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ISSUE 7 2025

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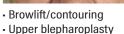


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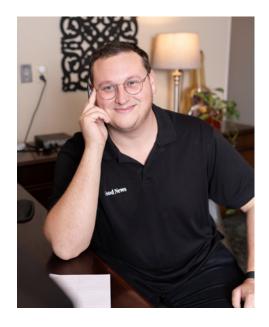
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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Land of the Brave

Celebrating veterans who watch over us from sea to shining sea.

F YOU'VE ever seen a fighter jet cut across the sky, you know what powerful looks like. You know what freedom sounds like. That roar overhead reminds us that we live in a country where people put their lives on the line so the rest of us can live without fear. They fly above land and sea, from coast to coast, from sea to shining sea, watching over the red, white, and blue.

This issue of Good News is dedicated to the brave — the ones who stepped forward when they didn't have to. Who negotiated peace with strength. Who shook hands with people they never met and still called them "brother." Who boarded boats and planes and tanks and flew into danger because protection is a calling of duty.

We salute our veterans not just for what they did but for what they made possible. Civility. Progress. A world where we can disagree and still shake hands at the end of the day. That handshake is not weakness. It's quite the opposite.

Independence isn't handed out. It's fought for. And the people who have worn the uniform, our veterans, carry that story everywhere they go. They are the reason the Stars and Stripes still wave. They are the reason we can gather around dinner tables, build businesses, fall in love, and sleep through the night without fear of bombs above or boots at the door.

Sometimes, honoring them means telling their stories. Sometimes it means listening. And sometimes it's as simple as standing still, hand on heart, letting the wind catch the flag on a clear day, and knowing you are lucky to live here.

This is the Land of the Brave. GN

From our publishing partner



"I am beyond grateful for the opportunity and the Lord's confirmation to bring Good News to Lebanon. As the publisher I've learned that Lebanon cares about it's people! If you feel your business would benefit from exposure to a positive audience, please feel free to call or text the number below."

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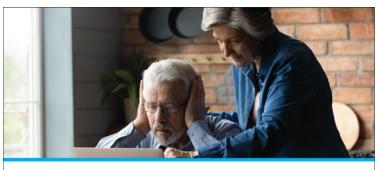








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James Briggs

LEADERSHIP in ACTION

Music and service make life better day by day.

By Sara Hook // Photography by Robin Holcomb

IGHTS FLASH across the stage, lighting up three guitarists as they bring to life the energy of '90s rock. Behind them, at the drum set, sits James Briggs, providing the rhythm and drive that helps make The Mixtape Allstars a premium rock band. Briggs is not just a drummer — like the rest of The Mixtape Allstars, he is a dad, but he is also a retired staff sergeant and a veteran of the United States Airborne Infantry.

Briggs joined the Army right out of high school and ultimately spent 16 years in active duty, serving in Iraq, Afghanistan, Panama, Egypt, and many other places across the United States and the world. It was an experience that changed his life for the better. He didn't have a father growing up or a steady background, and Briggs said that the military's core values helped him become a good man and a good leader.

"[I] had to learn at a young age to take care of myself [and] be very independent, so there were a lot of things that I was doing already before I came in that the Army just fine-tuned," Briggs said. "[The military] gave me those values to lean on and formed me to be the man that I ended up being. So it would've been a completely different story had I not joined the Army."

The values went under the acronym LDRSHIP: loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage. They led Briggs through his time as a soldier, and continued to lead him as he began taking on responsibilities and ranking.

"I spent [the] majority of my career as a leader, more than I was a soldier," Briggs said. "I looked forward to it; I was really good at it."





As difficult as it is transitioning from combat back to regular life, doing something you love to do is therapy every day. Whatever it is, just take part in it a little bit each day, doing something you love to do.

- James Briggs

"BRIGGS" stitched above the flag and airborne insignia captures more than a name — it reflects a life of sacrifice and dedication.



A James Briggs stands tall at the Lebanon veterans memorial, a local hero still giving back every day.

He held squad leader and section sergeant positions, and was in charge of the ammo section for an entire battalion — a responsibility usually reserved for sergeants two ranks above his own rank at the time.

