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MARCH 2015

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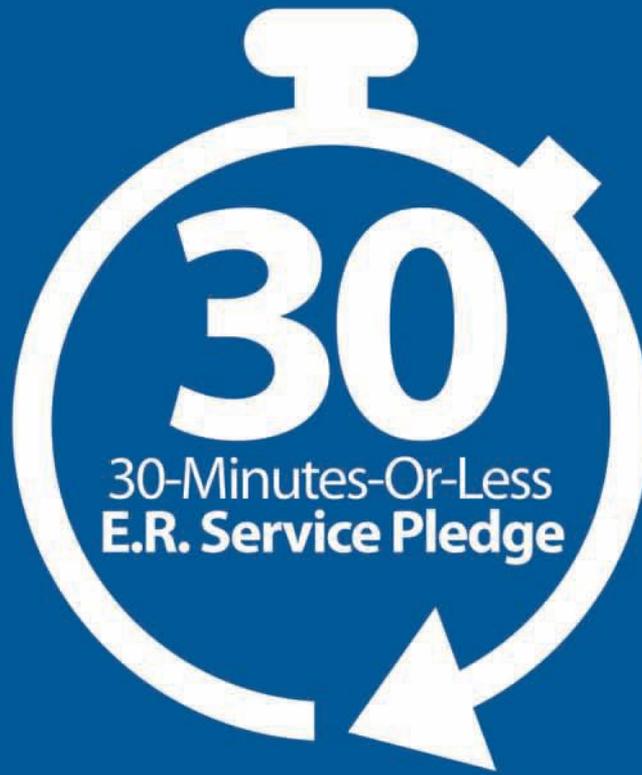
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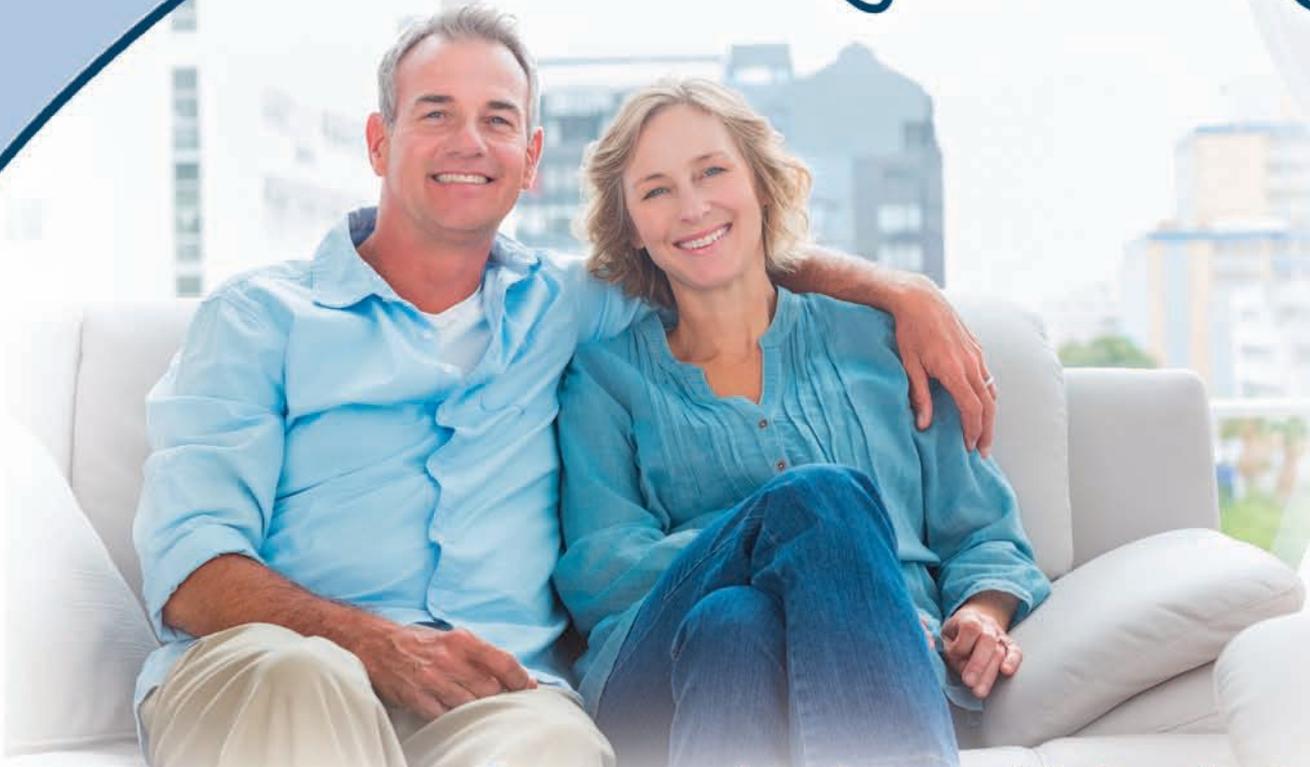
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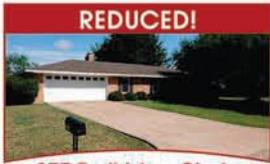
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**377 Trailridge Circle**

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**SOLD!**

**1411 Arlington Drive**

Nice brick 3 bdrm, 1.5 bath w/ fenced backyard & storage bldg. Great home for first time buyer!



**408 Meandering Way**

Alluring home; lovely views of lake. 3 beds, 2 baths, sitting on 2 acres in Bluffview Estate. Log cabin home features high ceilings, large living area & more!



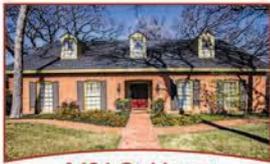
**2021 West Park**

Hardwood floors, split bedrooms, 3 living areas, fabulous master suite and bath, walk-in closets are some of the adorable features of this lovely home.



**1320 22nd Avenue**

Appealing California-style home. Completely updated with high-end upgrades. Granite, wood floors, picture perfect. 4/3 with 2 living areas.



**1424 Oaklawn**

This is one of a kind! App 4,000 sq. ft. 5/3 2 living areas, formal dining, custom gourmet kitchen, pool, outdoor fireplace. See it quick!



**228 Churchill Ave**

Lovely home on almost 1/2 acre in TOWN! HUGE backyard at the end of a nice cul-de-sac. 3 bed, 2 bath ... See it today!



**1907 W. Park Avenue**

Nice home in great neighborhood, Bowie ISD. 2 bed, 1 bath, 2 living areas and 1-car garage.



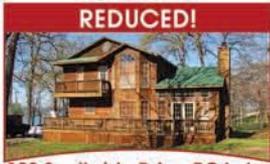
**3620 W Highway 22**

Fantastic, one-owner home. First time on the market! Fabulous brick floors. New appliances, fresh paint, granite, 30-year roof replaced in 2012.



**909 Madison Drive**

Be surrounded by beautifully landscaped park-like setting, 3/2/2 top-notch upgraded kitchen and baths. Established neighborhood.



**REDUCED!**

**109 Southside Drive-RC Lake**

Adorable and affordable. 3/2/1 cedar waterfront home. Great getaway.



**1605 Dobbins Road**

Paradise in the city! Beautiful open floor plan for entertaining that leads to the backyard oasis with pool and spa!



**3068 Liberty Drive**

Beautiful property and great country living located 3 miles from Hwy 31. Horse barn with water & electricity. Newly updated 3-bed, 2-bath home.



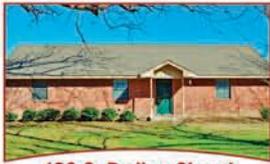
**3664 North Business 45**

Beautifully renovated home on 17+ Acres. 3 Beds & 2 baths with an amazing view & mature trees. Priced to sell! Call to see!



**536 Oakridge Drive**

Family home in Bowie school district. 3 bed, 2 bath with large yard. Freshly painted and ready for you! Come see this one!



**403 S. Dallas Street**

Fantastic home in Rice ISD. 3 Bed, 2 bath with large yard. Priced to sell!!!! Call to see!



**NEW LISTING!**

**3572 FM 55**

In Blooming Grove. Won't last long. 3/3 on 6 acres, large shop, barn, pond and storm shelter that holds 10.



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Bowie schools ... large corner lot, 3 bedroom 2 bath & 2 living areas.

