

Ladies' Journal

A SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT TO THE

BUFFALO REFLEX
& DALLAS COUNTY REPUBLICAN
EST. 1869



NOVEMBER 1, 2023

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LINDA (MARTIN) CASELMAN

I saw *Linda* at OakStar bank or was it in a cattle truck?



Linda Caselman has a grand accomplishment. She has kept a circle of friends engaged and loving each other since high school.

Linda entered Macks Creek as a junior and Penny as a sophomore. The families actually paid tuition to attend. Circumstances led them to leave the Skyline District. It worked out in the long run because the three women have spent a lifetime holding each other up and developing bonds that few women have.

The ladies have started celebrating their 60th birthdays, plan-

ning trips together for the marking of time. They just returned from traveling to Oklahoma to the Pioneer Woman. In the beginning, after high school, it took a lot of work to make it work. They had all married soon after school let out. Plus, all three worked at TanTara for many years. Each friend added to their family and devoted efforts to keep in touch.

They have tried to get together for birthdays and holidays. Sherry turns 60 in the spring, and Penny will follow next year. The Pioneer Woman excursion for Linda was very memorable. They attempt to have a mini-vacation with an overnight stay once a year.

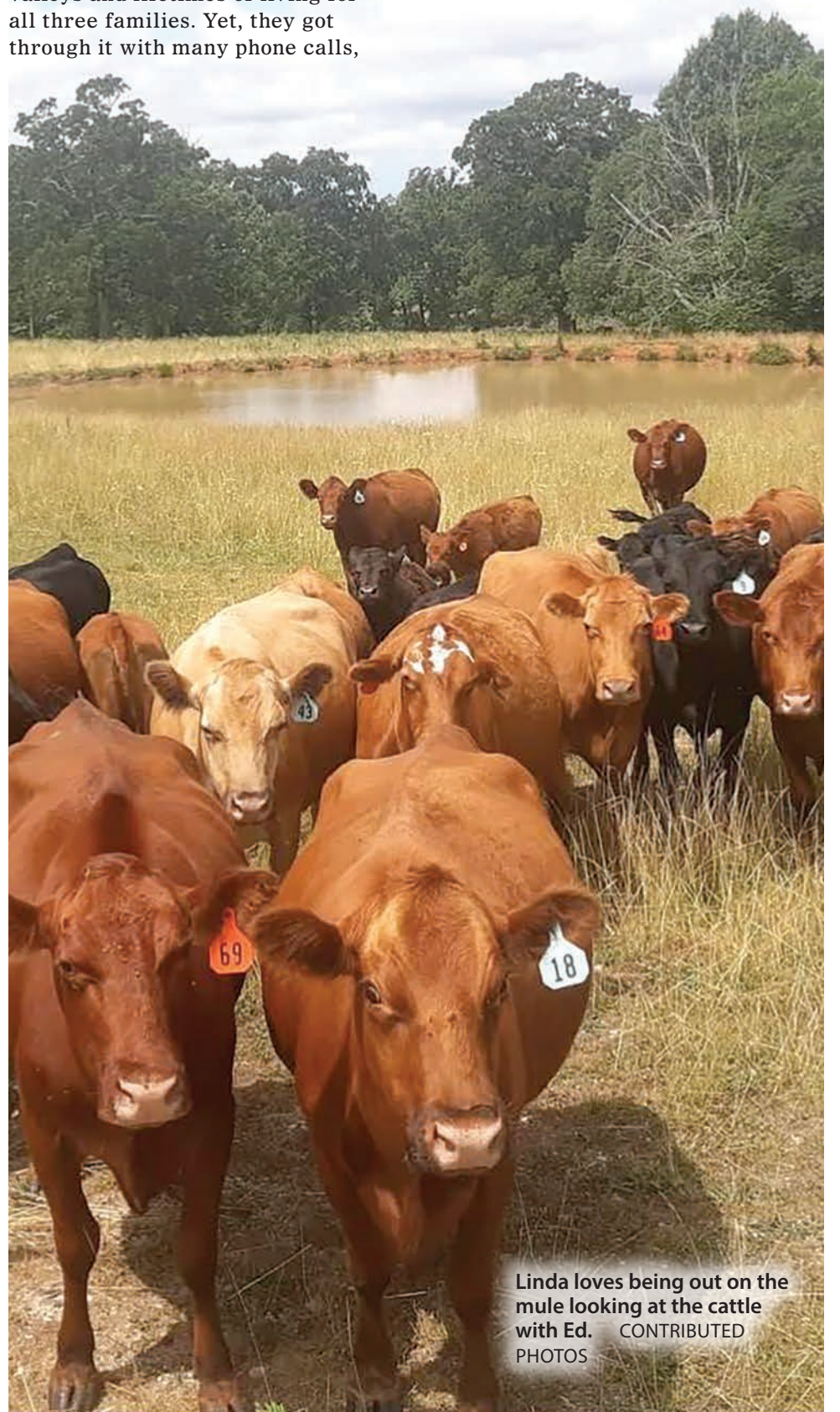
The gals have seen hard times,

visits and sisterhood support.

All three have ended up being bankers at different banks. Each gal has a distinct personality and is unique. Linda says that Penny has labeled her as

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too. Sherry lost her husband and is a widow. Penny went through a divorce, dating and a new marriage. Sixty years of life brings peaks, valleys and lifetimes of living for all three families. Yet, they got through it with many phone calls,



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Linda loves being out on the mule looking at the cattle with Ed. CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

CASELMAN

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the best listener. They have supported each other over the years with lots of listening, laughing and tears. The banking best friends are closer than close.

