

Issue 20
Winter 2023

East Texan



Cruse-ing into Stardom

*How Woodville's singer/songwriter
Kim Cruse captured national attention*



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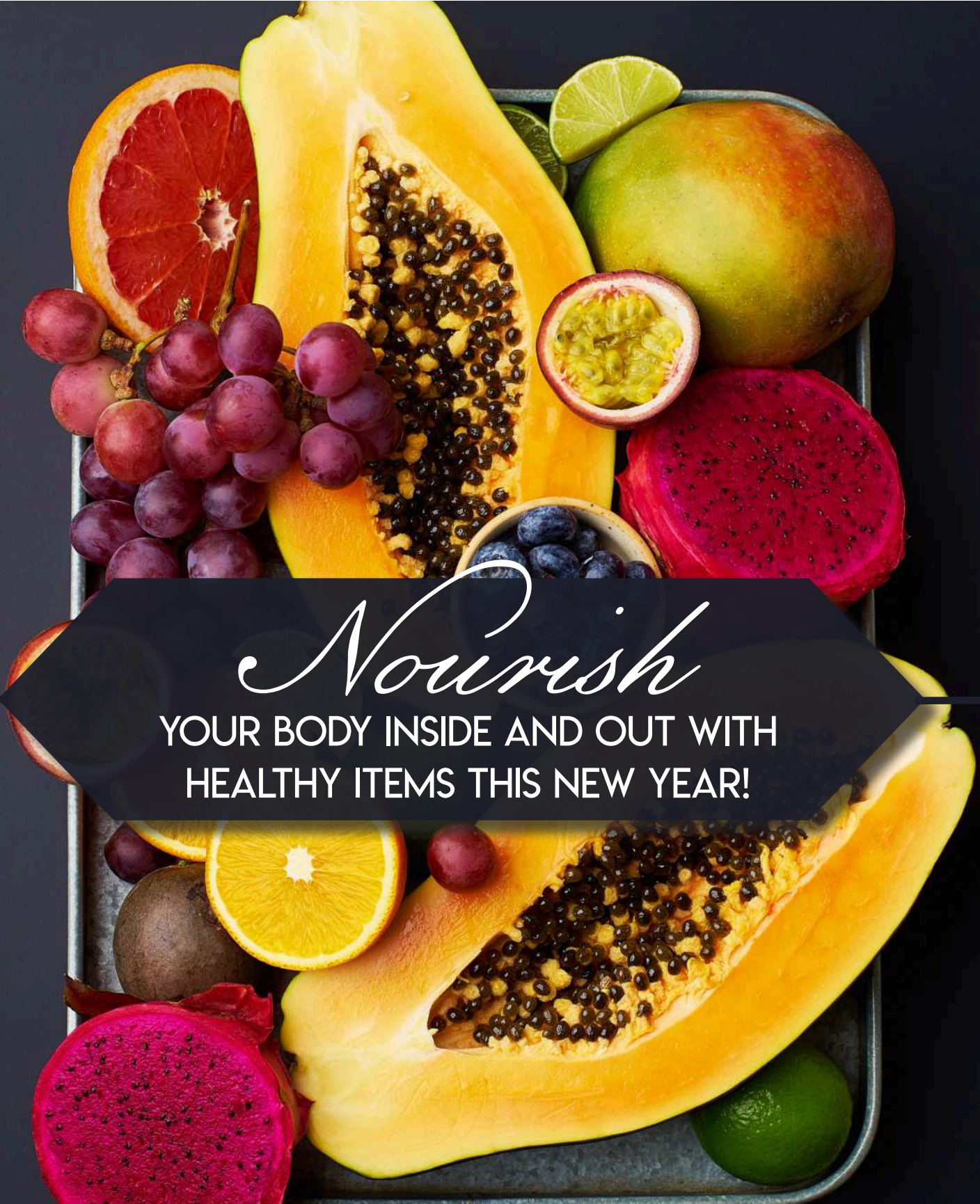
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Winter is here again in East Texas, which means cold days, warm days, some rainy days and some sunny days. One of the great things about living in this area of Texas are the ample warm days that can be enjoyed sampling nature and many great local attractions peppered in with the occasional spell of cool weather, just enough to remind us that cold and wet winter days mean a beautiful, lush spring. While some do not enjoy winter as much as others, it's still a wonderful time to enjoy local activities, try new hobbies, gather with families, and gather as communities. This issue of the East Texan reflects on just that. From quilting, food, and art to local histories and personal interest stories, East Texas boasts an ever-impressive display of warmth and community that continues to set an example the world seems to so desperately need.

With the midterms over and the holidays winding down, take some time to relax and read a story about our people, our culture, and all that East Texas has to offer. Let this winter be a season of family, community, new interests, and new experiences as we wait for the warmer months ahead!



~ Debbie Dickerson
East Texan editor

On The Cover



Photo by Emily Banks Wooten.
See full story on page 6.

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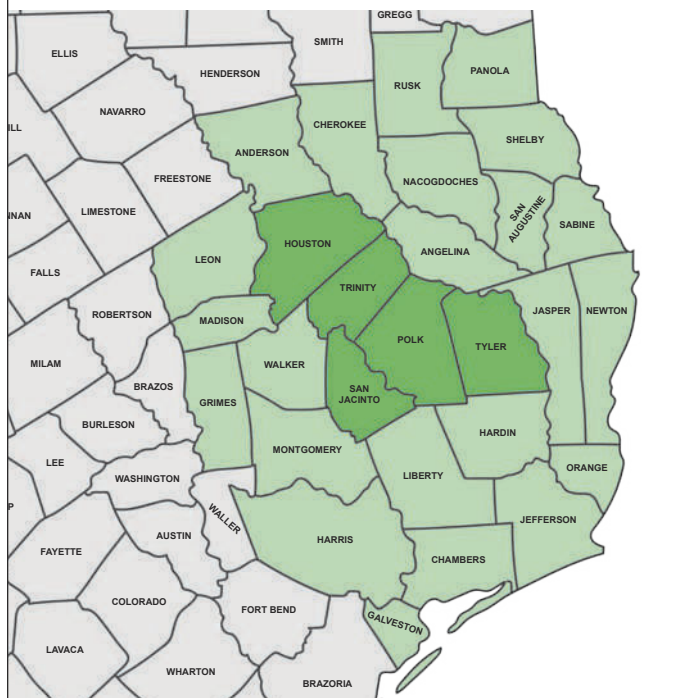


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How Woodville's singer/songwriter Kim Cruse captured national attention



For your service
Quilted by: Jeanie Noble
Date: Nov. 14, 2022
Presented to: Gary Wright

Special quilts cover service members, veterans touched by war

QUILTS of HONOR

By Emily Banks Wooten

Quilts of Honor is a program of the Livingston Piecemakers Quilt Guild. The mission of the program is to cover service members and veterans touched by war with comforting healing Quilts of Honor.

“The Quilts of Honor usually reflect patriotic colors. Veterans across the nation have been receiving these quilts of love from quilters. The quilts represent the prayers, healing thoughts and gratefulness of their makers. Quilts of Honor have been presented to veterans who have served and fought for our nation in all branches of our military in World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, Operation Desert Storm/Shield, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom and other conflicts around the world; along with those whose have served or serve in the military in service to our country,” according to Bonnie Walker, a Guild member and chairman of the Quilts of Honor program.

Thirty Quilts of Honor were presented in a moving program this past Veterans Day. Those receiving the quilts included: Wylie Rigel Angel, Roger L. Barken Jr., George D. Barr, CSM Jack W. Booth Jr., David E. Breaux, Aldred Elisha Coker, Peggy Hill Coker, Robert Crumpler, Carolee Kuest Day, John Daniel Day, Charlotte Ann Graham, Joshua Tyrone Green, Dalton C. Halton, Terry Wayne Halton, Paul W. Hughes (deceased),

Paul L. Jackson, Raymond B. Keating III, Larry K. Kestler, James Franklin Kingcaid (deceased), Harry Laxton, Richard E. Lay, John J. LePage, Pdc. Charles “Bill” Linton, Edward R. Liss, Troy Mach, Trooper Angel Maldonado, Robert Bryan Neal, Bernard Lee Norton, Dale K. Pearson Jr., Trooper Leonel Pizano, James A. Pusateri, Robert Pusateri, Jessie R. Simmons, Frederick S. Simmons III, Shelton S. Skains III, Gary W. Smith, Sgt. Tamela Snider, Edward L. Sommers, Trooper Thomas Thurston, Jerry L. Wooddell, Michael Woods and Sgt. Gary Wright.

The Quilts of Honor were made by: Marci Dickens, Lisa Jefferies, Sharon Jefferies, members of the SNS Bee, LaDonyce Hamilton, Linda Deeter, Sarah Hiatt, Patty Drewett, Sharon Jeans, Lyla Wenneker, Rose Miller, Brenda Hopson, Bonnie Walker, Cathay Tullos, Jammie Ackley, Mary Parrish, Lisa Anderson, Karen Repa, Gail Kestler, Lou Ann Nichols, Mary Wilson, Vicki Wooddell, Bonnie Magid, Susan Louis, Sondra Sterling, Linda Bogggers Parsons, Terri Cook, Jeanie Noble, Karen Lee, Kay Hardy and Norma Christensen.

The Livingston Piecemakers Quilt Guild is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that was established and organized in Livingston in 1994 to promote and preserve the art of quilting and encourage fellowship among quilters of all levels of experience from beginner to accomplished. The Guild provides





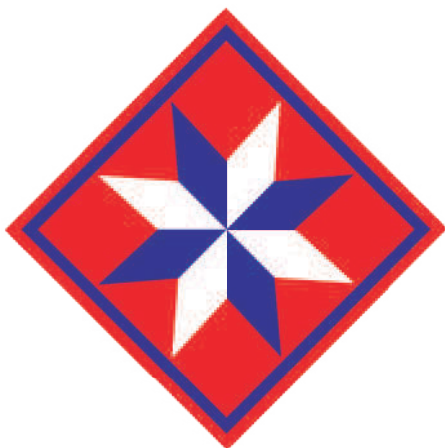
opportunities for continuing education among those interested in the art of quilting.

The Guild meets at 9 a.m. on the second Monday of the month at Blanchard Baptist Church located at 2450 FM 2457 in Livingston. They start with social time, then have a business meeting followed by a program and then show and tell, along with other Guild activities.

The Guild's year runs from April 1 to March 31 and they welcome new members throughout the year. Guests are welcome to attend two meetings free before joining. Annual dues are \$25 for full membership and \$15 for associate membership

The Guild holds a Quilt Show every two years that features over 100 quilts and demonstrations. There is also a donation quilt each year in which raffle tickets are sold. The donation quilt is one of the major fundraisers for the Guild. The money raised from selling tickets for this quilt is used to help defray the cost for the Guild's operating expenses. Each year, Guild members design, assemble, quilt and sell tickets for this quilt. The drawing for the donation quilt is held at the September meeting. Proceeds go mostly toward the Guild's charitable work such as batting and backing for the quilts of honor. Guild members have also made bibs for the residents of Timberwood Nursing Home and stockings to go in the care packages sent to members of the military through the F.A.I.T.H. Military Support Group. Tickets are one for \$1 or six for \$5 and the drawing is usually held in September.

For additional information about the Livingston Piecemakers Quilt Guild, contact the Guild at <https://lpqgtexas.org/>. ■





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THE PEPPER TREE

By Jolene Renfro

As you travel Texas State Highway 21, on the El Camino Real or historic King's Highway, about 26 miles east of Crockett, you will see a sign marking the location of the *Vitex angus-castus*, known as the Lilac Chaste Tree or Monk's Pepper, or locally — the Pepper Tree.

Looking its age (174), this tree has survived storms, droughts, and freezes, and is still standing. The Pepper Tree was planted in 1848, and has four offspring in the county, which were planted under the auspices of Miss Eliza Bishop, County Historian.

Of these younger trees, the first is located on the northwest corner of the Houston County Courthouse in downtown Crockett, two more are on West Goliad Avenue near the Crockett Depot, and a fourth is located on the northeast corner of the Quest School, next to the school's Administration Building on East Houston Avenue.

The original parent tree is said to have been planted by the Kennedy Family, early settlers of the Weches and Neches areas in the 1840s.

Although a native of China and India, the Lilac Chaste tree has been cultivated in the United States since 1670, and came to Texas with the early settlers. Hardy, with large, fragrant, beautiful blue or lavender flower spikes, it is a spectacular butterfly-attracting plant that the deer do not like to eat. Although not kin to the true Lilac tree (in the olive family), in Texas, the Pepper Tree (which is in the mint family) is a wonderful substitute for the Lilac tree that grows in the Northern states, and it is more reliable than the Buddleia or Butterfly Bush that we often grow here.

More and more, this tree can be purchased from local nurseries, but if you have a friend with seeds to share, you can plant your own. The following is how to get them started.

