

the

VOL. 3 NO. 2

SPRING 2016

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See page 16 *Since 1972*

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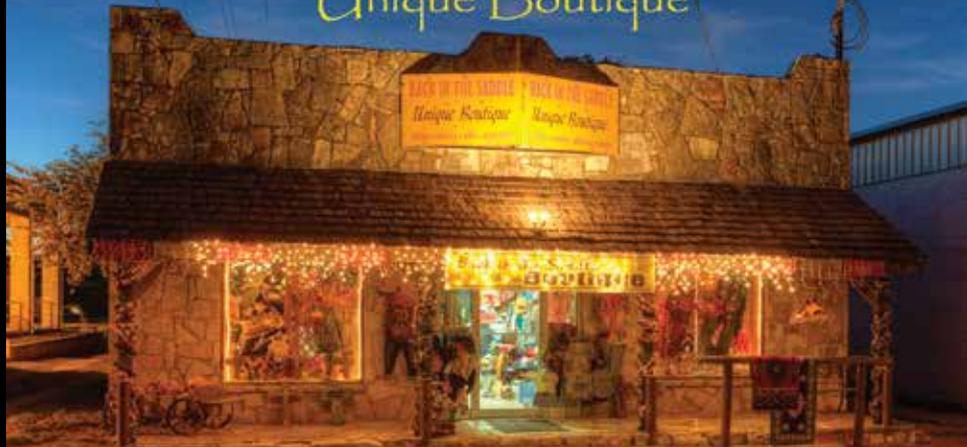
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Phil Houseal

Flying the Coop

Phil has unearthed yet another gem in Fredericksbug - The Coop. Abbi and Ben Jones have rolled up their sleeves and have created an new and unique venue in the Hill Country. The Coop will be a bar and music venue and available for private and corporate events. Drop by and fly The Coop!



Page 66

Healthy Eating from the Dinner Belle

"Healthy Eating - Progress NOT Perfection." Our Dinner Belle, Jil Utterback, has some yummy and healthy recipes for the Spring. Eating healthy and nutritious food is not as hard as you may think. This issue Jil shares three great recipes that will have you lickin' your chops.



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Kathleen Hudson

Patricia Vonne Rodriques

Dr. Hudson has been south of the border a lot lately and this issue brings us the story of Patricia Vonne Rodriques - a gifted musician and artist. With a number of releases and tours under her belt, Patricia will be visiting the Hill Country this March.

Page 36

Dalis Allen

Great Lineup for 45th Kerrville Folk Festival

Forty-five years of presenting great original music is no small feat. Thousands of concert goers over the years have come to call Quiet Valley Ranch home for three weeks of the year. This year's celebration will include the Hill Country Orchestra closing night to celebrate music and community.



Page 16



Joe Herring

Historic Gardens Blooming

Farming has always been a big part of the early Hill Country story. Fresh produce wasn't trucked in from all parts of the country and the world like today - if you wanted fresh vegetables, you had to grow them yourself. Joe takes a look at what was the core of a good Hill Country garden highlighting the Oehler's Farm near Mountain Home.

Page 12

Betty Sharp

Cowboy Crushes

Cowboy shows and films were a big part of growing up for some of us. I had a crush on Sky King's daughter Penny and it is good to know that I wasn't alone in my worship of glamorous western stars. Betty has her share of silver screen heart throbs to share with you. I hear a whistling sound in the air. Could it be Clint Eastwood?



Page 26



Mary Allyce

Write 'Em Cowgirl

Mary Allyce "Likes" you enough to lend her pen to Facebook and the way you can use it to connect with a large number of people with similar interests. For me, I find myself on Facebook and three hours later I pull my head up and think, "I just spent a lot of time watching cute kitten videos." And I "Liked" every one of them!

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3 NIGHTS

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Historic Hill Country Gardens

by Joe Herring

As the days grow warmer, and the trees have start to bud, I begin to wonder about historic gardens here in Kerr County, how they used to be planted, and what types of plants people chose back in the earlier part of the last century.

Often, when I want to know how daily life went on during those early days, I turn to a little volume called “Hill Country Boy,” written in the mid-1970’s by Herbert E. Oehler. Although the book is thin, it is rich in stories about this place.

The Oehlers had a farm on Johnson Creek, between Ingram and Mountain Home at the dawn of the past century. Here is how Herbert Oehler described his family’s circa-1900 garden:

“An acre or more of ground was always set aside for the vegetable garden,” Mr. Oehler wrote. “This was mostly under Mama’s direction and she decided what and how much of each kind of vegetable was planted.”

An acre is a lot of garden to take care of. Remember, then that this was not ‘hobby gardening,’ as most of us practice today: this was gardening in earnest, professional gardening. The Oehlers planned not only to live on the produce of that garden, but also to have a little extra to sell to earn some needed cash.

The physical work required to survive in those days, on a farm between Ingram and Mountain Home, would produce large appetites, and there were nine in the family. So an acre was just enough, and there were times, I’m sure, when they wished they’d planted more.

In one way, they were lucky, because their land was irrigated by a clever use of the nearby Johnson Creek.

“There were always several rows of beans, both bush and pole. Pole beans required extra work because when the vines began to reach out, wooden poles had to be stuck into

the ground for them to climb on. Slender cedar or willow limbs about eight feet long were cut and these poles were sharpened to a point and pushed into the ground beside one of the bean bushes. Two poles from one row were brought together at the top with two poles from another row and tied with a piece of string or baling wire. When the vines climbed to the top, the bean patch resembled rows of little green Indian tepees.

“Besides the tomatoes, potatoes and beans, there were radishes, cucumbers, squash, Irish potatoes, cabbage, musk melons, water melons, cushaws, okra, beets, turnips, carrots, lettuce, pie melons, black-eyed and crowder peas, onions, sweet and hot peppers, kohlrabi – practically any kind of vegetable that could be found in any garden in season but always as much as possible of the production was ‘put up’ for winter use by canning, preserving, drying, etc.”

What I’ve experienced in my garden was true even back then: “Weeds seemed to thrive even better than the planted crops.”

Their irrigation system was simple: a dam across the Smith Branch of Johnson Creek, with a ditch that brought the water to the field without the use of a pump.

I do wish I could time-travel and see the Oehler’s garden. I bet I could learn a lot from the family about gardening.

Joe Herring Jr. is a Kerrville native who has planted a garden each spring for more than thirty years. A few have been pretty good.



joeherringjr.blogspot.com



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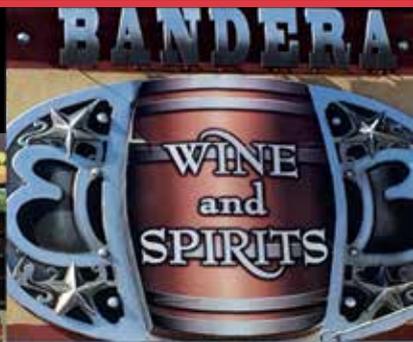


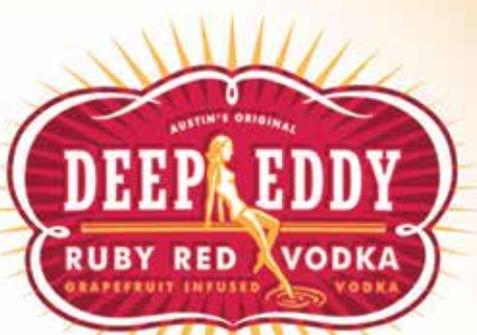
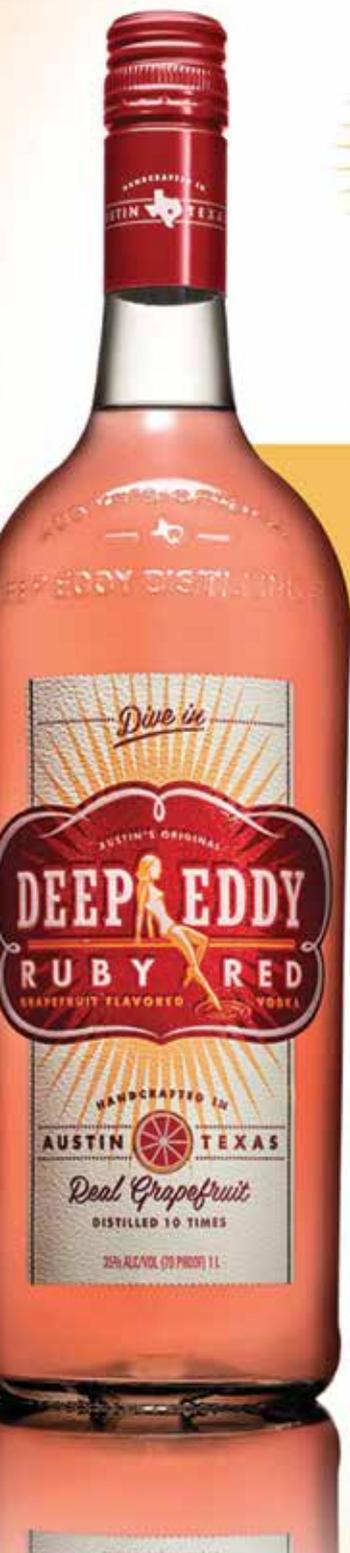
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THE KERRVILLE FOLK FESTIVAL 45 YEARS AND COUNTING

By Dalis Allen



The Kerrville Folk Festival has reached another milestone! Our 45th annual Festival, May 26 - June 12, 2016. We are pleased and humbled to continue honoring songwriters from all over the world. As our Founder Rod Kennedy believed, 'We are saving the world one song at a time'. We still believe it!



