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Taylor Owens is October Calendar Girl

OCTOBER 01ST 2012 BY UNKNOWN

Taylor Owens is October Calendar Girl

*Written by
Jessica Snider SMT Writer*

In a month where fall has finally arrived, the leaves are turning, and Halloween is approaching, Miss Taylor Owens is in the spotlight as the October Calendar Girl.

Taylor is the sixteen-year-old daughter of Ken and Shannon Owens. She is a junior at Dexter High School and plays tennis and basketball. Taylor won the title of Miss Dexter in the Miss Dexter Pageant held in September.

With Dexter High School's homecoming approaching later in the week, tennis matches, football games, and many more things, Taylor is sure to be busy being this month's Calendar Girl.

The top twelve contestants from the Miss Dexter Pageant will make up the Calendar Girls to be seen each month throughout the next year.

Photo courtesy of Shannon Putnam.

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Rebekah Northern Gaining Success

SEPTEMBER 27TH 2012 BY UNKNOWN

[Rebekah Northern Gaining Success](#)

*Written by
Jessica Snider SMT Writer*

Rebekah Northern is seventeen years old and currently a senior at Bloomfield High School. She has lived in Bloomfield her whole life and has always attended Bloomfield schools.

After graduation, Rebekah plans to move to Nashville, Tennessee, to further pursue her music career as well as study music business.

Rebekah recalls that she has been singing ever since she started to talk. “My mom used to be a music teacher and she has always been an inspiration to me,” said Rebekah.

Rebekah Northern first learned how to play guitar when she was twelve years old. It was then that she first started writing songs as well. She has performed at many different venues and events from the Southeast Missouri area to Nashville.

In 2010, Rebekah was accepted into a program known as “NOISE!” She was one of the thirty-two selected in the country to attend the camp in Nashville, Tennessee. The MUZAK and The Heart and Soul Foundation paid all expenses of the camp. “It completely immersed me in the music business and opened my eyes to how everything works. That camp was a game-changer for me.”

In the fall of 2011, Rebekah became acquainted with The Walker Bros. from Bernie, Missouri. Rebekah jokes that the wonders of the Internet led her to the Walker Bros. (she first heard of them via Facebook.) Rebekah’s list of original songs was starting to get very heavy and she wanted to get some of them recorded.

She recalls that her and The Walker Bros. instantly clicked. “They are so talented and great role models for me. They are like my brothers and I’m their little Walker sister!”

</images/Jessica's Pics/Rebekah Northern 2.jpg>

Rebekah had only dreamed of recording her songs until she started meeting up with The Walker Bros. and instantly began to record. Rebekah’s six-track self-titled EP was released last February. “I’ve had such an amazing response from my fans. I could not ask for any better friends than my fans.”

Recording that CD has helped Rebekah Northern open doors and reach out to more fans. This past year she has been in and out of Nashville a lot playing songwriters rounds and making friends in the music business.

Last summer at the National Beta Convention, Rebekah was in the special talent competition with a trio called “The Band Bloom” and took home first place. “That was a big deal for Bloomfield High School and myself because no one had ever won that before.”

Recently, The Walker Bros. and Rebekah got together and decided it was time to test the music video waters. “I’m always writing new songs and I played one of my favorites for

them, and we instantly decided to record it and make a music video to go with it.”

The song recently recorded is called “What You Wanted,” which is getting a lot of positive feedback from fans along with the music video.

The day after “What You Wanted” went live on YouTube, Clear 94.5 started playing it on the radio. “I had no idea that it was going to happen and I heard it one morning while getting ready for school. I kind of freaked out,” recalls Rebekah.

Since then, “What You Wanted” has been released on iTunes and other digital music sources. The song has been getting a lot of radio play from fans calling in and requesting it every day.

Rebekah closes by saying, “I am truly blessed. I know that making it in the music business is tough, but I also know that this dream is possible. I have the determination, the best friends and fans, family, and God to always back me up.”

