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HIS COTTON PAYS FOR HIS GRAPES



Tumbleweed Smith

I had the opportunity to see a very clean, manicured and well maintained patch of ground north of Seminole that was filled with grape vines. Each vine seemed to take on human characteristics and stood like a trained soldier waiting for orders. "I take care of

Tumbleweed Smith my vineyard like it was my racehorse." John Friesen. "It stays in top shape." John is a successful cotton farmer and was considering

planting a pecan orchard but decided that would require too much water, so in 2014 he started growing grapes as a hobby. It quickly got out of hand. "Yeah. We've got over thirty thousand vines that produce 13 different types of grapes. Most of them go to wineries, but we also sell some table grapes to area grocery stores." John didn't know anything about wines when he started his vineyard, saying he just liked to grow stuff.

John, at age 43, is one determined farmer. When his

first grapes were ready to be harvested, he had a call from a winery wanting to buy some grapes. When the

winery manager learned that John's grapes were young he said he wasn't interested, that he was looking for some mature grapes. John asked the man "how do you know my grapes won't work for you? You need to come see my vineyard. I'll be glad to give you the harvest if you like the grapes. We don't have any other customers." So the man came, saw that John was serious about growing grapes, bought the harvest and said he wanted to be Friesen Vineyard's exclusive and only customer. John declined the offer but still sells grapes to that winery because it bought his first harvest. John sells to 4 award-winning wineries now and there's a waiting list of people wanting to buy his grapes. "But

we can't plant them and grow them fast enough."

says John. "We get up at 2 or 3 in the morning and start picking the grapes wearing headlamps. There'll be 60 or 70 people out there with scissors. It's dark and dead quiet except for all the scissors chopping away at the clusters. We pick by hand. If you want to go for the high-end wines that's what they like. There's a small window to get the best grapes. Even a day or two can make a big difference. We try to do it right. We're willing to work with people, do what they expect, hang the grapes longer, just do all the stuff that make the grapes better." John says he picks grapes in the morning because it's

The harvest starts in early September. "It beautiful,"

The grapes are loaded into refrigerated trucks soon after picking and delivered to wineries in Johnson City, Fredericksburg and Austin.

I asked John what he likes to grow most, cotton or grapes. "I'd much rather grow grapes but somebody's got to pay for the grapes. Cotton pays for the grapes for the time being.'

John's large house sits on a hill and has an extremely plush wine cellar. It is climate controlled and has close to a thousand bottles of wine in it.

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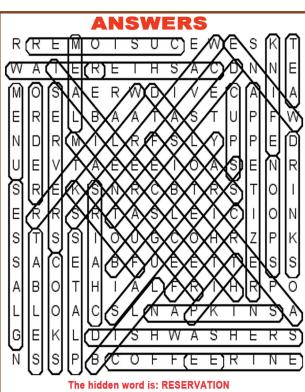
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Barbara Nell Sustaire

Barbara Nell (Roberts) Sustaire, age 90, of Saltillo, Texas, passed away Wednesday, November 13, 2024, at her home. She was born to Horace and Ollie Roberts on January 25, 1934, in Van, Texas.

Barbara married Joy Lee Sustaire in Purley, Texas, on March 9, 1957.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Joy Lee Sustaire; her daughter, Kristy Richey; her parents, Horace and Ollie Roberts; and her sister, Geneva Jolly. She was a member of Greenwood Baptist Church.

She is survived by her daughters, Brenda Williamson and Kim Brandon; grandchildren, Christopher and Carola Richey, Chase and Courtney Richey, C.J. and Geralda Richey, great grandchildren, Emery Richey, Emerson Richey, Evelyn Richey, Ethan Richey, Avery Richey, Gunner Richey, Gage Richey, and Andrew Richey; brothers, Bill and Della Roberts, Jack and Beverly Roberts; sisters, Patsy Elliott, Ilene and Bobby Joe Steele; numerous nieces, nephews and extended family.

A visitation was on Sunday, November 17, 2024, at Sam B. Harvey Funeral Home from 1:00 -2:00 p.m. and the Memorial service immediately followed at 2:00 p.m. with Dwaine Goodson officiating. Services entrusted to Sam B. Harvey Funeral Home.



Alice Hurley

May 26, 1950 — November 12, 2024

Graveside services for Alice Hurley, age 74, of Reilly Springs, Texas were held at 11:00 a.m. on Friday, November 15, 2024 at Nelta Cemetery. Visitation was held 30 minutes prior at the cemetery. Mrs. Hurley passed away at Carriage House Manor in Sulphur Springs, Texas on Tuesday, November 12, 2024.



Andrew Kniper

May 6, 1973 — November 3, 2024

A private family service for Andrew Kuiper, age 51, of Sulphur Springs, Texas, will be held at a later date. Mr. Kuiper passed away at his home on Sunday, November 3, 2024.

Andrew Kuiper was born on May 6, 1973, in Brisbane, Australia, to Reinhardt and Jakoba (Roos) Kuiper. Andrew was known to everyone as a very kind, helpful, and selfless person who will be truly missed. He found joy in making others smile and laugh. To know him, was to truly love him.

Andrew was survived by his daughters, Sydney Kuiper and Emily Miller; son, Ryan Kuiper; and his fiance, Megan Hosak. He was preceded in death by his parents, Reinhardt and Jakoba Kuiper.



Lisa Ruth Margaretta King

Lisa Ruth-Margaretta (Flanagan) King passed away at her home surrounded by her family on Wednesday, November 13, 2024, in Longview, Texas.

Lisa was born September 24,1952, in Wiesbaden, Germany to William Patterson and Margaret Nellie Morrey Flanagan. She was brought up in the Catholic church but became a member of the First Baptist Church in Tatum, Texas. She grew up in Scottsdale, Arizona.

She married Floyd L. King and they have been married almost 50 years, he survives, as well as her sons and their spouses, Charlie and Stephanie King, Wesley King and fiancii, Maizy; step-son, Marty Linder; her grandchildren, Ethan King, Alex King, Ciera King, Braiden Gripe, and Macey; her sisters, Susan Flanagan, Anne Francis and Leslie Holland; brother, John

Flanagan; her life-long friend, Cathy Wutkowski and other special friends, Dorothy Brazeal, Vickie and Don McGraw.

Lisa is preceded in death by her parents, William Patterson and Margaret Nellie Flanagan; brothers-in-law, Gary King, and Ray King. Lisa was a person of many attributes. She was strong in her love for her husband, Floyd. She dearly loved her sons, Charlie and Wesley. Her grandchildren were "the apple of her eye".

Graveside service was Saturday, November 16, 2024, 11 a.m. at McCrury Cemetery on County Road 1125, Bogata, Texas.

Services entrusted to Sam B. Harvey Funeral Home and online condolences maybe made.

Edovenia Johnson

March 21, 1954 — November 16, 2024

Graveside service for Edovenia Bayna Johnson, age 70 of Beeville, Texas will be held at 12:00 P.M. on Friday, November 22, 2024 at Old Tarrant Cemetery. There will be no formal visitation. Mrs. Johnson passed away on Saturday, November 16, 2024 at Citizens Medical Center.





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