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What was old is new

Halstead artist turns old hardware into useful jewelry

Waves of green

Flint Hills provide majestic views of prairie landscape

Tangeman blue

Local couple lives in historic home with indoor pool

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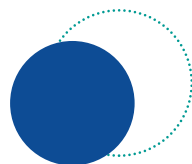
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From the Editor



Wendy Nugent, Editor

I'm really enjoying putting out this magazine, as this issue marks the beginning of the fourth year. My, how time whooshes by.

We have a great collection of articles and stories for you. Newton Now managing editor Adam Strunk went to Al's in Halstead, sampled the food and talked with the owner. He also took a long trip to the Flint Hills with some professional photographers and his girlfriend Sam Anderson, who's one of the nicest young ladies you'd want to meet. Mike Mendez, the new sports editor for Newton Now, did a couple of sports-related articles, one on the Bethel College cheer team that went to nationals and another on Brad Shores, who is charged with starting a scramble band at Bethel.

You'll also get to read about Jerry Davison, a Sedgwick resident who was a member of the 1953 Sedgwick High School basketball team that took the state championship written by Kelley DeGraffenreid.

Then, I had the pleasure of taking photos and writing about Mary Lee-McDonald, who makes beautiful jewelry out of old hardware. I took the magazine's cover photo at The Old Hardware Store in Halstead, but I didn't like how it turned out. It looked more like a high school senior portrait. So, Mary was gracious enough to let me take some more photos for the cover that were a little more creative. I also wrote about Barbara Lee, a woman with an interesting story about how she left corporate America to help others. You'll get to step a little back in time with the article I wrote about Maurice and Connie Tangeman's blue house.

We hope you enjoy this issue!

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ON THE COVER: Mary Lee-McDonald holds some of the jewelry she's made from vintage hardware. Her jewelry is for sale at the Carriage Factory Gallery in Newton. Wendy Nugent/HarveyCountyNOW



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cover story

Article and photos
Wendy Nugent

FROM THE OLD TO THE NEW

Mary Lee-McDonald has a key to the past with a vintage hand-forged metal implement she'd like to incorporate into a piece of jewelry, probably for herself.

This old key is just one of the pieces of antique hardware Lee-McDonald uses in her jewelry creations, and she gets most of her antique hardware from The Old Hardware Store in Halstead.

"Margaret has just been great, setting stuff back for me," Lee-McDonald said about the store's owner, Margaret Kratzinger. "She is so good to me."

The hand-forged key is one of the items Kratzinger set aside for Lee-McDonald, who said there's probably nothing else like it.

"People really like keys," she said.

Sometimes, Lee-McDonald knows what the pieces are, as in the case of the key; other times, she's not sure.

"Like this," Lee-McDonald said, holding up an item. "I have no idea what this is, but it will make a cool pendant."

The Halstead resident creates a variety of jewelry, including necklaces and earrings.

"I always just match earrings to the pieces," she said. "I make all kinds of jewelry. I mean, you can't use everything. Some stuff is heavy and long. Have to be particular."

A large portion of her work is one-of-a-kind, and her prices range from \$25 to \$45 for necklaces and \$8 to \$20 for earrings. She also can make custom pieces, and the only time she duplicates something is when a customer asks her to.

"I really try hard not to duplicate what I do," Lee-McDonald said.

The artist sells her jewelry at The Carriage Factory Art Gallery in Newton, where she's the assistant director, as well as at one craft show a year, which is near the holidays at Trinity Heights United Methodist Church. She also accepts custom orders, such as a painting she was creating for a woman in April.

"I do get requests for custom jewelry," she said.

During the past two years, she's made custom jewelry for the Halstead High School prom, which included a pin for a dress and a wrist corsage incorporating flowers and feathers.

She's also turned costume jewelry into art; she forms the jewelry into the shape of a Christmas tree, then frames the finished piece. She gave two such pieces to her mother and mother-in-law last Christmas.

Lee-McDonald spends a great deal of time on her hardware jewelry pieces, and enjoys working with wire.

"I just love wire," she said. "I've always enjoyed working with wire. I just try to recycle stuff as much as I can. I just like the old with the new. I really do."

Some of that old includes costume jewelry from days gone by that she incorporates into her new creations.

When working with old hardware, Lee-McDonald said she doesn't like to glue things; she spends her time wiring items together, such as a pair of earrings she was wearing.

Lee-McDonald has favorite metals with which she works.

"As far as the metals go, I seem to like the antique



“I need to create. It helps me be a balanced person.”



FACING PAGE: Mary Lee-McDonald looks through one of her necklaces. ABOVE: These are some of the necklaces Mary Lee-McDonald has made.



bronze," she said. "I like the pewter tones."

When making jewelry, she likes earthy tones. However, with her paintings she enjoys using other colors.

"The paintings I do tend to be in oranges, browns, reds, yellows," Lee-McDonald said. "I'm a fall girl."

Yes, in addition to making jewelry, the mother of two sons also paints and does mosaics. For the past five to six years, Lee-McDonald has worked with a mosaic artist

and completed a couple of custom mosaic orders, including one for a Wichita school last year and another at the Halstead library. Another one was for a couple who has a home in Florida and another in Kansas, and they wanted a design that incorporated both states, so Lee-McDonald incorporated subjects, such as the Plains, a mermaid, a pelican and shocks of wheat, in her design.

She's also been an art gallery director in Seattle and had her own gallery in Halstead. It appears she paints likenesses of flowers using a multi-media process. Lee-McDonald also said she donates three to four pieces of her work a year for charities to raise money.

"I'm kind of a jack-of-all-trades and a master of none," Lee-McDonald joked.

She studied art therapy in college and then married Jeff, who was in the Navy. They moved to Seattle and lived there four and a half years. Since Jeff was on a carrier, he was gone most of the time, Lee-McDonald said. She landed a job at an art gallery there and "completely fell in love with the art business."

She started in sales, was promoted to assistant director and then director, running one of the owner's galleries for about two years.

