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DECEMBER 2018



It's Time to Shop East Texas!



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Welcome Angelina County to *Around the Town!*

In addition to Nacogdoches, San Augustine and Shelby Counties, *Around the Town* will be distributed throughout Angelina County each month beginning with this issue.

"We are pleased to announce distribution in Angelina County and are excited about featuring stories of its people, events, businesses and places. I have many friends in the county, having lived there as a child and one year in high school when my father's work required our family to move from Nacogdoches to Lufkin. In fact, I may be the only person to have been a Nacogdoches Dragon AND a Lufkin Panther football player! We're looking forward to meeting and getting to know many new friends in Angelina County."

David Stallings - *Around the Town* Publisher

**Good News *Only* Featured in
*Around The Town***

Santa Is Real

by Brad Maule

Christmas Eve, 1956. That was the year that I absolutely, positively, truly believed with all my heart, mind, and soul that Santa was real. Oh, I had heard the vicious rumors from my four-years-old brother and his sketchy friends, but then they told me so many lies and half-truths about swimming pools and toilet seats and other "things" that they really had no credibility with me anymore...especially not that night, about something I wanted so badly to be true.

Late that afternoon, I rode with my father out into the frosty pasture. He was on his beloved roping horse, Rio, and I was trailing behind on my pony, Jigs, aptly named for his teeth-rattling trot. Normally, I would have begged not to go out into the cold December wind of West Texas, but this was a special ride worth any amount of frost bitten fingers. We were looking for that one special cedar tree straight enough and tall enough to fill the corner by the wagon-wheel-armed couch in our living room. No town-bought Christmas tree for the Maules, plus we couldn't afford such things.

On a steep side of our low rocky hill, we found the perfect four-foot cedar. It had grown out of the side of the hill in a tiny space between the rocks, turned a hard corner in search of the sun, and at exactly that spot where it reached straight toward the winter sky, my father swung his heavy axe several times and freed the ragged tree to come home with us. He tied his rope to the big end, and off



Brad Maule is a two-time Emmy nominated actor now living in beautiful Nacogdoches where he teaches filmmaking for the School of Art and acting for the School of Theatre at Stephen F. Austin State University.

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James Berg, M.D.

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NACOGDOCHES COUNTY

Bring In the Fall At the Fredonia

by Fredonia Marketing

Cool weather has finally made its way to Nacogdoches and just in time for the holiday season! As always, we urge you to shop local to help our neighbors and community out. Here at The Fredonia Hotel we are your one stop shop from food and beverages to lovely stocking stuffers and décor. You can find just about anything in this magical mid-century hotel.



Become mesmerized at the gift shop: The Shop @ The Fredonia Hotel with our iconic Fredonia Hotel logo merchandise that range from mugs, tumblers, fleece jackets and even trendy t-shirts. If you're still having trouble finding that perfect gift, The Fredonia Hotel also offers a wide selection of jewelry and delicate smelling soaps and lotions.

The shop carries the exclusive Uno De 50 brand, a handcrafted, Spanish jewelry line that was once only sold in 100 stores world-wide but now has expanded their reach. For the home décor and food lover we offer the Hester and Cook's line of disposable place mats and table runners perfect for any holiday hosting!

With so many options we understand how hard it can be to pick just one gift but don't fret just yet, The Fredonia Hotel does offer gift cards and gift vouchers for the overwhelmed shopper. Gift cards that can be used at our Nine Flags bar, Shop at Fredonia, 1st City Café or Republic Steakhouse can be purchased at the gift shop - hours include Monday thru Thursday 10 AM to 6 PM, Friday thru Saturday 8 AM to 6 PM and Sunday 8 AM to 6 PM. Gift certificates for rooms can be purchased at the front desk - available 24/7.

After your shopping adventures make your way to the 1st City Café for a delicious warm meal to finish off your day. The Café even offers hot chocolate and weekly specialty lemonades - ask your server for more details. Don't forget to reserve your spots for "Pancakes with Santa" happening December 1st. Reservations can be made through the front desk. For more details call: (936) 564-1234. Happy holidays from The Fredonia family!

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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.

Come Home for the Holidays



2018

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SANTA

we headed for the house dragging the precious cargo behind us. Our horses, half spooked by the scratchy green thing on the rope, headed more for the barn.

The house was warm and full of good smells as everyone pulled the cedar inside. A box of old ornaments and lights was already waiting for us. At first glance, the tree did not look near as beautiful as it had growing out of the side of that grey, windy hill. It only had a few branches, and was nowhere near symmetrical. In fact, that tree was at best crooked and we had pulled most of the green off it on the ride home. It was almost scary looking. I hesitated for just a moment, but my mother said, "Just you wait! This will be the best Christmas tree ever!"

Cotton, pulled and flattened from our field was laid like a blanket of snow around the bottom. Even my disbelieving brother and my kind hearted older sisters were drawn into the sudden celebration inside our plain house. Together we all strung fresh cranberries and popcorn on sewing thread and draped it around and around the sparse limbs.

It was getting dark by the time we had finished hanging the lights and ornaments. My mother turned off the yellow light of the living room. In the dark, my brother plugged in the flame shaped lights. The room suddenly filled with red, green, and blue circles of color. Reflections bounced back and forth on the walls, both from ornaments and memories. My father sat silent in his chair. My sisters stood leaning in through the kitchen door. My mother held a cup towel up and wiped the water from her eyes. I was overcome by the strange colored light in the room and feelings I had not ever felt, or at least not recognized in my short five years of life. Not before, and not since, have I seen a more beautiful sight.

That night, at my very reluctant bedtime, I left a plate of cookies and a glass of milk on the cotton snow beneath that shining tree. The next morning, half a cookie and a near empty glass of milk sat alongside an orange Tonka Toy Road Grader with a red bow and my name on it.

Santa is real, but my proof is not in a few missing cookies and an empty glass. It is not in the toy beneath the tree. My proof is in that moment when a ragged cedar tree turned six separate souls into one family filled with love and good will to all on a cold winter night in West Texas. I suspect it happens everywhere, in many different ways, to many different kinds of people. I hope so much that it does. Even so long ago still gives me comfort. I live knowing without a doubt, absolutely, positively, with all my heart, mind, and soul, that Santa is real.

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“Shop Nac First” With Meaning!

by Jessi Pinkert, City of Nac Content Coordinator

Downtown Nacogdoches has welcomed many new businesses into our community this year. With exciting new additions like The Tin Rabbit Antique Shop, The Main Fix, Red House Winery, Salon Haven, Cowboy Jacks and House of Photography, Nacogdoches remains a hub for unique shopping, dining, and leisure locations. Supporting our community is vital to the success of our local businesses. Here are a few ways that you can help your local shop owners and encourage more business growth in Nacogdoches!

This month, we ask you to do your part in shopping and eating at the local establishments. We all hear “Shop Nac First,” but what does this really mean? For us, supporting the Shop Nac First initiative means visiting our local businesses as often as possible and getting to know the person behind the counter. Shopping locally means our neighbors and friends who own local shops can stay in business. This creates jobs in our community and encourages new businesses to come to Nacogdoches. We encourage you to visit the new businesses that have recently opened and welcome them to our community.

In addition to visiting the new businesses in Nacogdoches, it is important to support our existing shops as well. Our downtown merchants have been meeting each month to discuss new tactics for their businesses. Social media marketing and product photography are just a couple of the great training our downtown shop owners have been learning. The Shop Nac First campaign is also creating a customer service training program that will be available for all businesses in Nacogdoches County. Many of our downtown merchants have also extended their business hours so that you can shop on Sundays!

