



Creative COUPLE

BY CINDY DENNEY

Everyone loves a good love story. Taylor Swift sings songs about them and Hollywood makes films about them. The most famous example for my generation is the movie “Love Story” with Ryan O’Neal and Ali McGraw.

Jay County REMC members Angie and Matt Howell of Farmland have a love story of their own. While it is not the classic Hollywood story, it is definitely the modern version of how a love story begins. The couple met via a dating website. Both come from small towns in Indiana — Angie is from Alexandria and Matt is from Farmland. Angie graduated from a small Bible college in Ohio, while Matt graduated from Ball State University. The couple has many of the same interests which sparked into a love story which blossomed into marriage and a successful business.

Angie had an idea to start her own company in 2012. With Matt’s support, the Jay County REMC member quit her job and used her last paycheck to start a creative design and print management company. The newly formed company would be based out of the Howells’ farmhouse.

When you mix Angie’s creative ideas and the location of the company, coming up with a name for the business was easy — Farmhouse Creative. The name proves that big ideas can come from a small town. The Howells believe that just because something has its beginnings in a small town, it can have a big impact. Starting a new business is extremely stressful, yet shortly after Angie began her new career; she became pregnant with the couple’s first child — in addition to the three children of Matt’s from a previous marriage.

Where do you turn when you went to get the word about a new business? Angie recognized the value Chambers of Commerce can offer. One of the first things she did was join area chambers. She began networking, sending out letters and doing meet and greets to establish her customer base.

The print side of the business exploded. Farmhouse Creative was doing business cards, letterhead, envelopes, operational forms (company checks, deposit slips, work orders, etc.), promotional products, name badges, signage (indoor and outdoor) and anything else in ink.

Angie, like most savvy businesswomen, realized that in order to help her customers she needed to enhance the services Farmhouse Creative was already providing. The answer to enhancing her business came from her husband.



Jay County REMC members Matt and Angie Howell own and operate Farmhouse Creative. The business has offices in Farmland and Muncie.

Matt joined the company in 2014 and, since then, the couple has launched over 20 websites in one year. Matt and Angie have also collaborated to create new logos for local businesses. A great example of one of the logos designed by Farmhouse Creative is the new WERK-FM (104.9 FM) logo. Farmhouse Creative was able to work with the station management during their recent format change. The new logo is now on the radio station’s website at werkfm.net and gives the station a fresh look to go along with their new format.

Matt said “It’s our job to stay on top of trends and help keep things fresh for our customers. We recommend a website be refreshed every two to three years. The current trend in web design is mobile responsiveness. This means we make the website easier to be viewed on a mobile device such as a smartphone or tablet.”

Matt and Angie also look for trends in social media. “The younger generation is moving away from Facebook and going in other directions such as Snapchat and Tumbler. The key is to know your audience and reach them where they are,” explained Matt.

The Howells soon realized with the growth of their business a second location for Farmhouse Creative was needed. The Innovation Connector, located on White River Boulevard in Muncie, allowed for the expansion without a huge investment.

The Innovation Connector is a full-service business incubator. It exists to help entrepreneurs succeed by offering resources and support. It offers a collaborative work environment designed to bring members together to share expertise, facilitate networking and grow professional relationships with the huge upfront cost of renting or building a new facility. The Innovation Connector, along with the Downtown Business Connector, gives Farmhouse Creative a physical presence in Muncie. It provides office space, a conference area and technology access.

“What we love about being in the Innovation Connector and the Downtown Business Connector is all the extras they provide for a new business. The Indiana Small Business Development Center and SCORE are located in the Innovation Connector. SCORE is an organization of retired professionals who provide assistance and brainstorm on ideas,” said Angie. “What’s great is that both the Indiana Small Business Center and SCORE are free resources. It’s fantastic to tap into these services as our business continues to grow”.

The Howells divide their time between the Farmland office and the two Muncie locations. In October 2014, Farmhouse Creative was awarded the "Spirit of Small Business" award from the Muncie Chamber of Commerce.

"It was an unexpected surprise and we were honored to receive the award," said Angie.

