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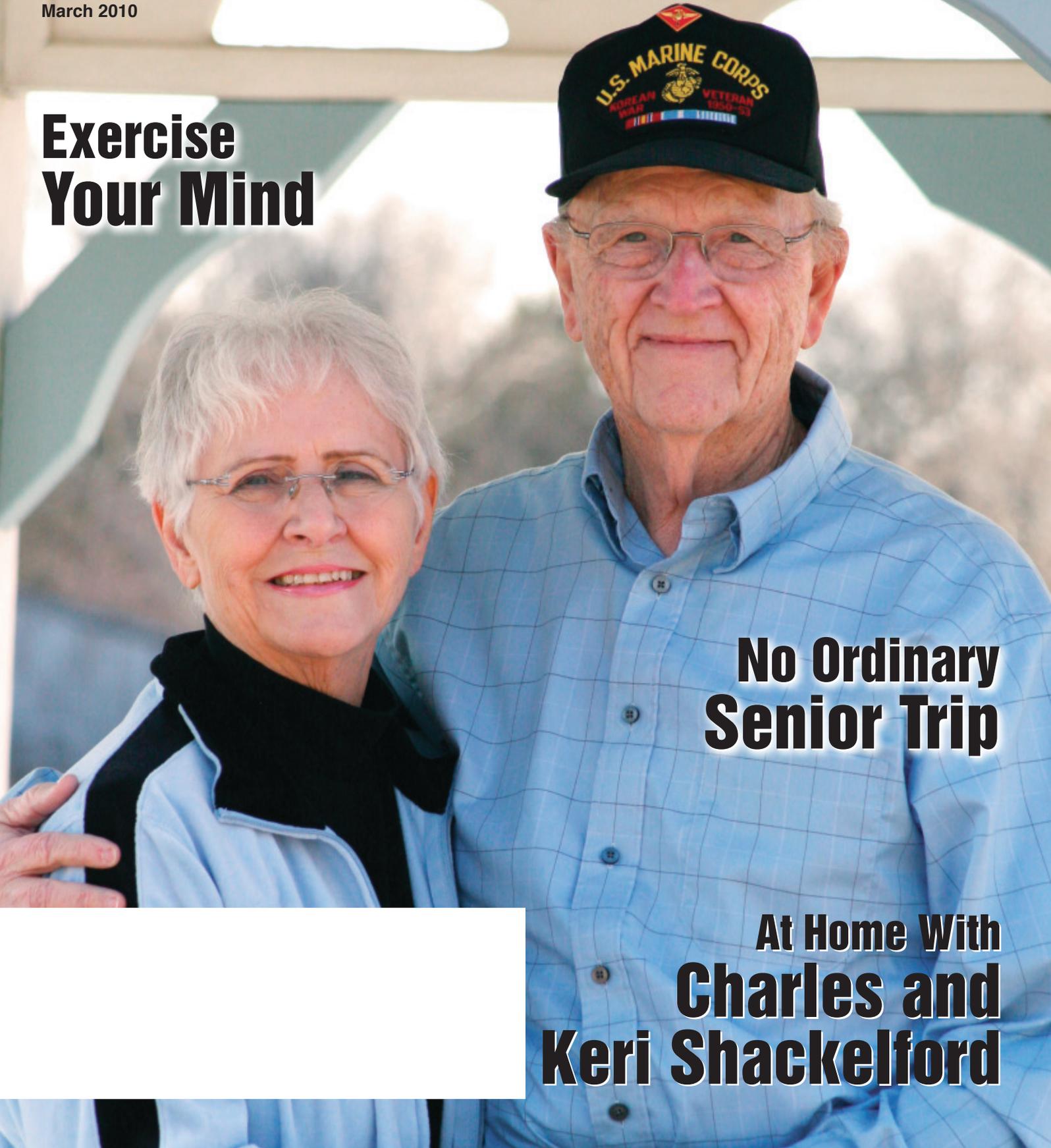
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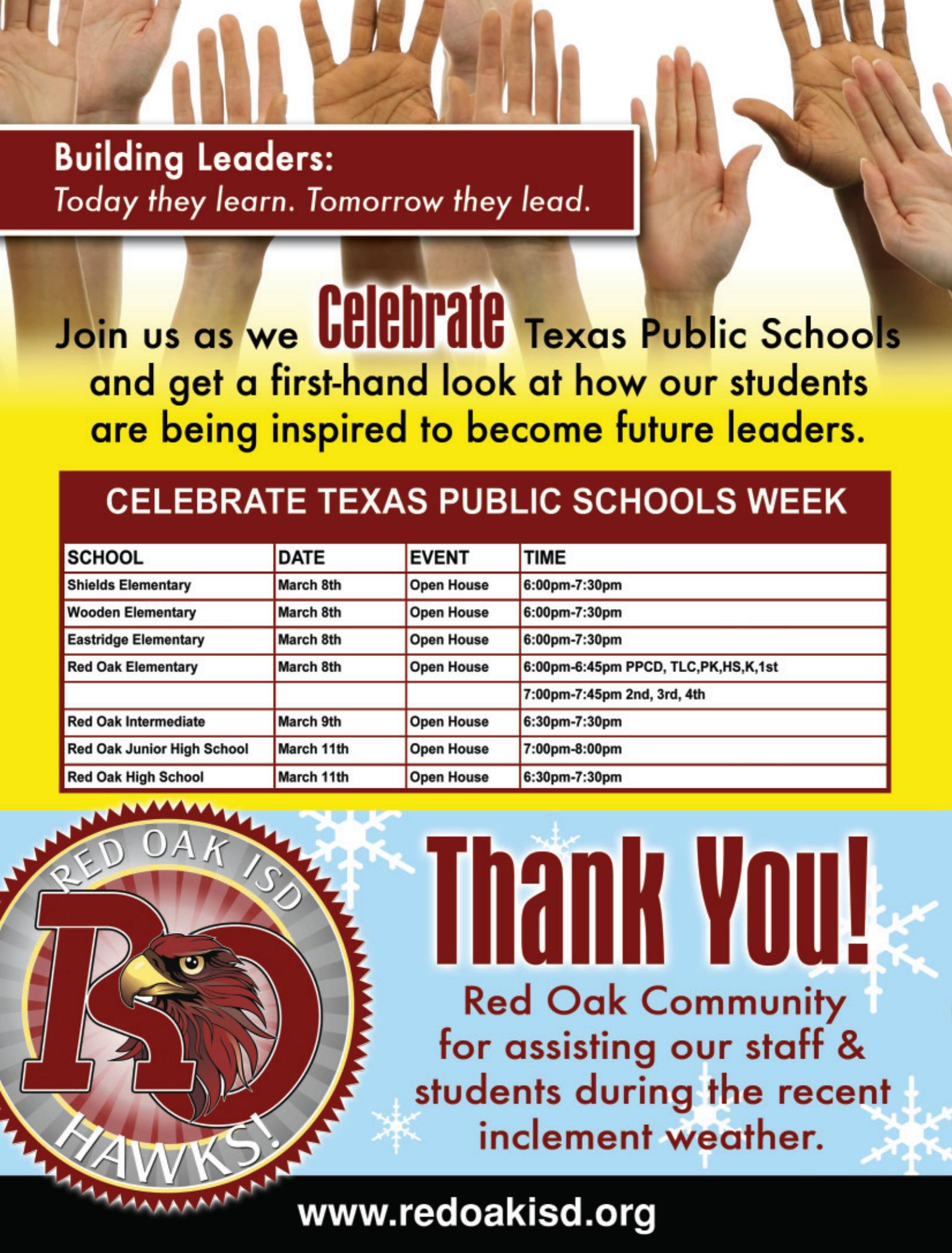
March 2010

