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ON THE COVER



Debbie Coleman's passion with buttons means unique bracelets for others.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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Subscriptions are available at the rate of \$35 per year or \$3.50 per issue. Subscriptions should be sent to: NOW Magazines, P.O. Box 1071, Waxahachie, TX 75168. For advertising rates or editorial correspondence, call (972) 937-8447 or visit www.nowmagazines.com.



Editor's Note

Spring is in the air!

I've heard it said that April showers bring May flowers. If that's true, then I say bring on the rain, because I so enjoy spending time digging in my flower beds. Dirt under my nails is therapy to my soul. Sometimes I look up into the heavens and wish my dad a happy birthday, since April was his month, and he would have been 82 on the 14th. Other times, the tears come as I thank the Lord for the valleys in life that have helped me grow closer to Him.

And yes, it's also the time when spring makes its appearance. Temperatures begin to warm up. Lightweight sweaters are traded for T-shirts and capris. Boots are boxed up, so flip-flops and sandals can come out of storage to take their place on closet shelves. Spring is definitely in the air!

Sandra

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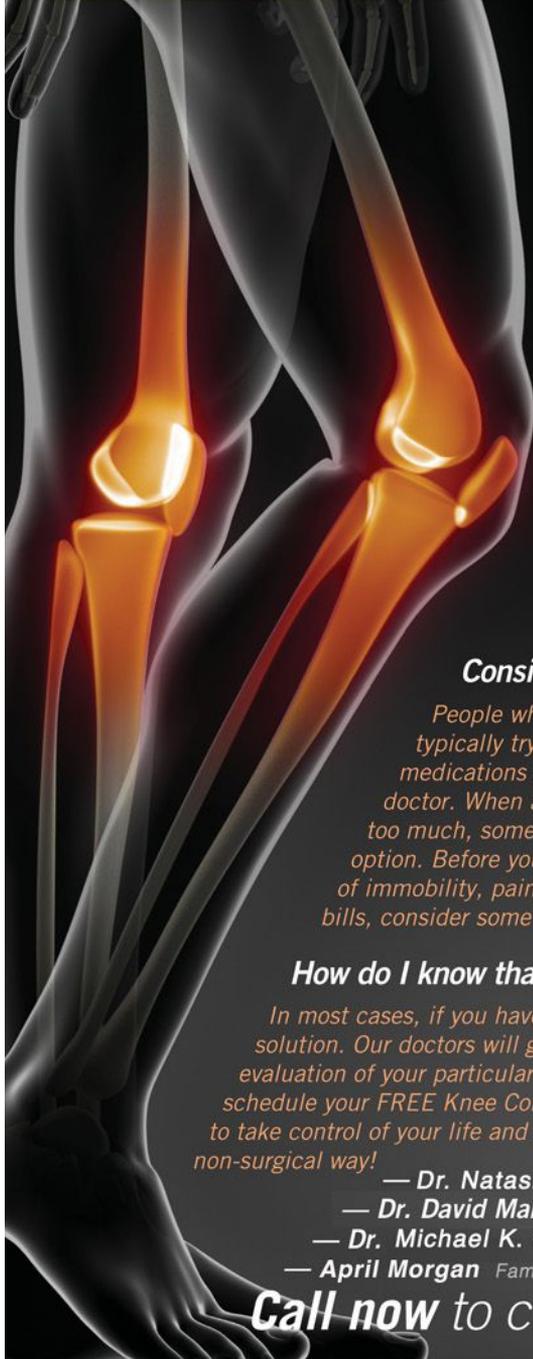
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The Sky's the Limit

— By Sandra Strong

Antique shops, flea markets, garage sales and resale shops are some of Debbie Coleman's favorite places to visit when she's on the hunt for a few of her favorite things. When she comes across an antique jar filled with buttons in all shapes, sizes and colors, her adrenaline starts to pump and her excitement builds as she begins to visualize all the possibilities. "My imagination takes over," she said with a smile that's infectious. "The sky's the limit!"

Debbie's family, friends and acquaintances share in her love of finding the perfect buttons, both antique and vintage. It's quite common for Debbie to go shopping with her children, only to come home with more buttons to add to her vast collection. Recently, her son took her to an antique shop specifically to look for her beloved treasures. "We found two jars of antique buttons," Debbie shared. "The nice thing about this find was the jars were also antiques."

One of the most intricately detailed creations Debbie has displayed in the home she shares with Ty, her husband of 39 years, is made from buttons she purchased in Istanbul, Turkey. "I visited Turkey several times when my daughter and son-in-

"I know it sounds strange, but I have relationships with my buttons. As I touch them, my imagination takes off."





law lived there,” Debbie explained, as she pointed to the vase overflowing with a one-of-a-kind button bouquet. “The vase and the jar beside it are from Istanbul, as are all the buttons in the bouquet. Did you know the tulip originated in Istanbul? I learned this fact on one of my trips to Turkey.” Looking closely at the arrangement, it’s easy to see the insignia on the pottery is in the shape of a tulip.

Another story that came from one of her trips to Turkey involved Muslim prayer beads. “They were so beautiful. I wanted to use them in my

jewelry, but I didn’t want to show any disrespect,” Debbie said. Debbie asked the store proprietor for permission to take the beads apart, and permission was granted, thus several new pieces of jewelry were born.

Some of the best and most memorable buttons Debbie has received in the eight years she’s been crafting with them were given to her as gifts. “My daughter and son-in-law gave me buttons this past year for Christmas,” she remembered. “They looked at each individual button to make sure they were antique and/or vintage. The vessel they came in was an old apothecary jar. That extra time spent picking out just the right buttons meant so much to me.”

As a truck driver, Ty has the opportunity to search for buttons, too. “He’ll call and say he’s found some,” Debbie laughed. “He’s intrigued with what I’ll come up with next.”



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The list of items Debbie has crafted over the years is nearly as long as the number of buttons she's collected. Well, maybe not, but it's getting closer with each new idea. Jewelry includes rings, bracelets, necklaces, broaches and decorative hairclips and headbands. "I refer to the larger necklaces as my statement pieces," Debbie said. "Duplicate buttons become broaches." Home decor includes decorative balls, several styles of button bouquets, all-occasion ornaments, snowflakes with a magnetic backing, serving trays, table tops and canvases. Her office artwork includes bookmarkers, desk paper clips and color-coordinated stick pins for the bulletin boards. The list goes on and on. "Imagination allows me to use anything for the foundation. It's absolutely crazy what all you can create with buttons."

Debbie takes pride in using what she has on hand. She even repurposes the jars the buttons come in, while turning something old, without flair



into something new that is sure to get a conversation started. All the items she creates are one of a kind unless the request has been for matching duplications.

Some of her favorites include a piece she lovingly calls “Nana’s Heart,” a vintage tree on canvas and a spinning globe. “The globe was a lot of fun,” she admitted. “I don’t know how many buttons it took to completely cover the globe — I just know it was a lot. The vintage tree is probably one of my most prized possessions. It’s a Christmas tree, but I leave it out all year long. I added felt and a couple of old necklace chains



to the collection of vintage buttons to complete the tree.” Each button on “Nana’s Heart” represents one of each of Debbie’s nine grandchildren — eight boys and one girl.

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Buttons made from mother of pearl are probably her favorite for several reasons. “The iridescent shell picks up all the colors around it. I go crazy when I find colors within the mother of pearl, since those are so hard to find,” Debbie explained. “And mother of pearl is always cool to the touch, no matter the weather.” Her favorite color is aqua. “I go nuts over aqua buttons when I find them,” Debbie confessed. “And it’s a really big deal when antique buttons have glitter in them.”



Admittedly, Debbie would spend every day crafting with buttons if she could. She would glue them, pin them and sew them. She would invite her grandchildren over more often to bring her new ideas to fruition. As time would have it, Debbie gets her two white platters filled with buttons out at least three days a week. She sits down and goes through them, touching each of the buttons, which prompts the ideas to take shape in her mind. “I know it sounds strange, but I have relationships with my buttons,” she said. “As I touch them, my imagination takes off.”

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Magnablend's President, Scott Pendery, said, "We are excited and honored to receive this award. Magnablend has been operating in Waxahachie for over 30 years, and we are looking forward to continuing to grow within this community. We are proud of our strong family-oriented culture and commitment to service that wouldn't be possible without the many employees, vendors, customers and partners in the Waxahachie area."

Magnablend continues to be active in the community. The company is hosting its second annual **Clays for a Cause** clay shoot fundraiser. This year's beneficiary is CASA of Ellis County, whose volunteers help to promote safe, nurturing and permanent homes for abused and neglected children in Ellis County. The fundraiser will be held at Alpine Shooting Range in Ft. Worth on Friday, April 25. For more information about participating or sponsoring, please contact Jaime Castro at (972)938-2028 or jaime.castro@magnablend.com.

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Discipline, Leadership, Teamwork

— By Callie Revell

In the familiar deep green of a well-worn Waxabachie High School letter jacket, James Miller sits up straight with alert eyes. He holds two shining pins in outstretched hands, both emblazoned with a seal and engraved with these words: The President's Volunteer Service Award. The pins represent awards he received from President Barack Obama, one for over 200 hours of community service in one year's time and the other for 100 hours.

