



the GOOD LIFE

Mental • Health • Dental

Community rallies around Lyndsey, a Skyline second-grader diagnosed with kidney cancer
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A JOURNEY TO CREATE



Braden Haun, Ryan Keith, Erica Venvertloh standing with Landon Kemp and Teri Dye at the Art Sync Art Gallery.



Landon Kemp demonstrates how quickly he can bring a sketch to life.



Dye, with Landon Kemp and Erica Venvertloh, enjoys getting input from fellow artists on what they expect for ArtAbilities.

For the love of art...

Interview and photos by
Linda Simmons
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Art and young artists are all very important to Teri Dye of Art Sync Gallery in Bolivar, and that is why she is looking ahead to a project that she hopes will be healthy for everyone involved.

The ArtAbilities Collective is in the very early stages, but the participants are collaborating with Dye to make this a journey, for all involved, one that will give them the opportunity to share their talents and have some fun along the way.

"Those on the spectrum, (which they all are) are very literal folks with not always a lot of emotion," explains Dye, referring to participants in the project.

Dye is speaking only from her experience with her own son. This is something very new and different for all of them.

"I don't know where this will take us, but I hope for them to enjoy the journey," she says. "Often they just want to be a part of an 'adult' setting or they want to be 'like everyone else.' They are each incredibly unique and special. Their honesty is always refreshing. They all love art and for them, ART is the focus and our common denominator for our 'collective,' not autism."

Dye wants everyone to understand, "this project isn't limited to only ASD,

but that's where it is right now." There is the exception of some participants with physical disabilities, as well as autism.

The Bolivar Herald-Free Press visited with Dye about the project.

How did "The ArtAbilities Collective" start? At the ArtAbilities Art Show that was held at the end of July is where all this began. I have been involved within the Autism Community for over five years now. My son, Jacob, was diagnosed with ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) at the age of 18, he's now 25. I was lost and thought "now what?" There are a lot of things out there for young children but not a whole lot of anything for adults on the spectrum. I found a local group, SWAN (Southwest Autism Network), that is now led by Andrew McFarland and Angel Haun. I volunteer with them as well. We thought maybe we could have an ART SHOW, we knew if nothing else, we had a few that would participate, our own children. I, loving all things art, am a member of the Polk County Artists Association and Art Sync Gallery so I went to work to see if I could make it happen. With a phone call to Kathy Roweton and a go-before the Board at Art Sync Gallery, we were in. Many thanks to them! The show, ArtAbilities, was a huge success! We not only had local artists but we had art come in from a special needs school in Springfield, Infinity Academy, as well as one of the local



Minda Cox works hard on her art and enjoys sharing her talents with other young artists.

group homes. I was thrilled beyond words!

After the ArtAbilities Art Show, one of the judges, Landon Kemp, inquired if there would be an opportunity to get together with some of the artists from the show. Landon is a published animator/illustrator that lives here in Bolivar. I told him to give me some time to see what I could do and from there, The ArtAbilities Collective came to be.

People might ask, what is “The ArtAbilities Collective”? They are a small group of very talented artists, amongst them we have painters, illustrator/animations/writers, a singer/songwriter and a couple of budding musicians. This group is for artists that are not defined by their “special needs” but thrive with them. This group of artists are here to encourage and inspire one another.

Picasso said that, “Art washes away from the soul, the dust of everyday life.” I think we all need that from time to time. Making art stimulates our brains, decreases our stress and anxiety levels with the bonus that it gives us the opportunity for self-expression.

Are you going to make art then? Yes, I am certain, we will make art! That is what artists do best. We are a “Collective of Artists,” meaning we are a group of artists (and supporters) that work together to encourage and support each other. We’ll also keep our eyes and ears open for art opportunities. Art Sync Gallery has several “CALLS For ART” throughout the year. We will be having another ArtAbilities ART Show in April, so stay tuned for details on that.

We do have a Facebook page “ArtAbilitiesCommunity” so please Like or Follow us to stay updated. Our meetings will be held the last Wednesday of the month from 3 to 4 p.m. at Art Sync Gallery, here in Bolivar. Which means our next meeting will be October 27. This will be an informal get together. We will talk about art, share ideas and possibly eat a cookie or two. Maybe we’ll



Dye and a few of the members toss around ideas about the future of ArtAbilities and discussing upcoming events.

talk about the best place to buy bulk watercolor paper. Ask an opinion on a certain brand of paint or pencils. Or, maybe someone will have a new medium or technique to share.

