

# the GOOD LIFE

Mental • Health • Dental

Nixa kindergartner goes to school after 18 months of cancer treatment

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STAFF PHOTO/  
KATHRYN SKOPEC  
**Laurie Blanchard of Stockton, dressed in scrubs and holding her usual work equipment, poses for a photo. As an elder advocate, she provides everyday living services for elders.**

# 'Help is near'

## Talking elder advocacy with Stockton local

By Kathryn Skopec  
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**L**aurie Blanchard of Stockton knows the importance of elder advocacy.

As an elder advocate, Blanchard assists elders who do not need assisted-living aid, but are starting to consider plans to remain in their forever homes.

Blanchard runs her business, "Help Is Near", in Stockton, where she provides everyday living services for elders. These services include everyday problem-solving, laundry, errands, cleaning, shopping, meals, appointments, correspondence, and of course, "gardening, giggles and grins," she said.

Blanchard's target clients include people who do not need assisted living care, but are starting to plan remaining in their forever home. This includes people who have eased into retirement, people reaching their 80s without family around and people are finding they could use some help.

"If a client's goals include staying in their home, I think I can please them with what I can accomplish in as little as two hours per week," Blanchard said.

Everybody's needs are different, and for one "sweet lady," Blanchard visits her every day for one hour.

"I do exactly the kind of things her daughter would do if she could swing by every day," Blanchard said. "Making him a nice resource to draw from when a referral is needed, my husband Mike

is a manager at O'Reilly's auto parts and knows a guy who knows a guy who can fix or build anything."

Blanchard considers herself an elder advocate and embraces her small role in the community.

"Keeping well-heeled ladies and gentlemen out of the nursing home is my business," Blanchard said. "It is not complicated."

Blanchard said that unfortunately, she is familiar with navigating the loss of a parent to a progressive, degenerative brain condition.

There are many resources available to become better prepared for the stages of dementia and Alzheimer's, and there are many resources available to become better prepared for the stages of varied diagnosis, she said.

"Once a client is on my schedule, I take any and all their calls [that would] come at a moment's notice, willing to help, that sort of thing," Blanchard said. "Help is near."

Well-heeled does not mean rich, Blanchard said.

"Those who qualify among us have an incredible system in orbit around their needs at no cost to them," Blanchard said. "A good thing, but it simply does not address the needs of the elderly who are not qualified to receive programs and funding. For that reason, I chose this part-time niche."

### PREVENTING ELDER ABUSE

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day was Tuesday, June 15 — a day that shines light on some of society's most vulnerable individuals.

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PHOTO/METRO

Blanchard noted that in current society, one major problem elders face is predatory behavior targeted toward the elderly.

“In our Constitutional Republic, the top law enforcement officer of the land is the local sheriff,” Blanchard said. “By law, we have no more powerful advocate than our county sheriff.”

Blanchard said Cedar County Sheriff James “JimBob” McCrary stopped a foreign telephone predator in his tracks and even recovered hundreds of dollars from Amazon for an elderly citizen who had fallen victim to the gifted gift-card scammer.

Elders are targeted through “every conceivable angle,” Blanchard said.

Predatory behavior can be seen via mail, telephone calls, texting, internet and more, she said.

“There’s a barrage of fraud perva-

rors pursuing the elderly constantly,” Blanchard said. “I see it even from reputable companies, frankly, sending confusing invoice statements.”

Overall, Blanchard said elder abuse is an important topic that needs more awareness.

### PREVENTING ELDER ABUSE

Elder abuse takes many forms: physical, emotional, sexual, financial and neglectful, with more than one form of abuse taking place simultaneously.

“Elder abuse is much more common than many people would believe, as one in 10 older Americans will become an abuse victim,” Christina Kanak, regional ombudsman director for Care Connection for Aging Services, said in a news release. “That’s why we set aside this day annually to call attention to the problems.”

Older individuals are more likely to become victims of abuse because of social isolation, a lack of support services and community resources, and elders’ needs for help in carrying out daily activities, according to the National Center on Elder Abuse at the University of Southern California.

People can help prevent elder abuse by taking these actions:

- Listen to older people and caregivers; understand the challenges and provide support.
- Educate others about the signs of abuse and how to get help.
- Report suspected abuse or neglect as soon as possible.
- Build a community that fosters social connections and supports.

All individuals are encouraged to report abuse or neglect by calling the Missouri Adult Abuse and Neglect Hotline at 1-800-392-0210. For emergencies, call 911.

**World Elder Abuse Awareness Day was Tuesday, June 15. Elder abuse takes many forms: physical, emotional, sexual, financial and neglectful, with more than one form of abuse taking place simultaneously.**

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STAFF PHOTO/KATHRYN SKOPEC

Elder advocate Laurie Blanchard poses for a photo.





