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THE
Wayne Dispatch

FEBRUARY 2020

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**Wayne Resident Handles Hardship with
Business Plan, One 'Slice' at a time**



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Wayne resident making dough with new business

By Carolyn Marnon

Crystal Murphy was homeless with two young sons. She had been living with her dad until he lost the trailer they were living in. They had nowhere to go. They went from house to house, staying with people they knew. They eventually ended up in Toledo, Ohio. Crystal was about 20 years old. But let's go back a few years.

Born and raised in Wayne, Crystal's dad spent 30 years working for Mark Wayne Motors on Michigan Avenue. Her mother had dropped her off on her dad's porch when Crystal was just 14 years old. Crystal says her mother couldn't handle having a kid anymore. She attended both John Glenn and Wayne Memorial high schools before dropping out at the age of 15 due to bullying she experienced at WMHS. She got her GED at 16 and got her first job working the drive-thru window at McDonald's. She was there about six months before discovering she was pregnant.

After she had her son, she started working at a nursing home. "I was taking care of the elderly. Cleaning beds, showers, feeding. I was enrolled online for nursing assistant. My son was about 6 months old at that time. I ultimately dropped my online classes. I couldn't keep up with the work and raise him. It takes a special person to be able to handle working in a nursing home. I had just lost my grandmother a year before and I was just too emotional to do the job."

Crystal started working in pizza restaurants. Her first pizza joint was Sammy's Pizza at Telegraph and Joy which she says is now closed. Her experience expanded to include "Papa Romano's, Jets, Howies and Cottage Inn. Domino's is where I spent most of my time. Domino's is where I was a manager and general manager of a couple locations. I could write a whole story on my pizza life," she laughs.

Now back to the time she was homeless and staying in Toledo. Crystal would drive everyday from Toledo to a hotel next to I-275 in Canton where she would clean rooms from 7:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. She then had an hour to herself as she made her way to Dearborn



Crystal Murphy entered a manage-to-own program with Toarmina's Pizza on Wayne Road in Westland. Photo by John Rhaesa

Heights to her second job as a driver for Jet's Pizza from 5:00 p.m. to midnight. After that shift, she'd drive back to Toledo, get some sleep, and wake up a few hours later to start her 2-job workday all over again.

For three months, this was her routine. "I was exhausted, I never saw my boys anymore. I was only working to keep gas in my car and buy food and diapers on a daily basis. Just enough to survive the day. I knew we couldn't keep living like that and a friend let me stay in their basement so I could get my head above water."

Crystal worked at Burger King on Wayne Rd. and Plymouth while living in the basement. "That was able to provide us enough money to afford my 1-bedroom apartment. From there I started working for Domino's on Wayne Road and Michigan Ave in 2013 as a driver. That was the real turning point for us. I was able to af-

ford a small 2-bedroom apartment and pay my bill's every month. But again, we were just surviving not really living."

Three years ago, she became the General Manager at one of the Domino's locations that was about a 45-minute drive from her home. The time she was gone and the gas she used on her commute were not worth it for her. She was able to get a GM position at another location, but she says "I was over worked, understaffed and poorly paid. Many nights I was alone to handle the rush and would have my fiancé come in to help me because they needed to watch their labor. They refused to give me the help I needed. It started to take a toll on my health. I had developed a twitch in my eye from the stress. That's when I started looking for something else."

Done with pizza and wanting a different lifestyle where she could

enjoy her life and her kids, Crystal was able to get a position at Wayne Westland Federal Credit Union. She says she spent 9-10 hours per day sitting behind a desk making loan applications with clients who were trying to open their own businesses. While working there, she met Lou Toarmina. It was there that he approached her about buying into a store. At the time, it cost about \$20,000-\$30,000; money Crystal didn't have. A year later, she saw an ad on the Toarmina's website about a manage-to-own program that required no money down. She reached out to Lou who remembered who she was and the seed was planted.

Crystal liked being up, moving around and interacting with people on a more consistent basis. She realized the credit union job was not for her. She was able to get a job as a driver for Domino's in Taylor, working 3-4 days a week just to keep some money coming in. "My fiancé worked harder to support us during that time. He supported my decision." She says he motivated her to move into management positions and reach higher.

After spending over 10 years in the pizza industry gaining experience, from delivery driver to manager to general manager at various pizza restaurants, an incredible opportunity presented itself to Crystal.

