

# LUCAS *Estate Life*

November 2017

A SOCIAL MAGAZINE EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE RESIDENTS OF LUCAS

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE:**  
History of Lucas: Part 2  
Young Athlete: Tracy Kemlo  
Plus More!



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# Now That Fall Is in Full Swing...

Shelby Brooks, Lucas resident and editor



Hello, Lucas Community!

I hope you have been enjoying the first several issues of the magazine. There have been so many great stories for us to share! Thank you for all the positive comments and article ideas that you've sent our way.

The weather in Texas has cooled down (even though we've seen some rain). Get outside and enjoy the weather while it lasts. Though November is often busy, it is still a good time to hang out with friends or family and spend time together.

This issue includes the tales of Prince Ali and Annabelle, the continued history of this little town we love, and more! Find a nice porch chair (or patch of grass) and read up on the people, places and pets in Lucas.



Shelby Brooks

*Shelby Brooks*

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## LUCAS SCHOOLS PART 2



AS PREVIOUSLY NOTED, THE LURE OF CHEAP, ABUNDANT LAND BROUGHT EARLY SETTLERS TO THE AREA WE CALL LUCAS. THEY BUILT COMMUNITIES BASED ON FAMILY, FAITH AND FARMING. THEY RECOGNIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION. EDUCATION CLASSES WERE OFTEN HELD IN CHURCHES AND HOMES. “SCHOOLING” WAS IMPORTANT ENOUGH TO STRUGGLING FAMILIES THAT THEY PROVIDED LAND, MATERIALS AND LABOR FOR SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND SCRAPED TOGETHER THE \$1.00 TO \$1.50 PER MONTH FOR TUITION TO HELP PAY THE \$30 A MONTH SALARY FOR THE TEACHER. FARMING COMMUNITIES OFTEN DEVELOPED NEAR WATER SOURCES, AND SCHOOLS HAD TO BE CLOSE ENOUGH FOR WALKING OR HORSE-DRAWN WAGONS—ONE OF THE REASONS WHY THERE WERE SO MANY SCHOOLS IN OUR AREA. THE LAW OF 1854 MADE POSSIBLE A “FREE” PUBLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM THROUGH PAYING TAXES. IN 1874, COLLIN COUNTY RANKED 12TH IN THE STATE FOR THE NUMBER OF “SCHOLASTICS” (GRAYSON COUNTY WAS #1).

According to the April 1880 issue of *The McKinney Advocate*, Collin County was home to 100 school communities. Between 1905 and 1918, this number grew to 162. But with the improvement of roads adding greater mobility, the advances of mechanization in farming, the growth of the automotive industry and the effects of the Great Depression, the schools consolidated together and the number of Collin County school districts dwindled to 20 by 1957.



Schools were named according to donors, the closest creek (i.e. Willow Springs), the community’s common name or even a description. Some of the

more “uncommon” names of schools in Collin County included Sunbeam, Frognot, Lick Springs (near a salt lick frequented by animals and now part of Lovejoy ISD), Lick Skillet, Swayback (its roof sagged in the middle), Hog Waller (the Faulkner school) (pictured above), Ketch Any (located 3½ miles east of McKinney), Hide Out, Martin Box, Seven Points, Squeezepenny, White Elephant, and “Who’d a Thought It” (the nickname for the Stinson/Parker School). Early schools in the Lucas area included Willow Springs (later becoming the Lucas School), Forest Grove (later consolidating with Lick Springs to form the Lovejoy School), Winningkoff, Stinson School, and Faulkner School.

The Faulkner Free School was located off present-day West Lucas Road approximately a third of a mile east of Angel Parkway/Dilhaey. Those who attended school here often referred to as Hog

Waller (Hogwallow) or Pig Waller. The name came from the mud holes that formed near the one-room schoolhouse. A story is told about an April Fool’s prank where the students walked two miles south across the fields to the Parker (Stinson) school house. The property was abandoned from 1917-1920 and the building was moved in the 1930’s to Parker to be used as a teacherage.