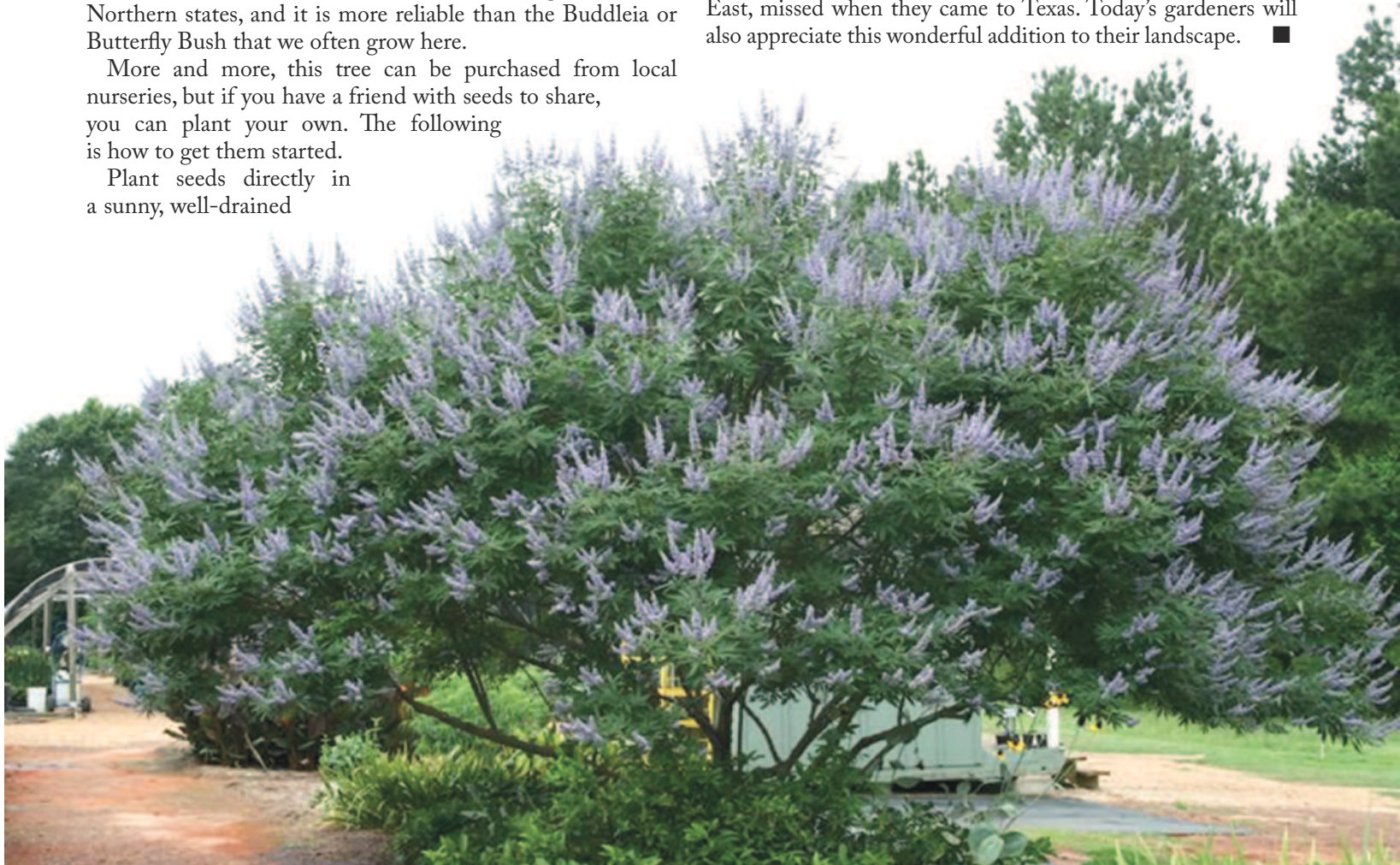
Plant seeds directly in a sunny, well-drained

location in either acid or alkaline soil. In good soil, the tree can reach up to 125 feet in height, and get twice as wide as it is tall, so allow plenty of space if you don't want to have to be continually cutting it back. Be patient, it will take a while to start growing, but the time can be shortened by pre-soaking the seed in water before you plant or by scarifying with an emery board.

Another way to propagate the seeds is to place them in a plastic bag with a handful of slightly moistened peat moss, and place the bag in the refrigerator for three months during the winter. This will break the dormancy of the seed. Plant the seed ¼ inch deep after the last frost and keep it watered until it sprouts from the ground in 2-4 weeks. Mulch heavily to keep in the moisture and keep out the weeds.

Once growing, if you will trim off the seed pods after every bloom cycle, you will enjoy the maximum floral display of this plant in the spring and fall. With good water and fertilizer application, the plants will bloom again within six weeks of seed pod removal.

The first specific medicinal indications of *Vitex* can be found in the writings of Hippocrates, 4th Century B.C. He recommends the plant for injuries, inflammation, and passing of afterbirth. The English names for *Vitex*, "Chaste Tree" or "Monk's Pepper," are derived from the belief that it would help monks and others maintain their vows of chastity ... hence the name Monk's Pepper, or Pepper Tree. The name "Lilac Chaste Tree" is derived from the fact that it was a great substitute for the Lilacs that the early pioneer women, who came from the East, missed when they came to Texas. Today's gardeners will also appreciate this wonderful addition to their landscape. ■




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Cruse-ing into STARDOM

How Woodville's uber-talented (and uber-sweet) singer/songwriter Kim Cruse captured national attention

By Chris Edwards

The first time Kim Cruse shared her improbably beautiful instrument with a large crowd was when she performed our nation's anthem before a full stadium of Space City basketball fans.

The Rockets were playing the New Orleans Pelicans that night, in 2018, and Cruse, who had already obtained experience aplenty plying her trade as a singer/songwriter in churches, clubs and at festivals, was grateful, yet nervous for such an opportunity.

"I just remember my booking manager calling me, and saying 'OMG, I'm about to cry!'" she said.

The young musician, who grew up as part of an incredibly loving, supportive and fun-loving family, recalled the moment when she got the gig. She admitted she was "a bit nervous, but overall, grateful" for the opportunity, and surmised that adrenaline would kick in as she performed to such a large crowd, and the experience would be over before she realized it.

Flash forward a few years and the 30-year-old Woodville native is an "it girl" in pop culture – she has the pre-requisite beauty and charisma, but there's one thing she possesses by the truckload that many passing fads seemingly do not, and that is talent.

Cruse's vocal bona-fides and compelling, in-charge stage presence has been beamed, internationally, into the ears and onto the eyes of those who relish great vocal talent, courtesy of NBC's *The Voice*.

There are singers who sing a song, and it stays sung. Kim

Cruse belongs in that rarefied class.

Cruse's vocal abilities consistently wowed the four celebrity judges on the program, during its 22nd season. During her debut, within the show's blind auditions last October, in which the hopefuls sing while judges all with backs turned, all four judges turned their chairs; wowed by Cruse, who sang "The Best Part", originally recorded by Daniel Caesar and H.E.R.

Gwen Stefani, long a household name outside of No Doubt, commented that Cruse's performance was "so undeniably pretty I don't even know how to talk after that."

After the judges turned their chairs around as she sang, each put in emphatic bids for her attention; each one wanting to be her coach.

Ultimately, she chose John Legend, a similarly minded artist, who made his fortune (and critical acclaim) mining a spiritually tinged neo-soul sound. "That tone immediately got me," Legend said. "I can't wait to work with her," he added.

The real deal

The term "overnight sensation" is fraught with the fault of a fickle public's perception. For every artist, band or performer who seems to emerge from nowhere to top the charts or reach the heights of viral YouTube stardom, there's been years, decades even, woodshedding their artform.

Cruse has been a professional musician now for several years and, since childhood, has not been shy about demonstrating her powerful voice.

The night the inaugural episode of her run on "The Voice" aired, she played hostess to a full house of family and friends



Kim Cruse at a meet-and-greet at the Emporium Stage in Woodville. Photo by Chris Edwards.



Kim, flanked by her parents Rev. Bobby Cruse and Ramona Cruse, at Magnolia Bar and Grill. Photo by Chris Edwards.

on Monday night at the Emporium Stage in Woodville at a watch party, said the show could prove to be a pivotal moment in her life.

As her segment came up on the screen in front of a roomful of family, friends and well-wishers, it was clear from the get-go that hometown support was working toward Cruse's favor.

During her audition, Cruse said she improvised a little screamed "yeah" in the song, as she couldn't contain her excitement, and singing for the panel of judges. "At first I didn't want to look at them," she said, "So I just played to the crowd."

Within the show's interstitial footage, the Woodville native was showcased doing the things she loves doing with her family, and back home, the wave of support for her has been enormous. During the first watch party, the crowd gave a room-filling cheer each time Kim was on camera, as the episode was projected onto the Emporium stage wall. The footage of her fishing with her dad, as well as her encouragement for young people of a creative mind to pursue their dreams helped make her a fantastic role model, and also helped showcase a small slice of Woodville, Texas, to the world at large.

During her run, regular watch parties took place on the patio of the Magnolia Bar and Grill, where large crowds could be found cheering her on while she performed on the television screen, in front of those family, friends and well-wishers, as well as an international audience.

Her acceptance by mainstream culture, by and large, represents something many Tyler County residents already knew – she is the real deal, a charismatic, soulful artist who owns the songs she sings and writes. Her uncommon ease of

spirit also ensures that no matter how successful she becomes, she will remain the same, beloved country girl with the big dreams and bigger voice.

In the top-shelf echelon of vocalists that Cruse inhabits, he or she communicates a song effortlessly, regardless of whether he or she had a hand in composing said song or not. In other words: they live inside the song.

Among these timeless American voices, the late great hillbilly Shakespeare Hank Williams; Texas's own blues-belter Janis Joplin; the sweet and charismatic Southern chanteuse Emmylou Harris; the unimpeachable, soulful Nina Simone; the Man in Black Johnny Cash and the powerful, yet tormented, soul of Layne Staley from Alice in Chains all loom large, among others, in the history of American music. Kim Cruse will be thought of among the same powerful pantheon one day.

Her sound, and her way of owning and living inside of a song, put her in a class that is far removed from most people who would mark "singer" or "musician" as a job title.

From ABCs to viral videos

The charismatic 30-year-old artist has already achieved viral video stardom prior to her star turn on television, and has toured the country, both as a solo act, as well as part of other artists' shows. She has also proven herself as a songwriter and recording artist, with the 2021 release of an eponymously titled five-song EP.

Before all of that, Cruse grew up in her father's church, Little Baptist Church, in Woodville, where she sang as often as she

could from an early age. She credits her parents, the beloved Rev. Bobby Cruse and Ramona Cruse, as her biggest inspirations to sing and perform. Music was a constant in the Cruse household for little Kim, and her older brothers, Brandon and Josh.

“They’ve worked so hard to help make everything happen for me. I want to be able to give them the world and more,” she said of her nurturing parents.

In an on-camera interview, on the show, Rev. Cruse recalled a time when his daughter was three years old and sang before his flock. The interview he gave was accompanied by footage of a very young Kim singing with the church band.

“My first public performance has to have been at church. We would have musicals at our church quite often. I believe I sang a song called ‘Mississippi Poor Boy’ with a quartet that my dad invited out,” said Kim.

She also recalled, fondly, how she would stand in her front yard as a small child and sing whatever her favorite song happened to be at the time. “Waking my lovely neighbors up on Saturday mornings” is a fond memory she recalled from growing up in Woodville.

“My parents like to say I was singing before I was talking. In daycare, I was always the talker and the one who sang,” she said. She learned the alphabet by singing the letters, and admits “I was so extra with it,” in how she sang her ABCs.

From her childhood filled with singing and music to numerous classical choir competitions in high school, Cruse worked steadily at her craft. She took up songwriting during her high school years, and auditioned for several television shows, such as American Idol and Sunday’s Best, as well as The Voice. She first auditioned for the show in 2012, and said that after the audition, she was told that if she did not receive a call back by one o’clock, then it was a “no.”

In 2016, she developed a polyp on a vocal cord, and got surgery to correct the problem. After that, she auditioned a few more times, and said “it took me a while to get comfortable with my new voice.”

At Stephen F. Austin State University, Cruse studied voice, and Nita Hudson, a faculty member at SFASU’s School of Music, said that Cruse is a student whom she recalled as possessing “a major natural talent,” and now is “singing the style of music that best suits her voice.”

“I am very proud of her,” Hudson said, and added that she wishes for her continued success.

Of her earlier auditions for television, Cruse said she went to Los Angeles to try out for the show but was not chosen at that time. That incentivized her to go ahead and try her hand at putting out some of her own music.

In 2021, she released the EP, which featured such tunes as “Daydreamin’.” The recording received positive reviews, and many who heard it and had the



*Kim and her mother, Ramona, atop a fire truck at send-off parade in Woodville.
Photo by Donna Hammer.*



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chance to catch her live compared her sound to such legends as Nina Simone and Billie Holiday. Later that year, Cruse wrote a song for Waffle House titled “Don’t You Wanna Go,” after being tapped by the corporation to create a song and video extolling the chain’s virtues.