Through that role and others, Briggs remained a true leader. He took care of his soldiers first, and he took his job seriously. While he was traveling, Briggs also took the time to learn about and appreciate the cultures he was around.

"I told my mom about it, and she was like, 'Nobody in our family will ever go to Egypt, James — enjoy it," Briggs said. "So I did. Everywhere I went, when I was in the service, I always took it all in, I really engaged with people."

In May 2012, however, Briggs' time in the military came to a sudden end. Eight months into a deployment, he was medevaced out of Afghanistan and to Brooke Army Medical Center. After a year

in the Warrior Transition Battalion, he was medically discharged because of his injuries and post-traumatic stress disorder. It may not have been what he wanted, but Briggs said it ended up being a good thing.

"I was getting so burnt out," Briggs said. "So I look at it like a blessing. Things could have [gone] a lot differently had I stayed in."

The transition into civilian life was difficult and full of depression and isolation. Throughout it all, Briggs said he kept seeing veterans serving around Lebanon. They invited him to the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Briggs eventually got involved. The community and the work gave him a sense of purpose and a way out of isolation.

Since those first few years, many things have changed. The birth of Briggs' daughter cut back what he was able to do, but he still volunteers with the veteran community center's ride service, driving veterans to and from appointments.

"It's my way of still giving back and helping the community out," Briggs said. "I always feel good when I'm able to help out another veteran."

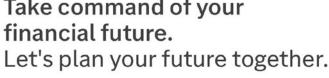
Briggs also found purpose and joy in music with The Mixtape Allstars. He'd been in bands his whole life, from playing percussion in high school to participating in a Battle of the Bands in Seoul, Korea. Answering the online ad was a step out of his comfort zone, but he said playing music helps him tremendously, and doing similar things can help anyone struggling, whether a veteran or not.

"As difficult as it is transitioning from combat back to regular life, doing something you love to do is therapy every day," Briggs said. "Whatever it is, just take part in it a little bit each day, doing something you love to do." GN











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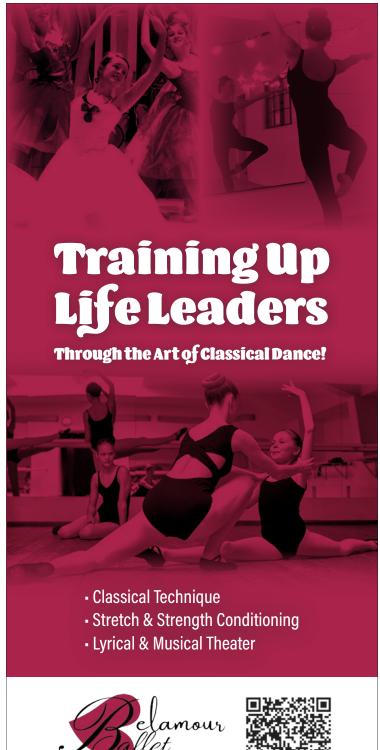






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1411 W Main St., Suite D, Lebanon, TN 37087 (615) 684-6211 www.thebellaballerina.com Sheriff Terry Ashe

A lifetime of GRIT, JUSTICE, AND SERVICE

Wilson County's longest-serving sheriff reflects on a fearless career and a dream fulfilled from Vietnam battlefields to cleaning up Bluebird Road.

By Rachael Smith // Photography by Robin Holcomb



A statue of soldiers and a folded flag reflect Terry Ashe's dual devotion to military brotherhood and local justice.

HE FLOWERS weren't just dead — they were a message.

Wilting in a hospital vase after his third lightning strike, Sheriff Terry Ashe stared at the bouquet, sent anonymously by enemies who knew he was vulnerable.

The sheriff had just shut down a major motorcycle gang's rally that would've brought drugs and violence into Wilson County, and now they wanted him gone.

A \$50,000 contract was out on his life, but Ashe, a Vietnam veteran and lifelong lawman, didn't back down then.

And he wasn't about to start now.

Now at 76 years old, Ashe has spent nearly 51 years in law enforcement, not counting military service.

Ashe grew up on a farm outside of Lebanon. His father, a decorated World War II Marine, was critically injured when Ashe was just 10 years old, spending the next 31 years in a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) hospital.