First Weekend - Moors & McCumber, Jimmy LaFave, Johnsmith, Billy Jonas, Randall Bramblett, The Deer, Del Barber, Kenny White, Cheryl Wheeler, Brother Sun, Steel Wheels, Vance Gilbert, this month's Cover Girl - Terri Hendrix, Slaid Cleaves, Mary Gauthier, Ruthie Foster

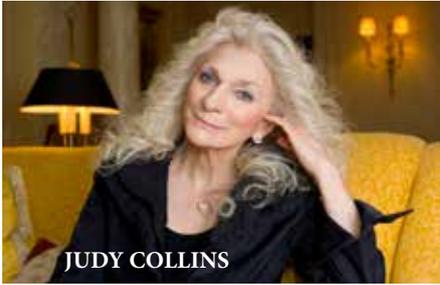


The Grassy Hill Kerrville New Folk competition concerts are on Saturday May 28 and Sunday May 29. The 32 Finalists will perform the 2 songs they were chosen for at the Threadgill Theater for a panel of 3 judges, Johnsmith, Kenny White and Cheryl Wheeler. The 6 Award Winners will perform in concert on Sunday June 5.

Second Weekend - Dana Louise & the Glorious Birds, Berkley Hart, B Sterling, Trout Fishing in America, Rev. Robert B Jones, Lance Canales, Dala, Peter Rowan, Tom Ball & Kenny Sultan, Wheatfield.

This issue we are dedicating the column to announcing our schedule so far and telling you about a special concert with the Kerrville Symphony Orchestra.

Third Weekend - Bill Hearne Trio, Michael Hearne, Ryanhood, Matt Nakoa, Bobby Bridger, David Amram, Ari Hest, Judy Collins, Kerrville Symphony Orchestra.



JUDY COLLINS

We will continue to announce as the confirmations and contracts are finished.

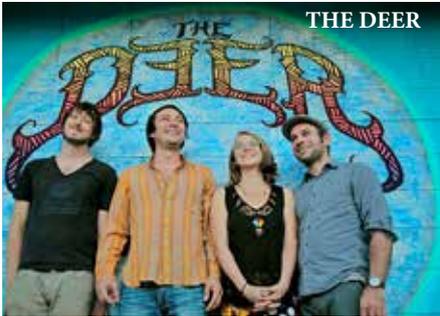
Every five years we close the Festival with a concert by a symphony orchestra to celebrate and remember those we have lost during those years. This year the list will include our Founder and Producer Rod Kennedy who we lost 2 years ago come April 14th. We are very excited that the Kerrville orchestra is available to participate! The evening will be conducted by American composer, conductor, multi-instrumentalist, and author David Amram and will feature 2 songs with Judy Collins, 2 songs with Matt Nakoa and 2 compositions by David Amram.

In addition to the concerts we have schools and workshops for Songwriters, Blues Guitar, Harmonica and Ukulele Faculties and they are ready to accept registrants.

Tickets are still at a discount so just go to <http://www.kerrville-music.com> and click on BUY TICKETS and join us for the 2016 Kerrville Folk Festival!!!

You can join our mailing list for updates and specials by going to http://www.kerrville-music.com/mailling_list.htm. Join us to experience the music, the family, the legacy!

Dalia



DALA

A Little Bit of Heaven

by Colleen Brooks



Oh, Texas Hill Country! Such beauty year round. But I have to admit, no other season showcases our beauty quite like Spring! The trees flaunting their fresh new leaves in beautiful symphony with the wildflowers popping up in their array of colors is like an ever-changing canvas, continuing to reveal more and more beauty.



A great place to see this beauty is riding through the areas of Wimberley, New Braunfels, and Gruene. Each of these towns has their own personality, offering something unique. New Braunfels is home to beautiful Landa Park, which is an ideal place for a family picnic. Kids will delight in the mini-golf, children's game, and paddleboats, and there is also a hiking trail. After, check out the Freiheit Country Store which is known for their burgers and chicken fried steak.

They have been serving New Braunfels since 1889 and have an extensive musical lineup planned for the season on their outdoor pavilion. Downtown New Braunfels will host their 13th annual Wein & Saengerfest on May 7th. This event will offer something for all ages, with wine/beer tasting for adults, live music, a grape stomp and artisan market, in addition to children's activities.

Gruene in the spring is simply magnificent! A former cotton gin town, this area is rich in both history and charm. A day strolling the shops in it's historic district with spring in the air is simply perfection. Be sure to stop in Texas' oldest dance hall, Gruene Hall, to look at all their

photos of past performers while enjoying a drink. Afterward, walk on over to The Gruene River Grill, Cantina del Rio, or The Gristmill Restaurant for a fabulous meal with a breathtaking view of the Guadalupe River. Gruene also hosts its wine event, "Come and Taste It", the third Thursday of every month in addition to Market Days, which is held the third weekend of every month.

Step back in time with a drive to Wimberley! If you're coming from Gruene, be sure to drive the back roads as they typically showcase plenty of wildflowers between these two towns. Wimberley has a lot to offer including shopping in it's town square, arts and culture, and their famous boot trail (pick up your boot map at the Visitor Center). Climb Mount Baldy to take in a panoramic view of the Wimberley Valley.



Blue Hole Park is a great place to spend a day, it offers numerous outdoor activities for families to enjoy. Afterward, head on over to I'noz for a bite to eat with an enchanting view overlooking Cypress Creek. Wimberley holds their Market Days the first Saturday of each month. The EmilyAnn Theatre and Gardens will host their annual Butterfly Festival on April 16, and The Wimberley Valley Art League will host their 8th annual Artsfest at Blue Hole Park April 23 - 24.

Take in the sights and sounds of spring! So much going on. Maybe I'm biased, but there's no place I'd rather be!

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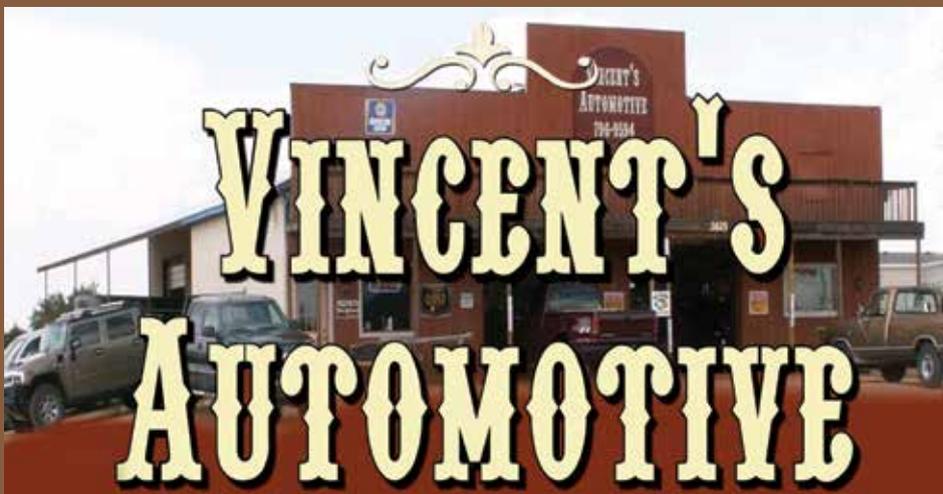
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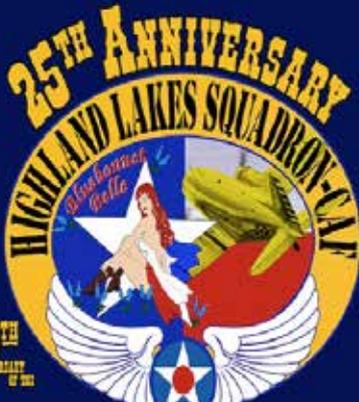


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BURNET MUNICIPAL AIRPORT | April 23, 2016

The Menu Board

Where to eat in the Texas Hill Country

New Braunfels Coffee House, New Braunfels, Tx

New Braunfels Coffee House is a one of a kind establishment that serves coffee, sandwiches, dessert and smiles. They are the finest provider of cappuccino, lattes, espressos, mochas, frappe, sandwiches, salads and a wide assortment of bakery delights. They serve only premium products with top quality service. Be sure and check out their "The Vine" Juice Bar. They have scheduled events and promote several artists in the surrounding areas, and also provides catering. 489 Main Plaza New Braunfels, Texas 78130 (830) 643-0098



Backyard Bistro, Pipe Creek, Tx

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Bricks River Cafe, Bandera, Tx

Located on the beautiful Medina River, thier full service restaurant features Appetizers, Sandwiches, Soups, Burgers & Steaks. In addition are Brick's Specialties - a collection of delicious entrees featuring chicken, seafood and pasta dishes you won't want to miss. Their Catering service is also available for special events & weddings. 830-796-9900 www.bricksrivercfe.com 1205 Main St., Bandera, TX 78003



TJ's at the Old Forge, Bandera, Tx

TJ's lunches offer sandwiches, burgers, along with a selection of hot entrees, and a Soup, Salad and Potato Bar. Vegetarian/Vegan/Gluten Free offerings. Kids' menu with fun, healthy options. Some dinner options include: steaks, tuna steaks, and broiled or sauteed shrimp. The Old Forge will be open 7 days a week featuring live music and karaoke. The kitchen will be open for lunch Tuesday-Sunday. Open for dinner Tuesday-Saturday. 807 Main St Bandera TX 78003

Mac and Earnie's Roadside Eatery, Tarpley Tx

Lunch on Fridays and Saturdays includes cheeseburgers, and their famous Cabrito Burger. Dinners on Friday and Saturday night feature steaks, catfish, ancho chile honey basted quail and specials such as grilled pork tenderloin with a sweet-tart Vietnamese dipping sauce or grilled Tuna with roasted Jalapeno Mayonnaise. 830-562-3727 11804 FM 470 (junction of FM 470 and FM 462)



