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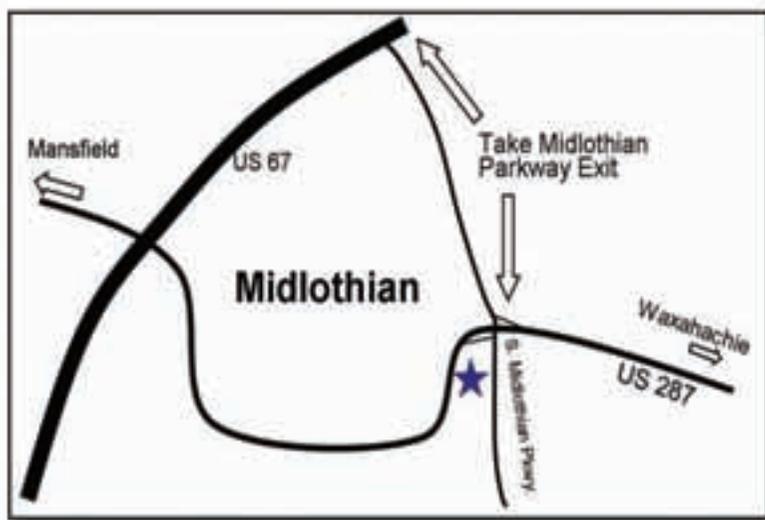


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On The Cover

A frisky reindeer decorates one of the Christmas trees in the Boyds' home.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

Editor's Note



Merry Christmas!

Tightly clutching my sister's hand at the top of the stairs, together we trembled in anticipation and fear at what lay below. We wanted to run down the stairs to see what Santa brought. But, what if he was still there? Finally, we went for backup and woke up Mama who promptly said, "It's 4 o'clock. Go back to bed!" I love to pull out that little memory at Christmastime. A similar sense of anticipation accompanies many of us each Christmas, and most certainly was present that first Christmas long ago as the world waited for the birth of the Savior.

Take time this holiday season to enjoy parties with friends and family, Christmas celebrations at your place of worship and Christmas and holiday programs at our schools. I hope this Christmas you continue to add more beautiful memories to your life with an abundance of joy, peace and love.

Betty Tryon
 MidlothianNOW Editor
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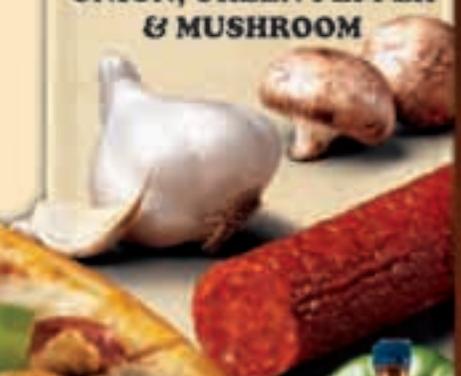
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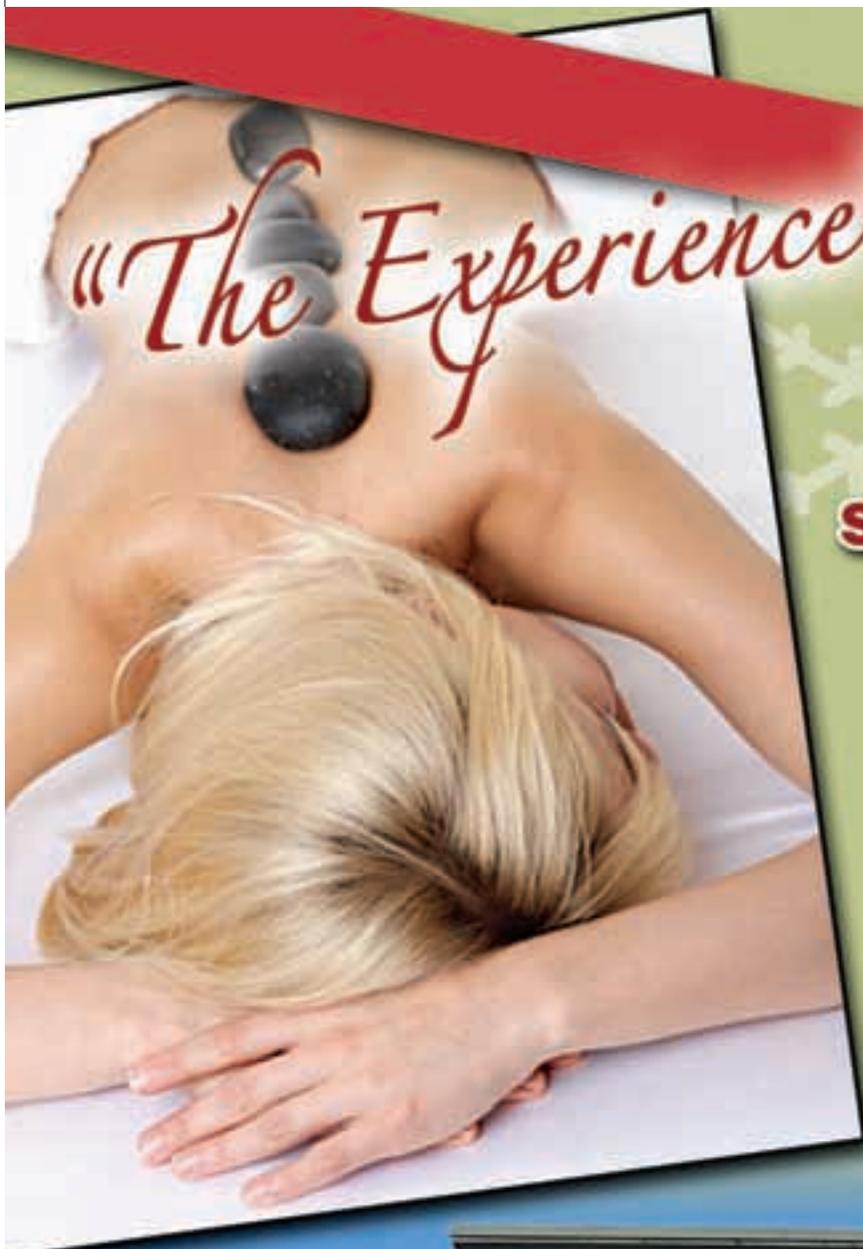
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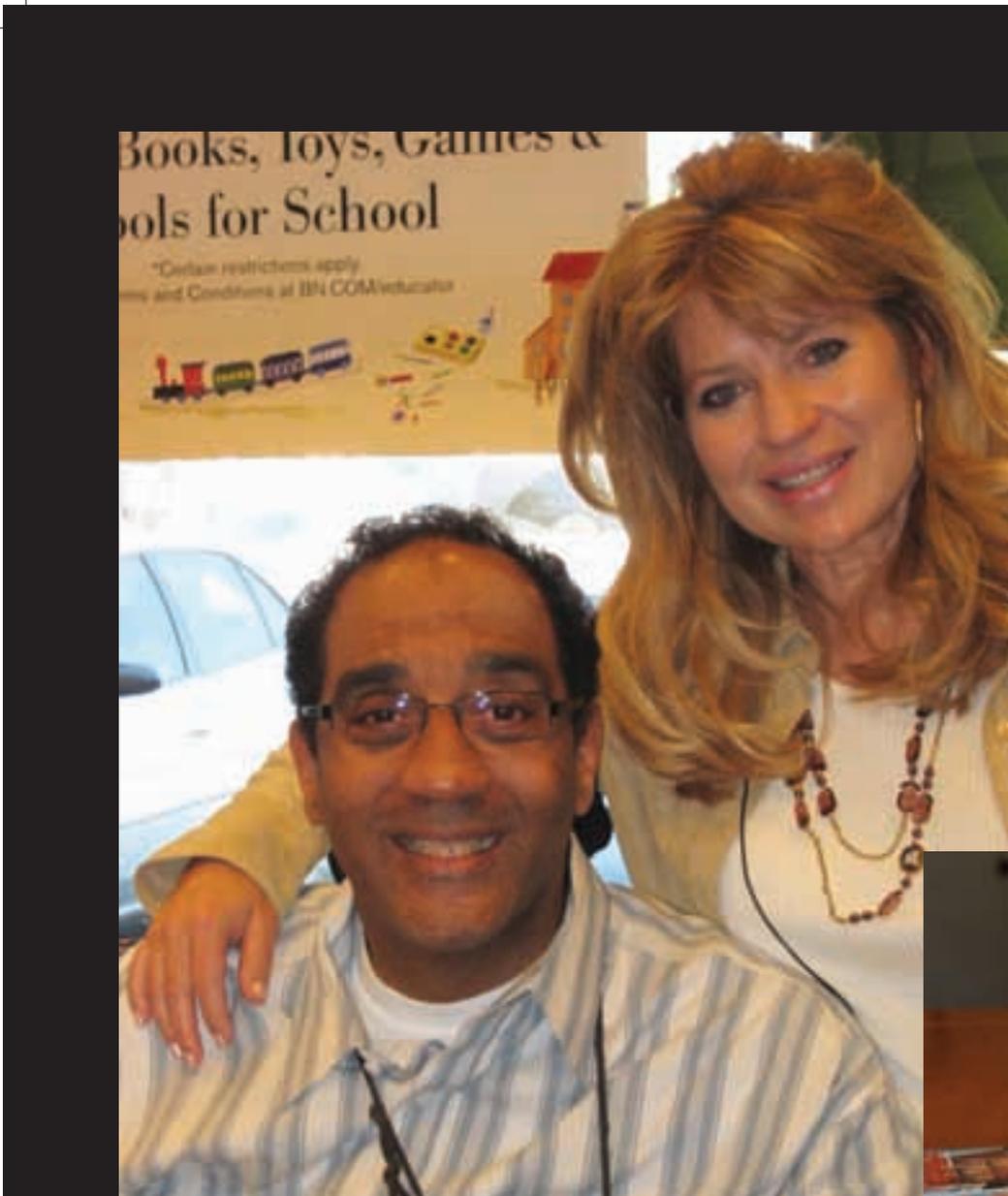
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Captain Marshall Allen in her new book, Swingman: What a Difference a Decade Makes.