I also hope to have in the upcoming year some “Artist Talks” from those in the disability/special needs community, along with artist demonstrations. It should be a lot of fun!

As for me, I am an ART enthusiast! I love learning about art. I love making art. I love integrating faith and art. I was a late bloomer, I graduated from the Class of 2019, right here in Bolivar, with my BS in Art with a 3D Studio Concentration from SBU. I love working with and being a part of the “special needs” community. The artists that I know within this group are incredibly creative, honest, encouraging and so inspiring. If you know of anyone that is an artist, 16 years old and up, within the Bolivar/Polk County community, that would be interested in joining us, please let them know.



Local auction offers county grown produce



Mail photos by Shelby Atkison

Local growers enjoy the sight of several sales at the Webster County Produce Auction in Seymour, located at 801 Berry Road.

By Shelby Atkison
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As folks begin to move into soup mode, produce sales tend to increase around the beginning of fall. This is especially true at the Webster County Produce Auction. Sales are held twice a week at 801 Berry Road in Seymour, featuring 100% locally grown produce.

“This is one of the busier week’s we’ve had this season,” said Auctioneer Bob Crump. “We have buyers from Arkansas, Oklahoma, Kansas and they’re all here to buy produce grown in Webster County. There’s nothing healthier than produce grown by people you can trust.”

Everything sold at the auction has been produced within a 7 mile radius of the sale barn. With auctions beginning in April and lasting through mid-October, sales are held each Tuesday and Friday through Mother’s Day, one day a week through the 4th of July and back to twice weekly through the end of October.

“All of our growers are Amish and they put a lot of effort into making sure customers are happy with what they’ve purchased,” Crump said. “There’s a lot of quality control checking that gets done before it’s ever set out to sell.”

According to Crump, the Webster County Produce Auction held its first-ever Mother’s Day sale on a Saturday this year, which is said to be repeated in future seasons. The auction will have another Saturday sale on the Oct. 2.



Seymour’s Anna Marie Kastning, 2, enjoys a fresh basket of cherry tomatoes immediately after winning the sale.

“Our growers offer everything from hanging baskets in the spring to fall decor once the autumn season rolls around,” he added. “There is bound to be something here for everyone.”

For more information on the varying produce available at the produce auction, search Bob Crump Auctions on Facebook for photos Monday morning’s ahead of each sale.



Bob Crump auctioneers each sale with years of experience – he started his career right after completing college.



Produce at the sales range from hanging baskets in the spring to numerous fall decorations, including an assortment of shapes and sizes of pumpkins.



One of the more popular items each fall are the home grown mums.

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Grace Place

Opening hearts
to foster care

By **Shelby Atkison**
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There are currently 400,000 children in the foster care system in the United States. According to Grace Place Childrens Home, that's 400,000 reasons to do what they do.

Grace place started with one pair of shoes. A little girl in Sunday school had broken a pair of shoes at camp, and Dana Auten replaced them with a \$1 pair of flip flops.

In December, she noticed the same little girl was wearing the same pair of flip flips – but by then they had broken. After carrying her home in the snow and realizing that was the child's only pair of shoes, it hit her that something was wrong within our community.

"That's when I started digging and felt myself being called toward the foster care side of ministry and how it affects everything," she explained. "It does touch on our poverty issue, it does touch on drug abuse and alcohol addiction. There are a lot of problems that contribute to the overall need of foster parents. I thought we could do the most good if we focused on foster care."

Grace Place has grown from there and was licensed last year to begin foster care training and last month, they were licensed for Spaulding, which allows them to train and license people to adopt out of foster care.



A Grace Place child unpacks a pod of her belongings at her family's new home, which is reportedly almost as big as her heart.

Contributed photos

"There is no limit to what you can do to help the children in the foster care system," added Auten. "Of course it's our mission right now to get potential foster parents signed up to go through these courses but we're

also here to answer any questions and ease the nerves of putting yourself out there and opening your heart to these kids."