Tj's at the Old Forge, Bandera Texas

Come try the best burger in Texas, made from custom cuts of beef and proprietary seasonings! They have Black Angus steaks, pork chops, seafood, pastas, gluten free, & vegetarian entrees. They also have the "Goldmine" salad/potato/soup bar. Full service bar, appetizers available all night, sports on the Giant screen, large front deck, downstairs AND upstairs for dining/visiting/watching parades, Happy Hour/Drink Specials. 807 Main Street Bandera, Texas (830) 796-9990



Creative Cakes by Sharon, Kerrville, Tx

Creative Cakes by Sharon is a dessert studio that specializes in Special Occasion cakes, gourmet cupcakes, cookies, and desserts that taste as good as they look! Sharon is doing her part to "make the world a better place by satisfying one sweet tooth at a time." (830) 895-CAKE (2253) 203 Earl Garrett St, # 205 Kerrville, Texas creativecakesdessertsstudio.com

Yeo-Bo's Cafe Korean BBQ, Kerrville, Tx

Korean Cuisine at its finest in the Texas Hill Country! Their stone bowl is a popular choice—with cooked fresh veggies, BBQ Pork, beef, or chicken, mushrooms, bean-sprouts, etc. with rice and an over-medium egg on top served in a hot/heavy stoneware bowl. Don't forget about the Kimchee, and the appealing selection of appetizers! Mon-Fri: 11:00 am-3:00 pm and 5:00 pm-8:00 pm 804 Water St Kerrville, Texas (830) 890-5873



Elaine's Table, Hunt, Tx

Nestled on the shores of the South Fork of the Guadalupe river is a favorite stopping place for fine dining while traveling the Hill Country. The house favorite that brings folks from miles around is Bruce's Tortilla Crusted Rainbow Trout. They also feature steaks, chicken and a daily special. 1621 Hwy 39, Hunt, TX, (830) 238-4484. elainestable.com.



Waring General Store, Waring, Tx

Although Waring is a bit off the beaten path, this one-block town has some great dining and entertainment. Wednesday nights features the original Steak Nite with live music and also offers great burgers and other Texas favorites. The Store is run by Jason Strange, son of Don Strange, caterer to the stars so you know you are getting the best the Hill Country has to offer in food preparation and hospitality. 544 Waring-Welfare Rd, Waring, TX (830) 995-4377. www.waringgeneralstore.com



Alamo Springs Cafe, Fredericksburg, Tx

Alamo Springs Cafe was immortalized on the cover of Texas Monthly awhile back with a shot of their monster burger. The Cafe, which is right next to the famous bat tunnel, is famous for its burgers and other Texas comfort food. It is outside Fredericksburg and a bit off the beaten path but well worth the drive. Seasonal live music on weekends. 107 Alamo Rd, Fredericksburg, TX (830) 990-8004 Visit them on Facebook!

Bandera Meat Market, Bandera, Tx

Whether you just want some deli meats and cheese for lunch, a jerky snack, breakfast sausage, or a tender choice steak for grilling, Bandera Meat Market is the place to go. Owner Kirby Jones prides himself on keeping a wide variety of quality products on hand that he knows his customers want. In addition to his over-the-counter sales, they also supply local restaurants and guest ranches. If you want to stock your freezer, go to the website BanderaMeatMarket.com and check out their Butcher Packs. 702B Main Street in Bandera 78003



China Bowl, Bandera, Tx

Authentic Chinese Cuisine at its finest! China Bowl has been a hometown favorite for many years serving traditional entrees along with the "Chef's Specialties." All the entrées are dished with just the right amount of spices to satisfy your tastebuds. They have great lunch prices and the dinner servings are double in portion. The staff is always friendly and willing to accommodate you. A must visit when in the area. 1206 Pecan St Bandera, Texas 78003 (830) 796-8494

Love Creek Orchard's Patio Cafe, Medina Tx

The Patio café was listed among the Top 40 best Small Town Restaurants in Texas by Texas Monthly Magazine. Try their Spicy Pepper Jack Burgers or homemade Chicken Salad. Choose from one of their award winning desserts: apple pie, apple cake, cookies, strudel, turnovers, muffins & famous Apple Ice Cream. 830-589-2202
14024 State Hwy 16 North Medina, TX 78055, www.lovecreekorchards.com



Camp Verde General Store, Camp Verde Tx

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Cafe on the Ridge, Kerrville, Tx

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Chichos Cafe, Ingram, Tx

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*If you would like to be included in our Menu Board,
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DINNER BELLE

BY JIL UTTERBACK



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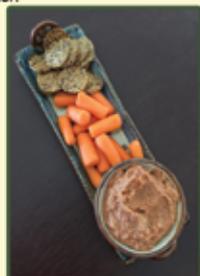
Did you know a group called Get Healthy Bandera meets at the Arthur Nagel Clinic every Wednesday at 5:30 pm? It is FREE and you can join our "Get Healthy Bandera" Group for inspiration! We talk about eating more whole grains, fruits and vegetables and less meat, oil, sugar and processed foods. We watch videos, share recipes, talk about reading labels and talk about products to buy at the stores. We even do cooking demonstrations in the beautiful clinic kitchen—and then we eat our creations!

Our motto is "PROGRESS NOT PERFECTION!"

I started my journey to eat healthy on May 23rd, 2015. My goal as a border line diabetic is to not take any medication. Since then I have lost 20 lbs as a pleasant side effect! You may want to lose weight, or lower cholesterol or maintain/or even reverse diabetes or heart disease. I have been sharing family and friend recipes in previous issues but want to shift to share some of my newly found "go to" healthy recipes. By switching to eating healthy, you are not counting calories or weighing anything, you lose weight and I promise you are never hungry! It is just a matter of WHAT you eat! By the way, there are Get Healthy Groups in Boerne and San Antonio and beginning all over the nation. You can go online and research the Whole Food Plant Based way of eating—there is a wealth of information out there. It is an education process and many things you think are healthy, in fact are not. The Bandera Library has a DVD * Forks over Knives you can check out or you can get it from Netflix or online. It is a good beginning video to watch to get you enthused about eating healthy. Remember, progress, not perfection! Whatever changes you make to eat healthy—even if small— can only help not hurt you! Come and learn with us! Our leader Debbie Gibson is a certified Whole Food Plant Based Instructor.

Pizza Humus

- 15 oz can of chickpeas drained (save liquid)
- 2-3 cloves of garlic
- 2 TBSP lemon juice
- 2 TBSP tomato paste
- 1 TBSP nutritional yeast (optional) (you can find it at the bulk food bins, at Trader Joes, Whole Foods, Amazon or just ask at the store—it adds a cheesy taste. It is ok to omit it also.)
- 1 ½ tsp oregano
- 1 tsp basil
- ¼ tsp onion powder
- 1/8 tsp salt
- Up to 4 TBSP of the reserved juice
- Mix in a processor or blender until dipping consistency.
- Enjoy with crackers (Mary's Gone Crackers are one good healthy choice—read the label and compare with other brands) or with your favorite veggies.



Asian Cucumber Salad

- 2/3 cup Soy Sauce (preferably Low Sodium Soy Sauce)
- 2-3 cloves of garlic
- 2-3 TBSP Chopped Green onions
- ¼ tsp Cayenne pepper
- Slice 3-4 medium Cucumbers with skin on and place in a zip loc bag.
- Mix the above ingredients and pour into the bag. Refrigerate 6-12 hours.
- What a wonderful healthy snack!



Ice Cream Made from Bananas

- 2 large Bananas, 1 cup of unsweetened Almond milk and a pinch of cinnamon
- Cut the Bananas into chunks and freeze them then place in a blender or processor with the almond milk and cinnamon. And Voila!!! Ice Cream!
- My grandkids love this and it really is like dairy ice cream!
- You can top it with fruit, add a little vanilla or other abstract like coconut, etc for a little different flavor
- (when you have those bananas going softer than you like to eat them, just cut them in chunks and throw in the freezer!) You will be amazed!



Finally, if you have read any of my recipes from other issues, you know I like Easy recipes because I am always in a hurry. So for a quick healthy lunch or dinner, try a baked potato loaded with salsa, sliced avocado, black beans and can or cooked frozen corn (no butter!). Or switch it to a baked sweet potato and do the same! How easy is that? Look for more healthy recipes in upcoming issues of the Heartbeat of the Hill Country!

"Forks Over Knives: Brief Summary—Through an examination of the careers of American physician Caldwell Esselstyn and professor of nutritional biochemistry T. Colin Campbell, Forks Over Knives suggests that "most, if not all, of the degenerative diseases that afflict us can be controlled, or even reversed, by rejecting our present menu of animal-based and processed foods." [6]

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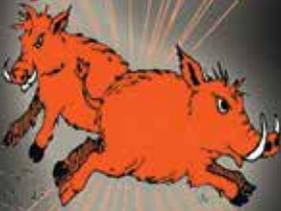
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TJ's at the OLD FORGE

RESTAURANT ★ SPORTS BAR

In 1986, Joe Reidy teamed up with blacksmith Kenneth “PeeWee” Stroud and purchased the Ranch House Café at 807 Main Street Bandera. They opened it as a working blacksmith shop, renaming the building “The Bandera Forge.” This was a real working Texas blacksmith shop with custom made branding irons, cowboy metal decorations, cold beer, a warm welcome, and country music by the their very own “Buzzard Band,” fashioned by Joe Reidy and his Forge bandmates, all in which defined The Bandera Forge. Both have passed on to the Forge in the sky, and even though the building has changed over the years from various restaurants and bars, Tj’s Old Forge plans to preserve their memory.