**Exercise
Your Mind**



**No Ordinary
Senior Trip**

**At Home With
Charles and
Keri Shackelford**



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Red Oak Elementary	March 8th	Open House	6:00pm-6:45pm PPCD, TLC,PK,HS,K,1st 7:00pm-7:45pm 2nd, 3rd, 4th
Red Oak Intermediate	March 9th	Open House	6:30pm-7:30pm
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On The Cover

Jim and Ginger Robnett are proud of Jim's service to our country.

Photo by Natalie Busch.

Editor's Note



Dear Readers,

Welcome to our new issue of *Red OakNOW* magazine. As I look over these March stories, I cannot help but notice they each have a similar theme. The concept of "passing it on" is really a noble thing. We need to invest time into the lives of those who will pass on such things as: family legacies, history, talents and the lessons we have learned from our own personal hardships and tragedies.

Passing on such knowledge is important. Not only can it help others or preserve your heritage, it can also be healing — especially when you help someone going through a hardship similar to one you have experienced. Within these pages are good examples of locals, who not only share their talents, but encourage others to do the same.

May you have a wonderful month!

Diana Merrill Claussen
Red OakNOW Editor

P.S. Please send story ideas to dclaussen.nowmag@sbcglobal.net.

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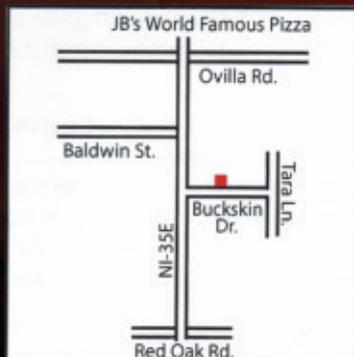
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No Ordinary Senior Trip

— By Adam Walker

Where did you go for your senior trip? When Jim Robnett of Red Oak tells people he went to Korea, it usually takes them a few moments to put that together with Jim's age and realize what that really means. Jim was 17 when he graduated from Adamson High School in Oak Cliff and volunteered for service with the First Marine Air Wing in June of 1950.



When he arrived in Japan in August, Jim was unable to go on to Korea with his buddies. “They said I was too young to die for my country,” he said. So, Jim had to wait until his birthday in October. “We had only been at the base in Japan for a week when a typhoon hit. We were in these rickety, wooden, H-shaped barracks, but the ‘head’ had a concrete base, so we all had to get in there. We listened and watched as the roofs blew away,” he recalled.

After his birthday, Jim was finally shipped out and landed with a different group of Marines at Wonsan. “I remember that we couldn’t go ashore for three or four days because the harbor was mined and had to be cleared first. Every hour or so we would hear an explosion,” he said. Jim and his fellow Marines had made the crossing from Japan in LST’s. “That’s a very small boat,” Jim explained. “They were Japanese contracted and manned by Japanese. I had KP (kitchen police) duty, so I was privy to the captain’s reefer. (That’s what we called the refrigerator.) He had beer and pies and cakes, so I helped myself. One of my buddies, who was a Hell’s Angel from California, discovered saki, and we couldn’t find him for three days! He had passed out in the hemp locker [rope storage locker]. We thought he had gone overboard.”

Since Jim had not been able to land with his original unit, no one had orders for him or knew what to do with him. His commander asked him, “Do you know anything about a BAR (Browning Automatic Rifle)?” Jim replied that he had learned about them in ROTC back in Texas, so the officer told him, “You’re a BAR man.” He was sent to a radar bunker to neutralize air raids. When he got there, one of his fellow Marines asked him, “Is that a BAR? We saw a picture of one in basic.” Jim became an infantry man because, once again, no one was sure what to do with him. “I learned to keep my head down and my mouth shut,” he said.

Then, only a month later, the Chinese entered the war. Jim remembers the cold as being the worst part of the war. “It was -40 degrees at times, and we were outside in it. We weren’t adequately equipped. The Army had better gear for the cold,



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so we Marines raided their supply depot for boots and parkas. It was easy to get in without orders, so we loaded three trucks with anything that looked warm. When we were leaving, we had to show our requisition orders. The first truck said the orders were in the second truck. The second truck said we had the requisition



“It was like the Fourth of July when that phosphorous grenade exploded!”

in the third truck. When the third truck, the one I was in, got to the gate, we just floor-boarded it. When we came to an Army road block, they tried to wave us to a stop, but we kept on going because we thought they knew what we had done. At the second road block, they opened fire, but we kept going. Then we found ourselves at enemy lines! We turned around as quickly as we could and headed back to the Army road block. When we got there, they asked us, ‘Why didn’t you stop?’ We didn’t want them to think we were a bunch of dumb Marines, so we told them, ‘Oh, we were just checking to see how close they were so we could adjust our sights.’”

Jim was at Chosin Reservoir when the Chinese attacked and surrounded the First Marine Division. “They tried to annihilate us,” he remembered, but the Marines and a few Army personnel who were with them fought their way to the sea at Hungnam. Jim was an aviation ordinance man,

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but he was sent to hold their position so the others could get out to sea. That is how he became one of the Chosin Few, the Marines and Army men who had to fight their way out at Chosin Reservoir. "We brought everyone out," he remembered. "Some of the guys' hands and feet had frozen black. The dead ones, we stacked in a truck, and evacuated to Pusan in South Korea." Jim had some frostbite, too, but he claims his was mild compared to buddies who died or lost limbs.

When they got to Hungnam, they were evacuated in the middle of the night. Jim had several grenades on him, including a phosphorous grenade. As he was climbing into a truck, the pin hung on some equipment. He heard a ping and had just enough time to throw the grenade. "It was like the Fourth of July when that phosphorous grenade exploded!" he said. His sergeant demanded to know who had done that, but the only reply he got was silence.

After Chosin Reservoir, Jim was assigned to the U.S.S. *Bataan*, a jeep carrier, and flew missions to support the ground troops. Then he spent his last nine months at a forward position, before he was sent to Cherry Point, North Carolina, and was discharged in 1952.