James received these awards through his involvement with the Young Marines, a youth education and service program open to boys and girls from the time they turn 8 until they graduate from high school. "Young Marines started as a drug-prevention program for kids in Waterbury, Connecticut, in 1965," James explained. "From there, it spread throughout the country. I'm part of the Ellis County Young Marines."

Through this program, young adults learn virtues like honor, responsibility and respect, as well as gain valuable leadership skills. "The older ones mentor the younger ones," James said. "The Young





Marines program is trying to get kids to be leaders in the community.” Besides participating in parades and other ceremonial events, the Young Marines run drills two Saturdays a month and work toward achievement awards and ranks. However, the Young Marines should not be confused with the Marine JROTC. “The goal is not to get kids to go into the military,” James clarified, “rather to teach them military discipline.”

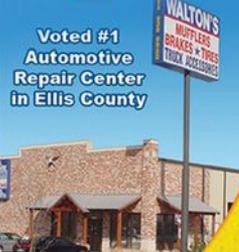
James has been involved with the Ellis County Young Marines since its inception. “I was actually in the first platoon in Ellis County in 2009. I graduated boot camp and went through Junior Leadership School. I’m now a sergeant.” Besides earning the Presidential Volunteer Service Award, James has also achieved Young Marine of the Year for the area and has traveled with the program to Pearl Harbor to serve in a memorial ceremony.

James’ day-to-day duties with Young Marines focus on drug prevention in Ellis County. “We have three core values: discipline, leadership and teamwork,” James said. “It’s helped me become a leader in my school through trying to prevent kids from doing drugs.” The Young Marines has given James opportunities he might not have had otherwise, and he urges members of





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the community to support the program and its goals. "I've seen kids who are really bad turn amazingly good in the program," James admitted.

As a 16-year-old at Waxahachie Ninth Grade Academy, James is involved in many activities besides Young Marines. One of his biggest passions is playing music — mainly the trumpet for the Spirit of Waxahachie Indian Band. However, a wide variety of instruments have captured his interest. "I play guitar for the worship band at my church. I also play a little bit of keyboard and sometimes drums," James said. He has big goals for his time with the Waxahachie High School band. "I want to be a section leader and, maybe, a drum major," he said, adding that his marching training with Young Marines has helped him with marching band. He plays with the worship band at First Baptist Church in Waxahachie and for the Christian Club at Waxahachie High School and sings in the Encore Jazz Choir. "Music brings more enjoyment to entertainment," James said. "I just like the passion of music, and I want to actually have a job in music." James wants to major in music in college and is considering attending Texas A&M University-Commerce.

James participates in many service projects throughout the year, but one project particularly important to him is Sumter Area Missions or SAM. Each June, groups of youth volunteers gather in Sumter, South Carolina, for a week-long community renovation project. The youth volunteers do significant home repair work, including patching roofs, installing windows, painting and repairing foundations. Some youth arrive with home improvement experience, and others learn on the job. "My uncle started SAM in South Carolina. We train at the beginning of the week, and then we go out into the community of Sumter and repair houses. This year, there were eight groups, and we fixed 16 houses in a week. That's pretty good for a bunch of teenagers," he said. To James, the most gratifying part of the experience is meeting the families whose homes have been renovated. "We have closing ceremonies at the end of the week, and the owners of the houses come. They tell us how we have influenced them by repairing their houses."

James is involved in another service project that hits a bit closer to home. Impact Waxahachie is part of an areawide collaboration of communities that support the fight against substance abuse. James is currently helping



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Impact Waxahachie work on getting a bill passed to make all businesses and restaurants in Waxahachie completely smoke-free. "It's an anti-drug coalition in the community," James said. "We support those who are concerned about people in public places, affected by secondhand smoke. Basically, we don't want smoking allowed in public areas, so people won't be affected by secondhand smoke." As part of the project, James and his fellow volunteers have filed petitions and worked to get the necessary forms filled out. They also conducted a communitywide survey with encouraging results. Approximately 60 percent of citizens in Waxahachie say they would go to restaurants more often if they were smoke-free, and 82 percent would support a communitywide, smoke-free ordinance. James' anti-drug education through Young Marines helps him support Impact Waxahachie.

Throughout all of this, James has had to overcome significant struggles with dyslexia. "I was diagnosed with dyslexia in second grade," James said. "My parents held me back one grade because they had just figured out I had dyslexia." James seeks to help others understand the different effects of dyslexia and how it impacts his daily life. "There are multiple types of dyslexia. My type is where you get the letters *b* and *d* backwards. I struggle with that because in reading I write certain stuff, and it looks like I wrote it wrong." However, James obviously hasn't let dyslexia hold

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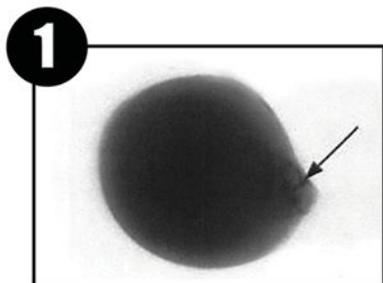


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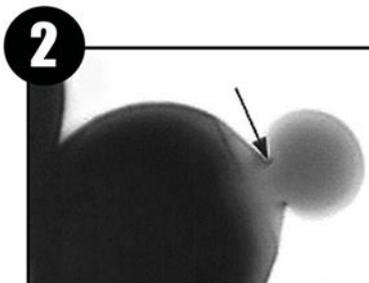
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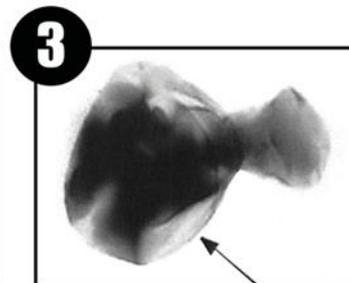
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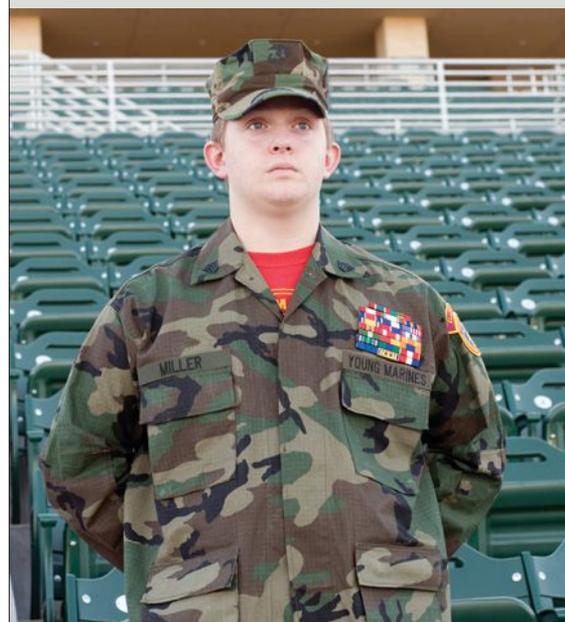


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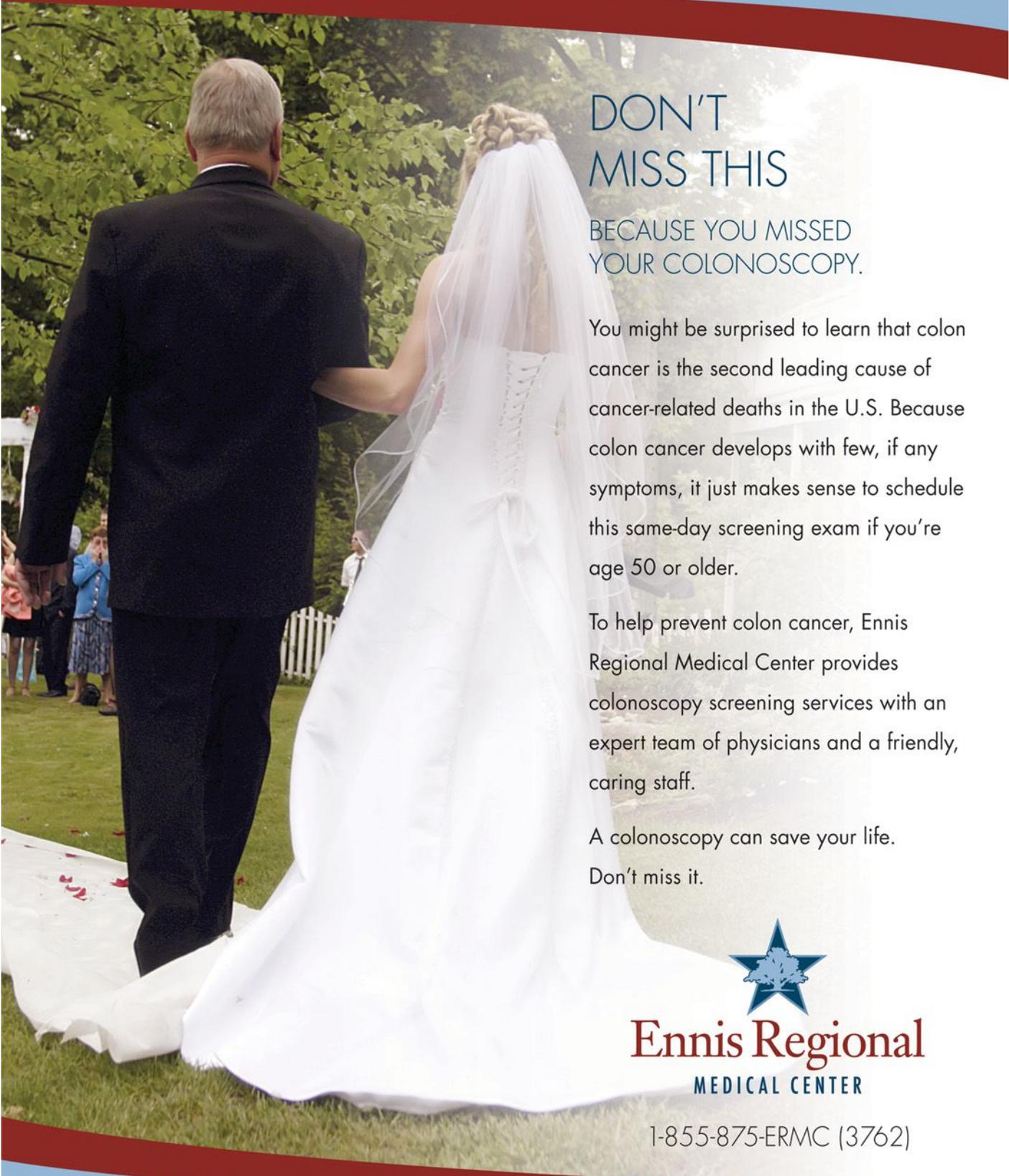
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him back from pursuing his passions. He's built himself back up very well. "I have dyslexia, but it doesn't have me," he said with a smile, adding that music has helped improve his dyslexic symptoms.