She explained, "In the big fat world of coincidences, I woke up one morning and decided to take a 30-mile bike ride. With no food and no water, I jumped on my bike and just went. By the time I got to Cedar Hill, I was so tired. I knew some people at Starbucks, so I thought I'll just peddle over there and beg food off of them and promise to pay later." That same morning at Starbucks, she met Marshall. Inspired by his story, Alex decided to write a book about him. Interwoven between Marshall's tale is her fight for environmental issues, her awakening spirituality and, as a special treat, her unconventional and hilarious Christmas letters filled with the mishaps, struggles and oops of her family that year.



Almighty

COINCIDENCES

— By Betty Tryon

One morning in 2001, a firefighter rode into his own Bermuda Triangle of tragedy that began with a 30-mile bike ride. An accident caused him to be thrown into a ravine with the force of the impact paralyzing him from the neck down. As he

lay there, out of the visual field of motorists, with fire ants crawling on him, he devised a way to take his life and put himself out of his misery. However, a series of miracles or coincidences saved his life. Alex Allred, local author of 15 books, chronicles the story of

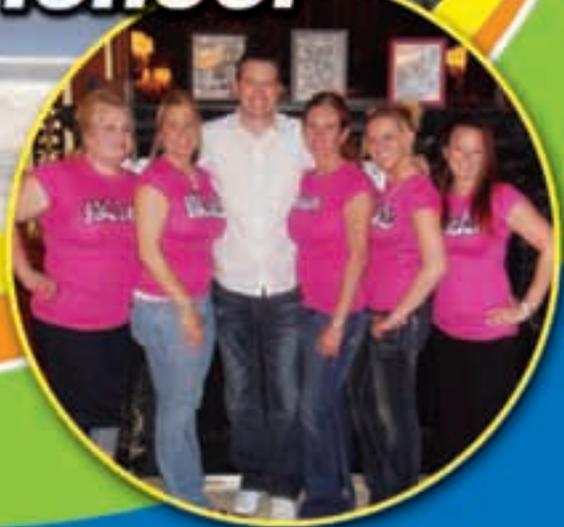
Alex's own life reads just as interesting as the characters in some of her books. Growing up in Moscow, Russia, she recalled her daily sprints to elude the tenacious KGB agents. Later in life, while being four-and-a-half months pregnant, she became a member of the first U.S. women's bobsled team. Her winning performance earned her the title of Athlete of the Year by the United States Olympic Committee. Being somewhat of a daredevil, Alex was not afraid of taking on a challenge. However, writing this book became a difficult ordeal because of her conflicting emotions about God



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Approved Home Health Care is Awarded CHAP Accreditation

Midlothian, Texas — July 7, 2010 — Community Health Accreditation Program, Inc., (CHAP) announced today that Approved Home Health Care has been awarded CHAP accreditation under the CHAP Core & Home Health Standards of Excellence. This is the beginning of the fourth year CHAP accreditation has been awarded to Approved Home Health Care.

Approved Home Health Care provides a variety of nursing and therapy services to patients and their families in Ellis, Johnson, Tarrant and Dallas counties and surrounding areas. They are locally owned and operated by hometown folks with over 50 years combined home health experience.

For additional agency information, contact
Kelly Kavanaugh, RN, HCS-D, COS-C,
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and her original belief that life was about connected coincidences. In addition, Marshall's story, while inspirational, has some heavy and heartrending moments.

"When I was fighting God, I wrote three full books of 300 pages, and it didn't work," she exclaimed. "It wasn't until the end that it all came together. That was a God thing, too. The last time I wrote the book, I decided to let it fly. It was a relief to let go. My thoughts went

"WAS IT A COINCIDENCE THAT I MET MARSHALL? I WAS SENT TO MARSHALL. I'M ON A MISSION. I'M PART OF THE MISSION!"

back and forth: *Was it a coincidence that I met Marshall? I was sent to Marshall. I'm on a mission. I'm part of the mission!*

"When I started to write again, it went so quickly because it just flowed. I was so into it [writing the book] that I broke all my own rules. If I have a good book concept, I do my query, a rough outline, a couple of chapters and I'll send it off and just keep writing it. The kind of feedback I get will let me know if I'm on the right track. In this case, I didn't care. I just wrote it, rewrote it twice and then sent it out."

Alex received two instant hits back from publishing houses that wanted to see the book. One hit back was a definite no, but Alex was not discouraged because, "It was the most amazing rejection letter I've ever gotten, so I saved it," she smiled. "He said it wasn't right for his publishing house, but he knew I would get published, and, he wanted to be on my Christmas letter list!"

The publisher from World Audience Publishers in New York contacted Alex and said, "We want to do the book." Having never heard of them, she researched and discovered, "They are babies in the publishing world. I told Marshall, it's a gamble with a new



Happy Holidays! MISD

Hike, Walk or Run for Heroes December 13 at 6:00 p.m.

Community members are encouraged to participate in the fifteenth annual Hike for Heroes benefiting Midlothian Special Olympics on Monday, December 13 starting at the Meadows Library parking lot. The 5K walk/run will begin at 6:00 p.m. Registration forms are available on the MISD Web site and at all campuses.

The MHS Peer and Leadership PAL classes sponsor the walk/run. All proceeds benefit the Midlothian Special Olympians for their competition fees, uniforms and other needs that they have.



2010 Holiday Card Elementary Student Artwork Contest



WINNER
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FINALISTS:
1. Lilibeth Vega, 10 - 5th Gr. @ J.A. Vitovsky
2. Caleb Navam, 10 - 5th Gr. @ Longbranch
3. Kialy Coleman, 11 - 5th Gr. @ Longbranch
4. Brianna Greene, 9 - 4th Gr. @ J.R. Irvin



2010 Gold Performance Acknowledgements

Midlothian ISD and its campuses received a total of 36 acknowledgements under the Texas Education Agency's Gold Performance Achievement (GPA) system. The GPA system recognizes schools for high performances or improvement in areas critical to the academic success of students.

