

Pride of Pampa



Business & Organizations

Photo Courtesy Another Perspective



The Coffee Shop: Cozy Local Abode

By GENEVA WILDCAT
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For the last 25 years, The Coffee Shop in downtown Pampa has provided the citizens of Pampa a cozy corner nook to sit, relax, socialize and enjoy artisan coffee, lunch and treats as sweet as the Shop's owners and managers.

Robin Nelson, her daughter, Stephanie Nelson and long-time friend and Coffee Shop lifer, Rachael Cambern, have made it their mission to offer something in Pampa that is more traditional and community-focused, and with their friendly smiles, quality product and being located in the heart of downtown, their mission has been proven successful.

Robin and her husband made a decision in 1999 that would not only change their lives, but would also unintentionally aid in the revitalization of the historic downtown and become a spark of inspiration.

"I was looking for something to do. My children were in school and I wanted to be available for them, but I needed something else," Robin said.

"My husband travels as an engineer and the cities that he had been to had coffee shops. Well that was 25 years ago and we hadn't really heard much about coffee shops in Pampa. He just thought they were really neat and so he asked *what would you think about doing that?* And from there, God just took it over! We got a building and we remodeled it and fixed up the other offices. We just started out doing coffees and lattes and sodas and a few fancy drinks."

"We were looking for a building and this happened to be available. It wasn't necessarily intentional that we were downtown. We thought it would be cool when the building came open. But from there we were one of the first businesses to kind of open downtown back up with The Coffee Shop. About five years later we bought the building across the street so my dad could open up his engineering consulting business and we renovated that building. So that kind of kicked off this little end and it's really been exciting to watch downtown grow over the years," Stephanie

said.

It wasn't long before The Coffee Shop became the ultimate hang-out and relaxation spot and the community was eager to see this local business expand and thrive.

Listening to the suggestions of their customers, lunch was soon added and the daily menus consisted of different sandwiches, soups and salads. "Everything to this point has been what they want. They would be like *can we get this chip or could we get a different bread or different dressing or soup would be good.* So we just keep adding on!" Rachael said.

Rachel Cambern started working for The Coffee Shop in 2002 part time while she was attending college. Little did she know that she would become not just a full-time employee and manager, but a beloved member of the Nelson Family.

"I moved here and needed a job. I was finishing college and someone said you should go downtown and apply at The Coffee Shop. So I walked in and they were like *sure, you're hired!* I started and it was

great. I kind of just fell into it," Rachael said.

"Rachel came along and really took over everything for us. She manages everything and handles anything that we need. We couldn't do it without her absolutely. She's more than just the manager, she's our family," Stephanie Nelson said.

"I got to see her meet her husband, marry him, have two children and one is graduating this year!" Robin added.

"We couldn't do it without everybody that has been here. This is really a family business through and through. Anybody that works here, we hope that they feel like family here and want our customers to feel like family. It's really important for us to have that relationship. It's not just about owning a coffee shop and running it, it's a ministry and we want to impact the community in a positive way."

Since its conception, The Coffee Shop has built a strong, loyal customer base, and although name-brand coffee shops have come into Pampa since, that sense of family and the tight-knit relationships

that have been built within the community can't be seen and felt anywhere else like that charming spot on Cuyler and that's precisely what keeps the people coming back.

"There is a 91-year-old man that came in on the very first day we opened and he has been coming every day, three times a day. He has the same coffee," Robin said with a smile. "When me and my husband opened it, we wanted it to be a place of ministry and fellowship and family. After 25 years, there's just so many that we think of as family and I think they do us too."

"It's really been a special thing. We've had several people over the years. Now we have the early morning men's group, the afternoon ladies that come, we have bible studies that come, we have the afternoon men's group that come. It's every single day the same people and it's pretty special," Stephanie said.

Aside from being a part of the daily and weekly routines for many of Pampa's citizens, The Coffee Shop has also

COFFEE cont. on page 4-A B&O

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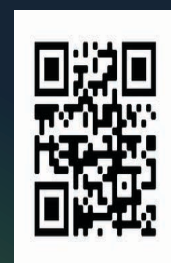
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Fuegos Restaurant: Authentic Mexican Food at the Top O' Texas



working together all the time is not always easy, but they enjoy being able to spend time together. "We learned how to understand each other more," Miguel said. The couple has recently opened a second location at 518 N. Hobart after their years of success, which features a buffett. The Soto family says that they love having a restaurant in Pampa because people love the food and they like to watch people enjoying their food. "It really is about pleasing the customers," said Eva.

"It's about watching them eat and then them giving us a 'thank you' or 'this is really good,' and it just feels really good to hear that coming from them." "We want to say thank you to the community of Pampa because of the support they have given us," Miguel said. For more information about Fuegos Restaurant or their authentic Mexican menu, you can go online to their Facebook page, visit their locations at 521 W. Brown or 518 N. Hobart, or call (806) 665-0442.

in their restaurant as wait and cook staff. Miguel is the main cook at Fuegos, and all the recipes are his own.

He says the recipes he is most proud of are his chuletas ranchera, the combo fajitas plate and the combo burritos.

"It's real Mexican food from scratch, not tex-mex. We make everything from scratch, including the cakes," said Miguel.

Miguel also makes all of his own sauces and condiments from scratch as well.

He is also proud of the breads and desserts that they bake fresh daily.

"About six months ago, I started making the cakes," said Miguel.

"We also make our own bread just about every morning."

They are willing to take special orders on their

baked goods, and they offer catering services as well.

Eva and Miguel say that

By MIRANDA ELLIS
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hamburgers and cheeseburgers in Mexico, and then I came over here," said Miguel.

Eva grew up in Pampa and has been here her entire life. Miguel grew up in Zacatecas, Mexico and moved to Pampa in 2009.

The couple met and got married in 2014, and both have children from previous relationships. Their children help them

Eva and Miguel Soto opened Fuegos in 2012 at 521 W. Brown in Pampa, where they offer authentic Mexican food and freshly baked goods to their customers. "Miguel has always worked in the restaurant business because of his family," said Eva. "I was always cooking

Harvester Donuts: A Hometown Staple



By GENEVA WILDCAT
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donut in a friendly atmosphere.

Every morning, people flock to the hometown staple to start their day with a sweet and savory fix, the drive thru and parking lot usually packed with vehicles.

While Pampa has seen donut shops come and

go throughout the years, Harvester Donuts has always remained busy and the momentum shows no signs of slowing down.

From experimenting with new flavors of donuts and breakfast items, such as the Fruity Pebbles

DONUTS cont. 4-A B&O

For nearly 20 years, Harvester Donuts has been Pampa's #1 morning sweet stop for those who are on the go or like to have a fresh cup of coffee and a blueberry cake

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Pampa Senior Citizens Center: A Recreational Area for Retired Teens

BY GENEVA WILDCAT
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In 1975, The Pampa Senior Citizens Center opened its doors with the purpose of providing a place for seniors to have lunch, participate in activities and socialize.

Wanda Talley was the first director of the Center and little did she know the impact the beloved establishment would make through the decades.

What started as what Nancy Looper, the previous director of the Center would call a recreational

area for retired teens, the Center would become something so much more to its members: a home away from home.

“The purpose of the Center was for the senior citizens to have a place where they could go to play games and have a good meal with friends and have fellowship,” said Teresa Dalrymple, current director.

The Center would become a place of routine and familiarity, playing a major role in many of the members’ lives and well-
TEENS cont. page 1-B B&O

Donuts

Continued From 3-A B&O

donut to the jalapeno sausage croissant, customers (regular and new) can never raise their expectations too high because Harvester Donuts will always exceed them.

But it’s not just the wide selection of different (and usually very colorful) donuts to choose from, the always hot and fresh breakfast sandwiches and burritos or unbeatable prices that keep the customers coming back.

The friendly and hard-working staff brings a smile to even the grumpiest early risers, helping those non-morning folks start their day on the right foot.

While there has been a change of ownership in the past year, nothing about its operation has changed, giving the citizens of Pampa a sigh of relief in knowing they can always rely on their beloved establishment in providing the best in product and service.

Angelica Cuevas has been working for Harvester Donuts for nearly 12 years and she believes the appeal, charm and nostalgic atmosphere of the building plays a big role in its continuing success after all these years, as well as the wide selection of flavors that can’t be found in other places, such as their infamous cherry donut.

“There’s something about this place that makes people feel like they’re at home. A lot of kids who have moved away come to visit and always stop here,” Cuevas said.

And while Harvester Donuts has their fair share of regular customers, the hype over their delicious round treats has spread across county, even state lines.

With its convenient location right on Hobart street, folks traveling

through Pampa can’t help but see the bright white and red building and its lot nearly completely full, indicating that there must be something special about the place and immediately get drawn in.

“We have customers from all over the United States that come through and they see all the cars in the lot and they get curious.”

Because they have a solid reputation as the go-to spot for an early morning breakfast and every day is expected to be busy, the magic happens behind the scenes when the town is still fast asleep.

Two hours before opening time, the kitchen staff are hard at work to have everything ready by the time the doors open and work continuously throughout the morning rush to always have fresh donuts to serve.

The front counter staff work just as tirelessly to make sure the coffee is always hot and ready and provide exceptionally speedy service, even so much as recognizing the vehicles that come through every day and having their regular order ready when they pull up, making it a more personal experience.

The lasting impact that Harvester Donuts has made within the community can be seen as you walk through the door.

A wall full of photographs date back to the establishment’s early days taken by families with their kiddos, some who are now adults that still stick with the tradition of coming back when they can.

“Those are pictures of kids that have come in here and some of them are now in their 20s and 30s. Some of them still come in and they’ll see their pictures and say *hey that’s me! I remember that day!*” Cuevas smiled.

Harvester Donuts is located at 508 N. Hobart and is open every day from 4 AM to 1 PM.

one through the years. It’s been huge in development of character in friendships and relationships and just getting to grow with it over the years has been really special. We thank everyone that has been here and continues to be here and everyone that will come. We are very grateful to even have an opportunity to be in their lives.”

Visit The Coffee Shop at 220 N. Cuyler in Pampa, open Monday through Friday from 7 AM to 9 PM and Saturday from 7 AM to 5 PM and make sure to take advantage of their delicious lunch specials from 11 AM until 2 PM.

Pampa Home and Sleep Store: Home is Where the Heart Is



BY GENEVA WILDCAT
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In August of 2012, Pampa Home and Sleep Store first opened their doors to Pampa, offering customers from all around

the Texas Panhandle and afar a wide variety of furniture and mattresses, sealed with a hometown hospitality guarantee.

Michael Anderson and his wife, Devney, worked in a furniture store in a small California town for

20 plus years, so they’re no stranger to the furniture business.

But it was Devney’s deep Pampa roots that brought them back to the Lone Star State.

Her family had lived in Pampa since the

1930s and her grandfather owned and operated Miller’s Jewelers, specializing in watch repair and maintenance on the bricks in downtown Pampa for more than 40 years, a business that is still well-remembered among long-time Pampa natives.

Upon moving to Pampa, the Andersons had the vision of opening their own furniture store, preferably in the downtown area.

“Being in small towns, you learn that the heart and soul of any small town is the downtown,” Michael said.

“When we moved here, it was my heart’s desire to be downtown. We moved here solely because we felt like the Lord wanted us to be here. We never saw Pampa as a busi-
SLEEP cont. pg. 1-B B&O

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Coffee

Continued From 1-A B&O

gotten to witness and contribute to major life events and milestones for them as well.

“The Coffee Shop really has been a part of people’s lives. We’ve had baby showers here and wedding showers, weddings, graduations—it’s really been special for us to kind of be a part of everyone’s lives that way.”

“It’s where people come together, it’s where they meet and stay connected. It’s been a part of most of my life. I can’t imagine not being here with everyone and seeing every-



Sleep

Continued From 4-A B&O

ness opportunity or that it was lacking anything. It's where my wife's family has always been. When I first came to visit, I felt an unbelievable tug on my heart and so we came back and we wanted to give to the community."

While the Andersons knew exactly where they wanted to be, they instead opened their business in Las Pampas Square, now the current location of Get Gussied Up.

They would operate in that location for a little over nine years, waiting for the right time to go where their heart had been calling them.

In the meantime, they would go on to build a strong customer base and positive reputation as being one of the Texas Panhandle's best hometown furniture stores.

Before Pampa Home and Sleep Store would finally move to their cur-

rent location downtown, the building had served as the Salvation Army headquarters for Pampa and then later a Cross Fit Gym with some renovations done along the way.

Once the Andersons bought the perfectly positioned corner building, the idea of giving the historic downtown a modern touch was a task that the Andersons, particularly Devney, was up for.

"When you look at the building, it's updated but it doesn't look like it's out of place. The outside of the building and the font was all my wife. She was very adamant that we needed to pay homage to the heritage of downtown and the historic greatness of what it is," Michael said.

"She has great memories of walking down these streets as a little girl when it was always busy and all the parking spots full. She told me stories of her Nana having to circle for blocks trying to find a spot in front of the dress shop she wanted to go to."

Since being in the beloved location, Michael's aspirations for downtown Pampa has grown and is currently thinking of ways to pull greater attention to travelers coming through.

A couple of years ago, he bought the old Capri Theatre on the corner of Francis and Cuyler, refurbishing the wornout sign and filling it in with 'Pampa' in the vintage style font used for his business that compliments the history well and has had lights installed to illuminate the sign.

Along the side of that building, he has a vision of a mural painted along the walls that depicts the hustle and bustle of the old theatre during its operation, instilling a sense of nostalgia for those who may remember and those who would have loved to have seen it.

"My hopes and prayers are that it will always stay looking like a theatre so it is accurate for its placement downtown and we will keep it beautiful and maintained as it has been since we got it," Michael said.

He also started the Pampa Cars and Coffee event held the first Saturday of every month since moving downtown, inspiration drawn from the Burnin' of the Bricks event that is held every year during the summer.

But Michael wanted something that was more year-round and folks from the surrounding towns make their way to Pampa every month to gather with fellow gear-heads

and talk cars and sip coffee.

While every downtown business is just a hop, skip and jump away from each other, the support among them all can't be beat and everyone is eager to welcome any new business that comes in and helps in any way they can.

"The great thing that I love about downtown Pampa and the Pampa merchants is there's a sense of we're all pulling for each other. But it's not that we're just pulling for downtown, we're pulling for Pampa as a whole."

As a service to the community they love, Pampa Home and Sleep Store has donated countless pieces of furniture to the Tralee Crisis Center, and as of recent, they have donated truckloads of furniture to families and individuals in Canadian who were affected by the wildfires that devastated the Texas Panhandle in February.

While the store typically delivers to the northern and eastern Oklahoma border and through to Memphis and Canyon, TX, any customer who has their eyes set on a certain piece that lives farther away, Michael and his staff have no problem delivering to the destination, free of charge, free installation and free disposal.

Visit Pampa Home and Sleep Store at 200 N. Cuyler in the heart of downtown Pampa, Monday through Friday from 9 AM to 6 PM and Saturday from 9 AM to 5 PM.

Faustina Curry: Pampa Welfare Society

By MIRANDA ELLIS
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"My family will tell you I've gone to the dogs," says founding member and President of Pampa Animal Welfare Society, Faustina Curry.

Curry has always been an active member of the community- she has formerly worked at Celanese and taught in Pampa schools. She is a member of First United Methodist Church and was even a member of the Pampa City Commission for more than a decade.

She loves to spend time with her family, and in her spare time she likes to spend time in her garden.

She also loves animals - a love that Curry says has taken over her life.

"I didn't intend for it to, but it did," she laughed.

Faustina inadvertently started a mission that is now known as PAWS after she heard the city had been having problems with the old animal shelter and paid it a visit in 2010.

"I went down to the shelter and it was a disaster. I was just overwhelmed at how awful it was.

"There wasn't enough space for the animals, and it was old and dirty. So I decided that I would get involved," said Curry.

She and a group of con-

cerned citizens pushed for a community meeting to see if there was anything they could do for the shelter animals.

At the meeting, they expressed their concerns to the city- but the city said that they didn't have the money for a new shelter at that time.

Afterwards, Faustina and a group of around ten people started going to the shelter to help with the animals and clean them up to advertise them for adoption, and is probably the exact moment PAWS was born.

"At that point, they were putting down 95 percent of the animals at the shelter, said Curry.

"There was no money. It was truly a very sad situation. Then we worked on trying to come up with a plan for a new shelter and the city again said they didn't have the money.

"Then an opportunity came up where they (city) had a bond that was retiring. I want to say that was in 2009."

It was decided that an **PAWS** cont. pg. 2-B B&O



Teens

Continued From 1-A B&O

being.

"Routine has a lot to do with it. There are some people that if they didn't have this place, they wouldn't know what to do. There would be no place for them to meet friends or see anyone and it would be really hard on them, because that's what a lot of them do. This is just their place to go."

Growing up at the Center when my grandmother was the assistant director, most of my favorite memories are within the walls of that place and remembering those members that have come and gone brings a tear to my eye despite all the years that have passed.

More than 20 years ago, the Center had a dance every Friday night and my grandmother was in charge of taking the \$2 it required to get in, collecting the money in an old, wooden cigar box.

Sometimes they would feature a live band, but usually it was old country songs on cassette tapes that would play through the tall, black speakers, and there was always an intermission for ice cream that was made fresh in-house.

To see those folks glide effortlessly across the dance floor was mesmerizing and sometimes I would even be asked to

join in a two-step.

After a while, attendance had dropped and the Friday night dances ceased to be.

Fast forward about ten years later and I'm working in the kitchen at the Center and as the janitor after hours.

I was the one in charge of setting up the Sunday School room for the many different clubs that would come in throughout the week, such as the Retired Teachers Association, Quilter's Guild and of course the men's Sunday church group, as well as setting up for Bingo.

So the first time I had to set up for Bingo, Nancy told me where to find the equipment, which was in the bottom cabinet of the large bookcase in the Quiet Room, a room where I would go to as a kid to watch television until my grandmother was good to leave for the day.

First thing I saw when I opened the door of that cabinet was the cigar box.

Nostalgia hit me like a ton of lead and tears filled my eyes until they spilled over. I couldn't believe it was still there after all those years.

Even today when I go in there, it still feels like home, and to see that it's the same as it's always been means the world to me.

Teresa Dalrymple has been the director now for three years, but has worked at the Center for

over 30 years and has the same sentimentality.

While very few changes have been made such as adding new and different items to the weekly menu and putting in a brand new floor, Teresa has kept the Center the same and welcomes every new face that comes in.

With a solid crew, faithful volunteers, and the advice and mentorship that Nancy provided kept close to her heart, Teresa keeps the Center's operation running in full speed.

While the membership age is "55 to Heaven", anyone of any age can come in to enjoy a hot lunch: with a live band every Monday that will have you tappin' your toes while enjoying a chicken fried steak or the roast brisket on Wednesdays that is to die for.

For those who are interested in becoming a member can enjoy the full perks, such as discounted lunches and full access to the Center's activities for only \$20 a year.

Members can engage in multiple activities such as playing a riveting game of pool, joining an art class or trying their luck at Bingo on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month with a wide variety of prizes to choose from: these are just to name a few.

Lunch is served Monday through Friday from 10:45 AM until 1 PM and is \$8.50 for members, \$9.50 for nonmembers and always \$8 for first responders and veterans, and includes your choice between two different meats, two servings of vegetables, one trip to their new, full salad bar, your choice of bread, a drink and desserts that are regular or sugar free; you're guaranteed to walk out of there stuffed.

Carryout and delivery options are also available. With a friendly and wel-

coming atmosphere, the Center is sure to leave a lasting impression on everyone who steps through

its doors.

For more information, call 806-669-7414, or to view their weekly menu,

visit their Facebook page, Pampa Texas Senior Citizen Center.

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21 LUNCH N' LEARN
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18 BUSINESS AFTER HOURS
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New Lampliter Restaurant: Flavorful, Original Chinese Food You Won't Find Anywhere Else



By **MIRANDA ELLIS**
editor@thepampanews.com

New Lampliter Restaurant owner and chef Bobby Li will be looking forward to his 7th year of business in Pampa in 2024.