# Blindness is a spectrum...

*No two blind people really see just alike*

By Linda Simmons  
news@bolivarmonews.com

Not all blind people are the same, just like any other individuals. They have various degrees of blindness. Some only see a hint of light and no shadows, others see shadows and basic shapes, while still others are able to read from a paper if they look at it out of a small portion of their vision.

Some are born with blindness while others lose their vision later in life. Some are in total darkness. The blind community is very diverse in so many ways,

Roger Jewell and Ron Wyatt appreciate the new sidewalk and handicap ramp in front of their favorite restaurant in town.

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***“For most people, however, I think they just don’t know how to treat someone with vision impairment.”***

no two blind people see just alike.

Roger Jewell, president of the Lake Stockton Area Council of the Blind, says it is important that people understand that everyone’s experience with blindness is different.

“Some of us were born blind while others lost their sight over time for various reasons,” he explains.

Jewell wants everyone to understand that “as hard as we try to be independent, we never can be.”

Things are different for visually impaired people. Adapting to live in a sighted world can lead to many challenges and because of these things, many don’t go out into the communities being embarrassed to be out in public and find it hard to deal with the struggles that go along with being blind, he adds.

Jewell goes on to explain — “People see me with my cane and don’t know how to treat me. They generally avoid talking to me since I am different. Some people have the idea that a visually impaired person is mentally deficient and incapable of living a ‘normal’ life. There are so many things concerning the way sighted people interact with those of us who are blind or visually impaired, some of those things are wonderful and kind, and others are rude and unthoughtful. For most people, however, I think they just don’t know how to treat someone with vision impairment.”

While Jewell and Mike Hopper enjoy hiking and getting out in the great outdoors, there are others that don’t feel comfortable with that, they say. And one thing other than the everyday challenges that every blind person most likely has to deal with is a separation from their surroundings, a feeling of loneliness and depression.

“Depression is something that I believe every blind person deals with in their lives,” says Jewell.

He goes on to explain that it is a strange feeling to be in a public place surrounded with activity and people, yet feel completely alone and secluded from what is going on

### Interacting with a visually impaired person:

The Missouri Council of the Blind offers the following advice for interacting with a visually impaired person.

1. We are not deaf, it isn't necessary to raise your voice to speak to us.
2. Do not pay attention to my guide dog. My dog is working.
3. Do not avoid the words watch or see; we use them all the time.
4. There is no such thing as a dumb question except the one you do not ask.
5. Don't assume I can't do something simply because I am visually impaired. If you want to know, you can always ask.
6. Feel free to tell me if my shirt is a mess and needs to be changed.
7. A visual impairment does not automatically ensure that my other senses will be improved.
8. If we are in a restaurant together and the waiter/waitress asks you what I want, please tell them to speak to me.
9. Identify yourself when entering a room and certainly when starting a conversation with a visually impaired person.
10. When you see us in need of your help, don't assume you know where we want to go. Ask if you can help and use words like “left” or “right, not “here” or “there.”

around you. This is the reality of blindness.

“Something most people probably don’t realize is that blind people have more nightmares than sighted people,” he explains, adding that as a previously sighted person, he knows this to be personally true. “I don’t know why, but if our subconscious does affect our dreams as I have heard, then it tells me that I am more scared to live life among others like I did before. I have more inner terror than I did before I lost my sight.”

Ron Wyatt says he enjoys going to eat out with his friends like Jewell. He notes many blind people will not go out to eat without a sighted person with them, because they can’t read the menus, find the bathrooms, or sometimes even see the food they are eating.

As Jewell explains, “Life is a little more challenging for us in many ways. We are not mentally challenged as some would think, but we are hindered because the main sense that people use to live day to day is gone from us, or is severely impaired.”



Members of the council enjoy getting to visit and enjoy a meal together.



Roger Jewell and Mike Hopper visit at the monthly dinner and meeting.

Lake Stockton Area Council of the Blind, a branch of the Missouri Council of the Blind, holds monthly meetings at 6:30 p.m. the first Thursday of each month at Maranatha Church in Bolivar. The group operates under the following mission statement — “As long as this organization exists, it shall strive to be a friend of, and advocate for, the visually impaired community. We are here to increase the independence, security, equality of opportunity and improved quality of life for all people who are blind or visually impaired.”

The branch currently has around 15 members.

For more information, call or text 292-9149.



Roger Jewell and Mike Hopper with Lila prepare to take a hike down the Frisco Trail.

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Mail photos by Bryan Everson  
**Fifth and sixth-grade participants in the BEAST Camp take part in a drill near the end of a session at the track on Monday, June 14.**

## Summer camp provides athletic base for student-athletes

By Bryan Everson  
 bryane@marshfieldmail.com

It's a sunny Monday afternoon in mid-June, the kind hot enough that it felt perfect for a visit to the pool or a trip to get some ice cream.

Maybe a few of the kids taking part in that afternoon's BEAST Camp were headed that way before or after, but at the moment, it was another sign of dedication and commitment by taking time out of the summer to be a better Marshfield athlete down the road.