They then moved back to the Halstead area. Lee-McDonald said it was difficult to find work in that profession, so she opened

her own gallery in downtown Halstead, called Tortoise Gallery, in 2009.

That same year, Lee-McDonald started creating art again.

"I was just around this creative energy," she said, adding she had dabbled in creating her own work and people liked it. "I've always been creating, but I never thought about selling my stuff." She said she enjoys promoting and helping other artists.

In 2011, Lee-McDonald closed her shop — not because it wasn't doing well, but for another reason.

"My boys needed me more," she said.

Lee-McDonald said she doesn't have a favorite art medium.

"I don't know if I have a favorite," she said. "I just like to create. I'm pretty much a rule follower, but when it comes to this, there's a great amount of freedom in it. I think I'm very much a process person. I need to create. It helps me be a balanced person."

The summer before opening the gallery, Lee-McDonald ran an art camp for adults and kids, and she said the kids' camp pulled participants from all over.

"It was really great," she said, adding she firmly believes most people enjoy creating something. "I just think there's just this huge sense of accomplishment when you finish something." ➡

ABOVE: Mary Lee-McDonald, right, looks through some old hardware at The Old Hardware Store in Halstead, while owner Margaret Kraisinger talks to her. **INSET:** Mary Lee-McDonald works in her home studio.

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A woman with dark hair, wearing a black headband, glasses, and a white patterned sweater over a leopard print top, is smiling. She is in a warehouse or storage area with metal shelving above her. She is working with several large yellow bags, some of which have purple and red patterns and the letters 'N!' on them. The text 'serving others' is overlaid on the image in a large, pink and white font.

Article and photos
by Wendy Nugent

serving others

Prior to the start of school one year, a woman who lived in low-income housing in Newton had purchased school supplies and clothes for her two children, leaving the items out on the couch. However, those items soon were gone.

"They had a series of robberies over there," Barbara Lee, director of The Salvation Army Harvey County, said about the housing.

Burglars entered the home with her in it, and the woman thought she heard something but didn't think too much of it, Lee said.

"Someone walked into the house and took everything she had bought and took her car," Lee added, as the woman's keys were out. "She came in here just in a panic mode. We were able to give her everything they needed for school."

The woman was so glad The Salvation Army could help her.

"She was very, very grateful we were able to meet that need for her," Lee said. "She's been thanking us ever since then."

Others also are thankful for The Salvation Army, which helped them when they were young, so much so they've paid it forward when they've become adults, Lee said. She said she's heard about a lot of folks doing that.

"They all remember the Salvation Army," she said. "We're here to service and here to help."

The local Salvation Army does a great deal to help those in need, whether it's at Christmas with food boxes or school supplies before school starts.

Lee enjoys being able to help others.

"The fact that I can change a person's life from sitting behind this desk," she said in her office. "It's so rewarding knowing you can make a difference in a person's life, and to me, that's very valuable."

Giving a tour in April of the back room of the Salvation Army, Lee pointed out how low their food supplies were. They don't just give food to needy folks around Christmas—it's a year-round endeavor.

"Look at the shelves now. From Harvest of Love, it's pretty empty," Lee said.

She said they do order food from the Kansas Food Bank, and New Jerusalem Missions in Newton has a place they can store the Army's Christmas boxes.



LEFT: Barbara Lee peeks through shelving at The Salvation Army Harvey County.

ABOVE: Barbara Lee, right, talks to volunteer Melissa Loveall of Newton, left, while driver Mike Galloway looks on.

In addition to shelves where they store non-perishable items, Salvation Army has seven freezers that hold anything from meat to cakes.

"The meat comes from (both) Dillons and Wal-Mart," Lee said.

The Ministerial Alliance finances the food pantry; they get bread from the previously mentioned stores, as well as The Breadbasket in Newton.

Before she became the Salvation Army director in July 2013, Lee worked in corporate America. She was employed at Bank of America for about 10 years as the legal records manager and was based out of San Francisco and Los Angeles. She did a great deal of traveling for that job and had nine locations where she had to set up systems. Lee said, jokingly, in banking, you have your black, blue and gray suits and carry a briefcase.

"That's part of that industry," she said. "You live in meetings. You meet to meet."

Lee eventually got to the point where she was tired of traveling and living out

of a suitcase, although she did enjoy the places to which she went.

"It got old real quick," she said.

That was from 1990 to 1999. In 1999, she left Bank of America, as the bank merged with another company out of the South. She was given the choice of working in San Francisco or South Carolina or taking a package that included stock and severance.

"I just took a package and ran," she said, adding if they hadn't done the merger, she'd probably still be working for them.

In 1999, she and husband Larry Lee moved to Newton, as they had family here.

"Ironically, my husband was looking at the same thing with his company," Lee said.

Lee said she likes the slower pace of Newton compared to big cities in California, adding she doesn't miss the traffic jams.

"When you see people putting on their makeup and reading, you know you're not going anywhere," she said. "I

do not miss that at all."

Trains holding up traffic in Newton is a piece of cake for her.

From 2000 to 2007, Lee was the manager of the Bethel College bookstore and, up until last December, also helped find host families mostly for African-American Bethel students.

After that, she found work at Presbyterian Manor in Newton, where she had a variety of positions, including certified nursing assistant, medical aide and activity director. Lee said she found the work at the Manor convenient and

something she didn't have to take home.

At one point, Lee became a chaplain and has a graduate degree in Christian ministries. She's also certified as a chaplain, is on call with the Newton Medical Center chaplain, Janine Arnold, and is part of the Chaplain Response Team (CRT). Lee also served two years under Arnold until funding ran out.

As part of the CRT, Lee was one of the team members who responded to the large prairie fire near Burrton earlier this year and the shooting at Excel Industries in Hesston. At the Burrton fire station, she helped serve refreshments.

"I think there was 150 of them that came there when we were there," Lee said.

In Hesston, she wore two hats, that of chaplain and as a Salvation Army representative.