He opened the doors to his own Chinese restaurant in Sept. 2017 after purchasing the building

from his friend William Ma.

Bobby lives in Amarillo with his wife Michelle and their two children.

He makes a daily commute from Amarillo to Pampa to cook for his beloved customers. He chose not to open a restaurant in Amarillo because of his ties to the community here.

His wife and children help him in the restaurant on the weekends, and he employs a staff that fluctuates between three and four employees, which includes wait staff and a dish washer.

Bobby takes pride in his craft and is always updating his menu to give his customers variety.

"He takes a lot of pride in his restaurant, even if it means working late nights or early mornings," long-time employ-

ee Christina Zarate said in a 2019 interview with The Pampa News.

Zarate said that she has even seen Bobby stay the night at his restaurant after a long day's work, to ensure he is on time the next day.

All of the recipes Bobby cooks are his own, and he is the sole cook at his restaurant.

Each dish is carefully prepared before being brought to his customers. He takes the extra time to make sure that soup isn't leaking over the sides of the bowls and that all dishes are visually pleasing before ever being taken to the table.

Bobby enjoys spending time socializing with the patrons of his restaurant. He takes pride in the compliments he receives on his meticulously prepared dishes.

"I love to see the customers happy and enjoying my food," Li said proudly.

New Lampliter Restaurant is one of the few in Pampa that offers delivery. They also book private parties and offer catering services.

For more information about New Lampliter Restaurant or to view a menu, you can go online to their Facebook page or visit their location at 403 S. Cuyler.



PAWS

Continued From 1-B B&O

election process would be held to decide whether or not that bond would be rolled over to be used for a new animal shelter.

"In the meantime, the shelter was having terrible issues with dogs dying for no reason," said Curry.

One of the dogs were sent off for testing, and it became known that the deaths were caused by a continuously-spread virus fostered by the shelter's deteriorated conditions.

"It was wet and cold and just a miserable place. It was perpetuating the disease.

"So we led a concentrated campaign to get people to vote for a new shelter."

The PAWS group, which consisted of 10 to 12 people at the time including Faustina, went door to door knocking, handing out fliers and asking people to vote for a new animal shelter.

"I don't remember the statistics, because it's been a long time, but we had one of the largest voter turnouts and won by a large majority," said Curry.

After the election, the bond was rolled over and the new Pampa Animal Shelter was built.

Since then, PAWS has continued to support the Pampa Animal Shelter by facilitating responsible adoptions, holding fundraisers to pay for medical bills and to provide a second meal for the animals every day.

"We give every animal that comes through the shelter a parvo distemper shot and a kennel cough shot. Every animal that

is sick that comes into that shelter we can't treat, we take to the vet," said Curry.

They also use raised money to provide bleach to help ensure sanitary conditions as well as toys and blankets for the animals.

"We were fortunate enough that we were able to raise enough money to purchase two vans that we use to transport animals to no-kill shelters in Colorado."

In addition to the help they provide to the Pampa Animal Shelter, PAWS also runs a low-income spay/neuter program. Volunteers donate their time, money and affection to the animals at the shelter.

With PAWS' help over the years, the animal shelter's previous euthanization rate has decreased dramatically.

"It's about 10 percent [now]," says Curry.

"That 10 percent are pretty much the animals that are too sick or injured to help, or too aggressive to adopt."

Curry says that the volunteers love the animals and that the animals feel like family to them, which is why they continue to do all that they do for them.

The Pampa News would like to thank Faustina and everyone in PAWS for the contributions they have made to the animals at the Pampa Animal Shelter.

PAWS is funded by a few grants, but is always in need of monetary donations, bleach, cat food, dog food, blankets and sturdy toys.

For more information about PAWS or to donate, you can go online to www.cityofpampa.org, mail a check to 811 S. Hobart or call (806) 665-7197.

More Than Just Skin Deep

By **GENEVA WILDCAT**
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Located at 511 W. Kentucky in Pampa, TX, Top of Texas Tattoo, soon to be known as Gypsy Iron Tattoo, has made quite the name for themselves in the Texas Panhandle, leaving their literal mark on those bold enough to go under the needle.

With a shop full of talented artists specializing in everything from fine line, black and grey to bright traditional, customers are sure to walk out of there with a smile

on their face and an ink-clad testimonial that will forever speak for itself.

Ethan Kindle, Gypsy Iron Tattoo owner and traditional-style connoisseur, has spent most of his life around the buzz of a needle.

His admiration for tattoos and the people who wear them started at an early age when adolescents are the most impressive and driven.

"When I was a teenager, I always thought tattoos were just really cool," Kindle said. "I was into skateboarding and punk rock music and those peo-

ple always had tattoos. I grew up in flea markets and I would always go in the leathers shops and see those kinds of people. Just hardworking, rough and tumble."

Since 1999, Kindle has fully immersed himself in the tattoo culture working as an artist in different parts of Texas, specializing in American traditional.

Norman Collins, aka Sailor Jerry, is coined as the father of the old-school tattoo and his unique style has influenced countless artists over the decades, includ-

ing Kindle.

"Traditional is when you use a bold line and if you really want to get serious, you only use black, red, yellow and green."

After gaining an abundance of experience in both the artist and business aspect, he would move back to his hometown of Pampa where he would open Outlaw Ink.

For nearly four years, Kindle would build a reputation as a talented and skillful artist among the citizens of Pampa and surrounding areas.

Unfortunately when Covid hit, just like all businesses at that time, he

SKIN cont. pg. 3-B B&O

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Skin

Continued From 2-B B&O

was forced to shut down. Once he was able to reopen and the public was finally allowed to rejoin society again, Kindle had a huge burst of business. But after a while, the enthusiasm of freedom dwindled and the burden of responsibilities took its toll on the working class, causing business at the shop to slow. Because of this and the birth of his newborn daughter, Kindle decided to permanently close Outlaw Ink and spend time with his family. A little more than a year ago, Kindle noticed a for lease sign for an office space ironically in the same building he was born in, the old Highland Hospital, and decided to open up another shop, named Top of Texas Tattoo.

With the office being a single room, Kindle was a one-man show for the most part until eventually he moved to a bigger space across the lot that allowed him more elbow room and the opportunity to hire more artists. Miles Trevor has worked as an apprentice for Kindle for a little over a year and also specializes in traditional; both in art and machine. While within the past decade tattoo artists have been graced with tattoo 'pens' that are easier and lighter to handle, Miles is loyal to the coil. "I will never make that transition," Miles laughed. "There's just something about the old machines. I love the sound of the coils when they hum, the science behind the way they work, tuning and building them. I think everyone should know some history and the roots of it." Constantly coming up

with his own flash designs, Miles takes pride in seeing customers walk out of the shop sporting his own creations. "I get to leave my impact long after I'm gone in a positive way with art to help someone who may be having a bad day or bad week." Roberto Solis, specializing in the classic black and grey style, has worked with Kindle for about a year. After a tragic work incident in 2016 that rendered his hands nearly incapacitated, Solis took it upon himself to get them back to their original functionality and began working on projects that would restore his hands' strength and dexterity. "In 2016, I was in an explosion at Flogistix and almost died. I wasn't working and couldn't do anything and I had started crafting, trying to keep my hands moving," Solis said. "I was making paracord bracelets and all kinds of stuff and then I started doing leather work-tooling. I did that for a couple of years and I thought there had to be something easier to help transfer the image to the leather. And that's when some of the stuff that we use like stencils and paper came about and I started using that. Well then I started watching videos and saw someone dull a needle from a tattoo machine to use on leather. Years go by and I wondered if I could use fake leather to tattoo. I had already been using the tools and doing it the old school way of hammer and tap, and so it just came natural to me. Slowly but surely, I grew

into it." Realizing that his leather creations would become worn out and eventually thrown away with time but the tattoos he could give would be forever, Solis ultimately decided to become an official tattoo artist and put his newly-rejuvenated hands to meaningful use. Kallea Villalpando has worked with Kindle for a little over six months, but has been a tattoo artist for about nine years and specializes in fine line and enjoys using bright colors to make a tattoo really stand out. Seth Childers has worked for Kindle for about six months, but has been tattooing for the last 14 years and specializes in American traditional. While all of the artists have done a multitude of different tattoos, from memorials of loved ones to young couples who decide to permanently let the world know who their partner is, there's one facet of the job that they all undoubtedly agree with. "This job isn't about us, it's about the people that come in. Like Miles said, you're leaving an impact on someone and you feel better when you know that person was really happy about that tattoo," Kindle said. For more information about Top of Texas Tattoo (Gypsy Iron Tattoo) or to view their extensive portfolio, visit their Facebook page, Top of Texas Tattoo. To set up an appointment, send a message through their Facebook page or call 806-662-3330. They can also be reached via email at topoftexasatattoos.com

That Shoppe on Foster: Heirlooms to Spittoons

BY GENEVA WILDCAT It's not often that you can step inside of a store and before you know it, hours have gone by and you're still not completely done looking at everything. Even if you think you've seen every piece, chances are if you're inside That Shoppe on Foster, you haven't actually seen all that the eclectic store has to offer and deserves a second (maybe even a third) go around. From a vintage suitcase-turned-table to an old-fashioned courting candle with a sweet back story, there's something sure to pique your interest. M., the store's owner, enjoys telling some of the fascinating stories associated with certain pieces, especially with the courting candle because not only does it have an endearing history, it takes the listener on a journey back to a time nearly long forgotten. When the candle came into M.'s possession 25 years ago during an auction in Virgil, Kansas, she got a tap on her shoulder from the then 90-year-old woman from whom the candle had originally belonged and shared the candle's history with M. "Her dad was a blacksmith in Virgil and he made this for her when she was 12. The candle is put down into the spiral and you turn it. Now if the family liked the guy that came into the parlor, they would start the candle up high and when the candle burned to a certain place

in the holder, it was time for him to leave. But if they didn't really care for the suitor, they could start it down really low and he had to leave even sooner." "That candle was her and her husband's and he was the only one she ever courted. They were married for 66 years." When the woman told M. the story, M. immediately offered to give the candle back due to its sentimental history, but the woman insisted she keep it. M. swore that she would never sell it and has kept that promise, eagerly sharing only its story with those who walk through the door. While the pieces within the store that do have a name and story attached to them, there are a few that have a mysterious origin, making them a fascinating discovery, such as the case of the hand-carved aluminum helmet. The history of the wearer is unknown, but because of the intricate and detailed carvings in the helmet, a little can be said about the man known as Dave. "This helmet was made by a man out of New York who made these for a living, charging anywhere from \$1,000 to \$1,500 for one. He would always put a good luck character on these, but not all of them were the same." "The man he made this for, Dave-I have tried endlessly to find out more about him, but couldn't find anything else other

SHOPPE cont. 4-B B&O



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The Little Red School House: Standing the Test of Time



BY GENEVA WILDCAT

Sitting off to the side of Highway 70 approximately 6 miles north of Pampa in Roberts County is The Little Red School House, formally known as The Wayside School.

Travelers can't miss this side-of-the-road curiosity and much to their surprise, the schoolhouse that is seemingly in the middle of nowhere has a long history that spans over a century.

Although not entirely open to the public, passersby can stop and read the historical marker placed in front of the structure and learn just how old and well-preserved the school actually is.

For those who have been given entrance can tell you that while the one-room school may not seem like much, it's quite the different experience as you step foot inside and allow the hands on the clock to fly backward.

The walls are filled with pictures of previous students and teachers from over a century ago, the yellowed photos preserved behind glass.

Numerous documents and newspaper articles tell the story of the school and its community and all those who contributed to its operation, many coming from Gray County.

While it has had its fair share of minor repairs and new coats of paint, the school has remained in its near-pristine and original condition thanks to the Wayside Club, an organization comprised of women living in the Wayside Community who all share the same goal: preserving their heritage.

Debbie Davis, President of The Wayside Club, explained that the club's existence really didn't have much to do with the school at all in the beginning.

In 1915, Mr. Montgom-

ery and Mr. Talley spent a little over \$500 at Whitehouse Lumber and built the Little Red School House, named the Wayside School from the community in which the school resides.

Last year in December, one of the last living students that attended Wayside, Jack Sloan, celebrated his 97th birthday inside of the school surrounded by family and friends.

His late wife, Betty Sloan, was a member of the Wayside Club and was heavily involved with maintaining the heritage of the school, even after her passing in 2009 when the community came together and funded the repairs of the school after a big hailstorm had damaged the roof and siding through memorials in her name.

The Texas Panhandle is known for its unexpected weather patterns and while there have been many wildfires, tornados,

hail and wind storms since the school's conception, it has withstood everything thrown at it.

Debbie Davis has the perfect explanation as to why that is.

"God knows how much we love that building," she simply said.

But natural disasters aren't the only thing that has threatened the school over the years: such as the case when a disgruntled individual nearly took the school down with a road packer, pushing the school 6 inches off of its foundation from the northeast corner.

"The school is owned by trustees, so it's not owned by the County or anything like that. So that's why we keep it up because there's not really anyone else to maintain it."

"The Pampa community, not just our area in Roberts County, has always been very supportive."



Shoppe

Continued From 3-B B&O

than what the helmet had."

As M. slowly turned the helmet around, pictures of Dave's work history could be seen in impressive detail with the Texas Star at the very top.

"You see, he worked for DCP out of Borger on an offshore oil rig. Here is the helicopter and the boat that would take him to work every day."

Many of the pieces that M. has are consignment items brought in by people who are looking to sell at a reasonable price.

"Someone will contact me and want me to look at what they have and tell me what they want for it and I'll tell them if it's a reasonable price. I'll look it up and see what the market value is for this area."

Other items include treasures she's bought at estate sales or auctions, paintings provided by Texas artists and a few things of her own that she has collected over the years.

"What I want my store to be known for is this: if I don't have it, I'll sure try to find it."

While some people may come into the store looking for a particular item

that M. doesn't happen to have, she has no problem directing the customer to other vintage and antique stores that she knows would have such a piece.

With the people come first mindset, M. has generously helped those in need, and in a selfless act of generosity during the recent wildfires, M. donated items to affected families, such as furniture and other household necessities.

M. has also recently purchased a wide variety of prom dresses for the upcoming event completely out-of-pocket, and knowing that prom dresses are usually ridiculously expensive for just a one-time wear, she has priced all of the dresses for less than \$50.

"I think what the good Lord wants us to do is to help each other."

That Shoppe on Foster is located at 509 W. Foster and is open Thursday and Friday from 11 AM to 5 PM and Saturday from 11 AM to 4 PM. To shop by appointment, call 940-634-6069 and M. would be happy to open up.

M. will extend her hours throughout the week starting April 2, when That Shoppe on Foster will be having a 50% off on all non-consignment items and 25% off on furniture sale that will run for two weeks.



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Photo Courtesy Another Perspective



Retired Teachers: Out from Behind the Desk

By GENEVA WILDCAT
reporter@thepampanews.com

There's really nothing quite like running into a teacher that you've had from many years ago that still remembers your name and asks what you've been up to all these years.

It's easy for a previous student to assume that their favorite retired teachers are enjoying the fruits of their labor, spending time with family and taking advantage of sleeping in late: a luxury we all strive for.

But for most retired teachers, that certainly isn't the case.

From putting in many hours of volunteering for local organizations to fighting for the rights of teachers, currently working or retired, the lives of these cherished educators are much busier than anyone would think.

Once a month, the retired teachers of Pampa gather at the Pampa Senior Citizens Center for a meeting, discussing legislative issues that affect Texas teachers and retired teachers, logging in volunteer hours and even going on field trips around the Panhandle, fulfilling their love for knowledge and learning new things.

There are some that even serve as substitute teachers when the need arises, putting them right back where their hearts never left.

The local chapter is comprised of 76 members, the majority of them residing in Gray County.

Most of the focus and mission of the Texas Retired Teachers Association is to keep an eye on the issues that are happening at the state level, according to Kathy Cavalier, Vice President of the Pampa Chapter.

The testimonies of these retired teachers of the unfair treatment that they have faced over the decades would infuriate even the coldest of hearts.

"There's several reasons for the local chapter because we're a part of the state organization and it helps us to know what's going on at the state level. Especially with this past year, we've been heavily involved in getting a cost-of-living adjustment in our retirement benefit because there hasn't been one since 1984," Cavalier said.

Gaylene Skaggs, a retired Pampa High School teacher, served on both the local and state level and has personally witnessed the neglect that re-

tired teachers face after spending decades shaping the future of our youth.

"I think this is a great organization to keep up to date on what's happening with the legislation and that's why I got involved. I got to really see the nitty-gritty of it all," Skaggs said.

"It's not just teachers; it's all retired school personnel who were under the umbrella of the retired teacher system," said Cay Warner, retired Assistant Principal for Pampa High School who also served on the school board years after retirement.

"A long time ago when we started teaching, the idea was that teachers would not get social security. They would only have teacher retirement and so for most of us, that is the case. Even if you worked other jobs or did anything else, you were not eligible for anything other than your teacher retirement. And it's still true today."

"So retired school personnel had to hold hands together for people to recognize this, especially legislators. Because for a very long time, there had been no cost-of-living adjustment and teachers don't make very much to begin with. So if you were resigned to living

only on your retirement, that was a meager thing. And so we're doing a little bit better by holding hands in the state working together."

"We never had a choice on whether we wanted to go into the social security system or not. The choice was made for us. We never made the decision ourselves and a lot of people don't know that," said another retired teacher who wished to remain anonymous.

"When I transferred from Lefors to Pampa, that was the first year that you had to pay into social security and then you could have Medicare after you taught 10 more years. And I thought, *I'll never teach another 10 more years!* I didn't have a choice, I had to. The insurance for teachers is really rough on them," said another.

When these lovely ladies aren't out fighting for their rights, they're making a difference right here at home with community outreach and tons of volunteer hours.

"We're involved legislatively with those kinds of things, but locally it's the manpower of volunteer hours. Almost everyone is involved from Meals on Wheels, the Good Samaritan House, Gray Cares, all of those service organizations

and the people that take on the legwork are retired teachers."

With nearly 18,000 volunteer hours last year among the members, the title of "retired" doesn't seem to fit! But it's not always just about work; there's also time for learning experiences, fun field trips and strengthening their bonds through encouragement and engagement.

"When we have our monthly meetings, we have a program of some kind that is informative and we try to take advantage of learning about new businesses and see what's going on and educate ourselves as to what they're about," Cavalier said.

"We are focused on contributing back to our community and advocating for not just retired teachers, but also retired personnel with the legislation that is going through at the state level to give cost-of-living increases or federal benefits of some sort," Susan Bromlow, retired teacher from Pampa High School and Pampa Learning Center, said.

"But it's also just encouraging each other to stay healthy and to stay active by getting out and meeting new people and just giving back."

Redeemer Pampa: A Reflection of the Community



BY GENEVA WILDCAT
reporter@thepampanews.com

Since 2011, Redeemer Pampa has given the community a different spiritual experience not heavily focused on aesthetics and tradition, but rather teaching the word of God in an environment that feels more like home than church.

Pastor Jeremy Buck and his wife, Karmen are Texas Panhandle born and raised, with Jeremy's family establishing their roots in Pampa since the very early 1900s.

After graduating high school, Jeremy attended college at Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee and from there, he and Karmen would move to Yemen in the Middle East to serve on the mission field.

While Karmen would teach English as a second language to college students, Jeremy would learn Arabic while doing his anthropologic research, merging two different worlds in a harmonious and impressive way.

The Bucks moved back to Pampa in 2006, and in 2011, Jeremy started Redeemer that began with

small gatherings in the living room of his own home before moving to The AmericInn Event Center for Sunday service.

After a few months at the Event Center, Jeremy would come across the old Sands Fabric building downtown that was in desperate need of a complete makeover.

"We basically had spent the first several years gutting and remodeling it while we were meeting in it. Like we would meet on Sunday mornings and there would be a scissorlift in the corner or a pile of lumber against the wall. We would have Sunday service and then we would move all the chairs and spend a week tackling a project," Jeremy laughed.

