



# POLK COUNTY

*Polk County*



**PRIDE & PROGRESS**

A Special Supplement to the Bolivar Herald-Free Press  
**Wednesday, March 24, 2021**

# PILLAR IN HEALTH AND WELLNESS

## Michelle Morris & the Polk County Health Center



Polk County Health Center Staff poses for a photo. Pictured are, back row – Michele Thomazin, Chastity Willers, Noelle Kates, Wanita Lister, Theresa Hunt, Sarah Choate, Michelle Morris, Gavin Alexander; front row – Carol Bookhout, Hanna Siems, Kiley Laney, Lela Franse, Colleen Ball, Laura Miller, Joyce Schmelzle, Susan Anderson and Brittany Campbell. Not pictured are Alli Ashlock, Tammy Atteberry, Ronda Levy, Diana Johnson, Richard Vest, Shelby Sears, Mary Bruce, Landee Nevills, Anissa Laney, Colton Lambeth, Noemi Moreno and Jen Warden.

STAFF PHOTOS/LINDA SIMMONS

## protecting the community's health

Michelle Morris, administrator of the Polk County Health Center, and her staff have always been ready to rise to any task at hand at any given moment. Offering a wide variety of services to the community, including fingerprinting, WIC program appointments, immunizations, senior foot care and annual health screenings, the center's main concern is the health of the community. While 2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic brought many challenges, the health center

staff worked together and continued to focus on the organization's mission statement — "protect our community's health by offering preventive strategies for a better tomorrow."

While the whole country faced daily changes and challenges, Morris and her staff continued to make Polk County and its residents their main focus, keeping people safe and going through daily challenges as a team. Morris and other staff members visited with the BH-FP staff about what this past year has meant to them.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

### What is something you love about working in health care?

**Wanita Lister:** Public health is a rewarding field because you have the opportunity to effect change for an entire community. It works to create change for the population as a whole by creating safe, healthy environments for people to live and interact. It also involves many areas of health: physical, mental, environmental, nutrition and health education. Public health focuses on prevention, and when you can prevent illness or disease in a community, there is a ripple effect for generations. Public health is a very rewarding profession, but it is really a way of life.

### How does a sense of community factor into PCHC's mission?

**Lister:** The Polk County Health Center's mission statement focuses on prevention. It is difficult for one organization alone to prevent illness or injury in a community, but when many organizations and businesses come together to present the same message or behavior change, a community more readily adopts that behavior, which increases health outcomes for the population. Working with our community partners and community members makes all of us successful; we need each other to really make a difference. There is nothing that the health center does alone, it is through our partnerships that the work we do is possible.



**Southwest Electric Cooperative**

Multiple 24 hour payment & power outage reporting options.

800  
262  
0326

SWEC  
.coop

SWEC  
app

Your Trusted Energy Advisor

972b



FILE PHOTO/LINDA SIMMONS

Landee Nevills, Michell Morris and Wanita Lister work at a mobile vaccine site.

**None of us could have expected the past year. What were the biggest obstacles you had to overcome?**

**Michelle Morris:** In the beginning, it was managing the speed of information and staying up-to-date, learning quickly and making adjustments mid-stream. Later, it was managing the number of cases and contact calls daily while continuing to provide services the community counts on from the health center. Helping families who were sick or lost a loved one during this past year was also emotional for staff, but again it was the support of our community that helped through those difficult days. The health center struggled to identify funding to meet the needs of the community. However, through the dedication of the board and staff and making decisions based on evidence-based practices, the health center was able to overcome some of those obstacles.

**What has been the driving force behind PCHC during this past year?**

**Landee Nevills:** It is the professionalism of the staff and their desire to protect our community and help wherever there is a need that has kept the organization going this past year.

**Lister:** Keeping focused on the values of the organization: compassion, integrity and leadership. We strive to show compassion to those who are faced with unwanted news, whether it was a positive test result or notification of a quarantine period. Compassion to listen to individuals as we called to check on their progress and meeting needs whenever possible. Integrity by maintaining accurate reporting of all information. Ensuring we are an organization that our community can count on and trust. Leadership by setting an example for our community by remaining consistent, organized and prepared.

**What should we expect in 2021 as we move forward?**

**Carol Bookhout:** While 2020 was one that none of us could have expected or totally prepared for, there were many good things that came out of the year that we will carry into 2021. The strengthened partnerships with so many organizations in our community. Groups we have talked to in the past and planned with, that now we know on a first name basis and will continue to work together on other projects.

**Nevills:** The overwhelming kindness of community members and the amount of support we received in 2020 is hard to describe. Polk County is a stronger community today than we were prior to COVID-19, and that strength comes from what we have experienced during this past year together. We expect to see more of our community members vaccinated and slowly returning to pre-COVID-19 life. We expect 2021 will open doors for collaborations we never expected and new opportunities as a result.



**“Public health is a very rewarding profession, but it is really a way of life.”**  
— Wanita Lister



Brittany Campbell, Michelle Morris and Carol Bookout work with the staff to keep the traffic flowing through the mobile vaccination site.

Carol Bookout, handling the paperwork and adding encouragement before the vaccine is administered.



Michelle Morris works at one of the vaccine sites.

**Continuing To Serve Our Customers Since 1910**

**LimeBank**

*Stop by and let us help you with all your banking needs!  
We look forward to seeing you!*

**FDIC**

1630 S. Killingsworth | 111 W. Jackson St.  
Bolivar, Missouri 65613 | Phone: 777-3322 | [lime.bank.com](http://lime.bank.com)

**Dental Care for All Ages**

**Services Offered**

- On-site dental care
- Screenings • Cleanings
- Fillings • X-rays
- Fluoride treatments
- Sealants • Crowns
- Complete and partial dentures
- Space maintainers
- Pulpal therapies • Extractions

**Miles for Smiles  
OCHC DENTAL CLINIC**

**417-328-6334**  
203 E. Broadway St.  
Bolivar, MO 65613  
Hours: Monday - Friday  
8am - 5pm

[ozarkschc.com](http://ozarkschc.com)

**“It is the professionalism of the staff and their desire to protect our community and help wherever there is a need that has kept the organization going this past year.”**

— Landee Nevills



Michelle Morris, Brittany Campbell and Laura Miller work with the public to get their vaccinations in an orderly and timely manner.