If all of this isn't enough to do, Lee and her husband co-pastor All

Nations Church in Newton.


"I love being a chaplain," Lee said. "That's what I say I'm going to do when I retire. I'm going to do chaplain work. I think I've come full circle to God's purpose in my life."

Lee said that 10 years ago, she wouldn't have had any desire to do what she's doing today and that her work with Presbyterian Manor and Bethel College prepared her for her director job.

"I've learned a lot of things," she said. "I can look back now and see how I was prepared for this position—being on campus, working with seniors."

Lee said she couldn't have walked from corporate America and done this job, couldn't have learned compassion and not being self-centered.

Working at the Manor definitely did those things.

"It gave me a greater appreciation of people and their needs," Lee said. "It taught me patience and sensitivity, and it was a great preparation for me coming to the Salvation Army because it taught me every need has a face. I wouldn't have learned compassion if it wasn't for health care from this particular job." 



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Article and photos
by Adam Strunk

AL'S PLACE OFFERS SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE



PREVIOUS PAGE: Al Schmidt stirs a pot of homemade pasta sauce for an upcoming Italian night at his restaurant. LEFT: Al Schmidt stands in front of his restaurant in Halstead. ABOVE: Al Schmidt and an employee work to prep for the day's orders.

Al's place, nestled at 221 Main Street in Halstead, looks like an ordinary greasy spoon from the outside. It's the kind of place you'd assume has a decent burger, an OK chicken-fried steak and perhaps a nice breakfast combo or homemade slice of pie.

Stepping inside doesn't change the assumption much, with booths and a fairly rustic, but clean, interior.

But then a man walks out of the kitchen, and he's dressed in a chef's coat and hat.

He'd look out of place if he wasn't so at ease moving from table to table, talking about the day's specials.

That's the eponymous Al Schmidt, who opened the restaurant in the fall of 2015.

Schmidt has traveled many places and cooked many types of food.

He learned French food in Lexington, he learned Italian in Pennsylvania, he learned upscale spending time as a sous chef at YaYas and Newport Grill in Wichita.

But it was the food of his roots, the chicken-fried steaks, the burgers, the bierocks that he settled on when opening his own restaurant in Halstead. He describes his cuisine as rustic with a twist.

"I love the simplicity of it," he said. "It's all stuff we grew up with for the most part. You don't need saffron and cardamon in every recipe."

Schmidt instead uses methods he learned from his mom at home and his lifetime in the restaurant industry to make an everyday staple pop.

"Even though I have been classically trained, I enjoy the roots of it," he said.

His Big Al's Rueben uses a tangy cooked cabbage, similar to German red cabbage, to spice up the dish he serves on rye bread from Crust and Crumb in Newton baked to his specifications.

His chicken-fried steak uses what's left of gallons of beef broth cooked down to make a cream gravy instead of a simple pepper gravy normally used.

His Big Al Burger comes with fresh ground beef and a bacon mayonnaise and pico de gallo he borrowed from a grilled-cheese recipe he made for himself every day when he worked at YaYa's. It's far from a regular combination, and it works.

Basically, Schmidt explained while the dishes are familiar, the tastes are a little bit different and meant to elevate them. And while a chef, for Schmidt that means swallowing a bit of pride to cater to customer tastes, as well.

"I'm trying to make a fresh quality product accessible to everyone and not saying no when people want me to modify it," he said. "It hurts me a little because I make it to be good, but I'll do it."

Listening to him talk about it, it's clear Schmidt is passionate about his food. Much of that passion he picked up from his mother Nancy who still works in the cafeteria at Goessel.

"She still attests to me standing on a step stool at 5 years old making my own omelet," he said.

His dad did mechanical work, something Schmidt said he was never any good at and it was with his mother that he first learned the basics. She still cooks all of the restaurant's desserts outside of Al's cinnamon roll bread pudding. Al said it's a way to let his mom share his dream to run a restaurant, one she also had.

"She always wanted a little café or diner," he said.

Schmidt said he always wanted to run his own restaurant, but it was a bit of serendipity that allowed him to do so. He was in between jobs, doing some landscaping and happened to do a job for the owners of the building. He said they liked his work and started talking to him.

"They said 'You're not a landscaper?' and I said, 'No I'm actually a chef.'"

{What to get}



By Adam Strunk

This is not going to sound like an objective review here, because I've now eaten at this place six or seven times, and I haven't ever left dissatisfied. To be honest, I didn't plan on writing a story on Al's until I visited there once and kept hearing bits and pieces of Schmidt's story each time I came back to enjoy his food.

I've sampled my way through most of the menu during the last few months.

The Big Al's Burger is the only thing I've ordered twice and is a thick patty of meat which oozes juices that meld with the bacon mayo sauce on it and the tang of the pico de gallo served with it. It sounds like a mess, but all of the flavor is soaked up by a thick ciabatta roll that serves as the bun.

I always try to order a chicken-fried steak at restaurants that advertise as down home, and this one holds up against the competition. The crust was crispy enough that the rich gravy soaked through to the meat, making for a good crunch and mix of

flavors. My piece was relatively thick, and felt like I was eating a steak instead of something pounded down to cut corners.

The bierock is about the size of a plate served with a pork-beef mix, a homemade dough and cabbage and represents one of Schmidt's more traditional takes on the dish outside of its size.

Schmidt said he probably gets the most interest in his rueben, and it's easy to tell why. A crisp piece of toasted rye bread manages to absorb the juices of sandwich and doesn't get soggy as many ruebens do. It's heaped with cheese and corned beef, which is first thrown on the grill topped off with homemade rueben sauce and homemade "kraut." The menu calls it kraut, but it's basically a stewed cabbage. Schmidt told me he throws green apples into the mix to give the kraut some tang. Normally I'm a rueben traditionalist and want a pile of sauerkraut, but Schmidt's take on the dish lightens it up and works.