"It was almost like a physical picture of what we were hoping to do spiritually of taking something old that was maybe no longer being seen as beneficial or had some wear on it and watching the slow process of sanctification of it being restored."

While most churches are comprised of a single pastor, Redeemer is an

elder-led church with multiple pastors, Jeremy and TV Cuellar as two of them.

Paul Rayburn, director of The Well STEM and Literacy Center right next door, also serves as an elder at Redeemer and both establishments work hand-in-hand in support of each other's missions.

The goal of Redeemer is simple: to allow people to feel comfortable while growing closer to God.

"We take Jesus very seriously and we take scripture very seriously, but we don't take ourselves very seriously. You'll see folks in a wide array of dress because we're not a traditional place. We're trying to take down any barriers someone might have. One of our core values is we want to be reflective of our community. I just want them to walk in and say *I can see myself here*," Jeremy said.

"I think it appeals to a younger crowd and to those who may have unfortunately been hurt by a church or may have had a bad experience somewhere. We had a delivery guy come by and while he

REDEEMER cont. page 8A in the Newspaper

Clay Jones: Cultivating Success at Pampa High School

BY MIRANDA ELLIS
editor@thepampanews.com

In the halls of Pampa High School, Principal Clay Jones walks with a sense of purpose and pride. A Pampa native and a graduate of the very institution he now leads, Jones's journey is a full-circle moment that speaks volumes about his dedication to education and community.

"This is my fourth year being back here in Pampa," Jones shares, reflecting on his return to his roots. His post-high school years took him from Oklahoma State to Texas Tech, where he completed his general business degree, followed by a master's from Lubbock Christian University. But it was the call of home that brought him back to Pampa in the summer of 2019, just before the world was hit by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Jones's entry into education was driven by a passion for coaching, a field where he spent a decade honing his skills and mentoring young minds. "I got into education because I wanted to coach, that's really what my background has always been in and I've always really enjoyed it," he explains. His coaching career took him from Monterey to Plainview, but Pampa High School beckoned him back, not as a coach but as an educator. "When I first came back here, I taught AP World History and I coached football and track for a year," he recalls. It was after this year that he transitioned into administration, first as an assistant principal and then, stepping into the role of principal two years ago.

Since taking the helm, Jones has witnessed and in-



stigated significant changes in the educational landscape. "A lot of horrible things came out of COVID—the loss of learning, mental health issues, the strain on our systems as a whole," he admits. Yet, he also sees the silver lining: "A lot of good things came out of COVID too, because it really made us take a step back and look at our systems. It really forced education to speed up about 10 years."

Under Jones's leadership, Pampa High School has refocused on its students, offering a triad of educational pathways: college-bound routes, career technology classes, and industry-based certifications. "We have our college-bound routes, we've partnered with Clarendon College. We have a lot of AP classes and we offer several dual credit classes," Jones says, proudly noting that nine students from this year's graduat-

ing class will also receive an associate's degree from Clarendon College.

The school's Career Technology program is a particular point of pride for Jones. "Last year, for example, our welding program had 62 kids who took the ASE Certification Test and 61 of them passed," he recounts. The success of these programs is not just in certifications but in real-world opportunities, like the partnership with Tower Systems, which reached out to hire students directly from the program.

Jones's vision for Pampa High School is one that aligns with the needs of the community, preparing students not just for college but for immediate entry into the workforce. "We are turning out people that are work ready," he states. The school's partnerships with local businesses, including internships and hands-on

JONES cont. on page 7-FE

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Picture courtesy of Michael Yates

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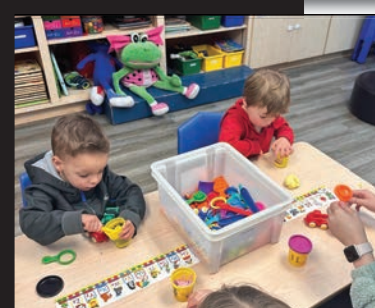
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Grace Baptist Church: Sermon in the Sky



BY GENEVA WILDCAT
reporter@thepampanews.com

Since 1977, Grace Baptist Church has provided the city of Pampa with a traditional, small hometown approach to teaching the Word of God.

Kyle Ohsfeldt has been the pastor for Grace Baptist since November of 2000 after moving to Pampa from Tulsa, Oklahoma with his wife, Suzie who is the music teacher at Community Christian School.

Ohsfeldt had just completed an internship with Eastland Baptist in Tulsa when he got a call from his father-in-law to pastor Grace Baptist after the previous pastor had retired.

Coming from an enormous city, the small town of Pampa isn't exactly what the Ohsfeldts had expected, but like for most citizens who come here, it didn't take long for them to call it home.

"We knew this was the Lord's will for us to come

compared to others, it's not about how many people can be counted in the pews that should be taken into consideration, but how many ears the message is reaching.

For the last ten years, Grace Baptist Church has broadcasted their sermons every Sunday morning at 8, 9 and 10 AM on the local Pampa stations, spoken by Ohsfeldt himself, resulting in his voice being recognized in public.

"We invest in that primarily because feedback tells us that it's been a blessing to people. About a year or so ago, I walked into a local business and I didn't know any of the guys in there and when I spoke, one of the guys said *man, I'd know that voice anywhere! I listen to you every Sunday morning!* One day we were out at Ollie's and the lady at the cash register asked me if I was the preacher on the radio. We've heard good feedback from people over the years that have said *I listen to you when I'm getting ready for church service* or whatever the case might be."

"It has not generated one person in the pew, but that's not the point. That's why we continue it—we really do believe that it's making an impact."

With the number of church attendants in decline throughout the years all over the country, it's

"We're just a smaller congregation of about 60 and we identify ourselves as being traditional in our approach. We still use the hymns and things like that. It's more of what you would call the old-style approach to church life."

Although the congregation may seem small

out here and almost 24 years later, it's now home and we've raised our kids here," Ohsfeldt said.

While Grace Baptist Church sits on the south side of the railroad tracks and may not garner the attention like some of the other churches in Pampa do, Ohsfeldt believes that no matter where the church is located, it's the message that's important.

"I think there are several good churches in town filled with people who love the Lord and try to follow the Lord and try to do what's right and be the people they're supposed to be, so I think to an extent that's what our church is trying to be," he said.

GRACE cont. page 8A in the Saturday Newspaper

Pampa Learning Center: Home Away From Home

BY GENEVA WILDCAT
reporter@thepampanews.com

As a previous student of Pampa Learning Center, it is a privilege for me to write about this hidden gem that was there for me when I absolutely needed them.

Carrie Williams was my English teacher when I was a student at PLC back in 2005 and the fact that she is the director is no surprise to me because the love and compassion she showed each and every one of us was unconditional and her cheerful disposition was contagious: and still is.

Williams's teaching career goes far beyond her service to the students of Pampa with a total of 26 years in education, starting in Mississippi at a behavioral alternative school, and from there she would move to Pampa and teach 8th grade English for three years.

When Pampa Learning Center began its operation, Williams knew that's where she wanted to be and waited anxiously for an opening.

She would teach English at PLC for ten years and then become the director, going on six years.

"What our mission in Pampa is, is to help kids that are struggling in a regular environment for whatever reason and are in a situation where they can do our program that is self-paced—we're an option for them."

The misconception of



the Pampa Learning Center being a school for the "pregnant teens" or the "bad kids" is far from the truth: it acts as a safe haven for teenagers (who have enough to deal with on their journey to find themselves with the pressures of impending adulthood) to be able to get an excellent education from teachers and instructors who teach them more than just academics.

In fact, Pampa Learning Center will be featured as a showcase school at the annual Texas Association of Alternative Education state conference in Austin for July of this year, an honor that is well deserved.

Knowing that high school isn't every teen's cup of tea, PLC offers a different approach from the hustle and bustle of its counterpart and views itself not only from an academic standpoint, but almost from a therapeutic one as well.

From the calm and laid-back environment to the self-paced and reasonable curriculum, the de-

cision to get up and go to school in the morning is made much easier, and sometimes, PLC acts as an escape for those whose home life is far from perfect.

Carrie Williams and every instructor and staff member of Pampa Learning Center takes into consideration the circumstances with which every kid brings as they walk through the doors.

"We serve a lot of different purposes, but almost every one of these kids has their own story and no story is more important than another," Williams said.

"Some kids have issues outside of school that are pressing, but we do preach to them that there's no one here that has more of a right to be here than anybody else. Mr. Steele said that for many years and we still live that. Everybody has their own reason."

"Many times students come in and they have to get past whatever is going
PLC cont. page 8A in the Saturday Newspaper

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Calvary Pampa: Connecting People with Christ



By GENEVA WILDCAT
reporter@thepampanews.com

Since 1998, Paul Beam has been in ministry with the life mission of bringing people closer to Christ.

Hailing from Oklahoma where he spent a few years as pastor, Beam made his way to the Texas Panhandle after a friend and fellow pastor referred him to Calvary Baptist in Pampa in 2017 where he became pastor.

Beam's focus is on building disciples who live by the word of God and follow the teachings of Christ with a welcoming, come-as-you-are attitude.

"As we follow him, he calls on us to make disciples and that's our goal and tell people about Jesus and help them learn how to follow Him," Beam said.

"We're kind of a blue-collar people. We've got guys who work out at

familiar with the teachings of Christ, especially the younger generation, are curious.

"I think there is a reality there that our world is geared against God, the church and the bible. But I do find a lot of people really wanting to know things and know about God. That's one of the things about our discipleship is teaching folks how to read the bible and study it and apply it."

For the past year, Beam has served on the Community Christian School board, appreciating the fact that Pampa has an alternative school that focuses on not only academics, but the spiritual well-being of the kids as well.

"The school is important to me. I think it's important to have the option of a Christian education. There's only so much the public schools can say about the bible and they have to be careful. But the Christian school can open up and share and kids can ask questions and find answers."

Calvary offers many services and gatherings throughout the week, with regular morning service on Sunday starting at 8:30 AM with prayer, followed by Life Groups at 9:30 and regular service at 10:30. There also two small men's groups that meet on Sunday nights at 6:00 PM.

On Mondays, there is a ladies bible study starting at 6:30 PM.

On Wednesdays, atten-

Titan, are in the oilfield industry and the highway department-people from all kinds of walks of life. We just have this really good fellowship of people that love one another and work toward the same goal."

"You have a lot of good churches in town that are focused on loving people and loving God and following God, but I think what makes our church different is the way we approach scripture and the way we approach people."

"One of the ways that we approach scripture is we believe that God's word is true and infallible. We believe in the Bible's entirety. We take scripture with the mission that Christ gives us in Matthew Chapter 28 that says, *Go and make disciples.*"

While it's said there's been a decline in church attendance over recent years, Beam finds that more people who are not

Duane Limbaugh: Steering White Deer ISD Towards a Future of Opportunity



White Deer Robotics

By MIRANDA ELLIS
editor@thepampanews.com

In the quaint town of White Deer, Texas, Superintendent Duane Limbaugh is shaping a future brimming with potential for the students of White Deer ISD. With a career that has spanned over three districts and a passion for educational excellence, Limbaugh's tenure is characterized by strategic partnerships, community engagement, and a forward-thinking approach to education.

"I was hired last January a year ago," Limbaugh recalls, marking the beginning of his journey with White Deer ISD. His path to this position was influenced by personal ties to the region. "I've got a daughter that came to Texas Tech to run cross country and track, and so that gave my wife and I the opportunity to come up to a better part of the world. And so I was

blessed to be able to start applying for positions up here—we got White Deer and I have loved it."

Upon his arrival, Limbaugh found the P-TECH program already in place, a foundation upon which he would build further. "The number one thing is having P-TECH, which is in our high school, and really putting an emphasis on dual credit," he explains. Recognizing the program's potential, he brought in Collegiate EduNation to sponsor it, drawing inspiration from Roscoe ISD's successful model. "Kim Alexander was the superintendent down in Roscoe that really made a model for rural schools to put things together to make sure that rural students have just as much access as those in the bigger cities," Limbaugh says, echoing Alexander's belief that "the only way to break through generational poverty is

through education."

Limbaugh's ambitions for the district are high. "We've got pretty high goals. 90 percent of incoming freshmen will graduate with an associate's degree. 80 percent will graduate with a bachelor's, and then 70 percent would get an industrial certification," he shares. This vision is about more than just academic achievement; it's about leveling the playing field and offering every student the chance to succeed without the burden of debt.

The superintendent is also proud of the specific trades and degrees that the P-TECH pathways offer. "We've got three pathways; a construction and science pathway with welding, we've got a health pathway, and then a third one on family and consumer science," he details. The district's size allows for a tailored educational experience, ensuring that students can pursue paths that lead to viable careers.

New sports programs are also on the horizon, thanks to the generosity of the community. "So the community really pushed, and we got an enormous donation over the next three years to the costs of starting baseball and volleyball," Limbaugh says. This initiative is a testament to the community's commitment to providing a comprehensive educational experience for its students.

FUTURE cont. page 5A in the Saturday Newspaper

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The Well STEAM and Literacy Center: A Community Gem



By GENEVA WILDCAT
reporter@thepampanews.com

For the last eight years, The Well STEAM and Literacy Center has provided the Pampa community educational assistance and enrichment, focusing on the needs of kids who may need further assistance on top of their existing education, whether through the public, private or homeschooled sector, and gives an alternative and individualized approach to academic excellence.

Director of The Well, Paul Rayburn, explained that The Well acts as a support system to not only families and their kids, but also to the schools by assisting existing students who are struggling, whether it be in specific coursework or in their general setting.

Rayburn understands that every kid is different in the way they adapt, learn and retain information, so his main goal is to guide a student toward scholastic achievement using a variety of meth-

ods to fit a child's educational needs.

"We want to be a resource to families no matter what their education setting is and so we want to help public, private and homeschooled kids," Rayburn said.

Working in the public school sector as a science teacher for five years and a math teacher for two years, Rayburn's expertise in the two most difficult fields of study for kids led him to embark on a new career path tutoring struggling students: a journey that started with just one tutoring session over a soda at The Coffee Shop.

"I was on staff at Redeemer when I left the Junior High, and one day I got a call for someone who needed math tutoring because they heard that I was still in town and that I taught math. And initially I told folks no, but I started to get that call multiple times and one day I finally said yes. The first student that I tutored was over at The Coffee Shop and that

was in October of 2015. By February, we opened our space in Las Pampas Square and I had 23 students."

When The Well first opened its doors, they primarily focused on tutoring math in the evenings and then three years later partnered with Open Books Literacy Center, directed by Brittany Martin who tutored reading.

Aside from tutoring math and reading, The Well also focused on the core studies of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math); studies for which The Well's name is inspired.

"We wanted to honor our community and the part of the world we live in and highlight the fact that math, science and engineering are related to what we do here. So the pump jack and all of the oil industry for that matter, from pumping out of the ground to delivering where it needs to go-all of that depends on good, solid math, science and engineering. So we figured the pump jack and

the oil well was a good connection between our folks here and what we're trying to do."

After moving to downtown Pampa three years ago, The Well and Open Books combined, creating an educational powerhouse and has since expanded their curriculum and services.

"There are three facets to what we do here. The first is tutoring in the evenings, primarily for math and reading. The second is all of our summer programs that we offer. And the third is the day-time offerings that we call flex-schooling. The idea behind flex-schooling is that you can choose any amount of classes or electives. So if you're a homeschooled family, you can send your kid here for one or two electives or core classes, or if you're elementary or in middle school and you want to just do half-day school, you can do that or you can do full-time here as well."

The Well offers 40 summer programs for kids from pre-k to 12th grade that range from chemistry camps, robotics, 3D printing, science programs, book clubs and art camps, just to name a few.

With a group of talented and experienced tutors and instructors well-versed in every range of study, families can take comfort in knowing that their kids are receiving the highest degree of education.

"We have folks that have experience in the public school, home-

school and private school environments and we love that because everyone brings a different perspective, knowledge and expertise to the table."

"We're very selective with our hiring and our folks have a very wide range of background experiences and education levels. Some of them have Masters Degrees, some have college degrees and some have a little bit of coursework. But the thing that I'm really looking for is someone who really has a desire to help kids and has that natural gift of teaching. Once we've identified those two characteristics, we do most of our training in-house."

While there is always a need for tutors and instructors outside of the often heavily regulated school system, the Covid pandemic turned that need into a demand, and The Well answered the call.

"When Covid hit, for the emerging readers, the

kids who were just learning to read, their fluency level and comprehension really suffered and not just in Pampa, but all over the country. So for a kindergartener or a first grader, we started to see those gaps accentuated two or three years later, so our reading tutoring really picked up because there were so many kids who needed help and were so behind."

Paul Rayburn and every member of The Well take into account that every child is unique and having an alternative channel to support that child's specific needs is crucial in their academic development.

"Education is not a one-size-fits-all, so you have to make the right decision for your family and your kid, and we're happy to be one of those options."

For more information about The Well STEAM and Literacy Center, call 806-486-1971 or visit thewellpampa.org.



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Bright Beginnings: The Name Says It All

BY GENEVA WILDCAT

As someone who had decided to start a family earlier than most, I was fortunate to have Pampa Learning Center take me in and comfort me at my most vulnerable moment and give me an alternative academic option that was suitable for my hectic schedule.

They visited me in the hospital after I gave birth to my wonderful daughter and gave me the time I needed to recover and adjust to my new life as a teen mom, sending instructors to my home to check in on me and my newborn while still providing me the education I needed to move forward.

Just when I thought my heart would burst with the outpouring of love and support I received from the entire faculty of PLC, it wasn't until I was able to return back to school that I realized the daycare associated with PLC, Bright Beginnings, was truly an unsung hero. Just like when family

and close friends are excited to see a new bundle of joy, the staff at Bright Beginnings was just as excited to welcome their newest little addition.

Every day that I picked up Barb (my daughter), she was always so very happy and engaged in the little projects the instructors had her involved with.

They celebrated her birthday when it rolled around and made sure to take pictures and save every little sweet thing she had made for the day for me.

Although the teachers that were at Bright Beginnings between 2005-2007 when my daughter was attending are no longer there, the love and tender care for these tiny tots is still at the forefront of everything they stand for.

Within the past few years, Bright Beginnings has expanded their services to not just the students with littles, but for teachers in the district as well, relieving these cherished educators of the stress of childcare.

Shelby Boyd, Director of Bright Beginnings, has been working with the youth for most of her career, from daycares to Pampa Learning Center and according to her, she doesn't feel like she's worked a day in her life because of how much she loves what she does and has been able to do.

"I love it and I'm getting to do what I've always loved doing," Boyd said.

"I taught for a very long time and one of my passions is supporting the teachers especially when it comes to curriculum and classroom management and stuff like that. So several years back, I went ahead and sought getting my director's license so I could get into that kind of a position and help out and offer support."

Boyd started her lifelong passion of working with kids during her time with the daycare at First Baptist Church in Pampa.

From there she started her own at-home daycare registered through



the state for several years while doing children's ministry and volunteering with the youth group at the church she was attending at the time.

After Boyd's own children were of school-age, she made the decision to get back into the workforce and went to Pampa Learning Center where she spent five years before being offered the job as director at Bright Beginnings.

But the decision to leave PLC wasn't an easy one.

"I loved my job at PLC so much," Boyd said fondly. "I was serving teenagers. I was listening to them and hearing their stories and always tried to be a smiling face they saw when they walked through the door. That can set you up for the rest of the day. *I'm present. I'm listening. What you say matters.* I wanted the students to know that they're all valued there."

"One of my favorite phrases that has spoken to me for a long time is *be the adult that you needed when you were a kid.* Going through my own tough times and my rock bottom in junior high and high school, I had some adults that stepped up and helped me and supported me a great deal."

Although Boyd was a bit reluctant to leave the place she loved, the position at Bright Beginnings merged all of her passions into one job and allowed Boyd to put her director's

license to use.

With this being Boyd's first year at Bright Beginnings, she got to witness the transition of the beloved daycare and preschool into the Woodrow Wilson Elementary campus, giving a fresh start to the new director in a new location.

Tina Tibbets, who has been with Bright Beginnings for seven years believes that the merge into Wilson Elementary has so far been nothing but positive.