The foster parent training classes offered are provided at no cost to



Toting some special decor indoors, the child prepares to decorate her new room.

the family. They consist of five-week courses at Temple Baptist Church in Marshfield. Courses are held on Saturdays and are going on now.

"If you're teetering just call us, ask questions and speak with us personally the whole process can be intimidating," she said. "The idea of taking in children can be a little bit scary... but what if you could just take in one child? What if just one child needed you? Sometimes that takes the fear factor out of it and it's just one person that you're helping."

For questions or to register for foster parent training classes, contact Dana Auten by emailing graceplace-children@yahoo.com or calling 417-242-1332.

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Community rallies around

LYNDSEY

Reflex photo by Sherece DeFreece

Skyline second-grader Lyndsey Morales, who is battling kidney cancer, was the guest of honor at the Skyline-Fair Grove football game Friday night, Sept. 10. Here, she gets ready to toss the coin before the opening kickoff as members of both teams look on.

Skyline second-grader diagnosed with kidney cancer

By Paul Campbell
paulc@buffaloreflex.com

In an outpouring of support for Lyndsey Morales, a Skyline second-grader who has been diagnosed with Stage 4 kidney cancer, the local community has raised more than \$20,000 through various fundraisers and donations. Fair Grove also has pitched in \$1,700 that was raised in just a few days. In addition, the community of Macks Creek also has been raising money for Lyndsey.

The fundraising figures were announced Friday night, Sept. 10, prior to the high school football game played at Skyline between the Tigers and Fair Grove.

Lyndsey was chosen to toss the coin at the start of the game, and she was presented with flowers by representatives of both the Fair Grove and Skyline teams. Donations and fundraisers will be used to help Lyndsey financially as she and her mother travel to Children's Mercy Hospital in Kansas City weekly for Lyndsey to receive chemotherapy treatments. She has 20 more weeks of chemo scheduled.

Fundraisers have included "Hat Day," the "Loose Change Challenge," a large donation by OakStar Bank and many more. Several football players from both Skyline and Fair Grove had their heads shaved at Skyline's Friday, Sept. 10, assembly. Lyndsey also shaved Skyline Elementary School Principal Jason Pursley's head at the assembly. She threw a pie in the face of Skyline girls basketball coach Kevin Cheek.



Reflex photos by Kelli Cheek

Skyline Elementary School Principal Jason Pursley sits for Lyndsey Morales, as she gives him a haircut.

There is a bank account set up for Lyndsey at OakStar Bank in Urbana. Checks can be made out to the Lyndsey Morales Donation Fund. Those who bank at OakStar can transfer funds.

For those who do not bank at OakStar, they can pay via bill pay

from their bank, etc. Or people can just write a check made out to the donation fund. Checks made out to the fund can also be sent to the school, and they will be deposited at OakStar. For those who live close, they can take in cash at the bank or drop it off at the school.