Owners of the property and restaurant, Arlene Guerra and Tammie Jones, are both successful business owners who bought property and moved to the Texas Hill Country a few years ago and are here to stay and service their customers! They look forward to being an integral part of the Bandera culture providing a regular place for local residents, and a favorite place for Bandera visitors.

The General Manager, (former Executive Chef), Sidney Cook, came to Bandera almost ten years ago. She has

over 30 years experience in the restaurant industry and has catered extensively in the area for events large and small. Sidney is well versed in all aspects of hospitality, but her heart is in the kitchen. Having lived in the Middle East as a child, her palate was awakened early and she hungers for diversity:

“I love cooking. There is always something new to try. Always something new to learn. Every bite of food comes from something living. It has energy. How that lettuce or tomato, or steak, or the grain in the bread came to me, makes a difference. How this bit of energy transforms into some sustenance, is just as important. I value tradition as well as nutrition.”

Lance McWhorter was raised in the restaurant industry and secured his first culinary job at the age of 13 as a dishwasher in a busy tourist town diner. During his service in both the US Army and US Navy as well as several years working as a high threat security contractor in the Middle East, he had the opportunity to travel to almost 40 different countries, turning the exposure to so many different cultures and cuisines to his true passion, cooking. Now retired from the wild life, and settled into his new role as Executive Chef at Tj’s. He now enjoys crafting country-esque comfort food with a dash of class, inspired by the cuisines of all the various countries he has been to.

Look for an expanded menu soon and a continuous selection of lunch and dinner specials featuring as many seasonal, farm to table, and locally sourced ingredients as possible. The Tj’s team cooks up the best burgers in Texas, made from custom cuts of beef and proprietary

FORGING AHEAD!

Tj's at the Old Forge features local acts such as Art and Lisa, Dave and Jeremy Kemp, Autumn Light, Lee Winright, Three Peace Band, Melissa Baxter, Goat Creek Band, and many more! Going back to the natural roots of the original Forge, Boone Holding is now hosting an 'open pickers circle' on Sunday's from 1pm-4pm.

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They also feature Tarpley Texas' Seco Ranch Longhorn grass fed Beef sliders and a "Bellows Burger"—a flame broiled portabella mushroom with grilled onions and provolone cheese, yum! Bandera needed a soup-salad-potato bar, especially for those who just want to pop in and out for a quick, light lunch (½ sandwich combos also available.) There have a Kids' menu with fun and healthy options as well.





ALLYCE'S ATTIC

by MARY ALLYCE



Springtime. A time of renewal, of hope, around here, hopefully, of rain – as in “April showers bring May flowers.” That old saw is from Chaucer’s prologue to *The Canterbury Tales*, (“Whan that Aprill with his shoures sotte/The droghte of March hath perced to the roote/And bathed every veyne in swich licour/Of which vertu engendred is the flour”). The modern version is pithy, but Chaucer’s Middle English original is poetic, musical, graceful. I wonder if Chaucer was alive today, what would his facebook page look like? After all, he and Shakespeare and other intellects contributed the original thoughts we see as “hackneyed” or trite today.

I’m not endorsing of facebook, just acknowledging how large part it is of most of our days (and nights). Used to promote artists and businesses of all kinds, it also keeps us in touch and posts endless lifestyle statements, mostly written by someone other than the poster. We are uplifted, encouraged, incited and/or insulted by a deluge of “helpful” word images once confined to “bumper sticker mentality.” In more recent “days of yore”, when e-mail was the main conveyor of whatever passed across the senders’ minds, we saw lots of the same stuff, but in longer format. Now, facebook lets anyone reach out and touch, enlighten and annoy literally millions of people with one click.

It’s not necessarily a bad thing. It is a lot easier to hit “Like” than to respond to an e-mail with some sort of intelligent response. I read posts on a daily basis showing me “6 Things Mentally Strong People Do”, “5 Deadly Terms Used By A Woman”, instructing me that surrounding myself with nice, intelligent, positive people will improve my life and outlook, thousands of recipes, some of which actually look good, craft ideas I save and never get around to making, lots of religious posts, lots of political posts, pictures of cute animals, the lunch my friends are eating, their vacation

and family photos.

Occasionally one really strikes a chord.

My favorite this month, is: “Some studies have shown that sipping champagne can have a positive effect on people . . . Some people even think it boosts your mood due to having magnesium, potassium, zinc and even traces of lithium.” And you thought facebook wasn’t educational. I know champagne lifts my mood and it definitely makes facebook a lot more entertaining!

We haven’t talked about all the videos eager to eat up your data plan, One writer might have called them, “Too much of a good thing.” Shakespeare. He would have had lots of fun commenting on facebook with familiar phrases like, “Love is blind”, “Fight fire with fire,” “Dead as a doornail” Send him packing” and “Naked truth.” Ah, the sweet brevity.

No surprise - I love writer quotes. Some of my favorites are from Hemmingway: “All my life I’ve looked at words as though I were seeing them for the first time.” “Easy writing makes for hard reading,” and “It’s none of their business you have to learn how to write. Let them think you were born that way.” Mark Twain advised, “Don’t say, ‘The old lady screamed.’ Bring her on and let her scream.” F. Scott Fitzgerald warned, “What people are ashamed of usually makes a great story.” All the above have appeared on my personal facebook page and my writer page.

I’m not a big fan of smarmy stuff – the “I’ve decided to be happy because it’s good for my health,” stuff even if that was written by Voltaire. I much prefer the one about the baby dragon sitting on my shoulder and that’s all I can print about that one!

Having instant access to millions of people with whatever we decide to share is fun, but let’s finish with a quote from J.K. Rowling (Harry Potter) who said, “Words are, in my not-so-humble opinion, our most inexhaustible source of magic. Capable of both inflicting injury, and remedying it .Good advice for writers and Facebookers.

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Writing this column in San Miguel de Allende at the annual Literary Festival. Inspired by Mexico and the stories of Luis Urrea, inspired by Gail Sheehy and her story of “daring,” inspired by Joyce Carol Oates, Scott Simon and the founder, Susan Page, I sit outside under a clear Mexican sky and think about Patricia Vonne. Why? Well, I wore her dramatic t-shirt my first day here, receiving lots of questions and comments. I deliberately chose that t-shirt because THMF will showcase her March 2 at the THMF/Schreiner coffeehouse, and we also showcased her at the 290Texas.com series in February, and she is an important chapter in my next book. Good reasons to wear the t-shirt. She sent me my first castanets from Spain, and I know have 4 sets, one I purchased in Granda for myself and one more from her, signed, that I purchased at the 290Texas show. Go ahead and ask “why four?”

Some interesting information about Patricia Vonne Rodriguez. Her heritage is

Spanish with her father’s family going back to San Luis Potosi, close to me right now. Her mothers heritage hearkens back to Spain by way of El Paso. Her 6th album is in Spanish, “Viva Bandalero,” and is up for Album of the year in the Austin Chronicle awards. She is also painting and had several show with music and art (and Rosie Flores and Michael Martin) at the Jackson Ranch in December, a place that promotes art in the center of San Antonio.

Her brother, Richard Rodriguez, used her song, “Traeme Paz,” in “Once Upon a Time in Mexico.” She has toured Europe several times, using dance and her castanets to get the audience involved more, inviting them to join in. I once invited her to my English class, where she and her partner, Robert LaRoche, talked about the writing process, music and creativity. She will meet with students again on March 2 at Schreiner. Humble does not adequately describe her generous and open heart. We share a backstage moment at the January tribute to Leonard Cohen by Alejandro Escoveda at ACL in Austin. On one album Patricia records with some of her heroes, including Es-



coveda. Her website is a work of art, including the lyrics to her songs. I am always pleased to see that as I enjoy sharing the writing with my students.

In San Miguel de Allende, I saw with a small Mexican crowd listening to another hero, Sandra Cisneros, reading her well-known short story, "Eleven." Sandra, the woman who wrote the poems entitled LOOSE WOMAN, inspired me in the same way Patricia inspires me. Be true to that inner voice that nudges at times and screams at times. Women who express themselves are my heroes. We all face fear, and some of us move through it and step over it. Gail Sheehy spoke of her new memoir at the San Miguel Literary Conference, DARING. She told us her stories of daring then asked for volunteers to share their stories.

I think of Patricia Vonne and her daring. The fourth of ten children, the first girl, she told me of a family guided by a strong work ethic exhibited by her dad going from door to door selling kitchen utensils. We talked one day in her house, surrounded by the art and culture of Mexico. Her roommate, Rosie Flores, is my next feature and a chapter in my book on the women of Texas music.

My interview with Patricia is archived on my website kathleenhudson.net where many of the shorter interviews live, ones that did not make the print edition. And both Rosie and Patricia are chapters in my current project, Hispanic Heritage in Texas Music: Stories of Texas and Mexico.

Patricia played at Sam's with Del Castillo on Feb. 18. She represents Texas music wherever she performs, bringing seductive Spanish to an Americano rocking style. A darling when on her European tours, she returns to Texas and plays each venue with an international flair. Her world is large, and she once headed to New York to model for a few years. Her experiences are vast with each album representing a level of her own transformation. "Viva Bandolero" is number six. Check her out at www.patriciavonne.com Join us on March 6 in the intimate setting of the Lion's Den at Schreiner University. Buy her album and take her home with you. Its sont partis.

