



Owners of the Golden Homestead, from left, Cathy and Tony Pegues, pose on the outdoor patio with Business Manager Janna Castloo.

## How To Love Your Art and Eat It, Too

BY PAIGE EATON

**THE WALLS OF THE 1912 GOLDEN HOMESTEAD** building show their age, standing in stark contrast to the paint-splashed canvases of the traditional and modern art that adorns them. The building was once a bustling dry-goods store designed to serve the town of Golden, an early 1900s crossroads that swelled to a population of 650 as a railroad and farming community. Upon the one-two punch of abandonment of the railroad line that passed through, followed by the Great Depression, the population of Golden dwindled.

Unused, the infrastructure fell into disrepair, much of it crumbling to the ground. More than 100 years later, not many could see possibilities for the derelict portions that remained. It would take the eyes and the talents of an artist to dream of a resurrection for such a dusty old heap.

Cathy Pegues was that artist with the vision and creative mind, and her husband, Tony, lent his carpentry and building skills. “The intention was to have a home base, primarily for me, that would be a workshop, a painting studio and a gallery,” Cathy explains about the refurbishment project that they undertook in 2009 for the Golden Homestead.

Cathy, along with her artist cousin, Karen Musgraves, had once before refurbished a 1913-era building in Golden to serve as gallery and studio that they co-owned. When their traveling schedules consumed them, they sold it. But when the time became ripe for a local studio again, she and Tony decided on the fixer-upper across the street.

Cathy says that after they bought the building and inspected the boarded-up structure, they saw that it was in such rough shape, they thought, “‘What have we done?’ When we first started, the building had trees growing in it. We started one board at a time and kept at it,” she says. “Except for the concrete work, we did the entire interior ourselves, leaving as much of the original as possible.”

As they uncovered various pieces of furniture, Cathy rehabbed those, too. There’s a counter, original to the building, that now serves as a bar and buffet area. Cathy kept much of the patina and old-world style, but her artistic side spilled over it with some restrained decorative brushstrokes that add a little sass and color.

Beautiful rugs are scattered about, to bring warmth and

color to a space that might otherwise be austere. It's only after careful inspection that one may discover the rugs are faux—made of paint instead of fiber.

Other charming and inventive discoveries can be found in and about this artists' haven. From the ceiling, amid the gallery lights, hangs a grand but humble chandelier that Cathy fashioned from small tree limbs and twigs. It is intricate and delicate, as only natural elements can be, yet stately. Visitors will also spy "Twigger," a grand, aptly named horse sculpture that grazes on the lawn, also fashioned by Cathy from limbs and twigs. On the north lawn, a twiggy handcrafted sidekick, a longhorned steer, stands sentry.

The aforementioned art pieces are mere trimmings for the art that is for sale. Four artists are represented in the gallery. Cathy's oil-on-canvas works are mostly equestrian-themed and usually large scale. Karen's art runs the gamut from pop—such as her large-scale, electric Willie Nelson portrait—to more realistic western landscapes and still-life pieces. Some of her more popular paintings, including Willie, and some beautiful East Texas wildflowers, are reprinted on throw pillows. The gallery also holds the works of Cathy's parents, Joyce and Barney Terrell. Joyce is a retired art teacher and creates watercolors and fiber arts. Barney is a master woodworker and fiber artist.

As a gallery and studio, the space works, and it has fledged to become more than Cathy first imagined.

"One day, someone walked in and said, 'Would you rent this place?'" Tony recalls. "We said we weren't quite set up for that, and he said he didn't mind. It was good enough for him. And that is kind of how it started." That was the start of a special events business.

"It sparked an idea, and we thought maybe we needed to go that direction," Cathy says. "It's evolved ever since."

In the events center, the couple has hosted weddings, showers, anniversary dinners and various parties. They have hosted pop-up dinners for those who have become loyal fans of the cooking and ambience of the Homestead.

The two of them could not do it all alone, though, especially because Tony is a full-time banker and Cathy must practice her art. So Cathy asked her lifelong friend, Janna Castloo, to help out as the business manager.

"We decided to do this together," Cathy says, explaining that Janna is the ideal person for the job because she possesses strong organizational skills. She's also a distant cousin, hailing from the same long line of great cooks as Cathy. That's important because everything served on Golden Homestead's tables is homemade.

For events, the trio of Tony, Cathy and Janna have developed a "cowboy cuisine" menu that includes satisfying favorites such as smoked pork, beef, sausage and chicken, chicken parmesan, cube steak, vegetable sides, and salad with homemade dressing and homemade bread. Cathy says they will work with their customers on any menu items. Recipes are stacked high and run from old family favorites to inventive and fun appetizers like the often-requested salad-on-a-stick. Because the Homestead is not a restaurant, the food is always





bought fresh, close to the event date. Cathy also says that no matter what they serve, they like to apply her dad’s old adage: “Eating is not a necessity; it’s an art.”

