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WINTER 2022

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Creation & Evolution
of *upbeat* REPORTER

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INSIDE

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HIGHS&LOWS: *The Legacy of an Artist*

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 Leah Fort
 Frances Frost

Nola Hopkins
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 Tammi Scoggin
 Carol Simpson

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UPBEAT REPORTER

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Emmanuel God with us

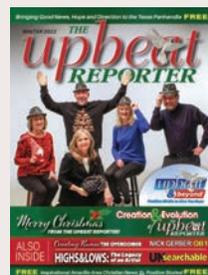
Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

Matthew 1:23



Publisher: Mary Kay Kuhrts
 Editor: Janet Byars
 Creative Director: Cathleen Tyson-Day
 Pastoral Advisor: Dr. Sheldon DeVries

Magazine layout design by
 Cathleen Tyson-Day
 Panhandle Presort Services
 Amarillo TX



ON OUR COVER

Photo courtesy:
D. Maldonado at
Sharpened Iron Studios



Creation & Evolution

THE upbeat REPORTER

By Dr. Sheldon DeVries, Pastoral Advisor



In November 1999, the first print went out..... the first newsprinted Upbeat Reporter.

Some of the early contributors included David Terry, Jimmy Evans, and Mike Haynes - to name a few. Looking at it now, the graphics look a little dated; written in fonts not seen since the early 2000's, and ads from businesses, some still around and some not. It is a time capsule of the past and shows a little insight into what the Texas Panhandle was like just 20 years ago. But the content - well that hasn't changed that much. The vision of the Upbeat Reporter was simple - to bring "Good News, Hope and Direction to the Texas Panhandle." That tag line has been printed on every single issue and is as true today as it ever was. It is a wonderful reminder that although some things change, some things stay the same. The core of who we are doesn't really change, it just evolves and perhaps grows.

I was quite amused when seeing that in this first edition, Amarillo was celebrating a 'brand-new' radio station called K-Love, which was launched shortly after this first ever issue. How funny! Steven Curtis Chapman was about to have a concert at the Civic Center, and you could "double your minutes" with a new Nokia Cell Phone, including caller ID and a new function of text messaging, all for \$29.95. By the way, that came with 140 anytime minutes.

But the Upbeat Reporter is still here. A few hiccups along the way, but still here. Still spreading good



news, hope and direction. In 1988, Mary Kay had the idea for a Christian news magazine. She initially sold newsprint advertising for the Canyon Newspaper for Brad Tooley (Now owner of Choice Media). By 1999, the Upbeat Reporter was launched. At first it was printed every month, and quickly gained traction as an essential read for many in the area. Stories ranged from information about upcoming events, inspirational stories, as well as marriage building tools and commentaries on local businesses. From non-profits, ministries, influential people, community change, or personal testimony and victories, the Upbeat had them all.

From 2003 to 2019, the Upbeat Reporter found itself on hiatus. Putting together a periodical printing is an enormous task and technology was not what it is today. Sometimes we forget how far our world has come and when I chatted with Mary Kay about these early editions, she shared how they would lay out by hand all the articles and physically transport the flats to the printing press, which in and of itself is quite an undertaking. As printing changed, and costs increased, the quality was not going to be compromised. It began as a ministry and because of family demands that Mary Kay encountered, the Upbeat Reporter was halted, with the intention of letting it be done - or preferably, passed to another who could take up the mantle. But no one did long term.

In 2019, Mary Kay decided to give one last push. She had kept the original printed editions, which inspired her to start again. Her mission was for something positive to come forth. She had since retired and no longer had the same family commitments. For the



past 3 years, the resurgence of the Upbeat Reporter, from newsprint to glossy magazine has become a reality. This was always the goal. What was created in 1999 evolved into what it is today in 2022.

The goals were once again simple - Bringing good news, hope and direction to the Texas Panhandle. Again, this is at the heart of the Upbeat. In fact, there is no Upbeat Reporter without this. As a great movie quotes: "Hope is a good thing, maybe the best of things, and no good thing ever dies." In a letter to Red, from the movie Shawshank Redemption, Andy shares with his friend not to give up. To keep going, to travel a little farther. This story is the same for The Upbeat Reporter. It is occasionally a struggle to keep it going, but somehow every issue makes its way onto the newsstands and into the world that needs to hear a good word.

Mary Kay shares a moment she had earlier in 2022, and it was a simple affirmation, saying:

Keep Going!

So where will the Upbeat Reporter be in 23 more years? Who knows? We are growing and we are changing. Changing is growing, and I personally wonder what space-age editions we will have in 2045. Maybe we will read them on our Phaser Phones or have them read to us by our personal android home humanoids. Ok, maybe that is too far - but who knows? Also, something exciting is coming. I'm not sure if you have noticed, but things cost a lot more than they did 1 or 3 years ago, with the cost of printing paper becoming prohibitively expensive. A new online version called Upbeat & Beyond is about to launch. **Upbeat & Beyond**, an upcoming TV and online talk show, will include Interviews with community leaders, nonprofit organizations and special unknowns who change the world.