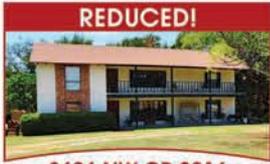


What a place! This property has everything you could ever need! Upgraded open floor plan home that features 3 bedrooms and 2 and half baths.



**413 Wesley Drive**

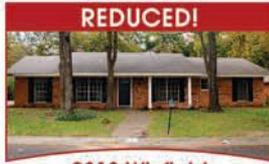
Gorgeous home with lots of updates! 3 bedrooms, 2 baths with a great kitchen. Located on a large corner lot with beautiful trees. Come see this one today!



**REDUCED!**

**3606 NW CR 0016**

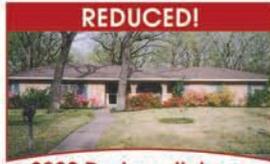
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1-acre, treed lot  
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**REDUCED!**

**2813 Winfield**

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**REDUCED!**

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## ON THE COVER



Mr. Franco and his car are both "shining" at CHS.

Photo by Memories by Melissa.

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## Editor's Note

*Hello, Corsicana!*

My daffodils and irises are heralding the advent of spring. Every year, these beauties return, reminding me of the times my daughter, Katie, and I spent in our gardens planting the "daffies," because she had seen them at the nursery and loved them and of my grandfather who grew vegetables, fruit trees and irises. My grandmother wanted me, upon my grandfather's death, to transplant bulbs and take grafts. Those plants

have made it through three moves, and every spring, they flood their memories into my life.

I am also so thankful to *see* them. Sight challenged for many years, I am a supporter of this month's Save Your Vision and the National Eye Donor designations. Join me in spring cleaning and donating those old eyeglasses to the Lions Club International, so someone else can enjoy the gift of sight.

## Virginia

Virginia Riddle  
CorsicanaNOW Editor  
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# Ready for





# CHANGE

— By Callie Revell

*Even though he grew up and was educated in the big city, Eldon Franco loves the smaller setting a town like Corsicana provides. As the new principal of Corsicana High School, Eldon is a great proponent of vocational programs and the arts and aims to adapt his big-city ideas to bring success to his students.*

Eldon and his wife, Carrie, who is currently serving as the nurse at Drane Intermediate School, have been married for 24 years. They have two children, Mason and Mariah. Both children attend Houston Baptist University, the school Eldon and Carrie attended, and where they met on a blind date. “We’ve been together ever since,” Eldon said. “It’s been an adventure, that’s for sure.”

Eldon earned his Bachelor of Science degree from Houston Baptist University with majors in mathematics and biology. He went on to earn his

“THE WHOLE GOAL IS TO GIVE THE KIDS EVERY OPPORTUNITY FOR SUCCESS.”

master’s in educational leadership from Sam Houston State University and is currently in the process of earning his doctorate degree from Lamar University. He has worked throughout East and Central Texas, including places like Deer Park, Huntsville and north Houston. As a teacher, Eldon taught all-level math and science, and his favorite subject is physical science. “After 12 years in the classroom, I felt like I needed a boost,” he said. “I wanted to go back to school and further my education.”

After Eldon became certified as a principal, his first position was in Giddings before he moved to Silsbee and served in the area for nine years. “Sometimes I miss teaching in the classroom, but my whole goal since getting into education has been to affect as many kids as I can in a positive manner,” Eldon said. “As a principal, that circle has expanded. I can’t develop a personal relationship with kids like I can in the classroom, but I think I can affect them on a grander scale.” Since becoming a principal, he has served on the board for Texas Association of Secondary School Principals and is currently serving

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on the legislative committee for that organization. He has also led schools to exemplary status, which he considers a great honor.

A career in education was not always the plan for Eldon. "When I was in college, I couldn't decide a direction I wanted to go," he admitted. "I just knew I didn't want to do pre-med or engineering." When a faculty member suggested Eldon consider a career in teaching, he wasn't convinced. It wasn't until he took his first observation course that he fell in love with it. "I just knew that was where I needed to be," Eldon said. "Just like on the third date with my



wife when I knew that was the woman I was going to marry, during my first observation class, I knew that was the career I was going to marry.”

Eldon was originally interested in working in Corsicana as a way to expand his horizons. “I had started looking for a new position, because I hope to one day be a superintendent. I feel like if that is going to happen, I will need experience with bigger schools,” he explained. When the opportunity to work at Corsicana High School presented itself, he was excited about the prospect. “I felt like I could connect with the student population here,” Eldon said. “I thought it would be a good opportunity for me



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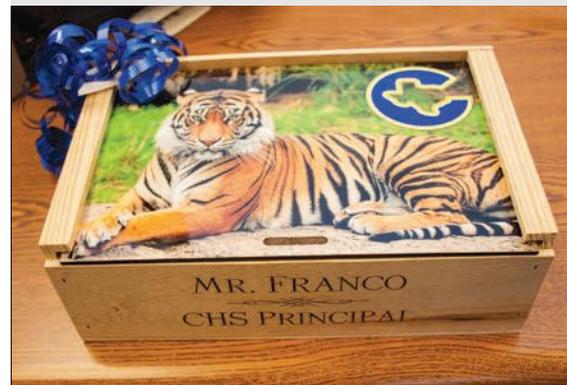
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to grow professionally, and as a person, to work with different cultures. The students have been great so far.”

Working at CHS has exceeded his expectations. “Never once did I hear bad things about this campus,” Eldon said. “Once I got here, I knew this was the right choice.” He has a great team working with him who knows how to get the job done. “The staff here made it easy to come in and get going,” Eldon said. “My administration has also been wonderful and very supportive. I think the relationship we have built has put them at ease that this school is a priority.”

Eldon’s professional philosophy is all about priorities. “Christ comes first. My family comes second, and this job comes third,” he declared. “That’s how things work for me personally. When that gets out of alignment, things start to fall apart.” When interacting with the community, Eldon wants people to know how much he values open communication. “I’m going to treat people with civility, and I expect them to do the same,” he said. “I urge anyone who has a question or concern to come in and talk to me. The outcome might not be what they like, but I will listen and take everything into consideration.”

Eldon has big plans for Corsicana High School, and some of those plans have already begun to take effect. “I want to build a high-performing team of teachers and of students,” he said. “I subscribe to the ‘team’ concept as far as leadership goes. We are all pieces of the whole. The whole goal is to give the kids every opportunity for success.” In order to achieve success, Eldon plans to do everything he can to build up his school. “I’m going to support my teachers, and I’m going to support my students,” he said. “We have to do what’s in the best interest for all involved.”



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Outside of school, Eldon loves dove hunting, duck hunting and fishing. "There's nothing like saltwater coastal fishing," Eldon said. He also enjoys woodworking and target shooting. His favorite team is the Green Bay Packers, and he will let everyone know it. "I'm a Packers fan through and through, which irritates a lot of people around here, but that's OK," Eldon laughed. "That's been my team for many years." Everyone knows Eldon's car when it's parked in the parking lot. "I drive a MINI Cooper. That's probably the only car I'll ever drive," he said. "People sometimes make



fun of me as a big guy in a little car, but I love it." The car was a Christmas present from his wife five years ago, and Eldon does all the work on the car himself.