Baxter Elementary: Comparable Improvement Math, Commended Reading/ELA, Commended Math, Commended Science

Irvin Elementary: Commended Reading/ELA, Commended Math, Commended Writing, Commended Science

Longbranch Elementary: Attendance Rate, Comparable Improvement Math, Commended Reading/ELA, Commended Math, Commended Writing, Commended Science

Miller Elementary: Comparable Improvement Reading, Commended Reading/ELA, Commended Math, Commended Writing, Commended Science

Mt. Peak Elementary: Commended Reading/ELA, Commended Math, Commended Writing, Commended Science

Vitovsky Elementary: Attendance Rate, Commended Math, Commended Science

Frank Seale Middle School: Commended Reading/ELA, Commended Writing, Commended Social Studies

Walnut Grove Middle School: Attendance Rate, Commended Reading/ELA, Commended Writing, Commended Social Studies

Midlothian High School: College-ready Graduates, Commended Social Studies, TSI Math

The 2010 District Accountability Summary is available online at www.midlothian-isd.net/curriculum/index.html

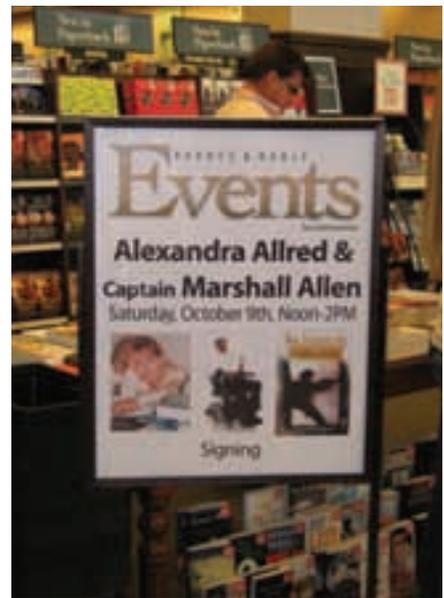
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publishing house. I ended up talking to the publisher at World Audience several times, which is really rare. You usually talk to an agent. You don't talk to the publisher. It was new, exciting and questionable, but I really liked the guy." After several conversations with him

Wishing You a Blessed Christmas and a prosperous 2011!

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explaining how his publishing company works, she received a contract for 15 percent royalty. "That is a good one," she stated. "Usually, the royalty is from 12 to 15 percent; that is standard." With contract in hand, Alex and Marshall were still not sure if they should go with a new company instead of one of the major publishing powerhouses. She finally called him back and reiterated how this book was very important to her because she was splitting everything with Marshall. She wanted him to get a new van and a new chair. After dropping this information on the publisher, there was a long pause on the phone. Alex wondered if she had dropped the call and said, "Hello?"

He responded, "You're splitting the



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The Message

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book with Marshall?"

"Yes."

"Did you write the whole thing?"

"Yes."

"Whose concept was it?"

Alex said it was hers.

"But, you're splitting it with Marshall?"

"Yeah."

"Well," he said, "I'm going to need you to tear up your contract I gave you."

Alex gasped, briefly panicking and thought, *What did I do? What did I say? I didn't know where I had gone so wrong!* In a stammering voice she said, "OK."

He explained, "I'm going to need to send you a new contract of 30 percent so Marshall and you can each get 15 percent."

Recalling that moment, Alex said,



"Even now it chokes me up. I spoke to some other friends of mine who are authors, and no one has ever heard of anything like this. That never happens. If I said it a hundred more times, that would not be enough to say that doesn't happen."

The fourth topic intertwined within the book is her fight for the environment. A perfect blend of Alex's newfound faith and her ongoing fight for all things green was a T-shirt she had made for herself that read "Protecting God's Green Earth — It's Our Only One." She stated, "This is His creation! That's why this is so important, and that's why we should all care and protect it."

From the hilarious misadventures in the Christmas letters, the impressive Captain Allen, the coverage of her environmental fight and finally her realization that God is real, this book is truly a unique literary experience. Alex declared, "From magazine articles to books, this has been the best publishing event ever!" **NOW**

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Gift of GIVING

— By Alex Allred



From left to right Joe and wife Angela Fitzgerald with baby Cailyn and their son Carter, Candy and Ray Boyd

AT HOME WITH RAY AND CANDY BOYD

As early as October of each year, Candy Boyd begins the process of decorating her home for Christmas. It is, she says, all about creating memories for her children and grandchildren. It is a beautiful sentiment not lost on those who know Ray and Candy Boyd, an extraordinary couple who have been creating memories and changing lives for decades, working with at-risk youth and serving the community around them.





“We were team teachers,” Candy said with a smile. For more than 20 years, the two were the best of friends teaching English and reading in the Lancaster school system. While both were married to other people, their commitment to their students formed a strong bond between them. “I’d also bring her coffee every morning,” Ray smiled. “And jelly beans!” Candy added.

Though they joke about their early teaching days, they both forged a critical path for many at-risk students who faced tremendous obstacles. They grieved with their students when a few were murdered, lost to gang violence, but cheered far more often when students raised up far beyond the expectations of others. The Boyds were fearless leaders and mentors, friends and confidants. But when they each went through a divorce and Ray left the school district and state,



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Candy recalled telling her sister that she would never date another man unless it was Ray Boyd.

When Ray left for Atlanta, he had given Candy a card telling her how he really felt about her though he would never know her feelings were reciprocated. That is, not until he heard what he can only describe as an “audible voice,” telling him to call her one day. When Ray returned to Midlothian and they had their first official date, Candy pulled out the card Ray had given her four years earlier, and he knew exactly how she felt.

Today, their “happily ever after” includes a blended family of five grown children and seven grandchildren, “with one more in the oven,” Candy laughed. With the ages of the grandchildren ranging from seven months to 15 years, the couple’s home is a wonderland of adventures that becomes all the more magical during Christmas. But the decorations, bows, toys and boxes all carefully placed throughout the home came slowly — each with its own story and time.

After Candy’s divorce, she bought a



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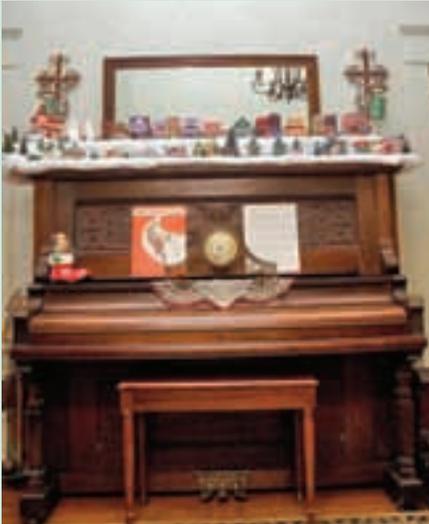


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The decorations, bows, toys and boxes all carefully placed throughout the home came slowly — each with its own story and time.

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charming two-story home built in 1901, with all of its original wood flooring, tile and even a 1919 coal-burning stove in the middle of old town Midlothian. From the street, particularly with its Christmas decorations, the Gingerbread house is reminiscent of a more elegant and gentler time with old-fashioned screen doors, open porch with hanging ornaments, plants and an array of statues and bird feeders. It is warm and inviting — just as the Boyds want it.

Equally breathtaking to the outside is the entrance to the Boyd home with its 12-foot vaulted ceilings, rich oak wood that runs throughout the house and four double-sided coal burning fireplaces, all in their original tiling. With a keen eye for both bargain hunting and style, collectible vases, pictures, clocks and statues adorn antique furniture.

The formal sitting room, a.k.a. the Wilderness Room during the holiday season, is artfully decorated with leather furniture and dark woods to emulate a wilderness cabin, while the master bedroom has been decorated to look like a chic bed and breakfast suite. It is in



this room that Candy made a wonderful discovery while exploring a closet. While she bought the home believing it to be a one-story house; a large vent led to an extraordinary find, turning her three-bedroom abode into a five-bedroom house.

