

WINK

Magazine

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The Boys are Still in Town

The Blossom Shop

INSIDE:

• THE BUNDT SHOPPE:
Home is Where the Heart is

• FOR THE LOVE OF SOPHIE:
Moyers staff helps Golden find a match

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Home is where the heart is

THE BUNDT SHOPPE

BY GLENNA HOWINGTON
WINK ASSISTANT EDITOR

She took a chance on opening a home-based business – The Bundt Shoppe – and that turned out to be a good instinct for Lindsey Gomez. The business will mark its one-year anniversary in April.

“I’ve been an entrepreneur; it’s in my family blood,” Lindsay explained. “So the business part is not new, but the baking part is.”

See **BUNDT** page 6

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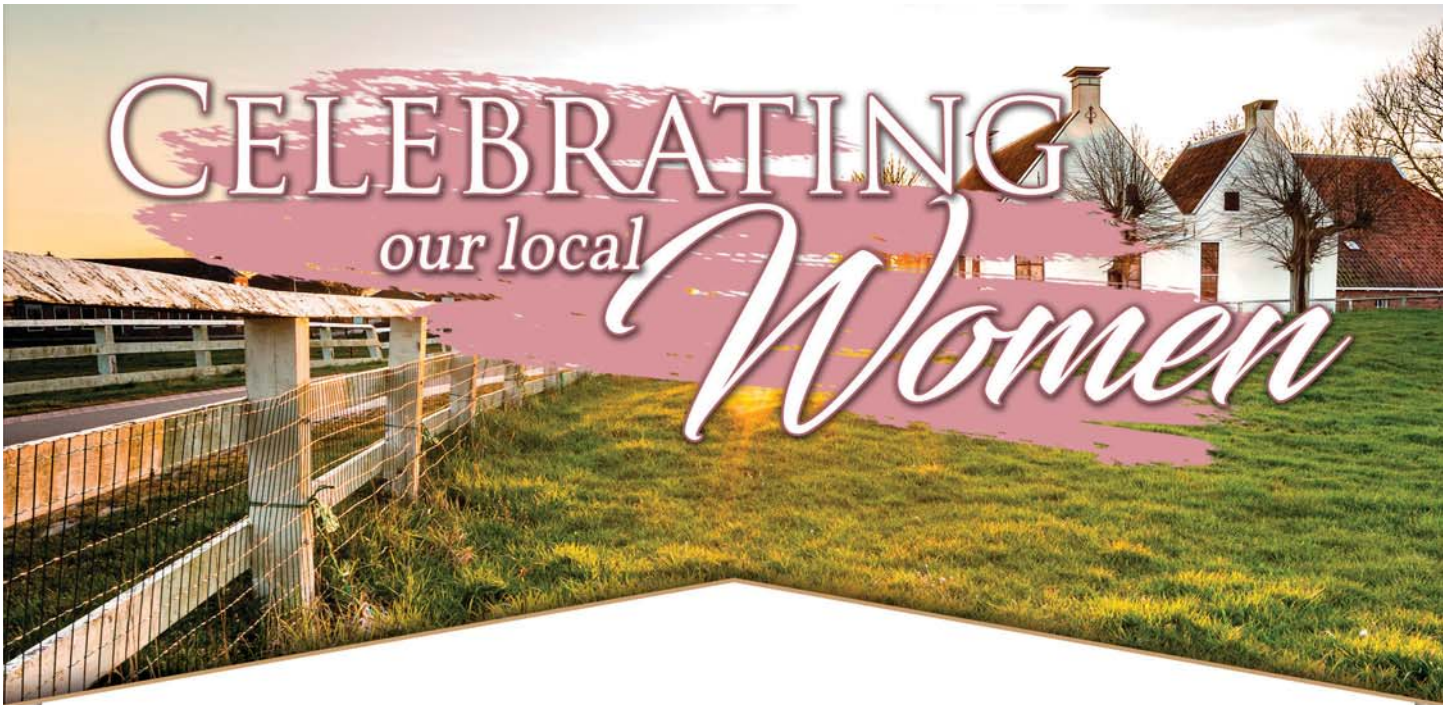
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Bundt

(Continued from page 3)

I've always loved to be in the kitchen cooking. Pinterest sparked my interest in Bundt cakes."

