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Mansfield NOW MAGAZINE

April 2010

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Good Athletes, Good Friends

At Home With Gary and Beki Anderson

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–Kathleen Macdonald

Arlington resident and coronary stent recipient at Methodist Mansfield Medical Center.

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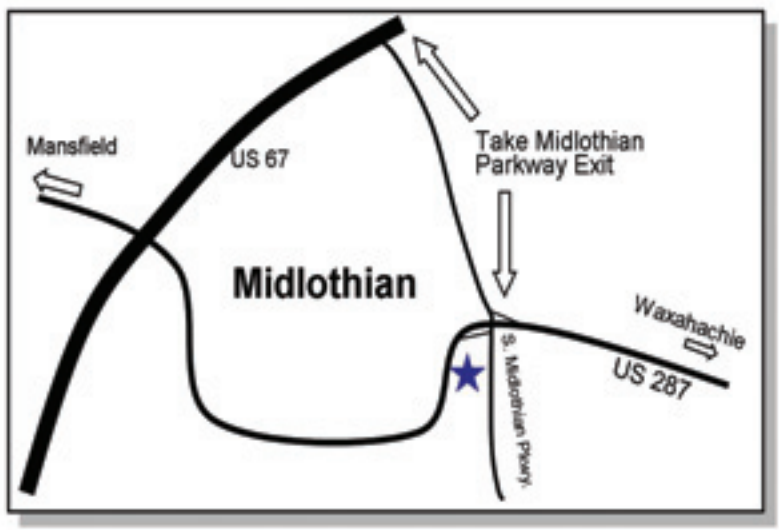

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Mansfield NOW MAGAZINE
The Community Magazine Serving Mansfield and the Surrounding Area

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On The Cover

The front facade of the Anderson home shows their beautiful custom blend of old and new style.

Photo by Shana Woods.

Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

Finally, spring has sprung! My mother may have forgotten to pass down her "green thumb" to me, but I still share her love of flowers. For all you gardeners, a quote from Ruth Stout: "I love spring anywhere, but if I could choose, I would always greet it in a garden."

Cancer has touched the lives of many among us in one way or another. The Mansfield Relay For Life will be held this month on April 23 and 24 at Rose Park. I will be there, walking in remembrance of my grandmother, Kathleen Creed. Come help us celebrate, remember and fight back!

This month's magazine is also full of stories of people working to make our community great. If you are actively involved in making Mansfield a better place to live, send your pictures or story ideas to jaime.nowmag@sbcglobal.net.

Your friend,
Jaime Ruark
MansfieldNOW Editor

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COMPASSIONATE CAMARADERIE

— By Katrina D. McNair

Marines are known for their bravery, fearlessness and their unwillingness to leave another fellow Marine brother behind or in need. This resolve to take care of their own has been the catalyst for a local gathering of marines, whose sole aim is to support their local Marines, be it with finances or fun.

Rick Pollak, along with Bret Frye and Thomas Mendonca, are three of the founding members of the Mansfield Area Marines. The nonprofit organization was established to provide support for Mansfield area Marines, both active and former. More than just a financial support system, the organization has quickly become a place for Marines to socialize and brainstorm ways to show the compassionate side of the Marine Corps.

Reared in Grand Prairie, Rick moved to Mansfield after leaving the Marine Corps in 2001, following four years of service. From a family with deep Marine Corps roots, the call to serve was second nature to him — though there were other perks. "The college money was a plus," he said, grinning.

After leaving the Marine Corps and returning to Mansfield, all three guys, naturally drawn to one another through their shared military experience and crossed paths, began hanging out with each other, their service the strong common bond. "We put together this group, mainly like a networking and social group for Marines to hang out together, to talk, tell war stories — whatever. And then we decided we wanted to give back. And this was the best way to do that, to help out Marines and their families," Rick said.

"The Marines are always like a first-response [team] — we're kinda known for that — and this was kind of our way, if anything ever happened to a local area Marine, if we had a group of people together, we can all chip in and give someone a check," added Bret, who served for eight years, joining during the Desert Storm conflict in 1990.

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"... we decided we wanted to give back. This was the best way to do that, to help out Marines and their families."

Though Marines were eligible for financial assistance once they returned home, especially those wounded in battle, paperwork takes time to push through various channels. Recognizing this, a "pass-the-hat" to help was the main fundraising efforts utilized by the group. However, as they saw needs increase, and as they sought to expand their fundraising efforts by asking local businesses for assistance, becoming "official" became their mission and goal. "When we started doing fundraising efforts, that's when we decided to form a nonprofit," Bret explained. "If we're going to ask companies or whatever to donate, we felt we needed a legal entity behind us to make them feel better about us."

Roughly six-to-eight months after their initial social escapades, the group came together and formed Mansfield Area Marines in the summer of 2007. With the assistance of a local lawyer and accountant, the group worked to establish their nonprofit status and now have a membership of approximately 35 paid members. The group has a board of directors, bylaws and is officially recognized by the State of Texas. Meetings are held on the first Monday of every month, at Fat Daddy's Sports & Spirits Café in Mansfield. Since their inception, the group has donated roughly $5,000 to local Marine families and charities.

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Monies are collected in a variety of ways. There are sponsorship levels available for local businesses and raffles are sometimes held during member meetings. Restaurants and other businesses in the Mansfield area have donated portions of their proceeds to the group as well. The organization keeps a certain amount in their bank account to help with injured Marines or to assist with funeral costs (a check that, thankfully, they have not had to write yet); remaining funds are dispersed at the end of the year to organizations selected by board members, such as the famous Marine Toys for Tots Foundation. In addition to providing financial and social support, the group also partners with other military-oriented groups in the area to welcome troops back home from overseas at the DFW Airport and to collect items for care packages that are sent to active servicemen and women. "We actually have an individual on our board designated to organize fundraisers," said Thomas, who served in the Marine Corps for almost a decade. "We've already started the year off very well with donations. We've had a really good response from local businesses that really support what we're doing."

The group is unique in its policies

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Left: Rick Pollak reviewing a meeting agenda. Right: Bret Frye with a crew member of Firehouse Grill and Brewery, one of the many local businesses that support Mansfield Area Marines.

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regarding members and membership. Though there are organizations that service all branches of the military, the Mansfield Area Marines are very specific about who can join them; those eligible for membership include active duty and retired Marines, honorably discharged Marines and FMF (Fleet Marine Force) Corpsman. "We could be a 300-member organization overnight if we opened the doors. But, that's not what we want. We are specifically dedicated to taking care of our brethren Marines and that's why we are not a ridiculously huge group," Thomas admitted.

