

CorsicanaNOW

MAGAZINE

MAY 2024

Honoring Local Legends

Take a tour of Corsicana's lasting legacies

In the Kitchen With Jamie Johnson

Also inside:

Scavenger Hunt

Crossword

Featured Business:

Watkins Development Construction Services



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ON THE COVER



Celebrated times and people are immortalized in bronze.

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Subscriptions are available at the rate of \$35 per year or \$3.50 per issue. Subscriptions should be sent to: NOW Magazines, P.O. Box 1071, Waxahachie, TX 75168. For advertising rates or editorial correspondence, call (903) 875-0187 or visit www.nowmagazines.com.

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EDITOR'S NOTE



Virginia

Virginia Riddle
CorsicanaNOW Editor
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Gearing up for fun!

It's that time of year again. School bells will be silenced soon. Photos of graduations and weddings fill our time. Online storage and memory banks are overflowing, and summer plans are being made. Corsicana Parks and Recreation Department and the Corsicana Public Library Facebook pages and sites will be full of activities for kids with many of the exciting fun times offered for free. Whether kids are residents or visiting for a week or two, there are fun times to be had at the Corsicana YMCA and in city parks, pools and at the splash pads. Rainy days can be spent at the Pearce Museum or its neighboring planetarium. There's so much for kids and kids-at-heart to do right at home.

Taking a trip? Whether near or far away, it's time to make plans, reservations and budgets. Corsicana's in a great location for day and long weekend trips to wonderful places. There are plenty of campgrounds and state parks nearby, too. It's great to get away and see new sights and experience different cultures and landscapes.

Finally, on a personal note, I'm happy that my 11-year-old granddaughter, Sophie, will be attending her first two residential camps this June. Classified as medically challenging from birth, she hasn't had the typical childhood. She's excited about attending a camp for children with diabetes and one for kids who are fighting or recovering from cancer. Medical professionals are camp counselors, so her special needs and those of the other campers will be covered. Thanks to all of you who support special needs camps of all types. They give kids a chance to have a week of "normal" camp experiences safely and promote independence. As Sophie's family, we're grateful and excited to see her blossom through this experience.

Let's fire up the grill and get a jump start on summer!

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HONORING LOCAL LEGENDS

— By Virginia Riddle

A toddler snuggles up to the two children sitting on the bench with book in hand. Mom is kneeling not far away with her cell phone ready to catch the moment in a photograph. This beautiful scene is often repeated as families enjoy the Corsicana Public Library and stop to interact with the statue. The Corsicana Kiwanis Club gifted the city with the bronze statue of two children seated on a small bench to encourage young people to become lifetime readers. This is one of now 18 statues, with three more in the works, that grace Corsicana's landscape and street corners. "All the statues carry a legacy," Parks and Recreation Director Sharla Allen said.

"Visitors to our city love the bronze statue tour," Amy Tidwell, Main Street director, added. "The statues are an example of heritage tourism." The tour can be accessed through Main Street's website and played on one's cell phone. "The statues are located all over town from the airport to the college," Amy said. "It's

a great way to get visitors to explore Corsicana and not stay just downtown."

The process, from idea to a statue's unveiling and dedication ceremony, usually takes a number of years. "People come in wanting to honor a point in the city's history, a friend or family member," Sharla explained. "A committee meets once a year to consider ideas and proposed locations. "Each statue costs approximately \$40,000-\$60,000 and is totally funded by the family, friends or through fundraisers," Sharla added. "The expense is a commitment, since it takes usually about two years to raise the money. Just to make the bust and small mock-up statue costs about \$2,500."

The people proposing the statue usually select the artists and commission the work, but City Manager Connie Standridge found the first artist. Lisa Perry, known for her Bronze



Horses, has sculpted several of the statues. Cane Morrow and local artist, Nancy Rebal, have also contributed their talents, along with J. Payne Lara, Tim Harmon, Doug and Sandra McDonald, Buck Main and Spencer Evans. "The artist usually meets with the family and/or friends to get suggestions of the little things that were important to the person to be honored, such as the Masonic ring worn by Brent Thompson or Dr. Kent Rogers whose statue features his stethoscope around his neck," Sharla said. "The artists must get a feeling for the person or historical significance involved and does so through several meetings with the family and/or friends. They first create the bust and the small mock-up. Once that's approved, then the remainder of the statue is created and approved." The artists are usually the ones who

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Each statue receives an unveiling and dedication ceremony, which is open to the public with special seating for the family and/or friends involved, some of whom add their remarks and memories to the eventful day. Memories and stories are shared during the event, such as those shared by Jackson High School alumni dressed in their school's letter jackets and colors at the unveiling and dedication of G.W. Jackson's statue.

