

**MIKE SHERRY**

From Backyard to Backdoor

**Plus:** Kim Hunter    Stick's Place    River Bend Nature Center  
Half Pint    Gary Kingcade    Wichita Falls Symphony

# THE HUB OF NORTH TEXAS

Summer is beginning to wind down but the Wichita Falls art and music scene is still hot. New shows are launching at Wichita and Backdoor Theatre, music festivals are being planned, and art shows are everywhere. There's always something exciting happening in the Falls. Don't forget to donate to your favorite charity on September 7th for Texoma Gives.

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Sometimes life throws twists and turns at us. The Hub does not take any responsibility for information or schedule changes. We want to support local artists and businesses but we suggest that you verify the information before putting something on your calendar.

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SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 9TH 2017 @ 7:00 PM

9TH STREET STUDIOS PRESENTS

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Sept. 8 - Ninety to Nothing w/ Project 98

Sept. 9 - Cody Shaw & The Rhythm Boys w/ Saints Eleven

Sept. 15 - AA Bottom & special guests

Sept. 16 - To Be Announced

Sept. 20 - Brothers Gow

Sept. 22 - Erick Willis w/ The Powell Brothers

Sept. 23 - Cherry Bomb (Joan Jett tribute) w/ Sedated (Ramone's tribute)

Sept. 29 - The Kept

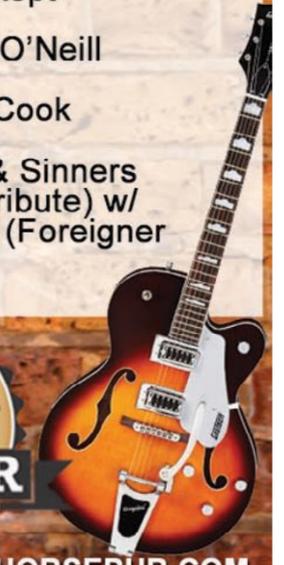
Sept. 30 - Mike O'Neill

Oct. 6 - James Cook

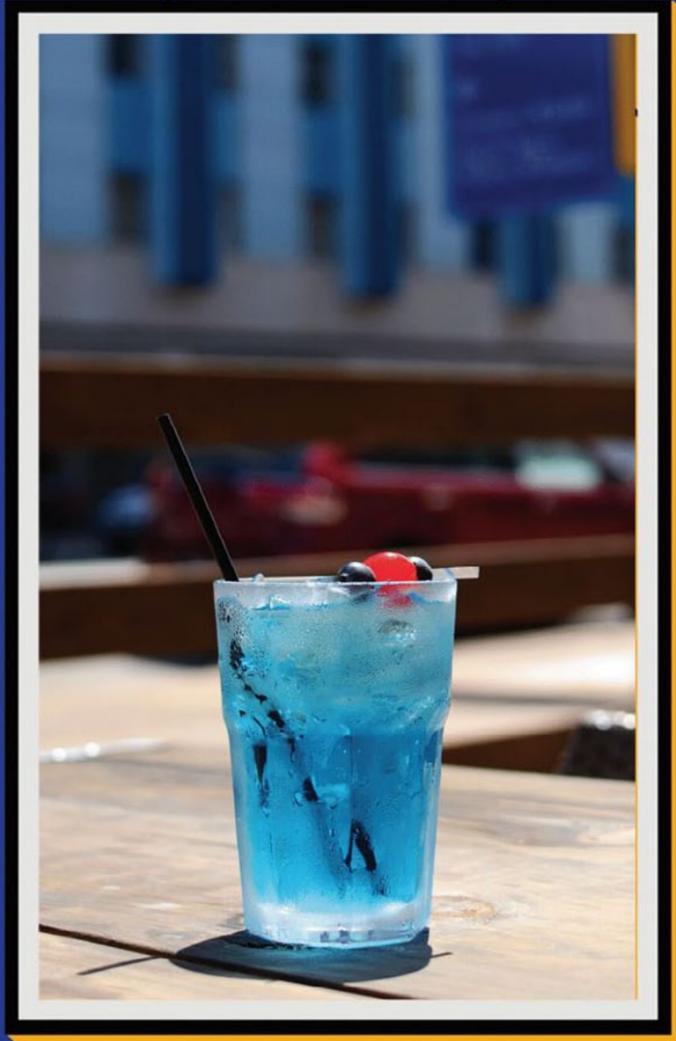
Oct. 7 - Saints & Sinners (Whitesnake tribute) w/ Double Vision (Foreigner tribute)

