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JANUARY 2021

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New Food Publication Coming February 1st to East Texas!

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Around the Town Publisher, David Stallings, recently announced the start-up of a new publication titled *RECIPES from Around the Town and Beyond*. The monthly paper will be distributed on the first day of each month beginning on February 1st and will feature favorite recipes and the stories behind many of them from readers, restaurants, cookbooks, schools, churches, social clubs and Mr. Stallings' celebrity friends.

"We're looking forward to presenting this fun new publication. It seems that everyone has a favorite recipe and we want to include and share them with our readers. We feel that readers will want to save each issue and we're anxious to hear from those who prepare the recipes," Stallings said.

Please send recipes, photographs and stories to AroundTheTown@mail.com. Please also include your phone number so that we may call you for any clarifications. For more information, please phone 936.554.5822.



Around the Town Publisher, *David Stallings* (center), pictured with his friends, *The Oak Ridge Boys*. L-R: *William Lee Golden, Joe Bonsall, Duane Allen and Richard Sterban*. The Oaks were guests on a TV series that Stallings produced, titled *Nashville Country Cookin'* and their favorite recipes will be featured in the first edition of the new publication.



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by Terri Lacher
talacher@sbcglobal.net

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As one of the leading auto repair shops in the East Texas area, the automotive repair and mechanic services at Boatman Tire and Service are done by well trained and qualified mechanics, trained to work on a variety of makes and models of automobiles. In addition to automotive servicing, their representatives are skilled in helping you find the right wheels and rims for your vehicle, as well as finding the right tires from a selection from Goodyear, Cooper and Sailun.

Boatman Tire and Service is located at 315 N. University, Nacogdoches, Texas 75961, open Monday through Friday, 7:30 am to 5:00 pm, and Saturdays, from 8:00 am to 12:00 noon. You may reach them at (936) 564-8339. You may also visit their web page at boatmantireandservice.com or visit their Facebook page at Boatman Tire and Service.



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Our Pledge . . .

Around the Town and its publishers seek to provide the people of this area with news and information about the current events and happenings in the categories of dining, entertainment, sports and the arts, while providing a venue for retail and commercial establishments, as well as local artisans and non-profit and service organizations to present themselves to the public. We also strive to feature some of the rich history and culture this area is particularly known for.

Texas in 2021

by Tweed Scott

No one will dispute 2020 has been the most unsettling and bizarre year we have ever experienced in our lives. Just when you figured out how to navigate these strange times something else would raise its ugly head and change most of the rules again. You and I will be happy when we can put “the year that was” behind us.

Even as we sweep out the old and bring in the new year, what does that look like for Texas? Let me start out by saying, thank goodness we are Texans! We are uniquely built to deal with the “come what may” mind-set. I’m sure there will still be plenty to carry over from 2020 too. As Texans, we will look forward to the new year as a new starting point, a new beginning. For sure, the new year will come with its own share of issues both new and some leftovers from 2020. We can agree, much of it will be uncharted territory we will have to traverse, but take heart.



You can handle this, and will handle it, because you are a Texan. Think about it. You already possess everything it takes to be successful in facing any challenge.

It already comes “built in.” It is an intrinsic part of you. I have long believed that Texans, through their hard-earned history, were born with an extra gene or something. I call it the T-Chromosome. It’s that something in you that makes you believe you can do anything you set your mind to. Quitting or failure is not an option. It culminates in that “Can Do” attitude that’s deeply ingrained in your mind-set. It’s a part of who you are. One thing that is abundantly obvious is that Texans are “How” thinkers and not “If” thinkers. IF never enters in the decision tree. There is always a way to the solution.

With that comes a steely determination. There is a “No is NOT an option” approach to virtually any problem you encounter. I love that. There are countless stories throughout Texas history of people who tried and failed and then got back up, dusted themselves off and said, “Well heck, that didn’t work. Now, how do we make it happen?” They try again and again, if necessary. For me, that is at the root of the Texas Attitude! That “Can Do” thing. I Love and embrace all that. It is so positive. Positivity. We are going to need lots of that in the weeks & months ahead.

So, bring on 2021. Be open to changes, but never give up on you. You are who you are with your unique skills and approaches to navigating life. Be true to you, your family, and friends. In the early days of the pandemic, we were told that we are all in this together. It’s true. Although it may not have been a choice of our own making, it is our reality.

Liz Carpenter, Lady Bird Johnson’s Press Secretary & Chief of Staff once told me, “When you look back at Texas history, Texans were a needy people. Needy in the sense that they needed each other to survive in those conditions.” Our lives today, in that sense, are not much different than our ancestors.

As Texans we may be fiercely individual, but we are at our best when we work together. 2021 is going to be like the countless number of times we have had to deal with adversity in the past. We will still be dealing with the virus for a while, then there is the vaccines roll-out to deal with too. We will still find ways to keep up with friends and family.

It doesn’t appear that we will get our old normal back. So being Texans, we’ll do what we’ve always done. We will create our own normal and it will be good. God & Texas! So long as we have those two things, we’ll find our way and we will make it work for us. Happy New Year!

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Left to right: Jo Beth Maraist, Sharon Bradberry, Chair Renovation Committee, Kathryn Robertson, Betty Shinn, Federation of Womens Club President

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News from the Nacogdoches County Attorney's Office



John Fleming
Nacogdoches County Attorney

Across Texas, No Jury Trials Create Backlog of Criminal Cases

Like many, our office is excited to usher in a new year. While 2020 has been unforgettable, we wouldn't mind forgetting some of it. It will be hard to forget, however, given the backlog of cases that waits on the other side of the pandemic.

One of the challenges that the criminal justice system will face in 2021 and beyond is the backlog of cases created by the pandemic. Across the country, many cases that would normally be heard, pled or tried have been delayed. The cases have been delayed due to concerns about spreading the coronavirus. In most States, if not all, orders from a variety of governing bodies have restricted or banned in-person court proceedings. In Texas, for instance, the Supreme Court of Texas issued its Twenty-Ninth Emergency Order Regarding the COVID-19 State of Disaster on November 11, 2020, stating in part: "Courts must not conduct in-person proceedings contrary to the Guidance for All Court Proceedings During COVID-19 Pandemic issued by the Office of Court Administration." Judges are not permitted to hold in-person proceedings in any matter, much less a jury trial, unless the trial judge has used all reasonable efforts to conduct the proceeding remotely (videoconferencing). In order to have a jury trial, a court must obtain prior approval for that jury proceeding from the local administrative district judge and Regional Presiding Judge.

A jury trial is considered to be a bedrock right within our criminal justice system - the right to have a jury of peers decide if one is guilty or not guilty of a crime. If a criminal defendant requests a jury trial, his right to such must be protected. He can't be made to waive or give up that right. The threat of a jury trial keeps the criminal justice system moving - and without that threat, it creates a backlog. The pandemic removed the threat of a jury trial for all intents and purposes. In counties all across Texas, colleagues share that they have a backlog of cases because the catalyst for resolving cases, a jury trial, is absent from the system.