**What do you foresee the “new normal” looking like locally?**

**Bookhout:** It is difficult to predict the future, but as case count and positivity rates continue to decline, we see opportunity for community members to begin participating in activities that they have always enjoyed. There are still recommendations for wearing masks, social distancing and hand washing to help protect our community.

**Morris:** In some instances, this may become more of the norm as we monitor the health of our community. Again, changes that were implemented because of COVID may turn out to be things that can help our community be healthier overall.

**PCHC offers a large variety of services. How has it been keeping all of those services going, as well as dealing with a pandemic?**

**Morris:** We have excellent staff. Although the demands were taxing some days, we were able to maintain the majority of our services throughout this past year. The staff of the Polk County Health Center is like no other. They all display an attitude of how to get tasks done together. When asked to do more, they did, and maintained a high degree of professionalism throughout. They all have worked long hours and rose to the standard for which the PCHC has always strived. The Polk County Health Center has been successful by continuing to operate with the same level of expertise and commitment that is expected in our community.

**What has it meant to you to have been named a Polk County Pillar?**

**Morris:** In a time in which almost every business, especially health care businesses, are experiencing unprecedented times in providing care to our community, it truly is humbling to be nominated as a Polk County Pillar. We have worked alongside so many other healthcare providers this past year, and the work that has been done at the health center would not have been possible without others in our community and region that provide health care services. It is an honor just to be nominated.



Wanita Lister and Joyce Schmelzle making sure all is well after a vaccine was administered.

**As the oldest family-owned hometown funeral home in the Bolivar and Polk County areas, we understand family...**



Bolivar



Humansville



Butler House

Since 1958, we’ve provided sound advice and caring service during times of personal loss. We would be honored to help your family in your time of need.



Bolivar, MO • 326-5233  
 Humansville, MO • 754-2215  
[www.butlerfuneralhome.com](http://www.butlerfuneralhome.com)



Mayor Chris Warwick gets his first vaccine at a PCHC clinic.

**PREVIOUS NOMINEES**

- SBU physical therapy program
- Dr. Jeffrey Tedrow
- Ashley Ballard
- Angel Haun
- Donald J. Babb (2020)**
- Mike Stephens
- Dr. Lou Harris
- CMH Auxiliary
- Colby and Whitney Grove
- Polk County's Opioid Task Force (2019)**

**“Polk County is a stronger community today than we were prior to COVID-19, and that strength comes from what we have experienced during this past year together.”**

— Landee Nevills

**DOUGLAS HAUN HEIDEMANN  
LAW FIRM**

103

Originally the First National Bank Building at 103 E. Broadway in Bolivar, the location became the home of Douglas, Haun & Heidemann, P.C. in August of 2019.

Firm founder T.H. Douglas in his office 1927. Firm founded in 1912.

**DOUGLAS  
HAUN  
HEIDEMANN** P.C.

**Two locations in SW Missouri:**

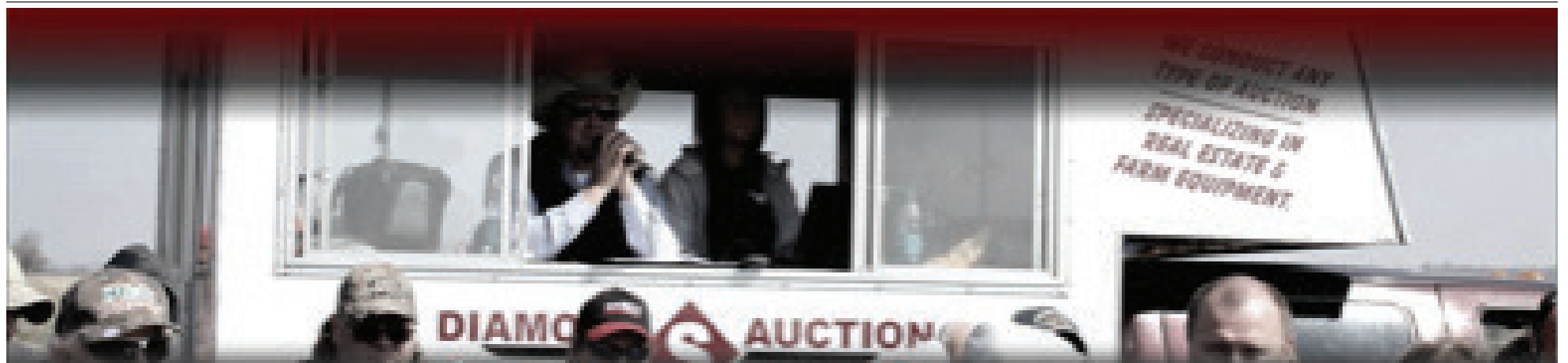
901 E. St. Louis, Suite 1200  
Springfield, MO 65806

103 E. Broadway  
Bolivar, MO 65613

**800-743-5728 | 417-326-5261**

- Personal Injury\*
- Class Actions
- Family Law
- Criminal Defense
- Estate Planning
- Trust Administration
- Probate Law

- Traffic Law
- Real Estate
- Business Law
- Commercial Law
- Bankruptcy Law
- Employment Discrimination



**Serious Planning.  
Unmatched Execution.  
Superior Results.**

Whether it's the sale of a family farm or the estate of a loved one, we realize that an auction represents one of the biggest financial and life events our clients will ever face. We take on that responsibility with our commitment to be the best in the business. When it's on the line and results really matter we are ready to work for you.

**UPCOMING AUCTIONS**

- Mega Firearms Auction • Saturday March 27, 2021
- Online Only Ammunition Auction • Lots Close Sunday March 28<sup>th</sup>
- 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Farm & Ranch Equip. Auction • Saturday May 1, 2020
- Polk County Land Auction 250± Acres • Thursday, May 21, 2021
- Cedar County Land Auction 240± Acres • Thursday May 27, 2021
- Fullerton Estate Auction • Saturday June 12, 2021



**1-877-907-3000**   
**www.diamond-s-auction.com**

Call or click for a free no-obligation consultation and see how southwest Missouri's auction leader can add dollars to the bottom line at your auction.

