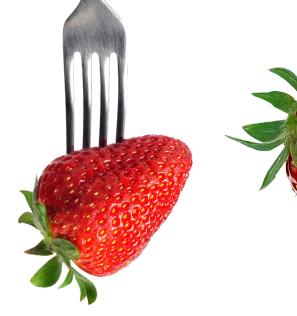
Any father can help with that mission, whether they want to take a Dare2Dad course or teach one. You don't have to have a degree in human services or be a perfect father. In fact, Frett said, he has neither qualification.

"God took an ordinary man — an ordinary dad — and he said, 'Hey, go talk to ordinary dads about what it means to be an extraordinary father," Frett said. "All of us have that ability in us to be those extraordinary dads." GN

Learn more at connect.five18.org.







REFRESHING SUMMER **TREATS**

straight out of Mama's cookbook.

It's ready; come and get it!

It's hard to want to eat a large meal after a long day working or playing out in the blistering heat. You know you need something substantial to sustain you, yet you're so worn out. Those hearty winter meals, while tasty, sit too heavy on your stomach. That's the last thing you want. It sounds like you need something light, refreshing, yet still incredibly appetizing. Well, fret no more. We have just the right lighter fare recipes to fill you up and get you on your way! By utilizing summer's perfectly ripe harvest and local recipes, we'll have your taste buds satisfied in no time. Just head to the produce stand, pick up some strawberries, and leave the rest to Mama! GN







Strawberry Trifle

In memory of Patricia Hopper

1 round angel food cake
1 c. confectioner's sugar
1 pkg. cream cheese, 8 oz., softened
1 c. milk
2 qts. strawberries, sliced
2 bags strawberry glaze
1 container whipped topping, 8 oz.

Tear the angel food cake in to pieces and place the pieces into a large bowl. Mix sugar, cream cheese, and milk together in a separate bowl, until smooth. Pour sugar mixture over the cake pieces. Layer sliced strawberries over cake mixture. Spread glaze evenly over strawberries; top with whipped topping. Refrigerate trifle overnight.



Strawberry Lemonade

Submitted by Morgan Hargrove

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

1/2 c. strawberry soda

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

Strawberry Preserves

Submitted by Margie Drake

2 qts. strawberries 6 c. sugar water, enough to boil berries

Scald strawberries for 2 minutes; drain. Put in pan and add 4 cups sugar; bring to a boil. Cook for 3 minutes after boiling begins; cool. Let stand 5 minutes; add remaining sugar and return to heat. Bring to boil; cook for 10 minutes. Remove from heat. Cool for 24 hours before putting into jars stirring occasionally. Jars do not have to be hot.





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





Felecia Turner FASHION, FUN, AND A FAMILY OF CUSTOMERS

Through in-store visits and live sales, Winey Chicks Boutique brings people together.

By Tina Neeley // Photography by Chris Morris

FAMILIAR VOICE carries across the boutique before the door even fully opens. Easy conversation, laughter, and the occasional clink of a hanger sliding along a rack fill the space. At Winey Chicks Boutique, shopping feels less like an errand and more like a visit with friends.

For owner Felecia Turner, that welcoming atmosphere was always the goal. When she moved to the area, she wanted a way to be part of the community and build something lasting. Retail had been part of her life before, but this was different. She wasn't just starting a business — she was creating a space where people could gather,

swap stories, and feel at home. Some come for a new outfit, others just to say "hello," but nearly everyone stays a little longer than planned.

"I envisioned a boutique that was not only affordable but also a place where I could connect with people, foster community engagement, and, most importantly, create a welcoming space for gathering, fun, and socializing. Today, I see that vision come to life through our incredible customers," Turner shared.

Her customers are never far from her mind. As she shops for new apparel, accessories, gift items, and other special mer-



▲ Felicia Turner

chandise for the shop, her eye is on the latest trends, but her customers' tastes are her North Star.

"I can instantly recognize what certain customers will love and what may not be the right fit. While I showcase trendy pieces, I also blend them with what I call 'timeless' styles, ensuring a well-rounded selection. My focus is always on budget-friendly options because I cater to hardworking women who want to look and feel great without breaking the bank."

It's a personal touch that's present whether shopping in-store or through interacting with the Winey Chicks app.

Turner said, "Our app allows us to stay connected with customers through weekly live sales, creating an engaging and interactive experience. In many ways, it's like inviting them into our home each week. During these live sessions, we can chat directly with customers, answer questions, and even see friendships form among shoppers. [COVID-19] changed the way people shop, and we've embraced that shift while ensuring that personal interaction and outstanding service remain our top priorities."

For Turner, Winey Chicks is a labor of love. She puts her heart into every detail, from selecting merchandise with specific customers in mind to fostering the kind of atmosphere that keeps people coming back. The work isn't always easy, but the reward is in the connections she builds.