Bundt pans are aesthetically pleasing; it has been a reoccurring home décor trend to display the traditional sized pans in kitchens, and the miniature versions are just as detailed.

"The pans I found were beautiful," Lindsay said, "And the great thing about a Bundt cake is that the pan does the decorating."

"After that, I just started experimenting with different recipes that I found for cake. I had a few failures. I had to figure out what to change. Baking is a science, you have to figure out what is wrong. I settled on a few different flavors."

Once she developed the menu, Lindsay put the word out on social media.

She developed a Facebook page to drum up interest



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about the upcoming launch of The Bundt Shoppe.

“Before I launched, friends shared it and people were apparently excited about Bundt cakes in Morristown,” Lindsay said.

She works around the care of her daughters – all four of them! She and husband, Antonio, have an active home; the girls are ages 9,8,7 and 4.

“I do mostly pre-order; so anytime someone would like to place an order, they can message me what flavors and decide on a pickup time. Occasionally, I will just bake some and post that I have extras and



folks can tell me they want them.”

Lindsay works normal business hours: “I’m not open 24/7!” she said.

The initial investment was not financially overwhelming.

“Most of the items I already had in my kitchen,

except for the miniature pans and the packaging. Things like bowls and mixers, I had. I started out with small amounts of supplies,” she said.

Starting out small was a good idea for Lindsay’s particular situation; the growth of the business has been steady.

“I’m happy right now with the way things are going,” she said. “I think it would be interesting to offer different flavors, even sizes, and expand the types of bakery items. I would consider a brick and mortar location someday. I’m kind of seeing where it goes. I think it’s been

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helpful to not rush the process and not put a limit on what it can be.”

Being active on social media has allowed her to become a part of a growing local network of home-based entrepreneurs, many of whom actively support their fellow business owners.

“I’ve been able to message them as I was learning the process and ask things like ‘Why is this receipt not turning out? What kind of mixture do you use?’ They share where they get their supplies for boxes and which sources for recipes are good,” Lindsay said.

Not limited to information, the fellow entrepreneurs also offer encouragement, which is a valuable commodity to someone who works alone.

“They’ve absolutely been encouraging,” Lindsay said. “They’ll comment, ‘Hey, your pictures look amazing. They’ve shared my Facebook post on their personal pages.’”

For Valentine’s Day, Lindsay will offer chocolate Bundt cakes with strawberry glaze – “It’s like a reverse chocolate covered strawberry,” she said.

Another popular cake, the red velvet, will be offered as well. And her regular menu is posted on her Facebook page. Once an order is requested via FB messenger, she will send a payment link. Pickups are normally scheduled at a park on the West end of Morristown.

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Special to Wink Magazine

Sophie joined by her brothers Mason (left) and Hamilton.

For the Love of SOPHIE

Moyers staff helps Golden find a match

BY GLENNA HOWINGTON
WINK ASSISTANT EDITOR

The term ‘rescue’ can be a misnomer. For example, the ‘rescue’ may well turn out to be the ‘rescuer,’ when all the facts are laid out.

Just ask Sophie.

The sweet-tempered Golden retriever had a bit of bad luck at the end of April, 2022. She had been surrendered by her owner, presumably an older individual who was no longer able to take care of her.

In hindsight, she was surrendered to a proverbial haven for furry four-legged types in need of a new home. The staff at a local vet’s office have a penchant for matching ‘parents’ to ‘children.’

Sophie pretty much won the lottery. “I was at Moyers Veterinary Hospital to pick up items for the Scotties,” Debra Williams, Morrystown Area Chamber of Commerce General Manager, said. “They had her in the office. I said, ‘What a pretty dog!’ They came back with, ‘Do you want

her?’”