With so many different activities and a full high school schedule, James admits he sometimes has trouble balancing it all and feels overwhelmed every now and then. However, he loves every minute of his busy days. All of his many activities are helping him build toward his future goals. "I want to be a music teacher here in Ellis County," he said, adding he would also love to coach basketball and football. Overall, James dedicates his own effort and free time to improve Waxahachie and the character of his community. **NOW**



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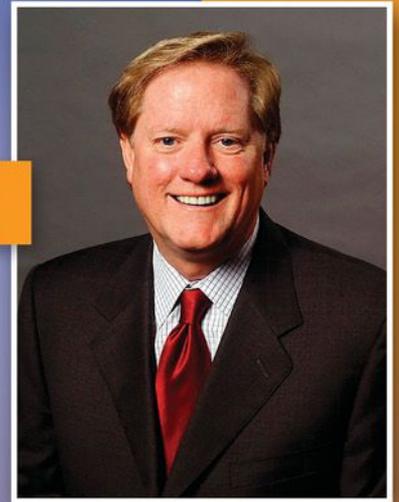
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AT HOME WITH Hank and Amy Hollywood

DEEP TEXAS ROOTS

— By Carolyn Wills



Proving that love is contagious at weddings, Hank and Amy Hollywood met at a wedding. She was a bridesmaid, and he a groomsman. The two have been married now for 14 years and are the proud parents of two boys.

Hank is a fifth-generation Texan, and Amy a fifth-generation Ellis County Texan. For them, there's not a better place to live than in Texas, and, precisely, there is not a better site for their beautiful home than in Ellis County. "My family has lived near FM 878 for 80 years," Amy smiled.

Although he was born in Texas, Hank moved a lot as a child. "It's important to me that our kids grow up in one place," he said. "We built our house in 2006, so the boys would know it as their childhood home and will have a place to come home to see mom and dad when they're grown and have families of their own."

Hank and Amy's ranch-style, 2,200-square-foot home sits on two acres with a backyard view of wide-open country. The exterior is variegated red





brick with cedar trim, and the stunning leaded-glass front door is banked on both sides by matching leaded-glass panels.

"Amy's dad was our contractor," Hank said. "We took the time to think through each step of construction, to draw and redraw, and we've really been happy with the results. I can't think of anything I would change."

Each room pays testimony to Hank and Amy's families, traditions and deep Texas roots. "Everything in our house has a story," Amy smiled. "There's something in every single room that tugs at my heartstrings."

The front door opens to a large, open living room/kitchen/dining room. The living room, floored in wide-planked wood, is furnished with soft brown leather sofas, a cedar chest transformed into a coffee table and an old Victrola record player complete with 78 rpm records. A second wood chest is covered with Amy's great-grandmother Leva's hand-quilted friendship blanket and a collection of old family photos. A long horizontal mirror framed in weathered barn wood, handmade as a gift from Hank to Amy, serves as a hat rack. "The straw pith hat was my granddaddy's," Amy shared. "He was a farmer for many years, and that hat became his trademark."

Amy's grandparents lived in Ellis County all of their lives. "I was very close

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to them,” she said. “My grandfather died in 2009, and my grandmother in 2012. It’s comforting to have some of their belongings in our home to keep their memory alive.”

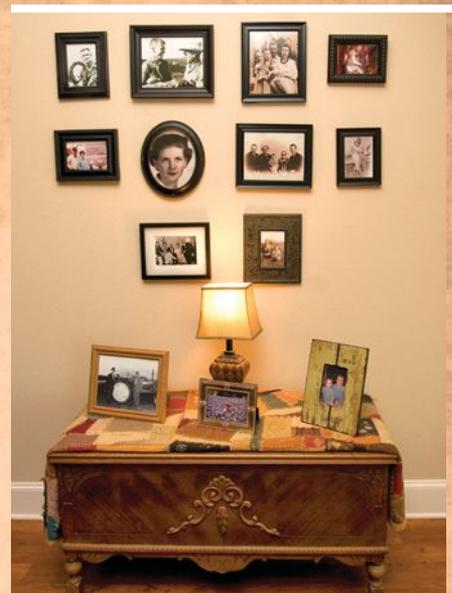
Amy’s favorite belonging, though, arrived as a surprise Christmas gift from Hank. A crystal chandelier made from an old oil lamp, which was originally hanging in her grandparents’ home, had disappeared. Amazingly, Hank was able to find and buy it. “It was in a million parts,” Amy said. “All of the crystals had to be restrung, and it took me a whole

year to restore it.” Today, that chandelier, returned to its original glory, hangs above the family dining table.

“My grandmother, Ouida Borders, was a wonderful artist,” Amy said. “We have a number of her oil paintings.” Another collection of heirlooms belonged to Ouida’s mother. “My great-grandmother began collecting creamer pitchers when she was 12 years old,” Amy explained. At one point, the collection numbered in excess of 1,100. Over time, Ouida distributed the pitchers among family members. “I have about 400 of them,”

she said. The pitchers are beautifully displayed next to the kitchen in an antique cabinet that once belonged to Ouida.

“We also have things from Hank’s family,” Amy added. “We have a set of amber Fostoria glasses, there’s an antique buckboard wagon that came from his grandparents’ yard. Hank and the boys



rebuilt the box, and now I plant my herb garden in it.”

A large, bright kitchen with custom knotty alder wood cabinetry and dark countertops completes the open central living/dining/kitchen area. “Amy is really a good cook,” Hank said.

“My hot sauce is pretty popular,” Amy grinned. “It’s really fresh, because most



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of the ingredients come from my garden. I also do quite a lot of canning.”

In addition to the core area, their home features three bedrooms, two-and-a-half baths, an office for Hank, laundry room, the boys’ game room, large garage and a screened-in back porch. “Our son, DJ, is 12 and in the sixth grade,” Hank said. “Brock is 8 and in the second grade. They both play multiple sports including basketball, baseball and football. When



they’re home, they spend a lot of time in the game room.” The game room has a half-bath and exterior access to the backyard, where the boys also spend a lot of time.

The boys’ bedrooms are unique to their interests. DJ’s room is filled with sports and hunting references, while Brock’s is all about cars. A large bathroom connects the two bedrooms.

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spacious and beautifully appointed with a tall four-poster bed covered in a light-blue and white comforter. The enormous bathroom features a luxurious tub, as well as a large shower.

Hank and Amy are both graduates of Texas A&M University in College Station. Hank's degree is in agricultural science, and Amy's is in journalism. "Hank is a teacher and high school football



Amy's great-grandmother poses with her pitcher collection in 1943.

coach," Amy said. "I am the director of communications and marketing for the city of Waxahachie. With our jobs and the boys' sports, our schedules are pretty hectic, especially during sports seasons."

As for the name Hollywood, Hank was encouraged by his Scottish professor to explore its origins. "My professor believed the border between Scotland and England was known as the Holy Woods," he explained. "In 1998, my oldest uncle and I visited Ellis Island. We looked up our name, and sure enough, it had been changed from Holy Wood to Hollywood."

When they're not rushing from work to a practice or to watch the boys play, Hank and Amy enjoy time at home. "When the weather cooperates, we like having dinner on the back porch," Amy said. "We've collected a lot of antique signs and have hung them on the porch walls."

