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OCTOBER 2026

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Laughter and lessons were shared between Elena Herrin and Mongolians.

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Going Forth With *Faith*

— By Virginia Riddle



Elena Herrin was raised in Corsicana, where she served as her church's young woman youth leader. She always knew she would serve her church, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, as a missionary after graduating from the Pensacola Christian College homeschool program. Upon applying, she was called to go to Mongolia as an ESL teacher combined with opportunities to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Training, including learning Mongolian, took place for 11 weeks at the Provo Missionary Training Center in Provo, Utah. Then it was sink or swim time in Mongolia for the rest of her 18 months of service.

She was accompanied by her family, parents Zachary and Laura Herrin; sister, Audrey, currently serving as a missionary in North Carolina; and brothers, Calvin and Levi, to the MTC where goodbyes were said after a family photo was taken. "We got keys, cell phones and maps," Elena recalled. "Our classroom view was so beautiful. We were right by the mountains, so we saw the sunset behind them, and it was stunning!" Their instruction was "everything Mongolian," she said. "I loved meeting people from all over the world coming together to learn and testify of Christ."

With her training behind her, Elena flew through New York City and Germany to Mongolia, which lies between China and Russia. There, Elena faced challenges of apartment life and being recognized as a "Jesus Person" — all while trying to adapt to a totally different culture and use a new language. Helpful friendships were made with fellow teachers/missionaries, her many different companions and with the students and their parents.

Elena moved through teaching and missionary assignments in Choibalsan, Murun, Ulaanbaatar and Nalailkh. "The population of Ulaanbaatar is over 1.7 million, so this was by far the biggest city I've ever lived in," Elena noted. Through teaching ESL at an orphanage, the church, two public schools and online, while residing in settings from countryside

with “cows, farmers and free-ranging people” to big city, Elena experienced Mongolian life. “I was an ambassador through 4-H on the county and state level, and I love agriculture. I showed cattle in school, which was great because Mongolia has more horses and cows than people,” Elena explained. She learned to cook traditional Mongolian dishes, such as *buuz*, *tsuivan* and *khuushuur*.

“Something I thought about during that time was being a disciple of Christ,” Elena recalled. “Nothing anyone says or does determines what kind of disciple you are — only you.”

In February Elena celebrated Tsagaan Sar, the Mongolian Lunar Year. “The entire country of Mongolia shuts down for three to five days, and you go to people’s homes to get gifts, eat dumplings and celebrate the Lunar New Year,” Elena explained. “This is the year of the fire horse.” She also celebrated Naadam, a cultural holiday, in July. She learned about Genghis Khan and visited his statue as well as a Soviet statue, *Zaisan*. Another activity Elena participated in was the building of *gers* (yurts).

Visits to monasteries taught Elena about the Buddhist religion. “There were so many monks, and there were Tibetan prayers, massive statues and burning incense,” she noted. “Learning about Mongolian Buddhism helped me understand the people.”



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A trained pianist, Elena enjoyed playing in church and secular settings during her stay in Mongolia. She also learned about Mongolian native music and purchased a morin khuur, a traditional Mongolian instrument.

She found what a challenging sacrifice it was to serve a mission while leaving the comforts of home and being exhausted from 16-hour days. "I relied on the Lord every step of the way because everything was new," Elena said. Her most memorable moment came when a 40-year-old man she had been teaching was baptized.

June brought a performance of her choir celebrating America 250 in



Sükhbaatar Square. The celebration was organized by the U.S. Embassy. "For weeks before, we practiced singing 'America the Beautiful' and a really awesome Mongolian song," Elena shared. Then she played for the East Stake Choir at the Ulaanbaatar Children's Palace. "It was a pretty cool experience!" she added. Another cool experience was visiting the Gobi Desert. It required a bus ride with transfers but was quite an experience.