Since moving to Corsicana in July, Eldon and his family have thoroughly enjoyed the small-town atmosphere. "The community has been wonderful. I have yet to meet someone who wasn't friendly," he said. "I have been very happy with the way the community has accepted me." Even on their first day in town, Eldon was already impressed with Corsicana. "We had people bring us food when we were moving in. In 23 years, we've never had that happen. That idea of community has really impressed me. I love the idea of a community spirit." **NOW**

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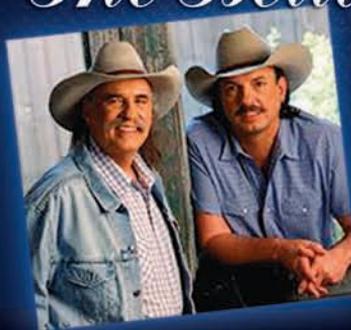
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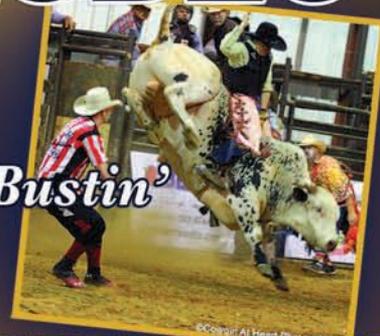
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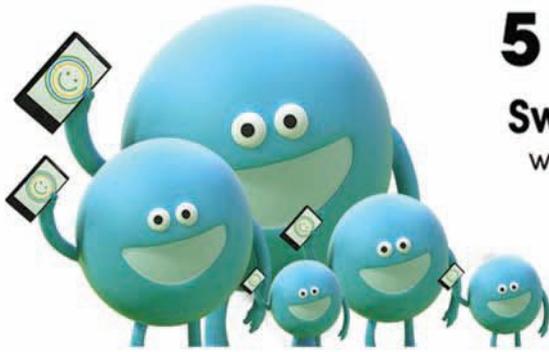
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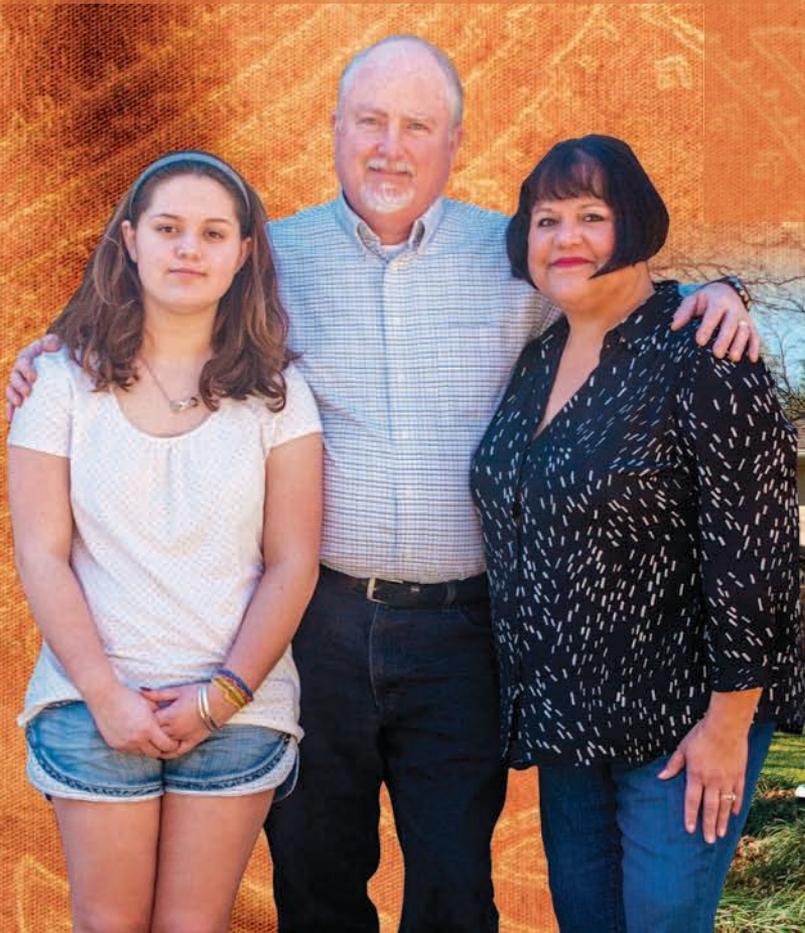
## Transplants

— By Virginia Riddle

California natives, Steve and Annie Avery, met the challenges of an interstate relocation with enthusiasm two years ago. Steve, an engineer, had accepted a new position with Guardian Industries in Corsicana, so the couple, along with daughter, Savannah, now a seventh-grader at Collins Middle School, headed

eastward. “We love it here. There’s no traffic, but there are plenty of avenues of art — theatre and concerts at the Palace Theatre. There are so many things to do here,” Steve explained.

The family’s love of travel and adventure was another major lure to Texas, since they had not totally explored the Midwestern states. Annie has traveled to 32 of the states, and Steve has been to the 48 contiguous states. They love exploring Texas and are fascinated by Texas history. Cities, such as Chicago, are a lot closer now. “Anytime Annie sees a three- to four-day weekend, she’s ready to go somewhere. She’s great at planning our itinerary,” Steve said.



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"I love being here, since I have always loved the stories about life on the prairie by Laura Ingalls Wilder. We saw her home in Mansfield, Missouri, last summer," Annie revealed.

Annie has also loved being a stay-at-home mom following a 35-year career in retail as a store manager for such names as Gap. "You sacrifice a lot in retail, family-wise, since you are working nights, weekends and holidays," Annie said. A graduate of California State University, San Bernardino, with a B.A. in Spanish, Annie had planned to become a bilingual teacher, but her retail college job turned into a career.

With an undergraduate degree from Pomona College in Claremont, California, and graduate studies at Cal-Poly, Pomona, Steve enjoys working with glass coatings.



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"I've done this all my life, and it's really nice to see young men at Guardian who can afford homes for their families in this area," Steve said.

The couple met on a blind date arranged by one of Annie's store associates. "Annie is known for being late, and she was that night. I was standing outside the restaurant holding a rose, waiting and waiting, but she did call," Steve remembered. Married since 1997, they are parents to Stephen and Chris, Steve's sons by a previous marriage.



Ruling the household is Lilly, the family's Miniature Pinscher or Min Pin. "She thinks she's a German Shepherd," Steve said. "We call her a 'max pin' since she weighs about 30 pounds. Savannah wanted a puppy, so we searched on Google. We found her in the *Penny Saver*, so she's a discount dog. We put her in obedience school classes, and she flunked every test."

However, Lilly won the family over. The bay window in the formal dining room is her alert station as she watches for Steve to come home each day. "Lilly is purely Savannah's dog, but I do like my puppy time," Steve admitted. This room is also Annie's favorite room, since the

expansive window lets in so much light and air. Framed stitchery says: *Bless This House With Friends and Family*.

The galley-style kitchen is Annie's domain, since she enjoys cooking. "I love having the double ovens, pantry and two dining rooms," Annie stated. The adjoining breakfast nook also plays host to Annie's extensive recipe book collection. "We like having people over and putting my baking creations out on the tables," Annie added.

"Annie is a very good cook," Steve revealed.

Set just off the kitchen is Annie's Beatles and family media room. Built-in cabinets and the walls are filled with



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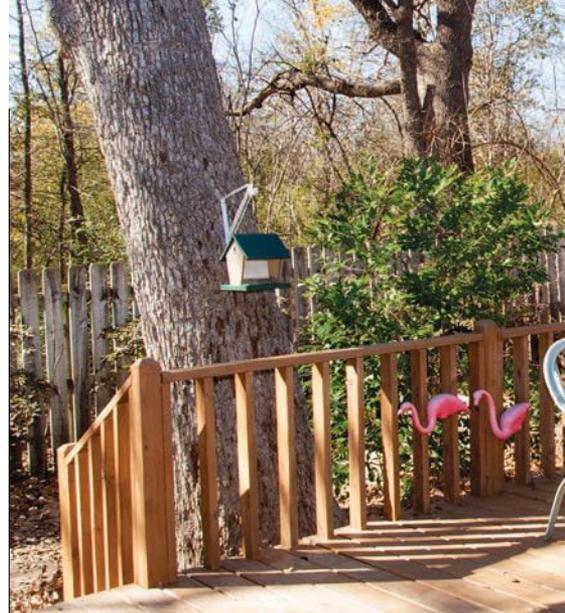
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Beatles' memorabilia that Annie likes to collect. "Most of this has been given to me as gifts. I used to go to Beatles fests and once met Cynthia Lennon," Annie said.

The built-in cabinets were one of the big selling points of the home since they provide storage in nearly every room of the home, including the den. A magnificent fireplace and mantel, stained and varnished by Annie, rival the cabinets as the room's focal point, however, for Savannah, the main feature of the room is the piano. A student of piano, clarinet and organ and a member of choir, Savannah's practice time enables her to shine at the keyboard. Steve, who plays the guitar, mandolin and ukulele, enjoys accompanying Savannah and other family members on sing-a-longs around the piano.