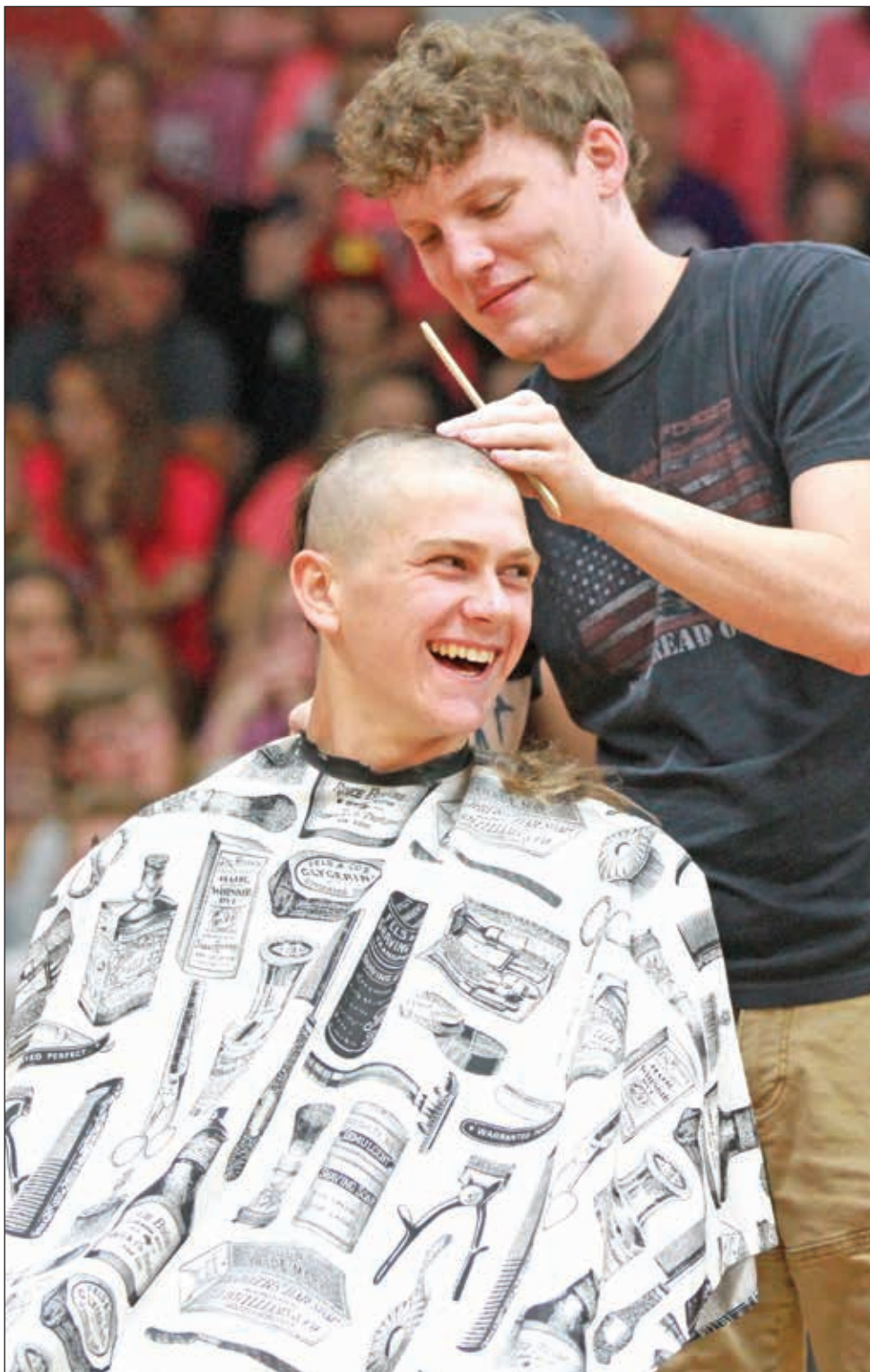


Jason Pursley and Lyndsey Morales hug after she shaved his head at the Skyline assembly on Friday. Pursley is principal of Skyline Elementary School.