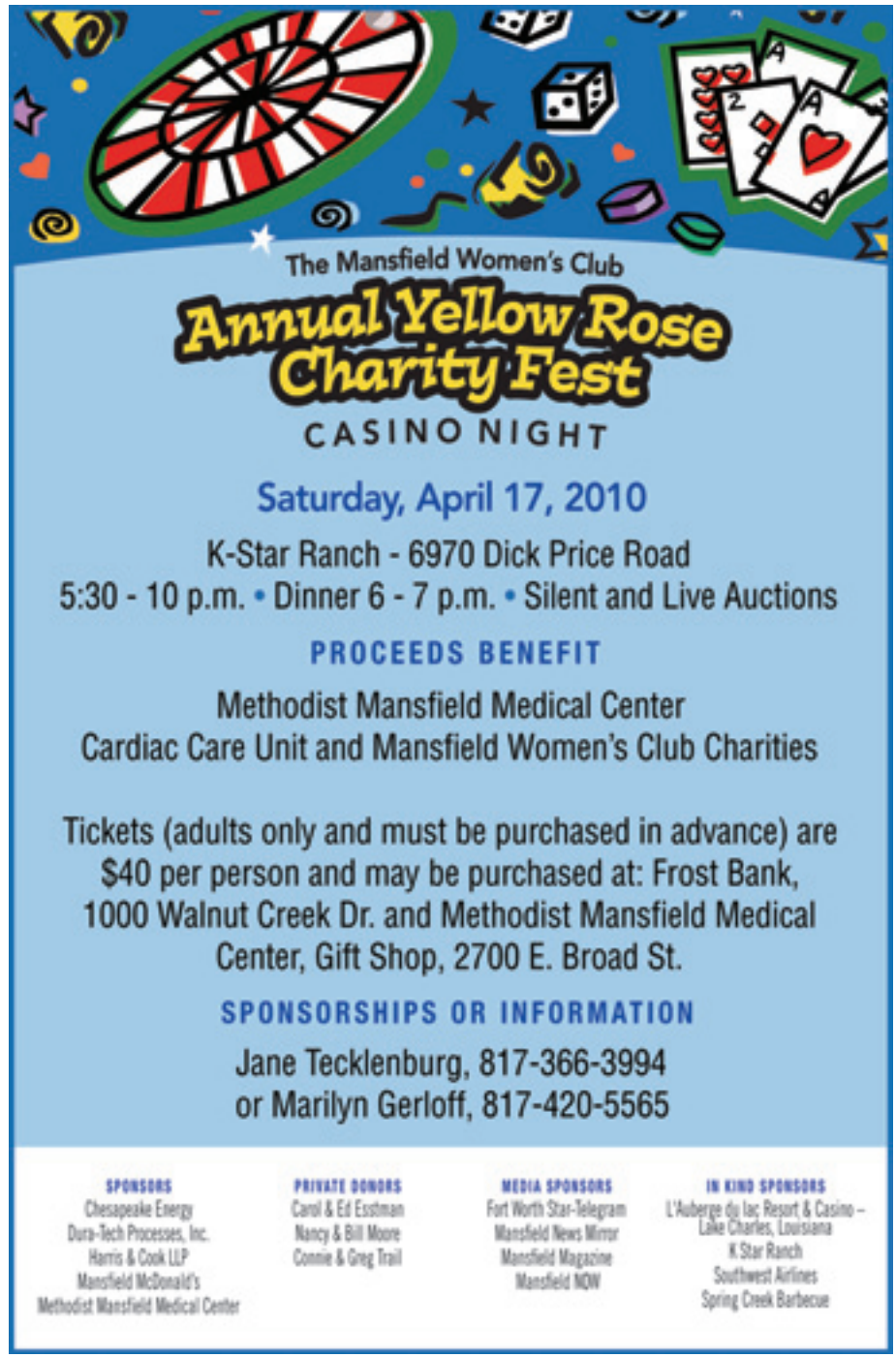
Mixtures of generations have given the group a unique vibe. Members have served in wars dating back to World War II, and as recently as in conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. As they grow and continue to work in their community, the lives they live outside of the Marine Corps have proven valuable to the development of the young group. "We've got members from every way of life. We've just got different facets of different professions, and that's been a tremendous thing for us," Thomas said. "It's very unique to get the different stories from everyone." When they are not raising funds and brainstorming ways to support Mansfield-area Marines, group members do find time to kick back and enjoy rounds of golf, visit each other's homes and attend other social outings.

Looking toward the future, Rick, Bret and Thomas hope to see growth of their organization — as long as it remains true to its core values and founding principles. "Fundraising is a means to the end of being there when a Marine needs us," Thomas said. "You'd love to have more members and that will come, but as far as I'm concerned, as long as our true idea of why we started it stays intact, it could be 1,000 members."

"We'd like to be exactly what we are right now," Rick added. "It might be a little bit larger, but exactly what we're doing right now."

"It's my favorite night of the month," said Bret, when asked what his favorite aspect of the group is. "You get to hang out with other Marines who get it all. The camaraderie — it's the best." NOW

More information about this organization can be found at www.mansfieldareamarines.com.



A New Angle on Old World Charm

— By Adam Walker

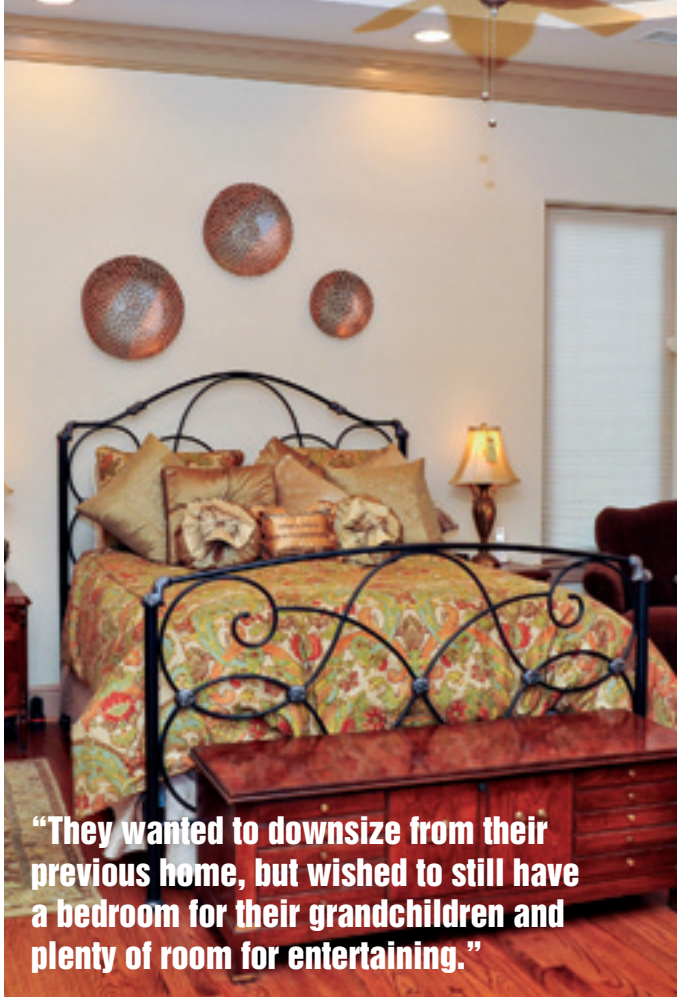
When Gary and Beki Anderson got together with their builder two years ago, they already knew what they wanted. Gary wanted no hallways and Beki wanted to include favorite European design elements she had encountered in her travels. They had each moved to Arlington decades ago — she in 1969, he in 1973 — but Beki said, "Arlington just outgrew us," so they found a pleasant lot in the new Links Crossing subdivision next to a country club in Mansfield and built a place to call home for their retirement years.

Gary and Beki both retired from American Airlines where he worked as a pilot and taught in the flight academy after serving as a commander in the Navy, and she retired with 41 years of seniority as an international flight attendant. So travel is not on their agenda for retirement. "We had lots of travel, but we like a small town and being settled in one spot," Beki said. They are keeping their priorities simple — their health and their grandchildren — and enjoy living by the country club. Gary said, "It's like living in a resort." But they manage to stay busy enough playing tennis and hosting parties that Gary asked, "When

did we have time to work?"

The routes Beki flew with the airlines show in the house. The architecture incorporates her favorite elements of English, French and German designs, like the English turret, the German woodwork and the French masonry. Inside, these elements are carried over and joined by Japanese and other Asian accents. "Beki used to do her grocery shopping in Frankfurt, Germany, and Tokyo, Japan," Gary reported. "I used to bring home bottles of wine from Paris," Beki confirmed. "Recently, I saw the same bottle of wine at our Sam's Club — the same wine!" With a background of travel like that, Beki knew what she wanted and created a design to blend these varied influences. She put together the basic floor plan incorporating Gary's love of the open living concept and dislike of hallways, which he considers a waste of space. The result is a home with lots of interesting angles and surprising nooks and crannies, like the full wine cellar tucked away under the spiral stairs to the second floor. They wanted to downsize from their previous home, but wished to still have a bedroom for their grandchildren and plenty of room for entertaining. "With the open concept we have the living room in the kitchen and the kitchen in the living room. It's great for entertaining," Gary added.

