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M A G A Z I N E

JANUARY 2011

## Viva la Troubadour

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music in its rarest form.

### Also Inside

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At Home With  
Tomas &  
Rita Reyes



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**On The Cover**



Heart strings strike a chord.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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# EDITOR'S NOTE

*Happy New Year, Waxahachie!*

Wow! I cannot believe another year has come and gone. So many wonderful memories were made in 2010. I married a wonderful man. My youngest son married the girl of his dreams. My oldest son learned the importance of home and the value of a dollar. It was a year of growth for the whole family.



A new year means new beginnings. As we embark on 2011, I look forward to making many new friends as the community editor of the best hometown magazine in the county. You have always made me feel welcome, and I thank you for that. It means the world to know you are trusted by those you represent.

If you made a New Year's resolution, I wish you the best of luck in keeping it. I am going to take it one day at a time. Maybe then I will find success at the end of the "resolution rainbow."

Sandra Strong  
 WaxahachieNOW Editor  
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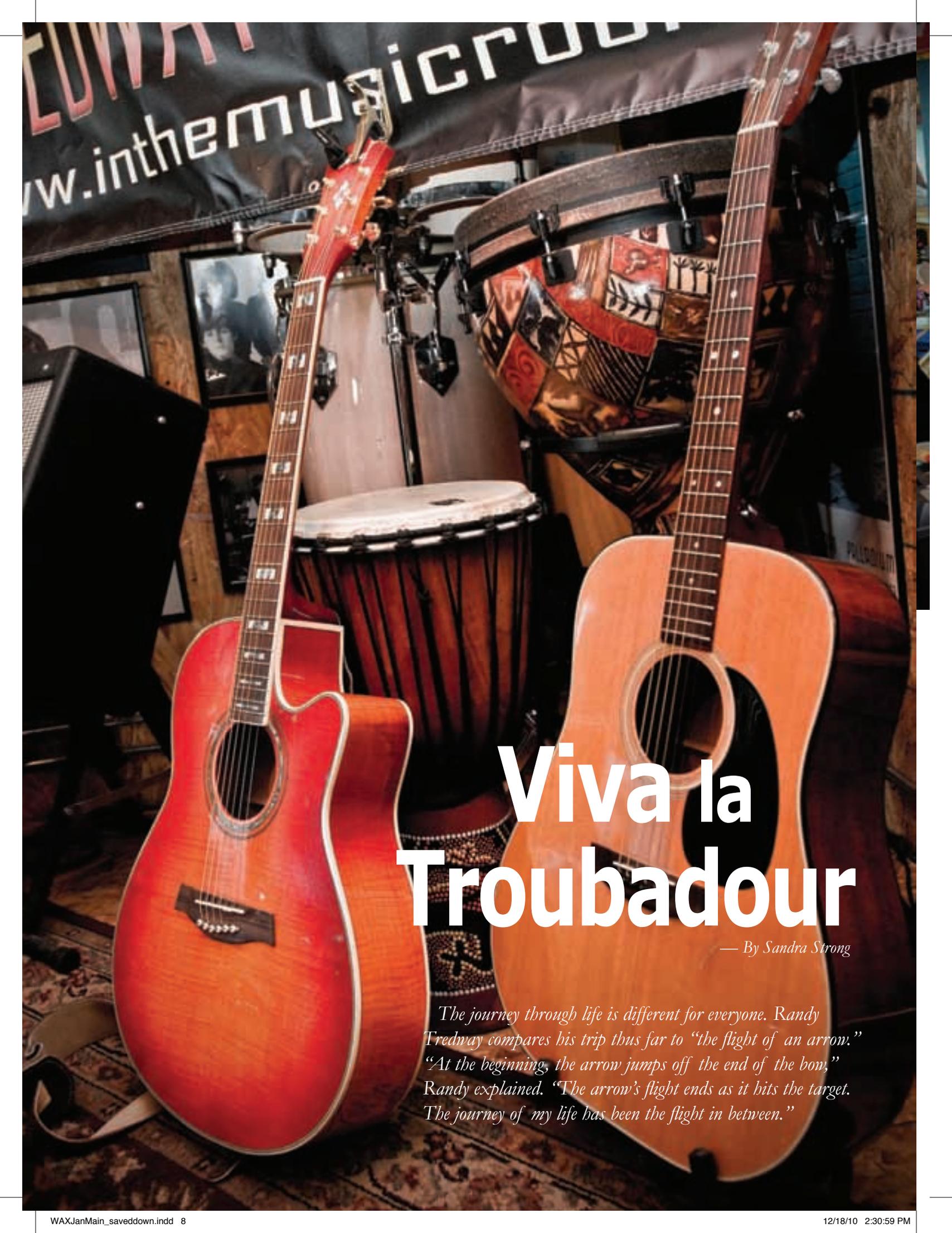


