

MUSIC - ART - NEWS

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OF NORTH TEXAS

FEBRUARY 2020

FREE

## RICK & CHRISTY GRAHAM

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# ROMANCE IN WICHITA FALLS BEST PLACES TO GO ON VALENTINE'S

- BUY ARTISAN CHOCOLATES FROM B COCOA (CLOSES AT 5 PM)
- GET FLOWERS FROM BEBB'S FLOWERS (CLOSES AT 4 PM AND ORDER EARLY)
- PURCHASE JEWELRY (A FEW LOCAL CHOICES ARE DOVE'S, HOLDER'S, AND NACOL'S)
- ENJOY A GLASS OF WINE (OR BOTTLE) BEFORE DINNER FROM 6TH STREET WINERY (5-10PM) OR HOOK & LADDER (4-10PM)
- GRAB A ROMANTIC DINNER (OUR FAVORITES ARE HIGHLANDER, KARAT BAR & BISTRO, OR MCBRIDE'S STEAKHOUSE ON MAPLEWOOD)
- ATTEND:
  - A.DANCING FOR THE STARS AT THE MPEC 6:15 PM
  - B.8TH STREET COFFEE OPEN MIC 7:00PM
  - C.BACKDOOR THEATRE'S SWINGING WITH  
SINATRA: A VALENTINE'S SOIREE 7:30 PM
  - D.WICHITA THEATRE'S WEST SIDE STORY MUSICAL  
7:30 PM
  - E.IRON HORSE PUB'S CHARLEY CROCKETT, CODY  
SHAW TRIO,  
EB STEWARD AND THE RAMBLERS 9:00 PM
- GO DANCING AT LONESTAR
- TAKE A ROMANTIC WALK ALONG SIKES LAKE OR THE SPILLWAY
- NETFLIX AND CHILL



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# Faces And Places



**Texas Senator Pat Fallon w/  
Casey Polhemus  
at the Crime Stoppers Banquet**



**Mike Sherry**  
Photo: David Barnard



**Backdoor Improv Troupe**



**Kiwanis Pancake Festival**



**Oddfellas**  
Photo: David Barnard



**Kelly Kinter**  
Photo: David Barnard





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# EVERY NOW AND THEN:

## *Whatever Became Of Bumpin' Butch?*

How well I remember the two main heroes of my youth. One guarded America's Old West while the other was on watch over a great metropolitan city-and the rest of the world if necessary. One spent his days with his wonderful crime fighting partner, Tonto, seeking out the bad guys and bringing them to justice while the other spent his days confusing his co-workers, Lois Lane and Jimmy Olsen, with the ever clever disguise of a pair of dark framed eyeglasses. I must say, that was one of the finest disguises ever created because I had no clue that Clark Kent was someone else at times! Did you?? One was a mortal human, subject to demise at all times, whether it was a bullet or a cattle stampede, while the other was a super human from another planet whose only fear was a substance known as Kryptonite.

The Lone Ranger and Superman were, of course, creations in the world of entertainment, but I was very fortunate to have a hero that lived in my little town of Burkburnett, Texas. He was not a veteran of some far away war or a scientist who found a cure for some ghastly disease. His contribution to the world at the time was seemingly small and not heroic at all, but to me, it was life changing. He was a teenager, a student, a fellow that played drums in rock bands in the sixties and seventies, and the oldest child in a family of four children, but he went beyond the label of average in all his endeavors.

Robert "Butch" Halverson was the kid in high school that lived in the "projects" and worked hard at the Palace Theater in the concession stand, cleaning up, and even running the old timey movie projectors. He was doing this while so many of us other teenagers were watching the movie and having fun. I remember him working there and thinking he was not having the fun so many of us were having, but he seemed happy enough. At the time I didn't really know him, except that he was friendly and seemed like an energetic and upbeat young man. He later worked at Sheppard Air Force Base as a training aid. He spent time as a janitor at Burkburnett High School. He played drums in a rock and roll band. This was during his teen years, a time when a job allowed for some extra spending money at the most.

Butch did not have extra spending money. His money went to support the household of his mother and three siblings. I had become aware of his sacrifice sometime in the early seventies when, many times, I saw Butch proudly

FEBRUARY 2020



walking down the streets of Burkburnett (the family had no car for a very long time), smiling, holding his head high, and pushing his mother in a wheelchair. Next to Butch were two of his siblings, following along, and in his mother's lap was his youngest brother. I never asked what circumstances led to his role in the family. But as was his nature, Butch knew something had to be done. And he did it.

As fate would have it, Butch and I ended up in a band together, playing all over North Texas and Southern Oklahoma, as well as gigs from Arizona to Colorado to Montana. This allowed me to get to know Butch much better and learn about his family. And what a family it was! His brothers and sister were some of the kindest people I had ever met and his mother was a most precious lady to me. Butch himself proved to be the nicest and most uplifting person I had ever met, never regretting his station in life. I can truly say it was an honor to know him and to have him as my best man when I got married in 1974.

His work for his family in the sixties spilled over into the seventies when Butch bought a home for his mother and the younger siblings. While most of his peers were partying or trying to find our footing in life and trying to

build for our future, here was Butch, building a better life for his mother, brothers, and sister. Butch eventually turned his drumming abilities and love of music into a successful business. Disco music had hit the scene fairly hard and it became common for a live drummer to accompany the music the DJ was playing, giving it more of a drive. Butch could be found at the Seymour Electric Company in Wichita Falls doing just that. He later branched out to play private parties and other clubs under the name Bumpin' Butch, the Bump being a popular dance at the time. In this role he was the drummer and the DJ! During this time in his life, Butch was also studying mechanical engineering/mechanical drawing and discovering his career calling. Butch's mom passed away in 2006 and the siblings have become wonderful adults. Butch has worked in the engineering field for many years and currently works at Corlett, Probst, and Boyd Engineering. He and his beautiful wife Sherry have two grown daughters and two grandsons. Bumpin' Butch is a distant memory. Butch's drums are, it seems, a thing of the past. The Palace Theater is no longer standing. The streets of Burkburnett are no longer bristling with shoppers. But my memories of Butch Halverson are strong and inspiring to this day.

I saw Butch a couple of weeks ago and, even though he has been suffering, he is under the care of a liver specialist for autoimmune hepatitis, which is inflammation in the liver that occurs when the immune system attacks the liver, he was as upbeat and funny and as positive as I have always known him to be. Keep him in your thoughts and prayers for he is a much deserving fellow.

As I close, I want to share what Butch texted me when I told him I wanted to do a story about him: "Well, whatever you do, don't flatter me! It was my duty for mom and family and I humbly accepted my place without burdens". My response was: "Some don't accept that duty. I'll be flattering you".

-Johnny Divine

# RACING IS BACK IN WICHITA FALLS!



Good old-fashioned, American, heart-pounding, blood-throttling, adrenaline pumping racing! Monarch Motor Speedway at 1633 FM 369 N is officially back for a second season!

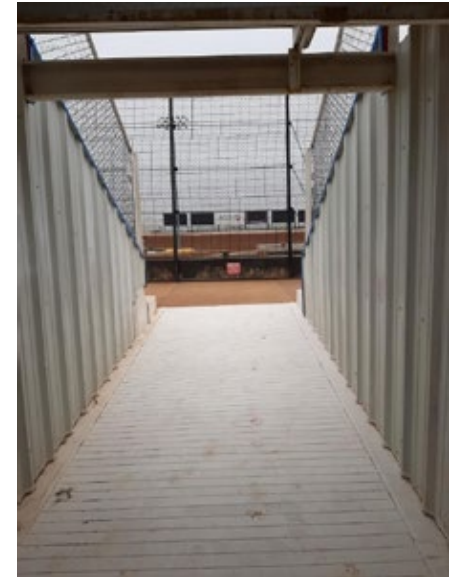
From their website [www.MMSDirt.com], “We're all locked and loaded for the 2020 racing season - and can't wait for it to begin! Action atop the ultra-fast 1/4 mile is set for Feb-Oct! Our first night of racing will be on Friday, February 21st with the running of the Lone Star Stock

Car Tour featuring IMCA Stock Cars, Modifieds, SportMods and Sport Compacts, plus Factory Stocks.” According to Speed Shift TV it's, “the Class Too Tough to Tame [...]” Racers from all over the country are coming to compete. Anywhere from 150 to 200 racecars can be expected to fight for the checkered flag on opening night.