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## What's Happening

- September 5**  
Romeo Whiskey @ Fall Outdoor Concert Series, WF Softball Complex
- September 6**  
Karaoke Night @ The Maplewood
- September 7**  
Randy Summers Band @ Silver Dollar Saloon
- September 8**  
Dannie Carson @ Stick's Place
- September 9**  
RIP @ Stick's Place
- September 13**  
Susie White Art Show @ The Maplewood
- September 14**  
Dannie Carson @ Silver Dollar Saloon
- September 15**  
AA Bottom @ Iron Horse Pub
- September 16**  
Hip Hop Hooray @ Silver Dollar Saloon
- September 19**  
It Hurts To Be Dead @ Outdoor Concert Series, Bud Daniel Park, 900 Ohio
- September 21**  
Brothers Gow @ Iron Horse Pub
- September 22**  
Black River @ Silver Dollar Saloon
- September 23**  
Kim Younkin @ Stick's Place
- September 24**  
Bruce Lyons' Sidewalk Jam @ B.W. Lyons Guitars
- September 28**
- September 30**  
Mike O'Neill @ Iron Horse Pub
- September 31**

SEPTEMBER 2017

### ★ NEW LOCATION ★

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**9-11:00 AM Specials**  
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 Sept 8 - Clinkers - Painting Sugar Skulls  
 Sept 14 - RIP  
 Sept 23 - Kim Younkin

**\$2 Tuesdays**  
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**and Bacon Marys \$6.50**

**Open 9am-2am Monday-Friday**  
**and 12pm-2am Saturday-Sunday**

- September 21**  
The Wizard Of Oz opens @ Wichita Theatre, runs through October 2
- September 13**  
Karaoke Night @ The Maplewood
- September 19**  
Randy Summers @ Silver Dollar Saloon
- September 22**  
Erick Willis w. The Powell Brothers @ Iron Horse Pub
- September 23**  
Throwback Acoustic Show w/ Joel Estes, Michael Hayes, and Brandt Holmes @ Mustang Bar
- September 23**  
Joe Palen & Friends @ Silver Dollar Saloon
- September 24**  
Cherry Bomb w/ Sedated @ Iron Horse Pub
- September 28**  
Oktoberfest @ Highlander
- September 29**  
The Kept @ Iron Horse Pub
- September 30**  
Hellen Bach @ Silver Dollar Saloon
- September 31**  
Ongoing Live Events: Live Music on Fridays, Race Rutledge on Saturdays @ Texas Nite Life
- September 31**  
Texas Boneyard Band first Fridays, @ Lonesum Dove
- September 31**  
Dru Gid's open jam first and third Wednesdays, Bryson Lawrence's open mic second and fourth Wednesdays @ Iron Horse Pub
- September 31**  
Open Mic Fridays @ 8th St. Coffee House
- September 31**  
Live music Fridays @ Ganache Cupcake Lounge
- September 31**  
Dru Gid's open jam Mondays @ Old Town
- September 31**  
Find The Hub Of NTX on Facebook for updates. Grab a friend and see a show!

The Hub is not responsible for any mis or changed information. Verify info before making plans.



# KIM HUNTER

Kim Hunter was 8 years old when she received her first knock-off Stratocaster for Christmas as a gift from her father. Her parents owned 9 bars in Oklahoma City and Kim would sneak in and peak through the back door to watch Country and Western bands that were on stage. "I was going to be Buck Owens," Kim joked.

She moved back and forth from Wichita Falls and the Dallas/Fort Worth area starting in 1987 and finally settled here in 2000. Her roots were actually in Punk Rock, with a band called Black Satin that was filled with leather, profanity and insanity. "We got kicked out of more gigs than we played," Kim confessed.

Her Country roots brought her back to the scene. "I always liked the Outlaw Country, ya know, Merle Haggard and Waylon Jennings." Through a karaoke contest, she was able to group up with local musician Toby Wayne to form Renegade, who played throughout the area. The band's sudden split meant Kim need-

ed to fill scheduled dates with a new band. This began her project with the Terry Allen Band, which she played and toured with for seven years. Eventually she took control of the writing in the band Barefoot Dixie, which included Tammy Billen-Scheiber, Jose Romero Jr., Joe Harris, Jimi Divine, and Tim McMillam.

Sometimes touring will take a toll on musicians and trying to keep up with that, and life in general, can get to be too much. They eventually slowed down, yet Kim continued with acoustic performances that ultimately got her to play solo and join the underground coffee shop circuit. Hunter has continued writing for these shows. "I've never done something just for me" Kim reflects, "So I've decided to do a personal project called True Stories." The six song EP will deal with her childhood in east Texas, Honky-tonks and heartaches.