Finally, if you're able to make it through his food and are somehow still hungry, there

are appetizers and desserts. The onion rings would be your best bet here as Schmidt said over his decades in the industry, he's got making homemade rings down to a science, and I tend to agree. They feature a crispy batter and an onion that doesn't pull out when you bite it. Schmidt said that comes from cutting the onions a day or more before they are cooked.

For those with a sweet tooth, try the cinnamon roll bread pudding and ice cream. It's rich, the ice cream cuts it, but it's probably best shared with another person as the portion is a little large.

Again I'm sorry this doesn't sound like an objective review, but I've been recommending this place to friends and see no reason why I shouldn't include that in the article.

Hours for the restaurant are from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Tuesdays through Thursdays; 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. and from 5 to 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sundays.

The customers said they had a restaurant location they needed someone to fill.

"It's been my dream to get something like this going, but I had quit pursuing it as hard as I had been," Schmidt said. After looking at the location and thinking it over, he decided to go forward with Al's Place.

"It would be stupid not to do it right now," he said.

Schmidt said starting up a restaurant is easier said than done, however, and it's meant long hours and a lot of work to find good staff as he expects good customer service from them. His wife Jaime helps out a bit. His young daughter Anya has become a staple of the restaurant as well, taking after her dad and socializing with customers when she's there.

Schmidt added it also takes a bit of work to build up a customer base.

To do so, he's been having specials, sometimes during the day, or at nights, such as Italian night, Burger night or Mexican night.

His prices are what you would expect to find in a restaurant that serves quality food. His rueben and bierock run \$8, his burgers \$11, his chicken-fried steak \$14.

But the prices are still a dollar or two higher than what some people would expect out of a small local diner.

Schmidt said those prices are based on the costs of quality ingredients and food, as well as providing quality service.

"Being proud of what you make is important," he said. "If I wouldn't serve it to my grandmother, I won't serve it to you."

Schmidt said the easy part of his job, however, is once people try his food, they often become hooked and keep coming back.

"The biggest complaint that I have is they have eaten too much, and they can't eat any more," he said.

And whether the food's fancy or down home, that claim is something for a cook or chef to aspire to. 🍴

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BETHEL CHEERLEADERS RISE WITH GOGUS

As the Bethel College cheerleaders finished eighth at the NAIA National Championships, there was an enormous sense of pride and accomplishment.

The program had come from nearly nothing to be one of the best in the nation. But in many ways, the finish was just the beginning of the story head coach Joseph Gogus and the Threshers are trying to write in Gogus' second year.

"We didn't have one of our best showing at nationals," Gogus said. "I think part of that was that it was everybody's first time. Literally every person on that floor had never been to college nationals before. And I had a lot of freshmen that were on the floor. I had a lot of seniors who had never been to an event that big. I really think that they have come a long way. We are definitely not where I want us to be yet, but we are getting there. As far as establishing their name and their face and their identity, it's definitely starting to improve."

Bethel's cheer competition squad competed at nationals.

When Gogus got to the Bethel College campus, there wasn't much of a cheer squad. With the coaching job being a part-time position, it was hard for the program to get the attention it needed to get off the ground. Gogus was pitched the job as a part-time position as well, but insisted on a full-time job to make it worth the move from Alabama. Upon arrival, it was clear it was going to take full-time work to take Bethel Cheer to a collegiate level.

"When I arrived here two years ago, I came two weeks before school started, and I only had seven girls and that's all I had," Gogus said. "I had seven girls in the program and that was it. It was relatively at the bottom of the conference. We never finished a competition out of last before I came here."

What was roughly a group of cheerleaders with good high school skills improved rapidly, with success growing more success as previously unseen potential started to be reached. As the group got better, Gogus could start to get to the big focus of building the confidence needed for them to become the face of Bethel College.

"A lot of it was really just renewing their self worth," Gogus said. "That they were important and that they should be leading this campus, that they should be the most influential people on this campus. That is one thing that I have tried to convey to them the second they walked in the door. You guys should be the most influential people on campus. Everyone should know you, everyone should see you. They should know your face. You should basically be the face of Bethel College."

As the squad got better, it drew eyes from other athletes around the campus. Football players came over to become full-time cheerleaders. The program started spreading.

But the nerves leading up to the first competition under Gogus were

Article by
Mike Mendez





LEFT: Bethel College cheer coach Joseph Gogus, bottom, lifts cheerleader Erin Doerksen of Newton in March during practice. Photo by Wendy Nugent/Harvey County Now **ABOVE:** Bethel College cheerleaders perform during a fall 2015 football game. **RIGHT:** Sondra Buller cheers during a football game. Buller was part of the competition team. Photos by Vada Snider/Special to Harvey County Now



there with bad experiences branded into their memories.

"They just didn't know if it was worth it because their experience prior to that had been, that we put in this time, and then we go and we just get last and we are just kind of a joke because we are not doing what everybody else was doing," Gogus said. "And we went to the first competition, and we were not really ready yet. So I just put them in a comfortable position. We didn't even do our real routine. We did what they were comfortable with. And we did it on their own time and their own pace."

And even with a simplified version of the routine, the hard work paid off with a second-place finish. It bred more hard work.

With the program blasting off from the ground floor in the first year, Gogus knew the team could do more, even if they couldn't see it yet.

"Everybody that I sat down that I talked to this year, we did our end-of-the-year interviews; what I seemed to get back was

they really didn't quite believe me when I told them you guys are going to be good enough to go to nationals this year," Gogus said.

But from a cellar dweller to an eighth-place finish at nationals, the program still is taking off. As the skills and routines have gone from a high school level to a collegiate level, more and more high schools are coming in for camps as they want to learn what it takes. The notoriety Bethel has earned brings more eyes and interest to the program, as a perennial last-place squad transforms into the leader its coach wants it to be.

However, eighth place with a nervous routine in the first-ever trip to nationals leaves more to work toward.