While in the Marine Reserves in high school, Jim had thought he would make a career of military service, but after the war, he decided to return to civilian life. In 1954, he met and married his wife, Ginger. They moved to Red Oak in 1973 and both their daughters, Melanie Petersen and Judy Robnett-Reifel, graduated from Red Oak High School, while Jim spent 25 years in sales.

These days, Jim spends his time working as president of the Industrial Development Corporation of Red Oak, convincing industry to move to Red Oak, enjoying his three grandsons and two great-grandsons and sitting with his wife in their gazebo waving at folks who drive by. Everyone knows him as "the guy with the gazebo" and "the guy who likes to take three-mile walks on Red Oak Road." How many also know he was a hero?

Jim has never returned to Korea, though the South Korean government offers special deals to veterans of the war returning for anniversaries. "It was an exciting senior trip," he said, "but I don't want to do it again!" **NOVY**

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The Castle House

— By Diana Merrill Claussen

When Charles and Keri Shackelford first saw the land on which they built their dream home, they immediately knew the three tree-lined acres would be theirs forever. “We walked around the property for about a week,” Charles said. “Once we bought it, I started drawing the plans immediately,” he added.

Before and during the building process, “We would go and walk the property, spending many hours on end picnicking, sitting under the trees and enjoying the soft ripple of water running from the back creek,” Charles said. The Shackelfords fell in love with many aspects of the property when they first saw it, and spent hours, and even entire days, enjoying and maintaining it. “We would often sit [on the undeveloped property] and try to figure out where everything was going to be,” Keri said, remembering the many occasions when they discussed the home’s layout.

One day while visiting, they pulled into the driveway and saw three dogs sitting in a triangle. “They were neighborhood dogs and always stayed with the property,” Charles remembered. Throughout construction, the dogs would “guard” and even live inside the home.

Every aspect of the Shackelfords’ 3,900-square-foot residence was completely designed by the couple, down to the smallest tile. “Then we started hiring our own contractors,” Charles said. The couple had many innovations they wanted implemented both inside and outside of this amazing two-story home.

Construction of the home first began in 2008. “We actually had to stop construction on it because it was the rainiest year ever on record,” Charles said. Later, there was a tornado on the property. “It blew materials everywhere,” Keri reminisced. “It also completely tore down the house frame,” Charles added. The wild turn of events, however, did not keep the couple from



pushing forward on what they had envisioned together. “We just had the framers come back, re-frame, and then the home was built within a year,” Charles said with a smile.

The custom touches to this magnificent home are made from mesquite-colored Perfect Fit stone and a lovely variety of knotty wood and walnut. Inside and out, the home exudes a Greco-Roman/Mediterranean influence and style. The front entry seems to go up for miles, while the rounded and full-length balconies and the interior are romanticized with Charles’ wrought iron accents and many other special touches. The Juliet balcony, made entirely by Charles, serves as a stunning accent to the home’s four stately columns. The overall effect is not only inviting, but gives a sense of royal magnificence.

Inside the three-bedroom, five-bath home are many built-in, knotty alder wood bookcases, hand-carved cabinets and library shelves. Rich woods were also used to create the floors and stair

At Home With Charles and Keri Shackelford



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railing. Many parts of the construction of the home were Charles' special projects. "I had never designed a house or a staircase before this house," he admitted. "I not only designed it, but built our 'Lazy S' shaped staircase," he said. "Every step is different in size due to the curve of the staircase."

One design element the Shackelfords wanted was the ability to "see both the front and back of the house from every room within [it] except the bedrooms," Charles said. They managed this by providing floor-to-ceiling and sometimes

entire wall-length windows throughout. The front and the back of the property can be seen from the second floor as well.

"I like a lot of natural light and really open spaces," Charles said. The couple also likes many lighting options to be available at any time of day or night. "We have a GRAFIK Eye® system throughout the house," Charles said. This system allows the family to change everything from the brightness of the lights, to turning on or off just about any electrical option within the home. "It also has remote controls," Charles added.

The couple and their son, Dalton, enjoy easy access to the outdoors via rear doors or exits. Being outside and active is very important to this family. They enjoy calming outdoor activities such as relaxing by their custom-built, dolphin-tiled pool or an evening watching the stars from the 18-person hot tub. The Shackelfords have captured every natural element, including a fire-lit, tempered-glass poolside table/sculpture. "Charles designed it all," Keri exclaimed, "including the fire table."

"What I wanted was to sit outside so

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you could be surrounded by all of the elements of nature: earth, wind, water and fire,” Charles said. The LED-lit pool, light show and curved conversation bench are accented by many waterfalls, Dalton’s rock slide and Keri’s self-designed tile mosaic of three playful and inviting dolphins.

“I tried to find things that I didn’t like about other pools,” Charles said, referring to their choice of pool design. The family plans to add an outdoor kitchen at a later time, but for now, they have easy access into the home’s interior kitchen for a refreshing drink or poolside snack. The kitchen features a floating island which includes, “seven different lighting systems,” Charles said. Other

design elements include lovely hand-crafted cabinets and a bay window by the breakfast nook from which the family can admire quiet sunrises.

Many of the rooms throughout the home feature 8-foot doors, while all of the upstairs rooms open up to a 10-by-25-foot balcony which overlooks both the pool and surrounding woods. There



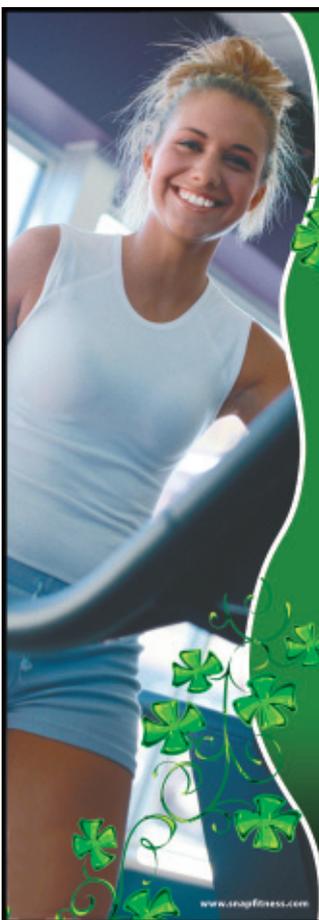
are no plain rooms in this home; each has its very own theme. “Dalton loves sports, and he is a ‘soccer boy,’” Keri said, explaining the room’s athletic theme. There is also a guest room which the Shackelfords call the “grandma room” and the final room is the “masterpiece” bedroom. On the cut Berber rug next



to the fireplace hearth lies Keri’s pet Chihuahua, Speedy. Keri considers a remote-controlled fireplace in the master bedroom a must-have; as are his-and-her closets. Both the bedroom and master bath are accentuated with indirect paneled ceiling lights and multi-dimensional corner lights, “So you don’t have to walk in the dark,” Charles said.

