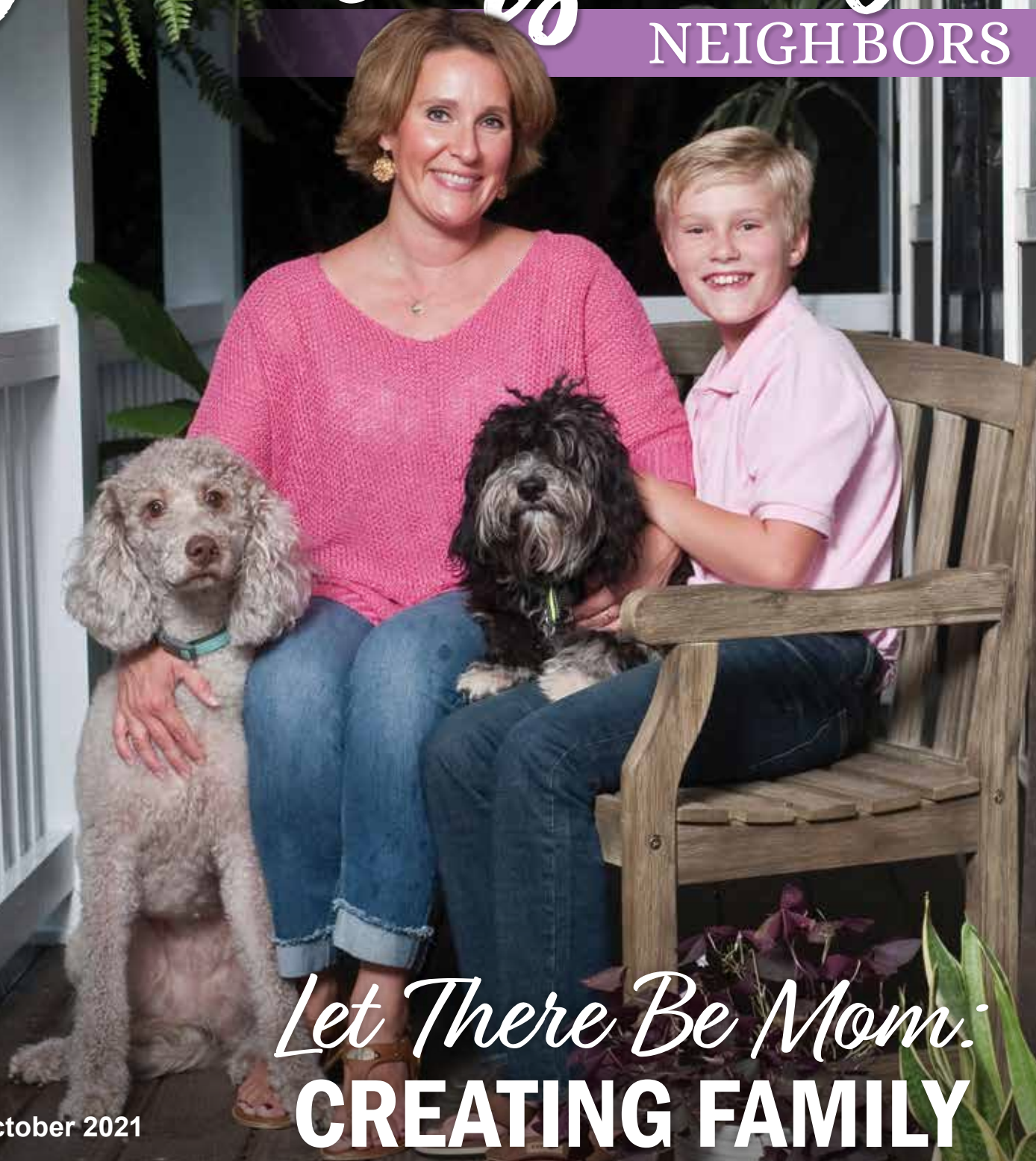


Powdersville

NEIGHBORS



Let There Be Mom:
**CREATING FAMILY
LEGACIES**

October 2021



Best Version Media®

Cover photo by Mark Massingill, Ernest Rawlins Photography



I also want to share a special thank you to all the doctors, nurses and other medical professionals that are a part of my story, many of which live here in the Powdersville area. I owe them my life and words can't express how much I appreciate all that they do each and every day!