Last July, Crystal entered a manage-to-own program with Toarmina's Pizza. With no down payment, she started managing the Toarmina's location on Wayne Rd in Westland. After three months as manager while she and Lou Toarmina were determining if this was a good fit for the business, she signed the paperwork in early October to become the store's new owner. She's now hoping her sons, now 10 and 8, will one day take over from her. "I want to secure a future for them." She goes on to say, "I never thought I would make a career out of it."

Toarmina's Pizza is a Michigan-based company whose claim to fame is the 24-inch pizza where each slice is a foot long. The Toarmina family originally owned the location she is now at. It later switched hands numerous times over the years as dif-

See **Pizza**, page 9

NEWS BRIEFS

Dueling piano party

Wayne Rotary Club presents their annual St. Paddy's Dueling Piano Party on Saturday, March 14, at 7:30 p.m. Held at HYPE Western Wayne Center, 4635 Howe, this evening of musical entertainment includes a cash bar, food available for purchase, 50/50 raffles and fun. Tickets are \$20 each. Proceeds will benefit Wayne Memorial High School Rotary College Scholarships. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m. with show starting at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are available at Henry's Service Center, Kurt's Cap and HYPE. For more information, contact Linda Gable at (734) 751-2302 or email linyet2b@yahoo.com.

African-American genealogy

Genealogist Jessica Trotter will teach about the fundamentals of researching your family tree at African-American Genealogy on Wednesday, February 12, at 5:30 p.m. at the Wayne Public Library.

Baseball and softball registration

The Wayne Baseball Association (WBA) will be hosting registration for baseball and softball players for the 2020 season on Saturday, February 15, from 12:30-2:30 p.m. at the Wayne Public Library, 3737 S. Wayne Rd. The WBA believes team sports help youth gain confidence, learn responsibility and become leaders. Registration events will also be held February 29, March 14 and March 28, 12:30-2:30 p.m. Registration

events will also be held on Thursdays from 5:30-7:30 p.m. on February 20, February 27, March 5, March 12 and March 26. Registrations taken after March 28 are by appointment only and are subject to a \$10 late fee. Players from all cities are welcome. You will need to provide a copy of your child's birth certificate. For more information, contact WBA at (734) 722-6400.

Girls wanted for fastpitch softball

The Wayne Baseball Association (WBA) is looking for girls born 2003-2013 for Fastpitch Softball. Registration will be held at the Wayne Public Library, 3737 S. Wayne Rd. on Thursdays (Feb. 20 and 27, Mar. 5 and 12) from 5:30-7:30 p.m. and on Saturdays (Feb. 15 and 19 and Mar. 14 and 28) from 12:30-2:30 p.m. There will also be a special registration on Thursday, March 19, from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Mark Chevrolet, 33200 Michigan Ave. Players from all cities are welcome.

Children's story time at the library

The Wayne Public Library will be celebrating Black History Month with a children's story-time event for children ages 6 and up with an adult caregiver on Saturday, February 22, at 3:00 p.m. The story is "Granddaddy's Turn: A Journey to the Ballot Box" followed by a discussion for the right to vote and the making of a craft related to this important subject.

Drag queen bingo comes to Wayne

Drag Queen Bingo will be coming to the Wayne-Westland Family Center Moose Lodge 835 on Saturday, February 22. Tickets are available now and can be purchased at the Lodge's bar, 38050 Michigan Ave, for \$20 presale. Tickets, if any are still available, will be \$25 at the door the night of the event. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. Show starts at 7:00 p.m. Bar food will be available 5:30-7:30 p.m. Seats are all general admission. This show is for 21 and older; ID will be checked at the door. This event sold out last fall.

History of greeting cards

Wayne Historical Society President Nicole Conklin will be giving a presentation on the history and customs of greeting cards. The Wayne Historical Museum will have a large variety of vintage cards from the museum collection on display. Light refreshments will be served. The History of Greeting Cards will be at the museum, 1 Towne Square, on Thursday, February 13, at 7:00 p.m.

Airport historian gives talk about female pilots

Detroit Metro Airport historian Daniel Mason will talk about the 107 female pilots who flew aircraft in and out of what is now Detroit Metro Airport during a presentation, The W.A.S.P. of Romulus Army Airfield,

on Thursday, March 12, at 7:00 p.m. at the Wayne Public Library. The event is hosted by the Wayne Historical Society.