Connections through the church and home were important. With modern technology available, Elena was able to post a weekly email, writing of her experiences, including occasional photos, to her list of interested readers back home. Also, she was able to connect in real time with her family during holidays and on her birthday.

This fall, Elena is attending Brigham Young University to study food science. After the many challenges of being a missionary: adjusting to a new culture, language and country; eating



traditional foods; surviving -60 F weather; not seeing her family for 18 months while serving others; and helping people to find Christ in a country where foreigners can't legally, openly talk about Christ unless someone brings [the topic] up first, Elena is prepared for college and life beyond. She advised others, "Follow your heart, and always seek to do good. God is good. Never forget or doubt it, and always go forward with faith." **NOW**

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2 Corsicana Palace Theatre

Since 1921, The Palace Theatre has been a live performing arts venue. It was restored in the late 1990s and hosts famous, nationally and internationally known acts, as well as locally performed musicals. Contact: (903) 874-7792, www.corsicanapalace.com.

3 Corsicana Preservation Foundation

The Corsicana Preservation Foundation is dedicated to saving historic structures, brick streets and local heritage and landmarks. One of its projects has been to restore the historic Whiteselle Brick & Lumber steam whistle from WWI. The group hosts community educational workshops on various topics. Contact: www.corsicanapreservation.org or (940) 297-9149.

4 G.W. Jackson Multicultural Society

The G.W. Jackson Multicultural Society is dedicated to preserving the legacy of Corsicana's first African American school principal and civic leader, George Washington Jackson. Founded in 2008, the society spearheaded the creation of The Legacy Park on the site of Jackson's home. Contact: (903) 874-5808, www.gwjacksonsociety.org.

5 Shepherd Inn Transitional Housing

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Hidden Beauty in Hill Country

— By Emma McKay



Located in the Hill Country taking up 2,208 acres of land, lies Lost Maples State Natural Area. Purchased by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department in the 1970s, this land houses more than 350 different logged plant species and rare birds such as the Golden-cheeked Warbler, the Black-capped Vireo and the Green Kingfisher. In 1980, the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service named Lost Maples a national natural landmark. While some refer to Lost Maples as a park, due to the focus on conserving and maintaining its natural beauty, it's considered a natural area rather than a state park. Because of this, certain parts of the natural area may be closed off to the public at times to protect the land.

Due to the voluminous number of bigtooth maple trees in the natural area, people from all over Texas travel to Lost Maples during the fall to see the stunning colors of the leaves as the trees ready themselves for winter. Even though this fall foliage draws in the largest crowds of the year, visitors still find beauty in the land during any season. Ten miles of hiking trails take visitors to limestone canyons, plateau grasslands, clear streams and the top of a 2,200-foot cliff.

Visitors should keep in mind that cell phone service is unavailable in the natural area. Due to its dedication to protecting the land, they must adhere to the Leave No Trace policy. People are discouraged from veering off trails and from marking them.

Fishing is allowed at Can Creek and the Sabinal River. On the shore or pier, fishing

licenses are not required to engage in the sport. Fishing equipment can be borrowed to use while in the park.

Like in any other Texas state park or natural area, parties with kids can pick up a free Junior Ranger Activity Journal. These journals include coloring pages, games and worksheets for kids to complete during their visit. Upon completing a certain number of activities, they may receive a Junior Ranger pin.

Campers can select from 30 campsites with electricity and 30 primitive campsites. Campsites with electricity allow up to 8 people per site, and come equipped with water hookups, 30-amp hookups and back-in RV parking. There are also fire rings, picnic tables, restrooms with nearby showers and shade shelters. Primitive campsites allow campers the opportunity to truly rough it. Each primitive site allows up to 6 campers and can only be accessed by hiking.

Overnight visitors may enjoy the night sky free from light pollution. According to the natural area's web page, the darkness of the area's sky has been rated on the Bortle Dark-Sky Scale to have Class 3 visibility, with a Class 1 being pitch black skies and a Class 9 being near-impossible sky viewings due to city lights. With nights this dark, stars shine clear and bright for visitors to admire. Lost Maples hosts special events to appreciate the celestial bodies seen overhead, so visitors should be sure to check the events calendar before planning their visit.