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# Viva la Troubadour

— By Sandra Strong

*The journey through life is different for everyone. Randy Fredway compares his trip thus far to “the flight of an arrow.” “At the beginning, the arrow jumps off the end of the bow,” Randy explained. “The arrow’s flight ends as it hits the target. The journey of my life has been the flight in between.”*



When others speak of Randy, many refer to him as a “modern day music man.” When listening to him talk about his journey, it is easy to see that he has loved the written word and how it relates to the “musical senses” his entire life. “I was 7 when I first heard Elvis and 14 when the Beatles came on the scene,” Randy remembered. “I thought life couldn’t get any better than this.”

It was during these formative years that Randy first learned to play the guitar and the piano — with only a few lessons. “I thought lessons were for girls,” he laughed. He credits the fluency with which he plays both instruments today to his diligence and desire to play. “I’m a self-taught musician,” he added with emphasis.

These early greats inspired him to write — to share the verses that were just “dying to get out.” “I had something to say — things inside me that needed to get out,” Randy admitted. “I really think my journey in music and songwriting began in my early 20s. By the time I reached 30, I no longer wanted to do just covers: songs that are known by other artists that we would remake and perform ourselves. I wanted to compose.”

Randy learned the key to his musical success at an early age. He understood his need to write and perfected his craft. Only

then did he realize he could perform his own material. “I prayed to learn to be a great performer,” he said modestly. “I admit I was a poet before I was ever a songwriter. I found writing to be very therapeutic. It allowed me to get the feelings that were bottled up inside of me out.”

While working in the industry he has grown to love, Randy met his wife, Helen Kennedy. They met on a dating Web site. They strongly believe it was their love of music that brought them together, and that it is one of the key elements that has kept them together.

“When she said the Beatles were the greatest,” Randy said, as he looked at her and winked, “I was hooked.”

“We are writers,” Randy admitted, returning to his serious mode, “who are waiting on the next verse or idea to take shape in our minds. Once it’s there, we transfer it to the strings of a guitar.”

Helen is the first to say she does not play an instrument. “My voice is my instrument,” she said. “I can have a tune in my head. When I hum it or sing it to Randy, he makes it come alive on the

guitar. We create well together.”

So far, the ride for Randy and Helen has been anything but dull. They refer to it as “interesting, to say the least.” When they met, neither had been looking for a life partner; they only



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wanted to find someone compatible whom they could date on occasion.

The early attraction quickly turned into a love affair between two musical hearts. This love for one another and music has grown into something the couple enjoys sharing with the community. The idea of “In The Music Room” morphed into something much bigger than the two of them expected. “The live studio concept just evolved,” Randy shared. “I was still praying that God would be involved in my marriage and also in this venture. I truly believe He started sending people to us right and left. It’s been a very humbling experience for me and Helen. I can’t tell the story without shedding a few tears.”

