

Good News

exchange

NIKKI DAVIS

VINTAGE FINDS, TIMELESS PASSION

Her store blends memories,
affordability, and a whole lot
of heart in every aisle.

Shop
LOCAL

ISSUE 5 2025

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ISSUE 5 2025

**LETTER FROM
THE EDITOR:** 4
Shop Local

Good Living

**THE BOWLING GREEN-
WARREN COUNTY
HUMANE SOCIETY:
PROVIDING A
BETTER LIFE FOR
OUR ANIMAL
NEIGHBORS** 6
Thousands of local animals
find loving homes





Good Stories

- 8 TUNDE DUGANTSI:
A SWEET SLICE OF HOME**
From gingerbread beginnings to a national following, her cookie art brings Hungarian tradition to Kentucky
- 12 NIKKI DAVIS:
VINTAGE FINDS, TIMELESS PASSION**
Her store blends memories, affordability, and a whole lot of heart in every aisle
- 16 SOLEIL FERNANDEZ:
SPREADING SWEETNESS**
She tests the limits of taste buds one dessert at a time





LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Shop Local

Every receipt is a vote for dreams to stay open.

WHEN 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**

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The Bowling Green-Warren County Humane Society:

PROVIDING A BETTER LIFE FOR OUR ANIMAL NEIGHBORS

Thousands of local animals find loving homes.

By Sara Hook // Photography by Adin Parks



DOGS BARK happily, cats nonchalantly clean their fur, and rabbits and guinea pigs wiggle their noses in greeting. All these are common occurrences at the Bowling Green-Warren County Humane Society (BGWCHS), where staff and volunteers tend to the animals in their care. This has been the case for over 60 years, as the humane society works to better the lives of thousands of animals in Bowling Green, Warren County, and beyond.

BGWCHS has many programs that benefit the community, above and beyond what might be expected for a community of Warren County's size. Emily Cothran,

the community cat program manager, has worked with the shelter for five years and said the shelter is honored to be serving the way they are.

"We are a very large, very busy humane society, especially considering the surrounding area," Cothran said. "We're really active and really busy for the size of the community."

As an open-intake facility, the humane society will take in any animal brought by a Bowling Green, Warren County, or Edmonson County resident. The shelter will take animals from other surrounding communities if space allows, but every local animal is welcome — and they do not euthanize to free up space. Instead, through its

Rescue & Transport program, the humane society sends adoptable animals biweekly to partners in New York and Pennsylvania who have a high adoption rate.

"We're getting highly adoptable animals directly into homes quicker and then freeing up local space to continue to serve the local community," Cothran said. "It's so important to make sure that we can continue to do all the other things that we do."

Animals are also adopted right here in the community. In 2024, nearly 5,500 animals found homes through local adoptions. Each new animal companion is fully up to date on vaccinations and flea and tick control, and the shelter works hard to keep fees low.



Other programs include a community cat program that focuses on the health of free-roaming local cats, a spay and neuter clinic with low-cost public appointments, a shelter thrift store, and a working cat program that gives unfriendly outdoor cats a home in local sheds, barns, and warehouses. Those programs are constantly changing and growing to fit the needs of the county.

“Our animal shelter is very focused on serving the community and on improving animal welfare through our whole community, and when we improve animal welfare for a community, we actually improve the quality of life for our human neighbors as well,” Cothran said. “Animals are a very

meaningful part of a lot of people’s lives, and so we take that very seriously.”

Many others also take the humane society’s work seriously, volunteering money, time, or goods to keep the shelter running. When the shelter puts out a call for help after a storm, an influx of animals that need baths, or for any other need, Cothran said the help can be overwhelming. When supplies are low, people are incredibly generous, and other talented community members constantly make warm, cozy things for the animals’ comfort.

“We have incredible community support in a lot of ways,” Cothran said.

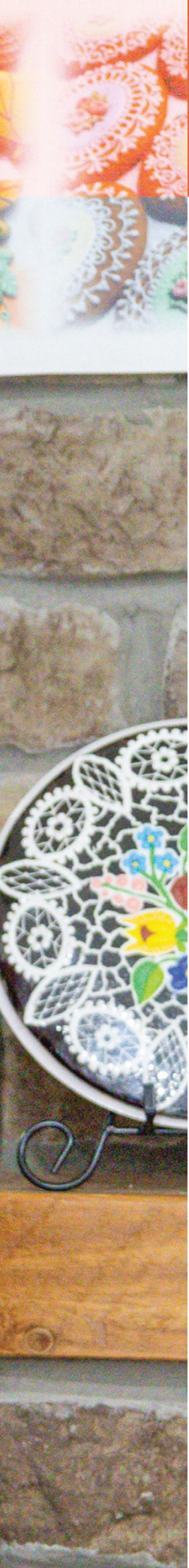
Besides donating or volunteering, there are two big ways to support the

shelter’s work: spaying or neutering pets and adopting local animals. BGWCHS works to make both actions as cheap and available as possible because they want to see a positive impact on every animal in the community.