To date, Dr. Rogers is the only honored person who personally participated in the planning stages of his statue prior to his untimely death due to contracting COVID-19 while treating patients. "Working with Dr. Rogers is a memory I cherish," Sharla said. "Another memory was the selection of what longtime baker to use to represent Collin Street Bakery." Jerry Grimmert, who was a baker at the famed bakery for over 60 years, was the chosen figure. Other statues honor Corsicana's history through generic representation. The Cadet Memorial, representative of the 90,000 cadets who trained at what is



now C. David Campbell Field during WWII; oil field workers; farmers; and the Navarro College Native American fit in this category.

Only one statue, so far, represents an animal — the wolf, Kaiser, for whom Wolf Brand Chili was named by its Corsicana creator, Lyman Davis. The statue occupies the corner on which Lyman sold his chili in 1895 from the back of a wagon parked by a saloon. Wesley Green's statue stands appropriately on the corner where he and his wife, Lucille, operated their western wear store for many years.

Sharla, whose department oversees and maintains the statues, is a Dawson, Texas, native. She attended Navarro

College and Texas A&M University and has been employed by the city of Corsicana for 29 years. "I love the people here," she said. "They're appreciative and proud of their community. We know our neighbors, and I love everything about my job. It's great to see kids playing outside in the parks, hosting all our summer events and helping with downtown events year-round." In addition to the 18 statues, the Parks and Recreation Department manages 20 parks, city owned buildings, two lakes, two downtown pocket parks and the Stuart J. Beebe Athletic Complex.

A Corsicana native, Amy left town to attend college but returned to raise her family. "Sharla and I are both passionate about seeing Corsicana grow. Our partnership and teamwork just help that growth."

"The city is honored to have the bronze statues and their legacy," Sharla concluded. "They're part of the Parks and Recreation Department's goal to provide this community with a diversified program to meet recreational, educational and leisure needs." **NOW**

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Barbara Kelly shows her CHS support by purchasing Braeden Carroll's tiger during Navarro College's Student Art Show.

Zoomed In: Douglas MacGregor

By Virginia Riddle

A South African native son, Douglas MacGregor met his wife, Laura, through friends while on a business trip to Texas. His business interests, coupled with an earned MBA degree, enabled Douglas to travel "around the world to four continents while living in six countries and working in four." He and Laura moved to South Africa, where their daughter, MacKenna, was born but returned to Corsicana when she was 12. "A bibliophile, Douglas said, "I speak Portuguese and enjoy languages and their nuances."

Douglas works with Griffin-Roughton Funeral Home helping people pre-plan their funerals. He chaired the Corsicana and Navarro County Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors and was Ambassador of the Year, while also volunteering with First Baptist Corsicana's GriefShare. "I enjoy helping people and find that people here are friendly and open-minded."



Chaser Crouch entertains the crowd rockabilly style.



Legacy Rehabilitation and Healthcare's Business After Hours drawing winners are all smiles.



Mexia High School students, supervised by their culinary teacher, Stephanie Kirkendoll, plan, prepare and serve lunch to Mexia Woman's Friday Club members.



Jannine Horsford, from Trinidad and Tobago, shares her poetry with 100 West Open Studio attendees.



Crystal Richardson with Bristol Hospice becomes an entertainment delight for Savvy Seniors on St. Patrick's Day.



Moe, the Tailor, gets seriously into accompanying the WLAC actors in Couture of the Blackland Prairie.

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BusinessNOW

Watkins Development Construction Services

— By Virginia Riddle

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Watkins Development Construction Services, a Corsicana-based design and construction firm since 1978, provides complete services for industrial, commercial and residential projects both large and small. “We make it our business to find the perfect fit for your needs,” Phil Seely, project manager, stated. “We focus on the overall project delivery to create cost-effective solutions. Experience counts as these professionals see each project through the design, planning, pre-construction and construction phases, turning clients’

wishes and longtime dreams into reality.”