Our local business owners are special because they are passionate and hard-working. There is no questioning the commitment of Nacogdoches' citizens in preserving and promoting our unique history while helping small businesses remain successful in an ever-changing economic and technological environment. Making current businesses successful encourages new businesses and rehabilitate vacant buildings, which will make our town more unique and vibrant. The goal of the Shop Nac First campaign is our citizens make an effort to find their products within Nacogdoches County before looking outside of the community. Visit Downtown Nacogdoches this holiday season before ordering online or heading to the big city. Unique gift ideas (and gift cards!) are waiting for you on the historic brick streets of Nacogdoches.




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Anita Scott



Nac County Exposition and Civic Center

What's Hot with Anita Scott

The Nacogdoches County Expo & Civic Center wishes everyone a joyous holiday season!

DECEMBER 12, 2018 – LOVE, INC. CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS

Nacogdoches Love, INC Christmas Blessings provides Christmas gifts for children whose need has been verified through an application process. Applications for assistance can be found at 917 Ruby Street (off Powers St.) in Nacogdoches. The applications will be accepted November 1-30, 2018. If approved, applicants will be given an appointment to come and shop for their children.

If you would like to make a donation please contact their office at 936-569-8555. Donations for older children Jr. High and High School age are needed most.

Our covered Main Arena is available for riding Monday thru Friday from 8:00am till 4:00pm for \$10.00 per horse. No reservations needed. (Closed December 24th and 25th, and 31st for County Holidays)

The Nacogdoches Pro Rodeo & Steer Show will be here March 21st-23rd, 2019. Rodeo Sponsorship's are a great way to promote your business or organization! Sponsorship levels vary, and can be tailored to your specific business. Sponsorship's not only help promote your business, but also the Nacogdoches economy, Nacogdoches Jaycees, and scholarships awarded to local college bound students.

If you are interested in a Nacogdoches Pro Rodeo Sponsorship please give me a call at (936) 564-0849 or email me at ascott@co.nacogdoches.tx.us.

The 2019 Pro Rodeo will feature professional Barrelman and Rodeo Clown Rockin' Robbie Hodges! He is one of the hottest barrelman and rodeo clown's in the industry. His performance is totally off the cuff, unscripted hilarity. Robbie is not just a renowned entertainer, but an award winning Bullfighting Barrelman who intuitively reads the bull's movements to become part of the protection team.

The Steer Show will begin Tuesday, March 12, with the weigh-in and classification from 3:00pm-5:00pm. Showmanship begins at 6:00pm. Friday, March 22nd the Steer Show kicks off at 10:00am with the selection of the Grand & Reserve Champion. The Premium Buyers Reception is from 5:00pm-6:00pm, with the Premium Sale beginning at 6:30pm.

Wrangler Wednesday will be back! In partnership with Wrangler and Nacogdoches area Brookshire Brothers we will give away 4 FREE RODEO TICKETS each Wrangler Wednesday from February 27th to March 20th! The Nacogdoches Pro Rodeo Prize Posse will be on the lookout at both Nacogdoches Brookshire Brothers locations for customers proudly wearing Wrangler Apparel! From your Pearl Snaps to your Rivets, Wranglers got you covered!

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VFW Gun Raffle!

VFW Post 3893 in Nacogdoches is conducting a raffle for a Henry "God Bless America Edition Big Boy" .44 Magnum Rifle. This Collectors' Edition firearm features beautiful engraving with the words "God Bless America" and an outline of the 48 contiguous states on a 24K gold plate. The barrel is octagon blued steel and the stock is American Walnut. The magazine capacity is 10 rounds.

Proceeds from the raffle will be used for parking lot improvements and granting life memberships and legacy life memberships to long-time members.

Only 1000 tickets are available. The drawing will be held on August 1, 2019, or when all tickets are sold.

Tickets are priced at \$10 each and are available from Post Commander Don Kirkley at 936.554.6437, Senior Vice Commander Gailon Fletcher at 936.637.9347 or leave message at the VFW Post phone 936.569.9670.

Pictured are Post Commander Kirkley (R) and Senior Vice Commander Fletcher.



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Rhonda Oaks
 Lufkin District Public Information Officer
 Communications Division
 Texas Department of Transportation

Changing Our Bad Habits

I stood in line at the grocery store the other day listening to a mom and teenage daughter disagree with each other. I didn't find it unusual. Moms and teenage daughters usually have an ongoing disagreement about one thing or another. I wasn't exactly eavesdropping; but you really couldn't help overhearing their discussion. The mom was stern and the daughter down-right impertinent.

"I'm just telling you that if you ever do anything like that again, I will take your phone away," mom said.

"I can't live without my phone," the teen replied with an emphasis on the word live. She said it as if her mother surely already knew that life could not continue if she were denied the use of her phone. She stood there with arms crossed and an angry look on her face. You get the picture.

I pondered the girl's statement. What could each one of us really live (or not live) without? Living without a phone seems impossible in today's world, but learning not to use it when we drive might be the only thing between living with your loved one and living without them.

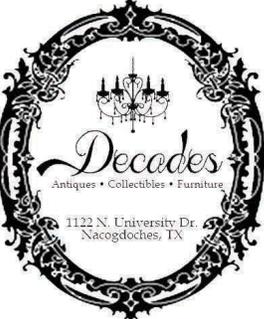
Nov. 7 was a grim reminder in Texas. It was the date signifying 18 years since we have seen a deathless day on Texas roadways. It's hard to hear that more than 66,000 drivers have died on Texas roads since 2000. That averages one person every 18 hours. The major cause of traffic fatalities are distracted driving, drinking and not wearing a seatbelt.

TxDOT is serious about our safety campaigns, but this record of fatalities will never be broken if each one of us don't change our driving habits. It's time to break those bad habits of not wearing a seatbelt, texting and driving or getting behind the wheel after a couple of drinks.

We would love to not recognize this milestone next year, but rather celebrate the first day on Texas roadways when there are no deaths. And if we can do it for just one day, then we can do it every day.

I later wondered how that teenage girl's predicament turned out. Did she lose it for a while? If so, will it keep her from being distracted and possibly save her life behind the wheel of a vehicle? I hope so.

If we don't change our driving habits, we could all lose. We could find something far more important taken away from us than a phone. It could be your child, your parent, your spouse or even your own life. And I can't really think of anything or anyone I want to live without.



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Nacogdoches Hosting Destination Marketing Principles Seminar in January



Stephanie Fontenot
CVB Marketing Director

The Texas Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus recently selected Nacogdoches to host an upcoming event that has the power to influence and benefit a variety of professionals both within our city and all across the state. Specifically, Texas' oldest town will host a Destination Marketing Principles Seminar Jan. 30-31 at the recently-renovated historic Fredonia Hotel and Convention Center.

This seminar is created to benefit anyone who works to promote a destination - both directly and indirectly. More people are included in these categories than you might realize, such as hotel industry employees, local business and attraction owners, elected officials, city organization board members, regional tourism promoters, arts and cultural organizations and volunteers and advocates. If you're a tourism ambassador in any form or fashion, this seminar applies to you.

Attendees who arrive Wednesday, Jan. 30, will have the opportunity to enjoy a special Nacogdoches heritage tour and evening reception. The tour will showcase some of the vast history of Texas' oldest town, including visits to the Nacogdoches Railroad Depot, Durst-Taylor Historic House and Gardens, Sterne-Hoya Museum and Library, Old University Building and the stunning Zion Hill Baptist Church. The following evening reception, sponsored by Nacogdoches-based Hancock Advertising, will be hosted at Red House Winery, a new downtown venue that serves up award-winning wines in a gorgeously unique and inviting atmosphere.

If you'd rather get right to business, you're welcome to attend Thursday's informative sessions only. The first half of the day will be dedicated to the principles of destination marketing, including funding, marketing strategies, partnerships, hotel occupancy tax usage and more. This session will be instructed by special guest Marla Roe, executive director of Visit Frisco, who has more than 31 years of experience in hospitality and destination marketing.

Two engaging afternoon sessions will focus on local businesses and the arts and cultural community - the first presented by Alysia Cook with Opportunity Strategies and the second by Beverly Abell with the Mesquite Downtown Development Office. A short bonus session will be presented during lunch by Marty Prince with the Texas Forest Trail Region.

