

# An Unconventional Breed

The nontraditional career paths of seven local women

by Gail Bennison  
photos by Jason Kindig



## Boss Lady

The Fort Worth Herd has brought the Old West back to life twice daily for 10 years as cowhands drive 15 Texas Longhorn steers through the city's historic Stockyards along Exchange Avenue.

Arizona native Kristin Jaworski was 25 years old in 2002, when she took the reins as the Herd's third trail boss. She is the first woman to hold the position. Eleven of the 12 cowhands she manages are men.

Jaworski was raised around the livestock industry and exposed to tourism at the Grand Canyon at an early age. She found that marketing was her passion while attending Tarleton State University in nearby Stephenville. Her background helps her manage the livestock, budget, event coordination, the media and the education program—a few of the trail boss "hats" she wears.

"The men test me, of course, but the more tenured drovers are actually very protective of me," Jaworski said. "They all call me 'boss lady,' and we currently don't have any major issues. That did not come easy though," she continued. "The first few years, I had more terminations than I did new hires!"

Interaction with tourists is a favorite part of her job, she said. "What better place than working where people choose to visit and are so excited to be so close to those amazing steers?"

Jaworski lives in Tolar, just southwest of Fort Worth, where she raises quarter horses and Hereford cattle.

Kristin Jaworski  
Trail Boss  
Fort Worth Herd



**Special Agent Kathryn Lumley**  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
Fort Worth

### Criminal Minds

The 1991 film, "The Silence of the Lambs," opens with actress Jodie Foster trekking the FBI Academy obstacle course in Quantico, Virginia. Special Agent Kathryn Lumley entered FBI duty that same year. "We call the obstacle course The Yellow Brick Road," the diminutive Lumley said. "And it's rigorous. I worked out every day for a year before I even went to the Academy."

Lumley earned an accounting degree at St. Leo University in Florida, worked as a police officer in Tampa for five years, and five years as an accountant with Bank of America to prepare for a job with the FBI.

Classified as a Criminal Agent, her assignments included evidence collection at the scene and in the morgue after the 1995 Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building bombing in Oklahoma City. She also assisted in the roundup of members of the notorious "Texas Syndicate," a violent prison gang that developed behind bars in the 1970s and committed serious crimes in North Central Texas and other areas.

Currently working in the white-collar crime area, Lumley specializes in mortgage and insurance fraud. Her strengths, she said, are "putting together all the pieces of the puzzle and making people feel comfortable enough to confess their crimes."

"When people meet a female FBI agent, they find it fascinating because law enforcement traditionally is a male-dominated profession," Lumley said. "For me, it's a dream job."



**Deborah Rogers**  
Goat Farmer, Cheesemaker  
Deborah's Farmstead  
Fort Worth

### Say Cheese!

Henry, Claire, Hazel, Sister, Gigi Fontaine, Chips, Twigg, Max and Isabella—these are just the ones she's bottle feeding. Deborah Rogers is the proud mommy of 52 baby goat kids this year.

In former lives, Rogers was a globetrotting Ford fashion model and a high-powered stockbroker. She certainly is not your ordinary goat farmer. Her farmstead isn't ordinary either. Deborah Rogers Farmstead fromagerie, located five minutes away from posh Westover Hills, looks more like a European retreat than a goat farm. But Rogers' model is the Amish farm system. She wants people to seek out her cheese because it is unique.

It was during her modeling days in France that Rogers fell in love with cheese and the art of making it. "This year I'll have fresh Chevre (goat milk cheese), Feta, a Raclette, similar to a Gruyere, Birdsong, a bloomy rind cheese similar to a Camembert, and a Persille, another bloomy rind cheese with white and blue molds," she said.

Rogers plans to launch her Botanicas Skincare line early this summer. "Goat milk is one of the most nourishing things you can put on your skin," she said. "I've been working on the all-natural formulas for about 18 months." Botanicas initially will include a cleanser, toner, moisturizer, serum and hand cream.



## Hard-Hatted Woman

"I love putting puzzles together," said Vicki Dickerson, president and CEO of Fort Worth-based The Projects Group. In 2002, she formed the company, which offers a full range of development services through completion of construction and opening of the facility. Dickerson was the first woman to graduate in her class of Joint Electrical Apprenticeship in 1981 and the only one on many job sites, but said she never considered herself a pioneer. For her, it has never been about gender.