The Hub and the Wichita Falls community as a whole are pleased to welcome the owners Mr. and Mrs. Shannon and Misty Kelton from Duncanville, TX, married for 25 years. They are excited to bring their passion for racing to North Texas. A family business, the Keltons have been involved in racing ever since Shannon bought

his first race car over 20 years ago. They are the proud parents of two sons, Jordan and Scottie. Jordan is a professional firefighter and the other, Scotty, is also in the family business competing in SportMod competitions around the country. When they're not racing or firefighting, Scottie and Jordan can be seen helping their parents out at the Monarch Motor Speedway. The Monarch Motor Speedway is the Kelton's first track that they've owned. There are 26 nights of USRA racing on the 2020 schedule along with a wide range of traveling series that will be visiting Monarch Motor Speedway.

The 2020 season launches with a fast paced event featuring the legendary NASCAR racer Kenny Wallace. Wallace will be competing with drivers from all over the country at the February 21 race at Monarch Motor Speedway. “Kenny has over 425 Nationwide starts, making him only the second driver with this distinction [...]. Kenny also has over 340 starts in the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series. He has grabbed three poles, six top-five, and 27 top-ten finishes, including three career-high second-place runs. Kenny's most well-known finish probably came when he pushed



the late great Dale Earnhardt to his final Cup victory at Talladega in 2000 in a thrilling last lap shootout.” [http://kennywallace.com/about/]

You won't want to miss the inaugural race on February 21st! The opening race, and all races this season, will be affordable fun for the whole family. Adult tickets go for \$15, \$10 for seniors (65 and older,) military and first responders, \$5 for children ages 6-11, and anyone under 5 years old is free!!! So come, bring the whole family, and be a part of all the action.

For more information please visit the Monarch Motor Speedway website at: [www.MMSDirt.com](http://www.MMSDirt.com) or on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/MonarchMotorSpeedway/>.

-Jonathan Hartman

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# NEGRO LEAGUES BEISBOL

Baseball became America's celebrated pastime in the 1860s, but the game would remain largely segregated until the 1940s when Jackie Robinson officially broke the major league color line. The stories from this divided time in American history are now on display at the North Texas History Museum.

The Wichita Falls Alliance for Arts and Culture, in partnership with The Negro Leagues Baseball Museum in Kansas City, Missouri brings the exhibition Beisbol to Wichita Falls for the first time.

Beisbol explores the connections of African American baseball history to Hispanic cultures, communities and countries, and will be on view until March 13, 2020.

2020 marks the 100th anniversary of the Negro Baseball Leagues, organized February 13, 1920. The league provided a playing field for African-American and Hispanic baseball players to showcase their world-class baseball abilities. The Negro Leagues would operate for 40 years and play a significant role in bringing the country together at the



height of segregation in America. 2020 also marks the formation of the Texas Negro Leagues. The Wichita Falls Black Spudders were a part of the league along with teams like the Houston Black Buffs, Austin Black Senators, and Beaumont Black Oilers. The players took the field in a time when racism and segregation were a fact of life. Very little is known about the Black Spudders team, but Margie Reese, executive director of the Arts Alliance is hoping to change that.

"These men risked their lives to

play a game they loved," Reese says. "One former player told me about driving to Dallas to play and seeing black men who'd been hanged along the side of the road. They couldn't stop at restaurants, they couldn't stop for gas, their cars couldn't break down."

Over the next few months, the Arts Alliance will be working to gather more information on the Wichita Falls Black Spudders, the players, and their lives.

"We are looking for memorabilia, newspaper clippings, pictures, obituaries. Anything that can help us tell a better story than we can now," Reese says.

The research will culminate with an exhibit at All Hands Community Cultural Center to honor the players from the Wichita Falls Black Spudders, and a mural will be unveiled dedicated to the players.

If you have information on the Wichita Falls Black Spudders, you're encouraged to contact the Alliance by calling (940)500-4451 or emailing [info@wichitafallsarts.org](mailto:info@wichitafallsarts.org).



**NEGRO LEAGUES  
BEISBOL**  
Family Day: February 22  
Museum of North Texas History

"Rube Foster, who was born and raised in Calvert, TX is credited with the formation of the Negro National League in 1920. Foster started playing for amateur and semi-professional teams in the late 1800s and early 1900s, primarily with teams from Waco and Fort Worth. His skill as a pitcher soon earned him recognition on a national scale."

-Mark Presswood, Texas Almanac





# FUN STUFF

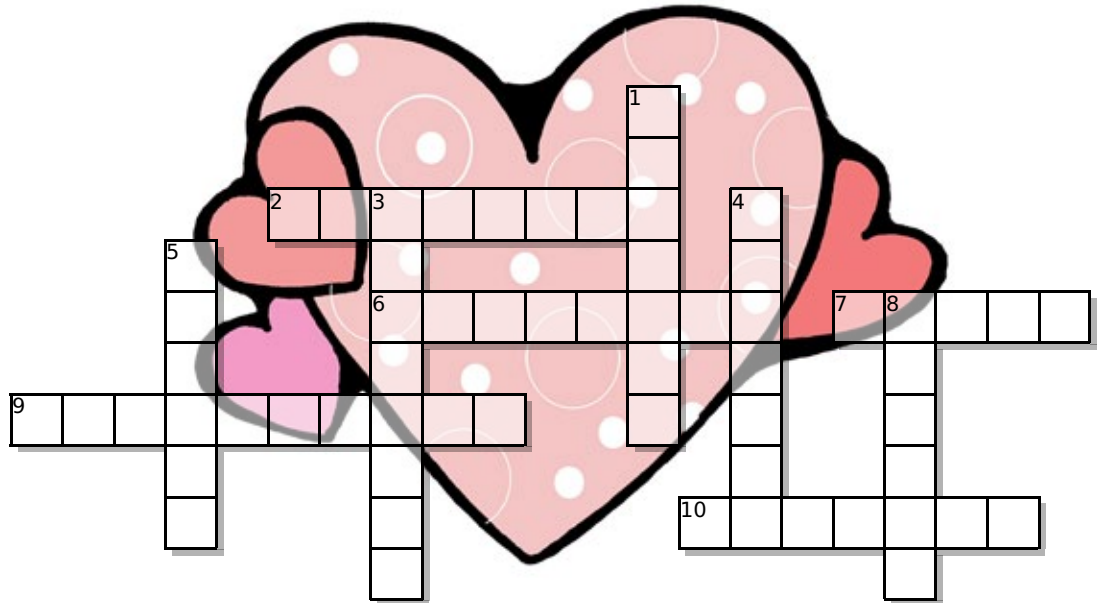
Me thinking "hmm... now I need something sweet" after I just ate



If you're happy and you know it



February 2020



## ACROSS

- 2 Name of featured Greek restaurant
- 6 What Steve Hilton teaches at MSU
- 7 First name of Americas got talent winner performing at Memorial Auditorium
- 9 This restaurant has an ad with a 10% discount (has the best fish and chips)
- 10 \_\_\_\_\_ and Chill with your Valentine

## DOWN

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_ Masterpieces" is the fourth concert of the 2019-2020 season of the WFSO
- 3 Theatre showing Oliver Twist
- 4 Name of the building 7th Street Studios is located
- 5 Last name of couple on cover
- 8 Last name of "The Kept" creators

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COLLEGE IS WHEN YOU'RE AFRAID OF BOTH**

**IT'S A 5 MINUTE WALK FROM MY HOUSE TO THE PUB. IT'S A 35 MINUTE WALK FROM THE PUB BACK TO MY HOUSE.  
THE DIFFERENCE IS STAGGERING.**



# ...AND NOW LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: THE KEPT!



Imagine Jimmy Fallon one day saying, "...And now ladies and gentlemen: The Kept." Then witness an explosion of blood-curdling music — the kind that could peel paint off the walls. All the while, the sound deafening the very children parents tried to raise in their likeness, who have now suddenly come up with lasting hearing-ailments and have to ask everybody else to speak up like grandparents do!

