

Wichita Chamber Business Accelerator

Episode 108

Bonita Gooch

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Don: [00:00:00] Welcome to another exciting edition of The WCBA Powder. Of Kopa Evergy. First, thank you for listening. Don't forget to like us, love us, share us follow. We truly appreciate you checking us out in the house today E, the community voice.

Ebony: That's right. We're excited today because we have the incomparable Miss Bonita Gooch in the house.

How's it going? Welcome.

Bonita Gooch: Thank you for having me.

Ebony: Absolutely. Tell us a little bit about who you are and what you do.

Bonita Gooch: Oh boy. I am, and Editor in Chief, which is my job position of the Community Voice Newspaper, which is a now 28 year old publication. Wow. Yeah. Yeah. 28. And I've been excellent. 26 of those. So that means I'm not a young woman anymore,

But, I've been, but it's a publication serving, we started off Wichita's African American. Expanded into Kansas', African American community and for five years now have now been part of Kansas City's African American community as well.

Ebony: Wonderful. So you serve the state of Kansas pretty much correct?

The eastern part?

Bonita Gooch: Well, you know what I really would love to say we do a better job of serving the western side, and that's a 2023 objective. We've got to do more. To reach that community. I, I really, mm-hmm. , I'm, I'm just disappointed that that Garden City liberal city area is not more connected to our eastern part of the state.

And, and that's really something I like to see how we can do a better job of in 2023.



Ebony: I love that. So you hear, you've heard it here first on the podcast, that the western region will be solved by Miss Bonita Gooch in 2023.

Bonita Gooch: and not, and not just me. There's so many other organizations I want to take with me.

I've been talking to like the state naacp, the Kansas African American Affairs Commission, the ACEC, L U. A lot of these organizations are not connecting out there in western Kansas. This is a really east, west divided state, and we really, we really do, I think as Easterners all of us need to do a better job of connecting with a western part of our community, of our.

Ebony: yeah. Mm-hmm. . I love that. Mm-hmm. . okay. So let's talk a little bit about, the, the publication itself. So you've been with the publication for 26 years. Mm-hmm. , it's been alive for 28 years. Mm-hmm. , what is it that the publication does? what do you, what is the community voice?

Bonita Gooch: Well, the community voice originally was just a regular old newspaper, but anymore, there's no such thing, a regular old newspaper anymore.

You have to be a multi-platform publication, which is what we are. So we are, We used to, depend heavily on our print publication, but we lead now with our digital, which is our website@communityvoiceks.com. I'll repeat back community voice ks.com. And then we also have our social media and our newsletters.

which are also a very much part of us. But our, our focus is the African American community and we are the only publication in the state of Kansas that has a focus on that community.

Ebony: That is wonderful. So what are some of the types of things that this publication, how does it differ from some of the other publications that we see?

Bonita Gooch: Mm-hmm. . Now I'm asked that a lot and I tell people that, you know, the things we cover. are, are very much the same news and information as other, publications. We cover. and because the interest of the African-American communities are very much the same, you know, we cover state news, we cover local news, we cover health, we cover arts and culture.

We cover education. We cover business and finance, all of those kind of things. But our mm-hmm. objective is to cover those. With our community's interest [00:05:00] at, AT as the focusing point and from their perspective. So I will always tell our reporters if we go to something and the story's exactly the same, it might just be exactly the same, but we need to make sure that we're understanding that we're reporting that.

from our community's perspective. Maybe this perspective isn't different on that issue, but where it is, we always want to make sure that that's how we are reporting things. So our community

understands that we're reporting this with their interest in mind. Mm-hmm. , why is this important to this community and this is why, and, and so.

you know, I'll read an article in another publication and it won't look quite the same as the article in our publication because what's important to us about the issue may be totally different, right?

Ebony: Yeah. Mm-hmm. , I can see that. And, and I, I thank you for explaining that because, a lot of people do ask that question, right?

They wanna understand how is it different? If it's the story, it's the story. It's the story, right? But it isn't, is it?

Bonita Gooch: It isn't, it isn't. And you know, because what's important, I just see it time and time and time again. I mean, obviously in 20 something years, it's just, you know, the, the important factor, I, I'll, I'll bring up one incident.