While there has been an hiatus in jury trials since March, 2020, there will be a reckoning. And that's where the public can help. Once jury trials are permitted, there will be many opportunities to serve on a jury. While some groan at the privilege, the public will be needed more than ever to resolve disputes and deliver verdicts. For those who say they've never been selected for a jury, that may change as I anticipate more jury trials in the first year post pandemic than we've had in the last two to three years combined. A robust effort will need to be made by the criminal justice system to manage the backlog. It will be the public, however, from which juries are chosen, that will play the most vital role in restoring balance within our dockets. Their participation will be required to keep the criminal justice system moving forward — even if at the pace of a pandemic.

Here's to hoping each of you has a blessed 2021.

Feel free to contact the Nacogdoches County Attorney's Office at 936 560 7789 or jfleming@co.nacogdoches.tx.us should you need their assistance.

John Fleming
Nacogdoches County Attorney
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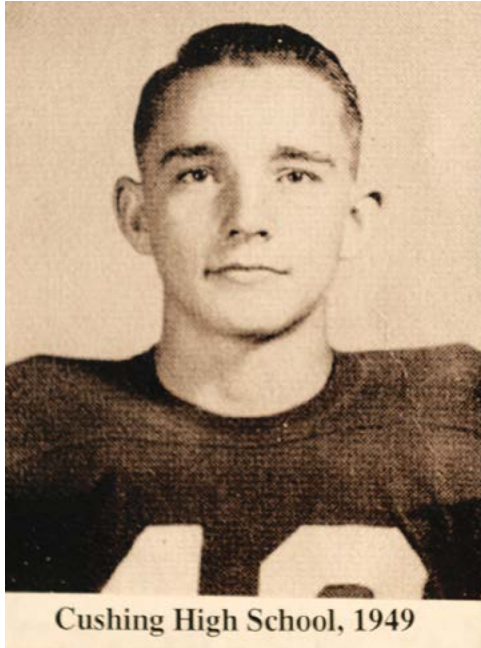
"So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets."
Matthew 7:12

Former Heisman Trophy Runner-up Grew Up Right Here in Sacul, Texas

Submitted by Bob Sitton, CHS '56

The 2020 College Football season is in the books and the 2020 winner of the Heisman Trophy, the most prestigious award in college football has been named.

In 1955 Howard "Hopalong" Cassidy of Ohio State was the winner. Dr Jim Swink who was born in Sacul, Texas in 1936 was the Runner-Up. He attended Sacul School thru the 8th grade and transferred to Cushing in 1949 for his Freshman year. He played football, basketball and baseball for the Bearkats. Due to family illness he transferred to Rusk and became a great player for the Rusk Eagles. In 1953 he was chosen the Outstanding Player in the Texas High School Coaches All-Star Basketball Game.



Cushing High School, 1949

Jim went to Texas Christian University to play football for the Horned Frogs. In 1955 he averaged 123 yards a game and had an 8.2 per carry, a record that still stands. He and the Horned Frogs won Cotton Bowl games in 1955 & '56. In the



Texas Christian University, 1955

May 20, 2002 Dallas Morning News Sports page Frank Luksa, sports writer for the News, described the greatest run he had ever seen, it was a 62 yard run against the University of Texas in 1955. He said, "I never saw Swink run thru the line, but he would appear amid a startled Longhorn secondary and would

fake tacklers off their feet." That day he ran for 235 yards and 4 T D's. Jim was a 2-time All-American and, Academic All-American. He played one year with the Dallas Texans.

In 1955 he was Captain of the team and winner of the National Sportsmanship Award. He was elected to the Texas Sports Hall of Fame in 1977. In 1980 he was elected to the ABC Television Silver Anniversary team. In 1989 he became a Charter member of the NCAA Academic Hall of Fame. He was inducted into the Cotton Bowl Hall of Fame and recipient of the Doak Walker Award in 2005.

Jim was most proud of his academic accomplishments and credited his teachers and coaches at Sacul, Cushing, Rusk and TCU for his success. After retiring from his medical practice in Ft Worth, he and wife Jeannie retired back to Rusk. He passed away in 2014.

His 5 sisters and brother graduated from Cushing. Vera, Rose Mary,



Texas Christian University, 1955

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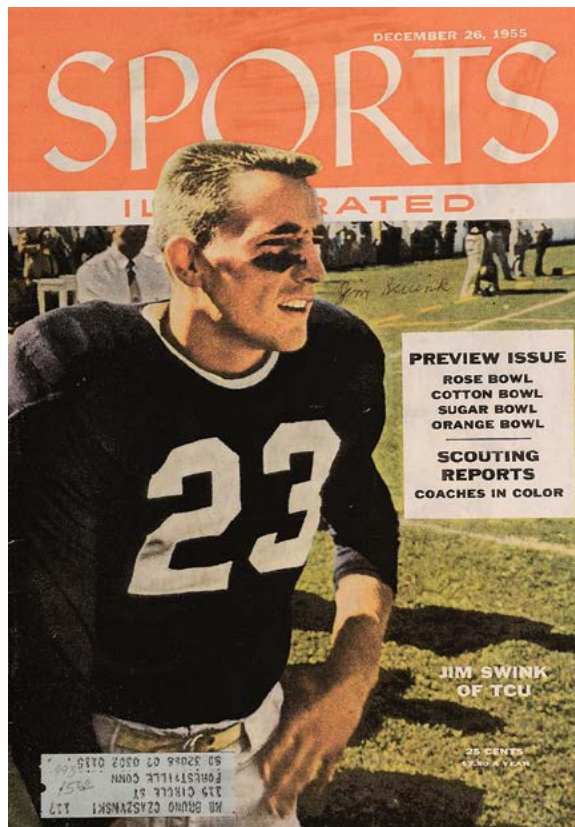
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Mary Ethel, Wilene, Ann, and Joe. Joe was recruited to play for the Horn Frogs, but chose the Air Force. Sacul, Cushing and Rusk are very proud of the Swink Family and their accomplishments in both the classroom and in athletics.

More of the story . . . The Rusk Eagles now play their home games in Jim Swink Stadium. They are coached by Athletic Director and Head Football Coach Thomas Sitton, a former Cushing Bearkat and 4-year Lumberjack Letterman. Thomas coached the Chapel Hill Bulldogs to two 3-A State Finals in Cowboy Stadium. They lost to Henderson in 2010 and in 2011 went No. 1 from start to finish, posting a 15-0 record and a 20-19 victory in the Finals.



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Life Under The Juniper Tree

“REED ALL ABOUT IT!”
by Dr. Allen Reed

“It is enough! Now, Lord, take my life, for I am no better than my fathers!”
(1 Kings 19:4 NKJV)

Depression is the common cold of our emotions. Eventually it touches everyone. A classic example of a depressed person in the Bible is the prophet Elijah. He became so discouraged at one point in his life that he ran away, sat down under a juniper tree and asked God to let him die. “I’ve had it, Lord,” he said. “Take my life for I am no better than my fathers!” (1 Kings 19:4 NKJV). Elijah was having a pity party.