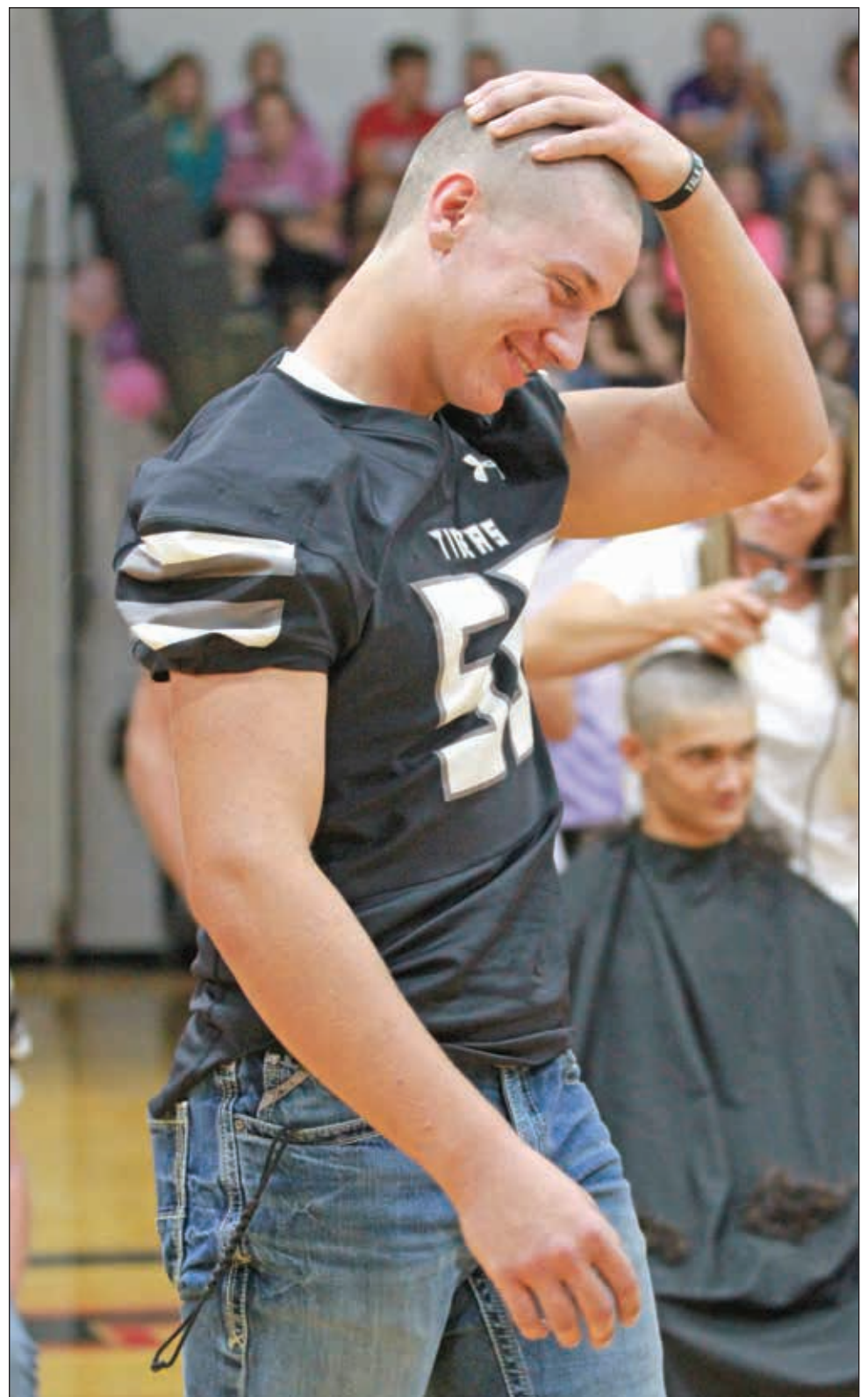


Reflex photos by Kelli Cheek

These Skyline and Fair Grove football players had their heads shaved at Skyline's Friday, Sept. 10, assembly in support of Lyndsey Morales, front, who is fighting Stage 4 kidney cancer.



AJ Dampier was among several Skyline and Fair Grove football players who had their heads shaved at Friday's Skyline assembly in support of second-grader Lyndsey Morales, who is battling kidney cancer. Doing the shaving was Bailey Jones.



Skyline lineman Azlen Metscher notices that something is missing after he had his head shaved at the school assembly.

X marks the SPOT

Staff Photos By Brittany Gilbert
The SPOT is a home for all types of members of the community. It was designed with the idea of its intended target membership in mind, focusing on being a darker, quieter place for them to hang out — preventing sensory overload.



The SPOT offers a slew of instruments to members of its music class to use during practice. Most of them were donated by Bolivar musician Sean Hunter.

By Brittany Gilbert
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In a community with limited services for mental health and special needs populations, Melissa Rohrbach is taking action to create some.

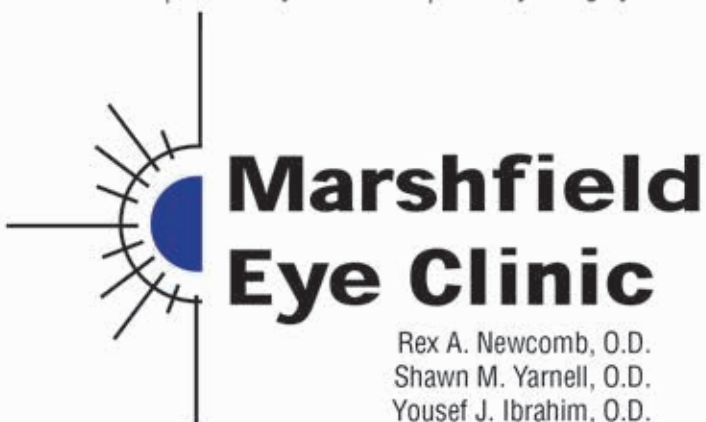
Some families in the Bolivar community are in low-income households, meaning they can't easily travel to Springfield to get the help they need, she said. They also don't always know how to get insurance or go about getting a diagnosis for their children. Then, there are some families who aren't able to do the extensive research on the topic like she did.