The camp is held two for two groups — Grades 3-4 and 5-6 — on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons over June and July, one hour per each. In total, it's 23 days of commitment for kids, parents, and its organizer, Blue Jays football head coach Cody Bull.

"We do a lot of really good things and have really good people who want to help us," Bull said. "We've got a ton of really committed parents. It's in the middle of the day and it's hard to get them here. It's a community effort for sure. It just goes back to how I feel about marshfield and how good a place we're in. It makes us unique because everyone's in and backing the program, and kids are excited to come back year to year."

The BEAST Camp lays the building blocks of what eventually becomes the more advanced Edge program that the high school student-athletes participate in when they reach that level.

"Our incoming sophomore group of girls and boys, a lot of those were beast campers," Bull said. "The incoming eighth grade girls, over 20 were beast campers, and [so were] a large portion of our incoming junior class. We've got a nice pipeline of high achievers that have gone through this program."

Bull stepped in and worked with former coach Damon Sieger five years ago to do kids at the youngest level that the BEAST Camp now involves, and has spearheaded the efforts since.

"What we've done is turn it into the base level of our programming," Bull said. "We have a good time and it's fun, but what we're really trying to do is teach them body positions. Things like how to run and land properly, how to take off. A lot of things go into running form, and it's hard when you're in high school to spend time on those things that are required. There's a lot of sports going on and kids have jobs. When we have them at younger ages, it's a lot easier to work those specific positions and patterns."

"Those third and fourth graders, it's really important for them to stack skills. Our varsity athletes, there's things they've learned and repetition they've gotten that's helped them later in our Edge program."

The kind of instruction going on that Monday is focused on those kinds of aforementioned basics. Early in the camp, it's a lot of drilling stability and positioning. There's emphasis placed on strength and flexibility to hold certain positions, or proper foot position when the foot isn't on the ground to make for a great ground strike.

After the first few weeks, it's moving on to jumping and landing to help the body absorb impact, a precaution of sorts to mitigate the strain on knees and the back. The last weeks, it's focus on body movement, and for the older age group, there's some lighter weight lifting involved, something that becomes more critical as student-athletes advance to junior high.

"The [youngest group] does a great job of paying attention and really trying to focus on doing things right," Bull said. "They do a lot of things our high school kids do, it just takes us longer to get into those progressions. By the end of July, they'll do things we're doing in Edge, it just takes time to get there."

Roy Kaderly assists Bull, and also gets to see the benefits of the program down the line as Marshfield varsity track and field head coach.

"As they get into high school, you see that they're able to jump into what we're doing right away without having the learning curve," Kaderly said. "They're leading the group, they can demonstrate it. They're



**Marshfield football head coach Cody Bull, seen here providing instruction on form inside the junior high, oversees the effort that helps prepare**

so much farther and they get it so much faster."

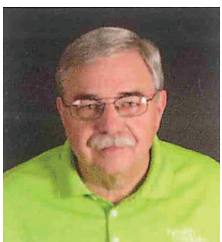
"As a track coach, we're doing a lot of speed development stuff here. We've never had a boys relay team finish where we did at state, and all the kids on that have either been a part of this, or Edge, or the junior high program from Day 1. The senior group was the first to ever have six years of lifting and stuff like this. All of our programs have benefitted from this stuff. Our seventh-grade girls this year I think were conference champions, every one, and they've been doing BEAST Camp. You can tell a big difference. And it's not sport-specific; every kid can get something from this."

Like with Edge, it's more time dedicated in the summer for Bull, but it appears to be anything but a chore for him.

"I love watching it click for them," Bull said. "You see a kid working on something and struggling, then they get it. You see the light come on and they get excited. Watching them have success and feel good about their successes, being focused on self-improvement, that kind of stuff is fun for me."

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# Thatcher's first day

## Nixa kindergartner goes to school after 18 months of cancer treatment

*"Thatcher was super ready to get here, it's something he's been looking forward to for a very long time."*



RANCE BURGER/Headliner News

**FROM LEFT, Thatcher Dingus, 6, walks up the sidewalk with his father, Kendal, for Thatcher's first day of kindergarten at High Pointe Elementary. Thatcher underwent 18 months of treatment for neuroblastoma, a cancer that attacks adrenal glands, before his first day of in-person schooling on March 25.**

**RANCE BURGER**

[ranceb@ccheadliner.com](mailto:ranceb@ccheadliner.com)

The first day of school took on incredible meaning for a kindergarten student and his family.

In September 2019, Thatcher Dingus was diagnosed with stage 4 neuroblastoma, a type of cancer that attacks adrenal glands. Thatcher mainly dealt with cancer cells in his kidneys. On March 25, he walked through the doors of High Pointe Elementary School in Nixa for his first day of school in a classroom since the diagnosis.