Another important and relatively new member of the Hollywood family is their 3-year-old female German Shepherd. "We're big fans of the breed," Amy explained. "We lost our older one not too long ago, and it was time for another rescue."

Clearly, for Hank and Amy, there's no better home than in Texas where memories and histories run deep, and the view is wide open. "Yeah, I would say we are both pretty old souls," Amy grinned. **NOW**

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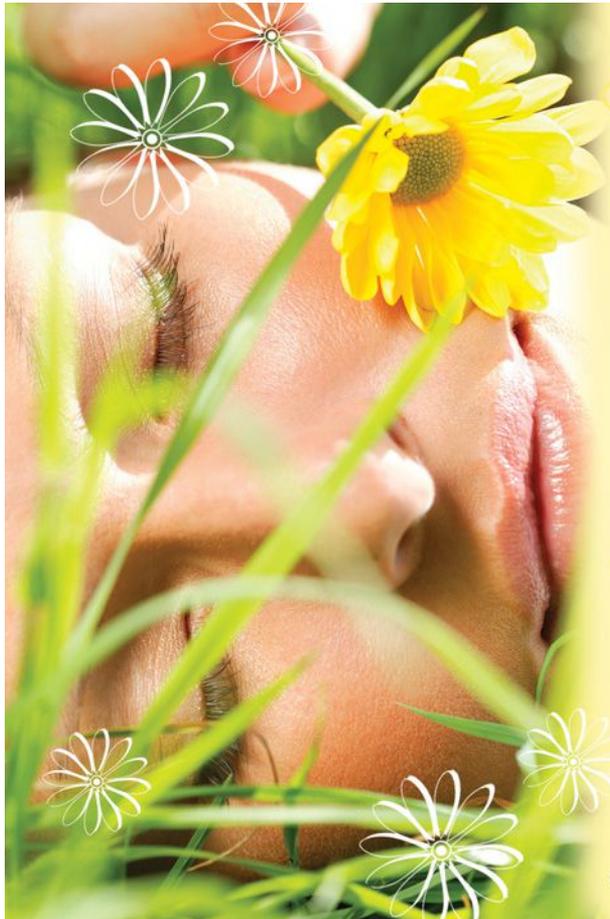
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HAVE YOU THERE IT

— By Sara Edgell

Baseball is in his blood. It's what he loves, what he does and what he has dedicated his life to. The game has literally defined his entire life. Until last year, Parker Sheets has done everything based on baseball. But it's different since a new element has been added to the game he's played for so long. Now he has players and those players'





families to think about. You see, Parker is now a coach, not a player, and that's where Parker's real story begins.

As a sport, baseball can be pretty intense. The game requires great skill but even greater intelligence. It's far more than throwing, hitting and catching a ball, and to love it as passionately as Parker does, well, that's even more intense than playing the game.

Parker's life has revolved around baseball since the age of 4. He started out in typical fashion, playing Little League in his hometown of Irving, Texas. Over the years, he progressed in his ability, skill and love for the game. He played for various competitive teams, as well as Little League. Parker played shortstop and pitched all four years at MacArthur High School.

When Parker went off to college, he continued playing ball for The University of Texas at Tyler. The reality of Parker taking his baseball career to the professional level was simply out of the question. As discouraging as this might sound, Parker took it all in stride. He knew there were bigger and brighter things in store for his life. "I knew I didn't have the ability to go further,"

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he admitted. "I couldn't have thrown another baseball if I wanted to, because my arm was shot. And honestly, I didn't have the work ethic to make it."

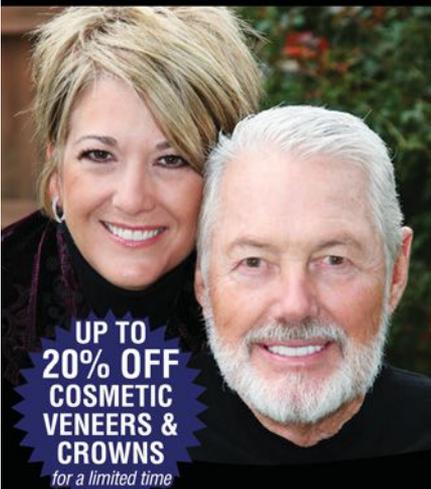
Since the major leagues were not in the cards for Parker, after college he took a job coaching for the Dallas Amateur Baseball Association. While coaching a young player, Parker learned about Gear Up Baseball in Waxahachie. The organization was looking for a coach, and Parker fit the bill perfectly.

Parker accepted the head coach position with some reservations. Taking



the position was not ideal, since he still lived in Tyler and would have to commute over two hours to work and another two hours back home every day. Admittedly, he had serious doubts about how long this would last. "Three or four months into it, I seriously questioned my choice, but it's worth it," he said. "I love what I do."

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So there you have it. That's how Parker found and began his career. But just like in baseball, it hasn't been that simple. Taking this job enabled Parker to discover his true place within the sport he loves so much. It's how his passion for the game changed him. In this case, finding the dream job isn't the happy ending of his story, but rather where it all begins.

At Gear Up, Parker coaches two teams. The 9U Ellis County Prospects is a competitive select team for 9-year-old boys who play year-round since baseball is not a sport played in elementary,

intermediate or junior high schools. They often travel long distances to compete in lengthy tournaments, playing multiple games in one day's time.

The 16U team is a little different. This team is made up of 16-year-old high school athletes who only play in the fall and summer, offsetting the regular high school baseball season. Under Parker's guidance, the obvious focus for both teams is, of course, baseball, but in all actuality, it's also about life.

Parker is known as the great encourager because of his caring nature. If Parker sees or learns one of his players is struggling, he goes the extra mile to reach out to them. For instance, one of his younger players on the 9U team had been bullied at school for wearing a pink breast cancer awareness shirt to school. Parker found out about the incident after one of his routine





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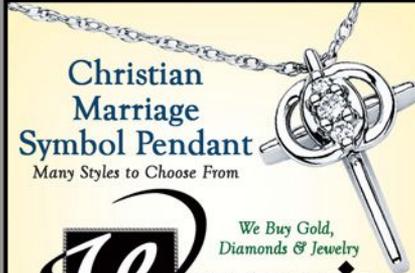


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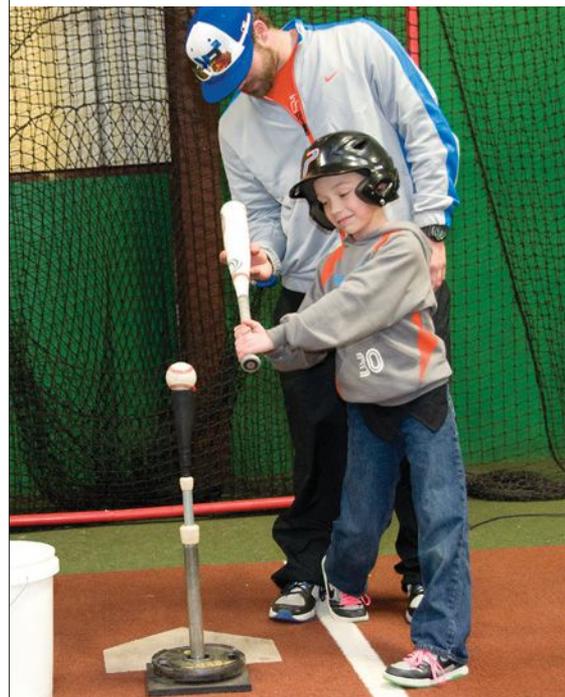
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Facebook checkups, and he took action. When the boy showed up to practice, Parker was decked out head-to-toe in all pink gear because, as he said to the boy, "Real men wear pink."

Seeing the boy's reaction was an important point in Parker's life. Reaching these kids and showing them I care is what I'm here for," he said. "It's more than just baseball."

But his caring nature also includes hard work and discipline. Parker admits he motivates and pushes his teams because he has high expectations for them. But his expectations are rooted in building confidence in the players and teaching them how to be respectful individuals. He wants them to have fun because, in the end, baseball is just a game. "I always tell my kids how proud of them I am," Parker stated. "I make sure to tell them



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that no matter how much I yell at them on the field, I am always proud of them.”

This demonstration of pride and love rings true throughout the work Parker does with his teams, the players’ families and his co-workers. He is admired so much by the parents of the boys on his team that one of them even wrote an essay nominating Parker for the www.mylates.com Coach of the Year award. “I didn’t win, but I feel like I have already won just because someone thought of me as a good nominee,” he admitted.

Over the past year, coaching baseball has become a switch-hitter of sorts for Parker. Not only does it provide him with an enjoyable job, but also with a family. The reservations he had about joining the team quickly vanished. Knowing he was in the right place, he moved shortly after to Waxahachie, solidifying his commitment to his job and his two teams.

Parker is truly one of a kind. He teaches so much more than baseball, because to him, baseball is so much more than just a game. It’s about building bonds, forming relationships, learning respect and developing lifelong skills. Along the way, Parker has found, despite his great love for the game, he loves working with the kids even more. But if you were to ask Parker to tell you about himself, he wouldn’t say anything. He’d smile humbly and politely decline to take the spotlight. “It’s not about me. It’s about the kids and helping them to reach their goals,” he explained. “It’s more than baseball. It’s family.” **NOW**



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A CLASSY HOOD

— By Jill Rose

When it comes to home improvement, most people believe you have to spend a large amount of money to make much difference. The reality is, some of the projects with the most impact on your home have the least impact on your wallet. One such project around my house involved replacing an over-the-stove microwave cabinet with a custom hood for the range for less than \$50.