That was experience I had throughout the night from the performance of twin brothers Brandon and Tyson Arnold, founding members of The Kept.

The Kept's Brandon and Tyson are heavily influenced by The Smashing Pumpkins all the way to heavier bands like Sepultura and Pantera. Incidentally, they both were initially going to start a death metal band, but artistically they started down the path they are on

currently. They not only make music, but make it together, and are able to perform with a somewhat rabid fan-base!

Their performances will solidify them into the metal genre because of their intensity and their apparent dedication to heavy metal.

The music is loud but rightfully so! Afterall, the very spirit of heavy metal is reprisal, angst, aggression, and The Kept greatly deliver. The shock-and-awe from the drumming and the tempo are all you need to become or staying a metalhead! That said, will loud music ever go away? It is very unlikely because of all the hard work that goes into writing and performing this particular music. In fact, some of the better music I have ever listened to is from the same genre and had a community-type feel to it.

When Brandon is on the drums, you're looking around for earplugs and for anyone not using theirs! His drums could implode your eardrums and make you have continual heart palpitations, but are also in perfect rhythm and timing with brother Tyson whose guitar prowess may have well started on another level from the very beginning.

Brandon and Tyson Arnold also play in another band together. In fact, both brothers are so close you'll never see one in a band without the other. They have both been playing their instruments for the better part of their lives. Not only are they enjoying every minute of making music together, but anyone who knows them or has listened to them can attest to their undeniably impressive performance! These guys are waving the flag for heavy metal. Like any music, it continues to stand the test of time and keeps engaging the interests of talented individuals like Brandon and Tyson.

-John Gossett





# 7th Street Studios

On the corner of 7th Street and Ohio in downtown Wichita Falls, day in and day out, a lovely group of ladies work at the Seventh Street Studio in the LaSalle Building.

The studio has a total of six artists making and displaying their art. They are not a business, but a working studio. Each artist has a place to store supplies and to create whatever type of art they choose. There is also an art gallery on-site for them to display their finished products for the public.

Mary Jane Roberts owns the studio and rents space to the

other artists, including: Sandi Gant, Karyl Barbosa, Sharon Norton, Ronda Morgan, and Beth Prichard. In fact, they even have one more space open and available for one other artist.

The Seventh Street Studio boasts live models for their once-a-week drawing night held on Mondays. Artists of all skill levels are invited to attend drawing night. A donation for the model is the only requirement to participate, along with your personal supplies.

The women individually sell their pieces, while also teaching various

forms of art. Previewing at the studio are sculpture workshops with Sandi Gant, which have just recently been added to the long list of what is taught by the current artists.

“We are the only place to offer what Sandi Gant does,” Sharon Norton shared.

Different techniques are also taught here. Karyl Barbosa teaches oil painting with a grid method with a limited palette of red, blue, yellow and white. Mary Jane Roberts teaches students how to use pastels, and Beth Prichard teaches how to paint landscapes with an “atmosphere of color” that “gives them distance.” Something valuable can be learned from all the artists. Seventh Street Studios



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offers drawing classes, watercolor classes, acrylic classes, oil classes, pastel classes and, of course, sculpting classes.

The artists also do commission work in which the buyer asks for certain criteria. In order to find what style of art the buyer may want, they recommend you come and peruse their gallery. Each artist has business cards available or people can speak directly to the artist if they catch them in the



studio. Art lovers can also make appointments to see individual artists.

The artists love the comradery they receive from working in a space together.

“We lift each other up and share our skills,” Sandi Gant said. “I like coming down here to be with the ladies for painting and for my workshops.”

“I have told people we feed off each other. If you don’t know how to paint rocks, someone else does.

They will give you their opinion and little hints and feedback,” Ronda Morgan said. “I have a space in the house to paint, but someone is always interrupting me. Down here you can get in your zone and hone your craft.”

Ronda Morgan also stated how nice it is to go to the studio with the girls and just cut up, too.

“It has been a good opportunity for me to start teaching and working with people who want to

learn about what I do. I really like the opportunity to have a gallery space to show my artwork,” Karyl Barbosa added.

“I cherish the days I get to come here and work with everybody. If I am here, I am away from the distractions. I like to get away from those, and I love coming here,” Beth Prichard said.

“We all have a different style of painting. It is a composite of all different kinds of artwork. I love painting with these ladies and have taken lessons from each artist. Most of us don’t have a place at home to paint. This a community of energy,” Sharon Norton said.

There is a kinship among the artists at the studio, Mary Jane Roberts added. If asked they even

critique each other’s work.

Because this is not a business, they do not have regular working hours. The ladies come to paint when they want to; however, there is an open sign. If the sign is on, passersby are welcome to come and check out the artists and their work.

Seventh Street Studios participates in the After Hour Art Walks and Stroll & Roll, as well as other activities in the downtown area.

What started off in 2015, with four artists, has become a thriving studio and art gallery all bundled up at 530 7th Street.

“We are here to stay,” Mary Jane Roberts said with a smile.

- Cindy Kahler Thomas



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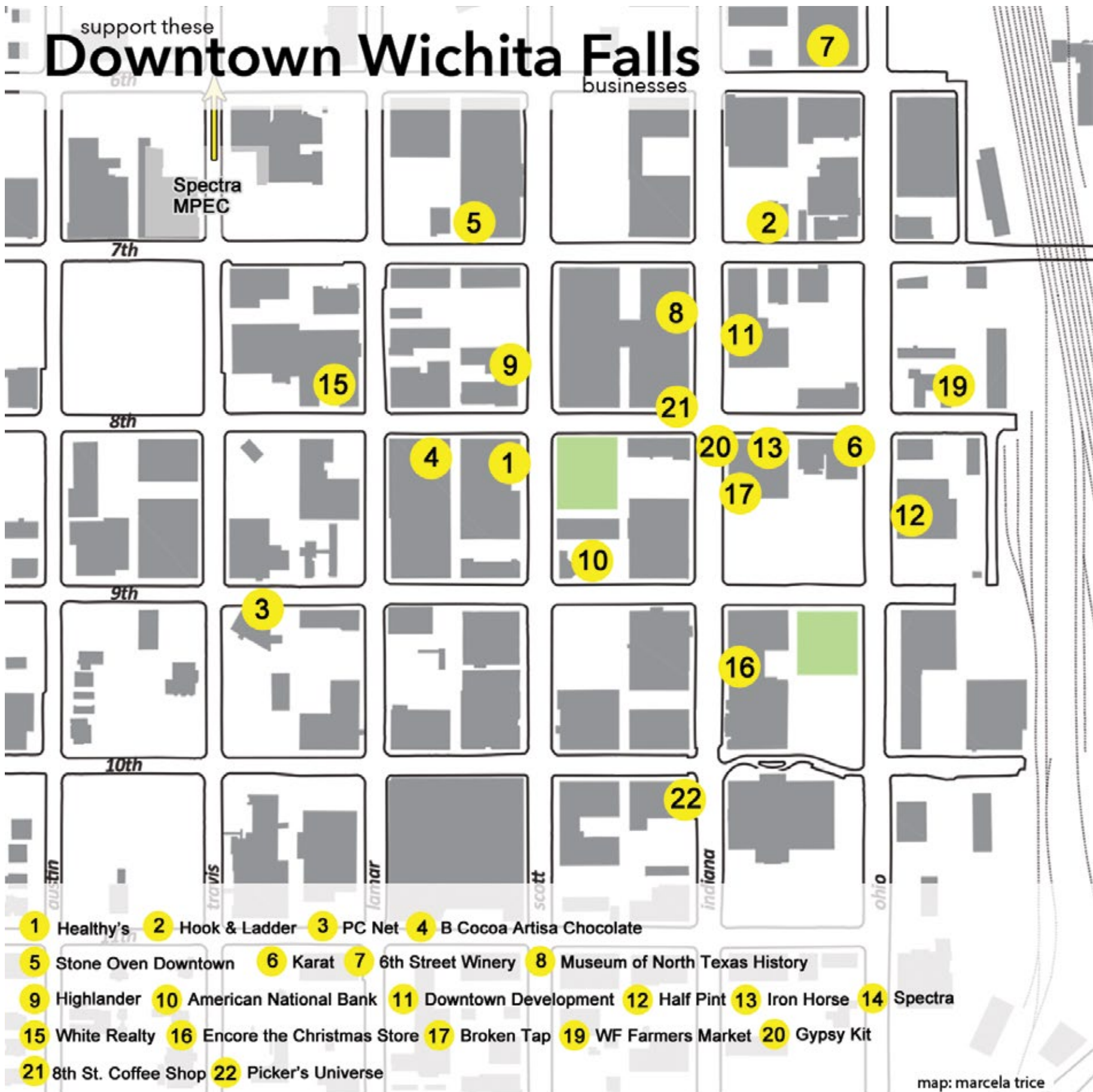
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**RADIO ROMANCE**  
**UNDER THE INFLUENCE**  
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**FEB 14**  
**CHARLEY CROCKETT**  
**(TICKETS ON SALE NOW.)**