The master bath’s heated porcelain floor keeps the floor warm and comfortable. The sculpted marble tub, Roman-styled fixtures and six-spray shower are not only conveniences, but enhance the home’s five-star quality.

“Dalton calls our place the ‘castle house,’” Keri said with a smile. He could not have named it any more perfectly. **NOV**





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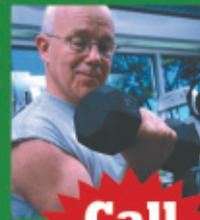
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The Jeter family enjoys a special night out together.



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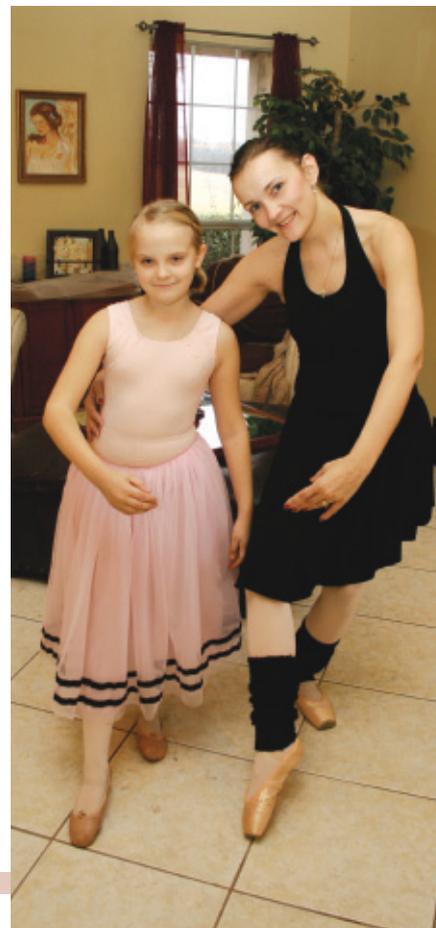
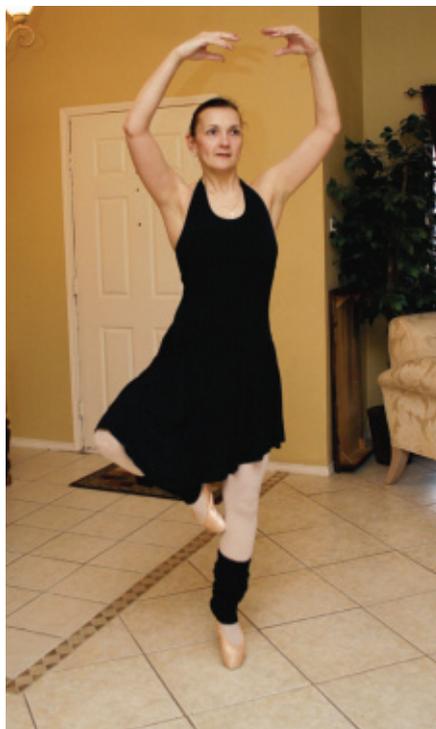
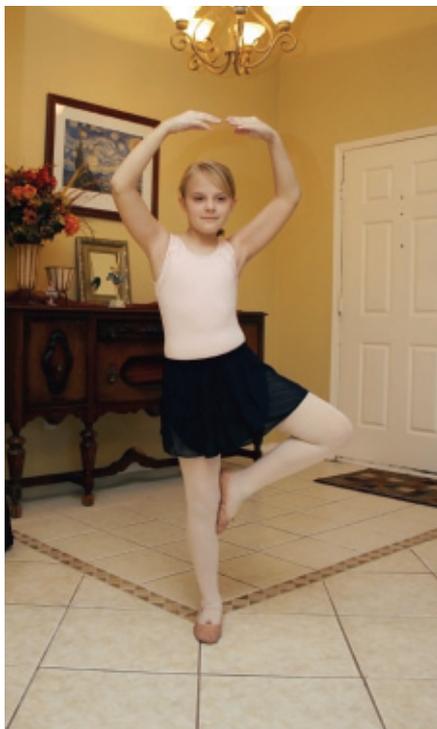
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Twirling Twosome

— By *Diana Merrill Clausen*

Local mother, Dorothy Loney, and her third-grade daughter, Scarlet, enjoy each other's company, both in their family home and outside of it as well. Scarlet has been involved in many out-of-school activities such as cheerleading and Girl Scouts. "At one time, she was cheering for the Red Oak Desperados C Division," Dorothy said.

Throughout her life, Scarlet had always seen her mother dancing, performing and practicing the classical art of ballet. "It wasn't until my mom was talking to me about a dance at school when I realized I wanted to be a dancer, too," she said. Since that time, Dorothy has been very involved in her daughter's training, both in the history and the performance of ballet. "Scarlet now loves ballet — and schoolwork," Dorothy said beaming.

The Loney family home offers many testaments to both Dorothy and Scarlet's love of dance. From ballerina sculptures, paintings and books to performance pictures of each of them, it is easy to see ballet is not only a shared talent, but

something they love to do together.

Dorothy was born in Poland and grew up in Germany. "I learned ballet for 10 years in Germany, then I added jazz dance and started performing recitals in real theaters," she said. When Scarlet showed an interest in learning Dorothy's beloved art form, it was decided she would start with classic ballet only in order to learn the basic leg and arm positions. "This is also when you learn the discipline of dancing," Dorothy added.

One of Scarlet's first performances was a production of the musical *Annie*. "I had attended a summer camp every day for two weeks straight," Scarlet said smiling. "I got to make my own clothes out of rags. I liked that!" Scarlet is also motivated by professional productions, such as the Russian Ballet's performance of *The Nutcracker*, which her mother took her to see over the Christmas holidays. "It was pretty awesome," she said. "My favorite scene was the battle of the rats!" Since then, Scarlet has collected all things *Nutcracker*, including books

and a Christmas decoration of the main character, Clara.

The thing Scarlet likes most about ballet is, in her words, "dancing all around the floor," especially when she is joined by her mom at the studio or when they are practicing at their home. "I volunteer at Scarlet's dance studio," Dorothy said, adding that she loves being able to spend dance time with her daughter. "I walk around the studio and help the girls with their body positions."

Having her mom as her ballet inspiration is teaching Scarlet many things. In fact, many of the techniques, steps and dances Scarlet now practices are the same techniques Dorothy learned when she was a young dancer. "Classic ballet focuses on the beauty of the dance. When I started dancing with Scarlet, I could tell she found joy in that," Dorothy shared with pride. Dorothy looks forward to the day when she can teach her daughter dances from all over the world, from the Spanish flamenco to the Polish mazurka.