Working with the contours of the

vaulted ceilings and walls, they used boards from an old and unused garage to lay down new planks and create a second level to the home. They also added a quaint box seat window that overlooks the front yard and a rustic-looking, though beautifully crafted staircase,



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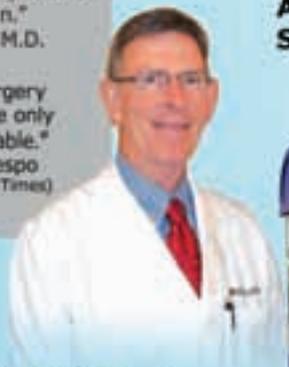
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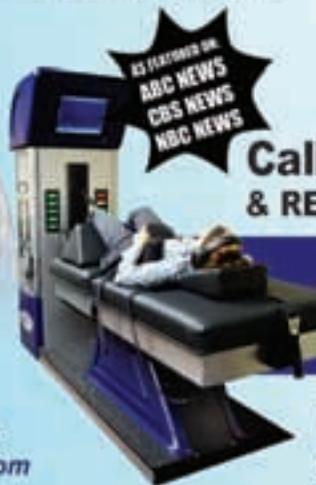


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complete with a wooden banister. It is charming and quietly elegant.

The stairs blend perfectly with the formal dining area. Again, antiques offer a feeling of tremendous warmth but are also fully functional. One china



hutch holds goblets and pieces of china, including a punch bowl that Ray said, "Is the only thing of value my mother ever had." From this hutch, the Boyds have assembled treasure chests for their children.

"We've given a treasure chest to each one," Candy said, explaining that each child and grandchild has been given a box, a treasure chest which holds various heirlooms that come from the family tree. Just as an old garage became the new staircase and upper level to the house, the Boyds see value in all things. Though this is not something they can put into a treasure chest, it is one more gift they have imparted to their children: Everything has worth and should be treasured.

From the dining area, the red tiling and white cabinetry of the kitchen are perfect

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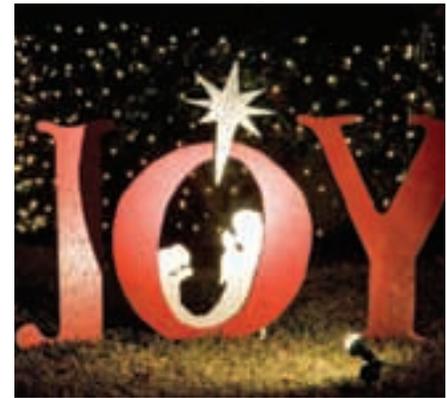
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Toe! Toe! Toe!

complements to the woodwork and plethora of pictures hung throughout the home. Pictures of family coincide with older portraits of landscapes, flowers and wilderness settings. The tone is cathartic, leaving one very definite impression: This is home. Candy's style of decorating, especially during the holidays, with old-fashioned ornaments, rich colors and fabrics and different Christmas trees in each room, is traditional. It honors family, history and community.

Even the back porch and yard are representative of this. A tin roof that covers the back porch, "because we like the sound of rain," Candy said, protects the two porch swings and table setting that overlook what can only be described as a hidden oasis. Heavy ivy and other plants, including seasonal flowers, and a



rock slab pathway weave patterns around the yard. A koi pond that contains two fountains, birdhouses and a side deck with yet two more table settings offer the feel of a secret garden. Like the hidden treasure of the upstairs, each path leads to something new and adventurous. The backyard oasis could easily host an intimate party for four, a grand holiday party or offer fantastic childhood memories for those with even the smallest of imaginations.

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Around Town **NOW**



J.R. Irvin student, Emily, performs a science experiment to determine if gas has weight.



The Pie Room was a popular spot during the Lord's Acre Festival at First United Methodist Church.



Kalysa and Kamual Jones enjoy the children's corner at the Lighthouse Arts Festival.



BMX stunt guys perform tricks during a speech on bike safety at LaRue Miller Elementary.



Baxter Elementary School kindergartners learn that T is for Texas Rangers.



Miller Elementary fifth-graders held a mock gubernatorial election using a database program and filling out registration cards.



Colton Patton gathers treasures at the Midlothian Fall Festival.

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Age had settled in. As did arthritis, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and borderline diabetes. However, the health problems that 51-year-old Chris Green was experiencing had less to do with his increasing years and more to do with his increasing waistline. At 272 pounds and a body mass index of 40, Green found himself morbidly obese, meaning the medical complications created by excess weight were decreasing his life span.

"I had dieted, lost weight, and gained it back many times over the years," confides Green. "My problem was keeping it off as I got older. I was getting to where I didn't want to do anything with my children because I didn't have the energy."

Green began researching his options. He talked to others whose health had been jeopardized by their weight and who had successful procedures at the Methodist Weight Management Institute at Methodist Mansfield Medical Center. Determined to find himself by losing weight, he opted for a gastric sleeve, which is one of the latest bariatric procedures available.

"I knew I was in safe and skilled hands with the experienced team at Methodist Mansfield."

"Bariatric surgery was the sensible choice for me because I wanted to do something that would make me feel good again and restore my health," Green says. "I want to be around for my wife and children and have more energy and be active in their lives—and enjoy it—before it's too late."

He was surprised to find the recovery process easier than expected. "I don't get the hunger signals I used to get all the time," he admits. "I feel very good, and it's nearing time to start shopping for a new wardrobe. I feel I have taken control of my life. My health issues are going away. My aches and pains are easing up. I can walk without pain, and my knees don't creak. Just because I've aged doesn't mean I have to slow down."

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—Chris Green
Mansfield resident and Methodist Mansfield Medical Center weight-loss patient



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ONE-MAN-BAND

— *By Sydni Thomas*

“I’ve chosen music as a career because it is a medium for expression.”

French horn, trumpet, guitar, piano, bass and vocals may sound like the makings of a band, but for college student Patrick Campbell they are a few of the instruments and talents he has developed thus far on a list of many more he would like to add to his musical repertoire. He has lived and breathed music most of his life, and it has had a major impact on his future.

It all began in the sixth grade with the

French horn. Patrick was a member of the Midlothian band until he graduated. Once he mastered the French horn, he moved on to the trumpet. Each time he learned a new instrument, he would add another. At one point, Patrick traded a guitar for a small, electric piano with a synthesizer because he had wanted to learn how to play for a long time. What information and skill he did not pick up in class, Patrick learned on his own.

“It took about two years to get really focused on the French horn,” Patrick said. “The other instruments I just mess around with them. I’m working toward getting good at each instrument. I struggle with reading piano music, but I’m working on it. My roommate is on the praise team at school, and he helps me out with learning the guitar.”

An affinity for playing numerous instruments runs in the Campbell family. “My dad was in band from elementary through high school,” Patrick said. “He played many instruments, too, but I didn’t

find that out until I was in band. Back then, they could change out instruments whenever they wanted. He played the flute, trombone, drums and, I think, even the saxophone. His mom wouldn’t let him play clarinet, though, because she thought he’d get an overbite.”

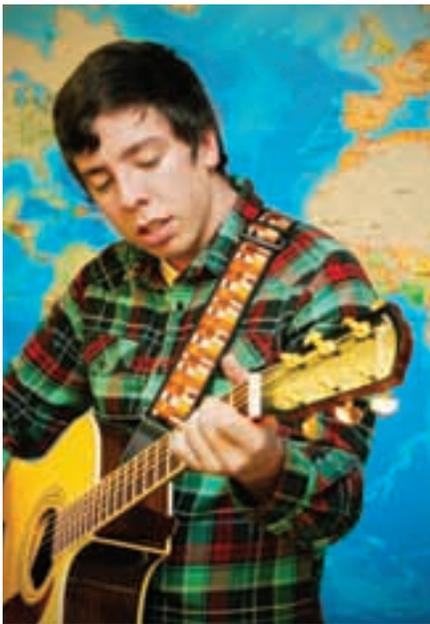
While playing with a band called Seasons, Patrick had the opportunity to record a few songs in a studio. He played piano, bass and did background vocals. “If I ever get the opportunity to record again, that’d be great,” he said. “For now, I have other goals for my music.”

After graduating from Midlothian High School in 2008, Patrick felt led to pursue a career in music. He had been a part of bands and musical groups for a while, but decided a leadership role in music ministry was where he needed to be. A year-and-a-half into his education at Navarro College, Patrick started making plans to attend a school better suited for ministry education.

“I’ve grown up with music,” Patrick

said. "I've chosen music as a career because it is a medium for expression. Christ For The Nations Institute is a Bible college that prepares us for the ministry and equips us. I'd looked at attending Hillsong in Australia and started praying about it, but after visiting Christ For The Nations, I felt like that is where I needed to be."