“Animals come to us through a number of circumstances,” Cothran said. “Some of them are heartbreaking, some of them seem more routine, but all of these animals deserve the absolute best opportunity at a safe and loving home.” **GN**

Learn more about the programs at bgshelter-pets.com or visit the humane society in person at 1924 Louisville Rd.





Tunde Dugantsi: A SWEET SLICE OF HOME

From gingerbread beginnings to a national following, her cookie art brings Hungarian tradition to Kentucky.

By Haley Potter // Photography by Amanda Guy

WHEN YOU walk into Tunde Dugantsi's Sugar Arts Studio in Bowling Green, you're met with the sweet aroma of gingerbread and the kind of warmth that feels like home. For Dugantsi, decorating cookies isn't just a craft — it's a way to share her Hungarian heritage, one intricately piped cookie at a time.

"I moved to the U.S. in 2007," Dugantsi explained. "My husband got a job here, and we brought our three children along. At first, I was just a mom trying to keep busy and stay creative."

It wasn't until Christmas in 2012 that everything changed. "We made some gingerbread cookies with the kids. It was

so much fun," she said, smiling. "I never stopped after that."

What started as a holiday activity quickly grew into a full-blown passion project. "I wasn't a professional baker back in Hungary," Dugantsi mentioned with a giggle. "But I was always a crafty person. I realized there's no way you can be a mother, have a job, and still keep a hobby. So I decided — why not make my hobby my work?"

She began researching traditional Hungarian techniques and experimenting with recipes from home. "Gingerbread is a big part of Hungarian culture," she explained. "You see it at festivals,



fairs, weddings — it's more than just a cookie. It's a gift."

In fact, Dugantsi's cookies are so much more than sweet treats. With designs ranging from elegant florals to Kentucky Derby horses and designs for every holiday — they're miniature edible artworks.

Soon after she began posting her creations online, the requests started pouring in. "In the first year, someone from New Jersey called and said, 'All I want for my birthday is a class with you.' They flew me

out and paid for everything. That's when I realized — this is serious."

That one class turned into a career. Dugantsi has now taught all over the U.S. and has been invited to CookieCon — an international cookie art convention — 11 times. "People who took my classes kept calling the organizers, telling them to invite me," she remembered. "I wasn't part of the first round, but they added me later. And I've been invited back every time since."

Since 2018, she's had her own studio space in Bowling Green. "Before that, I taught at the library, cake supply stores, and even the farmers market," she said. "But it's so much nicer to have my own space. Everything's ready here."

Dugantsi offers both group and private classes, usually a couple of times a month at her studio at 1106 Adams St. in Bowling Green. "Classes are \$65 and last two to three hours," she said. "But if you bring your own group, I'll work with



you. And I promise I won't leave until you finish your cookies."

What draws people to her classes, beyond the artistry, is her warm and welcoming teaching style. "This has to be fun," she said. "If it's fun, you'll do it again. And if you do it again, you'll get better. But, if I yell at you, you'll never touch a piping bag again." Each class includes a gingerbread or dark chocolate cookie recipe, Hungarian in origin, except for the dark chocolate. "That one's just too good to pass up," she grinned. Students also receive icing and practice tips to take home. "The best way to practice? Start with graham crackers!"

Dugantsi's studio has become a destination for many visitors. A map on her wall proudly displays pins showing where her students have come from — everywhere from California to Florida. "I even have big pins where I've traveled to teach," she said. "Now I just need someone from Hawaii."

With over 100 cookie designs in her catalogue and the ability to 3D-print custom cutters, there's almost nothing she can't create. "If you don't find what you want, I'll work with you to make it happen," she promised.

Dugantsi's journey is a true testament to what can happen when you follow your passion — with a piping bag in hand and a little Hungarian sweetness in your heart. **GN**

"If it's fun, you'll do it again. And if you do it again, you'll get better."

TUNDE DUGANTSI





Nikki Davis: VINTAGE FINDS, TIMELESS PASSION

Her store blends memories, affordability,
and a whole lot of heart in every aisle.

By Rachel Smith // Photography by Amanda Guy

IN BOWLING Green, there's a business where nostalgia meets affordability.

Nikki Davis owns and operates the Consignment Corner, which opened in 2008 and has become a staple for locals looking for unique finds, hidden gems, and bargains.

Running this business is something that is rooted in Davis' blood and past.

"Once you do what we do, which we always call 'junkin', most junkers will tell you once it's in your blood, it's just something you like to do," Davis said.

It's a pastime she often shared with her mother.

"We used to go yard selling and go to auctions, and I just loved it. And I always

said I wanted to open the consignment store one day," she said.

Inside the store, shelves are neatly arranged with antiques, vintage clothing, home decor, and rare collectibles.

Her original space was only 2,500 square feet, and Davis quickly needed to expand. She acquired the building across the street, which offered an expansive 11,000 square feet.

"It was a big jump, and after a lot of talking and thoughts and prayers, it's like, either go big or go home," she said.

She purchased the 17,000-square-foot building she's in now in 2021. But right when she was set to open in December, a tornado hit that Saturday.