"I'll never be complacent with what you've done," Gogus said. "I'll be happy with what you've done. But I will always find a way to improve it. I want you to realize there is a point where I'm proud of you, but we can get better and there's more that we can do. No matter what you do and how well you do, even if you finish first, you can still be better." [e](#)

Finally, we reached the 15-foot limestone monument, Teter Rock. Tethering cameras to our necks, we climbed out of the jeep and down the crown of the hill to look upon the panorama below us. The emerald waves of hills undulated for miles before touching the edge of the blue, cotton-balled sky. The descending sun painted shadows of contrast upon the valleys and rocks.

Through zoomed-in camera lenses, we could see a herd of mustangs off in the distance.

But against such a backdrop, a lens cannot zoom far enough. Out there on the prairie, removed from houses, people, cities, development, you got the feeling that just beyond my focus, loom the great buffalo herds, the American Indians which followed them or the lone cowboy whose grave was marked with a square rock in the valley below.

That was the true timelessness of what we looked upon. It inspired a sense of awe.

"This is the Serengeti," said Jim Griggs, one of our guides for the trip. "It's crazy you don't see that until going to Africa, but it's what the Flint hills were 400 years ago."

The expedition deep into the heart of the Flint Hills began with a newspaper column of all things.

I had written in our newspaper Newton Now, about an ill-fated shortcut trying to get home from Lawrence, and how I ended up on a narrow muddy path crossing the prairie.

A week later, Duane Graham of Hesston emailed me, asking just how I got lost out there. He said as an avid photographer, he knew the hills well and launched into a long account of all of the offbeat and wonderful features in the hills.

At the end of the email was an offer: Anytime you want a tour, give me a call.

We loaded up in Graham's jeep on a Saturday afternoon, the girlfriend and I with a cooler of Gillespie Sandwiches and no idea of what we were in for.

A photographer friend of Graham's by the name of Jim Griggs drove. The two had been friends for 15 years, meeting in a photography club.

As we drove east on U.S. Highway 50, the two got into storytelling. Casual at first, just two buddies, with a shared hobby, talking shop.

The talk turned to the times in the Flint Hills, the times in South America, the times in Tanzania.

The time where a lion entered their camp or where cheetahs played on the back of their jeep. The time Griggs caught that photo of a jaguar in Peru.

They eventually asked where my camera equipment is. I tell the men I figured any shots they get will be better than mine and figured they might send a few for a story.

Graham looked at me, and I asked if that was a rude request and he said, "Of course not."

They had plenty of extra equipment we could borrow.

It wasn't until after the trip I realized how that request for

A stone monument Teter Rock stands sentinel over the prairie directly east of Newton and Cassody. The location originally had a pile of rocks to serve as a landmark to early homesteaders. As nearby Teterville grew during a small oil boom in the area, the rocks were removed to be used in buildings. In 1954 according to Kansastravel.org, the current monument was constructed at the point. It is visible many miles away.

The gr

Article and photos
by Adam Strunk





reen hills of Kansas

travel





free photos would have been in bad taste if the two men weren't as friendly and generous as they were. Both are professional photographers. Both get paid good money for their work. People pay to have Griggs teach them about photography and to do so in places like Africa or South America or Wyoming. And they pay good money to do so.

But in the car, they were all just excited to get out there. And both of these photographers who had traveled far and wide were visibly excited about going to a stretch of ground in Kansas.

"I don't know if we'll get to Teter Rock," Graham said mentioning the recent rains. Griggs said he sure hoped so.

Humans have lived in the Flint Hills for more than 10,000 years.

Prior and during European settlement, Wichita, Kansa, Osage and Pawnee all called the area home.

It was U.S. explorer Zebulon Pike who gave the hills their name in 1806 noting his crossing of the formation as "very ruff flint hills," making his way south of Emporia, traveling just south of what became Cottonwood Falls before following the Cottonwood River and heading west toward Colorado.

"These vast plains of the western hemisphere may become in time equally celebrated as the sandy deserts of Africa," he wrote of his trip. Stephen Long, the leader of the next federal expedition through Kansas, took the idea a bit further, labeling the tall grass plains the "Great American Desert."

Wood was scarce in the area, and early cartographers labeled it unfit for civilized cultivation due to either a reprieved scarcity of arable land or lack of water and resources.

While that assumption proved vastly wrong for areas west of the hills, the stoney chert-covered ground of the area did prevent any major farming activity. Today the Flint Hills, which stretch from the Oklahoma to the Nebraska borders, are one of the largest tall-grass prairies existing in the world, though they represent less than 4 percent of the prairie's original range.

Following the Civil War, to spur settlement in the American Interior and to protect the creation of railroads, the American government drove off native peoples. With the help of hunters selling robes and tongues, the government facilitated a mass killing of the millions of bison that lived throughout the Great Plains as well as the Flint Hills.

The vacuum made ranching and settlement of the hills easier for Europeans. The ground might have been rocky, but the grasses were fertile, and the Flint Hills became some of the best cattle-grazing land in the country, a title the hills still have today.

Great cattle drives began in Texas and followed the Chisholm trail through Harvey County to the Hills, where cows were fattened up and shipped to hungry markets back east.

Huge ranches sprung up across the land, and cowboys made the area home. That culture and way of life exists to this day in the work of existing ranchers and at area rodeos, such as the Strong City rodeo.

With the penetration of rail into the Flint Hills, the drives lessened, longhorns transitioned to more contemporary cattle breeds, and eventually many of the trains went the way of the cattle drives and were changed out for trucks.

Those transitions decreed the need for workers and merchants, and the cow towns and rail towns diminished. Chase County started the 20th century with 8,200 people and today has a population of 2,700.

