

Winter • 2008

Elegant Living

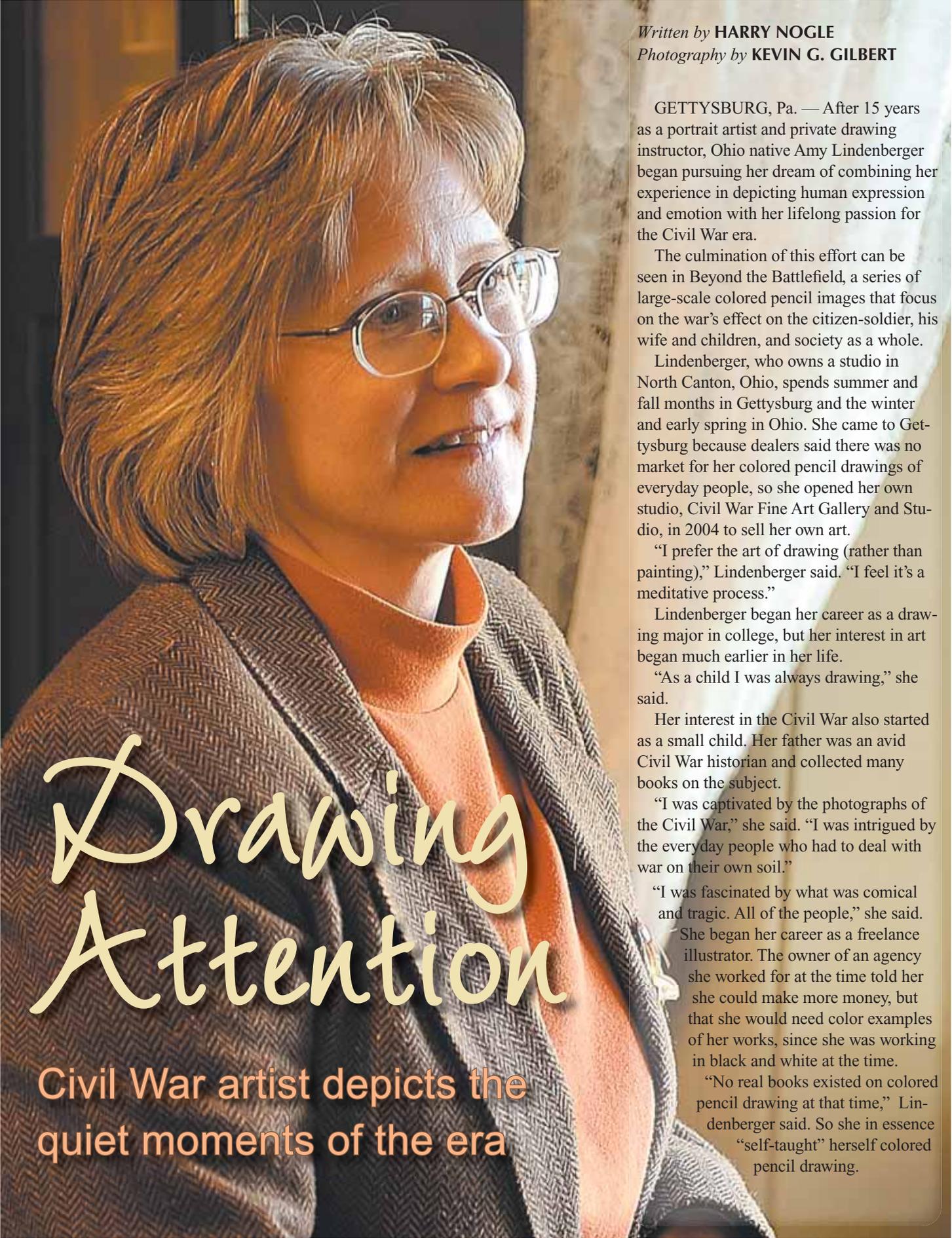
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Written by **HARRY NOGLE**

Photography by **KEVIN G. GILBERT**

GETTYSBURG, Pa. — After 15 years as a portrait artist and private drawing instructor, Ohio native Amy Lindenberger began pursuing her dream of combining her experience in depicting human expression and emotion with her lifelong passion for the Civil War era.