Ghost hunt

The Great Lakes Ghost Hunters invite you to join them for a ghost hunt in Wayne's 140 year old museum on Friday, March 13. Tickets are \$20 for a one-hour spot between 8:00 p.m. and midnight. Contact the Wayne Historical Museum for ticket information.

Free ice cream cone day

Dairy Queen's annual free cone day will take place Thursday, March 19, from 1:00-9:00 p.m. at the Wayne Dairy Queen on Wayne Rd. Come get your free small vanilla soft-serve cone. The event is held in partnership with the Children's Miracle Network Hospitals. Your Wayne Dairy Queen opens for the 2020 season on Sunday, February 9.

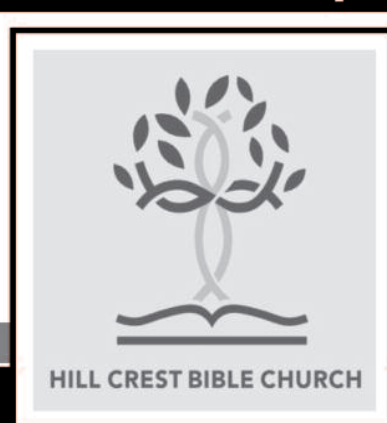
Make a fairy garden

The Wayne Historical Society will be hosting a Fairy Garden Workshop on Saturday, April 4 at 1:00 p.m. All supplies will be provided for this make-and-take fairy garden. Reserve your spot today for \$20.

Blood drive

The Wayne-Westland Family Center Moose Lodge will be holding an American Red Cross Blood Drive on Saturday, February 29, from 9:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m.

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The 2020 dog and cat tags are available for sale in the City Clerk's Office at City Hall. All dogs and cats four months of age or older must be licensed (certificate of rabies vaccination required) and wear a collar with current tag attached. Tags obtained by February 28, 2020 will be at a lesser fee.

Fees during annual licensing period ending February 28, 2020

Regular license	\$18.00*
License for spayed or neutered animals	\$10.00*

Fees from March 1 through December 31, 2020

Regular/spayed or neutered animals	\$30.00
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*Dogs and cats under four months of age or owned for less than 10 days qualify for these rates at any time of the year.

Any questions please contact the Clerk's Office at 722-2204.



ALL CATS MUST BE LICENSED IN THE CITY OF WAYNE

“How we tied the knot” residents share love stories

By Carolyn Marnon

Can there really be too many Judy's? According to Judith Shelton, yes there can be, which is why she prefers to be called Judith. However, to her doting husband, Stan, there can only be one and his Judy happens to be the apple of his eye.

Stan Shelton was attending the University of Michigan with Judith's cousins. Her aunt was familiar with Stan for about a year and said that she had someone she wanted Judith to meet. When Judith's cousin got married, Judith and her mother went to the wedding. Stan happened to be in attendance, and so they finally met.

Judith's cousins invited her to United Artists to see a movie. She didn't know that Stan would be there although she told her mom she thought he would be. He knew she would be there. Their first date was that group date with her cousins. Stan has been the only person she's dated since!

Judith worked at Detroit Edison



Judith and Stan Shelton on their wedding day, the happy couple will celebrate 45 years of marriage in April.

where she did one-line diagrams. Stan happened to be a computer programmer who worked there too. “I al-



ways said I wouldn't marry anyone who worked for the same company I did, but it was too late. I liked him.” The reason she didn't want to date anyone in the same company was because she didn't want people in her business, she says.

Stan was quiet. “I had to make him talk. Now he talks too much!” Judith laughs. “He listened to me. I just enjoyed his company. He had a very pleasing manner. My brother was just crazy about him.” She adds that her brother told her ‘he's the best for you.’ She's sad that her dad never got to meet Stan. “He's a lot like my father” who died.

Stan Shelton grew up in Mississippi. “A southern hick,” he says. He was the oldest of 8. His folks were sharecroppers. When he was 10, his

family moved to Inkster. Judith mentions that her dad was also from the south.

“I always liked tall men,” she shares.

“She was pretty. Not crazy until after we've been married 44 years! Dressed nice. Always gave me pointers on my dress,” he says. “Lots of pointers!” she insists.