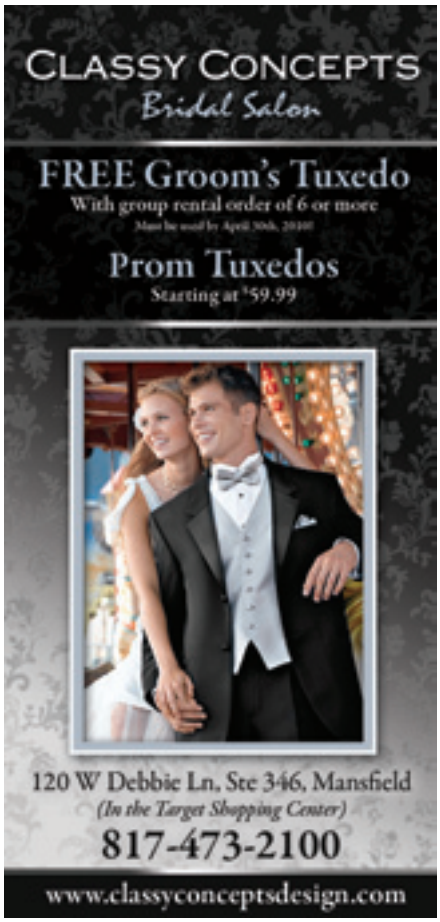
The kitchen, like the rest of the house, plays with an earth-tone palette, but keeps to the lighter, softer end of the spectrum. The range hood above the stove is a French-inspired design and is accented with brass escargot crawling along its edge and *fleur-de-lis* on the backsplash. Its soft,



"They wanted to downsize from their previous home, but wished to still have a bedroom for their grandchildren and plenty of room for entertaining."

mottled pink blends well with the "pickle tone" woodwork of the cabinet facings and the marble tops of the two islands — one a serving bar, easily large enough to seat four or more, the other a vegetable prep area. The drop lighting above the serving bar is mirrored by the pot rack hanging above the prep area, which hosts more than just pots. A Guinea fowl figurine resides there and reminds Beki of her brother in Kansas who raises the birds, and the rack is also sometimes host to "the Mouse in the House,"

"The range hood above the stove is a French-inspired design and is accented with brass escargot crawling along its edge."



a game Beki plays "hiding" a mouse figurine in various locations for her youngest granddaughter to find.

While the house is brand new, it manages to incorporate elements of previous abodes. The door to the butler's pantry came from the Anderson's former house in Arlington and features a push plate patterned with dogwood blossoms made from a soda can, a leaded glass window and a transom cut down from what had been a hanging piece of leaded glass art. Reaching further back in time, two of the rocks in the living room fireplace are from Gary's childhood home in Michigan, but the mantle, while looking old, was carved by an East Texas artist, who uses old wood and carves his designs to remove damage, as well as to decorate.

The fireplace indoors is paired with the one on the patio, which features tumbled brick combined with stonework to achieve a French chateau effect. "It was hard to get the mortar right on the stonework," Beki said, explaining the construction process. "They kept trying to be so neat and precise. I had to tell them, 'Sloppy, I want it sloppy.'" The result is the appearance of age and comfortable living.

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Upstairs, the patio is echoed by a balcony large enough to serve as a second outdoor living area or host to small gatherings. Enclosed enough to be private, it is still open enough to feel airy. The ceiling fan, along with mosaic artwork by Lubbock artist, Joni Keith, help lend a cabana-type air.

Inside, the second floor features a lot of natural wood. Beki's work room is where she keeps numerous interesting objects gathered from her travels and closer to home — clocks, Chinese and Japanese bric-a-brac and tables featuring beautiful parquetry. This room is also where she engages in her hobbies.

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Scientists from the University of British Columbia discovered a link between an adjuvant used in vaccines, aluminum hydroxide, and symptoms associated with Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and Lou Gehrig's disease. The lead scientist, Chris Shaw, Ph.D. even stated "No one in my lab wants to get vaccinated. This totally creeped us out. We weren't out there to poke holes in vaccines. But all of a sudden, oh my God—we've got neuron death!"

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Source: Shaw CA, Petrik MS. "Aluminum hydroxide injections lead to motor deficits and motor neuron degeneration." Journal of Inorganic Biochemistry, Volume 103, Issue 11, November 2009, Pages 1555-1562.

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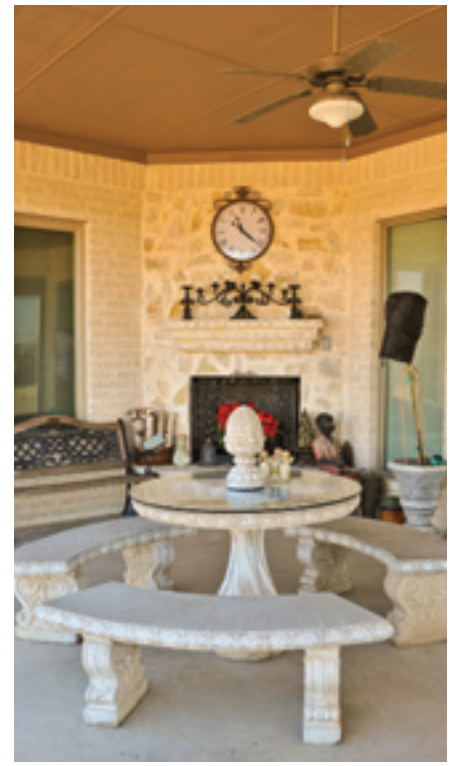

The library features built-in shelving and Gary's collection of hand-carved scrimshaw. Another pair of items on the shelves is Gary's Boy Scout membership card, which he had framed and displays alongside his original handbook.

The upstairs bathroom holds an unexpected treasure — a painting of tennis pro Chris Everett which used to hang in the Wimbledon Tennis Club in Arlington. When the club burned, Beki rescued the painting and restored it. The owner of the club rewarded her efforts by giving her the painting.

Most of the artwork displayed on their walls has a story. *The Travelers* reminds Beki of the weariness of working as a flight attendant. *Ship of Fools* ties into Gary's interest in history and politics and was a gift from Beki while they were dating. The print of two children standing over a broken flower pot allows Beki a bit of playful humor by mounting a symbol of a golden question mark directly above it. But the retirement photos of the last plane Gary flew and of Beki perched inside a jet engine, signed by all their co-workers, have a special place on their walls.

Gary and Beki are enjoying their retirement. While staying connected to their pasts, they look forward to the future and meeting all their new neighbors as Links Crossing grows and develops around them.

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The Skinners of Mansfield (Merie, Ian, Bert, LaSandra, and Warren) enjoy a great time and meal at Suzy Q's on Broad St.

Mike and Debbie Koennecke are all smiles at the Mansfield Cares Charity Ball at Walnut Creek Country Club.

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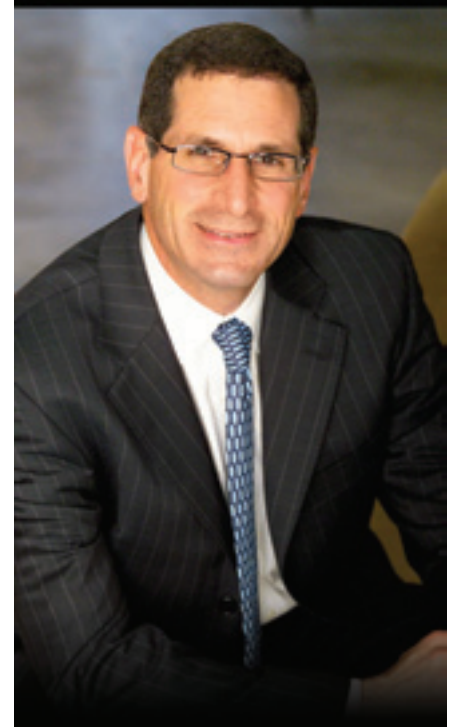

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Lalanii, Grant and Trent Poteet; Nialah, Justice, and Shaee Palmer; Ashlyn, Ryan and Susan Kerr playing on the playground at Rose Park.

