

MUSIC - ART - NEWS

**★ THE
HUB**
OF NORTH TEXAS
DECEMBER 2019
FREE

GETTING DOWN TO BUSY-NESS
RICCI AMADOR

INSIDE

AMERICAN NATIONAL BANK
2ND ANNUAL SHOP HOP
SYMPHONY- HOME ALONE IN CONCERT
MSU-BURNS FANTASY OF LIGHTS
HEALTHY'S DOWNTOWN
LEADERSHIP WF
TOUR OF HOMES
JULIE SCALES
MSU SERVICES FOR STUDENT SUCCESS
WFISD TEACHER RIDES WITH THUNDERBIRDS

INTERESTING FACTS

SOME FAMOUS FOLKS OF THE WICHITA FALLS AREA

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Larry McMurtry was born in Wichita Falls in 1936. He is a Pulitzer Prize-winning author, Emmy Award Winner and Academy Award winner. Many of his books went on to become films such as The Last Picture Show, Texasville, Terms of Endearment, and Lonesome Dove.



Tommy Tune was born in Wichita Falls in 1939. He was a Broadway actor, singer, dancer, choreographer, producer and director. He was the first person to win 2 consecutive Tony Awards in the same category and to win in 4 categories he also received a Lifetime Achievement Award in 2015



Mia Hamm grew up in Wichita Falls. She played with the U.S. women's national soccer team for 17 years winning the Women's World Cup in 1991 and 1999, and took Olympic gold medals in 1996 and 2004.

Dominic Rhodes and Bryan Gilmore both played for the NFL, went to school at Midwestern State University.

Nathan Vasher, born in Wichita Falls in 1981, played 8 years in the NFL.



David Nelson was an NFL player who is now best known for starting a non-profit organization, I'mME, that focuses on ending the orphan cycle.

Lloyd Ruby was born in Wichita Falls in 1928. He was a racecar driver who raced in the USAC Championship Car series for 20 years, achieving 7 victories and 88 top-ten finishes



Eddie Hill who still resides in Wichita Falls is a retired American drag racer who won numerous drag racing championships on land and water

Dr. Phil McGraw was given a football scholarship to attend the University of Tulsa but was injured and forced to transfer to Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls. McGraw graduated from the Midwestern State University in 1975 with a B.A. (Bachelor of Arts) in psychology.



Bowling for Soup is an American rock band originally formed in Wichita Falls, Texas, in 1994. The band consists of Jaret Reddick (lead vocals, guitar), Chris Burney (guitar, backing vocals), Gary Wiseman (drums, percussion, backing vocals), and Rob Felicetti (bass, backing vocals, acoustic guitar)

Tom Danaher made history in August 1945 when he shot down the last Japanese bomber on the final night of World War II. He also has flown in about two dozen movies such as Empire of the Sun, Out of Africa, Cliffhanger, and GoldenEye.

Angela Kinsey is an actor who grew up in Archer City. She is best known for her role as Angela Martin in "The Office"

Rex Tillerson was born in Wichita Falls in 1952. He served as the 69th United States Secretary of State and was the chairman and chief executive officer of ExxonMobil.

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Faces And Places



Art Battle Semi Final Participants - Photo:David Barnard



David Barnard - Photo:Simon Welch



Los Muertos Festival - Amber Scott
Photo: David Barnard



Kara Nickens, Chris Horgen, Taylor Offut -
KAUZ Turkey Drive Photo:Simon Welch



4 on the Floor Photo:David Barnard



Hamilton Bryan Employees -
No Child Hungry Event Photo:Simon Welch



Throttlebody - Photo: David Barnard



Ritmo De Hoyos - Photo: David Barnard



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American National Bank & Trust



American National Bank started out in a portable building in 1976, at 2732 Midwestern Parkway, where their main branch still resides. They have come a long way since then with the addition of other branches in Wichita Falls, Iowa Park, Archer City, Quanah, Chillicothe, Flower Mound, Dallas and soon, Denton. Other than their ever-growing success, what makes them special is the immense community involvement of American National's employees.

"We have always encouraged our officers and employees to participate as much as possible to serve on non-profit boards or volunteer in the community," said Blake Andrews, the Wichita Falls Market President and Chief Financial officer. "We have guys who coach baseball, soccer and just about any sport from a kid's standpoint. We have people who serve on the boards of Child Advocates CASA, Beacon Lighthouse for the Blind, Leadership Wichita Falls, the Wichita Falls Heritage Society, the Wichita Falls Area Food Bank, River Bend Nature Center, Hospice of Wichita Falls, and the Chamber of Commerce. We try to encourage everybody to participate. This is our community and we support it."

There is a cooking group called The Pit Crew at the bank. Occasionally, they donate a steak dinner for 50 to non-profits like the ARC and THE Kitchen, who may be having an auction. They provide all the food and do all the cooking for the dinner.

They have also been Partners in Education for longer than two decades, with Fowler Elementary School. "We do a hotdog cook for them at the end of the school year when they have their Field Day. We'll go in and allow the cafeteria workers to take

the afternoon off. We cook hotdogs for all the kids, teachers, parents, and anyone else who may be visiting. So, we do a lot of different functions to support in any way we can," Blake explained.

"We sponsor just about everything you can imagine. We do a lot for Hospice, River Bend Nature Center, and we support the United Way and Hands to Hands. We have also helped the Kemp Center for the Arts, Faith Mission, and the women's shelter, Faith Refuge," he said. They sometimes cook for the Faith Mission and serve the food to the clients. They also sponsor the Friends of Hospice Golf Tournament.

American National Bank has given away over a million dollars in scholarships to Midwestern State University students. "We award four scholarships every year to incoming freshmen from high schools here and in Flower Mound. We give \$1000 per semester for eight semesters, and have been doing this for 19 years," Blake shared.

American National Bank also has a CASA Angel Tree in the lobby each year at their main branch. "Employees go the Christmas tree and pull a name tag off the tree with a list of wants and needs for a particular child. We gift wrap them and have them ready to be picked up," he said.

They have different donation bins throughout the months for non-profits and the community's needs. They have helped PETS with pet food and

other essentials, and even had a coat drive.

"We do casual Fridays where we allow our employees to wear jeans. They make a \$5 donation into an account. Then we pick a non-profit to donate to every week. It allows everybody to wear jeans, and we make a giving opportunity out of it," Blake said.

"We also have several employees who ride in the Hotter N' Hell Hundred bike run. We have a team who participates in THOR of Texoma's Hellacious Obstacle Run, which is a fundraiser for various non-profits. We lend our support and we lend our people to get these things done," he shared.

Employees who participate still receive their wages when they are working at an event or volunteering for a non-profit. American National Bank takes care of its customers, but also helps those who are in need in Wichita Falls, through donations and precious time. They contribute to the communities of their out-of-town branches, as well.

- Cindy Kahler Thomas



Vintage Shop Hop



GRAB YOUR FRIENDS And HIT THE ROAD

JOIN THE WICHITA FALLS AREA ANTIQUE DEALERS ASSOCIATION AS THEY ROLL OUT THE RED CARPET FOR SHOPPERS ON A SELF-GUIDED ROAD TRIP THROUGHOUT NORTH TEXAS AND SOUTHERN OKLAHOMA.