"Ever since I was young, ballet has

been my passion,” Dorothy said. “I now use it to stay in shape and would like to continue it with my daughter.” While ballet is encouraged in the Loney household, Dorothy does not push Scarlet, but instead joins her. Sometimes before and after ballet practice, both mother and daughter will practice together. “We will do a warm-up at our kitchen counter, [using the counter as a practice bar], and after warming up we like to do spins and turns,” Dorothy explained, as Scarlet started to twirl across the room. This ballerina team cannot wait until dad, Donovan, converts the family gym into a ballet room.

For Scarlet, being able to dance and spend time with her mom makes her happy. “My mom is sharing dance with me. I like how she helps me with my arm positions and the correct way to do the steps. I also like to stand in fifth dance position,” she said. “Me too,” Dorothy lovingly added. “Since we share our art/hobby, I think it brings us closer together. I’m thankful for the opportunity to volunteer at the studio and am lucky that I can share that with my daughter.”

Scarlet’s teacher asked her to perform a step/routine at practice one day. Scarlet took extra care to concentrate and



performed the step perfectly. When her mom applauded, Scarlet said, “I just wanted to show my best in front of you mom.”

“That really touched my heart,” Dorothy shared. Participating in ballet together has shown Dorothy the importance of being active in her child’s life while creating an even stronger bond between the two. “It is always good for the family to show their support,” Dorothy said. “You just have to let your children guide you, and they will show you what is important to them and how you can be involved in their life.” **NOW**

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The Ultimate Goal

— By Adam Kobut

Kodi Harvill is a normal 13-year-old. He attends Red Oak Junior High, lives with his parents and has been practicing karate several times a week for the last two-and-a-half years. The karate, however, is what makes Kodi different. He has competed twice in Texas state tournaments — placing fifth in the weapons and open hand form events in the first tournament, and fourth in weapons and first in forms at the second tournament held in January. “We encourage the tournaments and the competitions, but the karate is his deal. It was his idea from the beginning,” Kevin, Kodi’s father, said. “When I was a kid, I played football and took karate, but karate was going to interfere with football, so I quit karate and stuck with football. Kodi wanted to play football last year, but when he found out it was going to interfere with karate, he said, ‘No, football.’ The competitions are really nice, too. We’ve met a lot of folks. We’ve made some good friends, and Kodi’s made some good friends.”

To qualify for the state tournament, Kodi accumulated points through other tournaments. The top five students from each of three divisions (north, south and east) are invited to state, making a final pool of 15 competitors. “I just always liked kung fu stuff, like in the movies,” Kodi said. “I wanted to do a back flip off a wall. I haven’t reached that [level] yet.”

In two to three years, Kodi will earn his black belt. Although it might be a long time to wait, Kodi will stay busy, practicing and training, focusing on his *kamas* — sickle-like weapons that are used in karate form [formal sets of routines] events. Kodi received his first pair as a birthday present from his local dojo, The Martial Arts Experience in Red Oak.

According to Kevin, there has been a noticeable difference in Kodi for the better, since the beginning of his karate career. “This doesn’t mean parenting him is a breeze, but it sure does make things easier,” Kevin explained. “The respect, the attitude, the discipline [have all seen improvement]. You know, he’s still a 13-year-old kid; he still gets into some of the typical 13-year-old-kid stuff. But looking at some of his buddies who come over that aren’t in karate, there is a difference in respect and attitude.



Most times it’s ‘yes, Sir’ and ‘yes, Ma’am,’ but he still slips every once in a while. Schoolwork, well, he’s not the best student in the world, but he takes care of business. I guess he gets that from me; I wasn’t the best student in the world either.”

He might not be the best student academically, but when it comes time to train, Kodi is easily able to retain and learn new information. He is simply better in the gym than he is behind a desk. Karate is much more fascinating to him than anything he could learn from a book. Mastering new skills is his favorite, when it comes to training. “I’m just not too big on the technique,” Kodi said. “I also don’t really like to review all the stuff that I know. That’s a big problem that I have in school.”

Sparting is an event Kodi really enjoys. He anticipates reincorporating it into his training regimen and improving his skills in the event now that there is a steady instructor in the dojo.

After his black belt, Kodi's future in karate is undecided. He assumes he will keep training. Black belts are also able to instruct, which could also be a possibility for Kodi, who already has some experience in that regard. "He was helping teach the Little Dragons and the white belt classes four days a week,"



"I just always liked kung fu stuff, like in the movies."

Kodi's mother, Julie, said. "He did that for about a year, so he's already had the experience of teaching. I think it was just interfering, you know, he needed some free time to be a teenager. But he still helps out, if they're short. If someone's not there, he still offers his time to go up there and do it. Of course, he wasn't getting paid for it. They offered but we said 'no.'" Kevin explained that they simply felt that a 13-year-old did not need extra spending money. They saw it as a learning experience for Kodi — and a very beneficial one.

Whatever may come of Kodi and karate, one thing is for certain — the future seems bright. But, for now, according to Kodi, "the black belt's the goal." **NOW**

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A Caring Touch

Dr. Ferne Cummings welcomes her new associate, Dr. Rebeca Piantini.

— *By Diana Merrill Clausen*

Dr. Ferne Cummings is a long-standing family practitioner who incorporated her family practice with the pediatric specialty of her new associate, Dr. Rebeca Piantini, to create Red Oak Family and Pediatric Clinic. Dr. Piantini not only brings over 17 years of pediatric experience to the clinic, but her heart for children as well. “It’s hard to say no when it comes to helping kids,” she smiled.

Before coming to the clinic, Dr. Piantini practiced at the University of Texas Southwest Medical Center in Dallas. “I did a lot of work with kids who had been abused. It was a hard job,” she admitted. Prior to her UT Southwestern career, she practiced medicine in California for 17 years, but her passion for helping children started

when she was little. “Since childhood, I had always wanted to be a pediatrician,” she smiled. “I liked my pediatrician and had many family members involved in the healthcare profession, including my mom and sister who are both nurses.”

Caring for children is Dr. Piantini’s number one priority. “I like to help people and kids to be able to achieve the best they can be,” she said, explaining that for her, complete healthcare does not just relate to the physical. “It is the whole aspect of good physical health, including both the mental and spiritual. I also want my patients to succeed in all things and to be happy.”

A big part of Dr. Piantini’s practice involves preventive patient care such as vaccines and check-ups. “I believe every



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Friday: 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

child and adult should be vaccinated," she said, adding how she has seen firsthand the protection vaccines provide to patients. "In the early 1990s a lot of children died from measles," she said. However, since certain vaccines have been a required part of the vaccination process, "We do not see very many epidemic cases of patients who have contracted things such as chicken pox or measles," she added. Dr. Piantini attributes reduced illness rates to those vaccines.

Both Dr. Piantini and Dr. Cummings place great importance on assisting, diagnosing and caring for their patients, especially when it comes to taking preventative measures for total wellness. "I see children from birth to 18 years old and, sometimes, they have chronic issues

"We want to help keep their health under control so they can have a normal life and participate in normal childhood activities."

such as asthma and diabetes," Dr. Piantini said. "We want to help keep their health under control so they can have a normal life and participate in normal childhood activities." She advocates preventive measures such as vision, hearing and dental checks as well as wellness exams.

