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Taking a Moment to Reflect

This magazine has always meant love to us. We love to create it and the relationships we forge because of it. The love we get in return from the community makes it all worth it. Each and every issue is special and it seems the newest one is always our favorite. When I reflect on these recent years, what we've learned and achievements we've made, I see each issue as an individual triumph because every magazine had its own creative obstacles and feats.

As this year come to a close, let us also reflect and recognize each personal accomplishment on its own, rather than caching it all together as a 'good' or a 'bad' year.

Applaud yourselves for enduring any hardship, meeting your goals, even accepting defeat and learning from mistakes. It all seems a bit less heavy when we view life as a collection of individual experiences, rather than narrowing our feelings to one chapter.

Here's to 2017 and the possibility of many victories, large and small.




Melissa McGavock
MANAGING EDITOR



FROM OUR READERS

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Granbury, Texas 76048

FOLLOW US  

Thank you for the "Lake Granbury Living"... we enjoyed the magazine so much. Thank you again for your excellent work and your kind service.

- Brenda and Jack Godfrey

I always look forward to receiving my copy of the latest edition of Lake Granbury Living! I read it cover to cover because I love the beautiful photos and in-depth stories about people and events in our community!

- Gail Joyce

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10

At the Table With the Folgers

BY MELISSA MCGAVOCK

This adorable location on the Historic Square brings diners from all over.

18

Reading is Fundamental

BY JULIE LYSSY

How different would your life be if you were unable to read?

26

Change is Now

BY JONATHAN HOOPER

Change is an upheaval from the existing norm, and this upheaval occurs in cycles.

34

Deep in the Heart of Christmas

BY JAN BRAND

From all of us, have a very Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year.

42

Songsters Recount Their Gospel Roots

BY JAN BRAND

Granbury-grown musicians and singers abound, with talent to spare.

52

Granbury Culinary Arts

BY CONNIE LEWIS LEONARD

Career and Technical Education:
Hospitality and Tourism Pathway at GHS



10





40



18

16

Hometown Happenings

Granbury Night of Lights Parade

32

Hometown Happenings

2016 YMCA Kids Triathlon

40

Bundles Of Joy

Welcoming the newest additions to Hood County

48

How to Get Involved

Philanthropic happenings to look forward to this season



52



42

Cheers and Chocolate Cake



The new year brings new beginnings. Resolutions are often set to give us something to measure ourselves by, whether personal or career based. The idea is that we set a mental bar for ourselves to get behind or to raise, i.e. limit ourselves from eating that chocolate cake or raise the bar and make a career change.

Resolutions can also be about commitments. At Lake Granbury Living we are committed to keeping our hearts and minds open to learning from each other, and to be a beautiful reflection of this tight-knit community.

One of the secrets to keeping your resolutions is to keep yourself surrounded with a dedicated team of professionals. The right peers lift you up and share your vision and values.

I've never met a more dynamic group of ladies

than those who I am proud to call my team. We constantly push ourselves, and seek to improve where we can. We are goal oriented and strategically plan for the future to ensure that we reach our full potential. Most importantly, we encourage one another and lift each other up.

So, as 2016 comes to a close and a new year brings resolutions, we know that we can count on each other, our community and reach our goals together, even if it's just to put down the chocolate cake.

Rachelle Pritchard, CEO

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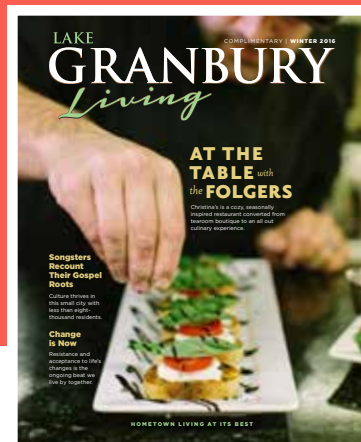
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ABOUT THE COVER

Photo taken at Christina's bistro and boutique on the Historic Granbury Square.

Photo By: Ellen Ashton

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The Folger family pictured, cozy in their new environment at Christina's.

AT THE TABLE *with* the FOLGERS

Words by **Melissa McGavock** | Photography by **Ellen Ashton**



Christina's on the Square is a cozy, seasonally inspired restaurant converted from tearoom boutique to an all out culinary experience.

The bread and butter of Christina's had always been the boutique, but the Folgers were ready for change and, it's evident, Granbury was ready to eat. The new owners cleared the floor and exchanged the clothes and handbags for tables and chairs. However, the long-standing boutique element has not been left behind, it's mostly been moved upstairs to make room for dining. So when you pay a visit, enjoy the quirky and transformative atmosphere. What's happening here is too good to be ignored, so let's begin.



“Thank you for the food, it was wonderful.”



EAT

Take a coast to coast pop-up tour when you dine at Christina's. This husband and wife brainchild is heavily influenced by the couple's respective home states. Katy is a Southern California girl and met New Hampshire-born husband, Gary, while waiting tables at Marie Callender's restaurant years ago on the west coast.

Keep in mind, as the restaurant transformation is taking place, Katy and Gary do not yet have a walk-in cooler. This is actually a happy circumstance for the diner, as it ensures all perishable ingredients are gathered fresh daily. While some staple items are easily stocked, much of your cheeses, meats, and produce are subject to the season and availability - which means fresh, local and good.

The baked stuffed lobster, prime rib sandwich

and shrimp and grits are among some menu favorites. Pictured is a simple and traditional cheese plate with romano, smoked cheddar, and dill jack cheese accompanied by housemade mango chutney and local honey.

At the table was caprese crostini, a dish that has boundless versions. The Folgers keep this bite uncomplicated, yet refreshing. Served over a grilled crostini and dressed in balsamic vinegar with pesto, plum tomato slices are sandwiched between fresh mozzarella and basil leaves. The generous portions are a perfect plate for sharing, or for your next catering event.

The cheddar, swiss and braised beef short rib quesadillas are perfectly enjoyable for lunch or even for the kids. This recipe is a sincere introduction to the educated palate without being overly stuffy.



Goers of Christina's past, do not fret. The tea sandwiches, delightful soups and salads have not been left off the menu. Featured is the housemade tomato basil soup flanked by a chilled shrimp salad and on other side, candied pecans with strawberries on a bed of mixed greens.

Now let's talk about steak. My mouth began to water as Gary presented the pre-cut prime rib to the table, camera ready. As lighting was adjusted and staging executed, this absolutely succulent, house-made treat was the only thing holding my attention. The smell of the indulgent and thoughtfully prepared premium piece of beef filled my airway so fully I could taste it. It's meaty and herbaceous juices leaked onto the large natural cutting board monogrammed with the Folger name, an impressive steak to claim for sure.

Beyond the modest introduction to the biz serving at Marie Callender's, Gary moved on to manage front of the house duties at upscale wine bars and restaurants in Southern California. With years of extensive wine knowledge, Gary is both particular and adventurous with his wine menu.