Debra and her husband, Frank, own a home in the courthouse district of Morrystown, with a fenced yard, a generous front porch and plenty of sidewalks in the neighborhood and beyond. At the time of Debra’s chance introduction to Sophie, the couple were the parents of two energetic Scotties, Mason and Hamilton -- both of whom they would take on twice-daily walks. The dogs

See **SOPHIE** page 20



IN BLOOM

The Blossom Shop team, from left Mike Johnson, Elizabeth Bourgeois, Tim Webb and Charlotte Baldus. Not pictured: Hannah Watson

The Boys are Still in Town

FROM WINK REPORTS

The news came down the pike back in December, when it became evident that former owners Don and Sue Baldus and their daughter, Susan Holt, were planning to sell the business that had been a fixture for more than two decades in the hospital district of Morristown.

Would the Blossom Shop close?

And what would happen to longtime employees Mike Johnson and Tim Webb?

To spill a bit of WINK tea – folks were getting concerned.

There was interest in buying the shop, building and all; however, the process was taking too long, according to Sue.

“We needed to make sure that Mike and Tim were taken care of. We are all like family,” she said after a recent Rotary Club of Morristown meeting.

“Susan and I were ready to retire at the end of the year,”



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Sue said “Susan has two grandchildren that she was ready to spend time with and enjoy. We just decided, ‘Let’s see what we can do.’ But we didn’t want to hurt the business, because we were a fixture in Morristown – all four of us.

Part of the more than 20 years of owning The Blossom Shop were the personal touches facilitated by the team.

It was not uncommon for Sue and Susan to be out on a Sunday and get a call from a regular customer saying they

had just heard about the death of an acquaintance and needed a flower arrangement or a plant to be delivered to the funeral home that afternoon.

“That’s what we did. We went to the shop, we prepared something and went straight to the funeral home. And believe it or not, he was coming out of the funeral home as we were going in,” Sue said.

We kept thinking about it and wondering, ‘What are we going to do to get



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all this in order so it doesn't hurt the business?" she said.

As good fortune would have it, a buyer came on the scene who was interested in purchasing the business and leasing the building, to serve as a silent partner.

The conversation was initiated at the shop counter, according to Sue, like many business transactions that occur in a developing city that still has a small town feel.

"He asked, 'What's going to happen?' I told him, 'If we can't sell it, we're going to close down at the end of the year.' He said, 'You can't shut it down!!' – "Well then buy it,' I said."

And there it was. The solution that worked for everyone, including and especially, the customers.

Susan will get time with her grandchildren (and husband, 'Shorty': rumor has it they have booked a cruise), and Don is happy to have Sue spending

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more time at their lake-side home – “I’m happy to be sleeping in late,” Sue quipped.

As for ‘the boys’ – well, it will be business as usual as far as they are concerned.

The talk between Mike and Tim, whether it be business acumen or a humorous story, is a bit like watching a good game of tennis: you’ve got to pay attention to keep up.

“We’re going to leave everything as is and run it as if they were still here,” Tim said. “There’s no change with that. They taught us how; so now that we know, we’re going to continue what they taught us.”

“We’re not going to try and fix something that’s not broke,” Mike said.

“So we’re going to run with it,” Tim said, “And hopefully make it bigger and better.”

The big holiday for florists is coming up this month. It’s basically a season, with weeks of planning and days of prepping, followed by a flurry of selling and delivering.

WINK had to ask – ‘What are you anticipating about Valentine’s Day?’

Tim didn’t hesitate: “The last day,” he said.

“When it’s over,” Johnson concurred.

There are typically customers, a majority of



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whom are male, who wait until nearly closing time on the big day, their eyes showing desperation as they belly up to the counter.

“Do you have anything left?” they’ll ask with that last bit of hope in their voice.

So the prep work, aided by a cadre of additional workers who return every year to help, is key to making sure those last minute shoppers find the perfect bouquet. The overwhelming majority of sales for florists on Valentine’s is fresh, rather than silk, arrangements.

“We’ll start making up (florist speak for ‘designing’) the week before,” Mike said. “We’ll work the Saturday and Sunday before and hopefully Monday and Tuesday, we’ll be getting everything out of here.”

The most requested color? The red roses.

“We’re going to keep it pink, red and white. We’ll have a few other things, but the primary is going to be those three. That’s what we did last year and it worked better that way because you didn’t have so many leftover. For the fresh, it’s going to be designer’s choice only. On their website, they’ll specify the arrangements that will be available.

Local businesses and physicians offices order Valentine’s Day flowers for their employees.