"Both my children are adults with autism," she said, explaining her connection to the subject, so "after dealing with services and the frustration as a parent," she began her research.

Her intent, she said, was to ensure other families don't have to deal with

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 First and third Wednesday: 2-3 p.m. Art class
 Thursday: 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Cooking skills

These events require a completed information packet and registration. Individuals must register for EACH class they would like to attend. To request the information packet and to register, call 777-0166



Staff photo by Linda Simmons

Melissa Rohrbach started the SPOT and her counseling services with the idea in mind to provide a safe place for all types of people, including those with mental health concerns or special needs.

When it comes to music classes, the SPOT has a variety of available instruments to pick up and play on the center's stage. Most of them, Rohrbach said, were donated by Bolivar musician Sean Hunter.

However, she said, with a low influx of people, these classes don't fill up very often.

"We're here regardless," she added, "so if nobody shows up, we go home. But if they show up, we're always here."

Plus, even if only one person shows up, they will still have an option to do something.

It's for these classes that Rohrbach purchases supplies. She said she also works to "organize the groups" and ensure there are staff available. She also teaches others "how to facilitate and have an effective group."

However, even with all these classes and all the work Rohrbach puts into the nonprofit, getting a SPOT membership is free to anyone.

She sustains the community center, she said, through her counseling services.

"I don't pay myself a paycheck," she added. "Everything I make I put back in the nonprofit."

With Mondays reserved for paperwork and bills, she sees clients four days a week, with operational hours from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

"Currently," she said, "it's just me."

However, she has a new counselor joining her soon who will work twice a week.

The name for the nonprofit, she explained, is Rohrbach Services Corp., which pairs with her counseling services to support the SPOT.

She plans to soon "have a name for the store when we're doing the job train-

the struggles she did.

"There (are) great benefits in Missouri for people with disabilities," she said, "but in our specific community, we don't have services that I think we should have."

The result of her efforts is a local community center called the SPOT, located at 302 W. Jackson St., Suite E, in Bolivar.

Due to the pandemic, she hasn't had the chance to have a grand opening, but she opened the doors in April 2020. Since then, they've had Fourth of July, Halloween and block parties.

Due to how many programs they offer at the SPOT, "we want to be careful and keep everybody safe," she added. "We can't get too crazy right now."

She isn't working alone, though.

There are five people on her team, but two are leaving, and three are joining.

One of the people joining her team full-time is Larissa Ann Lewis. Currently, she teaches the evening groups at the center, but when she joins, she'll be the director of the classes.

"Clients love her," Rohrbach said. "She's a really great asset."

Of the classes offered — both during the evening and day — there are ones for music, book clubs, wellness and recovery, art and others. Those, though, are open to everyone. There are some classes reserved for those with additional needs, like autism, down syndrome and others.



Staff photo by Brittany Gilbert

The kitchen is located further back in the building, a place the SPOT has for when it hosts cooking classes.

ing for people with other abilities (who are going to work at the store there.)"

For now, she coordinates with Citizens Memorial Hospital — where its workers send her clients, and she refers some back — the Community Connections Board, the Early Learning Childhood Center and, possibly soon, Community Outreach Ministries.

In the future, though, Rohrbach said she hopes to one day have classes structured by age, but that requires the SPOT to have a steady turnout.

That's not where her dream ends, though.

She said she has put together this "five-year plan of organized services in every office here."

She's planning to get her doctorate to become a clinical psychologist. She also hopes to have various medical providers on hand, like a medical doctor, an occupational and physical therapist, a nurse and other services. She said she wants to have a "whole person healthy coordination of services."