FACING PAGE, TOP: The Cottonwood River flows against the Drinkwater and Schriver Mill in Cedar Point. The Mill has stood since the 1870s but now is in danger of collapsing into the river as part of the west wall has begun to give way. **ABOVE:** Cottonwood Falls Main Street serves travelers and locals. Cottonwood Falls and nearby Strong City provide a travel stop in the Flint Hills, and a place to shop and grab a bite to eat. **FACING PAGE, LEFT:** An old one-room schoolhouse for District 34 in Marion County remains after construction in 1896. One-room schoolhouses once dotted the countryside and provided rural children a place for education they could ride or walk to. Photo by Sam Anderson



ABOVE: Jim Griggs entertains Duane Graham and Samantha Anderson with a story as the group takes a break on Diamond Springs Bridge. Both men served as a repository of knowledge from Flint Hills trivia to photography tips.

The list of empty or near-empty towns in the hills increases—Neosho Falls, Elmdale, Cedar Point, Clements, Diamond Springs, Teterville. All the locations stand testament to history past, empty quiet islands in a sea of living green.

Into this landscape of empty towns, forgotten places, histories past, Griggs and Graham injected us.

We made our first stop at a one-room schoolhouse for Rural District 34 in Marion County along U.S. Highway 50. Such schoolhouses once were commonplace in the area distanced from each other to enable rural children to at least walk or ride to school. Another such schoolhouse remains preserved in the Tall Grass Prairie National Preserve near Strong City.

The next stop came at Cedar Point to visit the Drinkwater and Schriver Mill built in 1868 upon the banks of the Cottonwood River.

The building was used to mill corn and wheat, and then eventually grains into cattle feed all the way up until the 1960s, according to the Drinkwater and Schriver Mill Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to saving the mill.

In 2007, it was listed to the national historic registry, but time has not been kind to the building.

Griggs and Graham pointed out the various cracks on the building snaking up the walls. They make for good photographs but bad news for the building. Repeated flooding has caused the west wall of the old mill to fall, and one day, if not repaired, the land and river will reclaim it. In 2015, the Drinkwater and Schriver Mill Inc. organization formed to save it. The website said it will take \$2.5 million to stabilize the building and eventually turn it into a museum, if that would ever happen.

Next we stopped at the Diamond Springs Bridge in Morris County, one of the stone arch bridges that exist in the area. It isn't quite as large as the Clements Stone Bridge,

just off Highway 50 in Chase County near Clements.

Many of the stone bridges are closed, but they still provide an impressive look at engineering on the Plains.

To build a stone arch bridge, limestone was quarried, the river was dammed and a mound of earth built to support the arches as they were constructed. With the capstone in place and construction complete, the earth was removed, creating a long-lasting structurally sound crossing. It's no small note that many of the bridges outlasted the towns they were constructed to connect.

After spending a good amount of time at the bridge, Graham suggested we make our way to the Tall Grass Prairie Preserve, an 11,000-acre preserve north of Strong City managed cooperatively by the National Park Service and Nature Conservancy.

As we drove, he told the story of how Griggs had worked and volunteered his time and photos to lobby congress to turn the area into a national preserve.

Griggs downplayed his role, but upon reaching the park, sure enough his name appeared under displayed pictures.

The park's worth an article and a day's visit in itself, which I had done before. Trails snake all the way back through the preserve, where Kansas and the Flint Hills exist in their natural state. Buffalo herds still roam the 20-year-old preserve.

Hungry from our travels, we stopped at Cottonwood Falls for a slice of pie and some coffee at the Keller Feed and Wine Company.

The coffee was good and the chocolate pie delicious at the little shop situated on Main Street overlooked by the iconic Chase County Court House.

Cottonwood Falls and Strong City together sport a strong collection of eateries driven by the tourism in the area, such as Grand Central Hotel and Grill also in Cottonwood, and the rustic chic Ad Astra in Strong City.

After our refreshment, we finally attempted to make the trip to Teter Rock, which is 40 or

so miles directly east of Newton. You can get there if you keep driving east on First Street and take a right at a sign that says Tetersville.

We drove miles upon miles of snaking road, passing over numerous cattle guards, low-water crossings. Herds of cows noticed us driving and walked up to or across the road to investigate. They probably assumed we'd feed them, since it's unlikely they see many vehicles that way.

We finally neared our destination, and the last road snaked past a few concrete foundations, all that was left of an oil boom town, Tetersville, which had once held 4,000 people.

We now were the only souls on the hill as we left our cars and walked toward the stone monument that marked the spot of the spectacular view.

Griggs and Graham both said the location was their favorite in the hills.


Looking out over the vista, Graham told the story of the cowboy who was buried a little ways down, who had found himself alone on the prairie and died. They found him like he had just laid down, Graham said.

The cowboy had a stone placed at the spot. And his story faded away with the stories of the American Indians, the Buffalo, the Ranchers, the various people who have called the area home buried beneath the verdant grass. Even the grass itself has to die and burn before it sprouts forth again.

It was a thought I had that made me feel small, finite and fragile.

The hills will remain long after the world claims us all.

Looking upon the green hills of Kansas, in awe of what I saw, the thought came as a warm reassurance. My heart was glad.

Editor's note: Special thanks to Jim Griggs and Duane Graham for volunteering their time, talent and equipment to chronicle the Flint Hills. It was truly generous. 



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Article and photos
by Wendy Nugent



Tangeman Blue

There's a shade of paint anyone can purchase at Graber's Ace Hardware in Newton called Tangeman Blue.

"Actually, the blue, I created," said Maurice Tangeman, who lives in a 3,500-square-foot house with wife Connie.

The blue color looks gray when it's cloudy outside and blue when sunny, he said.

The Tangemans have had a cleaning business for 40 years, and they also have rentals in the area, some of which Maurice paints that Tangeman Blue, including their own house.

"I do it because it saves on money and time," Maurice said.

The Tangemans' home, which comes complete with an indoor swimming pool, was constructed in 1906 by Rudolph Goerz, whose father built Goerz House at Bethel College in North Newton.

"He was Warkentin's foreman," Maurice said. The Tangemans are the fourth owners of the home, which is on the southeast part of Newton. They moved in on Halloween 1981.

"When we bought it we got it for an extremely good price," Connie said.

Maurice said he believes the home was patterned after a Sears house.