- KH

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Sports from the Women's POV by Carlotta Schmittgen



I love baseball. It actually started back in the 60s in New England. I was raised in a neighborhood consisting primarily of boys my age so I quickly learned what baseball cards were used for. I excelled in a game where you flipped a card against another person and the best combination flip would get to keep both cards. I won some great cards and I kept them in one of my Dad's cigar boxes ... Sandy Koufax, Don Drysdale, Brooks Robinson, Hank Aaron, Willie Mays and Harmon Killebrew. In the late 60s, we moved to Houston as the "Eighth Wonder of the World," the Astrodome, finished completion.

I became an Astros' fan and revered legends such as Rusty Staub, Jim Wynn, Joe Morgan, Bob Aspromonte and Larry Dierker. Fast-forward to the fall of 1986 when I moved to the DFW area and started working the Texas Rangers' baseball charters for Delta Air Lines. The following spring found me talking hubby Rick into replacing our ski vacation with spring training in Port Charlotte, Florida. Spring training provided a more relaxed atmosphere where you got to meet the players. In late 1988, to the thrill of Ranger fans and to the dismay of Astros fans -- especially my Mom -- Nolan Ryan signed on with Texas.

That man's arrival created almost as much excitement as winning the lottery. The Rangers' charters became "prime real estate" on the bid sheet and flight attendants senior to me who didn't even care about baseball were infiltrating my turf! Nolan was self-conscious with all the attention coming from the media and fans.

The following year, Mom, who was in her late seventies, asked me to take her to spring training. We flew into Sarasota-Bradenton. I got goofed up leaving the airport and after some time found us heading south toward Naples instead of north to Port Charlotte! By the time I got turned around, we had reached the city

limits just before nine p.m. The restaurant on the wharf wouldn't seat us, as they were trying to close. Needless to say, we were now pretty hungry even by central time standards! A good flight attendant (as well as former Brownie/Girl Scout) always has a Plan B to put in place. I knew of a small restaurant that the players frequented and stayed open late. As we perused the menu, Mom excitedly told the waiter how I worked the Rangers' charters for Delta. He smiled and told us that one of the players was there --- Nolan Ryan.

I quickly scribbled a note and gave it to the waiter to give Nolan. A few minutes later the waiter returned and said Nolan wanted to meet Mom. He then escorted us back to a banquet room. Mom was finally going to get to meet Nolan Ryan! She was beside herself! There stood Nolan and another gentleman. I introduced Nolan to my mom. He, in turn, introduced us to Craig Reynolds, a former shortstop for the Astros. Mom immediately dropped Nolan's hand and threw her hands up to her face. "Oh, my! Craig Reynolds! I can't believe it!"

Now, according to Nolan, Craig never let him forget that moment --- a fan getting more excited over Craig than Nolan! Later that year Mom had knee replacement surgery. When she died and I went through her things, I found in her mementos a Get Well card Nolan signed for her. Yep... Mom dumping Nolan for Craig was just a momentary lapse in judgment.



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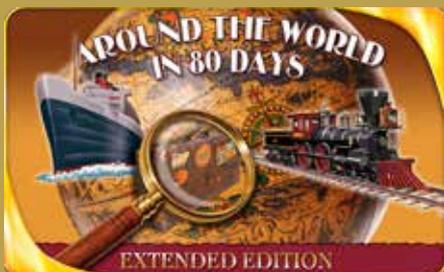
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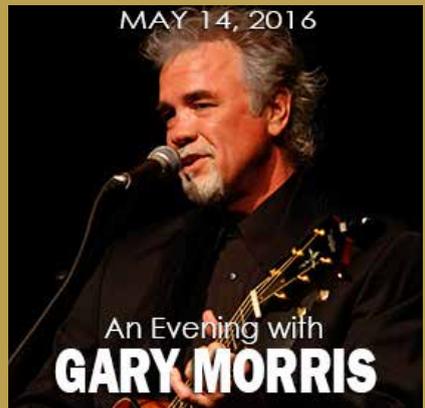
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DEEP IN THE HEART OF BANDERA

BY GENIE STRICKLAND

It's Spring! Ready to put on my boots and ride the Hill Country!

First, NEVER miss the first Tuesday of each month when we kick start with the Cowboy Capital Opry. The music is awesome and surprise performances Rock! Silver Sage Community Center.

We have Bingo weekly all around the County. Also really cool Classic Car Shows in and round the county on a weekly basis too. Good Food at the fish fry with the Knights of Columbus each Friday night! Go to BanderaCowboyCapital.com and click on Events for the dates and times so you will not be late!

Every Saturday, the Bandera Business Association hosts the Cowboys on Main program in downtown Bandera. At noon, at Rattle Snake Ridge (a town located in the backyard of the Bandera Visitor's Center), meet the Bandera Cattle Company. Fulfill your fantasy of the gunfights of the Old West. They are informative, some historical, and some hysterical. Gun safety is covered and the kids get deputized too as official Deputies of the Bandera Cattle Company. Around town you will find chuck wagons, horses, strolling singers, trick ropers or longhorn cattle to get your picture with as well as some occasional horseback rides in City Park. Take a wagon ride down Main Street only in the Cowboy Capital of the World.

First Saturday of each month, at 1:00 pm, visit the Frontier Times Museum for the Cowboy Camp. Bring your lawn chair and enjoy some traditional cowboy music. Better yet, bring your guitar and join in! Most bring their own refreshments too. Don't miss it!

The State Hill Country Natural Area

banderacowboycapital.com

is an incredible park. Each month offers seminars /workshops on how to become a Junior Ranger or educational Discovery Hikes with the Kids through the 5,000-acre park. Join Birding Buddies for educational bird discoveries in the Texas Hill Country. For more information, call 830-796-4413.



For a unique "Cowboy" experience, check out the Chuck Wagon Dinner every Saturday March 12th through Labor Day at the Flying L Guest Ranch. From 5:30 to 7:30 pm you can experience wagon rides, roping lessons, hat and pistol branding, archery, Old Tyme Photos, a Cowboy Stage Show, Gunslingers, Line dancing and great food! 800-292-5134 for reservations.

Bandera has some awesome events planned for the spring. Start your day off on March 19th with the BEC Annual 5K/10K Cowboy Capital Stampede! Join the fun! But save the later morning for the Kronkowsky Library of Bandera County's 19th Annual WILD HOG EXPLOSION! at Mansfield Park. Did I mention Wild? This is a wild Hog "catch" and the squeals and spills are a hoot! Starts with kids 4 to 5 and moves on up to the adults. Of course the hogs start small too and get bigger as you go! Bring your own Hog and participate in the All Bike Rally, whip up you best entry in the LSBBQ Cook-off, buy a chance for a \$1,000 prize in Bacon Bingo, shop the arts and crafts, and well there is a lot more so check it out at www.wildhogexplosion.com!

If catching wild hogs wasn't enough for you, how about riding one! Biker Rallies of Texas presents Thunder in the Hill's March 31st thru the April 3rd. Held at Bandera's Mansfield Park it includes tent camping, poker run, vendors, food, field events, live bands and special entertainment. Friday and Saturday, a bike show, tattoo contest, Sunday morning church service, and well you just gotta go. 18 OR OVER NO EXCEPTIONS.

Things change in April and the month events are kicked off by Bandera Market Days around the Court House. Scheduled the first Saturday in April thru November. Arts and Crafts featuring some of the best in the Hill Country. Free and open from 9 to 4pm.

Head to the Medina River as the Bandera Business Association presents Mayhem on the Medina featuring the National competition of the Reenactment Guild of America (RGA). Scheduled for April 9th & 10th hat Bandera City Park. Exciting competitions of Living History Campsites, costumes, and gunfights. Competitors from across the nation! Vendors, live Music, wagon rides and more! Step into the past and experience Mayhem on the Medina! Games from the 1800's, exhibits and food. More info at www.MayhemOnTheMedina.com

Bandera is all about horses. April 29 to May 1st TETRA/HC-SNAP will host their annual Spring Benefit Trail Ride. Join the Texas Equestrian Trail Riders Association and the Hill Country State Natural Area Partners for their annual spring benefit at the Hill Country State Natural Area. Registration on Friday

May 1st is the Annual St. Stanislaus Parish Festival at the Church on Cedar Street. Time: 11 AM - 5 PM BBQ, Games, Music, Auction and more. Way too much fun!

May 6th the Bandera County Helping Hand will hold an annual Charity Golf Tournaments. Starts at noon at the Flying L Guest Ranch. Call 830-796-8300 for more information.

May 7th Join the 16th Annual Medina River Cleanup. Registration 9-noon at Bandera City Park. Help keep our Medina river to stay the cleanest, clearest river in Texas! BBQ and music too! Call Bob Brischetto at 210-413-7264 for information.

Bandera County "Relay For Life"

will kick off on May the 14th - 15th at 6:30 PM - 2:00 AM Bandera High School track and football field. All proceeds go for cancer education, transportation to appointments, and other items to help those getting treatments. Donations and all teams welcomed. 474 Old San Antonio Hwy Bandera, TX 78003 - On May 21st Join the Polly Texas Pioneer Association as they Celebrate a Bandera Legend: Jose Policarpio Rodriguez. This fundraiser will help preserve Polly's Chapel. Entertainment, a delicious luncheon followed by a "Frontier Auction". Call 210-364-7096 for more information.

One of our most exciting events of the year is the Annual Bandera Pro Rodeo Time: 8:00 PM Annual Memorial Day Weekend. Held Fri - Sun May 27th - 29th. Performances Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings. Mansfield Park Rodeo Arena -

On Saturday May 28th grab a seat for one of the best parades in Bandera! The Chamber of Commerce presents the Annual Funtier Day Parade at 11am! Shop the annual Funtier Days Arts & Crafts Show. Over 75 vendors on the Courthouse Square Call 830-796-4447 for more information. Applications for the art show or the parade on line at www.bandera-tx.com

Who Knew? Such a small town of 857 folks could have so much fun! You cannot be bored in Bandera! Be sure to visit our music venues too!

