



PHOTO BY ROSALIND ESSIDG/RESSIG@JESSAMINEJOURNAL.COM
New WNJK 105.9 FM morning show host Will Osborne was in the Edgewood Plaza studio Tuesday morning. The Jess-FM morning show broadcasts 6-10 a.m.

ON THE AIR

again in N'ville

Jess-FM hits the airwaves after nearly two decades without locally focused station

By Rosalind Essig
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Nicholasville is now home to a station focused on Jessamine County — after almost 20 years without local radio.

WNJK-FM 105.9 is now broadcasting as Jess-FM, providing locally focused programming for the first time since WNVL-AM moved out of Jessamine County in 1996. Station owner Jonathan Smith said Jess-FM is currently on the air with an adult contemporary music format and is developing programming to include local news and sports coverage.

“There was a long heritage of good local radio in Nicholasville,” Smith said. “There’s been a void since the deregulation in radio that allowed for the conglomeration and the moving of radio signals like that.”

Like other communities surrounding Lexington, Smith said, there are several stations licensed to Nicholasville and Jessamine County. However, they have all been moved to Lexington and use Lexington programming.

“And there’s still a void in Nicholasville: It’s a good-sized

town and wants to maintain its identity separate from Lexington and it needs a local radio station,” Smith said.

Jessamine County hasn’t had a local radio station since 1996, said circuit clerk Doug Fain. Fain was a DJ on Jessamine County’s WNVL-AM for 16 years. And he still has people regularly tell him how much they miss having the local radio station.

“It has left a tremendous void ... any time something went on, whether it was a cancer society trying to raise money or whether it was a snow storm and trying to help people out, anything like

that, NVL was always kind of the hub,” Fain said.

Smith said the adult contemporary format was chosen to appeal to as large an audience as possible, because the music will ultimately be secondary to the local news and information the station provides for the community.

“It’s a wide demographic,” Smith said. “It’s the kind of music that a mother and a daughter could both listen to. In fact, I’ve had that happen already, where a 16-year-old daughter and a 49-year-old mother both agreed on the station.”

The station is in the process of adding on-air talent and sales staff, Smith said. He views local sports coverage as an important component of the programming. Morning show host Will Osborne said the station is working to develop a schedule for coverage of selected East Jessamine and West Jessamine high-school girls’ and boys’ sports.

Smith, originally from Stanford, took over the ownership of former Stanford station WRSL-FM in 1994. The station had been owned by his father, Calvin Smith, from 1965 until

his death in 1987.

Smith said he began acquiring other stations in 2008 and currently owns 10 radio stations in Barbourville, Manchester, London, Stanford, Lebanon, Bardstown and now Nicholasville. He continues to reside in Chicago and is a licensed attorney but says he is now focusing more on radio and is regularly traveling back and forth between Kentucky and Illinois.

Contact the station at 859-885-5377, or find WNJK Jess-FM online at www.wnjkf.com and on Facebook.

E-commerce website Etsy helps local artisans grow businesses selling handmade goods

By Rosalind Essig
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Just a month ago, Angel Allen was standing in her tent at her first Kentucky Guild of Artists and Craftsmen fall fair in a chilly, drizzly Berea. But she was also beaming. In less than a year, Allen went from working 9-to-5 in a gas station to realizing her dream of making jewelry for a living.

The Nicholasville resident is now a member of the guild and was recently a vendor for the first time. But all of this might not have been possible without a website called Etsy and the doors it opens for artisans like Allen, as well as hobbyists and casual sellers.

Founded in 2005, Etsy has a global appeal for would-be sellers because it breaks down some of the barriers to starting a business and serves as a virtual storefront, which is both affordable to maintain and accessible by people worldwide searching for handmade goods. And for artisans and crafters in less-metropolitan Jessamine County, access to Etsy’s 40 million members across the globe can hardly be compared to the foot traffic they might be able to generate in a city the size of Nicholasville.

For Allen, it meant making her dream a reality. After quitting her gas-station job to care for her father following an accident, Allen said she was unable to find a new job. So she went back to what she knew: Jewelry making. Allen said she started making jewelry as a little girl, but the overhead and other challenges involved in starting a business had been in the way of making a living at it.

“This has been my lifelong dream, is to have my own store, to sell my own things,” Allen said. “But with the insurance and cost of rent and the flow of traffic that is possible in a small (city) — I actually have jewelry on every continent except Antarctica via Etsy, and I’ve only been doing it, I mean, not even a year.”



PHOTO BY ROSALIND ESSIDG/RESSIG@JESSAMINEJOURNAL.COM
Bows With Attitude owner Jennifer Royalty glued a bow Tuesday that was part of an order she was putting together for a school cheerleading squad. Royalty uses Etsy to sell competitive cheerleading bows in Kentucky and around the world.

Business briefs

Chamber, local businesses to participate in Small Business Saturday Nov. 29

The Jessamine County Chamber of Commerce will participate in the fifth-annual Small Business Saturday on Nov. 29 to support independent businesses in Jessamine County. Founded by American Express in 2010, Small Business Saturday is a day to celebrate small businesses that help support the neighborhood and is held every year on the Saturday after Thanksgiving.

The event will feature a chance to win \$25 gift cards with every purchase from a participating small business. Participating businesses may display “Shop Small” signs in their windows, and a list of participants will be available on the chamber website at www.jessaminechamber.com as well as on the chamber’s Facebook page.