We are fortunate to live in a community that is full of kind, giving people with great ideas and big hearts. The new show will include hosts Mary Kay Kuhrts and Dean Yates, produced by Brant Fricker. The magazine itself will continue quarterly. A digital version of the magazine is the newest development and will connect the magazine to more readers.

So once again, the Upbeat Reporter is evolving into its next chapter. It continues to offer the same news



as it always has, but in new and inventive ways. Good news should be free; after all the best news is. Most people don't realize that each copy costs \$1.25 to print and distribute, but the hope is that the value is more than the cost. It takes effort to share good news - not always cost. But good news should dare us to dream, and our dreams should be outlandish and a little far-fetched - that is why they are dreams...

This year's Winter issue celebrates those who have helped the magazine get to where it is today and shares plans for the future. The world needs more positive stories, and the Upbeat writers have a gift in bringing them to life.

Thanks for sharing in the journey of The Upbeat Reporter thus far - we look forward to seeing you in the next issue and beyond!

Mary Kay Kuhrts prayed for God's guidance to put those people in place to lead her in the next level of the journey for The Upbeat Reporter and Upbeat & Beyond.

It's exciting to see God's hand in the development of the website, the magazine and our newest endeavor, Upbeat & Beyond.

Sheldon was offered a new opportunity in his ministry which unfortunately takes him away from Amarillo. Although he will not be a part of the team in 2023, Sheldon was a huge part of the growth and mission of the magazine for many years. His prayers and leadership have been a valuable asset. We will continue to ask for God's guidance, and pray for Sheldon as he is called to lead others.

The Upbeat Team:
Mary Kay Kuhrts
Dean Yates
Cathleen Tyson-Day
Brant Fricker
Janet Byars

Dr. Sheldon DeVries



Sheldon grew up in Cape Town, South Africa and moved to the USA in the late 1990's. He grew up in a Christian home with parents who served actively in their local church.

He began his pursuit of ministry in 1997, and after attending Southern Africa Bible College, and receiving a Diploma in Theology, he moved to Rochester Michigan to continue his studies. He received a Bachelor of Religious Education in 2001. Following his stay in Michigan he moved to Abilene, Texas where he completed a Master of Divinity Degree in 2004, followed by a Doctor of Ministry Degree in 2010, both from Abilene Christian University.

UNsearchable

Humanity makes its feeble attempt to interpret Your mysterious ways. Filling our minds with theological rationales, we aim to give You praise.

We categorize each doctrine into a well-thought group with a heading. With scholarly words we speak, unaware of the holy ground we are treading.

With self-focused hearts, we design an image, making You to be like man, Forgetting that we were created from humble dust, as part of Your divine plan.

Though limited in understanding, we attempt to explain Your vast wonders. Our changing theories over the centuries only prove our continual blunders.

We unceasingly strive in each generation to see You with a clearer vision. We search Your Word diligently, hoping to describe You with more precision.

Yet, language cannot define You, for You exist beyond what can be known. Unlike frail beings dependent on You for breath, You stand completely alone.

Unsearchable and even impossible are Your ways for finite man to understand. It seems inconceivable for us to approach You, but You offer a nail-pierced hand.

The greatest display of Your grace to man, You made known on a wooden cross. Willingly, You sent Your holy Son, suffering what seemed an unfathomable loss.

Three days later, the grave opened wide as Jesus arose, conquering death and sin. Calling forth to Himself those who follow by faith, a new life they will begin.

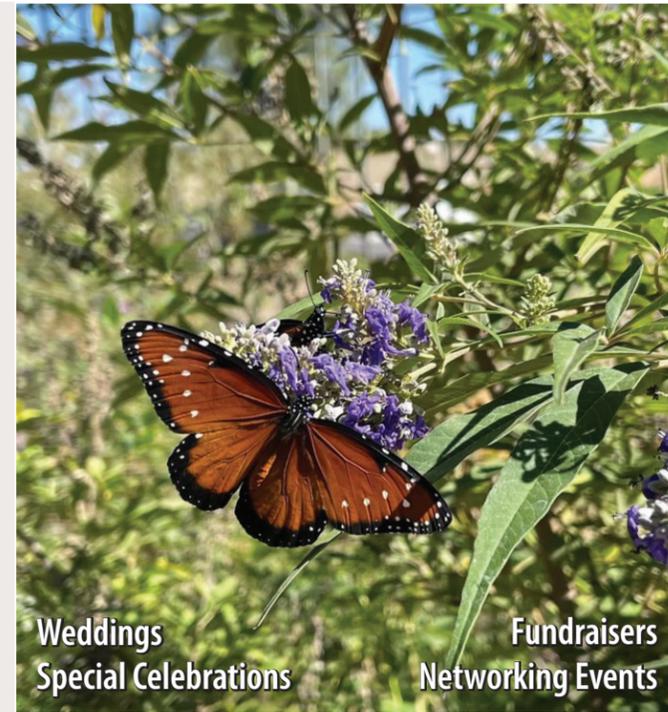
So, while vast galaxies may yet be found that unveil the greatness of Your might, Your most wondrous revelation appeared in Jesus Christ, shining His pure Light.

by Tammy Scoggin

Tammi Scoggin



Tammi Scoggin, an Amarillo resident for over thirty-two years, enjoys all forms of writing - novels, short stories, poetry, children's books, ladies Bible studies, anecdotes, articles, and even a discipleship manual. She aims to share the gospel of Jesus Christ through all of her communication and encourage others to pursue a personal relationship with Jesus, especially through Bible literacy.