She's done all this, all while fighting Squamous Cell cancer, which was in Stage 4 when they caught it. "It was really hard to get it diagnosed. I'm halfway to saying I'm cancer-free." Right now she is in between a radiation stint to make sure the cancer doesn't return. Her struggle is met with the love of fellow musicians, myself included, who are pulling behind her, her battle and her musical efforts. You can hear tracks from her upcoming album on KOLI 94.9 The Outlaw. *-James Cook*

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SEPTEMBER 2017

# SILVER DOLLAR SALOON

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- Sept 2 - TBA
- Sept 7 - Randy Summers
- Sept 8 - Shantell
- Sept 9 - Bisketheds
- Sept 14 - Dannie Carson
- Sept 15 - Cellar Door
- Sept 16 - Hip Hop Hooray  
from Dallas
- Sept 21 - Randy Summers
- Sept 22 - Black River
- Sept 23 - Joe Palen & Friends
- Sept 28 - Tite Wire
- Sept 29 - Romeo Whiskey
- Sept 30 - Helen Bach

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# STICK'S PLACE TAKES OVER THE MB CORRAL

On the night of August 26, 2017 the venue located at 311 E. Scott St. known as Stick's Place saw its last live show. The local bands Therapy and Leddit Ride had the honor of closing out one chapter in the local music history books which featured local legend musicians from the '70s and '80s, as well as those of the younger generation.

Kimberly and Eric Stevens didn't know what to expect three and a half years ago when they opened up Stick's Place, but its legacy is growing bigger and brighter than ever. With the acquisition of the historic MB Corral located at 3305 Sheppard Access Rd, Kimberly and Eric, along with the support of one Mr. Don Larson, are excited about the future of live local music in Wichita Falls. September 1 will be opening day of the 'dive bar' section at the new venue.

I had the pleasure of talking with Kimberly and Eric at this final show to get their feelings about the closure of this location. "Bittersweet," Kimberly said. "When we went into this we didn't know how it was going to go. This move fits us and the direction we want to go." Eric says that three years ago he never expected to be in the position to go bigger, and he is glad the local people have made it possible to do so. "It is the people who have made this possible," he says.

The new place is a very special place. "The Music History at MB Corral is incredible," said Kimberly, "and some of the things Eric has found while getting the place up to par are cool concert posters with the MB Corral logo on it featuring artists like Marty Robbins and Little Richard, and others we may have forgotten about. There is a book written about this venue titled 'Playing By Heart' by Carol Wilson, and the last four or five pages are a list of famous artists that have come through Wichita Falls such as Elvis Presley, Conway Twitty, The Big Bopper, and Etta James, just to name a few. The list goes on and on. I think some people may have forgotten what has been in this venue, and we want to bring it back to life. And we are planning a music museum later on down the line."

"This will be a great opportunity to help our local musicians even

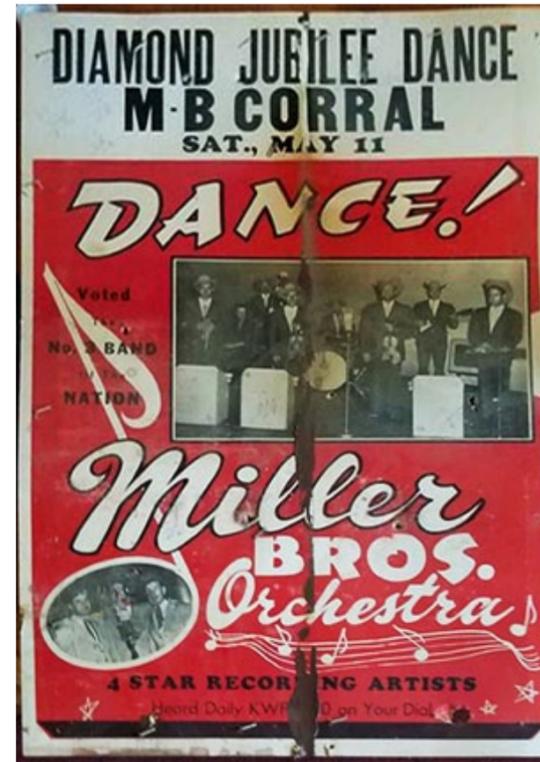
more," says Eric. "I mean, look what we've done so far. A year ago, not all the venues around town were having live music every weekend until we started doing it. People saw what was happening and realized that this is what Wichita Falls needed. We need our musicians." About 95% of the acts that have played here at Stick's Place have been local acts. "And we will do that still," Eric continues. "This will give us an opportunity to bring in bigger acts and locals can open for them, like a showcase, which will bring in more people to see them."