Elijah’s depression wasn’t bound up in any one cause. Rather, it stemmed from a number of things. There were at least four causes of his depression as revealed in (1 Kings 19): fear (v. 3), failure (v. 4), fatigue (v. 5), and futility (v. 10).

Fortunately, we don’t have to be the helpless victims of our emotions. We can bounce back from depression to live useful lives. Here are four suggestions taken from the experience of Elijah for our consideration in dealing with depression.

First, Take Time Off. Elijah took some time off so he could get physically and emotionally rejuvenated. He had been so busy taking care of others he had neglected his own needs. No one can run full throttle all the time. We need to slow down to an idle occasionally.

Second, Let It All Out. Elijah talked through his frustrations with God. Talking is one of the best ways to rid ourselves of harmful emotions. When we talk, it is like pulling the plug out of the bathtub. All sorts of bad feelings are drained from us. You can talk to others, but don’t forget to talk to God. Say what you want to God, He can take it. God will not condemn you as you pour out your hurts.

Third, Get Life Back in Perspective. Depressed people often feel alone. They often focus on the negative. Many times they arrive at the wrong conclusions. Elijah thought he was more important than he really was. He thought everything depended on him. If God’s work depends solely on you and me, God is in serious trouble.

Fourth, Get Back in the Mainstream. The time for complaints and self-pity came to end. Elijah needed to get back to work. With us, as it was with Elijah, the best way to quit feeling sorry for ourselves is to start feeling sorry for someone else.

Elijah whipped his depression and went on to a lifetime of useful service. So can you.

A LITTLE HUMOR: Still thinking you’re having a bad day? The average cost of rehabilitating a seal after the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska was \$80,000. At a special ceremony, two of the most expensively saved animals were being released back into the wild amid cheers and applause from onlookers. A minute later, in full view, a killer whale ate them both.

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Keeping a Christmas Spirit All Year

It was Christmas Eve, 2012. Joe pulled into a truck stop in Council Bluffs, IA. It was cold, and as Joe scanned the parking lot, he spotted a vehicle with a family inside, trying to stay warm.

It didn't take long for Joe to realize the family had no place to stay, no food to eat and the children had no Christmas presents. He approached the vehicle and struck up a conversation. He took the family inside the diner and bought them a meal. He walked next door to the motel and bought them a room for the night and he purchased a few toys from inside the truck stop and gave them to the children. No big deal to Joe.

To the family, Joe was a Christmas angel, but they didn't know that he enjoyed helping people. It all started in the 1990's when he was in the military and his unit gave toys to children at Christmas. They also didn't know that Joe was a TxDOT maintenance technician there on vacation.

Joe still serves with the maintenance office in Shelby County. And yearly, he continues his acts of kindness. In December, he and his family donated more than 100 new toys to a local organization, and his colleagues placed more than 1,000 toys in drop boxes in East Texas. He hopes to double that number next year.

You have seen Joe and other TxDOT employees like him working alongside the road on a hot August day or in a freezing winter storm. You have probably seen them working to clear the roads after a tornado, a flood or on a hurricane response team. TxDOT men and women just like Joe show kindness outside the scope of their jobs on any given day. They have been known to help stranded motorists, save a life or two from a flood ravaged roadway, and they don't hesitate to jump into action when they come upon a crash. No big thing to any of them. Normal people with lives of their own, yet they are heroes who go above and beyond.

Showing an act of kindness is a worthy effort when you see spirits lifted and smiles spread across the faces of those who have had nothing to smile about. I hope we will all try to keep that Christmas spirit all year, pay it forward and be kind.

Next time you drive through a work zone, think about Joe and his Christmas spirit. My hope is that we can harness it for the whole year. If we do, there will likely never be another homeless family in a truck stop parking lot on Christmas Eve or another child without a Christmas toy.

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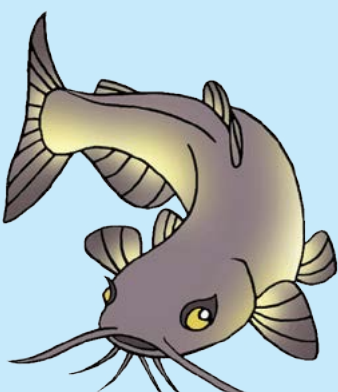
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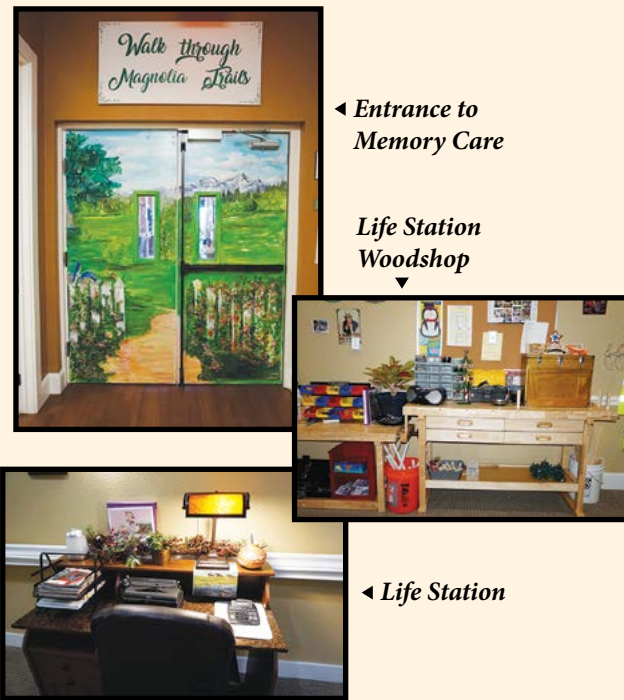
For Seniors coping with Dementia, one of the greatest frustrations is the inability to do those things they once loved. The fact is Seniors with Alzheimer's feel worthless, a once successful businessman or a passionate housewife has nothing to live for as they cannot remember. You and I need a purpose each and every day, these folks are no different. There are stages for this disease and the community has the opportunity to slow the progression down so they don't go inside them self and are ALONE until they die.



We first need to know about their history so I have a special assessment the family and I do together. The family can provide items to assist us with their purpose. There should not be a TV in memory care as that is a babysitter. Physical activity, we also provide activities that stimulate their minds and their hunger for art and music. It's pretty simple as you use the 5 senses and individualize for each resident. It doesn't matter if they finish just get them to a point they feel successful. PURPOSE!

When someone has a memory issue the loved ones need to put a few things into priority. Everyone tries to make the resident come into our world. What needs to happen is we must go into theirs, even if they have a memory of something for a brief moment we need to validate it with them.