A Heroic Homecoming

It has been said by observers on more than one occasion that an overabundance of talent is within the Pineywoods of East Texas.

Every small town in the region seems to offer up a downtown art gallery full of representations of local painters and photographers, most of whom commit to their chosen artform just for something to do.

In most all of the bars and restaurants hosting live music, there are singers, songwriters, pickers and bands who often go unappreciated until the day one of them “makes it,” yet many ace musicians and singers never get past the back porches, living rooms and campfires. Many of the region’s musicians learn to sing and play in churches and create harmonies lushier than anything coming from the Grand Ole Opry stage.

Kim Cruse joins a roster of Deep East Texas talents who have sprung into the national consciousness through the auspices of a television talent show. Fellow Tyler County native Kree Harrison is an alumna of American Idol and is now a songwriter and recording artist in Nashville. Others, such as Lufkin’s Dave Fenley, Kacey Musgraves from Golden, Livingston’s Laci Kaye Booth and superstar Miranda Lambert (of Mineola) all took the similar path Cruse did. They were all working musicians prior to being picked for television and were all able to use the shows they appeared on to further their careers.

Cruse made it to the semifinals on The Voice but fell short of the votes to end up on the finale. During her run on the show, she consistently wowed the judges with performances ranging from the Aretha Franklin classic “I Never Loved a Man” to Willie Nelson’s “Always on my Mind.”

After her stint on the show, Cruse said she cannot say

anything besides “thank you, God” for the experience. “I wouldn’t trade this experience for the world,” she said. “I left it all on the stage, so I have no regrets.”

Many performers who wind up winning on shows like The Voice or American Idol lack the real-world experience of touring and playing in clubs, or on packed festival bills to often underwhelming crowds. Those are the names and faces relegated to “where are they now?” clickbait lists, despite their 15 minutes of fame. Kim Cruse will not be afforded a similar fate. Her talent and love of great songs put her in the realm once inhabited by such greats as Aretha Franklin and Etta James.

Cruse said that off-camera, Legend really pushed her to give her best performances and to go past any perceived limitations, something she said she needed as an artist. Legend said from the beginning that Cruse was already a “full-fledged star,” and the two developed a lasting professional relationship and friendship.

Her return to Woodville, in early December, was marked by a large crowd that was stationed along the driveway of her alma mater, Woodville High School, to greet her.

With The Voice behind her, Cruse will return to her regular gig as the worship leader at Mount Corinth Church in Houston, and will no doubt give her all to whatever recording projects and gigs she can take on, but one thing is certain: the metrics of commercial success in the music business could never be enough to eclipse the love and support Cruse has in her hometown.

Another particular songstress who shot to superstardom once upon a time once said that her ambition was “to rule the world,” early in her career. Her star power is already present and clear, yet Kim Cruse comes across as the same humble, friendly soul she’s always been. Her ambition might not include world domination, but she will certainly let the world around her know of her immense talent.

“I want to be a model, someone who can testify and say, ‘Hey, this is what can happen if you stay true to who you are and trust God and his timing.’” ■

Children and staff of Jacob's Ladder Learning Center in Woodville with Kim and her mother. Photo by Jim Powers.



Putting her Heart into Metal Art



By Jan White

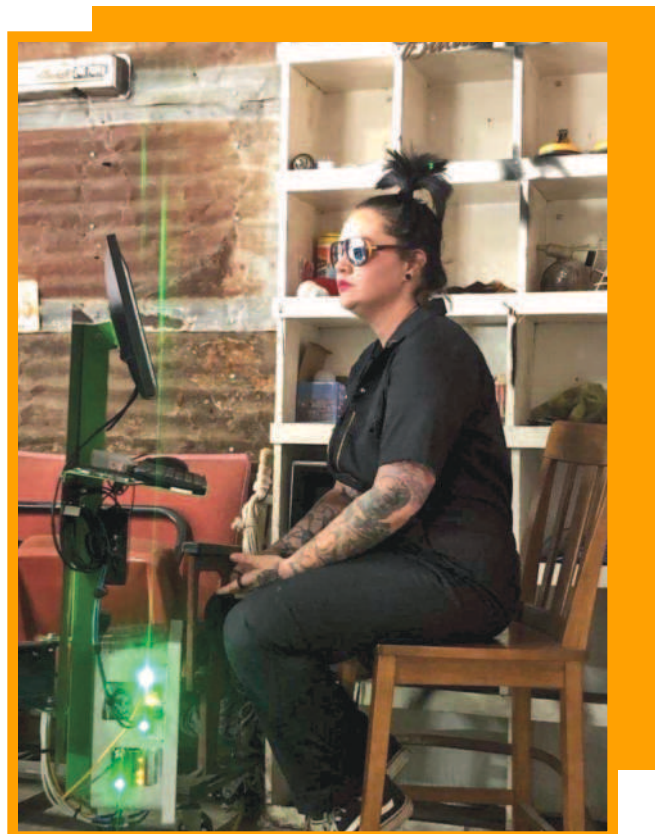
Art takes all forms. It can be found hanging in galleries or museums or in the lyrics of a song or the choreography of a dance. And if you take a drive down East Goliad Street in Crockett, Texas, you'll find art in the form of stunning metal designs and uniquely crafted signs created by artist and entrepreneur Robin Ogg.

Robin and her husband, Ronnie, have been operating their custom fabricated metal parts company, Filthy Gringos, since 2017. Ronnie has over 20 years of experience as a custom builder, and Robin adds her artistic background to help create one-off ideas for custom builds. The husband-and-wife duo makes everything from full-build choppers to fabricated, one-of-a-kind items, such as luggage racks, handlebars, and sissy bars for any motorcycle make or model.

Recently, Robin branched out with a new venture. Her energy and passion for life and art come alive in her voice and eyes as she relates the story of how FG Metalwork began. The couple, who hail from Seabrook, had a five-year plan.

"We would pay off our house, sell it, then use the profits to buy land somewhere, maybe out in the country, where we could run our business and ship from there. We were even thinking about buying property outside of Texas."

That plan changed, however, when a weekend trip landed them in a small, East Texas town. As they made their way through



the streets of Crockett, a city block of deserted buildings caught their attention.

“There was something about the old buildings that drew me to them,” Ogg said.

While eyeing the building that once housed Crockett’s popular Tchoupitoula restaurant and its adjacent structures, Ogg spotted two gentlemen across the street and told her husband, “They look like guys walking the property.” It turned out to be Marco and Ricardo Hayes, who were in the process of purchasing buildings on the block. The brothers shared their vision with the Oggs to bring East Goliad back to life and to restore Bear Hall — formerly an old, saloon-style business that had been closed for years — into a premier venue for live music.

“It really spoke to me,” Ogg said.

After listening to their plans to revive their side of the street, Ogg and her husband discussed the pros and cons of purchasing one of the East Goliad buildings across from Bear Hall.

“The street was dead. Nothing was going on there. The property we were looking at was over budget. It wasn’t feasible for the relocating the shop we currently had. And I wasn’t looking for property on the main drag. It didn’t make sense.”

Maybe it didn’t make sense from a pragmatic aspect, but Ogg, a huge blues fan, said, “It was the idea of being so close to Camp Street, which is so connected with the blues and all of its music history. I just felt like this was where we were supposed to be.”

The couple spent that Sunday night in Crockett and put in an offer on the building located at 202 East Goliad Avenue the next morning.

“It [the building] was about 40 percent collapsed in on itself,” Ogg stated. “It had about a foot of water standing in it. It had a mountain of trash in the back. And I was like, ‘It’s perfect.’”

Ogg says she was lucky enough to have grown up with a contractor.

“We would move into a house and flip it while we were still in it. I was always living in a construction zone. So that part didn’t bother me at all.”

Renovations started in November 2021, and by March 2022, the doors of Filthy Gringos opened for business in their new location. It wasn’t long after the opening that the idea for Ogg’s next venture began germinating.

“It started around May of this year,” she said.

Ogg had been creating custom floorboards and luggage racks for motorcycles. She would design an item, outsource it to be cut, then shipped back to her. Ogg realized that the process limited both her creativity and her ability to work on larger projects. So she began saving up for a plasma table, which, she said, would allow her to reimagine her projects on a much larger scale than just floorboards and motorcycle parts.

The plasma table Ogg purchased can hold a 4x6 piece of sheet metal.

For those unfamiliar with the process, plasma, in the simplest term, is ionized gas. Plasma cutting is a thermal method of cutting and etching metals. A plasma cutting

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table is typically a flat-bedded surface comprised of steel slats spaced approximately two to four inches apart. These steel slats not only support the material being cut but are also filled with water to help absorb the heat of the thermal cutting process. Ogg starts with a design, either hand-drawn or using a computer-aided design (CAD) program on the computer, then uses another program to complete the code, which tells the plasma torch what and where to cut. The torch is suspended directly above the table and rides on a “bridge” over the material, moving in conjunction with the program sent via computer.

And that’s how FG Metalwork was born.

Ogg first started cutting personal metalwork items, but her business began to grow due to interest garnered from her website and word of mouth.

One of her early large-scale projects was a custom gate built for a dog run outside of town. The design required four quarter-inch pieces that would slide into frames built into the gate. The scene she designed incorporated elements found on the property – low-flying ducks over a marshy stream.

“People have been very supportive and trusting of my designs,” Ogg said. “They leave it up to me to come up with the initial idea, but I really try to get a sense of the customer’s direction. It’s a team effort, so when they receive their product, they feel like they’ve had a large part in it. I don’t think you really get that in many design businesses.”

With plasma art, nine times out of ten, you get what Ogg calls “cookie cutter” metal art.

“Like the big “W” cutout that stands for “Williams” or other very basic scenes. My goal is to offer some of these ranchers out here a little more elaborate or unique artwork for them that maybe they couldn’t get before.”

Because of her interest in all things vintage, Ogg has big aspirations for sprucing up the signage in the historic downtown Crockett area.

“I want to make this row of buildings enticing,” Ogg said. “It’s kinda the first thing you see when you come down East Goliad into town. We want people to pull in and say, ‘What’s all this?’ and really catch their interest.”





CAMP STREET

EAST TEXAS

BLUES

The first sign that went up as part of Ogg's plan is the hanging Old Crockett Wine Emporium sign. It is a double-sided LED style, says Ogg, and has gotten the attention of both visitors and locals.

"I grew up around the Galveston area and that kind of sign style gives you a certain feeling — like old downtown. It's a new business, but it's got this old feeling to it that creates a nostalgic vibe."

Ogg says she's trying to keep the aesthetic between art deco and 1950s retro signs.

"It goes along with the history of the town rather than a modern look, which falls right into my love of that style."

She hopes her idea of using the lighted vintage signs in the downtown area will catch on.

"A city at night, with lights on just seems more productive. More welcoming."

Currently, Ogg is working on a sign for Bear Hall.

"It's a 'Live Music' sign fashioned in the 1940s style. At night, the five-by-three sign will light up with the old-school bulbs that stand out away from the flat sign surface."

The artwork is an original, completely hand-drawn, designed by her personally.

"There's no other sign out there like it."

A creativity that knows no bounds, Ogg has a fountain of ideas, from sprucing up downtown Crockett to generating interest in vintage car shows, rockabilly bands, and vintage airplanes.

"I always had a love for vintage and retro."

Her eclectic style is also found in the items used to produce some of her art.



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“See that Camp Street sign?” she asked, pointing to the impressive piece of art hanging on the wall. “That’s made from a metal air conditioning pan I found lying out in the street. I wanted a piece that was an homage to Camp Street, so I made this sign that says ‘Camp Street East Texas Blues.’”

At present, FG Metalwork shares its space with Filthy Gringos, but Ogg’s dream is to divide the room and have the motorcycle shop on one side and the metalworks shop on the other. She wants to set up an art gallery for her creations.

“I want to incorporate movement into it — maybe lighting that reflects on the ground. And I want to make things like high-end cutlery and custom barbecue pits, items you just can’t get anywhere else.”

Ogg hopes that more artisans will be drawn to the area.

“I have a friend who works in stained glass. I keep telling her she needs to get down here. I love that this town has been so open to artistic suggestions.”

Saint Francis of Assisi once said, “He who works with his hands is a laborer. He who works with his hands and his head is a craftsman. He who works with his hands, his head, and his heart is an artist.” Robin Ogg is an artist in the truest sense of the word. ■





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Culture of Community

Nigton organization focuses on the future,
but keeps its past near to its heart



The road leading into Nigton belies the strength of the community.

By Tony Farkas

A sign on FM 2262 in northeast Trinity County says Nigton, but there's not much other than trees lining the highway in both directions.

About a mile further, though, is a historical marker that has the town's history and significance emblazoned on it, a testament to the residents' resilience in keeping the community thriving.

As an example of Nigton's long memory, about 12 feet away from the marker is a tiny playhouse, made from the remains of the town's former Masonic Lodge.

Nigton was founded in 1873 by former slaves, and named by early civic leader Jeff Carter, a former slave. In the early days, it boasted three churches, a sawmill, and hundreds of residents.