NOV. 23TH-DEC. 7TH

PICK UP A PASSPORT AND MAP AT ANY OF THE PARTICIPATING STORES. HAVE IT STAMPED AT EACH LOCATION TO BE PLACED IN A DRAWING FOR A \$500 GIFT CERTIFICATE GRAND PRIZE! LEAVE YOUR PASSPORT AT THE LAST STORE STAMPED TO BE PLACED IN THE DRAWING.

WICHITA FALLS:

- * BIRDS OF A FEATHER - 617 OHIO AVE
- * PICKER'S UNIVERSE - 1000 INDIANA AVE
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- * HERITAGE ANTIQUES - 1503 LAMAR
OPEN MONDAY - SATURDAY 10-5 (INCLUDES HALL'S ANTIQUES, B & C ANTIQUES)
- * FASHION GARAGE - 1115 LAMAR OPEN MON - SAT 10-5
- * ECHOES FROM THE PAST - 908 INDIANA
OPEN MONDAY - SATURDAY 10-5 (INCLUDES MILLIE RAE)
- * EASTERN TREASURES - 620 OHIO AVE
OPEN TUESDAY - SATURDAY 11-5
- * BLUEBONNET HILL ESTATES & ANTIQUES -
2505 GRANT ST. OPEN WEDNESDAY - SATURDAY 11-4

BURKBURNETT:

- * BURKBURNETT ANTIQUE MALL - 119 E. 3RD STREET
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(INCLUDES BURK TRADING CO & ANTIQUES)

BYERS, TX:

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OKLAHOMA:

- * ADDINGTON STATION ANTIQUES - 401 US 81 - ADDINGTON
OK OPEN TUESDAY - SATURDAY 10-5
- * BUZZARD'S NEST ANTIQUES - 604 S. RODEO DR.
COMANCHE, OK

2ND ANNUAL VINTAGE SHOP HOP 2019



The Wichita Falls Antique Dealers Association is hosting the 2nd Annual Vintage Shop Hop from November 23rd until December 7th. The Shop Hop is a chance for antique lovers to check out many of the stores in the North Texas and Southern Oklahoma area with the added benefit of possibly winning a \$500 gift certificate to spend in any or all the businesses participating.

Lisa Alexander is store manager at Picker's Universe and the president of the Wichita Falls Area Antique Dealers Association. According to Lisa, there are 11 stores participating. "The cool thing is you can start at any of the locations to pick up your passport and get it stamped at each store. There is no purchase required, but you must get stamped at each location to be eligible to win the \$500. It is a fun thing to grab your friends, husband, or whoever and enjoy participating in the Shop Hop."

Picker's Universe is one of the locations. It has one-of-a-kind items and some with a sense of humor, such as a skeleton sitting on a barber's chair and a large dragon with another skeleton riding it. Their inventory includes European antiques, as well as a large variety of vintage treasures and unique gift ideas.

"We are rolling out the red carpet for shoppers to a self-guided road trip throughout Northern

Texas and Southern Oklahoma," Lisa said. Each store participating is listed on the passport along with their operating hours and addresses. The farthest location is just a fun road trip away in Addington, Oklahoma. Addington Station Antiques has the Addington Station War Memorial, dedicated to all veterans. The store has a variety of items, such as tiger oak furniture and 3,500 square-feet of antiques. They boast vintage signs galore and a large collection of Fiesta Ware.

Fashion Garage is also a stop on the Shop Hop. "Our shop is different because we focus directly on fashion items for both men and women. We have a large selection of vintage through contemporary resale. There is also a large selection of accessories including hats,



purses, shoes and jewelry. We probably have one of the largest selections of those items in North Texas. It is a one-stop-shop for all your fashion needs," explained Connie Bennett co-owner of the store.

You can find the list of other locations participating in the Shop Hop in the ad beside this story.

- Cindy Kahler Thomas

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

CURRY GARDEN



Kamal Talukder, owner of Curry Garden located at 1308 Holliday Street, wanted to bring something new and different to Wichita Falls. The Bangladesh native's new Indian food restaurant fits the bill.

"I did it because a lot of people don't know what curry is. I wanted to introduce curry to Wichita Falls. It is a little bit spicy

and a little bit different," he said. Curry is in the most popular dishes in Bangladesh and is quickly becoming known in our community thanks to Kamal.

Tikka Masala is one of the most popular dishes. "We use the best chicken cut into tiny pieces, and it has a lot of ingredients mixed in," Kamal said. Another dish that is well-liked is the Goat Curry. "Whether you try one or the other, everything is good. It is always fresh, and fresh tastes better," he added.

The portions are big and the food averages from \$8 to \$12. Kamal says you cannot get this type of food anywhere in this area. The meat is blessed by a temple and slaughtered in the traditional Bangladesh way. "It tastes better," he shared. Kamal travels to Dallas for many of his ingredients including the goat and lamb meat., even though it cost more. The end product is worth the extra time and cost, he said.

The business hours are Monday 11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. They are closed on Tuesdays, but are open Wednesday and Thursday from 11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday's hours



are 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. and Sunday's hours are 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. He encourages everyone to come in and try something unique - and wake up those taste buds.

- Cindy Kahler Thomas

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Ho! Ho! Ho! “Home Alone in Concert”



The Wichita Falls Symphony Orchestra presents the family-friendly “Home Alone in Concert” on Saturday, December 14th at 7:30 p.m., at Memorial Auditorium in downtown Wichita Falls. Really, to say a live orchestral concert is “family-friendly” is a bit of a misnomer—they are all family-friendly. This one, however, should be fun for young and old alike - including those who normally do not think of themselves as orchestra buffs.

“Home Alone in Concert” is the first event under the leadership of the WFSO’s new Executive Director, Alicia Deges. “We are so excited to start the holiday season with this great family film,” Deges says. “We’ve put together several affordable family ticket packages we hope will entice enough folks out to fill up Memorial Auditorium for this unique concert experience.”

Much like the WFSO’s performance of “Pixar in Concert” in 2018, “Home Alone in Concert” brings together the excitement of Texoma’s professional orchestra performing in sync with John Hughes’ 1990 Christmas classic as the story unfolds on the big screen. Joining the orchestra onstage for the second half of the program will be the Oratorio Chorus, a group of singers made up of MSU students and members of our community.

The film score of “Home Alone” is by John Williams, world-renown composer of some of the most memorable cinematic music in history such as all eight “Star Wars” films, the first three “Harry Potter” films, “Schindler’s List,” “E.T.,” “Jaws,” and “Saving Private Ryan” just to name a few.

Everyone knows “Home Alone,” but just in case you have not seen it since it premiered nearly thirty years ago, here is a recap: Macaulay Culkin stars as the feisty eight-year-old Kevin McCallister, who is accidentally left behind by his family as they head out for their Christmas vacation. The movie’s action centers on the young McCallister repeatedly outwitting two bungling thieves played by Joe Pesci and Daniel Stern.

For these live “in concert” events the score is removed, leaving only the dialogue, sound effects, and any other music featured in the film by other artists. The conductor will lead the orchestra from a copy of the score as he does during each performance. What makes this performance different? Maestro Fakhouri will also be using a teleprompter which will provide him with the tempo, downbeats, and markings highlighting the timing of important musical moments in the film.

Fakhouri, who also conducted “Pixar in Concert,” says, “I can’t wait to present this production to our Wichita Falls audiences. It is a terrific score by one of the greatest movie composers of all time. Conducting such projects requires bringing many varying elements together. This is not always easy, but it is a challenge we at the WFSO love to partake in.”

To learn about the special cost-friendly family ticket packages the WFSO has put together for this concert, call 723-6202 or visit wfsso.org.