Shoppers should put their names and phone numbers on the backs of receipts and place them in a designated bag at the participating stores on Nov. 29. Twenty \$25 American Express gift cards will be awarded to winners drawn at random from all the receipts collected.

“It’s another great opportunity

A8: ETSY

Jennifer Royalty, a Nicholasville resident, started her business, Bows with Attitude, "completely by accident." Royalty now works full time making bows for competitive cheerleading.

"With my daughter, who is a competitive cheerleader, we were buying these bows and they're not cheap ... But, you know, we started buying these things and I was getting orders that just weren't finished," Royalty said. "I mean, they literally sent them to me half-finished and (I thought), 'OK, this is not rocket science, I'll just finish it so we don't have to take another six weeks to get them.'"

So, she took one apart, reassembled it and began working on bows for local gyms and schools. And after starting her shop on Etsy in February 2012, Royalty was outfitting squads around the world. In fact, Bows with Attitude was getting so much business that Royalty had to choose between filling Etsy orders and her corporate job in sales for WKYT, which she left in February.

"If you would have asked me, you know, three or four years ago, if this is what I'd be doing full time, I would have laughed," Royalty said.

As was the case for Allen, the cost of running a brick-and-mortar store would have kept Royalty from seriously considering starting her business and, because she accidentally started making the bows in the first place, she said "it probably would have never even crossed my mind."

Another Etsy shop owner from Nicholasville, Karen Million, said she approaches it more as a hobby because she prefers to do a variety of fabric crafts, not focusing on one money-making product. Even so, she said the orders she's gotten through Etsy keep her busy.

"It's become very time-consuming," Million said. "It's become almost a full-time job also, but certainly I don't make that kind of money."

Million, an architect alongside her husband, said there are people who make a living



PHOTO BY ROSALIND ESSIG/RESSIG@JESSAMINEJOURNAL.COM
Jennifer Royalty added a bow to an order Tuesday. Royalty began her shop on Etsy in February 2012.

Some local Etsy shops

- Solar Simulation by Angel Allen • solarsimulation.etsy.com
- Bows With Attitude by Jennifer Royalty • bowswithattitude.etsy.com
- Wedding Parties by Karen Million • weddingparties.etsy.com
- Equine Crafts by Connie Johnson • equinecrafts.etsy.com
- Element 83 by Ernie McElhannon • element83.etsy.com

using Etsy to sell their products, but she also recommended the site to hobbyists who want a way to sell some items without being a crafts-fair vendor, which she said can get expensive. That was the case for Connie Johnson, who sells portraits, jewelry and ornaments through her shop, EquineCrafts.

"I figured I'd give it a try because everybody kept telling me I should sell some of my crafts and my drawings

that I make," Johnson said. "Well, I figured that would be a good place to start."

Johnson, who has worked for Amcor for 20 years, said she started using Etsy as a hobbyist about three years ago but would like to see her shop become a part-time or even a full-time job eventually.

Etsy makes it possible for users such as Johnson to create and sell as casually as they like because shop owners get 40 free listings when they cre-

ate their account and, after that, listings are 20 cents each.

"So, until you sell something you don't have to pay for (your Etsy account)," Allen said.

Allen said the site allows users to track a variety of statistics on their shops, including views and locations of sales. Seeing where her sales are coming from is interesting,

Allen said, because she has sold only a few pieces in

Kentucky and she advertises on Instagram, where she can reach any of her 14,000-plus followers around the world instantly.

"I advertise mostly on Instagram. I listed something this morning and it sold within five minutes," Allen said.

Etsy is also a good tool for sellers because the site makes the process of finding and buying items easy for anyone to use, Allen said, including older people who might be less familiar with the Internet. But, while Etsy has made a lot possible for Allen, including a recent vacation to Florida, that's not to say that Allen would not like to have a brick-and-mortar store one day.

"Eventually I would like to have a storefront — on the beach," Allen said with a laugh.

A8: BRIEFS

to give back to this community," Jessamine chamber CEO Amy Cloud said in a news release. "Jessamine County is full of small businesses. What better way to say thanks for having your business here than shopping at these great establishments?"

Small business owners can learn more about taking part in Small Business Saturday and download free marketing materials on www.shopsmall.com. Consumers can also visit the site to find small merchants to shop at on Small Business Saturday.

County unemployment drops from August to September

Jessamine County's unemployment rate dropped from 5.4 percent to 5.0 percent between August and September, according to a Kentucky Labor Market Information (KYMLI) news release.

In September, unemployment rates fell in all of Kentucky's 120 counties from their September 2013 rates, the release reported. The 5.0 percent Jessamine County unemployment rate for this September is down 1.8 percent from September 2013.

Unemployment dropped in all Kentucky counties in August as well, making September the second month in a row that all of the commonwealth improved over last year's jobs rates.

The unemployment rate for the Bluegrass Area Development District, of which Jessamine County is a part, was 5.2 percent for September.

The unemployment data for counties is not adjusted to account for seasonal fluctuations in employment. The statewide rate for Kentucky, which is seasonally adjusted, was 6.7 percent, the lowest it has been since July 2008, during the financial crisis.

The state unemployment rate is down from 7.1 percent in August of this year and is also down from September of 2013, when 8.3 percent of Kentuckians were unemployed.

"A steep drop in unemployment combined with gains in hiring and consumer spending are clear indicators of a growing economy," said Kentucky Office of Employment and Training economist Manoj Shanker in a KYMLI news release. "All signs point to a robust recovery from the financial crisis in 2008."



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