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Tim still delivers; however, on Valentine’s Day he’ll be in the shop.

“We’ve got people lined up to work – we usually have five vehicles on the road,” Johnson said.

Susan helped with the Valentine’s Day order, which is the largest of the year.

“If she hadn’t, we wouldn’t have been able to do it,” Mike said.

“Sue and Susan were a big help during the transition,” Tim said.

Mike will be handling the majority of the office work, while Tim will be taking over the inventory ordering process. They

will both continue designing.

“The accountant is going to come in at the end of the month to make sure I’m getting everything to him. But now I’m picky – everything’s got to be in its spot, so I’m of sort of really organized; so I know where stuff is at,” Mike said.

“Sue sat down with Mike for at least three weeks in December and showed him her part of the paperwork – and she still helped in the workroom as well,” Tim said.

“I pretty much knew how to do the ordering, because I had done it before,” Tim said. “Mike never re-

ally wanted part of that. Whenever Sue and Susan were on vacation, I took charge of that. And then I took charge of the pricing.

“I’d always finish a silk and say, ‘Here, you need to put a price on that,’” Mike said.

“Sue asked one day back in the workroom, ‘I want to know, in this arrangement here, I want everyone to tell me what dollar amount is involved in it,’ and I was the one who got it right,” Tim said. Sue said, “I can’t believe you were right on the money.”

“His mind works in numbers,” Mike said. “Mine works more in technology.”

And their design skills compliment one another, which is convenient to the type of business they are in.

“I can’t see the silk, I can see the fresh,” Tim said.

So, for the sake of argument, WINK asks, “Which one requires more technical ability?”

“If I started a silk, it would take me all day,” Tim said.

“Most people think about it too much,” Johnson said. “You just have to do it. Don’t think about it, just do it. It can be pulled out. And you can bend the stems.”

It’s nothing unusual to visit the workroom and the team members are each working on an arrange-

ment. In the time it takes for them to complete that one design, Mike will have casually put together four or five.

It’s pretty incredible. “I’ve done it for so long, I just don’t think about it,” Johnson said.

Tim started out as a driver and has developed a strong skill for designing fresh funeral arrangements and other fresh items over the two decades that he and Mike have been staples in the shop’s workroom.

His gift for gab comes naturally. It needed no training, or encouragement, really.

“My mom said I didn’t belong to her,” Tim said. “She said, ‘I don’t think I got the right baby at the hospital. You just talk to everybody.’”

“I don’t meet any strangers,” he conceded.

If they happen to be picking up shop supplies together, say at Walmart, the inevitable will happen – “I’m going to see somebody I know,” Tim said, “And I’m going to stand there and talk to them.”

After one particularly engaging conversation, Tim looked around the store for Mike. And kept looking. He finally resorted to calling him – “Where are you?”

“I’m in the car,” Johnson told him. “I’m done. I’ve



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checked out.”

Webb retorted, “Okay, I’m on my way. Unless I run into somebody else.”

“That’s fine. That’s just who he is. That’s who he’s always been,” Johnson said.

The boon for business is that Webb’s engaging personality has helped him build relationships with every funeral home in the area. He works part-time with Stetzer-Bales Funeral Home.

“Folks will see me in a suit and say, ‘Boy, you clean up nice,’” Tim said.

The secret to building a long-term business in a

community is to provide a need. And not just to supply a necessary commodity, but to also meet people where they are in the moment, and even provide comfort along with service.

It all goes back to the attitude Tim has with regard to deliveries.

“I always make a point when I go in to a funeral home to let somebody know that I’m there. And I put my items where they need to be. I talk to the staff. I want them to know I have been in their establishment,” Webb said. “I’m not going to set it at the back door and run.”



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Sophie

(Continued from page 9)

were regularly featured on social media and accompanied Debra to work, where they would greet Chamber guests. Bernadette and Charlie, who had since passed away, were also social media favorites. They also happened to be larger breed dogs who had been rescued.

“I saw Sophie stand up and I noticed she was extremely overweight; she had trouble standing,” Debra said. “The girls in the office told me she was six years old and I thought, ‘That’s not old.’ But her hips were bad.”

Debra decided to call Frank, who said, “Bring her home; if the Scotties like her, we’ll keep her.”