Linda married Ed Casselman. With the last name of Caselman, one would figure she helps out at the sale barn. Nope, Linda is a cattle truck driver. She helps Ed haul cattle, pulling a trailer for a regular auction cattle buyer all weekend. He recently retired, so the cattle hauling business slowed down for her. She would haul one trailer and Ed another.

The couple has a farm out in the Long Lane area. They run a big herd of about 100 head of beef cattle, primarily mommas and babies, black and red. Then, they sell off the calves.

When her daughter Jessie was born, she worked at Bass Tracker in Lebanon and later got laid off. It was then she started in the banking business. She began at Buffalo Bank, which was bought by Southwest Bank. That bank sold to Mercantile when First Star took over. In 1996, she started at Bank of Urbana in Buffalo at the trailer that sat out front of the current building in the beginning with Georgia Hale and Tammy McDaniel. She celebrated 27 years at OakStar, with 33 years of banking this year.



Back row, left to right: Loyd Caselman, Devin Caselman, Jessica Nyberg and Nathan Nyberg; middle row: Chelsey Caselman, Ed and Linda Caselman and Leslie Caselman; front row: Willa and Hanna Nyberg.



The three amigos at the Pioneer Woman's Lodge are Linda Caselman, Penny Morgans and Sherry Nations.

Linda has done every job in the bank except loans. She has been a teller and the back room with processing. Then, she was brought to the lobby to specialize in new accounts and CDs. She was promoted to retail manager and supervises the tellers.

In fact, she is looking for tellers to fill some vacancies. Anyone interested in the positions should call her or stop by the bank to inquire about qualifications and the opportunity.

OakStar wants to be a community service bank. The employees can read about events and volunteer needs on regular bank postings. Everyone working there has a spirit of volunteerism. All of the OakStar branches are like that, Linda explained.

Linda enjoys her job because she likes talking to people and helping them with their financial issues. She has a lot of regular customers because she's the familiar face they look to for help.

She enjoys outdoor activities. She is

an avid gardener and loves the outdoor flowers.

She finds going out in the fields to count cattle relaxing. She enjoys seeing their land, checking fences, and counting the cattle. The mule rides with Ed is her favorite thing to do. Linda is a farmer's wife through and through.

Ed is still her sweetheart after all of these years. Every Sunday morning, they have a breakfast date at the Rocking Chair in Conway. That started a while back, and they try to go every Sunday.

Her children and the grandkids are special to Linda. She is blessed with two children who are supportive and enjoy happy families. Jessica married Nathan Nyberg, and they have two girls. Loyd married Chelsey and they have two boys, 19 and 14.

Linda Caselman knows how to build relationships at home, work and social relationships. Relationship building is her superpower.

Equal Pay, really?

The Equal Pay Act, passed by the US Congress in 1963, was the first federal legislation to prohibit sex-based discrimination. Women earned an average of 17% less than men in 2022. For every dollar earned by men, women earned 82 cents.



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REFLEX PHOTO
BY JOY BEAMER

CYNTHIA BUSH

I saw Cynthia at Greasy Creek General Store or was it OMB?



The family stands in front of the store before one of the 1800s fall festivals. CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

By Joy Beamer
joyretires@gmail.com

If you attended any festivals at Greasy Creek General Store, the likelihood of meeting Cynthia Bush is high. Her family are the original owners of the store and organizers for the events.

Cynthia is the matriarch of the Bush family. Her husband, Dan, and son, Josh, operate the store six days a week. Her daughter, Coley, no longer works with the family business. However, Coley was the member of the family that led the organization of the fall festivals.

While they no longer host the enormous celebration of the 1800s and the crafts booth vendors, they have been developing a different type of event.

Plans to align more closely with the store and the 1800s era for an event are in the works.

The festivals were a big hit for Dallas County residents and drew people from the region. Cynthia enjoyed the festivals initially, but the event became harder and harder for the four of them to pull together.

When Coley grew up and sought her career, putting on a festival proved too much for them to handle. The store is open six days a week, and Cynthia works full-time, making planning difficult. The weather was also an issue; Cynthia hoped it wouldn't rain or have too much wind. Dealing with people and vendors with problems and all the little things it takes to get the festival going each fall was proving to be too much.

Coley would start July 1 to hone in on the October event. The festival was a constant undertaking and took a lot of organization.

Cynthia said, "It was fun while it lasted, but that season for the store is over."

West Plains is her hometown. She attended school there and calls herself a math nerd. So, it makes sense that she has landed at OMB (Old Missouri Bank). Numbers and math are her thing. She even serves as the treasurer at their church, Cedar Ridge Church.

She enjoyed all the business courses in high school. She is well suited to the office atmosphere. She loved courses like shorthand and was a Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) member in high school.

After high school, she attended Southwest Missouri State for a time. After they made her take tennis class, she thought she should quit. She couldn't play a better tennis game after the class and grew tired of school. College was not her path.

Dan and Cynthia married in their 20s. Initially, they lived in West Plains, later moving to Hannibal. She worked part-time through the years. They started a family, first a girl, Coley, and then a boy, Josh.

The couple decided to homeschool. Cynthia enjoyed the process and feels her family has reaped the benefits. The time together has brought the family very close. They enjoy a family kinship of harmony that other families only dream of.