"It's about doing the very best that I could," she explained. "If you're the best, you don't have to think about that. Have I always, in the background, wanted to be sure I represented and set an example for women who follow me? Yes. But I never went into anything thinking there would be a judgment against me because of gender."

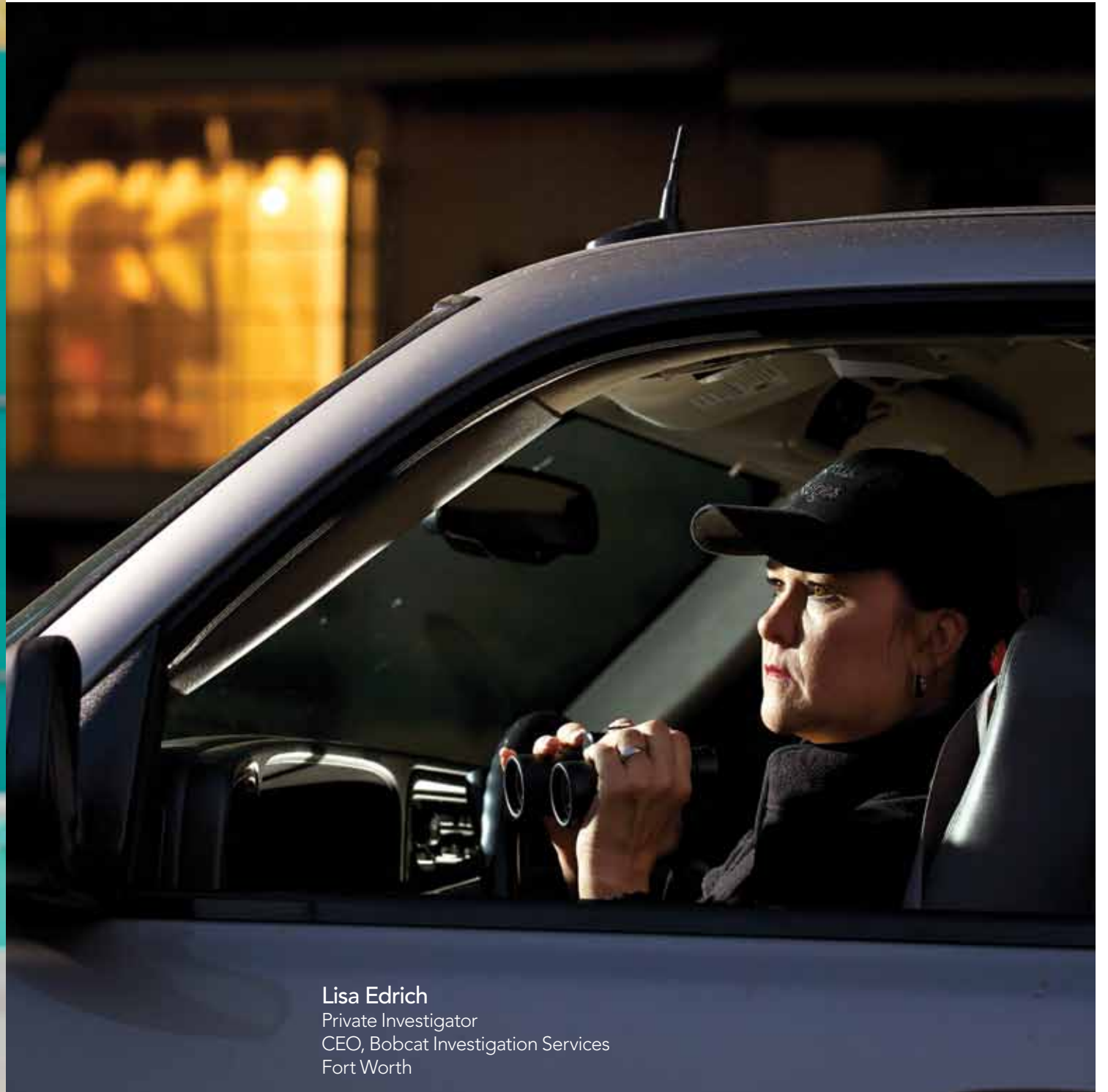
Equipped with a degree in construction management, Dickerson's first job was working for Southland Corporation on the City Place Project. She developed numerous projects for Southland before the company closed.

Among her accomplishments are the project management of the Nancy Lee and Perry Bass Performance Hall, National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame, Bank One, Wells Fargo Bank, Sundance West and Sanger Lofts.