The idea of “In The Music Room” is simple — offer a venue for music highlighting all genres to be performed live — while also taping it for the market of radio listeners. “I guess you could say we are dedicated to the modern day Troubadour,” Helen said, referring to the singer/songwriters who travel from all over the United States to Waxahachie, on a regular basis, to set up and sing to a live audience in a backyard garage that has been transformed into a recording studio. “It’s our little Sherwood Forest. Viva la Troubadour!”

So many uniquely talented artists have taken center stage. “Bugs Henderson is a ‘Blues Man’ from Texas. He’s played with everyone you can name,” Randy said. “Although Bugs is huge in Europe, we’ve made it possible for people in Ellis County to see him live, up close and personal. Another good one to mention is Ken Gaines,” Randy added, as Helen nodded her head in agreement. “He’s from the Houston area and will be back in town on May 14. He’s a staple at the annual Kerrville Folk Festival. He’s Cole Porter with a guitar.”

Others who have shared their talent include: Kevin Gleason, a young Waxahachie High School (WHS) graduate who entertained with his Texas Country music before heading off to college; Tim McGeary, a flight medic helicopter pilot located in Naples, Florida; Daddy Rocks, a three-piece band from Dallas; and Karen Mal, a beautiful entertainer who shares her Folk Celtic style with her voice and a simple mandolin. “The list goes on and

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on," Helen said. "There's a style of music for everyone. Every individual has a song within them, whether they know it or not."

Each of these artists brings something "all their own" to the stage. Events and life's experiences can spur a lyric to paper, and that paper to a musical score. It is this variety in music that keeps people coming back weekend after



weekend. "We can learn so much from other performers," Randy confessed. "The most important thing we offer here is music as it is supposed to be — in its rarest form — no real amplification, just good music with good friends."

The goal in this venture has always been to allow people to see an artist they like in a relaxed atmosphere. "It's not a business," Randy was quick to mention. "And we don't want it to be." The experience, a concept of a listening room of the '20s and '30s, is one of family where many friendships, and even some marriages, have been forged.

The advice Randy and Helen give is very simple. "If you want to sing, you have to let go of the fear," Randy said. "Stop fearing that you will make a mistake at the top of your voice. Please don't go to the grave with music still in you. That would be a crime to say the least." **NOW**

*Editor's Note: Visit the Web site at [www.inthemusicroom.com](http://www.inthemusicroom.com) for additional information, featured artists and upcoming events.*

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# A Season for Repose

— By Janice C. Johnson



## At Home With Tomas and Rita Reyes

*Tomas and Rita Reyes have mastered two important skills: They know how to work hard, and they know how to relax. Thirty years ago, they lived in Mesquite. At that time Tomas worked such long hours that, according to Rita, “Our neighbors thought I was a single mom!” But in the back of Tomas’ mind was the idea of living a slower-paced lifestyle, preferably on a lake somewhere.*

A friend who was a builder offered Tomas a three-acre lot on Lake Ray Hubbard for only \$750,000. Tomas had replied, “Do you know anyone in Oklahoma who has a tipi for sale, because if I bought that lot, I sure couldn’t afford to put a house on it.”

But then Tomas heard about some available lake lots in Waxahachie. He was a little skeptical: “I said Waxahachie didn’t have a lake,” he admitted. He and Rita got directions to the site, found the lake and walked around a couple of the lots. Tomas felt drawn toward one in particular, which the couple bought



The Reyeses with their grandchildren. Top row, left to right: Victoria Hernandez (11); Rita Reyes (holding Liliana Magallon 1 mo); Tomas Reyes and Julian Hernandez (8). Bottom Row: Ayden Magallon (2).

soon after. One thing that attracted him to the site was the friendliness of the neighbors. "We hadn't even started on the house, and people came over to introduce themselves to me," he said, recalling his amazement. "We lived in Mesquite for nearly 30 years and didn't know our neighbors!"