In essence, they want their food and the total experience at the Homestead to leave guests feeling comfortable, satisfied and enriched.

The Homestead is both health- and food service-certified (just like a regular restaurant), but neither Cathy nor Janna have ever worked in the restaurant business. So the two act more like hostesses.

“We try to make the experience more of a guest experience,” Cathy says. “We want our guests to relax and enjoy themselves. I want everybody to have as much fun as we try to have.”

The Homestead can comfortably seat 60 inside and, using all of the property or the addition of tents, can expand up to 250. Prices per person range from \$16 to \$30, depending on the fare selected. All meals come with tea and coffee. Alcohol is permitted, but it must be provided by the customer.

“One fun thing we do on occasion are pop-up dinners,” Janna says. “I send details to our large email list with the menu, price, date and time. The first 50 people that respond get a seat. We do that as often as we can, and we’ll sell out within 24 hours. We approach it like a cruise-ship setting, and we seat people at tables of four to six. You get to meet people, and some have become really good friends.”

Cathy chimed in, “With those pop-up dinners, we try to do something totally different than what we normally do. We try to get creative. It’s a three- to four-course meal. We’ve

had huge successes.”

The Homestead also hosts other events during the year. They have an artisan sale the weekend after Thanksgiving, during which local artists, spinners, weavers, potters, woodworkers, silversmiths and others sell their wares. The Homestead also opens up during Golden’s annual Sweet Potato Festival in the fall.

The crew is also working on two new events. Toward the end of April, they are planning on hosting an all-women’s vintage caravan group. The plan is for the group of about 25 caravans to open up their decorative trailers to the public for viewing with a night of musical entertainment. Later in the year, they plan to join Olivia Sadler Thompson, owner of Golden Grocery, to host a fundraiser—featuring all local farm-to-table food—to raise funds for the local chapter of the National FFA



Organization.

Being the full-time operators, Cathy, Tony and Janna stay busy; and depending on the size of the event, they’ll get a little help from Tom, Janna’s husband, or Cathy’s parents.

“We try to keep it in the family because we know we can depend on them,” Cathy says.

Art lovers and food lovers can learn more about the Golden Homestead, see pictures and read about upcoming events at the website, [goldenhomestead.com](http://goldenhomestead.com), or via Facebook.

Golden Homestead is served by Wood County Electric Cooperative and is located at the crossroads of FM 779 and FM 1799 in Golden. For booking inquiries, call Janna Castloo at (903) 638-6007. To request a viewing of the art gallery, call Cathy Pegues at (903) 768-2087.

# Coleman To Represent WCEC in Washington

**SPRING COLEMAN, AGE 16** and a junior at Mineola High School, won first place in Wood County Electric Cooperative's Youth Tour essay contest. As the contest winner, she will represent WCEC at the week-long Government-in-Action Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., in June.

To win, Coleman submitted an essay titled, "My Co-op, My Local Human Connection." In it, she described how, beyond the delivery of electricity, WCEC improves lives in the region it serves. She outlined several ways that the cooperative invests in the community, including supporting the local chapter of the National FFA Organization, providing scholarship programs and sponsoring students to attend a leadership camp.

An honor-roll student at Mineola High School, Coleman plays the saxophone in the band, is a varsity cheerleader and is a class representative on the student council. When she is not busy with school activities, Coleman spends her time working at the local skating rink. She says she also enjoys reading and writing poetry. She has published three poems, one of which received honorable mention in a national poetry contest. She is also an active member of Smith Chapel United Methodist Church.

Coleman is the daughter of WCEC members Monte and Summer Coleman. "We are so proud of Spring," her mother says. "She worked very hard on her essay, and I could not be more pleased for her. We can't wait for her to experience our nation's capital, and I look forward to hearing all about it."

Coleman will travel to Washington, D.C., with approximately 125 other Youth Tour winners sponsored by other Texas cooperatives, where they will join fellow students from across the nation. During Youth Tour, she will have the opportunity to meet congressional representatives and visit historic memorials and cultural centers.

"The Youth Tour is a signature program of electric cooperatives," WCEC CEO/General Manager Debbie Robinson said. "Past attendees have called it the trip of a lifetime. As such, we are extremely proud of this program and all of the youth that have represented our cooperative as delegates. Over the years, we've watched past attendees blossom as part of this wonderful experience, and I look forward to seeing Spring enjoy the same."



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