The Shelton's have three children. The oldest is their daughter, a psychologist, who lives in Westland. Their middle child, a son, is in the Army. The youngest son “works all the time,” Judith says, for an auto supplier. “He's a good catch, if you can catch him.”

When asked about their most memorable date, Judith replies “Oh my goodness. We went on so many!” “Eastern Market” Stan says. “He liked food,” she says. “We still go sometimes.”

The secret to their amazing relationship? “Anytime you put God in the relationship. He keeps us together,” shares Judith. Neither wanted to ever be divorced.

They share several funny moments. Stan tells a story. One Thanksgiving, he was cleaning chitlins. Black people cook chitlins, he says, which happen to be the intestines of a pig. (According to a 2014 Portland Observer article “Most people of color believe that Chitlin's were “invented” by slaves who received the last of the unwanted meat from the annual hog killings of their slave masters.”) Judith told him that the next time, she would clean them. He laughs that she gagged the whole time. She says

See **Love**, page 6



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Love, Continued from page 5

the time after that, she put gloves on. They playfully bantered over whether there was a next time.

Judith shares her funny story. She was home with her mom making chili. Stan said it was too hot because she had poured too much pepper into it. Stan looks at her while she is sharing her story. "Your story's not even right," he says.

The Shelton's have been in business together since 1989 running J&S Portrait America Photography. Judith says she once worked at JC Penney taking photos. She mentions that she wanted to be a videographer and took a class once. Stan got his first camera when he was 10 years old.

Judith had to take a step back in the business when she got sick with kidney issues and was in and out of the hospital. She got two new kidneys in 2015. She says Stan was always right there. He was attentive to her, not chasing other women. When she broke her leg, she says he was attentive then too. "He's always protective." She grew up an independent young woman with parents who "encouraged speaking up." She had to

learn to accept help from Stan. "I like him being there and being the husband I married."

Stan is currently the President of the Wayne Chamber of Commerce. Judith helps out at the Chamber offices three days a week. In April, they will be celebrating 45 years of marriage.

The Websters

Councilman Jeremiah Webster met Amara in the fall of 2010 when they both worked at Walmart. He was working there while also working as the property manager for a senior community high-rise, a job he still has. Amara's sister-in-law knew Jeremiah and arranged for them to meet. They were friends for a while and, it wasn't until after Christmas that they went on their first date: dinner and a movie. "We've been to a lot of movies. We love going to the movies," says Jeremiah.

On the day after Christmas the following year, Amara discovered she was pregnant with their son, Nolan. When she and Jeremiah met, she already had a daughter who was then 1 1/2.

The couple became engaged on Valentine's Day 2013 and married in October 2014. They say there was no



Jeremiah and Amara Webster became husband and wife in October 2014. The Webster's will be adding to their young family in May.

honeymoon. The kids stayed with their parents while they went to Frankenmuth for a few days.

On their 5th wedding anniversary last October, Amara's dad took the kids while she and Jeremiah went to dinner.

They joke about how he locks himself out quite a bit. He once had to call her from work because he had locked himself out of his car. She had to drive to Taylor to rescue him. "She never lets me forget it," he laughs. He has also locked his keys in his car while he was visiting a friend in a cemetery.

"We don't fight very often," Amara

says. "We're very good at talking everything out. We're pretty level-headed and can talk through most stuff." They have the same beliefs. "It's easy when you both feel mutually," says Jeremiah.

Jeremiah also jokes, "She pats me on the head and says 'That's nice. You're wrong anyway.'" He comments that he has to check the home office before doing anything. "I'm not really the boss though," Amara replies.

The secret to their relationship is that they let things be equal. "I think we're just a little boring," says Jeremiah.

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Wayne-Westland teachers loved receiving the new books for their classrooms.

Brooke's books benefits students of all ages

By Carolyn Marnon

"Community Circle's first literacy campaign is coming to an end! We were able to help all ranges of grades," organizer Brooke Johnson exclaimed. "This week I will be packaging and delivering the books to the schools that answered my email that I sent out."

With the generous donations of community members, Brooke, a student at Wayne Memorial High School, was able to obtain books for kindergarten through 8th grade teachers for their classrooms.

Once those had been sorted and packaged, she started looking for donations to help her fellow high school students. She had an Amazon

wishlist available for books she hoped donors would purchase. Brooke also asked for used books. Each book that was donated has a nameplate inside the cover listing the donor.