The inspiration for this project came from a beautiful range hood I saw online. As beautiful as this range hood was, the price was not. The cost of this particular range hood was around \$700. With a few materials, you can create a similar hood for a fraction of the cost.



What you need based on a 16-inch range hood:

- 1 4 ft. x 8 ft. birch plywood panel: **\$10.67**
 - 1 1 in. x 2 in. x 8 ft. support board: **\$2.61**
 - 1 1 in. x 3 in. x 8 ft. pine board (for top front facing): **\$5.43**
 - 1 1 in. x 4 in. x 8 ft. pine board (for bottom front facing): **\$8.64**
 - 2 8 ft. lattice pieces: **\$7.28**
 - LIQUID NAILS construction adhesive: **\$2.52**
 - 8 ft. trim pieces (quantity and style based on personal preference): **\$8.52**
- Vent: N/A

Total: \$45.67! *Note: The cost of the vent is not included in the project costs as it varies by make and model. Also, this cost doesn't include the crown molding. I was replacing all of that on my cabinets anyway, so I already had it on hand.*

Step 1: Determine and purchase the type of vent you need.

Depending on the type of venting currently provided by your microwave, you will either need a recirculating vent or an external vent. A recirculating vent takes air, steam or other materials, passes them through a filter and reintroduces them into the room as fresh air. An external vent takes these same materials and removes them to the outside of your home using a venting system. For my particular situation, I needed a recirculating vent. To determine the correct size, measure the width and depth of your space, subtract approximately 4 inches from the depth and width and use that number as a guide.

Note: You do not want a vent the width of your cabinet, because you will be unable to build a box to hold it.





Before



After

Step 2: Remove the existing microwave and cabinet structure.

Note: Before beginning this project, move your stove so it does not get damaged.

After removing the microwave, remove the cabinet doors. Next, remove the bottom of the cabinet, as well as the front support piece. If your cabinets are individual units, you can simply take the cabinet off the wall. In my situation, the

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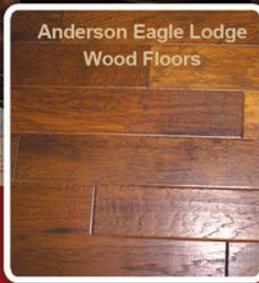
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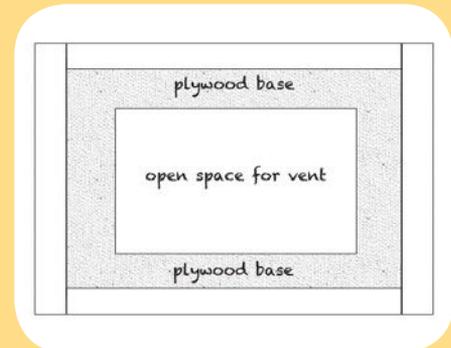
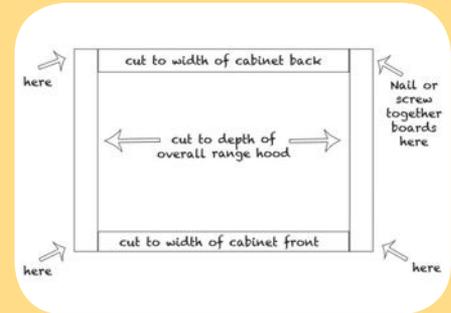
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middle cabinet was a part of a single cabinet unit.

Step 3: Determine the depth of your range hood.

Most range hoods have a depth between 16 and 24 inches. The size you pick will be based upon your preference, but generally you want to make sure it extends far enough to partially cover your front burner.

Step 4: Build a box for your vent.



Measure the width of your cabinets in the front and the back. (They should be the same, but can be off by about 1/2 inch.) Cut two support beams to this width. Next, cut two support beams to the overall depth you decided on for the range hood. (For me it was 16 inches.) Attach the supports together, creating a box frame. Do this outside of the cabinet space (in your workshop).

Next, cut a 3/4-inch thick piece of plywood to the overall width and length of the finished box frame. Set the vent on top of the plywood and draw an outline. Cut out the outlined section. Attach the plywood to the bottom of the box frame.

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Step 5: Attach the vent.

Attach the box frame to the cabinet. Attach the vent to the supports. (Your user's manual should suggest the best way to do this.) Install the vent, i.e. plug it in, attach the outside venting, if needed, etc.)

Step 6: Create the front facings and supports.

Using the 1 in. x 4 in. x 8 ft. pine

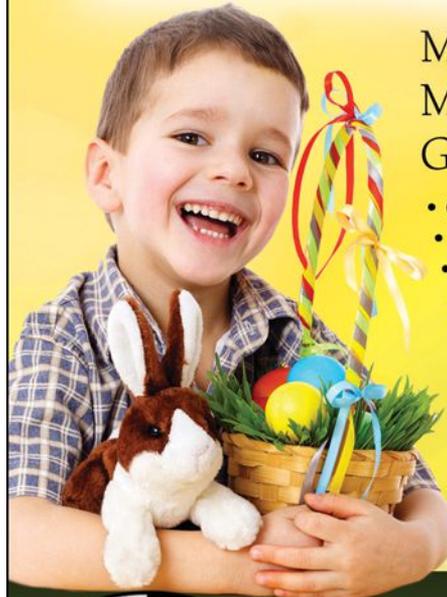


board, create the front facing for the bottom support. The front facing should be roughly 1/2 inch longer than the support and should be mitered to 45 degrees on both ends. Next, measure the amount of exposed supports on the side and cut front facing for each side (continuing to use the 1 in. x 4 in. x 8 ft. pine board). Miter the edges. Attach the facing to the support using a nail gun.

Using the 1 in. x 3 in. x 8 ft. pine board, create the front facing for your cabinet frame. (The top face front should be the same length as the bottom face front and should also be mitered at the ends.) Depending on how far the top face front sticks out, you will need to cut side face fronts for the upper section as



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well using the remaining 1 in. x 3 in. x 8 ft. pine board. Attach the facing to the support using a nail gun.

Measure the length between the top and bottom face front, and cut three support beams to that size using the 1 in. x 2 in. x 8 ft. support board. Attach them to the back of the face fronts using a nail gun. (I mitered the ends of the boards, so they can be attached just behind the face fronts.)

After adding the supports, measure the open area from the outside of the left support to the outside of the right support and from the top face front to the bottom. Using these measurements, cut out a plywood square. Attach the plywood to the supports using a nail gun. Because the hood is slanted, the plywood should sit right behind both the upper and lower face fronts.

Next, determine the angle of the side pieces. For lack of a better option, I folded a piece of cardboard over the side and then cut the cardboard to size. Trace out the pattern on a piece of plywood and cut. Attach side pieces to the supports using a nail gun.

Step 7: Add the finishing touches.

After attaching the sides, sand the entire range hood. Next, cut two pieces of lattice to the width of the center plywood area, making sure to miter them on the edges.