Ashe's family struggled, losing their farm and moving into town, where he delivered newspapers.





Around this time, a close family friend and local sheriff made a lasting impact on his life.

"He used to come over and visit, and I was just enamored by his badge and his gun," Ashe said. "He told me, 'You'll be sheriff someday,' and gave me a little tin badge. I wish I still had it."

Tragically, that same sheriff was killed in the line of duty shortly after.

That dream was put on hold when Ashe was drafted into the Army during the Vietnam War. He served as a paratrooper and reconnaissance scout with the 101st Airborne. He earned numerous commendations, including the Bronze Star, three Purple Hearts, and the Cross of Gallantry.

"Vietnam changed me forever," he said. "Everybody who went over there left a part of themselves behind."

His military experience prepared him for the life of a lawman.

"The leadership skills, the instincts, those carried into law enforcement," he said. "I truly believe God had His hand on my shoulder the whole time."

Back home, Ashe rose quickly through the ranks.

He began as a deputy sheriff in 1972, became a sergeant, then chief deputy, and later served as chief of detectives with the Lebanon Police Department.

In 1982, he was elected Wilson County sheriff, an office he held for an unprecedented eight consecutive terms.

Throughout his career, Ashe worked on high-profile cases and made tough decisions.

He helped take down the notorious "Southside Rapist," investigated the Melrose murders and later solved a 40-year-old cold case involving the murder of a childhood friend's brother. This investigation culminated in an exhumation and forensic analysis at the University of Tennessee's body farm.

But his boldest campaign may have been his effort to "clean up" Bluebird Road, once a haven for drugs, gambling, and prostitution.

"What I thought would take six months took four years," he said. "It wasn't easy and there were attempts on my life, but I made a promise to the people, and I kept it."

One of the most notorious gangs even placed a \$50,000 contract on Ashe's life in the 1980s; those who sent him the dead flowers in the hospital after he'd been struck by lightning.

"We didn't back down," he said.

Incredibly, lightning struck Ashe not once, but three times. Once at the age of 8 and twice on the same day in 1989 while moving hay.

"After that, nobody wanted to stand near me in a storm," he joked.

He spent several days in the hospital with burns and fractures, but soon returned to work.

"I guess the Lord wasn't finished with me." For Ashe, the rewards of service came not from medals or headlines, but from the people.

"I've had inmates stop me in the store to thank me for treating them with respect. Families I helped thank me for bringing them justice. That's all the reward I need," he said.

Even in retirement, Ashe continues to serve on multiple county boards and committees. He's written a memoir, "Ashes of Bluebird," and is working on a second book, "Daylight Moon," about his Vietnam experience.

When asked what advice he'd give his younger self, Ashe said: "Remember how you got here. Stay close to your faith. Do the right thing when nobody's looking. And spend more time with your family."

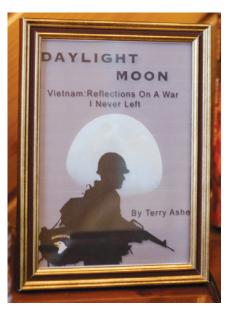
What does he hope his legacy will be?

"I hope they say I was kind, that I was devoted to serving others, that I could be trusted, and that I gave it everything I had." GN

To purchase "Ashes of Bluebird Road" or to learn more about Terry Ashe, visit ashesofbluebird.com



A Terry Ashe and his wife stand side by side on their front porch, a testament to enduring partnership through war, law enforcement, and community service.



Terry Ashe's second memoir, "Daylight Moon", offers an unflinching reflection on the emotional weight of war that never truly ended.



This framed collection traces Terry Ashe's evolution from deputy to Wilson County's longest-serving sheriff.