Brooke was able to collect enough books to give to the nine Wayne-Westland schools that responded to her outreach. "Two books for each class, leaving me with extra books that will potentially go to Stottlemeyer to hopefully start their love for reading at a young age."

With her goal reached on this project, it is time to wait and see what this young future leader has up her sleeve for her next community campaign.

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Downtown improvements are happening

By Carolyn Marnon

The Downtown District of Wayne comprises the areas along Wayne Rd and Michigan Avenue from city limit to city limit in each direction. The Downtown Development Authority (known as the DDA) is tasked with implementing plans for the physical improvements that affect the appearance of the downtown and to develop cultural and recreational activities which increases activity in the area.

Community Development Director Lori Gouin recently presented an informational report to the city council about DDA activities in 2019. This report can be accessed online at cityofwayne.com/index.php/business/dda.

The DDA, in conjunction with Wayne Main Street, helps host the annual Scarecrow Show and Contest. This event draws thousands of people to downtown Wayne. This event allows individuals and groups to design and build a scarecrow on a pre-made T-frame. The scarecrows are displayed along a portion of Wayne Rd and Michigan Avenue where community members can view and then vote on their favorites in a contest with a \$100 cash prize for winners.

Wayne's Annual Downtown Days, co-hosted with Wayne Main Street, is a two-day family-friendly event that took place this year in Veteran's Plaza with food, music, a flea market, and other activities.

TOAST Wayne (formerly Jazz on the Avenue), the annual Wayne Main Street fundraiser, is co-sponsored by the DDA and the City of Wayne. The event brings together community members to downtown Wayne to celebrate what is best about Wayne.



The DDA was a major contributor in the Wayne Rotary's Summer Concert series in Goudy Park.

The Wayne Rotary's Summer Concert series in Goudy Park is a huge event in the city. Over 2,000+ people attend the musical event each week. The DDA is a major sponsor of this event.

The DDA also sponsors Small Business Saturday with Wayne Main Street to draw citizens into the city to shop local. Karma Coffee and Kitchen hosted the kick-off event in November. Over \$1000 in gift cards for local stores were placed in some of the tote bags given out. Kids had the opportunity to visit with Santa at the A Visit With Santa event held at the State Wayne Theatre.

The DDA celebrates new businesses that have come to Wayne in the past year: Tropical Smoothie Café, Bei Capelli Collection, Wayne Auto Deal LLC, The Creative Mobility Group, Allstar Patriots/Dance, Wayne Wellness Inc dba the Releaf Zone, Appliance Avenue and Allstar Patriots Cheer Gym-all on Michigan

Avenue. On Wayne Rd, new businesses include Nemo's Subs, Power Stroke Printing LLC, 7 Star Liquor, and UAW Local 845.

The DDA has met with the Wayne County Department of Public Services to discuss traffic calming and a pedestrian crossing on Wayne Rd between W. Michigan Avenue and Glenwood. Strategic planning sessions with members of the Planning Commission have been underway to provide input on the City of Wayne Master Plan Revision. New businesses have been welcomed with ribbon-cutting ceremonies at various locations. The DDA has also completed all public reporting requirements as mandated by PA 57 of 2018. Improvements have been implemented in the Downtown District. Trees have been trimmed along W. Michigan Avenue. Trees blocking storefronts have been removed. Public parking lots have been restriped. The islands next to the Court and be-

hind Leo's Jewelry have been cleaned and remulched. The flowerbeds along Wayne Rd from Simms to Glenwood have had the plantings removed and replaced. The area surrounding the Peace Memorial by the library has had the bushes trimmed and the area remulched along with restoring the entire exterior of the Peace Memorial.

In 2020, the DDA plans to continue landscape improvements along W. Michigan Avenue, promote a new Façade Improvement Program, add dumpster enclosures to public lots and update the DDA Plan following the completion of the City's Master Plan.

Also in the works is the formation of a partnership with the Wayne County Community College District to institute a program which will assist in developing small businesses by providing access to business loans, business development services and networking opportunities.

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LOVE, Continued from page 6

miah. They do lots of family stuff together with Nolan, now 7 who can play an energetic game of UNO with himself, and their 10-year old daughter. They agree that Nolan is a mini version of his dad. They generally do the same activities together: shopping, dinner, movies at the State Wayne. "We do more family things than we do couple things," says Amara.