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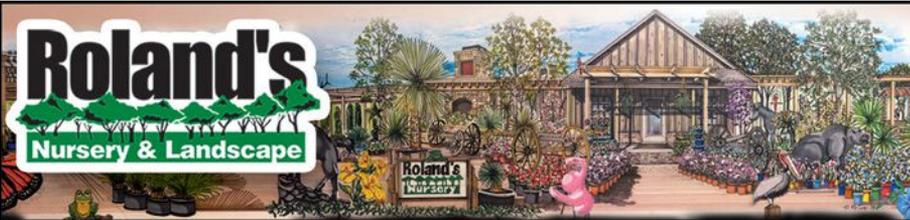
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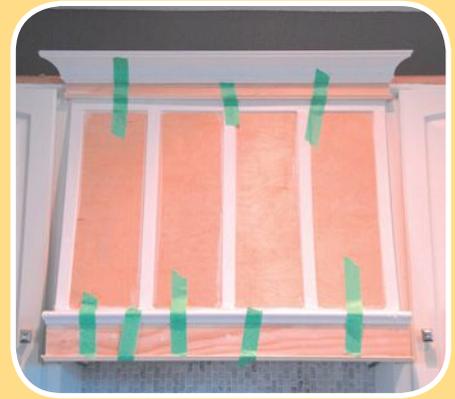
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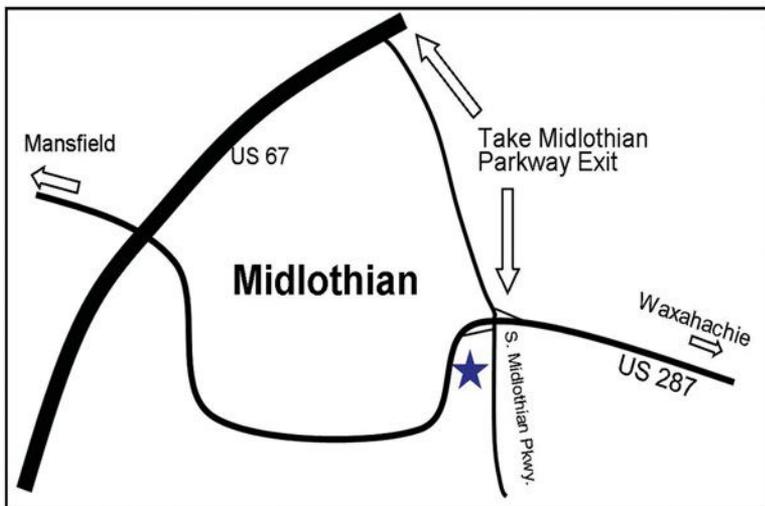
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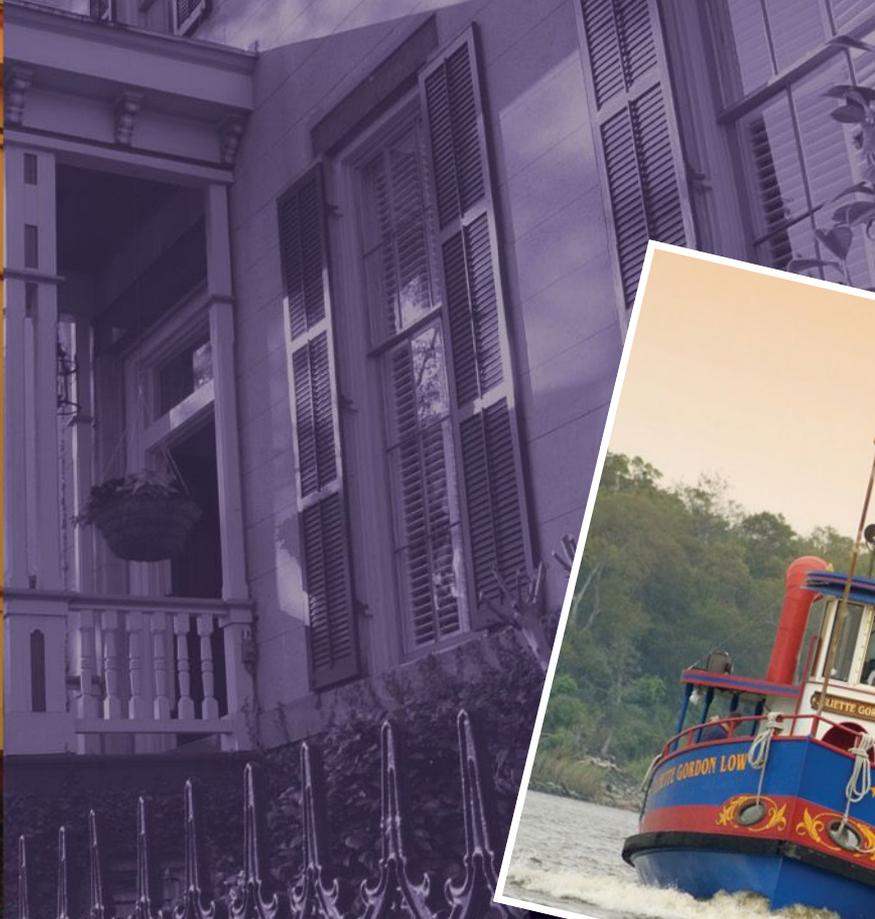
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Situated on Georgia's coast in the midst of the delightful Low Country, Savannah waits to embrace you with gentle warmth and Southern hospitality. The appeal of the first city of Georgia is her dazzling combination of old-fashioned charm and 21st century chic. Visitors can saunter past picturesque homes lining the city's walkable streets, relax at a cafe or watch ships drift along the Savannah River. Originally

founded in 1733, this coastal haven is classic but hip. From the elegance of the Landmark Historic District to the festivities of River Street, visitors delight in this coastal jewel's secrets.

Savannah was shaped from a wilderness by James Edward Oglethorpe and a group of English settlers. Five months after General Oglethorpe and the original settlers landed in Savannah, 42 Jewish refugees arrived from Spain — the largest immigration of Jews at one time to the New World during the Colonial period. Oglethorpe favored



Savannah with what has become her world-renowned claim to fame — the park-like city squares, havens for rest.

Warm hospitality mixes with the Old South's calm pace on strolls down cobblestone streets, where century-old live oaks shade magnificent homes and refined churches. The reoccurring haint blue color painted on doorframes, porches and windowsills of many of Savannah's grand homes is not only aesthetically pleasing, but the Gullah/



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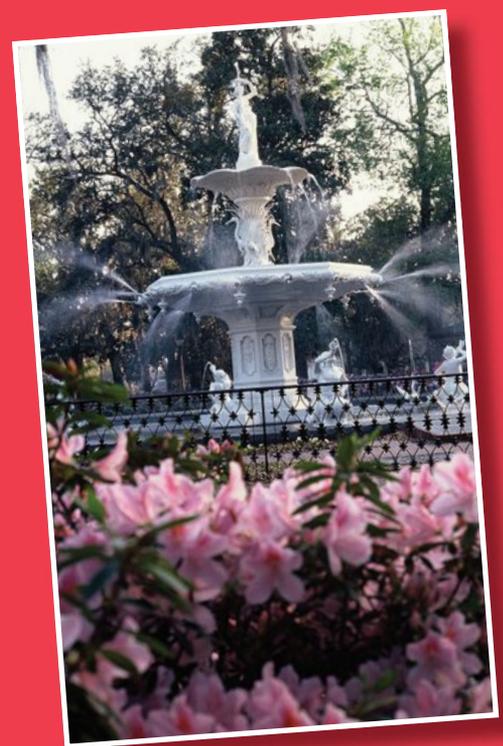
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Geechee culture of the Low Country teaches that the bluish-green hue represents water, over which spirits are said not to pass.

Savannah's magnificent architecture and 22 splendid squares beckon walkers to slow down. The Bull and Abercorn Street corridors take you past some of Savannah's famous landmarks. The heart and soul of downtown Savannah is verdant Forsyth Park. This 30-acre urban oasis has hosted outdoor concerts and spontaneous gourmet gatherings since 1840.



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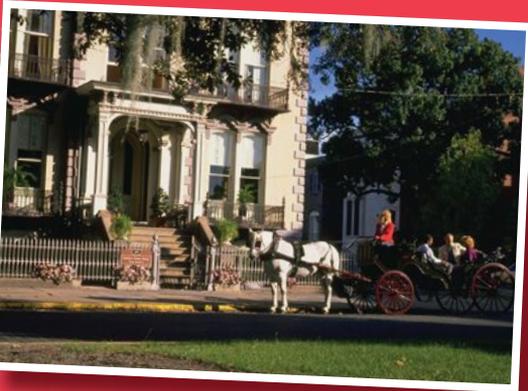
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Nearby, Savannah's Historic River Street hosts casual and upscale dining. Seafood, steaks and family favorites can be found in these restored cotton warehouses now home to some of Savannah's favorite restaurants and pubs, some offering live music for a toe-tapping good time. Sampling fine restaurants in Savannah's City Market, it's possible to dine outdoors at a European-style cafe or eat in one of the Market's restored buildings, all special with their own quirky charm. The Pirates' House, a famous Savannah restaurant, was actually a tavern frequented by pirates who sailed the Caribbean in 1794. Events at the Pirates' House were the inspiration for Robert Lewis Stevenson's novel *Treasure Island*.



Savannah's quaint bed-and-breakfast inns and upscale hotels offer comfortable options for resting up before another day of exploration. Savannah grew up to be a bustling port famed for exporting cotton, and a city of culture whose architecture blended a variety of styles still in evidence — Federal, English Regency, Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Romanesque Revival and Queen Anne.

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In a study published by the Savannah Historic Foundation, one of the most admired preservation groups in the country, more than 40 percent of 2,500 buildings inventoried in Savannah had architectural or historical significance.

Today, Savannah invites well-versed, inquisitive travelers to experience its splendor. Always alive with the arts, influences like the Savannah College of Art and Design and the City Market artist colony make Savannah's Historic District the perfect artist's muse. Antique shops, galleries and gift shops full of handcrafts pepper every corner of the district and River Street. Explorers find that Savannah is a city of romance.

As one of only a handful of cities in America that allow al fresco cocktails, Savannah offers an unforgettable night out. If you're walking on foot north of Jones Street, any Historic District bartender will pour your drink to go. A moonlit carriage ride is the perfect beginning to a romantic evening of a candlelit meal followed by a musical, play, opera or comedy at one of Savannah's three performance theaters.

Most months, Savannah hosts festivals adding spice to life. The holidays are always spectacular in Savannah with events like the Holiday Tour of Homes and the Savannah Harbor Boat Parade of Lights. The city's Martin Luther King Jr. Observance Day Celebration and St. Patrick's Day Parade are legendary. Throughout March and April, the Savannah Music Festival features some of the best performers and vocalists around. Fall gatherings, like the Savannah Food and Wine Festival and Savannah Film

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Pioneer Village - A collection of early settler homes, businesses and artifacts. For information call: 903-654-4846 M-F 8-5, Sat 9-4, Sun 1-4

Watkins Trophy Room - The Trophy Room includes over 400 animals from across the world, ranging from Blue Moose to Blue Marlin, including the famous Black Diamond Elephant. For information call: 903-874-6587

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Savannah mesmerizes with her unforgettable natural beauty and thrilling past. This much-celebrated destination has enticed visitors with her sultry ambience for centuries. If you're feeling tempted to discover her secrets, check out www.VisitSavannah.com to begin making plans to discover paradise. You'll feel at home in the streets of Savannah and remember her fondly. **NOW**

By Visit Savannah. Photos courtesy of <http://www.VisitSavannah.com>.