- Large Parcel & Multi-Tract Land Auctions
- Small & Medium Sized Acreages
- Commercial & Residential Real Estate
- Agricultural & Construction Equipment
- Estates & Personal Property
- Online Simulcast Auctions
- Bankruptcies & Business Liquidations



# PILLAR IN EDUCATION



Margaret Vest, Jean Vincent, Randy Jones and Sheila Hacker strike a pose with the museum's sign.  
STAFF PHOTOS/LINDA SIMMONS

## Jean Vincent & the Polk County Historical Society

### bringing history to life

It doesn't take long when talking with Jean Vincent to realize the community, and more specifically the history that formed the community, is one of her biggest passions. History can sometimes be forgotten and viewed as "not that important" in everyday life, but Vincent knows that is not even close to being true.

History is important to understand and to learn from, and it's necessary to pass lessons learned onto the next generations. That is what makes the former Bolivar history teacher so proud to be a part of preserving the community's history, sharing it with others via Polk County's North Ward Museum and the Polk

County Historical Society — and bringing it into the modern world.

Moving that history into the future has been a task Vincent has tackled with the support of and help from fellow Bolivar residents Margaret Vest, Randy Jones and Sheila Hacker, all with their own love for history and various areas of expertise. Together, they've worked to get the museum's archives organized and brought up to speed with the 21st century through a new website, [bolivarmuseum.org](http://bolivarmuseum.org).

Vincent shared her thoughts and vision for keeping the community aware of the county's history and making it more accessible for future generations.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

**What does it mean to you to be able to preserve and share the history of Bolivar and Polk County?**

It means so very much to preserve and share our history. I believe that we need to know where we have been in order to be able to completely go forward. For example, I have talked to so many people who love seeing the old photos of Bolivar. It gives them a new perspective of our history and progress.

**How has the past year, with the pandemic, affected the museum?**

The restrictions of the pandemic have severely impacted our income. We have no federal or state grants; all of our income is derived from endowments, purchases of merchandise and admission fees. The building is over 100 years old and needs a lot of repair. Not being able to open for visitors and gaining that income has had a definite impact.

**What has it meant to you and the museum as a whole to get the new website up and running?**

We are excited about bringing the museum into the 21st century with online access to view our museum, purchase items, read stories, digitize our records, etc. We are so thankful to Bunch Marketing, Promoveo LLC and Lime Bank for their generosity in the website's creation and the purchase of enough equipment to digitize, copy and print our records.



**Family Owned in Bolivar for 29 Years!**

**SEE ALL OUR LISTINGS & PICTURES AT**  
**[WWW.JIMRUSHCARS.COM](http://WWW.JIMRUSHCARS.COM)**

**3111 S. Springfield Ave. • Bolivar • 417-326-5858**

**How can someone get involved in helping with the museum and its needs?**

There are many ways in which people can help us. Our greatest need right now is for someone to donate internet service to the museum. In this age of digital information, it is vital that we get our information on the web. Donations to the Historical Society of Polk County Missouri Inc. is another way people can help. We are a tax-exempt entity. We need people to act as greeters when the museum is open and to take visitors on tours. We are also hoping for help with landscaping, repairs and all kinds of other assistance. Basically, if you have a talent, a passion, or even just good strong muscles, we can find something for you to do! We need a lot of help! We would also like to invite folks to join the historical society. By doing so, you will receive our newsletter five times per year, which will keep you updated on meetings and what's going on at the museum, plus interesting stories of Polk County.

**What does it mean to you to have been nominated as a Polk County Pillar?**

I am honored beyond words and humbled beyond measure to be chosen for doing something I do just because I love and enjoy it. As a fourth generation "Bolivar-ite," I have loved this community my entire life. History has been my passion since I was a child sitting on my grandmother's kitchen stairs and listening to those of two generations before me telling family stories of the past events, of sitting on the porches of ladies in my neighborhood who told of life when they were young. One of my most exciting life events was when I became a history teacher in the same school district that was attended by two generations of my family before me. As I've often said, "History was not just my profession ... it is and always has been my passion."



Randy Jones, Jean Vincent, Sheila Hacker and Margaret Vest pose for a photo, surrounded by exhibits at the museum.

**"I believe that we need to know where we have been in order to be able to completely go forward."**



As a former Bolivar R-1 history teacher, Jean Vincent feels right at home behind a desk and by a chalkboard at the museum.



Jean Vincent poses for a photo in front of the museum.



**Springfield** 417-326-2070  
**AVE** café 921 S. Springfield Ave,  
 Bolivar, Mo 65613

*The Home of*  
**BOLIVAR'S BEST  
 FRIED CHICKEN**

**ORDER OUR FAMOUS CHICKEN ONLINE  
 AT SPRINGFIELDAVECAFE.COM!**




**SATURDAYS**  
**ALL YOU CAN EAT RIBS**  
 9.99 WITH PURCHASE OF A DRINK.  
 11.99 WITH NO DRINK.

607021b





**“One of my most exciting life events was when I became a history teacher in the same school district that was attended by two generations of my family before me.”**

Jean Vincent stands by one of her favorite items in the museum, the switchboard from Fair Play, the last one used in the United States.

**What are your dreams and expectations for the future of the museum?**  
 I have a mental picture of the building, surrounded by new landscaping (historically accurate, of course), windows repaired, with people in the yard, on the steps, events taking place on the lawn, adults and children enjoying and learning, conversations about history, “tall tales” ongoing among those visiting. I want it to become alive and vibrant — an active and integral part of the community.

**What is your favorite part of the museum?**  
 Choosing a favorite part is almost impossible ... I love it all! But, the switchboard from Fair Play, which was the last switchboard used in the United States (there’s a story about that in the museum) and the iron lung which was used to treat polio patients (and which generations younger than mine have no idea what it is) would have to be my picks.



The telephones that were used when President George H. W. Bush was in Bolivar.

**Award-winning residential design for contractors, custom homes, remodels and log homes.**  
**Commercial design for healthcare, office, retail, multi-family and senior care.**



**dga**  
**DESIGN GROUP**  
 ARCHITECTS LTD

**206 Killingsworth Ave.**  
**Bolivar, MO**  
**417.327.7465 | dgaltdonline.com**





Jean Vincent stands near the museum's iron lung, knowing this is a machine not many in younger generations know much about.



The Polk County Museum and Historical Society website.



The historical way to "google" – a dictionary from the late 1800s-early 1900s.