For more information, dates, times, exact locations, visit www.bandera-cowboy-capital.com and click on events. You never know, we may even add a few by the time you check it out! Yee-haw, Y'all!





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Cowboys and Crushes by Betty Sharp

I have some Yankee visitors coming this summer and I was thinking about what Hill Country events would be fun for their children. I looked up the Cowboys on Main in Bandera. They look pretty sharp in their photos and have lots of activities and skits. Even in 2016 a lot of children are fascinated by the Wild West, both the history (true or not) and the TV show by that name. Every Saturday countless stations nationwide run the westerns my generation grew up with---Cisco Kid, Lone Ranger, Bonanza, Wagon Train, even Roy Rogers and Dale Evans episodes. When I heard the Dixie Chicks' song "Dale Evans Made a Cowgirl Out of Me" in the late 1980's, they were singing about my childhood. So I understood when my friend's child asked me if she could meet Little Joe. Yes, she knows he isn't real but she can dream, can't she?



My first "cowboy crush" at 11 was dark haired Pernell Roberts who played Adam Cartwright, Little Joe's older brother, on Bonanza. Like my young friend now, my girlfriends then were crazy about Little Joe, but to this day I have never liked a cowboy who has a prettier hairdo than me. I admired cute Hoss a lot, especially since he was gentle with horses, but Adam was mysterious and gorgeous. He was a cowboy who played the guitar, recited Shakespeare and read books. My dream man! I will admit these perfectly coiffed TV cowboys---oh gosh who didn't love Clint Eastwood as Rowdy on Rawhide---didn't prepare me for life around real cowboys when I moved to Texas. I'll tell you this---when a cowboy removes his sweaty hat after a few hours of vaccinating cattle in a dirty corral his hairdo

doesn't bear any resemblance at all to Little Joe's. But I came to love them anyway.*

I'm hopeful some of the staged fights and skits we see in the Hill Country will have Annie Oakley types mixing it up with the guys. Even when a little girl, I was annoyed by the shows that had the woman standing helplessly off to the side while her man was fighting a bad guy. "Pick up the frying pan and smack him one," I often yelled. I plan to introduce my young friend to Gale Davis' 1950s Annie Oakley. It is great fun to see Annie stand up in the saddle on her galloping horse shooting at the villains. I have to tell you, though, in one of my favorite Roy Rogers shows, Dale tries to help Roy who is losing the fight. Dale picks up a chair and swings it at the bad guy, but Roy pops up just at the wrong moment and Dale smacks Roy over the head instead.

I want children to enjoy these old tv shows, as well as see live action western events and what better place than Cowboys on Main in Bandera. Just for the fun of it. Just for the creativity of it. They can read the real history at another point in their lives. I just hope the children don't ask me to explain why Roy and Dale ride around on Trigger and Buttermilk, but Pat gets to drive around in Nellybelle, a 1946 Jeep. Not to mention that all the bad guys Roy and Dale chase ride slower nondescript bay horses, so apparently the bandits weren't smart enough to steal enough money to buy a motorized vehicle to outrun Trigger and Buttermilk. Go figure.

*And before I rile anybody up, let me say that no actor cowboy---absolutely no one---was more fantastic than Yul Brynner walking down the street in The Magnificent Seven. And, yes, I now know that Pernell wore a toupee! So who cares? A gorgeous head of hair isn't everything in a cowboy.



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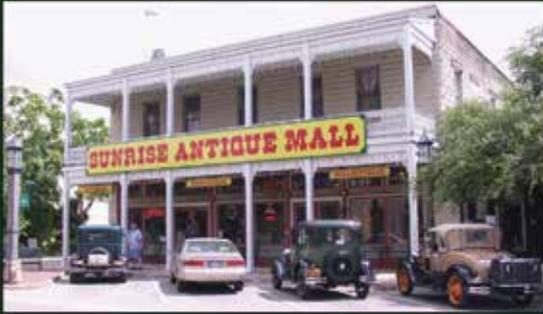
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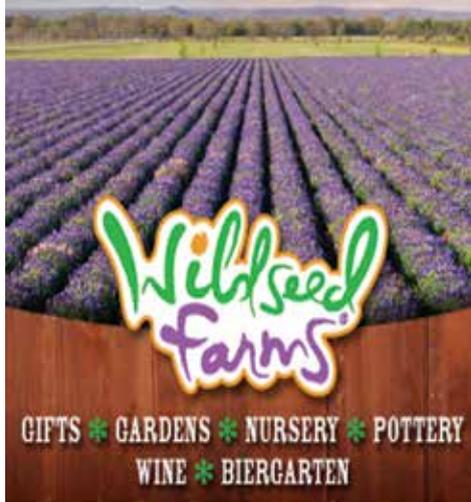
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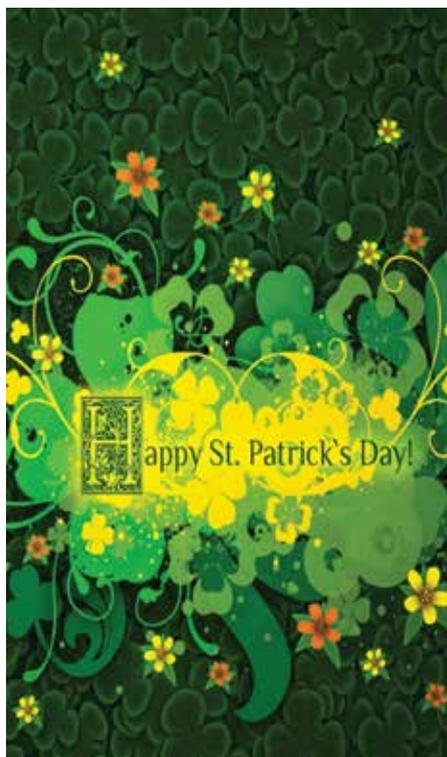
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A CONSERVATION NOTEBOOK

by Homer Stevens

The last previous conservation discussion documented some of the mounting evidence that our water resources are diminishing. The speculation for this issue will be on what can be done about the problem. There is not one easy answer, and many of the tactics involve people working toward the same end so that the small measures each individual takes may add up to significant achievement.

First on the list is overall Land Stewardship doing everything possible to maintain as much natural ground cover as possible over as much land area as possible. Books have been written about the benefits of grass cover and the importance of maintaining leafy vegetation. Fibrous root systems are best at creating paths for water to pass through the ground and into the aquifer. Creativity in taking measures to help maintain living ground cover would be a good goal for everyone.

In the early 50's the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service along with the Soil Conservation Service encouraged ranchers to build numerous small water holding structures for the stated purpose of grazing distribution. These usually relatively small tanks (dug outs) were placed some distance from ranch headquarters to encourage livestock to extend their grazing patterns out beyond the main water source. The concept was good in seeking to even out the pasture grazing and encourage grass growth. However, it has been my observation of at least 9 such structures on the Farm properties that only perhaps 2 held water for any length of time. A secondary value of these structures was and is erosion control and aquifer recharge. The structures can be justified on that basis alone.

Another ASCS & SCS supported practice was terracing of erodible cropland. These terraces or dirt berms were meant to prevent water runoff and allow the water to soak into the ground behind the structures. We are actively building a series of these terraces in the open spaces within the RV Park with the same concept in

mind. Referring back to history, there is a long terrace below the bluff that forms one boundary of the RV park that my father built using a little scoop that is in the lower display on the West of the Farm Cupboard Restaurant. This was done using the scoop and a team of mules. Evidently he saw value because this was a mind-boggling undertaking.

What seems to be the IN thing that has potential for The Farm and most properties is Rainwater Harvesting. This is the same concept as the old cistern that was mentioned in the last Conservation Notes. The size of the storage tanks, pumping, and distribution systems have been highly enhanced by modern equipment and technology. To give some perspective to this water conservation technique, one side of the roof of The Farm party pavilion is approximately 7,050 sq ft and would produce somewhere close to 4,500 gal of water per inch of rain. Our long term average yearly rain fall is 32 inches. The average daily water usage for the garden, swimming pool, laundry, café, and the rest of the recreation area over a four year period is 1,144 gpd. This means that $32 \times 4,500 / 1,144 = 126$ days without ground water usage. Keep in mind that this only involves catching water from one side of the roof of that building. These figures lend room for some degree of optimism, especially when you speculate on the potential for using the other side of the building, and all the other rooftops in The Farm complex. Consider also that this will be much better water than we get out of the ground. There are not nearly as many dissolved solids in rainwater as there are in water that has been in the ground for hundreds of years. The main complications to this approach are \$\$ for storage facilities, piping for distribution, disinfection, and pumping equipment.

So far as our little RV Park community is concerned the rainwater harvesting concept is very effective for capturing water from the roofs of storage sheds and decks. For watering potted plants and hanging baskets this water would prove to be much better than our well water.

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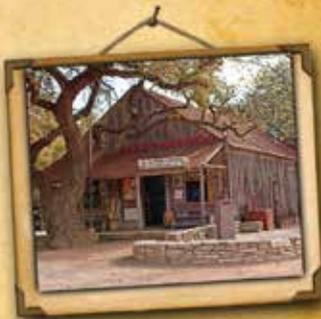
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The Coop: A New Place to Roost



When Abbi Jones and her brother, Ben, first saw the building on Fredericksburg's West Main Street last summer, it reminded them of "an old chicken coop."

They were looking for a site to set up a new bar and club. They started digging into the unimproved storage area when they saw a sign. Literally.

