

Cuba

Stories about a small town with big ideas



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» COVER PHOTO: Out on his family's 100-acre farm, Colt Mitchell, 7, reins in his horse Blacky as he rides through the woods.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICAH BOND | COWBOY COLT

A special thanks to the people of Cuba, for your hospitality
and to my friends and family, for your love and support

In memory of Randy Cox
Missouri Photo Workshop faculty for 12 workshops from 1982-2016



PROSPER

H. H. TIEMAN.
GENERAL MERCHANDISE.

I. J. BLAIR
SADDLES AND HARNESS

AGENCY
BEYOT BAKERY CO.
St. Louis
THREE
SUNRISE
BISMARCK
BREAD

WE SELL TENNENT-STIBLING SHOE CO'S FINE SHOES

WASHING
GAS

TENNENT-STIBLING SHOE CO'S
"Corduroy"
"Occident"
MADE IN U.S.A.
SOL'S 1910

SEEDS
FEED





» ABOVE: The Cuba Times published an aerial view of Cuba on Thursday, Feb. 25, 1965. The same issue where it was published that American archeologists discovered the remains of a 1000-year-old Native American in the Meramec Caverns. The caverns were also used as a station on the Underground Railroad during the Civil War. | COURTESY OF CRAWFORD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

» LEFT: Prosperity Corner has a rich history, first owned by H.H. Tieman as a general merchandise store, it later became the spot for one of many murals located around Cuba, Mo. In the 1950s Henry Hayes opened Hayes Shoe Store in this location after the original building burnt down and still stands today. | COURTESY OF CRAWFORD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

America's Mural City

Cuba, at first glance, is like any other small Midwest town. With its population of fewer than 3,300 people and miles of rural farmland, some wouldn't give it a second thought. What put it on the map was the historic Route 66, which led any passerby right through the heart of town.

What's so great about this small town depends on whom you ask. If you were to ask Bernard Brown, a historian at the Crawford County Historical

Society & Museum, he would tell you it's the "three M's;" The museum, the murals and the monument.

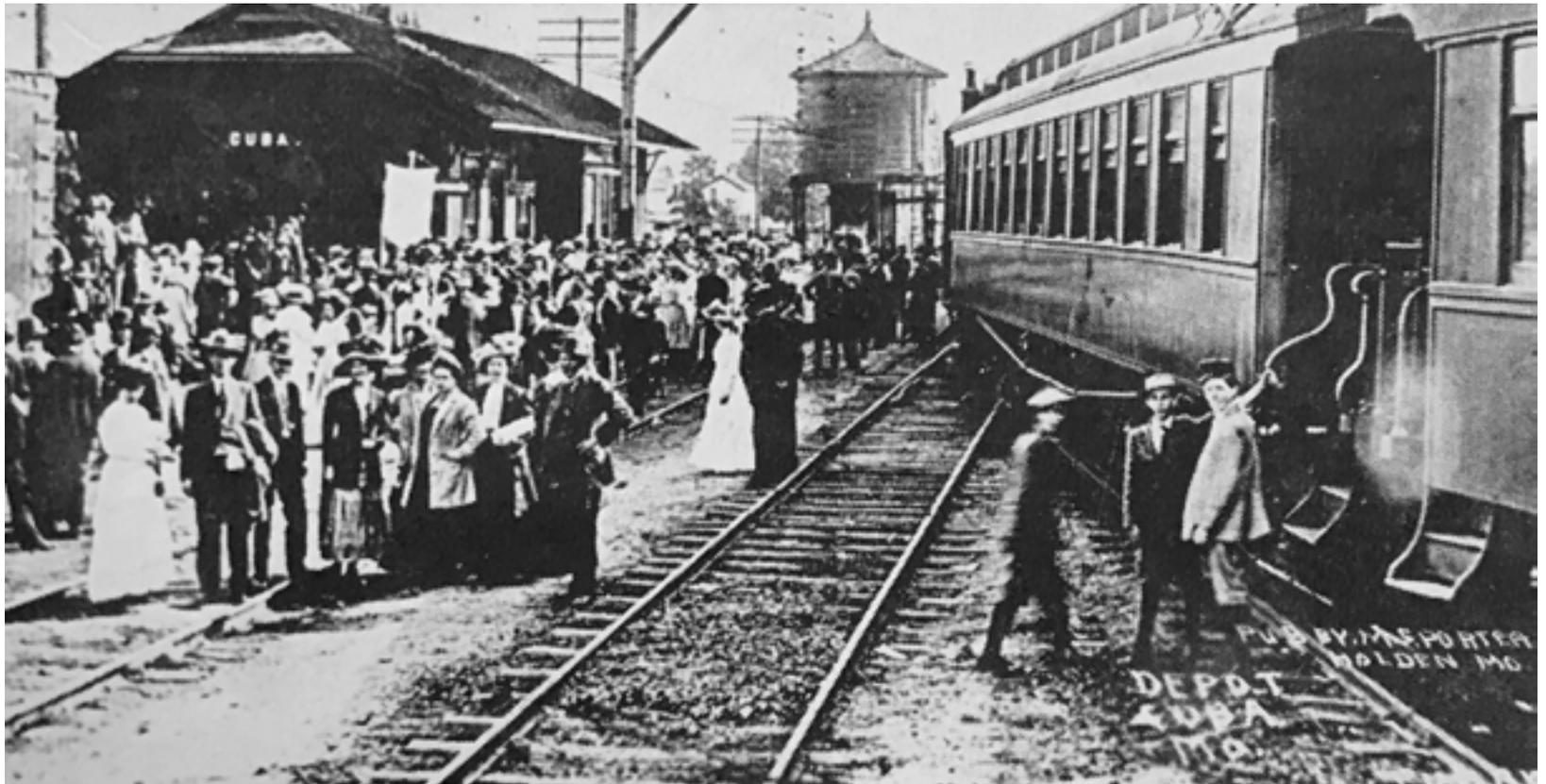
The museum, the Crawford County Historical Society & Museum, attracts many from all over the world, dedicated to traveling along Route 66, built in 1926 stretching from Chicago to Los Angeles. Cuba is the home to 12 outdoor murals, each depicting scenes from the town's history and all located along Route 66. The monument is the newest attraction to Cuba. Dedicated to the legacy of the Osage Nation,

construction began in 2015 and, when completed, will stand 30 feet tall.

Trains and Agriculture

Like most small rural towns, Cuba's foundation stems from the construction of the railroad. The decision

» BELOW: People prepare for the departure of the Salem Train from the Cuba Depot after a day at the Crawford County Fair. Cuba grew as a town when it was declared a site for the St. Louis & San Francisco Railway in 1857. | COURTESY OF CRAWFORD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM





» ABOVE: A man over looks the Shassette Turkey Farm, located 21 miles southeast of Cuba, Mo., as Crawford County Extension Agent John Cary observes. | COURTESY OF CRAWFORD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

to make this town a major shipping point for freights on the Pacific Railroad traveling to St. Louis came in 1857.

By 1860 the first houses were built and the town earned its name, after the Island of Cuba, and by 1884 it was incorporated as a city of the fourth class.

Between 1895 and 1920 Cuba became known throughout the U.S. as an apple shipping point and was popularly named “The Land of the Big Red



» ABOVE: The first fair took place in 1902, which mainly involved the selling and trading of livestock. In 1912 horse racing was added as an attraction. Today, it also consists of live music, carnival rides, pageants, and other forms of entertainment for the whole community. | COURTESY OF CRAWFORD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

» TOP: Cars are parked outside the Cuba Lanes bowling alley on Washington Boulevard in 1973. | COURTESY OF CRAWFORD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

» ABOVE: A street scene from 1910 shows a lightly used dirt road. The town's first car was only introduced two years earlier by A.J. Barnett. | COURTESY OF CRAWFORD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM



» ABOVE: Sam Viatali hangs a mail bag, also known as a catcher pouch, on the mail hook at the railroad in Crawford County in 1947. The technique known as “mail-on-the-fly” started in the 1860s but was scrapped in the 20th century for being dangerous and inefficient. | COURTESY OF CRAWFORD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

Apple.” Almost every farmer in the area had an orchard. They made their money from their orchards and livestock sales.

Route 66

As the apple industry declined, Route 66 was gaining traction and businesses opened closer and closer to the highway. One of these businesses was the Wagon Wheel Motel, which opened in 1936 and still stands today.

Transportation in Cuba changed dramatically due to the construction of the Interstate Highway System. Convenience and speed bypassed the appeal of the 2,400-mile highway. In the 1950s, Interstate 44 replaced Route 66.

Mural Project

Although many parts of the road have become impassable, many people from all around the world still pay tribute to Route 66 by driving the route to the best of their ability. Like other towns along the course, Cuba has its own display of heritage.

What was once known as “The Land of the Big Red Apple,” was declared “Route 66 Mural City” on September 6, 2002. From 2001 to 2007 Viva Cuba, a beautification organization founded in 1984, founded the Mural Project. It was responsible for commissioning 12 murals on public buildings along the town’s main road.

Missouri Photo Workshop

Recently, Cuba has appointed local artist Glen Tutterow to build a monument meant to honor the Osage Nation. The monument will stand 30 feet tall when completed, visible from I-44 at Cuba Visitor’s Center. “This project is more meaningful than anything I’ve ever done,” Tutterow said.

The idea came to Tutterow in a dream over five years ago and he began sculpting three years later. In 2016 he became a subject of the 68th Missouri Photo Workshop. MPW has been around for six decades, choosing a different small rural town in Missouri every year.

The University of Missouri has always connected with the state through their football and basketball teams in the SEC. This workshop serves as another way for rural Missouri to connect with the school.

The University of Missouri and the hospitality of this town are what make the workshop possible. Each year a chosen group of photographers from around the world are brought in to work alongside photo faculty members from leading newspapers and magazines to photograph the spirit and history of these towns.