I asked Kimberly about some of the big events that will be happening at the new place soon. "There are too many to mention," she said with a big grin. "We ask that you just stand by and watch us from week to week and see how we grow and the improvements we make each time you come back. But right now, we are looking forward to the opening of the smaller portion of the venue on September 1st. Our main focus is the music and the local musicians, and we couldn't be happier with the support of our locals. And we are hoping that with this being a bigger venue it will encourage even more local musicians to come into the live scene." She says that people have approached her about the move when they see her out and about. People are talking about it, and are excited about it.

I asked if they thought this will be a historic event, and Kimberly said, "I hope we can live up to what the music community is expecting. So, I ask that you be patient with us as we grow."

I said that I believe I can speak on behalf of the local musicians here in Wichita Falls when I say thank you for being the number one supporters

of live local entertainment, and that I have noticed that a lot of other venues have jumped on that bandwagon (pun intended). "And they should," said Kimberly. "And I am excited to see our musicians playing at all these other places and getting the exposure to audiences that they



typically would not get exposure to." "Exactly," Eric continued. "A year ago, some of these places would hardly book anybody local, and we got them out there." "Come on out, locals," Kimberly adds. "That's what I would like to see, is more locals out playing. Because I know they're out there, they are just hiding."

I brought up the point that Stick's place is where I held my first jam session here in town, and put on my first variety show, and how grateful I am to let me book in pretty much whatever kinds of acts I wanted. "I want these musicians to come in and be free to be themselves and be creative," Kimberly states. "If you notice, we host all genres of music, and it has brought so many different people together that would not typically come together for the love of the music and the fellowship, and I want to keep extending that." Eric adds, "That's what it boils down to for us, the music and the

fellowship. There's more talent in this town than I think anybody realizes, and we want to bring it out." And this includes the youngest generation of musicians we have seen recently. Future local legends as young as ten years old that have graced the dive bar stage at 311 E. Scott.

As I concluded my interview, Kimberly wanted to point out that they wouldn't have been able to take this next step if it weren't for the help of local music supporter Don Larson, and wants to be sure he gets the credit he deserves.

So, sharpen your pencil and get a fresh sheet of paper, because the next chapter of Wichita Falls music history is about to be written.

~tim maloney

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# Mike Sherry

## From Backyard to Back Door



“Do you want to be a star, or do you want to be an actor?” This question was asked by a seasoned and talented actress, Molly McCloskey, to a young, green, and ambitious Mike Sherry while he was still in his teens. At the time, he didn’t know the difference, but has since learned that an actor seeks the depth of his craft and is less interested in the glitz and glamour.

When I sat down with Mike in his poster covered office at Backdoor Theatre he enthusiastically jumped into his story. A story that zig zags the country from school to school and stage to stage. A story that begins on a small, homemade stage in a New England back yard. It all started for Mike when his father built a small stage for him to perform a tap dancing show for the family and their neighbors.

He shared his memories of watching Jimmy Cagney movies, like Yankee Doodle Dandy, with his parents and considers those moments to be the beginning of his theatrical training. “My parents would always have me watching musical movies. Ever since then I knew that I was destined for music and theater.”

A lot of theater people come from broken homes and are trying to escape. Not Mike. “I came from the leave it to Beaver family”. Mike described his family as typically blue collar and filled with civil servants or trade workers. Mike credits his parents for supporting and encouraging his path to the arts, but, as you can imagine, he met some resistance from other family members who would chime in with comments such as “you’re wearing tights?”