A light in the hallway, termed as the "eternal flame" leads the way to Savannah's teenage room with its white cabinets. Savannah has made some very good friendships at school and in the neighborhood, so her room plays host to sleepovers often. A window seat gives her a place to curl up with a fictional book, Savannah's favored interest. A British and a Swiss flag are displayed. "A young man from Switzerland from my youth gave me his flag, and the British flag was given to Savannah by a British lady who was waving it at Williamsburg while Queen Elizabeth was visiting on the same day as us," Steve explained, who worked in Switzerland and Germany and speaks German.

A bedroom serves as the music, scrapbook and computer room. The brick back of the fireplace makes a nice

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focal point while cabinets hold music, instruments and Annie's scrapbook supplies. With Steve as the composer and Annie as the lyricist, the couple has authored a collection of music. "I love scrapbooking so much I went to a convention in Dallas with neighbors," Annie said.

The master bedroom provides a quiet and private retreat for the couple. The master bath has his and her vanities and is a work-in-progress for the family since they have only been in their home about a year, having rented a house while they shopped for this perfect home.

Their tree-covered yard features a "moat" driveway over a usually dry creek bed. A deck overlooks pastures beyond the fence. "Looking through to the backyard is like looking at the Big Thicket," Steve said. "Lilly hung out with a fox, and we have had skunks and coyotes visit," he added. "We enjoy the birds, especially a cardinal and the swallows."

Life was so perfect for these transplants that Steve's parents, Father Richard and Marjorie Avery have moved to Corsicana. He is the assistant priest at the family's church, St. John's Episcopal Church. "They just love Corsicana," Annie said.

Formally active in the community as a Girl Scout leader and as San Bernardino Valley Jr. Chamber of Commerce president, Annie is learning about Corsicana through the Corsicana Newcomer's Club. "We are looking forward to the continued revitalization of Corsicana's downtown," Steve said. "We have found everything we wanted in this home and city." **NOW**

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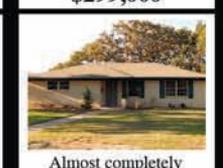
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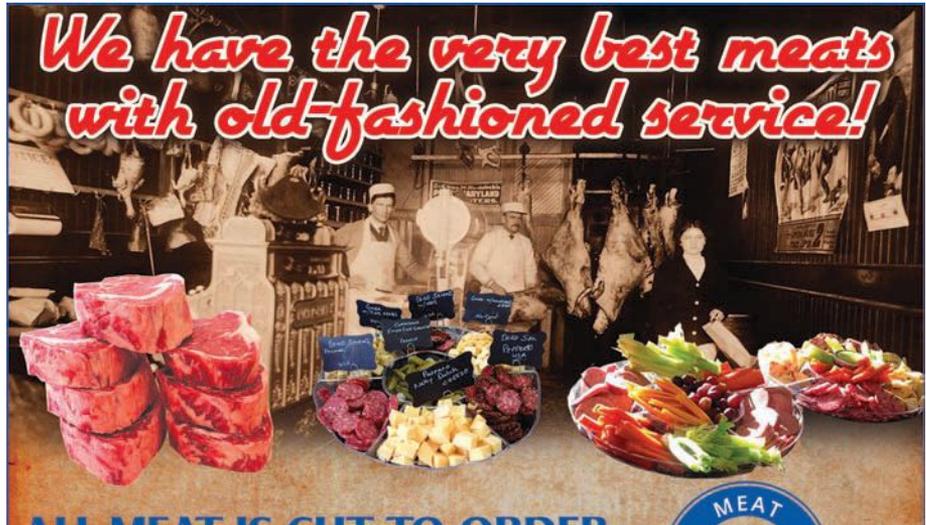
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# Learning Through Doing

— By Virginia Riddle

*High school is a busy time for students, and yet 13 area high school students have taken on extra volunteer opportunities this year. Delaney Johnson, a senior at Corsicana High School, feels fortunate to have been chosen as one of the lucky baker's dozen to participate in VOICE's Pathways to Success program (PTSP) during this school year. "I knew this experience would help me prepare for college and my future and help me with stress management," Delaney said.*

A blending of two previous VOICE programs, Master Scholars and Training Our Own Leaders (T.O.O.L.), PTSP helps high school students in Navarro County gain leadership skills while volunteering with nonprofit organizations and businesses in the area. After successfully completing



"After a long day of school, it was encouraging to listen to Melissa's lessons at our meetings. I definitely cannot put a price tag on all that I learned from her."

the program, the students are eligible for employment with VOICE programs and receive a \$500 college scholarship through VOICE. Melissa Castillo recently became the coordinator of the program. "I'm bringing my talents to the program, and I have been so rewarded. The kids are so energetic and make me laugh. We definitely have a lot of talented students who really stand out well," Melissa observed.

The application process opens shortly after the start of school each fall semester and mirrors the steps students would have to take in applying for college and/or a job. By a stated deadline, each applicant must file an application and essay, a copy of his or her official high school transcript and three letters of personal reference from nonrelatives. "This is a real-life learning experience, especially when it comes to meeting deadlines," Melissa said.

Delaney and the other 12 students selected who represent CHS, Mildred HS, Frost HS and Blooming Grove HS this year, must maintain overall B averages in school; be tobacco, alcohol and drug free; attend monthly leadership training sessions throughout the school year; and, individually, must volunteer 46 hours of service in the community and VOICE in order to remain in the program. The monthly meetings cover such topics as managing personal finances and styles of leadership. The students must build their résumés, participate in mock interviews, present a book they read recently and learn how to work with a diverse population. "I'm really a book nerd, and I was really interested in how important body language is during an interview," Delaney said.

"We stress the importance of education and giving to their community during these meetings, making every moment a teachable moment," Melissa added.

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CHS senior, Delaney Johnson, and 2012 Mildred HS graduate, Hayden Middleton, have both benefited from VOICE programs.



Helping students gain knowledge in fields of interest to them via volunteer activities is one of Melissa Castillo's goals.

While many seniors might be tempted to coast through their final high school year, Delaney is taking five challenging subjects as dual credit or advanced placement classes. Additionally, she is a cheerleader and member of the yearbook staff, a YMCA mentor to a student at Bowie Elementary and a member of the Physics Club, Student Council, Senior Women's Society, Council on International Affairs, Fellowship of Christian Athletes and the Ping Pong Club. Delaney serves in the leadership ministry at First Baptist Church and works part time at Corsicana Tumbling Academy (CTA) as well.

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Through PTSP, Delaney has found time to volunteer for Special Olympics, serve as a peer coach, be a date for the special education prom and has helped lead cheer clinics for rising cheerleading stars. She worked for the VOICE program, Summer Freedom School. "I take on as much as I can, but it is stressful," Delaney revealed. "Our meetings have helped me to manage everything better."

Hard work is paying off for this 17-year-old daughter of Mark and Harlene Hayes. Delaney has been accepted to Texas Tech University where she will major in business and mass communications.

Students in the preceding VOICE programs are in colleges and universities or are recent graduates. "Former students keep in touch and some work in VOICE summer programs. I'm a natural encourager. I want to see people succeed. It's great to see these students' success," Melissa enthused.

One such student is Hayden Middleton, a 2012 Mildred HS graduate who is now attending The University of Texas at Austin where he is majoring in neurobiology with the goal of attending medical school. This son of Kyle and Shannon Middleton eventually plans to become a surgeon who also teaches at a medical school. "I gained many skills that have helped me build a foundation on which to be successful in college," Hayden remarked. "I didn't know this program would change my life." After his year in the program, Hayden worked during the summers of 2012 and 2013 at VOICE's Breakout Summer Camp. "It was amazing to work with kids in the community, and they taught me more than I could ever have taught them. It's a blessing to see these kids when I am visiting my home," he added.



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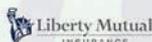


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While in PTSP, Hayden volunteered at Navarro Regional Hospital, planned fun activities for kids during spring break and helped decorate Pioneer Village for Christmas. He is continuing to hone his teaching skills by tutoring in math and science while in college.

Melissa is responsible for listening to each student's interests and matching them to volunteer activities that allow them to pursue knowledge and gain experience in that particular field. "Many of the students are already volunteering, but if not, I let them know about



opportunities for service that match their interests and career goals," she stated. "Businesses and nonprofits call us wanting volunteers. Some have age limit requirements, but we can usually match each student well." The students are then responsible for calling and arranging their volunteer hours.