**FEB 15**  
**WES JEANS**

**FEB 21**  
**SQUEEZEBOX BANDITS**

**FEB 22**  
**LOCAL ZERO, BLACK RIVER**

**FEB 28**  
**TUATHA DEA, FORT DEFIANCE**

**FEB 29**  
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## FEBRUARY EVENTS CALENDAR

### MUSIC

#### February 1

- Race Rutledge and The Texas Knights @ Texas Nite Life
- Hannah Belle Lecter, Everything in Between @ The Iron Horse Pub
- The G -Top Band @ Silver Dollar Saloon
- Jaguar @ Stick's Place

#### February 2

- Sunday Funday with Mark Forehand @ Stick's Place

#### February 3

- Karaoke @ The Broken Tap

#### February 4

- Open Mic with Clint Vines @ Stick's Place

#### February 5

- Weird Ass Wednesday with Harvey and Tim @ Stick's Place

#### February 7

- Open Mic Fridays @ Texas Nite Life
- Seth James, Justin and Paul from Bigloo Acoustic @ The Iron Horse Pub
- The Mick Jason Show @ The Maplewood
- Open Mic Night @ 8th St. Coffee House

#### February 8

- Race Rutledge and The Texas Knights @ Texas Nite Life
- Radio Romance, Under the Influence, Justin David acoustic @ The Iron Horse Pub
- White Jet Heroes: A Red Hot Chili Peppers Tribute @ Half Pint Taproom & Restoration Hall

#### February 9

- Sunday Funday with Mark Forehand @ Stick's Place

#### February 10

- Karaoke @ The Broken Tap

#### February 11

- Open Mic with Clint Vines @ Stick's Place

#### February 12

- Weird Ass Wednesday with Harvey and Tim @ Stick's Place

#### February 14

- Clint Vines & The Hard Times ft. Dru Gid with special guest Cody Newby @ Texas Nite Life
- Charley Crockett, Cody Shaw Trio, Eb Steward and the Ramblers @ The Iron Horse Pub
- Open Mic Night with Nick Dan @ The Maplewood
- Zack Crow @ BackPorch DraftHouse
- Brian Reilly Jazz @ Half Pint Taproom & Restoration Hall
- Open Mic Night @ 8th St. Coffee House

#### February 15

- Free Introductory Guitar Class @ Bruce Lyons Computers and Guitars
- Race Rutledge and The Texas Knights @ Texas Nite Life
- Wes Jeans @ The Iron Horse Pub
- The March Divide @ Gypsy Uncorked

#### February 16

- Big Daddy Weave with Paul McClure and Hannah McClure @ Evangel Church
- Sunday Funday with Mark Forehand @ Stick's Place

#### February 17

- Karaoke @ The Broken Tap

#### February 18

- Open Mic with Clint Vines @ Stick's Place

#### February 19

- Weird Ass Wednesday with Harvey and Tim @ Stick's Place

#### February 21

- Open Mic Fridays @ Texas Nite Life
- Squeezebox Bandits @ The Iron Horse Pub
- Free Night Of Rock ft. OddFellas, Chout, Drawing Blanks,

The Fleeting Romance @ Stick's Place

- The Mick Jason Show @ The Maplewood
- Dueling Pianos by Fun Pianos @ Half Pint Taproom & Restoration Hall

- Open Mic Night @ 8th St. Coffee House

#### February 22

- Bruce Lyons Sidewalk Jam/Concert @ Bruce Lyons Computers and Guitars

- Race Rutledge and The Texas Knights @ Texas Nite Life
- Local Zero, Black River @ The Iron Horse Pub

#### February 23

- Sunday Funday with Mark Forehand @ Stick's Place

#### February 24

- Karaoke @ The Broken Tap

#### February 25

- Suicide Door, Voice of Addiction, Bad Badger @ Stick's Place

#### February 26

- Weird Ass Wednesday with Harvey and Tim @ Stick's Place

#### February 28

- Open Mic Fridays @ Texas Nite Life
- Tuatha Dea, Fort Defiance @ The Iron Horse Pub
- Open Mic Night with Nick Dan @ The Maplewood
- Open Mic Night @ 8th St. Coffee House

#### February 29

- Race Rutledge and The Texas Knights @ Texas Nite Life
- Shea Abshier and the Nighthowlers, 51 Junction @ The Iron Horse Pub
- Zack Crow @ Silver Dollar Saloon
- White Jet Heroes, MOTLEY @ Stick's Place
- WFSO: Russian Masterpieces @ Memorial Auditorium

### ART

#### February 8

- Stitch Meet-Up! @ Wichita Falls Public Library

#### February 15

- Brea'n Thompson Artist Reception, "The Light That Moves Us" @ 9th Street Studios
- Exhibits @ Wichita Falls Museum of Art at MSU Texas
- On the Verge: Recent Works by Matt Wedel: Oct. 24 - Feb. 15

- Birds in Art: Jan. 10 - Feb. 22

- Exhibits @ The Kemp

- Jules Scales: Nov. 15 - Feb. 2

- Michele J. Garcia: Idiosyncratic: Jan. 17 - March 22

- Sierra Archer: Jan. 31 - April 5

- Ginger Boller: Feb. 7 - April 19

- Exhibits @ The Forum

- Rachel Liles: Jan. 10 - March 13

### EVENTS

#### February 1

- Operation Bike Down Benefit @ Stick's Place
- Local Wine Fest @ Downtown Wichita Falls Farmers Market

- Skeptics and Seekers Roundtable @ Odd Duck Coffee

#### February 3

- Bachelor Watch Party @ Half Pint Taproom & Restoration Hall

#### February 5

- Live Trivia @ The Wichita Falls Brewing Company

#### February 6

- Trivia Night @ The Deep End
- Wine and Dance fundraiser for the 2020 Dancing for the Stars WF Team Wineinger/Ryan @ 6th Street Winery

#### February 7

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-Beer & Bingo benefitting American Cancer Society @ Whiskeyta Club  
 -Comedy Night Out with Steve Hirst ft. Jorge Cortez @ Half Pint Taproom & Restoration Hall