"The joy I feel when customers return, whether through our app or in-store, is what keeps me going," she said. "I truly love my customers — they are the best — and I am incredibly proud of what Winey Chicks is today and what it will continue to become."





That pride is woven into every part of the boutique, where shopping feels less like a transaction and more like a visit with friends — one that keeps people coming back time and time again. **GN**

Visit Winey Chicks Boutique at 1129 Thomas Jefferson Rd., Forest, on Facebook and online at wineychicksboutique.com.





"The joy I feel when customers return, whether through our app or in-store, is what keeps me going."

FELECIA TURNER



Monica Wiles TURNING LOVE INTO LASTING PORTRAITS

Her detailed pet artwork preserves cherished memories.

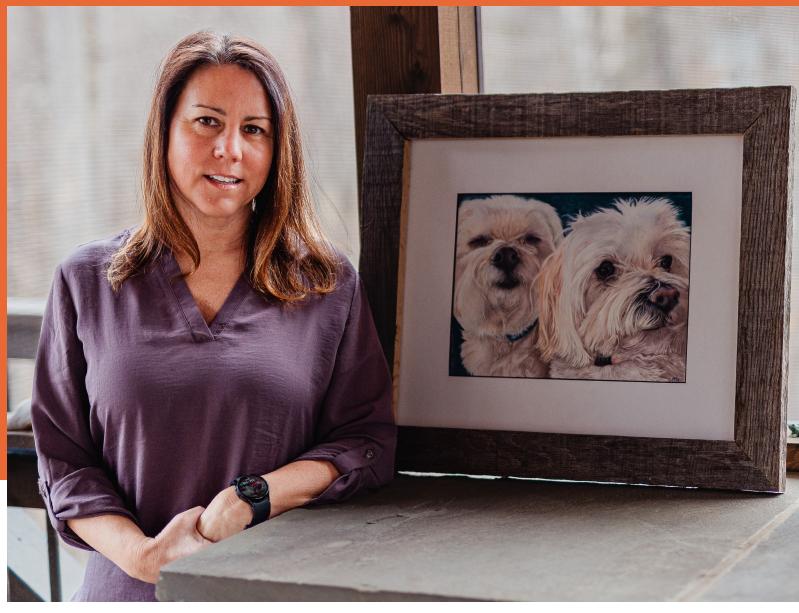
By Tina Neeley // Photography by Chris Morris

HE ONLY sound is the whisper of colored pencil on drafting film as Monica Wiles meticulously builds layer upon layer of color. Each stroke is deliberate, guided by the photograph before her — a portrait of a cherished companion. More than just replicating an image, Monica seeks to capture a feeling, forging a tangible link to a bond that transcends words. Hours melt away as she coaxes forth the unique spirit of the animal, creating a bridge between the present and precious memories. Encased in a frame handcrafted by her husband, Chris, the finished portrait becomes a lasting tribute, a way to hold onto the joy of someone's pet forever.

Look closely, expecting to feel the textures, to run your fingers through fur, feathers, mane, and tail. Rich, vibrant, textured — so real. Yes, it's art, but what leaps off the page straight into your heart is the heart of the pet that Monica so skillfully captured.

"The secret is in the layers of colors. To accomplish the depth and richness of realism, there are multiple layers of different colors. Different types of pencils achieve different results, and it is imperative to have a surface that can hold many layers," explained Monica.

Whether wildlife in their natural setting or a commissioned pet portrait, Monica strives for realism. A high-quality, detailed,



▲ Monica Wiles and portraits of her pets.

magnified image enables her to study the most essential element of a realistic piece.

"The eyes!" Monica enthusiastically explained. "The eye of an animal captures the feeling and their soul. I always start with the eyes. If all goes well, the rest will fall into place."

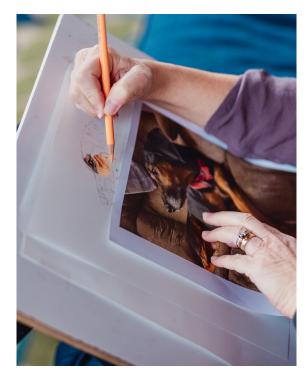
When customers see their portrait for the first time, their response tells Monica if she hit the mark.

"The emotion the customer exhibits when viewing the portrait for the first time is a very powerful feeling — not just for me but the receiver. My goal is to immortalize their loved one and to bring so much happiness and joy to cherish for a lifetime. Knowing my simple portrait was so impactful makes all the countless hours agonizing over detail completely worth it."

Monica also offers original color pencil art with the same passion for sparking connection. Through her images, she aims to stir memories and emotions, targeting other animal lovers and nature enthusiasts. An African grey parrot, Zippy, brings color to Monica's life — something she desired to honor by donating a portion of each sale to Happy Wings Sanctuary in Orange, Virginia. Birds like Zippy are frequently rehomed, and Monica hopes to raise awareness about the issue through her art. She also contributes to other animal rescue organizations.