The community gives back to the program through donations and by contributing to VOICE through its annual spring luncheon and the Baron's Ball. "It's local monies that fund this program," Melissa proudly said.

A Corsicana native and Mildred HS graduate, Melissa continued her education by earning a B.S. in criminal justice from Texas A&M University-Commerce. The daughter of Luis and Adela Castillo, Melissa volunteers in a prison ministry, which helped her earn the President's Award for Volunteer Service in 2005. During her spare time, she is an amateur photographer specializing in family portraiture and nature photography.

VOICE staff members have served as mentors to a total of 62 Navarro County PTSP participants since the program's 2009 inception. "After a long day of school, it was encouraging to listen to Melissa's lessons at our meetings. I definitely cannot put a price tag on all that I learned from her," Hayden stated. He's learned through his VOICE mentors and PTSP that true success is earned through work and service. **NOW**



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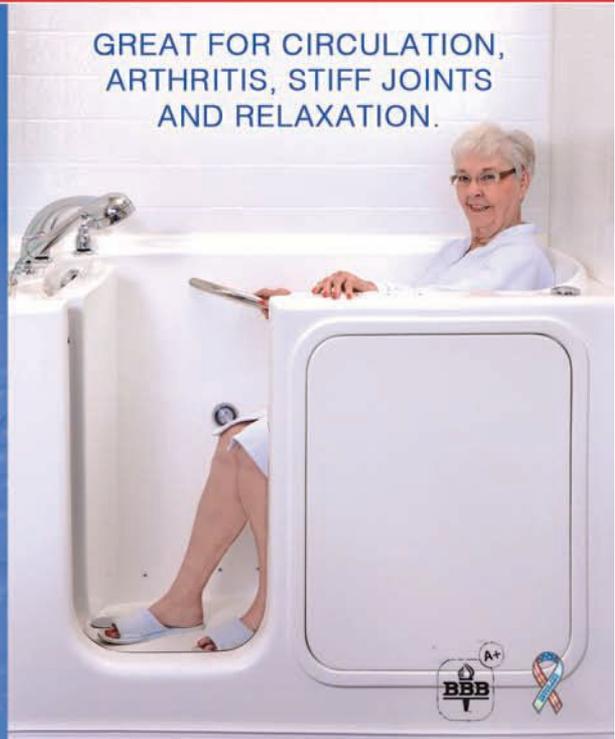
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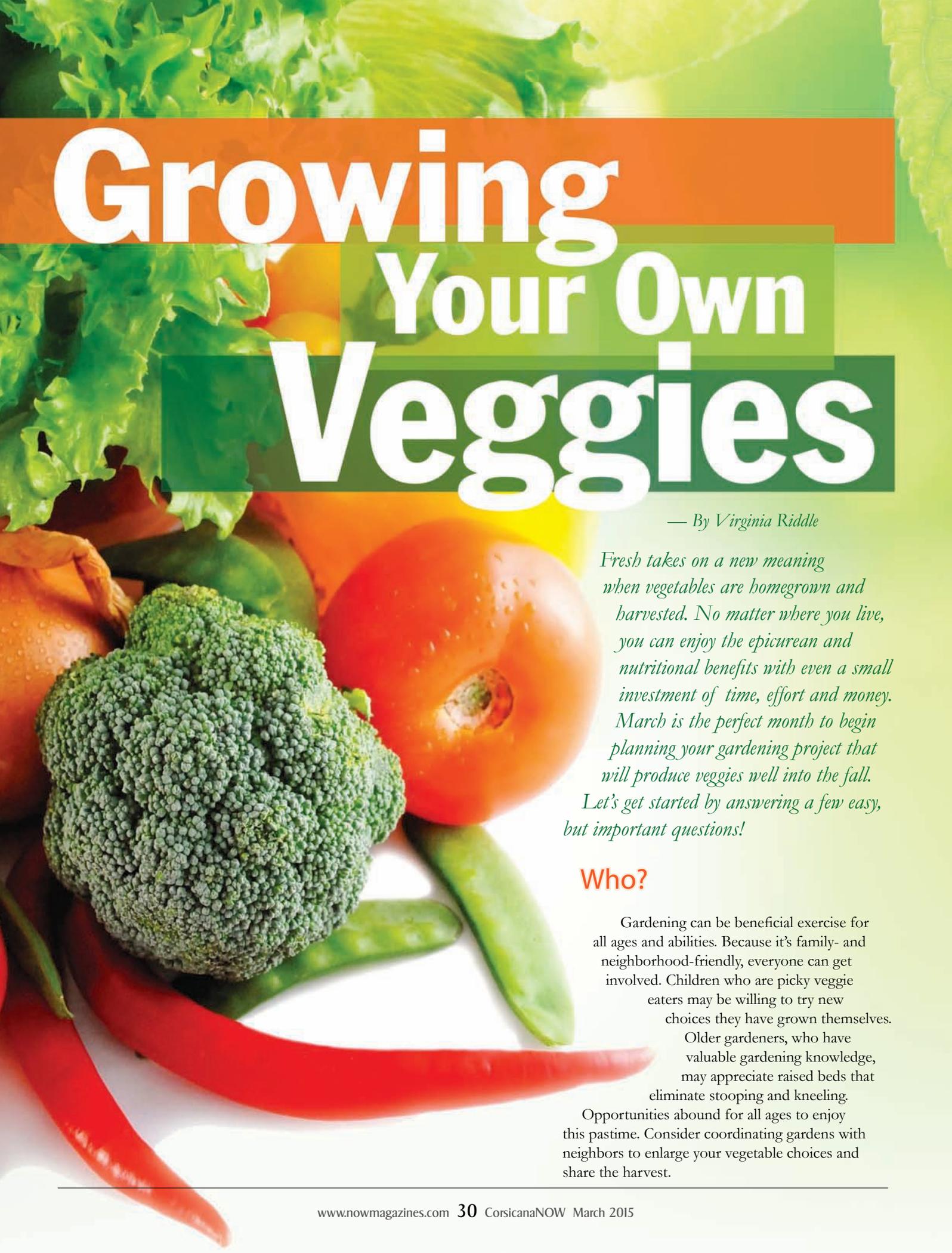
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# Growing Your Own Veggies

— By Virginia Riddle

*Fresh takes on a new meaning when vegetables are homegrown and harvested. No matter where you live, you can enjoy the epicurean and nutritional benefits with even a small investment of time, effort and money. March is the perfect month to begin planning your gardening project that will produce veggies well into the fall. Let's get started by answering a few easy, but important questions!*

## Who?

Gardening can be beneficial exercise for all ages and abilities. Because it's family- and neighborhood-friendly, everyone can get involved. Children who are picky veggie eaters may be willing to try new choices they have grown themselves.

Older gardeners, who have valuable gardening knowledge, may appreciate raised beds that eliminate stooping and kneeling.

Opportunities abound for all ages to enjoy this pastime. Consider coordinating gardens with neighbors to enlarge your vegetable choices and share the harvest.

## What?

Endless vegetables are easy to grow depending on the season of the year. If you are a first-time veggie gardener, keep things simple. Plant easy-to-grow vegetables or your favorites that have been recommended by neighbors or nurseries in the area. Spring and summer plant choices include all varieties of tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, summer



squash, peas, beans, okra and nearly all herbs. Swiss chard is a green that will survive the Texas summer heat.

## Where?

Most veggies require a sunny, well-drained area, but if that's not possible, try a potted garden or a hydroponic system in a sunny patio or balcony area. One patio tomato plant can produce a plentiful and continuous supply when planted in a pot. Local garden centers have a large range of pots. You can also create your own pot by cutting drainage holes into the bottom of a potted soil bag, splitting open the top of the bag, removing about half the soil, rolling the bag's sides down, and finally, planting a vegetable inside. Hydroponic systems are pricier but can yield produce for years to come. And since most vegetable

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plants blossom, they are attractive when incorporated into favorite sunny flower beds.

If you are carving a vegetable plot out of your backyard, have your soil tested. Use either a commercial kit or ask your county extension agent for advice. Almost any type of soil can be amended to give good plant growth. Your choice of mulch and fertilizer depends on soil type and available supplies.