Seven-month-old Dillon Manning enjoys a sunny day at Walnut Creek Park.

Judith Field, Michelle Buchanan and Geraldine Wood show off donations given by the Watercrest at Mansfield to the Alliance for Children.

Catherine Harris ordering cupcakes for the "Scrapbooking Divas Club" from Tonya Jefferson owner of Frosted Pink.

Troy Dorsey's Karate Studio teaches more than karate. Mr. Dorsey looks on as his students practice their moves in a kickboxing morning class.

Jackie and Bobbie, owners of Joe's Coffee Shop, smiling because business is really good this Friday morning.

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The Gift of Jazz

— By Jaime Ruark

Do you remember the days of wingtip shoes and bowler hats? When people slow-danced to the jazzy sounds of "What a Wonderful World" or bopped and boogied to the swinging song "Fly Me To The Moon"? J. Edward Irving, a local dentist for 29 years, is bringing those wonder years back with style, his smooth crooning helping a whole new generation dance their way to love.

Eddie, as he is known to his friends, has quite a musical history. Born in Shreveport, Louisiana, to a family full of creative artists, Eddie's mother was a voice major of local renown. His father played trumpet in a jazz band in New Orleans, so Eddie grew up surrounded by big jazz hitters such as Louis Armstrong and famous trumpeter and bandleader, Al Hirt. The unfortunate trappings that came along with that famous lifestyle bred in Eddie a distaste for all things jazz, and he decided to leave his musical background far behind him. "Jazz was everything to my dad, but I wanted to completely separate myself from that part of my life," he said.

Eddie attended college at The University of Texas at Austin and then went to Baylor University, in Waco, for dental school. He credits his wife, Anne, her mother and a few of his friends, who he jokingly labeled "The God Squad" with changing his life. "They finally talked me into going to this Bible study that was led by one of the instructors at the school," he recalled. "Then, I'll never forget this day; I was driving in a car with one of my friends, and he had a gospel channel on the radio. The DJ gave this really short, succinct gospel message, and I just knew." Eddie joined his "God Squad" friends, and the creative spirit he had stifled for so long was let loose in a completely new way. "I began singing gospel songs, praise songs. Music was different for me then," he shared.

After moving to the area, Eddie and his family helped start the Mansfield Bible Church. He is proud to have been a part in growing the church from a small Sunday night gathering in their home to its current large and thriving worship center on Country Club Drive, where he led the singing for 12 years. Eddie also began traveling around to local churches to perform. "Then one day, a church asked me to do their Valentine's banquet. They wanted me to perform jazz standards. I had such bad

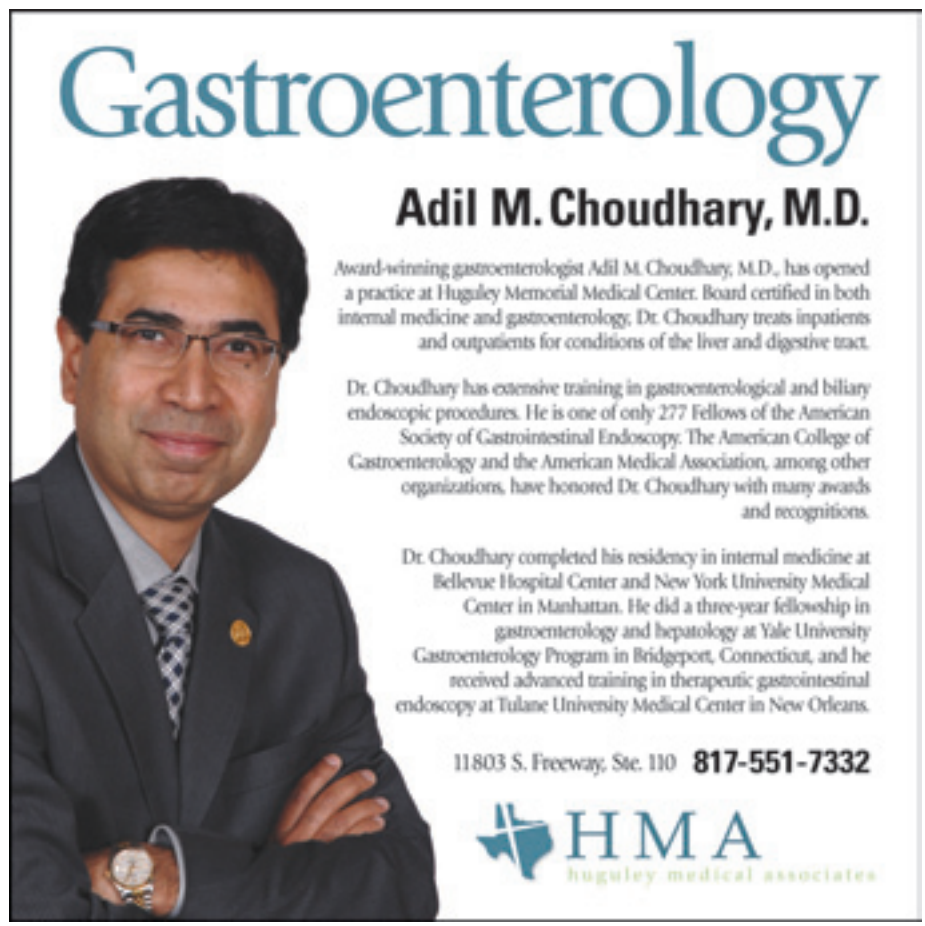
memories that went along with that music that I really didn't want to do it," Eddie admitted. For 45 minutes, Eddie sang the songs of Tony Bennett and Frank Sinatra, the songs of his youth he had hated for years. "God worked me through it," he smiled.

Eddie feels God was also working in other ways that night; from one of the couples swirling around the dance floor came a surprising invitation. "This man approached me, who had been a member

"Now, it's a blessing and I feel like I need to share that with people."

of a band for 20 years, and asked me if I'd ever thought of being in a band," Eddie recalled. Again, bad memories from the past warred inside him, but Eddie decided that as long as God was always a part of his music, he could open himself up to the possibilities. Thus, Eddie Irving and The Classic Swing Band were born.

Eddie is quick to sing the praises of



Group Photo Left to Right: Tom Lepper, Mike Kinard, Eddie Irving, Garland Gray, Randy Wills.

Foot & Ankle Surgery

Clayton H. Culp, D.P.M.

Clayton H. Culp, DPM, has a foot and ankle surgery practice in Burleson. A podiatrist, Dr. Culp has extensive training in all aspects of foot and ankle care, including diagnosis and treatment of bunions, hammer toe, flat foot, foot and ankle pain, neuroma, arthritis, ingrown toenails, infections, and foot and ankle fractures.

Dr. Culp graduated from Texas Christian University with a Bachelor of Science degree in biology. He earned his Doctor of Podiatric Medicine degree from Temple University School of Podiatric Medicine in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He completed his three-year residency in foot and ankle surgery at Kaiser North Bay Consortium in Vallejo, California, where he served as chief resident his final year. A member of the American Podiatric Medical Association and the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons, Dr. Culp has presented his research at professional conferences.

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his band mates. Accompanied by Tom Lepper, who plays the trumpet, trombone and flute; Randy Wills, the keyboardist; Mike Kinard, the percussionist; and Garland Gray on bass, Eddie said, "It's pretty hard to sound bad with these guys backing you up. There is so much talent among them. I'm just blessed to be working with them." Although Eddie has had no formal musical training, he has a natural, smooth quality to his voice, a breathy softness that perfectly lends itself to jazz standards.

"It's pretty hard to sound bad with these guys backing you up. There is so much talent among them. I'm just blessed to be working with them."

For this reluctant crooner, music has again become a force in his life. The band is consistently booked for events such as jazz festivals, weddings and veteran's or corporate events. Their popularity is spreading. "I've learned to say 'gig,'" he laughed. "The guys are starting to push us to move on. They want to travel, to get bigger gigs and play more." Content to stay local and small, Eddie is again fighting those fears of what that could mean. "I don't know; maybe if I was younger. I started this pretty old!" he joked.