It would take more than a feeling to make Patrick's plans to pursue music a reality. While Christ For The Nations is a lot closer to home than Hillsong, Patrick had to quit his longtime job in the Midlothian area once he started college in Oak Cliff. "It's a God thing that I've ended up where I am," he said. "I needed a job to stay in school and pursue a worship career. I had been stressing out



about how I was going to make ends meet. One morning at school, Pastor Gabe was talking about giving up our worries and burdens, and I finally decided to give it up. I'd been trying to control everything. Ten minutes later, I got a phone call with a job offer."

Patrick is studying both worship and youth ministry. After graduation, the plan is to pursue both full time. "I have about two years left in school before I will become a minister," Patrick said. "I may decide to go to the advanced school. To get my certificate in Practical Theology, I go [to school] for two years. Or I

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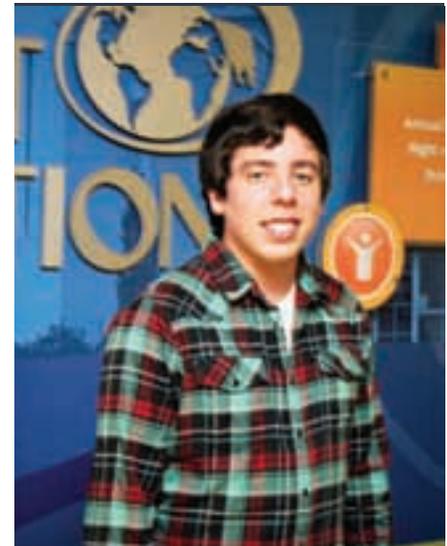

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can choose to go in-depth in worship ministry or youth ministry and add on an extra year.”

While attending Christ For The Nations, Patrick has been a part of the school choir and, in the future, hopes to start a worship team with some of his friends. On the weekends, Patrick attends worship at Crossroads of Life in Duncanville where he helps run the technical side of music working the



“I have a lot of musical friends at school.”

soundboard and lighting. “I have a lot of musical friends at school,” he said. “There is a lot of musical influence at Christ For The Nations. Everyone at school seems to be musical.”

Patrick mostly plays guitar now and finds time to sing every day. When he is not practicing one of his instruments, he enjoys writing music. Christianity influences all the music he writes, whether the lyrics state so directly or indirectly. Music is his life. Knowing how to play five instruments is not enough for him, though. “When I get the rest of these instruments down, I will move on to the drums,” Patrick said. “It’s an instrument that I’ve always wanted to learn.” **NOW**

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En Garde

— By Betty Tryon

En Garde! This French saying in a fencing match rallies the participants to assume the ready position. To those who prefer the English saying of “on guard,” the meaning is essentially the same; it is time for the participants to get ready to compete. David Allmon and his son, Jace, are familiar with both terms. Although new to the sport, they have come to appreciate its cerebral and physical nature. “The whole thing is a chess match,” David stated. “You have your offensive moves, with your main offensive move being a lunge. You lunge. You extend. You parry-riposte. (Parry is a block, and riposte is a lunge). You have to draw them in, move your sword different ways and do feints or fakes. My favorite thing about fencing is it is a mental game. When you do research about fencing, it’s about strategy. You see reference after reference about this being real chess. Chess is a game of battle, wit and strategy.”

Jace acknowledged the mental aspect of the game. “I like the mentality of it. You have to constantly think about everything you’re doing. Heaven forbid you do the same thing twice,” he said smiling. “Patterns in fencing are bad



because they [opponents] discover them and will oppose or hinder you. Everything is pre-thought out. There are endless amounts of combinations of things that you can do. You’re thinking, *Am I going to run inside the sword or attack outside the sword?* If I attack outside the sword, their parry is going to be here. I can disengage and come back in. It is constant mental gymnastics, not pirate swashbuckling and going at it.”

David has always wanted to fence. Remembering he said, “Ever since I was a little kid watching the summer Olympics, I thought fencing would be a cool thing to do. I liked watching movies and [reading] books that had swordplay. In the last 15 years, I found all of the fencing clubs to be in North Dallas. That was too far, and I knew if I had to drive that far twice a week, I probably wouldn’t stick with it. In March, I found La Reunion Fencing Academy in Duncanville and decided to join.”



David knew Jace had an interest in martial arts and weaponry, so he invited him to join him in the sport. Jace stated, "Fencing was never my primary interest as far as the subcategories of martial arts are concerned. It sounded like a lot of fun, and it has been a lot of fun."

"As far as athletic activity, it is relatively low impact, not a lot of injuries associated with fencing."

Although the mental aspect of the game is very pronounced, there is physicality to it, also. "It doesn't look like there is a lot going on physically, but it is a very good workout," David said. "For me, it's good exercise because I'm not thinking about the workout at the time. I enjoyed the workout I got with doing martial arts with Jace, but I got tired of getting pummeled. It's a physical beating! That's the cool thing with fencing. As far as athletic activity, it is relatively low impact, not a lot of injuries associated with fencing. The most common injury is tennis elbow. As long as you are able to stand up, you can fence."

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One of the necessary features of fencing is the weapons — the swords. There are three weapons associated with the sport: foil, saber and epee. Because the club is a sport club, the foil has a plastic safety tip. “Currently we are studying foil. It is a practice weapon and is the smallest and lightest of the three,” David stated. “Each weapon has its target area. For the foil, it’s strictly the torso. The epee is heavier than foil. It is the only weapon in the current sport of fencing that is in the same form it was designed hundreds of years ago. It is essentially unchanged. It’s not a practice weapon and hasn’t been adapted to fencing. It is actually a sword that came into being around the 17th century and was used up into the 20th century when wearing swords went out of vogue. A lot of guys are drawn to the epee because it is a real weapon. The entire body is the target area.”

The saber, patterned after the cavalry weapon and used during the Civil War period, is the only weapon in fencing that uses a slashing motion. David stated, “It does not have a sharpened edge, but you fence with it as though it does. The target area is waist up, so the arms and head are now part of the target area. The epee and foil are the only thrusting weapons. Each weapon has its own personality. You fight differently with each of the weapons. With us being newbies, we are just sticking with the foil for now.”

David has enjoyed this additional opportunity to have another positive connection with his son. One of the signs someone is enjoying themselves is when they ask others to join them. David and Jace hope others will come see for themselves what the fun is all about. **NOW**

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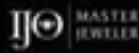
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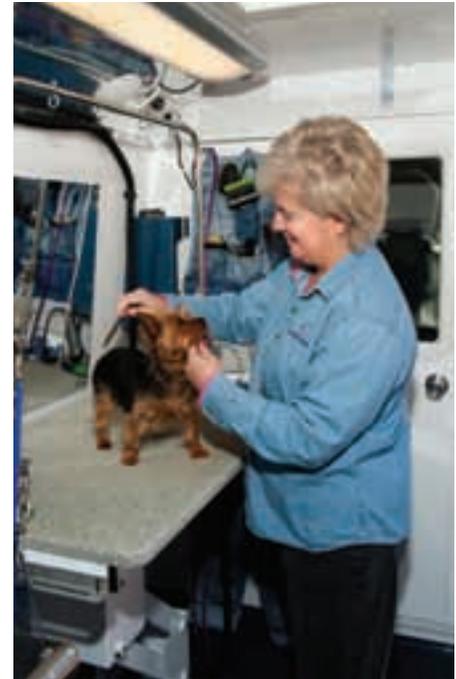


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From left:

Dina Klotz and her son, Trey, hold three perfectly groomed members of their family; Dina bathes a dog in her mobile grooming van; Dina shows off her mobile grooming van.

Glamour on Wheels

Dina Klotz of Glamour Dog Salon will travel to you to groom your dog. — *By Betty Tryon*

For the best-looking dog in the neighborhood, all you have to do is sit in your home and relax. Dina Klotz of Glamour Dog Salon will drive to your address and take care of everything. Her mobile van is a traveling salon and holds everything necessary to turn your pooch into a well-groomed dog. As the owner of three Yorkies, Dina loves caring for Muffin, Millie and Missy. “We have always had a dog. I love all kinds of animals, but Yorkies are my fave. I decided I did not want to take them to groomers, because I wanted to bathe and groom them myself.”