» RIGHT: The Model T mural by Michelle Loughery features Cuba's first Model T owner, a local banker A.J. Barnett. The mural was the first of the organization Viva Cuba's 12 outdoor murals and was painted in 2001. | ANDRIA HAUTAMAKI PHOTO



BUCHANAN
WASHINGTON



MISSOURI
US
66







» LEFT: Glen Tutterow's monument being built honor Cuba's Native Osage Nation stands visible from I-44. The idea for the monument came to Tutterow in a dream about five years ago. | JON LEMONS PHOTO



» RIGHT: Children pray at the beginning of the main service on Sunday, Sept. 25, 2016, before being led to their Sunday school class at the Cuba United Methodist Church. | EMMA CHIANG PHOTO



WELCOME
TO
SHELLYS
ROUTE

66
CAFE

CUBA
MO

USA





Vestiges of Route 66

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDRIA HAUTAMAKI

Established in 1926, U.S. Route 66 was the first and only major automobile thoroughfare across the United States for nearly 60 years. While the interstate may have outgrown Route 66 in 1985, Cuba still embrace the essence of dreams from a bygone era and echo the timeless desires for connection, community, and celebration. Traveling the road today is more than just a physical meander across Small Town America. Route 66 wavers between past and present. Colorful neon still lights up at night, mannequins are eternal, and local people gather at friendly diners. Cuba continues to preserve and connect the town's present context to its historical past.

» LEFT: Charles is a regular customer at Shelly's Route 66 Café. Tourism was an opportunity for local businesses, and mom-and-pop stores sprung up along the route, with each café and gas station uniquely reflecting its owners.

» ABOVE: The Missouri U.S. Route 66 traverses 317 miles from St. Louis to Joplin. Cuba, with a population of 3,356, is known as the "Mural City," and attracts national and international visitors to its historical streets.





» OPPOSITE: A vintage mannequin stares out of an old phone booth while original Route 66 iconography reflects on the glass.

» ABOVE: In 1946 Nat King Cole sang, “Well if you ever plan to motor west, just take my way, it’s the highway that’s the best. Get your kicks on Route 66.”

» LEFT: A neon sign for the Wagon Wheel Motel, added in 2013, lights up as it gets dark in Cuba. Wagon Wheel Motel is the oldest continuously operated motel on Route 66 at over 80-years-old.

Monumental Love



PHOTOGRAPHY BY JON LEMONS

At the age of six, Glen Tutterrow found an arrowhead in his father's Missouri farm field. Ever since he has felt a spiritual connection and a burden to American Indians. As an Evangelical Christian, Glen is

using his taxidermy and sculpting craft to complete a 30-foot tall monument to honor Cuba's Native Osage Nation.







» FIRST: Glen Tutterow works on his statue located in his metal working shop.

» SECOND: After speaking to two interested tourists about the monument, Glen takes their portrait with their cell phone.

» ABOVE: Glen positions a cradleboard into the hands of a clay model he made of the Osage Mother, one of the four figures he is sculpting. He found renewed confidence to finish the project after reading the Bible passage Exodus 31-6, "I have given skill to all the craftsmen to make everything I commanded you." Glen spent months communicating with the chief of the Osage Nation before getting approval.



» Top: After creating molds from his clay models, Glen scales layers to keep the final cold-rolled steel sculpture in proportion. Glen says that Osage women would rub paste made from the local red rock into the parts of their hair to have the sun bless them throughout the day. The color of that paste mimics the oxidized finish of Glen's monument.

» Above: Glen plays with his grandson outside of his metal working shop.

» Left: Glen mounts an elk at his taxidermy shop Wildlife Unlimited. Glen, now 63, has been practicing the art of taxidermy since he was 11.

A New Dawn



PHOTOGRAPHY BY ELISE JACOB

Dawn Green, 49, is a personal trainer and nutritionist. She participated in her first bodybuilding event while in the middle of a difficult divorce 18 years ago. During that time she moved from St. Louis, concentrated on raising her two children and taking care of her grandmother. Dawn's life philosophy has allowed her to help people, young and old alike, with various physical difficulties. In August, Dawn competed and won awards in three different figure competition categories in the National Physique Committee, part of the larger National Bodybuilding Competition. In March, she competed in the 50-and-over age group and she trained to be in.

Dawn encourages people she meets to follow their dreams and live their lives to the fullest.

» ABOVE: Dawn often starts her day at 5 a.m. and leads an energetic and loyal crowd to her morning workouts.

» RIGHT: Through her weight-pulling exercises, Dawn shows the positive effects of bodybuilding.





» ABOVE: Dawn works out with her family early in the morning. With her diet and exercise, she inspires and teaches her daughter-in-law Crystal Kniest, 27, and granddaughter Scarlet Kniest, 4.



» ABOVE: George and Dawn talk on his porch after his 45-minute workout with Dawn. Though George is diagnosed with dementia, Dawn keeps him moving and agile even at the age of 89.

» RIGHT: Dawn and George perform leg exercises that help his muscles stay strong.

» OPPOSITE: George Beltz, 89, lives in Steelville, Mo., and keeps fit and mobile with the encouragement of Dawn.







Cuba's Next Generation

PHOTOGRAPHY BY TIM TAI

For teenagers in a town the size of Cuba, finding a cure for boredom requires some improvisation. Late nights hanging out in their trucks, fast food runs, and off-roading misadventures have made 16-year-old J.C. McGinnis's crew of friends into a second family of sorts. Soon, J.C. will have to decide whether to leave Cuba for college or the military, or find other work. He has little interest in the family mill, which his great-grandfather founded. For now, though, J.C. is just a typical teenager — the next generation of Cuba, where life “could be better but I like it how it is,” he said.

» ABOVE: J.C. leans against his truck and reflects. He is undecided about going to college, joining the military, or finding other work.



» ABOVE: J.C. talks with his father, Rod McGinnis, a manager at McGinnis Wood Products, after school. J.C.'s great-grandfather founded the mill, a prominent Cuba business that manufactures bourbon barrels, but J.C. is unsure if he wants to work there.



» Top: J.C. lies on top of his classmate Jasmine Marquez's car after she stopped to talk with J.C. and his friends in the McDonald's parking lot.

» Above: J.C. spends time with his friends. Because there are few places J.C. and his friends can hang out in town, they spend hours loitering around their trucks in parking lots.

Five Star Faith





PHOTOGRAPHY BY KEITH BIRMINGHAM

From the outside, 5-Star Buildings is just a local business like any other in Cuba, Mo., home to just under 3,500 people. The business holds all pillars of the Mennonite community. Kris Zimmerman owns and operates 5-Star Buildings, which builds and sells portable buildings. He works with a handful of people who share his faith, creating a tight-knit family atmosphere who attend church services on Sundays in a building adjacent to the workshop.



» OPPOSITE: Martin helps out fellow Mennonite, 22-year-old David Petersheim on a large cabin at 5-Star Buildings. The business owned and operated by Mennonites try live by the words of Jesus.

» ABOVE: The family takes a moment to pray before dinner.

» LEFT: Martin helps his six year-old daughter Staci with her traditional mennonite dress in the early morning prior to going to work. Martin is one of a handful of Mennonite families living and working in the area.

For the love of the Children





PHOTOGRAPHY BY
PRASENJEET YADAV

Marvin and Wendy Holland are a couple in their fifties. Marvin owns a trucking business and they live on a farm in the outskirts of Cuba, Mo. Together, Marvin and Wendy are parents to 16 children. Six are biological and ten are foster kids. Over the last 5 years, they have adopted six out of the ten foster kids and they are looking forward to adopting the rest of the four kids one day. Today, they live with nine of their foster kids. When asked, they said, “It’s a sheer joy to have these children around, they are the ones who makes our lives beautiful and content.” Wendy and Marvin’s story is an inspiration.



» OPPOSITE: The Holland family gathers around their dinner table where their average meal looks more like a feast. “Family isn’t whose blood you carry, it’s who you love and who loves you back.” The Holland family is a perfect example of this.

» ABOVE: The lucky children end up with foster parents like the Hollands. These kids are full of energy and their playful nature keeps the house alive.

» LEFT: As an outsider, it would be difficult to tell whether these kids are adopted or not. Even though the Hollands’ house is run by rules, there is no boundry to the extent of their love.





» OPPOSITE: Marvin and Wendy are true to their family values. Their walls are decorated with photos of the warm bonds they share with their large family.

» ABOVE: According to 2015 statistics, there are more than 400,000 children in foster care. These children are forced to enter a foster home through no fault of their own.

» LEFT: Although these kids come from different places, they are an embodiment of the values that Marvin and Wendy have taught them: Love, family and responsibility come first.

Building Moore Passion



PHOTOGRAPHY BY EMMA MARIE CHIANG

Lorian Moore, 55, unites communities to care about the earth, natural building and preserving the history of her town, Leasburg, Mo. In between her role as a wife and mom of two previously home-schooled children, Sage, 23, and Kai, 17, Lorian works toward the revitalization of her town with a population of 350. With the help of others she formed a non-profit in hopes to purchase vacant store fronts, organize events in the community and upgrade public facilities.

» ABOVE: Lorian and her husband, Rex Rohrer, share an intimate moment while she massages his forehead before he leaves for work. Married for 28 years, Lorian and Rex constructed their straw-bale home in 1994 from donated recycled material.

» TOP RIGHT: Lorian smooths out cob clay, a subsoil of water, and other kinds of fibrous organic material on her window behind the kitchen sink.



