

2022 Governor's Volunteer Stars Awards announced for Marshall County

On Tuesday, December 13, Marshall County Joint Economic and Community Development Board hosted the local 2022 Governor's Volunteer Stars Awards (GVSA) presentation. Applications were submitted and winners were chosen by committee. This year's award recipients are Faris Phillips and Gracie Steely.

Faris Phillips has been a driving force behind the Marshall County Community Theater (MCCT) for many years and those efforts were recognized with the presentation of the 2022 Governor's Volunteer Star Award. After agreeing to serve as stage manager for a production of Oliver, her involvement with the local MCCT was solidified. In 1986, Faris agreed to serve on the Board of Directors for the organization. Previously MCCT had a home at what is now Lewisburg Middle School, but it was evident they were growing and needed a larger space. In 1994, an opportunity arose to purchase a permanent home. The Board of Directors purchased the Dixie movie theater and began the renovations to make it a performing arts center. Faris



Pictured, Faris Phillips receiving her award from Marshall County Mayor Mike Keny.

has always worked in the shadows mostly doing backstage managing, painting sets, running lighting/sound and constantly fundraising. The goal of the Dixie Theater purchase was to enhance culture, commerce, and education—Faris and the Board have far exceeded that goal with playbills and



Pictured, Gracie Steely receiving her award from Marshall County Mayor Mike Keny.

programming too numerous to mention. For many years, Faris taught a children's theater camp during summer break and was able to introduce many of our community's youth to the love of the theater. Faris's continuous commitment to the culture of our community is immeasurable and we

are thankful for her dedication. Gracie Steely is our 2022 GVSA Youth recipient. Gracie is a 2022 graduate of Marshall County High School where she was very involved in the Student Council and Sub Deb. Her passion for service to her community was developed during her roles in student government and leadership positions and Gracie was inspired to do volunteer work on her own. HOPEtown was her favorite place to serve and she did various things to help the local organization, such as sorting clothes and food for giveaways. She also volunteered during HOPEtown events by serving food, helping people choose clothes, and spending time with the children and families who utilized the services offered at HOPEtown. This past summer, Gracie single-handedly organized a fundraiser by setting up a booth at Young Professionals' Fun Friday where she was able to raise awareness for HOPEtown and collected \$1,000 cash along with clothing and food donations. Gracie's drive to help others has not ended with high school. She is a new

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Lucky's Cat House breaks hearts wide open

By **Hannah Davis**
Tribune Correspondent

After many delays, the only cat rescue in three counties, Lucky's Cat House, is set to open in a new home on East Commerce in the new year.

Board members and owners of the adoption center, Brandy Fox and Jaclyn Payne, bought the building in October 2020, and have been putting in the work to open the center, complete with kitten rooms, quarantine spaces and an intake center to facilitate medical needs. Once the shelter opens, the roaming cat rooms will be available to the public six days a week, while the intake side



Tribune photo by Hannah Davis

Local artists, including Jaclyn Payne's mother, completed the murals for the kitten room at the new Lucky's Cat House feline rescue facility opening soon on East Commerce.

will only be open one day a week. "The need is outrageously overwhelming. There's not been an organization like Lucky's," said Payne. The facility is one born of hard work, passion and, in Payne's case, a lifetime of dedication to the rescue

cause. With a background in wildlife rehabilitation, animal rescue, and kennel experience, Payne partnered with Fox, as well as a few other original board members to start Lucky's Cat House several years ago when she realized that there was a hole in the rescue industry.

"There are never options for cats. Our hearts break daily with this," said Payne as she and Fox teared up as they showed videos of past rescues.

On average, Lucky's Cat House rescues and fosters 700-900 cats annually, often fostering 130 cats at a time. They rescue cats from Huntsville to Franklin. Though it started as a cat

rescue with its foundation in foster homes, both Payne and Fox are eager to have an in-house location where they can facilitate the medical cases that Lucky's Cat House has become famous for.

"We all have our specialties, our favorites, I guess. I like the amputees and Jaclyn likes the 'eye kitties'," said Fox, regarding their soft spot for the special needs kittens and cats that most other shelters turn away.

"Most of our vets laugh and say that if it's weird or out of the box, Lucky's will have it," said Payne.

Since Lucky's Cat House began as a small establishment in Payne's garage, it

has earned a name for itself among the rescue and veterinarian community alike. Lucky's Cat House often receives calls from Giles County, Lawrence County and Maury County shelters and Sheriff's departments. Since neither Payne nor Fox have direct experience working as veterinarian technicians or in the veterinary field, they have learned what they could as they went from those willing to donate their time and resources to the fight against the mistreatment of cats.

"Being able to establish those relationships with the vets that have taught

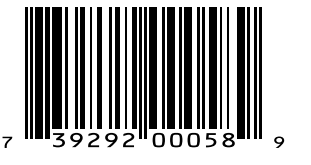
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CHRISTMAS WINDOWS MAKE SPIRITS BRIGHT

Photo submitted
Lewisburg Main Street held its first annual Christmas Window Decorating Contest for businesses around the square. Fifteen businesses entered their windows to compete in the contest. Mane Attractions took the 1st Place prize followed by Express Rx/H&S Gift Shop in 2nd place and Marshall County Art Guild in 3rd place. Thank you to Impact Realty for sponsoring this competition. Pictured are Courtney McMahon (front right), with Impact Realty, presenting the Blue Ribbon to Mary Beth Neece and the ladies of Mane Attractions.

Photo submitted



MERRY CHRISTMAS AND STAY WARM



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year