In 2009, Dina went to a program in Arlington called Texas Allbreed Grooming School (TAGS). She explained, “It is a

12-week program for instructing individuals to know the basics and to become a pet stylist. I got my certificate as a certified pet stylist from TAGS.”

After Dina’s training was completed, she had to decide if she would practice her profession in a storefront or in a mobile unit. “I decided on a mobile van, because I like that I can be flexible with my time. My youngest son is still at home. My mission as a mother is to have my children as my first priority. The benefit of a mobile unit for the clients is just the simple fact they don’t have to get in the car and drive their dog to a storefront. I will drive to their home. Their dog doesn’t have to stay in a kennel several

Business **NOW**

hours or all day and is not subject to other dogs barking and other distractions. Your dog is never kennel and receives one-on-one care.”

Dina’s service area is within a 20-mile radius of Midlothian, and she only grooms dogs weighing less than 40 pounds. Her grooming van is a fully self-contained van that never needs to hook up to your home for any reason. She has her own electricity and fresh water on board, even a tank that receives the dirty water. “Every dog is bathed at least twice, sometimes more, until I am satisfied that they are clean,” she stated. “The bath includes trimming their nails, cleaning the dirt that is visible in their ears and cleaning their sanitary area.”

One of the more enjoyable aspects of her van is her hydro-surge bath system,

“We have always had a dog. I love all kinds of animals, but Yorkies are my fave. I decided I did not want to take them to groomers, because I wanted to bathe and groom them myself.”

which offers a deep-cleaning experience and helps with one of her specialties — handling dogs difficult to groom. “The system I have massages the dog through the entire bath process,” Dina explained. “I have had several clients who have said, ‘My dog is nervous about this and may bite or nip you.’ Once I get them into the bath, some of these dogs just melt and lay in the bath. I do what I can to make sure they have a good experience in my van.”

Dina offers another unique addition to her business. She is a sign language interpreter, so there are no communication barriers for those in the deaf community. She acknowledged, “They don’t have to worry about bringing in an interpreter or have to worry about having to write.” This business definitely gives me full self-satisfaction. I have a deep passion for what I do, and it helps others because it helps the owners feel good, knowing that their dogs are being loved, cared for and cleaned. That’s why our tag line is: A clean dog is a happy owner!” **NOW**

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with Cathy, Ashley & Jessica Curry

Twenty-five Years of Language

— By Betty Tryon



Cherie Wagoner, principal of J.A. Vitovsky Elementary School, created something special for her school. It houses the only bilingual program in Midlothian. This is a natural fit because Cherie originated the program eight years ago as principal of Baxter Elementary School. “The program moved with me over here six years ago,” she stated. “That was exciting to start and implement a brand new program. It was the first time having a bilingual program here in Midlothian, and I must say, I think we have a real good one.”

Cherie prepared for this field while in college. At The University of Texas at Arlington (UTA), she had a double major in elementary education and in Spanish. She earned her master’s degree in counseling at University of North Texas. While getting her degree, she also became bilingually certified. Returning to UTA, Cherie earned her administrative certification and superintendent certification. She also has 18 hours toward her doctorate degree.

Cherie remembers when she first came to Midlothian 25 years ago and started doing her student teaching here. She said, “I got hired on as a fifth-grade teacher at J.R. Irvin. I went away for a short period to be a bilingual teacher in Ft. Worth and decided I wanted to come back to Midlothian.” Laughing she added, “I’d

had enough of the big city!”

When Cherie returned to Midlothian and implemented the bilingual program, her goals were “for the students to be bilingual and biliterate in both languages. We don’t want them to lose their Spanish as they are learning their English.” Students in the program at Vitovsky are growing and flourishing in their studies. Cherie stated, “Our children have gone all the way through since prekindergarten, and they are heads and shoulders above our ESL (English as a Second Language) only students. The research showed they are scoring out much better.”

Bilingual education is part of the Texas education system. Cherie described the school’s responsibility: “By state law, if you have 22 or more in one grade level in a school district and their first language is all the same language and they qualify as limited English-proficient students, then you have to start a bilingual program. Some districts will file a waiver, but we decided that because the population demographics were changing that we would go ahead and investigate programs. We visited lots of bilingual programs in the area and went to workshops to determine what the best program model would be. We started at prekindergarten and kindergarten, and last school year we added fifth grade. So, we have now completed the program and have it all the way through fifth grade.”

For a child who has been in the program from the beginning, the instruction is primarily all in English by the fourth or fifth grade. The school does continue with Spanish maintenance so

Education **NOW**

the students do not lose that language. Cherie attributes much of the success of the program to the program model they use. "I think the program model we have is a very developmentally based program. The children only do Spanish, writing, reading, listening and speaking in the lower grades, and we slowly transition over time. A lot of programs immediately immerse them in English, and that defeats the purpose.

"Another reason for the success is we have a very strong teaching staff. They are highly qualified and just outstanding. They are certified bilingually and are fluent in both languages. Once they come here, they stay because they have been in other bilingual programs in the area and they feel like this program is head and shoulders above wherever else they have been in terms of support. We have had strong support from the administration in anything we needed in training and materials."

Cherie is very proud of what Vitovsky has accomplished. The school has been at exemplary level for the last two years without needing exceptions or TPMs (Texas Projection Measure). Community volunteers in the school's mentoring program have helped with the success of the students. "We have a huge mentoring program on campus," she said. "Last year there were about 48 community members who came in and mentored students. We've seen kids really turn around [because they know] there is another adult in their life who cares about them.

This is probably the most diverse campus in Midlothian, but we embrace that. We don't hire anyone here unless they ascribe the same philosophy we have that all children matter. We want all children to be successful at the highest level, whether they have a disadvantaged background, a learning disability or even our gifted students. I could step away from this campus and the kids would still be successful, because this campus really works very closely together. It's a unique place to work. There is something special about Midlothian Independent School District and about J.A. Vitovsky. If Midlothian wasn't a great place to be, I don't think I would've stuck around 25 years!" **NOW**

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In The Kitchen With Sheila Barnhill

— By Adam Walker

Sheila Barnhill grew up in Waxahachie where she watched her mom and dad cook. Sheila learned to cook at the age of 16 and has enjoyed doing so ever since. Then she married in 1963 and moved to Florida where she learned several favorite recipes from her mother-in-law, including the Hobo Dinner which she shares below and buttermilk biscuits. "I love cooking for

my family," Sheila said. "I can spend hours in the kitchen because I love to see my kids, grandkids and friends enjoy what they are eating. It really warms my heart."

She especially enjoys letting her grandsons, Nick and Chris, watch her in the kitchen. "When the whole family gets together for the holidays, they all want Mom to make the potato salad!" **NOW**



GRANDMA FAYE'S HOBO DINNER

- 2 1/2 to 3 lbs. hamburger**
- Salt, to taste**
- Pepper, to taste**
- 1 egg**
- 3 Tbsp. ketchup or tomato paste**
- 5 potatoes**
- 5 carrots**
- 1 medium onion**
- 1 bell pepper**

1. Combine hamburger, salt, pepper, egg and ketchup.
2. Line a 9 x 12-inch baking dish with foil. Press meat down in pan to about 2-inch thickness.
3. Slice all vegetables and layer on meat seasoning each layer with salt and pepper.
4. Cover with foil and bake at 350 F for 1 hour and 30 minutes to 1 hour and 45 minutes. Serve with tossed salad.

ABBY'S FRIED MACARONI

- 1 to 1 1/2 lbs. hamburger**
- Red onion, to taste**
- Bell pepper, to taste**
- 3-4 Tbsp. olive oil or vegetable oil**
- 16-oz. bag of elbow macaroni**
- 2 cups hot water**
- 2 cans tomato paste**
- 1 can Italian style tomatoes**

1. Brown hamburger, onion and bell pepper until done.
2. Pour oil into a large pot. Add macaroni and brown over low heat until light, golden brown. Add meat and hot water.
3. Add tomato paste and tomatoes. Simmer until macaroni is done. Serve with crackers. Good wintertime food.