"I actually found a magazine in the rafters—old historical," he said, adding that back in the day, the maid lived upstairs in the attic.

In all the years they've lived there, the Tangemans haven't changed anything structurally to the house except taking windows out of the sunporch to walk into the poolroom, which was constructed when their children were young.

The first floor has a living room, dining room, kitchen, sunporch and a half bath, as well as an entranceway. On the second floor are four bedrooms, a sunporch, full bath and a toilet in a closet. Each bedroom, except the master, also has a sink.

Their third floor houses a workout room and two storerooms.

One historical feature of house is Bethel Deaconess Hospital nurses used to rent bedrooms there, and a tile fireplace in the dining room now is gas.

Plans include remodeling the kitchen and putting in hardwood. At one point, the Tangemans had insulated curtains put in, as well as 3.5 tons of insulation when they moved in.

.....
FAR LEFT: Connie and Maurice Tangeman of Newton stand on a landing between the second and third floors of their 3,500-square-foot home. **LEFT CENTER:** This is one of the home's bedrooms on the second floor. **LEFT:** This tile in a second-floor bathroom is original to the house.



TOP: Maurice and Connie Tangeman have an indoor swimming pool. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Tile on the fireplace in the dining room. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** All the second-floor bedrooms have a sink, like this one, except the master bedroom.



“We insulated because the bills were so high,” Connie said.

The couple moved into this large blue house because they needed more space. At the time, Connie’s mother lived with them as did three children, and all were in a three-bedroom house.

“We needed something bigger, and we thought it was a good price,” Connie said.

“The kids got in here, and they’d run around and drive us crazy,” Maurice added.

Another feature of the home is an attic fan that sucks the heat out of the house during the summer.

They also have a variety of plants in their poolroom, including a pineapple tree and fig tree. Connie said Maurice likes to plant “all this stuff” because they can keep them in the poolroom all year long.

“I’ve grown three pineapples now,” Maurice said. [e](#)

Scramble Band Time

Article by Mike Mendez



Living in Central Kansas League country during the last few years, making the trip to Haven for a game against the Wildcats provides a unique experience. When halftime rolls around, a group of students powerful in numbers, sound and attitude put on an unforgettable show rocking both household items, including trash cans, and eardrums in a percussion show as the Trash Cats.

It is as unforgettable as the game on the court and brings the Haven crowd to a boil.

And in the 2016-17 school year, Bethel College is hoping to bring the same performance energy hiring Haven band director Brad Shores to build a scramble band from the ground up to perform at athletic events.

"I think that it can change the atmosphere of the college," Shores said. "I really do believe that, because when you go to Haven now, people always think of the trash cans or they think of the steel drum band that we have. And it just changed the culture at Haven

because, I have been there 16 years and I have seen all the groups that have been successful have affected all other groups that have been successful. Success breeds success. And so when our (scramble) band starts getting pumped up and doing well, that helps our football team, which helps our concert band season because kids are up for everything. They expect to be successful."

Athletics at Bethel are starting to change. In 2015, the football team had its best season in six years in the Threshers' first year under

Brad Shores, right, directs the Haven High School pep band during Senior Night in February during a Bethel College home basketball game. Photo by Vada Snider/Special to Harvey County Now

head coach Morris Lolar. The men's basketball team went from an 0-27 season two years ago to a 12-win season. A rededication to cheerleading had a once invisible program taking eighth place at nationals.

With a high ceiling for success, Bethel President Perry White, who has a background in choral music, wanted to have live music at games. And as a Mennonite college, Bethel needed an alternative to the paramilitary institution of a marching band. The answer came in the form of a scramble band.

While not as rigidly structured as a marching band, scramble bands also perform choreographed routines providing entertainment out on the field. The wide-open format of a program that is being built from the ground up is exciting for Shores, whose creativity helped make a small-town group of kids in Haven a must-see event.

"Alternate instruments are definitely a part of it," Shores said. "Fun is a big part of it. I would say you are going to see alternate instruments like bass guitars, guitars, keyboards, different kinds of pep songs, crowd interaction. Things like that are all going to be a part of it."

Moving from high school to college, Shores is looking for more leadership out of the students, including input into the direction the band will go. And as a brand-new program, they all will have a truly blank canvas with which to work.

"One of the differences with this and high school is you can come to the students more and say, 'What do you guys think?'" Shores said. "Whereas high school, you can give them a little bit, but you still have to be the molder. Here you can kind of say, 'What do you guys think about this? This is what I have, what do you think?' and we can



Brad Shores is tasked with creating a scramble band at Bethel College. Here, he's standing in Bethel College's Luyken Fine Arts Center in North Newton.

Photo by Mike Mendez/Harvey County Now

kind of plan together and because there is nothing to follow, whatever we do will be the tradition. I found at Haven, the more ownership I gave them, within certain parameters, like the Trash Cats, that grew from seven kids to 42 because kids are having fun."

When it comes to drawing people to the campus for athletic events, fun is the name of the game. As the teams continue to improve, they will need an atmosphere in North Newton to grow into a home field advantage in which the Threshers can take pride. And live bands are a big part of what separates the college athletic experience with its professional counterpart. Beginning with the pulse of a drum line to provide a heartbeat that synchronizes a stadium or arena full of people into a singular living unit and going through the roar of


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the brass and the tension and suspense of the woodwinds, live bands create tangible excitement taped music cannot.

In bringing crowds together to cheer for teams who are working together for the common goal of winning, campuses become galvanized. It is the goal for the band to do its part to bring that excitement and school pride to the campus.

"Everywhere where there is an event that is appropriate for us, we need to be at," Shores said. "Because, when you think of Aggieville, you think of the band always being there. I want our group, whatever group it is, we have to have some sort of representation there so that they start to associate us with the college. We want to build excitement we hope will transition into success for whatever group, your group, our group, whatever. We are all on the same team." 