Thatcher has since finished kindergarten and is adjusting to life at home. He is even taking part in fundraisers for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

Thatcher, 6, had just had a central line removed from his body two days before his first day of school. The central line is used to administer chemotherapy, blood transfusions, platelets and other treatments, but it also comes with restrictions and risks. The removal of the central line checked off a big box on the list of improvements that allow Thatcher to attend school in person for the first time in 18 months. Because he's a kindergartner, March 25 also marked the very first day at his new elementary school.

Thatcher's father, Kendal Dingus, reported that his son was thrilled to walk through the door at High Pointe, which teachers and students had decorated for the occasion.



RANCE BURGER/Headliner News

**FROM LEFT, Lindsay Dingus, Gideon Dingus, Thatcher Dingus and Kendal Dingus.**

"There was a lot of excitement in the house this morning. Thatcher was super ready to get here, it's something he's been looking forward to for a very long time," Dingus said on the big day.

Thatcher finished out his early childhood learning virtually with Nixa Public Schools. The Dingus family spent nine consecutive months in Memphis, Tennessee, where Thatcher was hospitalized undergoing treatments at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

"He's done the virtual school, he did the St. Jude school, but he gets that it's a big deal, being back in the classroom. He misses his friends, just being

around other kids," Dingus said.

Coming home to Nixa was a big step the whole family. For the past year and a half, they've been dedicated to Thatcher's treatment schedule. COVID-19 precautions at St. Jude further complicated the situation. Kendal, his wife Lindsay, and their younger son, Gideon, all lived in relative isolation at the Target House apartments in Memphis for the past nine months.

"For us, it's a huge step just looking over the past 18 months," Dingus said. "It's been something that we have thought about, but it's been quite a distant reach, so to finally get to this point is a huge blessing and we're just super excited."

The Dingus family shared updates on Thatcher throughout his treatment on a Facebook page, which you can find by searching for "Team Thatcher D." Kendal Dingus said it was important to be open and forthcoming about what the family went through in an effort to help an organization that helped the Dingus family so much.

Patients at St. Jude are not charged for care. According to St. Jude, it costs \$2.8 million per day to run the hospital for children who face catastrophic diseases, particularly cancer. Patients travel from all over the United States to Memphis in order to undergo treatment at St. Jude, which is funded entirely through donations.

"It's an unfunded thing, childhood cancer, so just bringing so much awareness to that has been super important to us," Dingus said. "And then just bringing awareness about St. Jude. Most people don't know much about St. Jude. You see the commercials, and you hear the stories, but the things they do for the patients and the families are just unbelievable."

The message written in chalk at the entryway at High Pointe included the social media hashtag #ThatcherStrong, which has become prevalent in the Nixa Community for the past year and a half. His first day of kindergarten was a great showing of strength for Thatcher, who underwent seven rounds of chemotherapy, six rounds of immunotherapy and 12 rounds of radiation treatments all before turning 6 on March 16. Footage of his "No More Chemo Party" got more than 190 likes from Facebook users on Feb. 8.

"We're at the end of his treatment protocol, so now we're at the end of his three-month scans. We're working on getting his kidneys well, and then just checking up every three months to make sure the cancer is gone," Dingus said.

The Dingus last visited Memphis in May 2021, where Thatcher underwent scans. He will be checked every three months, so long as he remains cancer free.

On top of learning math, reading, writing and other skills that kindergarten students are expected to master, Kendal Dingus said that Thatcher is looking forward to experiencing play like a normal kid once his medical restrictions are lifted.

"Most kids love recess, that's something Thatcher is most excited about," Dingus said.



RANCE BURGER/Headliner News

**THATCHER DINGUS attended his first day of kindergarten at High Pointe Elementary School in Nixa March 25, 2021, after undergoing 18 months of cancer treatment.**

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# MAKING GAINS

By David Talley  
davidt@bolivarnews.com

Like many teens, James Crain has set goals for himself. Crain, of Bolivar, wants to get stronger, socialize more, manage his home and do more meal preparation.

Fortunately, he's got good support in his corner.

As the BH-FP previously reported, both Crain and his brother, Trent, have Duchenne muscular dystrophy and are wheelchair-bound.

The genetic disorder is rare and is characterized by progressive muscular degeneration.

For the last four years, Crain has been assisted by the Center for Human Services in Bolivar, which provides services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in 39 counties in Missouri.

His service coordinator at the center is Lisa Hagness.

"My grandmother, brother, and I are so happy Lisa is in our lives," Crain wrote in a news release. "She helps my grandmother with any questions she may have. When we see her on Zoom and/or FaceTime, she is always smiling and wanting to make sure we have everything we need."

According to the release, Crain has made significant progress at CHS.

"CHS Service Coordination services has assisted James to meet his goals, as well as provided the family with



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS  
Out and about, James Crain poses for a photo at the coast.

resources necessary for James to live life without limitations," the release states.