The population at one time swelled to above 500.

Ruth Williams, a 42-year resident of Nigton, remembers the town was booming when she first arrived.

Moreover, it was a tight-knit, cohesive community.

"It was a loving community," she said. "Although, a lot of the old-timers have died out, and a lot of the younger folks have moved on. But we've stuck together."

Kids coming home from school, if no one is home, can stay at a neighbor's house. If a family doesn't have water, someone will provide that. There are clothing drives, food drives, and more.

To further that sense of cohesion, the Nigton Historical Development Project was formed.

Board Member LaToya Walker-Hernandez said the mission of the NHDP is simple: to make sure people, especially former residents, are aware and understand the importance of community.



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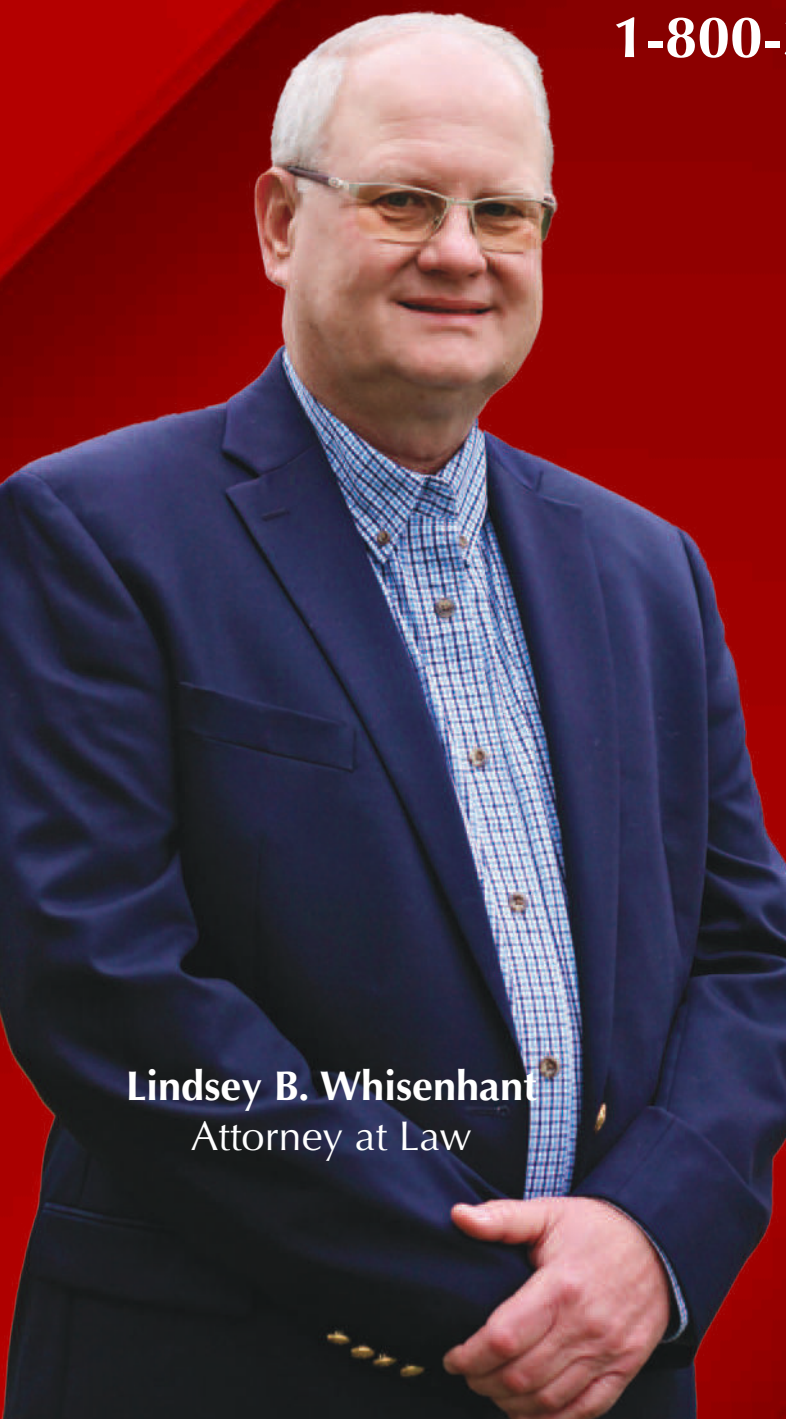


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“This is something I feel is lost to this generation,” she said. “I grew up here, and there was such a sense of community here, that no matter where you came from, you were one of us. Everybody took care of everybody, and we still have that today.”

Walker-Hernandez said the group will give people knowledge and education about Nigton and continue the efforts to get people to understand this is a place to which you can move back.

Currently, the population is less than 100, but NHDP organizers are seeing that change; during the 2022 homecoming, more than 1,000 people came to town.

For many years, longtime resident Elonda Lee worked hard in the community to offer services, such as tutorials for kids, and it was her vision to have a center to be used for different purposes.

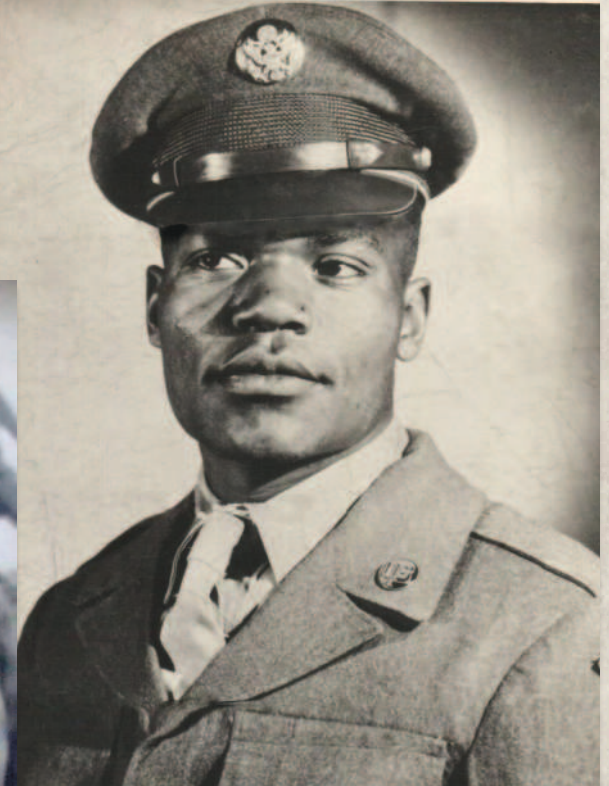
Walker-Hernandez said Lee worked hard toward the goal of a community center, so in 2016, she joined Lee in her quest. Sadly, a short time after the first meeting, Lee passed away, but the committee and townspeople kept the vision going, and expanded it.

On Dec. 3, Lee’s vision became a reality, as the NHDP broke ground on a community center.

Beginning in 2016, NHDP has held fundraisers toward the goal of building the center, and that included seeking grant funds from Trinity County, which had some money available from the America Rescue Plan Act. In November 2022, the NHDP was awarded \$50,000.

“When we learned about funds being available, we started showing up at the county meetings,” Walker-Hernandez said.

Since Nigton is part of the county and has a significant impact through taxes, it was time for some to come back.



The Nigton Historical Marker, proclaiming the past of the community, is flanked by a building created from the remains of the town’s Masonic Lodge. Photo by Tony Farkas.





Elonda Lee was the driving force behind the betterment of the Nigton Community.



Walker-Hernandez said the center will be used for a variety of purposes, including providing services to anyone in need, to build up the history of Nigton and to maintain the strength of the community. This provides the opportunity for a food bank, a place for people to get clothing, or whatever anyone in the Nigton community, or even the surrounding area, needs.

For instance, during the February 2021 Winter Storm Uri, there was nothing for people to use as a warming shelter.

“We drove around the area and found other towns had safe havens; even the road work stopped at the bridge leading into Nigton, leaving ice on the roads,” Walker-Hernandez said. “We most likely will have another storm like that, so with this building we can have a warming station, or a cooling station. Since the water quality in the area is horrible, it will have a well system for people to get clean water.”

With the center built, it has opened doors for the NHDP to move forward to its next project — tackling the water system.

“People have to buy water to brush their teeth; imagine having to start your day by opening a bottle of water.

“What that means is that like always, we step up and take care of the community.”

Williams said there’s an excitement about some of the changes, and that is evident in the popularity of the annual Nigton Homecoming celebration.

“The younger folks seem to be trickling back in, and the annual homecoming celebration is evidence of that,” she said. “When it started in 2017, it was lightly attended, but this year it was close to 1,000 people, many natives of Nigton.”

Walker-Hernandez said they hope to light the fuse on a second boom for the city. And while the town’s name might strike some as offensive, the people of the town haven’t seen a reason to change it.



The Ligon Chapel, founded around 1870, remains in use today. Photo by Tony Farkas.





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“When you say the word Nigton, you may ask where the name came from, and why it hasn’t been changed,” Walker-Hernandez said. “It sparks a conversation that is critical to have, but we’re one of two communities in Texas that held on to the slave-given name.”

From those humble beginnings came greatness: Walker-Hernandez said there are a lot of firsts connected with Nigton, such as the first black female to pitch in a state tournament game; and even the first black referee in the Southwest Conference hails from the community, as well as doctors, lawyers and politicians.

Willie Deason, who heads up the group’s fundraising efforts, said there are exceptional people here, especially those associated with the NHDP, and a lot of people who are visionaries, not seeing things as they are, but as they could be.

“We have a mission to serve, and a love of people, and we want to help people get to where they want to go. These people want to leave things better than when they found them.

The founders worked hard, Deason said, and made Nigton a self-sufficient and thriving community.

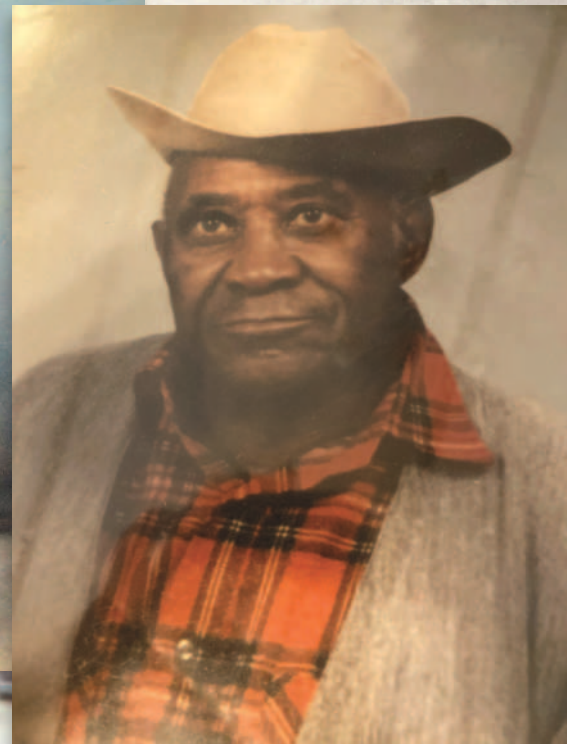
“We never asked for anything, and neighbors helped neighbors, but we’re at this point that we need help,” he said.

Walker-Hernandez said the NHDP could be the pebble that starts the ripple, keeping the town growing while keeping the values of the past.

“At the end of the day, we want to know we helped people,” Deason said. “We want to be an inspiration to other communities facing the same problems that anything is possible.” ■



Learn more about Nigton and the NHDP by visiting <https://www.nigtonhdp.com/>, or find them on Facebook at Nigton Historical Development Project.





Spinach Quiche Squares

If you are looking for a warm appetizer to serve during the Super Bowl, or any time, these little squares fit the bill. They are great right out of the oven, but can also be frozen, after baking, if needed for those unexpected visitors.

- | | |
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| 1 8-ounce can refrigerated crescent rolls | ½ cup finely chopped pecans |
| 4 eggs, beaten | ¼ cup minced green onions |
| 1 can cream of mushroom soup | 1 cup shredded Swiss cheese |
| 2 10-oz packages frozen chopped spinach, thawed, well-drained and minced | ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese |

Unroll crescent rolls and flatten to cover bottom and about 1/4 inch up the sides of a greased 9x13-inch pan. Press to seal seams to create a flat crust.

In a large bowl, thoroughly mix the remaining ingredients and spread evenly over the prepared crust.

Bake in preheated 350 degree oven for 40-45 minutes.

Cut into small squares. Serve warm. Makes about 40 1-inch square appetizers.

(If made ahead and frozen, reheat in preheated 400 degree oven for about 20 minutes.)

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EATIN' ON THE DOCK OF THE BAY

By Emily Banks Wooten

My family and I love to get away every now and then for a long weekend just to rest and recharge and have a change of scenery. One of our favorite places to do this is Crystal Beach on the Bolivar Peninsula. It's not too far away or too hard on the budget and we always come home feeling a sense of renewal.