This was years and years ago, but I, I kept it as an example for a number of years. An article we wrote on a, on a, on the school bond issue. That was, I don't remember. That's when Winston Brooks was the, the superintendent and was eagle. about that bond issue and what it was to our community at that point was, yes, we're gonna get more schools and we're gonna get air conditioning in schools, and we were going to get some safe rooms in schools, if I remember.

But the important issue out of that for our community is that we were going to return to some neighborhood schools. I, but that was not at all in their story. Right. That was the most important thing to our community. So, so again, just a little bit difference. What is important to us? Let's make sure we pick that up and elevate that in the story.

Ebony: Yeah. I love that. And you guys, you, I mean, this publication is so great and it's diverse in the fact that, like you said, it does education, it does business, it does, you know, all sorts of things. And in fact, I think that you guys do a community standout, corporate standout section as well. Mm-hmm. , is

Bonita Gooch: that correct?

Yeah, we do. See now. Have we done that in a while, ? I don't. We haven't done that one in a while. We need to bring that one back. We need some sponsorships. , but

Ebony: as she looks at Don

Bonita Gooch: directly at him, we did women a corporate. We did women in, women in business, we did that. Mm-hmm. , but we haven't done the corporate standouts in a year, in a couple years.

We need to bring that back. We, I mean, we were focusing on African American corporate standouts and sad to say we were running outta people. And yeah, that was the problem. That's why we stopped. But you know, I'm really impressed with this new group of young people that are coming in and it, it is probably time for us to bring that back.

But for a while there we were just like, there are no more corporate standouts. And that that's, A sad reflection on our community, but, that, you know, we could go through most of them in three or four years, but I mean, I'm glad to say, I think there's a, a new breed in there and I'm, and it's time to bring that back.

So thank you for bringing that to my attention, Ebony.

Ebony: Yeah, anytime. I'll, you know, I charge for my services, you know, ,

Bonita Gooch: oh no ,

Ebony: but no, in all seriousness. Now I'm gonna turn it over to Don here in a second, but just let's get some background on you so I can't re Do you actually, where's your interest? Always in, journal.

was that your background?

Bonita Gooch: Well, I'll tell you, I was a high school newspaper journalist and I went on to, and actually, a lot of people don't know. I worked for the African American newspaper. That was at the time I was in high school. That was in Wichita, the Wichita Times. I work for them, the high school.

And it that it was owned by Jack Hudson and Jack and I still keep in, in touch. I haven't heard from him in a little bit, but we do keep in touch. I think his health may not be that well, but but then I went on to KU and I did major in journalism, but I never did anything with it. I went on and got a master's degree in public administration and in city management, and went to work for cities.

I think I worked maybe for five different cities before I decided I was gonna become an entrepreneur. And somehow my entrepreneurial's path led me back to Wichita and to the community voice. And again, that was, at the encouragement of my father who insisted. and I always like to give credit [00:10:00] to Billy McCray.

Former county commissioner and former state Senator Billy McCray and his wife Yvette, who founded the Community Voice those couple years before I got involved. And and shortly after, they founded the publication, I guess maybe a year or so, Yvette died. And I guess Billy's interest kind of just kind of, I wanna slow down and I was just moving back to Wichita after being gone for 20 plus years.

and, didn't really know what I was going to do. I just knew I was coming back to be with family and a little bit closer to home. And dad says, yeah, you need to buy this newspaper . And I'm like, yeah, sure. And and he kept saying, well, if you and the joke was always that. He said if, if we bought the newspaper or I bought the newspaper, he would help.

And it was always a joke was, yeah. You still haven't helped yet, ? Still waiting. Still waiting. Well, obviously we're past that since the rip is now, you know, one year passed. But but he did his job always was even till he got so sick that he really couldn't, well, really what stopped him from coming to the office every day was.

And that's what kind of slow him down. But he came to the office every day and his job was to sit and wait on the mailman. And then when the mailman came, there was some money. He took us to the bank, which is a real important job getting that money in . So that was his job for, for years. It was great. He'd come every day.

It gave him, especially retired. He came down every day. Okay.