Experience hidden beauty in Texas, and plan a trip to Lost Maples State Natural Area today! Busy season runs from October to November, so be sure to make your reservation early when visiting during this time. **NOW**

Editor's Note: Reservations may be made through the Texas Parks and Wildlife website: <https://tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/lost-maples>.

Sources:

1. tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/lost-maples-state-natural-area.
2. tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/lost-maples.
3. backroadstexas.net/lost-maples/.
4. txmn.org/lostpines/2018/10/15/backroads-nature-lost-maples-state-natural-area/.

Cozy Pumpkin Recipes



Pumpkin, warm spices and hearty ingredients take center stage as we embrace comfort food season. These recipes capture the essence of fall, bringing warmth and nostalgia to your table. [NOW](#)

Creamy Pumpkin Pasta

- 1 lb. penne pasta
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup pumpkin puree
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1/2 cup chicken broth
- 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese, grated
- 1 tsp. dried sage
- 1/2 tsp. nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. black pepper
- 1/4 cup toasted pumpkin seeds

1. Cook the pasta according to the package directions until al dente; drain and set aside.
2. Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the garlic; sauté for 1 minute until fragrant.
3. Stir in the pumpkin puree, mixing well.
4. Pour in the cream and chicken broth, stirring until smooth.
5. Add the Parmesan; stir until melted and incorporated. Add the spices.
6. Simmer for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until slightly thickened.
7. Add the pasta; toss to coat evenly.
8. Serve hot, garnished with toasted pumpkin seeds.

Pumpkin Soup With Bacon

- 6 slices bacon, chopped
- 1 medium onion, diced

- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 cups pumpkin puree
- 3 cups chicken broth
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 tsp. dried thyme
- 1/2 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. black pepper
- Sour cream, for serving
- Fresh chives, for garnish

1. In a large pot, cook the bacon over medium heat until crispy, about 5-7 minutes.
2. Remove half of the bacon with a slotted spoon; set aside for garnish.
3. Add the onions to the pot with the remaining bacon; cook until softened, about 5 minutes.
4. Stir in the garlic; cook for 1 minute until fragrant.
5. Add the pumpkin puree and chicken broth, stirring to combine.
6. Bring to a simmer; cook for 10 minutes.
7. Stir in the cream and spices. Use an immersion blender to puree the soup until smooth, or transfer to a blender in batches.
8. Simmer for an additional 5 minutes to heat through.
9. Serve hot, topped with a dollop of sour cream, reserved crispy bacon and fresh chives.

Pumpkin Spice Muffins

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1/2 tsp. baking powder
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 2 tsp. pumpkin pie spice
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter, melted
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 cup pumpkin puree
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract

1. Preheat the oven to 375 F; line a 12-cup muffin tin with paper liners.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together the first 5 ingredients.
3. In a large bowl, combine the melted butter and both sugars, stirring until smooth. Beat in the eggs, one at a time, until well incorporated.
4. Add the pumpkin puree, milk and vanilla extract, mixing until smooth.
5. Gradually fold the dry ingredients into the wet ingredients until just combined.
6. Divide the batter evenly among the muffin cups, filling each about three-quarters full.
7. Bake for 18-22 minutes until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
8. Let the muffins cool in the pan for 5 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack.
9. Serve warm or at room temperature.

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Zoomed In: Carol McSpadden

By Virginia Riddle

After serving as Navarro College’s student body president and voted as Miss Navarro College, Carol McSpadden, a Navarro County native, left to further her education at The University of Texas at Austin, where she earned her accounting degree. Carol then spent her accounting career with major corporations in Texas.