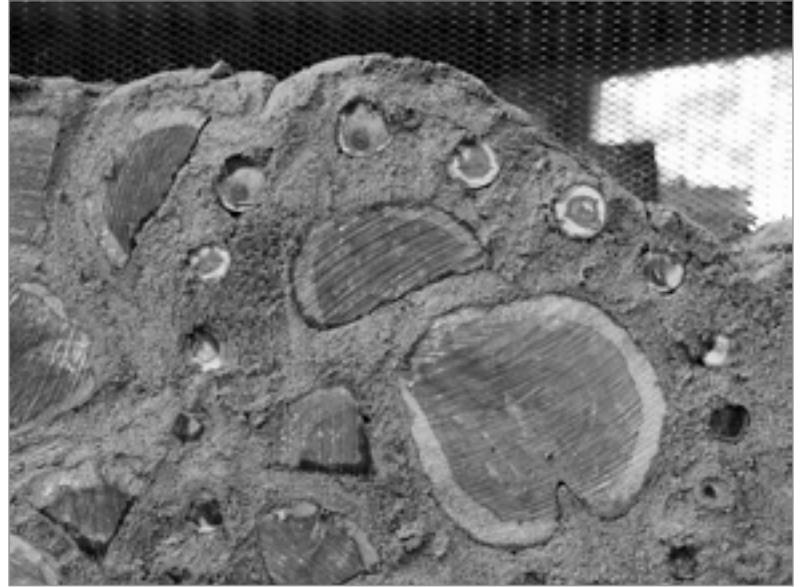
» ABOVE: Lorian, who works at the Onondaga Caves State Park, stands in front of the approximately 500,000-year-old stalactites called “The Twins.” She works at the park two days a week giving tours and organizing events for Onondaga Friends Association which is the park’s non-profit organization that she helped establish.

» OPPOSITE: Lorian teaches Rex walking meditation in their kitchen.



» RIGHT: Cordwood, short pieces of debarked tree trunks, is embedded in a masonry and cob mixture on the exterior of Tracy Brennan's house. Cordwood will be constructed on both sides of the walls of her home.

» BELOW: Lorian cordwoods her friend Tracy's off-grid house with others in Berger, Mo. Cordwood construction includes short pieces of debarked tree trunks that are embedded in masonry and cob mixtures to build a wall. Lorian encourages others to live off grid. "It's freeing to be making your energy from the sun," Lorian said.





» ABOVE: Lorain and Rex hug each other outside of their home. They consider each other best friends and have been married for 28 years.

Hurry Up and Wait





PHOTOGRAPHY BY
MATT RAHNER

Paul Chambers, 15, has had trouble finding his way in the small Missouri town of Cuba. Until recently, he was a sophomore at Cuba High School, but after the police were called over a remark made to a friend in jest, he decided to drop out. Paul's educational history is marred by suspensions, alternative schools and Homebound Instruction. His mother, Crystal Mallison-Schwert, 37, plans to homeschool Paul until he can take the test for his GED diploma. During the day Paul hangs out with his friend and roommate, Erica Crider, 19. In their room they smoke cigarettes, play video games, surf Facebook, and text-message. Waiting for school to let out, they search for rides into town; for something to happen. Once in Cuba they meet up with their friends, grab a bite to eat, and use free wi-fi at local restaurants. The next day they'll do the same thing.



» OPPOSITE: During the day Erica and Paul hide out in the room that they share. Paul can't go into town before 3:00 p.m. because he could be caught by truancy officers and taken back to school.

» ABOVE: Paul heads back to his room as his mom plays games on the computer. He is expected to start homeschooling in the next few days, but first his mother needs to acquire the proper educational materials through the Cuba Public Library.

» LEFT: Because he is not allowed on school property, Paul and Erica have to wait across the street from Cuba High School.



» ABOVE: Just waiting, Paul and Erica Crider sit on a picnic table at a park. But Paul doesn't like to sit around. Soon after they move onto their next destination in town.



» LEFT: The family has 12 dogs. Some are allowed to live inside the house, others live outside behind fences and in kennels.

» BELOW: Balancing on a stair railing leading to his room, Paul Chambers listens to his mother and stepfather discuss his recent troubles with the Cuba High School.



Loose Ends



PHOTOGRAPHY BY TANYA BYLINSKY FABIAN

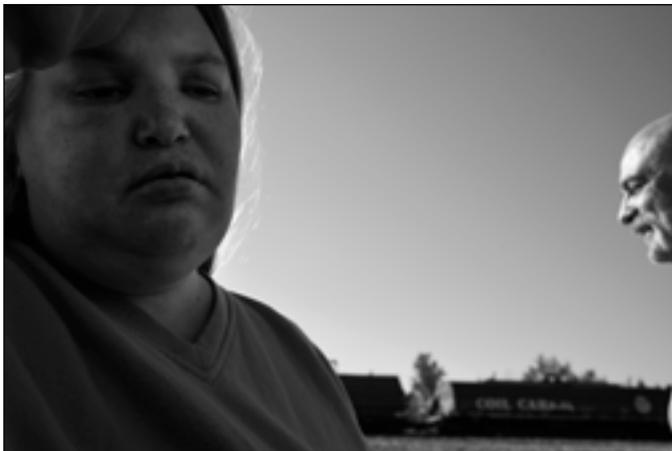
Once known as the Palace Hotel and the Southern Hotel, the two historic buildings have served as apartment houses in Cuba, Mo., for several decades. Denizens of the apartments call the buildings “Loose Ends,” a reference to the biker bar next door. Rent is \$500 a month and includes everything: heat, electric and cable. It’s a good deal for many in the area who are living below the poverty line. However, police are regular visitors and evictions are frequent. Conversations revolve around how to kill bedbugs and the latest drug raid.

» OPPOSITE: Barry Cypret is an alcoholic. “You’ve got to help me, or I’m going to die,” Cypret told his friends. “Call 9-1-1.” He said he’s ready for rehab. “Why did you call us?” An officer asked. “Because I drink too much,” Cypret said. Paramedics took Cypret to a hospital.

» ABOVE: Susan Mahan was being evicted. She was living in California for a year and a half, and her son and daughter were staying in her apartment, but they stopped paying the rent. Mahan returned to Cuba because her daughter had a baby, and now she, her daughter and son don’t have a place to live.

» MIDDLE: After living in Nevada and Florida, Ted DePriest and his wife Patty moved back to Cuba. DePriest has a disability caused by a medication reaction following a kidney transplant. After returning to Missouri, the couple has had issues with their Medicaid coverage and medication supplies.

» BELOW: Bugs are a problem at “Loose Ends.” Fly paper hangs inside and out. Residents say that alcohol or vinegar work for bedbugs: they shrivel right up. Some apartments are free of pests and others are badly infested.





» ABOVE: Cypret returned home that same evening. The next morning, Cypret began drinking again.

» RIGHT: By the 1940s, the Palace Hotel had become the Cuba Hotel. At one time, there was a restaurant on the second floor. Opposite the building are railroad tracks, where passenger trains dropped off visitors to Main Street, Cuba.





» ABOVE: Angel Summers was being evicted. As she packed, she told her two sons, “If you want anything, take it, because when I walk out of this door, the rest of this is going in the dumpster.”



» ABOVE: A neighbor stopped by and ordered Cypret to get better and to start taking his medication that will help him stop drinking.



» LEFT: The apartment houses sit at the intersection of Main and McClay. Some of the residents work, while others keep to themselves.

» BELOW: Shawna DeGonia, right, has been staying with friends on the first floor of the old Palace Hotel for about a month. One of her friends is in poor health, so she's helping with her daily care. One day DeGonia hopes to get her own place.





Life and Limits



PHOTOGRAPHY BY CLARE FIESELER

According to his mother, 1989 was the year that ruined James “Jamie” Pettig’s life. He plead guilty to a sex offense with a minor, and has since navigated life as a registered sex offender. He is a committed caregiver to his elderly mother and an affable cook at the local steakhouse. His dogs and passion for trading sport memorabilia are what get him up in the morning.

Missouri’s laws limit Jamie’s professional, volunteer, and housing options. Stigma makes him wary of being in large crowds. Jamie is not a repeat offender. Both he and his mother have maintained his innocence for almost three decades.



» OPSOTIE: Jamie is primary caregiver for his mother Becky Haterlamp. Jamie came, to live with her in Cuba from the St. Louis area in 2011. “I fell to my knees when I walked in the house,” he said, shocked by her rapidly deteriorating health and boarders who were stealing from her in the wake of her husband’s death.

» ABOVE: Jamie visits with his friend Dale Steen, owner of Dale’s Collectibles on historic Route 66, which Jamie helps with on his days off. “Once it cools down I’m going to start helping Dale organize the shop,” says Jamie. More than 100 Missouri license plates cover the shop’s portico ceiling.

» LEFT: Jamie owns about 20,000 sports trading cards dating back to 1955. Jamie sees these as an investment. “One day I will sell them,” he said. Right now, Jamie lives paycheck to paycheck. In the past, he has lost jobs when employers learn of his sex offender status.

Grace Under Pressure





PHOTOGRAPHY BY DOUGAL BROWNLIE

Renee Ross joined the Voss family to be with her partner, Brad, twelve years ago bringing order, structure and a caring personality to her new environment, and breaking the stereotype of the “wicked” stepmother. Everyday life, both at work at a family-owned golf course and catering business and at home with a physically and mentally impaired teenage child present constant stress. Despite the constant bombardment of obligations, Renee and her partner overcome their worries in their own separate ways.

» OPPOSITE: Renee takes a moment to herself in her office. “In the heat of the moment is when I am calm,” Renee said. “How [Brad] deals with the stress is to go hit a bucket of golf balls.”



» ABOVE: Partners Renee and Brad talk briefly in the parking lot of the golf course before rushing to her next errand as he returns to the clubhouse from the driving range where he was practicing his golf swing and trying to keep his pitching wedge from slicing and hooking. Brad finds the range to be a place where he can get away from the spotlight and have a moment of quiet from taking care of the golf course.

» LEFT: Ethan Voss, who has tuberculosis sclerosis, is fed by his stepmother Renee. This condition impedes his speech and mobility.



Queen of Moon Dance Farm



» LEFT: Jane brings her chickens back into the coop she calls “Cluckingham Palace” playfully named after Buckingham Palace. The chickens are all named after famous female actors.

» ABOVE: As part of her daily routine, Jane drives through the fields in the morning to check on her cows.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RONALD REINSTADLER

In 2009, Jane Parres' mother died in her arms. Her last words to Parres were, "Please take care of the farm." Jane closed her business in St. Louis and moved to Crawford County to do just that. She turned the 126-acre with 17-cow property into a chicken and 100-cow energy efficient farm. In 1991, Jane had a car accident that left her in a wheelchair for 17 years. She was told, "you will never walk again!" Through strength and determination, she regained her mobility. Her slogan is "never, never, never give up."