Anyone can register for this seminar. The price for non-TACVB members is \$100 for the full day. Half-day rates also are available.

For more information about the conference or to register, go to www.TACVB.org and click on the education/conferences/events tab. If you need assistance, call the Nacogdoches CVB at (936) 564-7351.

"Thank you David D. Stallings, for supporting and promoting our local businesses. We love the *Around the Town* paper!" Steve & Sarah Traylor - Texas First Health Insurance

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**Lamp-Lite Theatre presents
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 A Rowdy New East Texas Comedy!!**

Celebrate the holidays with the kooky citizens of Doublewide, Texas. In this outrageously funny comedy by authors Jones, Hope and Wooten, it's Christmas-time in the newest—and tiniest—town in Texas. And it's beginning to look a lot like trouble in Doublewide. Not only are the trailer park residents dealing with the stress of the holiday season, but they've just discovered that Doublewide is being doubled-crossed by the County. With their official incorporation papers in jeopardy, this band of eccentric Texans throw themselves into taking on the "Big Guys". Actors reclaiming their former roles include **Lisa Lalumandier, Jon Gauntt, Linda Licht, Jody Ryan, and Bill Small.** They will be joined by **Tina Oswald, Sally Ellsworth, Rick Jones, and Katrina Hawkins.**

Curtain time will be at 7:30 p.m. on Friday and Saturday nights, December 7, 8, 14 and 15. Sunday matinees will be at 2:00 p.m. on December 9 and 16. Tickets are available at Glass Castles, Nacogdoches CVB, Kline's / Wrap-It-Up and 45 minutes before curtain time at the Lamp-Lite Theatre Box Office. Seating will be general admission.

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Chamber Connection
by Kelly Augustine
Executive Vice President,
Nacogdoches County Chamber
of Commerce

Shop Nac First for the Holidays!

Exercise your power to support the growth of your community when shopping for the holidays by purchasing as much as possible from Nacogdoches County businesses, large and small. The Nacogdoches County Chamber of Commerce is encouraging all to “do business with your neighbors” and “shop local!”

The Chamber is working with community partners and local businesses to revive the Shop Nac First campaign, and all are invited to check out the new www.ShopNacFirst.com site produced by the City of Nacogdoches. Find videos that entertain as well as inform, fun graphics and some really interesting data about the results of purchasing products and services from your fellow Nacogdoches County neighbors.

Here is an example of what you will find on ShopNacFirst.com - a list “Why It Matters” reasons you should stay in the City and County for your holiday shopping:

- Significantly more money re-circulates in Nacogdoches when purchases are made here.
- More money is kept in the community because businesses purchase from other local businesses, service providers and farms.
- Local businesses require comparatively little infrastructure investment and make more efficient use of public services.
- Local businesses invest in community.
- Local businesses are owned by people who live in this community, are less likely to relocate and are more invested in the community’s future.
- Reduced environmental impact.
- Non-profits receive greater support.
- Customer service is better. You know the people behind the counters, and they know you!
- Our one-of-a-kind businesses are an integral part of our distinctive character. Buying local helps preserve the character and prosperity of the community we all love. By choosing to support locally owned businesses, we help maintain the diversity and distinctive flair of Nacogdoches County.

By making this simple choice, you will make a major impact in the place where you live and work. We all share benefits when we shop local.

Ribbon Cutting Ceremonies - please join!

20/20 Eye Care, 11:30 a.m., Tuesday, Dec. 4 at 3915 N. Stallings Dr. Contact Dr. Melanie Vardeman, 936-560-2020. Celebrating new ownership! View cool new styles by Robert Graham, Stepper, Betsy Johnson and Wildflower at the Trunk Show from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Enter to win door prizes and enjoy refreshments!

Love In The Name of Christ, 11:30 a.m., Thursday, Dec. 6 at 320 Powers St. Contact Patti Goodrum, 936-569-8555. Grand opening of the Love INC Kingdom Gift Store!

Super Yummy Mongolian Stir-Fry and Sushi, 4:30 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 6 at 4604 North St. #110. Contact: Paul, 936-559-5020. Celebrating opening of new restaurant!

Remember to go to the Chamber’s online community event calendar at www.Nacogdoches.org. Check it often and submit your events, too!



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"And His name will be called Wonderful..." (Isaiah 9:6 NKJV)

In the Bible 256 titles are used for Jesus, trying to picture His majesty, His deity, His humanity – all the wonder of His abilities and attributes. Yet they are altogether inadequate. Perhaps the only time the word "wonderful" is used with complete accuracy is to describe Him.

Isaiah could well have put a period after the word wonderful: "And His name will be called Wonderful." Wonderful!

"REED ALL ABOUT IT!"
by Dr. Allen Reed

What more can one say? A "wonder" would refer to something out of the ordinary, something unusual and uncommon. Historians listed "seven wonders" of the ancient world, but there are more than seven wonders about Jesus. He was wonderful in His preexistence; He was wonderful in His creation of the world; He was wonderful in His birth; He was wonderful in His life; He was wonderful in His teaching. He was wonderful in His death. He was wonderful in His resurrection; He was wonderful in His ascension. He is wonderful in His intercession; He will be wonderful in His second coming. He is altogether wonderful!

One may notice there is a comma after the name Wonderful. To remove the comma would give Jesus the name of "Wonderful Counselor" in keeping like all the other titles: "Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Elsewhere, Isaiah described Him as "the Lord of hosts, Who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in guidance." (Isaiah 28:29).

In his devotional commentary, Warren W. Wiersbe writes: "If His name is 'Wonderful,' then there will be nothing dull about His reign! As Counselor, He has the wisdom to rule justly and as the Mighty God, He has the power to execute His wise plans. 'Everlasting Father' does not suggest that the Son is also the Father, for each Person of the Godhead is distinct. 'Father of eternity' is a better translation." Isn't He wonderful!"

A LITTLE HUMOR: Sometimes something different about Christmas comes across the Internet that simply has to be shared. This item was obviously authored by a woman. Her claim is that all the reindeer that pull Santa's sleigh on Christmas Eve have to be females. Think about it for a moment. According to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, both male and female reindeer grow antlers in the summer each year. However male reindeer lose their antlers at the beginning of winter, usually late November to mid-December. Female reindeer, on the other hand retain their antlers till after they give birth in the spring.

Thus, she concludes, since all the male reindeer have lost their antlers by December 24 each year and since all depictions of Santa's reindeer show them with antlers, all of Santa's reindeer, every single one of them, from Rudolph to Blitzen, had to be female. Then she adds, "We've should've known . . . only women would be able to drag a fat man in a red velvet suit all around the world in one night and not get lost."

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Snapshot from Around the Town

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Christmas In Town

by Jerry Permenter

Jerry D. Permenter (aka Red Dirt Boy) can be found on Facebook, and his FB page, Red Dirt Memories, is currently nearing 10,000 followers. Join him and others for more stories there. He is also on Instagram @thereddirtmemories. To order your copy of "Red Dirt Memories," please send us an email Reddirtmemories@gmail.com



Jerry Permenter was born in East Texas and grew up in Nacogdoches County. He is transitioning to creative writing, with a memoir, "Red Dirt Boy" to be released in 2018. You can follow Jerry on Facebook at Red Dirtboy or on Instagram as @thereddirtboy.

Folks, I'm looking forward to sharing Christmas stories and music on Saturday, December 15th from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Cole Art Center in downtown Nacogdoches, Texas. All my people drove those red brick streets just outside its doors for many years and some still do, and I have a story for every corner in my hometown.

Mama would always be spending a part of her Saturdays this time of year paying on Christmas lay-aways at JB White, McCrory's and Cason Monk Hardware. And Daddy would already be looking at guns in one spot or the other, early on at Branch Patton but later at Crossland's Gun Shop.