**"As I've often said, 'History was not just my profession ... it is and always has been my passion.'"**

**PREVIOUS NOMINEES**

- Tim DeClue
- Steve Henderson
- Randy Jones
- Danielle West
- Meilani Conley
- Jena Whetstine
- Hillary Glauser-Patton
- Renfang Taylor
- Sandy Krueger
- Joy Rothdiener (2020)**
- Beth Grabowski
- Joe Shelton
- Robby Hoegh
- Jeff Davis
- Kim Ware
- Betty Glasgow
- Renee Sagaser (2019)**



**PROUD TO BE PART OF THE POLK COUNTY COMMUNITY**



**OakStar BANK**

340 S Springfield Ave, Bolivar, MO MEMBER FDIC  
417.327.4480 | www.OakStarBank.com 6069750

**Proud to be part of the Progress of Polk County.**



**Bolivar Ready Mix & Material, Inc.**



**Quality Concrete • Fair Prices**  
**326-5532 or 326-5799**  
**Bonded - State Approved • Bolivar, Missouri**

# PILLAR IN COMMUNITY SERVICE



## Community Outreach Ministries

Staff and volunteers at Community Outreach Ministries pose for a photo in front of the nonprofit's office.

STAFF PHOTO/DAVID TALLEY

### feeding the community

Last year, in the midst of a global pandemic, Polk County's Community Outreach Ministries distributed \$28,852 in financial assistance for rent, utilities, transportation, medication and emergency lodging to 1,177 households and 2,718 individuals in the community.

The Bolivar nonprofit operates a food pantry, thrift store and case management programs, while also offering emergency financial assistance.

It first opened in 1999, when a group of local pas-

tors formed the Bolivar Area Ministerial Alliance, or BAMA, a food pantry meant to meet needs in Polk County.

In 2014, the organization changed to Community Outreach Ministries.

Today, it also serves as the local Salvation Army Extension Unit.

COM executive director Micah Titterington shared his take on the organization's impact over the last 22 years and its work during the pandemic.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

#### What are some changes that have happened at COM recently?

In the past year or two, we've tried to make a number of improvements to our physical buildings. This is an ongoing process as our facilities are pretty old, but COVID has provided us a unique opportunity to tackle some of these projects since traffic inside our pantry and lobby has decreased due to social distancing measures and shutdowns. This past summer, we also did some re-branding by updating our logo and changing our thrift store's name. We hope that these efforts better communicate our identity and connect the various aspects of COM all together in people's minds.

#### What impact did the pandemic have on COM's work?

We get many donations from local grocery retailers, but these quantities have dwindled as distribution networks have affected those stores. Likewise, several annual food drives did not occur last year because of the shutdowns.

#### How did COM work around that?

We worked really hard to make sure that we had plenty of food in our pantry in light of the growing demands. We used our connections with Ozarks Food Harvest to purchase additional food and obtained a few grants to help with food purchases. We even purchased food from merchants at our local farmer's market at times when produce was very limited in the pantry. We connected with USDA's Farmer's to Families program through the CARES Act, which was also helpful in keeping the pantry stocked.

#### When it became apparent Polk County would be affected by the pandemic, what steps did you take to make sure people could still access COM's resources?

Last March, as the pandemic and shutdowns were looming in Missouri, we quickly decided to convert the pantry into a drive-thru. We were very blessed that our facilities made this conversion easy to pull off. So, over the past year, we've been conducting the food pantry as a drive-thru and have kept it open for our clients who depend on that service.

We also realized that with social distancing, communication with clients would become even more important. To make sure we could keep our clients informed and give them easy access to us, we upgraded our phone system to handle more phone call volume, introduced client notifications via text-messaging and text-to-voice calls, improved our physical signage, and have tried to stay very active on social media. We don't want any person in need to miss out because we failed to adequately communicate what is available to them.



- Full Service Oil Changes
- State Safety Inspection
- Tire Rotation & Balance
- Transmission Flush
- Radiator Flush
- Tire Sales & Repair
- No appointment necessary



**703 S. Albany**  
**Bolivar, MO 65613**  
 (across from Woods Supermarket)  
**417-777-4645**

[www.superlubeservice.com](http://www.superlubeservice.com)

Owned & Operated by the Wagoner Family 553417b

**How much greater was the need in this area last year than the year before?**

In 2020, we served 1,177 households and 2,718 individuals across all our programs. This was about a 10% increase over 2019. We also distributed \$28,852 in financial assistance for things like rent, utilities, transportation, medication and emergency lodging. This was about a 10% increase over 2019.

**Why were the services COM provides so important last year?**

Even before the pandemic, COM was working hard to address the needs of people in crisis or experiencing poverty. The pandemic has aggravated many of those existing problems. People who had stable work before the pandemic may have been laid off and have had difficulty finding work. Others who were already experiencing poverty before the pandemic now have to navigate additional hurdles to get the help they need as many offices are closed and many services are only occurring over the phone or online.

**What sort of role did you see COM play in the community during the pandemic?**

We just set about doing what we have always done — helping people. As we saw many new families needing assistance with food, we did our best to address this need. We kept our food pantry open and even partnered with other groups to bring thousands of boxes of produce and dairy to our county for “Free Food Saturdays” last summer. We also tried to make the community aware that if they were needing help with rent or utilities because of the financial impact of COVID that we were here to help.

**“We don’t want any person in need to miss out because we failed to adequately communicate what is available to them.”**



FILE PHOTO/DAVID TALLEY

COM executive director Micah Titterington makes a donation into the Salvation Army red kettle outside Woods Supermarket in November 2019.

**Looking back, would you change any of COM’s response?**

I’m sure there are some small things we would have done differently if we had the knowledge back then about the pandemic that we have now, but I feel like we did the best with the information we had at the time.

**Looking ahead, what does the future look like for COM?**

We want to keep finding ways to improve what we are doing and address poverty in a holistic manner. For example, right now we are launching a new program called “Project Thrive” that is aimed at targeting unemployment and underemployment. The program will offer 10 weeks of classes to clients focused on employment soft skills and life skills and will help connect people to local employers. We are also exploring what the food pantry will look like post-COVID. We want to keep the expediency of the drive-thru model while finding ways to integrate the client-choice aspects of a walk-through model like we had before. Finally, we want to develop strong connections to other agencies and resources to develop solutions to other problems in our community, such as homelessness.