Cynthia learned many things while homeschooling the children. She used a whole learning approach and did many activities with the children. She took them to the library. They studied many

subjects they may not have had the opportunity in public or private school.

Once, they had a meeting with a horse trainer, for example. Activities like that one gave the children an exceptional, round learning experience. The hands-on approach was vital. Of course, they completed book learning, but much more was explored, making the time fun and enlightening.

In the mid-2000s, Dan's job was moving to Florida. He knew he would not be moving, picking up his family and relocating. He had a side business, so the parents flip-flopped jobs. She returned to work full-time. Dan took over the homeschooling while working his side business.

Cynthia would provide a stable, reliable income by returning to work full-time. They didn't know if it would work with Dan operating the side business. The children got the best deal out of the switch. They spent half of their school years with mom and then dad. This fact is one key to how they enjoy a very close family relationship.

Cynthia enjoys being outside and taking hikes. The couple went camping on vacation and enjoyed walks and the time out in the beautiful Ozark fall. She would recommend hiking the Cedar Bluff Trail at the Pomme de Terre State Park, where the trail follows the water on both sides.

Another place to try hiking is in Arkansas. They enjoyed the rugged Petit Jean Mountain. The reward is at the end, where there is a waterfall.

The Bush families still like to camp together and enjoy little road trips together. A perfect night is when they have a hot dog roast in the backyard or



Back row: Sara Anderson, Crystal Tucker, Angie Lindsey, Lisa Zook, Chelsey Ownby
Front: Melanie Astarita, Mandalin Welch, Patty Carrillo

Not Pictured: Linda Nixon, Ava Scrivener, Nicole Nelson, Rebecca Lawson, Melissa Ford, Chyann Simpson, Brandy Henderson

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BUSH

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go on a Sunday afternoon hike. However, getting all four adult schedules together for family time is getting harder and harder. The children are adults now finding their futures.

The family enjoys animals, too. They have two outdoor dogs and several cats. Like most people with cats, they have a queen. Her name is Ella.

Cynthia is very busy working full-time at OMB as a personal banker. She opens new checking and savings accounts, CDs, customer service, telephone customer service and lock box management.

She is a gal who knows what she likes and doesn't care about. She is not a social media lover. She doesn't like to cook. She may put out a few flowers, but then they need water.

Cynthia doesn't have time for extra stuff, she joked.

Now, she loves the outdoors. The interview for this special section was conducted casually in the lawn chairs on the back porch on a perfect autumn day with a breeze. Who doesn't like that type of living?

Her favorite activity is scrapbooking and she finds it relaxing. Second, she enjoys reading Christian novels.

She works Mon. to Fri. and Sat. every few weeks. Greasy Creek is open six days a week. Sunday is reserved for church. They are active members at Cedar Ridge Church, with around 110 members.

Cynthia considers everyone in her family to be happy, busy and working. She attributes a lot of the success of her children back to homeschooling. The couple chose to keep them out of the public arena, away from kids with different values than their family.

They taught their kids Biblical principles and skirted around public school problems and the students with bad attitudes and issues brought into school. The children grew into responsible and caring adults by doing things together and raising them in church with the love of Christ.

Her heart saddens when she sees families in stores being hateful to one another and screaming at each other. She prays that those individu-

als will start loving those kids with affection and care about them. According to Cynthia, there are times to say no and discipline when needed,



Dan and Cynthia Bush own Greasy Creek General Store.

but parents should offer love through Christ's eyes. She takes her faith seriously.

She could take her children anywhere, and they have never embarrassed her.

She said, "When you start when they are little, it's not hard to train good behavior. It's a sad world we live in."

Her daily life at OMB is enjoyable because she works with a good group of people. She said they take care of you. Cynthia described the family business as a 'real ride.' She helps at the store when they need her now, but most of her days are at OMB.

At Greasy Creek, Jan. and Feb. is their slower time, but they spend time sorting, picking up the year's mess, and catching up on all the problems. Spring, summer and fall are busy. During the interview, Dan told her she would have a candle pick up on Saturday. She finds herself on the road again.

Cynthia is truly a Proverbs 31 woman. Christianity.com published a commentary from the ESV Study Bible, describing Proverbs 31, telling the reader the ideal woman is virtuous, strong and selfless. She does not wait to be served but rises early, even before sunrise, to delegate tasks and engage in business.

She does it all for God, her husband and her children.



Cynthia on a hike through the Japanese Garden in Springfield.





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SHERRY CLASPILL

I saw *Sherry* at O'Bannon Bank or did I?

By Joy Beamer
joyretires@gmail.com

Sherry Claspill works in the back for O'Bannon Bank. Area residents may not have seen her in recent years. She has worked for O'Bannon Bank for almost 36 years in December. Nonetheless, this is a rare photo of Sherry because she works in information security. Sherry is meticulous about what gets out on the internet about her personally and possibly the black web.

She takes her job seriously and is very careful for personal security and the hometown bank. Her job title is Senior Vice President, Information Security and Technology Officer.

You will find very few photos with Sherry on social media, if any. What you will find are the poodles in her life. She is a poodle lover and lives with two standard and two toy poodles. She explains that her pack of poodles is like her children.

Sherry keeps more than one dog, so the poodles will have companionship and suffer less from owner separation anxiety. She enjoys her poodles. The poodles are well-trained and well-groomed. Sherry spends most of her time at work but loves her time at home with her companion poodles.

