

Young artist helps save cancer-stricken grandma

By JOSIE MUSICO
Staff Writer

Mackenzie Guzman loves her grandmother way too much to watch her suffer.

So when her grandma, Maria "Tencha" Estrada was diagnosed with lung cancer last year, 8-year-old Mackenzie knew she had to do something.

A lifelong artist, Mackenzie decided to turn a hobby into a career by selling her drawings to raise funds for Tencha's chemotherapy treatments and traveling costs to and from Lubbock clinics.

"I want to raise money because it helps her with her chemo," she said. "...I started drawing more pictures, and I thought 'At least it will help Mama.'"

Mackenzie's artwork consists of everything from hearts, Indians, houses and little people to pine trees and cats.



Mark and Pam Whitfield are pleased to announce the engagement and approaching marriage of their son, Joshua Mark Whitfield to Malia Nicole Stokes, both of Sultan, Washington on October 6, 2012. They are planning a noon outdoor wedding at their home in Sultan. Joshua graduated from Loop High School in 2006 and attended South Plains College. He is employed by Macerich of Redmond Town Center in Redmond. Joshua's Grandparents are Daine and Evelyn Bearden of Brownfield, Tx. and Joy Whitfield and the late Olen Whitfield of Seagraves, Tx. Malia is the daughter of Darwin and Robin Stokes of Arlington, Wa. She graduated from Arlington High School and attended Everett Community College. Malia is employed by Safeway in Snohomish, Wa. Her Grandparents are Pearl Anderson and the late Luther Anderson of Portales, NM and Azelua Stokes and the late Donald Stokes of Arlington, Washington. The couple will reside in Sultan after their marriage.

Tencha has helped raise Mackenzie since her mom left when she was 2, and the now-third-grader sees her more as a mother figure. Despite the horrendous side effects of the chemotherapy that frequently leave her so weak she can barely get up, Tencha still manages to cook and clean for her artistic young granddaughter and help her with her homework.

"I love her because she's always been there for me," Mackenzie said.

And just as Tencha inspires others through her continuous efforts to fight cancer, Mackenzie, in turn, also cheers up everyone around her with her bright smile and eagerness to help others.

"She's always been really caring for others," Tencha said. "Everybody loves her."

Because the pair are so close, the thought of Tencha not being around someday is almost too much to bear for the entire family.

"It was hard, especially with Mackenzie being with me because she thought of my mom as her mom," said Tommy Guzman, Mackenzie's dad and Tencha's son. "She was Mom and Grandma. I couldn't think of the words to tell my daughter that she had cancer."

And unfortunately, Tencha's health has not significantly improved. Her April 2011 diagnosis of stage 2 lung cancer was recently upgraded to stage 4. The family then had to confront a worst-case-scenario possibility of someday losing their beloved mother and grandmother.

Tencha, though, handled the idea fairly well, relying on her Catholic faith to acknowledge she would one day be called home for the journey ahead.

"I said, 'I'm going to heaven,'" she said. "Mackenzie said, 'Can I go with you?' I said, 'No, there's only ticket per person.'"

In the meantime, Mackenzie is continuing to sell her drawings, and the family is collecting additional donations to help with Tencha's medical expenses. To donate or purchase a drawing, stop by their residence, 815 S. Second St., or call 637-9794.

They are also accepting plenty of prayers as Tencha keeps fighting.

"I'll take it one day at a time and see what will happen, because I'm not ready to give up until God says I'm ready to go," she said.



Maria "Tencha" Estrada (center) is struggling with her late-stage lung cancer, but her granddaughter, 8-year-old Mackenzie Guzman (left) and son, Tommy Guzman (right) will do whatever they can to save her. Mackenzie is even selling her artwork for help pay her grandmother's medical expenses.

Bridal Selections

Alyssa Silva & Justin Rios
Kelsey Salmon & Kent Moore
Melissa Zepeda & Eric Morin • Holly Isaacs & Tyler Britten
Kayla Dawson & John Pierce • Destiny Creech & David Richins
Terri Gonzales & Tim Ball

NELSON PHARMACY
805 Tahoka Rd 637-3533

**Flu shots
HERE!**

Medicare Accepted

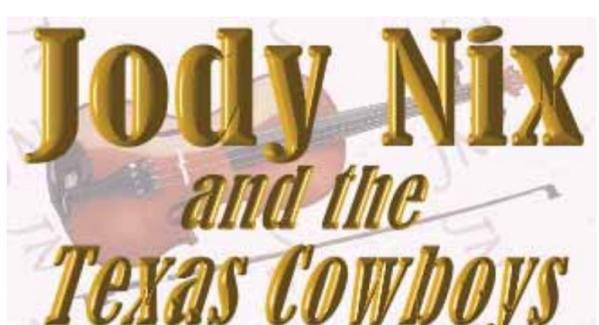
Fast & Friendly Prescription Service

 **CLINIC
PHARMACY**

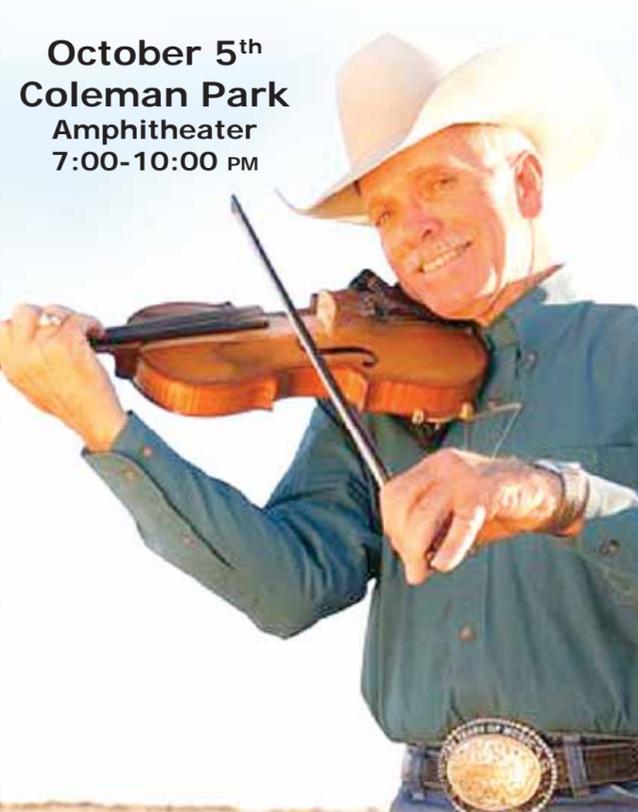
We care about your health!

Sylvia & Donnie Dingus Owners
901 Tahoka Road 637-7049

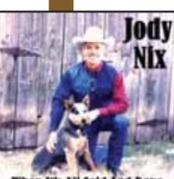
in Concert



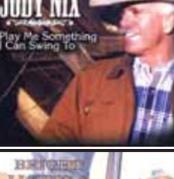
October 5th
Coleman Park
Amphitheater
7:00-10:00 PM



Brownfield Chamber of Commerce
brownfieldchamber.com









Announcing Harvest Church



*A special abbreviated
worship service for
those involved
in the harvest.*

SUNDAY MORNINGS
8:00 - 8:30 AM
Beginning October 7th

**Brownfield
Church of Christ
Chapel**

Please join us and we'll have
you in the field on time!

**Work Clothes ARE Church Clothes
at HARVEST CHURCH**

Brownfield Church of Christ
502 Lubbock Road 806.637.4597
Office Hours: Monday-Friday 8:00-5:00