NEW ORLEANS RED BEANS AND RICE

- 1 1-lb. bag kidney beans**
 - 1/2 onion, chopped**
 - 1/2 bell pepper, chopped**
 - 2 cloves garlic, chopped**
 - 1/2 lb. bacon, chopped**
 - 1 lb. smoked sausage**
 - 2 cups rice**
 - 1 beef bouillon cube**
1. Boil beans, onion, bell pepper and garlic together for about 1 1/2 hours. Add bacon and sausage and cook an additional 45 minutes to 1 hour.
 2. Cook rice with bouillon.
 3. Serve beans over a bed of rice.

QUICK PEACH COBBLER

- 2 cans sliced peaches, juice reserved**

1 box yellow cake mix

1. Pour peaches into a 9 x 12-inch baking dish. Pour cake mix over peaches. Add just a little peach juice.
2. Bake at 325 F for about 20 minutes. Serve with ice cream.

MEXICAN PORK CHOPS

- 4-6 pork chops (about 3/4 inch thick)**
 - 3-4 Tbsp. olive oil**
 - 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped**
 - 1 can cream of mushroom soup**
 - 1/2 can of milk**
 - 4 Tbsp. cumin**
1. Brown pork chops on both sides in olive oil with garlic. Place in baking dish.
 2. In a frying pan over medium heat, combine soup and milk. Add cumin and cook for about 5 minutes.
 3. Pour over pork chops. Bake at 350 F for 25 minutes. Serve over rice with seasoned carrots and garlic bread.

To view more of your neighbors' recipes, visit our Web site at www.nowmagazines.com.

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Merry Christmas
and a terrific 2011!





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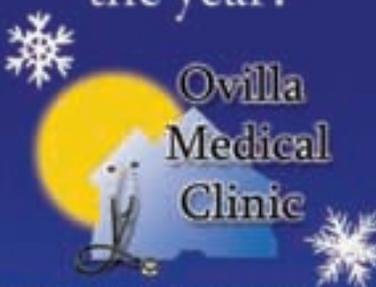
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BREATHING EASIER

— By Betty Tryon R.N.

An elephant is not really sitting on your chest; pneumonia just makes you feel as if one is. The manifestations of pneumonia can indeed make breathing difficult. This infection resides in one or both lungs and usually owes its origin to a viral, fungal or bacterial invasion. Foreign substances such as aspirated vomit can also cause pneumonia. When the lungs are invaded, the air sacs or alveoli fill with mucus, pus and fluids. The exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide occur in the alveoli. If they are full of another substance, the alveoli's function is impaired, and it becomes more difficult for oxygen to reach the cells of the body.



Most of the time when the foreign matter enters the body through the nose, mouth or eyes, our immune system is strong enough to fight off an infection. However, if a person is in a weakened condition, the infection has the opportunity to grow and spread. That is why the elderly, children under the age of 2, a person with pulmonary disease, someone undergoing chemotherapy or anyone with an impaired immune system is at a greater risk for becoming ill. Having an upper respiratory infection, such as the flu or a cold may make you more susceptible to pneumonia. Chronic or long-term conditions, such as heart problems or cancer also make it easier

for the pneumonia germs to take hold.

Several factors determine what symptoms an individual with pneumonia will experience. Some of the symptoms are chest pain, cough that produces mucus or a nonproductive (dry) cough, fever, chills, rapid breathing, racing pulse and extreme weakness. Often older adults experience milder symptoms.

Treatment will depend on the type of pneumonia one has and the severity of the condition. With bacterial pneumonia, your doctor will probably prescribe antibiotics. With viral pneumonia, antibiotics are usually given if you develop a secondary infection. Other palliative treatments for pneumonia which address the symptoms are pain relievers and fever reducers.

Practicing good hygiene, such as washing your hands often can help you avoid getting an infection. Get an influenza and a pneumococcal vaccine on the advice of your health care provider. Try to avoid those who are ill with respiratory illnesses. If you smoke, please stop. Smoking makes you more susceptible to pneumonia. If you do get pneumonia, take care of yourself by drinking lots of fluids, eating properly and taking your medication responsibly. Make sure you keep your follow-up visit with your doctor. Get completely well so you can stay healthy. **NOW**

This article is for general information only and does not constitute medical advice. Consult with your physician if you have questions regarding this topic.

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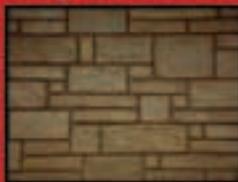
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Christmas Gifts for Your Gardener

— By Nancy Fenton



Another year has flown by and the holidays are almost upon us again! Years past have seen me with gloves, tarps, clippers, shovels, etc. high on my gift-giving list, and they are still good

choices. But there are some other fun ones I would like to mention, so I delved into the file of pictures, magazine articles and other advertisements I collected all year to find these fun, and sometimes useful, gifts.

The bottle tree is very popular this year and especially fun if you supply multicolored glass bottles to go on it — full or empty. They make charming additions to any garden area.

Of course, a gardener would love an actual tree. Texas-native trees will be cherished for years to come, and Christmastime is not too late to plant a container-grown tree. When selecting a tree, be sure to remember our alkaline clay soil, and stay away from the exotic ones advertised in the newspapers and catalogues if you want it to flourish outside.

My brother's favorite gift last year was a matching pair of "boot cleaners," one for the back door and one for the front door. I had a bit of trouble finding the ones with the brown brushes, but most farm and feed stores have these year-round.

I get bulb baskets for our children's families since they are pretty easy on busy moms around the holidays. The grandchildren can plant them in the yard after the holidays and see if they will come up year after year. I usually avoid tulips for the Texas families, since they are more of an annual here in the South. Star of Bethlehem and amaryllis are both good choices that will come back bigger and stronger year after year, as do narcissi and daffodils. You can even buy your own bulbs and make your own, just be sure to chill the bulbs first!

Last but not least are color-changing solar lights that add a bit of whimsy to your landscaping. Available at some local stores and online, they are a fun and welcome addition to the dreary days of winter.

Have a great holiday; be careful; and be ready to start another year. I'm going to try to look at some theme gardens for Texas next year, so stay tuned! **NOW**

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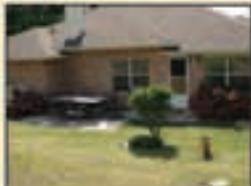


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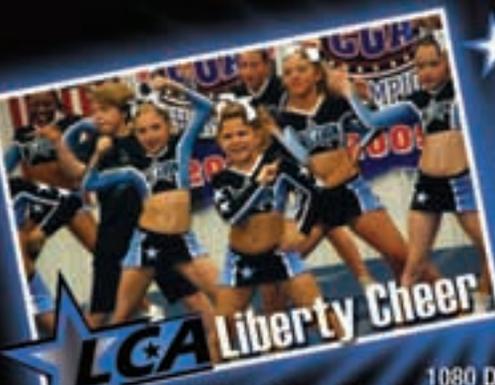


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Happening **NOW**

First and Fourth Mondays

School Board meeting: 6:30 p.m.

Second Mondays

American Business Women's Association Great Visions Charter Chapter — Midlothian meeting: 6:30 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center. Cost: \$15. Our program will be "Business Budgeting" by Debi Choate. Guests are welcome! For ABWA membership information and to RSVP, contact abwainfo@ymail.com or (972) 723-0017.

Third Mondays

Ellis County Aggie Moms: 7:00 p.m., Waxahachie First United Methodist Church, 505 W. Marvin. For more information, see our Web site: www.elliscountyyaggiemoms.org.

Fourth Mondays

Creative Quilters Guild of Ellis County: 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Waxahachie Bible Church, 621 Grand Avenue. The annual Christmas party will be celebrated in lieu of a guest speaker.

First Tuesdays

The Midlothian Area Historical Society meeting: 7:00 p.m., in the Community Room at Citizens National Bank, 310 N. 9th St. For more information, e-mail us at midlothianhistory@hotmail.com.

Every Tuesday

Midlothian Rotary Club meeting: noon, Midlothian Civic Center, 224 South 11th St. Call (972) 775-7118 for more information.