My grandmother, Ma Permenter, would take me into Rees Jewelry where she'd find a perfect bauble for the holidays, and once she bought a penguin pin she coveted into old age. My grandfather bought his "town ring," a black onyx with his initial on it there, one he only wore when he went "into town." I still go to Rees, because a lovely lady named Charlene can take me back to all my early Christmas memories downtown. I haven't been home until I've been by to see sweet Charlene. That's what a hometown is about during the holidays, walking some of the same streets, but with an expanded heart and an appreciation for all the things I once couldn't wait to outgrow. My spirit lightens the second my feet hits those red brick streets again.



These days, I stay at the Fredonia Hotel, where my grandpa used to have his shoes shined just off the lobby, and walk over to Blue Horse Bakery, and after a pastry there maybe into Milford's Barber Shop for a holiday trim, still in the same location of the first place I ever had my hair cut, Walton & Ward's Barber Shop. My barber there, R.L. Arm-

strong, once found a tick on top of my head while giving me my flat top. I was about five years old, and he calmly grabbed some tweezers and made quick work of it, as he knew a little boy like me would've been out in the woods with my beagle pups trailing something that needed hunting.

Sometimes, we'd drop Mama off at Hoggly Woggly (Piggly Wiggly), then we'd swing by to pick her up, and after helping with the groceries, we'd make the ascent up Orton Hill, the glimmer of our town behind us glowing extra bright with Christmas lights on the first weekend after Thanksgiving.

I'd begin to drift off in the backseat, the hum of the engine and Daddy singing low finally putting me down as we drove out Highway 7 towards home. I'd dream of the Christmas that was coming, of Rock'em Sock'em robots, a doctor kit and maybe, some boots and spurs, though I wouldn't have anything but a fence to rope and ride for a few more years.

It will be a wonderful experience to be there again, to share more memories of Christmas in a very special place. I hope some of you can join me in December! We'll all sit a spell, I promise! And if by chance I miss, I'm sending you all wishes for the most magical Christmas ever.

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Angela's Monthly Recipe

Low Carb Southern Chicken & Dressing

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

Ingredients:

- 2 ½ cups almond flour, sifted
- ½ cup crushed pork rinds (unflavored)
- ½ cup Whey Protein (unflavored)
- ¼ cup oat fiber
- 2 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp onion powder
- 1 tsp salt
- 3 Tbsp melted butter
- 2 Tbsp bacon fat
- 1 ¼ cup heavy whipping cream
- ½ cup water
- 1 tsp Amoretti Sweet Corn Extract (optional)
- 3 eggs
- 2 tsp ground sage (optional)
- 8 oz. cooked, shredded chicken (white & dark meat)
- 3-4 cups chicken broth
- 1 cup chopped celery
- ½ cup chopped onion
- salt & pepper to taste



BOIL THE CHICKEN

- Place a whole chicken in a large pot, add enough water to cover. (Be sure to check the cavity to remove the giblets and any packing material.)
- Add 1 tablespoon of salt, and boil the chicken on medium high heat for 45 minutes or until done.
- Once cool enough to touch, remove the skin and shred all the chicken into bite size pieces. Reserve.
- Boil the remaining stock for about 15 more minutes to slightly reduce the stock for more concentrated flavor. (If using purchased chicken stock, skip this step.)

MAKE THE CORNBREAD

- Preheat oven to 425. If cooking in a cast iron skillet, preheat the skillet in the oven with 2 tablespoons of bacon fat.
- In a large bowl, combine the dry ingredients and whisk well to combine: almond flour, crushed pork rinds, whey protein, oat fiber, baking soda, garlic powder, onion powder, and salt.
- In a measuring cup, combine the heavy cream, water and the optional sweet corn extract. Mix well.
- Beat 2 of the large eggs in a small bowl. (The third egg will be used later.)
- To the dry ingredients, add the milk mixture, the 2 beaten eggs and the melted butter.
- Stir to combine. Do not over mix.
- Carefully add the batter to the preheated skillet. The oil should be hot and the batter should sizzle when added.
- Bake for 25-30 minutes. Start checking at 20 minutes. A toothpick inserted into the center should come out clean with a few crumbs.
- Allow to cool in the skillet.
- Once cool enough to touch, break apart the cornbread into a very large mixing bowl.

PREPARE THE AROMATICS

- In a small skillet over medium heat, sauté the chopped celery and onions in a pat of butter for about 7-8 minutes or until they are until slightly browned.
- Add a cup of chicken stock to the skillet and increase the heat to medium high. Cook until the broth has been reduced, then add another cup of broth to the pan and continue to reduce until there are only a few tablespoons of liquid in the pan with the vegetables. This concentrates the flavor of the aromatic vegetables and the chicken stock. (There should not be much liquid, but the pan should not be dry.)
- Set aside to cool.

ASSEMBLE THE DRESSING

- Preheat oven to 400.
- To the large mixing bowl with the crumbled cornbread, add the shredded chicken and sautéed vegetables.
- In a small bowl or cup, beat one egg well and add 1 cup of the reserved chicken broth to temper the egg. Mix well and set aside.
- Add 2 cups of chicken broth to the dressing mixture and gently mix the dressing to combine.
- Taste the mixture and season with salt and pepper to taste.
- Pour the dressing into a well-buttered 9x13 casserole dish and distribute evenly.
- Pour the egg/broth mixture evenly over the top of the dressing and use a spoon to gently combine the egg mixture into the dressing mixture. Remember that this cornbread will not absorb as much water as traditional cornbread, so don't over do it.
- Cover with foil and place in a preheated 400 degree oven for 30 minutes. Carefully remove the foil and bake an additional 20-30 minutes or until browned.
- Allow to cool for at least 15 to firm up the dressing. Enjoy!

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Loblolly Model Train Display – A Holiday Favorite

Great things are happening at the Nacogdoches Railroad Depot this holiday season! Back by popular demand for the 8th year, the City of Nacogdoches Historic Sites Department is proud to host the Loblolly Model Train Display opening the Friday after Thanksgiving.

The Loblolly Model Train Display will be open for public viewing at the historic Nacogdoches Railroad Depot for three weekends this holiday season beginning Friday, November 23rd. The display has been a huge success in the past, drawing in over 300 people per weekend, and we are ecstatic to have them back again. The Loblolly Model Train display is a very unique one; not only is it billed as the only traveling 3-rail, O-gauge, railroad display between Shreveport, Dallas and Houston, they are also one of the only groups that choose to have their display at table top height with no ropes. This encourages youngsters to get up close and experience the fun and excitement of toy trains. You'll also see some local favorites like Dollis' Diner, the SFA Sylvans competition and the Fredonia Hotel billboard featured in this year's display!

Their schedule is:

November 23rd – 25th, November 30th – December 2nd and December 7th – 9th. The Depot will be open Fridays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sundays from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. for all to enjoy.

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There will also be representatives from Operation Lifesaver at the Nacogdoches Railroad Depot to talk to kids and adults about railroad safety. This event is free of charge!

For more information, contact the Historic Sites Department at 936-560-4443 or by email at historicsites@ci.nacogdoches.tx.us. Find us on Facebook at Nac Historic Sites. We hope to see you there! Happy Holidays!

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Introducing Our New Columnists from Cajun Country!

My friends, Peggy Devall and Mark Alemond, have agreed to write a monthly column for our paper. We're so excited to have them join us and know that you'll enjoy reading about their "adventures" in South Louisiana!

David Stallings - Publisher

This story begins with an unlikely origin....The characters? One former resident of Nacogdoches and a Cajun from the Swamps of Louisiana!...Intrigued?

Peggy Devall and Mark Alemond are a dynamic couple who are great friends of the Northeast Texas Region, especially Nacogdoches. Peggy made her home here for a number of years during the late 1990's into the early 2000's. Originally a native of South Louisiana she lived in the Nacogdoches community while tending to her aging mother who made her home here in her later years. Peggy was instrumental in the early success of the Jones House Bed & Breakfast in Downtown Nacogdoches.