-Dr. Todd Giles



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MSU-BURNS FANTASY OF LIGHTS

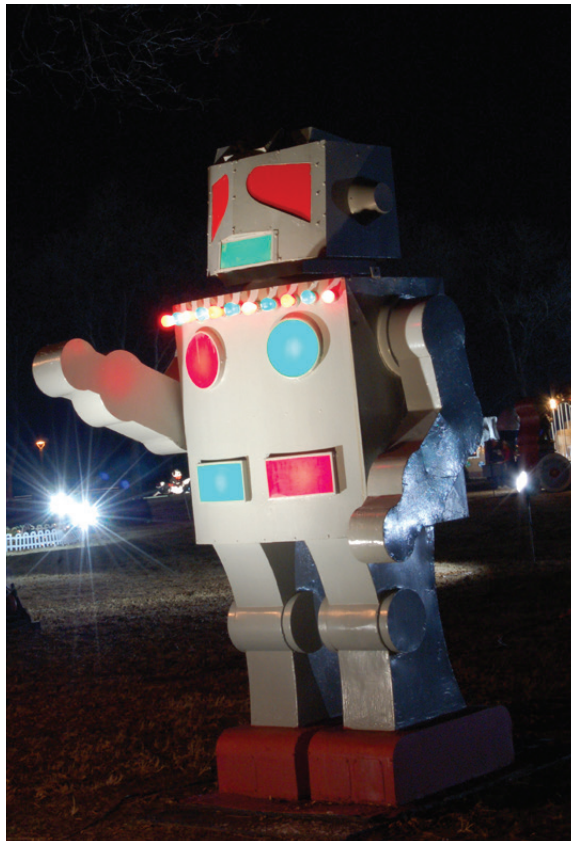
a fantastic tradition

Wichita Falls is home to one of the largest and most unique holiday displays of its kind, the MSU-Burns Fantasy of Lights. The MSU-Burns Fantasy of Lights holiday display has an estimated 200,000 visitors each year. Its purpose is to provide a festive atmosphere on the Midwestern State University campus, to serve as an outreach to the community, and to be a focal point for holiday activities in North Texas. "I have heard countless stories of how the MSU-Burns Fantasy of Lights has brought families closer together and created lasting memories to be shared throughout the years. The Fantasy of Lights prides itself on helping bring our community together," stated Dirk Welch, Coordinator of the MSU-Burns Fantasy of Lights. "I have seen marriage proposals and met visitors from as far away as Taiwan."

The Opening Ceremony for Fantasy of Lights was Monday, November 25, 2019. The display will run through Christmas Day, December 25, 2019. Throughout the season (typically on Tuesday and Thursday evenings in December starting at 6:00 pm), several local Elementary School, Middle School, and High School Choirs and Jazz Bands will provide musical entertainment at the MSU-Burns Fantasy of Lights. These choir and jazz band performers are able to display their musical talent to the enjoyment of many. On Saturday, December 14th at 3:00 pm Tuba Christmas will perform. A special guest visit by Jim Quashnock and his Belgium 40 Key Street Organ will occur later that evening (7:00 pm). To see the entertainment schedule, visit <https://fol.msutexas.edu>. The daily hours of operation are from dusk to 10:00 pm, seven days a week. On Tuesdays and Wednesdays, the displays can be viewed from 9:00 am – 2:00 pm for local school and daycare field trips.

The best way to experience the Fantasy of Lights is on foot. There are sidewalks throughout the displays enabling good visibility to take in all the wonderful details it has to offer. The Polar Bear Express, a local shuttle service, takes visitors back and forth to the display. It is located in the parking lot near the Dillard College of Business Administration on the MSU Campus. Students, faculty and staff with valid ID's can ride for free Sunday through Thursday. All other times and visitors pay a nominal fee.

The Fantasy of Lights tradition began in the late 1920's with a single blue bulb on a tree that sat on the front porch of the Burns Family home. Over the years, new displays were added until Mrs. Burn's passing in 1971. In 1974, the displays



were offered to Midwestern State University. Since then, MSU has continued the tradition as a memorial to Mrs. Burns, and for the enjoyment of the Wichita Falls Community and surrounding area. For the complete story visit <https://fol.msutexas.edu>.

Once it was donated to MSU, a nonprofit Fantasy of Lights Advisory Board was formed to raise the thousands of dollars needed to operate, maintain the displays, and showcase them each year.

The MSU-Burns Fantasy of Lights allows MSU to be a focal point of holiday activities in the North Texas area. With so many visitors coming each holiday season, it provides MSU with an opportunity to showcase the beautiful campus and introduce potential students to MSU. According to Dirk Welch, Fantasy of Lights Coordinator, "I believe the largest impact of the MSU-Burns Fantasy of Lights is felt within each individual who volunteers, donates, or attends the exhibitions. The community also benefits from the festive nature of the event and the economic impact of visitors to Wichita Falls and MSU."

The MSU Facilities Services team (Grounds,

Electrical, and Carpentry) is instrumental in the set-up, maintenance, and take down of the displays. The Career Education Center undertakes much of the display refurbishment. Additionally, this year, Davis Signs refurbished the Welcome Sign and the folks from Nexstar Broadcasting refurbished the Old Woman in the Shoe.

The displays are stored in the Jan Thacker Fantasy of Lights Workshop, located off Professional Drive and Archer City Highway. Today, the displays remain largely intact as they travel to the MSU campus from the Jan Thacker Fantasy of Lights Workshop and then back again at the conclusion of the season. But it still takes resources to maintain the exhibits and add new exhibits each year.

An annual Work Day is scheduled each fall (last Saturday in September) and is staffed by volunteers who paint, clean, and do minor repairs to the displays. Over 150 community members typically volunteer. Some displays require more significant refurbishment and are ongoing throughout the year. All expenses are paid by donations received each season. It takes virtually every penny raised to refurbish, maintain, and showcase the displays. MSU does not fund the MSU-Burns Fantasy of Lights. It is solely supported by the generous contributions from our community. The public plays a tremendous role in keeping this exhibit an annual event. Funding sources include donations from individuals, including the Texoma Gives campaign, as well as donation boxes and boot collections during the MSU-Burns Fantasy of Lights.

A unique way to fund the project is by "adopting" one of 44 displays and providing financial support. For more information about adopting a display or to see a list of "adopters," visit <https://fol.msutexas.edu>. Twenty-two displays have been added since 1974. There will be two new displays this year, "A Frozen Christmas" featuring the popular Disney characters, Anna, Elsa, Olaf, Kristoff and Swen - which will sing and move. Another new feature will be "Candy Cane Lane" with several tree trunks, lining the walking path, decorated with red and white lights.