The culmination of this effort can be seen in *Beyond the Battlefield*, a series of large-scale colored pencil images that focus on the war's effect on the citizen-soldier, his wife and children, and society as a whole.

Lindenberger, who owns a studio in North Canton, Ohio, spends summer and fall months in Gettysburg and the winter and early spring in Ohio. She came to Gettysburg because dealers said there was no market for her colored pencil drawings of everyday people, so she opened her own studio, Civil War Fine Art Gallery and Studio, in 2004 to sell her own art.

"I prefer the art of drawing (rather than painting)," Lindenberger said. "I feel it's a meditative process."

Lindenberger began her career as a drawing major in college, but her interest in art began much earlier in her life.

"As a child I was always drawing," she said.

Her interest in the Civil War also started as a small child. Her father was an avid Civil War historian and collected many books on the subject.

"I was captivated by the photographs of the Civil War," she said. "I was intrigued by the everyday people who had to deal with war on their own soil."

"I was fascinated by what was comical and tragic. All of the people," she said.

She began her career as a freelance illustrator. The owner of an agency she worked for at the time told her she could make more money, but that she would need color examples of her works, since she was working in black and white at the time.

"No real books existed on colored pencil drawing at that time," Lindenberger said. So she in essence "self-taught" herself colored pencil drawing.

Drawing Attention

Civil War artist depicts the quiet moments of the era

Lindenberger feels she can imitate other mediums with colored pencils. She draws sometimes on white museum board, other times on rag matte board, which is acid free.

“I simply prefer the nature of drawing over painting,” she said. “I like the softness of colored pencils.”

Lindenberger wanted to work in colors, but she “had problems with the dust that came from pastel chalk.”

“Pencils are cleaner,” she said.

To create the look of a painting, Lindenberger uses a Turpenoid coating over her pencil work to create more of the opaque look of painting.

Her work depicts the personal realities of the Civil War in the lives of both soldiers and civilians. It provides a complement to the battle scenes and high drama depicted by other Civil War artists.

While the majority of contemporary Civil War artwork focuses on the battle scenes, the generals and the heroes of the battlefield, Lindenberger believes that these themes were the exception, and that most of life’s fabric consisted then, as it does today, of quieter, less obviously dramatic moments.

Beyond the Battlefield is comprised of two categories: “Sword Across the Threshold” and “Women of Distinction.”

The drawings in *Sword Across the Threshold* depict situations in which an 1860s man — a citizen-soldier — and his family might have found themselves as the drama of the war unfolded.

The *Women of Distinction* group focuses on women whose contributions to the Civil War were notable and whose images Lindenberger believes deserve to be made more recognizable than those seen in century-old photographs.

Lindenberger’s current work is a drawing of John Brown. She works at a drawing board by a window that looks out on the street of her 333 Baltimore St. studio where passersby can easily look in on her as she draws. That doesn’t bother her.