Eddie has adapted his style over the five years the band has been together, adding what he calls his own little flavor to well-known classics such as "Just the Way You Are" and "I've Got You Under My Skin," as well as his personal favorite, "The Shadow of Your Smile." He also tries to take every available opportunity to share the Gospel at his concerts. "For so long, this music was such a hated part of my life. Now, it's a blessing and I feel like I need to share that with people," Eddie explained. "Music is really a gift given by God, and I want to make sure I use my gift for Him." NOW

Good Athletes, Good Friends

— By Jaime Ruark

Last year, the Mansfield Jaguars took the Optimist Club of Arlington's youth tackle football league by storm. The 21 sixth-grade boys who proudly wore their red and black team colors fought hard for a winning season. Perhaps more importantly, however, these young men learned skills, which will benefit them both on and off the field. They are already showing themselves to be fine athletes and leaders in their schools, and their friendships, forged through tackles, tears and sweat, will surely last a lifetime.

After his third year of coaching the Jags, Jeff Yale, father of Spencer (No. 5), could not be prouder of his team of footballers. "There's something special about watching kids grow and learn and being involved in that," he said. Co-coaches and fathers Russell Strowd and Trevor Grossklaus also work hard to make sure their young players are learning the skills, which will make them unstoppable in their athletic years to come. "Our main job as coaches is to make sure the boys are prepared for the next level — in this case, junior high football. If they learn to play the game properly at a young age, they can play for a long time, regardless of their size or athletic ability," Trevor noted. Quick to give credit to the other involved parents, Jeff added, "Mike Fanning, David Bayless and Kevin Fletcher are also dads, who help us out with coaching. Really, a lot of the dads who aren't coaches on paper are out there on the fields during practices helping us out."

Trevor Grossklaus, Mike Fanning and Jeff Yale enjoy coaching the Jaguars. (Coaches not pictured: Russell Strowd, David Bayless and Kevin Fletcher.)

With practice three times a week, as well as weekly games, the boys, most of them multi-sport athletes, and their parents

are making a big time commitment to the team. That commitment can be a bit difficult during a season that includes the gamut of Texas weather, from torrential downpours to oven-like heat waves. "Our season starts in August, when we start practicing, and basically runs into December," Jeff explained. "Those kids played in August in the 105-degree heat and they played in the winter when they had to bundle up for games because it was 30 degrees. Then there were all the rainy days in between, where they were just covered in mud," he laughed.

Unfortunately, injuries often go hand in hand with sports, and the Jags have had their share of misfortune. "This year was kind of unique in that we had a lot of kids who got sick. We had a rash of

the H1N1," Jeff said. "They've endured broken thumbs and bones, growing pains, bumps and bruises. They're just so dedicated, though; they just want to play."

Speaking of that dedication, team mom Renee Hubener shared, "These boys are just consumed with football. Those two hours they're out there practicing — they are disciplined and so focused, putting all their effort into the plays. Then when practice is over, it's the funniest thing, because they're just little boys again, running and playing and throwing the ball."

Despite their young age, these boys are already displaying impressive skills. "We had nine different players score touchdowns this year, with five different players scoring touchdowns in one game," Trevor said. "Many of the coaches told us we were a very difficult team to prepare for." One particularly exciting game involved last year's champions, the Highlanders, a game

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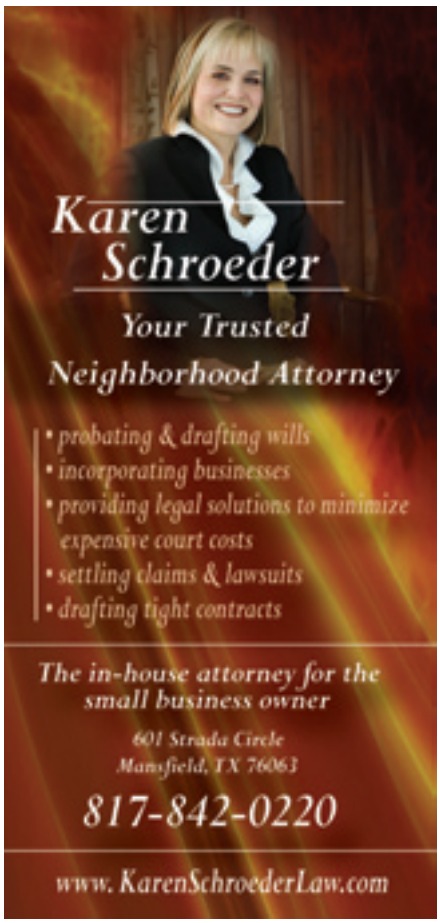
that came down to a final pass in the last seconds. "The Highlanders actually beat us last year in the semifinals by more than 30 points, so to come out and play with the heart these kids played with and to [almost] win the game in the last seconds was truly amazing," he added.

Short-minded players may think winning is everything, but true athletes learn how to win and lose gracefully. "Some of these teams we play have one or two star players, but that's just not the way we work," Jeff noted. "It's interesting to watch kids evolve as a team. As coaches, we want them to develop individually and as a unit."

For quarterback Lane Schwab (No. 8), that team mentality was one of the most important things he took away from his five years as a Jag; running back Kyler Hankins (No. 33) agreed, "I have learned about sportsmanship, and that we win and lose as a team."

"There's something special about watching kids grow and learn and being involved in that."

As the saying goes, time flies, especially when you are having fun. For the Jaguars, the coming spring and summer months cannot fly by quickly enough. The boys, many of whom have been teammates since the second grade, are already looking ahead to the coming football season, when team Jaguar will find itself parting ways, the boys heading off to different middle schools. Will the camaraderie continue as teammates find themselves facing off against one another? Coach Jeff believes it will. "They're already starting to talk about next season and joke about how they're going to beat each other," he laughed. "There's competition there, which will be something fun for their coaches and the community to watch. But really, when it comes down to it, they're all good friends at heart; they're just good athletes to boot." NOW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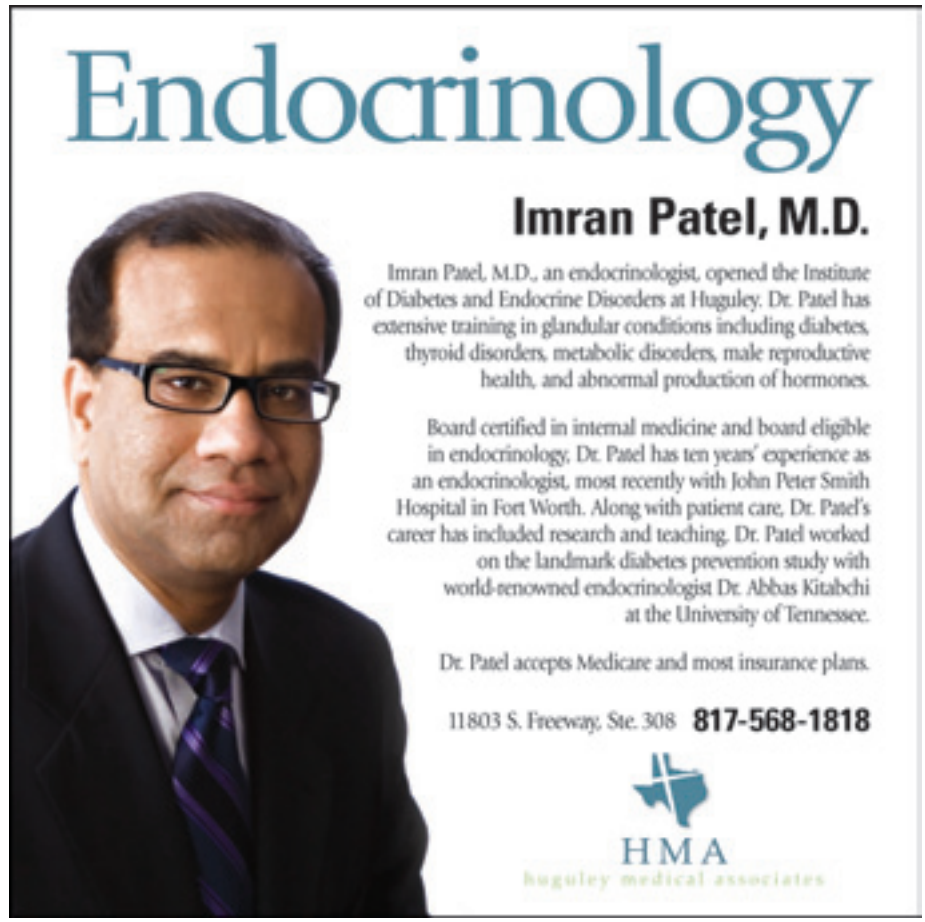
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From left: Owner Brittney Anthony; some of the gear offered at Tiger Shark Scuba; the tiki hut decor helps customers feel the vacation vibe.