Tomas worked with a builder to select and customize a floor plan. One of his top concerns was that the home should reflect quality workmanship. With that in mind, he brought in a tile setter and a cabinetmaker whose work he knew and trusted.

The floors were to be ceramic tile throughout. "We wanted to do all the floors in tile, with no carpet, because of my allergies," Rita explained. "And I haven't had any trouble since we moved here." An expanse of a single pattern across the large living area could have looked boring. However, the tile setter visually divided the space by working a square section into the center, in which the tiles are set diagonally, surrounded by an artistic border.



Tomas still admires the man's creativity. "The tile guy looked around the room for a few minutes, then sat on the floor with some little tile pieces and started laying out a border pattern to see if I liked it ... and I did." They chose natural stone around the two-sided fireplace, between the kitchen and living area, and matching stone for the kitchen backsplash. The tile setter's artistry shows even in the seldom-seen tiles above the guestroom bathtubs.

The cabinetmaker came in for his share of praise, too. He had looked at the plans and suggested some safety changes — such as raising the cornices that jut out above the fireplace, so people did not hit their heads on them. The glossy brown wood cabinetry in the



living room and kitchen warms the light, neutral color scheme.

Outside, a wide, arched front porch with a stone floor complements the gracious stucco exterior and clay tile roof. Tomas chose Cantera stone columns to support the arches and set off the double wood-and-glass front doors.

Rita shook her head remembering the lengthy selection process. "There's so much more to building a house than you

would think — all those choices! Toward the end we were getting so tired. It's a wonder we were able to find light fixtures we both liked."

The effort paid off, as Tomas and Rita are both pleased with the results. They are also glad they did not try to contract the entire build themselves, although with Tomas' experience, he could have done so. "I was working in Dallas, and I would have had to spend too much time driving

to Waxahachie," he said. As it is, he spent much of each weekend at the site, getting better acquainted with other residents in the process. From the time they moved in two years ago, they have felt very much at home. Rita, who loves to cook and entertain, savors the friendships she is building with others in the neighborhood. The families often get together for dinner at each other's houses.

Tomas still works hard operating his

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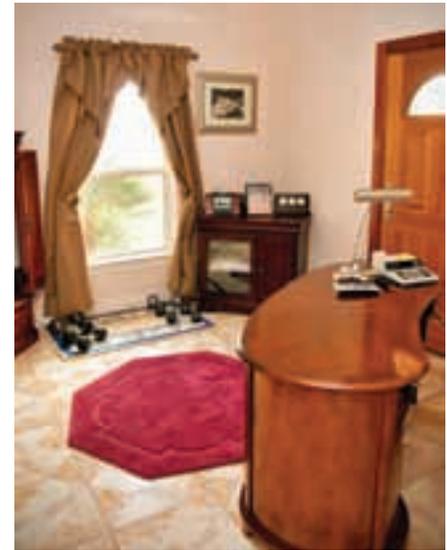
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own business in Dallas. Rita works in the office with him. "I do a little bit of everything," she said, adding that the couple's three grown children all work there as well. "I treat our employees like family; I bake a cake for every birthday. They have started coming to me before their birthdays, telling me what kind of cake they like." At the same time, she is careful not to show favoritism

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toward her own children. "I tell them, 'From Monday through Friday I'm not your mom!'"

Business has recently slowed down just enough to allow a less hectic schedule. As for Tomas, he is happy to have more time to take care of his expansive lawn



overlooking the water. "I love to do yard work, even in hot weather," he said. "Our neighbors don't mind if I start early in the morning, either. I'll start mowing, and pretty soon I'll hear a neighbor's lawn mower start up, and we just wave at each other." He appreciates Rita, who keeps him hydrated with iced tea and water.