"We are all like family and I love it. All the great experiences and all the good things that happen here, we all get to enjoy that," Tibbets said.

With the new transition, the love and support is reciprocated by the entire faculty of Wilson and Bright Beginnings while still maintaining their own independence, allowing Bright Beginnings to still accomplish what it always set out to do in the way they've always done it.

"It's a big deal to all of us. We're all here because we want to support those parents and because we want to love on these babies," Boyd said.

"We have a great staff and great kids and families. It's just been a huge blessing. It's a beautiful thing to be a part of. There's that phrase *know why you're doing what you're doing.* We all know what our *why* is. We're all here to help."

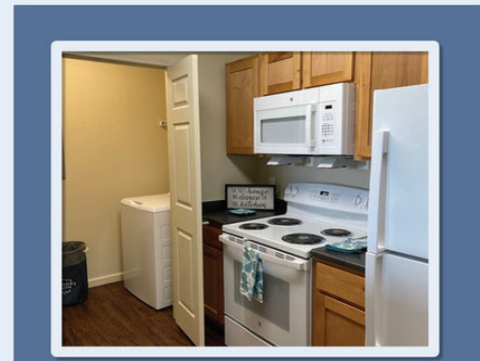
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Hi-Land Christian Church: Fostering Faith Within the Truth of the Gospel



By MIRANDA ELLIS
editor@thepampanews.com

Pastor Mike Sublett has been the steady hands guiding Hi-Land Christian Church in Pampa for more than three decades. His tenure began on a Thanksgiving Sunday in 1992.

Having grown up in Pampa, Sublett and his wife, Shari, are deeply rooted in the community. Though their faith was shaped in their early days by Mary Ellen Harvester church here in Pampa, their path to leading Hi-Land Christian Church was unconventional.

"Every church Shari and I've ever been at is a non-instrumental Church of Christ like Mary Ellen," Sublett recounted.

Mary Ellen Harvester is also credited for supporting Sublett while he attended Whites Ferry Road Preaching School in West Monroe, Louisiana, where

he graduated in 1973.

"It's where the cast members of Duck Dynasty are from," Sublett shared. "In fact, one of my professors is the guy who led Phil Robertson (from Duck Dynasty) to the Lord."

After graduating from preaching school in Louisiana and later down the line, Sublett and his wife were living in Ontario, Oregon, when they decided to move closer to home to be nearer to their aging parents.

"Getting here was a strange story," Sublett began. "We decided that our parents were getting older and that we really needed to be closer (to them) than Oregon. When we decided that, I started looking (for preaching jobs), and I had a phone call with a church in Alexandria, Louisiana that just sounded like it was the grand-slam home run."

"That guy loved me, I

loved him. We hung up the phone and then after that call, he got called out on Hurricane Katrina and was gone for six weeks. So, I didn't hear from him and I went, 'well, obviously God doesn't want us there.'"

"So (after that), we were taking Christina, our daughter, to college at Oklahoma Christian in Edmond, Oklahoma, and I brought some resumes with me just in case."

"Now, every time over the years that this church (Hi-Land Christian) was without a preacher, Shari's sister who went here would call Shari and say, 'I think Mike should apply for this job, because I think God may want Mike and Highland Christian Church', which was not a church of Christ."

"My response every time she would say is that I wouldn't go to Pampa, Texas, and preach at Hi-Land Christian Church if

it was the last church on the planet- and I've said that statement a bunch of times."

Sublett would soon realize that his resistance to the inevitable would get him nowhere.

"So, we were coming back here (on our way to drop our daughter off at college), and before we left Shari was on the phone with (her sister), and she says the same thing again."

"And so I said the same thing again, and I said to tell her that I would fill in for one day because they're without a preacher," Sublett explained. "So she called Shari back later (while we were on the road) and said they had somebody for Sunday morning when we were going to be here, but asked if I would do Sunday night. So, I agreed to preach that night."

Before filling in that Sunday evening, the

Sublett family attended services at another local church in town.

"We all went to church that Sunday morning as a family at a Church of Christ here (in Pampa) and we were all disappointed while we were there that morning," Sublett said of the uncomfortable experience. "After that, we went to lunch with Shari's sister Deborah and her husband Jerry. And while we were there, Jerry got a call."

"When he got back (from taking the call) he said, 'You won't believe this. The preacher we hired (at Hi-Land Christian) got a better offer and he took the other church. We don't have a preacher.' And Deborah, (upon hearing this), turned to me with longest finger in the world and stuck it right in my nose and said, 'What is God going to have to do to convince you that he wants you here?'"

"I went, 'Okay, I'll give them a resume, but that's all I'm gonna do,'" Sublett recalls.

"That night after I preached I walked up handed one of the elders a resume and he said, 'Are you kidding?' And I said, 'No.' So we had a big pow-wow meeting and it went really good."

"After that we went to take our daughter to college, Oklahoma Christian, and we dropped her off and we went home (to Oregon). One of the elders called me and asked Shari and I to come down (to Pampa). So we flew out and had one of those dinners where everyone is supposed to get to know

each other."

"I called him (church elder) before we came and told them that we weren't going to do just that dinner we talked about. I said, 'Nobody will talk to me and I won't get to talk to anybody. So I tell you what, we're going to do dinner and then we are going to have a question and answer session where anybody can ask a question and I can answer.' He said, 'Okay, that sounds like good deal.' Well, I fed Shari's sister some questions to be sure and ask that I knew were hot questions that nobody would probably ask. It ended up being an hour and 45 minute question and answer session," Sublett said.

"I wish I had a recording of that hour and 45 minutes. After it was over, I walked over to the table where my family was, and my daughter had her head down on the table. She said, 'I cannot believe you said all those things that you said.' Because to be honest with you, I didn't care whether I came here and was kind of hoping it wouldn't happen- so I answered questions the bluntest you could possibly do it," he chuckled.

"So it was really hot. And there was one lady in particular who asked if there was any reason that would prevent you from coming here and being our preacher?" I said, 'Yep, two things. One, I won't come here without a five-year guaranteed contract. And two, the reason for that is that your (church's) track record

TRUTH cont. page 5A in the Saturday Newspaper

Calvary

Continued From Page 4-FE

dants are provided a fellowship meal at 5:30 PM followed by a round table discussion at 6:30 led by Pastor Beam that focuses on Christianity, culture, theology and life in general, and a women's bible study group is at the same time.

Calvary students in 6th-12th grade, Calvary kids in kindergarten through 5th grade, and Little Calvary for children pre-k and under can attend classes on Wednesday nights at 6:30 PM as well.

Calvary is also part of the D3 Discipleship Group that focuses on not only spreading the Gospel, but helping people fully understand it and apply it to their daily lives.

"It starts as a group of three people in a group, and what they'll do is individually read a chap-

ter of scripture each day for five days and they will write some things they learned from that. They'll highlight a verse or two and explain and apply what they've read and they have a response which is usually a prayer. So they'll do that five days a week and then each of these facilitators come together and meet up and talk through that and pray and encourage each other. And at the end of that, the goal is that after 33 weeks, they add three more people through that. It's a multiplication of discipleships. It started out with just me and our staff two years ago. We went from six to twenty-something to now 60 people involved in it. So next year we're looking at over 100."

Beam is also the president of the Minister Alliance, an organization that brings pastors of different churches together to pro-

vide more of a spiritual outreach to the community.

"What I'm trying to do is build relationships with pastors. I feel like if people can see that if pastors can get along

then the churches can get along and that's important to me-that the people in Pampa see that everyone can get along."

The primary message of Beam and the Calvary Church is one of salva-

tion, love and truth, bringing people together and connecting them with Christ.

"We want people to come and grow in their faith. We want people to hear the word of God and

allow it to transform their lives. I often say *don't just take my word for it; find out for yourself.*"

Pastor Beam invites anyone and everyone to join Calvary Pampa, located at 900 E. 23rd.

Jones

Continued From Page 2-FE

experience, are a testament to this commitment.

Looking ahead, Jones is excited about the construction of a new building for the Career Technology program and the potential to expand offerings to meet the evolving needs of the community. "As we look to expand and add new things in our Career Technology program, one of the things we've really got to do a good job of is finding out what our community needs," he says.

For Jones, being the principal of Pampa High School is more than a job;

it's a mission. "I like being the principal here, it's unique. Every day is a new day," he says with a smile. His love for his job shines through as he talks about the successes of his students and the support of the community. "I wish people knew just how awesome the people are that we have here. I wish people understood how really good of kids we have here."

Clay Jones's story is not just about returning to his alma mater; it's about leading it into a future where every student can thrive. His commitment to education, community, and the success of every student makes him not just a principal but a pillar of the Pampa community.

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Dinosaur Exhibit- Mrs. Hernandez's class



100 Day of School Glow Party- Ms. Bruce's Class



Create Artwork after reading _ The Dot_ Mrs- Wise's class



Fun Friday Recess



Dress like your teacher (Red Ribbon Week) Mrs. Harris Class



Wear Red (Red Ribbon Week) Mrs. Mendoza's class

LAMAR ELEMENTARY



Mrs. Horst's Class on the 100th Day of School



Game Club



School Board member, Cade Taylor, visits club day and is working with Maverick Fisher



Sewing Club



Chess Club



Painting Club



School Spirit Club

PAMPA JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL



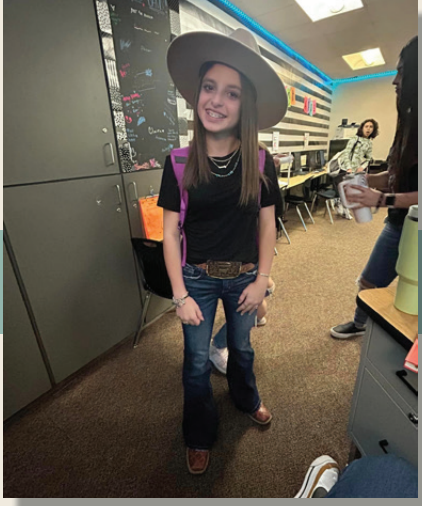
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Anything but a backpack day



Throwback Tuesday



Aanleigh Bowers



Bridgette



Grayson Boyd



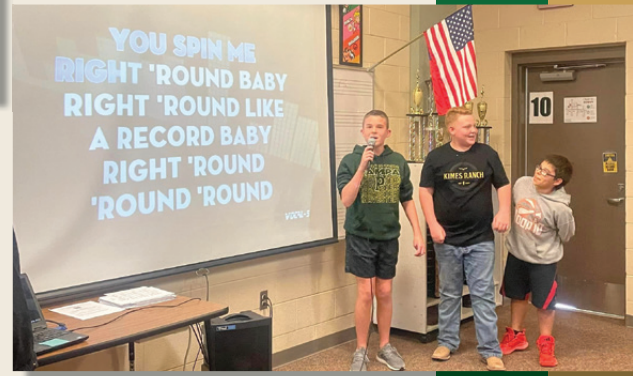
Green & Gold Day



Positive office referrals



6th grade science



Choir Karaoke



6th grade Jersey Day



8th Grade Lunch

PAMPA LEARNING CENTER



Christmas Craft-All students with their crafts



Christmas Craft Day - Tyler Gosselin, Taylor Gerlach, and Anhelica Luna creating their crafts



BIG EVENT DAY- PAWS Cleanup crew

-Christmas Craft Day- Brendan King-Heirs and Emily Palmitier showing off their crafts



-Fall Celebration-Nevaeh Davis and Mrs. Williams celebrating our graduates for Fall 2023

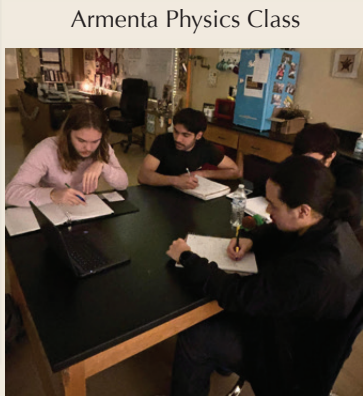


Christmas Craft Day Several students making their craft

PAMPA HIGH SCHOOL



Lady Harvester Soccer



Armenta Physics Class



College Night Oct 2023



PHS Choir February 2024



Culinary Arts students making pizza



DECA members at the District Competition in Lubbock



Lady Harvester Softball players at pulled pork dinner fund-raiser



PHS Varsity Tennis Members



Judson showing his Hamp



FFA Member at San Antonio Stock Show



Lady Harvester Track Coach Arnett and his throwers



Lilye Ogle 2023 Heisman High School Scholarship School winner



Mr Piatt visiting with our Education Pathway students Sept 2023



Universal Technical Institute visiting with Auto Tech students Feb 2024



PHS Career Fair 2024

BRIGHT BEGINNINGS



Ramzy, Layton, Garrett, and August going Trick or Treating in Wilson



Charlotte showing off her temporary tattoos at the end of year festival



Van making music in Bright Beginnings Toddler Room



Jovie enjoying puzzles in Bright Beginnings Preschool Room



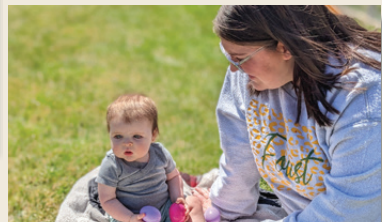
Bright Beginnings/Abigail enjoying the inflatable slide at the end of year festival



Trenly is representing Pampa as one of Bright Beginnings Littlest Harvesters!



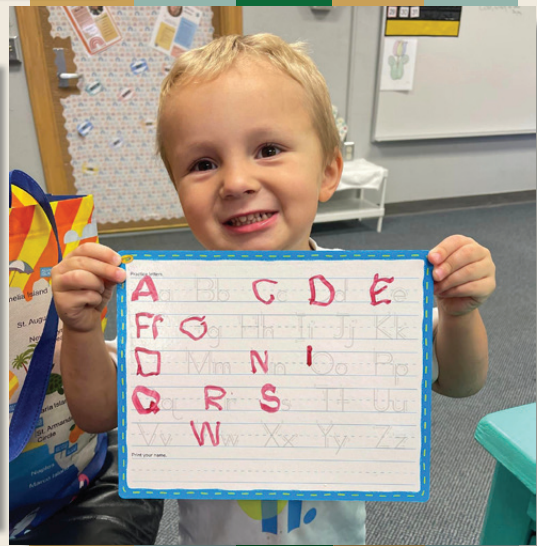
Jacqueline enjoying a good book in Bright Beginnings Wobbler Room!



Slayton, August, and Judson learned all about farm animals in Twos Class room



August concentrates on building a castle



Ryne is learning about letters and practicing writing them in Bright Beginnings Preschool Room



Juliette turns one



TRAVIS ELEMENTARY

Club Day- Ally Rogers



Hat Day and Battle of the Books
Crawford Curtis and Banner Baldrige



Helped a child out on the bus by using Google translate to speak in their language.- Astrid Taylor



Silent DJ Party- Abram Garza and Keaton Williams



Club Day- Taos Hadley



Karaoke Friday - Kaistyn McCord and Haidyn Parish with Mrs. Davis



Dress Like a Teacher- Coach Davis, Crawford Curtis, Jackson Hancock, Coach Wimmer

WILSON ELEMENTARY



Wilson Head Start



Wilson Prek

Pride of Pampa

Friends & Neighbors

Cover Photo Courtesy Charla Shults



Grant Johnson: Unveiling 'The Way We Were'

By MIRANDA ELLIS
editor@thepampanews.com

Grant Johnson's brushstrokes capture more than images—they tell the story of a community's spirit, echoing a time when life's rhythm allowed for genuine connections. His series, "The Way We Were," invites us to reflect on the bonds we've formed and those we've let slip away in our ever-evolving world.

Johnson, a Pampa native, has lived a life as colorful and varied as the subjects of his paintings. "I grew up here and went to school here," he says, setting the stage for a narrative deeply rooted in the local culture.

After high school, his journey took him to the Northern Rockies' untamed beauty, where he embraced a survivalist lifestyle. "I lived in the woods during that time. I

was kind-of a survivalist," he shares, recalling the years spent hunting and living off the land.

His adventures in the late '70s and early '80s were filled with the raw beauty and inherent risks of a life disconnected from today's digital world. "Sometimes I'd be in the mountains for a month or more. It was hazardous back then, you had no communication or civilization, and it

was before cell phones. So, you were just out there—but I loved it," Johnson reflects.

One particular memory stands out, a moment so profound that it would later inspire an entire series of paintings. "I remember a time I was in the Sawtooth mountains going to hunt elk," he recounts. "It just started snowing, and some low clouds moved in. You couldn't even see the top of the trees, just heavy clouds, and snow was falling silently. It was those big flakes, and they were probably six inches deep on the ground already."

Johnson continues, "Everything took on a monochromatic look, and you couldn't hear anything. It was dead quiet. I was squatted down looking at the mules, and then I saw something out of the corner of my eye. I looked to see what it was and didn't see anything. Then I saw another little bit of movement on the side of the hill, so I took my spotting scope and I saw a deer—just a flash of it. Then I saw another one over here, and over there, and over there."

"It was a huge herd of deer coming down from high elevation to get out of the snow,

but the way it was, they were in that cloud bank and looked almost like ghosts coming in and out. It looked like they weren't even real, it was very surreal. And it was totally silent, not a noise. It went on and on for about fifteen minutes, just seeing these little ghosts of deer, and it just sent chills down my back, you know."

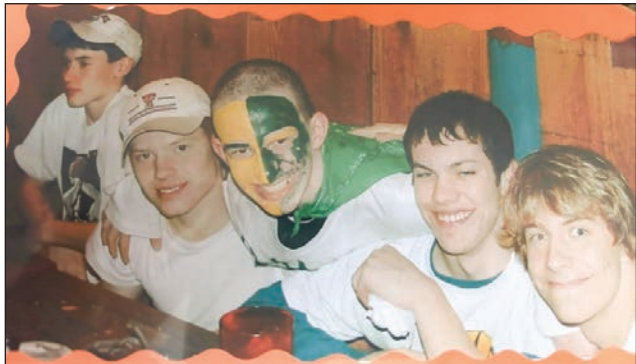
This encounter, where nature and silence conspired to create a tableau both eerie and beautiful, became a metaphor for Johnson's artistic philosophy. "I thought to myself, that means something. I couldn't put my finger on it, it's like when you have something on the tip of your tongue. I didn't know what it was, but I knew I was supposed to learn something from that," he muses.

Before the conception of "The Way We Were," Johnson embarked on a series of portraits that delved into the essence of individuality and expression. "I started painting portraits, and I realized that the whole thing that I saw back in the Sawtooth Mountains, about the veil, that it

JOHNSON cont. on page 2-FN



The Green Monster: The Man Behind the Legacy



BY GENEVA WILDCAT
reporter@thepampanews.com

must run green because you love the Harvesters so much. So that's what I put on the front of my shirt: My Blood Runs Green."

On August 29, 2002 at a football game in Perryton, The Green Monster made his debut appearance: but not without a slight hiccup along the way during his face painting process.

Stopping at a McDonald's bathroom, Evan decided that instead of just using green paint, he would paint half of his face yellow to match the Harvester colors.

In an attempt to perfect the look, Evan spent a little too much time painting the first half of his face that by the time he stepped out to call out to his dad for the yellow paint, a massive line had formed with customers needing to use the facilities: a story that Evan fondly and amusingly recounts.

Throughout the years, The Green Monster's look would evolve and his legacy would grow, capturing the attention of all those who cast their eyes upon him, at home and afar.

Beginning with green body paint, green hair, black pants and blue Converse during his freshman days, Evan would add more to the persona with each passing school year.

During his sophomore year, he would incorporate gold paint and by his junior year, The Green Monster would be decked out with a cape, bandanas, wrist bands and his dad's old green Navy jacket for a sentimental touch.

"It was totally unexpected because I wasn't doing it to get noticed or popular," Evan laughed. "But that's what ended up happening. I was just out there supporting my home town and it turned into something astronomical."

Although he's unsure of who coined him the nickname The Green Monster, he does remember when a classmate came up to him during their first home game and took one look at his painted face and outfit and screamed.

"That's when I was like, *okay, I've made it,*" he chuckled.