Poodles make great pets because they are intelligent. Poodles are easier to train than some breeds. They are hypoallergenic and do not create dander. They are lively, active, fun-loving dogs. However, each poodle has a different personality, much like other characters in your own family.

Sherry came to Buffalo by way of the Kansas City area. When she started school in Kansas City, her family lived a mile from the downtown grade school. Then, busing started. Her father moved them to the Independence school district for middle school behind the Truman Library area. Then, busing came to Independence. The next step was attending high school in Grain Valley, smaller than Buffalo at the time and a poor school that was mostly farmer-supported. Her mom and dad moved to Dallas County to be closer to the rest of the family. If someone here is a Claspill,

the likelihood of a relation to Sherry is high.

She tried retail briefly but found it wasn't for her. Next, she spent five years at a bank in Blue Springs. After that experience in banking, she decided to move to Dallas County to be closer to family.

She worked for a time at the vo-tech center in Louisville.



Beau is like family. Sherry has a four poodles family.



Sherry Claspill
REFLEX PHOTO BY JOY BEAMER



Nikki is one of Sherry's standard poodles. CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

There was an opening at O'Bannon Bank. She was an outsider. At that time, O'Bannon Bank usually hired only family or local people on recommendation. She was interviewed by long-term employee June Vogels.

Vogels rolled the dice on Sherry. The payoff is a 36-year veteran staff member. Sherry hopes to work for at least another ten years before retirement.

The school was a customer of the bank. She was advised to give a notice that suited the vo-tech school because the bank wanted to stay in good favor with the district. She gave one of the most extended notices she heard of, six weeks.

As luck would have it, Sherry became ill with bronchitis. She was to start at the drive-in and had taken antibiotics enough not to be contagious. As her character has proved repeatedly, she showed up for work and has persevered

with the characteristics of a quality, devoted employee.

She started learning information technology software and computer hardware at the bank. She helped out when someone quit because she had trained as the backup. From there, the work increased and she kept gaining knowledge and responsibilities. She became in charge of IT security at a time when males dominated all the fields in IT.

Once, Sherry went to server training and met soldiers from Fort Lenardwood taking the same course. Over time, she kept learning IT systems confidently, but it was evident at that training that she was a woman in a man's world.

O'Bannon does its own bookkeeping. Sherry has worked as a security officer and bookkeeper. Her job has morphed into different responsibilities as technologies and banking laws have been updated. There is a lot to oversee, with 35 servers in the Underground in Springfield.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, she helped set up the technology assistants for those who worked at home. Over time, more duties for her position grew, making it possible to hire KPM Technology LLC to work on a contract to assist the bank in all its IT needs. Sherry keeps on top of everything and learns how to remain on top in the information technology game.

There are bank phones, different software for different departments of the bank, and lots of hardware, printers and security needs. Sherry tries to stay versed in everything that O'Bannon

Bank uses with technology.

She can make a patch for a software problem or put in a kit for maintenance on a printer. Every time there is an update in the IT world, she is there to ensure everything goes on without a hitch.

If there is a security issue, IT problem, or project, she is in it, especially the security.

She said that bank employees work and any outside encroachment on their systems can't happen without her knowing.

Right now, customer service is implementing a new platform for new accounts. She laughed and said you can teach an old dog new tricks. As the bank modernized and upgraded programs, she made herself learn as much as possible.

The changes will keep coming and will be ongoing. There is an annual release of their main software each year, requiring updates for everyone at every branch. The bank is a Jack Henry's beta site to test all new software.

The banking industry has changed a lot in the last 40 years. Initially, she would hand-feed each check through a reader/sorting machine for processing. Closing the books for the day took hours. Now, day-end reports only take 30 minutes.

They have software alerting to a data breach or other security issues. Sherry will get the patch needed to stop the problem, lock it down and ensure no data loss or issues remain. Anything, any case involving IT, she knows about it.

The bank has ransomware protection for its banking customers. The bank is overseen by the banking examiners. She applauds the willingness of the O'Bannon Banking directors to let the employees do everything needed to protect the bank, the customers, and the board. Bill Monday, Martha Lewis and

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REFLEX PHOTO BY JOY BEAMER

Joy Beamer joyretires@gmail.com

For the second year, Casey Winkler serves as the Director of Special Services for Dallas County R-1 Schools (DCR1). She oversees special education for the entire district. In addition, Winkler oversees the gifted education of students with a higher IQ who need more challenges. Plus, she manages the paraprofessional program.

Students with a medical diagnosis that requires special accommodations are supervised by Winkler. Some students have English as their second language, requiring special instruction for English language learners.

Some students require homebound instruction. Most of the time, the child has a short-term medical need, requiring homebound remote schooling. She tries to arrange the session at the library or visit a shared location. Virtual class-

CLASPILL

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Andy Hall greatly support her department. Sherry is a problem solver.

The phone systems even fall under her purview. For anything related to technology, Sherry oversees the issues.

The banking software is designed so that each employee cannot see everything. They are limited to the areas where they manage or process data. For instance, teller software is different from the loan department. Only a few employees need total access to all systems. This is security for the customers and for the employees themselves.

Security lessons for all employees come on their computers in two to three-minute videos. The training includes training to identify phishing and malware threats. Employees will get scores within minutes, letting them know if they are at high risk or low risk based on the knowledge they displayed on the test.