Behaviors are not handled properly, we usually try and remove them from the situation instead of finding out what is going on. It is fact there is a reason for every behavior, we must take the time to find out. Seniors with Alzheimer's have a lot of things stored, when things occur including behaviors you need to find out, talk with them and validate either their emotion or a memory that needs to be resolved so they can die in peace.



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Chamber Connection
 by Kelly Augustine
 Executive Vice President,
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Join Us at the Nacogdoches Chamber in January

Operation Thank You! is Jan. 20-22

If reconnecting with customers and making new contacts are goals for the new year, the Nacogdoches Chamber of Commerce is providing a unique opportunity for you to achieve your goals through Operation Thank You! presented by Austin Bank. The annual event involves Chamber directors and event volunteers and Chamber members.

If you are interested in participating in the three-day event that begins on Jan. 20, please call the Chamber at 936-560-5533 for more information. Volunteer responsibilities are fun and flexible! Simply schedule a time to come in to the Chamber, pick up packets containing the 2021 Nacogdoches Guide & Chamber Directory and 2021 Nacogdoches County & City Street Map, and connect with our businesses through delivering the packets. We appreciate the event’s Presenting sponsor Austin Bank and Gold sponsors Excel ER and McWilliams & Son Heating and Air Conditioning for their continued support of Operation Thank You!

New look for Chamber conference calls

On Dec. 8, Chamber President and CEO C. Wayne Mitchell announced that the weekly conference calls would continue in 2021 at the same time, 10 a.m. on Tuesdays. He also dropped some exciting news about some changes to the calls on the horizon. The conference call program was created to distribute information from local, regional, state and federal level leaders in response to the pandemic and its impact on local business operations. In 2021, the audience may see more information shared from our community partners concerning activities in Nacogdoches County in addition to the important pandemic updates. Requests can be submitted to the Chamber to present during the calls. The conference calls will continue to be free-of-charge and open to anyone who would like to join by computer or smart device or by dialing in by phone. The calls will be recorded and posted along with previous call recordings on the Chamber’s YouTube channel. More about each week’s call can be found on the Chamber’s online event calendar at www.Nacogdoches.org.

The Nacogdoches County Chamber of Commerce wish all a Happy and Prosperous New Year!



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Cushing in January

from **Tiffany Duckworth**
mermaid.311@hotmail.com

My sister-in-law sent me a picture of an absurdly large alligator on a little bitty foot bridge, with a meme across it that read, "The Bridge To 2021." It made me chuckle and sent a shiver down my spine all at the same time. So, we shall see.

Cushing seems to be doing good. Business as usual. Kids are going to school. All are local businesses are open. I checked in with the usual suspects.

Jerry Fears told me Santa Renfro and Mrs. Claus made a surprise visit by the 7th Street Café the week before Christmas. There was hot cocoa and a fire out on the patio to keep warm by.

I asked about New Years eve, if there was going to be any parties? If there are, they will be extremely quiet and last minute. Backwoods style! No one is telling me for two reasons. **1.** Fear I will put in the paper. **2.** My husband and I have a reputation as the, "Lame Ducks." Last to show, first to go, if we go at all. So, we don't get a lot of invites. And then there's that tyrant of a name we shall not speak that's kinda raining on everyone's parade.

Jerry did tell me January 1st he will be open and serving up the traditional New Year's Day good luck meal with all the fixins! Corn bread, black eyed peas, cabbage and ham. So, if you want to cover all your bases for 2021, come by and eat up!

I received a sweet Christmas card from my friend David and his wife Fay, at my local neighborhood church in Happy Valley. He is a bass player in the church band. He was telling me that he had been making it by the 7th St. Bluegrass Jamboree in the old Domino Hall. (The 1st and 3rd and occasional, 5th Saturday of the month.)

The word on the street is... It is doing pretty well. Getting quite the turn out. So, I want to encourage everyone to come out. I need to stop by myself. If you play an instrument, bring it. If you cut a rug, bring your dancing shoes. And, while many watch their freedoms being stripped away... (Thank You Jesus for Governor Abbott!) They can't keep our ears from listening. So, mask up, and C'mon!

A quick joke speaking of Church & Texas. This guy who writes for a paper was going around interviewing different churches about how they were dealing with the covid crisis etc.... and he began to notice these Gold Phones. With a sign above them that was more like a price tag, \$10,000.

Supposedly a direct line to God.

He found these phones across America.

When he Got to Texas, he noticed the price changed to .25 cents. He asked the preacher why? The preacher told him, "Son, you're in Texas now. This is God's Country! That's a local call!"

God bless you and Happy New Year!



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Gunsmoke Ridge Handgun Licensing

2020 was a record-setting year for the sales of handguns and ammunition in America. Learning the proper and safe use of these firearms is essential. Texas also requires a License to Carry Permit and Steve Oates at Gunsmoke Ridge in Nacogdoches is a Department of Public Safety certified instructor.

The process includes four hours of classroom instruction followed by a shooting proficiency test conducted in Oates' covered range. The price is a reasonable \$100.00 per person or \$150.00 per couple and classes are available Monday through Saturday. Group rates are also available for employers and other organizations and they may participate as private classes.



The Texas DPS issues the license after all government agencies have approved the application.

In addition to the License to Carry classes, Gunsmoke Ridge now offers a Handgun 101 Class. It is a two hour class which teaches shooting fundamentals such as stance, grip, loading and unloading, handgun safety and maintenance. All graduates of the classes are given free unlimited access for handgun use only to the Gunsmoke Ridge Shooting Range.

For more informaton, please contact Steve at 936.568.0805, email to gsrnac@gmail.com or go see him in persnon at 10632 FM 1878, Nacogdoches, TX 76961.



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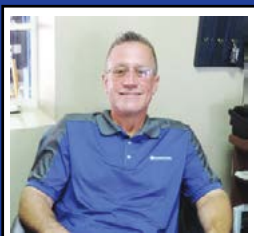
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Ashley Morgan
 CVB Creative Content Director

Happy New Year from the CVB

We won't spend any more time talking about the mess that was 2020. We're moving forward and not looking back! 2021 will be our year. Why? Because the CVB is celebrating 25 years!

Since 1996, the Nacogdoches Convention & Visitors Bureau has been bringing tourists from all over the world to Nacogdoches.

Also known as Visit Nacogdoches, we are a non-profit organization with a mission to bring tourists to Nacogdoches. Tourism is one of the largest contributors to the Nacogdoches economy. Visitors spend money at restaurants, hotels, retail stores & more. The sales tax from tourist spending impacts and shapes the city.

Our organization is known for events like the Wine, Whiskey & Brew tour and Sip & Strolls. While our events look different due to COVID restrictions, that hasn't stopped us from coming up with creative ways to still have fun while social distancing.