Ebony: That's wonderful. Mm-hmm. . So a degree in journalism. Then at ku she said, well, I ignored that and didn't wanna bring that up again.

Bonita Gooch: As you can see, we have a fight between what? KU K- State? Wsu. K State. K State You. K State. That's okay. Congratulations on your 12 championship.

That's cool. Alabama.

Ebony: Yeah, I know it. We're gonna win. Okay.

Bonita Gooch: I'm with you, .

Ebony: All right. Thank you for that support. but so, you know, a degree in journalism, then moved away, had various degrees with city administrations and said, Hey, I'm coming back home. Mm-hmm. . and it's interesting to hear the route of entrepreneurs because you know, it's not something that a lot of people initially have on their minds.

Sometimes it falls into your lap and that falling into your lap and the encouragement of your, of your father mm-hmm. say you can do this, has now turned into a 26 year, career mm-hmm. in which now you, it's not just you, but you have an entire staff. Right. Right. So, and can you talk to us about what, what that looks like?

Who are the type of people that you are looking to hire? Cuz I know we have young graduates or those persons who are still in school right now. How do you, how do you reach out to them? Are you needing interns? Like, what, what are, can you talk to us about that?

Bonita Gooch: Well, we need people , we really do. And, and I, I'm sure a lot of other people, entrepreneurs and business owners will tell you right now that, you know, hiring is kind of tough.

But definitely we're looking to hire more reporters, as, and so we're looking for people straight outta school. We have one immediate opening right now in Kansas City area. We're hoping that with some funding that we're hoping to secure, we'll be looking for one or two more, in the spring. And then we are part of a program called Report for America, which is a really cool program.

And, Lot. Some organizations have decided that newspapers and local newspapers and local news sources are worth saving. and they're helping to invest in trying to save us. And one of those programs is a Report for America, which is, happen to put, reporters in local newspapers. And so they've come up with some funding.

to help do that. And it's, been just a really great kind of program like Teach for America where people Okay. Stay out of school, for that, that kind of program. So we're, we have two reporter positions out of Report for America. And so, that will be, our new crew for Report for America will come on board in June.

So we're looking for, but they have to reply, they have to apply. Through Report for America, but in addition to reporters, we were, one of the things that, again, as you continue to want to grow your business, I realized, and I knew I had to have, and it just took me a while to be able to be in the position to do that, was to add a full-time administrator, to our organization.

So, that, that role was basically called the publish. Of the organization, they handle all the business side of the newspaper. Mm-hmm. . And so we were able to, a little over a year ago, about a year and a half ago, finally add a full-time administrator to our, our, to our staff. And I was lucky to take advantage of a lot of downsizing that was going on in [00:15:00] mm-hmm.

Business and Covid combined to get a really great individual that I. Who used to work for the Wichita Eagle, and I would've loved to have had him 10 or 12 years ago, but we didn't have the money. And so I'm so glad he's on board and he's helping to help steer the growth of our organization. So it's just, it just has to have that you, you can't be in so entrenched in your business and try to grow your business.

And so that's something that I'm, I'm glad to add. And then we have, in addition to that, office manager, and we have, sales staff, but you know, a lot of our work too, we've started outsourcing. Like we have a, a distribution company that distributes the paper and we also have outsourced our design.

And of course, we don't print. Having a printing press is really inexpensive individual something. There's not a lot of, I bet newspaper printing presses even in the whole state of. . So we outsource our printing, our graphic design, staff is outsourced now. And so, I mean, that's just

kind of the, the efficiency of scales.

Ebony: So the majority of your readers, is it moving mostly online because like, I don't, I'm trying to remember like, so my mom still gets the physical, right? She needs that physical copy mm-hmm. . But for me, everything is so is digital. Mm.

Bonita Gooch: Yeah, we have people, we would really like to pull people online, but you have those people who just won't give up their print.

Yeah, print. Yeah. And I'll still say, You know, there's still two really strong audiences. There really is. There are so people who will not give up their paper and we still move a lot of paper, but, you know, paper is expensive, but we also do real well on digital. So, you know, that's, and that was kind of one of those things that newspapers had to realize, you know, I remember.

that when internet first came along and all this newspaper was that old stuff, that's never gonna happen. , you know, before, never gonna get up their newspapers, you know? And we realized real quickly we needed to jump on board. And so, you know, we really consider ourselves a digital first publication. It used to be, and I'll tell you what really made us change was Covid.