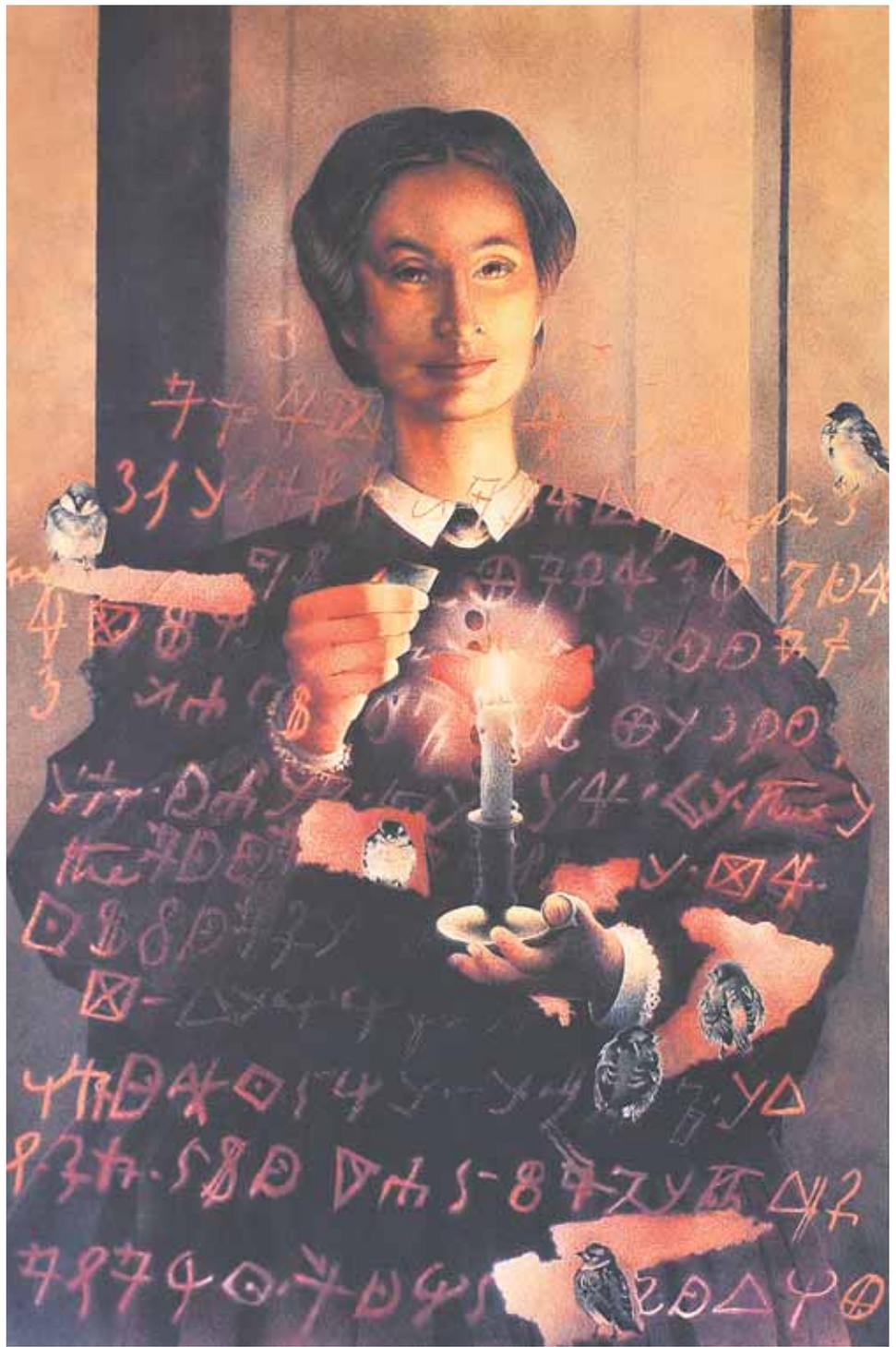
“I work by the window to invite visitors,” she said.

“I knew a lot about the history of John Brown before I began the work,” she said. “I always do a lot of research beforehand.”

Lindenberger spends between 100 and 450 hours on a work, sometimes 500 hours.

“For me, things change and evolve as the work is in progress,” she said.

Lindenberger began drawing Civil War art in 1996.