The "Nac at Night" drive-in movies at the A.L. Mangham Jr. Regional Airport have been a huge hit. If you haven't made it to one yet, there's still time! We have two more movies scheduled. *Love Actually* will be January 9th, and we'll have a Valentine's Day date night on Friday, February 12th. Movie is to be determined. Stay up to date by going to visitnacogdoches.org/nac-at-night

This Summer we're planning a "Nac at Night: Summer Concert Series" with live music and food trucks at the Airport, where there's plenty of room for attendees to space out.

To end 2021 on a much better note, the CVB is officially taking on the Nine Flags Christmas Festival! We're hoping to revive the spirit that was lost in 2020. Be sure to like and follow Visit Nacogdoches - Nacogdoches CVB on Facebook to be the first to hear about all of our fun events planned.

Happy New Year to all the residents and visitors that make Nacogdoches such a unique place to visit!

Happy New Year
2021



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A Salute to our East Texas

VETERANS



Danny and Shannon Mounger, along with their staff, appreciate and respect the service of all U. S. Military Veterans. The Moungers serve East Texas families in Nacogdoches, Shelby and Polk Counties with care and professionalism. It is their honor to present this monthly feature in *Around the Town*. Should you have a suggestion for a veteran to be featured, please send your name and contact information to AroundTheTown@mail.us.



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A Story of Mercy and Grace - James Arriola



Story and photos by Greg & Cindy Patterson

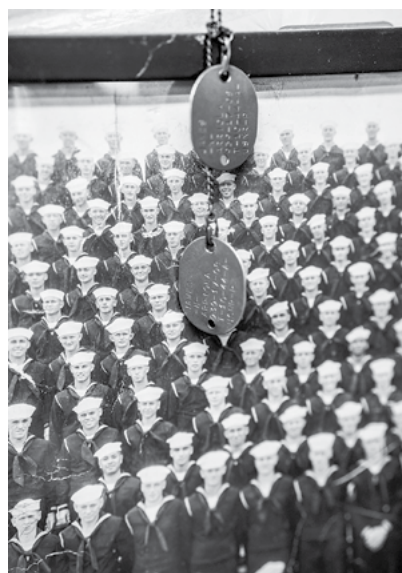
Many might say the fact he's lived 94 years is the reason why he has so many great stories to tell, but James Arriola would beg to differ. Born to a family of ten in Nacogdoches, he appeared during hard times just as the Depression was starting to affect Americans.



Many people know James Arriola as a barber, and rightly so, as he's been cutting hair for the last 72 years! When asked how he's been able to manage all these years, he replied that it's because of his skinny legs, referring to the long hours a barber must stand. Seeing as how quick his mind is and agile his body, you might wonder if barbering is the secret to a good, long life. Aside

from a quadruple bypass in 1997 followed by angioplasty the next year, he's very healthy. In fact, he walks every morning in his neighborhood, a practice he began before even leaving the hospital room at Methodist. Besides the successful surgery, he testifies that God has seen him through many a time as bad or worse than that.

He joined the Navy along with a brother in 1944 at age 18 weighing just 117 lbs. Being told his weight was of no consequence, he was assigned to a small amphibious boat as a Navy machine gunner that traveled from ship to shore delivering supplies and marines. For the next 22 months, he was involved in the last two major offenses of WW II. At the landing on Iwo Jima, he lugged two heavy crates of ammunition on shore to a bunker where he was told to promptly "get back to your ship before you get killed!" He witnessed on this occasion



a higher ranking marine grab two others by the scruff of their necks and maneuver them into battle. Upon reaching the top of the bunker, a mortar landed and exploded. His heart sank witnessing the loss of these three men. While in port a couple months later, he saw one of these men walking down the dock and he yelled to him, "Mendoza, Mendoza! I thought you died back on the beach of Iwo Jima?" Come to find out, and at great relief to Arriola, the mortar didn't fully ignite. The three he thought for sure had died only suffered burns to the chest and were transported away from battle and safely to a hospital.

Though he never fired on anyone, he spoke about two times while in the service that God saved him. One being when he slipped and fell about 40 feet from a ship to dock, landing on pipes which surely could have left him dead or paralyzed. Another occasion was when out at sea in the pitch black of night, he slipped and went overboard. Somehow, though, he managed to grab ahold at the last minute being pulled back into the boat by another sailor.



He talks of God having a plan for his life, and that's why he was rescued. He also says, "I was once a Paul, you know in the Bible...the one that was on the road to Damascus not wanting to believe that there was a God, a creator of all things. That changed in 1966. While lying in bed about midnight, he cried out to God, "If you're real, take this pain in my back away!" Immediately from the top of his head down his back he felt a tingling and in a moment, the pain was gone! He said, "OK God, you're real, but I'm not sure about Heaven." In a moment, he was whisked away from his body.

In trying to describe this, Mr. Arriola had a difficult time but said he saw a throne and around the throne were countless people all smiling, wearing white and with white hair. From behind the throne he heard a voice.

VETERANS

He didn't see the One speaking but heard, "Do you believe now?" Mr. Arriola replied, "Yes Master, I believe!"



He tells of another time while still quite young living on Hampton Rogers' farm west of Nacogdoches past the dam. His family worked for a tenant farmer, the only job in Nacogdoches they could find. A tornado was approaching suddenly, and he was terrified. God showed him in a vision how he should hide behind a well, so that's what he did with the tornado narrowly missing him. Another time he tells that while hunting, he came across a perfect cross made by two sticks. He asked the Lord, "What does this mean?" God was preparing him for the death of his first wife

of 45 years. It happened two days later.

In 1936, his family's crop failed, at which time his grandfather moved them closer to him to farm, but things got worse. At 11 years old, young James suggested to his parents they work for themselves, because he was getting tired of seeing the people they worked for having nice clothes and shoes when they hardly had enough to eat. That very day, Jack Johnson asked them to come and farm in Eden (later, James would name the road Seed Tick.) They had plenty of hardtack, two hogs, even a cow. They'd also attend school. They brought in 20 bushels of corn, and with what else was provided, were able to make a better living for themselves. He explains simply, "All my life, I've been old." I take this to mean wise, because as he explains, his mother, the drill sergeant of the family, would often send him to this neighbor or that neighbor for things their family needed. I imagine he had a way about him that was very likable. In the year 1943, JT Johnson took them across the Loco creek to farm; it was then their family began to acquire things money could afford.

There were many other stories he told of his family, as they were very close. A brother of his and sister both still live here in Nacogdoches. I asked him if he had a favorite Bible verse and he said that there are many. The letters from the Apostle Paul are some, but especially Galatians. He enjoys reading about Moses and Job. "I'm currently reading about King Saul, of how he turned his back on God and how God then anointed David to be king."

"George Poskey was my first customer" he said. "I told him so and asked him to come back later that day, that I'd have a gift for him. He enjoyed the bottle of whiskey and told his brother about me. Well his brother got a little upset thinking this barber was great offering a free gift with every haircut!" That first customer as well as his brother continued with Mr. Arriola as their barber! "I have one client that's been coming all 72 years I've been a barber." Loyalty was known and practiced by the "greatest generation."