This duo will be expanding the family soon. Baby Webster is due to arrive May 15. And then there will be five.

The Jenkins

Back at the turn of the century, when the internet was still new to many of us, there was a website called uDate. It was on uDate that Kim White and Dave Jenkins happened to connect. Neither seems to remember how they came to start emailing and calling each other, but Dave clearly remembers that women got to use the site for free while men had to pay for it.

Kim thought Dave was a police officer because he was wearing a blue lab coat and it looked like he was fiddling with some evidence in his uDate profile photo. She turns to him at her side, "I never told you that."

Their first date was at Union Street, an art deco eatery in midtown Detroit. Kim was so impressed with Dave that she says she just wanted to tell someone she met someone great.

Kim and Dave are the owners of Helium Studio on Wayne Rd. in Wayne. Next month, they will have been married for 17 years. The secret to their relationship? They say it's doing things together. They make

jewelry together. They invested in their shop together. "We've been making jewelry together over ten years," says Kim. Dave adds that "I say 'yes dear' a lot."

Kim says they appreciate each other's different styles. The way they communicate, their love languages, "leaning into the other person's style and needs." She goes on "You have to practice putting your self second and your couplehood first."

"As we age, there's more independence," Kim says. She adds that Dave has other friends to do things with, like going to the shooting range. She comments that one of their first



Dave Jenkins and Kim White-Jenkins will be celebrating their 17th anniversary next month.

dates was also at a shooting range.

Growing up in a church that she describes as "solemn," Kim admits that Dave is a social butterfly at their church while she is more laid back and quiet. Kim grew up as a Catholic



Dave Jenkins and Kim White-Jenkins on their wedding day.

schoolgirl, on the debate team with a strict upbringing as the oldest child of 5. Dave, the youngest of 4, was in the marching band and rode his bike for hours. "I do credit Dave and his family for bringing me back to the church," says Kim. They share their faith life at Merriman Baptist Church where they got married in the gym. Kim walked the half-court line as her aisle because an addition to the church sanctuary was under construction.

Dave brought two kids into their marriage. Brian is now 22 and Liz is 25. For their honeymoon, they stayed at a bed and breakfast in Chicago for a few days. Later that fall, they went to Ireland.

The couple is currently binge-watching "The Crown," a Netflix drama that chronicles the life of Queen Elizabeth II, during their chill-time. Dave shares that "Her phone is going nuts while we watch it! She's looking up historical facts" to see if what is on the show is true.

Dave admits, "She's interesting. We always have good conversations. She's fun to be around." Kim turns around and says, "I tell Dave at least three times a week 'how did you know that?' He knows facts or how

things work."

"We like to hold hands. My sister thinks it's corny," says Kim. She also says Dave likes to "same-side sit" in booths at restaurants.

Kim and Dave's wonderful adventures include purchasing their store in March 2015. "It took us seven months to renovate it. Dave was working and would come in at the end of the workday. We sold a lot of books while doing demolition and easy renovations," says Kim. Helium Studio was formerly a bookstore.

They also camped a lot with the kids for several years, all trips in Michigan except for one stint in Kentucky. It was 100 degrees and there were no real beaches in Kentucky. Instead, there was a "pond" beach that just happened to be closed while they were there. A tornado came through, the tents got blown down and full of water. It was the most miserable time according to Kim. However, their daughter said it was the best! Kim admits to being a beach person who likes to read. Dave is more active, prone to off-road jeeping and metal detecting. Kim admits they do like to geocache together. Dave did add, "Mammoth Cave makes a great tornado shelter."

Kim encapsulates their love in six words. "To me, it's a God-ordained relationship."

"We like to hold hands. My sister thinks it's corny."

Kim White-Jenkins

PIZZA, Continued from page 3

ferent owners ran the restaurant poorly thinking it would run itself, says Crystal. She's determined to change all that.