“Rose O’Neal Greenhow was a wealthy, attractive and outgoing widow, who made no effort to conceal her strong Southern sympathies. Living just across Lafayette Park from the White House in Washington, D.C., and being a very popular member of Washington’s highest social circles, Rose was strategically positioned to secure information valuable to her beloved Confederate cause.”— explanation written by Amy Lindenberger

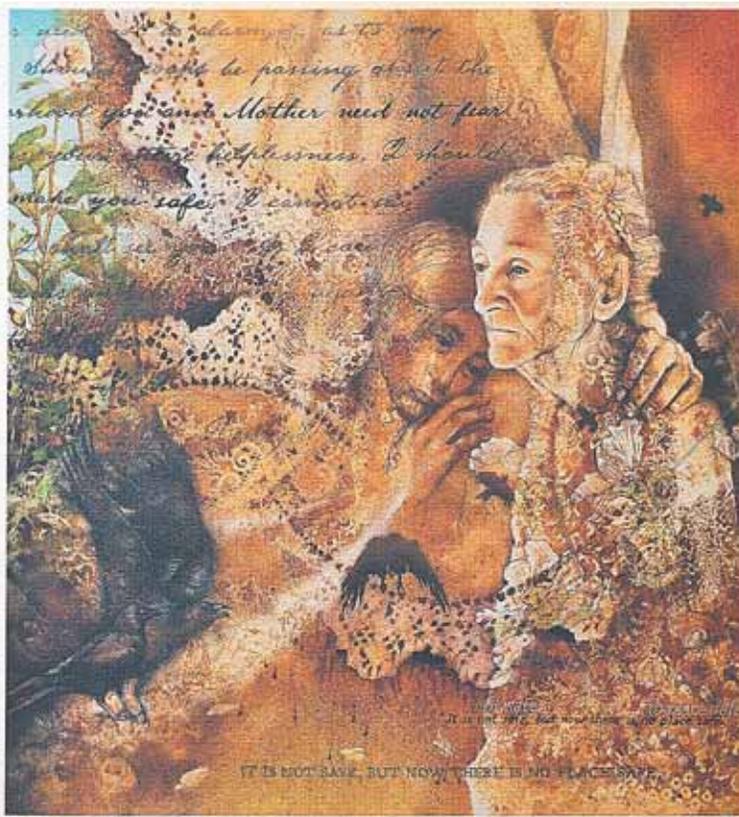
One of these women Lindenberger depicts is Rose Greenhow, a widow and Confederate spy in Washington during the Civil War. Greenhow operated a spy ring of women in Washington. Again, Lindenberger devoted a great deal of time and energy into the research for this work.

Another woman is an unidentified slave from Hilton Head, S.C.

“I want to draw a series of people you’ve heard about, maybe read about, but haven’t put the face with the story,” she said.

She generally limits the printed editions of her works to small numbers, sometimes

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CIVIL WAR ART: continued from pg. 19

as few as 50, sometimes as many as 600.

“I can’t let the originals go right away,” she said. “I have to live with them for two or three years.”

Judith Henry was a woman of 84 or 85 years who was the only civilian killed at the first Battle of Bull Run. She had been the resident of the Henry Hill House (it was called Spring Hill Farm when she lived there for 35 years), around which much of that battle occurred. No photos were ever taken of Judith Henry, so the portrait that Lindenberger has created on her only three-panel work is based on descriptive letters, imagination and inspiration.

The large center panel depicts a profile of Judith Henry, helplessness and despair on her face. She is framed with a border constructed of reproduction pages of a Harper’s Weekly magazine of that time.

“She would not move to safety,” Lindenberger said, even though her son and daughter begged her to leave the house.