What kind of watering system is available for your location? For small gardens or potted veggies, a watering can or diffused sprayer may work well. However, for larger plots, you may wish to lay soaker hoses on timers.

Invest in great time-saving gardening tools and keep them sharpened, cleaned and organized throughout the years to come. Simple hand tools are available, as well as powered tools.

**When?**

Planning begins now. However, planting out-of-doors needs to wait until the danger of a late frost or freeze is over. One of the best indicators of that date is when you notice buds on native-to-Texas pecan or mesquite trees. Vegetables, even tomatoes, can be started from seeds planted in starter trays purchased, along with quality potting soil, at your local nursery. Just follow the directions on the seed packet. The trays

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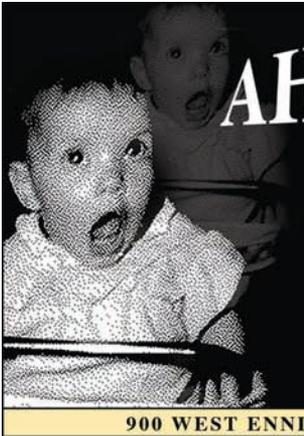
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are easy to set outside during warm days and nights but move them to a heated location when temperatures dip down below 40 F.

## How?

Now is the time to choose between organic or nonorganic vegetable gardens. Start a compost pile and investigate appropriate choices for fertilizer and pesticides that work best in your area. Your local garden nurseries, county extension agents and Master Gardeners are great resources for information that will help you whether you decide to go organic or not.

If your veggie garden is going to encompass more than a few square feet, rent or purchase a tiller from an area garden center or hardware store. Break the soil and turn the subsoil at a depth of about 6 inches. Remove rocks, make furrows for proper drainage, plant seeds or seedlings and lay down a 3-inch layer of mulch for weed control and water retention.

Plan your plantings so mature, larger plants will not shade smaller ones. Larger plants, like tomatoes, may need to be staked as they grow. To save space, beans, peas, melons and squash can be grown on easy-to-construct trellises, cages or A-frames.

Check your garden daily for insects



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and pull weeds that crowd your plants, taking water and nutrients from the soil. Water when moisture cannot be felt 1-inch deep into the soil and fertilize on recommended cycles. Harvest veggies when they are at their ripest point or before damaging weather, such as hail is predicted.

## Handling the Harvest!

Pick, wash, eat and enjoy your produce each day, but if your bounty exceeds your gastronomic limits, here are some easy tips.

- Most veggies can be frozen, canned or dehydrated for future use. Research methods online or with your county extension agents. Follow food-handling safety tips exactly.
- Donate produce to a local food bank. Their clients love to see fresh vegetable offerings. Your charitable donations may be tax deductible — check with your income tax specialist.
- Share with friends and family. They will know it is a gift from your heart!

Growing your own vegetables can be a fun, educational experience for family, friends and neighbors, and the physical exercise and healthy eating can elevate your spirits after our cold winter days. Welcome spring by enjoying watching your new veggie garden thrive! **NOW**

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Left to right: Mika Chappell, Brad Wilson, Holly Huffman, David Wilson and Angie Hightower are ready to service your insurance needs.

# Allstate Ensures Service

*David Wilson Allstate agents are available 24/7 by walk-in, phone or email.*

— By Virginia Riddle

Experience and knowledge speaks volumes about David Wilson and his fellow agents in the David Wilson Allstate Insurance Agency. Every person who works in the office is a licensed agent, so customers will instantly get the answers and service needed. “We can put customers’ names with faces, and our customers know us in the same way. A customer can work with the same agent every time he or she contacts us,” David explained.

Having an established working relationship with their agent is very important to customers, especially when a stressful loss occurs. “We are here to walk them through the process and, as quickly as possible, get their lives back to normal,” David said. “We are local. So many times, like with bad weather, we are

personally affected, but we are ready to help process claims,” he added.

Agent and business manager, Angie Hightower, is joined by the office’s other agents — Holly Huffman; Mika Chappell; and David’s son, Brad Wilson, who also serves in business development. The agency offers Allstate product lines in home and auto personal insurance, financial products, commercial insurance and life insurance. Collectively, the agents hold state licensing in property, casualty, life and health insurance and hold national Securities 6 and 63 licenses. An Allstate financial specialist is available on-site to guide customers through important financial decisions, such as establishing a child’s educational fund or preparing for retirement.

David began working in the insurance business for his father-in-law following his graduation from Stephen F. Austin State University. In 2004, he joined Allstate Insurance as an agent and manager, and together with his business partner, Marshall Potts, bought an Allstate agency in Woodway (Waco) and, in 2008, purchased this agency in Corsicana.

“We are now one of the fastest growing Allstate agencies and are one of the top agencies in Texas out of about 1,100 Allstate offices,” David said. “We are the largest agency between Dallas and Houston with over 4,000 customers and about 7,000 policies in force.” This office has received honors at Allstate national conferences by being named an Honor Ring Agency eight times, an Inner Circle Agency and received the designation as a Premier Servicing Agency.

Locally, the agency is a member of the Corsicana & Navarro County Chamber of Commerce and supplies the footballs Corsicana High School cheerleaders throw to fans at the games. David has served on the Habitat for Humanity board and serves on the Allstate Insurance regional committee which offers input that ensures the ease of customers doing business with Allstate.

Texas weather and “weathering” financial cycles offer unique challenges to insurance professionals. “We work hard to keep customers happy. In the past several years, Allstate has been paying out \$2 to every \$1 collected due to weather related losses,” David revealed. “We work hard to educate customers why there are rate increases.”

Owning an insurance office doesn’t leave David much spare time, but he enjoys making memories with his wife of 33 years, Renee, a teacher, and their three grown children as they travel together. “We also attend concerts, like Austin City Limits,” David shared.

David enjoys servicing Corsicana area residents’ insurance needs. “I enjoy seeing the agents in the office become successful. We are big enough to handle business efficiently, but we are small enough to know our customers personally. I am very proud of being able to offer great service to customers,” David said. **NOW**

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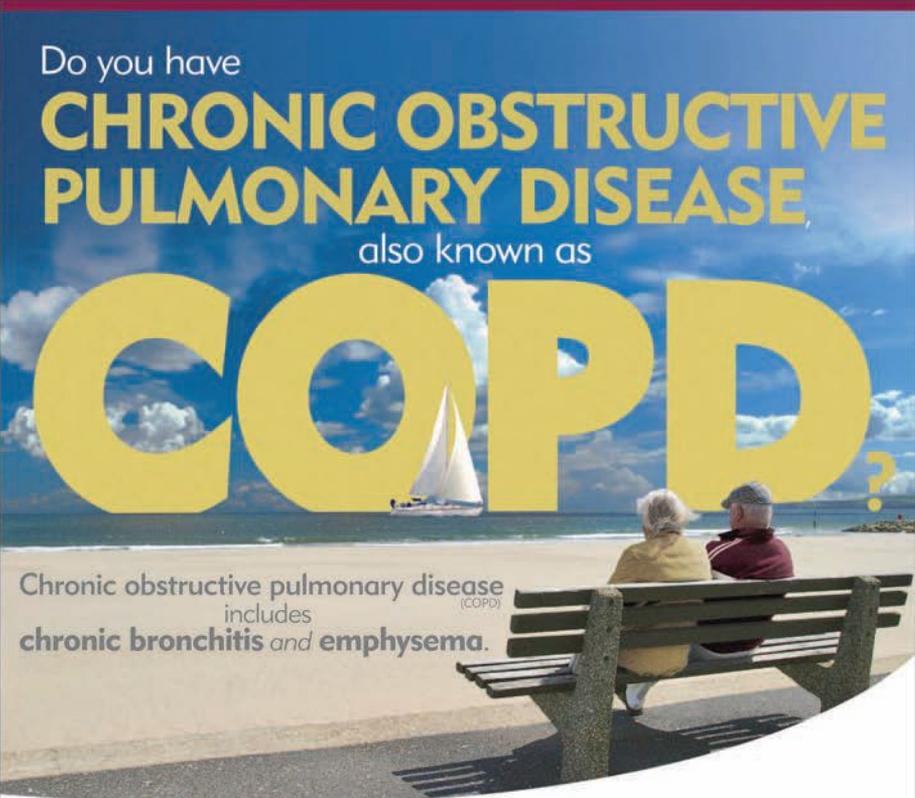
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Mildred Baptist Church members Kathy Sanders, Cindy Spoons and Kay Allen serve lunch and joy to Navarro College students at a BSM weekly Wednesday luncheon.