"I'm making it the way the Toarmina's originally intended it to be," Crystal says. She is working 5-6 days, 40-50 hours per week to make sure of that. She has had to retrain the employees on making the food. She has hired new people where the focus is on the product and how to make it properly. She's been quiet on

the advertising front as the quality was being reworked. Now that the pizza is up to the original Toarmina's standards, she is promoting the restaurant and offering specials, mostly through the facebook page "Toarmina's 1311 S. Wayne Rd"

Loving that Toarmina's is a family-run and operated business, a small mom and pop-type restaurant that is not corporate, where she knows all the other owners and that she can contact Lou Toarmina whenever she needs to, are major plusses for Crystal. Ultimately, she would

like to move her business to Wayne. "Wayne is a way of life," she says. "Everyone we know is in Wayne." However, that dream is not in the near future. Until then, Crystal wants everyone to know "there is a new owner/operator here" who cares about the community. "I'm not just another business owner. I don't plan on going anywhere else soon."

To everyone who is having or has had a rough time in their life, she advises them not to give up. "Keep going. There's a light at the end of the tunnel. Anything is possible.

"I was a single mom and I relied heavily on my dad and my sons' other grandparents to watch my kids. Their dad was never in the picture. I just made it work until I met my fiancé and he helped me a lot.

"I wouldn't be the person I am today if it wasn't for the people helping me along the way. Many friends helped me watch my kids while I worked or just were there when I needed someone. I owe everything to them because without them who knows where I would be? It takes a village to raise a child."

WWFCU announces executive promotions

Wayne Westland Federal Credit Union (WWFCU), a financial institution that's served its local community for 66 years, is pleased to announce the promotion of three key leaders.

Joleen Bowman is being promoted to chief executive officer (CEO), effective July 1, 2020. Bowman will succeed Thelma Dasho, long-time president and CEO, who will be retiring at the end of June. Prior to being named CEO, Bowman started as a teller 13 years ago and then soon moved into the member service department. Since that time, she succeeded in heading multiple divisions of the lending department such as consumer and indirect lending, and commercial and real estate lending. Bowman was most recently WWFCU's member service supervisor.

Tracy Whittaker is being promoted to chief operating officer (COO). She began at WWFCU 33 years ago as a part-time teller and was most recently the credit union's compliance manager. In between those positions, Whittaker was also a loan supervisor and branch man-



CEO Joleen Bowman

ager for WWFCU. Her attention to detail and loyal dedication to the credit union have brought her to where she is today.

Becky Schoonover is being promoted to chief financial officer (CFO). Schoonover began as a WWFCU teller 22 years ago and joined the accounting department in 2008.

Her most recent position before the promotion was accounting super-



COO Tracy Whittaker

visor. Schoonover brings with her a strong background in credit union accounting as well as exemplary management skills.

"It isn't the norm to find so many qualified applicants to promote from within one credit union with only 36 employees," said CEO and President Thelma Dasho. "I work with outstanding and very qualified staff, and these three ladies rank high on the list of qualified applicants. I know



CFO Becky Schoonover

they will achieve the objectives for the credit union and its members. My sincere congratulations to all three of them."

"I am both humbled and excited to be WWFCU's new CEO," stated Bowman. "The shoes I have to fill are both expansive and highly experienced and I'm confident that with our wonderful team in place, we will transition smoothly and continue on our dedicated path toward growth."

Man finds \$27,000 and returns it to local credit union



George Condash placed a big black box on the counter at the Wayne Westland Federal Credit Union and asked if there was a reward for turning in \$40,000.

By Carolyn Marnon

It was just another day at the reception desk for Ciara Bowie-Kidwell. Ciara greets customers as they enter Wayne Westland Federal Credit Union in Westland. In January, a gentleman walked into the lobby, put a big black box on the counter and asked if there was a reward for turning in \$40,000.

Confusion set in as employees tried to comprehend what was hap-

pening. George Condash had been by the drive-thru when he noticed a big black box outside the ATM. Amy Neale, Marketing Director for WWFCU, says George thought the box was a computer component of some type. Apparently, curiosity got the best of George when he got out of his vehicle to investigate. Amy says George didn't think twice; he just brought the box into the credit union. When they checked the secu-

rity footage, she says five cars drove by the box before George stopped for it.

The black box was a cartridge that had been removed from the ATM when an employee of the security company that maintains the contents of the ATM machines was servicing them. The cartridge originally held \$40,000 when it had been inserted in the machine. When it was

being replaced, it held only \$27,000.

Doris Pruett, ATM Specialist Co-Supervisor in the cash department of WWFCU, says the security company called her as soon as the employee realized he didn't have the canister. She says when George brought the canister in, no one knew what to think because they had never actually seen the ATM cash cartridges before.



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