The Stinson School, also known as the Parker School, was located near the intersection of Parker Road and Stinson Road on land donated by James and Margaret Biggs Stinson, the parents of ten children. The land was donated because Mrs. Stinson wanted a school for her children to be near their home. It was a one-room schoolhouse with about 90 students. It got its nickname from a passerby who exclaimed, “Who’d a thought it!” when he saw the neighbors building the school. In 2001 Stinson Elementary School in the Plano Independent School District was named in honor of the Stinson family.

According to Gwendyn Pettit in her *Allen American* series, “Between the Creeks,” there was also an early school known as the McKinney School House located near the intersection of FM 1378 and West Lucas Road. It was named for Elder John M. McKinney in the 1870’s. J. H. Sneed said, “It was a box house 16 X 40 feet with a fireplace in the west end of it, a row of benches along the north wall and also along the south wall. Split log and plank seats, there was no desk except a crude one along one end of the house where the children were permitted to sit when learning to write. Got water from a well.” Families attending included Fitzhughs, Sniders, Cooks, Sneed, Spurgins, McKinneys, Biggs, McMillans, Coffeys and Williams.

In *History of the Lucas School*, Mrs. John Shipp stated “A school was established at Forest Grove in July 1884. James M. Snider, the husband of Sarah Jane Fitzhugh Snider, gave a plot northwest of the Forest Grove church lot for the already established Forest Grove School.” This was on the current Forest Grove Road near the Fitzhugh Cemetery and the church. Because many of its students came from Orchard Gap, the school was also known as the Orchard Gap School. A few miles northeast was another school called Lick Springs (located near today’s Sloan Creek Middle School).



As roads improved in the early 1900’s and mechanization changed daily life, the rural population declined leading to the consolidation of schools districts. Discussions between the Lick Springs School and the Forest Grove School led to the formation of the Lovejoy

School. While neither community wanted to lose their school, the property owners finally signed a petition to consolidate. A 1966 article entitled “Lovejoy School” states: “On July 2, 1917, the Lovejoy Consolidated Common School District, Number 32, was established combining the older Forest Grove and Lick Springs schools.” The school opened on land purchased from the Fitzhugh family located midway between the two schoolhouses, the location of the current Lovejoy Administration Building (known as the “Red School House”). The combined district was named “Lovejoy” for Mrs. J.L. Lovejoy, a prominent McKinney resident and civic leader who took an interest in the school, donating books and money. In 1919, the Lovejoy School was described as being one of the most modern schools in Collin County.

The original Lovejoy School building (see photo above) was white and consisted of four classrooms for grades 1-9. Sheds outside housed the horses used for transportation to the school. By 1932, 100 students attended the Lovejoy School with three grades in three of the rooms. Older students were encouraged to help their younger classmates. Longtime Lucas resident Doyle Hendricks tells of being paid a nickel a day to go early and start the fire in the stove on cold winter days. The stove used coal as fuel. The school was lit by coal oil light and then later by white gas.

A tornado struck the Lovejoy School on Sunday, April 27, 1958. Although the building appeared to have been destroyed with the roof blown off and other structural damage, the community was determined to rebuild their schoolhouse. The students and teachers were sent to the Lucas School until the building was repaired and made better than before the storm with the addition of inside restrooms and a cafeteria-auditorium on the west side.



According to an article entitled “Willow Springs School Educated Kids in the Late 1800’s” written by Gwendyn Pettit for the *Allen American*, “On May 27, 1874, John and Martha A. Spurgin sold for a token \$1, three acres of land to J. M. McKinney, Aaron Snider, and

Jacob Faulkner, trustees of School District No. 20. Located at the corner of current day Estelle Lane and Gold Dust Trail, the school was named Willow Springs because of the spring that flowed out of a grove of willow trees. In 1884, Willow Springs became a public school. In *History of the Lucas School*, Mrs. John Shipp stated, “Around 1904 or 1905, because of the mud and the creeks the children had to cross, the Willow Springs School was moved with teams to a higher plot of ground donated by J.E. Stratton and Noah Cox. This acreage is where the old fire station stood with the original Lucas City Hall and where the Christian Church parsonage now stands. Although the school had moved uptown, it was still known as Willow Springs. Former teacher Clarence L. Horton of Farmersville says the school was known as Willow Springs when he went there in 1922, but before he left Lucas in 1936, the name had been changed to the Lucas School.”