Upon retiring, Carol lived in Kerrville, Texas, for nine years before returning to Corsicana in 2023 to be closer to family. “I love having lunch with family on Sundays after church,” she shared. “This is a slower paced life.” Carol stays connected with friends in Dallas and Houston, likes to do jigsaw puzzles, babysit family pets and Game Nights at Olive Branch Eatery. She added, “I love to travel, especially on cruises. I’ve been to 49 states and Europe.”



H.M. Davenport’s family, along with friends, celebrate his retirement as Navarro County judge.



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Zoomed In:
Tish Jackson

By Virginia Riddle

A California native, Tish Jackson returned to her family's Texas roots by way of attending college at Dillard University in New Orleans and then living in Dallas County for 12 years. "My grandparents lived in Texas, and we always attended family events/reunions here," Tish recalled. Tish and her husband, Martin, and kids, Kaleah and Michael, enjoy rural life. "Corsicana is very welcoming, and its people are super nice," she added.

Tish's profession is insurance claims, but she uses her criminal justice/sociology degree in her horror stories. Her writing began in elementary school, and several of Tish's short stories appear in publications. Additionally, she has a collection of horror stories published and has a novel in the works. Tish also enjoys gardening, crocheting and traveling. She's a CORS-I-CAN Writers Group and Horror Writers Association member.



Mexican Train is a popular game at the Senior Center.



Elevation Tax Company celebrates its grand opening in style.

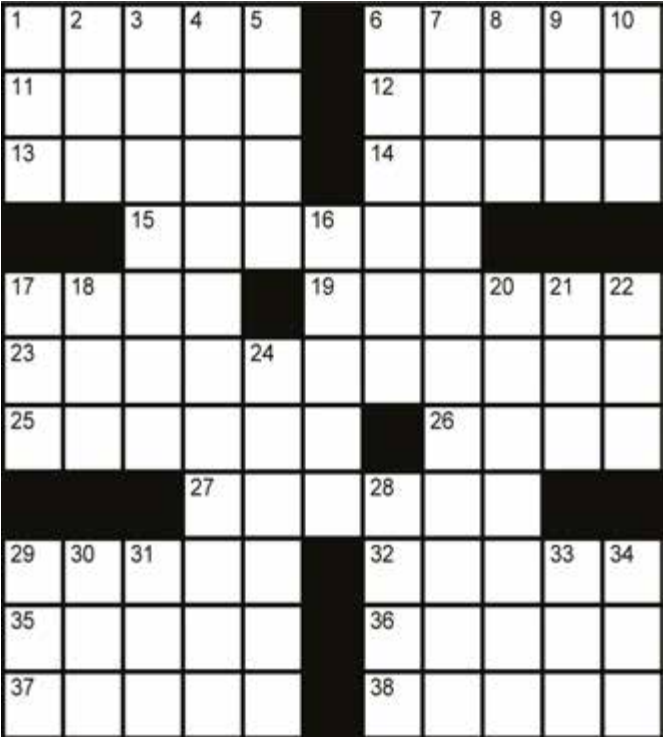


The Kinsloe House President's Tea kicks off a new year of exciting fun and fellowship.



Dorrie Ann Cobb's art surrounds gallery attendees at WLAC Gallery's reception.

Crossword Puzzle



Crosswordsite.com Ltd

Find puzzle answers within this magazine. Online versions and solutions are also available at www.nowmagazines.com.