He keeps the wine list competitive with varietals that are both modern and vintage. You'll find wines from Australia, South America, California, and old world wines from Europe. Gary is also familiarizing himself with what Texas has to offer.

The Folgers enjoy educating their guests with worldly flavors, both in the kitchen and from the bar. Not a wine lover? There's always fresh kegs on tap, just ask knowledgeable bartender Ty Roberts what he has available.





“It is like a big family, on Thanksgiving we have it here together.. And we consider ourselves lucky.”

- Katy Folger



LOVE

Put simply, this is well made food. It’s formal dining in a casual atmosphere. During our interview, the natural pitter patter and wild callings of the Folger children filled the background as the proud parents carried on, eager to share their ideas. “Daddy, Daddy..”, his youngest cries, and Gary smiles, “This is going to be the one that runs it someday..”

The Folger family has found a way to harmonize work and family and it started as most success stories do, with ups and downs, obstacles and perseverance.

Briefly exiting the restaurant industry for something more stable, Gary accepted a position for an air freight company that brought the couple to Granbury. Despite never visiting Texas, family of five gladly made the move and settled down in 2010.

Working half a dozen years at a desk, Gary was ready to lose the suit and tie and put the apron back on. The kitchen was calling him and Gary always knew he’d make his way back. In the meantime, Gary’s wife, Katy, picked up a waitressing job at local favorite boutique and bistro, Christina’s.

The big moment came when Christina’s previous owner let Katy know she was looking to sell. The couple jumped at the opportunity to take over ownership and work together again in a restaurant.

Dedication inspired by love for family and community has guided them to build a work and life balance that is proving to be fruitful. Three children, ages 10, 6 and 3, also 16 employees on staff, and open for lunch and dinner daily six days a week keeps the Folgers very busy. Like many small business owners, Gary and Katy wear many hats from chef, shopper, busser, manager, waiter, host and bartender - and don’t forget partner and parent. However, the commitment of their talented staff keeps all the moving parts of this tasty venture working.

SERVE

The staff is more like family, as they spend most of their time together - working doubles most days. Still, in the time I’ve spent there, it seemed every employee that walked in for the day’s work was

happy to see the others. So, maybe they’re actually more functional than most families.

Stellar service is imperative to a restaurant’s success, no matter how good the food is and the Folgers are bound to succeed. First, they are selective. Second, they train and educate effectively. Local talent is motivated to work for them. Lifers, in-betweeners, and amateurs alike, if they have a solid work ethic and good personality, the Folgers can teach them the rest.

In an attempt to stay competitive in the service industry and also in keeping with the Folgers brand of cooking, Gary will soon open a chef’s table. Adjacent to the kitchen, the diners will have a perfect view of Gary and Katy creating that night’s dinner. All lovers of the kitchen, get ready for an experience that’s educational and entertaining.

In an industry that is ever evolving, where food masters always take it up a notch, Gary and Katy are no exception. This quality is the only known secret to success for restaurateurs and top chefs around the globe. The endless path of tinkering and discovery brings satisfaction to the Folgers and their staff, as well as the patrons and will (hopefully) ensure this restaurant’s success. Katy explained, “We’re ever evolving, I don’t think we’ll ever stop doing that.”

GO

This adorable location on the Historic Square brings diners from all over. However, the couple’s love for community inspires the mission to cater to locals. They listen to their patrons, both the new ones and the regulars. They stay open late and they’ve trademarked events like Two Steppin’ Tuesdays - a live music, food, shopping, and dancing experience.

They look for feedback, for the exchange of ideas, to learn and to educate. Their theory is not a bad one: the more familiar the community becomes with their method, the greater their chances are of long-term success. Look forward to the rebrand of this establishment coming summer 2017 as “August One”. In the meantime, enjoy the wonderful food and watch them build their dream. ■LGL





Night of Lights Parade

Photography by Shad Ramsey, Amy Winters & Robert Klemer

The annual Night of Lights Parade takes place on the Friday following Thanksgiving. The holiday season kicks off with this magnificent themed parade, beautiful music, elaborate Christmas decorations, Christmas trees, and Santa's House. By candlelight, twinkling lights and with your family and neighbors, it is the best way to rejoice the season!





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Reading *is* Fundamental

Words by **Julie A. Lyssy** | Photography by **Dawn Skinner**



Imagine for a moment that you spent most of your life unable to do exactly what you are doing right now — reading. How different would your life be if you were unable to read? Would you view yourself differently? Would other people think differently of you if they knew you could not read?

For Richard, those questions were his reality for 75 years. You see, when Richard grew up in the 1940s and 1950s, education did not include testing or educational modification to account for learning disabilities. Educational challenges were met with more of a ‘mind over matter’ proposition.

Richard managed to get through school using his football prowess and classmate’s help as a means to continue. After leaving school, he found a job on a ranch in the Panhandle. He met a beautiful girl, married, had children and now enjoys being a grandfather. He accomplished all of this without being able to read.

When occasions occurred that reading was necessary, his wife handled the situation with so much grace and ease that no one ever realized the secret he held.

Then Karen Haggard came into his life and nothing has been the same — for either of them.

Karen not only grew up an avid reader, she made a career out of teaching. After earning a Bachelor of Arts in Special Education at Harding University and a certification in Special Education from the Texas Education Agency, she taught was ready to teach special needs children. Her Master of Education, also from Harding University, followed along with new teaching ventures: high school Spanish, English, Speech and college level English Composition. Along the way, she also became a certified Reading Specialist by the Association of Christian Schools International.



DID YOU KNOW?

Currently, two-thirds of adult education programs are struggling with long student waiting lists. At the present levels of public funding, less than 10 percent of adults in need are receiving services. (proliteracy.org/Resources/Adult-Literacy-Facts)

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“I began teaching because I love to watch students learn to read. It fascinates me.”

- Karen Haggard

“I began teaching because I love to watch students learn to read. It fascinates me,” shared Haggard.

After more than 20 years in the classroom, Haggard is shifting her focus back to her first love in the educational world — special education, specifically dyslexia.

Richard is Haggard’s first student on this new path. When his wife met Karen, she brought the two together to help Richard learn reading skills that many adults take for granted. They began with reading assessments to understand his “reading reality.” That is when Karen discovered he has a severe form of dyslexia. This set the course for determining the best ways to help him learn to read. After more than a year, Richard has moved through to the fourth of 10 levels of the Barton Reading and Spelling System®; a teaching approach designed for people

with reading challenges. If he chooses to complete all 10 levels, he will read at a mid-ninth grade level.

Haggard’s quest to help Richard initially led her to the Hood County Library to borrow materials to help in his education. To her surprise, they did not have any. This turned her to the Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy and Learning (TCALL), a statewide resource for literacy learning. This too proved to be a disheartening realization. There were no adult literacy resources in Hood County.