Dive Now, Work Later

Tiger Shark Scuba makes the total diving experience safe, affordable and unforgetable.
— By Jaime Ruark

Those lucky enough to have experienced life underwater know that there is a whole new world just waiting to be explored beneath the waves. Gorgeous neon-colored corral, waving tentacle-armed anemones and darting rainbow-hued fish all live in a sea of silence ready to be discovered and observed. Scuba divers know the wonder and addiction the sport brings with it, as well as the camaraderie felt by those who have experienced life aquatic. Perhaps none know this better than the dive pros at Tiger Shark Scuba, and they are ready to bring that wonder and adventure to others.

The tiki hut decor at Tiger Shark Scuba creates an instant tropical vibe, definitely the right state of mind for planning a scuba vacation. The walls of the shop are lined with every possible diving necessity, from masks, fins and snorkels to wet suits, regulators, gauges and compasses. "If it's made for scuba, you can get it here," owner Brittney Anthony said.

Brittney moved her business from Burleson to the current Arlington location more than two years ago. Brittney is a recreational instructor, which means she gets to pass on her love of scuba to all who enter her shop. A bumper sticker on display perfectly expresses her passionate belief: "If you don't dive, you haven't lived."

With help from her family, Brittney built the business from the ground up. "When I started, I did everything; the bills, the books, everything from scrubbing toilets to teaching classes. It was a lot of hard work, but it was definitely worth it," she said. Brittney

now has more helping hands on deck and is thankful for her crew which includes assistant instructor Keith Layton, Nick Mendez and technical instructor Kurt Lohrmann.

Because you cannot just walk off the street, onto the beach and into the water, Tiger Shark offers certification classes to ensure divers are qualified, educated and safe. "My biggest thrill now is teaching, seeing that look on their face when they've stuck their head underwater and breathed for the first time," Brittney expressed.

Group classes run from February to November; private classes are held in December and January. Some of their classes include: beginner and advanced open water, rescue, master scuba and extended range diver. They also offer specialty classes such as: night, drift, wreck and boat diving, search and

"If it's made for scuba, you can get it here."

recovery and underwater photography. "Our main recreational course is SDI, which is Scuba Diving International, because they have an amazing interactive online course," Brittney said. Class sizes are small and offered in-shop, with pool dives performed at Texas Wesleyan University and lake dives at Lake Travis and Clear Springs Scuba Park in Terrell.

Even more fun than the classes are the certification trips Tiger Shark offers. "Anyone is welcome to go on any trip we have, like our trip to Cozumel, Mexico, in May and Trinidad and Tobago in September," Brittney explained. "You don't have to be getting certified to go on those trips. Everyone is welcome — family, kids, whoever just wants to get away.

"Most people come in because they are going on a trip and they think they're never going to dive again," she continued with a smile. "Once they get underwater, it's a different story. You get this feeling of flying, of being free." To the 98 percent of the world's population that has yet to experience scuba, Brittney advised, "Don't wait; you'll regret it. Do it now!" NOW

Reading, Writing & Understanding

— By Katrina D. McNair

Model students are a teacher's dream. They raise their hands, they do their homework and they actively participate in class. For some students, this is not their story, and it can be easy to write them off as trouble. But, for Marcie Jackson, discovering the story behind the behavior of such children is key to helping them find a happier ending.

Marcie has been teaching for three years at Howard Middle School in Mansfield and has been unofficially tapped as a person with a special knack for working with students who may have circumstances in their lives which affect their education. Originally from Fort Worth, Marcie attended Prairie View A&M University, where she received a bachelor's degree in education and interdisciplinary studies and a master's degree in counseling. At Howard, she teaches eighth-grade language arts and a seventh-grade leadership class, designed to prepare them for entering the workforce and college, while also teaching leadership characteristics.

Often, those who grow up to be teachers were influenced by a family member or a teacher they had growing up. For Marcie, she just always had a desire to work with children. "I always wanted to work with kids because I enjoy giving back to the community," she said. "I don't really have a fairy-tale story — I just wanted to work with kids. I love working with them."

Any teacher can attest to the fact that their calling involves much more than teaching. Often, problems or issues at home can severely affect a child's behavior. Working with students who may have trouble coping with home problems and school is part of the reason Marcie feels so strongly about being there for them. Before moving back to North Texas, Marcie worked with children in a poverty-stricken area of Houston. There, she realized her passion and love was for the children, first and foremost. Working in a school where 92 percent of the students were disadvantaged showed her that many times, "problem" children were dealing with very grown-up situations. And though Mansfield is not considered a disadvantaged area, students in the district are not immune to negative variables, which affect their learning. "I grew up in a kind of poverty-stricken area, and I just know how many kids need someone to talk to. They need help. And I've always wanted to give back," Marcie said. "That's what made me go back and get my master's in counseling. I'm more used to working with students who have family issues; kids who don't have anywhere to stay — where parents may be doing their own thing, and the kid's were being the mother and father of the house."

As the city of Mansfield grows and more students enter the district, Marcie feels it is extremely important that the school district be prepared to work with

students who may not have the optimum home life. "I see disadvantaged kids, but to me, they are looked over," she said. "Our school will be Title 1 next year. The issues are there and they need to be addressed." A Title 1 school is provided with federal funds that aim to bridge the gap between at-risk students and those not considered at-risk. Money is used to enhance schools, by purchasing technology tools, for example.

As for her methods of working with some of her students and trying to be a positive influence, Marcie does not have an innovative new way of working them you might read about in any book. She simply listens. "If you don't have a relationship with the child, how are you going to teach them?" she said. "So many students are sent to me because I build a relationship with them. Respect and having a relationship are the two things that I require and that I work toward."

Through her school, Marcie has established a nonprofit organization called Shaping Her Attitude While Developing Essentials for Success (SHADES). "In this school, starting a nonprofit organization was really good," she said. "I have 25 girls, and about 10 to 12 of them live in disadvantaged situations. Having them being active and involved works. Some people don't want to do sports, but want to be involved in something. We have times where we sit around and talk and get things off our chests — that helps, too. Just talking to them and making them feel that someone cares — really cares — that's big with those kids." Meetings are held after school, and the students involved also perform community service projects.

Marcie understands she may not be able to reach every single student who crosses her path and may need that extra dose of attention. However, for the ones she does reach, it is gratifying when they see her again and have turned their lives around. Even more, she wants those who are thinking of working with disadvantaged children to heed a few words of advice. "Understand that every child is unique," she explained. "Once you understand every child is unique and comes from a different background, you learn not to judge them for where they come from, but just help them to be better." NOW

In The Kitchen With Alice Biggs

— By Faith Browning

When Alice Biggs looks back on her childhood, she can clearly recall standing in a chair helping her mother, grandmother or aunt cook a loving meal. "I grew up in a family of extraordinarily good cooks," she recalled. "We had large family gatherings and everyone contributed to the elaborate table called 'Pot Blessings.'"