**How can the community continue to support COM?**

We are always in need of volunteers. It takes a lot of volunteers to operate the food pantry alone. Especially with the pantry being drive-thru, we need volunteers to bag food, load food into cars on distribution days, pick up food donations from local retailers and more. In particular, we are currently looking for a few groups (churches, clubs, etc.) that would be willing to come volunteer once a month at one of our food distributions. Volunteers are also needed to help sort donations for our thrift store and to serve with our new program — Project Thrive. Interested volunteers can apply at [bolivarcom.org/volunteer](http://bolivarcom.org/volunteer) or call us at 326-2769 for more info.

**Are donations accepted?**

The second way a person can help COM is by making a donation, or even better starting a monthly donation. A great starting amount is just \$22 per month as that is how much it takes us to support one family each month across all our programs. The easiest way to give is on our website at [bolivarcom.org/donate](http://bolivarcom.org/donate) to make a one-time or automatic recurring donation. A person can also make a check to “Community Outreach Ministries” and mail it to PO Box 181, Bolivar MO 65613.

**SHOP LOCAL!**

**PLAY LOCAL!**

**DINE LOCAL!**

**Your chamber membership helps your business and your community grow!**

- Local business support, education, development and promotion
- Business networking
- Economic development
- Community events and promotion

**Join now! Grow more!**

**bolivar**  
area  
chamber of commerce

117A S. Main - on the west side of the Bolivar Square  
417-326-4118 | [info@bolivarchamber.com](mailto:info@bolivarchamber.com) | [bolivarchamber.com](http://bolivarchamber.com)



COM volunteer Hal Kelly walks between vehicles on scene at the drive-thru food pantry in March 2020.

**“We just set about doing what we have always done — helping people.”**



Tim Collins, at left, and Robert Kiger, both with COM, pull a grocery cart of food items toward a vehicle at the organization's drive-thru food pantry in March 2020.

FILE PHOTOS/DAVID TALLEY

**PREVIOUS NOMINEES**

**Linda Wollard (2020)**

- Carol Poindexter
- Rosie Meyer
- Stacy Turnage
- Louise Wimberly
- Dorothy Isdell
- Jack Glendenning
- Mark Stanek
- Dean Ponder
- Kermit Hargis
- CMH auxiliary
- Margaret Vest
- Ed Kurtz

**Nancy Harris (2019)**

- Michelle Morris
- Marcella Brown
- Leta Gass
- Steve Henderson
- Polk County Health Center
- Polk County Community Connections
- Susan Sparks
- Andrew McFarland
- Angel Haun
- Kent and Carol McGregor
- Mike Gardner

*your future  
powered by purpose*

SBU has pushed me to places  
I've never

*imagined*

I have been out of my comfort zone a multitude of times  
and that has given me the opportunity

*To learn and grow.*

**TYLER BURNETT**  
Computational Finance  
from St. Louis, Mo.



**Southwest Baptist  
UNIVERSITY**

**SBU**univ.edu

UNDERGRADUATE • GRADUATE • ON-CAMPUS • ONLINE

# PILLAR IN BUSINESS



## Citizens Memorial Hospital

Members of the staff at CMH pose for a photo. Pictured are, front row, from left, Denise Silva, RN, Emergency Department; Bobby O'Keefe, RN, Emergency Department; Mariah Hollabaugh, PharmD, MBA, BCPS, Pharmacy; Katie Dilday-Sims, COVID Testing; Cristy Hiser, RT, Respiratory Care; Jarrett Finnell, CPA, Materials Management; Ashley Johnson, LPN, Citizens Memorial Health Care Facility; back row, from left, Ron Evans, M.D., Medical Director; Joy Smith, RN, Infection Prevention; Tiff Cochran, RN, ICU; Matt Havens, PA-C, Butterfield Park Medical Center.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO/WREN HALL

### focus and commitment

For 40 years, Citizens Memorial Hospital and Citizens Memorial Health Care Foundation has served the Bolivar community as its main local health care provider.

But, last year, the hospital system confronted a new challenge — helping its community navigate the COVID-19 pandemic.

Founded and built by Donald J. Babb, who served as its first and only CEO for 39 years, CMH has grown from a rural acute care hospital in Bolivar with a handful of physicians to a healthcare system

with more than 2,300 employees, more than 100 physicians, over 400 volunteers and 50 buildings and properties in eight counties.

While growth is important, it's what has remained the same that helps make CMH a special place, Gary Fulbright, CEO and executive director of Citizens Memorial Hospital and Citizens Memorial Health Care Foundation, told the BH-FP.

Fulbright shared his thoughts on how CMH has changed, how it's stayed the same and how it's helped the community respond to the pandemic.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.



**Your Key**  
to Successful Home Buying and Selling



**Donna Reynolds**  
CRS, MGRI, SRES  
Sales Associate



**Peterson Real Estate**  
1000 S. Springfield Ave.  
Bolivar, Missouri 65613  
Office (417) 326-3900  
Cell (417) 328-8211  
Fax (417) 326-3902  
donnareynolds@century21.com  
donnareynolds.biz



Each Office is Independently Owned and Operated



*A 22-year local tradition —  
and counting.*



119 W. Broadway • Bolivar  
Mon.-Thur. 7:00 - 2:00 • Fri. 6:00 - 2:00 (Breakfast & Lunch)  
Sat. 6:00 - 11:00 (Breakfast only)  
**326-7357**

#### ***In 40 years, what hasn't changed at CMH?***

What hasn't changed is our focus and commitment to our mission, vision and values and to providing care at the highest levels of safety and quality for our patients and residents. The need for health care continues, even during a pandemic.