Owned by Loran Seely, P.E., and president, Watkins Development has its own custom fabrication and trim shop for metal work and an equipment yard for civil work. “We service the community with metal fabrication and installation, concrete repair/replacement and calculation/analysis,” Phil explained. Projects range from fabricating and installing catwalks for Amazon warehouses to repairing damage on residential property, proving no job is too big or too little for us to expertly handle. “We take pride in everything we do,” Phil added. “We’re passionate about serving our community because this is our home.”

A team of 25-30 people, depending on project needs and time of year, are employed. “These tradespeople have a wide range of diverse skill sets matched well to the demands of each customized project. Our design and construction professionals provide a true partnership with our clients, helping them reach their goals and objectives,” Phil said. “We have proven effective in offering and delivering comprehensive building designs and construction services. Our broad

experience, gained over these 40-plus years with building everything from residential barndominiums to large factories, serves clients well.” WDC projects include the “Corsicana” banner, which spans across Beaton Street, the Visitor Center’s railcar cover, the metal framing securing the city of Corsicana’s Pocket Park, the renamed Dr. Kent E. Rogers Clinic, additions to Navarro College’s Boutique & Books and local church projects.

Watkins Development Corporation is uniquely staffed by three engineers with 68 years’ collective experience managing all aspects of construction. Loran, a registered professional engineer, oversees all designing, engineering, estimating and construction projects. Phil Seely, following in his father’s footsteps, joined the company in 2015 after earning his engineering degree in 2009. Phil assists designing and estimating projects and coordinating OSHA requirements/training. Chris Valek, P.E., joined the engineering team in 2021 after earning his engineering degree in 2014. Chris assists with design, engineering and estimating, bringing engineering knowledge with a positive feel for customer service to the team.

Rounding out the management team are Operations Manager John Douglas, and office staff, Jody Dragoo and Angela Grant. John has been fabricating and erecting metal buildings for 45-plus years, making him a valuable and knowledgeable team member. In addition to overseeing the daily operations of multiple ground crews, he is responsible for conducting OSHA approved safety training for forklift and aerial lift operators. Jody and Angela manage deadlines, dollars and day-to-day office operations. “Our office staff cheerfully communicates with our customers, suppliers, bonding agent and governmental agencies,” Phil explained. “This is a great team that you, our clients, can rely on.”

They actively support the local community by taking part in fundraisers for various organizations. “We were particularly excited to partner with the city of Corsicana in the recent Eclipse Fest,” Phil said. “We are committed to faith, family, our clients and constant improvement. Try us, we aim to please!” **NOW**

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In the Kitchen With

JAMIE JOHNSON

— By Virginia Riddle

Jamie Johnson, a Corsicana native, loves being in the kitchen while cooking for friends and family. “I’m an anomaly in a family that doesn’t cook — I love to bake,” Jamie shared. “I’ve been baking for over 20 years and started my own company, Jamie Bakes Cookies. I find inspiration from things I see daily and from other bakers.” She makes her own recipes and tweaks those she finds online.

A founding member of the Sisterhood of the Traveling Book Club, Jamie enjoys reading, painting, shopping and having coffee with friends. “I love cinnamon in everything,” Jamie said.

“Over the years, I’ve had baking failures and successes,” she said. “The important thing is to keep trying new things and to have fun. Baking makes people happy.” ^{NOW}

Best Chocolate Cake

Butter, flour or nonstick cooking spray for pan preparation
 1 box Duncan Hines Chocolate Fudge Cake Mix
 1 cup sugar
 1 tsp. salt
 1 1/2 cups cold coffee

1/4 cup vegetable oil
 1/2 stick butter, melted
 3 eggs
 1 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese
 1 Tbsp. vanilla

1. Preheat the oven to 335 F; prepare 2 8-inch round cake pans with butter and flour or nonstick cooking spray.

2. Into the bowl of a stand mixer with a paddle attachment, add all the dry ingredients. Add the remaining ingredients; mix on low for 1 minute. Stop; scrape the bowl. Mix on medium for an additional 2 minutes.

3. Pour the batter into the prepared cake pans; bake for 30-35 minutes until a toothpick comes out of the center with just a few sticky crumbs clinging.