The Reyeses planned their three-bedroom home around convenience and family, and they love to be there. Each room is a calm, exquisitely furnished retreat. Two guest rooms, each with its own sitting area and private bathroom, await the company of the children and four grandchildren. A home office off the master suite allows Tomas to catch up on work without always having to drive to Dallas. Two eating areas accommodate the extended family. Living area furniture and plants are set well away from the walls, making the large space feel cozy while allowing free movement around the room. A high ceiling, open floor plan and plenty of full-length windows add to the sense of airy spaciousness. Several clocks tick quietly, their sedate rhythm soothing to the nerves.

But of course, what Tomas likes best about the property is his view of the lake. "We angled the front of the house to give us the fullest view of the water," he said. A city park hugs the edge of the lake across from the Reyeses' home. Tomas and Rita often see families making use of a nearby picnic table. Visitors to the park, respectful of the nearby homes, never bother the residents with noise or late hours.

Neither Rita nor Tomas feel the need for a hobby. Rita leaned back in her chair with a happy sigh as she said, "We just enjoy our home, neighbors and family." **NOW**

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# Finding Truth

# in the Moment

— By Sandra Strong



*“I took pictures because I wanted to always remember it.”*

Natalie Busch never imagined that the snapshots she took at age 12 would be the start of something much bigger. “It was my first time on an airplane and my first time to travel out of the country,” Natalie said, referring to the trip she took to Mexico. “I took pictures because I wanted to always remember it.” I guess you could say that is when her journey with photography first began; she just did not realize it at the time.

This “casual photography” continued for Natalie off and on until she was 20. “I was attending Navarro College in

Waxahachie, finishing up my associate’s degree in business,” she explained. “Friends began asking me to take photos of graduations, engagements and weddings.”

All these photo requests gave Natalie a self-confidence she did not have before. Her confidence level grew to a point where she found herself sitting back, pondering a different career path than the one she had currently been on. “I had always loved art, but I didn’t see myself as a ‘photographer.’ I began looking at photography as something more than just

a hobby or something I did for friends,” she said. “I began to seriously consider it as a career choice.” Confirmation in her career change came when friends and family offered to pay her for her time and talent behind the camera. “They started the passion within,” Natalie added, “that’s only grown over time.”

In 2002, Natalie signed up for a correspondence course through the New York Institute of Photography. The course provided the necessary Internet curriculum that gave her a deeper insight and understanding into



the world of photography. She had not gone digital at this time, so “snail mail” was the way in which she sent hard copies in to be graded. “I was using a low-key, point-and-shoot camera. It took a couple of years to earn my certificate,” Natalie admitted with a smile, “but it was worth it.”

Halfway into the correspondence course, Natalie purchased her first digital camera. Needless to say, she never missed her old point-and-shoot. Going digital offered Natalie ease, not only when taking the shots, but also when deciding which ones to keep and which ones to erase. “Actually, I didn’t work long using a camera with film,” Natalie said. “Once I decided to shoot photographs professionally, I went digital as soon as I could.” She laughed as she recalled the only time she ever lost a photograph. “Ironically, it was after I started using a digital camera.”



Photography is an art form all its own. Inspiration plays a key in any form of art, but most especially when taking photographs. Natalie’s early inspiration came from mission trips and vacations. “I have been to England twice and vacationed in the New England area,” she stated. “I take photos of landscapes, candid shots and architecture.”

Natalie also feels she may have “inherited” the passion for photography from her dad’s side of the family. “My dad’s side of the family is very artsy,” she said. “My grandfather took aerial photographs while he was in the Korean

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War. My dad enjoyed drawing, painting and taking pictures, too.”

Whatever the reason behind Natalie's passion for photography, she stepped even further into the world of pictures when she officially opened her own business, Memory Weaver, in 2005. The story behind the name choice, when told by Natalie, allows those listening to fully understand just how important family is to her. “Weaver is my maiden name,” she said, “and a memory is what you get when you take a photograph. The name ties into who I am and where I came from.” Framed snapshots of her grandfather, great-uncle and aunt may also have had a little something to do with the name choice. “I have individual shots of each of them holding their cameras displayed in my home. They're all on the Weaver side of the family,” she added.