The Lucas School building had four large rooms downstairs used for classrooms divided into primary and intermediate ages and included a kitchen and a playroom for recess. The upper floor consisted of an auditorium with a stage and two large closets where the Woodmen of the World (an insurance and fraternal group) stored their things. There was a sign on the upper part of the building that said W.O.W. One year all the kids got skates for Christmas and the playroom was used as a skating rink. Each classroom had potbellied, coal-burning stoves for heating and two large closets used as the cloakroom and the bookroom. A trophy case was located on the wall between the bookroom and the cloakroom in the northeast or “big” room. It is said that many trophies were earned but no one knows what happened to them.

The Willow Springs School became the heart of the Lucas Community. For sports teams, they had basketball, football, baseball (see photo) and softball. They competed with other schools including Parker, Murphy, and their archrival Lovejoy each spring for a first-place trophy. It is said that farmers stopped their work in the fields to watch the games. During recess, the students bounced the basketball, played tag football and participated in other games such as Tag, Red Rover and Hop Scotch. It took everyone in the school to field a softball team and they only had one or two gloves among them. Club meetings and holiday parties were also held at the school building with students often performing plays at Christmas and at the end of the school year (see photo). When





Lake Lavon was being built, the Corps of Engineers erected a tower in front of the school to help with the surveying for the lake. It is said the Lucas School kids loved climbing the tower.

Like most schools of this era, nine grades were taught in the school and most of these students went to either Plano or McKinney after finishing at Lucas School. In 1963, both Lucas and Lovejoy Schools had so few students that they were in danger of closing, so they voted to consolidate. Since Lovejoy had the better building, it was chosen for the area school, and the Lucas children were bused the four or so miles to school. There were two teachers for the consolidated district in 1963 and a third teacher was hired in 1965.

The Lucas School was used as a Community Center after its closure as a school. Unfortunately, on May 8, 1970, the building burned down. It is believed that the fire started in a construction trailer by a cigarette and spread quickly due to high winds and dry spring weather. It was impossible to save the beloved building that held such fond memories for so many.



Today, residents of Lucas are blessed to be part of excellent school communities. While the majority of our citizens reside in the Lovejoy Independent School District, many of our students attend the fine schools in Allen ISD, Plano ISD, McKinney ISD, Wylie ISD

and Princeton ISD as well as local private schools and homeschools. One common feature that today's Lucas Community members share with the early Lucas settlers is their love for family and desire for their children to obtain a quality education.

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## kids 2 kids

In the words of **Kinley** and **Braden Chaney**, Lucas residents  
Photos by **Candidly Captured Portraits**

# Battle Bots And Baby Dolls

This month we are featuring a brother-sister team: Kinley and Braden Chaney. They love getting to go to school, especially when they get to go outside and play. But they also enjoy Science class, especially the cool experiments. Kinley will start soccer soon; their team is called "The Emojis." Her brother, Braden, is already really involved in sports and has lots of trophies in baseball. At home, Kinley likes playing pretend baby dolls and watching "Mickey Mouse" or "Tom & Jerry." Her brother, Braden, on the other hand, likes playing pretend battle bots because of the show he really likes called "Battle Bots." He also likes designing things, with his huge collection of Legos.

Their dad recently built them a playhouse outside since both kids really wanted one. Braden even kept designing a playhouse for him and Kinley, so they are very excited to have a playhouse of their own. Hope you enjoy getting to know these two kids! Both are balls of energy when they get talking, and they love talking about their favorite things. For Kinley, that might be eating pickles with her dinner; for Braden, it might be proudly rattling off all the planets in order.

