

CFCA hosts Fourth Saturday Jam

From left, Ron Porch, Elizabeth and David Price, perform during the Fourth Saturday Jam at JN Long Cultural Arts Complex. Cleburne Friends of the Cultural Arts President Alden Nellis said August's event was "one of the best ever." Admission is free. Everyone is encouraged to bring a dish for potluck at 5 p.m. and/or join the jam from 6-8 p.m. in the cafeteria at JN Long Cultural Arts Complex, 425 Granbury St. in Cleburne.



Courtesy photo

Toastmasters welcome new member, name weekly winners



Courtesy photo

Cleburne Toastmasters would like to congratulate the winning speakers from their Aug. 23 meeting. From left are Best Speaker Vicki Doyle for her "Selling Something" speech where she presented her sales pitch for Helos; Best Evaluator Shirley McKee; Best Table Topics Moffat Gordon; and Toastmaster Stormy Rodriguez.



Courtesy photo

Cleburne Toastmasters would like to introduce their newest member Moffat Gordon, left. He is joined by his sponsor Christina Gonzalez. The Toastmasters said they are excited to help Moffat grow and reach his goals.



Courtesy photo

Cleburne Toastmasters would like to congratulate the winning speakers from their weekly meeting. From left are Best Table Topics Connie Delzeit; Best Evaluator and Best Speaker Amanda Walker for her speech "Garbage" where she discussed how people throw their problems on you and how to deal with them; and Toastmaster Dayton Holland.

Johnson County resident creates Montessori school

SPECIAL TO THE CTR

Located in rural Burleson, Kathy Machalica set out to create a Montessori school that is on a par with the most prestigious Montessori schools, but at half the cost, and she succeeded.

In Egan, the students at Rooted Life Montessori play in the thick of nature, connecting daily to the earth and the outdoors, which is a key tenet of Montessori.

The school has small class sizes — up to eight children per teacher — and a teaching staff with master's degrees in early childhood education, multiple Montessori credentials from the American Montessori Society, a combined 57 years of teaching experience in public and private settings, as well as advanced continuing education from Shelton Montessori in Dallas.

Three years ago, Machalica learned that two of her four children had learning

differences, which explained why they were not able to succeed in a traditional school setting. Unable to tutor them all at home and unable to afford the schools available, she set out to solve the problem, not only for her own children, but for all children.

Because a school that is trained to educate children with unique learning needs typically costs \$1,600 to \$2,200 per month, she said she really wanted to create a place on a par with these schools, but would also be affordable for the average family.

"Montessori, gifted and talented, and special needs schools tend to be options only for well-off families," she said. "I wanted every family to be able to afford the best education possible for their children."

She has stuck to her goal and has managed to create a school that meets each child

where they are, which is another tenet of Montessori.

While Rooted Life Montessori was born out of a desire to meet the needs of learning different children, the Montessori environment is also a vehicle for normally developing students, as well as gifted and talented children to, excel well beyond typical state standards.

"I had a 4-year-old essentially skip kindergarten academically, and a year later also skip first grade — all the while remaining in the same classroom with her peers," RLM Primary Lead Teacher Donna Shifflette said. "This is the beauty of the individualized curriculum, where I can guide each child to progress at his own pace."

There are other examples where primary or elementary students excel in one subject and are at normal levels or even behind in others, Machalica said. These students can be remediated and challenged

without being compared to their peers or even knowing they are "behind."

The Montessori classroom design and curriculum solves the problem of gifted and talented children feeling bored at school as well as learning different children being challenged at the right level.

"It's rare to find this quality of a school at this price with such a nurturing environment," said Hannah Silva, mom to a returning student. "We actually followed my son's teacher to this school and are finding the environment much more conducive to actually allowing my son to learn and thrive. He's happy, really happy. And, that's important to us."

The school is at 3437 CR 807 in Egan, five minutes from Interstate 35-W off Farm-to-Market 917.

For more information about the school, call 817-578-6556 or visit www.root-edlifemontessori.com.

RAMOS

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waited for me and I didn't buy from him. I told him that I didn't want him to be bitter and he just scoffed. Then I told him that even though I didn't need his product, I would buy all three under one condition — that he allow me to pray for him.

He rolled his eyes and agreed reluctantly because he wanted the sale. His friends began to laugh and he grinned cunningly. However something amazing happened; as I began to pray, God overtook him and he began to weep. His friends' laughs faded with his grin, and I saw the look

of a heart changed by compassion overcome him.

I told him that Jesus loved him and that while I had bought his goods, I wanted to offer him the free gift of salvation. He looked at me through tears and agreed. Interestingly enough a local pastor happened to be in the cafe and he stepped in and talked to the young man and told me that he would shepherd the new believer.

Of all the ministry I did there, this moment was the most special because it reminds me of how Jesus did ministry. It wasn't in a church or an established event. It was the love of God moving the hearts of his people to share his love in an everyday moment.

Allow your heart to be moved to show love to someone who desperately needs and wants it, even if they don't even know it yet.

Rina Ramos is an educator, writer, motivational speaker, evangelist, wife and mother

called to serve Johnson County. Send inquiries or comments to realwithrina@gmail.com. You can visit her blog at ramoslegacy.blogspot.com.

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