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Nick Gerber-QB1: Leading with Strength, Discipline and Dignity

By Dr. Aaron Hunt
WTAMU FCA
Athletic Chaplain



Nick Gerber #15

Nick Gerber is finishing his fourth season leading the West Texas A&M Buffalo football team and lead well he has done. This era of WT football can be described as tough, disciplined, and full of high character. These traits are exemplified best in the quarterback of the team who is finishing his career well.

There are two former head coaches on the coaching staff at WT. I asked them both what WT's reputation used to be around coaching circles, both said WT was known as 'being dirty.' That is a loaded answer and could not be farther from the truth today. The staff, administration, and players currently lead their football actions and lives with integrity.

Nick is a prime example. He currently holds the Texas high school record for passing touchdowns in a season at 77 that he set at Levelland High School. He made a stop out of high school at Tyler Junior College, then as a red-shirt freshman at Texas Tech University before finding his home at West Texas A&M. He is currently 23-10 as a starter at WT, and more important than the wins and losses, he carries himself with strength and dignity and laughs at the days to come (Proverbs 31:25).

I have watched him compete for the last four years and he does so with quiet strength, discipline, and dignity. He cares deeply for his teammates and his family. He also has a deep faith and values his relationship with Jesus above all else.

After graduating with his master's degree in Sports Management in December he plans to coach, and there are many suitors. Who wouldn't want a coach on their staff like Nick that will lead tomorrow's leaders and show young men what it means to work hard and live out your days with courage and discipline.



The Buffs are again contenders for the playoffs this year and I wish them so well. There truly isn't a more deserving bunch of young men who deserve a reward for their hard work. When Nick moves on, he will be missed, and I have no doubt he will continue to positively impact any community that he lands in.

*Whoever lands him will be blessed.
"Oh, that you would bless me and enlarge
my territory! Let your hand be with me."
(1 Chronicles 4:10a).*



Dr. Aaron Hunt

Aaron has been the Fellowship of Christian Athletes Athletic Chaplain at West Texas A&M University since 2016. Before that he was a high school Spanish teacher and coach, a junior high Assistant Principal and an Assistant Professor of Education at WT. He loves spending time with his wife and six children. They enjoy, reading, travel, and myriad of sport and outdoor activities. May God bless you and keep you and may you seek His face all of your days.

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Courtney Ramos

THE OVERCOMER

by Amy Crowley



It is a crisp October morning as I sit across the table from a lovely, optimistic young woman. The continuous smile on her face and the bright, confident tones in her voice lead me to believe her life has been nothing but simple. By the end of our time together, though, during which she told me her story of triumph over difficulty, I'm left with only one word playing over-and-over again in my mind - overcomer.

Courtney Ramos is most certainly an overcomer. At 25-years-old, after leaving a tumultuous relationship, Courtney and her three young daughters moved into an apartment at Buckner Family Pathways. According to their website, Buckner Family Pathways provides "single-parent families the opportunity to live in a safe, secure environment while completing their educational or vocational goals and learning the skills they need to be self-sufficient. Families are provided support through access to affordable housing, financial assistance, counseling, spiritual growth and case management services."

By her own account, Courtney was just "surviving" when she moved to Buckner after having recently left that bad relationship. She didn't have her beautiful smile and she was depressed. Courtney had endured significant emotional and verbal abuse from her then boyfriend.

One night, however, while sitting outside on the steps to their apartment, she prayed for new beginnings. Finding herself pregnant and with two young daughters, Courtney returned to her mother's home. She found her mom to be the comfort she so desperately needed during this time but she also knew there was more that was required of her.



It was about this time that Courtney's sister told her about Buckner. Courtney began to pray about a possible move. Her baby was eight-months-old when she and her three daughters made the move to Buckner - a place they would remain for three years.

Courtney knew if her life was to turn around, she had to face her situation with determination. She "hit the floor running" and hasn't looked back. She began attending church weekly, going to the gym, attending monthly meetings at Buckner, regularly praying, and journaling about her times with God.

As I caught a glimpse of her journals, it was evident this had been a turning point in her life. She repeatedly expressed her gratitude to God for all He had done in her life. What she did not do, though, was feel sorry for herself.

No, instead she met the "high expectations" Buckner had for her - things like attending college, a strict curfew, counseling when necessary, and monthly check-ins with Buckner staff. While rent is very minimal at the Family Pathways apartment, Courtney went even further. She maintained a sleek budget in order to provide for her children once they moved out on their own.

Continued on pg 12

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Continued story from pg 10

It was also during this time that Courtney decided she needed to better herself professionally in order for her and her girls to become self-sufficient. In December, 2020 she received her real estate license, becoming an active agent the following February. It was not an easy time to enter the real estate market. Covid had impacted businesses greatly by this point and Courtney began to doubt whether or not she had made the right decision. Despite closing just six deals her first year, she was determined to make it; she attended every training and meeting she could and began reading daily to become more educated in her field.