**Name:** Kinley  
**Age:** Three  
**Grade:** Pre-school  
**Brothers or Sisters:** Big brother, Braden  
**Sports I play:** Starting soccer soon  
**Musical instrument I play:** None yet  
**Musical instrument I want to learn:** Guitar  
**Something unique about me:** I'm the only non-brown-eyed person in my family (green).  
**When I grow up I'm going to be:** A mermaid

**FAVORITES**  
**Activities/Hobbies:** Playing in the playroom with Braden  
**Animal:** Pony  
**Color:** Pink and purple  
**Food:** Guacamole  
**Movie:** *Frozen*  
**Music:** Soundtrack from *Frozen*  
**Place to play:** Playground at Chick-fil-A  
**Sports teams:** Braden's baseball team (Leopards)  
**Subject in school:** Science  
**TV show:** *Goldie and Bear*  
**Vacation:** Colorado!!



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**Name:** Braden  
**Age:** Five  
**Grade:** Kindergarten  
**Brothers or Sisters:** Little sister, Kinley  
**Sports I play:** Baseball, golf, soccer, football, and basketball  
**Musical instrument I play:** None yet  
**Musical instrument I want to learn:** Guitar and drums  
**Something unique about me:** I'm the only right-handed person in my family.  
**When I grow up I'm going to be:** An engineer like my Dad

### FAVORITES

**Activities/Hobbies:** Making paper air planes  
**Animal:** George, my pet cat  
**Color:** Yellow and orange  
**Food:** Mac n' Cheese  
**Movie:** *The Nut Job*  
**Music:** Bruno Mars  
**Place to play:** The Lego Store  
**Sports teams:** Texas Rangers  
**Subject in school:** Math  
**TV show:** *Battle Bots*  
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## family spotlight

In the words of the **Price family**, Lucas residents  
Photos by **Aimee Louise Photography**

# Food, Family And A FOOD FIGHT



Aimee Louise

*I first have to apologize to the families we cut in front of to have our family featured. SO RUDE!!!*

For those of you who know me, I'm the last person I would want to be featured, for no other reason than one could perceive my intentional use of the magazine as a bit selfish. After all, who owns a magazine and decides to put his or her family on the cover? This guy apparently.

Truth be told, the only reason I decided to do so is because of the countless requests from other Lucas residents, many of whom I didn't even know, wanting me to share OUR story.

So, a deal was made. My friend and editor of our Fairview magazine, Katherine Ponder, who was equally as resistant to the idea of being featured, despite hearing the same from Fairview residents, agreed that we would do this together, over a mock Thanksgiving dinner. The idea was, Norman Rockwell meets the Griswolds.

The funniest part about doing this "Thanksgiving Gone Wrong" cover was we actually got to use our formal dining room, which for the other 364 days out of the year doubles as a kids play room. Additionally, for the first time since Shannon and I got married in 2009, we actually used our wedding china. Yep, we broke out the good stuff for these pics, people! We weren't messing around.

A bit about us...

Shannon was born and raised just outside of Buffalo, New York in the Town of Hamburg. I was born and raised in a small suburb east of Cleveland, Ohio, in Pepper Pike.

We are both from large families. Shannon has three sisters and is the middle child (which explains a lot), and I'm one of three brothers and the baby of the family (ok, so maybe that explains a little too).

Ironically, Shannon and I grew up only two hours from one another. She would often come to Cleveland for swim meets, and I would often go to New York to ski in a small town just outside Buffalo called Ellicottville at Holiday Valley Ski Resort.

It's funny to think that every time her family drove to Cleveland, they stopped and ate at a popular delicatessen called Corky and Lenny's where my family ate twice a week. And every time we drove North to go skiing, Shannon's family was probably doing the same.

Shannon later graduated from Frontier High School and went on to the University of Massachusetts (UMASS) where she swam on an athletic scholarship for four years. I graduated from Beachwood High School, and attended The Ohio State University.

Shannon graduated from UMASS with a degree in education and sociology, later finishing her graduate degree in administration at

Arizona State University. I attended The Ohio State University and Arizona State University with a degree in communications and relations.