Part of Dr. Piantini's prevention program involves visiting local schools and forums to speak to others about good health. "I also speak about abuse [and other child/teen issues]," she said. "I like to be a part of helping kids in all areas, especially in the whole aspect of good health, whether in the physical, spiritual or emotional realms. It is also important to help instill in them good self-esteem."

Being involved in helping their patients and the community is very important to the doctors of Red Oak Family and Pediatric Clinic. "I think Red Oak is a good place," Dr. Piantini smiled. **NOW**

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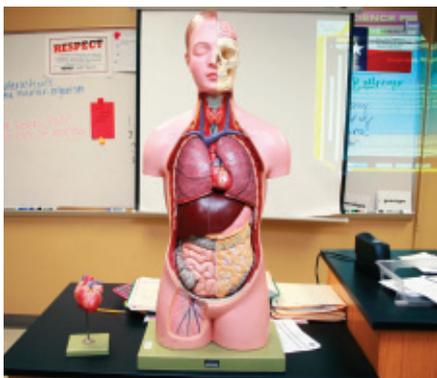
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Exercise Your Mind

— By Diana Merrill Clausen



Genelda Bedolla was born to be a mentor and a motivator. For a while, she used her kinesiology and exercise science degree to be a personal trainer until she decided she needed a career change. “Then, after my first child was born, I realized I also wanted to be more successful. While I was a personal trainer, I had taught many exercise classes and my students always commented that I would

be a good school teacher,” she shared.

Already a teacher to those she trained, it was time for Genelda to see if she had the talents to become a teacher in an actual classroom. With the support of her friends, she started her new career. “I take pride in motivating people,” she said. Since becoming a middle school teacher three years ago, “I learned motivation is the number one key that would help me in the classroom,” she added. The one trait Genelda knew she would have to work on, however, was patience.

Genelda also realized the type of person she would have to be in order to successfully accomplish her job. “I learned early on that if I was structured and organized the kids would know what I expected of them, and patience would soon come along with it,” she said. As it turns out, her theory was correct. “My kids definitely know what is expected in the classroom,” she noted.

“I remember sitting in classes and thinking, *There has got to be a more fun way to learn,*” Genelda recalled. So, one of the first things she implemented into her classes was the use of engaging and creative activities that would open her students’ minds and hold their attention. Genelda believes in keeping her students active, so on days when sitting behind their desks just is not working, she gets her students up and outside for a school yard field trip. “I love to have fun things going on outside for them,” she said.

“When we learn about predation, we have a simulated game where one group of kids are rabbits and another group are wolves. Both species are instructed to collect food while staying alive. After the kids get the hang of it, learning predation becomes a school yard game of tag. On other days, I’ll have the class venture outside to learn about energy pyramids and ecosystems.” In no time, her pupils have learned the importance of ecosystems without realizing they were just taught. “The students will always rise to the occasion when you let them know that what they are doing is important,” Genelda smiled proudly.

The 2009-10 school year was Genelda’s first year teaching eighth grade science, a subject which encompasses life, earth, chemistry and physical composite science

classes. Genelda is also the school's volleyball coach, as well as the assistant track coach, so discovering that her teaching was even more effective when she blended her subject matter and sports knowledge together was bound to happen. "In both science and in sports we get into discussing body systems, nutrition, brain food, cardio systems and healthy habits," Genelda said, explaining that for her physics classes she will use sports such as volleyball to help her students understand a difficult lesson.

In 2008, while teaching her second year of seventh grade science, Genelda learned she had received her school's "Teacher of the Year" award. "I had to go in front of the school board to receive my plaque," she smiled, admitting that she was nervous. She has also been nominated for an H-E-B "Rising Star" award from the grocery chain. She humbly credits her success to the positive support from her family.

Being the mother of two children and having a school full of students she thinks of as her "kids," has assisted Genelda in reaching her students on their individual levels. As a parent, she believes it is always good to observe a child's teachers in the classroom. "You can always go to school with your kids, sit in class and even have lunch with them," she said. "The child is usually pretty excited to have their parent in class." Going to school can help the child's learning experience, and it can positively establish a parent/teacher relationship. "As a parent," she added, "you really want to know that the person who is spending the most time with your child is someone who is a good role model, especially since they see the child on a day-to-day basis."

Besides stimulating her students' minds by keeping them actively engaged and using subjects they can relate to in order to help them understand, Genelda makes it a point to "plug in" to their lives in a more personal way if she sees them struggling. "There are a lot of times I have to have heart-to-heart talks with them," she said of her students. "They know I will always be very honest with them, and I believe it is never too early to start building a child's character and help them to form good habits." **NOW**

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In The Kitchen With Bob Williamson

— By Faith Browning

Bob Williamson began his adventure in the world of cooking at the age of 12. During the summers while his mother worked, Bob was at home learning new skills. “I didn’t like sandwiches, so I learned to prepare real food,” he recalled. “My mom’s family were all good cooks, Southern country food. Being from Louisiana, I share in that state’s legacy for good food.”

During his years as a CPA, Bob had the opportunity to live outside the country, where he learned new ways to spice up his dishes. “Having worked a few years in Asia, I learned to love Asian food, especially Indian, Thai and all the various Chinese provincial foods,” he explained. “I like pasta, seafood and spicy food. I like to cook with wine. Sometimes, I even put it in the food!” **NOW**



PEPPERCORN-CRUSTED PORK LOIN ROAST

- 1 3-lb. lean, boneless pork loin roast
- 3 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 Tbsp. nonfat buttermilk
- 2 cups whole wheat bread crumbs
- 2 Tbsp. cracked pepper
- 2 tsp. whole assorted peppercorns, crusted
- 2 tsp. fresh thyme, chopped
- 1/4 tsp. salt

Vegetable oil cooking spray

Fresh thyme, chopped

CREAMY PEPPERCORN SAUCE:

- 1/4 cup nonfat buttermilk
- 1/3 cup low-fat sour cream
- 3 Tbsp. grated Parmesan cheese
- 3 Tbsp. whole-wheat breadcrumbs
- 2 Tbsp. reduced fat mayonnaise
- 1 1/2 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 1/2 tsp. whole assorted peppercorns, crushed
- 1/4 tsp. salt

1. Preheat oven to 325 F.
2. Trim fat from roast. Combine mustard and buttermilk. Spread over roast.
3. Combine breadcrumbs and next four ingredients; spread evenly over roast.
4. Place roast on a roasting pan coated with cooking spray. Bake on oven rack at 325 F for 2 to 2 1/2 hours or until thermometer says 140 F. Let roast stand 10-15 minutes before slicing. (It will continue to cook.)
5. While roast is cooling, prepare creamy peppercorn sauce by combining all ingredients.
6. Slice roast at the table; serve with sauce. Garnish with thyme springs.