Evan had a massive amount of support by his parents, fellow students and staff, notably the late Coach Cavalier and his wife, Kathy, who adored what Evan was not only doing for the school, but for the entire community of Pampa.

"Evan as The Green Monster was one of the most unique things that Pampa High School ever had. It was definitely his own creation and he was embraced by the whole community with that character. It was just very special," said Kathy Cavalier.

The Green Monster was even featured in the school newspaper with multiple articles written by Chelsea Mills (Anderson) who played a large role in help-

GREEN cont. page 6-FN



Johnson

Continued From Page 1-FN

applied to us individually," Johnson explains. "There's so much behind a face. I did a whole series—40 paintings called 'The Face Behind the Face.' I did the whole thing chromatically."

He describes his process with a passion that is almost palpable. "I would get people who would volunteer to sit for a portrait and I would talk to them for a little while and watch their face. I would look at their eyes and their gestures and their body movements, because most of our communication is not verbal."

Johnson's series was a journey into the human spirit, exploring the layers that compose our public personas and the truths that lie beneath. "So I did that for a long time, painted tons of portraits and I started making pretty decent money painting portraits," he recalls. "I started getting commissions to where I wouldn't have to run all over the country to sell paintings."

In the current series he

is working on, "The Way We Were," Johnson not only paints the past but also holds up a mirror to our present, inviting us to ponder the true cost of our digital age.

In "Filler-up Earl," a piece from the series, Johnson vividly brings to life the gas station of his childhood memories. Reflecting on the inspiration behind this painting, Johnson says, "This last one I painted was a gas station I can remember as a kid. We'd pull into the gas station, the attendant would come up and my dad would roll the window down and call him by name. The name of the painting is 'Filler-up Earl,' because I can remember hearing my dad say 'filler-up, Earl!' We knew each other's names because we knew each other back then."

Johnson's work is a call to rediscover the empathy and understanding that once came so naturally. "Having empathy with someone doesn't matter if you agree with them or not, you can have empathy," he says. "We're getting to where we don't even identify each other as humans. We almost just

care about ourselves."

"It wasn't that way when I grew up. And so what I'm trying to do with this series, is make people stop and think for a minute about how we were even though you had to work harder," Johnson concludes. "Yes, it's harder to go over to somebody's door and knock and talk to them than it is just to pull out your phone and send a text. It's harder, it takes more time, but it's valuable. Those things are valuable, and there's a value to being uncomfortable."

He passionately adds, "Life has a texture and a vibrance to it. So many people don't get it. They don't sink their teeth into it, you know? The great thing that we humans have in common is that we are truth-seekers—and it's knowable, but you're not going to find it sitting on your couch."

Johnson's series of "The Way We Were" will include 16 paintings in total, 12 of which are already complete. The Pampa News looks forward to seeing the rest of the series unfold.

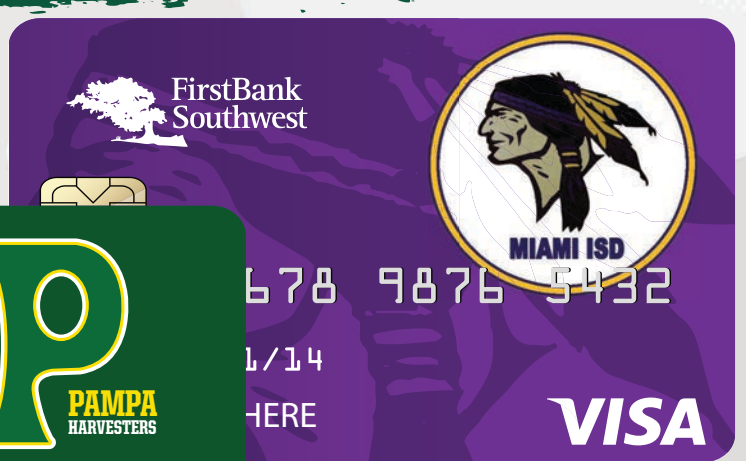
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The Show Goes On – The Voice of Pampa Still Speaks



■ Pampa's Darrell Sehorn continues to pursue his passion for meteorology, migrates to social media

By **MIRANDA ELLIS**
pampanewseditor@gmail.com

Anyone who has tuned their radio to 103.3 KGRO between 1969 and March of 2023 has heard the legendary voice of Darrell Sehorn. In fact, most residents of Pampa and the surrounding area are quite used to hearing his voice whether it be in their car, at home, or in the background while they shop and engage in their daily activities. This voice, which has been speaking to Pampa for 54 years now, can't help but make a Pampa feel 'at home' when hearing it.

Sehorn managed three radio stations in his time in Pampa, including KGRO-AM 1230, KOMX-FM

100.3, and KDRL-FM 103.3- which was named after him.

While Sehorn recently retired, or rather, graduated, from his career in radio- he hasn't exactly put down the mic yet. As soon as Sehorn left KGRO in March, he began recording weather reports and posting them on social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook and Twitter (X).

"It had come time for a change and after so many years (in radio). I hate to use the word 'retirement.' I guess I retired only to go back to work," Sehorn laughed.

"The walls would close in if I did not stay active and keep the passion of my life going, and my wife kind-of welcomes me to stay busy."

"So, what I shifted to was social media. To be honest with you, for years I was against social media

because I thought it was somewhat of a threat to local radio. But I have enjoyed joining social media and I believe that local radio has still got a good future."

With the help of his daughter, Shannon Stevens, he set up his social media accounts and got to work.

"I'd like to give a big thank you to my daughter, Shannon Stevens, for helping me set all of that up. I update it (accounts) at 7 a.m. every morning, a lot of the time in the evening, or if severe weather is happening I will update," he said.

"The main thing with technology- you can be local wherever you are. So I'm gonna carry on weather work, and even more so as time goes by, build an audience."

"The numbers are growing. I think as I expand that I'm going to get good numbers. My goal is to have as much of an audience as I estimated I had on the radio."

"I feel that if Tucker Carlson could migrate from a big national TV network to social media and do very well, that I could do the same thing on a small scale."

So far, many of Sehorn's daily listeners have already started following his accounts, but they aren't the only ones. After building relationships with advertisers over the decades, Sehorn has retained most of his advertisers.

"The advertisers I dealt with over those years are sponsoring me still, and I have other sponsorships available," he said.

While Sehorn is currently busying himself building

his social media presence and audience, he eventually wants to expand and do live weather broadcasts on his social media accounts in order to keep pursuing his passion of meteorology and storm-chasing.

"You know, when I was a little boy, I had a fascination with the weather. So by the time I was in high school, a junior, I picked up the nerve to go to the local radio station in Childress, Texas," Sehorn shared.

"I told the owner of the station (KCTX) that I wanted to do weather on the radio. He was out in front of the building swaying his golf club and he turned around and said 'When do you want to start?', and it scared me," Sehorn laughed.

"I said I was good to go, and that would have been about 1961."

"So I got the weather going in Childress. I would get up early all through my junior and senior year, go to the Federal Aviation Agency in Childress and prepare my weather report. (Then) I'd go to the radio station, record it, and go to school. It would play after I was already in class."

After high school, Sehorn carried on with KCTX and did a number of different jobs until he moved to Pampa in 1968. Shortly after, he started doing televised broadcasts in Amarillo.

"Later I did television weather in Amarillo- I did a couple of stints from 1968 until 1971," he said.

In 1969, Sehorn received a call from Jim Hughes, the owner of the Pampa radio station at the time.

SHOW cont. page 6-FN

John L. Levitow Award Presented to Pampa Native Patrick Allen

By **MIRANDA ELLIS**
editor@thepampanews.com



Senior Airman Patrick Allen was recently honored as a recipient of the John L. Levitow Award at the end of 2023, and is looking to be promoted in March 2024 in addition to that honor.

According to Military Times Hall of Valor: The John L. Levitow Award is the highest honor presented to a graduate of Air Force Enlisted Professional Military Education (PME), including Airman Leadership School, NCO Academy and the Senior NCO Academy. To be eligible for the award, a graduate must rank in the top one percent of his or her class.

"A little bit of backstory on it- it's named after John L. Levitow, who was a Medal of Honor recipient in the 70s," Allen shared.

Levitow was the first enlisted member of the United States Air Force to receive the Medal of Honor, and until his death in 2000, was the only living enlisted Air Force Medal of Honor recipient.

"The award combines your academic scores through leadership school and your rankings from your peers. I wasn't expecting to get it- I knew that I got nominated for another award, which is called the Commandant Award, and I thought I was up for that one. So when I didn't

have my name called for the Commandant Award, I was kind of bummed out. And then when they called my name for the Levitow Award, it was a really amazing feeling."

In addition to being honored as a top-notch student and leader, Allen has been selected for a promotion as well.

"I'm a Senior Airman (now). It's not an official rank, but I'm a staff sergeant select, and I just got selected for promotion a few months ago. I'll be promoted to staff sergeant around March," he said.

From Civilian to Senior Airman

"I used to work (at The Pampa News) as a sports editor for around two-three years outside of high school, and it just kind of hit me one day that I wanted to join the Air Force," Allen shared of his journey to becoming a Senior Airman.

"So, within a matter of months, I saw a recruiter. He told me I could see

ALLEN cont. page 4-FN

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Essential Meaning of harbor

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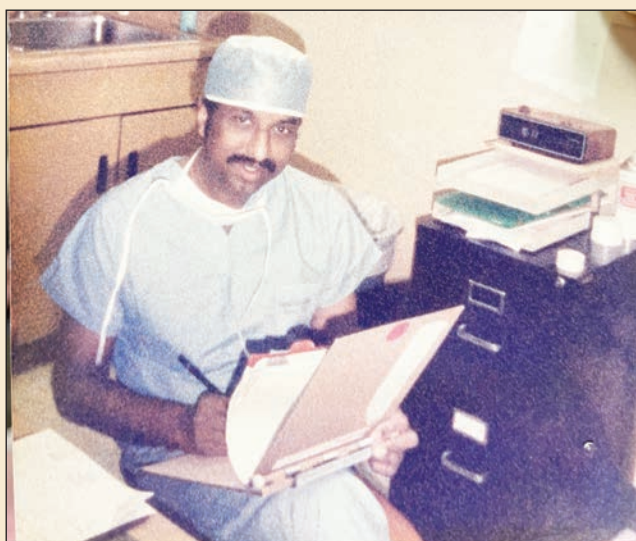


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Dr. Mohan Hangs His Hat After a Colorful Career Across the Globe



By MIRANDA ELLIS

Dr. Vijay Mohan is retiring after serving Pampa for 32 years. Born and raised in India, Dr. Mohan started his career as a surgeon overseas before coming to the United States in 1978.

Early Life and Career in India

"I come from India, a nice part of India that is very tropical. It is a place called Kerala, it is the most friendly of all states and everyone lives in harmony. It's also the most educated part of India; the literacy rate is at around 98 percent. I was lucky that I was born there," Dr. Mohan reminisced.

His interest in reading, writing and learning English started at a young age and was strongly influenced by his mother.

"My interest in reading and writing came from my mother. I started reading and visiting the libraries there when I was about 8 (years old.) My mother was a school teacher, so she has influenced my life from every turning point. She talked me into reading books that were translations of (British English stories.) We were under the British before, so mainly our type of English was British English," Dr. Mohan explained.

"My interest in the United States started in middle school, when I was about 12 years old. It was because I read three books; one was Little Women,

another was Uncle Tom's Cabin, and the third was a biography of my hero, Abraham Lincoln."

After graduating high school, Dr. Mohan went to a 4-year college and graduated to one of the best medical schools in India. He knew from that point that he wanted to pursue a higher education in the United States.

"After we get our M.D. (in India), we enter a residency program. During the residency program, I had excellent training under two British surgeons; one was a plastic surgeon, the other was a hand surgeon. The Chief of Surgery (there) was impressed with me, and so with the stroke of his pen I was (recommended) for a residency program in New York. He had a lot of pull in the United States, and so he was able to get it for me, which was wonderful."

"All my friends wanted to go to England for higher education, and I said no, I'm going to the United States," Dr. Mohan shared.

With a residency in place for Dr. Mohan in New York, he planned to make the big move to the United States fresh out of medical school.

The 4-Year Delay

"I was waiting for my passport, and unfortunately, Pakistan attacked India. I was drafted into the army. So instead of going to the United States, I was committed to serving four

years in the armed forces. I was about 23 or 24 years old," Mohan remembered. "So, I spent four years in the army. I was a thoracic surgeon, so (it was) a lot of trauma (surgeries), and it was in unfriendly territory close to Afghanistan. There was a lot of times I came close to dying because of all the grenade explosions. I had no choice. But while I was serving in the army, I also took care of civilian people. It was a small town with no doctors or surgeons, so I took care of them."

Dr. Mohan shared the highlight of his career as a surgeon in the Indian army.

"I saved the life of a young 21 year old woman who was being taken to the burial ground, (with members of the town) thinking she was dead. A guy came to me on a horse and told me 'Doctor, I don't think she's dead.' So I sent my jeep and brought her up, and I saved her life with (blood) transfusions. It was a post-partem hemorrhage and she had been bleeding for ten days," Dr. Mohan said.

"Since I was in the army, I had access to blood donations and the soldiers volunteered to let me take their blood and give it to her. I stayed with her all night and the next day she opened her eyes. After about 14 days, she went home."

50 years later, while living state-side, Dr. Mohan inquired about the woman he cared for back then. "When I was googling that place, I found the name of a journalist. So I wrote an e-mail to him and asked if she was still alive. He wrote back and said 'Yes, doctor, you saved her life and she is still alive.' This was 50 years after what happened," Mohan said enthusiastically.

Moving to the United States

"So after I got out of the

MOHAN cont. page 5-FN

Jeff Stevens: The Man Behind the Smile

By GENEVA WILDCAT

For those of us who were lucky to grow up in Pampa during the 90s can remember going into Frank's Grocery Store with their parents or grandparents and always being warmly welcomed into the cozy, locally-owned establishment.

As the smiling face of Frank's Grocery Store and grandson of the owners, Jeff Stevens was always so cordial and friendly with all who came through the door.

Personally, I always thought that Jeff was a family friend with the way he called my grandparents and I by name and conversed with us every time we went in there, and in a sense, he really was just that.

During his time in his grandfather's store, Jeff got to know all those who came in and made a reputation as being one of Pampa's sweethearts.

"In the grocery business, you'd see hundreds of people daily. But I've always liked the retail setting and enjoy being around people and the different personalities makes it fun."

But Jeff's friendly disposition didn't stop at just the grocery store; he carried that sincerity with him everywhere and still does, a trait that was engrained in him at a very early age.

Started in 1967, Frank's Grocery Store was owned and operated by Frank and Norma Morrison, who passed along their business etiquette and charm down the family line.

Jeff Stevens walked in the footsteps of his father and grandfather at a very early age, starting out as a sacker for the beloved business: a period of time that Jeff looks fondly upon.

"I do find myself looking back quite a bit on that. I was put on a schedule when I was twelve and that taught me a lot of responsibility," he said.

"I really do appreciate my parents and grandpar-



ents raising me to realize what responsibility is and showing up to do something. I look back on that and I feel like that taught me a lot of good standards and responsibility and I learned a work ethic. It teaches you a lot about life and what it's going to take to try to achieve something."

At the age of 18, Jeff became the manager for Frank's during his senior year, when he would marry his high school sweetheart, Tammy, who walked across the graduation stage proudly carrying his last name.

Spending approximately 20 years in the grocery business, Jeff also spent his free time buying and selling cars on the side; an interest and hobby that was beginning to pick up momentum.

With the support of his grandfather and growing family, Jeff was motivated to focus on his true passion and in 2009, jumpstarted his own car dealership, Xtra Auto Center, a business that has thrived for 15 years.

"It's like that quote you hear; *you don't work a day in your life if you love what you do.* I don't even want to call it a job because it's not a job. I enjoy doing what I'm doing and I have a great team around me."

To be able to carry an optimistic and friendly spirit throughout the years doesn't come easy to most, but for Jeff, his inspiration comes from a place deep within his heart and the ad-

vice of his grandfather still speaks to him today.

"One thing that he always said that really stuck with me was you've gotta take care of our customers because our customers are all we've got. Not a day goes by that I don't think about the things he told me. We're all kind of partial to our grandparents, but there was just something special to him and his encouragement. Just having that mentor and having his support."

"He had a way about how he would handle himself in situations, and when some of those situations weren't the best, he was always really calm, really collected and really patient and so I try to strive for that."

"I'm glad that I was of the age where I could work for him and get that guidance. I want to be that dad and granddad for my family."

As a father of four and a grandfather of three, Jeff wanted to ensure that his children and grandchildren receive that same guidance he was given, and according to him, Pampa is the perfect place to do so.

While many born and raised Pampa residents leave their hometown at some point, Jeff never had the desire nor inclination to and planted his roots deep within Pampa's soil.

When inquired what it was that made him want to stay here, his answer was humble and honest.

"I've got everything I need right here."

Allen

Continued From Page 3-FN

the world."

Allen chose to enlist and in April 2019, he was sent to San Antonio for basic training. From there, he was sent to Vandenberg Space Force base in northern California for more basic training until he was ultimately sent to Malmstrom Air Force base in Montana in October 2019.

"They sent me to San

Antonio first, and it was so hot there. Then I did a little bit of basic training at Vandenberg Space Force base, and then I went to Montana and did my full job training," he explained.

"Essentially, (Malmstrom Air Force base in Montana) is where we work on the facilities for Minuteman Three ICBM silos. It's basically a nuclear missile site out in the middle of nowhere like you would see in *Openheimer*."

"I worked as a missile

and space facilities technician for a couple of years, and right now I'm a senior controller in a control center. I oversee operations on the base on the missile side of things. Essentially, I just communicate things that the maintainers are doing up to higher levels, just making sure that everyone's on the same page," he said.

With his promotion coming up in March, Allen believes he may be moved soon.

"I think I'm going to

be getting moved soon, I'm not sure where. They could put me in maintenance or anywhere really, but my hope is to be a recruiter. I think it'd be cool to be the first face that people see when they come in with the Air Force. I like talking to people, especially having used to work (at The Pampa News). You get to go out and about talking to people, getting to meet new faces - and I really liked that," he shared.

While he admits he has yet to see the world in

his four years in the Air Force, Allen shared his favorite experience so far.

"I did get to go to Vandenberg Space Force Base (in California)- one of the coolest things I've ever done. It was in the summer of 2022 while there were tensions (between) Taiwan and China. There was a Minuteman Three test launch schedule, and so I got to go down there and work in the operations center and help with launching a test Minuteman Three missile."

Allen comes back to

Pampa to visit his family once a year.

"It's a long drive, about 1200 miles. When you're in the military, you don't get to see family that often. We're located pretty close to home compared to a lot of other people that are overseas, so it is definitely something that we take advantage of," he said.

The Pampa News congratulates Parick Allen for the honors he has received and thanks him for his service.

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Judge Chris Porter: Servant to the Community



BY GENEVA WILDCAT
reporter@thepampanews.com

For the last five years, Judge Chris Porter has served as the Gray County Judge, starting his tenure on the precipice of Covid-19, a challenge that would undoubtedly test his skills, diplomacy and

faith. A lifelong resident of Pampa, Judge Porter began his working career in the oil and gas industry, employed with Phillips for 15 years before he went to work for his family-owned oil business for 13 years. During that time, he

served as city commissioner under then-Mayor, Brad Pingle, and after coming to the conclusion that he wanted to do more for his community, decided to run for Gray County Judge.

"There was a lot of thought to that. It was a bit of a pain-staking process to decide to become Judge," Porter said.

"I've always been a problem solver and a servant to the community. I wanted to make things better and the County Judge's job was not something I had really looked at, but I felt like there needed to be a change and so I was fortunate enough to be elected."

Understanding that a healthy community thrives on the basis of solidarity, strong bonds and leadership, Judge Porter's main priority upon entering office was to repair the disconnect between the city and county that was prevalent at the time and has since successfully

been restored. "The platform that I ran on was to increase the cooperation between the city of Pampa and the county and we've got a phenomenal relationship now. The city of Pampa and Gray County are locked arm-in-arm and step-for-step," Judge Porter said.