» BELOW: Jane visits her close friends, retired blacksmith Gerard Rebmana and his wife Ruth Rebmana, in Owensville, Mo. She visited them to pick up a custom hoe that Gerard had made for her.





» LEFT: Jane Parres, 65, of Moon Dance Farm buys feed for her chickens from Hitching Post in Sullivan, Mo. Jane refers to herself as the Queen of her farm.

» BELOW: Jane starts her morning at 4:30 a.m. first by browsing Facebook before moving on to her daily office work on her computer.





» ABOVE: Jane rangles a newborn calf, Rollo, to put an ear tag on him. Earlies in the week a mother had pushed Jane away when she tried to tag its calf.



» LEFT: Jane leans against the wall of a barn at Bern General in Crawford County, Mo. She was there to attend a meeting on a community party that she was organizing.

» BELOW: Jane has a moment of reflection wading in a small creek where she played with her children when they were young. The place is near her farm in Crawford County.



Keep the Engine Running





PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREW MANGUM

The McLain Automotive Shop in Cuba, Mo. has been repairing engines for almost four decades. The mom and pop business is run by Jerry in the shop, Janet in the office, and son David assisting with repairs. The routine is broken most afternoons when their 9-year old granddaughter arrives from school, playing, exploring, and helping in the shop. The parents hope their son will continue the local business. Before heading to the auto-shop Jerry and Janet start each day at their favorite table in the Cuba Bakery.



» OPPOSITE: Unable to start an old Yamaha moped, Jerry moves it to the side of the shop for more work.

» ABOVE: Using a screwdriver, Jerry adjusts the boring drill to the size of the cut needed to repurpose an old bearing.

» LEFT: Bailey watches her grandfather work on the moped she expects to ride one day.



» ABOVE: Testing a repurposed Ford Mustang engine, Jerry and son David protect their ears from the high decibel start-up.

» RIGHT: Janet and Jerry have a favorite table at the Cuba Bakery where they enjoy coffee cinnamon rolls.





» ABOVE: Monday through Friday Jerry McLain opens the doors of his machine shop to take in new business. He's been doing this for 37 years.

Midwest Truck Stop





PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALEX SCOTT

As the nation's Interstate system made Historic Route 66 obsolete, the Midwest Travel Plaza in Cuba, Mo., found itself at the corner of America's new network. The 40-acre truck stop is an employer for local students, a place for law enforcement to gather, and a safe place for truckers to spend the night. Although most travelers are gone in a matter of minutes, those who pass through are witness to a functioning Americana as reality and not as relic.

» OPPOSITE: The Midwest Travel Plaza sits on Interstate 44, less than a mile from Historic Route 66 in Cuba, Mo. The 40-acre truck stop house's a diner, a diesel repair shop and is home to the 5-dollar haircut. The travel plaza is a gathering place for both locals and long haul truckers.

» ABOVE: Jon Larison places a jack underneath a truck that needs a new tire. Jon works the morning shift including on Saturdays.



» ABOVE: David Blankenship gets his haircut from Denise Bess at D's Hair Stop inside the Midwest Travel Plaza, home of the 5-dollar haircut. David lives in nearby Owensville and comes down frequently for a haircut and a conversation with Denise.

» RIGHT: Kayla wipes off a table in Dottie's Restaurant inside the Midwest Travel Plaza. The diner is open 24 hours and employs nearly 40 people from the nearby communities.





» LEFT: Denise Bess's father was a long-haul trucker for nearly 50 years and owned a truck stop for two years when she was a young girl. Denise has worked at the truck stop for 8 years and said that because of her husband's success she is not financially required to have a job but she loves the stories she hears and people that come through to see her.

» MIDDLE: Mandy Boyer has lived in Cuba, Mo. since she was in first grade and started a family of her own in the community.

» RIGHT: Justice Coldiron has worked at the auto repair shop for nearly a month. He said that he is learning quickly from the other mechanics, and that the trucks are not as complicated as they look.

America, Happy to be Here





PHOTOGRAPHY BY
HYUNGCHEOL “JAMES” PARK

Evelia is an immigrant from Mexico who settled in the small town of Cuba, Mo. 15 years ago. Despite the struggles and hardships she finally opened her own hair salon last December, built by her husband and son. Through hard work and genuine kindness, many people in the community frequent her salon for her service. This year’s election have brought immigration to the forefront of election debate and immigrants such as Evelia and her husband who has become a citizens of United States have brought many skill and resources to small towns across America.



» OPPOSITE: Republican candidate Donald Trump has made immigration an issue and made controversial comments towards Mexico and Mexicans.

» ABOVE: Evelia sits in her family-owned hair salon.

» LEFT: Evelia runs the salon by herself, she hopes her sister can work with her in the future.



» LEFT: A man falls asleep while waiting for his turn as he sits next to a woman getting her hair colored.

» BELOW: Evelia tweezes a customer's eyebrows.





» RIGHT: An elderly couple who had pedicures done wave goodbye as they leave the salon. She still has many clients waiting for her and some have been coming to her for years.

» BELOW: Evelia shares a laugh with a client as she waxes eyebrows.



Dana's Choice



PHOTOGRAPHY BY BENJAMIN NORMAN

Dana Webster, 44, grew up in Cuba, Mo. but left after high school for love and a world class cosmetology education. Seven years ago, she returned to Cuba to help care for her family and started working part-time in a small, one-chair barbershop on the outskirts of town. After the shop's owner became ill earlier this year, she took over and now serves the predominantly-elderly clientele with care and precision.



» OPPOSITE: Dana sits in her barbershop, which she gained ownership of in 2016.

» LEFT: Dana relaxes by the Merrimack River with her dog, Gracie, and a stray cat. Without many options for socializing around town, she usually spends afternoons and evenings alone or with her family.

» BOTTOM LEFT: A customer sits in Dana's barbershop as she cuts his hair. Her clients know little about her education but are just "glad to get a good haircut," Dana said.

» BELOW: Customer's chat with Dana in her shop. Dana's average client is close to 80-years-old. "I like the fact that they've been around so long," she said. "They've gained a lot of knowledge that we haven't."



A Butcher's Life



PHOTOGRAPHY BY CONNOR STEFANISON

In 2000, Scott Heintz opened Heintz Processing where he independently processes wild and domestic animals. Slaughtering and butchering animals is never a pretty sight, but it's a necessary step for people to get their meat. Four years later, Heintz's wife, Kathy, started a catering truck, which later evolved into a meat store and restaurant combo named Meats And Eats. Their award-winning products are sold at the store, bringing meats from field to table. Both run their businesses almost completely by themselves, resulting in busy work lives with minimal free time. They're tough jobs, but someone has to do them.

» ABOVE: Kathy and Scott Heintz relax before leaving for work in the morning. They spend most of their days apart.

» RIGHT: Scott Heintz moves a freshly slaughtered pig into his cooling room. The animals need to be hung for several days to increase the tenderness of the meat.







» ABOVE: Customers at Meats and Eats feast on meals cooked by Kathy and processed by Scott.

» RIGHT: Kathy loads her freezers with meats processed by her husband Scott. Kathy runs Meats and Eats all by herself.

» OPPOSITE: Two pigs, unwilling to move, give Scott a tough time as he gathers them into the processing plant. Most of the livestock that he receives comes from local hobby farms.





Cuban Wood





PHOTOGRAPHY BY
DOTAN SAGUY

The McGinnis family has been making bourbon barrels for half a century, preceding the industry boom that lifted Cuba, Mo. in the 1980's. Their factory, located on Old Route 66 on the east side of town, is the heart of the business. There, workers still assemble the barrels by hand, the way they've been made for centuries, save a touch of mechanization. The production team, their craft and their environment: all throwbacks to an artisanal, industrial age that many might assume had vanished from the U.S. long ago.



» OPPOSITE: Luis has one of the toughest jobs in the whole factory. He spends his day charring barrel heads in the scorching hot furnace room. The inside of bourbon barrels is charred to caramelize wood sugars which will leech into the maturing spirit.

» ABOVE: Logs are gathered from the lumber yard. At McGinnis Wood Products, bourbon barrels are still made the old fashioned way with many of the production tasks being done by hand.

» LEFT: Nick beats the temporary rings off of barrels using a hammer before the final hoops are driven into place by a machine. Thanks to his experience and skill he can get each ring off in only a couple of hammer strokes.





» LEFT: Antonio rolls barrels from one side of the factory floor to the other, where the assembly process and testing will be completed.

» ABOVE: Darrel positions a barrel before injecting compressed air into it to test for leaks. Any leaking barrel gets sent to be repaired by experienced technicians and re-tested. Most often a stave needs to be extracted and replaced to get a complete seal.

» RIGHT: Leroy McGinnis, 88, second from left, founded McGinnis Wood Products a half century ago. He still works every day and shares his office with his wife Ova Marie, 82, far right. They run the business with their son Don McGinnis, left, and his wife Tina.

» BELOW: Lenny mans the maintenance shop. He sharpens blades and helps repair any equipment that needs attention.





» ABOVE: Steve planes the staves before they get assembled into a barrel. By lunchtime he is already covered with wood chips.

» LEFT: It's 6 a.m. on Thursday. A new day of barrel production starts at the McGinnis barrel factory on Old Route 66 in Cuba, Mo.



I'm Just Jimmy



PHOTOGRAPHY BY MEREDITH GOLDBERG

Native Cuban Jimmy West promised his 12-year-old self that he would be a millionaire by his 30th birthday. Though at 31, he is not yet quite there. Still, Jimmy, with love and support from Ben White, 30, his partner in life and in

business, has found mostly acceptance in his hometown all the while working hard to become an integral part of the community as co-owner of Frisco's Grill & Pub, while also a member of the Chamber of Commerce.



» OPPOSITE: Jimmy West, 31, co-owner of Frisco's Grill & Pub, left, laughs as one of his managers, Brenda Biermann, looks for kitchen utensils she believes may have been lost under the shelving at the restaurant. Spice-distributor Bruce Ashlock came to check supplies.