Let There Be Mom: CREATING FAMILY LEGACIES

By Kipra Anderson & Meredith Conroy | Professional photos by Mark Massingill

Let There Be Mom (LTBM) is a local (started right here in Greenville) non-profit organization with the mission of preserving the legacies of Upstate moms and dads who have been diagnosed with life-threatening illnesses. All of the families they serve have at least one child under the age of 19. It's mom or dad that are battling a life-threatening illness and facing the very real possibility of not having a future here with their child(ren). Their goal is to capture the life story of the parent in tangible keepsakes that are given to the children now and throughout their lives for future milestone events.

LTBM usually ends up creating 12-15 gifts per child (depending on their age and the milestones the parent wants to mark). While the requested milestones they cover vary from family to family, some of the most requested occasions include getting their driver's license, sweet 16, prom, HS graduation, going off to college,

college graduation, first job, engagement, wedding, first house, and first baby.

Many times they use items that belong to the parents to create something new and meaningful for their child. "We are working with a dad who is a builder – one of his requests were gifts for his children when they become members of the church," says Kipra Anderson, founder of LTBM. "We will be welding some of his tools together to create a keepsake cross for each of them." Another Dad wants to mark College Graduation for his sons with a reminder of his love for travel; he had them create travel sets with a special message to "Embrace the Culture." Another mom wanted her clothing sewn into a quilt for her children

as a gift for now – each square is appliqued to tell the story of her life, making it possible for her little ones to physically wrap up in the mom's life. "One mom we served taught her son, at a



young age, the value of being able to grow and cook your own food,” says Kipra. “When he gets his first home he will receive a set of gardening tools engraved with a special message from his mom, as well as a cutting board engraved with his two favorite recipes that she made.”

All of their services are free to the families; the organization supported by community donations and fundraisers. The biggest fundraiser, Dine Out for Mom, happens each year in October. This year the 15th Annual Dine Out for Mom is Thursday, Oct 21. Local restaurants partner with the agency by donating 20% of their sales from the ENTIRE day to the organization - supporters just have to go buy food (or gift cards). It's an easy way to have an impact that will last for generations. And since it is an all-day event, every meal and snack can come from a Dine Out for Mom Restaurant Partner!

They use many volunteers to make the event a success. If you would like to learn more about our organization, apply for services, find out how you can help, or even where to Dine Out for Mom on Thursday, October 21, please visit the website at LetThereBeMom.org

Heather Ordner and her son, Pierson, moved from St. Louis in 2018 and have not regretted the move for single second. After traveling to the area frequently for 20 years, Heather decided Poudersville would be a great place to raise her son. She wanted to find an established, family friendly neighborhood for them

to settle in to and she found just that in Wilson Place. “I found that and more in Wilson Place,” says Heather. After moving here and getting settled, Heather was diagnosed with breast cancer. “What was completely unexpected was how this community would rally around us after I was diagnosed with breast cancer in the fall of 2019. I have countless examples of how family, friends, neighbors, and even complete strangers from the community loved on us to help us get through an incredibly hard time in our lives” says Heather. “I can’t thank all of them enough! We are so blessed to live in this community!” Heather has a Bachelor of Science from Illinois State University and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Goldfarb School of Nursing. She currently works for Kindred at Home as the Director of Care Transitions. Pierson, her son, is a student at Wren Elementary School where he is in charge of the school flags daily. He enjoys CESA soccer, basketball and learning to play the viola. Together this mother-son duo love hiking, biking, gardening, travel and activities at Grace Church. “We absolutely love to travel and explore new places! We try to fit in local weekend trips as often as possible, but this year we were also able to visit Florida’s Gulf Coast twice and took an unforgettable trip to Colorado in July,” says Heather. “Most of our family lives in central Illinois, so we’ll visit them on the farm as well.” They also love to spend time with their pets: Penny, a three-year-old Labradoodle, Pearl (10 month-

old, Sheepadoodle), Potter (2-year-old cat) and their newly adopted rabbit, Cotton.

Let There Be Mom has been such a blessing to Heather (41) and Pierson (11) during this journey. “It gives me such peace of mind knowing that I have special gifts that my son will receive in the event things don’t continue to go the way I hope, and I can’t give them to him myself,” shares Heather. “This organization does such amazing things for families during extremely difficult times, and I encourage you to support them every chance possible.” October is breast cancer awareness month which makes it a perfect time to remind everyone about monthly checks and yearly mammograms. “I can’t stress enough how important these are. I was diagnosed at 39 and am extremely thankful I was able to treat it in an early stage,” says Heather. “Breast cancer can happen to anyone and at any age, so please do your self-checks and talk to your provider if you have questions or concerns.”

Everybody has a story. Nominate your neighbor to be featured in one of our upcoming issues! Contact us at mconroy@bestversionmedia.com.