Operating the B&B and working to make a go of things, Peggy regularly hosted professionals from the Houston Area as well as other parts of Texas, doling out hospitality to which was second to none, and appreciated by all who stayed at the Jones House. To this day, the City of Nacogdoches is still near and dear to her heart.

Mark is simply a Cajun from "down under," meaning from the swamps of South Louisiana to be more accurate! Also a veteran of hospitality from his many years operating his family business, McGee's Landing and Swamp Tours on the Atchafalaya Basin, Mark has also invested the better part of his career as a tourism and hospitality professional. During his years of hosting hundreds of thousands of visitors the world over, Mark enjoyed sharing stories of the swamp with visitors; including the history of his ancestors in the swamp along with information about the unique ecosystem of the swamp among other interesting subjects.

Today, through the unexpected acquaintance of the two around 2001, the two have forged a great partnership in life and again offering their best attempts to provide visitors to South Louisiana an experience worthy of mention!

Back in 2014 the two built a little lodging space next to their home in Arnaudville, Louisiana. This is when the "Cajun Cabin Guest Cottage" was established. Since this time, Peggy and Mark have brought smiles, hospitality and intrigue to folks from all corners of the planet. The Cajun Cabin, as it is called for short, offers a quaint experience in a small town atmosphere, where folks can enjoy great food, craft beer, live music and other worthwhile events in short walking or biking distance.

Guests at the Cajun Cabin enjoy just walking around the little French speaking community and meeting friendly folks who share their stories with them willingly. It is almost, in some instances, like being in a Norman Rockwell era kind of a town, if you will.

Fast forward a little! In 2015, Mark decided to invest in a boat to take the Cajun Cabin guests into the deep sections of the Atchafalaya Swamp, really in the spirit of expanding the services of the guest cottage. It didn't take long before other tourism contacts, who Mark had worked with during many years of operating his family business, to begin referring business to the swamp tour business. So...Cajun Customized Excursions was established!

To this day, the objective continues to be the goal of offering a "personalized experience" in some of the more remote areas of the swamp. Guests aboard the "Wood Duck" experience places in the swamp that actually see very little human activity as well as other bayous where the tour will encounter fishermen trying to catch the big one! As they convey to guests, every tour is different, due to the swamp constantly going through natural changes on its annual cycle of high water levels and lower levels.

The great interest among tour guests are always closely tied to wanting a sighting of the elusive alligator, which during the warmer periods is a regular experience. However, there is so much more the swamp offers than just gators, such as a host of migratory birds, from many parts of the western hemisphere, such as South America for example.

These great attributes, along with many personal stories shared by Mark tops off the delight by visitors, exclaiming that they have been on many swamp tours, but nothing quite like the experience offered by Cajun Customized Excursions.

So...If you are intrigued to read more about the adventures that Peggy and Mark share with their Cajun Cabin guests and visitors aboard the Wood Duck, stayed tuned!

In the meantime, if you want to learn more about how to schedule a stay at the Cajun Cabin Guest Cottage and a deep swamp excursion with Cajun Customized Excursions, you can visit their website at www.cajuncabinexcursions.com.

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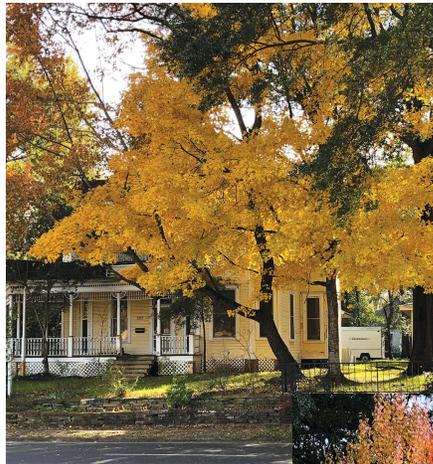
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Nacogdoches County Co-Op Life Skills (and More) Classes

One of many services provided by the Nacogdoches County Co-Op is the staffing and programming of Life Skills classrooms in Cushing and Chireno. Life Skills students have conditions such as autism, intellectual disabilities, emotional disturbance, Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder and Down's Syndrome requiring special educational programming tailored to meet their needs.

Co-Op Director Deborah Bowers Jones said the Life Skills programs and staff are top-notch, adding that the field trips and hands-on activities they plan provide excellent opportunities for the students.

The Cushing Life Skills program serves 21 students from Central Heights, Douglass and Cushing, while the Chireno Life Skills program serves 24 students from Etoile, Garrison and Chireno. Although they are on opposite ends of the county, the programs have similarities. Teachers from both Cushing and Chireno describe how the relationship between teachers, paraprofessionals and students feels like a family; and they also speak of the rewarding nature of their work.

Tammy Rasberry teaches six students in the Lil' Heroes class in Cushing, with the help of two paraprofessionals. "The students vary in age and learn best through the use of visual, tactile and kinesthetic methods," she said. "They enjoy hands-on activities with positive reinforcers and immediate feedback. They are provided differentiated curriculum with sensory motor activities to meet their educational goals."

Rasberry said it is a very rewarding job, and she has come to see how children love unconditionally. "They have taught me that love knows no limits," she said.

Audra Black, one of the paraprofessionals in the Lil' Heroes class, said she enjoys the different personalities of the children and watching them learn and grow. Chris Castleberry, another paraprofessional, added, "I love to see their faces light up when they have learned something."

Holly Sanders, who teaches elementary students in Cushing Life Skills, said she uses a variety of materials to meet their individual needs.

"We do one-on-one activities, attend field trips, and use technology," she said. "Our classroom is always busy. We participate in schoolwide activities such as the Homecoming Parade and pep rallies. We enjoyed carving pumpkins recently and we had an awesome field trip to Alexander Burger Company, after learning about food trucks." Sanders said the best part of the job is making a connection with the students. "We celebrate each success the children make," she said. "I look forward to each day I get to spend with them and help them learn new things. They make my heart happy."

High School Life Skills teacher Sara Barrett described some of the activities in which her students recently participated. "We sold raffle tickets to fund upcoming field trips," she said. "That was a great opportunity for students to work on their vocational and social skills." Students also created rock art, then hid the rocks around the community and monitored their movement on NAC TX Rock Hunt on Facebook. This taught the students how the community is intertwined with folks around the country, state and beyond, Barrett said.

Cushing High School Life Skills students also served as greeters and errand runners at the Sandyland Bluegrass Reunion, giving them a chance to work on their social skills and money skills.

Chireno Life Skills Teacher Matt Ball said the Co-Op is a major help when it comes to providing resources. "Each room has a teacher and two to three amazing para-professionals," he said. "I love all my paras, and there is no way that I could do my job without them. It's a constant group effort. We're like family." Ball said technology helps meet the needs of students – whether through computers, iPads, laptops or the Internet.

"Our field trips are always a blast," he said, adding that students were looking forward to "Journey to the Stars" at the new SFA Planetarium. Ball said hands-on activities such as task boxes, measuring dry goods and liquids, making change, etc., are ways he keeps his students engaged. "My classroom management is done with a classroom economy," he said. "Students earn classroom bucks for good behavior and receive fines for undesired or bad behavior. We have a 'class store' at the end of every week where students can purchase items."

Ball said cooking is one of the students' favorite activities to do each Friday. "At the beginning of each week we determine what we're going to cook as a group, find the recipe/ingredients, then use Microsoft Word on the computer to make a visual recipe, which is stored in their digital recipe folder on their own personal flash drive," he said.

What Ball loves most about his job is being with the students and his colleagues. "There is never a dull moment, that's for sure," he said. "We all have our good days and bad days, but we always try to have fun as well as have a lot of laughs. We have to be able to laugh, especially at ourselves sometimes. If we don't find the humor in things, life would be less fun."



Jasper Kile sorts letter of the alphabet.