They have software that scans the dark web to see if the employee is listed by public data breaches. It is taken seriously. Fake emails will be sent to the employees to see if they learned the lesson in the video. If they react appropriately, they may never know they were just tested. However, a required training video lesson will be delivered if they fail the test.

Along with Mindy Starkey, the two women moved from the downtown bank to the community room of the new bank when it was being built on

Ash Street. They were in charge of migrating the bank to the new facility. Eventually, they were moved to the middle of the construction. She remembers how fun it was to write all of the instructions on where wires and hardware would be set up on the sheetrock. Making a map on the wall to completion was rewarding.

Currently, there is no one under her training. The bank's back is KPM. There are standard operating procedures for almost every circumstance and every software.

Learning how to run wires and fix hardware throughout her employment has also made her handy at home. She knew to fix her air conditioning, mount motion lights, or fix things at the office like the joggers. She says Google is her best friend because internet videos teach her how to fix stuff.

Sherry said, "Can't sew. Can't cook. I run over cords with the vacuum. Can't crochet. But I can do computers all day long."

Staying home for three months during the pandemic was hard for her. She likes to take vacations but is ready to return to the bank about midway through the week.

She concluded that her job is to ensure everyone trusts the bank by providing quality security and protecting everyone's assets.

She said, "I will do a job right and always make it right for the customer."

rooms are also an option if a common area does not work for this special arrangement.

Winkler is good at her job finding accommodations for all types of students. She said there really isn't an average student. All students are special with qualities they exceed in and areas that need special attention. Her job is to help the teachers find avenues to enhance the unique needs of the students.

Many people think special services are only for the students on the lower end of learning ability. Winkler explained that the child with a higher IQ would probably do well in a gifted class because it is difficult to keep the student motivated and for teachers to challenge their intellect.

Winkler's Life Journey

She grew up on a farm where they grew corn, soybeans, and wheat. They also had cattle and hogs at the farm in Armstrong, Mo. Her dad hired out to

CASEY WINKLER

I saw Casey at Dallas County R-1 Schools

neighboring farms at harvest time. She has two brothers. The older brother lives in Colorado Springs and works in communication at the health department. Her little brother is a city planner in Lincoln, Nebraska.

She attended university in Bolivar at Southwest Baptist University (SBU). She met her husband, Brian, at SBU while in school. They have one daughter, Jordan, who is seven years old.

Winkler came to DCR1 from Grain Valley schools outside of Kansas City. She served in that school district for eight years. The couple wanted a slower-paced life and moved back to the area.

He coaches in Bolivar at the high school. He coaches speech and debate and is the asst. coach for theater. When one person is in the theater, they all are at the theater helping. The Winklers are indeed a theater family. Brian also helps recruit track and field for SBU. The family lives in Bolivar, and she commutes to work.

Bolivar and Grain Valley are similar in size, but Grain Valley has expanded. It is essential to keep family, church and the community a priority for their family. They moved back to Bolivar to raise the family and enjoy their lives because they like small-town living.

Winkler likes to run for her personal health. She ran half marathons at one time, but that takes a lot of time and energy. Her private time is limited because of the stage of life the family is in. Then, add in a career and she is a busy woman.

She still makes time to stop in at a garage sale occasionally. Otherwise, she is watching her daughter play soccer and participate in gymnastics.

Special Services

Winkler wants to see the community as a whole and to make an impact on individuals through the customized programs her department can offer.

Students can start services at three years old. The impact of helping a student implement a program can free the parent to get a job. The extra wages assist any household to get a leg up. Then, all the way through school, the services can help the child who has a special need get a job at graduation.

In today's classroom, students with special needs are mainstreamed into the classrooms. Many will remember how the special students at one time were out in the trailers or their special room at the end of the hall. That isolation from others is no more. Now, all students have inclusion. The child is around their peers and they can learn appropriate norms and have access to more curriculum. They know how to interact with others, which will help them get a job to support themselves. Plus, they will be ready to interact with the world.

A good example is her little brother. He had ADHD and needed services. Now, he is a city planner and has learned the coping skills he needs to make in the real world.

See WINKLER, Page 8

New Growth

Submitted by Patty Cantrell

Finding a ride. Getting small business support. Building your farm. All these types of assistance and more are available from New Growth. The rural community and business development organization serves 15 rural counties between Springfield and Kansas City, including Dallas County.

New Growth provides rural entrepreneurs with microenterprise financing, or loans less than \$50,000. The smaller loans help businesses get going and growing so they can qualify down the road for financing from banks as they need it.

New Growth also helps individuals and entrepreneurs join the financial mainstream with free action planning and next step tools to establish or improve credit scores. A good credit score is necessary to access employment, housing, and bank financing, and for going into business. A good credit score also saves money through lower borrowing costs, insurance rates, and more.

The New Growth Women's Business Center provides training and technical assistance for rural entrepreneurs – men and women. Business counselors are available to sit down with rural entrepreneurs and work through their ideas, and their next steps.

The New Growth Women's Business Center also hosts business workshops and monthly webinars on a range of topics from marketing to tax planning.

New Growth's Food Systems program offers both farm production and farm business development assistance. Conservation practices that save money and build soil and market options are a focus, including mentorship opportunities with experienced farms. New Growth's farm business counselor also works through enterprise ideas with farmers and food entrepreneurs.