» ABOVE: Jimmy sweeps the sidewalk and street outside of Frisco's. Typically, Jimmy's work day is 14 hours.

» LEFT: Ben and Jimmy head off to their respective jobs in the morning. Ben works in diversity training at Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla, Mo.

Nana's Four Generations



PHOTOGRAPHY BY PHU NGUYEN

Marsha Light, 59, known as “Nana”, is the owner of “Nana’s 12”, a local small restaurant in Cuba, Mo. Together, all four generations of the family run two businesses at the same time, a cozy home-style restaurant and a custom woodwork shop. Family members, including her son and father, help out between the two shops. The woodshop’s products also include caskets and Nana sews the liners for them.

Nana built the businesses as a legacy for her children and grandchildren, and to provide them a place to work and support themselves. She has overcome financial struggles and wants to teach her children the importance of working hard.



- » OPPOSITE: Nana shares a laugh with Barb Stadler, a customer from St. Louis.
- » LEFT: Nana checks the measurements of the liner of a coffin in the garage of her father's house.
- » TOP RIGHT: Nana sews beanbags in the kitchen while her sister, Donna Cape, holds Harper, as Charity Light, Nana's granddaughter-in-law, helps with the dishes. On busy days, almost every generation of Nana's family is present in the kitchen.
- » BOTTOM RIGHT: Marsha "Nana" Light, 59, and her father, Jerry Cape, cook breakfast on a busy day. Cape also helps out in the woodworking shop.



The New Me

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GABE WOLF

Florist Lisa Lorraine received a stem cell transplant from her brother Jeff five years ago in order to battle her Acute Lymphocytic Leukemia. During her battle, she contracted Graft Versus Host Disease (GVHD) which led to Scleroderma, a chronic hardening and tightening of the skin and connective tissues.

Lisa is cancer free, but continues to receive a photopheresis treatment once a week for her GVHD and Scleroderma by traveling to Barnes Jewish Hospital in St. Louis. The treatment allows her to continue doing what she loves, which is being a florist, loving her community and loving God.



» OPPOSITE: Lisa walks across a porch with flowers in hand. Lisa's shop is called "A Lasting Impression" and is located on Washington Boulevard.

» LEFT: Cancer survivor and florist Lisa searches for fresh flowers along "Florist Row," a florist market in St. Louis, after receiving treatment for her scleroderma at Barnes Jewish Hospital.

» ABOVE: Fresh flowers are laid across a work table at Lisa's flower shop. Lisa's treatments allow her more flexibility in her fingers and enables her to keep working.



» ABOVE: Lisa laughs while undergoing her photopheresis treatment at hospital. During her treatments Lisa often shows photos on her iPhone of her daughter and new grandson, Hunter.

» RIGHT: Lisa visits with Paula Pennick during Wednesday night Bible study. Loraine turns to her faith and her church family as they help her to stay positive during her battle with scleroderma.





» ABOVE: Lisa delivers an anniversary bouquet for Peoples Bank employee Tina Hannan. Lisa says that without the treatment she receives from her weekly trips to St. Louis, her life as a florist would be impossible.

Serving Cuba





» OPPOSITE: Bobbie, director of food distribution at the Cuba Ministerial Alliance, takes phone calls from community members in need of assistance all morning.

» LEFT: Bobbie goes through food pantry supplies. Volunteers survey people who come in to decide what they should supply.

» BELOW: The food pantry helps more than 300 community members every month, so Joplin must keep the shelves stocked with food and commodities.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY DANIEL DREIFUSS

Barbara “Bobbie” Joplin, 75, has lived in Cuba for more than 40 years. Joplin has been a volunteer and advocate in the community for over 25 years. Two years ago, she became the director of food distribution for the Cuba Ministerial Alliance, a co-op of 13 churches in Cuba that donate to and support the food pantry. At the food pantry, Joplin helps community members in need of food, clothing, gas money, utility bills and one-night stays at the Super 8 hotel. Seven years ago, Joplin opened Re Enjoy Thrift and Consignment Store on North Park Place. After her husband, Rusty Joplin, had open heart surgery, a flood at Re Enjoy caused extensive damage. Bobbie Joplin, while juggling the needs of the community, her husband’s health, and getting the store reopened, is still able to find time to spend with her grandchildren. “I wish I could do more,” Joplin said after being approached by a young woman in need of help paying her utilities bill.

Shirley's Journey





PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRISTIAN LEE

In a city with a white population of 98 percent, Shirley Ryan feels that she has to overcompensate to fit in with the community as an African-American woman. Shirley works hard to help others in town by giving shoes to those in need, help those who are disabled and give food to community members.

Shirley moved from St. Louis seven years ago after discovering this small town. She spends most of her time in the community building relationships, caring for her patients and checking on friends. Despite the demographics, she enjoys living in Cuba but feels she has to put in the extra effort to be accepted.

» OPPOSITE: Shirley Ryan, 67, shops at a local thrift store. She is one of the few African-American families that live in Cuba, Mo. “As an African-American woman, I knew that I would be watched in this community, so I wanted to make sure to be the best person I could be,” Shirley said.

» ABOVE: Shirley pauses after a long day of running errands and helping others. She rests on her couch at her home before preparing to make a meal for her son for when he arrives home from work.

» RIGHT: Shirley shops at a local thrift store. She used to go shopping with her daughter before her she was arrested. Her daughter struggles with drugs and has often been banned from stores after shoplifting. “I can’t wait until she is out [of jail] so I can have my best friend back,” Shirley said.

» BELOW: Shirley arranges a box of shoes she has stored in her bedroom. She keeps extra shoes around so she can give them to people who may need them. She’s known in her community as a person to come see if they need help with food or clothing.





» ABOVE: Shirley says goodbye to one of her clients who she spends the night with multiple times a week.

» LEFT: Shirley uses her hands to often help others, leaving them rough and worn.

The Sisterhood





PHOTOGRAPHY BY LISETTE POOLE

For Mennonite Christians family comes first. Women are taught to submit to men—their fathers, ministers or, once married, their husbands. Many of these women live far from their homes, and have moved to Cuba, Mo. to help out at the local bakery and teach at the Mennonite school. Without movies or mainstream music, they thrive sharing sweet moments of friendship, laughter and working side by side.



» OPPOSITE: Megan, left, and Michelle washing Megan's car. She bought the car three years ago paying her own money that she earned babysitting. Megan and Michelle do everything together after work at the bakery.

» ABOVE: Michelle Swartzentruber, 21, makes repairs to a homemade dress.

» LEFT: Mennonite women work at the Cuba Bakery & Deli in Cuba. Among the strong community there is a sisterhood of young single women who embrace their independence.



» ABOVE: Megan, left, and Michelle, right, on their front porch in Cuba. New in town, they are adjusting to the norms of the local Mennonite community. Michelle says in Oregon, she wore mostly print dresses but the women in Cuba wear solids.



» LEFT: Mennonite children learn from other women in the community. Although they study together, the boys and girls are separated during youth group activities.

» BELOW: Megan at the bakery before dawn. She and the other single women run the business.



Living By The Word





PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDRIANA MEREUTA

The Zimmermans live by their Mennonite faith with intention through following the word of God, as revealed by Jesus. Kris and Ruth Zimmerman have made Cuba home for themselves and their four children: Katrina, 10, Krixana, 7, Addison, 4, and Adrian, 10 months. As a breadwinner for the family, Kris, 32, owns and works at the “5 Star Buildings.” The business serves as the spring of the family’s revenue, through the manufacturing and sale of portable cabins, garages, garden sheds, and more. Ruth, 31, is a homemaker. The family life requires her utmost devotion, often leaving just enough space for prayer and rest. “Our family is far from perfect,” says Ruth. “We turn to Jesus to find solace and healing for our own brokenness. It is hope that inspires and defines our choices in life.”

» OPPOSITE: Ruth and Krixana bake cookies in their kitchen. *sandaest, cora voles dolla vo.*

» LEFT: Ruth and Kris embrace their son Adrian. Their loving outlook creates a space for the family to stay close and strong together.

» ABOVE: Family provides a sense of belonging, a space in which the Zimmermans live and express their faith. The ritual of coming together is symbolic of their gratitude and love for each other, and of their dedication to a purposeful life.



» ABOVE: Morning and evening meals are meaningful moments in the Zimmermans' daily life. They present an opportunity to cherish each other's presence, to talk, to teach and to learn.

» RIGHT: Plain dresses are a symbol of modesty in the Mennonite culture. Ruth sews both of her daughters' dresses by herself.





» ABOVE: Katrina and Kirxana play in their backyard.



» LEFT: Every morning, Ruth devotes some time to prayer and reflection. This practice grounds her intentions for the day ahead and helps her find strength going forward.

Raising Farm and Family





PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAKE R. RUTHERFORD

Embracing a mission to establish a Mennonite congregation in Cuba, Nathan and Ruthann Mast transplanted their family of five children and farm from Summersville, Mo., five years ago. After thirteen years of marriage and two pre-fabricated houses, the Mast's are building their own home.

Nathan's red angus cattle operation includes raising chickens, goats, ducks, rabbits, semi-wild turkeys, horses, and maintaining a garden. He hopes to eventually become a direct-to-consumer beef seller, while expanding his existing 140-acre homestead. Ruthann tends to the household, garden, and children, while the two eldest boys have an increasing responsibility over the smaller animals as they grow older.

» OPPOSITE: Austin Mast, 11, embraces his brother Colton Mast, 1, at the breakfast table before departing for school. Austin and two other siblings attend a private Mennonite school, while the youngest two children remain at home with Ruthann.

» ABOVE: Austin walks through his future home carrying a power tool. The Mast family is building their own home on their land northeast of Cuba.



» ABOVE: Austin cleans and loads his pellet gun in the barn for afternoon target practice after school. Austin is a budding hunter and shot four deer over the last two hunting seasons.

» RIGHT: Brittney retrieves bowls from a cabinet to set the table while her mother prepares dinner. The Masts had their current pre-fabricated home transported to a new location on the farm in July to make room for the new home construction.