#### ***What could CMH look like in another 40 years?***

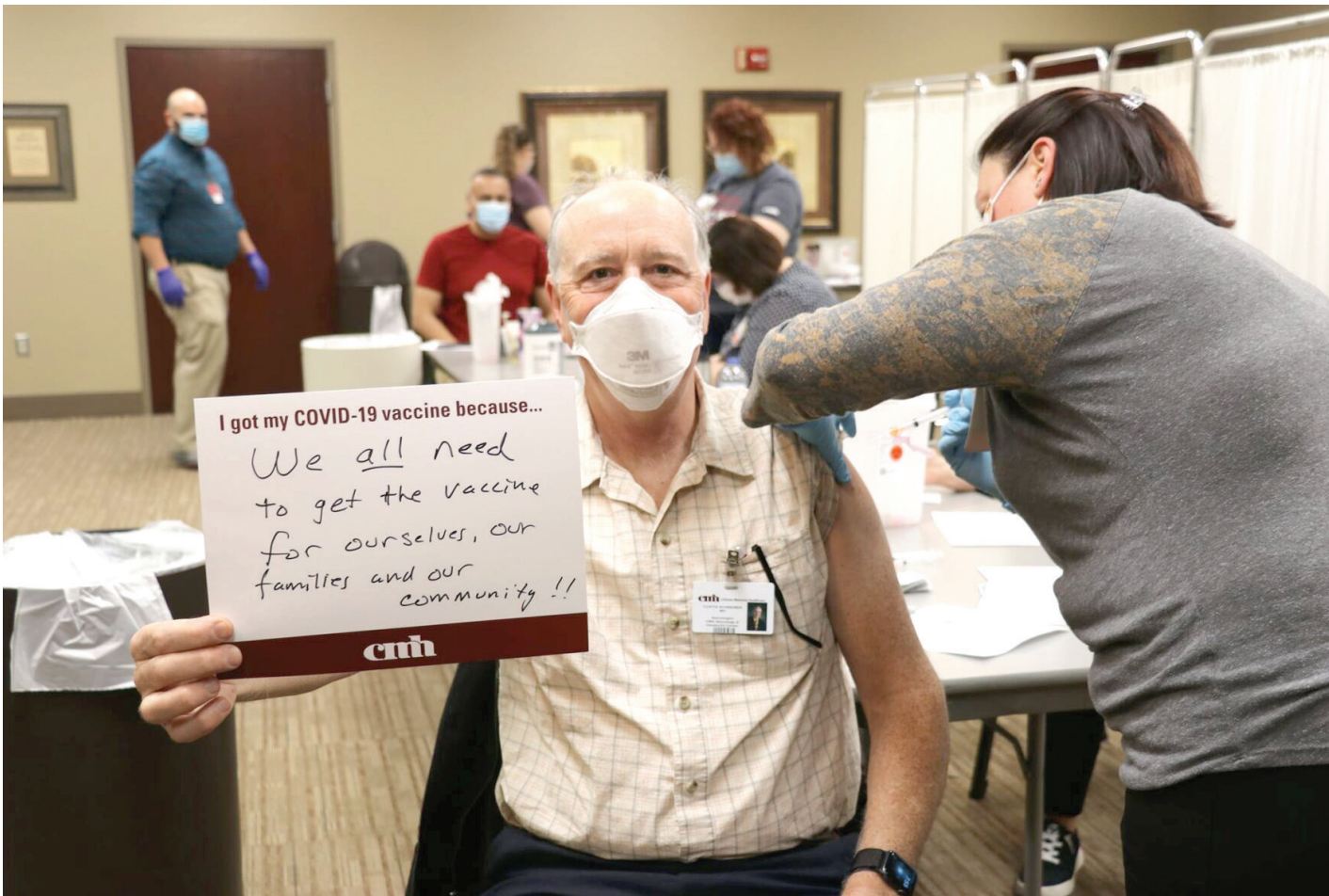
We will still need to continue staying on the cutting edge of new technology, and no doubt we'll see a lot of changes in technology over the next 40 years. Also, we anticipate the community will change over the next 40 years with a growth in population, and CMH will need to continue growing to match the increase in population.

#### ***Any immediate plans?***

We have a new clinic in Willard that we are breaking ground on this month, and it is scheduled to open in November. We are also working with architects for hospital renovations in areas such as the emergency department, surgery and cardiology.

#### ***Talk with me about what makes CMH a special place.***

Our employees, volunteers and physicians make CMH a special place. Many of our employees have grown up in the communities that they now serve. The continuum of services we provide also makes CMH a special place. We take care of families throughout every stage of life.



Fulbright

Dr. Curtis Schreiber with CMH's Neurology and Headache Center holds a sign stating why he's choosing to be vaccinated as he receives his COVID-19 vaccine during Phase 1A of the state's vaccination plan in December 2020. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

**How does a sense of community factor into CMH's mission?**

We care for every generation with compassionate healthcare. Our goal is to provide all the health care services that are feasible with the highest level of service.

**How was that mission affected by the COVID-19 pandemic?**

During the pandemic, we needed to change how we provided care to our patients. Using technology and innovation, we adapted how we delivered care for our patients by using telehealth and virtual visits. We created drive-thru testing and lab services, provided a hotline to answer questions, and partnered with other health care providers to support our communities. The breadth and depth of services we provide is a direct result of the drive to care completely for our communities.

**CMH was nominated in part due to its work during the pandemic. What were CMH's guiding principles during this difficult time?**

Our guiding principles are to do the right things for our communities, patients, residents, families and employees. The support of our communities, including coordination with local agencies, was a key to navigating the constant changes of the pandemic. Everyone came together as a team in an unprecedented way.

**How did CMH adapt its care?**

Because the hospital was full with COVID positive patients and finding a larger hospital where we could transfer a few patients was nearly impossible, we pulled to-

gether and opened a special COVID wing that was self-contained with negative air pressure and had dedicated employees that specifically cared for patients in that unit and separate from our long-term care residents. Fortunately, we didn't need the special unit very long, but it provided us a way to relieve capacity at the hospital and continue providing care for our patients.

**How important was the cutting edge technology and methodology at use at CMH during the pandemic?**

We were one of the first hospitals to administer Bamlanivimab infusions to high-risk COVID positive patients. The special infusions were a game changer and helped patients who might otherwise have been hospitalized to receive outpatient treatment and recover. This was one key to helping us and the community to turn a corner on the pandemic.

**Another factor in this nomination was transparency. What does that mean to CMH in a time like this?**

We've always been open and transparent with the public as the status of the pandemic changed and throughout the year, including the number of cases and hospitalizations. We created a COVID-19 dashboard for our long-term care facilities as another means of communication and transparency. We also implemented a daily "Safety Huddle" to report on and discuss organization and department specific safety concerns. That information is shared with all CMH employees to reinforce our culture of safety first and reducing patient and employee injury.