Mike admits that his formal training impacted him greatly as he named off a list of teachers, as if they were good friends, each one with a quote that he lives his life by. “If you can picture yourself do-

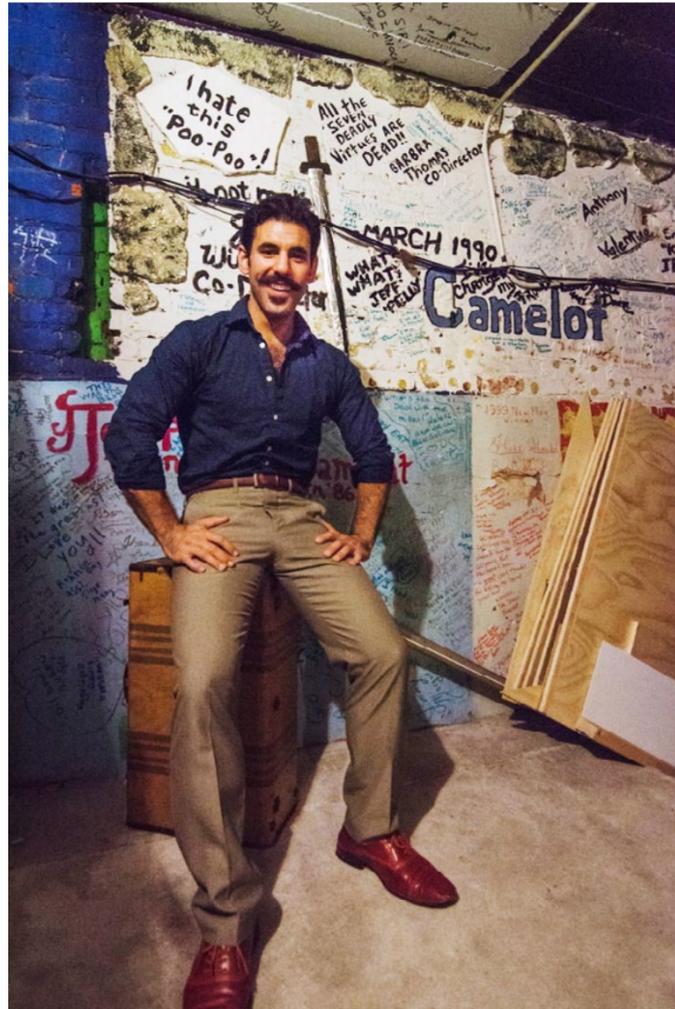
ing anything other than the arts then do it. If you can’t picture that, then you know this is what you were meant to do”, one teacher, Lynne Kurdziel Formato, told him.

Another quote that seemed to be the theme that connected everything was “always be truthful and tell the story”. Mike believes that every script has a story to tell, even the whimsical comedies. “Without a story to tell, then what are we doing?”, Mike asks. “The story draws the audience in and engages their hearts and minds”. He applies this concept to every project that he works on. “To this day, that’s how I direct my own personal work as well as when I direct other people on stage.”

Some of the notable schools Mike attended include the American Musical and Dramatic Academy in New York City, where he met his wife Erin. Erin was a dancer and that kick-started Mike’s interest in honing his dance skills. Desiring to continue perfecting his dance abilities, he decided to attend Elon University in Phoenix Arizona, which he describes as “the best school” that he attended. Elon had a great program that assisted in finding jobs for its students and that’s just what happened for Mike. The dance training that he received at Elon, topped with a network of artists, landed him several jobs from

across the country and eventually bringing him to the Wichita Theatre.

Throughout Mike’s education and work experience, he realized how small the arts world can be. This small world allows for tremendous networking opportunities that opens doors for new experiences. These doors led Mike to a wide range of experiences, ranging from lush hotels in Virginia to horses and rattlesnakes in Oklahoma, to cramped and musty dressing rooms on Broadway.



Eventually Mike decided to move back to Wichita Falls, and not long after that, received a late-night call from Dwayne Jackson at the Wichita Theatre asking him to come down immediately for an audition to dance in CATS. “It’s Sunday night about 10 or 11pm, but I grabbed my dance bag and went”. Mike got the role and, due to some unforeseen issues with project leadership, he was able to step up into some other roles including choreography. This helped him to immerse himself in the local art scene and eventually landed him the director position that he now holds at Backdoor Theatre.

Mike does not take credit for the success that he has experienced. He is quick to shine the spotlight on everyone from his parents, wife, schools, teachers, peers, friends, and other local organizations. He pointed Wichita Falls Art Alliance, Wichita Theatre, and several individuals that all help foster a healthy and thriving arts and theatrical community here in Wichita Falls. Mike could not say enough about the Backdoor staff and volunteers, and their role in the success of the sets and shows.

He concluded by telling me “It’s not just about entertainment. We can be entertained by watching Netflix. It’s about going deeper and finding meaning in life through the arts.” Mike is not afraid to tell the story.

Mike and Erin are co-directing Dirty Laundry, which is currently playing at the theater. Coming up is the Rocky Horror Picture Show in which Erin will be taking the lead choreographing and Mike will be acting in the role of Rocky.