This stark outlook became Haggard’s inspiration to be a catalyst for change in the adult literacy arena for Hood County.

“One in five American adults do not operate at the functional level [of sixth grade],” explained Haggard. “For those who did not grow up when teaching methods were available to help, they are



still impaired by their condition. In the early 1990's when I was in college, dyslexia was discussed, but no formal methods for overcoming it were taught."

She went back to the library and spoke with Library Director Karen Rasco about starting a free adult literacy program for Hood County. Rasco willingly partnered with Haggard to begin helping more people expand a love for learning through reading.

Throughout 2016, Haggard and Rasco have worked to develop a program to help adults with reading challenges and complete the infrastructure to make it possible.

Their first milestone was acquiring a site license for the Barton Reading and Spelling System so multiple tutors can utilize the system without incremental user fees. This is exciting as it allows the program to expand without the budget expanding.

The second milestone was successfully recruiting volunteer tutors to teach one on one with "struggling adult readers." To be a tutor one needed to be 18 years or older, able to pass the Barton Tutor Screening and able to commit two to three hours each week for

Education is the most powerful weapon which we can use to change the world.

- Nelson Mandela





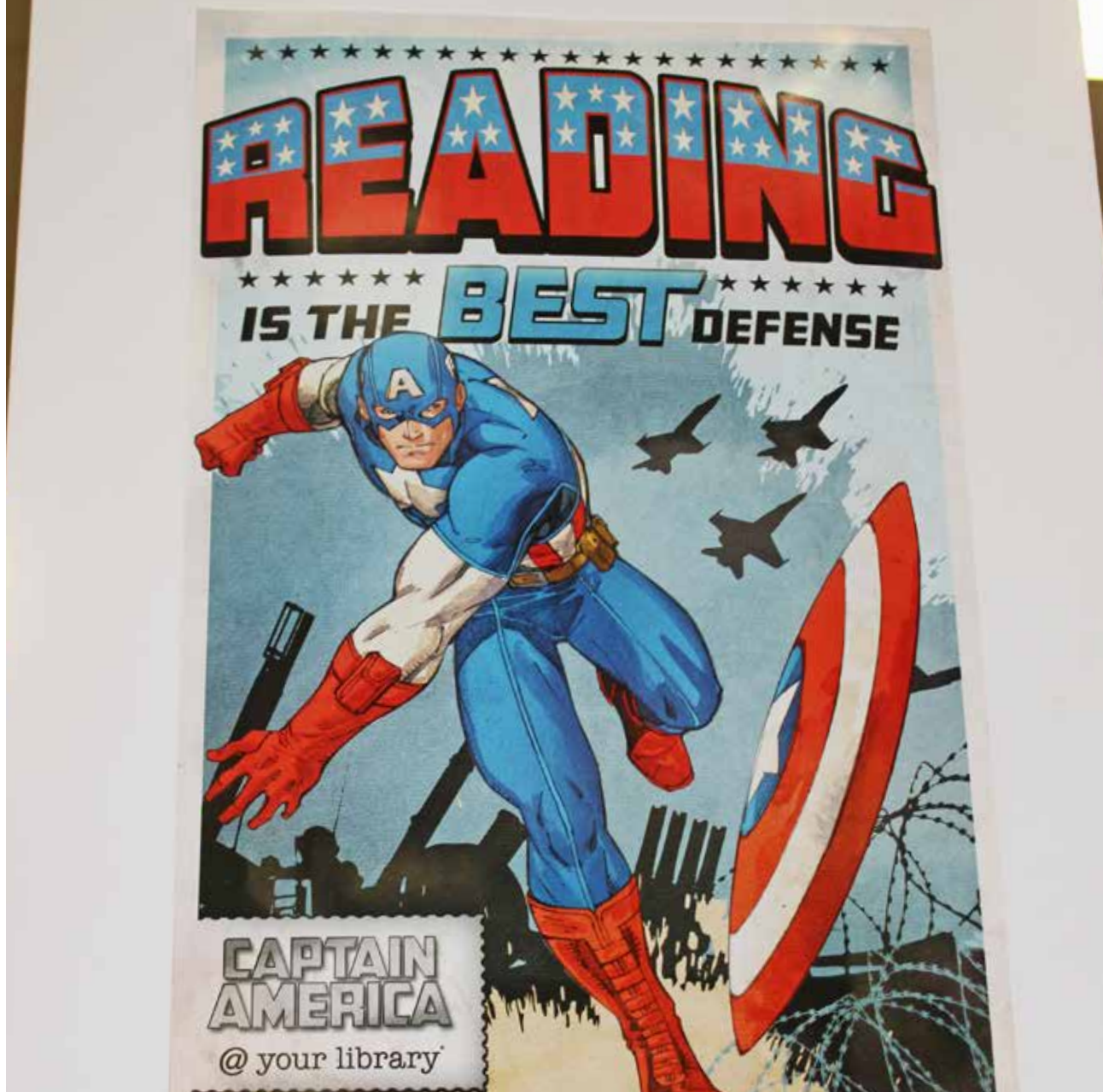
*A book is a gift you
can open again
and again.*

- Garrison Keillor

at least nine months per student. Volunteers come from all walks of life and backgrounds. There is no prerequisite training required. The training for the program itself can be all self-administered online in your home or at the library. To date, Haggard is training 12 volunteers to begin teaching in January of 2017.

The third milestone is one of affirmation and legitimacy. As of September 20, 2016, people using TCALL to seek out literacy resources know that Hood County is available to enhance the reading skills of their friends, neighbors and community, because this new program is now listed as a resource.

The fourth milestone, which will produce the fruit of this labor of love, is for students to self-identify and take advantage of this free program available



to them. Each prospective student will be assessed by Haggard before being partnered with a volunteer reading coach. As she illustrated at a recent volunteer recruitment gathering, this process is used to find skills gaps. Once the skills gaps are identified, the best fit and a realistic plan for success can be developed unique to each student.

Richard's life is forever changed by the choice to tell someone his secret and take action. Even his children and grandchildren did not know he was functionally illiterate. The frustration, the mental burden and undue shame he felt for so many years has finally ended.

He wants others in similar situations to know that there is no shame in asking for help to overcome challenges to better your quality of life. There is a lot of living to lose if you choose to keep your secret in the shadows.

For more information about this program, to volunteer or if you know someone who could benefit from it, you should contact Karen Haggard, Adult Literacy Program Director by e-mail at adulthoodliteracy@co.hood.tx.us, call the library (817.573.3569) or go by the library and speak with Karen Rasco, Library Director. ■LGL



DID YOU KNOW?

A 124,500 square foot abandoned Walmart in McAllen, Texas, has been turned into the largest single-floor public library in the United States. (weburbanist.com)



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Change Is Now

Words by **Jonathan Hooper** | Photography by **Shad Ramsey**

Every culture observes and celebrates certain days and events, from the ancient Mesopotamians to Millennials, and each culture observes change in cycles.