Repondng to the question about how he got starting barbering, he says it was because he didn't like the haircuts his dad gave them, referring to it as a "bowl" cut. He began his apprenticeship with Jack Hinds in 1948. And, though he's always started his workday at 7:00 bright and early, he now only works til 10 or 11:00 each day. During these hours, his barber pole is spinning. The remainder of his day, he watches his TV shows that include, "The Waltons," "Gunsmoke," and "The Rifleman" among others.



"By grace He saved me and I'm still here to be a witness to Him!" Mr. Arriola exclaims. Standing at just five feet, with a twinkle in his eyes, he proclaims that mercy and grace is from Jesus alone, and while yet a sinner, He died for each of us.

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EAST TEXAS SPORTSMANS CLUB



The East Texas Sportsman's Club (ETSC) is a responsive community of hunters and anglers in the East Texas region who work to protect fish and wildlife while promoting conservation and youth education. Our mission is "to conserve wildlife and wilderness lands, to educate youth and the general pub-

lic, and to promote and protect the rights and interest of hunters."

Meetings are on the third Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. at different locations. For meeting locations and other information, please contact Marsha Findeisen at marsha@ntsamson.com.

The Refuge

"That by two immutable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for REFUGE to lay hold of the hope set before us." (Hebrews 6:18)

Cheryl Brady is a native of El Dorado, Arkansas. Following graduation from college as a ROTC Distinguished Military Graduate (DMG) she went on to serve twenty eight years as a U.S. Army logistics officer, retiring as a Lieutenant Colonel. She and her husband, Donald, were transplanted from Washington State by the hand of the Lord to Nacogdoches in May 2019. They both have grown to love this oldest town in Texas. She is a Bible teacher and loves to encourage folks with the Word of God. She is also a published author and motivational speaker.



**The Bible—
Open It. Read It. Be
Amazed.**

Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures?" *Matthew 21:42*

Biblical illiteracy among Christians who possess a Bible and can read the words written upon its pages is too great to ignore. The year 2020 is now an historical record, both on earth and in heaven. Only one account will record truth. How we start 2021 is not prescriptive of how we will finish. Yet no matter what the Lord allows, as He did in 2020, His Word will be the Christians spiritual anchor for holding steady in the waters of change. One of the spiritual lessons I believe to have risen out of the coronavirus pandemic is the need for greater Bible knowledge.

Therefore, my purpose is to encourage followers of Christ to make reading the Bible a higher priority than ever before. God's people are perishing for lack of knowledge. In order to avoid unnecessary spiritual casualties in the battles ahead, our hearts must be prepared to put on our "battle rattle" (a military term used for donning everything the Army supplied to protect soldiers in battle) and fight. The Holy Spirit is inviting God's people to spiritual bootcamp. Will you accept His invitation? It is upon the Word of God which we must ride the coming waves of persecution. It is by God's word and His Spirit that we will be able to hold the line for truth in the church, our communities, and our great nation.

The Bible is a fascinating book. It is said that the Bible is the bestselling book of all time! The Bible is the Word of God written by inspiration of God (2 Tim 3:16). The Bible offers us truths about God's nature and character, who He is, that we may know Him. The Bible is the truth that sanctifies the believer (John 17:17-19). The Bible is a gift from God, and it reveals the origins of our identity (who and what we are in Adam and who and what we can become by the grace of God in Christ). The Bible is eternal and here is an amazing truth: If this eternal word lives inside of us, then we too have life eternal (1 Pet 1:23).

Do you know the Scriptures and the power of God? Come along on a new spiritual adventure in 2021. Open your Bible and read it. Be continually amazed by your Creator! God uses the Bible to involve born-again believers in a consistent, growing relationship with Himself (Joshua 1:8; Ps 199:11; Heb 4:12). You do not have to be discouraged by the thought of reading alone. Why not start a Books of the Bible reading group or a Bible Read-A-Thon to ignite a love of the Scriptures? Just a thought.

Central Heights... Let It Ring Out!

from Linda Flores
lsuflo@att.net

Happy New Year from our Central Heights community! The new year that we have all been eagerly awaiting since last March. We survived a bewildering, difficult year; but oh, how sweet it is to have a clean slate. We hope that you were on Santa's "good list" and that your time with your loved ones was special. May our communities be especially blessed in this new year.



Touching once more on our Christmas of 2020, I think we can agree that Christmas is a lyrical holiday ranging from the stories and carols of long days past of the birth of our Savior, to the hopes that are linked from that time to our future. Followers of my articles will know that I am a lover and student of the written word. Communication is so much more than verbal conversation. Edgar Allen Poe likens the poetry of words as the rhythmical creation of beauty. I hope you will read, enjoy the beauty of the words and take to heart the below poem by Alfred, Lord Tennyson, as the welcoming in of our new year and hopefully the ringing out of the ills of our world.

"Ring Out, Wild Bells" (from In Memoriam)

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light:
The year is dying in the night;
ring out, wild bells, and let him die...

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
the civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant men and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

— Alfred, Lord Tennyson

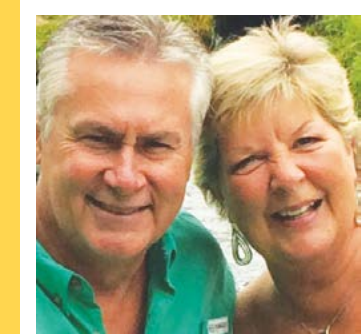
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FIRST RESPONDERS



Danny and Shannon Mounger, along with their staff, appreciate and respect the service of all First Responders. The Moungers serve East Texas families in Nacogdoches, Shelby and Polk Counties with care and professionalism. It is their honor to present this monthly feature in *Around the Town*. Should you have a suggestion for a First Responder to be featured, please send your name and contact information to AroundTheTown@mail.us.

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NPD Officer Jake Taylor



On November 30th 2020 around 3:12 a.m. Officer Jake Taylor, a new officer with the Nacogdoches Police Department, was nine hours into a twelve hour shift and was finally heading to eat. It had been a slow night for officers, but things were about to quickly change.

As Officer Taylor was driving on North Street, he saw what he first thought was fog near an apartment building in the 1800 block of North Street. Officer Taylor slowed down and pulled over to further investigate and quickly realized he was dealing with a life and death fire emergency at the apartment building. Officer Taylor saw smoke and fire coming from an apartment and immediately called for assistance, then began banging on apartment doors trying to wake up residents. Officer Taylor could see people on their balconies trying to escape the smoke and fire.



Other first responders began to arrive and fire personnel began using ladders to rescue people from the balconies. Police and Fire

personnel began forcing entry into apartments to make sure everyone was safely out of the building. Fire Department personnel from Nacogdoches, Lufkin, and Central Heights fought the fire for well over an hour before getting control of it.

Due to Officer Taylor's watchful eye and his and other first responder's quick response, only one person reported minor injuries. Officer Taylor stated, "I feel for the people that lost everything in the fire."