4. Let the cakes cool a few minutes in the pan before putting them onto a cooling rack; let cool before frosting.

Simple Buttercream Frosting

1/2 cup unsalted butter, room temperature
 1/2 cup vegetable shortening
 1 tsp. vanilla
 5 cups confectioners’ sugar, sifted
 2-6 Tbsp. milk
 3-10 drops food coloring (optional)

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer with a paddle attachment, cream the butter until it’s smooth and fluffy. Add the vegetable

shortening and vanilla; mix again.

2. Gradually beat in the confectioners' sugar until it's fully incorporated; add the milk slowly to gain the desired consistency. Add the food coloring; mix well.

3. Frost the cake after it has cooled.

Cake Balls

1 baked cake, any flavor

1 20-oz. pkg. chocolate or vanilla almond bark

Popsicle or lollipop sticks

Waxed paper and/or Styrofoam block

1. Prepare the cake according to the recipe or box instructions; cool fully.

2. In a large bowl, crumble the cake by hand; knead the crumbs together like dough.

3. Scoop out about 2 Tbsp. of the dough; ball it up. Repeat to make all balls; place them on a cookie sheet. Refrigerate.

4. While the balls are chilling; place the almond bark in a bowl. Microwave the bark for about 30 seconds at a time; stir in between until melted. Pour the melted bark into a Solo cup or water glass.

5. Dip about 1-inch of each stick into the melted almond bark; place that end into a cake ball. *Note: 5-10 balls can be worked at a time. After the sticks have been inserted, dip each cake ball into the bark; tap to remove excess bark.*

6. Balls may be placed on a piece of waxed paper to dry, or the sticks can be placed into a Styrofoam block to dry if a perfectly rounded ball is desired.

To search for more great recipes from any of the 9 NOW Magazines publications, visit www.nowmagazines.com.



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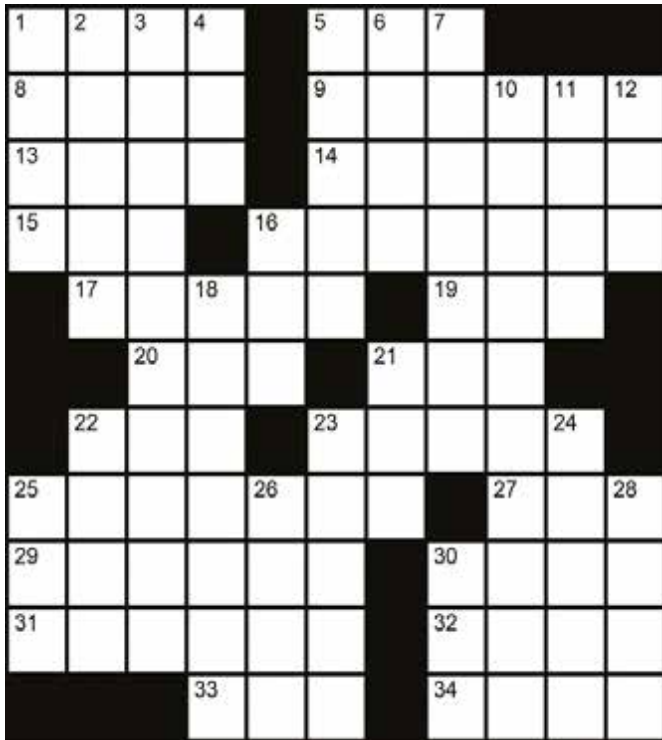
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Crossword Puzzle



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Across

- 1 Diamond element?
- 5 Norm, briefly
- 8 October's birthstone
- 9 Puncture
- 13 Goose cry
- 14 Tip off
- 15 Piece
- 16 "And Still I Rise" poet
- 17 Luxurious
- 19 Kind of deal in the 1930s
- 20 Open mesh fabric
- 21 Cleo's nemesis
- 22 "... Degrees of Separation"
- 23 Live