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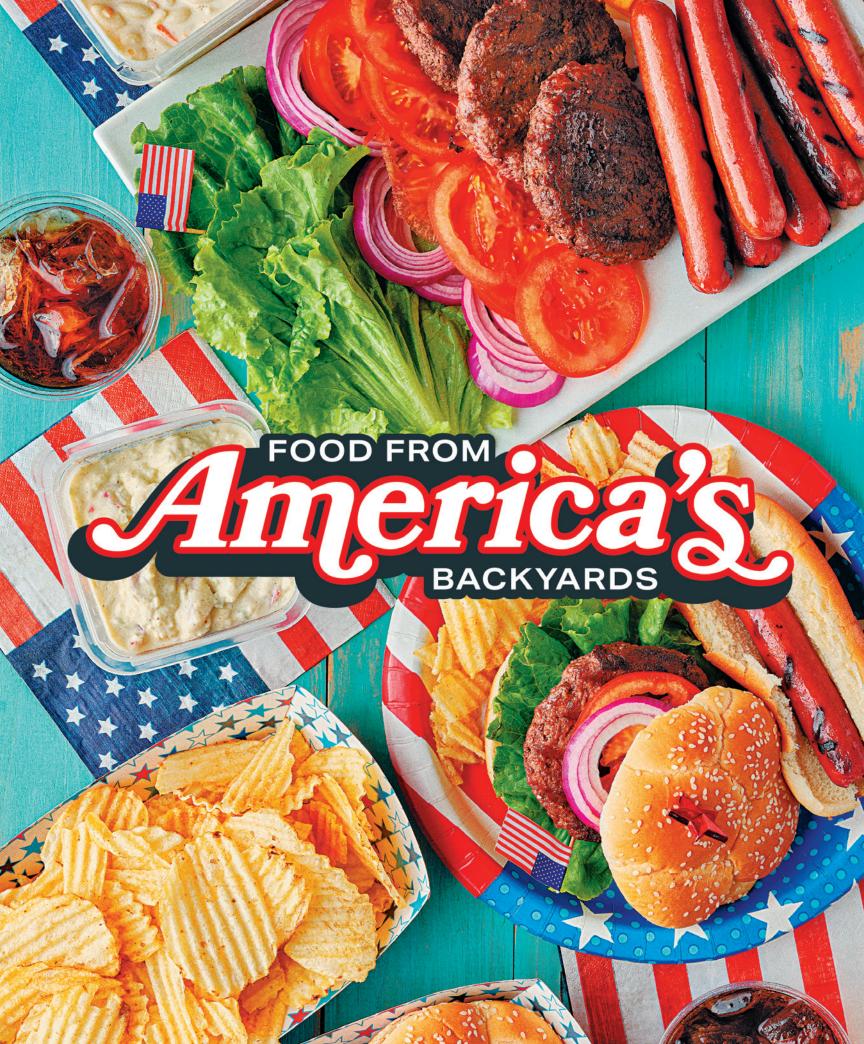














Savor Summer's

Easy Living

Family and friends sweeten the season.

S SUMMER heats up, so do our grills and smokers, giving our kitchens a well-deserved break. Casual worknight dinners, weekend celebrations, and holiday parties bring together families for good food and, sometimes, fireworks.

Plates filled with barbecue, burgers, and dogs, joined by potato salad, coleslaw, chips, and dips, are balanced as we gather in lawn chairs or sit by the pool. Homemade ice cream and cookies sweeten the occasion.

Summer living — and its foods — are easy! GN



Submitted by Rosalind Lindsey

1 can tomato soup
1 t. Worcestershire sauce
1 t. garlic powder
1/4 t. dried thyme leaves, crushed
2 t. packed brown sugar
2 t. lemon juice
2 t. vegetable oil
11/2 lbs. boneless beef sirloin steak, cut 3/4" thick

In a large bowl, mix soup, sugar, lemon juice, oil, Worcestershire, garlic and thyme. Brush mixture on both sides of steak. Place steak on hot grill and cook until golden brown and slightly charred. Turn steak over and continue to cook until desired level of doneness. Bring remaining soup mixture to a boil and serve with steak.

Roasted Corn on the Cob

Submitted by Betty Pirtle

8 ears fresh corn in husks 1/3 c. Italian dressing 2 1/2 T. water 1T. chili powder 1/8 t. ground red pepper

Carefully peel back husks, exposing corn. Leave husks attached. Remove and discard silks. Combine Italian dressing, water, chili powder, and red pepper in a small mixing bowl. Stir well and brush over corn. Return husk to original position and tie the tips with wire twist-ties. Grill corn over medium hot coals for 30 minutes or until the corn is tender. Turn corn every 5 minutes.