We were there not too long ago for a few days over the Thanksgiving break. The beach in fall and winter is beautiful in a much different way than it is in the summer. My appreciation for seeing it through this contrasting lens originated many years ago when Hubby took me on a trip during our courtship and we walked along the beach on a cold misty day.

Stingaree Restaurant & Marina has long been a favorite of ours. It's nothing fancy, but you can definitely get your fill of consistently good, fresh, authentic seafood and also enjoy the view of tugboats towing barges up and down the bay. Known for their fresh seafood, steaks, Stingaritas and more, the restaurant closed in late November for a remodel and expansion and is expected to reopen in mid-January, possibly in time for the MLK holiday. The remodel will include a lot of upgrades, including a brand new 21-foot cooler with eight doors, twice the size of the one they've been working out of for 37 years. The remodel and expansion will also include ripping off approximately 40 feet of the building and coming back with an additional 55 feet. Weekly updates may be found on the Stingaree Facebook page.

The two-page menu offers anything you could possibly want from a seafood and steak restaurant. There are a variety of cold and hot appetizers, a number of different salads, a bevy of fresh-caught shrimp, crab and fish, seafood platters, beef and chicken. Sides include French fries, red beans and rice, green beans, sauteed veggies, dirty rice, a baked potato and onion rings. They also offer several specialty sauces, such as Ponchartrain, Florentine, Vera Cruz or steak butter which may be added to your entree selection. Stingaree has a full bar and over 50 different beer choices, including local craft beers on tap.

For years, I'd order either the fried seafood platter or maybe the shrimp lover's platter. The fried seafood platter includes crab, catfish, shrimp, oysters, crab-stuffed shrimp, stuffed crab, fries and hushpuppies. The shrimp lover's platter includes boiled shrimp, fried shrimp, charbroiled shrimp, honey jalapeno shrimp, crab stuffed







shrimp and the choice of shrimp etouffee or gumbo. After ordering either of these, I was usually miserable for the remainder of the evening – either from all that fried goodness or just the sheer amount of food. I’m trying to eat a little lighter and healthier these days, so on the last few trips there I’ve had the ahi tuna, the blackened Texas redfish and the New Orleans style barbecue shrimp. I usually select the steamed veggies for my side and either a salad or coleslaw.

Hubby would usually order the fried seafood platter as well previously. These days, however, he usually orders the grilled seafood platter which includes barbecue crab, catfish, shrimp, crab-stuffed shrimp, barbecue shrimp and the choice of shrimp etouffee or gumbo.

When it comes to seafood, our daughter’s perennial favorites are fried shrimp, raw oysters and gumbo so she usually orders either the fried shrimp platter or a bowl of seafood gumbo or raw oysters. Most recently, she selected a dozen raw oysters on the half shell, accompanied by a cup of seafood gumbo. My mother often travels with us. She’s had the crabcakes, the grilled freshwater catfish and the blackened Texas redfish, usually with sauteed veggies and either a salad or coleslaw.

Give Stingaree a try if you’ve never been. And if you’ve been there but it’s been a while, then you’re probably due for a return visit. We’ve never walked away from the place hungry and we’ve never left disappointed either.

Stingaree Restaurant and Marina is located on the Intercoastal Waterway at 1295 N. Stingaree Dr. in Crystal Beach, Texas. Hours are 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Wednesdays, Thursday and Fridays and 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays. ■



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*"My writing influences include Flannery O'Connor, Herman Melville, William Faulkner and Evel Knievel.
If I can't get severely injured in the process, I'm not interested."*

~ Tim Bryant, 2012

**By Mollie LaSalle | Photos by Chris Edwards,
Mollie LaSalle and The Bosslight**

A 100-year-old oak table is where the magic happens. This unassuming antique sits quietly in the back of the Bosslight, an eclectic bookstore located on Main Street in downtown Nacogdoches.

On any given day, you will find a "who's who" of Nacogdoches (and occasionally visitors from outside the Pine Curtain) at this table, discussing anything or nothing (depending on one's ear and interests). I would venture to say that if tables could talk, this one would keep you entertained to infinity and beyond.

Tim Bryant is the proprietor of this gem. Most days, he can be found at the table, his girlfriend Annie by his side, writing his next novel, always finding the time to pause and welcome each guest with a smile and a story. Bryant is, in his own words, "a jack of all trades, and master of none."

Bryant graciously agreed to be interviewed on a cold and rainy Friday afternoon. He welcomed me into his store, I sat at "the table," and we started at the beginning.

"I was born in Smackover, Arkansas, and lived there until age 8, when my father took a job at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches. I graduated high school, and took some college courses at SFA. When I was in my 20s, my dad gave me a book written by Joe Lansdale. He told me, you can write this good and be from Nacogdoches.

"When I was 12, my grandmother told me I was going to be a writer. It wasn't like I knew from then on I was going to be a writer, I took a long circle back around to it, and didn't write my first book until I was 40 years old. I proved her right way down the road."

Bryant took a detour in the late 1990s to focus on his music, moving to New Orleans to play piano in a rock band and write songs. He is a prolific songwriter, having written between 500 to 600 tunes; he said he's written so many, he has lost count.

"Music came first for me; I started playing drums, then piano, and then the keyboard. I have written all my songs on the keyboard."

Prior to his move to New Orleans, Bryant owned the Out of the Way Café and Music Hall in Nacogdoches.

"We made sandwiches during the day so I could sing at night."



*Gathered around the old oak table. Back row: Rod Tanner, Tim Bryant, Scott Montgomery. Front row: Joe R. Lansdale, Karen Lansdale.
Photo courtesy of The Bosslight.*



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Bryant and his wife returned to Texas after two years to lay down roots and start a family. He went back to school, and enrolled in SFA's creative writing program.

"My mentors were (and still are) Dr. John McDermott, my professor in the program, and Joe Lansdale."

He received the first BFA in creative writing in SFA's history, in 2007. When he has spare time, Bryant holds writer's workshops at the university. He published his first novel, "Dutch Curridge" in 2010, and dedicated it to his grandmother.

"This one is dedicated to the memory of my grandmother, Thelma Grice, who taught me that reading makes you not only a better writer, but a better person." Bryant added, "Dutch changed my life. I wrote it based on a series of short stories around the time I was working on my thesis."

The internationally acclaimed Lansdale said about Bryant's first book, "Hardboiled, but hot as doorknob after a nuclear blast. Tim Bryant's work is blessed not only with originality, but with a kind of madness that makes it one of a kind and as special and surprising as a one-eyed 300-pound toad with a picnic basket. I love his stuff. Seems to me, his success is assured."

Another contemporary, Scott Montgomery, chimed in after Bryant had a few books under his belt.

"Tim Bryant is one of those emerging voices who is getting better with each book. His characters pop, the dialogue is spot-on, and he can deliver both chilling suspense and down-home

humor. He takes a story head-on and doesn't let go. I'm looking forward to bragging that I was the one who read him first."

Bryant added to the "Dutch Curridge" series with the novels "Southern Select" in 2013, "Spirit Trap" in 2014, and "Old Mother Curridge" in 2016. He published two John Wilkie Westerns, "A World of Hurt" and "Dead and Buried" in 2017 and 2018. His two newest releases, "Bywater" and "Upriver," came out in 2021. Bryant said, "The protagonist is a man who owns a bookstore and plays music, is that a stretch or what?"

Bryant was named one of the Top 5 Texas Authors of 2014 by BookPeople in Austin, Texas.

Right around the time "Dutch Curridge" was published, Bryant opened a popular T-shirt shop downtown and named it The Runaway Mule. Bryant named the store after a famous (or infamous) incident in 1910 when a runaway mule upstaged the Marx Brothers, who were performing at a local theater. He started selling copies of his book at the store, and soon, other East Texas authors were asking him to carry their books. Upon returning from a book signing in Austin, he saw what a successful bookstore operation looked like and re-christened his shop The Bosslight, moving it up the street to its current location. The Runaway Mule is now a shirt line.

"We were a T-shirt shop with a few books, now we are a bookstore with a few T-shirts. All our shirts are the Runaway Mule brand. I guess you could say I'm a fashion designer," he joked.



Tim Bryant, owner of The Bosslight

Whether fashion designer, author or musician, they are all part of what makes Bryant who he is.

“Reading draws people together, it’s something to talk about; it’s a way to keep things normal. My music is as important to me as my writing, you can’t have one without the other. There’s a balance in everything I do, from the music to the writing, to the books.

“It takes me about three to four months to write a book; sometimes it takes me as much as six months. Some of them come out faster than others. If it takes me longer than six months, I’m probably going to dump it and go on to something else. I try to write one to three hours daily to keep my creative juices flowing. If I’m on a project, I can be over here writing away, and when someone comes up to me I’ll stop and I’ll be a bookseller. I can go back and forth, it’s just practice from doing it every day.

“The music is important to the writing, the writing is important to the music, and it is all important to what I am doing here in the store. It all mixes together. I call myself a Zen Baptist; that’s what I am. Zen is having a sense of balance. It’s all part of a bigger thing to me. I consider myself a southern writer in the tradition all the way back to Faulkner, I guess, even more so, Flannery O’Connor; she is my biggest touchstone. She is the one that when I read her stuff, I wanted to write. To this day, when I want to reach back to where I started, I reach back to Flannery O’Connor.

“My job is to connect with people, and I love it when they

connect in my store. You learn what sells and what doesn’t by necessity; a bookstore takes on the characteristics of its town. As a sideline, I’ll sell you some books. That keeps me in business to connect with people. I’ll sell you books, shirts, local honey, pickles, paintings and photos, all to keep this thing going. A lot of it happens right around this table. It’s all about community. Now, six years later, I get asked, “Why did you put ‘community’ on your sign?” And my answer is community is the most important part of the whole thing. It took me 59 years to figure all this out. All I’m trying to do is connect with people.”

When asked where the name Bosslight came from, Bryant had an unexpected reply.

“Sounds cool, doesn’t it? But, it doesn’t really mean anything.”

Then, he confessed and told the story of its origin (you will have to ask him yourself; he may or may not tell you). It’s actually a pretty funny story and it makes sense the way he tells it.

Tim has just started writing his 13th novel. If you find yourself in Nacogdoches, he would love for you to pop in and say hello. You will find him in the back, at the old oak table, Annie by his side.

The Bosslight is located at 123 E. Main Street. Their hours are Tuesday–Friday, 11:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. and Saturday, 11 a.m. – 4 p.m., closed Sunday and Monday. Their phone number is 936-645-9800. Tim and Annie are also on Facebook (The Bosslight). ■





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Quilted Memories



“Creativity is piercing the mundane to find the marvelous.” – Bill Moyers

A passionate teacher of thirty-three years found time to create hundreds of magnificent quilted memories for her family members, friends, and their extended family and friends.

By Jennifer Birdwell | Photos provided by Destiny Pennington

Destiny Pennington graduated from Sam Houston State University in 1990 with a Bachelor of Arts degree. That came with certifications in elementary education and music. She was a student teacher and interviewed for her first position as a second-grade teacher at a Livingston primary school now known as Pine Ridge Primary.

After nine years of teaching classrooms, the music position opened and she was asked to take over as director. All of her professional career has been at the same school.

“It is so rewarding to be able to teach the children of former students. I love being able to have life-long relationships with the students who I genuinely cared about, and for, during our educational time together.”

In her estimation, she has taught thousands of Livingston students over the years.

“I played the violin and knew I wanted to teach the younger students,” Destiny said. “Livingston did not have an orchestra, but Mr. (Danny) Tinney (the school’s principal) wanted to keep me as a teacher, so I taught second grade until the music position came open. As a music educator, I was able to share my love of instruments, singing, and dancing with the children of Livingston ISD.”

“I learned to sew as an elementary-age child, making clothes for baby dolls and Barbies. My mother and paternal grandmother sewed clothes. Between them, they also taught me how to crochet, knit, embroider, and cross-stitch. I was already in orchestra starting in sixth grade, but because I wanted my own sewing machine, my mother made me take homemaking for formal sewing training. I had the best of both

worlds, homemaking and orchestra during school, and sewing and my violin after. I just felt like my hands needed to be busy either sewing or playing my violin constantly.”

Pennington’s commitment to quilting memories stemmed from the loss of her mother when she was 24 years old. It was a terminal issue. Her mother lived in Kaufman, and by the time Pennington arrived at her mother’s house to mourn with the family, her mother’s belongings had already been discarded and given away.

“My drive in quilt making is to preserve memories for others, because I wish I had the opportunity to make a memory quilt in honor of my mother.”

She is successful in making brilliant quilted memories.

“Recently, one of my former students lost her mother to a lengthy illness, and I was able to create six queen and twin-sized quilts out of her clothes for family members,” Destiny said. “I made lap quilts for each of the grandchildren, as well as stuffed keepsake bears, bunnies, and lions. The bookcase quilt was the perfect pattern, so that I could incorporate the many different prints. The prints can be recognized when looking at family pictures, and I love seeing someone’s clothes become a memory for their loved ones to cherish.”