Within hours of the incident the local Red Cross began assisting those residents with any immediate needs. Assistant Chief Dan Taravella with the Nacogdoches Police Department stated, "We are very proud of Officer Taylor's actions. Police officers like Jake Taylor are a great example of the positive impact an officer can have on any given day."



MONUMENT CORNER

This month Monument Corner goes back to Calder (Cotton) Square at the intersection with W. Lufkin Ave. There are two monuments a few feet apart on the south corner in front of the present offices of Junior Achievement of Angelina County and a third across the street. The first monument reads as follows:

KERR'S INC.

REGARDED AS THE OLDEST ANGELINA COUNTY BUSINESS IN CONTINUOUS OPERATION, KERR'S BEGAN IN 1870 AS A GENERAL STORE IN THE EARLY COUNTY SEAT OF HOMER (5 MI. SE). IT WAS STARTED BY CIVIL WAR VETERAN CAPT. JOSEPH KERR (b. 1828), A NATIVE OF SOUTH CAROLINA. THE OPERATION WAS MOVED TO LUFKIN IN THE 1880s, SOON AFTER THE RAILROAD TOWN WAS FOUNDED. AN ACTIVE BUSINESS, CIVIC, AND POLITICAL LEADER, KERR WAS LATER SUCCEEDED IN THE FIRM BY HIS SONS. STARTED IN THE EARLY DAYS OF THE COUNTY AND LATER OPERATED AS A TIN SHOP, KERR'S INC. IS NOW A LEADER IN STEEL FABRICATION.

(1981)

The second monument reads as follows:

SITE OF THE REHEARSAL HALL FOR THE HOO HOO BAND

AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY, A GROUP OF LUFKIN MEN ORGANIZED A TOWN BRASS BAND. IT LATER BECAME KNOWN AS THE HOO HOO BAND AFTER REPRESENTING TEXAS AT A NATIONAL CONVENTION OF THE ORDER OF HOO HOO, AN ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN AND CANADIAN LUMBERMEN. IN ADDITION TO CONCERTS IN NEARBY COTTON (CALDER) SQUARE, THE BAND PERFORMED AT VARIOUS EVENTS AND ALSO DIRECTED SUCH CIVIC PROJECTS AS THE FORMATION OF THE TOWN'S FIRE DEPARTMENT. INACTIVE BY THE 1920s WHEN SCHOOL BANDS BECAME



POPULAR, THE HOO HOO BAND REMAINS A SYMBOL OF LUFKIN'S EARLY CIVIC PRIDE AND QUALITY OF LIFE.

(1982)

(Both markers were erected by the Texas Historical Commission.)

The third monument across the street reads as follows:

CALDER (COTTON) SQUARE

CITY'S HUB, 1882-EARLY 1900s, TEEMING WITH COTTON BUYING, HORSE TRADES, BAND CONCERTS, POLITICAL RALLIES, SWITCHING RAILROAD TRAINS. SITE OF FIRE STATION, STANDPIPE, 1933 MEMORIAL LIBRARY NAMED FOR LUMBERMEN J. H. KURTH (1857-1930), SQUARE WAS RENAMED 1961 FOR KURTH FAMILY FRIEND, LOUIS CALDER (1879-1963) OF NEW YORK.

(1972)



(Marker was erected by the State Historical Survey Committee.)

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Angela's Monthly Recipe

Peanut Brittle

Angela Bradford is the owner/ operator of Appleby Sand Mercantile Café in Nacogdoches.

- Ingredients:**
- 1 cup raw red-skinned peanuts
 - 1/2 cup Karo syrup
 - 1 cup sugar
 - 1 tsp. baking soda



Preparation:

In a large skillet cook peanuts, sugar and syrup until syrup turns a light brown. Stir constantly. Add baking soda and stir rapidly to blend. Pour onto ungreased cookie sheet and allow to cool completely before breaking apart.

Recipe courtesy of Angela Bradford's Appleby Sand Mercantile Cafe' Cookbook. You may purchase the book at the cafe', located at 6530 FM 2609, Nacogdoches, TX 75965. Phone Angela for more info @ 936.559.515



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Rhonda Oaks

Finding Resolution

Not in anyone's wildest dreams did we have any inkling of what 2020 would hold when many of us made our resolutions in December 2019. And for most of us, every one of those resolutions were broken somewhere around June after being homebound for weeks. No restaurants open to enjoy dining out, no bars where we could enjoy raising a glass with friends and most of our small

business owners were suffering. We all were. Many of us suffered great loss in 2020. Loss that changes lives.

So, it's no wonder that as we look to a new decade, that we want to anticipate good things ahead. We want to make changes and resolutions that will really work. Many of us want a fresh start. Maybe living through the time of a COVID-19 pandemic has given you new perspectives in the way you resolve to live in the future.

Now last year, I had already jacked up all my new year's resolutions. I had eaten at Whataburger at least once, skipped the gym and probably had more than one glass of wine after dinner. I meant well when I made all three resolutions – to abstain from junk food, exercise more and have only one glass of wine in the evenings. I've done better on the third than the first two. But with the restraints we have all been forced to live under during most of 2020, it is a mighty wonder. After being home for months with little to no travel, I discovered I prefer good ole' East Texas sweet tea.

I think we can all take comfort in knowing that we are not the only generation to go through a pandemic or other hardships that life can present. Our streets have been filled with those who were caught up in wars, suffered through the Great Depression, didn't know where the next meal was coming from, lost businesses, jobs and loved ones. Times were bleak for many of them and they probably didn't think they had any reason to look ahead to a new year with hope. But they did, and they made it. We will too.

Don't be afraid to set resolutions with confidence and excitement. We can look back over the last century and call the names of many who made history in East Texas. Those who looked ahead and made it through the worst of times to realize the best of times as they worked together with our own ancestors to build the most unique and beautiful part of Texas.

So, raise your glass of sweet tea, East Texas. 2021 is here and we are going to make it.

Hi David,
Thank you and your wonderful staff for the great article in the paper! I really appreciate the way you look after our town in many different capacities. **Around the Town** has really become quite a popular newspaper in a time when print hasn't been as effective a means of advertisement as it was years ago. You have done a great job with the articles and local stories that people want to read.

Keep up the good work ol' buddy and again, thank you so much.

Jason Gound

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In the Loop... Expo Center in Lufkin

with **Burt Hairgrove**
Executive Director,
George H. Henderson, Jr. Expo Center
Lufkin, Texas

Hello East Texas,

What a year! We are ready to get 2020 behind us and look forward to a great 2021 season here at the Expo. While we have had to make some major adjustments to our operation, we have been able to adapt nicely. Most of you came out for some of our "social distance friendly" events like Purse Bingo benefiting Harold's House and the Eli Young Band Concert presented by the LCVB. These events were held out in our large, open parking lots with plenty of room for everyone to spread out and still have a great time.