When Covid happened. First of all, everybody wasn't going out to pick up newspapers, but the other part was everybody wanted news light. This, I mean, they wanted it now. Things were changing so rapidly every day. Something was different with this as we discovered what Covid was and what it was happening, and it became a really strong 24 7 new cycle even for us.

And so we couldn't depend on, and by the way, we are printed biweekly every two weeks. We couldn't. two weeks, everything was old, so we had to start putting things to the internet quickly. And so that was just, I can, we can almost divide our life before Covid and after Covid and and so we really started pushing much more to digital.

And so now we're to the point of considering what we consider digital First used to be, oh, we'll save everything and put it in the newspaper. Right, and then we put it on the internet. No, everything goes to the goes digital first. And then I tell people, if you only read the newspaper, you're missing probably half of what we write because we're, we're updating our, our website daily.

with stories and then, but when it comes down to the newspaper, a lot of that never makes it. So if you're not reading, uh uh, or following us online, you're missing a lot.

Ebony: So my last question before I turn it over to Don, and he has this next half is, so, you know, you said reading online. How can, people find you Benita?

Like where, where are you on Instagram, Facebook, what? How do we find you digitally?

Bonita Gooch: And don't ask me all of the addresses cause I don't know them, but we are, we are on Facebook for sure. And I know that's the community voice with the in front of it on Facebook. And then we're, on Twitter and I think we have C voice, Ks.

And I'm not gonna start to tell you what we are on Instagram. Okay, . No worries. We're on all three of those. Okay. Okay. Mm-hmm. . Perfect. Yeah. And don't forget the main website, community voice ks.com. And we did just roll out at brand new website this summer, which is, I think really much, nicer and easier for the use of our.

our readers and allows us a lot more flexibility. So we're really excited about our, our new website that launched in, I think about late August. Perfect. Thank you, Don.

Don: Excellent. Benita, you've been in business [00:20:00] 26 years, I believe. Mm-hmm. , how do you define success and are you there?

Bonita Gooch: No, we're not there. , you know, obviously turning a profit would be really good and a good strong profit in some reserves and a sustainable model.

you know, the problem with in the newspapers is it's every year you, you're selling your, your ads over and over again. And so, , you know, we, we need to one diverse, we're really working hard on diversifying our revenue sources. So, I know for up, again, prior to Covid and even prior to, and let me give a shout out to our, our publisher Kurt Oswald.

Bonita Gooch: Before Kurt, joined, we were just pretty much giving away our digital. and it was just kind of like, okay, well that's just an extra, but now we really understand that digital is a strength of ours and we are charging for our digital. And you know, and then we're looking for other ways to diversify our revenue.

We're looking to, for adding events, we're adding, more advertising through our new, through our newsletters, which are really going strong for us. So yeah, it's continuing to look at. Creative ways to grow our publication and and, and, and I would say revenue, yes, more revenue, but more diverse revenue so that we're not so dependent on one source would be a much more successful model for us.

Don: Excellent. Mm-hmm. . E

Ebony: I. So I guess my question is, you know, we're, we're here on the podcast, we're talking to, small business owners. How, what can small business owners in the Wichita community or in Kansas as they're listing, how can they support the community voice? What do,

Bonita Gooch: well, of course they can advertise.

That would be a, okay. Advertising will be it. That's, that's it. You know, partner with us, we're,

we're. O often looking for ways to collaborate and partner with organizations on things. We're, we're working on building our, our schedule for content and events for next year. And it, I'd love to see how, where we have common grounds, we can work with organizations in the community.

but, tho I mean, other than that, you know, those are our main sources right now. Advertising, although it's in different models, print and digital and newsletter, but also it, we're really want to work again now that we're really past man. We're not past it, but we're a little bit further past Covid than we were, to really start to bring, events into our equation.

Bonita Gooch: Well, that's awesome.

Ebony: I just, you know, I appreciate you sharing that because as we all know, a number of businesses are trying to find ways to find new avenues for diversity, equity, and inclusion. And I just see this, publication as one of the ways in which it can be incorporated. Mm-hmm. . And so I just wanted to really touch on that and show the advantages and the, the widespread of, of distribution areas that, that the community.