“T-shirt quilts are a common request for recent high school and college graduates. My first t-shirt quilt was for a dear friend’s son. I had made numerous traditional quilts since my daughter was born in 1994, but the t-shirt quilt trend was igniting. Students save their team shirts over the years, and then they can have a wonderful quilted memory to take to college as they leave their childhood home.”

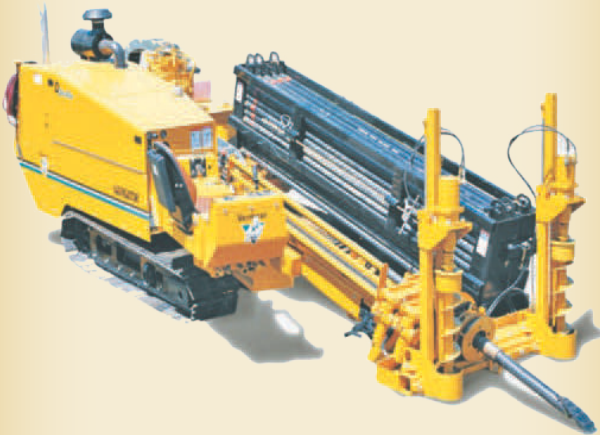
“I have friends that have saved their shirts representing years of travel, childhood memories, hobbies, and concerts. I have



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made pillows or stuffed animals for friends who have lost loved ones over the years. The material was from pajamas and the favorite comfy clothes of loved ones. I enjoyed getting to think of or learn about the person and the love given to the family and how they cared for people before passing. It's a beautiful way to preserve memories."

Destiny works almost every day sewing some type of project for others. Over a recent Thanksgiving week-long break from school, Pennington sewed/quilted for 100 hours, completing five quilts and starting two more. She has constantly shared the joy of music during the day and sewing at night for the past eight years. Her children were starting to become grown and did not need her as much, so quilting was her way to continue serving others.

"My first sewing machine was a Janome, and I mostly worked on my own clothing while in college and for teaching. Then, when I had my daughter, I loved making us matching outfits, her doll clothes, and doll blankets. I love to help my friends with sewing projects hemming poodle skirts, prom gown alterations, and sewing patches on letter jackets. It didn't take long for the word to get out, and I had many sewing projects."

She now sews on a newer Janome and has a Simply Sixteen with a 10-foot arm frame.

"I just upgraded to the Baby Lock Allegro model for sewing. It makes life easier because it sews 1,000 stitches a minute, has a larger workspace, and has a larger variety of stitch types."

The works of art are not programmable designs, and everything is customized.

"I free-motion all of my quilts. I love creating designs to match the quilt's personality. My favorite design is the different meander patterns on the quilts. Programmable patterns are uniform, but I prefer to use my imagination to create patterns."



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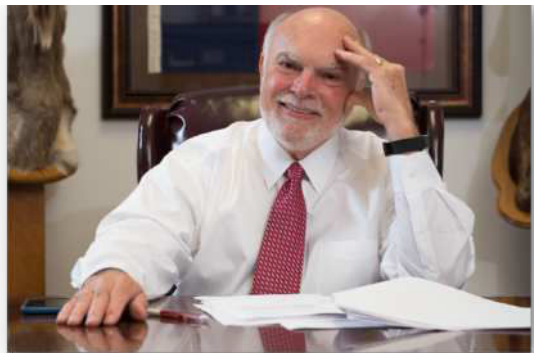
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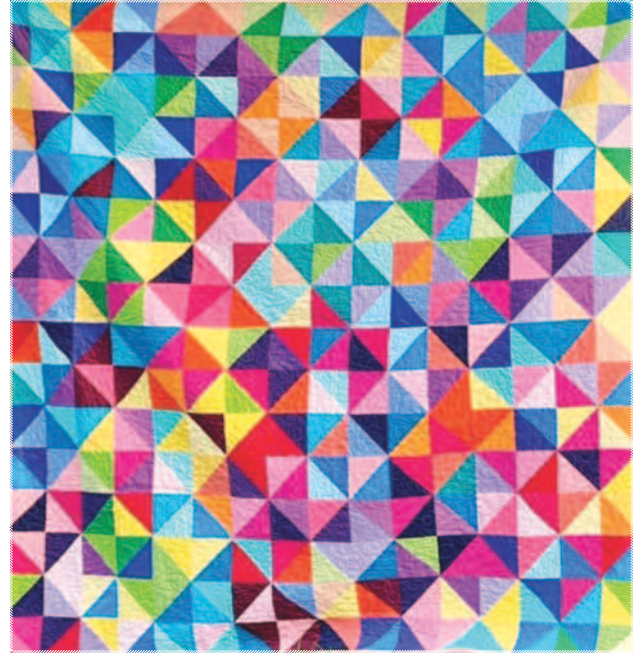
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Pennington created a Facebook page in 2017 called The Quilt Penn and shares pictures and stories of her projects and quilting travels.

“My husband and I love to travel, and I’m content to quilt on the long drives and at the campsites. Last year, we traveled to Yellowstone National Park and the Black Hills. I took English Paper Piecing for hand stitching and a crocheting project for the long ride up there and back. We may or may not have hit up some local quilt shops along the trip. It’s so nice to return to traveling after the restriction of the pandemic.”

In March 2020, amid school closures due to COVID-19, Pennington made and donated over 1,600 cloth masks. She was even featured in the local newspaper.

“Historically, quilts have been given to couples upon their marriage or for new babies. I try my best to gift the new babies, but I enjoy wedding quilts more. I was able to gift my daughter and her wife a special wedding quilt, which represented their relationship and their favorite colors to match their home. Then, this past spring, I created a special project to gift my

son and future daughter-in-law. It was a log cabin quilt made from red, pink, and maroon batiks. They met at a church camp. Pink is her favorite color, and they both graduated from Texas A&M, so I thought the colors and styles were appropriate.”

Destiny has other project types, including a recent “Quilt of Valor” for her brother, who served in the Army in Desert Storm and through the Inherent Resolve campaigns. She also created one for her daughter-in-law, who also served in the Army during the recent Operation Freedom Sentinel conflicts as a gift to her. She is currently working on one for a friend who was a pen pal to her former class of second graders for many years.

“My husband, Robert, is also happy to accompany me to quilt shows. I find that it re-energizes me and gives me more ideas for future projects. He even gains ideas for his future quilts from me. Sewing is a lost art and also a real-world necessity. I hope to be able to share my joy of sewing and teach others sewing skills over the next several years, like I have shared my love of music with my students these past 33 years.” ■

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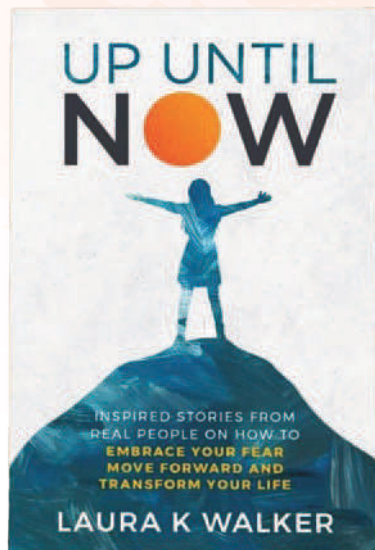
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Bestselling book inspires, transforms

By Emily Banks Wooten

If you're "of a certain age," then you already know that the path from Point A to Point B is not a neat, straight line. You know that it's filled with stops, starts, circle backs, zigs, zags, ups, downs and that it's anything but neat or straight. If and when you reach Point B, chances are you've celebrated, suffered, learned some things and grown a lot."

"Up Until Now: Inspired Stories from Real People on How to Embrace Your Fear, Move Forward and Transform Your Life" is the Amazon bestselling book by Laura K. Walker and Ellen Moseley May, both products of Livingston, Texas.

Forty co-authors from all around the world share their true stories of pain, heartache, grief and loss in the book, including their moments of overcoming and creating a renewed hope and reality after the storm settles. The stories of transformation run the gamut from job loss to navigating a messy divorce to surviving the death of a loved one to being financially devastated and more – all facing circumstances that seem overwhelming and insurmountable.

The book launched in November in South Lake, Texas, with a weekend celebration that included a book signing at Barnes and Noble with 33 of the 40 authors present. The weeks since the launch have been an exciting whirlwind as the book tour continues.

A life mastery consultant certified by the Brave Thinking Institute, Laura is a transformational coach and the owner of

Laura Walker Coaching and she lives in the Fort Worth area. A gymnastics coach, artist and nutritionist, Ellen is the owner of Moseley Gymnastics in Livingston.

The second leg of the book tour was in Livingston, where Laura and Ellen were guests on the Drummer Don radio show on 102.3 The Eagle, in addition to being celebrated at three additional book signings.

"Up Until Now" reached Amazon number one bestseller status in seven different categories in both digital and paperback almost immediately and shortly thereafter reached international bestseller status in Australia, France and the United Kingdom.

According to Amazon, "The resounding theme of overcoming is captured in these emotionally charged stories and this book serves as a collective voice to anyone who is struggling, stuck, scared, depressed or looking for something bigger while praying for some glimmer of hope."

"All of these people in the book are each a chapter and they are telling stories about hardship – maybe financial hardship, covid hardship. We all know those two years what happened there. And then maybe loss of a loved one, death, these kinds of things. And then they talk about the seed of good that comes out of it and how they launch off that and transform their lives into something better than they ever thought it could be," Laura said.

"They're all individual. We all have different experiences in



life and we all come out of trauma on the other side, hopefully, in a good place, but the experience is different for each person,” Ellen said. “My particular story is about the death of my Aunt Pam. Many of the people in this town will remember that, when she was murdered and I was nine years old. It’s about the process of going through the transformation of learning to forgive and learning to heal from that and kind of how that process happened. Hopefully, it will inspire other people to know that there’s a light at the end of the tunnel and the pain, and that while they may not feel it right now, they will at some point and there is hope.

Laura and Ellen are firm believers that catastrophe cannot only be overcome, but can also have a positive effect on life. They said the book is about inspiration, healing, overcoming and transformation.

Reflecting on the emotions that come with a book reaching number one, Ellen said, “We were incredibly, incredibly excited.”

Laura agreed. “It’s been surreal. I mean, I expected the bestseller because when you collaborate with 37 people, there’s power in that. But number one bestseller in seven categories on Amazon and the number one international bestseller in Australia, France and the United Kingdom? Unbelievable. So grateful.”

Laura was in a collaborative effort last year with some of her colleagues, other life coaches around the world, in a

similar book project that went to international bestseller. Ellen previously authored a book, “Surviving a Murder,” that’s expected to be re-released sometime in 2023.

As for the target audience for “Up Until Now,” Laura said, “I think anyone. Anyone that has ever come up against something that just seemed unsurmountable, either emotionally or mentally or even physically, spiritually. It just shows up in different ways and so I think anybody that picks up this book – that’s the point of having 46 stories – is that one of the stories is going to speak to someone. I think anyone from the age of 18 up can relate to it.”

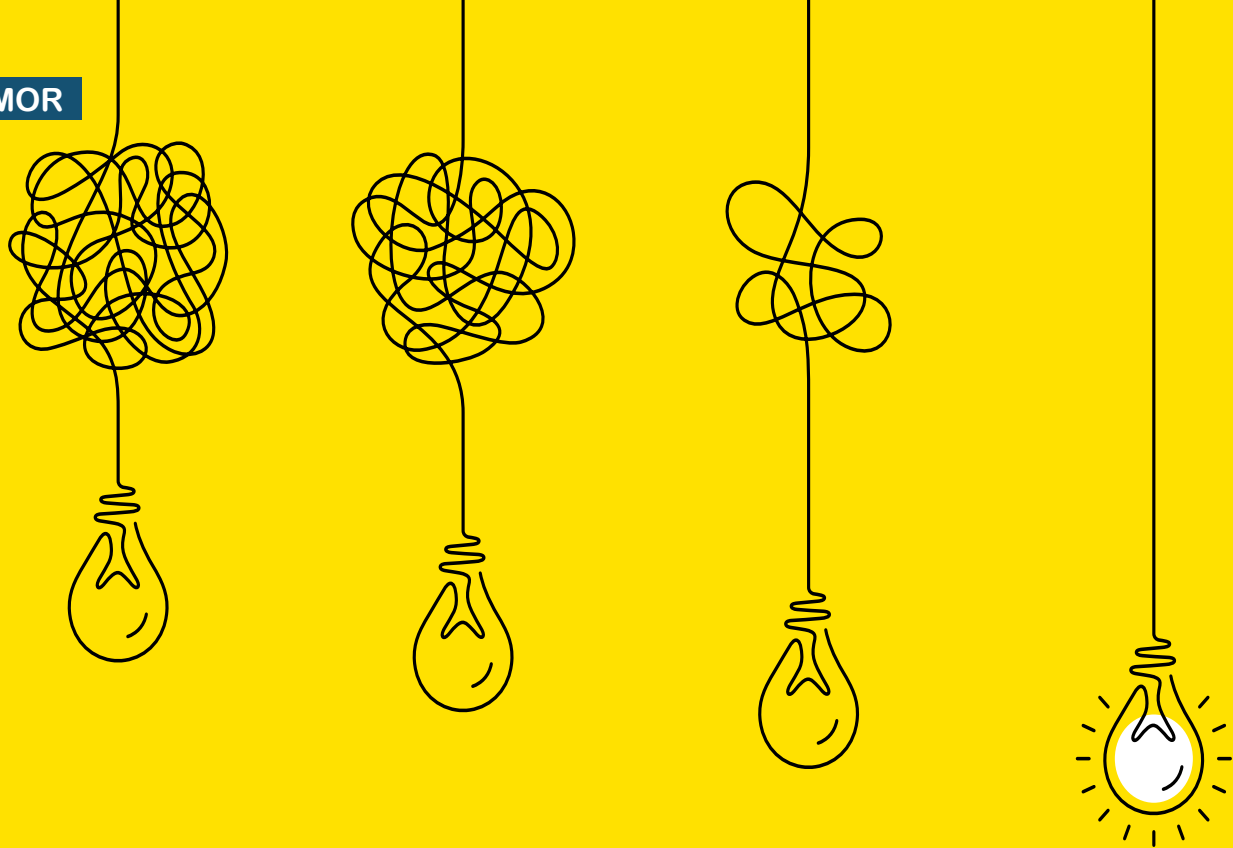
The stories are written by people from all over – New York, Florida, Minnesota, Michigan, Oregon, Alabama, Arizona.