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A dedicated fan

In 1953, a group of young men from Sedgwick accomplished what no team has done before or since, as they won a team Kansas State Championship. Even better, they defeated their rival, Halstead, in the final game.

One of the senior leaders of that team continues to be an active member of the Sedgwick community. If there is a home basketball game at Sedgwick High School, most likely, Jerry Davison will be in the stands. More than 60 years after he helped lead the Cardinals to a state championship, Davison is still there cheering on his hometown team.

Davison started playing basketball as a youngster for R.L. Wright, who was the Sedgwick Junior High coach. At one time, Wright's teams won more than 100 games without a loss. Wright taught fundamentals.

"If you made a mistake in practice, it was a 10-minute lecture," Davison said. "You didn't want to make the same mistake again."

The championship in 1953 was the final rung on a ladder Davison had been climbing throughout his junior high and high school career. In 1951 when Davison was just a sophomore, the Cardinals lost to Carbondale in the state championship game by one point, a fact that still aggravates Davison.

"We should have won, no question about it," he said. "If we'd have played them 10 times, we'd have won eight of those games."

These words come from a quiet man who is about as far from boastful as it is possible to be.

The following year, Sedgwick once again had a great team but fell just short of making the state tournament. Sedgwick beat Halstead in the finals of the district tournament, and at that time, the top two teams went on



ABOVE: Jerry Davison looks over scrapbooks full of clippings from his high school playing days. **RIGHT:** 1953 basketball team taken during the class's 50-year class reunion. Coach Gerald Jolley is on the far right. Courtesy photo



to play in the regional. Halstead and Sedgwick were in separate regionals. Sedgwick lost the Regional Final to Oxford in overtime, and Halstead moved on and won the State Tournament.

"It was a bummer," Davison said.

Davison, like many great leaders, does not like to talk about himself. Instead, like many standout point guards, he is all about the team. Davison said that at one point during his senior year, their coach, Gerald Jolley, pulled him aside and said, "I think you need to shoot more." Davison was not so sure. "I said, 'Coach, we've got pretty good teamwork; we've got good chemistry,'" and coach Jolley said, "Maybe you're right."

Davison was a great shooter, but he was far from the team's only scoring threat. Jack Kater and Jerry's brother, Charlie Davison, were fantastic shooters.

"Jack and Charlie—those two guys were gunners—they could score," Davison said. He believes they each averaged around 16 to 17 points per game, and all three were named to the 1953 State All Tournament Team.

Wedgwick and Halstead were huge rivals in those days. Just a few points decided most of their games. In 1952, Halstead won state, but Sedgwick had beat them in two out of the three games they played. In 1953, Sedgwick would lose the first game of the season to Halstead but went on to beat them the next three times they met, including the game that really counted. That last victory was in the state championship game, which Sedgwick won 45-44. After that loss, Halstead fired their coach despite the fact they had won state the year before and made it all the way to the championship game. The rivalry between the two schools was that big of a deal.

Davison is proud of what he and his teammates

were able to accomplish. His wife, Virginia, who also went to Sedgwick High School, has kept scrapbooks from Jerry's basketball days. Looking through the old press clippings and pictures brings back lots of memories. Davison remembers many moments from those days in great detail.

"I remember a lot of things," he said with a laugh.

He recalled a game during the 1951 state tournament when they played the team from Johnson that was 26-0. They had a 6'8" center, but Sedgwick had Paul Henry who, despite being just 6 feet tall, had what today is known as hops.

"Henry could jump out of the gym, and he got the tip from the big guy" as soon as the ball was thrown up.

Those Sedgwick teams were not just great at offense; they put almost constant pressure on their opponents.

"We pressed a lot," Davison said.

Davison takes exception to folks who discredit the way basketball was played back then. He's heard people downplay their accomplishments by saying "you played that slow ball. But we didn't, we pressed 70 percent of the time." They also were solid on the fundamentals and made free throws.

"I've always said if you make free throws and don't turn the ball over, you're going to win ball games," Davison said.

Additionally, these were the days before a 3-point line, and Sedgwick had some of the best shooters around.

"If we'd have had the 3-point line, we'd have demolished teams," Davison said.

Davison and his wife have lived full lives since graduating from SHS. They have raised three

children and enjoyed watching their children and grandchildren grow up, play sports and move on to become productive adults. Their youngest grandchild recently graduated from college.

Davison has kept in touch with Coach Gerald Jolley through the years. Jolley is in his 90s and was still coaching junior basketball just a few years ago. Davison says Jolley had helpers to demonstrate skills, but he was right there on the sidelines sharing his knowledge with the next generation. In 2003, the class of 1953 had its 50th reunion with seven members of the championship team in attendance. Jolley also came back for the reunion.

Davison loved playing basketball and had a scholarship offer to play for Butler County Community College, but after a week away from home at school, he knew his place was at home.

"I said to myself, 'My folks can't afford this.'"

He headed home to Sedgwick where he went to work for Bill Grattan. He would eventually land a job with Southwestern Bell where he worked for more than 40 years. He played a bit of "town team" basketball after high school. He still loves the game, and watching young people play is a big part of his life.

Davison's ties to Sedgwick High School run deep. His son Paul has worked for the district for many years, and his daughter-in-law Diane Davison, a long time Sedgwick educator, took over the role of USD 439's athletic director last summer. She is quick to point out the banner hanging in the SHS gymnasium honoring the 1953 team and "the most awesome man I know."

Come next winter, chances are Davison will be right there in the south bleachers watching the Cardinals battle.

"I go to a lot of games. I like to see the young kids play, and I just like basketball. Plus it gives me something to do," Davison said with a smile. 🙋

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Special Events:

June 28: "Don't Quit" Author Talk 1 pm
June 10, July 8: Otaku Anime Club, 4-5:30

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FOR ADULTS ...

June 8: Newton Sports History, 7 pm
June 13: Salted Creamery Ice Cream, 1 pm
June 21: Murder & Mayhem, 7 pm
June 28: Don't Quit, Use Grit, 1 pm
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