### February 8

-Skeptics and Seekers Roundtable @ Odd Duck Coffee

-Falls Town Flyers vs. Colorado Rumble @ Kay Yeager Coliseum

### February 9

-Darci Lynne and Friends @ Memorial Auditorium

-Falls Town Flyers vs. Savage @ Kay Yeager Coliseum

### February 10

-Wine Glass Paint Party hosted by Craft It @ Stone Oven

-Hunks The Show @ Silver Dollar Saloon

-Bachelor Watch Party @ Half Pint Taproom & Restoration Hall

### February 12

-Live Trivia @ The Wichita Falls Brewing Company

-The Meg Super Smash Bros Tournament @ The Deep End

-We Run This Motha – Galentines Event @ Gypsy Downtown

### February 13

-Trivia Night @ The Deep End

-Harlem Globetrotters @ Kay Yeager Coliseum

### February 14

-Be My Player 2 @ TAG's Maniac's Mansion

### February 15

-Skeptics and Seekers Roundtable @ Odd Duck Coffee

-Warehouse Clothing Sale @ Ray Clymer Exhibit Hall

### February 17

-Bachelor Watch Party @ Half Pint Taproom & Restoration Hall

### February 19

-Live Trivia @ The Wichita Falls Brewing Company

### February 20

-Trivia Night @ The Deep End

### February 21

-The Kicker Monster Truck Show @ Kay Yeager Coliseum

### February 22

-Arts Alive! Home and Garden Festival @ Ray Clymer Exhibit Hall

-Skeptics and Seekers Roundtable @ Odd Duck Coffee

-The Kicker Monster Truck Show @ Kay Yeager Coliseum

-Birthday Party for Brandon Mundt and Angel Hunter @ The Deep End

### February 23

-Arts Alive! Home and Garden Festival @ Ray Clymer Exhibit Hall

### February 24

-Bachelor Watch Party @ Half Pint Taproom & Restoration Hall

-Solid Rock House of God Variety Tour with Seventh Day Slumber, Stars Go Dim, Steven Malcolm and guest speaker Joseph Rojas @

Memorial Auditorium

### February 26

-Live Trivia @ The Wichita Falls Brewing Company

-Garden Bros Circus @ Kay Yeager Coliseum

### February 27

Trivia Night @ The Deep End

### February 29

-Balance at the Brewery @ The Wichita Falls Brewing Company

-Skeptics and Seekers Roundtable @ Odd Duck Coffee

-A Night in Nola fundraiser @ The Wichita Falls Area Food Bank

-Comedy Night @ The Deep End

Downtown Wichita Falls Farmers Market: Open 1st & 3rd Saturdays

## THEATRE

### February 1

-4th Annual Signature Series: From Broadway to Ballet @ MSU Fain Fine Arts Theatre

### February 1, 8, 9, 14 and 15

-West Side Story @ Wichita Theatre

### February 1, 7, 8, 14, 15 and 22

-The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee @ Wichita Theatre

### February 21, 22, 27, 28 and 29 – March

-Oliver! @ Backdoor Theatre

### February 22 and 28 – March

-Disney's The Lion King Jr. @ Wichita Theatre

### February 22, 23 and 28 – March

-Lion Country Jungle Safari @ Wichita Theatre

## FOR THE KIDS & FAMILY

### Every Tuesday

-Storytime @ Wichita Falls Public Library

### Every Wednesday

-Toddler Time @ Wichita Falls Public Library

### Every Thursday

-Nature Program @ River Bend Nature Center

### February 8

-Nature Tots @ River Bend Nature Center

-Science Saturday @ River Bend Nature Center

-Light-Up Cards and Flowers @ Wichita Falls Public Library

### February 10

-Teen STEAM @ Wichita Falls Public Library

### February 22

-Nature Tots @ River Bend Nature Center

-Science Saturday @ River Bend Nature Center

### February 26

-Whatever Wednesday @ Wichita Falls Public Library

Have something to add to next month's calendar?

Email: [gabby@thehubntx.com](mailto:gabby@thehubntx.com)

#funinthefalls



# Richard & Christy Graham

The revitalization of downtown Wichita Falls has had a lot of attention over the last several years, but Rick and Christy Graham have had faith in the downtown area before most. When they bought the LaSalle Building on the corner of 7th Street and Ohio Avenue, downtown was a “ghost town,” according to Rick.

In fact, the biggest challenge they have faced over the last 20 years of major historical renovations was getting financing for the LaSalle Building.

“We took money we had with some help from family and got two units open before we could talk a banker into investing money,” Rick said. “When we bought it, it was on the demo list for the city. I was called crazy multiple times.” Christy added that the crazy did eventually pay off.

“With these old buildings, there are no termites to worry about. It is just like an old Roman fort. If you keep the roof, it will last forever,” he said.

“I am not a broker. I locate something I feel would make an impact on the community, and I buy it and restore it to keep,” Rick explained. “I am addicted to saving these buildings- truly addicted. It’s a pain in the butt, and I say I’m not going to do another one - and I won’t for about a year. Then people start calling and every now and then one falls into my lap.”

Christy and Rick met when he was stationed at Sheppard Air Force Base. They both went, ironically, given their last name, to a bar called Graham Central Station.

“She asked me to dance, and that is all you need to say,” Rick shared. They now have been married thirty-three years and have two sons, Steven and David. Both are



involved in the business, now, making it a family affair.

When Rick left the Air Force, he stated, “we were lucky enough to get out of the Air Force with no job,” he chuckled. Rick is a pilot and was looking for a flying job in Fort Worth. They found a forty-two unit property, which was a vacant apartment complex. It was their first renovation and took over three years to complete. Rick also found the job he was looking for, and all seemed well.

Christy is from Wichita Falls, and her family lives here. There was a family emergency, where her sister and husband lost their little girl. Rick and Christy decided to move back to Wichita Falls to be close to family and have not regretted it since. They began to acquire more properties in the area and renovate them one-by-one. They even bought an already renovated building, The Holt Hotel, in

partnership with Michael and Michelle Deer.

Currently, the Grahams are renovating the Alamo School in partnership with Gary Mehan and turning it into forty-plus units with a “nice entertainment area, outdoor pavilion, and lots of space good for dogs and pets,” Rick said.

“One reason we are doing Alamo is when they were going to sell it, our phone melted down and Facebook was full of requests for us to save the building. The Board of Education put out for bids to tear it down. I got thirty, forty calls.”

Alamo is not the only school they saved. Austin Elementary was turned into Austin School Lofts.

“We partnered with Diane and Brian Walser,” Christy said.

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The school lofts won the Texas Downtown Associations Award in 2010 for Best Adaptive Reuse. “I understand Wichita Falls will be selling a lot more schools. I don’t

know if Christy and I are going to do anymore, but these things should not be torn down. We have given away so much of our history,” Rick said passionately.

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One of their buildings has not been turned into apartments. The Centerpoint Event Center is at 900 Scott Avenue and is perfect for weddings, parties and fundraisers. There are also office spaces available. Christy and Rick usually take a hiatus after big projects, but they have plans on buying another building to add to their growing number of properties. Rick said it is classified information and expects to go

into another partnership. “We never thought we would be successful or come back to Wichita Falls,” Rick added. One factor in the booming downtown is entrepreneurs like the Grahams who believe in our downtown and show this belief with every project they develop.  
 - Cindy Kahler Thomas





# SOLVING HUNGER WITH OLIVER!

**What: Oliver!**

**When: 7:30 p.m. Feb. 21 and 22, Feb. 27 to 29, Mar. 5 to 7 and Mar. 12 to 14.**

**Where: Backdoor Theatre, 5001 Indiana**

**Admission: \$12 to \$21**

**Tickets: (940) 322-5000 or [www.BackdoorTheatre.org](http://www.BackdoorTheatre.org)**

Backdoor Theatre opens its 2020 season in February with the classic musical “Oliver!” - a universal story about hunger that not only resonates with the Dickens novel it was based upon, but also the plight of many food insecure people who live in our community.

Backdoor Artistic Director Michael Sherry will direct “Oliver!” which opens on the Backdoor Main Stage beginning 7:30 p.m. Feb. 21 and 22; and then running Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays through Mar. 14.

Sherry said that Backdoor will partner with the Wichita Falls Area Food Bank and THE Kitchen’s Weekend Meals on Wheels Program during “Oliver!” to help draw attention to work of the area nonprofits’ as well as to help support their drive to end hunger.

The partnership begins on

opening night of “Oliver!” with a food drive. Sherry encourages theatre goers to bring canned goods and non-perishable items to the collection station in the downstairs lobby of the Main Stage.