She said she might even end up opening another building for what she wants to do, leaving the door open to even more possibilities.

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Seeing Greens:

Marshfield's Edgeman already no stranger to winning

By Bryan Everson
bryane@marshfieldmail.com

Members at Whispering Oaks Golf Course were able to point to the talent of Marshfield sophomore Marlee Edgeman before her varsity opponents this fall.

The Lady Jay posted a 142 at the course's club championship on Aug. 14 and 15 to win the Ladies Division of the tournament, and then some, unofficially.

"She not only won the women's division, but had the best score overall as well," Lady Jays golf head coach Cheratin Hunter said. "That's pretty neat for a sophomore."

Edgeman shot a 72 one day, 70 another to lead all members, saying she hadn't played in the tournament in several years, but it's a sign of how much her game has improved since, let alone in the past year.

"She'd had a heckuva summer," Hunter said. "I know she's put in a lot of work."

"I've been all over the place," Edgeman said. "I've stayed here in Missouri, played in Kentucky, Tennessee, Florida. It was really busy."

Part of it included July's 91st

Missouri Women's Amateur at Mules National Golf Course in Warrensburg, a tournament many of the Big 8 Conference's best from Springfield Catholic and Logan-Rogersville have played in recent years as well.

"That was competitive," Edgeman said. "The first day I didn't do so good — I shot an 87 — the second day I had a 74, and the third day I shot an 80. It was my first women's amateur and I was nervous."

The rest of the summer included taking part in tournaments throughout the country, many times against girls several years older. A lot of the focus from Edgeman has been concentrated on her score, rather than her place, though she doesn't hide that ambition to place highly. Those who last saw her play last fall and this summer will especially notice her improvements off the tee. "I've been hitting the ball a lot further," she said. "I was carrying my drives about 160, 170 yards last year. Now it's 180, 200. It's my technique, and I've gotten a little bit stronger."

Hunter saw the improvements already after several weeks of varsity practice.

"I think for sure she's definitely matured in her game," Hunter said.



Mail photo by Bryan Everson

Marshfield sophomore Marlee Edgeman chips onto the green at practice at Whispering Oaks Golf Course, where she shot a 142 as the best score at the course's club championship recently.

"The biggest thing that gets in her way is herself sometimes, but I really feel like she's relaxed and confident going into this season. I think with the experience last year of going to state, and playing the competition she's played all summer, it has only bettered her for the school season. I think she's ready to put her summer into this season and see where she goes from there."

All the playing with golfers of a wide range of ages has seemed to already pay off. Edgeman finished just four strokes off first at districts in 2020, then took ninth at the state tournament as a freshman.

Of last year, Edgeman said, "I feel like I've gotten a lot more confident knowing I finished top-10 at state, and going to big tournaments, doing well [over the summer], that's made my

confidence grow."

She's continued to make waves in her second season of varsity golf. Again playing with some of the best prep golfers in the Ozark, she captured a three-way tie for sixth place at the Springfield Catholic Invitational at Bill & Payne Stewart Golf Course on Sept. 1. The next day, she was a winner for the Lady Jays at the Seymour Tournament.

Those top-10 finishes were parlayed into Edgeman shooting a 72 at Whispering Oaks on Sept. 9 to win the Marshfield Invitational, another highlight for the prodigy.

"It's absolutely awesome, especially for a tournament with 19 teams," Hunter said. "It says a lot about Marlee and how she's playing right now. She's playing more relaxed, which definitely works in her favor."



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In quiet neighborhoods, you find quiet people going about their lives, doing good things. Harold is one of those people. An introvert by nature, he finds himself happiest while changing the brake pads on an old truck or replacing a water heater.

A mechanic by trade, Harold lost his job in his early sixties. His wife Jeannette teaches English at the local high school. With their own kids grown, they don't need a lot or want a lot. There is something liberating about being frugal and staying out of debt, even if it comes because you simply don't see the need for a lot of stuff. So Harold and Jeannette live simple lives. And while his wife is in the classroom, Harold makes the rounds in the neighborhood. There's always a widow who needs a faucet fixed or a teenager with a first car that needs the shock absorbers changed or the tires rotated.