Oscar Sifuentes, Jonathan Martinez, Jayden Brown, Perla Gallegos, Alex Harp and Wesley Forrest at the Sandyland Bluegrass Reunion.

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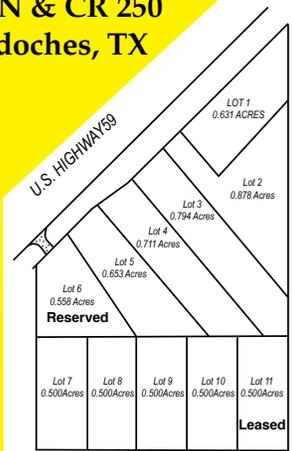
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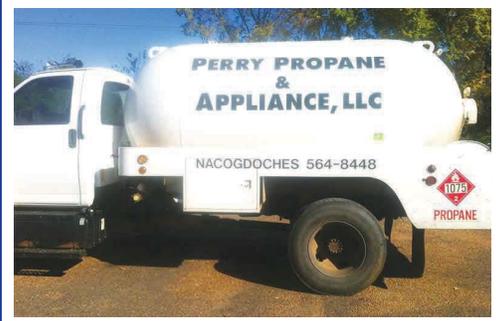
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ADVERTISING IN AROUND THE TOWN REALLY WORKS!

I love the new Around the Town publication! The first week the July issue came out with an article featuring my business, "Heart of Texas." I received more response than any advertisement I have tried in the 22 years I've been in business. We have needed a quality paper guide for tourists and visitors to Nacogdoches and having them placed around town, but specifically in the hotels and motels, really gets the word out. I have already renewed my ad to run again! *Gerry Larabee, Heart of Texas Gift Gallery, 110 S. Pecan, downtown Nacogdoches.*



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MONUMENT CORNER

This month in Monument Corner we look at the monument found on Hospital Street at North Church Street. The monument stands beside the Jones House and acknowledges the accomplishments of one of the city's early citizens, Diedrich Anton Wilhelm Rulfs. The monument reads as follows:

DIEDRICH ANTON WILHELM RULFS

MASTER ARCHITECT DIEDRICH RULFS WAS BORN IN 1848 IN STOLLHAM IN THE GERMAN PROVINCE OF OLDENBURG TO HELENE (STINDT) AND GERHARD RULFS; HIS FATHER WAS A CARPENTER. AFTER DIEDRICH MARRIED JOHANNE EMILIE BOSCHEN IN 1873, HE BECAME AN APPRENTICE IN THE BUILDING GUILD AT OLDENBURG, DESIGNING SEVERAL HOMES THERE AND ALSO HELPING DESIGN THE PARISH CHURCH AT STOLLHAM. AFTER JOHANNE'S FATHER DIED, DIEDRICH, JOHANNE, THEIR THREE SONS, AND JOHANNE'S MOTHER AND YOUNGER BROTHER EMIGRATED TO THE UNITED STATES ABOARD THE STEAMSHIP *NURNBURG*, ARRIVING AT NEW ORLEANS IN NOVEMBER 1880. THEY PROCEEDED BY STEAMBOAT TO JEFFERSON AND BY WAGON TO NACOGDOCHES, WHERE JOHANNE'S BROTHER WILLIAM BOSCHEN HAD ALREADY SETTLED.

NORTHERN GERMAN ARCHITECTURAL STYLES EXIST IN MANY OF RULF'S WORKS IN NACOGDOCHES: THE CORNER TOWER OF THE ROLAND JONES HOUSE (1896) IS TAKEN FROM THE DUCAL PALACE IN OLDENBURG, AND CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH (1901) AND ZION HILL BAPTIST CHURCH (1914) INCLUDE ELEMENTS OF THE ATENS (GERMANY) CHURCH WHERE DIEDRICH AND JOHANNE MARRIED. RULF'S COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS DOMINATED THE DOWNTOWN AREA AND INCLUDE: OPERA HOUSE (1889), LIBERTY HOTEL (1891), COTTON EXCHANGE (1898), REDLAND HOTEL (1906) AND MAYER-SCHMIDT BUILDING (1908). HIS DOMESTIC STRUCTURES AND CHURCHES LINED WASHINGTON SQUARE, VIRGINIA AVENUE, MAIN AND NORTH STREETS; EXTANT EXAMPLES INCLUDE THE HARDEMAN (1892), PERKINS (1900), HAYTER (1913), CASON (1914) AND BLOUNT (1923) HOUSES. RULF'S ECLECTIC ARCHITECTURAL INFLUENCES INCLUDED GOTHIC, GREEK REVIVAL AND ITALIAN STYLES. RULFS DIED IN 1926 AND IS BURIED AT OAK GROVE CEMETERY.

(2008)

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Photo by James Aston

Snapshot from Around the Town

Rob DeBardelaben, General Manager of Goose Landing (Formerly Yakofritz Landing), invites you to visit the recently-reopened store on Lake Nacogdoches. The store features bait, beer, Blue Bell Ice Cream, deer corn, Ethonol free gas and food items. The restaurant will open soon. The store is located at 11332 S. FM 225 - Phone 936.559.5366. Rob says "Good things come to those who bait!"



BIG THANKS to David Stallings and James Aston from all of us at Appleby Sand Mercantile Cafe' for the new paper they've put together. All week we have had NEW customers...Locals who didn't know about us and travelers who picked up the paper in gas stations and hotels. As a business owner, I love to hear how the dollars spent advertising WORKED!!!

Thank you, David and James! If you are looking for a way to advertise that really works, give David a call at 936.554.5822. This has been the best results from an ad I've ever had!

Angela Bradford
Appleby Sand Mercantile Cafe'
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ANGELINA COUNTY

“In the Loop”

with Burt Hairgrove



Greetings from the Expo!

Well, this is a new venture, being a contributing writer for “Around the Town.” I am happy to have the opportunity to let folks know what we have happening at the George H. Henderson, Jr. Exposition Center / Angelina County Expo Center or, as most people know it: “The Lufkin Expo.”

What most people don’t realize about us is that we operate as a non-profit organization. The Expo was completed in 1984 and construction was funded entirely by public and private donations. We are here to serve the residents of Angelina County through youth programs and education and to contribute to the growth of its civic ventures.

We are home to the following events, just to name a few:

- The Angelina County Fair
- The Angelina Benefit Rodeo
- The award-winning Texas State Forest Festival.
- Monster Truck Show
- Bull Bash
- Premier Equine Auctions
- Concerts
- Pineywoods Youth Rodeo Association
- Crossfire Team Roping
- The Expo’s Annual Birthday Party (more to come about that later!)
- Evening in Old Bethlehem
- Expo Trade Days

Keep an eye on our website: www.angelinaexpoctr.com to find out about upcoming events. Better yet, like us on Facebook as Angelina Expo.

COMING TO THE EXPO IN DECEMBER!

- December 7-8 First United Methodist Church Lufkin presents: “Night in Old Bethlehem” Come out Friday and Saturday 6-8pm. The event recreates the town of Bethlehem during the time of the birth of Jesus Christ and the census.
- December 29 – Crossfire Productions’ New Year’s Team Roping Championship.

We’d like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas from the Expo and I’m looking forward to bringing more news about our upcoming events. Stay tuned for more announcements or call (936) 637 EXPO.

See you in Lufkin at the Expo!

Burt Hairgrove, Director

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PRICE REDUCTION 2160656 9900 Blk US Hwy 259 1.97 AC CHISD- \$465,500

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2150749 12.2 acres 6700 Blk North St. - \$427,000

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Nichole Roberts
Marketing Coordinator



Christmas - The Perfect Time to Shop Local

Thanksgiving is over which means the rest of this year is going to zip by. I always feel like December happens without me - like, December 24th arrives and somehow, I'm still back in September and realize I still have to buy that gadget, bake the Christmas cookies for Santa and wrap the presents, only to find out I forgot to buy the tape. Am I completely alone? I don't think I am. I think a lot of us live this way. So here's your wake-up call! September is over...and October...and November! It's December!