» OPPOSITE: The Mast family takes an evening walk to visit a herd of cattle near their current home on the farm. They hope their new home will be ready by next year, settling further into their farm and life in Cuba, Mo.





Love, Faith and Family



PHOTOGRAPHY BY JORDAN STARR

After several turbulent years of living with her biological parents, Abigail Weber has started a new life with her grandparents at the age of 13. Abbi's challenge is to re-adjust her life from a broken home filled with the complexities of drugs, anger and divorce to a peaceful Christian home with

her grandparents, Joseph and Shirley Weber. Joseph often refers to their life so far as one that "everyone wishes they had". Although they have already raised a family of their own during their 55 years of marriage, they have decided to begin a new journey as born-again parents.



» OPPOSITE: Mornings are spent around the kitchen island for breakfast before they start their day. Abbi likes to joke around with her grandparents, which usually gets different reactions out of them.

» LEFT: Abbi reels one in on the lake that her grandfather dug out and stocked with fish at their home. They often compete over who catches the first fish as well as the most.

» BOTTOM LEFT: Some evenings after dinner, Joe plays the piano, Abbi plays the spoons and they all sing together.

» Bottom RIGHT: The family takes turns each night saying a prayer before dinner. They are very involved with their church and take their faith seriously.







» LEFT: Each morning Abbi waits at the end of the driveway for the bust to take her to school. Her unfolding social life at school is a constant worry for her grandparents, who desperately hope she will not succumb to negative influences.

» ABOVE: While being dropped off at school, Abbi kisses her grandmother goodbye, Abbi openly admits that she loves school and prides herself on her good grades.

Measured Steps



PHOTOGRAPHY BY LINNEA BULLION

Carey Portell, 41, has end-stage arthritis in her hips and ankles—the result of a car crash with a drunk driver six years ago. Carey only manages around 3,000 steps per day, and must choose each step carefully before the pain becomes too much.

Carey finds rehabilitation in tending to her family's pastures, riding her horse and taking care of her family of six. Although her movement is now limited, Carey makes each step matter.



» OPPOSITE: Carey Portell pauses at the site of her car crash, recounting the accident. She presents her story to schools, congregations, and other organizations across Missouri.

» ABOVE LEFT: Carey massages her ankles, which were surgically fused together at ninety degrees after the accident.

» ABOVE RIGHT: Carey latches an electric fence to keep the cattle in their pasture. What once was an easy task is now a feat of strength for Carey.

» RIGHT: Carey closes the gate at one of her pastures. She watches over a 120-head herd of cattle over three separate plots of land that she and her family own.

All Things Girl





PHOTOGRAPHY BY JACQUELINE M. SOFIA

Fourteen-year-old Sofia Kelly grew up in Cuba, Mo., and is the youngest of five living generations of women. Sofia's mother left St. Louis to raise her daughter in a stable and loving environment, close to her grandmother and extended family. Despite her friends joking that she "sucks at all things girl," Sofia has also won several beauty pageant titles, including Miss Missouri in the 2015 National American Miss Pre-Teen state competition. Sofia credits her mother and grandmother for helping her to realize how blessed she is in life and for keeping her focused on her goals.



» OPPOSITE: After school, Sofia visits the animal shelter in Cuba with a donation check to help the no-kill shelter continue its mission. The donation is a result of funds raised from members of the local community, and is part of her platform as Miss Missouri.

» ABOVE: Sofia stays focused during volleyball practice drills with her teammates one afternoon. She acknowledges that her athletic, tomboyish demeanor doesn't fit the stereotype of a beauty pageant queen, but she doesn't let that dissuade her from sweating it out on the court.

» LEFT: Sofia and her mom, Tabi Kelly, wake up before 6 a.m. to straighten Sofia's hair in preparation for drill team photographs. On most weekday mornings, Sofia rises early to start a day filled with activities.

Patricia's World





PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOANA TORO

Patricia Nolting is a 58-year old woman who lives with her mother. Her world is like that of a 10-year old child according to doctors. Her mother, Emma, 77, cares and watches over her child who had breast cancer twice, and whose own health is fragile. The two women support each other. They are constant companions driving to church, to yard sales, shopping, and sharing household chores. Patricia's world is mostly spent inside their home as she watches Western movies on television and arranges her make-believe friends—dolls and stuffed animals—that she collects and protects.



» OPPOSITE: Patricia plays with Riley while she watches television in her living room. Patricia's favorite television show is "Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman."

» ABOVE: Patricia gets ready to sleep, turning off the light in her room.

» LEFT: Patricia Nolting 58, Emma Nolting 77, and the family dog Riley are posing outside their house in Cuba, Mo. Emma and Patricia live alone in Cuba, but good friends surround them.

Remedied with Resolve



PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOVELLE TAMAYO

Tracie, 36, left her husband in April after 19 years of physical and emotional abuse, and moved to begin a new life with her sons, Timothy and Zackary. As Tracie makes sense of her new family dynamic, she must balance work and quality time with her children. Between Tracie's income as a part-time dishwasher and government assistance, the family has barely enough money for each month's expenses.

Shortly after paying September's bills, Tracie found out she now earns too much to qualify for food stamps.

Though Tracie is optimistic about her future and the life she can build for her children, she still endures remnants of her soon-to-be ex-husband's aggression.



» OPPOSITE: Tracie takes a moment. The relief of a fresh start collides iwth the challenges of surviving as a single mother.

» ABOVE LEFT: Zackary watches YouTube videos on his phone before sleeping. Zackary has bald patches on his head, which his mother Tracie claims is a result of his father's abuse.

» RIGHT: Tracie attends physical therapy for her torn ACL — an injury she says she suffered as a result of her husband's abuse — at Sullivan Sports Fitness-Rehab Center in Cuba.

» LEFT: Timothy and Zackary brush their teeth before bedtime.



Sheila's Redemption



PHOTOGRAPHY BY RYAN JONES

A year and a half ago Sheila Fee had lost everything: her kids to the Department of Family Services and herself to a methamphetamine addiction. In November, Sheila moved into Hannah's Ranch, a faith-based, substance-free home for single mothers seeking to be reunited with their children. After fighting for 11 months, Sheila regained custody of three of her children in April and has now been clean for nearly 10 months. With the support of her housemates, counselors and friends, Sheila has set out on a path of redemption to build a new life for herself and her children.



» OPPOSITE: Sheila teases Brandon, 7, as he eats his meal. After a nine-month recovery program, Sheila decided to remain at home for the support system it provided and to build her family's savings.

» ABOVE: Tara, 2, throws a tantrum while Brandon plays with a toy and Sheila comforts Emma. Sheila wakes up at 4:45 a.m. most days to get herself and her children ready for school before heading to work with other women from the home.

» LEFT: Mandie Reburra embraces Sheila outside of the factory. They're best friends and help each other outside of work.

Family Man



PHOTOGRAPHY BY YOUNGRAE KIM

Anthony Young is a family man who struggles to rebuild trust from society, despite his lack of housing, family health issues and a failed marriage because of his troubled past with methamphetamine addiction.

For Anthony, two decades of getting high on meth cost him his happiness. He was expelled from high school, lost his home, family and friends and spent four-and-a-half years of his life in prison. About a year ago he was charged with possessing a sawed-off shotgun and must meet community service hour requirements.

Since July, Anthony, his fiancé of 13 years Dawn Klages, her father Ty Klages and a black lab-pei dog named Sampson have been living together in a two-bed motel room, after losing the house where they had lived for the past five years. Dawn's COPD, lupus and social anxiety keep her from interacting with the outside world and Ty's dementia disables him from living a life on his own.

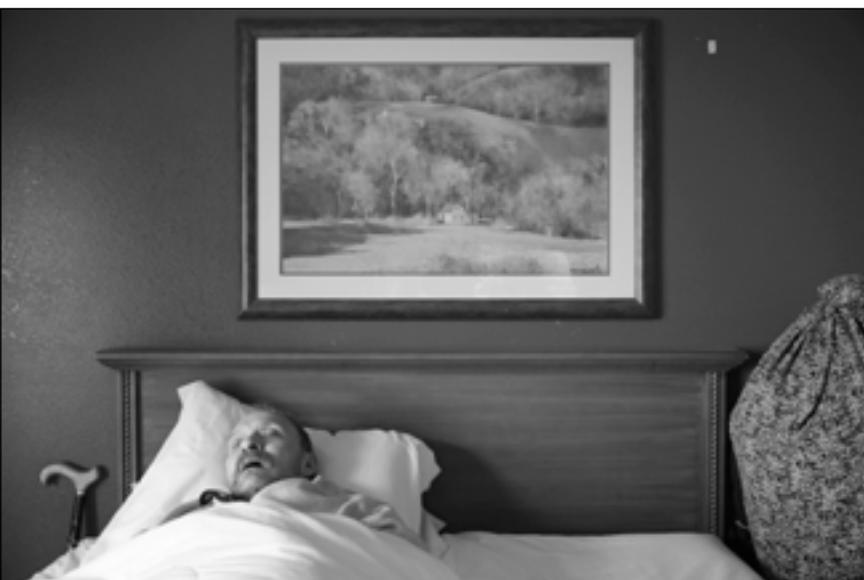
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» OPPOSITE: Anthony Young walks his 7-year-old black lab-pei dog, Sampson, near Chateau Inn & Suites in Cuba, Mo. Since July, Anthony, his fiancé Dawn Klages, her father Ty Kluges, and Sampson have been living together in a two-bed motel room after losing the house where they had lived for the past five years.

» Left: Anthony and Dawn are seen through a window at their motel. Dawn has developed social anxiety after she was diagnosed with COPD and lupus years ago, which keeps her from leaving the room. “It sucks living in a motel. I hate it. I have nothing to do except watching TV,” Dawn said.

» Below: Ty takes a nap in a motel room. Ty started suffering from dementia about a year ago, and now he barely recognizes his daughter Dawn and her fiancé.