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Displays from the original Burns' Family collection:

- Covered Wagon
- Dumbo
- Flipper
- Gingerbread House
- Horse with Cowboy
- Humpty Dumpty
- Lion
- Nativity Scene with Camels
- Old Woman & The Shoe
- Poinsettia
- Polar Bear & Bear
- Raggedy Ann & Andy
- Red Baron (Snoopy)
- Robot
- Santa's House
- Santa and The Flying Reindeer
- Santa in the Chimney
- Skaters Table/Piano
- Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs
- Snowman
- Toy Castle
- Welcome Santa & Candy Canes

The following displays (22) have been added since 1974:

- A Frozen Christmas (debuts in 2019!)
- Building Lights
- Candy Cane Lane (debuts in 2019!)
- Character Village
- Christmas Trees
- Cinderella
- Dickens Christmas Carol
- Little Engine that Could
- Eskimo Village
- Frosty's Friends
- Merry Christmas To All

- Nutcracker Carousel
- Peter Pan
- Santa's Chair
- Santa's Stop
- Santa's Workshop
- The Elf Band
- The Rock of FOL
- Three Little Pigs
- Toys' Christmas
- Toy Soldiers
- Wizard of Oz

Over the last few years, the Annual MSU-Burns Fantasy of Lights 5K & 1-mile Fun Run has provided a source for funding. The 5K & 1-Mile Fun Run is scheduled for Saturday, December 7th at 10:00 am. The race starts and ends at the MSU-Burns Fantasy of Lights. In addition to the race, gift cards will be given for the best and worst holiday themed male and female participant and fastest to reach the 5K finish line. Race t-shirts, limited quantities, will be available to the first 100 paid registrants. For complete race details and to register, visit <https://fol.msutexas.edu/5k-run.php>. Registration Fee: \$25.00 for the 5K Run and \$15.00 for the 1-Mile Fun Run. First 25 students that register are FREE. \$15.00 for all other students.



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- 3 PC Net
- 4 B Cocoa Artisa Chocolate
- 5 Museum of North Texas History
- 6 Elvis Always
- 7 6th Street Winery
- 8 Stone Oven Downtown
- 9 Highlander
- 10 American National Bank
- 11 Downtown Development
- 12 Half Pint
- 13 Iron Horse
- 14 Spectra
- 15 White Realty
- 16 Encore the Christmas Store
- 17 Broken Tap
- 18 Karat
- 19 WF Farmers Market
- 20 Gypsy Kit
- 21 Healthy's
- 22 Picker's Universe



map: marcela trice



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DEC 7 - 10PM

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DEC14 - 12PM

DECEMBER EVENTS CALENDAR

MUSIC

December 1

-6th Annual Holiday Canndeemonium
benefitting the Wichita Falls Area Food
Bank @ The Warehouse

December 3

-Open Mic Night with Clint Vines @
Stick's Place

December 4

-Harvey & Tim LIVE @ Stick's Place

December 5

-Karaoke & Open Mic Night @ Vudu
Lounge

-Karaoke with Tom Brillhart @ The
Maplewood

-Christmas Concert: Gail Key Academy
of Music hosted by WFYSO @ First
United Methodist Church

December 6

-R & R Gives Christmas Metal Show @
Stick's Place

-Open Mic Night with Nick Dan @ The
Maplewood

December 7

-Dimebash 2019 @ Stick's Place

-Race Rutledge and The Texas Knights
@ Texas Nite Life

-Hip Hop Night @ The Deep End

-Black River @ Vernon Parts Sports Bar
and Grill in Vernon, TX

December 8

-Philharmonic Orchestra Christmas
Concert hosted by WFYSO @ The
Forum

December 10

-Open Mic Night with Clint Vines @
Stick's Place

December 11

-Harvey & Tim LIVE @ Stick's Place

December 12

-Karaoke & Open Mic Night @ Vudu
Lounge

-Karaoke with Tom Brillhart @ The
Maplewood

December 13

-Everhym with Leddit Ride, A New Day
Falls, and Big Find @ Stick's Place

December 14

-Race Rutledge and The Texas Knights
@ Texas Nite Life

-Oddfellas Free Christmas Show @
Stick's Place

-Armadillo Flats Band @ Vernon Parts
Sports Bar and Grill in Vernon, TX

December 19

-Karaoke & Open Mic Night @ Vudu
Lounge

-Karaoke with Tom Brillhart @ The

Maplewood

December 20

-Open Mic Night with Nick Dan @ The
Maplewood

December 21

-Dueling Pianos by Fun Pianos! @ Half
Pint Taproom & Restoration Hall

-The Radio Broadcast with DJ

Whisperwish @ Vudu Lounge

-Race Rutledge and The Texas Knights
@ Texas Nite Life

-Crosswind @ Vernon Parts Sports Bar
and Grill in Vernon, TX

December 26

-Karaoke with Tom Brillhart @ The
Maplewood

December 28

-Race Rutledge and The Texas Knights
@ Texas Nite Life

-Bruce Lyons Sidewalk Jam @ Bruce
Lyons Computers and Guitars

ART

December

Exhibits @ Wichita Falls Museum of Art
at MSU Texas

-Paul Valadez: Collage and Community

-Luis Jiménez: The Human Family

-On the Verge: Recent Works by Matt

Wedel

-The Art Express: Miniature Trains from
the collection of Jim Hughes

Exhibits @ The Forum

-Lynn Connolly

Exhibits @ The Kemp

-Virginia Oechsner: A Retrospective

-Jules Scales

EVENTS

December 1

-Falls Town Flyers vs. Austin Power @
Kay Yeager Coliseum

December 3 – January 2

- THE Kitchen 2nd Annual Blanket and
Sock Drive @ Walmart on Lawrence Rd.

December 5

-Downtown Wichita Falls Candle Walk
@ Downtown Wichita Falls, TX

December 5 – 7

-Rockin' and Sockin' sock drive @
Wichita Falls Brewing Company

December 6

-Christmas at the Winery benefitting
THE Kitchen and P.E.T.S. Clinic @

Horseshoe Bend Cellars Vineyard &
Winery

December 7

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-Wichita West Craft Show @ J.S. Bridwell Ag Center
 -Little League WF Wranglers vs. NTX Prowlers @ Kay Yeager Coliseum
 -Christmas at the Winery benefitting THE Kitchen and P.E.T.S. Clinic @ Horseshoe Bend Cellars Vineyard & Winery
 -Skeptics and Seekers Roundtable @ Odd Duck

December 8

-Wichita West Craft Show @ J.S. Bridwell Ag Center
 -Christmas at the Winery benefitting THE Kitchen and P.E.T.S. Clinic @ Horseshoe Bend Cellars Vineyard & Winery

December 13

-Beer & Bingo benefitting Texas Pit Crew @ Whiskeyta Club

December 14

-PR Wars Smash Ultimate Tournament hosted by The Deep End @ Burkburnett Community Center
 -Skeptics and Seekers Roundtable @ Odd Duck

December 15

-An Improvised Christmas with Backdoor Theatre @ The Forum

December 16

-Defining Moments Dance Recital @ Memorial Auditorium

December 17

-Defining Moments Dance Recital @ Memorial Auditorium
 -The 55 Advantage @ Ray Clymer Exhibit Hall

December 20

-Improv Night @ Backdoor Theatre

December 21

-Holiday Dreams @ Memorial Auditorium
 -Little League WF Wranglers vs. TX Red Wolves @ Kay Yeager Coliseum
 -Oh \$*!# It's Almost Christmas Shopping Event @ Wichita Falls Brewing Company
 -Skeptics and Seekers Roundtable @ Odd Duck
 -Christmas Market @ Downtown Wichita Falls Farmers Market

December 28

-Falls Town Flyers vs. Colorado Springs Inferno @ Kay Yeager Coliseum
 -Balance at the Brewery @ Wichita Falls Brewing Company
 -Skeptics and Seekers Roundtable @ Odd Duck