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Owner Kirk Davis, agency manager Joanna Riddlehuber and the competent staff at ECIA work hard to make insurance easy for their customers.

Finding the Right Fit

Let ECIA do the insurance shopping for you! — By Sandra Strong

People are bombarded with advertising that encourages them to get on the Internet to find a quick “do-it-yourself” quote. “This is a scary thought when you think of all the ins and outs of insurance and what could be left off of a policy,” said Kirk Davis, owner of Ellis County Insurance Agency. “The price may look good, but be careful when you have to count on the policy to take care of you. We are licensed insurance agents ready to help with your insurance plans.”

The staff at ECIA comes with over 100 years of combined knowledge in the insurance field. Alone, agency manager Joanna Riddlehuber brings over 40 years of invaluable experience to the table. “As a full-service, independent insurance agency, we have the best possible rates available for our customers,” Joanna

explained, “because we work with dozens of companies.”

“They are all long-term, dedicated employees,” Kirk said. “They honestly believe in what they sell.”

In September 2010, Kirk and his wife, Tobin, purchased ECIA, a local company that’s been in business since 1897, thanks in large part to their families. “Bob Sokoll, Tobin’s dad and past Waxahachie city manager, was instrumental in helping with the business plan, as well as the purchase,” Kirk shared. The new ownership has already experienced growth in what was already a successful, thriving insurance office.

ECIA moved to a new location soon after Kirk and Tobin finalized the purchase. For years, the ECIA offices were tucked away a block from the historic downtown square, but as the

need for more office space made itself known, Kirk moved the business to its present location on Executive Court. The new offices are updated, modern and classy. "It's an environment conducive to conducting business," Joanna explained.

"We've just celebrated three years here," Kirk added.

The competent, well-established staff makes insurance easy for the consumer. Account managers Gayla Clark and Wendy Frank handle all aspects of commercial insurance. Commercial and small business insurance features a commercial package policy with many offerings that include, but are not limited to: worker's compensation; commercial property, which encompasses a building and/or its contents; crime; employer's protective liability; employee benefit coverage; and business income. "Our commercial business has grown tremendously," Kirk said. "I think our managers in that department have a lot to do with that growth. Their forte is the client."

Account managers Dustie Jones and Dixie Smith oversee all other types of personal insurance, while Kirk handles life insurance policies. Judy Finch serves as the bond account manager, while Gayla also works on large bonds. "We have simple term life policies to universal whole life policies," Joanna said. "We have our customers covered." ECIA is also helping customers leave a legacy instead of a tax burden with their "Safe Money" investment, a special life insurance policy geared toward earning more interest.

Servicing Ellis, Hill, Dallas, Navarro, Johnson and Tarrant counties, 2013 marked the first year in the company's long history where they hit the five perils — fire, lightning, hail, wind and riot and civil commotion — listed as losses in the insurance industry, thus the increase in some insurance premiums. Regardless of your insurance needs, potential insurance clients are encouraged to call and be added to the large family of satisfied ECIA customers. "We are able to quote insurance with many companies to find the right fit for any situation," Kirk reiterated. "Let us do the insurance shopping for you!" **NOW**

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Gayla Clark (Commercial Account Manager),
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Judy Finch (Bonds), Wendy Frank (Commercial Account Manager)
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Cherokee Charmers Lauren Lyle and Janet Hernandez pose for the camera.



Griffin Kitchens gives the tunnel slide a big thumbs up.



Meagan Mitchell, Kennedy Ikechukwu and Jonathan Bernos offer T-shirts to all those who could make a hole in one.



Aaron Penny, of Neighborhood Credit Union, and Lucy Baez, of YMCA, share information at the Lifestyles Expo.



Gina Robinson, with God's Little Critters, takes Corky to visit the residents at Renfro Healthcare Center.



Joanna and Russ Noggle share lunch and conversation at Chick-fil-A.



Earl Roberts and other family members make a surprise visit at the Chamber Awards Banquet to honor his son, Ken Roberts who was named Waxahachie Citizen of the Year.



Applebee's Alexis Davis delivers service with a smile.



Michelle McLaren invites you to Scarborough Renaissance Festival.

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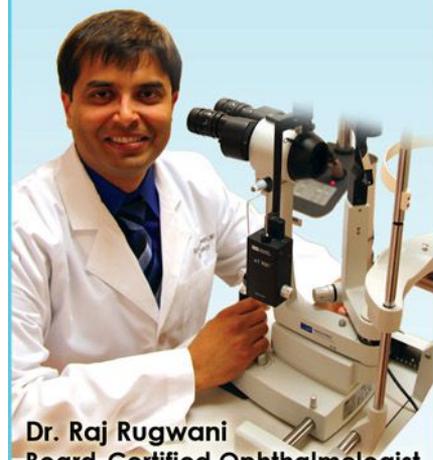
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Best Ways to Grow a Savings Account

Easy ways to become an effective saver

If you have a savings account or are thinking about opening one, it's apparent one of your biggest priorities is already saving money. And that means you're looking for the best ways to keep money coming in so you can watch your savings grow. Whether you're saving for something big like a car or a down payment for a house, or you're just securing your resources in the event you need extra cash, follow these tips for the best ways to grow your savings account, and ultimately, help you financially in the future.

1. Portion Your Paycheck. For each paycheck you receive, allot a certain amount of it specifically for your savings account. And adding it to your savings account right away ensures you'll get in the full amount you set aside. If you're having troubling remembering to put the money in, or you're fighting willpower to keep it all in your checking account, you can schedule automatic payments or deposits to go directly into your savings account.

2. Try Not to Transfer. It's a good idea to keep your savings account off limits, even to yourself. Tell yourself if you really want that new phone or motorcycle, your savings account is unattainable. One way to keep from transferring is to label your accounts.

3. Take Advantage of Technology. It can be expensive to hire a personal financial adviser — so just download one instead. Nowadays, there are various apps to help you save, one of them being SavedPlus. This free app allows you to pick a savings amount that automatically transfers to your account once you make a purchase. For example, say you set your savings to 10 percent. When you purchase \$100 worth of groceries or clothing or whatever else, 10 percent of your money will automatically transfer from your checking account to your savings. Also try

account alerts, which send a text to your phone letting you know how much is in your savings at the end of each month. Also, if the balance goes below a certain amount, this system will warn you.

4. Watch for Fees and Competitive Perks. When opening your account, be sure to ask questions and find out if there are any fees being deducted each month or year, or if there is a minimum-balance fee. Also, be on the look-out for accounts that offer additional perks such as competitive dividend rates. This is an easy way to generate some additional revenue off of your savings account, typically paid according to the average monthly balance in the account. In addition, there are several credit unions and other nonprofits across the nation that offer prize-linked savings accounts. These types of accounts are structured to do exactly that — help motivate people to save through the excitement of winning prizes and rewarding smart savings behavior.

5. Discipline Yourself. The ultimate way to keep the money in your savings account growing is not to touch it unless you need it, or you are using it for something you've saved for. Add to it when you can, and soon enough, you'll see your dollars multiplying, allowing you to be able to afford what you're wishing for.

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Aaron Penny is the branch manager at the Neighborhood Credit Union in Waxahachie.

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April 4, 5

Cherokee Charmer's Annual Spring Show Extravaganza/We Are the World: 7:00 p.m., WHS Fine Arts Center. Tickets are available at the door, \$8 for adults and \$6 for students and seniors.

April 5

Healing Hearts Third Annual Gala Event: 6:00 p.m., The Avenue Church, 1761 Hwy 77 N. After Five attire. Tickets are \$50 per person and can be obtained by visiting www.healing-hearts-center.org/ or by calling (972) 388-4777.

April 5 — April 27

Big Hair & Sparkly Pants Exhibit: 1:00-5:00 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays only, Webb Art Gallery, 209 W. Franklin St. Visit www.webbartgallery.com for more information.

April 5 — May 26

Scarborough Renaissance Festival: 2511 FM 66, Exit 399A on I35E. Open on the weekends only in April and May, plus Memorial Day Monday. For more information, call (972) 938-3247 or visit www.srfestival.com.

April 12

Run 4 West: 8:00 a.m., Getzendaner Park. Cost: 5K, \$25; 10K, \$35; 1-mile fun run, \$10. To register, visit www.runwrc.com/run4west or call Susan Turner at (972) 825-2182.

Annual Easter Fun Day: 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Easter egg hunt for children under age 10; Noon-6:00 p.m., silent auction; 2:00 p.m., dart tournament; 4:00 p.m., live auction; 7:00 p.m., pool tournament; VFW Post 3894, I-35E Southbound Service Rd. at Hwy 77. Doors open at 11:00 a.m. For event information, call (469) 658-6846 or (972) 351-3303. Call (972) 937-7007 for more detailed directions.