Backdoor will also hold a raffle at performances, with \$2 tickets or a special \$10 for 6 tickets. On specified evenings, a portion of the raffle proceeds will go to the area Weekend Meals on Wheels Program ([www.thekitchenwf.org](http://www.thekitchenwf.org)) According to the group’s statistics, 51% of people they serve on weekends would not eat without those meals.

Sherry said raffle tickets can be purchased at the box office before the performance, and prizes are awarded during Intermission. Prizes are either donated items, or a 50 – 50 split, which winners can donate back to the cause, if they wish.

“Oliver!” shows hunger on two levels, Sherry said, from the children’s perspective and from an adult perspective. “You see neglected orphans in the poorhouse working while they are starving,” he said. In Act 2, the audience sees Nancy (Erin Sherry) who hungers for love from her husband, Bill Sikes (Jeff Hood).

“All she wants is acceptance and to feel love.”

Sherry is very pleased with the performances of the youth and the adults in his cast. Oliver Twist is played by 10-year-old Iowa park native Adalyn Marquardt, who “brings such a realness to the character. I have really enjoyed working with her and all the kids. It’s great to see that aha moment in their eyes, because it reminds you of the same spark you experienced when you were their age.”

The sets of the classic musical are conceptualized, he said, in that they are papier- mached with pages from old books – many of which are by Charles Dickens. “It shows audiences how reading creates a set within your mind.”

The books came from the Wichita

Adult Literacy Council, a group that Backdoor will feature later this season.

“Oliver!” shows that all character’s hunger for something, while trying to survive,” he said.

“Hunger affects all of us and knocks on our doors in a variety of ways, whether we recognize it or not,” Sherry said. “One of the biggest challenges is highlighting the issue at hand and giving a voice to those that are not seen.

“Hunger is in our country, it’s in our state, it’s in our town. By partnering with these organizations, we hope we can bring an awareness and add what we can to help eradicate this issue.”

- Cindy Kahler Thomas



**What: Swinging with Sinatra: A Valentine's Soiree**

**When: 7:30 p.m. Feb. 14 and 15. Dinner begins at 6:30 p.m.**

**Where: Backdoor Theatre, 501 Indiana**

**Admission: \$45**

**Information: [BackdoorTheatre.org](http://BackdoorTheatre.org) or (940) 322-5000**





Texas is a BIG state with an even bigger problem but one non-profit, started right here in the Falls, has a solution and it ties in perfectly with this month's issue. February is spay/neuter awareness month.

P.E.T.S. Clinic began in Wichita Falls in July of 2007. To date, they have spayed and neutered over 60,000 cats and dogs in and around our community. Why, you might ask? Texas kills more companion animals each year than any other state, not because of our size, but because of pet overpopulation and a lack of homes.

P.E.T.S. Clinic gets to the root of the problem by ensuring affordable spays and neuters are accessible to all pet owners. "We can't house our way out of this," says PETS CEO, Leslie Harrelson. "We cannot build enough shelters. We cannot buy enough kennels. Dogs and cats were meant to be companions, not housed in a shelter for years at a time." Spaying and neutering is nationally accepted as the only solution to pet overpopulation and P.E.T.S. Clinic has a model that works.

Since their opening, our community has seen the intake of unwanted pets drop from over 10,000 annually to 3,300 in 2019.

FEBRUARY 2020

The fewer unwanted pets, the fewer euthanized. Hence, P.E.T.S. name- Preventing Euthanasia Through Sterilization. Their local success and the lack of progress in other parts of our state prompted P.E.T.S. to begin opening branches elsewhere. They currently have a clinic in Amarillo and open their 2nd clinic in Lubbock next month. P.E.T.S. does not just do spays and neuters. They offer low cost vet services because a healthy pet has a better chance of staying in its home. They also have a variety of community focused programs to keep pets in their home. Some examples are their PETS Pantry which helps feed 500 cats and dogs each month and their transport program which provides transportation to and from the clinic both locally and in rural communities surrounding Wichita Falls. Last year, they built kennels at Faith Refuge so families could stay together. P.E.T.S.' Underdog Express program receives a lot of local attention as it pulls dogs who are out of time at our shelters and send them to a partnering organization in New York where many are adopted before even getting off the truck. In 2019, P.E.T.S. Underdog Express saved 708 dogs.

In 2020, we can expect to see P.E.T.S. partner with more human service organizations in new ways. They hope this is the first of many similar projects. "Pets are part of the family. To treat part of a family or expect to split up a family isn't fair and in many cases. It's not helping," says Leslie Harrelson. "This runs both ways. It is very difficult for us to deliver pet food to a home and know the family has no running water or struggles to feed themselves." P.E.T.S. wants all welfare organizations to consider a ONE Health approach and begin referring more freely to each other ensuring that people and their pets have access to all the resources our community has to offer. "After all, a family that stays in their home rather than becoming homeless means the pet has a home as well."

This year, 2020, also means a new home for P.E.T.S. After almost 13 years in their current and original location, P.E.T.S. will be moving to 3001 Central Freeway. They will have much more room to house all of their programs and be able to accommodate expanded hours, services and future growth.

March and April are filled with the birth of countless litters

of puppies and kittens. There will never be enough homes. February is nationally recognized as Spay/Neuter awareness month in an effort to encourage pet owners to fix their pets before these unwanted births occur.

P.E.T.S. Clinic makes it easy and affordable for all pet owners to help fight euthanasia. Check out their fees and services at [www.petsclinic.org](http://www.petsclinic.org)

You can help prevent euthanasia in many other ways as well.

Always remember to adopt and save a life rather than purchase from a breeder. Donate to P.E.T.S. Clinic or your local shelters and rescues. Foster, Transport, Volunteer and most importantly- TALK. Make sure your friends and family understand we have a problem that cost millions of innocent lives each year in our state and the solution is in their hands.





# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

## HIBISCUS CAFE

If you are looking for authentic Greek food, look no further than the Hibiscus Café at 1616 B Pearly Drive. They will be celebrating their 21st Anniversary in April. The delicious dishes are made by Stabros and Stella Banagiotarakos, with their daughter Mary running the front half of the restaurant.

café is stuffed grape leaves. “My mother grows them at the house. She has her own grape vines. This type of grape leaves is popular in Rome,” she explained. “We also make saganaki, which is fried feta cheese and is very yummy. I always recommend people try it.”



“The people love the gyro, and the lemon chicken is also very popular next to the moussaka,” Mary said. “It is a casserole dish made with eggs, potatoes, ground beef and bechamel which is kind of like alfredo sauce. It is made with eggs, milk and cheese. I like to describe the dish as a shepherd’s pie. People love it.”

Mary’s favorite meal at the

Mary also enjoys the shish kabobs served on Saturday nights. “There is chicken, beef, and pork on the grill. It takes 30 minutes to prepare and is served over rice pilaf and vegetables. We are BYOB, so I encourage people to bring their wine and beer on Saturdays,” she said.

For dessert, she recommends the baklava, which is a wonderful pastry with many



layers of thin phyllo with butter in between each layer. It also is made with honey and chopped nuts. They encourage their customers to order the Greek coffee with it. “The baklava and the Greek coffee flavors complement each other,” Mary added.

The family is very - Cindy Kahler Thomas

passionate about their Greek cuisine and want everyone to taste it. They consider their customers to be family and treat them as such. Mary is pleased with how many people support the Hibiscus Café.

They are open during lunch hours, Monday through Friday, with evening hours on Thursdays and Fridays, and are open all day on Saturdays.



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Lights, Camera...Action! This year's Dancing for the Stars event should make for a memorable Valentine's Day evening. With a "Silver Screen" theme, local celebrities will be dancing to the music of our favorite movies as they compete to win the coveted Mirror Ball trophy. All funds raised benefit Big Brothers Big Sisters



and America's Small Business Development Center at MSU. This sixth installment of Dancing for the Stars is back at MPEC this year. The event will feature many exciting format changes from previous years. In past competitions, twelve couples, a "celebrity" and an instructor, created and

performed two-minute dance routines. This year, competitive groups have been added to the mix. In all, four couples, three trios, and two larger groups, will perform.