Bonita Gooch: Hits. Yeah. And I, I will tell you, even though, our primary targeted area. Audience, I'm sorry, is the African American community. We have a very, very diverse readership. , very diverse readership. Oh yeah. And it's amazing the people who continue to tell us that, I, I run across to read the Community Voice.

The other thing we do have is a membership model where people can just make donations or become a member. And we have a lot of, members who are not African American. and but tho the people who read the community voice tell me, well, if I hadn't read your newspaper, I wouldn't have known that. And over and over again, they tell me that's why they read the community voice, because they read things in the community voice that they would not read anywhere else.

Mm-hmm. And if it's not in the other publications, so, yeah. we do have a really diverse readership. And, and another way to, is, is I guess sponsorships. Not just collaborations, but sponsorships. You know, maybe we can, for businesses support us, sponsor content. You know, around different things that are important to an audience, you know?

Mm-hmm. . So, you know, maybe it's around health or maybe it's around business. Maybe it's around law that we can partnership on content from a business perspective also.

Ebony: Yeah. I like that. Mm-hmm. ,

Don: speaking of sponsors, you better do a break or we gonna get fired. ?

Ebony: Yes. I think we better hear a word from our sponsors,

So we'll hear from them and we'll be.[00:25:00]

Welcome back friends. We're here with a community voice. We're here with our good friend, Ms. Bonita Gooch, talking about the journey, and voyage of, this wonderful publication that serves Kansas. So, Ms. Bonita, this is 2023, is an. New year, it's fresh and we're here at the beginning of the year, but we are in a very special month, black History month.

Let's talk about the publication and then what we're, getting for Black History Month in our celebration.

Bonita Gooch: We love Black History Month. We really, gosh, I wish I could remember exactly how many years. We've done our special black history section. Probably we might be about year 15 maybe on that one.

You know, and we started it off because I just, you know, we, we were having a hard time getting some sponsorship to shout out to Evergy, who's been a very big sponsor that Woohoo. Over years. Over years is, you know, but I was just determined. We just had to do it. . And so we do a special, insert called the Reflector, and it was named the Reflector because there used to be a African American newspaper in Wichita called the Reflector, and it was reflective, so it made sense.

But, we, we really do a really great dig into black history stories, and I tell people this is. You're Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks, right. Kind of stuff. Mm-hmm. , we really look for stories that have not been covered or, or, or, mm-hmm. or you would just really, you're, everybody's gonna get something and learn something.

From our Black History section, it's usually about a 12 to 16 page supplement. We try to make sure we cover maybe some national stories and international stories, even some. , but we also covered state level stories and local stories about African American community. And so I know, last year we, we did the cover story, and again, it's a Kansas City story, but boy did he get a lot of coverage.

Boy and it, we did the Black Mafia of Kansas City. that was, everybody just was right floored by that story. But we, we did the research and found this story of, because I guess there was a TV show that Chris Rock was in that he, it was about the Black Mafia, Kansas City, and everybody was wondering, was there really ever.

Black Mafia in Kansas City and it were these real characters. So we did the research and came up with a really cool story on the, the Black Mafia, Kansas City, but we've, I can't even remember. We've been doing it for so many years. All the different people that we've covered in all the great stories that we come up with, and.

And we, we work hard on it. I mean, we go to the archives and do research and we just, and we

start very early on, it, come up with some really good stories. So if you get an opportunity, try to pick up really both of our issues in February, because they're usually, even if beyond reflector, we try to do some black history stories, and check us out online too, because we do a lot of Black history facts online in February.

So

Ebony: that's fun. Mm. . I always look forward to that. time of year.

Bonita Gooch: This time of year. Actually, another thing we do in February, we always do our love couples. That's another Yes. . That one's the one people like to just reading about, the couples and different couples. So just different things. That's for, that's for our Valentine's, but I just really, we, we put a lot of effort into our black history piece and, and, it's, it's worth reading and worth saving.

It really is. Mm.