Hagness has also had a hand in building a ramp at the Crain home, the release stated, "allowing him to gain wheelchair access to all areas of the property."

"She also secured \$10,000 for a van modification that allowed him to be able to get out and about easier," the release states. "These major changes have given James more independence and allows him to attend doctor and therapy appointments much easier."

According to the release, Crain is continuously improving on his outcomes and really enjoys working on those outcomes with the CHS staff.

Outside of those goals, Crain said in the release he enjoys drawing, playing video games and spending time with his grandmother and brother at their home.

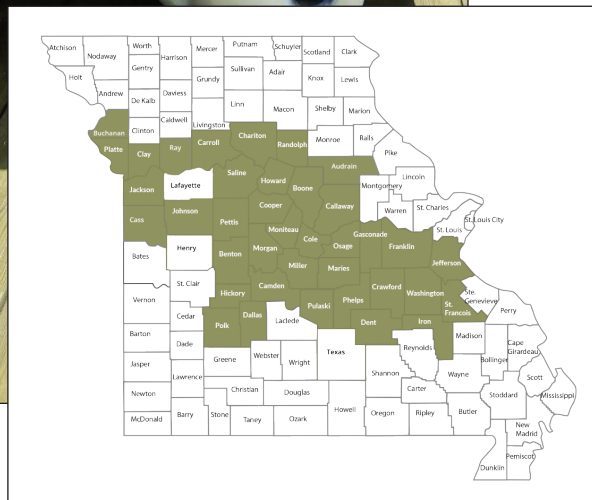
He currently attends virtual school and said he's excited to return to in-person learning next year now that he has his COVID-19 vaccine.

"CHS has been such a blessing for me and my family," he said in the release.

For more information about CHS, call the center at 660-826-4400.



A map shows counties where the Center For Human Services offers service coordination.



## Good to see your back

### Area massage therapist provides relief to Stockton

By Aaron Pyle  
aaronp@cedarrep.com

Need a massage or an adjustment? Erin Bellew of Tiny Hands Massage has you covered.

Cedar County residents and visitors can enjoy the relaxation and relief Bellew provides at her facility next to Laundry on the Lake Laundromat on RB Road.

Bellew has an associate degree in applied science with a heavy course concentration in massage from Baker's College in Michigan and is a licensed massage therapist. Erin graduated with her degree in 2011.

"I have wanted to be a massage therapist since I was nine," Bellew said. "It has just been my lifelong passion to help people to feel better."

According to Bellew, there was a massage therapist in Stockton before her arrival. The therapist sold the building to Erin's parents, Rick and Linda Leahy, who are operators of the Laundry on the Lake Laundromat, in 2016.

Massage therapists treat clients by using touch to manipulate the muscles and other soft tissues of the body. With their touch, therapists relieve pain, help heal injuries, improve circulation, relieve stress, increase relaxation and aid in the general wellness of clients, according to Truity.

Tiny Hands Massage offers nearly every form of massage to meet the needs of her clients, including ther-

apeutic, reflexology, acupressure, Swedish, hot or cold stones, poultice massage, prenatal massage, muscle and deep tissue.

Bellew also does body scrubs, body wraps, mud masks, hand and feet paraffin.

Erin works with men and women of all ages and has established a loyal customer base since opening in March of 2017.

"I love making people feel better," Bellew said. "Doing massage, not only does it relax them and calm them ... it relaxes and takes the stress off of me. I get to make my own hours and I have a lot of freedom."

One anonymous customer said, "Had My Mother's Day Massage. This girl went above and beyond to make



Tiny Hands Massage offers a number of lotions, shampoos and conditioners as well as custom gift baskets.



STAFF PHOTOS/AARON PYLE  
Erin Bellew, owner of Tiny Hands Massage, stands proudly outside of her business.

sure I was well taken care of. She did a great job."

Another testimonial said, "Just had an awesome massage here! I am feeling much more relaxed and ready to celebrate Independence day. I highly recommend her services."

Erin commented on the support

from the community as she said, "It has been great. It has been really awesome. I am definitely getting my name out there and I love it."

She is open to walk-ins Wednesday through Saturday starting at 8:30 a.m. and offers appointments to those who call her at (417) 241-9540.

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# Area artifact hunter stays active through pregnancy

By **Shelby Atkison**  
shelbya@marshfieldmail.com

For half a decade, Ocean Atwell has spent her free time trekking the fields of Webster County, uncovering forgotten artifacts. Her grandparents moved to Webster County in the 70s from their homestead in California and her family has been here ever since.

“My name’s only Ocean because my parents are hippies,” she laughed. “Growing up in California, my school was actually half Native American... we were on the reservations in California and the girls would make fun of me because I’m a white girl with that name so that was kind of funny. Now, the amount of respect I have for it probably stems from growing up with that experience.”