Upon building better relationships, Judge Porter was given a task that neither he, the county, the city nor the world was ready for.

"The pandemic was horrible for our citizenry and I wasn't prepared for it. One year after I was made the County Judge, I signed an emergency declaration for Covid. The pandemic taught me a lot of things. Every morning my job was to get the numbers for new positive cases and deaths. So I had to go through and make sure the numbers were correct and get them to our dispatch so they were aware of any calls to those residences for our

first responders to go to that was a Covid-positive house. We had quarantine issues that I never thought I would have to deal with in my life and figure out how to navigate that. But I was surrounded by the greatest people."

With the unwavering support and cooperation from both the city and county levels, the pandemic, while now in the rearview mirror, serves as a stark reminder that if everyone in the community and its leaders were able to pull together and make it through, then there's no doubt they can get through anything.

During the recent wildfires that scorched over one million acres across the Texas Panhandle, Judge Porter, faced with critical decisions that would affect the entire county, turned to his experience with the Covid tragedy.

Recalling the heart-wrenching story of one of the first deaths of Covid

in Pampa, Judge Porter looked back at the determination, selflessness and sacrifice one woman made that forever made a difference in Judge Porter's life when faced with a challenge.

"Her voice will echo in my head for all of time. The pandemic was very difficult. I made some good and bad decisions during that. But I'll look at all those files and I'm like *man, if we can get through that, we can get through anything.* She will always be in my mind."

When Judge Porter is not declaring and battling emergency disasters, he spends his time in the courtroom, both as a County Judge in misdemeanor court and as presiding chair over the county commissioner's court.

Upon entering the Judge's seat, there were more than 800 open criminal cases in Gray County **PORTER** cont. page 6-FN

Mohan

Continued From Page 4-FN

army, I said it's time (to go to the United States.)"

"In order to come to the United States, you had to pass an exam; which I had already passed when I got my M.D., so it was easy for me to come here," Dr. Mohan shared.

"I came to New York in 1972. I spent the next six years in training between New York Medical College and a hospital Downtown which was very close to the old World Trade Centers in lower Manhattan. These two hospitals were trauma centers because one was close to Harlem, and the other was close to the Italian Mafia and the Chinese gangsters."

"Out of five of those six years of intense training, my chief (surgeon) was a thoracic surgeon so I had a lot of exposure to all kinds of operations. I finished my training in 1977. Then for one year I worked as a surgeon in the same hospital doing thoracic surgeries and endoscopic procedures."

From New York to the Midwest

"I got a fellowship offer from Pheonix, Arizona and I was planning to go there. But, my wife's elder sister was living in Lubbock, Texas and she said 'no, don't go to Pheonix, we need to be closer to each other.' The closest cities aside from Lubbock were Pampa and Amarillo, and my wife said let us be here (in Pampa)," Dr. Mohan said of his transition to the Texas Panhandle.

"There was a clinic called Pampa Clinic that was at 1002 N. Hobart. The chief of the clinic was Dr. Bellamy, and he had two associates, Dr. Brown and Dr. Beck. They accepted me as a doctor. At the time, the hospital here was a county hospital called Highland General Hospital and it had over 120 beds. They only had private care and family physicians, about 15 of them. They were very friendly to me, they accepted me," Mohan shared.

"I learned a lot from them about bedside medicine and how to deal with (small-town) patients. It's a community that is very friendly, and so I learned a lot about bedside medi-

cine, ethics and general practice. Those days, doctors were kept on a high pedestal, and they lived up to all of it. They were very unselfish, hard-working doctors."

Dr. Mohan was the only board-certified surgeon in Pampa at the time of his arrival.

"Then the hospital became an HCA hospital, and we started getting more specialists like orthopedic surgeons and gynecologists," he said.

Spending the '80s in "Little Chicago"

"My experience in trauma surgery was really helpful, because Pampa was a risk community; there was a little bit of violence every weekend."

This was also was around the time Pampa was nicknamed "Little Chicago," which Dr. Mohan remembers well.

"Pampa was a little Chicago. Stab wounds and gunshot wounds were pretty common back then."

"I had a patient with a stab wound that was almost a DOA when he came here, he had lost a lot of blood. He was actually an innocent bystander, and there was a brawl going on. So, I took him to the operating room and fixed the bleeder- I was able to do that because of the quality of my training in New York," he shared.

The patient he treated back recently sent Dr. Mohan a letter.

"After Dr. Mohan announced his retirement, I got this card in the mail and I opened it up and it was this patient," said Kim Thompson, Dr. Mohan's office manager since the day he opened his clinic 32 years ago.

"He said in the letter that him and his wife had been discussing him and had googled him. They found out he was retiring and sent him a letter thanking him for saving his life. He lives in Albuquerque, New Mexico now," she said.

Dr. Mohan's Medical Milestones in Pampa

Because of his experience in New York with endoscopic procedures, Dr. Mohan was the first endoscopic surgeon in Pampa.

"Those were the days that when you needed an endoscopy, you had to go to Amarillo. So when I came and started doing them with a couple of nurses I trained, it became part of my practice as

well," Dr. Mohan said.

"He brought it here," Kim added.

"He also did the very first microscopic gallbladder surgery in Pampa in 1991," she said.

"That was a milestone. Nowadays, 99 percent of gallbladder surgeries are done microscopically," Dr. Mohan mused.

The Accident that Forced Him to Slow Down

"Like everybody's life, I had my ups and downs, trials and tribulations, triumphs and tragedies. Our life is never so smooth, so I have also had my share of problems," Dr. Mohan shared.

In 2009 while on a trip abroad, Dr. Mohan had an unfortunate slip.

"I had a neck injury when I was coming back from the Holy Land. Unfortunately, I slipped in a restaurant, hit my head and broke my neck. So after that, I haven't done any hospital-based procedures. It took me 12-14 months to get well," he said of the incident.

"So, since I had this small building, I just started doing office-based procedures."

Before the fall, Dr. Mohan worked back and forth between PRMC and his clinic across the street.

Saying Goodbye

"I have been blessed with excellent office managers, receptionists, nurses and operating room assistants. My present office manager (Kim Thompson), she has been with me for 32 years. The receptionist has been with me for 12 years," Dr. Mohan said of those who have worked with him in his clinic.

He also had some remarks about the hospital staff at PRMC.

"I would say that the administrative staff, the operating room staff, the nurses, and everyone else have all been equally good to me. I have been treated very well by the different departments of this hospital and so I'm very happy to have practiced here as long as I could."

And of course, always being one to check up on his patients, even after 50 years, Dr. Mohan was emotional when discussing his patients.

"I've been blessed with serving a community of this quality. They are very faithful to me, very loyal patients through almost

three generations."

Kim Thompson, who opened the doors with Dr. Mohan in 1985 and is helping him close them in 2023, was emotional as she described her 32 years at his side.

"The first time I saw him was when I was a patient when I was 17. Then I came to work with him when I was 20 years old and I've been with him ever since," she said.

"He is like a father to me, not like an employer. He's family. He taught me so many things, he always had a way of explaining

things."

In fact, the only other career Thompson had before working with Dr. Mohan was at The Pampa News in the Classifieds' department. Aside from that one year, she has spent her entire working career at Dr. Mohan's side.

The Only Regret

I have no regrets except that there was no teaching hospital here; I like academia. I used to teach students in Cornell College in New York, so I missed it," Dr. Mohan shared.

"He would have been an

excellent teacher," Kim added.

Retirement and the Future

Dr. Mohan plans on enjoying his retirement traveling to see his children and grandchildren, painting and playing the piano and harmonica. He is the proud owner of a collection of harmonicas, and sings and writes poetry as well. We here at The Pampa News hope these are your best years yet, Dr. Mohan. thank you for serving Pampa.

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Suzanne Pingel: Bridging the Gap

By GENEVA WILDCAT

Since 2006, Suzanne Pingel has been the messenger of hope for children and their families in Pampa, selflessly devoting herself to providing the ways and means for a child to get the help and services they need.

Establishing excellent relationships, having a constant open door for communication and the unconditional devotion to be of service to the community is just a part of the foundation of a social worker; one that Suzanne has undoubtedly built.

To her, it's more than just a job; it's her life mission and while in a perfect world, no child would want or need for anything, she stands fighting in the trenches against the harsh realities of life, knowing that the battle will never truly be over.

From making sure that a child is clothed and nourished to dissuading a teenager from going or continuing down a destructive path, Suzanne shines as a beacon of hope in countless lives in countless ways.

"Although I'm the social

worker for Pampa ISD, that also has several community factors involved with it because I have to make sure that our community partners such as CASA and Tralee and the Salvation Army and other organizations that help families are aware of the needs of our school community."

"I work a lot with families who are going through difficult times and having those community connections are very valuable because I can call someone I know and say *hey, this family is not able to pay their electric bill this month, do we have any funds available?* or since I have a contact with Lion's Club I can contact them and say *this family can't afford eyeglasses. Can we make a referral to you and you guys assist with that?*"

"A lot of these organizations are already in place to know of the needs of the community because of the years of building those relationships that we've already done, but it's just important and valuable to keep those relationships healthy."

Suzanne works with

many numerous organizations and serves as board member or sponsors for many of them, often working behind the scenes with a team of faithful volunteers by her side, such as Snack Pack 4 Kids.

Snack Pack 4 Kids was started in Amarillo in 2010 and has since spread throughout Texas, serving thousands of kids in multiple school districts, all made possible by the countless volunteers and strong partnerships.

"The counselors at the campuses know which kids may qualify for the program and they get a permission slip from the parents and every other Monday night, volunteers fill the sacks and we deliver those to the schools on Monday night and those counselors discreetly and privately put the bags of food in their backpacks."

"I think our community is very giving and aware that food is the basic necessity in a child's life to learn-children can't learn when they're hungry. They've always been ready and willing to help and we've had some of the same volunteers and board



members when we very first started about fourteen years ago."

For more information on how to donate or volunteer for Snack Pack 4 Kids, contact Suzanne Pingel at Pampa High School or visit their website, www.sp4k.org.

While Suzanne is in direct communication with organizations that provide tangible needs for children and their families, she is also an advocate for their mental health as well.

"I'm the sponsor for SADD, Students Against Destructive Decisions and

PINGEL cont. page 7-FN

Porter

Continued From Page 5-FN

and within the five years that Judge Porter has taken the honorary seat, those cases have dropped down to nearly 200.

As the chair over the County Commissioner's Court, one of the first decisions made by the commissioners under the guidance of Judge Porter was the closure of the staggering 14 game rooms that plagued the city of Pampa leaving now only two; driving the crime rate of our beloved town down to a ten-year low.

Decisions regarding the economic growth of Pampa also lies on Judge Porter and the commissioners, sometimes making decisions that not everyone agrees with.

"We have to broaden our economic drivers to be able to sustain our population and what we've got. It is important to me to try and facilitate and help and encourage new industries into Gray County. There's still more to go because I want to make sure that Gray County is going to make it another 100 years."

With a job that makes

you feel like the weight of the world is on your shoulders, it's extremely crucial to have a strong support system at your back, and Judge Porter has just that, his wife Angela being his main driving and inspirational force.

"I love my wife to death and she is very forgiving. I couldn't ask for a better partner. There are things that have been unpleasant for her that she has weathered like a champ. I couldn't imagine doing this without her. It's very much a partnership. She's my conscience a times when I come home and tell her about the day. I can't say enough about her and what she's done for me."

The support of personal and professional friends and colleagues mixed with the unconditional love for his community gives Judge Porter the incentive to continue his journey with no sense of retirement in the near future.

"This isn't a retirement gig for me. When I stop losing my pace or my stamina to be the Judge, then I will step down. I would prefer to go out on top than to go out on my way down."

Green

Continued From Page 2-FN

ing to further his legacy.

At one point during his junior year, Evan had suffered a torn ACL and was on an immobilizer for a period of time, and although he wasn't going to allow that to stop him from showing his school spirit, he was told by an admin-

istrator that they didn't want him out there on the track because he wasn't an "official mascot", despite Evan's beloved reputation among the school.

More than 200 students and teachers gathered together and signed a petition to allow him back on the track: a demand that was accepted and the rest is history.

Dustin Elliot was "Harvey", the Pampa Harvest-

ers mascot during the time of The Green Monster era, and the dynamic duo knew how to put on a show, even making the local news.

"I was the unofficial sidekick of Harvey and we had a lot of fun. I remember my senior year, there's a piece of footage from when we played Caprock at home and we beat them really bad and on the wrap-up on News Channel 10, they opened the highlight

package on myself and Dustin Elliot. It ends with me jumping into his arms and he runs down the track carrying me," Evan said with a smile in his voice.

With that much school and hometown spirit, The Green Monster would make some enemies along the way, nearly starting a riot when a few angry students from a rival school would push the Monster a little too far.

"I remember my junior year, I went to Plainview and I nearly started a riot, no pun intended, with the Plainview student section. There was an incident where they had tried to make fun of the Harvesters with something they called the harvest stick, which was basically a handmade bamboo pole with an ear of corn attached to the end. A student ran over and shoved this thing into my face and without thinking about repercussions, I literally stood up at the rails and broke this thing over my knee and threw it in the trash can. We had to be escorted to our car by Plainview Police because they were afraid there was going to be a riot in the gym with the students because they were that upset I had done that. I was trying to defend my school! I loved my school so much and I wanted to defend it by any means necessary, even if that meant ticking

off 50 some odd students from the other school."

Evan Grice has since retired The Green Monster, but the impact that he made in Pampa still echoes in the minds and hearts of all of us who are blessed to know him, with or without the face paint.

"Over the years, there have been few people you could argue bleed their team's pride. Evan was one of those guys. Head to toe, he'd wear that Harvester gear-from the overalls, his RIOT shirt, the Jason hockey mask, to the face paint-he reveled in the spirit. He always exhibited passion for his interests," said childhood friend, Dusty Joiner.

"I feel that he amped up the energy for being a Harvester in general. He encouraged us to be proud of our teams even through the tough seasons," said long-time friend, Megan Bowley.

"Evan and I started high school together. His freshman year was my first year teaching. I went through some very challenging times with Evan and in the end, we all came out better than before. God knew the way things would end up and it couldn't have been better for either Evan or myself. It's hard for me to even call him Evan. I call him Mean Green because I have never seen anyone so invested in Pampa Har-

vester sports that he bleeds green to this day. His passion is unmatched. Mean Green is someone that will have me in his corner forever. I'm thankful our paths crossed," former Pampa High School coach and teacher Dustin Miller said.

The empowerment and confidence that Evan gained during his high school years as The Green Monster allowed him to enter into adulthood with the perspective that life is too short to not be who you truly are and to enjoy it.

He is currently working on a book titled *Facepaint, Failure and Finding Happiness* about his days as The Green Monster: what led up to it, what's happened since and everything in between.

"I can honestly say that if I had not taken that first step and did what I did in high school being The Green Monster, I do not think that I would be at least half the person that I am today. I was extremely shy and that face paint allowed me to kind of come into my own skin and allowed me to become more personable."

"It is okay to take a risk sometimes and it is okay to put yourself out there and be who you are and that was the biggest thing for me."



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Porter

Continued From Page 6-FN

that's a group here at the High School. It's an open group where kids can join at anytime and the main things we do are look at local needs as well as global issues and remind students to be kind and remind them to not be judgmental and be open about their behaviors to prepare them for adulthood."

Nearly every month out of the year, SADD gathers together to provide outreach to the community in different ways, such as food drives to local churches in November, foster gifts for kids in foster care in December, and dating violence awareness at the Tralee Crisis Center in February just to name a few.

She also works closely with Pampa Learning Center to help pregnant students get the services and support they need.

"So whenever we learn of a student who has just found out they're pregnant,

of course they're faced with all sorts of emotions. So the first step in providing services is through me. I talk to them and we talk about things in our community that is available to them. I make sure they're going to a doctor and make sure we provide the services and education that we can to them or tell them of an agency that can offer that as well."

Suzanne with her husband, Brad Pingel, started a non-profit organization called Wheel Times, Inc., a program for children and young adults with mobility challenges to participate in team sports.

The program was inspired by their daughter, Lauren, who was in a vehicle accident that resulted in her being confined to a wheelchair.

"She has always wanted to be able to be involved with sports and she had many limitations just because she didn't quite fall into the category of Special Olympics, but she wasn't able to do regular sports with her friends either. So we started Wheel Times,

which all the players are in wheelchairs, even if they don't have to be and the high school kids that are in SADD are the volunteers. We play basketball and touch football and all these different sporting events. So all these kids are able to experience that because it's so important to be on a team and learn to share things and to win and lose."

Because of the consistent communication between the schools, diagnostics and the Pingels, Wheel Times, Inc. sees 10-12 kids on a monthly basis who come to participate and play at the Pampa High School gym.

Due to the sometimes distressing nature of the job and the tragic circumstances and situations that are brought to their door, the expected career span of a social worker is typically 5-10 years and Suzanne admits there have been times that she's wanted to quit.

"Some days are very hard, but then I remember why I'm here. It's not about me, it's about them."

Troy Schweigerath: A Legacy of Service and Leadership



By **MIRANDA ELLIS**
editor@thepampanews.com

From the heat of Denver's fires to the heart of Gray County's emergency management, Troy Schweigerath's journey is one of unwavering dedication and service. His 27-year tenure with the Denver Fire Department has been a testament to his commitment to public safety and community well-being.

"I was born in Denver,

Colorado. I moved to I Springtown, Texas when I was eleven and I stayed there until graduated high school," Troy begins, recounting his early life and the path that led him to a career in firefighting. After earning a degree in business management administration from Pittsburg State University in Kansas, Troy's professional journey took a pivotal turn. "From there, I moved to Denver, Colorado and in '94 joined the Denver Fire Department. I worked there until 2021," he says, reflecting on the years of service that shaped his expertise in emergency response.

The transition to emergency management came unexpectedly after his retirement. "I thought I was going to just make furniture and be retired and work at the theater every once in a while," Troy shares. But a higher calling seemed to have other

plans for him. "Then I went on vacation and my friends had told me that this job was open, and I really believed that God told me to apply."

Upon assuming the role of Gray County Emergency Management Coordinator, Troy was met with the formidable task of self-navigation through the complexities of his new position. With no predecessor to guide him and a scant job description, he delved into the depths of filing cabinets and absorbed every shred of information available. "The emergency operations plan that they did have was out of date by almost three years. So that was one of the first things I got thrust in the middle of," he recalls. This period of intense self-education laid the groundwork for his adept handling of subse-

TROY cont. page 8A in the regular newspaper.

Show

Continued From Page 3-FN

"The owner called me and said 'I've heard about you and I've seen you. We place a lot of emphasis on weather in our operations and I'd like for you to come up here as a meteorologist and weather forecaster.' So I (started at the) Pampa (radio station) on May 1, 1969."

In 1976, when Hughes moved to Carlsbad, NM, Sehorn assumed all responsibilities pertaining to the radio station and was ultimately with KGRO for 54 years.

"I calculate that I've

hired around 1,100 people over that 54 years. About 700 of them were out of Pampa High School as Trainees," he said.

Sehorn was willing to train so many people as he himself was self-taught in his field.

"Most all of my training is acquired. I've got an extensive background in meteorology, but never got a formal degree. I've always acquired an equivalency. There's nothing better than on-the-job training."

Sehorn's wife, their two daughters and granddaughter were among those estimated 1,100 people he employed and trained over the years.

"My family, even the

grand-daughter, Shaye, did commercials. We also employed, for many years, our two daughters Shannon Stevens and Stacey Sehorn. For generations, our family has been involved with the Pampa radio," he said.

"Linda Sehorn, my wife, I give her a lot of the credit. (During) that 54 years, 30 or so years we worked side by side at the radio stations. She ran the front desk, did the book-keeping, billing-all of that. I am blessed."

Sehorn's involvement with the community of Pampa doesn't stop at his work at the local radio station- He has been on the board for the Pampa United Way for many

years, even serving one of those years as a Chairman. He has also been heavily involved with the Pampa Chamber of Commerce, and has served as a Gold Coat for "more years than (he) can remember."