Ebony: Perfect. Very last question for me, and then we're gonna go into some fun times. So, mentorship, you know, you've talked about Billy McCray, you've talked about, you know, your father. How have mentors, helped shape you and help, keep you in this, on this journey? Mm-hmm. . And how important is it to have, mentors?

Bonita Gooch: Well, you know, I do like to give, I gave a shout out a little earlier to Jack Hudson who started me in this mm-hmm. , when I was in high school with the Wichita Times. And again, he has just been so encouraging over the years and he's just so very proud of me and just encouraging. Give him a nice, I give him a shout out.

But Dad was too, he helped me when, you know, I needed some really tough, choices. and help me make some wise choices that otherwise mm-hmm. , I wouldn't have had, I would not have made, you know, we used to publish the paper at the base, which was tanker times and when we were doing real well with tanker times and had this contract with tanker to do the base paper.

And I said, well, God, we're making money with the tanker times in this community voice thing. It's not making us any money. And he said, always keep your own. Because contracts will go away. You keep your own and we keep it. Yeah. And sure enough, about 10 years in, they decided to discontinue the print publications.

And so we at least had something to fall back on, so, correct. And so [00:30:00] that was, you know, one of those just wise things. you know, but now I will say that, we we're, gotten. Got involved with a number of, supportive type organizations that are working with black newspapers. Mm-hmm. , one of them we've just recently got involved with is this a cohort we call, we're one of eight newspapers, black newspapers that, a Knight Foundation funded, project called Blue Lab.

Is working on. And I'm really excited about working with them. They're really helping us with our technology and just growing revenue. And so they, you know, again, it's great to get advice from people in your industry. You know, some kind of times Vice is kind of generic, but this is a very specific device and we've been selected to be in this as a two year program, so we're really excited about it and just got started with that in.

Ebony: Well, that's good to hear. And I, I, I'm very excited about the new partnerships and ways in which businesses are collaborating with, black-owned businesses to ensure that they have the tools and resources necessary to, to stay alive and really compete and, and be as competitive as they can be. Mm-hmm.

you know, cuz when there's a will in a way, but you definitely need those resources without the resources. It makes it difficult.

Bonita Gooch: Yes. And it is, it's wonderful. Again, we've had a lot of, people come through. That I'm really pleased, since about Covid, when Covid started, that have really wanting to work with newspapers and work, particularly with, African American newspapers.

So it's been a pleasure, you know, because I tell you, I, I, again, the switch from 20 before 2020 and after 2020 has really been, really a big change in, in our life. Because, I mean, up until that point, if you had asked me, I was probably sitting. Doing the woe, it's me, , what am I gonna do? Oh my, you know, kind of thing.

Mm-hmm. . And then I got out there and another one, hats off to the Wichita Community Foundation. . Yes. Yes. Shelly Pritchard. Shelly Pritchard. They have invested some in supporting, local media as well. Yes. And I really appreciate that. And they're, helping to fund the Wichita Journalism Collaborative.

But a part of that is they have helped take me to a couple of conferences, and I tell you, I, I will tell them every time I was sitting around like, I don't know what I'm gonna do, because we didn't have money to go to conferences and things, and they took me to the conference and. Oh my, this is what people are doing.

I mean mm-hmm. Opened my eyes to changes in the industry that we weren't really exposed to, and I thank them over and over again and for just, you know, getting me out there and ex and getting me, getting my, my eyes open to what was the possibility. Yeah. So exposure. Yeah. Hats off to the Wichita Community Foundation for that support, and they're supportive of local journal.

Ebony: Wonderful. Mm-hmm. , thank you for sharing that. That's a real great testimony. Mm-hmm. .

Don: Yeah. Shelly Pritchard. she's doing great things over there. I'd be am Miss Bonita if I didn't

give a shout out to your dad. I mean, yeah. Rip so cool, but, so accomplished. I mean, he was just, oh my, he was, wow. He's an inspiration still.

Yeah. So big time. Shout out to him. So let's talk about what's next at the community voice, what's next on the frontier? You've been around 26 years. Mm-hmm. . What's

Bonita Gooch: next? well, we're really focusing heavily on growing our, our Kansas City market. I mean, okay. We are, you know, when you start talking about African-Americans, and, and that's our target audience.