As we prepare for the
inevitability of change,
let us do it with
beauty and grace.
- Janet Hagerman

When I see the word “change,” the first dozen or so images that smack me in the brain are song lyrics, ranging from Bob Dylan to Leon Russell to David Bowie to Tupac. Rest assured that I know that images do not actually smack me in the brain, even if change does. Okay, I know I have never been brain-smacked by anything, because that isn’t even a word. But keep following me here for the next few minutes while you sit in the waiting room reading this.

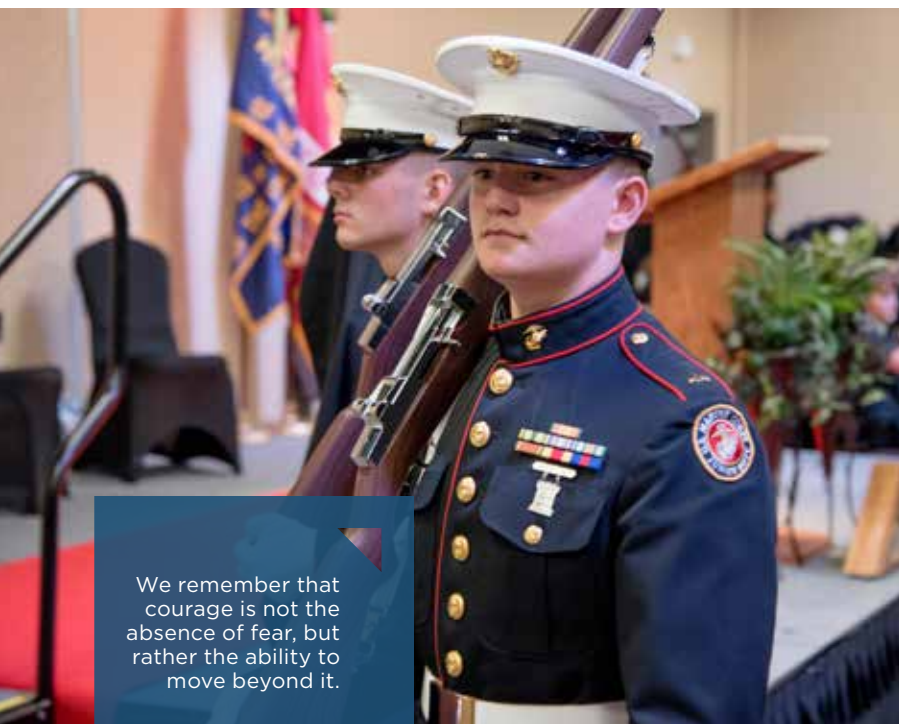
As I write this, we are in the heated and personally challenging denouement of the 2016 Presidential Election, as well as trying to figure out all of those additional “down ballot” men and women who aspire to lead our nation, state, county, school board, and for all I know, affect the selection of ice cream at the neighborhood grocery store. Most of us have little idea what the majority of these elected officials actually do day in and day out, but we are pretty confident when we vote for them that they will do a

better job than their opponent whether they are the incumbent or outsider. By the time you read this, the election will be over, and we will still have little idea what they do. Fortunately, we have had roughly 227 years of relatively smooth and peaceful transition between opposing factions (those first few years before 1789 were pretty tumultuous).

Our elected officials either remain in office, or are replaced with a new and improved (or old and worse) version. Either way, we vote hoping that the change will be to our liking. Unless it is someone we do not want. The cycle begins all over again, every two or four or six years. In short, we are constantly in flux with our national politics, under a constant barrage of propaganda, and we hope for change. Unless we hope that things stay exactly the same. Except for the people who want it to “go back to the way it used to be,” which is, of course, change. How can we ever be right if everyone is wrong?



2016 Field of Flags,
Granbury, Texas
As a community, we
honor the memory
of great courage
past and present.



We remember that
courage is not the
absence of fear, but
rather the ability to
move beyond it.

We don't like change. Unless we like it. It is a lot like insurance, which is definitely something no one wants to pay for, but are so thankful when they need it.

I recently moved to another state to be closer to family; particularly, closer to two perfect granddaughters. But that isn't quite true. All of my stuff is in another state, along with my family, but I remain here for another couple of weeks. Things have to be turned off, shutdown, cancelled, forwarded, and the obligations and commitments made in August must be fulfilled into December. If you want to experience change, pack up all your belongings (and cares and woes) and cram them into a large orange truck (or ocean liner, as they handle the same) and drive across the country (or the highway construction known as Arkansas), all the while hoping that closing on the new house occurs in a timely fashion (it won't).

But, I digress. Or maybe I don't.

Change is an upheaval from the existing norm, and this upheaval occurs in cycles (this isn't the first time I have moved from one state to another,



Another holiday season is upon us as the annual Christmas lights are draped from the very top of the Courthouse bell tower.

although I hope this is the last time). We all strain against the upheavals in life. Perhaps a loved one returns home from active duty—or departs for their first foreign tour. Maybe you end up in the hospital from an accident that occurred from something you safely navigate ten times every day, until today—or return home from successful surgery. You leave a job you dislike for new employment you believe to be better—or, alas, you discover the grass really isn't any greener on the other side.

For some, the approaching days on the calendar that are full of holiday celebrations, both sacred and secular, generate so much tension and stress, or loneliness and sadness, or joy and expectation that you are rendered helpless and non-functioning. Or maybe those holidays are the season where you find your ultimate groove.

We use holidays as barometers, milestones, and even crossing guard monitors of our successes and failures from New Year's Day through New Year's Eve, when we finally give up on the year and pretend the next twelve months will provide the change we want. "This is the year!" we proclaim, bravely believing that this year will not be like all those others. This year, the fitness memberships and exercise equipment will be used every day, and not just in January, only to become forgotten bank drafts