Stuart Schoppert helps Janay Williams with an income tax filing question at Corsicana's VITA site.



Kay Ovalle and Becky Long offer smiling support at the American Cancer Society Annual Wine & Cheese Fundraiser.



Jeff Golden, Marcus Janak and Harry Dotson welcome Go-Texan banquet attendees.



Ducks Unlimited committee members host the group's fun, annual banquet.



Senior Circle Ambassadors meet with Connie Beal, director, to plan the group's next gala.



Under The Bridge Steak & Seafood Restaurant celebrates their ribbon cutting with the Chamber of Commerce.



Faith Holt, Denym Mullin and Seri Nolan celebrate Martin Luther King Day at the Corsicana Public Library's showing of a MLK documentary film.



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What you don't know about money can hurt you. If you don't know how to create a budget, fix a poor credit rating or invest in a 401(k) plan, you're missing out on opportunities that improve your odds for financial stability and success.

Financial literacy — an understanding of credit, banking, savings and more — offers you the tools and information you need to improve your financial health and well-being. Here are just a few of the things that'll be easier once you have it:

- **Establishing a budget.** If you don't know where all your money goes each month, you're not alone. Find out how to create a budget and stick to it. It's a fundamental step in money management.
- **Managing debt.** Carrying some debt is normal, but too much debt can overwhelm your budget. Learn how to address your most expensive debt areas, particularly paying off high-interest credit cards.
- **Buying a home.** A home is the single biggest purchase most people make in their lifetimes. Find out how to save for a down payment, obtain financing and understand the details of a mortgage, so you can make the best decision about this major investment. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development offers information for potential buyers on its site.
- **Saving money.** Whether you're 16 or 60, knowing the best ways to save money will help you achieve your goals. Learn about basic savings accounts, retirement accounts, and how to make compounding interest work for you. Start with basic banking tips from CNNMoney's Money 101 series.
- **Getting a loan.** Whether you're going back to school, buying a car or

remodeling a room, you might need to take out a loan. How much can you really afford to borrow? Learn how your credit report has an impact on the availability and cost of a loan, and how to fit loan payments into your budget.

- **Planning for emergencies.** We've all been faced with expenses that can't be put off — the car needs a new transmission or the plumbing needs more extensive work than you were expecting. Find out how to plan ahead for these unwelcome surprises and keep your budget intact.

### Sources for Improving Your Financial Literacy:

**Go online** to find resources that can help boost your financial knowledge. MyMoney.gov, for example, offers basic financial information gathered from a wide array of sources.

**Take a class or workshop** about a financial topic that interests you, appropriate to your level of financial knowledge. State Farm® partners with programs around the country that promote financial education, including the State Farm Financial Literacy Lab at Florida International University.

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*Lynda Housley is a State Farm agent based in Corsicana.*

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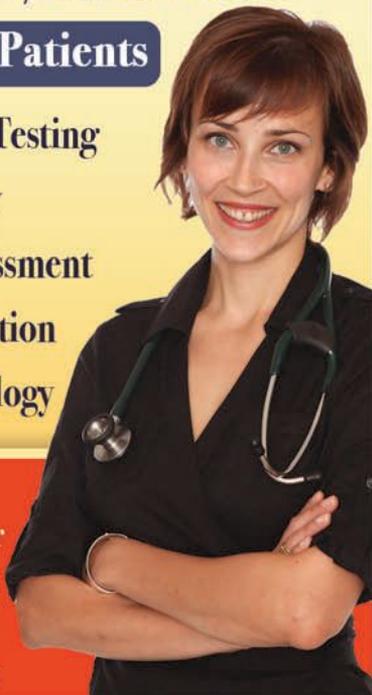
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### March 2

Piecemakers' Quilt Guild meeting: 9:30 a.m., Westhill Church of Christ Fellowship Hall. The speaker is Melissa from The Compass Center. There will be a Show and Tell and business meeting. Bring a sack lunch and stay for the Sit and Sew. For more information, visit [pqgcorsicana.com](http://pqgcorsicana.com).

### March 2 — April 17

Art by Monica Moody Exhibit: Warehouse Living Arts Center Gallery. For more information, call (903) 872-5411.

### March 4 — 8

Disney's *The Little Mermaid, Jr.*: Warehouse Living Arts Center. For more information or to make reservations, call (903) 872-5421.

### March 3, 5, 10, 12, 17, 19, 24, 26, 31

VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance): 2:00-7:00 p.m., Corsicana YMCA. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call (281) 682-0928.

### March 4, 11, 18, 25

VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance): 1:00-4:00 p.m., Kerens Public Library. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call (281) 682-0928.

### March 5

American Red Cross Blood Drive: 12:30-5:30 p.m., Corsicana First United Methodist Church. For more information, call (903) 874-4551.

### March 10

Eclectic Readers Book Club: 6:30 p.m., Corsicana Public Library. Share your love of reading with others. The club is open to all adults ages 18 and over. For more information, call (903) 654-4810.

### March 11

Liz Gillispie Genealogy Department Rock Wall lunch meeting: 12:00-1:00 p.m., Nancy Roberts Room, Corsicana Public Library. Bring a sack lunch. For more information, call (903) 654-4808.

### March 12

Friends of the Corsicana Library meeting: 10:00 a.m., Nancy Roberts Meeting Room, Corsicana Public Library. For more information, call (903) 654-4810.

Navarro County Retired Teachers Association: 9:45 a.m., Northwest Apartments Community Center. Emily Carroll with the Navarro County Health Department will present the program. All retired school personnel are invited. For more information, email [pk2@airmail.net](mailto:pk2@airmail.net).

### March 13

Senior Circle Pot Luck Luncheon: 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Navarro Regional Hospital. For more information, contact Connie Beal at (903) 654-6892 or email [connie\\_beal@chs.net](mailto:connie_beal@chs.net).

### March 14

City of Corsicana's Second Saturday: 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Pocket Park on Beaton. Live music by Matt the Cat Trio, a variety of food trucks, great shopping, and the Cars of Navarro County will provide entertainment for the whole family. For more information, call (903) 654-4851.

### March 14, 15

Texas Bicycle Racing Association Cup Series: Competitors from all corners of Texas and beyond will participate. Spectators are welcome. For more information, visit [www.txbra.org](http://www.txbra.org) or contact Mike Fankos at (214) 676-6011.

### March 16

AARP Drivers' Refresher Course: 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., Navarro Regional Hospital Classroom. This course is designed for drivers 50 years and older. The cost is \$15 for AARP members and \$20 for non-members. For more information or to reserve a seat, call (903) 654-6892.

### March 17

Sidewalk Chalk Art: 1:00-3:00 p.m., Corsicana Public Library. The library will provide the chalk, you provide the art! This family program is for all ages, but children under 8 years old must be supervised by an adult. For more information, call (903) 654-4810.

Living with Alzheimer's "Focus on You" meeting: 5:30 p.m., Sterling House, 3329 W. 7th Ave. For more information, contact Kelly Bell at (903) 872-8400.

Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 1009 meeting: 7:00 p.m., La Pradera Restaurant. For more information, email [roy.messick@gmail.com](mailto:roy.messick@gmail.com).

### March 18

Dining Out With Senior Circle: 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Old Mexican Inn. For more information, contact Connie Beal at (903) 654-6892.

Legos at the Library: 1:00-3:00 p.m., Corsicana Public Library. For more information, call (903) 654-4810.

### March 19

Simon Says ... Draw: 1:00-3:00 p.m.,

Corsicana Public Library. Children ages 8-12, come draw and play a fun drawing game. For more information, call (903) 654-4810.

### March 19 — 28

*The Red Velvet Cake War*: Warehouse Living Arts Center. For more information or to make reservations, call (903) 872-5421.

### March 23

Corsicana Children's Company Spring Theatre: Warehouse Living Arts Center. For more information, call (903) 872-5421.