New Growth Transit is an innovative program that addresses the rural need for more ride options, whether to the doctor or to the grocery store. New Growth Transit is available to Dallas County residents for rides. It also offers volunteer driver opportunities, including non-taxable mileage reimbursement.

Get in touch with New Growth
www.newgrowthmo.org

Business and farm programs are at
417-282-5936,
wbcinfo@newgrowthmo.org

New Growth transit is at
417-283-7991

WINKLER

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Paraprofessionals

Winkler supervises and hires the paraprofessionals (paras) for children who need a person with them throughout the day. Paras need 60 college hours or qualify for a paraprofessional or to be able to pass a college entry exam. She attempts to place students with a para that will mesh well. The school district is always looking for capable and willing paraprofessionals. The school district is happy to train them. Right now, there are around 25 paras on staff throughout the district. Anyone interested should contact Winkler through the main school number, 417-345-2222.

Each para's top priority is the child assigned to them. However, if time allows, a para can also help other kids in the classroom. They have found that the average student only needs acceptance. Paras and the classroom teachers can approve the child's needs to excel at their learning level.

Focusing on individuals

Winkler worked in a group home for a time. She learned that children need to learn, take risks, and ask questions there. She had non-verbal students who couldn't talk. Others needed independent living skills or learn how to interact with others through community service.

Gifted kids are similar to special needs students. A gifted student must have a 125 IQ score or confidence interval score of 21. They look at academic giftedness and fall in the 90th percentile of all the students. However, many students who fall into this category have social quirks.



Casey and her daughter rocking on the porch. CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Teachers need to think five steps ahead to help gifted students keep things going and the students motivated. One of the main focuses for giftedness is the social aspect. A student may have exceptional ACT scores and excellent grades. The problem is that they may be able to get a job, but not the social behavior with the soft skills to maintain a job.

Testing starts for the gifted program in the spring. The school screens all

second graders. They get an early peek if a teacher thinks a child is operating at a higher intellect.

DESI evaluates her department. Winkler attempts to streamline the guidelines for staff. She admits that DCR1 hires the best teachers, and they are always willing to try something new.

There are around 450 students in the school district that are under her department. Winkler says that everyone is ca-



The Winklers, SBU graduates.

pable of learning. Her department's job is to determine how individual children can learn best.

She loves classroom visits with the students and interacting with the teachers the most. Winkler sees how much each student gains and loves seeing their growth. However, if this is not the case, it is her job to help the teacher figure out how they can approach that student differently. Visiting the students where they are learning helps remind her why she does what she does for the kids.

Winkler manages the Individualized Accommodation Plan (IAP) for students who qualify. A student must be referred by the parent or the school district. Referral coordinators look at data to see what has been tried so far determining if they need more skills or need more training. Data like grades, medical status and attendance are all considered. The school avoids labeling students. If they suspect a disability, DCR1 meets with parents and teachers. Then, a decision is made if the circumstance warrants more testing. Eligibility is evaluated from 13 categories, and an IAP is created if needed. DESI will review these files, too.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, she has seen a significant increase in language and speech delays. They are still determining if all the time behind wearing masks affected how students saw how words are formed by watching others. She believed phonics could not be seen and heard correctly. The reading interventions at D.A. Mallory Elementary are helping.

In addition, the fine motor skills are dimensioning. Planned interventions and occupational therapists are available. Special services try working hard with fine motor skills for students who need to catch up. Teachers are attempting to have students work more with their hands. Students are checking out bags with practice skills. Early childhood fine motor schools are being looked at closely.

Trust with the teachers, the students and parents is paramount in helping the students. She hopes to continue nurturing teachers to build these trust partnerships.

Winkler enjoys her work and has made great strides in the district. She believes in the process and delivers above-average special needs education. The special services department doesn't use the cookie-cutter approach but models student-by-student plans.

She concluded, "We look at each child as an individual. What extra help do we need for each child?"



The Winkler family puts a priority on small town values and slower pace.

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Women's Selfless Service

Jane Addams was known as a pioneer social worker in America. She founded the Hull House, organized the Women's Peace Party and the International Congress of Women, and received the Nobel Peace Prize.

During the Civil War, Clara Barton was a nurse known as the "Angel of the Battlefield" who founded the American Red Cross.

HEATHER WINDES

I saw *Heather* at BTC Bank

By Joy Beamer
joyretires@gmail.com

If you saw Heather at the bank, then you really get around. She's only been in Buffalo since September. She is happy to be here and brings a great attitude of can-do spirit.

Originally from Washburn, Mo., she is a country girl, through and through. In fact, she went to college in Marshall on a full-ride scholarship with 12 gauge shooting talent. She earned a Bachelor of Science in agribusiness, paid by learning to be an expert trap shooter.

A friend asked her if she wanted to try the shooting club when she was in sixth grade. She stuck with it because she said she wasn't a natural shot. Everything else came easy for her. School and other activities took little effort. Getting an A is easy and sports were easy. She was determined to master her shooting skills. The motivation was to stick with shooting until she could beat all the boys.

Then, when she was in high school, the shooting club became more critical because she found out that scholarships were available for the top tier. She likes target shooting because family-oriented play and good conduct play a considerable role even though it is not a team sport.

She was looking at Evangel to try out for the volleyball team. Then, she saw that at Marshall, an agribusiness degree was available precisely meeting her dreams.

In high school, Heather was a busy student participating in softball, volleyball, trap shooting, FCA, NHS, and FFA.