Alice fills her days with family, friends and hobbies, including cooking, sewing, gardening, reading and directing the Silver Eagles group at her church, Word of Life Family, in Mansfield. Her group meets monthly, and each member contributes a favorite dish. "I am really fond of the family-style, southern cooking, using food grown in my own garden or locally-grown vegetables," she said. "I enjoy using recipes from friends and family — ones I have already tasted. I like the home feel." NOW

HAWAIIAN HAYSTACKS

4 chicken breasts, boneless and skinless
2 cups water
Flour
Milk
Cornstarch
4 cups cooked rice
2 5-oz. cans chow mien noodles, uncooked
1 cup bell pepper, diced
1 cup green onion, diced
1 cup raisins
1 cup chunked pineapple
1 cup black olives, diced
1 cup tomatoes, diced
1 cup celery, diced
1 cup coconut
1 cup almonds, slivered

1. Cut chicken breasts into 1-inch cubes; boil in water until tender.
2. Thicken chicken stock with flour, milk and cornstarch to make 4 cups creamy chicken broth.
3. Each person should bring one or more of the remaining ingredients. These ingredients are placed, in order on the serving counter or table.
4. Each person then builds a haystack with the desired items. It is nice to mix and match according to taste. *Fun, Fun, Fun!*

PEACH TORTILLA

3 sticks butter
2 cups sugar
1/2 cup water
2 cans peach pie filling
10-12 small flour tortillas
Sugar, to taste
Cinnamon, to taste

1. In a small saucepan, boil butter, sugar and water for 2 minutes.
2. Spray a baking dish with cooking spray.
3. Put peach filling in each tortilla and roll up. Place in the pan until the pan is lined with roll-ups.
4. Pour hot butter mixture over the roll-ups; sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon.
5. Refrigerate overnight.
6. Bake uncovered for 1 hour at 325 F. After removing from oven, immediately cover with foil. Wait to serve for 45 minutes to an hour.

SHOEPEG CORN AND PEA SALAD

2 16-oz. cans baby or petite peas, drained
2 16-oz. cans white shoepeg corn, drained
1 red bell pepper, chopped 1/4-inch
1 green bell pepper, chopped 1/4 inch
4 green onions, chopped
1 cup apple cider vinegar
1 cup water
2 cups sugar
1 Tbsp. celery seeds

1. In a bowl, combine all vegetables; set aside.
2. In a saucepan, combine apple cider vinegar, water, sugar and celery seeds; bring to a boil, stirring as it reduces. Set aside until it reaches room temperature.
3. Once dressing is room temperature, pour over the vegetables. It is best to let it set overnight, or it can be served once chilled. You can vary the amount of sugar to taste or use Splenda.

EGG BAKE

8 slices bread
1 lb. sausage, spicy if desired
1 doz. eggs, well-beaten
1/2 cup milk
1 1/2 cups sharp cheddar cheese, shredded

1. Using a 9 x 13-inch pan, put bread slices on the bottom. Spray with cooking spray.
2. Fry sausage until done and broken up. Place on top of bread.
3. Add eggs; pour milk over all.
4. Cover with cheese. Refrigerate overnight.
5. Bake at 350 F until firm. Good for breakfast or lunch.

CHILI CHICKEN SOUP

12 oz. chicken breast
1 12-oz. can Ro-Tel tomatoes
1 15-oz. can pinto beans
1 onion, chopped
1 tsp. chili seasoning
1 tsp. salt
1 cup water
1/2 cup cheddar cheese, shredded
Baked tortilla chips

1. Cut chicken into bite-sized pieces.
2. Put chicken, tomatoes, pinto beans, onions, chili seasoning, salt and water into a pot; cook on medium for 30 minutes or until chicken is done.
3. To serve, break chips into a bowl, cover with chicken and then top with cheese.

BEAN BAKE

1/2 lb. sliced bacon
1 cup onion, chopped
1 lb. ground beef
1 15.5-oz can red beans, drained and rinsed
1 15.5-oz. can of great northern beans, drained and rinsed
1 15.5-oz. can black beans, drained and rinsed
2 15.5-oz. cans pork and beans
Barbecue sauce, to taste

1. Preheat oven to 350 F.
2. Cook bacon over medium heat; remove grease.
3. Add onion and beef to the skillet. Cook until meat is no longer pink; drain grease.
4. In a 9 x 13-inch pan, combine all beans, beef, bacon and barbecue sauce; mix well.
5. Bake

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Breathe Deeply

— By Betty Tryon, R.N.

One of the most overused words in the English language is stress — with good reason. Stress, a normal and necessary part of life, can lead to serious consequences if managed poorly. Stress is the body's response to meeting a challenge with enough energy, alertness and strength. A common way of understanding stress is to see it as the "flight or fight" response. For example: A danger is perceived, such as a car suddenly veering into your path; you immediately assess the situation and swiftly take defensive action. The flight or fight response can also be triggered by a circumstance that does not put your life in danger, such as nervousness about a presentation at work or a final exam at school. When that happens, stress hormones are released.

The heightened reaction on your senses caused by this explains why some people say they operate best under pressure. In that type of situation or to aid in removing one from danger, stress is good. Stress becomes harmful when the body does not settle down after the situation is over. This can occur when you have ongoing stress in your life. Financial problems, divorce and chronic illness are a few examples which can cause stress hormone levels to remain high.

At the first sign of stress, the body springs into action by releasing adrenaline (also known as epinephrine) from the adrenal glands and cortisol. These are your fight or flight hormones. They work to increase your heart rate, respirations, metabolism, and dilate your air passages so more oxygen can be taken in to prepare you for action. They also contribute to increased alertness and increased glucose level in the bloodstream to give you energy to flee.

If you must meet danger head on, these hormones give you a fighting chance to meet that challenge. Under normal circumstances, once the challenge has been met, the body will go back to normal. Lingering problems, which cannot be solved quickly, will cause the hormones to stay in the body at increased levels — creating all sorts of mayhem. This may be the cause of sleeplessness at night or feeling nervous or edgy during the day.

Stress is a part of life. You cannot always control what happens to you, but you can find some peace in determining how you respond. Yoga is a popular retreat for those seeking how to stay calm in stressful situations. Exercise helps to work off a lot of tension. Give yourself a chance to start your day strong by getting a good night's sleep. If necessary, ask for help from a professional counselor or your spiritual adviser. The extra effort is worth it for your peace of mind and a healthier life. NOW

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

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Fleas, Raccoons & Other Creatures

— By Nancy Fenton

Now that it is warming up, it is time to think about how to avoid all those insect and animal problems that can plague homeowners. Those of us with dogs or cats immediately think *fleas*! As the temperature warms up, the fleas really get going. We discussed the use of nematodes last year, and they are still a good bet early in the year when we have damp soil and moderate temperatures. Nematodes do not do well in the heat, so start early and get your two applications on your lawn before it dries up and gets hot. Beneficial nematodes are available from several local nurseries and feed stores.

Raccoons and squirrels are another matter altogether. According to Texas A&M, there are four basic rules for controlling raccoon and squirrel damage. First, remove their food supply. Feed your outside cats and dogs in the morning and bring the food in at dusk. Second, remove the water supply. Third, modify the habitat with screens on chimneys and around foundation and attic access points. Fourth, trap them and relocate them a very long distance from the original site!

Insects that chew on your garden are yet another issue. "Companion plants," which have a strong scent (such as basil and thyme and/or silver foliage) repel some insects. "Trap plants" attract the offending insect until beneficial insects or birds gobble them up. Both repellant and trap plants can be used as long as they are close to their "companion" and can be seen or smelled easily. Other plants have special qualities, which enhance a "friend," such as basil and tomato and garlic and roses. For specific lists of plants call the Master Gardeners at the Texas AgriLife office at (972) 825-5175. Good luck with getting rid of all those pesky critters! NOW

Nancy Fenton is a Master Gardener.