-David Fowler

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The buzz around town is all about the Half Pint Taproom & Restoration Hall, and when they will open. The taproom is located on 817 Ohio Avenue and Cynthia Doten, Denton Keltner and their other two partners have been hard at work putting it together for their projected opening in early to mid-October. They have made great headway on the over 7000 square foot building that will house two venues-one for patrons that want to enjoy live entertainment and one for those that don't want to hear it. There will be a pizza oven, a dining area, two bars, a stage, a green room for the bands, an upstairs VIP area and a kitchen. The taproom and the stage will also be handicap accessible.

Their progress includes framing on the bottom and top of the



front venue, building a stage in the back venue, framing out both bars, the kitchen and the bathrooms. They will also have 2 outside patios when they open.

"Brian's Plumbing is doing the plumbing and Marvin Groves is doing the electrical work," Cynthia said, "We had no luck getting contractors to show up, but we have no complaints about those two companies." This led to the partners and two family members doing the amazing construction themselves. In fact, Keltner

drew up the blueprints. "Denton is the mastermind," Cynthia said, "We are a very good team. All the partners are from this area and they are good people. We are glad to have chosen them and would not want anyone else. Once the air conditioner goes in we will begin putting up the sheet rock, and then we will be closer to the finished project".

Half Pint will rotate 36 craft beers on tap, and 4 wines on tap. They will also have craft cocktails, and a huge brick oven for pizza and a menu of appetizers. They are focusing on being lunch crowd friendly with quality food with a minimal wait time. "I am bringing big time guys down here to do top notch pizza," she said, "They come highly recommended by a man that has 4 restaurants in San Francisco and also has some in



Vegas. We will not be a restaurant," Cynthia stressed, "But we will be a bar with food."

Cynthia said that their vision is to keep downtown alive and growing. They want their customers to feel like they are in a large city when they come to the Tap Room. "We want a good vibe, and we want people to come in and enjoy themselves. We also plan on supporting our local bands," she said.

-Cindy Kahler Thomas

# River Bend Nature Center

River Bend Nature Center (RBNC) is a twenty acre non-profit environmental education facility that has entertained and informed visitors for over 20 years. Approximately 35,000 people walk through the center each year, of which over half are kids. The center houses several species of critters that are native to this area and walking through the center one learns how each plant, animal, and other things that crawl or slither, rely on each other for survival. The staff care for each resident critter with great care and compassion. Everything there from turtles to tarantulas have a name, and many even have a nickname in addition to that. One of the most popular attractions is the butterfly conservatory.

Being a non-profit facility, RBNC relies heavily on donations and



fund raising opportunities to help pay the bills. This summer one of the most fun ways to raise money presented itself. A company called Over The Edge that has helped raise over 60 million dollars for non-profits actually contacted RBNC to see if they would be interested in teaming up and, of course, they accepted.

Over the edge has sent over 30 thousand people over the edge and pride themselves in safety and professionalism. Each participant will be geared up, guided, and lowered by a professional. No experience necessary. You can participate in the lowering or just hang out and let them lower you down if you prefer.

So, how does one get the chance to rappel down Big Blue? First, go to [www.riverbendnaturecenter.org](http://www.riverbendnaturecenter.org)

and find the events page, register by paying a \$25 tax deductible fee, and follow the instructions. You will receive your own page where people can donate toward your goal and advice on how to reach your goal. Once you raise \$1000 you get to go Over The Edge. You can even do it as a team or business to help reach the goal quicker and easier. If you are an over achiever and hit \$1500 you receive the GoPro video footage of your descent. Every dollar raised goes to RBNC and is tax

deductible for the donor. River Bend Nature Center is currently about 70% of the way to their \$100k goal for this event.

The big event will take place on Saturday, September 23rd from 9am to 5 pm at Big Blue on the corner of Scott and 8th St. downtown. Participants will be sent over the edge approximately every 15 minutes. There will be vendors and activities for people that prefer to stay grounded.



[WWW.THEHUBNTX.COM](http://WWW.THEHUBNTX.COM)

# The

# MAPLE WOOD

Wednesday, Sept. 6th  
Karaoke Night

Wednesday, Sept. 13th  
Painting party w/ Vickie Milam

Wednesday, Sept. 13th  
Susie White's art show

Saturday, Sept. 16th  
DJ Marcus

Wednesday, Sept. 20th  
Karaoke Night

Thursday, Sept. 28th  
Painting party w/ Vickie Milam

2611 Plaza Pkwy, Ste 301 A
(940) 689-0404

## MILESTONES AND NEW BEGINNINGS for the Wichita Falls Symphony Orchestra



The Wichita Falls Symphony Orchestra (WFSO) celebrates two milestones this season—providing 70 years of live orchestral music and educational programming in Texoma, and the hiring of Foad Fakhouri, the WFSO's first new Music Director-Conductor in twenty years. Following Candler Schaffer as the orchestra's 8th conductor, Maestro Fakhouri will kick off the season on October 1st with music of Mozart, Marquez, and more.