Because of that hard work, Courtney is enjoying success in her business life today. She says with a smile, "it was a long way, but now we're here". As of this writing, she has closed 25 real estate transactions in 2022 - a 123% increase over last year's numbers. Her previous broker refers to her as an "underdog". Courtney chuckles as she shares that, but then adds, "I just want stability for myself and my kids". With much hard work, prayer, and determination she has achieved that stability.

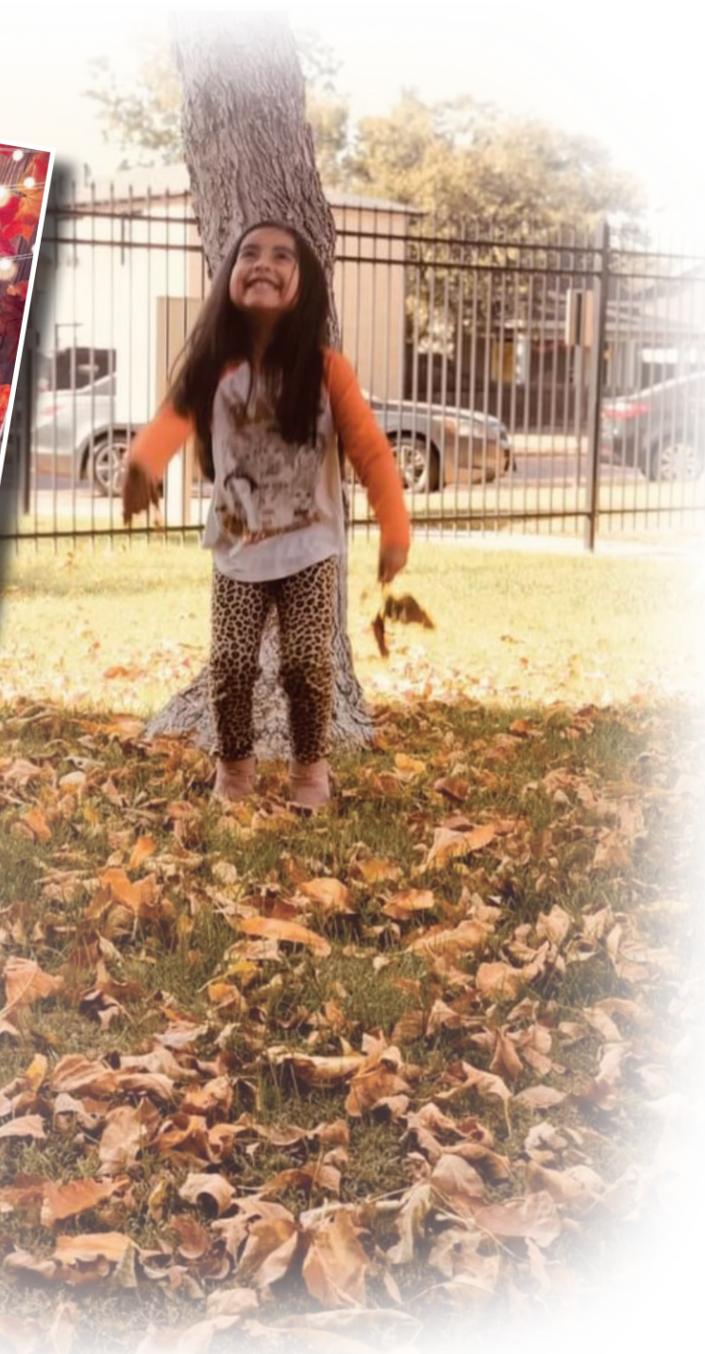
It's also because of her strong faith in God, impressive grit, and a healthy relationship with boyfriend, Coulter Wiley, that Courtney is continually getting stronger. She says of Coulter, "he helps me be a better person". After spending time with her, I'm convinced others look at her and say, "SHE helps me be a better person".

Find more information about Buckner Family Pathways online at buckner.org/Amarillo



Amy Crowley

Amy resides in Amarillo with her husband, Johnny, and is mom to five girls. She is a freelance writer and is the author of the Facebook page Live BOLDLY. She can be reached by email at: amylcrowley@hotmail.com.



Cindy Rowley has been a licensed pastor for almost 24 years and has served at Cox-Rowley Funeral Home for almost 12 years. Cindy loves visiting with and getting to know individuals and families so that she can ensure their wishes are in place. It is important to her that she be there pastorally for families when they experience the loss of a loved one. Cindy pledges that she and the capable staff at Cox-Rowley Funeral Home will care for those they are blessed to serve, will maintain the highest in moral and ethical standards, and that every funeral service will be a true "celebration of life."



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TRINKETS AND TREASURES

by Leah Fort

Hot cocoa, strings of lights, and carols playing, our family found the perfect Christmas tree on the lot at 10th and Bellaire. Tree secured to the car, excitement mounted as we made our way to the mall. Near the mall's center fountain, my older sister and I—aged nine and seven—were allotted \$1.00 each to purchase gifts for each other, and released to shop.