"We looked up and saw a sign with a picture of a chicken coop," Abbi said. "And we thought, this is perfect."



Welcome to The Coop.

It took a lot of work to get there. The building had been long used as storage space for the antique shop next to it. There was no interior framing, no plumbing, no furnishings.

With Ben as "the muscle" and Abbi as the idea person, they rolled up their sleeves and dug in. The piles of "collectibles" lying about turned into an unexpected bonus. They decided to use what they found as décor for their new venue.

So today customers can sip beer and wine in rooms decorated with such desiderata as a wood toboggan, a spinning wheel, boxes of classic beer cans, and four old bars set up to serve those beers. Most interesting for anyone who lived in Fredericksburg before it became "Fredericksburg" is the original wooden Indian that stood in front of the old Domino Parlor.

The theme continues out back, where they created a fenced, shaded beer garden with long picnic tables and a roomy stage for live music.

The pair grew up in west Texas. Ben went into the oil and gas industry, while Abbi got her degree in advertising at the University of Texas and worked in corporate event planning. Both grew weary of the endless travel, and decided to start up their venture in Fredericksburg.

"Ben is always looking for things to get into," Abbi explained. "He is really smart and good at seeing potential. We saw a great opportunity to do events in an outdoor area."



They also both have a desire to do more for the community. "We want to develop this side of Main Street," Abbi said. "Slowly, some great businesses are moving down this way. We want to help drive more people over here."

So far it seems to be working. Businesses and B&Bs are sending people their way. Locals appreciate that it is away from the crowded downtown, with easier parking.

Abbi is bringing her experience in event planning to The Coop. They have installed a wine tasting room, are adding food service, and creating some unique events, such as the “yoga and brew” series. That involves doing yoga practice outside, followed by beer tasting from local breweries.

Music is in the mix once the weather warms up. They plan to add bands on weekends, with a combination of blues, country, and classic rock, or “stuff you can dance and hang out to.”

They also are kid friendly.

“We want to be a place anyone feels they can come and be comfortable,” Abbi said. “I don’t like to go to a place and feel out of place, by being too underdressed or overdressed. You can come here in sweats or dressed up.”



That vision is fitting for a place inspired by digging through piles of stuff.

“The Coop is about building experiences,” she said. “Yeah, you can go anywhere and have a beer. But I watch people play Jenga and they are having the best time. We want to create an experience. We want to be a place to make good memories with friends.”

The Coop

607 West Main in Fredericksburg.
Open 3–11 pm 7 days a week
until midnight on Friday and Saturday.
Web site is www.thecoopfbg.com

Photos by Phil Houseal

Phil Houseal is a writer and owner of Full House PR. www.fullhouseproductions.net
Contact him at phil@fullhouseproductions.net

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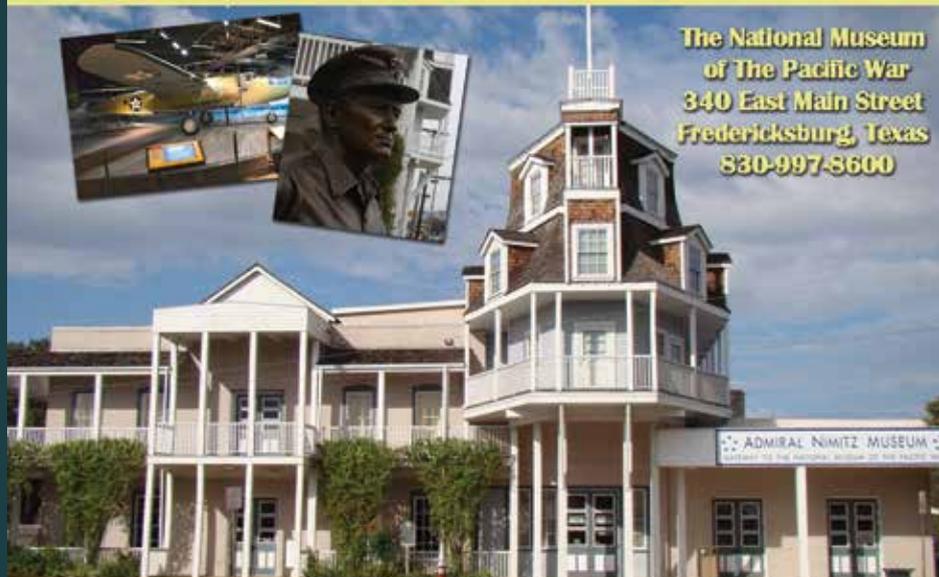
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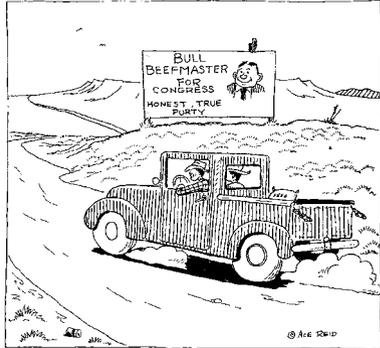
By Ace Reid



This is shore an unusual spring. We ain't had but two inches of dust.

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March 31- April 3, 2016

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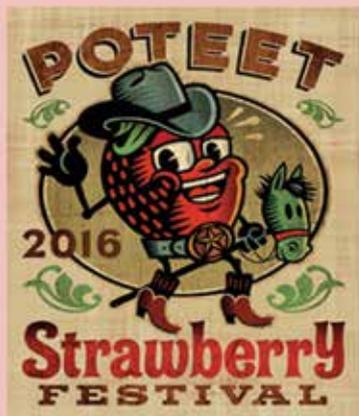
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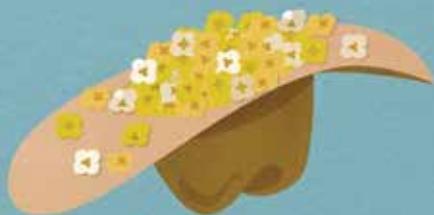
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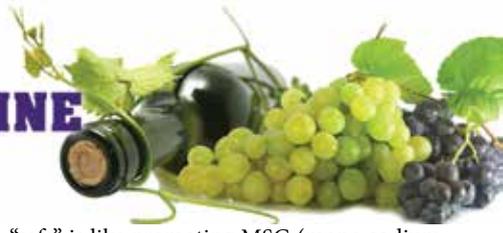
191 Derreck Rd S

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ORGANIC WINE

by Gary Lochte



What amount of FLUORIDE and PESTICIDE is acceptable in your wine?

Do you like clean food? Do you prefer food and beverages free from GMO (genetically modified organism), petroleum pesticides, and fluoride? Do you reject the agenda of the biggest “for profit” corporation’s mantra that fluoride, pesticides, and GMO are safe? A growing number of folks are saying “NO!” to GMO and fluoride.....Good wine is no exception.

Many private vineyards have entered the organic wine market as an answer to the public’s demand for clean beverages. Vineyards that produce organic wine appear to have developed strict production standards. They also appear to have done a remarkable job of controlling the added expense of avoiding cheap fluoride and pesticide-laden grapes in favor of more expensive, high quality grapes from organic farmers. Cutting-edge organic wineries have mastered the art of fermentation without the use of “added” sulfates and sulfites. For many wine enthusiasts, the sulfates and sulfites are the chief cause of brain-fog and body ache usually associated with enjoying more than one glass.

Sulfites are naturally occurring in grapes but in miniscule amounts. The problem is not sulfites which occur naturally, but those which are “winery added.” The sulfite content is 350 to 400 parts per million in most name brand wines while Organic wines tend to contain sulfite’s in only 40ppm concentrations. The latter is generally considered a safe amount.

Sulfites are used to clean equipment and bottles when making beer, wine, or spirits. However, other safe sanitizers can be used. Bleach is a good example. Bleach, even when heavily diluted, sanitizes just fine, but it requires massive rinsing. Some people are allergic to sulfites in small quantities, while other folks seem to tolerate higher amounts. Sodium meta-bisulfite is used to sanitize bottles before bottling. SMBS is also used by some winemakers to clean the barrels they use for aging. Declaring sulfites as

“safe” is like promoting MSG (mono sodium glutamate) as a safe flavor enhancer. I avoid them like the plague.

As for fluoride.....the fact that it is harmful to humans and animals is no longer arguable. The trendy wineries have masked the presence of fluoride in their products by giving the toxin an unrecognizable name. Regardless of what they name it, fluoride is probably best avoided. In particular, many California wines are laden with fluoride.

Good tasting organic wines are increasingly available....in fact, local grocery markets now offer an impressive variety of organic wines produced in the United States of America as well as from other countries. These quality organic wines have character, wonderful flavor, and are competitively priced.

There are many local wineries. Nearby Communities like Gruene near New Braunfels, Fredericksburg, and Kerrville boast of fine number independent wineries. When you call or visit them, ask about the availability of organic wines. If your local winery does not produce a line of organic wines, let them know that you prefer organic. The “purse” is very successful in persuading businesses to produce products that consumers demand.