You have a few weeks left to get all your shopping done, plan your menus, and do your holiday baking. The great news is Lufkin has everything you need. There is no need to travel to the "big city" to do your shopping. When you shop local, your tax dollars stay local and it keeps jobs in Lufkin. Americans will spend nearly 700 BILLION DOLLARS on Christmas this year. Imagine all the money we could keep right here in our town if we shopped local.

Stockings were always my favorite thing when I was a kid so I try to get creative with my boys' stocking stuffers. A great place to look for fun items to fill up those stockings is Cracker Barrel. They have tons of fun items in their Old Country Store like wooden puzzles, fun coffee mugs, hats, toys, and more. The best stocking stuffer candy can be found right here in Lufkin at Atkinson Candy Company. Who wouldn't want a stocking full of peanut butter bars?

It is a family tradition that the kids always get a book in their stocking which I plan to purchase at Absolute Fiction Book Store. They have a great selection of books and if they don't have what you're looking for, they can order it for you.

For that guy in your life that likes big toys, consider Ross Motorsports. They have a lot of fun stuff that would make any guy happy. For the musical person in your family, go by and see Bonnie at Music World or Tim at Sound Techs. They will both be happy to help you find the perfect gift.

For the woman who loves jewelry, stop by Beard Fine Jewelers, Cavanagh's, or Tommy's Watch & Jewelry. For your hard-to-buy-for teenager, Lufkin has an abundance of great boutiques. One of my favorites is Spruce. If you like to shop fair trade, they have a great selection of purses, jewelry and more that gives money back to impoverished women working to provide for their families. Want to get something monogrammed for a very personal Christmas gift? Kasey's Kreations can help you with that. Maurices and The Buckle in the mall have a ton of trendy options to choose from. I have my eyes on a pair of jeans in the Buckle that I will be putting on my Christmas wish list for my husband.

Don't have time to make a dish to take to your Christmas Shindig? No worries! Call Brittany at Tome Catering and let her take care of you. Have you tried the homemade toffee from the Red Tulip Rolling Bistro? If not, run there now and get some for you and get some to take as Christmas gifts to your coworkers. It is to die for! Looking for a caterer for your work Christmas Party? Call David at Texas Custom Catering or Kate at 1921 Catering. So see, you are covered. Everything you need is right here in our great town. And to help you get through the holidays, go see Brandon at Curbside Cafe to stay caffeinated so you don't miss a beat. December is too great of a month to miss!

Remember your community, the place you call home this holiday season. And most of all, remember to take time to enjoy this season. We only get to experience it once a year. Make the best of it by spending time with loved ones and watching all your favorite Christmas movies. Be sure to check out www.visitlufkin.com for all the fun happenings to enjoy with your loved ones this holiday season.

I love this town and all that it has to offer and I hope you do to. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

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Rhonda Oaks
Lufkin District Public Information Officer
Communications Division
Texas Department of Transportation

Ryan Chapel - Local and Family History

I love to talk about Angelina County history, although local historians know far more than me. I am proud to be a sixth generation Angelina County resident. My roots go deep in these pineywoods.

Many locals know the history of Ryan Chapel Methodist Church located between Lufkin and Diboll on FM 2497. Nestled among the tall pines sits a replica of what was the original church that was built in 1866. Fires would take the building more than once over time, but it would never take the determination and perseverance of those who established it or the dedication of their descendants who still worship there.

The church overlooks Pine Valley. The site was chosen because of a nearby spring for horses and mules. That first building was made of logs. There would later be a cemetery established on the property. Local families donated land because of church growth and the rest is history. But there is a



little more history there that not many people know and it involves my family.

The first appointed pastor of the newly formed church - Rev. Henry Dawson Wright was my grandfather. He lived more than 100 years before my time, but stories of his life's work have dripped like water down through the generations that compile my Dad's family tree.

I saw the original church Bible on display a few years ago and I pictured him holding it as he preached to his congregation. I love to hear how the members paid him in bacon, corn and syrup, and how in 1907 another generation of church members purchased the church bell from a Mail Order catalog for \$13.60. A state historical marker was placed at the church in 1964 and in 1966, the church observed its 100th anniversary.

Ryan's Chapel Methodist Church is an East Texas treasure with all of its 152-year-old history. The people of the church survived fires that took the church building, but they rebuilt and continued life through wars, depression and modern times. Today, the church still serves as a place of worship for many.

Whatever happened to Henry Wright? Well, he spent his life here in Angelina County and he and his wife Martha are buried in Ryan's Chapel Cemetery with his family members and his descendants.

There are many others buried alongside him who helped build Angelina County. They all lived their lives in such a way that it helped create a better place for all of us who have come after them and those who will come after us.

SAN AUGUSTINE COUNTY

The Day Santa Claus Robbed A Bank

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.



Who would have ever dreamed that Santa would rob a bank! But, it happened in Cisco, Texas. On December 23, 1927, a man dressed as Santa Claus walked down the sidewalk in downtown Cisco, followed by several small excited children, and into the First National Bank. After shooing the children away, he pulled out a gun and robbed the bank.

Santa – Marshall Ratliff – and three accomplices then conducted one of the most inept bank robberies in the annals of ineptitude. A general gun battle erupted during the robbery, owing to the general citizenry being armed, and a standing reward of \$5,000 available from the bank association for shooting a bank robber in the act. Over 200 bullet holes were found in the bank building.

When the four robbers finally fought their way out of the bank and to a getaway car, killing two police officers in the process, they realized the car was almost out of gas. The robbers drove off in a hail of gunfire but made it only a few miles out of town. After their car ran out of gas, they commandeered another car from a citizen, and continued their way north.

During the next three days they stole two more automobiles from other victims, but never made it more than about sixty miles from Cisco. After three days of dodging the largest manhunt in Texas history, everyone was rounded up, although one of them was shot dead. The other two received death sentences. Henry Helms was electrocuted by “ole sparky” in Texas’ electric chair on September 6, 1929.

Santa, rather Ratliff, had his execution delayed by a sanity hearing that brought him back to Eastland County, where he feigned illness and killed a guard in an abortive escape attempt. The good citizens of Cisco decided that they’d had about enough of due process.

The following is quoted from a newspaper report about what happened to Mr. Ratliff:

All yesterday they gathered in little groups about the town and muttered about (the guard) Jones’ shooting which physicians said probably would prove fatal. Last night a crowd in front of the jail swelled to nearly a thousand at 8:30 o’clock.

At about 9 o’clock, some 200 men slipped into a side door of the jail and asked for the man. Jailer Gilborn refused to give him up. They then overpowered Gilborn, took his keys and got Ratliff. He was dragged in the direction of the public square, but the crowd would not wait to go those few blocks.

At 200 yards from the jail a strong telephone cable was pointed out, a rope flung across it. A noose was put around Ratliff’s neck and a dozen men on the other end of the rope bent their weight, and Ratliff was jerked from the ground. The rope broke. Messengers were sent for another rope, and again the mob set to its task. Then someone remembered that men about to die are usually given a chance to say a last word. For another moment he was lowered to the ground, but, displeased at his mumblings, the crowd yelled “string him up!”

So, Santa Claus met his fate at the hands of the citizens of the town of Cisco. Amazingly, only six people were killed, considering all the shots that were fired. Two of them were police officers.

A plaque has been erected on the outside wall of the old First National Bank building in Cisco which reads, “Scene of daring Santa Claus Bank Robbery.” So far as is known, Santa has never participated in another bank heist.

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Executive Director

San Augustine County Chamber of Commerce

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Hello from San Augustine County Chamber of Commerce.