It wasn't until 2002, while living in Scottsdale, Arizona that Shannon and I would meet, through a mutual friend. We started dating and soon after we moved in together. Shannon started her teaching career in Surprise, Arizona while I took a position with a local business magazine. It wasn't until 2006 that the magazine was acquired by Gannett Inc. that I persuaded Shannon to move to Dallas, where I was going to help my father and step brother with the family business. Shannon, on the recommendation from family who lived in Lucas, interviewed with Lovejoy ISD, where she remains today, teaching 3rd grade at Puster Elementary. If you're keeping up with the math, we've lived in Lucas going on 12 years.

I would later decide to part ways from the family business, during a little downturn in the economy that would later become known as the GFC (Global Financial Crisis). My family's business at the time was in real estate, specifically development and new home construction, and with the death of my father during this period, I decided that it was time for me to move on.

With a brief pit stop working for the great Rick Wells ("Thank you Rick for the opportunity!"), I decided, because family was so fun to work for, I would work with my oldest brother, who was a venture capitalist and was involved in 13 different businesses.



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The challenge, though, was that the majority of his projects were based overseas, in Australia. So for five years, I traveled monthly from Dallas to Sydney and Brisbane, spending about four weeks there at a time and then coming home for one week. At first, it wasn't that bad, travel-wise, but this all soon changed with the birth of our first child, Nora, in the summer of 2013.

The writing was on the wall, as they say, and while my responsibilities and opportunities in Australia were great, the challenges of a long distance marriage and parenting were not. We were faced with some difficult decisions. I wanted to move there but Shannon was resistant. Something was going to have to give, and despite how great work was, I realized that no amount of money would replace the moments I was missing, as a husband and as a father. As Nora began to grow older, leaving her each time became more and more difficult. Something had to change and that something was me.

After many difficult conversations, the decision was made: we were going to put our family first. Shannon always asked, "Can't you find a career closer to home, at least in one of the 50 states? Can't you find something 'local'?" Careful what you wish for because it was during one of my brief stints home that I was first introduced to N2 Publishing and the rest is history.

Get to know your neighbors better by having your family featured in the next available issue! Email us at [jonathan.price@n2pub.com](mailto:jonathan.price@n2pub.com).

What started with our Fairview publication in November of 2015 has turned into Lucas as well, launching in August. Additionally, outside of my own publications, I am a Sales Director for N2 Publishing, responsible for 54 other magazines here in the DFW Market.

As I joke with Shannon today, "How's this for local? Is this local enough?"

What was a difficult decision to come to, in hindsight was a no-brainer. We are so incredibly fortunate to have two beautiful daughters and reside in such an incredible community. Our oldest daughter, Nora, is four years old and attends Pre-K at Lovejoy. She loves swimming, soccer and all things Disney. Our youngest is Paige, who's going on eighteen months, born in May of 2016, and she loves the water as well but has the greatest enjoyment in playing with her sister.

For my family and I, Lucas is home. It has been a great place to raise our family, my wife adores her job teaching at Lovejoy, and it has afforded me the opportunity to start a local business. Why we moved here in the first place is very different than why we live here now, but as they say, all things happen for a reason. #ThankYouReason and #ThankYouLucas.

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## precious pets

Shelby Brooks, Lucas  
resident and editor

# Prince Ali's Grand Entrance On Annabelle

**This month we are featuring some very unique precious pets: Annabelle the Sheep and Prince Ali the Rooster. Rebecca Pettit and her family enjoy their funny antics, particularly around dinnertime when they come up near the house.**

Both animals are friendly. If you have food, Annabelle will make herself your best friend. She will trail along after you, and she loves attention, especially a good chin scratch. Prince Ali even lets people pet him sometimes; he isn't aggressive like the typical rooster.

In addition to Annabelle and Prince Ali, the backyard barnyard includes several chickens who keep them company. Annie, the sheepdog, doesn't mind the chickens or the sheep, and all of the animals love it when leftovers are thrown their way for a treat.

While the Pettit family eats dinner, the chickens and sheep actually mill around at the back door, hoping for those tasty leftover dinner scraps. One night, the family looks over and notices Prince Ali nonchalantly standing on top of Annabelle's back.