Dwayne Bivona, Executive Director of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Wichita County, said the changes were instituted this year to streamline the competition and to freshen up the format.

"This event has a wonderful history, but we felt some changes were needed to shorten the program and to add to the entertainment value," Bivona said.



Vanda Cullar, Regional Director at America's SBDC

at MSU said, "The addition of groups allowed us to approach participants who may not have said 'yes' if they had to dance alone."



Cullar added the change helped with the recruitment of volunteer instructors since the event was not limited to six male and six female instructors as in the past.



The fundraiser is dependent on sponsors of the event, ticket sales, and donations raised through its participants. Local "celebrities" are not only tasked with dancing, but are asked to raise \$2,500 for the non-profit organizations, as well. The celebrity who raises the most money is awarded the

Mirror Ball trophy. Awards are given for "Judge's Choice" and "People's Choice", a new addition this year, as well.



This year's celebrity dancers will be Ivonne Wineinger, Sonia White, David Kelley, Dustin Nimz, Stacie Cook, James Cook, Caroline Groves, D.J. Moss, Michelle Cramer, Jessica Edwards, Kristen Howard, Jennifer Taylor, Ward Roberts, Nicole Rhoads, Tarah Nyberg,



Peter Griffiths, and Amy Vail. Event organizers stressed how important these volunteers were to the success of this event. "They all have jobs outside of this event, yet they give so much time and effort. I'm truly blown away by their dedication  
WWW.THEHUBNTX.COM



and generosity,” Bivona said.



Dancers for the event are coached by local dance professionals and enthusiasts. Referring to the volunteer instructors, Cullar said, “I’m constantly impressed by the amount of talent we have in this town. Every year, they raise

the bar on these performances.” The instructors for this event were announced as Raymond Ryan, Stephanie Medenwaldt, Jennifer Blackwell, Alicia Ayres, Ashlen Loskot, Josh Mallett, Crystal Snider, Lauren Loskot, and Andreina Biederman.

Since its inception, Dancing for the Stars has been a collaborative effort between Big Brothers Big Sisters of Wichita County and the Small Business Development Center at MSU. The fundraiser is the signature event for both organizations. Tickets for the event are available for purchase at [www.dancingforthestarswf.com](http://www.dancingforthestarswf.com) or by calling (940)-767-

2447. Doors open at 6:00 PM on February 14th. Tickets are \$99 if purchased prior to February 1, 2020 and are \$110 after that date. Tickets include dinner and two drink tickets. Attendees are invited to hit the



dance floor at the conclusion of the performances.

Big Brothers Big Sisters is a nonprofit one-to-one youth mentoring organization. They have been providing professionally supported mentors for Wichita County children for more than ten years.

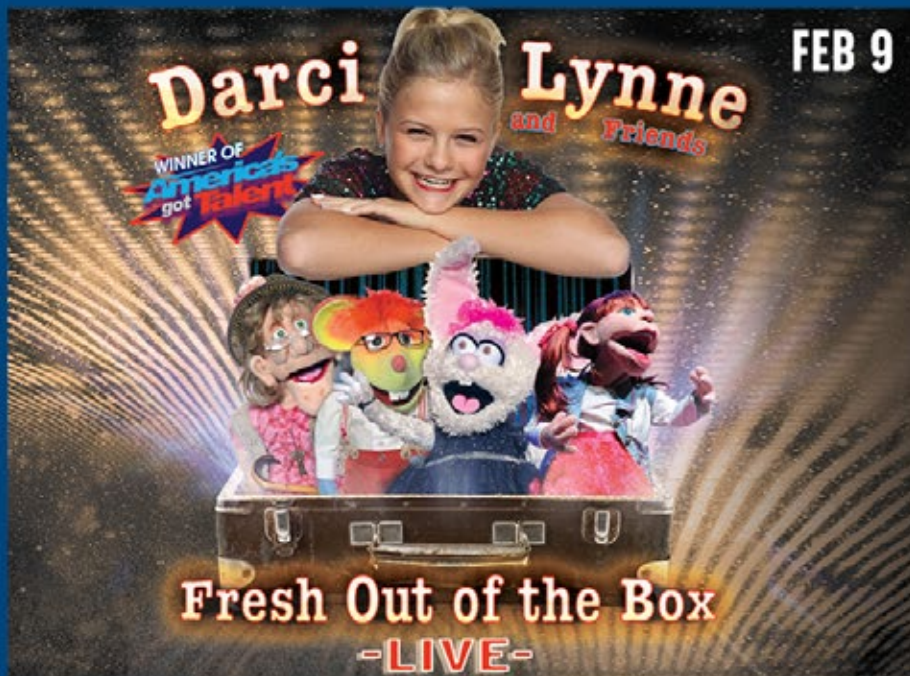
America’s SBDC at MSU Texas provides one on one business consulting, training and research to small businesses in eleven counties. The SBDC also works with the youngest entrepreneurs by hosting National Lemonade Day. The SBDC has been empowering entrepreneurs for over thirty years.

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*Julian Schwartz,  
Cello*

# RUSSIAN MASTERPIECES

**SATURDAY  
FEBRUARY 29, 2020**

**7:30 PM  
MEMORIAL AUDITORIUM**

“Russian Masterpieces” is the fourth concert of the 2019-2020 season and the second of three featuring guest soloists. While the WFSO’s recent performance of “Home Alone in Concert” was one that could be enjoyed by those who generally shy away from classical music, this concert invites those same folks back to Memorial Auditorium to hear some of the big boys of the orchestral world—Bruckner, Shostakovich, and Tchaikovsky.

One thing that ties the three works on the program together is that they all contain march themes. The concert opens with Anton Bruckner’s brief “March in D minor.” A late Romantic composer, Bruckner is most well-known for his large contemplative symphonies. One of the reasons the Maestro included this short march is to introduce audience members who might not be familiar with Bruckner to his work, which he hopes to share more of in upcoming seasons.

Guest soloist Julian Schwarz will be joining the orchestra to perform Dimitri Shostakovich’s “Cello Concerto No. 1.” The 29-year old Schwarz, who recently earned his Master’s degree from The Juilliard School, made his concerto debut at the age of 11 with the Seattle Symphony and his US touring debut with the Moscow Radio Symphony Orchestra in 2010. Since being awarded first prize at the inaugural Schoenfeld International String

Competition in 2013, he has led an active career as soloist, making over 150 concerto appearances in the US and abroad. He also tours with his fiancée, Marika Bournaki, as the Schwarz-Bournaki Duo.

Shostakovich’s “Cello concerto No. 1” was composed in 1959 for the composer’s friend, cellist Mstislav Rostropovich. The four-movement work opens with, as Shostakovich put it, “an allegretto in the style of a jocular march.” Interestingly, the last three movements of the concerto are performed without pauses between them.

Fakhouri is a huge fan of Shostakovich’s work. As he says, “I find his music viscerally appealing. This concerto is one of the most

challenging concertos in the entire symphonic repertoire. I can’t wait to perform it with Julian Schwarz. This will be my first time working with Julian and I am very much looking forward to making great music together.”

The concert will close with a work familiar to most fans of classical music, Tchaikovsky’s beautifully melodic “Symphony No. 5.” This 1881 symphony features Tchaikovsky’s “Fate” theme, which progresses from a funeral-like tone early on into a more triumphant march in the final movement. Passages from this famous symphony have been quoted on numerous occasions, including in the 1949 Spencer Tracy and Katharine Hepburn movie *Adam’s Rib*. Even John Denver seems to have gotten in on the act with the opening of “Annie’s Song,” which sounds remarkably similar to the horn theme from the second movement.