Harold approaches each day the same way he has for years. He pulls on his coveralls and goes to work. He doesn't run a small business, but he has a big heart. And while his wife teaches students to be clear in thought and articulation, Harold economizes language as if he is saving it for some future outpouring.

"Yep, you got a leak. I'll get my toolbox."



That's about as much as you'll get out of Harold. Even when you thank him, he'll just wave.

In a world of oversharing, channels of information that flood our screens, and myriad ways to communicate, if you want to talk to Harold, you have to wander over to his workshop and knock on the door. There's something reassuring, almost spiritually grounding, knowing that

amid a chaos of change, there's Harold, in his gray coveralls, with a wrench in his thick hands, willing to put his back into fixing the mechanical things that stress us out. Watching him work, slowly and methodically, is a Zen experience, gratifyingly meditative. Remove the old pipe, haul it to his truck, cut and thread a new pipe—the oil and shavings dripping into an old coffee can. He's done this hundreds of times and knows how not to make a mess, not to rush. The pipe joint is dry-fitted, then pulled apart, pipe dope applied, then wrenched together. There's no frustration, no hurry, only an ease and satisfaction in things being done right.

At the end of Harold's life, his good deeds will come pouring out in the words of friends and family, a rush of appreciation that would have embarrassed their good-hearted neighbor with the skilled hands.

"He was there when I needed a hand," many will say. And indeed, what a valuable thing that is these days. After all, our purpose is not to get the most likes, but to like most what we do for others.

Purpose...PassItOn.com

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Forgiveness Heals Us

By The Foundation for a Better Life®

Forgiveness isn't always as easy as it sounds. Sometimes we think it needs to be earned rather than freely given. As a young father, Davis was working to remodel and maintain his home. There's nothing like the pride you take in that first home, no matter how much work it needs, it's yours by sweat and sacrifice. So when he came home one night and caught two local teenagers breaking into his garage he was angry. They ran off, but he recognized them. And the following day confronted them and their parents. You'd expect a moment of truth, a reconciliation. But none came, only denial and character witnesses by the parents. A few weeks later Davis confronted one of the boys and threatened him. The boy confessed to some of the theft but Davis wasn't satisfied. He stewed over the lies and the reluctant admission. Fathers of teenage boys know this feeling of incomplete restitution. It takes time for emotional maturity to develop to its completeness, so sometimes half an apology is just going to have to do. Years later Davis again ran into the now young men. They had grown up. They thanked Davis for not doing more when he caught them,

like calling the police. They talked about college life, the future. For a moment, Davis was oddly unsatisfied; that is until he too apologized. He was sorry for losing his temper, and for not developing a better relationship with the boys in the first place. That's when the tight strings around his heart loosened.

Remorse can motivate us to strengthen our character and see people differently, even seek forgiveness. But ruminating on the past will only hold us back. On the last day of Junior High School, the bell had rung and the exuberance of school ending turned into rowdiness. A shy girl had just cleaned out her locker and one of the rowdy boys kicked the books and papers out of her hands. They spilled everywhere, down the stairs and into the herd where her art projects and journals were trampled. In tears, she tried to collect a year's worth of work. Ross watched briefly until his friends pulled him away and off to end-of-year parties he knew this girl would never get invited to. His eyes were fixed on the futility of a girl who didn't fit in and was now cast out. He would regret not helping her the rest of his life.

Forgiveness sometimes comes slowly, a piece at a time. Sometimes it comes at unexpected moments so

completely it overwhelms us. And sometimes, the hardest person to forgive is our self. Ross may never forgive his 14-year-old self. But he should. He should let the confusion of emotions he was feeling belong to his youthful lack of social courage. He should learn from it and forever be aware of other's feelings so that he can become the person who will stand up for the unnoticed and

unpopular members of his community. Because it is in those moments we all find redemption.


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* Source: Recovery Research Institute

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Matthew Ericksen, D.O., is an otolaryngologist at CMH ENT Clinic, Bolivar. He is board-certified in Otorhinolaryngology, Facial Plastic, Head and Neck Surgery. Learn more about treatment options for chronic sinus issues and nasal obstruction at <https://bit.ly/CMHENT> or call 417-328-7000 to schedule your appointment today.

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