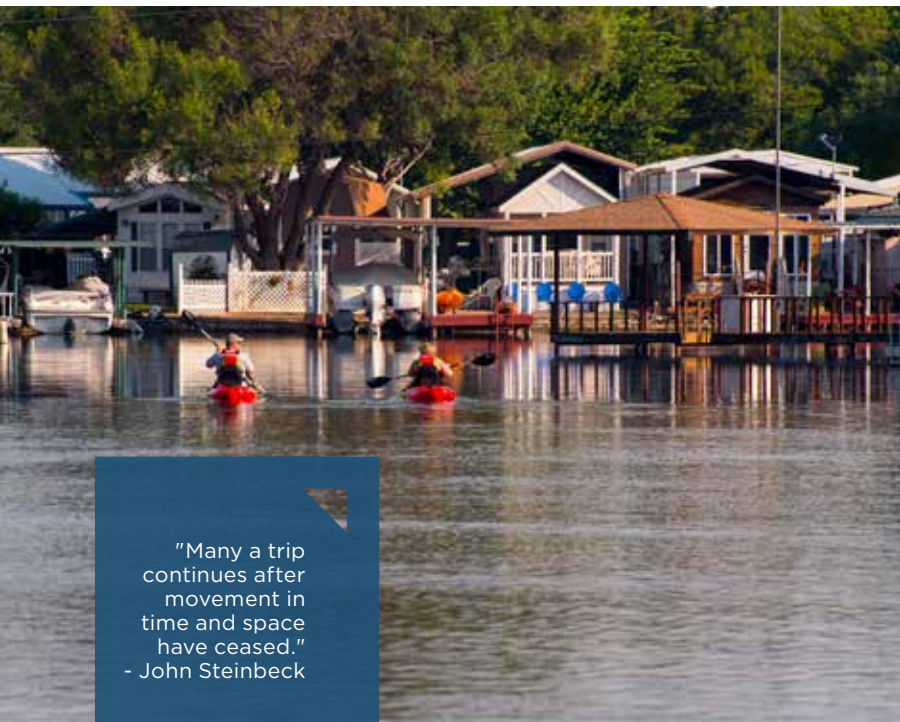
and clothes hangers by February or March, leading to about six weeks of Lent resulting in spiritual development or personal deprivation. Side note: in Ireland, if you give up beer for Lent, you are allowed to drink a Guinness or five on St. Patrick's Day. Then you can cycle back to spiritual observance.

Labor Day arrives, then 4th of July, then Memorial Day, The Friday Night Lights of High School Football Season (no, they are not official holidays, but...), Halloween (my least favorite), Thanksgiving, then on into Christmas, Kwanzaa, and Hanukkah, to mention just a few of the mainstream holidays in America. As other cultures continue to share their holidays with us, we find literally hundreds of specials observances, from Epiphany Day to Ramadan to Cinco de Mayo to Yom Kippur—and the list goes on. Every culture observes and celebrates certain days and events, from the ancient Mesopotamians to Millennials, and each culture observes change in cycles.

I have noticed lately at funerals—and I have attended far too many in recent months—that within each grieving family is a newborn. There might be a two-year old toddler rather than a two-month old baby, but that is close enough. This isn't about "out with the old, in with the new," which is so unfeeling and inconsequential, and we can agree that birth and death are nei-



State of Mind,
(n), definition:
1. The status of ones
consciousness, as in
their perception of
the outside world,
their perception of
their own intuition,
and the function of
their brain. (www.
urbandictionary.com)



"Many a trip
continues after
movement in
time and space
have ceased."
- John Steinbeck

ther of those. Rather, it is the cycle found in loss of a loved one and the birth of a new addition to the family are wonderful reminders that we are constantly changing. Soon enough, that baby will be the family elder—the “pater familias” if you will—and the cycle continue anew.

We recently celebrated the Hood County Sesquicentennial. That is 150 years of surviving, fire, drought, flood, dams, wars, fire ants, Pappy O’Daniel, LBJ, Astroturf, disco, line dancing, The Giants in the 2010 World Series, Jade Helm 15, listeria, and even Jerry Jones. When Texas observed its Sesquicentennial in 1986, few people had even heard of the term “sesquicentennial.” A Speech Communications professor at a nearby university referred to it as “So-Squeeze-Your-Tentacles” which is quite frankly how I learned to say it. It now falls on us to begin our next 150 years in Hood County, and to continue the cycle.

Personally, I think our life cycles occur in binary form, constructed from a long series of opposing zeroes and ones, ups and downs, ins and outs, lefts and rights, and rights and wrongs. Don’t put the maga-



Resistance to change is inevitable, but we celebrate as we triumph and find beauty in the process.



zine away just yet—hear me out. We live, we die; we breathe in, we breathe out; our eyes open, our eyes close; the sun comes up, the sun goes down (I took Astronomy in college, so I know this isn't exactly what happens, but work with me here); we get sick, we get well; conversely, we are healthy, we get sick; the lake is full, the lake is low; we have drought, we have floods; we sleep, we wake up. This could go on forever, right? Now consider that all of these zeroes and ones are moving along an arc (because there are no straight lines in life) down the Brazos River through varying currents and deep pools and shallow rapids and dams and lakes and rocks and islands, floating all the way from Curry County, New Mexico to the Gulf of Mexico for 1,280 miles (or 840 miles, depending on the source). Up and down, left and right, stop and go: these are the changes found along the river, and along our lives.

If there is a point to all of this—and there is—it would be that change is all around us; that we all experience those changes in similar ways, albeit at different times in our lives; that “new” actually does replace “old” sometimes, for better or worse; and that we are all in this together, regardless of which holidays we observe.

Because we can't always move to another state. ■LGL



The Hood County YMCA Kids Triathlon sat., Oct 9, 2016

Photography provided by Sara Hasenfuss, Health Living Coordinator Hood County YMCA

Triathlons are increasing in popularity and this includes youth participation. Each event consists of four challenges in swimming, biking, running and transitions. This YMCA course is tough, but achievable for the first-timers. The experienced staff and volunteers are proactive in ensuring this event is fun and safe as possible. Congratulations to the 2016 participants! For information: ymcafw.org/locations/hood-county-ymca





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DEEP IN THE Heart of Christmas

Words by **Jan Brand** | Photography by **Shad Ramsey**

ON DASHER, ON DANCER, ON PRANCER AND VIXEN...

Santa whooshed through the black velvet sky making his faster-than-the-speed-of-light Christmas Eve run when he looked down on Granbury, Texas. “Whoa, Rudolph!”

It had been a long night, and his old bones were achy. He wished to be home with Mrs. Claus enjoying a good cup of hot chocolate, but something below caught his attention. A spirit of good cheer hung over the city like star glow. He slowed the sleigh and swished down for a closer look. Tiny lights twinkled on the square. People stopped and wished each other a blessed and happy Christmas. What he saw made his bones hurt less and a warm feeling permeated his tired, cold body. He couldn't wait to get back to the North Pole and talk to Mrs. Claus. Santa had a plan.

After a long night of delivering the things on the wish list of children around the world, Santa trudged home to the North Pole. He slumped into a chair at the kitchen table. “Mrs. Claus, it's time for a change. We're not as young as we used to be, and the cold is affecting my achy joints. A hundred years is long enough to live in one place. I think I like Texas. It's warm, the people are friendly and you should see the decorations of Granbury. People have come from all over. The spirit of Christmas that fills the town with joy and laughter is like the sound of bells on Christmas morning. Let's move.”





Mrs. Claus set a steaming mug of chocolate before Santa and settled in the chair across the table. “Nick, I have friends in Granbury, the Hollands. Arlis reminds me of a butterfly, flitting from flower to flower, dusting her wings with pollen at one and depositing it on the next bloom. She fills the space around her with joy and spreads it like fairy dust. And you’d like Ken. His heart’s as big as the state of Texas. Like you, he just wants to see goodness spread as far as he can reach,” Mrs. Claus explained, “I’ll give them a call and see what I can find out about Granbury.”