Atwell typically finds arrowheads on her excursions, however she has come across other artifacts such as bear teeth, bone tools, kitchen tools and nutting rocks, which were large stones with a space carved to place a nut, in order to break it open. Each find is special and carries a unique story with a special place in history.

“The best part of when you find it is that these artifacts are hundreds of years old. So you picture what the person who made it looked like, what the area looked like and it’s crazy to think that there were hundreds and thousands of people on these properties... the history is unreal,” she explained. “It’s so old, you’d have to find old, old diaries of families that were here hundreds of years ago and maybe they would have information on it. That’s it. There’s not a lot of information on native people in Webster County.”

Atwell explained that her research into which areas to hunt are often topographical, depending on where she believes indigenous peoples would have made camp in relation to water, high ground and areas that would have sustained vegetation. When you find larger concentrations of flakes you know you’re close to where they would have been.

“Natives would have had to counter floods but also be close enough that they didn’t have to hike all day to get water to camp,” she added. “You have to kind of read the land and see the valleys, hills and look for material... that’s where they would have camped.”

She hunts alongside her significant other, James Townlain and with their unborn baby, J.R. The soon-to-be parents scour creeks, rivers and plowed fields. Though she’s 34 weeks pregnant, she doesn’t let it slow down her lifestyle.

“We haven’t stopped... between all the things that we do normally, we’re pretty active people,” she said. “I haven’t stopped arrowhead hunting but we did buy J.R. a handmade arrowhead case and all the ones I’ve found while I’m pregnant we’re putting in there for his nursery.”

The historian also keeps detailed journals of her special finds, with a log of information.

“I keep track of every point and log where I find them. I’ll also keep a site ID which I use clear nail polish and a sharpie and mark on the arrowhead so it can be removed, but it organizes the artifacts and keeps a log of the information that I do have about them,” she



Mail photos by Shelby Atkison

**Ocean Atwell cradles three of her most recent artifact finds – arrowheads from the late paleo era, at least a few thousand years old.**

said. “Then I have a map key so that a museum or native researchers or anyone who may be interested in those types of thing can know where the sites were, what was found and it helps with trade pieces because you will find materials from other states here.”

For reference, Atwell uses textbooks about local Missouri Native Americans and Indigenous people of all North America. There are hundreds of thousands of different types of points that can be identified on arrowheads. By finding out what type of point an artifact has, one can determine its age, location of origin and the span of where it was found. She said she keeps her journals both for her own memories, as well as for the fact that they may be useful to any researchers who may come to our area in the future.

One thing to keep in mind for those getting started in artifact hunting is that there are several “unwritten rules” of the sport. For example, hunters should only tread on property that they own or that they’ve received permission to hunt on. It’s also important to leave things exactly where they are if a hunter is unsure of what they’ve found.

“Native people could be buried with a large area of artifacts, which has never happened to me, but it does happen,” she explained. “Those type of things are important to keep in mind... you’re not allowed to dig up anything ceremonial because it’s unethical.”

While these artifacts have been covered for hundreds of years, every spring and fall during planting seasons they will pop up in fields. Many can also be found in rivers after it floods. While they are everywhere in the Ozarks, Atwell said there seems to be an age gap in hobbyists from what she’s seen.

“I’ll go to trade shows and notice that there is a big gap between ages but it’s important because it’s history. A lot of people do it as a hobby but some of these artifacts are worth money, some



**Atwell’s dog, Oliver gets in on the hunting as well – bringing mom his daily finds. Oliver specializes in finding bones, furs and carcasses while his parents search for arrowheads.**



**Atwell said that after a flood is a good time to check out the riverbanks, where most of the arrowheads will wash in and be more visible.**

are worth a lot of money,” she added. “But whatever gets people interested...”

As for her, she said it’s her favorite past time. She does it for exercise, to be out in the sun and connect with nature, and for the thrill she gets when she find something. She hasn’t sold anything from her collection, she just lets it grow. According to Atwell, arrowhead hunting is an all-around exhilarating experience that everyone should try at least once.

“They don’t teach about this in school but it’s important because they’ve already been laying in the ground for hundreds or thousands of years. There’s only so many traces of history left and the Trail of Tears went right through Marshfield. So arrowheads have been found everywhere... you just have to look down.”

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## Market 116 owners, Chad and Nicole Brayman feel their biggest job responsibility is teaching their children good work ethics

BY STEVE JOHNSON  
stevej@buffaloreflex.com

Entrepreneur couple Chad and Nicole Bryan of Buffalo have been very successful at taking a little something and making it into a big something. The young couple are the owners of Market 116 in Buffalo. The business includes a recently expanded retail store and a wedding venue located in renovated old business buildings on the town square in Buffalo. Their vision, along with the visions of other young entrepreneurs of Buffalo, has helped bring life back to the downtown commercial district. The Bryans take a little pride in their many accomplishments, but the one thing they are most proud of is how their two young sons have picked up on their philosophy that hard work pays off.