"I'd also like to mention that I've been a realtor in Pampa since 1980. My real estate sales license is currently active with RE-MAX," he said.

Sehorn is also a long-time member of his church in Amarillo, which he does audio and video work for.

"When I came to Pampa, I was connected with a church in Amarillo- Christian Church of God. They had a vast broadcasting network which went right

along with what I did. So, to this day, I'm still associated with that church and I do the audio-video work for them," he said.

Sehorn has also been an official observer for the National Weather Service in Amarillo for the last 52 years.

While Sehorn misses his time in radio, he is enjoying his current pursuits and getting to be near his daughter, grand-daughter and son-in-law.

Sehorn expressed how grateful he is to the Pampa community for their loyalty over the years.

"I've had a lot of people give gratitude and I certainly want to thank Pampa- all these people

and the many advertisers I have dealt with over the years. The audience was a loyal and faithful audience. When the storm clouds gathered, they turned that radio on because Darrell Sehorn was going to be out there storm-chasing," he said affectionately.

"Going forward, you can still get Darrell Sehorn weather on those platforms (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter-X). I have a lot of gratitude for Pampa. Thank you."

To keep up with Mr. Sehorn, be sure to follow him on his various social media accounts (handles @sehornsays). The Pampa News wishes Mr. Sehorn the happiest years yet.

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Frontier Regiment of the High Plains

By MIRANDA ELLIS
editor@thepampanews.com

The Frontier Regiment of the High Plains has been a source of historically-enriched fun for the Texas Panhandle and Pampa community for more than two decades now. From research and amateur archeology to live-action re-enactments, the group has contributed more than just a few wooden nickels to paint a realistic picture of Texas Panhandle history.

“Our group actually started in Pampa in 2000. We were actually an off-shoot of an organization down in Lubbock called the Fourth Cavalry Memorial Regiment formed back in the 1980s. Their (activities and research) were based off of Randall Mackenzie and the Battle of Palo Duro Canyon. As they grew, they started to get more interest outside of the Lubbock area and eventually, they had a few members appear in this area (Upper Panhandle),” explained Chris Larson, President of Frontier Regiment.

Later, members of the group nearer to the Canyon, TX area formed another group, branch-

ing off of the first.

“Cavalry troops are arranged by companies. They formed what they called Company E based in Canyon, and then had some other groups from outside the Canyon area get involved. At that time, the Fourth Cavalry (based in Lubbock) was kind-of going away. They had lost membership and weren’t really quite as active anymore, so the group reformed in April 2000, calling themselves the Frontier Regiment of the High Plains.”

“They put out a call for members that would be interested in history and in frontier military history specific to the Texas Panhandle. And at that time, there was (a parallel) interest in a sequel to *Dances with Wolves*,” he said.

“It came out in 1990. It was first a book written by an author named Michael Blake, and it became a popular movie. It actually kind-of brought back the idea of Westerns in movies and led to several other movies that did pretty well.”

“Well, this author had written a sequel to *Dances with Wolves*, and the story of that sequel actually took place during the Red River War- which

happened here in the Texas Panhandle in 1874. There was some interest in shooting that movie in the early 2000s, and the author actually came up here and scouted some locations. Some of the early members of the Frontier Regiment showed him around and were hoping to get involved with it. That led to a lot of members joining in the early 2000s, hoping that they would get to be in the movie, which ultimately never happened. But those that stayed with the group were the ones that were really interested in history.”

Larson wasn’t far behind the pioneer members of the Frontier Regiment, discovering the group only four years after its inception at a gun show in Amarillo.

“I got involved with this group in 2004. They (Frontier Regiment) were set up at a gun show here in Amarillo and were just talking to people as they walked by hoping to get people interested in joining the group. I couldn’t believe there was a group like that here in the Texas Panhandle.”

For Larson, it was the historical and archaeological aspects of the group he found

enticing.

“I’ve been interested in the Indian war since I was a kid. My parents would take us on trips and sometimes we’d make little side stops at Frontier forts and battlefields. I started getting interested in getting books to learn more about it. And at some of these historical sites, there would be re-enactors. It just seemed like a fun thing to do. So, to be honest, the history side of it is what got me interested,” Larson shared.

What exactly are they doing in this neck of the woods?

“Ongoing research is one of the big things in the Frontier Regiment. I’m actually on the board of the White Deer Land Museum, and I’ve been designated as the Red River War historian. I was able to use a lot from my 20 years of research from the Frontier Regiment into the Red River War. It showcases all 17 of the major battles of the Red River War in chronological order. We’re hoping lots of people get to see that this year since it’s the 150th Anniversary,” Larson began.

The Frontier Regiment also

strives to spark a love of history in Texas Panhandle youths.

“We usually do five or six (living history events) annually. We’re in a group called Windows on a Wider World (WOW), and the Pampa museums are in that group too. Basically, they bring in kids to listen to groups talk about history,” Larson said.

“The problem is our group has firearms, and so we can’t actually go to schools to do programs. So, museums are a real good source for us to work with. We can set up things at the museum and we get to do our thing there. We have rifles, pistols- our group even owns a Gatlin gun, which we have on display at WDLM in Pampa. They’ve been working with us so that we get to store it there too, which is great for the museum as well. We have cannons, and we get to fire blank cannon booms that the kids really enjoy.”

“That’s one of the main things. I think that helps our group because that’s how I got involved. When I was a young kid, I saw guys doing this type of thing. You could wear a uni-

FRONTIER cont. on page 2-RH



Frontier

Continued From Page 1-RH

form from 150 years ago and pretend like you're a soldier, live like a soldier and even eat food like a soldier did."

"We let them (kids) eat hard-tack, which are the army crackers from the Civil War onward. It's

basically just a ration of a hard, brick-like piece of bread. I always give kids a little piece of that and that lets them experience what it was like to be a soldier. That's the stuff that grabs kids, those tactile experiences. Getting those kid's imaginations when they're young is a good thing to pass on that history," he shared.

"We're hoping to catch that kid that maybe hangs on to the wooden nickels we give out and looks at

it sometime and thinks about it. You know, it's history- not everybody's interested in it. But, if you can get just a few when they're young, maybe they'll carry on."

The Frontier Regiment's next live reenactment event is scheduled at WDLM on April 19.

"We'll be doing a program and we'll probably be set up in the park behind the museum to demonstrate our Gatlin gun. We'll have a cannon out

there to shoot. It's going to start I believe around 9 A.M. and go until just before lunch," Larson said.

Wanted: Pard'ners

"Usually, (we have) somewhere around fifteen-or-so members from all over the Texas Panhandle. We're always looking to get more members in our group," Larson shared.

"We are really looking for more members this year. We'd love to be able to have as many members as possible. I've got uniforms like you wouldn't believe"

"There was a historical documentary financed by the WDLM called *The Contested Plains*, and the Frontier Regiment was pretty heavily involved in that. We got to be involved with the filming, which was pretty neat, and got a lot of uniforms. So if people want to join, we have uniforms available that we can loan out. So, we're just looking to fill the ranks this year," he said.

"The positions that we have are basically just whatever anybody wants to wear for the uniform.

I've been in the group for 20 years now, and I'm just a corporal."

"If someone wants to portray the rank of someone, then we just require them to know what an officer of that time period would have. (For example), If you're going to wear the rank of a military soldier from 150 years ago at a living history event, you should be able to act according to the procedures for an officer (at that rank)."

Historical accuracy is key for live re-enactment events.

"We really strive to be accurate to the time period and wear the correct uniforms as what would have been seen here in the Texas Panhandle and use the correct equipment. Their uniforms were worn and used and leftover from the Civil War a lot of times, so no two soldiers were necessarily wearing the same thing. So we like to really make it accurate and realistic," Larson said.

"We're not all (portraying) military (characters) though. We also accept scouts in our group, we'd love it if we can get some

Native Americans portraying some of the Indian warriors. Buffalo hunters were also a big thing here in the Texas Panhandle. We even have some women in our group too that portray laundresses at Fort Elliott."

"One of the other benefits of being in our group for people who love history and archaeology is we get to sometimes go to historical sites that have to do with the Red River War and the Texas Panhandle."

"We've met the landowners (during) historical commemorations and developed relationships with them. Oftentimes, they let us do metal-detecting. In archaeology, we're just amateurs, but we do it just for the love of history and finding out more about some of these battles There's so much more that still can be discovered either dug up from under the ground or findings in military files," Larson said.

To inquire about membership to the Frontier Regiment, send an e-mail to frontierregiment@gmail.com.

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The Pampa Farmer's Market: Cultivating Community

By MIRANDA ELLIS
 editor@thepampanews.com

The Pampa Farmer's Market stands as a testament to community spirit and the perseverance of Natalie Zarante, who saw a need for a local farmer's market and took it upon herself to fill that void. "I had to ask United to expand their organic food section, and started looking for ways to get access to locally grown food," Zarante recounted, highlighting the initial absence of such a market in Pampa.

Despite early setbacks, Zarante's resolve did not waver. She reached out to local gardeners and farmers, and although her first attempts did not yield much success, she persisted. Starting her humble

journey at Top O' Texas Trade Days, her efforts eventually led to the establishment of the Pampa Farmer's Market, which found a welcoming home in the parking lot of Tractor Supply. "Tractor Supply has been very generous to allow us to set up in their parking lot," Zarante expressed her gratitude for the support that helped launch the market.

Over the years, the market has become a hub for local vendors to sell home-grown fruits and vegetables, canned jellies and salsas, and hand-crafted items. "We want everything to be hand-crafted or home-grown," Zarante emphasized, ensuring the market's commitment to quality and authenticity.

The 2023 season

brought its challenges, particularly with the weather. "The beginning of the season was off to a great start, but we had a lot of hot weather—so attendance dropped," Zarante said, reflecting on the impact of the elements. However, the market continued to thrive, introducing new vendors and products, from freeze-dried candies to unique hand-made crafts.

As the market looks to the future, Zarante remains hopeful and open to new possibilities, including finding a new location to accommodate the growing number of vendors and visitors. "Tractor supply is great for us... But, we can't really grow in that space," she noted, considering the potential for the market's expansion.



Through Zarante's dedication, the Pampa Farmer's Market has become a beloved destination for the community, embody-

ing the shared values of sustainability, craftsmanship, and local pride.

The 2024 season of the Pampa Farmer's Market will begin July 6.

For more information about the Pampa Farmer's Market or to become a vendor, you can go online to their Facebook page.

The Combs-Worley Building: Pampa's Gentle Giant



By GENEVA WILDCAT
 reporter@thepampanews.com

Overlooking historic downtown Pampa stands the mighty Combs-Worley Building located at 120 W. Kingsmill, situated in "Million Dollar Row" that include the Gray County Courthouse, City Hall, and Pampa Fire Station.

Built in 1931 under the design of Amarillo architect William R. Kaufman, the stunning five-story structure remains as one of Gray County's oldest and most well-preserved historical landmarks with it still being nearly in its

original entirety.

The settlement of Pampa began as early as 1877, but it wasn't until 1902 when White Deer Lands Co. who owned land in Gray County at the time began to sell its holdings that people flocked to the area to buy.

While the population of Pampa remained under 1,000 during that time and was more widely considered a farming and ranching center, the discovery of oil in 1926 in the area caught the attention of investors, industrial developers and people interested in establishing their roots in the booming little town for future genera-

tions. Downtown Pampa was on the up-and-up and the newfound enthusiasm and expansion of the town incited the need for new government and office buildings.

The Phebe Worley family along with business partner, Albert Combs bought 13 sections of land from the White Deer Land Co. in 1913 located about four miles west of Leforsland that had an abundance of oil.

With their new accumulated wealth, Combs and Worley sought out the architectural expertise of Kaufman with C.L. Boyington Company of Pam-

pa as contractor to construct an office building that would immediately become a local landmark and hub for the local oil and gas industry upon its completion and opening.

William R. Kaufman was the son of Amarillo architect, Davis Paul Kaufman who together, designed numerous schools and government offices throughout the Texas Panhandle, most notably the Gray County Courthouse and City Hall, built just a few years before the Combs-Worley Building.

Kaufman had an eye for
COMBS cont. page 5-RH

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The Woody Guthrie Folk Music Center

By GENEVA WILDCAT
reporter@thepampanews.com

Located in historic downtown Pampa just on the other side of the railroad tracks is the Woody Guthrie Folk Music Center; the building and location itself rich in history (and controversy) that would make any history or music buff giddy with excitement.

Painted across the brick front of the Woody Guthrie Folk Music Center is 'Harris Drugs' depicted in its near-original font, a preservation of what the building was and still means to the story.

Upon walking in, the decor-laden walls full of paintings, pictures, and other historical items dedicated to the late-great folk music icon grabs your attention and clings onto it until you've seen and read every fascinating piece.

From the pictures of a barely visible Pampa during the Dust Bowl to the displayed bouy obtained from the sinking of the USS Reuben James off the coast of Iceland in 1941 (the inspiration for Woody Guthrie's song, The Sinking of the Reuben James), the fellow traveler or tourist can expect to wiggle their toes in the sands of time. Under the high ceilings containing the original tin material and design from the building's conception, an open stage and seating area welcome guests and musicians from all backgrounds to come together for a jam session every



Friday night.

While the man for whom the building commemorates is of absolute significance, the history of the location is just as interesting, especially for those life-long Pampa residents.

Executive Director of the board for the Woody Guthrie Folk Music Center, Michael Sinks, is not only a Woody Guthrie historical buff, but a Pampa history enthusiast as well.

Having moved to Pampa in 1989, Sinks worked for AT&T until his retirement in 2009, giving him more time to focus on his love of music and playing music.

After visiting the barber

next door to the Woody Guthrie Folk Music Center, Sinks would be invited to a jam session that would put him on a path he never expected and the woman who would set him on that path was Thelma Bray, who is now 100 years old.

"The little lady that started this place, Thelma Bray, said they needed some help and asked me if I would come back Tuesday night," Sinks said.

"So I thought maybe they needed to move a piano or something, but they were having a board meeting and she asked me to be on the board and I've been here ever since. I had just retired and was

looking for a place to play music. It was completely self-serving, I just came to play some music," he laughed.

Admittedly, Sinks didn't know much about Woody Guthrie or his music, but a member of the board at the time, Pat Stewart who was a die-hard fan of Woody Guthrie, passed along his knowledge and passion for the folk singer to Sinks.

"He started telling me what books to read and telling me stories and introduced me to the family and I went to the music festivals in Okemah, Oklahoma where Woody was born and I just became enamored with the story; it's Shakespearean. And the fact that he started his music career right here in this room," Sinks said.

"He found his first guitar in the store room and he started fooling around with it and the boss told him, if you can play it, you can have it. So this is where it all started for Woody."

Harris Drugs was owned and operated by Carl "Shorty" Harris, formed during the oil boom in the late 1920s that affected the entire Texas Panhandle.

Trying to find a way to make money during a time when oil field towns were less than friendly to most people, Shorty set up a lemonade stand out on Highway 60.

From the advice of a traveler, Shorty learned how to turn a profit from his simple lemonade stand and turned it into a hamburger stand.

After a few years' worth

of savings, Harris, along with a business partner, bought the newly constructed building that would become Harris Drugs.

Across the street from Harris Drugs was a boarding house that out-of-town oilfield workers would stay and the 25-cent-per-8-hour cot rental would be managed by none other than Woody's father, Charley who would hire his then 17-year-old-son.

Prohibition was in effect during that time and while most drug stores were known to sell ice cream and root beer and other various items, "special medicine" was also sold under the prescription of a doctor.

"So drug stores popped up everywhere, kind of like medical marijuana dispensaries today. But Woody was told when he went to work here that if somebody put down a nickel, they wanted ice cream or root beer. If they put down 50 cents, reach under the counter and get one of these bottles in a paper sack and don't ask any questions," Sinks smiled.

Thelma Bray was going to school during the time that Woody Guthrie was working and playing music in Pampa and had no idea until later on when she read a book about his life.

"She went to a town hall meeting and stood up and said *I want to do something to recognize Woody Guthrie as a worldwide famous musician who started here in Pampa, Texas.* One of the people said that *Woody Guthrie was a communist and an*

atheist and we'll have nothing to do with him in Pampa. Neither one of those statements were true, but it didn't matter," Sinks said.

"She didn't let that stop her. She was kind of a mover and a shaker around here. She was one of those people that didn't let "no" dissuade her. She started looking for other people that were like-minded and thought that something should be done to honor Woody Guthrie and she found some people and started a 501C3 in 1992 called Pampa's Tribute to Woody Guthrie and they had their first concert that year that had all sorts of names including Debbie Gibson."

After Harris Drugs had closed, it has since been a leather shop, a shoe shop and a bar, but after its final closure, Thelma set her sights on buying the building.

In 2002, the ten-year project was finally coming to its completion after they bought the historic building with the help of many of Pampa's well-known citizens at the time.

After a lot of renovations and clean up, the Woody Guthrie Folk Music Center became what it is today, and according to Michael Sinks, it's more than just a museum.

"I underestimated the power of Woody Guthrie's name because people did come," he said, pointing to the massive painted canvas of a boxcar with hundreds upon hundreds of signatures of visitors and musicians from all over the world that have stopped through to pay Pampa's hidden gem a visit.

"People kind of take some ownership of this place. Usually when they come to visit they often stay for 2 to 3 hours and we'll just talk. I'll tell them all the stories I know about Woody and they'll tell me their stories," he said.

"Some people have an idea in their head about what folk music is, but the real definition of folk music to me is folks getting together to play music. That's what this place is for and that's exactly how I got here."

Because the Woody Guthrie Folk Music Center is completely nonprofit and is free to the public, the center does rely on donations and funding from certain organizations to keep up its operation.

WOODY cont. page 6-RH

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Meyer Land & Cattle Company



By MIRANDA ELLIS
editor@thepampanews.com

Greg Meyer, a Texas resident, man of God and cattleman has recently expanded his family's ranch to grow and sell hay commercially.

"Beforehand, when we raised (hay), it was for our cattle. Now, we're doing it for business. We're still in the early stages of that and still buying equipment," Meyer said.

After a trial-run first year, Meyer and his brother John worked out some minor machinery issues and have gauged

the needs and interests of their potential customer base.

"Our whole aim is to get into the alfalfa business," Meyer shared.

While this expansion is hopefully a new source of income for the Meyer brothers, they originally planted the hay on their

land as a measure of fire-prevention.

Located near Skellytown, the family's land has been no stranger to wildfires and high wind.

"That ranch had been burned up totally three times. And fortunately, God spared the ranch house. So, we planted some acres around the house to the south and west to prevent that, mostly in the plot near the house. Believe it or not, we had a fire (shortly after planting) and it came right up to the hay line. Because it was green, it stopped that fire," he said.

"We're in the process of recapturing the land that went back to nature for over thirty years."

By timing the planting of their hay so that it will be green during fire season, Meyer has effectively added a measure of safety for his ranch house while also using it as an opportunity to revitalize the soil on the land.

Aside from alfalfa, Meyer also utilizes sudan hay.

"Because it's really sandy out there, we went

to Sudan. Sudan has a root structure that helps get the sand converted back to usable soil. It's also a good hay crop," he explained.

Man of God and the Sky

Aside from running the family ranch, Meyer recently obtained his pilot's license and spends as much time as he can spreading his ministry.

"Let me just put it this way: I've got an area where the Lord calls me to go in and do certain things and I stay under the radar," Meyer says.

The citizens of Pampa and surrounding areas may have seen in numerous places a devotional entitled *God Wants You to Win!* by Jeff Copenhaver, whose father is the famous two-time world champion bronc- rider featured on the front cover.

Greg, along with many other volunteers and missionaries, have traveled around the country and abroad giving away the devotionals by the thousands.

"They're in Spanish and they're in Russian. One of our guys is a missionary in Ukraine, of all

places," Meyer said.

"We went to the rodeos, the national rodeos, and another group we went to were the FFAs, especially the state and national conventions. We would give out literally thousands of them."