Although Natalie still enjoys taking travel photos and wedding portraits, her main inspiration these days is found in the life she shares with her husband, Jeremy, and their two children, 3-year-old Zion and 10-month-old Sedona. From the very beginning of her journey, Jeremy has been very supportive. Early on in those rare moments when Natalie doubted her abilities, it was Jeremy who built her back up. He is what many would call the “head cheerleader.” By and large, her favorite photos are of her family. “Life is sentimental. I find joy in documenting life through my photography. I want

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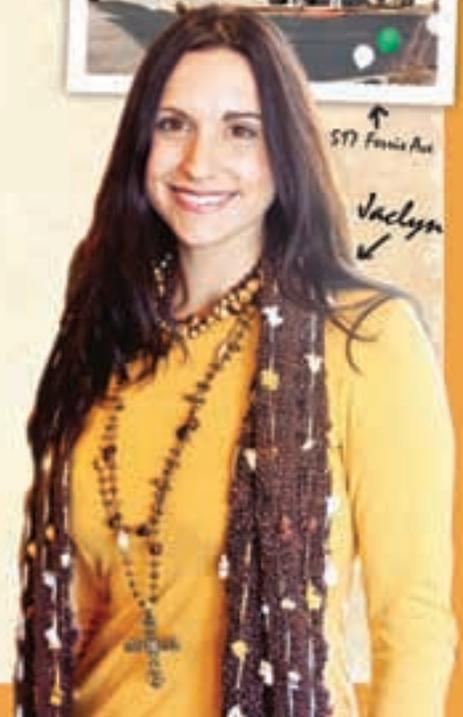


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to remember all I can,” she said, also mentioning that each child gets an equal amount of playtime in front of the camera. “I’ll admit, I’m a mess with the regular ‘mommy jobs,’ but I’m real good at the baby books and photo albums. I’m great at keeping pictorial records. I can almost guarantee they won’t lack for memories in photographs.”

When asked what it takes to come away with a great picture, Natalie only took a moment to think about her answer. “Perspective,” she stated. “It’s about freezing a moment in time in my own perspective. Photography is all about artistic expression. All photography artists have a different perspective on what a picture should be.” This ability to look at things differently is what makes each photographer and each photograph unique and special. Five photographers can be instructed to take a picture of the same landscape, and each photographer will return with a totally different picture. “Everyone’s perspective is different; what they see through the lens is never the same,” Natalie reiterated.

If Natalie had to give her style of photography a name, she said, “It’s more photo-journalistic. An action shot is what’s actually happening in the moment. Photos need to capture the truth of the moment.”

Several of Natalie’s photographs have won awards at the Midlothian Photo Expo. The “yellow” taxi cab and the “red” flower are two of Natalie’s favorites. “They each have one focal point of color, while the rest of the photograph is black and white,” she explained. “I took both pictures while I was pregnant and entered them in the expo on the years the children were born.” Zion’s poster-size print of a taxi cab took first-place honors in 2007, while Sedona’s flower earned a second-place ribbon in 2010. “Red and yellow look great on black and white,” Natalie said. “These are pictures they can cherish forever.”

The woman behind the camera is a self-proclaimed extrovert with introvert tendencies, which could be what makes Natalie’s photography so special. Or it could be as simple as deriving great pleasure in capturing the truth of the moment. No matter the reason, Natalie’s passion is evident with each photograph. It is easy to see she loves photography, and it loves her right back. **NOW**