### Becoming partners in business and life

When Chad and Nicole Brayman married in 2012, they each brought a dowry of owned properties that they had invested in. Chad had three houses and Nicole owned one. Chad had turned his houses into rental properties, Nicole owned and operated Galini, a salon and spa in Bolivar. They both attended real estate school to become agents and obtained more properties of their own. With those properties, they were setting up rent-to-own residences through owner financing.

Always on the lookout for new investment adventures, the duo decided to build a wedding venue about three miles north of Buffalo. The beautiful large cedar sided coun-

try barn accented with stonework trim called Timber Line Barn opened in 2013.

“At that time, rural wedding venues were a new idea, so we had a lot of people ask us, ‘You’re gonna do what?’ recalled Nicole. “I guess they were concerned it wouldn’t be successful. And we had our doubts at times.”

However, it did prove successful, and the Bryans began receiving offers from people interested in buying the venue.

Not afraid to venture into another challenge, they bought some apartment buildings in Buffalo, cleaned them up and made them into nice affordable apartments for families, seniors and single moms. They also purchased a vacated Chrysler-Plymouth dealership building and an old feed store on the Buffalo square. These they turned into a home goods store and another wedding venue. It wasn’t long until they came to the decision that two wedding venues were one too many for them to keep up with so they agreed to let Timber Line go for one of the offers. Nicole remembers when she posted it online, she cried for a good while, but she realized change is inevitable and good for growth.

The success of Market 116 has recently led to the purchase and renovation of the old Woods Supermarket building on the northeast corner of the square for additional space to relocate their very busy store, which also sells to online customers in 48 states. The old store building, attached to the wedding venue, will be incorporated into the wedding venue for more space there and additional options.

The move was accomplished in just 56 days—from purchase to Re-Grand Opening on Market 116’s five year anniversary date of June 5.

Back in 2016 when Chad and Nicole were working on the original Market 116, their 18 month old son, Beau, would accompany them everyday to work. As small as he was, he still wanted to help when he could with small tasks, like sweeping, or he would sit on the cement bags and observe his mom and dad working. This was the beginning lessons of work ethics for little Beau.

### Along came another helper

Today, six year old Beau has a little follower and observer of his own. Three year old Dak tries to follow in his

brother’s footsteps. The remodeling of the Woods building took a lot of physical labor, and demolition to certain walls and flooring were Beau’s favorite part of the continual work the building required before new windows, flooring and interior walls were installed.

“I liked smashing down the walls with a hammer,” said Beau, who had his own coffee stand in the original Market 116 store. “I did a lot of work in the old store. I sold a lot of coffee. It was fun.” Nicole confirms the coffee sales were quite good, attributing it to everyone wanting to buy a coffee from the toddler who was helping out his parents. She admitted it was a smart marketing ploy.

Beau and Dak also helped with painting walls in lower areas of the new



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store building. Beau claims to be Dak's boss, and Dak helps in ways that is not always helpful. Dak enjoys helping his dad power wash the lawn mower and ride around with him in his truck when he's looking for new places to invest in. Dak realizes when he makes a mess, it is his responsibility to clean it up. Once he accidentally spilled ketchup all over Chad and hurried to the bathroom to return with very wet dripping towels to wipe it off.

"He thought he was cleaning it up, but the trail of water he left from the bathroom to the table, and the way he smeared the ketchup all over my clothes, required another going over," said Chad, "but it is good to see him trying to do the right thing."

The work hard ethics that the Bryan parents have passed down to their sons is exemplified in the grades Beau makes at school. He is a fourth generation student at Skyline Elementary and his last grade report showed 100 percent. He also give 100 percent to football and T-ball, sports that he likes and participates in.

"Mom and Dad tell me if I'm going to do something, to do the best I can, said the young sports enthusiast.

Chad and Nicole said Dak tries to do everything his big brother does. They both like dinosaurs and building houses with their Legos. Perhaps they are starting their own house collection like their mom and dad who have owned as many as 24 houses at one time. They still own the very first house each of them bought and merged at nuptials.

#### Dreams of the young

Beau told this reporter that when he grows up, he wants to own his own Jurassic World. He knows it will take lots of money to build that dinosaur park, so he said he would be a paleontologist first to raise the funds. Big dreams for a little guy, but then, Chad and Nicole followed their dreams and have realized them so far. There's still ideas and avenues left to explore.

"I think it is just curiosity that guides us to try and accomplish a plan, and with a desire and hard work, we pull it off," said Chad.

Nicole added, "We hope to impress on the boys that if they have a goal, the only way to reach it is by continually moving toward it."

Nicole, who is an inspiration to others in interior decorating and furniture restoration, said that the boys want to help her when she's working on restoring an old piece of furniture. She has to remind them that there are some things they'll be able to do better as they get older.