Starting off in January we had our Installation Gala, where State Representative Trent Ashby came to San Augustine County to help us congratulate all of our award winners. Awards recipients were CHI St. Lukes Memorial, Lucy Mitchell, EMS (Jean Hines), Clayton Bennefield, Boy and Girls Club, Virginia Lipman, Cherry Burnett, Rosemary Blackstock, Martha Butts, Charles and Barbra Mitchell, Heart of Texas Grill, Texas Star Retail, Waldo Dalchau, San Augustine Athletic Department and Betty Oglesbee.

Next up in April we had the 2018 San Augustine County Rodeo! The rodeo was a huge success this past year and our contractor was Hat Brand Rodeo Company and they will be back for the 2019 San Augustine Rodeo. Johnny "Back Flip" Dudley was there and he sure kept us entertained. Garrett Ryles was the Bullfighter and boy was he good at his job! We hope you come join us for our 2019 San Augustine Rodeo for only \$1

admission!

In July, our Civic Auction was next and that is one of our most popular events that helps to support the San Augustine County Chamber of Commerce. We have several games to play that night and it is a good way to get out and let loose. We have several rounds of bingo, silent auction, Hi-Lo game, 54 card games and a live auction, all with items donated by area businesses.

Then in October, our 28th annual Sassafras Festival took place on the Historic Down Town San Augustine Square. We had a variety of vendors, which included face painting, petting zoo, elotes, carnival games, funnel cakes, arts and crafts, clothing, cotton candy and much, much more! Competitors showed out for our contests with their best BBQ, Photo, Art, Costumes and Fudge.

Trunk or Treat was next on October 31 we had the best time passing out candy at Twin Lake Nursing Facility, after that we hit the Historic Down Town San Augustine Square to pass out candy again.

The lighted Christmas Parade, on November 30th was an enchantment of the Holiday Spirit. Great times were had by the young and the young at heart! The very next day on December 1st was the Miss Merry Christmas pageant and the pageant girls showed off in their beautiful gowns.

Thank you all for the support for the last year and we look forward to another wonderful year in 2019!

Snapshot from Around the Town

While removing old plaster from an interior wall at Hardware on the Square in San Augustine, a Coca Cola sign was recently uncovered. It was painted sometime between 1892 and 1920 and is in amazing condition. The "old time" hardware store is located at 134 W. Columbia and is worth a drive to visit. Phone 936.275.9474 for more information. Pictured left-to-right are Hunter Berry, Joe Consford and Buster Consford.



"I've been advertising in *Around the Town* from the very start two years ago and it's the best money I've ever spent. Several times each month, we hear from someone who's seen our ad in the paper. I highly recommend *Around the Town!*"



Hunter Perry
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Imogene's Café & Homemade Baked Goods

by Cheryl Harvey Hill

I was definitely looking forward to interviewing **Imogene Newman**, the owner of this popular café and bakery in the historic little town of **San Augustine**. I had heard so much about her delicious menu, her amazing baked goods, and several impressive awards she has received, but she was quick to tell me, "You won't find nothing fancy here. I'm not a chef, I just cook down-home food. That's really it in a nutshell. We cook the things we were raised on." She goes on to say she has had no formal training, she simply learned to cook and bake by following in the footsteps of the very best cooks she has ever known, her Mother, Grandmother, and Aunt.

Imogene may not be a chef but she has a lot of finesse in the kitchen and has been in the restaurant business for almost fifty years. The last eight years have been dedicated to **Imogene's Café**, which is a true family business. The Café has a very diverse menu and they serve a hearty breakfast, lunch, and dinner. She does all the baking but she has a lot of help in the kitchen. Her granddaughter is a breakfast cook, her sister is a cook, her brother worked with her until he retired a few months ago, and her grandson helps out in a variety of ways. She says they also have three people who work with them "who are not related by blood but they are still family to us."



Imogene Newman, owner of Imogene's in San Augustine.

She is proud to be a third generation cook and baker. She likes creating new dishes but the majority of what they have on the menu really was derived from classic homemade meals. She says they cook what they have been eating all of their lives. Most of their menu items have been passed down through generations of their family. You will find everything from the most simple comfort food to an elaborate 16-ounce ribeye steak dinner, and everything is always served with a choice of sides, the freshest homemade bread, and mouth-watering options for dessert. Throughout the year, the bread and dessert options vary to complement the season. During this time of year, for example, cranberries and pumpkin may be incorporated into a variety of breads and pies.

She looks forward to coming to work every day because she truly enjoys cooking. She loves being creative and positive feedback from their customers is all it takes to keep her motivated and inspired. "There is nothing more gratifying than seeing people enjoy the food you have prepared," she says. I asked her if she was familiar with this old saying by Confucius, "Find a job you love, and you will never work a day in your life." "Yes, yes," she enthusiastically replied, "that is exactly how I feel."

It is very clear after reading only a few of the many customer reviews, that their patrons definitely enjoy the food and the service. More than one customer commented, "the prices are reasonable and the portions are generous," while another stated that Imogene's is, "as good as the best and better than the rest." All of the replies are positive... "delicious, best bread, awesome, terrific, heavenly pies, wonderful burgers, great, like going home, best food anywhere, best waitress, best service"... well, you get the idea. One person summed it up perfectly when they wrote, "The quintessential café on the square." I couldn't have said it better myself.

Since Imogene bakes all the pies, the bread, the cookies, cupcakes, cakes, and makes the candy, I asked her if she ever creates her own recipes. She says that a lot of her pies are her own creations but right now, between **Thanksgiving** and **Christmas**, it is the busiest time of the year for them so they try to stick to the traditional menu unless they get a special request. They make so many pies, cakes, candies, pumpkin butter, and jellies during this time of year. When I ask if she has a favorite recipe, she says, "it changes often, but at the moment my favorite is the German Chocolate Pie." When I ask if she has created anything new for this month, "As a matter of fact", she replied, "I just made a new pie this morning. It should be good, I used lots of chocolate. Lots and lots of chocolate she reiterates. I think people will like it, it's a Pecan Brownie Pie."

As we wrap up our interview she says she is very proud of the café, her family, and equally proud of her community. She credits the generosity of their patrons, and hard work of her family, for their success. She hopes her customers know that seeing them enjoying their meals, their bread, or their dessert, is what motivates her. It's contagious she says, "Seeing her patrons smile, makes her smile," and I predict the pecan-brownie-pie is going to generate a lot more smiles.

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Santa's Christmas Parade
SHELBY COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
PRESENTS

Saturday, December 1, 2018 — 6:00 p.m.

**Historic Downtown Center Square
Presented by Shelby Savings Bank**

The Shelby County Chamber of Commerce, Santa's Christmas Parade Committee announces the 2018 parade will be held on Saturday, December 1, 2018 beginning at 6:00 p.m. The theme for the parade this year is *A Mardi Gras Christmas* and is presented by Shelby Savings Bank.

Categories for the 2018 themed parade will include Individuals, Schools, Businesses, Churches and Civic Organizations. Judges will award cash prizes to the top three places in each category, First \$100, Second \$50 and Third \$25 and the Overall Best in Show Float will receive \$250 cash prize.

Parade float entry registration is free and completed applications must be returned to the Shelby County Chamber of Commerce office by the entry deadline on Wednesday, November 21, 2018.

Parade Float applications with entry rules are now available at the Shelby County Chamber of Commerce office located at 100 Courthouse Square, A-101 on the historic downtown Center square or online at www.shelby-countychamber.com.

In keeping with the established holiday tradition, this year's parade guarantees a time of grand celebration with fun and excitement for everyone. The parade will feature a special Grand Marshal, holiday floats, marching bands, and of course, Santa Claus.

Contributing sponsors include Float Competition Sponsor, City of Center and Silver Sponsors are Specter, Inc., Tyson Foods and Farmers State Bank.

The Shelby County Chamber of Commerce is organized to promote and advance economic enrichment and development, tourism, and the social and civic interest of Shelby County and adjoining areas. For additional information, please call 936.598.3682, email info@shelbycountychamber.com

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