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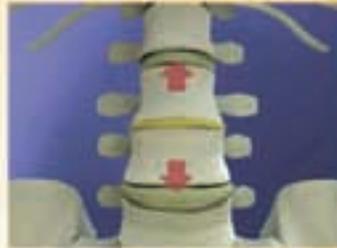
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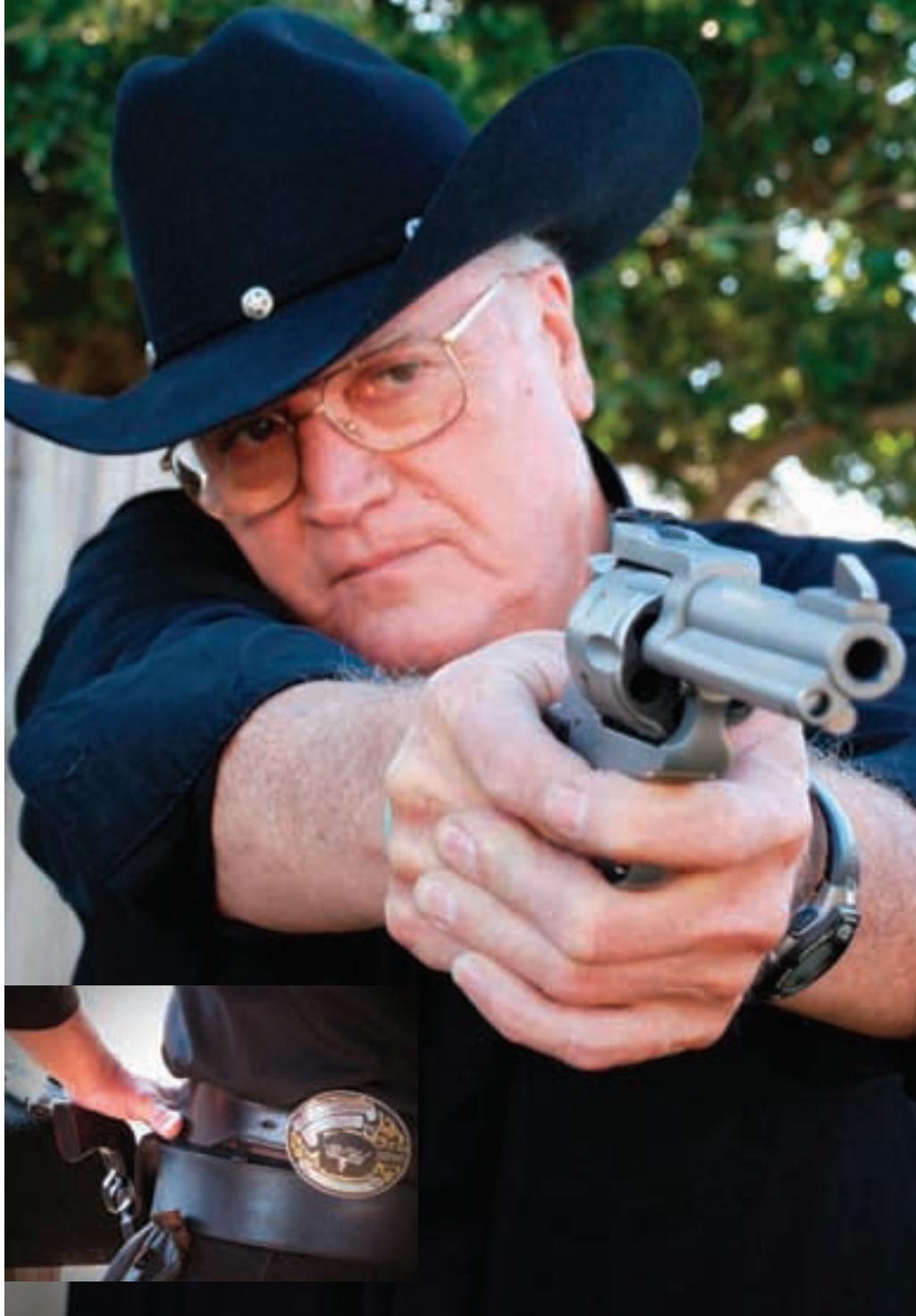
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# ALIAS: GUNSLINGER

