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A Ride on the Texas State Railroad



I took my two eldest children on a train ride. Like the ones I traveled as a kid going with my Mom back to Odessa to see the relatives. Also because it was at their birthday time, I was reminded of how my life changed upon becoming a mom. These two were my "twins", born one year and ten days apart in September 1974 and 1975. Well, they're now in their 40's and had never ridden a train! So, I treated them to a ride on the Texas State Railroad in late August. We reserved our seats in 'First Class' which was by no means the most plush car in the line! But it was comfortable and adequate for the 90-minutes we spent each way. Our seating was a table with a bench on each side, so we were face-to-face and had a full view of passing scenery from spacious windows. An attendant came by with complimentary snacks and took our drink orders. And we were off on an adventure!



Clay Bounds age 47 and Bobbi Bounds Rowland age 46

Everyone was so cordial and helpful, and seemed thrilled that about 250 people filled the cars for a great experience. Another perk was that during most of the journey, there was no cellphone service! That made it perfect for conversing and catching up on what's new with their own kids and their other siblings. Much of the time, I just let them talk and enjoyed listening to their view points of life. I learned a lot, and was humbled by their positive outlook and maturity.

From the young conductor, I found out that he was from Rusk, Texas originally, and now as an experienced railroad official, he oversees each trip between the Palestine to Rusk Depots year round. For many reasons, I learned that he treasures the 'old ways' in our American history, and is passing that legacy on to his children now. For the rest of the ride, I looked out the windows at the passing East Texas scenery and counted my blessings to be in Texas, USA.

Til next week, let's count those blessings daily and anticipate a change in the season here in NE Texas.



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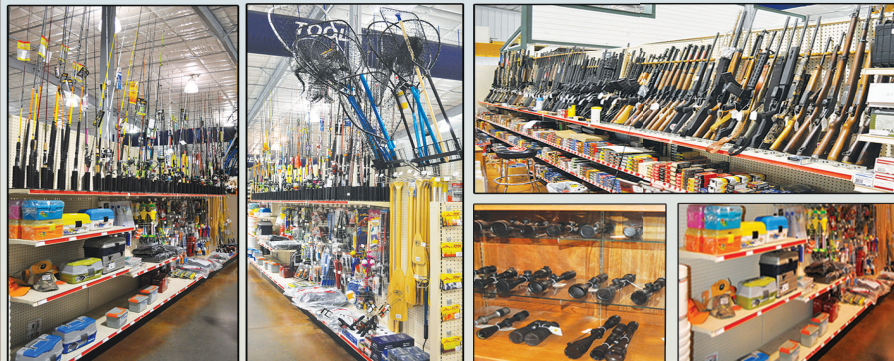


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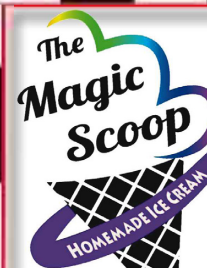
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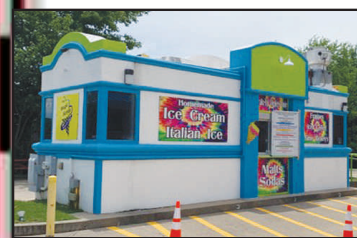
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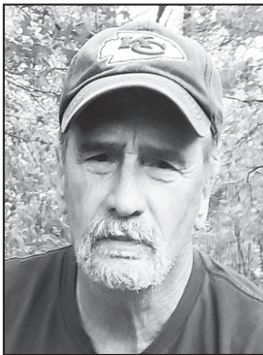
Stacey Ruth Patrick

Memorial service for Stacey Ruth Patrick, age 53, of Sulphur Springs, Texas, was held at 2 p.m. September 10, 2021, at First Baptist Church with Paul Ray Vititow Jr. officiating. Visitation was held one hour prior to the service. Mrs. Patrick passed away on September 6, 2021, in Sulphur Springs.

Stacey was born on April 4, 1968, in Sulphur Springs, Texas, to Rickey Lee and Linda Sue (Gibbs) Patrick. She married Steven Patrick on March 2, 1998, in Mount Pleasant, Texas. She worked as a Real Estate Agent. Stacey was a member of Greater Dallas MLS and National Associations of Realtors and Texas Associations of Realtors. She was rewarded Realtor of the Year in 2019 and 2020. Stacey was also a member of the First Baptist Church in Sulphur Springs.

She is survived by her husband; daughter, Lexey Patrick; son, Corey Cole; grandson, Karsyn T Roberts; brothers, Paul Ray Vititow Jr, Jeffrey Wade Vititow, Michael Patrick and Mark Patrick; aunt Sarah (MiMi) Gibbs; grandmother, Helen Ruth (Baby Ruth) Gumm; and numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and many friends.

Stacey was preceded in death by her parents and sister, Paula Sue Vititow. Arrangements under the direction of Murray-Orwosky Funeral Home.