FETTUCCINE ALFREDO WILLIAMSON

- 1 pkg. fettuccine
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1.5 cups unsalted butter, melted
- 2 cups grated Parmesan
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- 1 egg yolk
- 1 Tbsp. coarsely ground black pepper

1. Boil pasta in salted water with oil. Do not overcook. The pasta should be *al dente* (chewy).
2. While pasta is cooking, warm a large skillet on the stove. When pasta is done, place in warm

skillet, turning heat up to medium low. Add butter; toss well.

3. Add cheese; toss until melted.
4. Add heavy whipping cream, sour cream and egg yolk, tossing until pasta is well-coated.
5. Add black pepper and serve on warmed plates. Extra cream and sour cream may be needed to get the proper sauce consistency.

CRAB-STUFFED BAKED POTATOES

- 6 large baking potatoes
- 1/2 cup butter
- 1/2 cup light cream
- 1 tsp. salt
- Pepper, to taste
- 6 green onions, diced
- 1 cup sharp cheddar cheese, grated
- 6 oz. can crabmeat
- 1/2 tsp. paprika

1. Bake potatoes in a regular oven. (If cooked in a microwave, put in the oven for a few minutes afterward to crisp the skins.)
2. Cut potatoes lengthwise. Scoop out insides and whip with butter, cream, salt, pepper, onions and cheese.
3. With a fork, mix crabmeat with potato mixture. Refill potatoes; sprinkle with paprika.
4. Bake in a hot 400 F oven for about 15 minutes. These can be frozen and baked when needed. You can use boiled shrimp or imitation crabmeat.

CHOCOLATE MOUSSE PIE

TOPPING:

- 1 jar maraschino cherries with stems
- 1 cup Captain Morgan’s rum or bourbon
- 5-6 oz. semi-sweet chocolate
- 1-2 oz. paraffin

CRUST:

- 2 cups dark chocolate wafer crumbs (from the bakery are best)
- 2 Tbsp. butter, melted

MOUSSE:

- 8 eggs, separated
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/2 cup Captain Morgan’s rum
- 8 oz. unsweetened chocolate
- 4 oz. semisweet chocolate

- 3/4 cup butter, melted
- 1/2 cup coffee, fresh brewed (not instant)
- 3 Tbsp. sugar

1.5 cups whipping cream

1. Drain liquid from the jar of cherries and replace with either rum or bourbon. Allow them to sit in the refrigerator for several hours (best overnight). Before starting the rest of the preparation, transfer to a freezer proof container and store in freezer.
2. In a food processor or blender, grind the crust wafers into fine crumbs. Combine with butter; place in the bottom of a springform pan. I use the bottom of a glass or Pyrex measuring cup to pat down crumbs into a firm crust.
3. Bake at 325 F for 10 minutes. Remove from oven; cool completely.
4. Prepare mousse by combining egg yolks, vanilla, salt and rum; place in the top of a double boiler. Bring water to a simmer; whisk slowly until mixture becomes pale yellow and thick, about 8-10 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside in a large mixing bowl.
5. Melt both types of chocolate in the double boiler. When melted, remove from heat.
6. Mix in butter, a bit at a time. Using an electric mixer, beat this mixture into the egg yolk mixture until smooth. This will congeal and become stiff. Add coffee and continue to beat until well-mixed.
7. Beat room temperature egg whites into soft peaks. While beating, gradually add sugar until stiff peaks form.
8. Transfer 1 cup of egg whites to chocolate mixture; mix well with a beater or whisk. Fold remaining egg whites into chocolate mixture.
9. Beat whipped cream until stiff; fold into chocolate mixture. Pour into the spring-form pan. Let sit overnight, if you can.
10. Melt chocolate and paraffin in a double boiler. When melted, quickly dip frozen cherries one at a time into mixture, swirling by the stem until completely covered. Place on waxed paper and refrigerate.
11. When the mousse is thoroughly chilled, place chocolate-covered cherries on top with stems pointing upwards. Arrange them in any pattern you like. You can make a variation of this in parfait glasses.

Impact-resistant roofing

— By *Andrea Walton*

How about an affordable investment in your home that pays you back in return? There's a fairly new product — impact-resistant roofing — that can do just that. It's available in shingles that look like ordinary asphalt shingles (either three-tab or architectural shingles), as well as other types of materials such as metal and alternative products. Regardless of the material you choose, each type of impact-resistant product tends to stand up much better to hail than do ordinary shingles; and many impact-resistant products are rated for higher wind resistance as well. Here's how this new type of roofing can save you money:

- Many insurers offer an annual discount on homeowners premiums for qualifying roofs. Very important: You'll want to check with your insurer or agent before you buy a roof to be sure the shingles you have in mind qualify for the discount with your insurance carrier.



- If your roof is not damaged from a wind or hail storm, you will avoid having a claim and paying a deductible. With most insurance companies writing higher deductibles these days, your savings could be substantial. And it's our experience that qualifying impact-resistant roofs typically fare very well in storms that cause considerable damage to ordinary roofs.

Perhaps even more important is the protection you're adding for your home and contents if the roof you invest in does a better job of keeping the elements out. The roof you choose is your home's first line of defense in a storm. Everything inside — including items like pictures and heirlooms that would be difficult or impossible to replace — is at risk if your roof fails.

For more information on qualifying impact-resistant roofing, please contact a roofing expert or your insurance carrier. **NOW**

Andrea Walton is a State Farm agent based in Red Oak.

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Plant for the Future

Water the plant each day for seven days to give it a little extra chance.

— *By Nancy Fenton*

March is the right time to start thinking about planting your landscape. Most plants come either in pots or bare rooted. Pot-grown plants often need a few days in the shade outside to “harden off” if they have been grown in a greenhouse. Water as needed and give them a chance to adjust to the changing temperatures before you shock them again by planting them.

Wet to wet is the usual thought in planting, so soak the potted plant right before you plant it. Dig a hole not much larger than the pot — about two inches larger than the diameter of the pot usually works. Separate the roots gently, cutting only if the ball is tightly packed. Set the plant in the hole so the top of the root ball is even with the surface of the soil; then push soil around and over the top of the root ball. Water well and stand back!

Woody plants, which are planted in unimproved soil like our yards, need a much wider hole (three to five times the width of

the pot.) Break up the root ball as before and spread the roots out. Plant high and backfill with the soil that came out of the hole. Water well and make a large basin like ridge around the plant to funnel water to the roots.

Bare-rooted plants need a large hole to enable you to spread out their roots. Remember to soak the bare roots. Make a cone in the center of the hole and spread out the roots evenly. Once again, plant high and push soil gently over the crown of the plant. If you are unsure which end is up, do not worry. The plant knows, and will send shoots up and roots down! Water the plant each day for seven days to give it a little extra chance. Fertilizer is appropriate after the first signs of new growth. **NOW**

Nancy Fenton is a Master Gardener.