New York Push Cart Hot Dog Onion Sauce

Submitted by Emma Hardin

2T. vegetable oil 2 md. onions, sliced ¼ inch slices 1/4 c. ketchup pinch of ground cinnamon 1/8 t. chili powder dash of hot pepper sauce dash of salt 1/2 c. water

In a medium skillet, heat vegetable oil over medium heat. Add onion slices and saute for 7 minutes or until golden brown. Add ketchup, cinnamon, chili powder, hot pepper sauce, and salt. Pour in water, stir, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, for about 10 minutes. Serve over hot dogs.

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





AFresh Take on a Local Favorite

Warm hospitality and bold flavor make this new spot a welcome addition to the neighborhood.

UR FAMILY really loves Mexican cuisine, so we were disappointed when one of our favorites, Los Compadres, closed. It did not take long before Casa Azul opened in its place.

Shortly after they opened, we stopped in for lunch. The decor is basically the same as the previous establishment, with traditional Mexican artwork and pops of color throughout. It has a casual and comfortable vibe.

From the moment we walked in, the atmosphere felt inviting and relaxed. The service, the setting, and the pace of the meal made the experience feel effortless — just one of those outings where everything clicks.

Our server, Aban, was great. He was super friendly and attentive and made sure we had everything we needed. He cared that we had a good experience, which made a big difference.

We started with chips, salsa, and queso, which is always a good test of any Mexican restaurant. The chips were warm and crispy, the salsa had a fresh, zesty flavor, and the queso was smooth and creamy.

I should mention that my go-to drink order is always sweet tea — or half-sweet, half-unsweet if I'm pretending to cut back on sugar. I am a tea snob, and I liked their tea. My husband says that it is high praise coming from me.





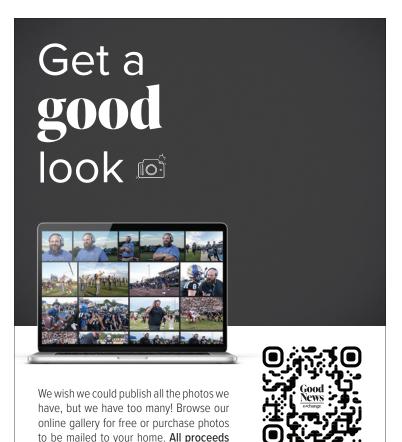






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ZABRINA SEAY ON BOTH SIDES OF THE DESK

A simple conversation could change a veteran's life.

By Sara Hook // Photography by Steve Zak







N ONE side of the desk, there could be a veteran, their spouse, their widow, or their children. ZaBrina Seay cares for them all. As director of the Wilson County Veterans Service Office, Seay works every day to ensure veterans and their families receive the support they need.

Seav said her passion for the work stemmed from her own time in the military and her own experience sitting on the other side of that same desk.

"Someone took great care of me when I retired, and now I have the opportunity to repay that favor," Seay said. "We literally change the lives of some people. They can go from not being able to afford their food, rent, or medicine all at the same time to actually living — living and thriving."

Seay joined the military after graduating from college, following the footsteps of several of her family members. Her father, brother, aunt, and uncle all served their



"SOMEONE TOOK **GREAT CARE OF ME** WHEN I RETIRED, AND NOW I HAVE THE **OPPORTUNITY TO** REPAY THAT FAVOR."

ZABRINA SEAY





country as well. While in the military, Seay said, she added others to her list of 'family.'

"I have friends now, that I consider family, that I met from day one, and we're still together," Seay said.

She retired as a lieutenant colonel after 20 years of service, having commanded at Fort Benning and Fort Campbell. During her retirement process, she went through the same process that she takes people through now, though she did not understand at the time how important it was.

"I had no idea the gravity of what was happening at that point," Seay said. "All I know is that I walked away with my 100%, and now I know what that person did for me."

It's a complicated system, where one word mentioned or forgotten could be the difference between getting a service and being denied. Seay said it is easier to make the necessary connections since she has been in her client's position.

"It doesn't matter how old or how young they are, what sex, what race, what branch of service, or any of that," Seay said. "We all speak a common language, so it's easier to build that rapport. It's easier to build that trust with them."