The WFSO season will end with “Brilliantly Orchestrated,” featuring the world premiere of “Krupa,” a new work by Maestro Fakhouri himself, along with the music of two more Russians: Rachmaninoff and Rimsky-Korsakov. For more information on this concert or the season finale,

call 940-723-6202 or visit [wfs.org](http://wfs.org)

- Todd Giles





# STEVE HILTON

The ceramics department at Midwestern State University is blessed to have the fantastic professor, Steve Hilton, at the helm. Because of his renowned skill, he gained the position 14 years ago. For comprehension, Hilton stated it is typical to have 200 plus applicants for such a job. His pottery was well known even then and was showing various art pieces all over the United States and even China. Hilton has not always been in the ceramic field. In fact, he has previously been a high school coach and a science teacher. With a degree in environmental geology, he is certified to teach art on a college level and has his master's degree in art education. Hilton has taught in many places, including teaching on a sailboat for two years! In between his teaching position and his time as a student in college, to expand on his love for teaching, Hilton and his wife took a break to teach snowboarding in Utah.

"We were on our way to teach in China and we stopped in Utah to snowboard for a week or so... We stayed for 2 years," he said with a grin.

His wife, Alissa Donaldson, is also a highly educated artist. The two of them have traveled all over the United States teaching, including a stint in Alaska. She is now an art teacher at Booker T. Washington Elementary School and Burgess Elementary School. They have a five-year-old son, Wes, and have been married for twenty-two years.

"This is the longest we have ever lived in one place. My dad was in the military and we lived in Europe for years," Alissa said. Her dad moved all the time, being in the Army. Hilton has traveled to other universities to teach as an artist in resident including Japan, Australia, Spain, Slovenia, and three separate times to China.

One may wonder when he found ceramics and decided to do it exclusively, considering all the adventure seen in his life previously. Hilton taught high school for ten years in St. Louis, and halfway through discovered ceramics.

"My best friend was a ceramics teacher, and he kept asking me to come to make pottery. I didn't do it because I didn't have the time. But once I tried it, I loved it," Hilton explained. "Clay is tactile in a way unlike anything I have ever touched before. To be able to move it around the way one can is just amazing. Maybe part of it is I was fortunate to have a good teacher and to be very successful with it."

Hilton said that just within a month, he was already throwing (referencing to how a pot is made) five-foot tall pots.

"I worked really hard and maybe I was a natural, I don't know. After I found ceramics,



I spent literally every waking moment doing it," he said. "If I wasn't teaching, or coaching or getting ready to teach or coach, I was in the ceramics studio making stuff." Hilton's incredible love for creating ceramic art has not changed. The pieces are often site-specific. Hilton describes it as "ephemeral", which is lasting for a very short time. The installations are large and with many pieces strategically placed for an achieved effect. They are designed to be temporary at the museums or galleries at which they are placed.

"More people might know me for my odd teapots. They are not necessarily functional and typically hang on the wall," Hilton described. "In a solo exhibit, I made a large-scale installation, and one of the pieces was 197 teapots hanging on the wall. It was a lot of work, but it was great fun."

Hilton has shown his art all over the world and has accumulated many accolades in his biography. He also teaches the education ceramics program in Wichita Falls.

"We have students in high school all the way up to an 88-year-old student. We teach on Monday nights where they learn to do ceramic sculpture and throwing on the wheel," he said. "It is a great way to be creative and have fun and meet amazing people. The semester runs 16 weeks, and we basically give the students everything they need to create."

Steve is also in charge of 1,000 bowls made for the annual Empty Bowls Fundraiser for the Wichita Falls Area Food Bank.

"It started with some people at the food bank talking to us about what [the fundraiser] was. We immediately jumped on board and have been making bowls ever since," Hilton stated. "My students, my continuing ed students, myself, my resident artist, and local artists all contribute. It is a great way to give back to the community," he said with a smile.

- Cindy Kahler Thomas







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# ACQUISITION OF LAND SETS IN MOTION

## PLAN TO EXPAND STUDENT PROGRAMMING

MSU Texas took another step forward in its master plan to address the physical space needs for support of its students and programs. In November, at its quarterly meeting, the MSU Texas Board of Regents authorized the administration to finalize the purchase of property located at 2733 Midwestern Parkway.

This new Midwestern Parkway property, located at the southeast corner of Maplewood and Midwestern Parkway, will be renovated to accommodate procurement services and the central warehouse in line with a number of promising changes to the campus. Acquisition of the property allows MSU to set in motion a phased approach to convert the Daniel Building located in the heart of campus into the much-anticipated Bridwell Activities Center. Last year, the University began construction of a new facilities complex located at the corner of Louis J. Rodriguez Drive and Hampstead Lane that will house the core maintenance and facilities operations moving out of Daniel.

Once the relocation of the facilities operation is complete, the first phase of the activities center will begin to provide space for four large Greek suites that will be known as the Cannedy Greek Commons.

“We are excited to see the transformation of our campus as we contribute to our vibrant



learning environment and our reputation as a destination residential university,” said MSU Texas President Suzanne Shipley. “The purchase of this property allows us to expand our presence along Midwestern Parkway in order to open new possibilities in our historic campus core.”

Funding for the first phase of the activities center is made possible through a leadership gift from the J.S. Bridwell Foundation that was first announced in 2018. Funds from university reserves will be used to purchase the property at Midwestern Parkway. The total purchase price of the Midwestern Parkway property was \$3.5 million. In addition, the University received gift commitments totaling \$529,000 to assist in the purchase.

- Julie Gaynor

# 92.9

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# THE LOCAL AND WORLDWIDE IMPACT OF SHEPPARD AIR FORCE BASE

Residents of Wichita Falls and surrounding communities are well aware that Sheppard Air Force Base (SAFB) has been around for a long time, since WWII. It has had a strong positive impact on the local economy, employing many people from our area.

However, many people are not aware of what exactly the US Air Force does at SAFB and how the base's mission impacts, not just our local area, but around the world.

Personally, I live in Wichita Falls because of training received at Sheppard AFB in 2001. I was a medical equipment repair student (a.k.a. Biomedical Maintenance) as a reservist. My training brought my family from Montana to Wichita Falls, to the great state of Texas. After finishing my training at Sheppard, I found a civilian job repairing medical equipment in Wichita Falls and have been here ever since.

Reservists move here permanently because of training at Sheppard. Many who finish up their years of military service at Sheppard decide to retire in this area. Civilians in certain specialties move to Wichita Falls to work at SAFB.

Did I forget to mention I came here as an Army Reserve member? While Sheppard's mission has changed from the medical, and medical equipment, training it specialized in prior to FEBRUARY 2020



2005, new training programs have replaced what was lost. These include Air Force training aircraft maintenance and Army civil engineering, as well as Navy and Marine Corps engineering, and common specialist training.

The main training element at Sheppard is the 82nd Training Wing, currently commanded by Colonel Kenyan Bell, and has been commanded throughout the years by a one-star USAF General. The operations they perform are nothing to sneeze at. Approximately 60% of the entire Air Force trains at Sheppard AFB at some point or other. Over 5,000 trainees on average are at Sheppard at any given moment and over 60,000 military members graduate from over 900

different courses every year. This represents, not only all branches of the US military, but also hundreds of military members our US allies.

Since the Air Force generally flies trainees and other military members directly to and from Wichita Falls, military passengers support our municipal airport in a major way. In fact, SAFB is the single largest employer in Wichita County, with one in eight county residents working there - well over 10,000 people. An official estimate in 2017 calculated 3.95 billion dollars was brought in by Sheppard to the local economy. The second biggest training element at Sheppard is the 80th Flying Training Wing (FTW), currently commanded

by Col. Russell Driggers. The 80th FTW at Sheppard is the only place in the US Air Force where pilots do undergraduate training, introduction to fighter fundamentals for all fighters in the Air Force, and pilot instructor training. About 50% of all USAF pilots are trained at the base, and all fighter pilots from Belgium, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, and Norway train at Sheppard. Nine other NATO nations, 14 in total, also send either instructors or students to SAFB.

Foreign countries pay for their military trainees to come to Sheppard, adding to the benefits forwarded to our economy.

Overall, around 250 pilots graduate per year, bringing in NATO allies in contact with the Wichita Falls area for at least 55 weeks of Undergraduate Pilot Training. For some foreign military members, the United States is strongly represented by their link to Sheppard and Wichita Falls.

So, not only does Sheppard boost the local economy and change lives like mine, but it has a ripple effect across the globe.

*-Travis Perry*





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