In addition to adding website design to their offerings, 2014 also brought about the acquisition of another area business, Printing Creations. When the owner of that company decided it was time to retire, Angie was able to welcome those customers being served by Printing Creations into the Farmhouse Creative family.

"Carolyn (Buffy) Grieves and I realized that we run our companies in much the same way and were excited to make the transition," Angie remarked.

In 2015, the company's looks forward to helping its current customers achieve their marketing goals.

"We would love the opportunity to earn your business and trust. We look forward to working with more local businesses in Randolph and Jay counties," said Matt.

Farmhouse Creative has the brand management solutions your business or organization requires. Whether it be creating or refreshing a logo, printing eye-catching marketing pieces, providing memorable promotional products, or designing an outstanding website, Farmhouse Creative strives to be the first place you think of when looking for help.

According to Angie, "The digital age has become a great asset for small businesses. You no longer have to order 10,000 business cards to get a price break. If you want to order 100 business cards, we can make that happen."

What are you waiting for? Call Angie and Matt at Farmhouse Creative at 765-273-3022 or email Angie at angie@farmhousecreative.net. You can write the next great marketing solution/web design love story ever.

Register below to win a \$50 gift certificate toward your next promotional product order from Farmhouse Creative. 

CINDY DENNEY is director of marketing and customer services for Jay County REMC.

WIN A GIFT CERTIFICATE!

Complete this form to have a chance to win a \$50 gift certificate toward your next promotional product order from Farmhouse Creative.

NAME: _____

ACCOUNT NO.: _____

PHONE: _____

TO ENTER: Mail entry to Jay County REMC, P.O. Box 904, Portland, IN 47371. You may also call 800-835-7362, ext. 225, or drop off your entry at the REMC office. Entries can be emailed to denneyc@jayremc.com. The drawing will be held Feb. 27 at 4:30 p.m.

Use your Co-op Connections Card and save!

It's a little card, but it offers big savings! As a member of Jay County REMC, you are part of the Co-op Connections Card program. Use your card to receive discounts from local and national retailers.

The card also offers discounts for prescriptions at participating pharmacies. There are discounts at participating dental and vision offices as well. Plus, listed below are the local discounts currently offered through the Co-op Connections Card.

Check our website at www.jayremc.com to see all the local and national discounts.

Local Co-op Connections Card discounts:

Creative Awards and Gifts, Portland

- ▶ 10 percent off purchase.

Locker's Touch of Country, Portland

- ▶ 10 percent off purchase.

Ritz Theatre, Portland

- ▶ \$1 off large combo.

The Cottage, Albany

- ▶ Buy a pound of fudge, get ¼ pound free.

Jay County Pawnbrokers, Portland

- ▶ \$1 for regular DVDs.

Dave's Heating and Cooling, Portland

- ▶ 2 percent discount on a new heat pump.

Keller Landscaping, Berne

- ▶ 20 percent off regular priced trees.

Crossroads Financial FCU

- ▶ \$5 initial deposit when opening a savings account.

**Applies to branches in Dunkirk and Portland*

New Look Exteriors, Geneva

- ▶ 10 percent discount.

J & N Bargain Shop, Bryant

- ▶ 10 percent discount.

Miles Mowing, Portland

- ▶ 10 percent off a four-step weed control program. 10 percent off first application only.

Bickel Equipment Rental, Portland

- ▶ 10 percent off bounce house rental.

Strohl Appliance and Electronics, Portland

- ▶ Purchase three scrapbook pages at regular price and receive the fourth free (of equal or lesser value).

Buffalo Wings and Rings, Portland

- ▶ Five free wings with \$10 purchase. Excludes alcohol.

Progressive Office Supply, Portland

- ▶ 10 percent discount off non-sale items. 30 minutes of free computer service (in store only).

Sunshine Boutique, Fort Recovery, Ohio

- ▶ 10 percent off of non-sale items.

Valentine Feed and Supply, Portland

- ▶ \$1 off a bag of dog biscuits.

Bromagem Heating, Winchester

- ▶ \$25 discount for cardholders. Not valid with other discounts. Excludes equipment.

Remember When, Portland

- ▶ 10 percent off candles.