That trust has led her to hear stories shared with no one else, to comfort widows who never believed their husbands' deaths would be resolved, and to uncover information that secured a Marine hundreds of thousands of dollars in overdue pay.

"It's very fulfilling and humbling to be able to care for not only ... (I call us the 'less than one percenters') out there, but their family members," Seay said. "It's heartwarming to be able to do that." As director, Seay started the No Vet Left Behind program. Funded entirely by donations, No Vet Left Behind has helped veterans and their dependents pay rent, pay bills, and buy medicine, among other things. Her work there and in the Veterans Service Office has helped people across Wilson County get back on their feet and back to thriving in the community.

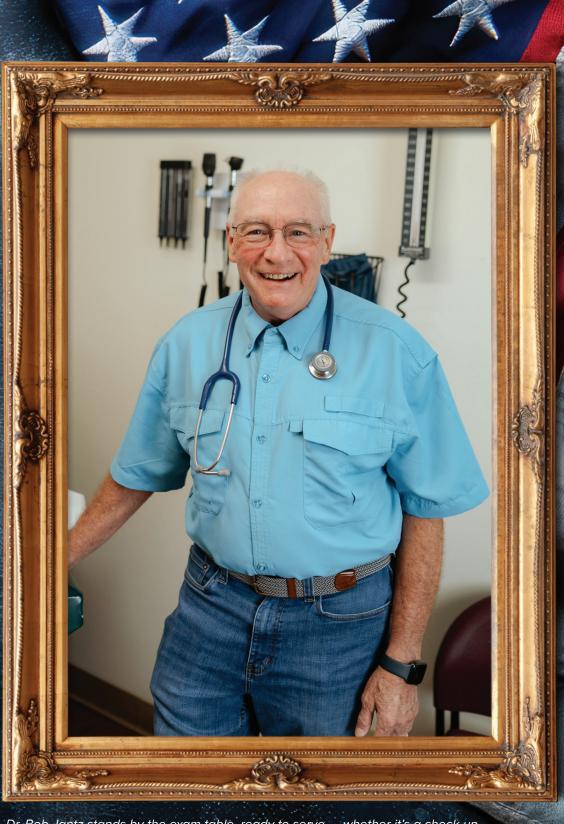
"We're moving and shaping," Seay said.
"We are willing to go the distance with each and every veteran and their family members to get them what they deserve." GN

For more information, visit Wilson County Veterans Services at 304 E. Main St., wilsoncountytn.gov/202/Veterans-Services, or call (615) 444-2460.



"WE ARE WILLING TO GO THE DISTANCE WITH EACH AND EVERY VETERAN AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS TO GET THEM WHAT THEY DESERVE."

ZABRINA SEAY



Dr. Bob Jantz stands by the exam table, ready to serve — whether it's a check-up in Tennessee or a mission across the world.

BOB JANTZ

HEALING HEARTS ACROSS CONTINENTS

A Lebanon doctor shares medical care and the Gospel with hundreds in Romania each year.

By Gabriel Grant Huff // Photography by Robin Holcomb







Promise plants the seed for another to bloom. In a small Romanian village around 1999, a young boy didn't expect much from the visiting missionaries. He had cut his arm on a piece of glass and came to see a missionary doctor for help. The doctor cleaned the wound and promised to return in a few days to check on him. To the boy's surprise, the doctor returned as promised to change the bandage. Within minutes, about 30 people gathered at the boy's home, and the doctor turned to his pastor friend and said, "Start preaching."

The event became one of many impressions to convince the Lebanon man to sacrifice the next 28 years.

A Prickling Heart

Bob Jantz grew up to serve. With a medical degree from Temple University Medical School and residency at St. Vincent Hospital in Indianapolis, the Pennsylvania native took his talents to Lebanon in 1988, where he opened his own private practice in 1993. The clinic provides patient-centered care focusing on wellness and prevention. Patients will find treatments for common illnesses and more complex problems, including diabetes management and hypertension. Conveniently, Jantz also offers minor surgical procedures in the office.

Jantz lives with his wife, Roni, and their two cats, Annie and Sandy. He has two grown children and six grandchildren.