### March 26

Corsicana Newcomers' Club: 11:00 a.m., Kinsloe House. For more information or confirmed reservations, contact Annie Avery at (714) 345-6707.

Hope Center Annual Fundraiser Banquet: 7:00-9:00 p.m., I.O.O.F. Event Center. For more information, call (903) 872-2881.

Masters of Soul: 7:30 p.m., Palace Theatre. For more information or to make reservations, call (903) 874-7792.

### March 27

Navarro Regional Hospital's Lunch and Learn: 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., hospital classroom. Dr. Robert Kingman will speak about varicose veins. For confirmed reservations, call Connie Beal at (903) 654-6892 a week prior.

Planetarium Starry Nights: **7:00 p.m.**, "The Sky Tonight", a live tour of the night sky presented by the center's resident astronomer; **8:00 p.m.**, "Deep Impact" covers NASA's Deep Impact mission to a comet; Cook Center Planetarium. Admission is \$2 per person. For more information, call (903) 874-1211.

### March 28

Navarro Regional Hospital's Senior Circle Rusk/Palestine Train Ride: 8:45 a.m.-5:30 p.m., depart from hospital's parking lot. The cost per rider is \$70. For more information and reservations, contact Connie Beal at (903) 654-6892.

### March 31

Annual United Way Fashion Show: 6:00-8:00 p.m., Cook Center. For more information, call (903) 874-5253.

*Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your current event details to [virginia.riddle@nowmagazines.com](mailto:virginia.riddle@nowmagazines.com).*



## In the Kitchen With Rowena Winfrey

— *By Virginia Riddle*

This lady, when not traveling to far-flung destinations like Qatar for her birthday or taking a cruise with friends, is in her kitchen practicing her other passion — cooking! A cook since her 4th birthday, Rowena Winfrey said, “I learned from my mother who loved to cook and my grandmother who loved to bake.”

This smiling face at Corsicana Public Library’s front desk and mother of three has passed on her cooking passion to her son, and her two daughters are learning. “It’s a chance to bond between generations,” Rowena offered. Birthday cakes presented to friends and family as a surprise brings her the greatest joy. “I love to surprise people. Cooking is synonymous with love.” **NOW**

### Granny’s Buttermilk Fried Chicken

Makes 4 servings.

- 2 cups all-purpose flour or Bisquick Mix**
- 3 Tbsp. Lawry’s Seasoned Salt or table salt**
- 1 Tbsp. black pepper**
- 1/2 Tbsp. red pepper**
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil**
- 1 bread cube**
- 1 cup buttermilk**
- 2 large eggs**
- 1 whole chicken, cut into eight pieces**

- 1.** In a large plastic bag or large mixing bowl, combine flour or Bisquick Mix with salt and both peppers. Stir or shake to blend; set aside.
- 2.** Heat vegetable oil in a large skillet or deep fryer; test heat by dropping bread cube into skillet. If it fries within seconds, the oil is hot enough.

- 3.** In a smaller bowl, combine buttermilk and eggs.
- 4.** Wash chicken pieces, pat dry and dip pieces into buttermilk and egg batter.
- 5.** Shake off excess batter; put pieces into flour or Bisquick Mix (no more than two pieces at a time).
- 6.** Fry chicken until golden brown; place on paper towels to drain.
- 7.** Serve chicken hot, at room temperature or cold.

### Shoestring Potato Cookies

*Warning: Do not give cookies to small children. They could choke on the shoestring potatoes or nuts.*

- 1 11-oz. bag butterscotch or chocolate chips**
- 1 15-oz. can or bag shoestring potatoes**
- 1 18-oz. can salted peanuts, pecans or almonds**

- 1.** Melt chips in a double boiler or mixing

- bowl placed in the microwave.
- 2.** Slowly stir in shoestring potatoes until well-coated.
- 3.** Stir in nuts.
- 4.** Drop mixture by tablespoonfuls onto waxed paper or greased cookie sheet; let cool; serve.

### Winfrey Family Ramen Noodle Casserole

- 2 3-oz. pkgs. chicken or shrimp Ramen noodles**
- 2 cups chunked chicken or cooked shrimp**
- 1 10 3/4-oz. can cream of chicken or cream of shrimp soup**
- Shredded mild cheddar cheese, to taste**

- 1.** Boil noodles; use only 1 package of seasoning for both packages of noodles; drain water after noodles are softened.
- 2.** In a medium-sized casserole dish, combine noodles, meat and soup; mix until blended.
- 3.** Top with shredded cheese. Bake at 250 F until cheese melts.
- 4.** Serve while hot or freeze before or after baking.

### Mama Rosa’s Trashcan Spaghetti

- 4 8-oz. pkgs. spaghetti noodles**
- 3 lbs. ground beef**
- 1 lb. Italian sausage and/or Canadian bacon**
- Lawry’s Seasoned Salt, black pepper, onion and garlic powder, to taste**
- 1 lb. pepperoni**
- Basil and oregano, to taste**
- 2 15-oz. cans tomato sauce**
- 2 8-oz. cans tomato paste**

- 1.** Boil noodles in a large pot.
- 2.** Season ground beef and sausage with salt, pepper, onion and garlic powder.
- 3.** Brown in a skillet; add pepperoni when meats are nearly browned.
- 4.** Drain in a colander; add basil and oregano.
- 5.** Drain noodles; toss with oregano.
- 6.** Add meat mixture; stir in tomato sauce and paste until well-mixed.

To view recipes from current and previous issues, visit [www.nowmagazines.com](http://www.nowmagazines.com).

Ennis Regional Medical Center

# WELCOMES

**Robert P. Roye, M.D.**

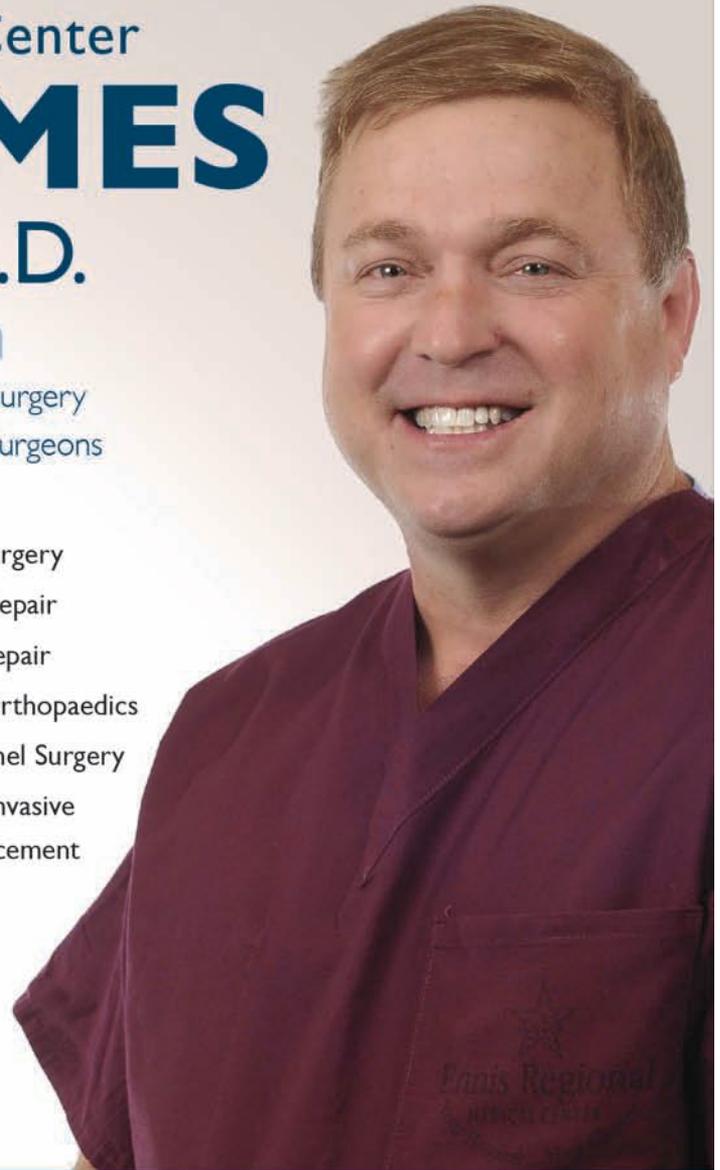
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