- Across**

 - 1 Ladybug food
 - 6 Sound made by many things, these days
 - 11 Flambéed steak preparation
 - 12 Competitor
 - 13 Start a match
 - 14 Egg producer
 - 15 It's the same old story
 - 17 Sets of clothes, all of the same design
 - 19 Adventurous expedition
 - 23 Two Party men revised a Roy Orbison number
- Down**

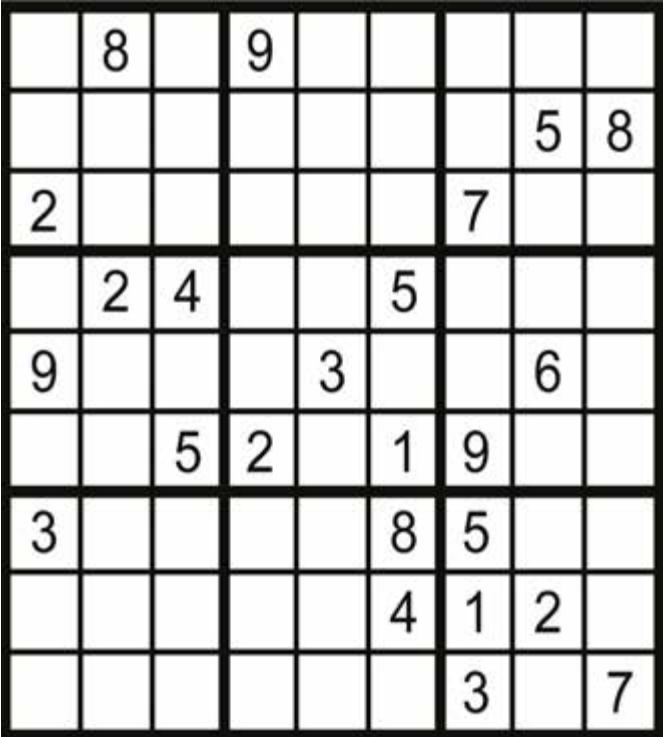
 - 25 Literary ridicule
 - 26 Clarets
 - 27 Obtained
 - 29 Dry stalks
 - 32 Throw out
 - 35 Path
 - 36 Copycat phrase
 - 37 Big name in chips
 - 38 "Stir Crazy" co-star Richard ---
- Down**

 - 1 Lifeblood of TV and the web
 - 2 Filled pastry crust
 - 3 Abolitionist --- Tubman
 - 4 Probe vintage site after disturbance
 - 5 Consider
 - 6 Long-running anchor Tom ---
 - 7 Aaron's Rod
 - 8 Model --- Marcille
 - 9 Corn spike
 - 10 Tire layer
 - 16 Thus far
 - 17 "Brown" delivery co.
- Down**

 - 18 2nd Amendment defenders
 - 20 Agreeable quality
 - 21 "Awesome!"
 - 22 Those currently in favor
 - 24 Bricklayer's tool
 - 28 Short-term worker
 - 29 Mr., in Madras
 - 30 100 cubic feet on a ship
 - 31 Furrow
 - 33 Dove sound
 - 34 High craggy hill

Sudoku Puzzle

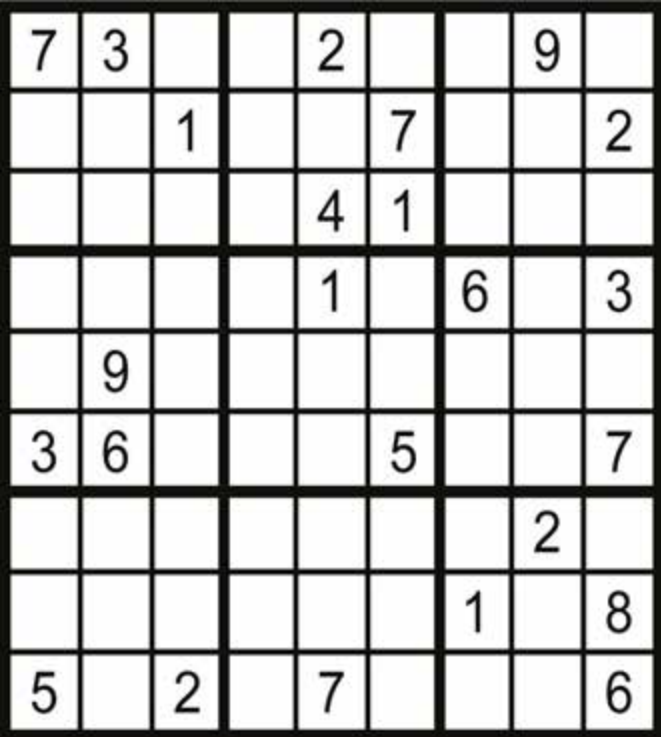
Easy



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Medium





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Things to do in Corsicana!