If you haven’t heard Rebekah Northern’s “What You Wanted,” you should take a few minutes to listen and watch her video. It is amazing to see the amount of success that Rebekah has already accomplished at such a young age. We wish her the best of luck in all her future endeavors!

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Greg Banken Taking Talent to Kansas City

SEPTEMBER 26TH 2012 BY UNKNOWN

Greg Banken Taking Talent to Kansas City

Written by

Jessica Snider SMT Writer

Since 1985, many people in or around Dexter, Missouri, have been familiar with Gregory's Creations located on the corner of Stoddard Street in downtown Dexter.

After twenty-eight years of being in the floral artistry business, owner Greg Banken has decided to sell the shop and move on to explore new adventures.

"I'll be moving to Kansas City but continuing the same thing. I'll be doing floral artistry there as well. It's been a good twenty-eight years here, but I've decided to move on."

Greg Banken has worked for other flower shops in the area prior to his own, but Greg started Gregory's Creations in 1985 from scratch. He started with absolutely no merchandise, just experience, and since then has filled his shop with various items and has vastly built up an impressive clientele.

"I just want to live in the city. I think it's time for a change," said Greg on leaving Dexter.

The shop that many in the area have come familiar with will stay in business as someone has already purchased it. Terry and Tim Holder of Dexter will be the new faces in the shop, and both seem eager to continue help the business thrive. Greg said, "They will take over after the first of the year. "

When Greg was asked if he thought it would be tough for him moving to Kansas City and starting again he replied very quickly with, "No. I don't think it will be tough because I'm so ready for the change."

Greg commented that this upcoming weekend he will be doing his fifth second-generation wedding. Meaning he did their parents wedding and will now be doing theirs. "I have

quite a bit of root here, so I'll definitely miss that. I have customers that have been my customers since my first week of being in business."

Many people faithfully stop in the shop for various reasons. Whether it is getting a wedding gift, having a gift or flowers sent to a funeral, ordering tuxes, boutonnieres or corsages, or even just to say hello. These faithful customers have nothing to worry about. The business will stay the same just with new faces taking over.

Greg closed by saying, "It'll be good. It's going to be bitter sweet though. I did build this from nothing, but I'll do it again. "

Many people have asked Greg why he would start over after building this successful business and he replied every time with, "Because I can."

Greg Banken has made it obvious that he loves what he does and he is very excited to be taking on this new adventure.

We wish Greg the best of luck as he practices his floral artistry talent in Kansas City, and also wish the Holders the best of luck in taking over and may they all have many more years of success!

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After 58 Years of Loving People

SEPTEMBER 24TH 2012 BY STAFF WRITER

After 58 Years of Loving People

Written by

Zach Hedrick, SMT Writer

Dexter, Missouri - Cleo's Service Station, a landmark business in downtown Dexter, will be locking its doors for the final time this Saturday. The family business has enjoyed 58 great years of successful trade in Dexter, but at the youthful age of 80, Cleo Holder has decided that it is time to retire.

Many local residents will find a change in their normal routine of pulling in to get fuel, a needed camping part or those wonderful flowers during the spring and fall seasons.

The greatest loss will be the positive spirit that Cleo Holder personally delivered to your car window with a hardy "Hello ... " and call you by name. The immediate shine that the Cleo's Team would put on your windshield no matter how many bugs you had run through will also be missed.

Cleo's was a safe haven for those not so sharp in the skills of auto maintenance and auto repair. A customer of Cleo's could often stop by to see what Cleo or Tim thought about their auto troubles, and either get it fixed or get referred to another local business to do a more extensive repair.

Cleo's was a place where you could trust that your children could get their gas and maybe some small talk about what was going on in their lives. Considered a small item in our busy world but yet, a piece of yesterday that we transfer to a memory and a story for your grandchildren.

Change is never easy for anyone, but the Holder

family has been able to preserve pieces of Americana that have been replaced with the

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efficiencies and speed at which we live today. We will indeed miss these small delicacies of business.