Glistening shelves beckoned us into a card and gift shop. Perusing the trinkets, just within my reach was a ceramic coin bank. Fashioned into a half lemon, it held a pink mouse seated under a red umbrella on a brass spring. I thought, Carrie will really like this.

Upon finding our selection, our parents accompanied us to make the purchase, so I hurried to the center of the mall to find them. Mom was there with our baby brother, so I led them into the store. Upon arrival, I pointed up—to an empty spot. The coin bank was gone!

Disappointed, the evening ended with wrapping a different present for Carrie.

A couple of weeks later, Christmas morning arrived in Pleasant Valley and we opened gifts; stuffed animals handcrafted by Mom, and a new store-bought outfit from Daddy. When it was time for us to exchange presents from each other, I handed my gift to Carrie. She opened it and, to my delight, was very happy.

Then it was my turn. I received an artistically wrapped box from Carrie and inside was the coin bank! Joy filled my heart as tears filled my eyes. We both liked the coin bank and knew the other would equally enjoy it.

My precious Carrie passed away March 26, 2022 and the coin bank—fifty-plus Christmases later—still sits on my shelf. While it is a treasure of sisterly love that I will forever cherish, it pales in comparison to the gift in the manger. God the Father gave Jesus so all of humanity could be reconciled into right relationship with Himself. May you know the greatest gift of Jesus Christ in whom is the treasure of everlasting life.

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HIGHS & LOWS

The Legacy of an Artist

by Sharon Miner



His journey to success has been fraught with trials and tribulations, highs and lows, rejection and acceptance, but Jacob always knew God was with him. Having spent time in the foster care system, battled drug and alcohol addiction and is a gunshot survivor, Jacob has pressed on to his calling and has purposed in his heart that nothing will stop him from achieving what God has put him on this earth to do.

On July 2, 2015, Jacob lost the love of his life and the mother of his 2-month-old daughter, Madison, in a car accident. Devasted by grief, Jacob found the strength to continue on for his daughter Adelaide and found healing in his art. "Madison changed my life by giving me my darling daughter. She supported my art and for the first time in my life she gave me a sense of what it meant to have a family," he remarked with a longing in his voice for someone he missed dearly. "With all the struggles that have happened in my life, what makes me happy is knowing that I made it through, and I haven't grown cold towards the world," said Jacob. "I have faith and I would not change a thing because I have learned a lot. I do not need signs because I believe it has all happened for a reason."



Continued on pg 18

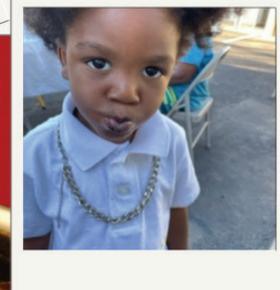
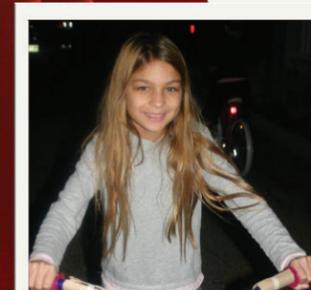
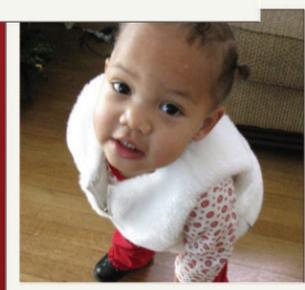
On a warm Summer Panhandle Day, Jacob Aaron Morin, strolled past a vehicle with an Upbeat Reporter sticker on it as he came out of a print shop. He wondered in his mind, if possible, the publisher of the magazine was in the print shop so he turned around and went back in to look for an individual he had never met. Not certain of what he was going to say, he boldly approached a woman who he thought belonged to the sticker and struck up a conversation. Soon it was determined that Jacob's story should be told in The Upbeat Reporter.

Jacob has survived as an artist since he was nineteen and at age 39, he has successfully become what he calls a mixed media artist. From portraits to murals and more, Jacob is able to capture images through the creative spirit God has given him. His art tells the story of how he sees the world and reflects the glorious beauty of God that Jacob believes is all around us. "I believe creativity is God given and there are no rules to expressing your own creativity. I have learned to use any materials that are around me to create the vision and images I believe God pours out to me," Jacob stated.



MERRY CHRISTMAS

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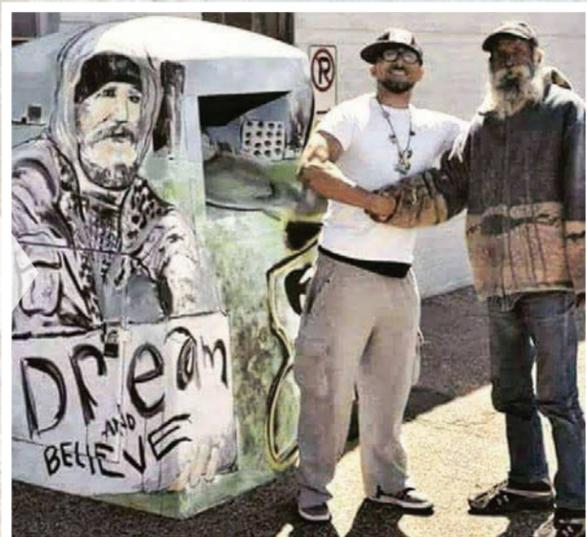
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Continued story from pg 17

Jacob admits that at times he still struggles with demons from the past but defeats them by focusing on his art. He feels close to and hears the voice of God, during his creative process, as he allows the power of God to be stronger than any struggle he might face. Always positive and upbeat (no pun intended), Jacob approaches each day with a sense of awe and wonder, fully expecting to see the hand of God at work in his life.