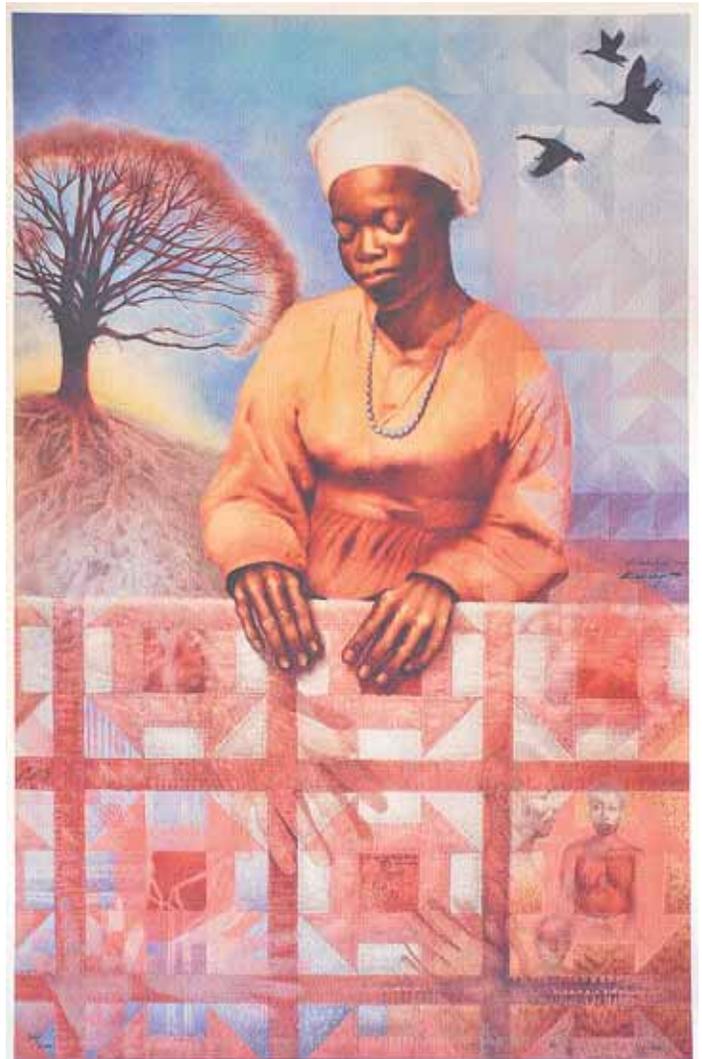
Each panel contains images of ravens, traditional symbols of foreboding and gloom.

“I want this drawing to project the sense of helplessness that Judith Henry’s daughter must have felt,” Lindenberger said. “She had done all she could for her mother, and now she could only wait for events to unfold,” she said.

Lindenberger has put much of her own life into this work.

“My mother is in the advanced stages of Alzheimer’s disease,” she said. “We, too, have reached that state of helplessness.”

Above, a three-panel work by Amy Lindenberger depicts scenes from the life of Judith Henry, an elderly woman who was the only civilian killed at the first Battle of Bull Run. Ravens in all three panels are symbolic of foreboding and gloom. In “Hard Road to Travel,” below, the red-and-white quilt pattern contains images related to slave history. The flying geese are headed for the North Star, a marker for slaves fleeing north.



Amy Lindenberger's *Beyond the Battlefield* has been exhibited in solo shows at The Little Art Gallery in North Canton, Ohio, in 2004, and at Harrisburg Area Community College campus in Gettysburg during Women's History month in 2006. Lindenberger was the featured artist at the 2004 March to Destiny Civil War Encampment in Shippensburg, Pa., and served as a lecturer at the Women's History Symposium in Gettysburg in 2005.

She is a charter member of the Colored Pencil Society of America (CPSA). She was awarded Signature Status by the CPSA, a distinction earned for having three pieces of work accepted into the Society's international exhibitions within a 10-year period.

In addition, Lindenberger has shown her work in a wide variety of local, regional and national exhibitions, receiving numerous awards. Her work has been published in four internationally-distributed books, "The Best of Colored Pencil, Vols. I, II, and IV," and "Creative Colored Pencil Portraits," and was featured in the Winter 2006 edition of *American Artist Drawing* magazine.

To view Lindenberger's drawings online go to www.civilwarfineart.com.

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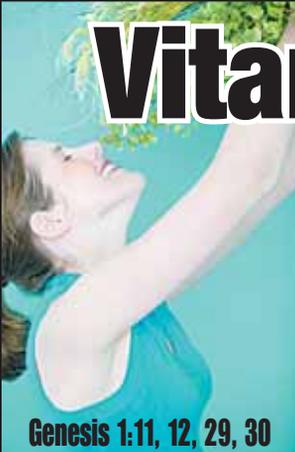
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