Rockin' For Rick: 6:00 p.m., Sokol Hall, 2622 E. Hwy 34, Ennis. Concert benefiting the National Brain Tumor Society in memory of Rick Sparkman. Crawfish boil at 7:00 p.m. Live auction at 8:30 p.m.

April 19

Seventh Annual Waxahachie Easter Egg Hunt: 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Getzendaner Park. For more information, call (972) 885-0558 or visit events@mission75165.org.

April 26

Waxahachie Symphony Association presents The Classic Swing Band: 7:00 p.m., Park Meadows Baptist Church, 3350 Hwy. 77 N. This is a concert, not a dance. For more information, call (972) 938-1181.

5K4KIDS benefiting Midlothian ISD Education Foundation: 10:00 a.m., MISD Multi-Purpose Stadium, 1800 S. 14th St. Midlothian. There will be a chip-timed 5K and a 1-mile Fun Run/Walk. Register at 5K4KIDS.net or mail in/drop off form at the MEF office at 100 Walter Stephenson Rd. or P.O. Box 1906, Midlothian, TX 76065 or call 972-775-8296, ext. 1281.

May 3

Third Annual Race for the King benefiting the Kyle King Scholarship Fund: 7:00 a.m., onsite late registration and packet pickup; 8:00 a.m., 5K race begins; 8:45 a.m., Prince and Princess Fun Run begins; 9:00 a.m., presentation of awards. For more information on registration, shirt fees, etc., contact Traci Rodriguez at (972) 544-2279 or visit tdrodrig@ferisisd.org.

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your current event details to sandra.strong@nowmagazines.com.

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Damaged Joints

— By Betty Tryon, BSN

Nearly everyone is familiar with arthritis. Many people either know someone with it, or they have it themselves. That is because arthritis is not one disease but a term used to cover over 100 medical conditions. Statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report, “An estimated 50 million U.S. adults (about 1 of 5) report having doctor-diagnosed arthritis. As the U.S. population ages, the number of adults with arthritis is expected to increase sharply to 67 million by 2030.” Osteoarthritis is the most common form, and for the purposes of this discussion, the information relayed here refers to that disorder. Many of the symptoms experienced in osteoarthritis are found in the other conditions.

Arthritis damages the cartilage which protects the joint. The cartilage is the flexible connective tissue that covers the bone at the joint, allowing the joints to move smoothly and avoid friction. Cartilage also acts as a shock absorber. Without that intact and healthy cushion, bone would rub bone — something as painful as it sounds. Inflammation becomes a perpetual part of the problem. Other symptoms are swelling and stiffness, resulting in a decreased range of motion in the affected joint.

There is no one specific known cause for arthritis. Even though no cause has been recognized, researchers have identified risk factors that may predispose a person to the disease. No. 1 on the list is age. As we grow older, the stress on the joints increases

because of constant use. Some sports and occupations encourage the development of arthritis because of repetitive use of a specific body part. Weight plays a part in arthritis due to the added burden on the joints, and injury to the joint area can set the area up for constant inflammation.

In treatment, your goals are to prevent further joint damage and manage your pain level. Many pain medications such as acetaminophen and NSAIDs (nonsteroidal, anti-inflammatory drugs) like aspirin, naproxen and ibuprofen are sold over the counter. Other NSAIDs are only by prescription. However, there are many other options available to make living with arthritis a little easier. Applying heat, ice or massage can help. Another option is proper exercise to reduce stiffness, build strength and increase or maintain range of motion. Try to avoid repetitive movements that put stress on joints.

Arthritis may be in your future, but moderation in exercise and following your doctor’s instructions regarding medication can help you stay active. **NOW**

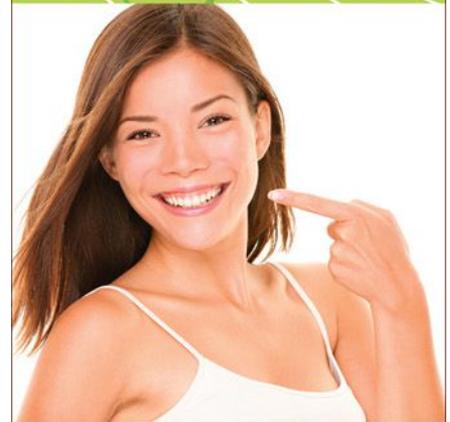
Source:

www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/resources/publications/aag/arthritis.htm

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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In the Kitchen With Gloria Munoz

— By Randy Bigham

Cooking is a spicy way of life for Gloria Munoz whose Mexican heritage has inspired her culinary skills. From girlhood, she has loved the craft of producing great meals, and she credits her grandmother for instilling in her that appreciation. “I grew up enjoying the wonderful Mexican cooking of my grandmother,” Gloria recalled. “She had a magic touch and was a great teacher, and I loved being with her in the kitchen.” Her own mom’s effortless cooking abilities have also had a hand in making Gloria the talented cook she is today.

Gloria takes cues from TV chefs, but indulges her creativity by tailoring them to her taste. “I make mental notes,” she said, “as I watch as to how I can make the recipe my own.” **NOW**

Baked Bean Chili

- 1 lb. hamburger
- 1 small onion
- 2 28-oz. cans Bush’s Baked Beans
- 1 10-oz. can Ro-Tel Tomatoes and Green Chilies
- 1 pkg. McCormick chili seasoning
- 1/4 cup tomato sauce
- Sour cream and fresh onion, diced, as garnish (if desired)

1. In a skillet, brown hamburger; drain liquid.
2. Sauté onion until transparent. Add to meat and place in Crock-Pot.
3. Add remaining ingredients. Cook for 1-2 hours on medium heat. Garnish as suggested.

Cheesy Corn Casserole

- 1 10-oz. pkg. frozen corn, thawed
- 2 15-oz. cans cream-style corn
- 1/2 stick butter
- 8 oz. cream cheese
- 1/4 cup jalapeños, diced or 1 4-oz. can

- green chilies
- Salt and pepper, to taste

1. In a buttered casserole dish, mix all ingredients and place in oven at 350 F for about 30-45 minutes.

Chicken Tortilla Soup

- 2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 2 1/2 cups water
- 1 Tbsp. vegetable oil
- 1 small onion, diced
- 3 small cloves garlic, finely diced
- 1 4-oz. can green chilies, drained
- 1/2 tsp. cumin
- 1 10-oz. can Ro-Tel Tomatoes and Green Chilies, drained
- 4 oz. tomato sauce
- 1 15-oz. can black beans, drained
- 1/2 cup frozen corn
- 2 cups hot water
- Corn tortilla strips, sour cream, diced avocado, cheddar or Monterey Jack cheese, grated, as garnish (if desired)

1. In a saucepan, place chicken breasts, salt, pepper and water. Bring to a boil over medium heat; cook until chicken is done. Reserve broth. Shred chicken with 2 forks.
2. In a small skillet, heat oil over medium heat. Add onion, garlic and green chilies. When onion is transparent, transfer to soup pot and add cumin, Ro-Tel and tomato sauce. Stir to combine; mix in remainder of ingredients. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer for 30 minutes. Turn off heat. Allow soup to sit about 15 minutes before serving. Garnish as suggested.

Lemon Bars

- Crust:**
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
 - 1 cup confectioners’ sugar
 - 1/8 tsp. salt
 - 2 sticks butter, room temperature

- Filling:**
- 4 eggs
 - 2 cups sugar
 - 6 Tbsp. flour
 - 6 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Lightly grease a 9x13x2-inch pan.
2. *For crust:* Combine flour, sugar and salt in a mixing bowl. Cut in butter; mix until crumbly. Press mixture into pan. Bake 20 minutes.
3. *For filling:* Combine all ingredients until mixture is smooth. Pour mixture over baked crust; bake for 25 minutes.

Quick Banana Bread

- 1 yellow cake mix
- 1 2.4-oz. pkg. Jell-O Banana Cream Instant Pudding
- 4 eggs
- 1/4 cup oil
- 3/4 cups water
- 1 cup bananas (3 bananas), mashed
- 1/2 cup walnut pieces

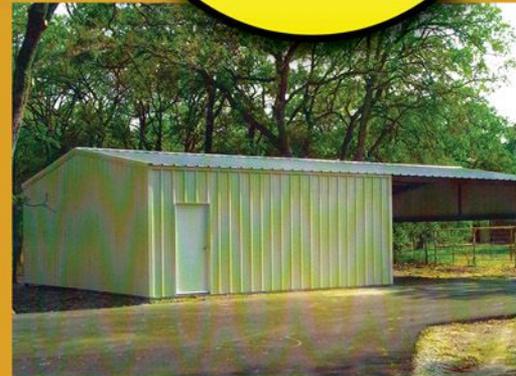
1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Grease and flour a standard loaf pan, or 5 mini loaf pans.
2. Beat together first 5 ingredients with a mixer for about 2 minutes. Add bananas and nuts. Blend all ingredients well. Bake 35-40 minutes.

To view recipes from current and previous issues, visit www.nowmagazines.com.



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