The quick agreement surprised



Special to Wink Magazine

Sophie before her weight loss journey began.

veterinary staff. “We just thought of you as Scottie people,” Dr. Brandon Byrd said.

“They had to help me get her in the car,” Debra said. “She weighed 118 lbs. She kind of waddled up the porch steps. The Scotties were very

interested in her for about 30 seconds. Then they went their way, she went hers.”

“Dr. (Katie) Maxey gave us the food instructions, which surprised me,” Debra said. “You actually feed them the amount suggested for the weight

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they need to be healthy – not the weight they are now.”

Sophie immediately joined the family on those two-per-day walks around the neighborhood and into the downtown area, pausing only for traffic lights and stop signs.

“The weight just started coming off,” Debra said.

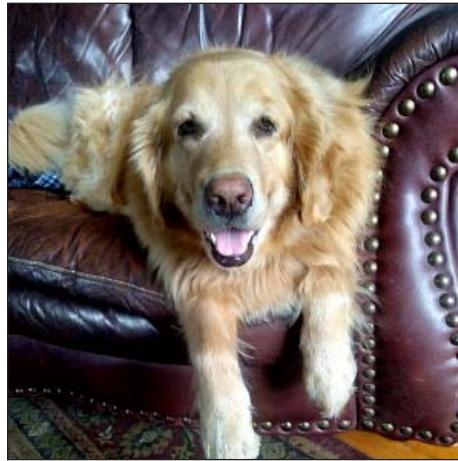
Sophie hit the 75-pound mark about a month ago.

“Now, she still loves the couch,” Debra said. “And she doesn’t really play with the Scotties (no zoomies). She’ll get them going and then steps back to watch them. But when she goes out on the porch now, she’s pretty animated. She moves great now. This is a good weight for her.

And then there’s Frank.

“She looooves Frank,” Debra said.

Apparently the feeling is mutual. Frank takes her for frequent rides in



Special to Wink Magazine

A slimmed-down Sophie on her favorite couch.

his vehicle. It’s a true fact that when the Scotties recently needed to be picked up from the groomer, Frank took Sophie with him because “He didn’t want to leave her alone,” Debra said.

“She’s very sweet, gentle. She was housebroken. She’s interested if

you’re eating, but she’s not pushy. When we walk, if people want to pet her, she’s gentle. She lets anyone pet her and there’s no jumping up on people.”

Sophie is quite intrigued by squirrels, according to Debra. She likes to look out the window at them (that may have been her main hobby in her previous life).

“That was the first time she ever pulled on her leash, was when she spotted a squirrel,” Debra said. “But she doesn’t have any bad habits, none at all.”

As a twist to the tale, Frank has also lost weight during Sophie’s lifestyle change – a circumstance attributed to the Golden coat.

“Well, he’s running the vacuum cleaner three times a day,” Debra said.

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This Valentine's Day
 Come And Dine With Us!

JERSEY? SURE

Jersey natives
Dawn and
Lawrence
Phillips cater
with love

BY G. HOWINGTON
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Wh e n
y o u r
take-out
bag in-
cludes
printed instructions for
proper introduction of the
herbed butter, chances are
good that dinner has been
upgraded.

The chances are also
good that you are Face-
book-acquainted with
Lawrence and Dawn Phil-
lips, owners of Jersey
Girl Catering, located in a
store front on West Main
Street in Morristown.

It all started back in the
spring of 2021.

Easter was fast ap-
proaching when a social
media post appeared that
signaled a shift of the
earth's axis, if you hap-
pened to be a serious-
minded foodie who never
developed a talent for re-
cipe interpretation or had
grown tired of standing
at the stove in the time of



Corona.

Dawn posed a question
on FB, asking if there
would be any interest in
a meal to take home and
heat up later, prepared by
Lawrence and staff in the
commercial kitchen locat-
ed next door to Jersey Girl
Diner (now closed).

The feedback from that
informal poll resulted in a
menu titled "Easter Feast"
posted the afternoon of
April 8, 2021. Inspiring
phrases like 'Dark Beer
& Brown Sugar Sirloin

Roast' and 'Citrus Cran-
berry Jus' (to accompany
the rotisserie pork loin)
practically jumped off the
electronic page.