"The kids laugh so hard when this happens," says Rebecca Pettit. "From then on, we often see the duo walking around the yard this way." Prince Ali enjoys his free ride, and once, the family even saw him perched on top of Annabelle's head.

Prince Ali is a young Ameraucana rooster, not yet turned one year old. *Aladdin* is a favorite Disney movie in the Pettit household, and

that was the first thought that came to mind when they saw him on top of Annabelle's back.

Prince Ali got his name from the scene when Aladdin rides into town on an elephant's back. You know the scene. A big, long parade. A grand entrance, right? Then, the genie belting out, "Prince Ali! Fabulous he! Ali Ababwa..." (Take a moment to sing it out loud.)

Prince Ali (the rooster) is fancy, too, and enjoys his royal ride. The Pettit family often sings the song when they see the pair (sheep and rooster) taking a stroll. Annabelle, a one-year-old Dorset sheep, came with her name, but it fits for her to pal up with Annie, the sheepdog.

They inherited Annabelle from one of Rebecca's cousins after retiring from the 4H club. Annabelle used to be a show sheep! Maybe the rooster chose well on a royal ride. Prince Ali arrived at their house in a batch of chicks (who knew a rooster snuck in?).

"Annabelle is more like a big dog than a sheep; she loves living among the chickens," says Rebecca. "Prince Ali rides around on her back, and she never seems to mind. Our family just loves the relationship that Annabelle and Prince Ali have with one another."



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## making a difference

By **Victoria Howard**, Lucas resident

# save lucas recycling



I have lived the majority of my life in Lucas. I remember when the roads were gravel, when we had party lines ringing at 5 a.m. on a Saturday, and when all men wore Cowboy hats, which they tipped when appropriate. Cowboy gentility reigned supreme, and it was no façade.

When we would drive our clunky 1978 box of a van down the road, praying we wouldn't be run off by a local gravel truck, all the oncoming drivers would pass by and wave. We would wave in turn. It was unthinkable not to comply. I actually still do this myself, although I get strange looks now.

By 1987 it was a common fact in our house that recycling mattered. Doyle Hendricks still drove his pickup truck, with tall wooden sides attached, around Lucas and picked up everyone's garbage, but curbside recycling wasn't a blip on anyone's radar. No matter. We would save our recycling: papers, glass, and cardboard. Arguments would ensue about who had to load the truck with our weekly stash. No one wanted to be the recipient of the stale rinse water that never quite made it out of the soda or beer cans. A dousing or two of stagnant bilge squeaking in our flip flops was enough to make anyone think twice. My dad would swear about all of the "crap your mother keeps," but he'd load the truck, begrudgingly, and help take the recycling. We replayed this scenario for years. It was Saturday. It was a ritual. This ritual has now evolved.

In 2002, Barnes WDS started curbside trash and recycling services for the city of Lucas. The August 2005 Lucas City Newsletter published that "...7.81 tons of recycled material was diverted from the landfill...[with] 156 households participating..." (p. 3). In July 2017, Barnes reported that more than 20 tons of recycled material were diverted from the landfill involving 761 households that participated.

Recycling in Collin County has exploded since I was a kid schlepping our recycling every Saturday. Now every town in Collin County has curbside recycling...except Lucas. The evolution of recycling in the last 30 years, from those of us puttering around each and every Saturday to those of us relying on our curbside

recycling service, is remarkable. In 2017, 58% more of Lucas residents voluntarily recycled each and every month than voted in our May election. Recycling has become an ingrained practice in our town. Even more so than voting. We are dependent on our curbside recycling service the same way we depend on our curbside trash services.

"You recycle people are late to the game," one opposing City Council Member told me at the July 6th council meeting, slated to discuss curbside recycling. At the time, I had spent months researching the reasons why and how Lucas was no longer continuing with a curbside recycling service. I had recycling statistics; I had approximate recycling rates from the three biggest recycling vendors in the area; and I had spoken with the Mayor, City Planner, City Secretary, and various Council members. And as much as the dissenting voice of that council member rankled me, he's right. Recycling is considered, by many, to be inconsequential. To some, recycling is as optional as a sport, a movie, or a magazine to be picked up and put back down again. In that one sentence, many views of recycling were condensed into one: "It's a game." But I assure you: it is no game.