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HappeningNOW

All Month
Thinking about getting a pet? Check out the Mansfield Animal Control. New weekday hours: 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. No longer open on Saturdays.

Monday-Friday
Young At Heart meeting (for residents ages 55 plus): 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Mansfield Activities Center. (817) 453-5420, ext. 2227.

Every Monday
Basic line dancing for seniors: 10:30-11:30 a.m., Mansfield Activities Center.

Bingo: 11:30 a.m.–noon, Mansfield Activities Center.

Story Time for Tots, for infants to 3-year-olds: 10:30-11:00 a.m., Mansfield Public Library.

Second and Fourth Mondays
City Council meeting: 7:00 p.m., Mansfield City Hall, 1200 Broad St.

Every Tuesday
Small business counseling provided by SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives): 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Mansfield Chamber offices, 114 N. Main St. By appointment only. (817) 473-0507.

Rotary Club meeting: noon, Spring Creek Bar-B-Q, 1724 Hwy. 287 N.

Crafters' Book Club meeting: 11:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Mansfield Public Library. Join other crafters (scrapbooking, knitting, quilting, beading, etc.) and listen to audio books during craft time.

First and Third Tuesday
Training Academy for Dental Assistants' free informational session: 5:30 p.m. (972) 842-2999.

Third Tuesday
Senior Citizens Advisory Council meeting: 10:00 a.m., Mansfield Activities Center. Participant meetings are held immediately following from 11:15-11:30 a.m.

Every Wednesday
Children's Story Time for ages 3-6 years: 10:30-11:00 a.m., Mansfield Public Library.

First Wednesday
Zoning Board of Adjustment meeting: 6:00 p.m., Mansfield City Hall.

Second Wednesday
Library Advisory Board meeting: 6:00 p.m., Mansfield Public Library Community room, 104 S. Wisteria St.

First Thursday
ABWA Empowering Women Express Network monthly meeting: 5:45 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center, 1 Community Circle, Midlothian. RSVP to Daphne Brewer at (972) 723-6551.

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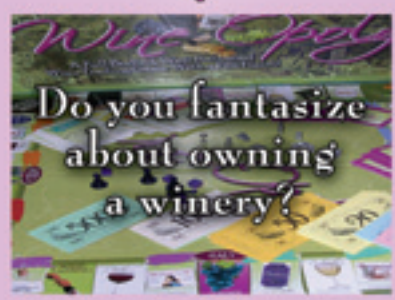

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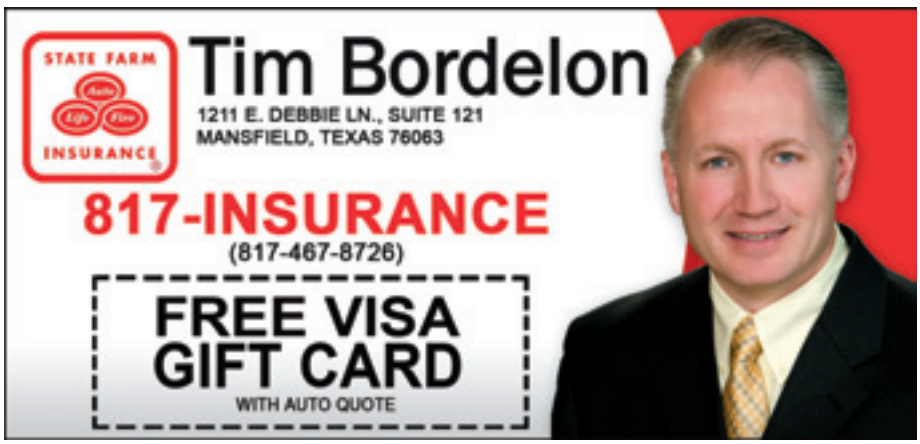

HappeningNOW

Third Thursday
Mansfield Park Facilities Development Corporation meeting: 7:00 p.m., Mansfield City Hall, 1200 E. Broad St.

Every Friday
Mansfield Kiwanis Club: 6:45 a.m., Methodist Mansfield Medical Center, 2700 E. Broad St. (817) 473-9886.

April 2
Mansfield ISD Spring Holiday.

April 4
Mansfield Area Parental Support System (M.A.P.S.S.) meeting: 7:00-9:00 p.m., Ben Barber Career Tech Academy. Open to all MISD students birth through 4th grade. Purpose is to develop a parent education program designed to foster and enhance early reading development.

April 10
Beautification Day, sponsored by the Women's Division of the Mansfield Chamber of Commerce: 7:00 a.m.-noon, 2nd Ave. and Burl Ray Rd.

April 12
"When I Grow Up" by ventriloquist Dennis Lee, presented by MISD Council of PTAs: 7:00-8:00 p.m., Willie Pigg Auditorium. Visit www.dennisleeproductions.com/shows for more information.

April 15
Women's Division Networking Luncheon: 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. For details, visit www.mansfieldwomenschamber.com/lunches.

April 16, 17
Willowstone Estates Neighborhood Garage Sale. Every household wishing to participate must obtain a permit from Mansfield City Hall prior to the sale and provide your own advertising.

April 17
Safe Sitter Babysitting class: 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 777 N. Walnut Creek Dr. This nationally recognized program is designed to teach boys and girls ages 11-13 how to have fun with children, recognize a medical emergency and prevent problem behavior. Space is limited to 16 participants. For more information, contact Seree Plumlee at sereep@firstmethodistmansfield.org.

2nd Annual FUMC Son Run benefiting Stop Hunger Now. Beginning at the First United Methodist Church of Mansfield parking lot, this event is a chip-timed 5K and a family 1-mile fun run. Race times: 9:00 a.m., 5K; 10:15 a.m. 1-mile fun run. Adult registration: $25. Under 12 registration: $20. For registration form, visit www.firstmethodistmansfield.org.

April 17, 18
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HappeningNOW

production of *My Fair Lady* to be held in the choir room of First United Methodist Church, 777 N. Walnut Creek Dr. Saturday: 10:00 a.m. Sunday: 2:00 p.m. Up to 75 actors will be cast.

April 20

As the Page Turns adult book club: 6:30 p.m., Mansfield Public Library. April's book: *Wednesday Letters* by Jason F. Wright.

Mansfield ISD Math and Science Job Fair: 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., MISD Administration Complex, 605 E. Broad St. Interested participants must have completed and submitted an online application. www.mansfieldisd.org.

April 21

Mansfield ISD new student registration for Pre-K and kindergarten students: 8:30-11:30 a.m., 1:00-3:30 p.m., student's home campus. For more information, contact the school or David Hodges, Director of Campus Support, at (817) 299-6360.

April 23, 24

Relay for Life, Rose Park, 217 N. Walnut Creek Dr. Visit RelayForLife.org/mansfieldtx for more information.

April 27

Mansfield ISD School Board meeting: 7:00 p.m., Mansfield Administration Building, School Board room, 605 E. Broad St.

April 30

Black and White Ascot Ball, benefiting the Mansfield Community Theater: 7:30-10:00 p.m., Aristide Event Center, 570 N. Walnut Creek Dr. $50 per person. Come for an evening of dance and entertainment and meet the cast and crew of the upcoming theater production of *My Fair Lady*. Contact Beth_Holland@sbcglobal.net or call (817) 301-5084 for more information.

May 4-7

Mansfield ISD Teacher Interview Days (by appointment only): 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., MISD Administration Complex, 605 E. Broad St. Elementary: May 4, 5. Secondary: May 6, 7.

May 8

Mansfield ISD Athletics Job Fair: 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., MISD Stadium Community Room, 3700 E. Broad St.

June 5

Mid-Way Regional Airport Annual Pancake Breakfast Fly-In: 8:00-11:00 a.m. Event and parking is free. Public invited. Breakfast tickets: $6 for ages 8 and above; $3 for ages 3-7; free for 2 and under. Classic airplanes/fighters, The Classic Swing Band, helicopter rides, Midlothian Classic Wheels and other attractions. For more information, call Tammy at (972) 923-0080.

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