A scroll through Monica's art Facebook page reveals how her pets inspire and enhance her life. There and in the photos of her previous work, you'll also find a mir-





Monica Wiles works on her latest animal portrait.



Monica Wiles works on her latest creation.

"The eyes! The eye of an animal captures the feeling and their soul. I always start with the eyes. If all goes well, the rest will fall into place."

MONICA WILES

ror to the souls of others' beloved pets, sparked by their eyes and unspoken love and dedication. You'll see the heart of someone following her childhood artist's dreams, confident she's exactly where she's supposed to be. **GN**

Look for Monica's artistic creations on her Facebook page, Monica Wiles Art. For more information on commissioned pieces, contact her at artfur.wiles@gmail.com.



Barbara Tolbert: SHE'LL BETHERE

Trade Winds Subs & Deli owner finds friends and family in all of her customers.

By Tina Neeley // Photography by Chris Morris

HE DOOR swings open, the air bringing with it the weight of the people coming and going. Some step inside briskly, scrubs rustling as they approach the counter. Others move slower, distracted, pausing just inside the doorway as if recalibrating between two worlds — the hospital across the street and the steady warmth of Trade Winds Subs & Deli.

For 12 years, the rhythm has remained unchanged. Some return daily, drawn by habit and their favorite menu items. Others disappear for a time, only to find themselves back again, not just for the food, but for something harder to name — a place where they are remembered, where they don't have to explain.

As the rush slows, Barbara Tolbert steps out from behind the counter, her eyes scanning the dining room. She stops at one table and asks about a regular's medical recovery and at another to check on someone she hasn't seen in a while. She listens, nodding in understanding, leaning in to be sure she hears despite the multitude of conversations around them. Whether customers are hurrying to work or taking their time, they know they are seen.

That connection goes both ways.

When the COVID-19 pandemic threatened to close her doors, Tolbert never asked for help — but her customers gave anyway. She made a few calls.

"I'm not asking y'all for money, but will you call some of your friends and ask them to support my business?" she asked.



A Barbara Tolbert talks with Homer and Catherine Justis, regulars at the deli.

They showed up. Customers helped however they could — one gave \$500 twice, another handed her \$1,000, saying, "You take this money and do what you want." She used it to send food to the emergency room workers.

It happens like that at Trade Winds — Tolbert gives, and people give back. People come from all over, not because they can't get a sandwich closer to home, but because this place is more than lunch.

"I got a doctor — he retired to Charlottesville but still calls me asking, 'You got some chicken salad for your honey?' If he don't come, he sends his wife."

Some places you pass through. Others pull you back. Trade Winds carries people here, over and over — not just for the food, but for Tolbert, for the comfort of being remembered.

Like family, she doesn't have to ask where they've been. She notices who hasn't come in for a while. When a former cancer patient stopped showing up with his family, she sent his son home with soup.

"Take this to your daddy," she told him. "Tell him it's from me."

Cancer runs in her family, so she understands the fight. That's why she's made it a tradition — when a customer finishes treatment, their next meal is on her.

"It means a lot to them," Tolbert said.

Like the winds that name this place, Tolbert is constant. People come and go, but she remains — a fixed point, a place to return to.

"I will always be there for them," she promised, "no matter what — good or bad."

Whether they return tomorrow or the winds of life bring changes that take them longer away, Tolbert will welcome them as if it were yesterday — just like family. **GN**

Trade Winds Subs & Deli is located at 2201 Langhorne Rd., Lynchburg. Call (434) 528-3218 for more information.



▲ Lisa Dibble with Barbara Tolbert



Thrive Outside Festival - April 5







Photography by Chris Morris

On April 5, the Thrive Outside Festival was held at Falling Creek Park. The festival brought outdoor enthusiasts together with vendors dedicated to helping find adventure and fun outdoors. Live music, face painting, pony rides, demonstrations, and the kid's favorite foam party, kept everyone entertained.





The furry friends stole the show.
 The foam party was the biggest hit with kids.
 Families came out to enjoy the sunshine.
 Cubas Cups and Treats were on hand for the four-legged adventurers.
 Food vendors, like Peter's Family Concessions, were a big hit.

Lynchburg Home & Garden Show - April 5-6





Photography by Chris Morris

April 5-6 saw the much anticipated return of the Lynchburg Home & Garden Show. Hundreds of attendees were able to get connected with local businesses and plan spring projects. Door prizes, giveaways, and educational seminars were highlights of the weekend. Lynchburg is grateful to have the local Home & Garden Show back and can not wait for the next one.





Dixie Millner and Tina "Tupperly" Miller
 Joshua Jackson played tunes for the attendees.
 Josh Hafner talks about the Oh Deer yard treatment for ticks and more.
 Various businesses were on hand for the event.