**"During the pandemic, we've seen or heard a lot of misinformation out there from across the nation, especially on social media, so it is all the more important for us to continue delivering a consistent and honest message and to be a trusted source of information for the public."**

**Pride & Progress In Our Hometown**

**Garretson Trash Service, LLC**

**Committed to our community for 67 years!**

**We believe your choice of a waste removal service provider is an important one!**

**We aren't as fancy as the corporate companies, but we work harder!**

**Transitioning service provider is EASY - call 417-326-7507 and we do the rest!**

Polycarts included

Customer discounts available

Recycling services available

Call basis service - best rate in town

Additional item pick up year round

Local drop off site & office

Largest weekly limit available

Employs local families

Gives back to the community

**Effective at the end of April, we will handle all accounts in the Bolivar City limits through our office - no hassle of third party communication.**

**Our Family Working For Yours!**





Citizens Memorial Hospital staff prepare to see patients at a drive-thru COVID-19 testing station in March 2020.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO/TAMERA HEITZ-PEEK

**Why is transparency important?**

It has always been important for us to be inclusive of the community and to communicate in an open and honest manner. We are the community’s hospital, and we take that fact seriously. During the pandemic, we’ve seen or heard a lot of misinformation out there from across the nation, especially on social media, so it is all the more important for us to continue delivering a consistent and honest message and to be a trusted source of information for the public.

**What does the next step in the fight against the pandemic look like?**

CMH and the Polk County Health Center, along with other health care partners including Ozarks Community Health Center, have worked tirelessly to vaccinate Bolivar citizens and surrounding communities. As of March 3, we have administered more than 8,000 doses of Moderna vaccine and will administer 1,000 doses of Johnson & Johnson vaccine Saturday, March 6. We want to vaccinate as many people as possible to protect them from severe illness and hospitalization. The more citizens that can be vaccinated, the sooner we can look forward to starting recovery from the pandemic.

**“What hasn’t changed is our focus and commitment to our mission, vision and values and to providing care at the highest levels of safety and quality for our patients and residents. The need for health care continues, even during a pandemic.”**

**PREVIOUS NOMINEES**

Rose Roweton

Steve Henderson

Mike Gardner

Justin Ballard

Susan Sparks

Jason Farmer

**Downtown Business Association (2020)**

Jerry Hamby

Gail Noggle

Stephanie Rains

Tanner Isenberger

**Linda Bunch (2019)**



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

In 2017, BTC LPN students look over medical information in CMH’s Medical-Surgical department. Pictured are, from left, Samantha Coats, Tyson Gillis, Tia Foreman and Angie Dismang.



# PILLAR IN AGRICULTURE

## Ashley & Jered Brown



Ashley and Jered Brown pose with their children.

FILE PHOTOS

## educating the future of ag

Ashley and Jered Brown are a big part of the fabric of local agriculture education. Ashley grew up in Bolivar on a beef cattle farm and Jered was raised in Pleasant Hope on a dairy farm. Jered is three years older than Ashley. They both were active in FFA but never knew each other as youngsters. Jered went to college at Missouri State and

Ashley attended the University of Missouri. They first met when they were introduced when Ashley was hired at Hermitage and Jered was hired at Halfway. Ashley has been teaching for 13 years (5 at Hermitage, 8 at Bolivar) and Jered has been teaching for 14 years (1 at Greenfield, 2 at Halfway, 4 at Marshfield, and 7 at Pleasant Hope). The Browns currently each teach in their hometowns.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

### What is the favorite thing about your job?

**Ashley-** My favorite thing about my job is the students. There is nothing better than seeing them set goals and reaching them. It is also really great when a student realizes the potential they have and getting to push them to see that in ag and FFA. I also love seeing the connection that people have because of FFA. It doesn't matter what state or chapter you were a member of everyone can connect with something in FFA and usually has a story to go along with it. I love it when people come up to me and tell me stories about when they were in FFA especially when it starts with everything I am who I am because I was active in FFA.

**Jered-** I really enjoy getting the students out of the classroom and giving them real world experiences. Also, when students find success in the ag contest and they get that drive to be the best—that's when it really gets fun.

### How do you see the future of ag ed changing? In what ways do you think it will stay the same?

**Ashley-** I see less students coming from the traditional farm and that is fine, but we see more educating students on things that they didn't 30 years ago because they had the on-farm experience. I also see us preparing them for jobs in agriculture that don't even exist yet because things are ever changing.

**Jered-** We continue to have to adapt to new technology to stay relevant. The focus has changed from not only preparing students to work in agriculture to also educating future consumers of agriculture products. I think the core values of ag education is what has stayed the same as we continue to focus on hands-on learning and career education.



**Mary Fry Agency**  
1135 E Broadway St  
Bolivar, MO 65613  
(417) 326-2454  
maryfryagency.com

American Family Mutual Insurance Company,  
American Family Insurance Company, 6000 American Parkway, Madison WI 53783  
006441—Rev. 11/15 ©2015

607248b

**What changes have you seen in ag education thus far during your career?**

**Ashley-** A big thing is technology. Which has been a great in a lot of ways. My first year teaching at ag contests we had to hand grade every students paper. Now everything is on a scantron and we leave the competition and find out how we did on the internet.

**Jered-** More and more students are not living on a farm. Technology continues to change and we have to change with it.

**Discuss the importance of youth activities such as 4H prior to FFA type of activities in high school?**

**Ashley-** Every student that takes an ag class has to have a project. Being in 4H allows an early start of a great SAE project in high school. It helps teach them responsibility, hard work and a good work ethic. A lot can be said about when a person is looking for a hard worker and when someone knows that a student comes from a farm. They know they are a hard worker.

**Jered-** Being active in 4-H and FFA develop our students into becoming responsible adults. When our youth take care of animals or have a job as their agriculture experience, they learn the value of hard work and the importance of doing your best. FFA and 4H offers so many opportunities for all kinds of students and any kid can be successful in these organizations with hard work and determination.

**What motivates you as an ag educator?**

**Ashley-** The students! It can be in a number of different ways but I love it when a student wants to get really involved and finds something they love and are passionate about. And there are so many things in agriculture and FFA to get passionate about. The programs and offerings are endless and there is something for everyone.