SUMMARY CONTINUED:

Six months ago, Anthony finally stopped using meth to become a responsible person. Since then, he has spent most of his days caring for Dawn and Ty, working part-time to help his best friend Andy Sanozaro build a cabin, volunteering at a local food pantry to fulfill his community service hours and looking for a new home for his family.



» ABOVE: Volunteers listen as Barbara Jopling, the director of Cuba Ministerial Food Pantry, prays near a stack of sweet potatoes to start the day. Local churches and farmers along with the government-owned food bank donate food to the pantry.

» RIGHT: Joan Damm, a volunteer at Cuba Ministerial Food Pantry, logs Anthony's final day of community service hours. "He's been to the bad side, now he wants to go to good side. And he's struggling hard, because someone who's been there, done that, they have to fight that demon everyday," Joan said.





» ABOVE: Dawn holds Anthony for a kiss in a motel room. Dawn said she didn't marry Anthony for 13 years because she was never sure if he would stop using meth.

Left Behind





PHOTOGRAPHY BY
ZOE MEYERS

On the morning of Sept. 26 Juanita Bull was planning to move to Colorado. She needed to get away for a while and figure things out. By Friday she had made it as far as a nearby hotel. The time between was filled with fights and distant moments between Juanita and her husband Steve and her two daughters, Felicia and Cheyenne. In Crawford County, Mo. high rates of poverty, alcoholism and drug abuse trap many individuals and families in dysfunctional relationships that can be difficult to break out of. These cycles leave their fractures long before relationships are admitted to be broken. What remains between the cracks?



» OPPOSITE: After twenty-five years of marriage Juanita is making plans to move out. “I’m going to go to Colorado for a while to figure things out.”

» ABOVE: After days of fighting Juanita rolls her suitcase out of her family’s house. She decided not to go to Colorado right now but plans to stay with a friend or in a nearby hotel.

» RIGHT: The pieces of Juanita and Steve Bull’s wedding photo are stuck to the front of their refrigerator in Cuba, Mo.



» ABOVE: Before going out, Felicia puts on make-up. At 17 years old, she is planning to return to high school in January to finish her credits and graduate.



» LEFT: Felicia, Juanita's daughter, has a lot of her own issues that she is struggling to work through. "I don't think I can get better if I stay here."

» BELOW: Steve sits on the porch waiting for his ride to work. "My concern is how I'm going to take care of my two daughters."



Daily Heartbreak



PHOTOGRAPHY BY WESLEY DU

John and Janet Smith's loving marriage has spanned for 54 years. Their lives were changed forever when their middle son, Joe Smith, was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis 25 years ago. John Smith had to have six-way bypass surgery and Janet Smith struggles with diabetes. Unable to

properly care for their son, the couple placed him in a nursing home when he was confined to a wheelchair 10 years ago. It is the love they share and their faith in God that binds this family together that transcends disease and hardship.



» OPPOSITE: John Smith reflects on the times he spent with his his son while looking in his son's old bedroom. "It's happy and sad looking into his room. We had some happy times," he says. John's son, Joe, was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis 25 years ago and has lived in a nursing home for the past ten years after being confined to a wheelchair.

» LEFT: Janet lovingly gives his son a kiss before she leaves. "It still hard every time that I go to see him, it doesn't really get easier," she says.

» ABOVE: John and Janet pray with their son during their weekly visits to him. Even though they can not comprehend why this tragedy happened to their son, it is their faith in God that has kept them resilient during this time.



» ABOVE: Janet and John anxiously wait for the doctor to reveal the prognosis of Janet's eye exam. Her eye has been bleeding in the retina due to her diabetes. "I often worry about my son and what will happen to him once we get older," she says.

» RIGHT: John and Janet share a tender moment after visiting their son, who will turned 50 on October 2, 2017.







Fading Memories



PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUAN CRISTÓBAL COBO

Agnes Cook, 79, of Cuba, Mo. suffers from dementia and needs permanent supervision from her daughter Terry Cook, 54. They live in different homes but Terry plans to move in with Agnes soon.

During the day they share their time with their two dogs and two cats. Agnes clings briefly to her memory, but as the day progresses it slowly starts to fade away.



» FIRST: Agnes Cook, 79, a former kindergarten teacher of 39 years suffers from dementia. Although her memory is slowly fading, she still interacts with many aspects of normal life.

» SECOND: One of Agnes and Terry's two dogs keeps Agnes company at her home. She often reminisces about her accomplishments as an active community member.

» ABOVE: Agnes looks out the window with her cat as she eats some soup for dinner.

» RIGHT: Agnes looks at a wall covered with pictures of her family. She concentrates on the images in an attempt to remember who they are, but she often fails.





» ABOVE: Terry takes a walk with her mother, Agnes, and their two dogs Hope and Pepper. The dogs, along with two cats were rescued off the streets by Terry.

Nurture and Protect





» OPPOSITE: Due to her grandfather's urinary incontinence, April changes her grandparents' bedding with the help of her grandmother almost everyday.

» ABOVE: April and her grandmother must assist her grandfather when he stands and whenever he needs to go to the bathroom or the dining room.

» Top RIGHT: Sandy Wood, Pinnell's mother, sorts medicines into containers for her parents, a task she does every Monday. Several alarms are set as reminders for Sandy's parents, April's grandparents, to take different medicines and vitamins throughout the course of the day.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY MINYING KONG

April Pinnell, 35 and mother of two, decided to quit her job at the local bank two years ago to take care of her grandparents. The fear of her grandparents being sent to a nursing home and possibly being mistreated influence her decision to get a job as a caregiver for the company Pyramid Home Health, and apply to work with her grandmother. Pinnell now gets paid to assist her grandmother and can also help her grandfather at the same time.

Her grandmother, Melba, 77, has vision disabilities after already surviving breast cancer. Despite her vision problems, Melba is fairly independent but needs to remain at home where her surroundings are familiar. Pinnell's grandfather, Kenneth, 75, has a combination of Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's, and heart disease. He is also a cancer survivor. The two require multiple daily medications and need constant monitoring.

Everyday, Pinnell travels from her home to her children's schools, then to her grandparents' home. Despite juggling the demands of motherhood and care-giving, Pinnell is a happy person and considers herself lucky to be able to spend time with her family.





» OPPOSITE: April Pinnell sweeps the floor at her grandparents' house early in the morning after dropping her boys off at school.

» LEFT: April looks affectionately at her husband Darrell, 39, after he gets home from work. Her husband used to work out of town and come home very late in the evenings. Now he has a new job closer to home, so he can spend more time with his family.

» BELOW: At the end of a long day caring for her grandparents and her husband and kids, Aprils washes the dinner dishes, while the boys spend time watching the news with their dad.



Last of the Summer Sun





PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHARLES FOX

After her cousin spotted a personals ad from Donald Spreng, Susan Spreng decided to leave her country, the Philippines, and resettle with him in Cuba, Mo.

Susan and Donald married in 1994 and lived on a farm with a drive-in theater in 1998 he bought in 1998 and moved the family into the theater's projection building.

Donald died in 2011, leaving Susan with their three children, Karen, Carol, and Brad, who is autistic. Susan built a new home for them in 2014 and continues to care for her son Brad while running the theater with her daughters on the weekends.

» OPPOSITE: Susan bathes her son Brad, 14, who was diagnosed with autism at the age of two. He is non-verbal and requires a feeding port for nutrition.

» ABOVE: Susan breaks down in tears at her home after talking about the loss of her husband in 2011 and her loneliness.

» ABOVE: Afternoon light falls on the screen at the drive-in theater in Cuba, Mo. The theater is owned by Susan Spreng, who moved to Cuba from the Phillipines in 1994 after marrying Cuba resident Donald Spreng.



» ABOVE:: Karen Spreng, 20, cleans out the back of her pickup truck while her mother Susan looks on from the family house. The mother and daughter relationship is distant, although Karen still lives with her mother. The house is on the drive-in theater property.



» LEFT: A Catholic rosary casts a shadow on Susan's hand as she drives to Washington, Mo. on a shopping trip. She was looking for an outfit to wear for an international friend who might be visiting her soon.

» RIGHT: Susan looks out the back door of the home she once shared with her late husband Donald and her brother-in-law Frank. Even though she inherited this house and 70 acres of land from them, Susan still struggles to care for her disabled son and her daughters and to keep the drive-in business alive. Her future is uncertain. She is land rich and cash poor.

Mending Motherly Love





PHOTOGRAPHY BY SOFIA JARAMILLO

Five months ago, Raven Tackett obtained a restraining order against her mother, Latoya Pate. Financial struggles and mental illness complicated Latoya's efforts as a mother when Raven was growing up. Raven spent 7 years in foster care. Now, at 25, she is raising two children of her own with her same sex partner, Trinka Boatright, 28.

At first, Latoya did not understand her daughter's sexual preference. Now they have begun to rejoin one another's lives. With the support of her new husband, Jared, Latoya spoils her grandkids to atone for her own mistakes as a mother.

» LEFT: Newly married Latoya and her husband Jared laugh with their grandson London and Latoya's daughter Raven at the Pate's home. Jared was a friend of Raven's before he met Latoya. Once Jared got together with Latoya, he aided in rebuilding the relationship between Latoya and Raven.

» ABOVE: Raven Tackett, center, and her girlfriend Trinkia Boatright lay in bed with Raven's son London Tackett, 2, at their home in Sullivan, Mo. Raven and Trinkia have been together for one year. "In past relationships they'd look past the person I was. I'd pray for someone who could see me for who I am. She broke that down and that's how I know I'm supposed to be with her," said Raven.



» ABOVE: Latoya and her granddaughter Dianna reflect while doing homework at Dianna's home. Latoya watches her grandkids at least three times a week to help her daughter Raven. "I think she finally realized what she did was wrong. She is not the same grandmother as she was a mother," said Raven.

» RIGHT: Raven helps her daughter, Dianna Jones, 7, get ready for school in the morning at their home in Sullivan, Mo. Raven had her daughter when she was 19 years old and has been a single mother for most of Dianna's life. Raven said she wants to give her kids the opportunities she did not have growing up.





» LEFT: Jared leaves his home for work around 5:00 a.m. Jared works for McGinnis Wood Products while Latoya stays home to cook and keep the house clean.