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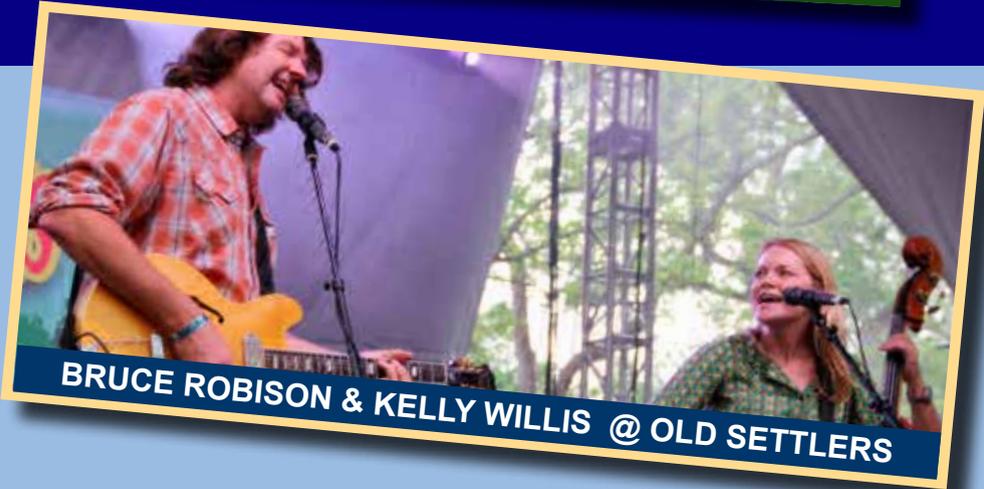
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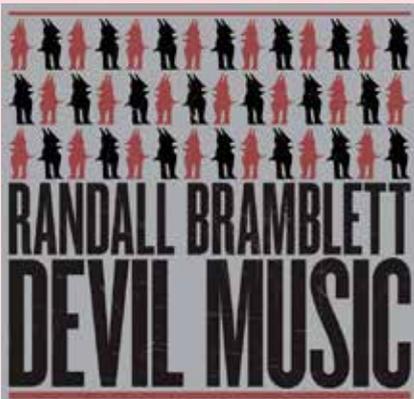


BRUCE ROBISON & KELLY WILLIS @ OLD SETTLERS



MATT & TOM @ MUSIC AT THE MANSION





Devil Music

Randall Bramblett

Produced by Gerry Hansen

New West Records

Review by Greg Forest

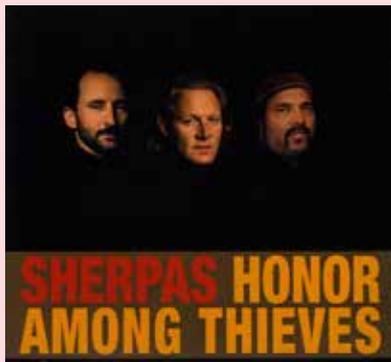
Randall Bramblett started his career as a session player and touring musician in the 1970s contributing his chops to some of the best known artists of our time, putting down tracks with the likes of Gregg Allman and Elvin Bishop. On the road he continued to grow his reputation touring with Gregg Allman, Sea Level, Widespread Panic and Traffic. His mixture

of funk, jazz and blues has colored many a release and show. His latest and fifth CD release is “Devil Music,” a titled culled from an old legend that when Howlin’ Wolf tried to reconnect with his mother, she accused him of “playing the Devil’s music.”

When people like Mark Knopfler of Dire Straights and Derek Trucks are contributing to a CD, it demonstrates the respect given to Bramblett who is indeed a musician’s musician. From the 1st track, “Dead in the Water,” Bramblett imbibes his music with a southern Who Do mojo that pulls the listener into a murky musical world. The title track, “Devil Music,” is up next and is all over the sonic map with a rocking back beat blues.

Great musicianship and journey man songwriting make this release a sonic pearl. If you are a fan of southern rock & blues, this should be in your CD library. Randall Bramblett will be performing at the Kerrville Folk Festival on May Friday May 27th.





Honor Among Thieves **Sherpas**

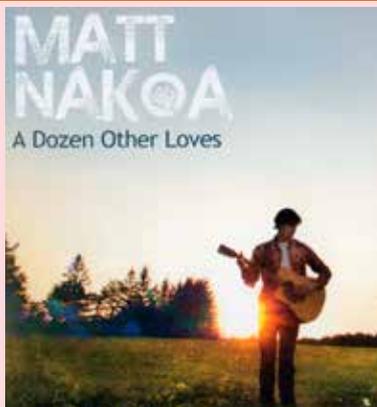
Produced by Tom Prasada Rao

Clear Point Records

Review by Jack Armstrong

What do you get when you combine three of the best voices and songwriters out there and put them together? Sherpas. None of the artists on this release have, "Greatest Hits" CDs out - until now. The songs are culled from the best of the catalog of all three artists.

The song that stands out most for me this election year is "Jesus, Chicks & Politics" which accurately displays our sometimes dysfunctional election system in a humorous manner. The CD also has some other songs you may recognize from their solo careers, my favorites being, "Lefty's Boys," "See Myself in You," and "Can't Get You Out of My System." The title track, "Honor Among Thieves" starts the ball rolling by reminding us that things aren't always what they seem and the things we sometimes strive for aren't really worth the effort. The Sherpa make it through the Hill Country frequently so keep your eyes out for this, better than the sum of its parts, trio.



A Dozen Other Loves

Matt Nakoa

Produced - Matt Nakoa

& Neale Eckstein

Independent Release

Review by Greg Forest

I was talking to some of my favorite songwriter buddies at the Music at the Mansion series before the show and they were all full of praise for a new writer/performer that they were all blown away by - Matt Kaa. Matt made a true believer of me too.

Nakoa's musicianship is first rate - playing both the guitar and piano. His early classical training weaves its way through more contemporary original songs. He will be helping The Hill Country Orchestra and David Amram, renowned musician and conductor, in a full orchestra performance at the close of the Kerrville Folk Festival June 12th.

The songs on the CD are strong with Nakoa penning or co-writing the entire release. The song styles run a wide gamut - from ballads like, "You Are My Moonshine" to the straight ahead in your face pop-rock "If You're Tryin' To Break My Heart." There is a wink and nod to both the spiritual and high tech with the lyrical "Where On Earth is Heaven?"

The studio production features an A-Team of session partners and clear as a bell mixing and mastering.

Visit Matt on the web at mattnakoa.com and don't miss him at the Kerrville Folk Festival.

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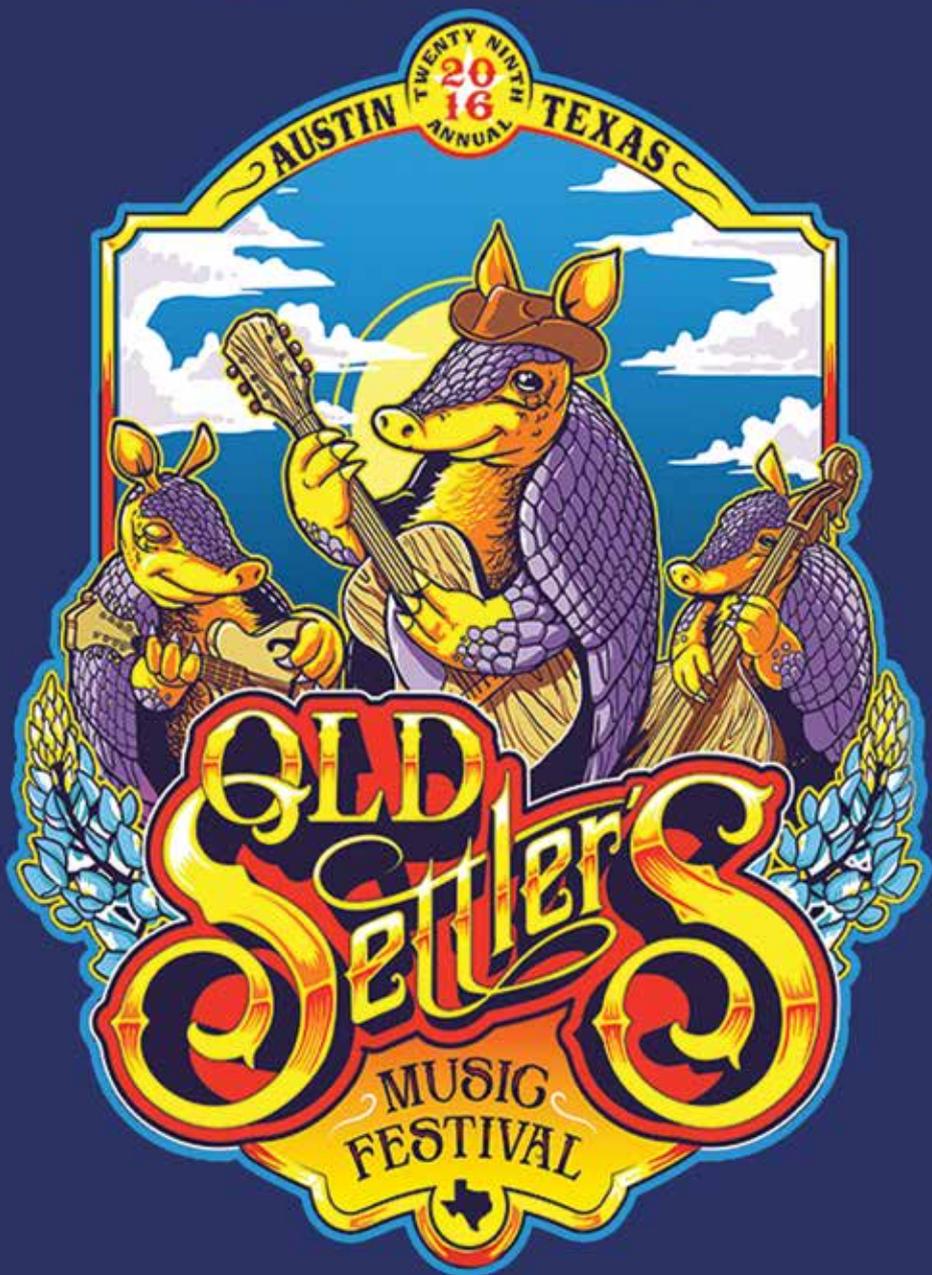


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