Happening **NOW**

Third Monday

Ellis County Aggie Moms: 7:00 p.m., First United Methodist, 505 W. Marvin.
www.elliscountyaggiemoms.org

Fourth Monday

Creative Quilters Guild of Ellis County monthly meeting: 6:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m., Waxahachie Bible Church, 621 Grand Ave.

First Tuesday

PrimeTimers Senior Group: 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Oaks Fellowship, 777 S. I-35 East. Fun, food and fellowship. RSVP to (214) 376-8208.

AA meeting: 8:00 p.m., Lonestar Cowboy Church, 1011 E. Ovilla Rd. (972) 576-0900.

First and Third Tuesdays

Red Oak Lions Club meeting: 7:00 p.m., 207 W. Red Oak Rd. (214) 864-8014.

Tuesdays and Thursdays

Alcoholics Anonymous meeting: 7:00 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 600 Red Oak Rd. (972) 617-9100.

Sound Options Pregnancy Services parenting classes: 658 Big Stone Gap, Duncanville. For information and to register, call Freda at (972) 230-8101.

Every Wednesday

Family Story Time: 10:30-11:30 a.m., Red Oak Public Library, 200 Lakeview Pkwy. All ages welcome. (469) 218-1230.
www.redoakpubliclibrary.org

GriefShare Recovery Seminar and Support Group meeting: 6:15 p.m., Palmer Christian Child Care and Day School, 510 S. Dallas St., Palmer. Contact Vivian Saladino at (214) 802-2256 or e-mail griefshare@fbcpalmer.org for information.

Wednesdays and Thursdays

Senior Citizens Club meeting: 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., 207 W. Red Oak Rd. Games, exercise and activities. (972) 576-2777.

Third Thursday

American Business Women's Association meeting. www.abwa-empoweringwomen.org

Every Friday

Celebrate Recovery meeting: First Baptist Church, 320 E. Ovilla Rd. (972) 617-3591.

First Saturday

Red Oak Fire Rescue CPR classes: 9:00 a.m. Call early to register. (469) 218-7713.

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Happening **NOW**

Second Saturday

Lonestar Cowboy Church Motorcycle group ride. 1011 E. Ovilla Rd. (972) 576-0900

March 1-27

Free GED prep classes: Zula B. Wylie Library, Cedar Hill. For reading, math, writing, social studies and science. Attendees must be on an eighth-grade reading level or above to enroll. Limited space. RSVP to Diane Rayburn at (972) 291-7323, ext. 1313.

March 7

Lifestyles Home and Family Expo featuring "A Taste of Waxahachie," will be held from 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. at the Waxahachie Civic Center. Adult tickets are \$3. Children under 10 are free. For more information, call (972) 937-2390 or visit www.waxahachiechamber.com.

March 17

Ellis County Christian Women's Connection meeting: 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Waxahachie Country Club, 1920 W. Hwy. 287. For reservations, call (972) 937-2807.

March 18-20

DeSoto Art League presents James Spurlock Art Workshops: 9:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. at DeSoto Presbyterian Church, 212 W. Pleasant Run Rd. Cost: \$195/members; \$200/non-members; \$100 deposit due Mar. 5. Limit 10/class. (972) 217-1546 or sandy@sandyreese.com.

March 20

Red Oak Lions Club Pancake Breakfast: 7:00-11:00 a.m., 207 W. Red Oak Rd. Cost: \$4, all you can eat. (214) 864-8014.

March 21

Red Oak Bridal Show: noon-5:00 p.m., Red Oak Municipal Center, 200 Lakeview Pkwy. (972) 617-3638.

March 25-27

DeSoto Art League presents James Spurlock Art Workshops: 9:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. at Ellis County Art Museum, 501 W. Main. Cost: \$195/members; \$200/non-members; \$100 deposit due March 5. Limit 10/class. Contact (972) 217-1546 or sandy@sandyreese.com.

March 27

Ellis County Master Gardeners Expo: 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Waxahachie Civic Center. (972) 825-5175.

April 1

City of Red Oak Easter Egg Hunt at Red Oak City Park. For more information, call Lauren Whatley at (469) 218-1202.

Texas Mystique

— By *Becky Walker*

Texas: strong, brave, free-spirited, independent-minded and proud of it! From longhorns, 10-gallon hats, vast ranches, yellow roses, bluebonnets and cowboys on horses, to Cowboys on the football field, skyscrapers and the lights of some of the largest cities in the nation, the spirit of Texas is found everywhere you turn. It is said that everything is bigger in Texas, and what else should you expect from the largest contiguous state in the Union?

For many Texans the pride in state is just as strong as their pride in country. Where did such state pride come from? To gain understanding, you must take a step back in time, to the days when Texas was part of Mexico. Tensions were high due to a series of legislative actions, which were seen as harmful to the growth of Texas, including: tariffs, an unnatural union making Texas and the State of Coahuila one state and a law restricting immigration to Texas. When Santa Anna repealed the Constitution of 1824 and established himself as dictator in December 1835, war was just around the corner. Texans



grow up with stories about the heroes of the Texas Revolution: Sam Houston, Davy Crockett, Stephen F. Austin, Jim Bowie — men who laid their lives on the line against impossible odds, and though many of them paid the ultimate price for freedom, their cause succeeded. For 10 years — 1836-1846 — Texas was a sovereign nation covering a huge amount of land including all of the current state of Texas and parts of New Mexico, Oklahoma, Kansas, Colorado and Wyoming.

Though the Alamo is probably the most recognizable symbol of the Republic of Texas, the official birthplace of the republic is a little closer to home for North Texans. Nestled near the Brazos River approximately an hour northwest of Houston, is Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site. What better place to visit in honor of Texas Independence Day (March 2nd) than the site where independence was declared? The park features a replica of Independence Hall where the Texas Declaration of Independence was drafted using the United States Declaration of Independence as a model.

The park is also home to Barrington



Living History Farm, which gives visitors a feel for what daily life was like for Dr. Anson Jones, the last president of the Republic of Texas, and other early settlers of the area. The Star of the Republic Museum displays republic-era artifacts, documents and details of the Texas Revolution. A walk down Ferry Street leads to a scenic overlook of the river. As the water rushes past, you can almost hear the voices of the brave pioneers, who birthed a nation — and a mystique as big as Texas!

Tickets may be purchased at individual sites, or at the Visitor Center. Those interested in visiting multiple sites may purchase a Brazos Pass for all sites. For more information, visit www.birthplaceoftexas.com. **NOW**





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For a physician referral or for more information about cancer care services at Baylor Waxahachie, call [1.800.4BAYLOR](tel:1.800.4BAYLOR) or visit us online at BaylorHealth.com.

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