Dwyan Morgan

Funeral services for Dwyan Morgan, age 66, of Sulphur Springs were conducted at 1 p.m. Monday, September 13, 2021, at West Oaks Funeral Home Chapel with Rev. Randy Smith officiating. Interment followed at Cumby Cemetery with Nicholas Morgan, Trenton Morgan, Lucas Morgan, Coltyn Morgan, Shannon Morris, and Kobe Sartin serving as pallbearers. Visitation began at noon on Monday, one hour prior to service time. Dwyan passed away at Christus Mother Frances Hospital on Wednesday, September 8, 2021.

He was born on December 28, 1954, in Greenville, Texas, the son of Don Johnson Morgan and Wanda Otts Morgan. He married Vanessa Morehead on September 25, 2020, in Hugo, OK. She survives. Dwyan was a master electrician and a member of the IBEW (International Brotherhood Electrical Workers) Union #124. He was an avid fisherman, he loved driving hot rods, and loved spending time with his family.

In addition to his wife Vanessa, he is survived by sons, Nicholas Morgan (Danniele) of Pleasant Hill, MO, Trenton Morgan (Antoine) of Annapolis, MA, Lucas Morgan of Garland, and Coltyn Morgan of Sulphur Springs; daughters,

Crystal Ysasaga (Mike) of Garland, and Mikala Engelmann (Gion) of North Kingsville, Ohio; brothers, Ronald Howard, Donald Howard, Darrell Howard, and Frankie Morgan; sister, Pam Morgan Petty; grandchildren, Kelsey Kay (Weston), Kobe Sartin, and Alana Morgan; and step-children, Mitzi Giles, Tracy Giles, and Dion Ross. He was preceded in death by his parents and sisters, Rosemary Howard and Cynthia Morris.



Buck Askew

Funeral services for Buck Askew, age 60, of Sulphur Springs, Texas, were held at 11 a.m. Monday, September 13, 2021, at Murray-Orwosky Funeral Home. Interment followed at East Caney Cemetery. Masks were required to attend. There was no formal visitation. Mr. Askew passed away on September 7, 2021, at his residence.

Lawrence Windell Askew, Jr. (Buck) was born on August 15, 1961 in Sulphur Springs, Texas to Lawrence Windell and Christine (Gray) Askew. He attended Sulphur Springs High School. While in school, Buck was an outstanding basketball player. He graduated from Sulphur Springs High School in 1979. He accepted Christ at an early age. Buck was a lover of people and the great outdoors. He spent much of his time connecting with the community at the local park in Sulphur Springs, Texas. His family and friends were always entertained by the way he told his stories. He was a hilarious man, finishing almost every story with his coined proclamation, "Imma bad man." He will be truly missed.

Lawrence Windell Askew, Jr., punched his "golden ticket" into heaven and earned his wings on September 7, 2021. He leaves to cherish his memories his virtuous mother, Christine Askew; devoted sisters Esther Crook, Anita Godbolt (Ricky) and Lillie Johnson (Wyman); his adoring nieces and nephews, Lawson Crook (Toi); LaTonya Hawkins, Kristi Hill, Vallesha Adams (Skip), Roderick Godbolt (Sharday), Broderick Godbolt (Chere), Marcus Johnson, Angela Johnson, Chianti Adams (Deraymus), Ricky Godbolt II; ex-wife and longtime friend, Sherry Askew, as well as 14 loving grandchildren, Destiny Askew, Shakyra Cork, Tyrek Cork, Tashyra Cork, Devon Cork, De'Kemian Person, ShaQuille Relford, De'Quavian Person, Zacharian Goodson, ZaQuavian Scott, Xavier Cork, Tydrick Cork and Shaniya Cork; Aunts, Vallie Cherry (Wolfe City), Reva Hollins, Dorothy Gray (Dallas); and a host of doting great-nieces and nephews, cousins and friends.

Buck was preceded in death by his father, Lawrence Windell Askew, Sr.; his children who meant the world to him, Hurley Jerome Cork, Brandie Askew and Kevin Cork; his friend and brother-in-law, Hubert Earl Crook; nephew Melvin Dewayne Abron, Jr., "Lil Mel"; and a host of aunts and uncles.

THE IDLE AMERICAN

16-Year-Old NOT 'DeFEETed'...

Commentary by Dr. Don Newbury

The aura of a special day added to the enchantment of a special place, beautiful Bryant Park in Manhattan. The weather was made to order, unseasonably cool, and a few thousand people--most of them visiting gawkers like me--adorned the grassy pallet of green.

Soon, theirs would be a chorus of screams that only teenagers can make when rock star idols, uh, well, rock!

Invigorated by a brisk four-block walk from the hotel, I wilted upon seeing this sea of youthful humanity, quiet--ever so quiet--as if countdown had begun for a space shot. I wondered if my arrival in the park increased the average age there by a couple of years....

I was there because it's where ABC's Good Morning America telecast was scheduled that Friday in June. Pad in hand, I was directed to a small seating area at stage left. I jotted a note about the youngsters' quiet anticipation of Maroon Five, the featured musical group that day.

The name sounds more like a basketball team to me, but no, this is name for well-known guitar-plunkin', drum-beatin', song-singin' guys about whom I was formerly clueless.

The kids weren't.... the park was magnified by an aerial display, the likes of which I'd never seen.