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) published a State of the Region Recycling Report in 2017. In this report, it states that "...35% of monitored active and inactive... landfills have detected hazardous leaks in Texas, including eight active and seven inactive landfills in DFW" (p. 9).

What do these dry statistics have to do with recycling? Everything. Within 15 miles of Lucas is an already state-permit-approved future landfill site. The CRWC construction waste landfill is a 147-acre site located on University Drive. Although currently inactive, a letter to the Collin County Courthouse written in April 2015 says that "CRWC anticipates the initiation of construction and operation of the facility in the Spring of 2016" (p. 1). While this has yet to manifest, it's apparent that it's only a matter of time before CRWC continues with their plans.

The TCEQ report, prepared by the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee, reports that The North Texas Municipal Water

District landfills in both McKinney and Wylie have had open groundwater contamination investigations conducted by the state. Notable chemicals detected were: Chlorobenzene, 1,2 Dichloroethylene, and metals.

The less recycling accessibility we have, the more need for future landfills there will be. TCEQ reports that "in the North Central Texas region alone, 9.6 million tons of waste were disposed of in landfills in 2015, the highest out of 24 different regions, accounting for almost 30% of the state's total waste" (p. 1). At this rate, our 21 active area landfills have a remaining life of less than 40 years—and this doesn't account for our growing population.

It is because of this looming threat that I have started the group, Save Lucas Recycling. We are actively petitioning to convince the city council that we must have a weekly curbside recycling service. We are determined to bring recycling services back to our curbs. We think all residents should have a convenient, responsible option for disposing of reusable materials. We don't want new landfills built near our community, and we know the best way to prevent this waste is to conserve and reuse our resources. This is no small task, so we will need many voices to be raised at City Hall.

As of October 1st, the city government has no public plans to move forward with any curbside recycling services. We can



change this by actively participating with our local government. This begins with writing letters to those on the city council, signing the petition that Save Lucas Recycling is circulating throughout town, and telling anyone that will listen that recycling matters to our way of life.

Lucas residents should not sit idly by. Our community has to be vigilant and ward off threats of wasted resources, water pollution, and landfill expansions. We are the unusual place that still celebrates two-lane roads, large trees with spreading canopies, and open spaces. We are stewards of our land, and we know how special it is. The city I see now, as opposed to the one I grew up with, is not so different, but we have grown. We are now beginning to recognize the need for stewardship, conservation, and environmentalism—although some cowboys might scoff at such a word.

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## resident spotlight: small comforts go a long way

### a duffel bag drive for foster children through mybelongings

Shelby Brooks, Lucas resident and editor

For foster children, it can be scary to arrive in a strange, new place, especially without the tangible things that make you feel at home, like your favorite stuffed animal or comfy pajamas and socks for bedtime.

my BELONGings, a 501(c)(3) charitable foundation, began with the idea of putting together duffel bags of clothes, books, toiletries, and stuffed animals so that foster children can feel comfortable that first night.

Founder Kalli Britton started the organization as a "small act with a big impact... providing comfort to children entering foster care" ([www.mybelongings.org](http://www.mybelongings.org)). It has really grown into its own as an organization; the total number of gifted duffels reached 1,850 as of September this year.

Kalli shares the story behind myBELONGings on the "About Us" page of the website. To get a sense of the impact that these duffel bags can have

on the children, here's the story, in her words, as follows:

"As foster parents, our children arrived with nothing. We would have fun making late night runs loading the kids up with what they might need immediately. However, we quickly learned this was not how things usually happened.

"As our children's case managers would make their monthly visits, we would load the managers up with clothes for them to take to other foster kids. This became a treasured resource.

"In talking with a close friend (who is a strong, brilliant woman, with a hugely successful career) about the idea of my BELONGings, she began to cry. She could barely get out the words to say how important she felt this cause was.