There is a great chance you have viewed the skilled artwork of Jacob in Amarillo and did not know it. Western Bowl, Big Texan, Hooters, Military Surplus, and countless other locations display the unique images captured by Jacob. "I love art. I collect art and I love teaching art. I believe everyone is an artist. You just have to practice your craft. Whether that craft is painting, drawing, writing, speaking or singing, the more you practice the better you will be," he remarked.

Although Jacob's challenges have been real in his life and continue to try to knock him off course, he remains steadfast. He loves his community and believes that he can make a difference by giving away some of his art through Mass Givings. "I love this community and am thankful for the people and clients who trust me with creating a visual tapestry for them. It gives me a sense of purpose. I also believe in acts of kindness and find joy and peace in sharing my art with others," commented Jacob.



"I have faith and I would not change a thing because I have learned a lot. I do not need signs because I believe it has all happened for a reason."

There are many ways for believers to worship and praise the Lord. For Jacob, it is through his art. James 1:2-4 says (NIV), "Consider it pure joy my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything." Jacob has faced more than his share of trials and his faith has been tested, and for 20 years he has made his living from his art, lacking nothing. But one thing he is certain of, is with the help of God, he will continue to persevere with immense joy as he embraces his God given talent of capturing images to leave as part of his legacy upon the earth.

To contact Jacob Aaron Morin follow him on Facebook | Instagram | Google Mass Givings. Or call 806-223-5322.



Sharon Miner

Sharon is the director of development and public relations for Martha's Home. She has worked with homeless women and women in recovery for over 20 years. Her professional career includes politics, business and non-profit organizations.

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RHN Outreach Services

by Nola Hopkins

Life is hard. Life as a homeless person is even harder. That's why Regence Health Network (RHN) Outreach Services strives to bring down some of the physical and mental barriers that challenge those living on Amarillo's streets.



"It's kind of like a one-stop shop," RHN social worker Chellsea Rea said. A team of medical care and behavioral health specialists work with each patient to treat the whole person. They look beyond the medical problem that has caused the patient to seek help. The care may include mental health and substance abuse conditions, health behaviors, life stressors and crises, stress-related physical symptoms and ineffective patterns of health care utilization, according to an Outreach newsletter.

"We are like a clock with a lot of cogs going in one big machine," Rea said. When clients enter the clinic at 713 N. Taylor Street, they may be surprised that it doesn't look like some free health clinics in other cities or states. It is clean, modern and well-equipped. It has its own lab, private exam room and therapy room. Paulette Muniz, a family nurse practitioner, can write prescriptions that can be filled at the in-house pharmacy. She can refer them to J.O. Wyatt, a community-based health clinic through Northwest Texas Hospital, if they need more extensive care. "If we can't help somebody with a special need, we will help them gain access to other community resources," Rea said. "We are trying to decrease barriers in our community to access care. The important thing is it's not about us - it's the patient."

RHN provides a long list of free services: primary care, TDAP/flu shots, pharmacy services, laboratory testing, medical and behavioral social work, medication consultation, women's health services, routine health screenings and STD screenings and treatment. Specialty referrals include dental care, rehabilitation, housing assistance and addiction counseling.

“ The difference here is That we care,” Rea said.

"Some patients are almost afraid to come in because they think they will be judged or because of the stigma that is attached to being homeless. There is a lot of trauma and substance abuse in this population. The difference here is we meet people where they are. If we have to go on our fourth try, our fifth try, our sixth try, then that is what we are going to do - not 'here's this community resource list.' We are different. I am going to work with them to get them where they need to be. There's that human element; the reality is we could all be two or three paychecks from being homeless."

The outreach clinic had 424 medical encounters the second quarter of this year, an increase of 16 percent from the same time in 2021. It had 183 patients who came for prescription refills. Rea, in her capacity as the social worker, saw 168 patients.

Following are patient comments:

"I appreciate how I am always called by my name here, and everyone is just so kind!"

"I was just released from prison and had a hard time getting meds and healthcare. Thanks to your staff, I'm getting the care I need."

"I have never been to a place where I was treated as kindly as I was here!"

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The phone # is 806-345-7917.



Funding is provided by a Health Resources and Services Administration grant under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. RHN also has offices at Ross Street in Amarillo, Hereford and Plainview that operate on a sliding scale pay based upon income.

Twice a year the City of Amarillo sends volunteers to count the number of homeless in the city in a 24-hour Point-in-Time census. Results of the latest census showed 539 people were homeless with 368 of those unsheltered.