Every few seconds, foam shapes, four feet wide and a foot thick, floated skyward. The "flogos" included shapes of angels, musical notes and stars, "Footless but not Debelched from a device

made by Snow Masters in Lexington, AL. (They reach heights of 20,000 feet and sometimes travel 30 miles before disintegration.)

Invented by a former magician, Francisco Guerra, these flying objects are composed of a water/air/helium/soap agent. They floated lazily over Manhattan, dotting a blue canopy that was a cloudless sky....

I was pumped, finally seeing the park I'd heard much about, then witnessing a contraption that clearly fits into the "what'll they think of next" category. What came next, though, was infinitely more special. In addition to pads, writers have ears.

I heard snippets of hushed conversation from folks in the row in front of me. There were five 16-year-old girls and a couple of moms. They sounded decidedly southern with good reason. They, like the big foam bubble machine, came from Alabama....

Seeing Diane Sawyer, Robin Roberts and Sam Champion "up close" was an intriguing prospect, but the "star" was seated directly in front of me. Her name is Mackenzie Derr.

She has experienced cancer twice in eight years, forfeiting a limb when Ewing's Sarcoma was found in her left knee as an eight-year-old third-grader. Last November, the same cancer was diagnosed in her right leg. Again, amputation was necessary.

Following her second surgery, she made a sign for her hospital door: "Footless but not DeFEETed!".....

Through it all, her faith, smile, endurance and determination sustained her and amazed others starting with her mom Ellen, dad Tom and 13-year-old brother Matthew.

The Life Inspiration Award from the American Cancer Society was awarded to Mackenzie following her first surgery in 2001.

She "made do," taking on the challenges of a prosthesis. Fond of dancing, she continued taking lessons.

Before the second surgery, she opted for a hair-cutting party, sending her 12-inch-long tresses to Locks of Love. (This is a charitable organization that makes wigs.)

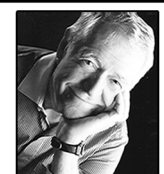
Oh, I should add that four friends with her in NYC were from an army of admirers who helped sustain her during tough times of chemo treatment. And the whole bunch was there thanks to a "wish" granted by Birmingham's Tum Tum Tree Foundation. They saw a Broadway play, lodged in the Trump Hotel, shopped until frenzied and visited landmarks, whisked around the city in a limousine....

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Tumbleweed Smith

THE PAINTED WALLS OF ALPINE

Tumbleweed Smith

No wall in Alpine is safe from artists. The town is loaded with murals. And a dedicated group of mural lovers figured out unique ways to pay for them. One of the 30 or so murals in Alpine is near the Sul Ross campus and shows the history of the Texas Rangers.

"We painted silver badges all the way around the mural," says Kerri Blackman, a stained glass artist and owner of the Kiowa gallery downtown. "People donated 250 dollars to put a name on a badge. It may have been a father, grandfather, uncle or anyone in the family who was a Texas Ranger. We also put the dates they served on the badge."

Kerri says it takes between 35 thousand and 50 thousand dollars to do a mural.

"Most of that goes to the artist. The rest goes to promoting the mural, selling t-shirts, taking care of the donors with a sponsor party and all kinds of stuff. It's a lot of work, but raising money is easy." The latest mural is one that shows Texas musicians.

"We wanted to pick 36 to 50 iconic Texas musicians. In order to raise money for this mural, we put a bounty on everybody's head. So Willie Nelson, Waylon Jennings, Bob Wills, they were all five thousand dollars. You go on down the list and we have some at 25 hundred, some at a thousand and some at five hundred. We raised over fifty thousand dollars in less than a month."

That mural is located near the railroad tracks. Alpine has an alley full of murals. It's called Art Alley.

"That got started by some of the downtown artists. Different owners of those buildings wanted to beautify the alley. It was kind of run down for a long time and then the Main Street program came in and fixed it up a bit and artists took the initiative and started doing the murals."

A lot of people walk though the alley. Others drive through. While we were slowly driving through it, Kerri was describing some of the murals.

"This one is a painting of the Big Bend Chihuahuan Desert and it has javelinas running along, a turkey, a mountain lion, a cactus and other desert plants. This particular one has ceramic figures attached to it. It's really amazing. Another one is called the postage stamp mural and contains about a dozen frames a foot by a foot and a half done by different artists. One of the favorites is a stylized sedan from the 50's titled Cruising the Big Bend. You'll see that our dumpsters are painted, too. They're really cute. Even the backs of the buildings on the alley are painted. Some have nighttime scenes with the moon and stars made of mosaics. The artists who created these did so as a gift to the community. The alley is a popular place for tourists. People have their pictures made standing by a mural.



Wildcats

2021 Sulphur Springs

SS
Wildcats

Wildcats

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Aug. 27-Wakeland- Here	Oct. 8- Royse City- Here
Sept. 3-Lovejoy-There (7:00)	Oct. 15-Corsicana-There
Sept. 10-Kaufman-There	Oct. 22-Greenville- Here
Sept. 17-Crandall- Here	Oct. 29- Forney- Here
Sept. 24-Ennis-There	Nov. 11-North Forney-There

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