Cleo recounts the good memories of his years at this busy downtown corner. Most memorable to him was working with his two sons, Tim and Terry. "What more could you want than to go to work for your son everyday," stated Mr. Holder. "Of course both of my boys have worked here," commented Mr. Holder. "... and it's been a tremendous pleasure working with them and being here with Tim for the past 15 years."

Change has come upon the auto industry. The improvements and increased reliability of cars and trucks has created an effect in other industries; therefore, what is good in one area is not as good in others. "The auto service industry has just gone downhill," commented Cleo in a recent interview. "Cars are just many times better than they used to be. What would normally require a tune-up every 10,000 miles is now a 100,000 mile tune-up," he continued.

These efficiencies have caused many service stations of the past to disappear over time. You can only attribute the long standing success of Cleo's Service Station against these odds to the loyalty they earned from their customers for the service they provided. "I don't know," Cleo modestly stated. "We like people and people like us the best I can tell you."

But this was not Cleo Holder's first brush with progress. Cleo and his family were originally farmers in the area. After spending a year and a half in the Philippines and Okinawa in the Army, Cleo returned home to find the family farm being gathered up due to progress of the Dexter community. Their farm sat on the ground that the Dexter Public Schools now sits.



Losing a portion of that ground did not leave

enough for the family to continue farming. At the age of 22 years, Cleo came down to visit with Red Francis, who had owned the service station 27 years. Red was known by many as a nice guy that sometimes was a little bit of a "joker". Often, Red would create entertaining visit to his service station, as a pistol arcade might occur behind what is now Rainey Mathis Funeral Home. "That's when I *"bought"* my first job and never left," Mr. Holder proudly explained.

The sales representative at that time promised Cleo to build a new building if he was able to run a good business for one year. The year passed and the new building we all know as

Cleo's was built.

"We have had many students work here over the years from the COE program at the School," remembered Cleo. "Some of them are successful businessmen here in town now, including Allen Walker of Walker Construction. We've really had some good ones."

When asked about his favorite memories, he simply noted "the people and relationships have been the most rewarding. Being a business owner has given Glenda and I a chance to travel so we've been able to visit every State in the Union and all Provinces in Canada." Cleo also noted that they've done all that by auto since his wife does not fly.

When you want to talk about stamina on the job,



Cleo Holder is the candidate of the year for the best at being on the job. In 58 years of owning the business, he only missed one half-day of work to have a surgical procedure. "They removed my thyroid that morning and I came in that afternoon," noted Mr. Holder. "That's not too bad for 80 years old. When I was young, *I used to think the old peoples were tough and now I are one.*"

Cleo was proud to see that the tradition will continue to the next generation as both Tim and Terry Holder will be the new owners of Gregory's Creations beginning January 1st, 2013. After a short period of time, both brothers will begin to work through the holiday season with the current owner, Greg Banken, to ensure a smooth transition with the business.

The actual closing of Cleo's Service Station has been moved up a few weeks as they have sold the majority of their inventory in the past weeks. "It's gonna seem strange to not be coming to this place." commented Cleo.

Many have grown accustomed to the many youth activities of the First Christian Church that are held at Cleo's throughout the year. Tim Holder was quick to make sure everyone would still find those traditions going forward at the new location at Gregory's.

"We will certainly setup during the Stoddard County Parade and make available our hot dogs," added Tim. "You can count on us remaining involved in the community more and more."

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Refuge Van Big Hit For FBC Dexter

SEPTEMBER 23RD 2012 BY STAFF WRITER

[Refuge Van Big Hit For FBC Dexter](#)

Dexter, Missouri - The past week's events have created the perfect venue for the new First Baptist Church Refuge Van. A dream conceived by youth pastor Greg McGhee, the project has been a labor of love and passion for youth in the area.

When asked, "What is one of your dreams you would like to accomplish with your ministry?", Greg replied that he had a dream of putting together some sort of vehicle that could be used by the youth ministry to provide music, TV, and fun around different youth events. That began a flurry of support that constituted donation of equipment, money, and services to bring the Refuge Van into existence.