"The harder I work at creating a better community means a better community for my kids later," Rea said. "I think the worst thing is we almost become numb to it (homelessness). I don't want my kids to become numb to it. I don't want to be numb to it because that's not OK."



Nola Hopkins

Nola Hopkins is a retired English/journalism teacher, and her husband Ed is a retired history teacher/coach. They have travelled to all 50 states and six of the seven continents. They own their own tour guide company, Texas Memory Tours. They have two daughters and seven grandchildren.

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IS THIS SCHOLARSHIP FOR YOU?

by Diana Felder, M.Ed., LPC



Being “called” to the ministry (someone who senses that God wants him or her to devote his or her life to serving in a local church) is a holy, but formidable place to be. While all Christian denominations have different educational qualifications for pastors, nearly all require some amount of education. This call may come after one has a family and is not just taking a job to pay the bills, but to answer God. Single or married, the cost of theological education can be exorbitant.

GOOD NEWS IS HERE!!

The Mary E. Bivins Foundation fosters the **Bivins Scholar Program**, which provides scholarships to educate current Christian ministers and upcoming ministers who are permanent residents of the northernmost 26 counties of the Texas Panhandle. Mary E. Bivins had a passion for helping young pastors, and in 1954, she

provided the first scholarship to a young man pursuing such an education. It has since been expanded to help members of church staff and those with intent to do some type of vocational Christian ministry in a church. The scholarship is also available to one who is already in full time ministry, who may or may not have a family. The scholarship is not based on financial means; one does not have to be poor to obtain it.

In a recent interview with Jessica Tudyk, Program Officer of the Mary E. Bivins Foundation, she expressed the hope that more individuals would seek this scholarship. “The money is here for them, but fewer people are taking advantage of the opportunity.” Individuals who serve or intend to serve as a pulpit preacher upon graduation will be given precedence, but those on staff or planning to be are considered as well. What a bright, hopeful endeavor,,, emphasizing education without fostering elitism!

Scholarship eligibility requirements, dollar amounts available (\$3,500 to \$7,000), application timelines, interview process, information sessions scheduled. Other information may be gained by calling **Ms. Tudyk at 806-379-9400, going online to <http://www.bivinsfoundation.org>, or by mail to P. O. Box 1727, Amarillo, Texas 79105.**



Diana Felder, MEd., LPC

Diana is a Licensed Professional Counselor, currently retired after 25 years in practice. She attends Saint Paul United Methodist Church and enjoys time with her children and her 19 grand and great grandchildren.

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Dr. Bree

at Body of Life Holistic

by Karen Benckenstein



Dr. Bree Bradley has a thing for butterflies. She wears butterfly accessories, has butterfly tattoos, and decorates her offices with butterflies. It's not a big leap to understand the fascination; she has a knack for helping others, and herself, transform and fly.

Dr. Bree, as she's known to friends and clients alike, started out as a struggling premature baby weighing only 3 pounds, 11 ounces. She struggled with a myriad of health issues growing up. She quickly realized they were closely tied to her emotional stressors. She learned two lessons that have served her well: lean on Jesus and health is tied to emotional and mental health just as much as the physical.

As part of a large family with 7 children, Dr. Bree is the oldest and helped deliver 4 of her younger siblings at home. When asked how she got started in the medical field, her first answer is, "delivering my mom's babies!" She was homeschooled and so had time to begin shadowing her mother's best friend, a midwife.

BODY OF LIFE



HOLISTIC WELLNESS CENTER

High school diploma in hand at the age of 16, she began to explore the medical field as a profession. Though she started in a more traditional educational direction, she soon felt pulled toward midwifery and naturopathic medicine. She would go on to get a Naturopathic Doctorate in Medicine with master's degrees in reflexology, herbology, and iridology (the study of the eye) over the course of 10 years. She has also become a midwife.

Dr. Bree married young; she was only 17 when a doctor told her (and her husband) she only had a 2% chance of conceiving. Her fertility journey was challenging with numerous miscarriages. She finally adopted two children.

During school, she received a terminal cancer diagnosis. At 26, she began a 10 year battle. She found healing through a combination of allopathic (or traditional western) medicine, natural healing, her faith, and the work of delivering healthy children.

She ran a successful massage therapy practice alongside her midwifery work. She has been cancer medicine free and in remission since 2013. That year, she also converted her massage therapy practice to

Continued on pg 28



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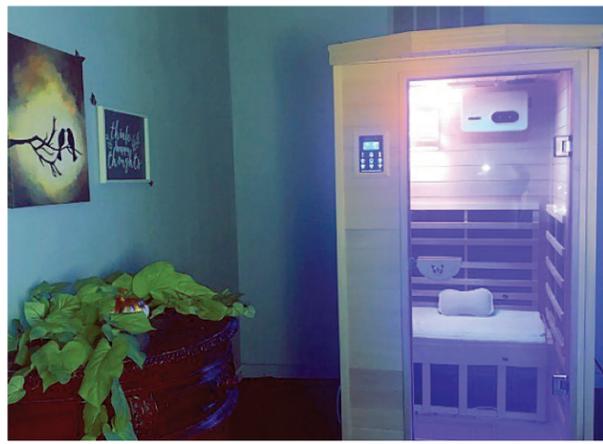
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Continued story from pg 26

one of holistic health and wellness. She and her family moved to Austin briefly, but Dr. Bree says that God told her He had more for her to do here. During that transitional time, Dr. Bree fell on a Galveston pier and had severe injuries. She suffered a brain bleed that would hospitalize her and force her to relearn many basic life skills. She retained her wellness and scientific knowledge which she feels God protected.