“It’s so amazing. It’s unbelievable to me but they’ve all been my clients and I just wanted to create a voice for them,” Laura said, adding that the project really was easy because everyone was onboard. “Everybody had a like-mindedness and a vision for it, so it was easy. They couldn’t wait to do it.”

“It’s been a great experience,” Ellen said.

One might say that regardless of who you are or what season of life you’re in or whatever walk of life you’re from ... you can relate.

The book tour is heading to Alabama, Florida, New York and Arizona, among other places, and will go throughout March. There’s also a Facebook page to keep up with the book and its authors. ■



Putting limits on learning may be the smart thing to do

By Barbara White

I would like to say that I can hardly wait to see all the new inventions and trends that will be unveiled in 2023. I would also like to say that I can wear the same jeans I wore when I was 30 and that I have only one chin, but I can't say that either.

Truth be told, I have had it up to here (I am pointing to an area well above my double chin) with trying to grapple with every new curveball that is pitched my way, especially when it comes to technology. I was pushed over the edge by a short paragraph I encountered in *Time* magazine, the print edition, which should tell you something.

While I am accustomed to feeling a little out of place in the modern world, that one little paragraph made me feel like the only earthling at a family reunion on Mars. It appeared to be written in English, but it made little sense to me.

You seem like nice people, so I hate to do this to you, but here it is, word for word, because I do not trust myself to try to paraphrase: "This issue of *TIME* is also available as a non-fungible token (NFT) — the first ever magazine issue on the blockchain. It will be dropped to select community wallets in the coming weeks ..."

I wrote it down so that I could share it with a few

friends to see if I was alone in my befuddlement. Yes, I said I wrote it down. I used a pen. And paper. I realize most people would have taken a photo of the paragraph with their phone and emailed it to whoever. I just don't think that way, which helps explain why I sometimes feel like I've crashed a Martian reunion.

"OK, listen to this," I told one of my oldest friends over the phone. She is my age but is much more tech-savvy than I am and can often explain things in a way I can actually understand; she is fluent in old-people speak. I love it when she can answer my questions. I love it even more when she is just as confused as I am. There is great comfort in knowing you are not alone.

I read the paragraph over the phone.

Her single-word reply was the answer I was secretly hoping for: "Huh?"

I read it again.

"What's a non-fungible token?" she asked.

I reminded her that I was the one asking the questions and that it was her job to answer. She could not.

I shared it with a couple of other people and they were just as baffled. Full disclosure: I did not share it with anyone who was born in the current century. I had a hunch they would not only have understood the meaning

of the paragraph but, God forbid, would have wanted to explain it to me. By this time, I didn't really care what it meant; I was just seeking solace.

That night, as I prepared for bed, I discussed the matter with the much-older woman who lives in my mirror and we mutually decided that we are finished trying to wrap our respective heads around every new thing being thrown at us. From now on, we will tackle such matters on a need-to-know basis and not waste valuable brain power just trying to keep up with things that we don't find interesting or particularly useful.

I still have a lot to learn, stuff that somehow missed the net as I skipped through life gathering knowledge.

For example, I recently discovered that I have been using the word "peruse" incorrectly my entire life. I thought if one perused a book, they were just thumbing through the pages and paying little attention to the content. Come to find out, it means "read attentively," according to Mr. Webster of dictionary fame. Seeing as how I have managed to put vittles on the table most of my adult life by at least pretending to be a writer, that is embarrassing. I will continue to seek that kind of information; hopefully learning something new every day, especially if it's old.

What I will not be doing is researching non-fungible tokens.

If you understand that brief paragraph from Time magazine, I am sincerely happy for you. If you want to explain it to me, please don't. I do not need to know.

I seriously doubt I will ever need a non-fungible token and if I have anything to say about it, I will never join the blockchain gang. The very thought of a "community wallet" makes me want to stuff cash under my mattress.

Maybe the old lady in the mirror and I will tackle the new stuff when we have mastered the old, which won't be anytime soon.

It's going to be a good year. ■



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WALKMAN
DOWNTOWN

H SHOPPING

M DRINKS

M FOOD

M relaxation

M MOVIES

R EVENTS

MUSIC ART

M Memories



SHOP EAST TEXAS

Shopping in downtown Huntsville

Happy New Year to all my East Texan shoppers. I recently enjoyed a morning of shopping in downtown Huntsville. I noticed during my time there, several individually owned specialty stores, good restaurants to choose from, beautiful scenery and art. I recommend this area for a day trip. One store in particular carried beautiful furniture priced at or below box store prices, but each piece was so special and unique. Enjoy!

By Kelli Barnes

Sneak Peak: The Spring 2023 issue will feature the Silsbee/Lumberton area of East Texas.

CUTE CHARCUTERIE BOARD \$64.95
The Crooked Crown



1920'S DESSERT COVER
A Nitsch in Time



COSMETIC BAG \$40
The Crooked Crown



PAIR OF RED AVON
SALT/PEPPER
SHAKERS \$6
A Nitsch in Time

VINTAGE BUFFET
\$750
Farmhouse
Furniture & Gifts



The Crooked Crown
1102 11th Street
Huntsville

A Nitsch in Time
1108 11th Street
Huntsville

Bluebonnet Square Antiques
1110 11th Street
Huntsville

Farmhouse Furniture & Gifts
1118 11th Street
Huntsville



STORES FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE

Come across a little shop in your travels through East Texas? Let us know about it! kelli@polkcountypublishing.com



**EMMET KELLEY EDITION
CLOWN \$75**
Bluebonnet Square
Antiques



VINTAGE BROACH \$9.95
Bluebonnet Square Antiques



**JAZZ FUNERAL PROCESSION
"LITHO" \$40**
A Nitsch in Time



**BEAUTIFUL BASIN
AND PITCHER \$96**
A Nitsch in Time



**RONNI NICOLE VINTAGE
BLACK VELVET DRESS WITH
FAUX LEOPARD TRIM \$32**
Bluebonnet Square Antiques

VASE \$51.99
Farmhouse Furniture & Gifts



SILVER MARBLE COASTERS \$19.95
The Crooked Crown





SHOP EAST TEXAS

DECORATIVE ROLLING PIN \$27.31
Farmhouse Furniture & Gifts



DRIFTWOOD BLOWN GLASS
PLANTER \$89.99
Farmhouse Furniture & Gifts



EMOJI TIN PLATES \$10 EACH
A Nitsch in Time



MILK HOUSE CANDLE \$17.99
Farmhouse Furniture & Gifts



PATCH GIRAFFE \$25
Bluebonnet Square
Antiques



CHECKERS SET \$10
Bluebonnet Square Antiques

SNAKESKIN PRINT JEANS \$88.75
The Crooked Crown



FAMILY SCALE \$98
A Nitsch in Time



GOLD/SILVER BRACELETS
\$5 EACH
A Nitsch in Time

BRALETTE \$22.95
The Crooked Crown



CALENDAR

JANUARY

Galveston

26th Annual Townes Van Zandt Wake/
Old Quarter Acoustic Café
JANUARY 1

Houston

The Music of Elton John and Billy Joel/
Houston Symphony, Jones Hall
JANUARY 6-8

Nacogdoches

East Texas Chamber Winds 2023
Concert/Mast Hall
JANUARY 7

Beaumont

Southeast Texas Whiskey Festival/
Beaumont Civic Center
JANUARY 7

Galveston

Galveston Symphony Orchestra New
Year Pops Concert-Happy New Year/
Grand 1894 Opera House
JANUARY 8

Tomball

Janie Fricke at Main Street Crossing
JANUARY 13

Beaumont

Southern Soul Concert/Julie Rogers
Theater
JANUARY 13

Greenville

The Oak Ridge Boys/Greenville Municipal
Auditorium
JANUARY 13

Lufkin

William Lee Martin Comedy Tour/Pines
Theater
JANUARY 14

Sugarland

William Shatner: Star Trek and the Wrath
of Khan/Smart Financial Center
JANUARY 14

Athens

Memphis Soul: Motown Tribute Band/
Texan Theater
JANUARY 14

Galveston

The Oak Ridge Boys/Grand 1894 Opera
House
JANUARY 14-15

Houston

Chevron Houston Marathon and Half
Marathon
JANUARY 15

Houston

29th Annual MLK Grand Parade/
Midtown
JANUARY 16

Crockett

Gary Puckett and The Union Gap/
Crockett Civic Center
JANUARY 19

Conroe

Houston Money Show/Lonestar
Convention Center
JANUARY 19-21

Lufkin

Angelina Arts Alliance Presents: Pink
Martini/Temple Theater
JANUARY 20

Conroe

Houston Money Show/Lone Star
Convention Center
JANUARY 20-21

Tyler

East Texas Gem and Mineral Show/Tyler
Rose Museum
JANUARY 20-23

Tomball

Ambrosia at Main Street Crossing
JANUARY 20

Beaumont

Beaux Arts Ball 2023/The Art Studio,
Downtown
JANUARY 21

Longview

East Texas Bully Classic 2/Cobb
Convention Center
JANUARY 21

Galveston

Yaga's Chili Quest and Beer Fest 2023
JANUARY 21

Houston

Auto Show Houston 2023/NRG Center
JANUARY 24-28

Tyler

The Doo Wop Project/UT Tyler Cowan
Center
JANUARY 24

Corsicana

The Music of Sam Cooke/The
Palace Theater
JANUARY 26

Beaumont

Rickey Smiley and Friends/Julie
Rogers Theater
JANUARY 27-28

Lake Jackson

Lorrie Morgan at the Clarion at
Brazosport College
JANUARY 27

Huntsville

A Salute to Conway and Loretta/
Huntsville Community Theater
JANUARY 27

Marshall

A Salute to Conway and Loretta/
Memorial City Performance Hall
JANUARY 28

Lufkin

Davina and the Vagabonds/The
Pines Theater
JANUARY 28

Crystal Beach

Polar Plunge 2023
JANUARY 28

Houston

Gazillion Bubble Show at Jones
Hall
JANUARY 28

Lufkin

Sights and Sounds Series: The
Marion Anderson Quartet/
Museum of East Texas History
JANUARY 29

Houston

Monster Jam 2023/NRG Stadium
JANUARY 29

Lufkin

On Your Feet!/Temple Theater
JANUARY 31

FEBRUARY

Orange

The Lutcher Theater Presents:
The Simon and Garfunkel Story
FEBRUARY 2

Crockett

Jaston Williams at the Crockett
Civic Center
FEBRUARY 2

Canton

First Monday Trade Days
FEBRUARY 2-5

Mt. Pleasant

The Texas Tenors/NETX
Community College
FEBRUARY 3

Houston

Wade Bowen at White Oak Music
Hall
FEBRUARY 3

Galveston

Ghosts of Galveston with
the Klinge Brothers and Greg
Lawson/Seawolf Park
FEBRUARY 3-5