"We started the project in the summer of 2010 and finished it up after last years football season." recalled Greg McGhee. "We planned on having it done earlier but some things came up and it got pushed back a little bit."

There are many ways to do a budgeted project of this nature. McGhee took the right approach allowing patience to rule and allow God to get involved in this creation. By doing this, he was able to deliver a showroom quality piece that had no debt.

Initial searches for the perfect cost effective

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vehicles was the first order of agenda. As luck would have it, one of the youth found a 1991 Chevrolet Van that was mechanically sound and required very little work on the exterior. Most importantly, the van could be purchased within budget for the overall project.

"This is just something that we wanted to use to bring more young people to Christ." recalled Greg McGhee. "There are steps that are necessary to get people to come to have a relationship with Christ and this was an idea that we had that would help with that." commented Greg.

"The first step is making acquaintances," recalled Greg McGhee. "and the second is building relationships with other people, at that point you can begin to share with them about how they can gain a relationship with Jesus Christ."

The van is an attractive conversation starter for the ministry. Those who attend car shows will understand the draw that occurs in a crowd when an auto is painted to perfection, designed with cool graphics and the doors open to the thundering beat of a bass guitar. People become curious and begin to stop just to get the story.

The Refuge Van has a story to share about a Savior that gave his life at Calvary so that everyone can have a relationship with God by simply confessing and believing in Him.

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Reaching out to friends and businesses that

specialize in auto body work, Greg received a blessing from a friend at his former church in Parma, Missouri.

After some initial work was done in Parma, additional paint and body work was done and completed by the body shop in Oran, Missouri. The body shop was able to completely repaint the van at a fraction of the cost of normal prices.

The FBC Refuge Van project also received a huge blessing from [Stereo One](#) in Cape Girardeau, Missouri. [Stereo One](#) sold FBC all of the audio and video equipment for the

project at their cost, and donated their time to the project at no cost.

"A stereo project like this is a very time consuming and difficult undertaking and could not have been done without their help." commented Greg McGhee.

As the dream continued to grow, various features

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were desired that would draw the attention of young people and bring impact to the ministry of First Baptist Church. Several members who knew of the ongoing project stepped forward to add additional funds to make sure this project was completed and ready for action this fall.

What could be better than a rolling event machine? This is a full featured vehicle including items such as: a 42-inch flat screen TV, four 6x9 speakers, two 10-inch subwoofers, power converters, and amplifiers. All of this is enclosed in custom carpeted speaker boxes with a hookup for an Xbox or other game console. In the front of van is a CD deck with the capability of playing an Ipad through the flat screen or the sound system.

"The van has been a big hit at several outdoor youth events this summer!" "We have taken it to some of our youth members birthday parties and it is something that the kids really enjoy." recalled Greg McGhee.

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With thumping and bumping Christian music playing, the FBC

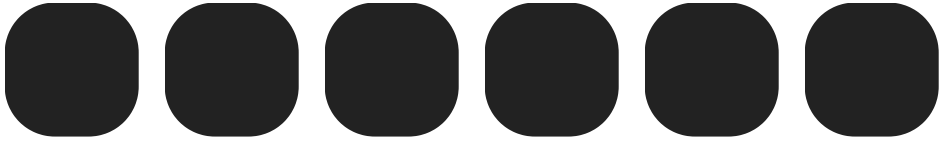
youth group was seen recently in the Stoddard County Parade traveling down Stoddard Street handing out candy to the crowd. This was one of the biggest events to allow the most people in the area to see this work of art.

Without a doubt, the Refuge Van is a piece of work that would challenge an episode of "Pimp My Ride", where rap superstar and car enthusiast Xzibit and car customization specialist Mad Mike take aim on the biggest clunkers on the road. Greg McGhee and many supporters at First Baptist have turned this clunker into a rolling good time in hopes of spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ.

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