GED Class: 6:00 p.m., Meadows Library, located at Midlothian High School.

Second and Fourth Tuesdays

Midlothian City Council meeting: 6:00 p.m., City Hall, 104 West Avenue E.

Third Wednesdays

The Ellis County Christian Women's Connection monthly luncheon: 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. at the Waxahachie Country Club, located at 1920 W. Hwy. 287 at I-35 East (Exit 401B). Cost is \$13.00, inclusive. Reservations are preferred. Contact Kay at (972) 937-2807 or windchime423@yahoo.com, or Margaret at (972) 937-1016 or pmestep@yahoo.com no later than Sunday, December 12.

First Thursdays

ABWA – Empowering Women Express Network monthly meeting: 6:00 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center, 1 Community Circle, Midlothian.

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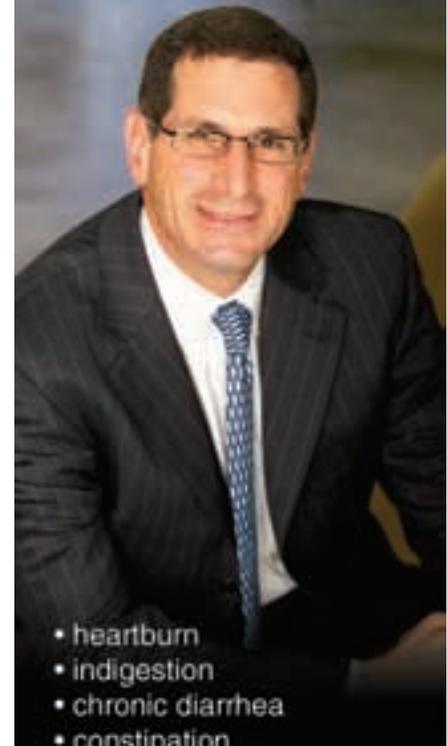
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Happening **NOW**

For more information, please RSVP at www.abwa-empoweringwomen.org.

First and Third Thursdays

Midlothian Lions Club meeting: 7:00 p.m. at Midlothian Civic Center, 224 S. 11th Street. For more information, call (972) 775-7118 or to RSVP call (972) 723-0017 or e-mail julia_mainplace@sbglobal.net.

December 2

“How to Get Government Contracts” workshop sponsored by the Navarro College Small Business Development Center: 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Citizens National Bank, 310 N. 9th Street. The cost of the workshop is \$25.00 and pre-registration is required, as seating is limited. To register, call the Navarro College SBDC (972) 923-6425 or e-mail sbdc@navarrocollege.edu.

December 3-5

Real Life Christmas at Life Church, 620 N. Hwy. 67, just north of Walmart on the northbound Hwy. 67 service road. Bring the entire family out for Midlothian’s most unique Christmas event. *Real Life Christmas* is a narrated, drive-through nativity story with great sets, actors, live animals and special effects. Join us afterward for complimentary hot chocolate and coffee in the church lobby. Friday: 7:00-9:00 p.m.; Saturday: 6:00-9:00 p.m.; Sunday: 6:00-8:00 p.m. For more information, please contact Pastor Jason Exley at (469) 537-8651.

December 6

The Midlothian Downtown Business Association’s annual Christmas Holiday Light-Up Parade: 6:00 p.m. The theme for 2010 is “Sweet Dreams and Candy Wishes.” For more information, contact the Midlothian DBA at (214) 321-8545. In case of rain, the parade will be held Monday, December 13.

December 11

Midlothian Guns & Hoses Flag Football Game: 1:30 p.m., Midlothian High School practice field (behind the high school). The Midlothian Police and Fire Departments will square off on the football field. Admission is one unwrapped toy which will be donated to Toys for Tots. Please contact Donnie Schley at (972) 775-7690L.

Vocal Majority Christmas Concert: 8:00 p.m., Midlothian High School Auditorium. Reserved Tickets can be purchased online at www.msftx.org, at the MISD Administration building (ask for Dawn) or at the door. Proceeds benefit

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Local residents have been taking advantage of a nationwide trend by turning gold into cash.

Kendall Wiley, owner of Wiley's Diamonds and Fine Jewelry, said he has been buying gold and diamonds for the last 28 years. Since gold prices have soared, he has been buying thousands of dollars weekly. The increase in market value for gold is allowing people to get more money out of it than in previous years. The last three of four months have had record highs.

People have turned to selling their used gold for several reasons. Some people genuinely need to sell because of expenses. Some just want to clean out their jewelry box of unwanted items. Many want to trade in and upgrade to white gold or just a new piece of jewelry. Others may just need some extra Christmas spending money.

Whatever the reason, seller beware! Be as cautious with selling your valuables as you were in making the purchase. Think twice before mailing in your goodies in response to an Internet ad or TV infomercial (read the fine print). As the old saying goes, if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Sell only to reputable jewelers or buyers you trust, so you know you will get the most for your gold and diamonds and won't be taken advantage of. Wiley mentions that if you are even thinking about selling your old gold, now is the time. Stop by our location or call for an appointment for a free evaluation while you wait. You are not obligated or pressured in any way to accept our offer. It is our job to make sure you know the facts about your valuables before you sell them to anyone. We are paying cash for gold, diamonds, silver, coins, dental gold, silver flatware, any broken or unwanted jewelry. Stop by the store for more information or visit our website.

Wiley's Diamonds and Fine Jewelry is located at 2251 Brown St. Waxahachie TX. (972) 937-4422 or www.wileysjewelry.com.

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John 3:16

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the Midlothian Masonic Scholarship Foundation. Call Duke Burge at (972) 670-8193.

Christmas Toy Drive: 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Citizens National Bank, Uptown Waxahachie. This event, sponsored by the Honda Goldwing Riders GWRRA Chapter W-2, benefits the children served by CASA of Ellis County (Court Appointed Special Advocates). Cash donations and unwrapped toys for children and teens will be greatly appreciated! Make checks payable to CASA of Ellis County and mark for: W-2 Toy Drive. All donations are tax deductible.

Paws for Reflection Ranch cordially invites families with special needs to join us for Breakfast with Santa: 9:00-11:30 a.m., 5431 Montgomery Road. Fun for the whole family, including: Pictures with Santa, hot cocoa in the barn, craft time, story time, breakfast treats and visits with the miniature horses. Call (972) 775-8966 or visit www.Pawsforreflectionranch.org.

December 12 and 15

The Christmas Offering — Celebrating The Greatest Gift Of All hosted by Overcomers Fellowship Church, located at 504 Overlook Drive, Midlothian. December 12: 6:30 p.m. December 15: 7:00 p.m. Dessert and fellowship will follow the services. For more information, please call (972) 723-0311 or visit www.wehaveovercome.org.

December 13

Hike For Heroes/Reindeer Dash 5K Walk/Run: Registration: 5:30-5:45 p.m. Hike begins at 6:00 p.m., Midlothian High School library parking lot. Registration fee: \$20 if received at the MHS main office by December 3. After December 3, cost is \$25. All proceeds go to benefit the Midlothian Special Olympics. Contact Laura Truett at MHS at (972) 775-8226, ext. 1171.

December 14

Midlothian school holiday choir concert: 7:00 p.m., Midlothian High School Auditorium.

December 20-January 2

Midlothian ISD Winter Break. School will resume January 3.

December 25

Merry Christmas!

For more community events, visit our online calendar at www.nowmagazines.com.

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As co-owner of a karate school, Valerie Honeycutt, 47, leads a physically active life. But hip pain from chronic arthritis made it difficult for her to even tie her shoes. At Baylor Medical Center at Waxahachie, Valerie underwent hip resurfacing, an alternative procedure to total hip replacement. She then participated in physical therapy to regain strength and full range of motion. “It was an absolutely wonderful experience,” she says. “Everyone at Baylor was very compassionate and caring. My doctor was very clear in his explanation of what would happen during the procedure, and that was very important to me.” With her full mobility returned, Valerie is enjoying traveling, karate, swimming and even tying her shoes. “I’m back on my feet doing everything I want.”

For a physician referral or for more information about orthopaedic services, call **1.800.4BAYLOR** or visit us online at BaylorHealth.com/WaxOrtho.

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