Fakhouri, who was chosen out of one hundred and forty-four highly qualified applicants from around the world, lives in New York with his wife Diane and daughter Bella. A composer himself, he has degrees from West Texas A&M and UNT, as well as from Pennsylvania State University. Having recently retired from leading the Fayetteville Symphony Orchestra in North Carolina for twelve years, he now heads up not only the WFSO but also the Saginaw Bay Symphony Orchestra in Michigan. To date, he has guest-conducted nine other orchestras, including the Lebanese Philharmonic, the Rochester Philharmonic, and the Cairo and Bulgarian symphonies.

Though the Wichita Falls community attempted to establish an orchestra in 1915, it was not until 1948 that the WFSO was established in earnest. Over the last 70 years the WFSO has performed with countless internationally renowned soloists, including Benny Goodman, Van Cliburn, Duke Ellington, Mark O'Connor, Chet Atkins, Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, and American composers Alan Hovhaness and Michael Torke.

This season continues that tradition and promises to have something for everyone. Texomans will have the unique privilege of hearing actor and former Marine, Wilford Brimley,

Cont. WFSO

narrate Chris Brubeck's Quiet Heroes: A Symphonic Salute to the Flagraisers at Iwo Jima as part of the WFSO's Veterans Day salute to our men and women in the armed forces. The world-famous Canadian Brass will join the orchestra for the second time at their annual Christmas concert in December, and in February the orchestra will be joined for the first time by concert pianist (and Dean of the Lamar D. Fain College of Fine Arts at MSU), Dr. Martin Camacho. Closing out the season in April will be an exciting multi-media program called Pixar in Concert, which will bring together live music and big screen video clips from all fourteen Pixar films, including Cars, The Incredibles, and the Toy Story trilogy.

To help commemorate their 70th anniversary, the WFSO is in the midst of a fun interactive community campaign called "Archiving the Past, Articulating the Future." Music fans of all ages are invited to share their most memorable WFSO moments by recording one or more brief videos on their cellphones and emailing them to Alicia Deges, whose contact information is below. Videos will be compiled in an online video archive on the Symphony's webpage and shared throughout the season on Facebook. All stories are welcome—from attending your first concert as a child to singing your favorite 60s hits with the Midtown Men last season; whatever your favorite memories, the WFSO invites you to share them via video.

For more information on how to participate in the WFSO's video history campaign, or for a more in-depth rundown of the concert season, you can visit wfs.org, call 940-723-6202, or email Alicia Deges at marketing@wfs.org.

-Dr. Todd Giles



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# TIPS AND TALES FROM OUTBACK

with Johnny Divine (Outback Studios 940-613-8436)

Let's talk about the weather! If you plan on going into a recording studio during a thunderstorm, don't be surprised if the session has to be put on hold. Lightning and electrical equipment do not get along! I'm sure this tip didn't shock {are puns allowed??} anyone out there as it is pretty much common sense, so let's REALLY talk about the weather!

A friend to us all in Wichita Falls, and legendary guitarist, Mike O'Neill, moved from his hometown a few years ago to pursue retirement in what he calls "the redneck Riviera". After many visits to the Texas Gulf Coast, Mike set up camp in a town that has now become the subject of many headlines as of late. That town is Rockport, Texas and is now known as being the epicenter of Hurricane Harvey.

As I sit in relative comfort in North Texas, writing this article, a large part of our gulf coast is being devastated by one of our country's most brutal acts Mother Nature has ever presented us. While millions of our fellow citizens are being affected by this hurricane and our hearts and prayers go out to them, I've chosen to concentrate on Mike O'Neill since I have been in personal contact with him through out this storm.

There's not a lot to the story yet because it's on going as you read this, but I can let you know what I know as of now. Mike, at first, planned to ride out the storm for a couple of reasons. The first being for the adventure of it and the other because he was expecting the delivery of a vintage Fender Concert amplifier. The amp did not show up Thursday evening as planned and Harvey was quickly gaining strength, from a Category One storm to almost immediately a Category Three, and then a dreaded Category Four storm. Amplifier aside, Mike decided he and Julie should get on out of the area. Surely the delivery of the amp would be delayed and lives were on the line, so the time was right to pack up what they could. That's what they did and they headed to his brother's home in San Antonio. They made it safe and sound, but they must play the waiting game of being able to return to their home to assess the damage.