"She shared that when she was in foster care, there was a stuffed monkey that meant everything to her. The comfort that monkey provided to her as a terrified child was truly immeasurable and to this day the thought of him stirs great emotion.

"Hearing this, it became clear there was important work to do concern-

ing providing comfort to children in crisis." ([www.mybelongings.org](http://www.mybelongings.org))

Kalli's organization has spurred the springing up of several duffel bag drives in various towns across the United States; myBELONGings sends the duffel bags/tags and people from the town can donate to help fill up the bags.

Lucas resident Beth Denniston recently held a duffel bag drive for kids in Texas, filling up 10 bags and 24 backpacks with school supplies. Lucas community members have also contributed by making donations to help fill up the duffel bags.

It all started when she saw a post on Facebook from her friend, Lisa Flynn Sellari. Inspired by myBELONGings, Lisa has done several duffel bag drives for foster children in the Florida area, and it inspired Beth to start a drive of her own in Texas.

She collected donations, including clothes, books, socks, pajamas, toothbrushes, etc. for the foster kids. Then she purchased items to put in the bags, as well as, some backpacks and school supplies. After that, she delivered the bags to an organization called Pathways Youth and Family Services.

If you'd like to donate to one of Beth's duffel bag drives, all you have to do is go to [www.mybelongings.org/donate](http://www.mybelongings.org/donate) and, in the "Write a Note" section, put "Texas." It's an easy way to help a foster child feel less nervous about living in a new place. Remember how fondly you still hold onto belongings from your childhood?



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not your everyday teenage girl

By Shelby Brooks, Lucas resident and editor

young athlete: Stockshows to Shotguns

The Kemlos have been proud Lucas residents since 2013 when they relocated from California to Texas. Colin and Tracy cheer on their daughter, Brianna, every chance they get. Now she's a junior at Plano East Senior High School, and you could say she's breaking the barrier on the typical teenage girl activities.

Her extracurricular activities include showing pigs in FFA; showing goats, lambs and rabbits in 4-H; and riding her horse in playday events (e.g. barrel racing). She also holds office positions in both her 4-H Club and FFA Chapter.

Livestock season for Collin County hits full swing near November to January. For Brianna, one of the highlights has been showing at the majors in Fort Worth and San Antonio for the first time and placing at both shows.

One of her most rewarding moments was winning her first belt buckle showing her horse, Candy. "She has been a real challenge since the day I brought her home," says Brianna. "But I feel proud when I look back on how far we have come and what a great team we are now."

Her friends in the Lone Star 4-H Club helped her train Candy and are big supporters of each other at the shows. "I love spending time taking care of my animals and preparing them for shows and also getting to travel and hang out with all my friends from around the county in 4-H and FFA," says Brianna.

Tracy, Brianna's mom, was involved in 4-H and raised lambs and rabbits, so she encouraged 8-year-old Brianna to try out her first 4-H meeting. Ever since then, Brianna has loved being a part of it; she has plans to eventually attend veterinary technician school.



Parent-daughter bonding doesn't stop with 4-H in the Kemlo family, however. Brianna is a member of the Allen Eagle competitive shooting team. The team won state and national championships this year. "I love all the people I have met, the friends I have made and working towards bettering my scores," says Brianna.

Brianna and her dad, Colin, love doing shooting activities together at indoor and outdoor ranges with all types of firearms. She bought her first shotgun when she was nine years old by selling her toys on Craigslist and saving all of her birthday and Christmas money.

Both of her parents help keep her on track and motivated to do her very best. Brianna is extra careful to maintain her good grades so that she can participate in the activities that she loves to do.

"I'm constantly inspired by my parents—my mom for all her knowledge about showing animals and my dad for everything he has taught me about firearms and shooting," says Brianna. "My parents have made it possible for me to do the things I enjoy doing and reach my goals."



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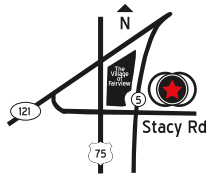
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