In FFA, Heather served in officer positions, including vice president and president, during her senior year. She even thought about becoming an agriculture teacher. She still misses FFA activities today.

Like other students in our area who are FFA alumni, they know how to work hard for everything they want to achieve. With practice and commitment, FFA



Heather's trap shooting skills paid for college through a scholarship.

people meet their goals. FFA delivers to students a work ethic second to none and bolsters the agricultural mindset.

FFA students know how hard it is to work on a farm daily. Many people say FFA students are cut from a different cloth. They are--blue corduroy.

Blue Jacket alumni Heather is an only child, and one day, she will inherit the family farm of 400 acres. Seeking a career in agribusiness would only enhance her knowledge to become the owner of a large crop/livestock farming operation.

Family is important to Heather. There is a mile between her folks and the grandparents, who are 90. Her other grandparents are 80 and live 20 miles from them on 700 acres. They operated a dairy farm for 55 years.

Her mom remembers looking for her when she was three because she would get the cows to come in for milking. A dairy is labor intensive. Her grandparents switched to beef cattle now, which is easier at the young age of 80.

Mom and Dad's farm has 60 head of cattle and grows Burmuda and Brome hay, soybeans, wheat and corn. Despite being in the Ozark hills, their farm is unusually flat for the region, and they grow crops.

See **WINDES**, Page 10



Heather Windes
REFLEX PHOTO
BY JOY BEAMER



Heather is a country girl through and through. CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS



John Deere green is her color.

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HALEY WEAVER (LONG) I saw *Haley* at Dallas County R-1 Schools, or Mr. Eds or CCMH Oncology?

By Joy Beamer
joyretires@gmail.com

Haley Weaver (Long) has lived in Dallas County most of her life. She has two children with her husband, Aaron Weaver. Paxton is a busy 13-year-old boy playing all the sports. Paylin, her 10-year-old girl, is the creative butterfly enjoying everything artistic: piano lessons and Bison Cheer for youth sports.

Haley will be the first to tell someone new that she is a homebody. But when it comes to her kids' activities, she is all in. She can be found at sporting venues supporting the Bison and cheering on her kids for at least eight more years. When she's not there, she will need to stock up on art supplies for her daughter. She is the ultimate sports mama and art promoter. Family comes first in her life.

Adult life begins

In high school, Haley worked at Mr. Ed's in Urbana. If you stopped at Mr. Ed's during that period, she was probably pulling the ice cream cones. Haley graduated from Skyline High School and was active in cheerleading and student council. She loved the activities, especially cheerleading. High school

brings many good memories. She likes all the teachers at Skyline and loves the Skyline family's sense of community. Everyone is there supporting one another.

She met Aaron in her late teens and over time, they became friends. Aaron is a real joker, but eventually, their friendship leads to love, marriage, kids and jobs. They are the whole package--a happy nuclear family.

Aaron is the manager at the Buffalo O'Reilly's Parts. Lucky for Haley, Aaron takes care of all the car stuff for her.

In May 2022, she began working for Dallas County R-1 Schools in the administration building. She is the full-time chief executive assistant and human resources and onboarding specialist.

She started as the receptionist. As she met people, many friends of Aaron would ask her if she was Weaver's Wife. She said it is comical because it has become a nickname over time. Many never call her Haley but keep addressing her as Weaver's Wife.

As the district has grown, job duties were redesignated. The school board had approved for a new human resource clerk. She approached Dr. Ryan about taking that responsibility, and the wish was granted.



Haley Weaver
REFLEX PHOTO
BY JOY BEAMER

She serves as board secretary, superintendent's secretary, district phone operator and human resources specialist.

After high school, she attended Ozarks Technical College for a year in general studies. Life changed a bit and her college hours ended. However, after marrying Aaron, they went to Chicago for one year. She was a manager for a beauty supply store while Aaron attended college. Their favorite place was the Field Museum. She recalled that the museum was large, with new exhibits all the time.

Then, the homesick bug started. They didn't have friends, so they moved home. She then worked for Ed Pyatt, her father-in-law, at the dental

office for six years before going to the CMH Cancer Center and working for Dr. Leo for 14 years. Most people would agree she has worked for some great bosses, including Dr. Pyatt, Dr. Leo and now Dr. Tim Ryan.

Haley likes a challenge and has enjoyed all her jobs. She has an excellent work-life balance. Weaver prioritizes time at home with the family and activities together. She enjoys quality time in quiet environments.

Haley enjoys her new home and hospitality, inviting friends and family over. She is probably happiest around a campfire, making smores for everyone

See **WEAVER**, Page 11

WINDES

Continued from Page 9

In college, she lived in an apartment. She lived on 80 acres in an old farmhouse for a year when she started working. She is still missing the 400-acre homeplace and is now in a small space--a fifth-wheel trailer.

She is looking to buy a house. The camper is suffocating when compared to where she wants to live. She climbs the stairs to the overhead bed and back to the living area. She says she hates stairs now.

She asked, "Where should a girl put all her shoes?"

She went from having two walk-in closets to space for only work clothes and a few jeans and T-shirts for after-hours.

"I need my boots. I grew up on a farm my whole life; I'm country as country can be," she added.

This single, 22-year-old farm girl is

now a home loan officer at BTC Bank. She may never have seen herself in this role and living this way, but she explained that she is willing to do something uncomfortable to get where she wants to be.