**Jered-** Knowing that I'm able to offer once in a lifetime opportunities for kids is what motivates me. I have been able to take FFA members all across the US to competitions and leadership conferences and seeing them discover what is outside their own community is pretty neat.



**“My ag teachers had such a great influence on me that I wanted to do the same for others and get them passionate about agriculture.”**

— Ashley Brown



Attend our drive-thru  
**CMH Spring Hiring Fair**  
 Friday, April 9 | 1 - 4 p.m.  
 CMH Broadway Professional Building  
 2001 W. Broadway Ave., Bolivar

**Where CAREER and PASSION meet.**

**We're passionate about helping people.** From our medical staff to our support teams, CMH employees are making a difference in the lives of our patients and residents every day. Working at CMH is a rewarding career choice. We provide educational opportunities helping our employees to grow in their careers and to become leaders in their communities.

**Competitive Pay & Benefits | Great Work Environment**

Free health and dental insurance options to full-time employees | Employer-paid term life insurance policy | Employees receive at no cost, group long-term disability coverage after one year of employment | Matched savings plan and profit sharing plan | Paid time off Employee health and wellness program | HEROs employee recognition

**APPLY TODAY**  
 417-328-6426 | [citizensmemorial.com](http://citizensmemorial.com)



607247b

*The Vintage*  
**DEPOT**  
*Brush Creek Boutique*  
 100% Local  
 & 1000% Grateful  
 for your support!

- Furniture
- Home Decor
- Boutique Clothing
- Signs
- Florals
- Good Ole' Junk!

**Greenhouse Opening in April!**

HOME WHERE WE ARE FAMILY  
 THIS IS US. OUR LIFE. YOUR STORY. OUR HOME

4317 Hwy P | Half Way, MO | 417-327-2699

606974b

**What have been some of the more rewarding moments of your career as an educator?**

**Ashley-** The most rewarding moments have been the two National Entomology Championships my students earned. They worked so hard and it was so well deserved. After both times we drove through Stephenville, Texas, singing We Are the Champions at the top of our lungs in sheer excitement. I think it is moments like that myself nor the kids will ever forget. (The National Entomology Contest takes place at Tarleton State University and not at National FFA Convention in Indianapolis)

**Jered-** I have been fortunate to have team achieve success in contest with 2 state champions in Dairy Cattle and Livestock Evaluation. In 2019 I took a team to the World Dairy Expo and they won the FFA Dairy Cattle judging contest earning them a trip to Europe to compete internationally. Seeing these kids achieve such success is so rewarding.

**What makes your particular school and students special?**

**Ashley-** The Bolivar FFA Chapter was one of the very first FFA chapters in the state in 1929. It has such a great history and the best supporters. We have lots of students who want to work hard and achieve great things.

**Jered-** The FFA at Pleasant Hope has a rich history of success and the students are always ready to work. It is pretty neat to be able to teach in the WH Hood Ag building and all the history that comes with it.

**At what point in your youth did you begin to think that ag education would be something you'd pursue?**

**Ashley-** I knew that I wanted to be an ag teacher since I was a junior in high school when I was walking around the career show at State FFA Convention in Columbia. My ag teachers had such a great influence on me that I wanted to do the same for others and get them passionate about agriculture. Every time that I had opportunity to practice teaching in college it just reassured me that I was in the right profession. I get such rush teaching especially if it is a topic that I really love. I knew that I always wanted to teach in Bolivar eventually too.

**Jered-** I decided in college to pursue being an agriculture teacher. I've always wanted to be involved in agriculture and this is a career that continues to challenge me and motivate me to keep getting better.

**If you could give your younger self a bit of advice, what would that be?**

**Ashley-** Everything happens for a reason. You have to trust that there is a plan even though at the time it might be hard to see or realize it.

**Jered-** Don't sweat the small stuff and to just focus on what's important.



# BOONES BBQ BARN

Bolivar, MO.



**FOLLOW US**



**BAR IN THE LOFT | CATERING | BOONESBBQBARN.com**

5260 S Scenic Ave, Bolivar, MO 65613 (417) 326-7008

<b>Monday &amp; Tuesday:</b> CLOSED	<b>Friday:</b> 11:00 AM - 9:00 PM
<b>Wednesday:</b> 11:00 AM - 8:00 PM	<b>Saturday:</b> 11:00 AM - 9:00 PM
<b>Thursday:</b> 11:00 AM - 8:00 PM	<b>Sunday:</b> 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM

**I've always wanted to be involved in agriculture and this is a career that continues to challenge me and motivate me to keep getting better.**

— *Jered Brown*

**How important is the support of parents in a child's ag ed? Explain.**

**Ashley-** Parents are essential in ag education especially when it comes to SAE projects. If the project is an ownership project the parents play a crucial role because they will likely have to help with the project such as livestock or agribusiness. I think parents can be a huge motivator too on the FFA side. I know that own parents being in FFA motivated me to do certain things. Ever though they never specifically told me what to do in FFA I saw my dad's Star Greenhand award and wanted to be Star Greenhand myself as well as my mom's Creed Speaking award and I wanted to be the chapter creed speaker because of that. I now have those awards of my parents in my office as a momentum of some of my motivation in FFA.

**Jered-**Parents are the key in all types of education especially in ag. I really can tell what kind of parents a kid has based on how they value their own education. Agriculture education and FFA involves a lot of time investment from the kids as well a required ag project. It really nice when you have parents that see the importance of having their kids involved in school activities.



**PREVIOUS NOMINEES**

Sukovaty family

Mark and Donita Stanek

**Velynda Cameron (2020)**

Billy Bruce

Jim Hacker

Robert Hensley

Sam Hawk

Trent Drake

**Kathy Drake (2019)**

# Family Owned and Operated SINCE 1970

**Our family is thankful for the opportunity we have had to serve this community for the past 50 years. We look forward to a long future of providing farm & home products that meet the needs of local families!**

**Celebrating  
Over 50  
Years In  
Business!!**



Family Owned and Operated Since 1970

**Home of the Answer Man.**

**C & C – Bolivar**  
3260 S. Springfield Ave.  
Bolivar, MO 65613  
417-326-2436

**C & C – Lebanon**  
1680 W. Elm St.  
Lebanon, MO 65536  
417-532-7158

**candefarmandhome.com**