Down

- 1 Atomic physicist Niels ...
- 2 "... --- player, that struts and frets his hour upon the stage ..." (Shakespeare, "Macbeth")
- 3 Nicaraguan politico
- 4 Large deer
- 5 Like a porcupine
- 6 Sound of a small bell
- 7 Resistance against attack
- 10 Deploy Earl badly on stage, perhaps?
- 11 Humiliating meal?
- 12 It'll never get off the ground in Australia
- 16 AIDS fighter
- 18 Cloth
- 21 Amazement
- 22 Adam and Eve's third
- 23 Overpowering fear
- 24 Skier's shelter
- 25 First animal in the Chinese Zodiac
- 26 "Little Shop of Horrors" dentist --- Scrivello
- 28 Shakespeare character "more sinned against than sinning"
- 30 Medical insurer

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Some events may have been cancelled or rescheduled while we were at press. Check with individual organizations or your city or Chamber websites to verify dates and times.

MAY

Weekends Through 5/27

Scarborough Renaissance Festival:
Fun 16th century style.
Handmade crafts, artisan demonstrations, festival food.
10:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m., 2511 FM 66, Waxahachie.

5/1, 5/8, 5/15, 5/22

Kinsloe House Luncheon:
Noon, Kinsloe House, 618 W. 3rd Ave.
For membership information or reservations, please call (903) 654-0620.

5/1

Navarro County Boys & Girls Club Summer Camp Registration:
Camp dates available in June and July. Facebook: Navarro County Boys & Girls Club.

5/1-5/15

Navarro College Kid's College Registration:
Open to all boys and girls who have completed grades K-5th. Classes, dates and times vary on NC campuses.
For details, visit www.navarrocollege.edu/youth-programs.

5/2

Navarro College Symphonic Wind Ensemble Concert:
6:00 p.m., Cook Education Center, 3100 W. Collin St. www.navarrocollege.edu/calendar.

5/4

Pat Waters Band:
\$15 cover fee for the concert. Steakhouse open: 5:00-9:00 p.m.; music begins: 9:00 p.m., Corsicana Opry, 215 E. 5th Ave. (903) 872-6779.

5/9

Neal Berg's 50 Years of Rock and Roll:
7:00 p.m., The Palace Theatre, 112 W. 6th Ave. 903-874-7792.

5/17

Corsicana & Navarro County Chamber Golf Classic:
Registration and lunch: 11:00 a.m.; tee off: noon, Corsicana Country Club, 500 Country Club Dr. (903) 874-4731.

5/24-5/26

The National Polka Festival:
Come help the city of Ennis celebrate 57 years of Czech heritage and traditions. Enjoy a

weekend of polka dancing with 15 live polka bands including Grammy Award winning Brave Combo and the Josh Abbott Band Country Concert on Saturday night! Visit www.nationalpolkafestival.com for more information including admission, band schedules, food and hall locations.

5/30

Kinsloe House Spring Into Style Show:
Local retailers' outfits will grace the runway with vendor booths for pre-show shopping, plus locally catered dinner and wines. Tickets: \$50. 5:00-9:00 p.m., Cook Education Center, 3100 W. Collin St. Tammy Carter, (903) 641-5243.

6/1

Pancake Breakfast Fly-In/Drive-In:
Classic airplanes, helicopter and airplane rides, Midlothian Classic Wheels Club, live music, children's activities, etc. Free. Entrance/parking. Breakfast tickets: \$3-\$7 8:00-11:00 a.m., Mid-Way Regional Airport, 131 Airport Dr., Midlothian, TX. For more details, call (972) 923-0080.

Tuesdays

Corsicana Lions Club Meeting:
Noon, Sirloin Stockade,

2508 W. 7th Ave. Facebook: Corsicana Lions Club.

First Wednesdays

Mexia Woman's Friday Club:
Noon-1:00 p.m., Location TBA, Mexia. Facebook: Mexia Woman's Friday Club.

Wednesdays

Storytime:
10:30 a.m., Corsicana Public Library, 100 N. 12th St. Facebook: Corsicana Public Library.

Fourth Thursdays

Corsicana Newcomers Club Meeting:
Master Gardener Ellen Soklovich will speak. 11:00 a.m., Kinsloe House, 618 W. 3rd Ave. Annie Avery, (714) 345-6707.

Third Saturdays

I.O.O.F. Trade Days:
9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., I.O.O.F. Event Center, 601 N. 45th St. (903) 872-7438.

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your current event details to virginia.riddle@nowmagazines.com.

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