December 29

-Steve Hofstetter @ Half Pint Taproom & Restoration Hall

Downtown Wichita Falls Farmers

DECEMBER 2019

Market: Open 1st & 3rd Saturdays

THEATRE

December 5, 6, 7, 12, 13 and 14

-Miracle on South Division Street @ Backdoor Theatre

December 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 20 and 21

-Elf The Musical @ Wichita Theatre

December 6 and 7

-Wichita Falls Ballet Theatre The Nutcracker @ Memorial Auditorium

December 7

-Country Christmas & Gospel Show with Patriotic Salute @ Royal Theater in Archer City, TX

December 16

-The Grand Ol' Christmas Show @ Wichita Theatre

December 21

-Texas Country Gospel Show ft. Kevin Rowe and The Prodigal Sons @ Royal Theater in Archer City, TX
 Downtown Wichita Falls Farmers Market: Open 1st & 3rd Saturdays

FOR THE KIDS & FAMILY

December 14

-Holiday Open House @ Wichita Falls Public Library

December 21

-Studio Saturday: All About Artists – Michelangelo @ The Kemp

Mondays

-Youth Drawing @ The Kemp

Tuesdays

-Beginning Anime and Elementary Art @ The Kemp

-Preschool Storytime @ Wichita Falls Public Library

Wednesdays

-Advanced Anime @ The Kemp

-Toddler Time @ Wichita Falls Public Library

Thursdays

-Advanced Youth Art @ The Kemp

Fridays and Saturdays – December 21

-ElectriCrittters 2019: A Lighted Christmas Display @ River Bend Nature Center

Have something to add to next month's calendar? Email: gabby@thehubntx.com

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Ricci Amador getting down to busy-ness

From being diagnosed with Attention-Deficit-Disorder as a child to finding his entrepreneurial spirit as a young adult, Wichita Falls native Ricci Amador, who with his wife Jan, currently run the 8th St. Coffee House. Seventy-hour work weeks are not unheard of for Amador. Incidentally, the idea of opening a coffee house began to materialize when his wife and he were still attending high school. His drive came from seeing his dad's success as an Insurance Agent for State Farm and later opening a bar named Amador's. Aside from Ricci's many responsibilities as part-business owner, he has found many successes in his 41 years.

When Ricci was younger, he attended several different schools eventually graduating from Harold Accelerated Learning Center, which was located near the Post Office downtown. He later attended a junior college for half a semester before becoming a young father at the age of 18. To make ends meet, Ricci had multiple jobs, even coaching sports at one time of his life.

In an effort of keeping himself focused due to ADD, Ricci began playing the trumpet in his early years. He later learned piano and guitar. He admitted to not being as good on guitar as he would eventually be on the drums, where he attests to having had better musical experiences.

At the age of 17, Ricci and one of his friends insisted on starting a Nirvana cover band because of their interest in alternative music. Until then, Ricci had never played drums but was determined to teach himself. So, he bought a drum-set from his cousin and the rest is history. He never thought music would serve as big of a role in his life when he was first teaching himself to play instruments.

The turning point to his music career began at the age of 28, when he formed another band and has been involved with playing with fellow musicians ever since.

Mr. Amador has also committed to volunteer work, in which he served on the board of Downtown Development for two years. He has been entrusted with serving on any committee where there is a downtown event,

DECEMBER 2019



such as the St. Patrick's Day Festival. Ricci also volunteers his time and musical talent to Backdoor Theatre. 8th Street Coffee house helps non-profits in the community by collecting donations for THE Kitchen – Meals on Wheels and P.E.T.S. Clinic, as well. When asked if he would ever consider expanding his business and opening another location, Ricci expressed how busy he is. It would just be too much to handle, since he also works for Federal Express and has been engaged in every musical production of Backdoor Theater since 2016.

In addition to his long list of priorities, Ricci also plays drums for Faith Baptist Church on Sunday mornings and is about to lend his percussive ingenuity to First Baptist Church. If that's not enough, he is also the drummer for local 80's and 90's cover band Hannah Bell Lecter.

8th Street Coffee House, Downtown Development, Backdoor Theatre, FedEx, Faith Baptist Church, First Baptist Church, Hannah Bell Lecter, husband, father... Ricci is a busy man! He has found success, as he has truly found his entrepreneurial spirit.

- John Gossett



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M-F 3pm-2am • Sat Noon-2am

DEC 6-WAYWARD BLUE

DEC 7-LONE STAR SKYNYRD
(TRIBUTE TO LYNRYD SKYNYRD.)

DEC 13-SHOT OF BENATAR
(TRIBUTE TO PAT BENATAR.),
RED BRICK TROLLEY

DEC 14 - TBD

DEC 20-QUEEN FOR A DAY
(TRIBUTE TO QUEEN.)
THROTTLEBODY

DEC 21-MIKE O'NEILL AND FRIENDS

DEC 27-GANNON FREMIN AND CCREV

DEC 28-TBD

DEC 31-NEW YEARS EVE
NINETY TO NOTHING, BLC

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If you are one of many who want to live healthier and are planning on making it part of your New Year's resolutions, Healthy's Downtown is the place for you. Healthy's is located at 807 8th Street, but also has a door facing Scott Street.

"There is always a flux of people who are making New Year's resolutions," said Carrie Garner, owner and operator of the store. "I encourage people to not do something so lofty they can't stick with it. The follow-up and follow-through are very important. A lot of people come in and are trying to lose weight. I have lost weight with this program and I am still on a journey."

Carrie has lost over 80 pounds by drinking the shakes and teas Healthy's offers. "Some people are coming in for a healthy breakfast or lunch and they are not necessarily working on a goal, and that is okay too. For people who are coming in and need to lose weight, to have more energy, or are trying to build muscle, we can do a wellness profile. We do an evaluation

with them free of charge with no obligation. Then, we can decide what goals they have and recommend a program to reach that goal," Carrie explained.

The secret ingredient in Healthy's shakes and teas is Herbalife, a company that has been around for 38 years. It has evolved over those years and is quite tasty, according to Carrie. The basic shake is 200 calories and has 24 grams of protein. "We also have a line formulated for people working out. It has additional products in it like branch chain amino acids and things athletes are looking for in a supplement, but it is a shake and it is awesome," she said.

"The other cool thing is some people don't want it cold - and this is great hot. It doesn't have to be shake consistency. It can be almost like a creamy hot chocolate or a creamy banana-nut bread you are drinking. You are still getting the 24 grams of protein," Carrie said.

"The teas are thermogenic, which is an energy and metabolism-booster. We

have aloe shots that can be added to the tea, good for your skin and your insides. A lot of people are big fans of the tea bomb, which is an energy tea with an additional energy tablet, band C vitamins, and ginseng for memory. It gives you a sense of well-being. With the tea bomb, people feel an enhancement, an uplift like you do with caffeine but without the caffeine drop off," she boasted.

The flavors are never-ending. The flavors include wedding cake, sprinkled donuts, lemon blueberry, blueberry muffin, rocky road, wild berry with banana and strawberry, caramel apple, and orange dream, which Carrie said is reminiscent of a Dreamside you might have enjoyed as a child. The Elvis, with bananas and peanut butter in a chocolate shake, is very popular. Cookies and cream is the best seller, but Carrie's favorite is salted caramel. "Almost anything you can imagine you like ice cream wise, I probably have as a shake. There is something for everybody, and my granddaughter even likes them. Kids won't drink anything that doesn't taste good, and it meets kid approval," she said with a smile. As an

added bonus, every Wednesday she also has a specialty shake that is not on the menu.