After college, she earned her banking license while working for Flatbranch Home Loans. A friend told her about the opening at BTC at the Buffalo branch. She tried for the position because the move would bring her closer to home with a two-hour drive. Her family farm is seven miles from the Arkansas line.

She missed being around agriculture and knew BTC's focus was agriculture-based. She can help with other loans, but her focus is home loans. The people at BTC make her feel at home and everyone is friendly. The place feels homey and she enjoys the work.

Her boyfriend is a field service tech for a private electric company in Sedalia. They have been together for a year and a half. They are still figuring out the long-distance relationship. She said it was hard to part because they have a real connection.

She's eager to meet new people and learn the culture around Buffalo. Sometimes, living in the camper makes for a lonely time with the boyfriend, a long drive away.

She is looking for at least five acres and a house. She has a horse and a female Mini Aussie. Neither animal is with her currently and she is missing the taste of country life.

Mini Aussies are intelligent, affectionate and protective. Her dog, Cona, is right beside her wherever she goes.

She's a true banker saying, "I don't want kids. They are expensive. I know how expensive I was. I must be financially ready."

Heather is busy on the weekend, traveling to see her boyfriend or visiting her parents. Soon, she will be shopping for a church home. Her tradition is attending the Church of Christ.

Heather considers her hobby, work. She misses the farm life. Heather likes hay: cutting hay, bailing hay and smelling cut hay. Absolutely, she loves being on the farm.

She wants to play if there are local adult softball or volleyball teams. She's told the local FFA teachers she is willing to coach teams or help judge a contest.

No surprise, Heather likes tractor pulls and green is her color, John Deere. She enjoys attending antique tractor pulls with her dad. They also love to go to the big steam engine show that recently moved to Ash Grove. They go every year and wish there would be more than one in the fall of each year.

Do you like a mandolin? Yes, Heather loves bluegrass music and plays the mandolin. She doesn't play as often today but played with her dad and his friends while living at home.

She's a worker. She has dreams and goals and is laser-focused to meet them.

She said confidently, "I've worked too hard not to."

Residents are encouraged to visit BTC Bank to meet her or inquire about a loan. She is eager to meet people and get out in Buffalo and network.

"I never would have gotten a shooting scholarship without determination. You don't know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory," concluded Heather.



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WEAVER

Continued from Page 10



The Weavers stand in front of a Star Wars display. CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

and laughing with conversations with their friends. Aaron is great with the grill. Relaxing by the fire with friends is the quiet, uncomplicated life she seeks. She loves re-charging at home.

Forever Home

Their new home brought a season of change. After selling their house in April of 2021, they lived in a camper in Aaron's parents' backyard. They moved into the forever home a week before Christmas in 2022. Being in Dallas County is vital to the couple because the value of friends and family is immeasurable.

Haley is an animal lover. In the 40-foot camper lived an English Mastiff, two Maltese, a boy, a girl, a husband and herself. The time together was decent because they all love the outdoors. Grandma and Grandpa's house was close, too.

Haley said, "We had to get close to one another because we were close."

According to Haley, all the sacrifice was worth it because they reached their goal of a forever home.

The couple are also business owners watching after people's storage units. They own Buffalo Prairie Storage.

The priority for them still lies at home. Haley describes her husband as a great dad, teaching his son, Paxton, everything he needs to know. Their daughter Paylin was described as 'Aaron made over.' Paylin is independent and strong-willed. She lets a person know precisely what she thinks, just like her daddy.

Haley-close up

Time away with girlfriends at this time in life is hard. She enjoys go-

ing out to lunch and drinking coffee with her girlfriends. She says her circle is relatively small. The relationships are more intimate, and it's real. She loves the art of face-to-face conversations, visiting with someone and learning their social cues.

Before Paxton, the couple had a son, Lawrence Aaron Weaver IV. He was born and died the same day. The heartache of it all has allowed Haley to place priorities with family first. She also has become empathetic to others going through tragedy.

One friend tells Haley she is an empath. According to WebMD.com, an empath is an individual who feels more empathy than an average human. Empaths are exceptionally sensitive to individuals' emotions and frame of mind. Empathy is a natural state that enables a person to build an emotional connection through cognition with other individuals.

The interview showed that she is a great listener and a persistent person who gets the job done. She is organized, patient and task completer. Combine those qualities with how she can truly feel the emotions of others, people confide in her sharing their problems, and she is an excellent secret keeper. Haley may be an empath. She offers counsel to others, is level-headed in a crisis, and calls herself a rational optimist.

Haley reflected on her life, "Friendships that I've made and the people I work with have become like family. I like what I do at school, but the people who work here make it what it is. Dr. Ryan reminded me when he hired me that we spend more time with co-workers than at home. He was right. I'm glad because everyone welcomed her with open arms."



The Weaver family enjoys all outdoor activities.

Local Women Here to Serve You!



Bottom Left, Wendy counts, Jill Hostetler, Alicia Tindall, Jackie Tindall
Top Left Cassie Wallace, Nichole Van Scoy, Amanda Gonzales, Liz Swanigan
Not pictured Kassie Wommack, Cassidy Mcguire, & Rhona Harris

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Women in Science

Sally Ride was the first woman in space in 1983.

Mathematician Katherine Johnson's mathematical computations helped launch John Glenn into orbit and send Apollo 11 to the Moon.

Ann Tsukamoto identified and isolated stem cells in 1991, which was vital to medical advancements such as treatment for blood cancer.



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Buffalo



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