The devotional focuses on what the great American cowboy is all about: dedication, hard work, helping others and a strong faith in God, values that Meyer wholeheartedly believes and upholds.

In addition to answering the call of the Lord to his ministry, Meyer shares that God encouraged him to go and get his pilot's license.

"The Lord said to get my pilot's license, and so I got my pilot's license. I don't have the plane yet, but I know what it's going to look like and I know the Lord will bring it if He told me to get my license. I'm 70 years old and I can't wait to see what's coming next," he shared excitedly.

For more information on the Meyer Land and Cattle Co. or the ministry, contact Greg Meyer at 512-573-3178.

Combs

Continued From Page 3-RH

the Art Deco style that was popular in the 1920s and 30s, and his vision was that of luxury, extravagance and an undeniable beauty that would capture the attention of all those who came through the bustling town.

Passersby can admire the smooth terra cotta and black ceramic that adorn the piers and pilasters of the exterior, still in their pristine and original condition.

Upon walking in either the west or south entrance, the combined names, Combs-Worley, are inscribed above the doors, ushering guests inside to take an appreciative gander at the terrazzo flooring, gray marbled walls and stairway, the magnificent geometric lighting fixtures and the delicate mixture of turquoise, buff and cream hues used throughout the lobby. The first tenants that settled in the newly built structure were the financial managers of the Combs' and Worley's holdings, independent and corporate oil and gas executives, attorneys, an insurance agency and the building's contractor.

Today, attorneys, CPAs, disability advocates, a barber shop and salon, therapists, engineers, geologists and other businesses occupy the five floors of the building, some whose families that had inhabited the building since its conception.

Ken Fields, who is the longest residing tenant of the Combs-Worley building for the last 49 years has the original lease of the building in his office, and his love and adoration of the building has not faded with time and remains in awe of it each day.

"It has occurred to me on more than one occasion how fortunate I am to have spent my entire professional career in a building with such architectural integrity and so pleasing to the eye," Fields said.

"I look forward to many more years of strolling into the beloved Combs-Worley to face the events of the day. I see friendly ghosts there, but also new, young faces and historic Combs-Worley Building serves on into the changing years."

While 92 years' worth of changes have touched the City of Pampa and sometimes even looking at old photos carries hardly any resemblance of the

town, the Combs-Worley Building has stood the test of time and change.

The vintage brass mail box and letter chute is still in use today; the office floors are of the original moultilite that was said to be "durable enough to withstand lighted cigarettes thrown on the floor"; the windows on the upper floors have remained in their original case units: the bullet-proof glass of the exterior windows have survived and stepping onto the elevator is like stepping into a time capsule.

Richard Thomas, the General Manager of the Combs-Worley building for the last two years, has a deep reverence for the history of the Combs-Worley building, especially from an architectural and engineering point of view.

"Everything about this building was built way over specs up to the point that it is classified as a nuclear fallout shelter. These windows are not standard resistant windows, they're bullet-resistant," Thomas said as he gave me a tour of the offices on the fifth floor.

"We've had doctors, dentists-it was the creme-de-la-creme at that time. In fact, some of these offices were actually built

specifically for the various tenants. It's just an amazing place."

As we went into the boiler room, it became clear that having a deeper understanding and knowledge of older building mechanics is crucial to the structure's operation and functionality, and with Thomas's expertise, he was just the man for the job.

"A friend of mine had called and told me they were having some issues here. For a 92 year-old building, if you don't have an engineering background and maintenance background, you cannot manage this facility. It has so many parts and moving variables that it requires you to really know what needs to be done and extrapolate an appropriate business plan," Thomas said.

But of course in order to preserve something that is cherished, it has to be brought gracefully into the present and Richard Thomas has done just that by partnering with Vexus and T-Mobile to bring the building's technology up to date and also by giving green energy industries a place to plan future developments for Pampa.

"By and large, this is an impressive town and this building is a prime ex-

ample of it. It's my goal to leave Pampa a little better than the way I found it. I have such an outpouring of support and when these people get on the horn, amazing things happen."

"I have a vision here and that is to see this building continue to serve this community because it's not just brick and mortar. The disability advocates

help thousands of people, the lawyers help countless people, the haircuts and their commradery and the various services. I'm trying to find a balance without disrupting the historical appearance and ramification of the building, but yet find a path forward so that history can provide a better future."



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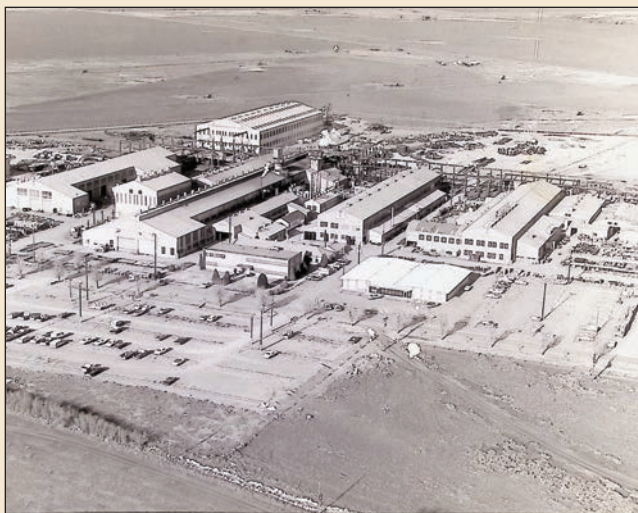
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Cabot Corporation: Industrial Innovation and Community Commitment in Pampa



ious causes, from sports leagues to educational foundations, demonstrating a commitment to the well-being and growth of the community it calls home.

This year, the White Deer Land Museum is set to open a new exhibit that celebrates Cabot's long-standing contributions to Pampa. "We are working on it now in collaboration with representatives of Cabot," said Anita Gullet of the White Deer Land Museum. The exhibit will feature interactive displays and historical artifacts that tell the story of the company's impact on the region. It aims to educate visitors about Cabot's history and the processes behind the products that have become a part of everyday life.

Cabot's involvement with the Pampa Independent School District highlights its commitment to local growth and develop-

ment. The company has partnered with the district for events that underscore its commitment to building a stronger, more educated community. These collaborations aim to inspire the next generation and ensure that Pampa continues to thrive.

At the Pampa Development and Manufacturing Center, innovation is key. The center is part of Cabot's global network, where research and development efforts focus on advancing technology and improving product performance. The facility is a hub of innovation, constantly pushing the boundaries to meet the evolving needs of customers and the industries served.

Safety is also a core value at Cabot, with initiatives like "Drive to Zero" aiming to eliminate workplace incidents and the annual Global Safety Day promoting safety proto-

cols and best practices. The company's proactive approach to safety ensures the well-being of its team members and sets a standard for the industry.

As Cabot Corporation looks to the future, it remains committed to its dual role as an industry leader and community pillar. The upcoming exhibit at the White Deer Land Museum and the partnership with Pampa ISD are just a few ways the com-

pany's legacy is being celebrated and preserved.

Cabot's presence in Pampa is a story of resilience, innovation, and community partnership. As the company continues to grow, it upholds the values of innovation, safety, and community engagement, ensuring that it remains an integral part of Pampa's story—a story that continues to unfold with each passing year.



By MIRANDA ELLIS
editor@thepampanews.com

since become a symbol of enduring industrial success. The Pampa plant is a model of safety, health, and environmental excellence, reflecting Cabot's global commitment to responsible manufacturing practices.

Beyond its manufacturing achievements, Cabot is deeply involved in the Pampa community, supporting local initiatives and fostering a culture of giving back. The company's efforts extend to var-

In Pampa, Texas, Cabot Corporation exemplifies a blend of industrial innovation and steadfast commitment to community, establishing itself as a vital part of the city's economic and social fabric since 1945.

The facility's history is rich, with its roots tracing back to the Carbon Black Corporation, which was acquired by Cabot and has

White Deer Land Museum: Preserving Gray County History



By MIRANDA ELLIS
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campus for kids and has even financed research documentaries on historical happenings in the Texas Panhandle.

This year will feature a host of new exhibits.

"Right now we have O.M. Franklin, who created the black log serum, exhibit upstairs. We're also bringing in Celanese and Cabot (exhibits). 2026 will make 100 years that Atlas Cabot has

been here in Pampa," said Anita Gullet, curator of the White Deer Land Museum.

"And then we, along with the people of Lefors, are actually building an exhibit on Lefors being the first county seat and it is a community project."

In addition to the O.M. Franklin, Celanese, Cabot, railroad and Lefors exhibits, the museum will also see the grand open-

ing of the Red River War wing and a B&G Electric exhibit.

"August 24, we're having Dr. Michael Jordan from Texas Tech here doing a lecture on ledger art. He focuses on Kiowa, Comanche and Cheyenne ledger art," Gullet shared.

"On August 27th and 28th, we're going to be doing tours of the Red River War battle sites. November 8 will be the

grand opening of the Red River War Wing—there will be a banquet and a big opening that will also bring in lectures, food and a lot of fun to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Red River war."

"We also have our summer camps coming up, and our summer camps are three days long. It's where we do art and history, and it's a lot of fun. We usually have 25 to 30 kids, and we do two different series so that we don't miss anybody in Pampa if they want to go. So we do one set in June (10-12) and one set in July (8-10)."

Museum Archivist Della Moyer has been on the board of White Deer Land museum on and off for decades. She explained some of the ins and outs of collecting, organizing, preserving and displaying the information collected over the years.

"We research as much as we can," Moyer began.

"It's not just scanning it and putting it out there. Our goal is to have something for people to come look at on the computer instead of the more fragile archives."

Documents, photographs, newspaper clippings and more are scanned and organized into a spreadsheet. For the more fragile documents, Moyer utilizes her camera. To identify people and events in photographs, Moyer utilizes social media groups and spends a lot of time "chasing rabbits" online.

These digitized documents and organization help to shine light on family histories and contribute to information displayed on storyboards within the museum, most of which Moyer put together herself.

"I worked for an attorney for 14 years. Research and organization was what I spent most of my time doing. That was back before social media— you

had to be very original in your search parameters to find out what you need to know about people or events," Moyer said.

This skill has helped Moyer to refine the archives while digitizing—especially on days that boxes of documents are brought in for her to organize. These documents can range from family photos to receipts to building plans to estate sale items and more.

"A few weeks ago, (a Pampa local) brought in 30 years worth of files on his recovery efforts for the swamp ghost in Papua New Guinea. It had photographs, had articles, magazines and the contracts they had drawn up. His wife had, thank goodness, organized it all so well, and we went in and digitized it," Moyer shared.

"We have people that have found things in estate sales that they may bring in. We scan those in and put as much information as we can with them."

"Anything that pertains to Gray County, we like to at least see. Sometimes we just scan items in and give them back to (the people that brought them in) because our archive storage is limited."

In addition to the wide range of topics of information the museum may take in, Moyer also navigates around poor storage and preserving practices.

"We try to make what we scan as legible as possible. Staples, glue and tape are not your friends in archiving. Paper clips—anything metals rusts. Tape loses its 'sticky' and leaves a residue. It can be difficult to scan items with backing on them," Moyer explained.

While she explains that it can be difficult to archive documents such as this, she emphasized the need to continue to print physical copies of photos

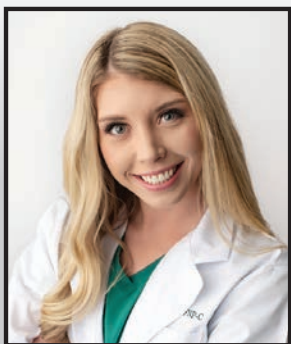
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Woody

Continued From Page 4-RH

But with the outpouring of love and support from the community and from folks all around the world, the spirit of Woody Guth-

rie is still live and well in Pampa.

Visit the Woody Guthrie Folk Music Center at 320 S. Cuyler Tuesday through Friday from 10 AM to 5 PM and join in on the jam sessions on Fridays from 6 PM to 8:30 PM.



Freedom Museum USA: A Legacy of Service and Sacrifice



that I have the complete history of," she says with pride. The helicopter's story is one of heroism and tragedy, as "all the flight crew was lost" during a rescue attempt in a storm. The helicopter itself crashed into the ocean and remarkably washed ashore in Kodiak, Alaska. After being recovered and refurbished, it continued its service, playing a role in various missions, including drug interdiction, hurricane monitoring, and rescue operations. "It worked Hurricane Katrina," Moyer adds, underscoring the aircraft's long service history.

that the legacy of those who served is not only remembered but also felt deeply by all who visit. It's a place where history is preserved, honored, and continues to inspire.

As Howell recounts his first encounter with the museum, it's clear that the institution is more than a collection of artifacts—it's a community. "The first Memorial Day I had up here at the VFW, we all came up here and they opened up the museum. This was the first time I'd been in even though I'd lived in Pampa since '79," he shares. His deep connection to the museum and its mission is evident as he speaks about his role: "I've been here at the museum pretty close about 10 years now."

For Moyer, the helicopter is not just an exhibit; it's a narrative of progress and resilience. "It's my favorite because it's got this fabulous story," she declares. The helicopter, known as the fallen heroes aircraft, is a tangible reminder of the sacrifices made by service members and the ongoing efforts to honor their memory.

The Freedom Museum USA stands as a chronicle of bravery and resilience, a place where the stories of those who served in conflicts from World War One to Vietnam and beyond are told with reverence and pride. It's a place where visitors can come to understand the sacrifices made for freedom and the enduring spirit of the American soldier.

The museum's ongoing exhibits, such as the one commemorating the 50th anniversary of Vietnam, remain a permanent fixture, reflecting the personal connections of the board members, many of whom are Vietnam veterans. Howell's stories contribute to the rich tapestry of the museum's narrative, ensuring that the legends and truths of those who served are preserved for future generations.

Among the museum's many exhibits, the Coast Guard helicopter holds a special place for Moyer. "Then we have the Coast Guard helicopter out front



By MIRANDA ELLIS
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In Pampa, Texas, the Freedom Museum USA stands as a proud guardian of military history, honoring the service and sacrifice of those across all branches. "It covers all branches of the military, which is unusual," says Della Moyer, who has been deeply involved with the museum for nearly two decades.

The museum's home is a building steeped in history, originally serving as Pampa's first water pump station. "It was built in the first Pampa water pump station," Moyer recalls, emphasizing the transformation from a municipal facility to a sanctuary of valor. The city's support is evident, as it leases the building to the museum for a nominal \$10 a year.

The collection within the Freedom Museum is

a testament to the community's commitment to preserving history. "One of our board members has a friend who goes through abandoned containers and storage units," Moyer shares, revealing the unexpected sources of the museum's artifacts. This dedication to discovery has unearthed treasures like "two large boxes and there were two photo albums from a naval vessel during World War One."

The museum also serves as a living tribute to the Pampa Army Air Field, with Moyer's personal connection adding depth to its story. "There used to be an airbase here," she says, noting that her father "brought the first troop train in for the airbase out there." The museum was born from the collective efforts of those connected to the airbase, who established it as a tribute to

their shared history.

Ronnie (RJ) Howell, the museum's sole employee, a veteran, and initially a volunteer, reflects on his path to becoming involved with the museum. "What got me involved with the museum was badgering," Howell chuckles. His service in the army from '68 to '71, including time in Vietnam, left him with wounds that cut his military career short, yet his dedication to serving veterans and preserving their stories continued. "Because I joined (the VFW in Pampa), I got involved with the museum here," he explains.

"I enjoy being here at the museum, especially when people come in and ask me questions," Howell states. His ability to weave tales from fragments of memory and history adds a rich layer to the museum's narrative. "That's how you

tell stories, and that's how legends get built you see," he muses.

The museum's ongoing exhibits, such as the one commemorating the 50th anniversary of Vietnam, remain a permanent fixture, reflecting the personal connections of the board members, many of whom are Vietnam veterans. Howell's stories contribute to the rich tapestry of the museum's narrative, ensuring that the legends and truths of those who served are preserved for future generations.

Among the museum's many exhibits, the Coast Guard helicopter holds a special place for Moyer. "Then we have the Coast Guard helicopter out front

WDLM

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and other documents. "All of us are bad about not writing on the back of photographs. Cell phone cameras and digital photography are probably the biggest enemies of historical preservation, because people don't do anything with them. They just store it on their phone, then they get a new phone and their baby pictures are gone, school programs are gone. People need to print," she stresses. "When a loved one passes away, one of the biggest healing things we do and don't think about, is we go through the old

photographs. It gives us a chance to relive the good times and gives us an opportunity to teach our kids the family history and walk through our grief." While Moyer's passion for history is displayed on many of the walls of White Deer Land Museum, she hopes to see a passion for history spark within the younger generations.

"I grew up here, I love the history. What I do is try to document it for people 400 years from now, which I'm afraid people won't care. The interest in history is lacking in the younger generations. That's why we like to do the WOW kids. All three museums in town are in the WOW program. You

get the kids in the museum and you teach them about history, and you make it fun and they want to learn and just maybe out of all of those kids, you may have one that history will become a passion."

"It's fun to see the family history, the connections- and you'd be surprised who's related to who. I've gone on a lot of rabbit hunts and I've helped a lot of people put their family history together- It's important to me, and I hope it benefits somebody else." To contact the White Deer Land Museum about its upcoming events, exhibits and summer camps, you can e-mail anita.gullett@graycch.com or call 806-669-8041.

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PRO MAN



Bear Creek Farms: Hydroponic Pioneers of Pampa

By MIRANDA ELLIS
editor@thepampanews.com

Bear Creek Farms stands as a beacon of agricultural innovation in Pampa, Texas. Established in 2016 by the Frogge family, the farm has quickly become renowned for its high-quality, hydroponically-grown produce, setting a standard for sustainable farming in the region.

Tony and Cindy Frogge, along with their son Ryan, embarked on their hydroponic journey out of necessity and curiosity in 2016. The soil in their backyard proved challenging for traditional gardening, prompting a shift to hydroponic methods. "After having little success trying to grow plants

in the soil in our backyard," Tony Frogge said, "we decided to start growing our tomatoes hydroponically at the suggestion of our son." This pivotal decision led to remarkable results, with their first greenhouse yielding tomato stalks that soared to impressive heights. "Typically, in the ground, you may see indeterminate plants grow to around six or seven feet tall," Ryan noted, contrasting this with their own plants that reached up to 25 feet.

As demand for their tomatoes surged, the Frogges expanded their operation. "We started selling our tomatoes in a tent on the corner over there," Tony recalled, pointing

to a spot in their parking lot where they would sell out quickly each morning. The success prompted the construction of a first and then second, more durable greenhouse. "The new models are made from which have held their structures better against the Texas Panhandle winds," Tony explained.

The farm's commitment to organic produce is unwavering. "These will be herbicide-free, pesticide-free. There won't be any chemicals on them," Tony assured, reflecting their dedication to providing the purest produce. In the 2023 season, Bear Creek Farms offered a variety of vegetables, including lettuces, bell peppers, ja-



lapenos, and strawberries, alongside their renowned tomatoes.

Ryan spoke about the farm's continuous experimentation to refine their offerings. "We probably went through 50-60 varieties of slicer tomatoes [before landing on the stevia variety]," he shared, revealing the careful selection process to find the perfect tomato. The farm's innovative spirit is evident in their willingness to explore and adapt, always striving to offer the best to their customers.

Despite the challenges posed by the weather, Bear Creek Farms' greenhouses stood resilient. "We had a few holes over here on this end [of the greenhouse], but other than that, the plants didn't have any damage done to them," Tony said in a previous interview with The Pampa News, recounting the region's hailstorms in the respective years they occurred.

Looking forward, the Frogges are optimistic



about the future. As Bear Creek Farms prepares for the 2024 season, they remain a cornerstone of the Pampa Farmer's Market, a testament to the Frogge family's hard work and the town's support.

With over 3,600 square feet of grow space and a production of around 6,000 pounds of tomatoes per season, Bear Creek Farms stands as a model

of efficiency and sustainability. Their hydroponic system not only conserves water but also ensures that each plant receives precise care.

Pampa's hydroponic source for organic vegetables, Bear Creek Farms, is located at 600 S. Ballard in Pampa. Follow them on Facebook to stay up-to-date about their 2024 season.



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