Carrie also sells Herbalife products to customers so they can stay on their program at home. In fact, January 10th is the first anniversary of the business. They will be launching with some other team members a six-week weight loss challenge starting on January 5th. There will be money and prizes for the top losses. The Herbalife products will be available to participants to reach their goals.

"As far as New Year's resolutions go, a lot of people say, 'I am going to start on the first' but they are not, because they have eaten like crud during the holidays, they are going to watch football and play on the first. Don't set yourself up for failure. That week we will be doing wellness profiles, and people can make a commitment to take the time to do it, not just act on the emotion 'Oh it is the first!' The first week is the time to start something new. We will sit down with them on their time schedule," she promised.

- Cindy Kahler Thomas



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LEADERSHIP WF

Are you a native Wichitan? Are you new to the area? Either way, Leadership Wichita Falls could be the just the right opportunity for you to learn what makes Wichita Falls unique. LWF is now accepting applications for their 2020 class. Go to www.leadershipwf.org to learn more. Whether an established business professional or a newcomer to Wichita Falls, each participant in LWF enjoys a well-rounded opportunity to enhance his/her leadership skills, network with other participants and leaders, assist in volunteer placement and develop a profound sense of awareness and gratification concerning important aspects of the Wichita Falls community. Leadership Wichita Falls (LWF) was established in 1979 as a result of the tragic tornadoes which struck Wichita Falls that same year. Born out of a disaster with a mission to create community leaders, the legacy of LWF is in every aspect of the 16-week leadership development and community orientation program. Its mission is to recruit, educate and develop individuals for civic leadership while providing foundation and ongoing opportunities for community involvement.

Each year, up to 40 adults from diverse sectors and backgrounds are selected to participate in a 16-week transformative and enriching experience, covering a

broad spectrum of professional development and networking opportunities. Participants will:

- Learn more about Wichita Falls economic engine and city infrastructure with education and field trips pertaining to the Wichita Falls City government, the Wichita County government, the Wichita Falls Fire and Police Departments;

- Learn leadership skills, discover strengths and find ways to apply those strengths through activities and training specific to leadership. “My favorite memory from LWF is watching classmates overcome some of their greatest fears through determination and team work,” said Rusty Downs, Class of 2019, Wichita Falls Fire Department.

- Grow professional and personal spheres of influence

through structured and unstructured socials, retreats and events. “Leadership Wichita Falls helped me make connections and brainstorm on how to make improvements for our district. It was a great experience,” said Peter Griffiths, Class of 2018, WFISD.

- Immerse into the nonprofit community which reflects the generous heart of Wichita Falls through activities with local nonprofits, Sheppard Air Force Base and the creation of a class project. Laci Edwards, Class of 2018 stated, “The LWF program solidified that I want to be the best advocate that I can be for this phenomenal city that I live in.”

Class Projects
Each LWF class is responsible for planning and implementing a class project to benefit the Wichita Falls community and demonstrate

the class’ awareness, as well as understanding of community needs and opportunities. The most successful and longest running event influenced by LWF is the Hotter ‘N Hell Hundred. This event still goes on today and is one of the most prestigious bike races, not only in Texas but in the nation. It is estimated this race generated \$8 million in revenue for the city of Wichita Falls since its inception. Many of these projects continue year after year and become embedded in the community. Other class projects have included:

- 2019 - Bags for Brags benefitting Children’s Aid Society
- 2018 - Dumpster Dine benefitting Wichita Falls Area Food Bank
- 2017 - Mane Event; Back in the Saddle
- 2016 - Falls Fast N Furious benefitting Children’s Aid Society
- 2015 - Red River Hoop Jam benefitting Children’s Aid Society & Downtown WF Development
- 2014 - Red River Smoke-out benefitting Children’s Aid Society
- 2013 - Falls Fast N Furious benefitting Whispers of Hope
- 2012 - Freedom Fest benefitting The Kitchen & Big Brothers Big Sisters
- 2011 - THOR (Texoma’s Hellacious Obstacle Run) benefitting Faith Refuge & area first responders
- 2010 - Legacy Gala benefitting Cunningham Elementary School



•2009 - 47 Miles Project: Remembering the 1979 Tornado benefitting area nonprofits



•2008 - Character Banners benefitting the Wichita County Humane Society & WF Adult

Literacy Council

•2007 - The Mane Event: Painted Horses benefitting Faith Mission, Patsy's House & Downtown WF Development

Youth Leadership Wichita Falls Youth Leadership is a joint project between Leadership Wichita Falls and the Wichita Falls Independent School District Partners in Education program. Since 1993, the Youth Leadership program has afforded local youths the opportunity to enthusiastically embrace a journey to promote their personal growth while empowering them to realize the need for positive change and involvement within our community.

Each spring, 30 students from

Hirschi, Rider, and Wichita Falls High School are selected to make up the Youth Leadership class. The class is introduced to several leadership development and community awareness programs from February through April. The curriculum also includes a minimum of 3 community service projects. The Youth Leadership experience is offered at no cost to the students or their families as 100% of the program is underwritten through the generous support of local foundations, philanthropic organizations, and businesses. If you or a student that you know would be interested in participating, contact the College Career Counselor at any of the three high schools. Students must be in the 10th or 11th grade and

be in good standing with their school.

Join the over 1200 LWF alumni and become a member of the LWF 2020, "the best class ever." Start your journey to discover the "real" Wichita Falls and what it takes to be a true Wichitan!

By Sonia White and Marla Malone

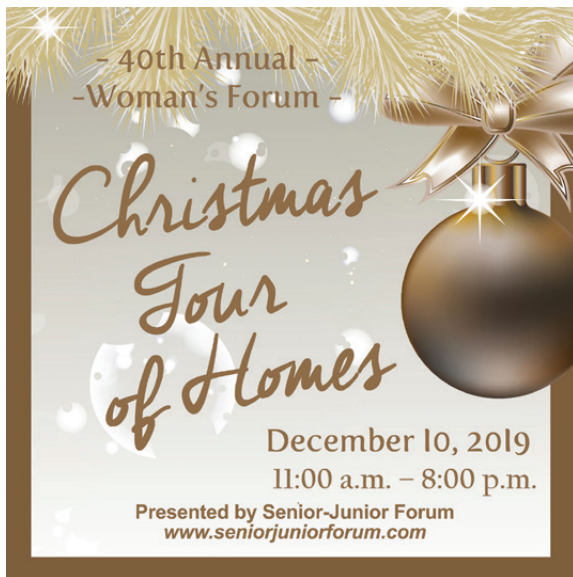


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WOMAN'S FORUM ANNUAL CHRISTMAS TOUR OF HOMES



The Woman's Forum Christmas Tour of Homes has been a tradition in Wichita Falls for forty years. The tour features 6 beautiful homes decorated for the Christmas season. The homes open their doors Tuesday, December 10th from 11:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m.



Jacksboro National Bank, Mortgage Division in Wichita Falls, is sponsoring a complimentary Hot Chocolate Bar at The Forum. Please stop by and have a cup of hot chocolate. You can also buy a ticket at the Forum and use their parking lot if you would like to carpool with friends. There is also a restroom available in The Forum.

Guests are free to take a self-guided tour of each home in any order they chose. Volunteers will share interesting information about each home.

We have a door prize donated by Harvest Drug and Gift. It is an 18.5 inch "Classic Christmas" lighted water church featuring a picturesque caroler scene. It is lighted with continuous swirling glitter and is battery operated. At your last home, complete the information on back of ticket and leave in the drawing box. The drawing will be the



following day and the winner will be contacted.