Whether walking the halls or working side by side, Bob and Roni Jantz bring care and kindness to everyone who walks through their days.

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BOB JANTZ

He finds purpose in serving the people of Wilson County. His generosity, however, reaches far beyond county lines — stretching all the way to Romania, where a new world opened to him and continues to shape his journey.

The first trip came in 1998 after hearing a guest pastor, Dr. Pierce Dodson, encourage his congregation to join a mission trip sometime in life. Despite trying, Jantz could not ignore the call to action prickling in his soul.

In June 1998, he found himself with the Romanian-American Mission (RAM) in Bucharest, putting away the fear of leaving the familiarity and safety of his homeland. While riding in a bus toward the city, he surveyed the land and could not help but notice the poverty and dysfunction in the area. He then cried.

"That's when the Holy Spirit came over me," Jantz recalled. "I was crying, and He just told me, 'This is your mission place.' I never had that happen before." Two weeks of providing medical assistance and sharing the Gospel came and went, but Jantz's life and perspective of the world changed forever. Subsequent trips followed.

Medication for the soul

During the first year, Jantz made a key friend in his driver, Octavian Bozga, who began offering his own Bucharest home to Jantz as a place to stay. Seeking more freedom, Jantz left RAM and started organizing his own visits to Romania around 2002, partnering with Bozga.

Over the years, they bought a building and converted it into Abraham's Rest, a mission house to host missionaries from around the world. The place later transformed into a day care, producing rent funds that supported Jantz's mission. They also started a medical clinic in Bucharest named "Clinica Medcross," which has since closed.

He continually trains Romanian students in medical care, passing down his

knowledge to them as they serve as his translators in the field. The doctor offers medical screenings, minor surgeries, medications, hygiene products, and more for the needy while sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

"What I've done over the years is use my doctoring skills as a way to attract people to hear the Gospel," Jantz said.

The doctor prioritized involving his wife in the trips as well. His two children participated during the early years of his mission work. Now, his team helps about 900 people a year.

Some of Jantz's favorite moments include the day in 2021 when a nurse, her child, and her mother all came to believe in Christ. That same day, the clinic was unusually quiet — most people were staying away after a scam stirred fear and suspicion in the community. However, an hour after a call for prayer back to Joy Church in Tennessee, about 50-60 patients arrived!

None of this work could have occurred if Jantz had allowed fear to overcome him back in 1998 and ignored the voice of his heart. Many people now benefit from the selfless decision.

"Sometimes you have to do it afraid, and that's what I did." GN

Those wishing to support Bob and Roni Jantz's mission can make checks payable to Medcross Inc., a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization. All donors will receive a letter for tax deduction purposes.

Mailing Address: 706 Cadet Ct. Lebanon, TN 37087



◆ A feature wall in Bob Jantz's clinic reminds visitors of his mission, with the verse, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation," setting the tone for a life of service.



In a corner of the clinic, Bob and Roni Jantz share a cheerful moment beneath the words, "A cheerful heart is good medicine," reflecting both their faith and their warmth.

DR. PAUL NAWIESNIAK

A MISSION RENEWED

Paul and Elaine Nawiesniak turned their values — and their clinic — into a lifeline for veterans.

By Jeriah Brumfield // Photography by Steve Zak







HERE ARE no limits to what you can achieve, especially when your purpose is bigger than yourself. For Paul Nawiesniak, that purpose — his "why" — has always been veterans. The people who raised their right hand and answered the call, only to return to a system that sometimes forgets them. For Nawiesniak, a retired Air Force dentist who spent 28 years in uniform, forgetting is not an option.

Nawiesniak was born into a blue-collar family in Illinois. He had no road map for success, but he did have determination. After graduating from dental school in the early 1980s, interest rates hovered near 18%, and with no generational wealth or collateral, banks wouldn't help him.

He remembers walking out of one interview demoralized, until a professor pulled him aside.

"Do you have anything against the military?" the mentor asked.

Nawiesniak didn't. He'd briefly worked with the Army ROTC during undergrad. The professor encouraged him to join a little-known program led by a founder of the Academy of General Dentistry, and that recommendation changed everything.