That recovery led her to a sensory deprivation tank in the Austin area. It aided her healing so much, finally stopping the migraines the brain bleed had caused, that she knew it had to be part of what she offers to others. She began to make big decisions for her family, knowing that God would take care of them. She says now that "Jesus owns the practice; [she] just pays the rent."

Body of Life Holistic and Wellness is now a thriving practice in The Village on Bell shopping center at 34th and Bell. Dr. Bree Bradley has a "booming" fertility practice called Body of Life Conceivable Dreams with 65 couples over the last 10 years giving birth to healthy babies after being told they couldn't. The whole body wellness services include a Halo salt chromotherapy sauna, a sensory deprivation tank, an oxygen bar, cold laser therapy, an ionic foot bath, medical modalities, and nutritional counseling. The mission of the business is to encompass whole body wellness and help people heal mind, body, and soul through that journey.

She has also found a heart for helping others. She frequently holds cold weather clothing and food drives in her office to donate to others. She will be making some large donations through local nonprofits that help homeless children and abused/battered women for the 2022 holiday season.

Dr. Bree continues to learn and explore new ways to encourage healing mind, body, and spirit. She has plans to expand the Body of Life Holistic & Wellness in the next 3 years, which has only been in the current location since the summer of 2022. This is the first year she's ever advertised in 28 years and more than 1000 patients. Her clients have supported her and some even believed in her work so strongly that they paid her when she was sick but couldn't work. She is preparing the release of a book about her struggle and practice as well as a children's book addressing holistic health.

Dr. Bree wants people who are suffering from any imbalance or illness to know they have options for treatment; there is not just one standard way to go about things. Holistic treatments can give your body the tools to get you through whatever you're going through. Anyone can start with a toxic, unhealthy mindset and grow into exactly what God intended with healing. But Dr. Bree says it's crucial to learn that you can't do just one part of your mind/body; it's also about the bigger reason you're here.

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Karen Benckenstein

 Karen Benckenstein was a nonprofit executive and fundraiser for a decade. She is now a freelance writer in addition to being a wife and mom to 4 teenagers. Karen writes about ways to achieve wellness in mind, body, and spirit.

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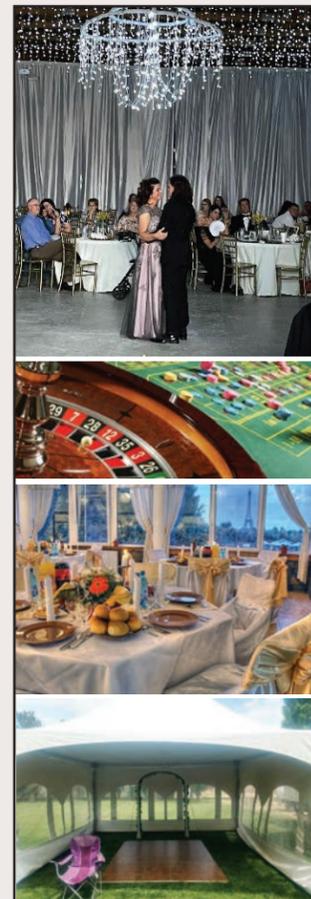
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A KOOK 4 Christ

by Carol Simpson

You get what you ask for, kind of!



My family picks an adult to buy Christmas presents for each year. Once I got my sister-in-law. She is a computer person and I am a woodworker kinda gal. You can imagine my excitement when I read on the piece of paper from the hat that she wanted a router! I grabbed my keys and headed to Home Depot where I not only got her a router but a plunging router and a few bits! I was a bit envious because it was a step up from my router, but she deserves the best!

Christmas morning rolls around and gifts are starting to be handed out. My excitement was heightened as she was given the box and she mentioned how it seemed heavy. She opens it up, but excitement was not her expression but a look of perplexion! As she pulls out the beautiful wood router box, she states, "I meant an internet router!"

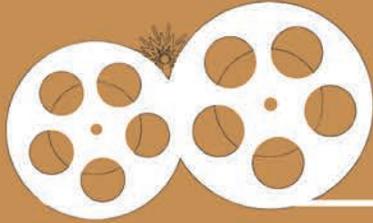
So make sure on your Christmas wish list... YOU SPECIFY!!!

Carol Simpson



I was born at an incredibly young age in Ft. Worth, TX when Dallas was playing at home and they won!!! I gave my life to Jesus in 1973 in Canyon, TX and it has been the best roller coaster ride of my life. I have been in around Christians all my life and have noticed something...we need to laugh more! I genuinely believe that

if we cannot look like God has saved us from something, this ol' world is not going to be interested in what we have to say. I performed my first Christian Comedy in 1996 at Cal Farley's Boys Ranch and knew if I could get those kids laughing that God had a place for me in this ministry of humor.



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