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their system of moving around each other in the cramped faded yellow building. Bottles of colored syrups are lined up in rows on one side, with small and large sized Styrofoam

cups sitting nearby with their white ice pointed tops waiting to be brought to life and handed out the small window to the next eager customer. The snow cone machine, situated across from the window-unit air conditioner necessary to create their frozen treat, is at a constant hum, pulverizing the ice cubes brought in from the stainless steel freezers attached to the little building, assuring Mathis never runs out of her main ingredient.

About five years passed with Mathis and her son running the small summer stand, with younger sister Brandi stopping in to help. The original Main Street location of 3M Snow Cone – which stands for all three Mathis family members and is the real name of the operation – was between Johnny Mart and the old Frisco Tile Company. They remained at that location for eighteen years before relocating to their current larger parking lot at the southeast corner of Main and Second Streets.

As the Mathis children grew up, married, and had kids of their own, Mary was left to run the stand alone (although both children drop in now and then to lend a hand), but never thought of closing up shop. For years, in fact, Mathis was so dedicated to her job, she would drive to and from Oklahoma several times a week while caring for her ailing mother, in time to open her beloved stand by 2:00 pm weekdays and 3:00 pm on weekends. Mathis praises her right-hand man and good friend, Mike Sanchez, who has helped for the last ten years and is proud to say that any customer waiting in line, even if it's past her closing time of 10:00 pm, will be served.

By demand, Mathis has moved up her opening day to May 1st and stays open through the end of September. The summer heat doesn't bother those enjoying the simple pleasure of sitting underneath one of Mathis' umbrella-covered benches reveling in the icy refreshment of childhood. Down the road the commercial boom of Frisco may be raging away, but here, time is at a standstill and everyone appreciates the break.

“... bottles of colored syrups are lined up in a row.”

*The Snow Cone Lady, Mary Mathis
photos by Natalie Medigovich*

the snow cone lady

by natalie medigovich

SHE HAS NEVER HAD A NEED TO ADVERTISE. Although the tiny clear Christmas lights adorning the little shack certainly add some quirky charm, they are by no means a necessity as a beacon to the local followers who have come to crave Mary Mathis' delightful snow cones.

Hundreds of local residents and many from outside Frisco pay homage to the one of a kind snow cone hut. They willingly stand in line waiting for their Styrofoam cup and accompanying red plastic straw (complete with a “shovel” to help scoop up the last chunk of melting ice), happily mulling which of the 45 flavors, like “wedding cake” or “Ninja turtle” (a blend of banana and lime syrup), they will choose as a topping this time. All this for \$1.00 (tax included). A large cup is 25 cents extra.

It all started 22 years ago when Mathis' son Shane begged her to buy a snow cone maker so he could set up shop in the summers to earn money. The boy knew he had something unique to offer when his mom agreed to be his entrepreneurial partner. Little did they know that the hours they stayed open would lengthen as would the days, which turned into weeks and finally into months. Business has more than tripled since then.

Shane ran the stand in the afternoons after school until his mother joined him and helped out in the evenings, perfecting

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