



ENERGIZING ENTREPRENEURIAL COMMUNITIES

A Pathway to Prosperity



Source: *The Logan Banner*, August 1 2018, provided by [The Hub](#)

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Community Matters with Dan Taylor



Entrepreneurs never fit a mold, there is no cookie cutter way of knowing who they are or might be in your community. They all approach it from a different background, skill set and angle.

Donna Elkins, in Boone County, is one of the more interesting and inspiring entrepreneurs I've met in my time coordinating The West Virginia Community Development Hub's Entrepreneurial Communities program over the past year and some change.

Her story and struggle have already been featured by the Coal Valley News in Phil Perry's series, "Faces of Coal Valley."

We learned of how she completed her college degree this past spring at age 50, while taking care of her two grandchildren and how her independent study requirement before her graduation became an arts and crafts show project that took place at the Madison Civic Center in March 2018.

I want to tell you her story since then - the story about how Donna became a community entrepreneur out of both necessity from the need for flexibility, but also out of opportunity with her newfound skill set and an opening in the community for more event planning.

Donna created a new event planning business in the community called "Rags to Roses Events, LLC." With the passion and desire to put on community events to support local craftspeople and artists, musicians, performers and more, she has a full calendar of events already planned from now until next year.

After her arts show in March, she hosted a community flea market in April with 80 spaces rented by vendors, and then went on to put on a sold-out Murder Mystery Dinner at the Danville Community Center in June, with support from Murder and Merriment in Scott Depot and Ma and Pa's BBQ from Madison.

She also created the Boone County WV Community Bulletin Board Facebook page this past June to feature and share all types of community events, and kicked it off with close to 500 followers joining in just the first week!

Next up was the recent "Kids Back To School Consignment Sale" on July 19-21 at Fountain of Life Worship Center in Foster.

She also hopes to have another Flea Market down the road soon, plus a "Southern WV Jubilee Gospel Sing" is tentatively planned for September at Running Right Way, with another Murder Mystery Dinner on Oct. 12 at Scott High School. Plans for 2019 include a spring Home and Garden Show.

For more details and announcements on what Donna has coming up as well as others in the community, keep your eye on the Boone County WV Community Bulletin Board Facebook page.

As Donna told me when I met with her recently, "Do things differently! Branch out from just the things that have already been done. And good marketing is key, as well as getting nonprofits and local businesses involved."

As for her success thus far, Donna speaks of some sage advice she got many years ago, "Find what you love and stick with that." That is how Donna ended up with a degree in design studies and event planning at age 50 from WVU, and how Boone County ended up with a new entrepreneur making the community more exciting.

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