The Woodlands

Ronnie Milsap at Dosey Doe/The
Big Barn
FEBRUARY 3

Beaumont

Harlem Globetrotters at Ford
Park
FEBRUARY 3

Houston

Houston Spring Home and
Garden Show/NRG Park
FEBRUARY 3-5

Galveston

The Romeros in Concert/Grand
1894 Opera House
FEBRUARY 4

Houston

Brickfest Lego Fan Experience/
NRG Park
FEBRUARY 4-5

Tyler

ETX Bridal Expo/Tyler Rose
Museum
FEBRUARY 4

Tomball

Herman's Hermits at Main Street
Crossing
FEBRUARY 5

Tyler

Doris Kearns Goodwin/Ut Tyler
Cowan Center
FEBRUARY 7

Houston

Houston RV Show/NRG Center
FEBRUARY 7-11

Mt. Pleasant

Neal McCoy at NETX Community
College
FEBRUARY 8

Houston

Houston RV Show 2023 at NRG
Center
FEBRUARY 8-11

Beaumont

The Mavericks at the Jefferson
Theater
FEBRUARY 10-11

Galveston

Mardi Gras Galveston/The Strand
FEBRUARY 10-21

Longview

Home and Design Show/Cobb
Convention Center
FEBRUARY 10-12

Lufkin

Purple XPerience/Pines Theater
FEBRUARY 11

Huntsville

SHSU 2-23 Contemporary Music
Festival
FEBRUARY 13

Houston

Bruce Springsteen at the Toyota
Center
FEBRUARY 14-15

Beaumont

Mardi Gras of Southeast Texas/
Crockett Street
FEBRUARY 15-18

Tyler

Joel McHale at UT Tyler Cowan
Center
FEBRUARY 16

Galveston

Lyle Lovett at Grand 1894 Opera
House
FEBRUARY 16

Pasadena

Greater Houston Train Show/
Pasadena Convention Center
FEBRUARY 18

CALENDAR

The Woodlands

Shake Russell at Dosey Doe/The Big Barn
FEBRUARY 18

Crystal Beach

Mardi Gras Parade 2023
FEBRUARY 18

Humble

Lake Houston Home and Outdoor Living
Show/Civic Center
FEBRUARY 18-19

Lufkin

The Word Famous Glenn Miller
Orchestra at the Pines Theater
FEBRUARY 19

Greenville

Mark Willis/Greenville Municipal
Auditorium
FEBRUARY 19

Beaumont

41st Annual Taste of the Triangle/
Beaumont Civic Center
FEBRUARY 21

Galveston

Petite LaFitte Fat Tuesday Parade/Strand
Historic District
FEBRUARY 21

Huntsville

Prison City Film Festival
FEBRUARY 22-25

Galveston

The Kingdom Choir in Concert/Grand
1894 Opera House
FEBRUARY 24

Huntsville

Prison City Crawfish and Film Festival
FEBRUARY 25

Houston

BBQ Cook-Off, Houston Livestock Show
and Rodeo/NRG Stadium
FEBRUARY 23-25

Conroe

Lone Star Throwdown 2023/Lone Star
Expo Center
FEBRUARY 24

Marshall

The Jersey Tenors Direct from Broadway/
Memorial City Performance Hall
FEBRUARY 24

Sugar Land

John Mellencamp at Smart Financial Center
FEBRUARY 25

Crockett

Sawyer Brown at the Crockett Civic
Center
FEBRUARY 25

Houston

Itzhak Perlman at Jones Hall
FEBRUARY 26

Houston

Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo/NRG
Stadium
FEBRUARY 28-MARCH 19

Galveston

The Ugly Duckling/Grand 1894 Opera
House
FEBRUARY 28

MARCH

Canton

First Monday Trade Days
MARCH 2-5

Houston

Muse at the Toyota Center
MARCH 2

Beaumont

SETX Boat Sport and RV Show/Ford Park
MARCH 3

Crockett

Mark Chesnutt at the Crockett Civic
Center
MARCH 3

Conroe

4th Annual Lone Star Jeep Invasion
MARCH 4-5

The Woodlands

The Woodlands Marathon/Tom Green
Park
MARCH 4

Montgomery

Home and Outdoor Living Show/
Lonestar Expo Center
MARCH 4

Beaumont

Gusher Marathon at Spindletop
MARCH 4

Galveston

Rob Landes Trio at the Grand 1894
Opera House
MARCH 5

Lufkin

Angelina Arts Alliance Presents:
Fiddler on the Roof/Temple
Theater
MARCH 6

Houston

Neil deGrasse Tyson at Jones Hall
MARCH 7

Crockett

Ballet Austin/Crockett Civic
Center
MARCH 10

Galveston

The Commodores at the Grand
1894 Opera House
MARCH 10-11

Beaumont

Monster Nation Wrecking Crew/
Ford Park
MARCH 10-11

Houston

TOBYMAC at the Toyota Center
MARCH 10

Port Arthur

Rotary Taste of Gumbo/Bob
Bowers Civic Center
MARCH 11

Beaumont

Bee Gees Gold Tribute/Jefferson
Theater
MARCH 11

Lufkin

Gene Watson at the Pines
Theater
MARCH 11

Nederland

Nederland Heritage Festival
MARCH 14-19

Canton

Van Zandt County Bluegrass
Festival/Canton Civic Center
MARCH 16-18

Woodville

Festival of the Arts/Heritage
Village
MARCH 17-18

Longview

Celtic Angels-Ireland/Belcher
Center
MARCH 17-18

Palestine

84th Texas Dogwood Trails
Celebration
MARCH 17-APRIL 2

Galveston

Corvette Chevy Expo/Galveston
Island Convention Center
MARCH 18-19

Conroe

A Night with Elvis/Crington
Theater
MARCH 18-19

Palestine

Dogwood Trails Arts and Music
Festival
MARCH 18

Alvin

2023 Boots and Bourbon/
Morgan Falls Event Center
MARCH 18

Lufkin

Angelina County Fair/G H
Henderson Expo Center
MARCH 20-25

Livingston

Livingston Community Concert/
Polk County Commerce Center
MARCH 21

Lufkin

Ricky Skaggs at the Temple
Theater
MARCH 23

Houston

Bayou City Art Festival
MARCH 23-26

Beaumont

YMBL South Texas State Fair/
Ford Park
MARCH 23-APRIL 2

The Woodlands

Ricky Skaggs at Dosey Doe, The
Big Barn
MARCH 24

Henderson

Roald Dahl's Willy Wonka Kids/
Civic Center
MARCH 24

Woodville

Western Weekend Trail Ride and
Rodeo
MARCH 24-25

Conroe

Montgomery County Fair and
Rodeo
MARCH 24-APRIL 2

Crockett

Houston County Fair and
Livestock Show
MARCH 25-APRIL 1

Houston

The Killers at the Toyota Center
MARCH 25

Nacogdoches

Pro Rodeo and Steer Show/
County Expo Center
MARCH 26

Orange

The Lutchter Theater Presents
Anastasia
MARCH 30

Corsicana

Ruthie Foster at the Palace
Theater
MARCH 30

Huntsville

Walker County Fair and Rodeo
MARCH 31-APRIL 8

APRIL

Colmesneil

Easter Walk with Jesus/Victory
Camp Colmesneil
APRIL 1

Marshall

Ruthie Foster at Memorial City
Performance Hall
APRIL 1

Woodville

80th Annual Dogwood Festival/
Queen's Weekend
APRIL 1

Galveston

Galveston Steampunk Festival/
Galveston Rail Road Museum
APRIL 1

Orange

21st Annual Art in the Park and
Orange Riverfront Car Show
APRIL 1

CALENDAR

Port Arthur

Cajun Heritage Festival/Carl Parker
Multi-Purpose Center
APRIL 1

Greenville

Heartache Tonight: Eagles/Journey
Tribute/Municipal Auditorium
APRIL 7

Mineola

Mineola League of Arts Annual Art
Show/Longview Convention Complex
APRIL 7-8

Nacogdoches

Red Dirt Mud Run/County Expo Center
APRIL 8

Kirbyville

Kirbyville Magnolia Festival
APRIL 12-15

Sugarland

Ana Gabriel at Smart Financial Center
APRIL 14

Gladewater

38th Annual Gusher Days
APRIL 14-16

The Woodlands

The Woodlands Waterway Arts Festival
APRIL 14-16

Hitchcock

Galveston County Fair and Rodeo
APRIL 14-22

Crockett

Davy Crockett Bear Chase/Davy Crockett
National Forest
APRIL 15

Lufkin

Angelina Arts Alliance Presents: Neil
Berg's 50 Years of Rock n Roll at the
Temple Theater
APRIL 15

Galveston

An Evening with Renee Elise Goldsberry/
Grand 1894 Opera House
APRIL 15

Madisonville

Madisonville Mudbug and Music
Festival/County Fairgrounds
APRIL 15

The Woodlands

2023 Children's Memorial Hermann Iron
Kids Texas Fun Run
APRIL 15-16

Houston

Tyler Childers at 713 Music Hall
APRIL 19

Greenville

Hunt County Fair and Livestock Show
APRIL 21-30

LaPorte

San Jacinto Battle Reenactment
APRIL 21-22

Palestine

1836 Chuckwagon Races/Diamond B
Ranch
APRIL 21-23

Conroe

Texas Mineral and Fossil Show/Lone Star
Convention Center
APRIL 21-23

Lufkin

Etta May and the Southern Fried Chicks/
Pines Theater
APRIL 21

Houston

H-Town Blues Festival 2023/NRG Arena
APRIL 21

Beaumont

Neches River Festival
APRIL 21-22

Galveston

Texas Beach Fest Weekend 2K23
APRIL 21-23

Orange

Mauriceville Crawfish Festival
APRIL 22

Tatum

Pecan Pie Festival
APRIL 22

Huntsville

Heatwave Music and Film Festival
APRIL 24-25

Corsicana

Derrick Days 2023
APRIL 28-30

Galveston

Rail Fest 2023/Galveston Rail Road
Museum
APRIL 29

Port Neches

Port Neches River Fest Fun Run
APRIL 29

Custom

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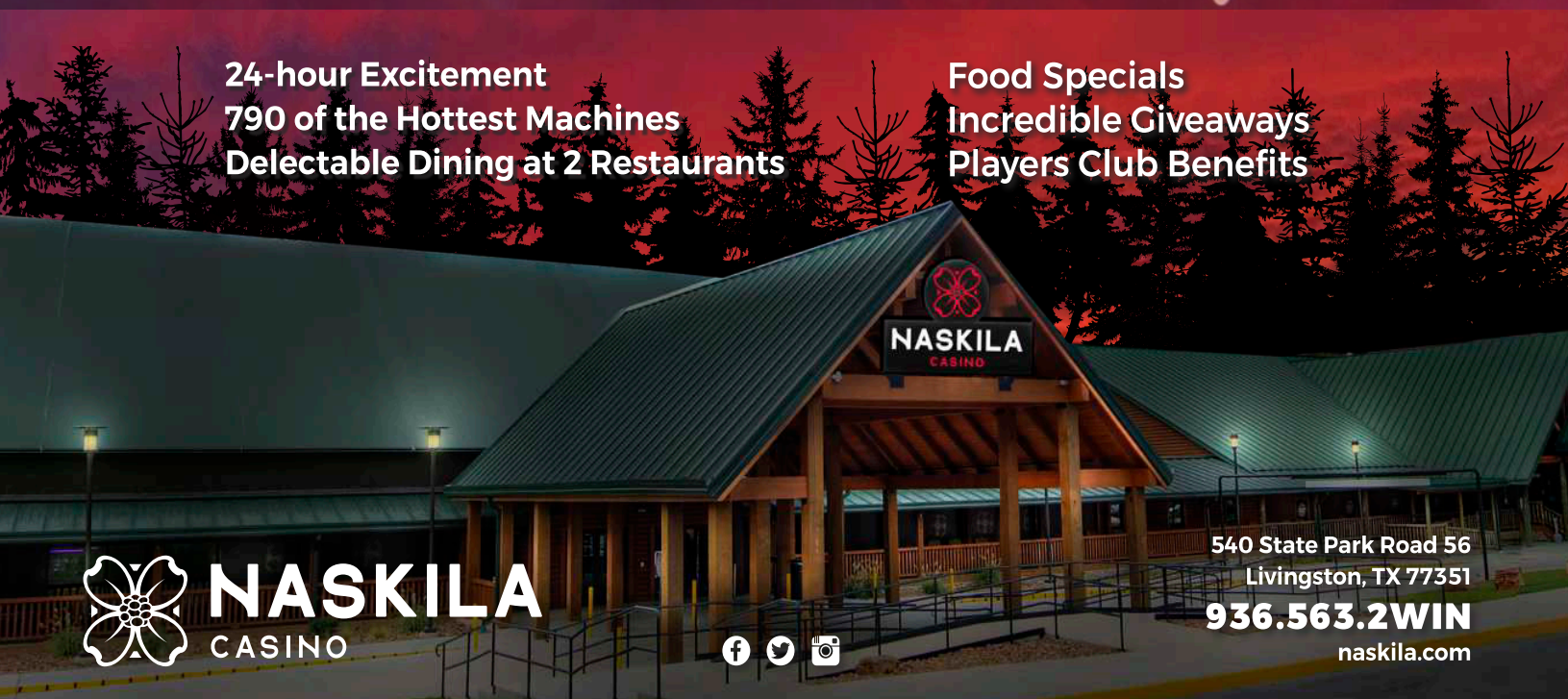
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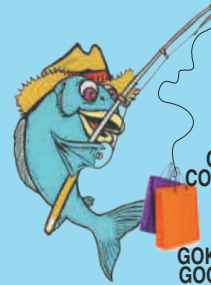


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