The Senior-Junior Forum, The Arts Council, and the Junior Forum share the proceeds in support of charitable works in our community. The Senior-Junior Forum is proud to continue this tradition.



SENIOR-JUNIOR FORUM



HOMES ON TOUR

Brenda & Harry Patterson
100 Memorial Dr.
(Corner of Lake Parke Dr.
and Southwest Pkwy)

Linda & Gary Tippit
2505 San Simeon

Nancy & Ted Smith Jr.
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Courtney & Todd Waggoner
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Sarah & Dr. Matthew Pitts
2033 Avondale

Tammey and Jeff Haynes
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Jules Scales: Twisted Imagination

Jules Scales' art is captivating, unusual, symbolic and has "a large amount of twisted imagination." It can be viewed until February 2nd at the Kemp Center for the Arts in the West End Gallery.

"Each piece has a story. When I am creating, I put my emotions of the moment into the work which helps to develop the final results," she explained. Jules is full of joy and light, and demonstrating a wonderful sense of creativity that shows in her art.

Jules grew up on a farm in Electra and attended Midwestern State University. She graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts and lives in Wichita Falls. She works at MSU in the Undergraduate Resource Office helping students with scholarship programs. But that is just her day job. In her time off she creates mixed-media collages, fiber art abstracts, and acrylic abstracts.

Even when she was a child, she liked to make collages. "It was a craft we did a lot growing up. Out in the country, it was remote and on a hot summer day or a cold winter day, what are you going to do? We always had glue and magazines. I loved making fun pictures and collages when I was little," she said nostalgically.

When she got older, she started scrapbooking. "I was watching different scrapbooking artists on YouTube and the internet to check out the different techniques, and there was a trend toward mixed media. I was very curious about it, so I investigated it further and began to experiment with those techniques.



I discovered I liked them. I think it was a natural progression from scrapbooking to making collages, from adding paint elements and different things to make it more cohesive," Jules said.

Another factor in Jules' art progression was the loss of her mother, Rexena Thompson Scales in 2015, after "being her caregiver for a couple of years." Between a full-time job and caring for her mother, there was little time for art. Her art and scrapbooking materials were stored in the craft room. Because of her mother's frequent trips to the hospital and the rehabilitation afterward, Jules started to have more time to herself and began "doing those techniques again."

"I discovered it was a good way for me to escape constructively and not sit around and be depressed. I also quit smoking in 2015, and it was something to keep my hands busy. I realized when I was creating these alternate faces and worlds, I wasn't

dwelling on being sad. A lot of my art has been influenced by my mom, and how she supported me; and about her life and our life together. I found memories of her flowing into my pieces," she said.

"There is always an element of time, pretty hands, or a cardinal, or some kind of bird. My mom loved watching birds. I tie those elements in subconsciously as a little piece of her. The piece with the cardinal is called Bird in Hand. It started out dark because I had found an image of an old cemetery. One day I was harvesting images, cutting out things I would want to use in future pieces of art. I cut out the cardinal and as I cut out a hand it landed on the cardinal in this unique way, like it was holding the bird. I decided to put it on the cemetery, because I thought it was a great contrast of the bright cardinal in the cemetery. Cardinals are often referred to as spirits of our guardian angels or spirits of someone you lost watching over you. My

mom loved cardinals, and I do too. I had some cardinals visiting me in my backyard at that time. So, it has kind of become the story. I didn't really realize what the story was until someone asked me. I started putting different pieces together, and I realized it was an homage to my mom. She wouldn't have wanted me to be sad and depressed because she was gone. She would have wanted me to continue to live my life and share my light," Jules said with a smile. "The hands represent my mom because I always thought her hands were beautiful even when they were arthritic. The bird represented me, and her hand was securely holding me and supporting me and telling me I need to let my light shine even in my darkest places."

The time elements Jules often uses in her pieces are also symbolic and "mean there is no time limit on grief. There is no time limit on your emotions. You are the only one to put yourself in a time limit. You are the only one who gives you a deadline, and the essence of time just means to me that art is timeless," she explained. Peace Not Pieces is another very interesting mixed media work of art. It has a mask jutting through the canvas with puzzle pieces attached. The puzzle continues down the canvas and the subject of the puzzle is various masks. "It clicked that it needed to be Peace Not Pieces because we need to have peace in ourselves. We need to not fall apart even when things are falling apart around us and while we are attempting to get them back together. The calmer you are

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in a stressful situation, the more you can see clearly,” Jules shared. After the Ball is a Cinderella story told from a different point of view. “My Cinderella had ashes on her face because her spell was breaking. She was color and beauty, and her face is going backwards from being beautiful to her reality. The concept of the piece is even when the spell starts to break at the last moment, don’t let the nonsense break your spirit. You have to have courage,” she explained.

“I grew up on a farm and was raised
DECEMBER 2019

in the country with a strong Christian background. I was taught to do good, treat others with fairness, kindness and love. Don’t judge people. Accept them for what they are,” she said modestly. She is not comfortable being in the limelight but rose to the occasion at the opening of her show on November 15th. Her art speaks for itself and what started out for fun and for therapy to keep herself “from being in a hole” is now being shared at the Kemp Center for the Arts.

- Cindy Kahler Thomas

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CONNECTION

MIDWESTERN STATE OFFERS A VARIETY OF SERVICES TO AID IN STUDENT SUCCESS

Midwestern State University offers everything a student needs to succeed while getting an education and beyond graduation. Many students would attest the classes and programs prepare them to enter the workforce after graduation. The university is committed to student success and it begins as soon as new students move in.

Freshman Experience

Freshmen moving to the university are supplied with numerous resources in an environment that cultivates learning. Freshmen attend Mustangs Roundup, a weeklong orientation prior to the first week of classes, to immerse new students into the atmosphere at Midwestern. Although it is not a requirement, there are four different on-campus housing options for freshman. Co-ed and same sex housing options are available to fit each student's preference. First year students are also required to enroll in MWSU 1233. The course aims to assist freshmen in adjusting to life in a college setting and to teach them tools to help throughout their experience in college.

Business Administration senior Baylee Seymore said Mustangs Roundup and the freshman seminar course really helped shape her college experience. Seymore said, "I made my first friends during roundup week. Being around all the others who live in my dorm has helped me make connections with people I wouldn't normally befriend. The course was helpful too. Through the class, I learned some helpful skills that have gotten me through each semester and met individuals who are in a lot of my classes."

Academics

The university offers a wide variety of classes in different fields of study. There are 45 undergraduate programs to choose from and 28 graduate programs. The faculty members assigned to teach the courses are very knowledgeable in their field of study and willing to help students. Average class sizes at the university are small and yield an 18:1 student to teacher ratio. Smaller classes allow more interactions amongst students, their peers, and professors thus creating an environment where thoughts and ideas can be shared without hesitation. Midwestern State has additional opportunities for students to learn outside of the classroom. There is an undergraduate research opportunity for students. EURECA presents undergraduates with the ability to work alongside a professor to conduct research on a topic of interest. The university also provides students the advantage of studying abroad in five different locations across the world. Accounting senior, RJ Sayler, recommends studying abroad to any student interested. "Studying in London was an awesome time. It was interesting to learn in a different environment and experience a new culture. Not only did it satisfy credits needed for class, but I gained life experience too," said Sayler.