In 1986, Nawiesniak joined the Air Force. Nearly three decades of learning, advancing, leading, and serving followed, from small remote bases to the Pentagon. Along the way, he completed a rare two-year residency, becoming board-certified and designated as a "comprehensive care" dentist. That training



Military challenge coins are presented by commanders, unit leaders, or other individuals in positions of authority to recognize service, achievements, or participation in specific events. These coins were presented to Paul during various times during his career.

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COMMUNITY."

DR. PAUL NAWIESNIAK







This flag was flown in Patriot Dental's honor on a mission over Afghanistan as a thank you to the team for providing dental care to an Air National Guard member that made him medically cleared to be deployed for this mission.

empowered him to treat complex cases, often in places where referral wasn't an option.

"I really enjoyed that practice," he said. "It increased the spectrum of patients I could treat and deepened the complexity of care I could provide."

He was a flight commander, a battle planner, and a logistician. He deployed on humanitarian missions across the Caribbean. He designed clinics, ran top-ranked facilities, and eventually retired from The Pentagon, but none of it ever eclipsed his heart for people.

After retiring, Nawiesniak thought life might slow down. But it didn't. In 2014, he purchased and later built his own dental practice, Patriot Dental. True to its name, the practice's mission was trust and dignity. It was a chance to give veterans what they deserved — access, understanding, and quality care.

Through a partnership with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Community Care program, they can make that mission a reality for disabled veterans. Patients must be referred through the VA, but once they

are, they find a team committed to honoring their service with the care they deserve.

"We were approached by Community Care [VA initiative] and they said that the dental clinics available nationally and in Murfreesboro are woefully understaffed," said Elaine Nawiesniak, Paul's wife and the former office manager.

"They did not have a dental hygienist at the time. They were looking for community partners to help the veterans get the care they needed. We looked into it, and it aligned with who we are and our core values. And being a veteran family, we learned to take care of our own as much as possible."

And they have. Through their partnership with the VA, Patriot Dental now provides critical dental care to disabled veterans, many of whom have waited years for services they desperately need.

"It's a bond," said Paul. "And just because you're no longer wearing a uniform, it doesn't mean that you don't still have that community and, to a certain point, that reliance on each other. The military learns to take care of itself."

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DR. PAUL NAWIESNIAK

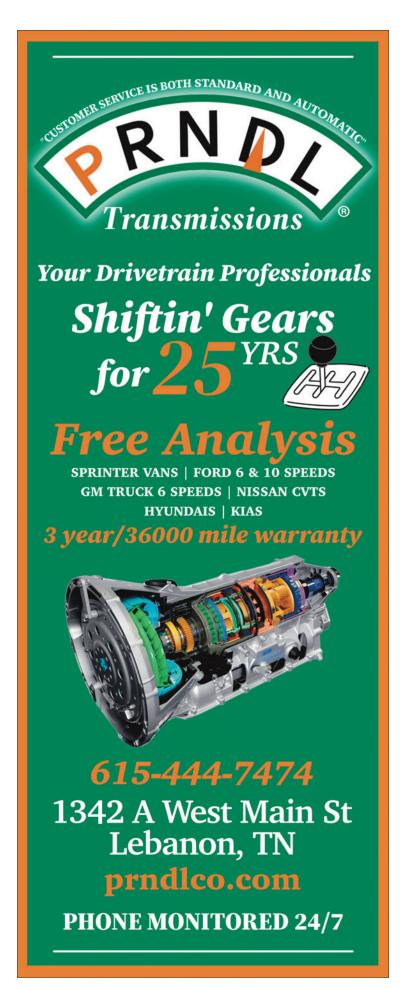
He's seen the tears when a veteran sees their smile restored for the first time in decades. He's heard their stories — some visible, some hidden. He reminds his team that every veteran is someone's son or daughter and that behind many of their smiles are wounds we cannot see.

"The neat thing about this particular area is that Tennessee has a lot of veterans who stepped up when the country called, and I think they deserve the benefits they're entitled to."

Paul understands that service doesn't stop with retirement. For him and Elaine, it simply took on a new shape. These days, it means showing up, listening well, and making sure the people who gave so much aren't left behind.

The change you can create is limitless, especially when love of country meets love of people. **GN**

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