

## COLOR OVER THE CREEK



# Derr adds Friendswood to growing list of artistic bridges

**BILLY LIGGETT**  
Reporter News Staff

His company's work can be seen along many of Texas' finest highways and as far away as Salt Lake City, Utah.

But Scott Derr wanted to add some flair to his own hometown, so he donated labor and talent to the city for four emblem paintings along the FM 518 bridge over Coward's Creek.

Derr, owner of Scott Derr Painting Co. located near Ellington Field, has seen his company grow to 38 employees since it began in the late 1970s as a business that restored old

homes. They've been painting bridges since 1989 and haven't looked back since.

"TxDOT pays me to paint the bridges, but I do the flair free of charge," said Derr, overlooking his latest creation in Friendswood.

That "flair" is the artwork he adds to several of his jobs. The usual addition is an emblem that represents that city. Beaumont had symbols of Texas with oil derricks inside. Southlake has WWII airplanes flying against a clouded sky. Amarillo has a cowboy mural along its bridge.

It's this creativity that has Scott Derr's company getting offers from

and Washington D.C.

"We painted millions of square feet of bridge in Utah before the winter olympics, and we added the Olympic rings," Derr said. "People loved it."

That \$2 million paint job got Derr offers from China ... but he's not looking to travel that far.

"I'm not going to China," he said. "Not now anyway."

Derr Painting Co. has been signed on to paint the Woodrow Wilson bridge. Derr is relocating an employee for the position, and the job will last from 2005 to 2007. Closer to

Staff photo by Billy Liggett  
Scott Derr stands next to his company's latest creation, art work for the bridge over Coward's Creek on 518 in Friendswood.

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# Bridge

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home, Derr will begin work for what he calls his biggest project, the Katy Freeway, in 2005.

But the job in Friendswood was just something Derr wanted to do, free of charge, to make his town look a little nicer.

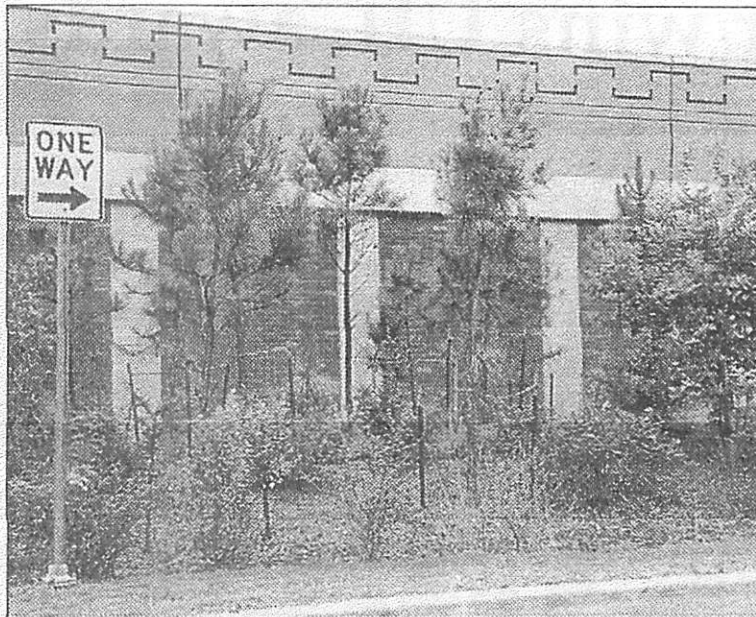
"People usually don't look at bridges as they're driving, but I do for obvious reasons," he said. "I live in Friendswood, and I've noticed the bridges here are gray and dirty. I figured I would do something to fix that."

The bridge over Coward's Creek features a Texas flag with a Friendswood emblem in the middle. The four paintings face each other at both ends of the bridge.

He wants to complete the job by painting the word "Friendswood" along the center.

"I just think it'll look nice," he said. "It will make it complete."

Derr's company's work can be found all over Texas. The little blue waves on bridges over I-45 toward Galveston are his work. What looks like brick-lined walls in Bellaire along Loop 610 are actually paintings. Highway 75 through the heart of Dallas has some of that Derr flair, and more paintings can be found in Angleton, Beaumont, New Braunfels, and El Paso.



Photos courtesy of Scott Derr

(Top photo) That's not real brick. Derr Painting Company painted faux brick along portions of Loop 610 in Bellaire, earning TxDot an award recently. (Bottom photo) The bridge that leads to the airport in Waco, the usual landing spot for President Bush, has been touched up to give the highway a more "Texas feel."

## National Day of Prayer

Friendswood will join cities across the nation celebrating the National Day of Prayer Thursday.

The ceremony will be held from noon to 1 p.m. at the Stevenson Pavilion in Friendswood City. There will be prayer, singing of scriptures, and singing.

Children from Christian schools will be sent special music. This year's theme is "Call Our Nation to Prayer" based upon the scripture Chronicles 7:14, "If my people, which are called by name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and turn from their wicked ways; I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their iniquity, and will heal their land."

In keeping with this tradition, the City of Friendswood asks all concerned citizens to join in prayer for the nation and its leaders, to thank God for His blessings on the nation and the city, to seek His intervention in problems, and seek His guidance for the nation's and city's government and community leaders.

The ceremony will be sponsored by Friendswood Community Prayer Breakfast. For more information, call H. Flynn at (281) 992-3580.

## Faithful fathering topic of May Prayer Breakfast

Special to the Reporter News

The next Friendswood Community Prayer Breakfast will be held on Saturday morning, May 15 at 7 a.m., at Mary Queen Catholic Church in Friendswood.

## Rap CD

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directed at the students who helped the girl.

ABC interviewed one parent who decided to tell her son at home, because he was one of the students named in the song.

Despite a few absences, attendance at FHS