In response, near panic
ensued.

Comments of "Yes!!!"
and "Count Us In" were
posted one after the other,
including a request for an
express shipment to Iowa.
There was momentary
confusion as to how to
guarantee a reservation.
Comment? Private Mes-
sage? Then, as the already

hungry gazed with awe at
the details of the multiple
courses on the menu, the
instruction to email was
noticed. More comments
followed: "Did you get my
email?"

The whole thing was a
coin toss, really.

Notwithstanding the
time it took to console
the panicked, there was
the preparation (until 2
a.m. Saturday for Law-
rence) the organization,
the packaging and, most
intriguing, the deference

shown to the unskilled consumer regarding the instruction sheet. The directions were concise, yet simple: preheat oven, set timer, cover or uncover, pour over, refrigerate. The small piece of paper was held dear to the hearts of those deigned with the responsibility of getting Chef Lawrence's impeccable creations to the home table intact and, by Golly, at the right temperature.

There were enough positive responses to justify a modified repeat performance. On April 20, the Wednesday Dinner Pickup debuted, featuring Chicken Parmesan.

Then things got real.

On April 22, the Saturday Dinner Pickup was posted, featuring Charleston Crab Cakes.

The bacon wrapped meatloaf dinner was next, followed by a pork loin brined in apple cider, then the Classic Shepherd's Pie.

Reservations were required several days prior to pick up for the Mother's Day Feast, due in no small part to: Rotisserie Herb Coated Chicken Breasts, Apple Cranberry Corn bread Dressing, Charleston Shrimp & Grits with Andouille Cream Sauce, and so on and so forth.

Each package is sold to feed four people, priced at an average of \$10 per



plate, and featuring generous portions that enable it to be extended beyond one meal. There is something very neighborly about the whole thing. While waiting in line to check out with Dawn, there is ample time to learn the latest community news – the customer base for pickup meals is as varied as the menus. Friends greet each other and new acquaintances are quickly formed.

James Templeton is always on hand with a quick smile to divvy out the carryout packaging, divided into two and four-servings.

When Dawn made that first Facebook post, the idea was to re-open the Jersey Girl Diner. It had been closed due to Covid.

However, the immediate and long-lasting success of the pickup meals – along with the staffing challenges that faced the Phillips many other small business owners across the country – led to the decision to keep it closed.

The couple, and James, keep busy with catering events, both large and intimate. They serve the volunteers at each United Way of Hamblen County report luncheon and are in high demand for non-profit fundraisers and galas hosted by civic organizations.

Their reputation for consistent, impeccable menus and service is unmatched in Morristown.

The success as a team can be explained by their

success as a couple.

Dawn is from New Jersey and Lawrence is from Fort Myers, Florida. And, yes, it was love at first sight – “I always thought a man in a chef coat was sexy!” Dawn said.

Lawrence has an extensive resume as a professional chef and Dawn's background is in convention management, with a focus on booking banquets.

The couple moved to Morristown in 1996 and opened Jersey Girl in 2008. There are definitely challenges to living and working together, “but we work really well together,” Dawn said.

They miss the customers that frequented the diner, but “we are enjoying what we are doing now,” Dawn said.

As WINK noted back in 2021, there are things that might not be the same again, ever. And change is hard.

Uncertainty can make people act in irresponsible or selfish ways. But there is comfort to be found. Generosity prevailed.

The business of living and thriving in our community will ensue despite challenges and frustrations.

In the process, Dawn and Chef Lawrence continue to show us how to pivot.

Gentlemen of Real Estate



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Ben was born and raised in beautiful East Tennessee, where he and his family still reside. He first started his real estate career a few years ago as a broker's assistant and a professional real estate photographer before getting his real estate license in early 2020. As an affiliate broker licensed in Tennessee, Ben provides strategic marketing, commitment in listening to his client's needs, and hard negotiation skills to ensure a successful transaction. He has successfully helped many clients with multiple transactions, making him a top producing agent within his real estate brokerage. Ben has become a well-esteemed agent, highly regarded by his clients and the professionals in his field. He provides exceptional service to ensure you will feel confident in your decision to work with him.

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