

“THE FENCE”

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When driving up to the stop light off Broadway and Hailey Street, you're always greeted by a saying or design on "The Fence". This chain-link fence has become a landmark to Sweetwater local citizens.

Lita McEachern started decorating "The Fence" in 1991. Before this she was decorating her own fence in front of her own house, when she moved here in 1985. Mrs. Layfield, who she bought the house from, taught her how to decorate the fence. Originally she was using pieces of cloth, weaved into the fence and pinned.

After years of using the tedious method of weaving cloth and pins, she saw someone using cups to decorate a fence, and decided she would adopt this easier method. After positive community recognition of her decorating, she decided to move to "The Fence". She would decorate at midnight, surprising people in town with bring the design she worked days on to life.

"There were little fairies that came and cleaned their house at night but they did it at night when nobody could see them," remembers Lita as she tells a childhood story of fairies who do good deeds when nobody's looking.

Lita's love for the community has no boundaries, being named Citizen of the Year was an honor but she says she didn't do it for the recognition, "There's two things that you could never do enough for and that's the United States and your community."

People would call her and request that she put up a special sign for family members coming home from war. Lita would work on special decorations for military soldiers who had served in Afghanistan and would be passing through Sweetwater on their way home, and when

they did come through they would see Lita's labor of love.

And like the fairies in Lita's childhood story, her work came to life in the light of day, but by then she was long gone.

Lita had knee surgery, and was bound to a wheelchair for some time. She would still go out and decorate the fence every Thursday night. She would decorate in her wheelchair, walker and brace, nothing could stop her from showing her love for the Sweetwater Mustangs.

She would cut out figures to represent different characters to go with her fence. She would randomly think of quotes to put on the fence, to be an inspiration to citizens. At one point, she was doing 4 fences around town.

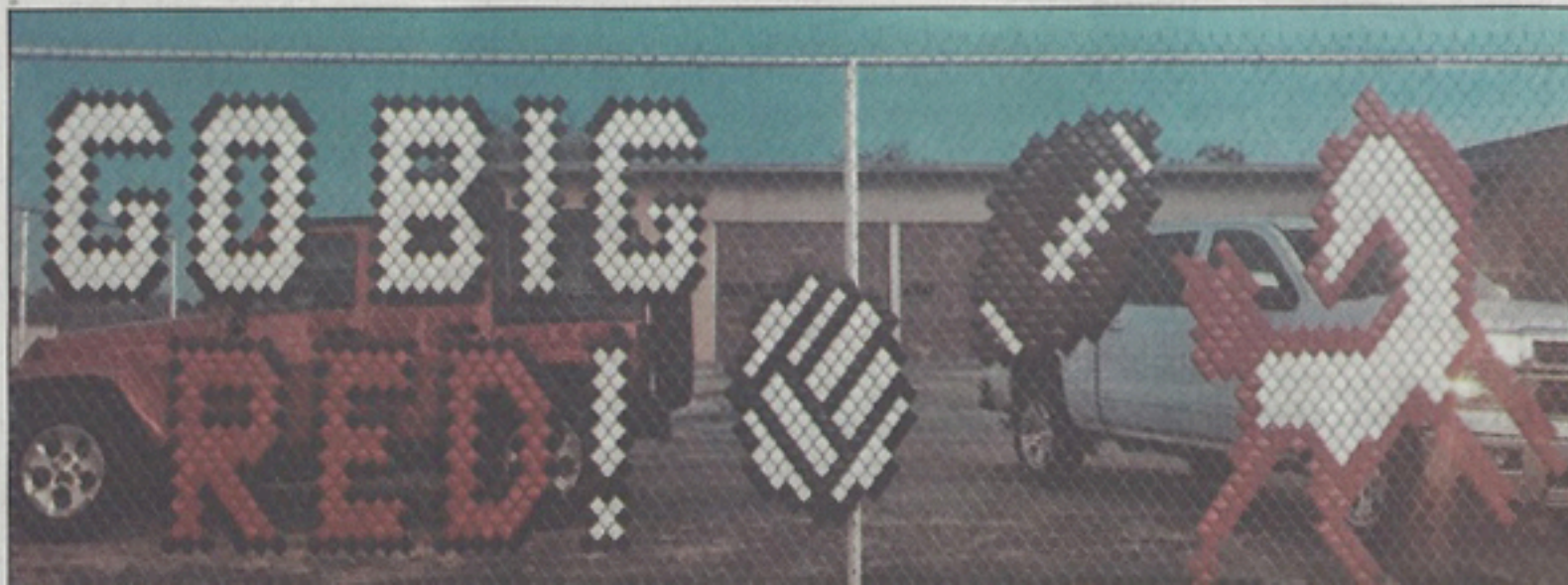
She started calling her fence decorations "Fence Talk on Broadway". She came up with the saying when thinking about how neighbors would talk over the fence while hanging up laundry or doing yard work.

Lita decorated "The Fence" for 32 years, before deciding to hand it over to The Chamber Of Commerce, once her husband retired. Area News even paid tribute to her years of hard work and creativity. KTAB-KRBC deemed her "Cup Lady". Her last fence was February of 2017.

The Chamber Of Commerce took over March 2017. Shortly after taking over, they had a new fence put up. Once the new fence was up, they started using "Put-N-Cups".

Cynthia Delgado designs the fence on paper with colored pencils. Karen Hunt and Joanna Martinez help Delgado put up the decoration.

The fence is used to promote events, holidays, games and other exciting things around Sweetwater and surrounding areas. It's an exciting town landmark to drive by and see what the new design is. Visitors love stopping by to see it, occasionally taking pictures with it.



The Sweetwater and Nolan County Chamber of Commerce decorate "The Fence" to show Sweetwater Mustang Pride during football season.