I mean, we just needed to go find a bigger pond. I mean, quite honestly. Mm-hmm. , Wichita has. 45,000 African Americans Right. Compared to about 250,000 African Americans in the Kansas City metro area. Correct. Yeah. And so, I mean, it was just, we, we really looked at and felt like compared to other cities and what they were doing with circulation, based on their market size, , we had really reached what we could do.

I mean, we were right. We were, we weren't gonna grow anymore in Wichita and we looked at the Kansas City market and kind of felt like, and, and, and I think most people agree, it was very much underserved. Mm-hmm. . And so we've come into this market and have just been received very well. People nice.

Appreciate our publication. and we're just gonna continue to see. and thanks to that we more than obviously doubled our print circulation, but, and probably could have done more except for we really are pushing more towards our digital and try not to digital. Yeah. Yeah. If you make papers too available, then maybe they won't go online.

And we really wanna encourage our online growth. So that would be it. Our online growth, our newsletter growth, our event.[00:35:00] . and, we're, we're really excited about, this new year. we're looking at joining and, and being a part of a can, the Wichita Journalism Collaborative. We've been approached about being a part of a Kansas City, journalism collaborative, that we like to be a part of too.

So, that's something we're really excited about for, 2023 as well. So it we're, Feeling really great about the year. I just, we really are, and with this Bloom lab support of, you know, working through some of the processes and things that we, you know, fundamentally did not have in place that we knew we needed, we just felt like it's gonna be a really good year.

Don: Excellent, excellent. Look like you on a great track to do great things up there in kc. So I think it's time to have some fun. You've dealt with Ebony long enough. Okay. She's loved every minute. E no . She hadn't said that. So and I'm not trying to give her a chance to, we're gonna do some, word association.

Bonita. I'll give you one word. You give me one word back. . Okay. And it's not wrong cuz it's

your word. Right? Okay. Okay. .

Bonita Gooch: Right. I'm, I'm, come on, let's go.

Don: Oh, okay. Leader.

Bonita Gooch: Oh boy. Follower. Somebody's got to follow. Correct.

Don: Success

Bonita Gooch: free time.

Don: Nice. College,

Bonita Gooch: KU

Don: oh, boom. I was waiting for that. All show , just for Ebony's benefit.

failure.

Bonita Gooch: Never.

Don: Entrepreneur.

Bonita Gooch: That's a good one. I can think of so many words. I'd want to say fun.

Don: Nice. Wichita.

Bonita Gooch: Home.

Don: Vacation.

Bonita Gooch: Soon.

Don: Hero.

Bonita Gooch: Rip Gooch.

Don: Of course. Mm-hmm. . Wichita Chamber.

Bonita Gooch: John Rolfe.

Don: Okay. Family.

Bonita Gooch: Love them.

Don: Fun.

Bonita Gooch: Oh boy. I like to have fun. . It's hard to choose one. I have a lot of fun things on my list, but, fun. Dancing.

Don: Ooh. Oh, are we two step or line? Step?

Bonita Gooch: Oh, I gotta learn the two step. I used to know how to two step, but I, they changed up.

Two, they changed up. And I'm gonna have to go take a class, but, oh boy. You gotta come to Kansas City and two step. You got

Don: Yeah. KC two steps off the chain. Yeah. I love that. Oh,

it's a beautiful thing,

Bonita Gooch: but I gotta get a partner. That's the other part of two steps. We gotta have a partner. Yeah. .

Don: That's true.

Yeah, that's true. Last but not least, and you gotta tell the truth about this one beverage

And there's a giggle. Mm-hmm. . Mm-hmm. . She, she ain't gonna say what she should be saying.

water.

Ebony: water. With a mix of

Don: We'll go with water.

Bonita Gooch: I'm holding strong to water. Okay.

Don: That's it. That's it. That's it. Excellent. Thank you Benita. Good to see you. Yes. Thank you for coming on.

Bonita Gooch: Okay. Thank you guys again for having me. I appreci.

Ebony: Well, friends, we've come to the end of today's segment. If you would please like us and

share us, make sure you share this segment with those who you think will find value in this, and we hope to hear from you soon.

Let us know who you'd like to hear from next till next time, peace.