» BELOW: Jared gives his wife Latoya a kiss while out on the town at the Loose Ends bar in Cuba, Mo. “I feel complete and in love. He loves me unconditionally,” said Latoya.



Turtle Earth Family



PHOTOGRAPHY BY PARKER MICHELS-BOYCE

At the end of an old road that no longer has a sign, Colleen and Jamie Smith are raising their family in the same one-room schoolhouse that Colleen's grandmother attended as a girl. In the 1960's, Colleen's grandfather acquired the old schoolhouse in southwestern Washington County at a community auction. The Smiths embrace a lifestyle that is closer to nature—growing much of their own food and limiting their impact on the environment. They focus their energy on nurturing the family relationships and have decided to homeschool their three daughters, aged three, six, and ten.

Jamie works as potter in the tradition of the Wyandot Native American tribe, his ancestry, and works out of a studio attached to the schoolhouse. Colleen is an herbalist and operates a small shop called Turtle Earth Healing and Arts on Main Street in nearby Steelville, where she sells teas, dried herbs and Jamie's pottery. The name Turtle Earth comes from the Wyandot creation story, which explains mankind's relationship to nature and the balance between good and bad in the world.







» FIRST: Colleen Smith takes three-year-old Leonora's hand to lead her inside the house as they get ready for the day. Recently, the family of five is together on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Jamie and Colleen work jobs away the remainder of the week.

» SECOND: Jamie swings with Leonora in a hammock outside the house. "They have everything they need, as far as food shelter and a place to sleep, a comfy place. Everybody thinks they need more and more and more. I think we can do well by living more simply," said Jamie.

» ABOVE: Taking advantage of a sunny afternoon, Leonora and Violet, 6, play outside. A creek and wooded areas surrounding the property provide the children with plenty of space to explore and learn about nature firsthand.



» LEFT: Jamie gives Colleen a kiss before heading off to work in the morning. Jamie learned construction methods from his father and works a variety of jobs in the area.

» ABOVE: Ocarina, 10, loves to read and is rarely without a book in hand. She is home-schooled, along with her sisters, but may enter the public system within the next year.

Familia

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GRISELDA SAN MARTIN

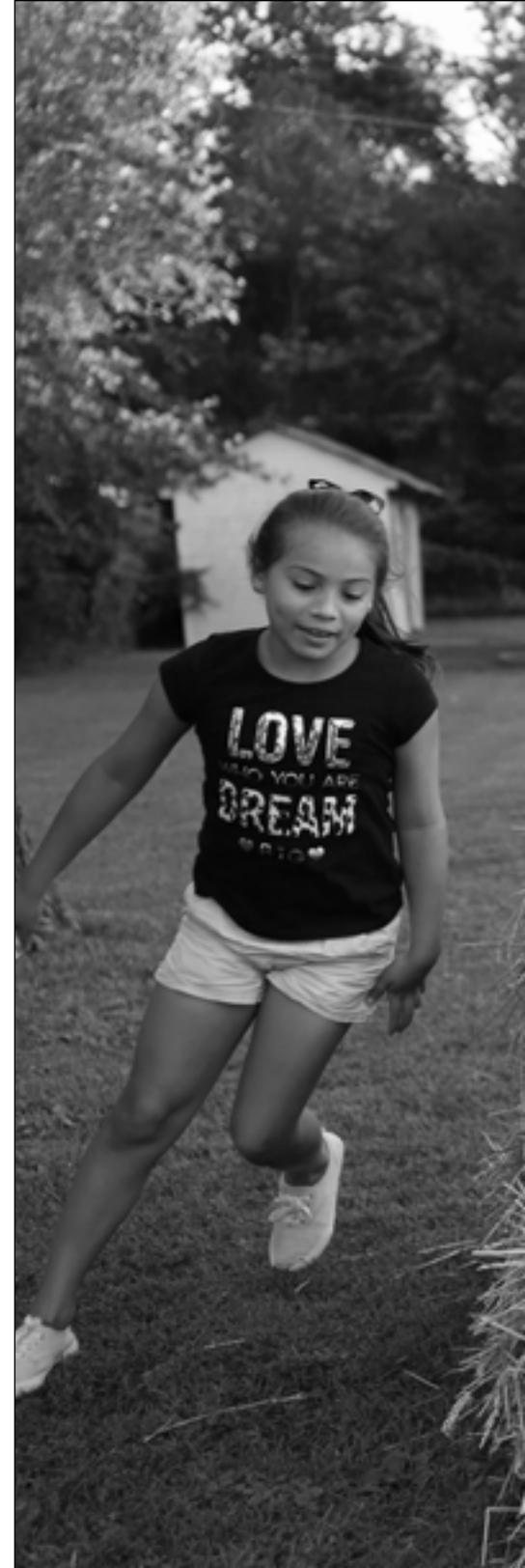
Cynthia and Jose Viramontes left Mexico 11 years ago to settle in Cuba, Mo., a predominantly white town in the heart of the Midwest with an extremely small Mexican community. For Latinos, being together and connected as a family are of great importance and major sources of one's identity.

They work hard to make a better life for themselves while spending as much time as possible with their children, Annia, Cynthia and Uriel.

"We have to take care of our family," Jose said. "That's what matters the most."

» BELOW: Cynthia Viramontes feeds Uriel in their home. The Viramontes try to pass on their cultural values and traditions to their kids, who have never seen Mexico.

» RIGHT: Cynthia, 8, plays around a Halloween decoration in the family's front yard, as her mother watches over her family. Uriel, 2, needs constant supervision to keep him from running onto the highway.







» ABOVE: Annia, 10, and Cynthia, right, ride their bikes in their neighborhood. The girls were born and raised in Cuba, and have never visited Mexico.



» ABOVE: Cynthia pushes her son Uriel on the swing while her daughter, also named Cynthia, plays with them. The two try to keep Uriel entertained in Hood Park while Annia practices soccer on the park's field.



» LEFT: Cynthia greets her father, Jose Viramontes, as he arrives home from his shift at McGinnis Wood Products.



» ABOVE: Cynthia works in the kitchen while her daughter works on her homework. Cynthia is the pillar of the family and cooks for them every day.

» RIGHT: Cynthia prays with her children under an image of the Virgin of Guadalupe, a symbol of the family's Mexican identity. The family goes to Mass every two weeks when the church has services in Spanish.





Little Cuba





PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID JACKSON

In Little Cuba, appearance isn't everything. On the fringe of the city limits of Cuba, Mo., the neighborhood is a study of contrasts — modest homes with tidy, manicured lawns next to ramshackle houses draped in tarps. Peeking through overgrown brush like the forest which surrounds them are trailers that are home to families struggling to survive. Though many residents live in a fragile economic state, the lure of privacy has drawn residents and made them fiercely independent. The unifying factor in this diverse neighborhood is a resilience for life and love.



» OPPOSITE: After lighting a fire, Debbie collects trash from around the house to burn. The yard is cluttered with garbage and rather than letting it collect, the family burns any excess items when enough has accumulated.

» ABOVE: Chase rides his bike in the alley beside his family's home on the edge of Little Cuba.

» LEFT: Having lost his eyesight in recent months, Stubby, the Santonge's dog, stumbles around their home in search of food dropped by the family.

» RIGHT: After dipping into his savings and renewing his Playstation Plus online membership, Zander Santonge plays Call of Duty. At the age of 16, Zander is too young to join a professional online team but receives regular invitations for his performance.



» BELOW: After returning home from school, Colton, the youngest of four boys, began to cry at the news of Stubby's death. Brandon and Debbie held Colton to help comfort him when the news of Stubby's passing upset him.





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Duke and a Cowboy



PHOTOGRAPHY BY GUILLEM SARTORIO

Chris Spurgeon and Duke became best friends when they first met three years ago. Chris, 53, is a professional cowboy who has spent his entire life from rodeo to rodeo, travelling all over the country and first rode a horse when he was 3-years-old. Duke was a three-year-old Quarter Horse stallion. On Sept. 23 someone broke into Chris' farm in the middle of the night and attacked Duke, causing him serious injuries. The horse fought against pain and suffering for several weeks. "If it comes to that, I'll put him down with a bullet myself," the old cowboy said. It first seemed as if Duke's injuries were not permanent but Duke had to be put down several weeks later.

» ABOVE: Duke is Chris' favourite horse. The animal was attacked last Friday night by an unknown person causing serious injuries.

» RIGHT: The stallion makes his first steps outside the barn to be loaded into a trailer.





» RIGHT: Since the day Duke was born, there has been a strong bond between the cowboy and the horse. “ I feel for him the same love that a person can feel for their partner,” Chris said.

» BELOW: A veterinarian explains an X-Ray plaque of Duke’s front leg to Chris. There are no signs of coffin bone rotation.





» ABOVE: Chris takes a break and lights his first cigarette of the day. This cowboy started smoking when he was 12 years old.

» LEFT: Chris suspects that Duke is suffering from coffin bone rotation, a disease that might leave him crippled. "I'll rather shoot him. I don't want him to suffer," Chris said.



Cowboy Colt

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICAH BOND

Colt Mitchell is a seven-year old cowboy. He can ride. He can shoot. And he knows who John Wayne is. Up early, Colt helps his family with the morning chores before school. When he gets home he grabs his hat and spurs and heads out to ride his pony and hunt possums.



» FIRST: Out on his family's 100-acre farm, Colt reins in his horse Blacky as he rides through the woods.

» SECOND: After skeet shooting, Colt and his father share a laugh before heading home for dinner. Stories about hunting expeditions and other adventures are a favorite topic of conversation in the family.

» RIGHT: Colt takes aim with a 12-gauge shotgun. His father, Steve Mitchell, often takes him out to shoot clay birds and practice his shooting.

» BELOW: Colt plays with his bike on his family's property. His parents give him plenty of chores in order to push him to be independent and solve his own problems. Colt still finds plenty of time to have fun.





» ABOVE: The sun rises as Colt gets a few more minutes of sleep before his mother comes to wake him up and start the day.



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