Our hearts and prayers go out to Mike and Julie, and once again, to all of



the folks that are experiencing this life changing event. Right now, our good friend is safe, and that's a bright light in this ever darkening story.

By the way, I did let Mike know that a vintage Fender Concert amp was spotted floating in the Gulf Of Mexico about 30 miles off the coast of Cuba. Ok! Just kidding. But I really did let him know he was loved very much up here in North Texas.

-Johnny Divine

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# GARY KINGCADE

Art has always been a part of Gary Kingcade's life. As a small boy, about four years old, Gary Kingcade remembers his mother letting him draw during naptime. "My brothers were younger than me and while they slept I drew in my grandfather's old ledger books," Gary reminisced. "I wonder what happened to those old books. I would love to have them now. I drew horses. I never had a horse. I have always had a love affair with horses," he added. "I still paint them sometimes."

Gary had a passion for art even at such an early age, and the passion has grown over the years. He began to excel in art in the first grade. "I got the most attention with my art in school. Mrs. Williams, my first grade teacher, developed a liking for my art and showed it to Glen Conway who taught art in junior high," Gary said. "He came and saw me and bragged on my art. He kept up with me through college, and

we reconnected when I came to Old High (Wichita Falls HighSchool) to teach in the 80's," Gary said. "We both taught. Glen was a great artist", Gary exclaimed. "Later in life he even collected some of my paintings".

Gary taught art for 40 years, with the first 2 or 3 years in elementary school. His higher education began with an art degree from Midwestern State University in the fall of 71 and then graduated in 81 with his Master's Degree in Counseling. "I always had an interest in that. I was always fascinated by the visual arts and the human being. They are both so unpredictable," he explained. "The intellectual part of the mind and the creativity of it. When I wrote my dissertation, I wrote about the artists versus the scientists. Art is impossible to grade and put a number on."

The philosophical side of art is still influencing him, and much of it had to do with a professor named Larry Fleming. Larry was a character with

Levis tucked in his boots, a long goatee and mustache, a blue jean shirt and long hair. This mentor took an interest in young Gary and gave him things to read on the philosophy of artists such as Piet Mondrian and Pablo Picasso. The artists were the authors of these readings and Larry would then discuss what Gary had read. "He opened my eyes to how much deeper art was than just creating art. It was a philosophy, and they were explaining what they were trying to express," Gary stressed.

Gary is now retired from teaching and has a job as curator for the Kemp Center for the Arts. "I wanted to make art when I retired," he said. "But I don't sell much of my art now because my paintings are too personal. They are my therapy." He does

show his art at the Wichita Falls Art Association Gallery.

"My mom let me draw on my grandfather's old ledgers, so yeah, I still get excited about art. If I ever got to the point that I wasn't excited, I would quit," Gary said. Let's hope that never happens. -Cindy Kahler Thomas




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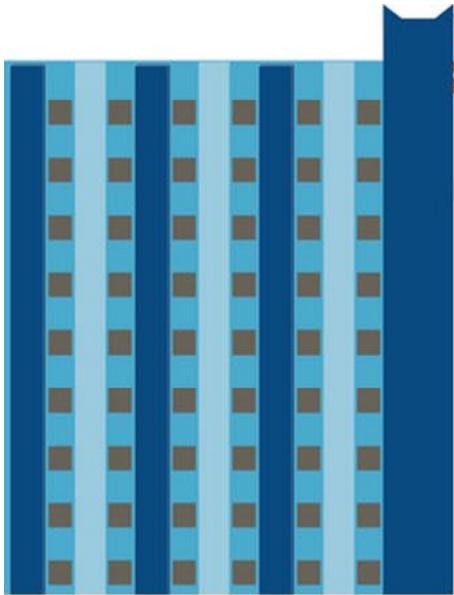


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There is \$25.00 registration fee which goes toward your overall fundraising goal. This is considered a donation to RBNC and is tax-deductible. After you register you will receive all the tools you need in order to go Over The Edge! All donations raised by rappellers are tax-deductible and will go to furthering the educational mission of River Bend Nature Center. Note: Participants must raise the minimum \$1,000 to participate in this thrilling opportunity.



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