

WESST – You want them in your business

Rhonda Johnson and her husband Stever (yes, the r is on purpose) moved to Roswell with their son Steele in March of 1995 after learning their music pastor Gary Schaeffer was leaving Fountain of Life Church in Haltom City, Texas, a suburb of Fort

would be there to help his choir, and sure enough by March 12 we were living in Roswell attending that church,” said Johnson. She also said “The Schaeffer family wasn’t even here for a year, so it’s like they were sent here just to bring us here.”



THE PLACE TO START & GROW YOUR BUSINESS

Worth. “The choir in that church was such a tight knit group, we didn’t want to let him go. Hearing Gary describe their new home, a smaller town with less people and traffic, it sounded like exactly what we wanted as we were tired of raising our son in the car, feeding him both breakfast and dinner to and from work. Working in the city and living in the country left us commuting for several hours each day, leaving us with no quality time. So a quiet smaller city sounded like a great solution,” said Johnson.

Johnson’s husband got a relocation package from the Roswell Chamber of Commerce within two weeks, to her surprise, and he called to ask Schaeffer if he had been checking around Roswell for them as he had requested. Schaeffer and Johnson were both surprised at his motivation. “When Gary announced to the Fountain of Life choir that one of our favorite evangelists would be at the Roswell church on March 12th, I told Gary that some of us

Once they committed to the move, everything fell into place. Stever found a job as a rural carrier associate (RCA) for the Post Office immediately. It was the first vacancy of that type in the area in many years. She found work almost immediately as well.

“On our original trip in February 1995 to interview for jobs, we were driving down Main Street and there were NMMI cadets marching. When our son Steele, only five years old, saw the cadets marching he pointed at the cadets

and prepared her house to sell. She listed it with a local realtor, and nothing happened. “I didn’t worry because I knew that the house would only sell if God had plans for me to move,” said Johnson. Soon she was recruited to run the Roswell office of WESST.

Having made the job her own, with the support of her supervisor Agnes Noonan and the strong network WESST has state-wide, Johnson is excited to help people start and grow businesses. “We dive deeper and get into the weeds with business owners to help them understand how best to grow their business,” said Johnson.

When asked how she feels about Roswell’s present potential and future growth she says “Roswell cannot draw most big companies to employ great numbers of people, so we have a great opportunity to start small and grow many businesses. I always say Microsoft started in a garage.”

WESST is in the Sunwest building at 5th and Main, on the seventh floor, and can be reached at 575-624-9850

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- Camilo Romero

saying ‘Soldiers! I want to be a soldier!’. We nurtured his interest and today he has a career in the Coast Guard,” said Johnson.

“Roswell has been such a good home for us. My passion is to help my community,” said Johnson.

Johnson lost her husband, after a long illness, in 2014. With her son grown and moving duty stations every couple of years, she considered where she might live

~A WESST success story~

Growing up in Roswell with a cop for a dad, Camilo Romero always held an admiration for the discipline and responsibility of serving and protecting the public. “I grew up waving goodbye to a police car, and watching my dad in his uniform every morning. He was so proud to be a police officer,” said Romero.

“When I was around eight or ten years old, a friend and I found a pair of my dad’s handcuffs. While we were playing, I put the cuffs on my friend. Then I realized that I didn’t have a key to release him. We spent a good hour worrying and scaring ourselves before we finally broke down and told mom. She called dad at work and he came home to release my friend,” said Romero. “The grounding didn’t hurt nearly as much as that hour of worrying had.”

“Phil” Romero retired after 35 years of police work.

Lieutenant Dan Murillo has been a friend of Romero’s since childhood. Of Romero Murillo says “I’ve always seen him as a wall-breaker. He’s like a big brother to everyone. He takes care of people even when he doesn’t have to.”

In 1997, at the age of 17 Romero worked for his dad’s security company and the experience turned his love of his dad’s work into a life’s passion. “About a month after I graduated from Goddard High School, in 1998 I started at the Chaves County Detention Center,” said Romero.

Romero started Allstate Security in 2009, after he recognized a need for a full-service, professional security company in Roswell. “We started with me and a friend. We bought two uniforms, I made a couple of patches and we started working private parties, dances and weddings,” said Romero.

In 2012 Allstate landed two large contracts, hired 5 full-time employees and opened their K-9 unit. Wesst loaned us the money for this first expansion. “Wesst has always been supportive and

helpful. Along with the loan, the attention to detail, ensuring we had what we needed and helping us to anticipate future needs were the kind of help we really appreciated,” said Romero.

Allstate picked up two more large contracts in 2015. One of those jobs took Romero right back to Wesst, and Rhonda Johnson. “We started doing security for a large oil company, and suddenly we needed 36 employees. This meant uniforms, training and payroll along with other costs. Rhonda has helped us, once again, to get the loan we needed, to train our office manager and prepare her for the increased responsibilities, and to cover details. She really thinks ahead,” said Romero.

Allstate Security is now licensed by the state of New Mexico to train levels 1, 2 and 3 security officers. They also have some officers certified for drug and alcohol testing with the Department of Transportation. Soon they expect to do private security for government as well.

Allstate Security is primed to be one of Roswell’s long-term employers while helping our local businesses and homeowners to remain safe.

Wesst and Allstate are making Roswell a better place to live.