Santa shut his eyes and nodded off for a long winter nap. When he awoke, Mrs. Claus smiled and gave him good news. “I talked with Ken and Arlis and they’re thrilled that we would consider relocation of the toy shop and elves to Texas. Ken said they’d run it by the Granbury Historical Merchants’ Association and the Hood County Commissioners. Arlis wants to know what size Stetsons and boots the elves wear!”

Santa chuckled. “I told you this was just the place we could live and find kindred spirits. Let’s start to pack as soon as everyone has recovered from the holiday rush.”

They found the perfect location for Santa’s House on the Granbury Square right behind the Hood County Courthouse. Santa wanted only the best craftsmen for the new Santa’s House, so Mrs. Santa Claus called longtime friend Clifford Page, from Kentucky, to help them. Clifford had the artistic talent needed to create a place of wonder and awe for the little ones, and for those who only felt young again at Christmas. He dropped his current project and hurried to Granbury to make a home for Santa.

Ken Holland used his engineering skills to design the structure, a total of 32 large panels. Clifford started work on the art layout with colorful murals depicting a child’s fantasy of Christmas. Elves scurried to tote and fetch the materials needed for the project. Arlis did what she does best, cheering everyone on and keeping the coffee pot filled while work-

The spirit of Christmas that fills the town with joy and laughter is like the sound of bells on Christmas morning.







Longtime
friend and artist,
Clifford Page





ers burned the midnight oil to get Santa's Workshop finished on time.

After weeks of hard work, Santa's Workshop was ready. Mr. and Mrs. Santa took one last nostalgic look around the North Pole home that had served them well. The elves stood around the convoy of loaded trucks ready to carry precious cargo to their new Texas home.

The night after Thanksgiving the big Christmas parade found its way to the Square. Santa and Mrs. Claus arrived on a red antique fire truck at the end of the parade. Families and little children lined the streets, their eyes shining with delight as Santa and Mrs. Claus stepped down to meet the folks. An occasional, "Ho-Ho-Ho!" could be heard above the excited squeals of wide-eyed little ones.

Carolers roamed the streets singing. A violinist played tunes of the season, and living Christmas trees lined the square with live actors telling the story of Christmas. Merchants served hot chocolate for the revelers. Santa and Mrs. Claus shook hands and chatted with the crowd. Photographer Shad Ramsey volunteered to provide professional pictures, while cell phones and cameras clicked in the hands of excited parents.

Santa's House is cozy and filled with charm, complete with a fireplace, Christmas tree and a bookcase. The walls provide a panoply of Clifford's paintings. This place is filled with the heart of Christmas—the love for people everywhere.

For everyone except Ebenezer Scrooge, Christmas is our favorite time of year. And Granbury celebrates with gusto, with Santa's help.

At midnight, the streets were empty and Santa's House was locked up tight for another year. Children were nestled all snug in bed, waiting for the moment they had waited for all year. Tonight, the jolly fat man in a red suit has reached into the heart of hope in the youngest toddler and the eldest grandparent, but now it was time to ride. Santa packed the sleigh and harnessed Dasher, Dancer, Prancer and Vixen, Comet, Cupid, and Donner and Blitzen. He tied red cowboy bandanas around the reindeer necks. After all, they were Texans now.

As the sleigh climbed into the starry sky, Santa reflected on the night, the sense of community, all the sharing, the giving, and the many acts of kindness. A star hanging over a stable in Bethlehem that first Christmas brought a message that resonated down the corridors of time, "Peace on earth, good will toward men," Santa sighed. There was still hope the world would get it right.

From all of us, to all of you, have a very Merry Christmas, and a blessed New Year. ■LGL





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2. Lennon Ortega

Parents: Charlie & Courtney Ortega

3. Eleanor Carver

Parents: Chris & Lauryn Carver

4. Sophie Jones

Parents: Ben & Andrea Jones

5. Caroline & Elizabeth Dillingham

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Parents: Justin Whitehead & Nicole Smith

7. Maddux Mitcham

Parents: Matt & Alyssa Mitcham

8. Steely Greene

Parents: Denver & Caitlyn Greene

9. Allison Chambers

Parents: Justin & Jackie Chambers

10. Molly Hidalgo

Parents: Jeremy & Jennifer Hidalgo

11. Graham Norman

Parents: Charles & Leigh Norman







Songsters Recount Their *Gospel Roots*

Words by **Jan Brand** | Photography by **Dawn Skinner**



Who hasn't thrilled at the sight of Julie Andrews spinning on a mountain top in Austria, with her arms outstretched and joy rising around her and filling the air with the sound of music? Every country, ethnic group and region has been influenced by their music. A lyrical melody touches the heart in places where nothing else can go.

Granbury enjoys a wealth of riches in every facet of the arts, including writers, artists, actors and musicians. Culture thrives in this small city with less than eight-thousand residents. Home-grown musicians and singers abound, with talent to spare.

Perhaps one of the best known groups which have enjoyed a long run is the Judge and the Jury, started by Jack Franks in the late 1990s. After his death, Judge Ralph Walton carried on with the group and later recruited a high tenor, Stan McBroom, and a bass, Ray Scott.

As the son of a Church of Christ minister, McBroom learned early in life how to harmonize. He likes to say, "We're just a bunch of ole guys who like to sing." They do it well because the group is in demand year round. When he's not singing the high notes, McBroom audits the books for Hood County.



One of the best known groups which have enjoyed a long run is the Judge and the Jury, started by Jack Franks in the late 1990s.

Photo by Shad Ramsey



Ray Scott is a retired retail marketer for a national automotive industry giant who joined the group in 2007. He is a resident of Pecan Plantation, and the newest member of the group. Veteran's Day each year the group does a special tribute to veterans at Pecan Plantation Country Club, where two-hundred and fifty patriotic souls attend. The group sings a medley of songs in tribute to the Armed Forces. They have each group of veterans stand when their special song is sung to recognize them for their service. The program ends with Lee Greenwood's famous, "I'm Proud to be an American," where the audience stands and often joins in, in a flag waving affirmation of the love they have for this great nation.

The love of God and country is a central theme Judge Walton has kept central to their mission. The group sings a wide range of music from gospel to country, oldies and doo-wop. They love to sing Christmas songs and have gigs lined up for the season. Ray Scott does an Elvis impersonation and a rendition of Elvis' "Blue Christmas" to the delight of audiences.

Jesse Overton played with two bands, and has performed in musical theater and reviews. He was born in Puerto Rico, where his father was a Church of Christ minister. He started singing in church when he was five years old. After his father rotated back to the States they returned to the family farm in Granbury for a time, where he learned to love country life.