"We didn't get to open on time," Davis said. "It blew out a couple of windows. It blew out every piece of furniture. The winds were so crazy, a cushion got stuck up in the ceiling."

She closed for a week to clean up and reopened the following weekend.

"A lot of my vendors came in and helped us clean up everything," she said.

Despite the challenges, Davis has remained committed to creating a space where everyone feels welcome.

"I don't care if you've got 50 cents in your pocket or you want to spend \$500, you are able to come in this store and find something," she said.

The main level of the shop is all consignment, consisting mainly of furniture and home decor, but downstairs is what customers tend to call the "mini-mall," which hosts more than 50 vendors with booth spaces of their own.

"We have very good vendors who work their booths, keep everything looking good, and keep their prices low," she said.

Davis added that because Bowling Green is a college town where students attend Western Kentucky University, that clientele has become a large part of her business.

"You can tell when the kids are in town and when they're on break," she laughed.

She wants to make secondhand shopping an inclusive experience for everyone — whether they're collectors, bargain hunters, or simply looking to relive cherished memories.

"This reminds me of my childhood. There's stuff in here that when I was growing up, my parents had this, or my grandmother had it — it brings back memories and positive memories," Davis said.

She attributes her success and inspiration to her late mother.

"My mother was my inspiration, and I lost her a few years ago," she said, choking up. "But now my dad is a part of it, and that's really special."

She loves that the inventory is ever-changing, creating a different experience for visitors each time they enter the store.

"I love the thrill of the hunt, the thrill of the sale, and just finding stuff," Davis said. **GN**

Visit Consignment Corner at 1100 U.S. 31 W. Bypass in Bowling Green or follow them on Facebook.





"I love the thrill of
the hunt, the thrill
of the sale, and just
finding stuff."

NIKKI DAVIS



Outside the Historic RailPark, Soleil Fernandez stands with pride — a local entrepreneur building sweet memories in Bowling Green, one treat at a time.



Soleil Fernandez: SPREADING SWEETNESS

She tests the limits of taste buds one dessert at a time.

By Katlyn Olsen // Photography by Adin Parks

IN A community like Bowling Green, Kentucky, everyone has the chance to make their business dreams a reality. With hard work, determination, and the support from a community that truly understands the value of small businesses, any person has an exciting opportunity. This could not be more true for Soleil Fernandez, owner of Bundts-N-Stuff.

For three years, Fernandez dutifully worked as a caregiver for her ill mother until she sadly died. Stricken with grief and general uncertainty for the future, she took time for herself to carefully consider what would be the next step in her life. Out of

her tragedy came a wonderful new opportunity. With a passion for baking and a desire to be her own boss, Bundts-N-Stuff was created. Fortunately for Fernandez, her hard work and confidence in her vision paid off, and the community loved what she had to offer.

For any small business, the factor of staying relevant with larger companies in the market is always a matter to reflect on. However, for Fernandez, the solution was simple: give the customers something new — that they may not find through a larger competitor — for a fraction of the price. On top of the products you would expect to

see from a sweets shop, Bundts-N-Stuff offers a wide variety of unique candy arrangements. These arrangements — especially the flower arrangements — have become her favorite treats to make and sell. Fernandez's unique approach has truly proved successful. Whenever customers see her beautiful handcrafted creations, they often tell her, "Wow, I've never seen anything like this before." This has led to her business being a stand-out within her community.

Today, Fernandez distributes her treats at farmers markets, elementary schools, community events, and through the help of other brick-and-mortar businesses who have welcomed her products into their stores. With around 200 customers, almost all of which are repeat, it is safe to say that Bundts-N-Stuff has captured the hearts of those in the community. Because of that same community, Fernandez's success has soared to all new heights. The customers who understand the importance of small businesses and the fellow business owners who never fail to show their support or lend a helping hand have made all the difference for Fernandez and her business.

When she's not in the kitchen, Fernandez spends her time researching what new desserts she can try, testing her products, and bolstering her social media. As of now, Bundts-N-Stuff operates as an in-home bakery; however, in the future, Fernandez dreams of owning her own brick-and-mortar shop. With her inspiring passion and drive, there is no doubt that the future for Bundts-N-Stuff is bright. **GN**

For your next sweet treat, consider supporting Bowling Green's community and small businesses by visiting Bundts-N-Stuff. Their extensive menu is sure to impress!



▲ Soleil Fernandez holds one of her signature candy leis — a sweet creation from Bundts-N-Stuff that has Bowling Green smiling.



▲ With a candy pop in one hand and a whisk in the other, Soleil Fernandez showcases the tools behind Bundts-N-Stuff.



▲ Soleil Fernandez stands proudly in front of Bowling Green's iconic BGKY sign.



▲ A closer look at one of Soleil Fernandez's crowd-favorite creations — a jumbo candy pop packed with nostalgic sweets, handcrafted with love and a sprinkle of fun.

"Support small businesses. It's what we need now. It's the heart of the community."

SOLEIL FERNANDEZ