Current projects include the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History, The Smith Center for Performing Arts in Las Vegas, and Richmond Performing Art Center in Richmond, Virginia.

### Vicki Dickerson

President and CEO of The Projects Group  
Fort Worth



### Lisa Edrich


Private Investigator  
CEO, Bobcat Investigation Services  
Fort Worth

## Private Eye

Being a female private investigator has a lot of advantages, said Lisa Edrich, CEO of Bobcat Investigation Services in Fort Worth. "I'm able to get closer to a situation or put myself in the middle of a situation easier than a man could," she explained. "I've been burned before on the job, and I just start doing something that women normally do, like putting on makeup. People think, 'Well maybe she isn't watching me.' It just never occurs to people that a woman would be sitting in her car working surveillance."

Edrich, who does most of her work in her car, started in the business 10 years ago as an office manager for a private investigations firm. She has also worked as a process server, a job she says can be very dangerous. "Being an investigator can be dangerous, too, if you don't work smart," Edrich added. "If my job takes me to an area of town where people who look like me should not be, I'll give that case to someone who will blend. Sometimes I find myself in a bad situation. I do the smart thing and get out because it's not worth losing my life over it."

Bobcat Investigation Services works for insurance companies on workers compensation investigations, and for individuals and attorneys in cases involving pre-marital background checks, child custody, the location of missing relatives and runaway teens, and surveillance services for spouses who suspect their partners of infidelity. They also provide background investigation services for business owners.

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a dark blue flight suit, is smiling and holding a Nikon camera with a large lens. She is positioned in the open bay of an aircraft, with various equipment and a parachute pack visible in the background.

Elizabeth "Liz" Kaszynski  
Multimedia Production Analyst  
Aerial Photographer and Videographer  
Lockheed Martin Aeronautics  
Fort Worth

### G Whiz Liz

She wears a flight suit, harness and G-suit just like the pilots wear. She feels G-forces from head to foot—what scientists call "positive G." At nine-plus Gs, she couldn't move a muscle. The same force that keeps water pinned in a pail when spun at arm's length flushes blood from the brain and chest, sending it south to her feet.


Liz Kaszynski started with Lockheed Martin Aeronautics in Fort Worth as an intern during her last semester of college. After graduating from the University of North Texas in Denton with a degree in radio-television-film, she was hired full time in 2003. Kaszynski received her flight status credentials four years ago.

"As an intern, I didn't have a clue what I was getting into," she said. "I didn't even know who Lockheed Martin was! But being a poor, starving college student, I thought 'Well, I'll try that.'"

Kaszynski flies in the rear seats of F-16 and F-18 fighter jets and supports flight testing of both the F-16 and F-35 programs in her role as an aerial photographer and videographer. Basically, her job is to shoot photos and videos of other fighter jets in various configurations and profiles as part of Lockheed's flight testing process.

Kaszynski must be able to handle cameras and communicate with the pilots during the aircraft "high-G" maneuvers and has been trained to eject if necessary.

"I'm shooting not only for engineering documentation but for marketing and business development purposes, so when we get back from that 30-minute flight, I need to have some stellar visuals," she said. "It's a great job!"

A woman wearing a grey long-sleeved shirt, blue jeans, and a dark cap is holding a shotgun. She is standing in a grassy field. In the foreground, a white and brown speckled dog is looking to the right.

Allison "Bunny" Brown  
HighPoint Kennels  
Bird Dog Trainer and Breeder  
Granbury

### Getting to the Point

A professional bird dog trainer and breeder, Bunny Brown knew from the time she was in 5th grade that she wanted to train dogs for a living. "I grew up with horses and dogs, and I've never had a normal job," she said.

Over the last 24 years, her Brittany Field Champions have won and placed in more than 300 regional field trials in the Midwest, including the United States Open Brittany Championship, Texas Open Brittany Championship and the National All-Age Brittany Championship. "I started winning and beating professional trainers when I was in high school," Brown said. "I was traveling all over Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas during my senior year and all through college."

Brown, who lives in Granbury and trains at the 26,000-acre Diamond H Black Ranch, describes an ideal Brittany All Age dog as "having the ability to run big and stay out to the front, to go to the correct objectives to find wild birds, the stamina to run over one hour hard and wide, class, style and manners around their birds, and the ability to find enough birds. Their ground speed and classy style catches a judge's eye," she said.

"We do our best to train both dogs and owners," Brown said. "Owners are welcome to observe and work with their dogs during all phases of training. A well-educated handler is the key to a successful investment in any hunting program."