OCTOBER CorsicanaNOW

M A G A Z I N E

Some events may have been cancelled or rescheduled while we were at press.

10/5-10/29

45th Annual Quilt Show
Free. **Monday-Friday:** 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.; **Saturdays:** 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
www.corsicanaquiltguild.com.

10/8

Aloha From Vegas!
7:30 p.m., The Palace Theatre, 112 W. 6th Ave.
www.corsicanapalace.com.

10/8-10/18

A Midsummer Night's Dream
Times vary. Warehouse Living Arts Center, 119 W. 6th Ave. www.thewlac.com.

10/9-10/10

Oakwood Odyssey
Living history of Corsicana presented by Navarro County Genealogical Society. **Friday:** Seated presentation at 7:00 p.m.; **Saturday:** walking tour of Oakwood Cemetery at 5:30 p.m. Call (903) 654-4808.

10/15

Albritton Administration Building's Grand Reopening
2:00 p.m., Navarro College, 3200 W. 7th Ave. For more information, visit www.navarrocollege.edu.

10/17

Kerens Cotton Harvest Festival
7:00 a.m.-11:00 p.m., Downtown Kerens. www.kerenscottonharvestfestival.com.

Corsicana Coyote Squadron Airshow

Noon, Corsicana Municipal Airport, 9000 Navarro Rd. www.coyotesquadron.org.

10/22

Boo on the Block
3:30-5:30 p.m., Downtown Corsicana. www.visitcorsicana.com/events-corsicana.

10/24

Crossroads of Texas Go Texan Country Festival
Enjoy Texas' largest one-day arts, music and food festival. Free. 9:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m., Downtown Waxahachie. www.waxahachiecvb.com/events/.

11/5

Kinsloe's Night of Style – La Dolce Vita, an Italian Affair
Dinner, wine bar and runway fashion show. Individual tickets and tables available. 5:00 p.m., Cook Education Center, 3100 W. Collin St. Contact Connie Hickman at (903) 654-4029.

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Crossword - Sudoku Solutions

1	A	P	H	I	D		8	B	L	E	E	P
11	D	I	A	N	E		12	R	I	V	A	L
13	S	E	R	V	E		14	O	V	A	R	Y
			15	R	E	M		16	A	K	E	
17	U	N	I	S		19	S	A	F	A	R	I
23	P	R	E	T	T	Y	24	W	O	M	A	N
25	S	A	T	I	R	E		26	R	E	D	S
			27	G	O	T		28	T	E	N	
29	S	T	R	A	W		32	E	V	I	C	T
35	R	O	U	T	E		36	M	E	T	O	O
37	I	N	T	E	L		38	P	R	Y	O	R

Easy

5	8	7	9	1	6	4	3	2
1	9	3	7	4	2	6	5	8
2	4	6	8	5	3	7	9	1
7	2	4	6	9	5	8	1	3
9	1	8	4	3	7	2	6	5
6	3	5	2	8	1	9	7	4
3	7	2	1	6	8	5	4	9
8	5	9	3	7	4	1	2	6
4	6	1	5	2	9	3	8	7

Medium

7	3	8	5	2	6	4	9	1
4	5	1	3	9	7	8	6	2
6	2	9	8	4	1	7	3	5
2	8	7	4	1	9	6	5	3
1	9	5	7	6	3	2	8	4
3	6	4	2	8	5	9	1	7
8	7	6	1	3	4	5	2	9
9	4	3	6	5	2	1	7	8
5	1	2	9	7	8	3	4	6

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