If you haven't been out to the Expo in a while the first thing you will notice in the barns is a compliment of brand new stall panels. We are so proud and excited to be able to offer our exhibitors some great accommodations for their horses. Graham Livestock Systems and the T.L.L. Temple Foundation partnered up with the Expo to provide the new equipment that will last for years to come. The commitment and support the Expo Center receives from this community continues to humble me. Thank you, Lufkin.

Assuming things get somewhat back to normal, the Angelina County Fair and Angelina Benefit Rodeo will be on the event horizon before you know it. Speaking of the Rodeo, I'd like to express our appreciation to the Lufkin Lions Club for their support of this facility. They went over and above the call of duty and service by making a generous donation to the Expo. The donation was made in spite of the fact that, because of COVID, they were unable to host the rodeo in 2020. Even though they were unable to put on one of the biggest fundraisers in this community, they still stood in the gap and helped us cover expenses that we were unable to meet due to COVID cancelled events. Thank you, Lions.

As for helping others, The East Texas Food Bank reached out to us early last year as the effects of COVID shutdowns began to arise in the area. We were more than happy to open the Expo for their regular food distribution efforts. The response has been phenomenal. The number of people that show up to receive food assistance demonstrates the need in the community and showcases the efforts of those who work to meet them. Thank you East Texas Food Bank.

As this goes to press, we are anticipating getting back to normal and scheduling new events, planning for a great 2021!

I look forward to seeing you soon at the Expo!



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Clowning Around

by Neal Murphy

Neal Murphy grew up in the small town of San Augustine, Texas. He and wife Clara have two grown children. Moving back after retiring, now with five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren, he began, as a hobby, writing short stories of humorous things that he observed over the years. He was an ambulance driver in college, worked for two funeral homes, then spent over forty years in the insurance business. He also writes stories of his forty-four years as a state certified police officer working for seven different departments. After living in five different states, he is now retired back in San Augustine and has his stories printed in seven different newspapers, and published five books. He is a graduate of Stephen F. Austin University, and the Insurance Institute of America. He is a Deacon in a Baptist Church and former Sunday School Teacher for many years, as well as Choir Director at several churches. He is also the docent in the 1919 Jail Museum in San Augustine and works three days a week. He was the director of the restoration of the old county records dating back to the 1800s.



Being a deputy sheriff can have its humorous moments, some you can share and others you cannot. A number of years ago I was working security at the Shelby County Rodeo at the rodeo grounds on Highway 7 East. I had arrived early to watch people parking and entering the arena and just to be seen by the public.

I noted a professional rodeo clown getting his props in order when suddenly he approached me. "Hi, officer. I need you to do me a favor." A little stunned by his request I replied, "Sure thing. What do you want me to do?" The clown explained, "I am going to do a skit that requires a police officer to arrest me and lead me out of the arena. Would you do that?" I pondered the request for a few seconds and could not think of any reason I could not help him. "Sure, I'll do that. But, how will I know when to arrest you?" He thought a minute then explained, "Well, sir, I will have my little trick car out there and when you hear me say 'I could get arrested for doing that,' then you come out and do your thing." So, the plan was finalized and the rodeo began.

About what would be half-time at a ballgame, the clown raced out into the arena in his small car, spewing smoke and flames. He went into his skit after he stopped in the middle of the arena. I had asked my partner, Larry, to help me make the arrest, so we were watching for the cue. After performing several stunts with his car, he suddenly pulled out what looked like a sawed-off shotgun and shot it toward the ceiling. It made a loud "bang" and with that he said, "Now you folks know I could get arrested for doing that." Everyone laughed except Larry and me. We ran out in to the arena and grabbed the clown and I put my handcuffs on him. The crowd roared its approval as we escorted him out of the arena. I felt that everything had gone as planned.

The clown shouted at me, "Hey, I didn't mean for you to actually put the handcuffs on me. Get them off me quick." I noted a tinge of panic in his voice. Now he was at my mercy. I patted my pockets and looked at Larry and asked, "Larry, do you have any handcuff keys? I can't find mine." Picking up on the prank, Larry chimed in, "Nope, don't have any with me either." The clown was getting really nervous by now. "Hey, you guys. I am serious. I am claustrophobic. Get these dang things off me in a hurry," he stammered. I noted a few beads of perspiration showing through his makeup. I decided that the joke had gone on long enough.

"Hey, I just found my handcuff key on my key ring," I announced. He thrust his cuffed hands toward me and shouted, "Good, get them off, now!" Extending his agony for a few more minutes, I had to really work the key to get the cuffs to unlock. Finally, his hands were free, free at last. He stopped our laughter by saying, "I have never had handcuffs on before. No one has ever actually done that. It was a terrible feeling." I sort of apologized and we left to resume our security duties.

I thought that the clown had forgiven me for the practical joke on him, but I noted that at the next night's performance he had hired another officer to "arrest" him. So much for my clowning around.

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Brandi Emanis
Executive Director

**Happy New Year from
San Augustine County!**

With the 2020 year finally behind us, the San Augustine County Chamber of Commerce is excited about the New Year! 2021 is finally here!

We are excited about our upcoming events. We are getting geared up for the 2021 Rodeo coming in May. We have so much fun at rodeo time each year. Unfortunately last year we were not able to have the rodeo, but this year we hope to have a rodeo bigger and better than you have seen in a long time. There will be lots of things to see and do at the rodeo; there will be mutton bustin and calf scramble for the kids and clowns to entertain us. There are also bullfighters that risk their lives to save the bull riders, they put on quite the show, and lots more! This coming year we hope to see you there!

Our 2020, 30th annual Sassafras Festival was a HUGE success! We had vendors from all over to help make our festival an awesome one. This year our Bar-B-Que cook-off was sanctioned. We had 15 Bar-B-Que cook-off contestants and the over-all winner took home \$1,000! A total of \$3,750 in prize money was given out to the contestants who placed 1st-3rd in different divisions. We also had a mechanical bull, bungee jumping, petting zoo, pony ride, costume contest, and much, much more. There were bands playing all day under the pavilion and there was a whole street of fun just for kids! The smell of delicious food was in the air because there was a food vendor on every corner and street! So be sure to get to San Augustine in October 2021 for our 31st annual Sassafras Festival!

To wrap our 2020 year up we held our annual Miss Merry Christmas pageant in the downtown Agus Theatre. We had a total of 23 contestants this year ranging from 0-18 years old. We would like to congratulate our winners of the Miss Merry Christmas pageant; Jayln Mosley-Queen, Autumn McCallum-Duchess, Brookline Barnes-Princess, Molly Higginbotham-Tiny Princess, Mazeli Watson-Little Miss, Kyndee Fuller-Tiny Miss, Sophie Smith-Baby Miss. We would also like to thank our sponsors; Wyman Roberts Funeral Home, Texas Bank & Trust, Splash Kingdom, Bob Evans Equipment, Hardware on the Square, El Potosino, Sweets & Eats, Summit Nursing & Rehabilitation and Sherry Sue's Resale Shop.

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