At Delmar Junior College in Corpus Christi, which has a great music department, Jesse majored in education and minored in music only to realize that music was more appealing than teaching. He met Amy Grant through his roommate at Abilene Christian University before she found her fame, and as he got involved with pivotal people in music, the more apparent it was his future.

Over the years, Jesse has sung in many venues, but still feels his true calling is to encourage people and sings at churches of every denomination. He is a music evangelist.

Jesse moved home to the Granbury farm in 2004, which had been in the family since the 1870s. He had finally come home to stay. He can often be heard singing and playing his guitar at Farina's Winery and Café on Houston Street.

Jerry Allen has friends in high places. He became friends with, and played in clubs with Toby Keith before he became famous, and he has played in bands with Lorrie Morgan, Jerry Reed and Crystal Gail, to name only a few.

The son of missionary parents, he lived three years in Madrid, Spain, and another ten years in Taiwan.

His grandmother was a concert pianist and his mother had a degree in journalism from LSU and wrote children's stories. Creativity wasn't just in his genes, when he was an early teen, he thought if he learned to play the guitar he would be popular with the girls.



Photo provided by Jesse Overton



It was inevitable Allen would seek a more creative life than his B.S. and M.S. in computer science prepared him for. He studied composition and theory at Berklee School of Jazz in Boston, Massachusetts.

In Madrid, Allen met the famous guitarist Andre Segovia, the grandfather of the classical guitar, and who is still considered one of the greatest classical guitarists of all time. In 1969, in Taiwan, Allen met Chet Atkins, who created the musical style that became known as the Nashville sound. Atkins offered this sage advice to the aspiring young guitarist, Jerry, "Son, anybody can do this. It just takes a lot of practice." And Jerry did. Over the next thirty-five years

playing lead guitar he traveled to all the states except Maine and New Hampshire in the continental U.S..

Allen also played with famous rhythm and blues great Johnnie Taylor for about a year. In 1970, he played in a top 40 rock band in Washington D.C. while serving in Army Intelligence for four years. He had top secret clearance up to the presidential level and was called upon to take a message to President Gerald Ford.

Enjoy the musical talents of Jerry Allen at D'Vine Wine for the last Saturday every month. Check out www.facebook.com/Granburywinery/ for events and updates. ■LGL



Photo by Shad Ramsey



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How to Get Involved

Words by **Melissa McGavock** | Photography courtesy of **Shad Ramsey**

FEATURE EVENT:

Lake Granbury Area Beautification Council (LGABC) Annual Jewel Ball

November 12th, 2016

Black Tie & Bling, this annual formal is sponsored by the LGABC. The event featured cocktail hour, a seated dinner, casino, and a fabulous dance band. All proceeds from this annual event help to fund outdoor area projects that are enjoyed by our citizens and community guests.

The latest project, The LaRoe Picnic Green is decorated each Christmas and is a popular spot to take family pictures. The house-like structure is adjacent to Shanley Park and the green backs up to the city's hike and bike trail. Picnic tables behind the cozy cottage are a pleasant resting spot for those visiting the park.

For more information about the LGABC, please contact LGABC Director, Jan Caldwell at jcaldwell1961@gmail.com





LOOKING FORWARD:

Philanthropic Happenings this Winter

Saturday, February 9

Ruth's Place Handsome Hunks of Hood County

Granbury Resort Conference Center
6:00pm - 9:00pm

Proceeds from this annual event help to provide free medical and various family services to low income and uninsured individuals of Hood County. Find out more about this event, purchase tickets, or sign up for their newsletter at ruthsplace.wixsite.com/ruthsplace

Friday, March 10

"Heroes" Red Hot Concert #2

Granbury Resort Conference Center
6:30pm - Until the fun stops!

Proceeds fund Memorial Lane Project "Honoring Our Heroes".

This project will expand the existing Jim Burks Fire Fighters Memorial Park to remember and honor all fire fighters, law enforcement officers, or military. Within each site will be a designation for Fallen Heroes who have given the ultimate sacrifice.

Sales are ongoing for "Remembrance and Honor" Pavers Contact Julia Pannell at (817)308-7427 or Granburymemorallane@gmail.com

***Tax deductible donations should be made to the City of Granbury and indicate they are charitable contributions for Memorial Lane.*

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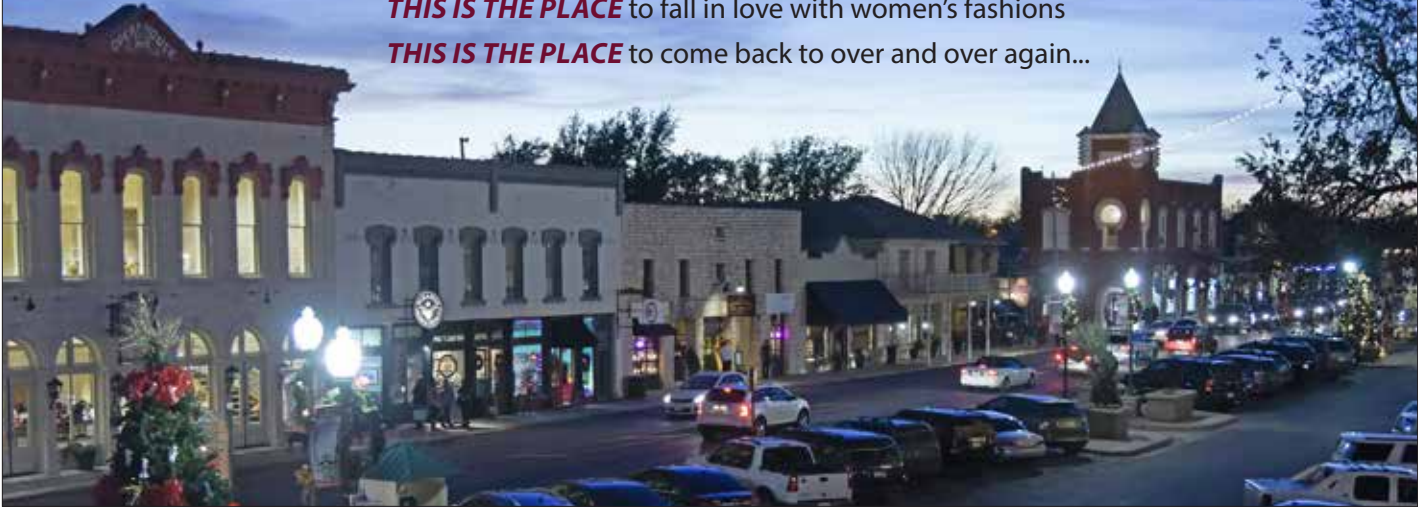
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GRANBURY CULINARY ARTS

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION: HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM PATHWAY



Words by **Connie Lewis Leonard** | Photography by **Dawn Skinner**

“WRIST, FINGERS, HANDS AND NAILS, NOW DO THE HOKEY POKEY,” ALLISON ALLEN SINGS AS STUDENTS ENTER HER CULINARY ARTS CLASS AT GHS.