Beau is good at taking instructions and following through. He helped with the refreshments table for the opening day of the new store. He was able to



REFLEX PHOTO BY STEVE JOHNSON;  
INSET PHOTO BY NICOLE BRYAN  
**The newly remodeled Market 116 Store, and (inset photo) the way it looked before renovation.**

take the packaged cookies and napkins and set them up on the table in a very nice display.

#### The family that works together 'plays' together

The Bryan family Works hard together and plays hard together. Beau and Dak have learned they have their own chores to do at home. They feed and water the small flock of chickens that the family keeps on their small acreage farm. They also gather the eggs. Asked if he ever broke an egg while gathering them, Dak got a sheepish look on his face, then smiled and nodded his head. "Some" he said.

The boys and their dad are making Tik Tok videos of wheelbarrow rides. The parents make it a point to explain to the boys why they do what they do with anything.

Dak likes to help his mom in the kitchen, baking cookies and he really likes to help eat them. When asked what he feels is something important he has learned to do everyday, he replied, "Brush your teeth."

At night before being tucked into bed, Beau and Dak listen to podcast audios with their dad about investing.

"We listen to 'Poor Dad, Rich Dad,' said Beau.

"You got that a little backwards," Chad told him. "It's 'Rich Dad, Poor Dad.'"

"Oh yeah," said Beau.

So as the years pass and the next generation of Bryans reach adulthood, we can probably expect more business ventures around Buffalo. Who knows, maybe we'll even have our own Jurassic World in Dallas County.



REFLEX PHOTO BY STEVE JOHNSON  
**Three year old Dak Bryan rides his "submarine," Market 116 worker Jennifer Allen as she works scraping the floor, while his brother Beau watches.**



REFLEX PHOTO BY STEVE JOHNSON

**Here's an inside look of the new Market 116 location as it looked the day before the 5th Year Anniversary Grand Reopening.**



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
**Dak Bryan helps his dad, Chad, get the nail gun in the right spot.**





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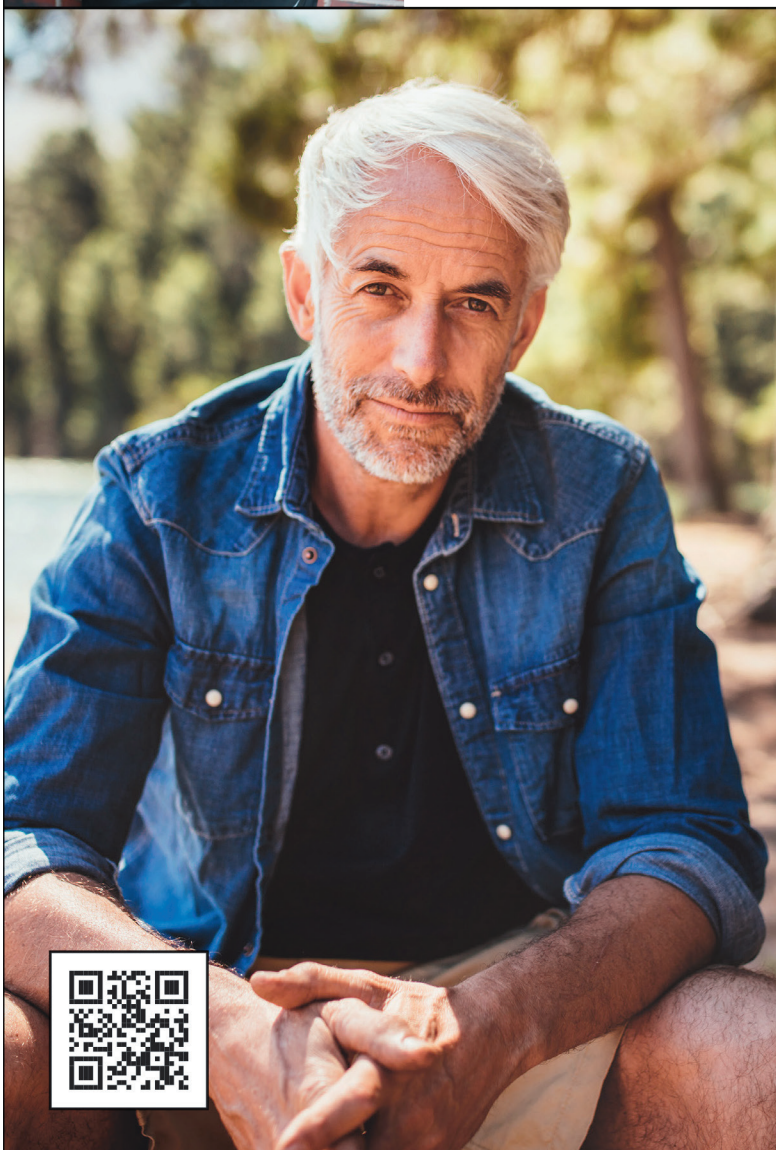
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