Student Life

Students at Midwestern State have opportunities to get involved during the school year. With over 100 student organizations, there is something to interest each person. The university is affiliated with 14 different national fraternities and sororities. It is also a member of NCAA Division II

sports. The Mustangs have 11 programs competing in the NCAA. Criminal Justice alumni Sir'vell Ford said, "Playing football at Midwestern was one of the best things I have ever done for myself. I met my best friends on the team. I am forever grateful for my experience here."

The Wellness Center on campus hosts 25 different recreational sports leagues. MSU also has a Student Government Association. There are clubs and organizations associated within every field of study. Some have been formed to bring students of various culture or social identities together.

On-Campus Resources

Outside of professors and peers, students have access to extra resources for academic and personal needs. The university offers free tutoring to all students. The Tutoring Center can assist students with any general classwork. Supplemental Instruction is a more intense tutoring experience from a peer who has already completed the course. The Writing Center is available to help any student write material from simple compositions to complex research papers. The Vinson Health Center on campus provides students with healthcare needs at a low cost. They offer services for general illnesses and therapy sessions. The Psychology Center is an additional way to receive confidential therapy for any type of mental issues a student may be working through.

Psychology major, Alaina Garza, said, "It's nice to have a place on campus to seek help with mental health. It's even nicer that it is paid for through my tuition so I don't have to worry about

further payment. They have one-on-one therapy sessions and group sessions. I have been to both and have benefitted for them."

Graduation and Beyond

All of the homework and time spent in the library lead up to one big accomplishment. Midwestern State graduates 42 percent of students. And, 93% post-graduates will be employed. Networking is an important part of securing a job. Former Mustangs, located across the country, are prepared to help other alumni. The median earning of Midwestern State graduates is \$37,700 2 years after graduation. This is \$10,787 more than the national average. Attending Midwestern is a way to ensure an individual has a well-rounded education and skills to use in the workforce and beyond. Finance alum, Erick Gamboa, said, "I feel like I was equipped with the right knowledge to go out into my field and be successful. I took my studies seriously and utilized extra resources."

Midwestern State has invested time and effort into its students, their academic success, and their future, starting as soon as freshmen move onto campus and continues with their achievements after graduation.

- Kayla Cryer

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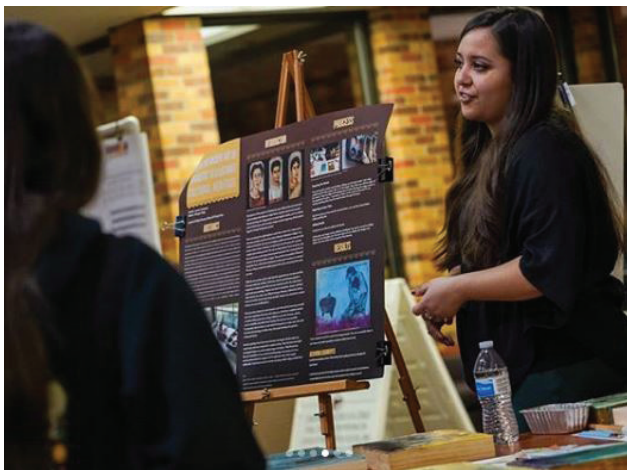
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WFISD TEACHER GETS RIDE OF LIFE WITH THUNDERBIRDS

SHEPPARD AIR FORCE BASE, A Wichita Falls High School teacher got the ride of a lifetime Oct. 27, 2019, when she soared through the North Texas skies with the USAF Demonstration Squadron “Thunderbirds.”

Debbie Pepper, who teaches English as a second language and Peer Assistance and Leadership, said she is still somewhat in disbelief of the experience and being the Hometown Hero selected to fly with the world-class aerobatic team. Pepper was named the Wichita Falls Independent School District Teacher of the Year for secondary education for 2019.

“Even though I’ve been through the experience now and I was there, have the pictures and have the witnesses, it still hasn’t completely set in. I flew in a jet,” she said of the red, white and blue F-16 Fighting Falcon that has been the show pony for the Thunderbirds since 1982. “I threw up in a jet – it’s still unbelievable.”

Pepper said when she received the invitation to fly as the Hometown Hero in September, she thought the email from the 82nd Training Wing Public Affairs office was fake. Her husband, Brad, said he thought the invitation was



legitimate, but she said that reassurance didn’t slow her mind during a sleepless night.

A phone call the next day from the PA office confirmed the request, she said, and the excitement continued to build.

Pepper said she knew a little about the Thunderbirds and the F-16. Col. Dann Carlson, Pepper’s

former Sunday school teacher and 80th Flying Training Wing instructor pilot who is now the commander of the Hawaii Air National Guard 154th Wing, flew with the Thunderbirds after his assignment at Sheppard.

Then there was the wait – the period between the notification and hopping in the backseat of the jet.

“(There was) a lot of anxiety, you know. It’s a jet. It’s fast, and, you know, you get sick,” she said. “But also exciting because it’s a once in a lifetime opportunity. Most people don’t get that chance.”

Pepper said she didn’t tell many people initially, but eventually told family, friends and her students at Old High, the locally familiar tag of WFHS. As her excitement built, so, too, did theirs.

The teacher of 18 years said she was astonished at the near rock-star treatment she received from the Thunderbirds team – including her name on the jet – as well as Sheppard leadership. She said while it was exciting to fly in the jet, it was just as exciting to receive the VIP attention.

Pepper said she didn’t know a program existed for civilians to fly with the Thunderbirds. She said she had heard of spouse taxi days with some organizations, but never this opportunity.

“Never in my wildest imagination did I figure I’d get to do something like this,” she said. “I have to say this again – the whole day is so special. Yeah, the flight; that’s amazing. It’s once in a lifetime. But the whole experience – you’re literally a VIP for them.”

Pepper said she went through the required regiment of training, which included how to suit up, proper technique for handling high gravitational forces, and

how to use the ejection seat. She was also instructed on the nine different maneuvers they would attempt.

Although the air sickness she is part of the experience that she shares with people, she said she wishes she would have “sucked it up” and performed more than the three maneuvers she could stomach, which were the vertical climb at takeoff, a 6.1-G turn and flying upside down.

The ride put her on cloud nine. But, she said, she was thankful to be on the ground and not moving when the flight was over.

It was back to reality Monday morning, she said, when she had to return to her classroom at Old High. She told her students about the previous day, all of the training and equipment, and, of course, her ride in the back of an F-16. She handed out red, white and blue Thunderbirds stickers, one of which is proudly displayed on her nameplate outside her door.

Pepper said she has spent the past 13 years teaching ESL at Old High, witnessing the challenges some students have as they learn a new concept in foreign country. Some of those students are connected





to Sheppard's missions, which include international aircraft maintenance students in the 82nd Training Wing and NATO partners in the Euro-NATO Joint Jet Pilot Training program.

As she recalled her experience with the Thunderbirds, she equated that to the trials her students face.

She said when she was going through G-suit training, her instructor asked Pepper to show her what she had learned. Although she had missed or had forgotten a few things, Pepper said her instructor was patient and took the time to reteach the information.

It was a reminder, she said, of how she is in the classroom and the patience she should exhibit while teach a new language to students. a technique she said she uses with her students.

"Just because I explained it clearly doesn't mean that it all sinks in," she said. "They need reminders. They need reinforcement. They need to hear it again."

Pepper said she was confident that she was one-and-done with her supersonic, aerobatic twists and turns in the F-16. But as the experience grew more distant – and knowing there are six more maneuvers left in the sky – she said she wouldn't mind doing it again.

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