“It helps students to remember the order for scrubbing their hands. The hair must be up, their hands must be washed, they put on the chef coat and apron, then wash their hands again. Students must wash their hands multiple times during a lab to prevent cross contamination, food borne illness and keeping a clean work space.”

The day I observed the class, they made Double Chocolate Cupcakes with Salted Caramel Buttercream Icing in preparation for the Cupcake Battle competition in the spring. At the beginning of class, Allen went over the roles of each recipe element.

“Fat is our friend—our minds need it. Cornstarch stops gluten from forming. All-purpose flour has 12% gluten, but Swan’s Down Cake Flour is lighter with less gluten. Sifting adds air to flour, but if it’s too light, it won’t support the dense ingredients. Baking powder and soda—leavening—raises, lightens and lifts. Sugar makes us happy. Eggs moisturize. Vanilla enhances flavor. Milk, lactic acid—Boom!—time to rise.”

The state of the art kitchen contains one huge Hobart standing mixer. Each stainless steel station is equipped with a KitchenAid Commercial Mixer and a drawer containing necessary utensils. To prevent tripping, the electrical cords go up to the ceiling. Each of the three students per station has a job to do, working together, measuring and mixing. Large rolling bins hold flour and sugars. Students retrieve other ingredients and supplies from the storage rooms or the walk-in freezer.





PATHWAY, PRINCIPLES OF HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM

Home Economics class used to prepare girls to become homemakers, teaching about nutrition and cooking, childcare and decorating. Girls perfected what they learned from their mothers and grandmothers. Culinary Arts, part of the Career and Technical Education: Hospitality and Tourism Pathway, goes far beyond traditional Home Ec. class. The first class in the Pathway, Principles of Hospitality and Tourism, focuses on the hotel and restaurant industry as a whole. Students learn skills to help them function in this multi-faceted and multi-billion dollar business.

LIFETIME NUTRITION AND WELLNESS

The next class is Lifetime Nutrition and Wellness, which concentrates on nutrition, food choices and food management skills for individuals, families and business. The Restaurant Management class serves as an introduction and prerequisite for Culinary Arts. The students gain insight into food production, management and hospitality skills. Culinary Arts students work in a commercial kitchen setting,





focusing on food service, preparation, safety and sanitation, customer service and other employable skills.

Allison Allen explains of these new programs:

“The Hospitality pathway classes fill a need for many students. Cultural awareness, diversity, professional resumes, interviewing, history, science, chemistry, writing, math, engineering, accounting... and that’s all BEFORE they take Culinary Arts. Not everyone is the ‘traditional student’. Some people learn best when given the tools in their hands and a purpose. Working in the kitchen gives many of them that purpose. They enjoy seeing a product made by their own hands. They have the biggest smiles when someone compliments them on their culinary product. And it’s fun! Culinary school takes anywhere from nine months to two years, depending on which program you pursue. For many students, this is the best continuing education. It’s quick, it’s their passion, it’s challenging and it’s rewarding. Most students in culinary schools work in the industry and receive credit for their efforts. I make it my goal to give these kids a ‘real world’ education. It’s not just about what they can learn in a book. It’s about sharing tips and tricks along the way to make learning

fun and to work smarter not harder.

About 30% of students who begin on this pathway finish Culinary Arts. With the new kitchen and a new teacher, we anticipate that number increasing. It is our hope that more opportunities for real-world application, more industry recognized certifications and more hands-on training in the Bistro will encourage more students to complete the program.”

Brianne Langdon, the new teacher, is a proud mom and an Aggie. She said, “The greatest reward is seeing that ‘light bulb’ come on for a student when we are working in the kitchen. I also love seeing how proud they are... when they create something they’ve never made before.”

Langdon said, “These classes are important to our community and our kids, because they learn practical life skills that apply to the tourism industry, as well as how to feed themselves! It’s alarming how many young people don’t know how to cook when they graduate high school. We help prepare them for real life. Most kids think food just comes from the store. I want them to know where it comes from and how it ends up in their kitchen, so they can give the ingredients the respect they deserve.”

After 20 years of traveling with her career Air

CULINARY ARTS

Students pictured from the 2016-17 GHS Culinary Arts Program



DID YOU KNOW?

Employment of chefs and head cooks is projected to grow 9 percent from 2014 to 2024, faster than the average for all occupations. Most job opportunities for chefs and head cooks are expected to be in food services, including restaurants. (www.bls.gov)





Force husband, Allen is glad to be back home in Texas. Her daughter is a sophomore at her alma mater, Texas Tech University. She feels blessed to be teaching at GHS. “My students are the BEST! They are curious, enthusiastic about learning new skill sets, and have a good work ethic. Don’t get me wrong, everyone has a bad day. But overall, my students see the opportunity through the classroom door and they are hungry to get in the kitchen and show me what they know. They are all amazing kids, and I truly feel fortunate to have this opportunity to share my passion with them. When they succeed, I succeed. As I tell them frequently, ‘You are a reflection of your family, your school, your community and me. Make good choices.’ They know I have their back. Even after graduation, I’m still there for them.”

Teaching is rewarding, but it can also be demanding. Langdon says consistency is

her biggest challenge. “I have so many classes, sometimes it’s hard to make sure we are getting everything done in the exact same way or that we didn’t miss something.”

Allen discusses the difficulty of making someone want to learn when they feel like they’re ‘stuck’ somewhere. “Today’s students have so much exposure to the world. Many of them only see the success of others and never stop to think how much it took to get there. When they hit a roadblock, sometimes they quit. And then apathy strikes. That’s why as teachers, we are always ‘ON’—looking for solutions, fighting for our students’ successes and praying every day they realize they are amazing!”

Thanks to the GISD Education Foundation and the citizens of Hood County for passing the bond that made this wonderful program possible for GISD High School students. ■LGL



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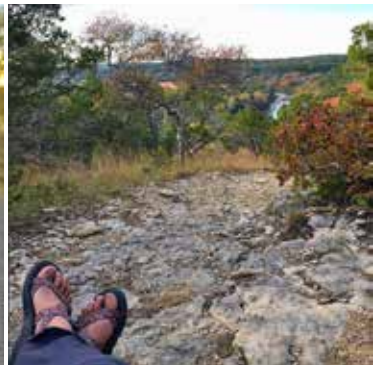
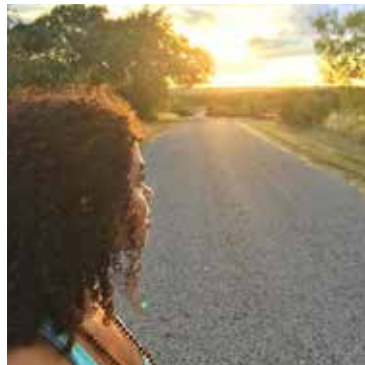
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