— By Janice C. Johnson



*The man known as “Gunslinger” laid a replica Winchester rifle and a double-barreled shotgun on the porch rail in front of him as he squinted out into the sunshine, waiting. An electronic timer beside him signaled. In one movement he pulled a pistol from the holster on his right side, fired five rounds in rapid succession and holstered the gun. He repeated the action with the left-hand pistol, then squeezed off 10 rounds from the rifle and, finally, four from the shotgun. Two men sporting suspenders, droopy moustaches, armbands and eyeglasses watched, peering through the smoke at the array of targets.*

“One, five point zero, zero. And ... clean!” said the man holding the timer. Bob Sanders, alias “Gunslinger,” was halfway through a 10-stage “Cowboy Action Shooting” match. He had completed this stage in 15.00 seconds with no misses, safety violations or errors — pretty good by most standards, but nothing to brag about, in his view.

The match, hosted at Old Fort Parker (near Groesbeck) by the Ft. Parker Patriots Club, is an annual fundraiser supporting the fort’s upkeep. About a hundred shooters had come from clubs across Texas and adjacent states. “We compete under Single Action Shooting Society (SASS) rules,” Bob explained. SASS, a national organization, promotes and oversees the sport of Cowboy Action Shooting™. Its handbook describes the sport as “a combination of historical reenactment and Saturday morning at the matinee.” Members choose a unique Old West alias and may compete within gender and/or age categories. They must wear period costume and use vintage-style firearms: single action pistols, lever-action rifles and side-by-side double-barreled shotguns with lever or pre-1899 pump action. Scoring is based on accuracy and elapsed shooting time.

“The real antique guns are cost-prohibitive for most of us,” Bob said, “so we use what’s called a ‘clone.’ My rifle is a clone of an 1873 Winchester; it’s actually made in Italy.” His replica shotgun was made in Russia, and he uses Ruger Blackhawk .357 Magnum revolvers. Bob estimated the basic startup costs for four guns, accessories, gun cart and simple costume at about \$3,000. “Then again,” he added, “the guns — if you take care of them — are going to last you forever.” The only ongoing expenses are for ammunition and entry fees.

A woman strolled past wearing a



black-and-white striped costume with holster and cartridge belts. The beaded fringe on the brim of her black-feathered hat swung above contemporary amber-tinted “blade” sunglasses. “Some of the ladies compete; others just like to dress up,” Bob observed. “Some have a shooting costume and have a separate costume for the awards ceremony and banquet. A thousand-dollar gown is not unheard of.”

Spending can apparently go as high as one’s budget allows. The array of gun carts at this match provides just one example. Competitors were using everything from a golf-bag pull cart or jogging stroller, modified with gun rack, to a Polaris “Ranger Crew” ATV. Several of the carts bore imaginative handmade wooden supply boxes; one was shaped like a coffin. Many carts also showed their owner’s alias and a five-digit SASS

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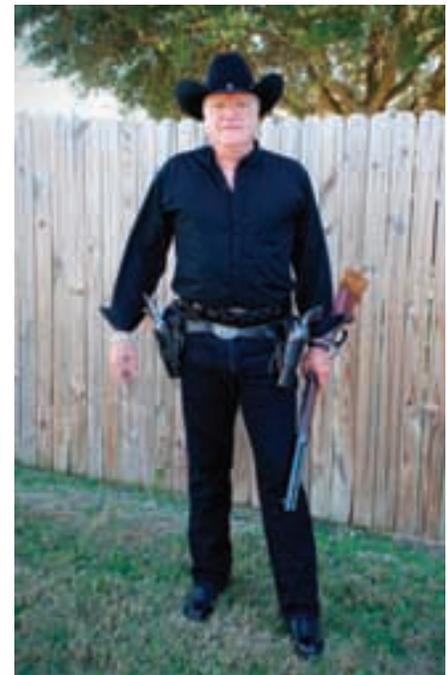
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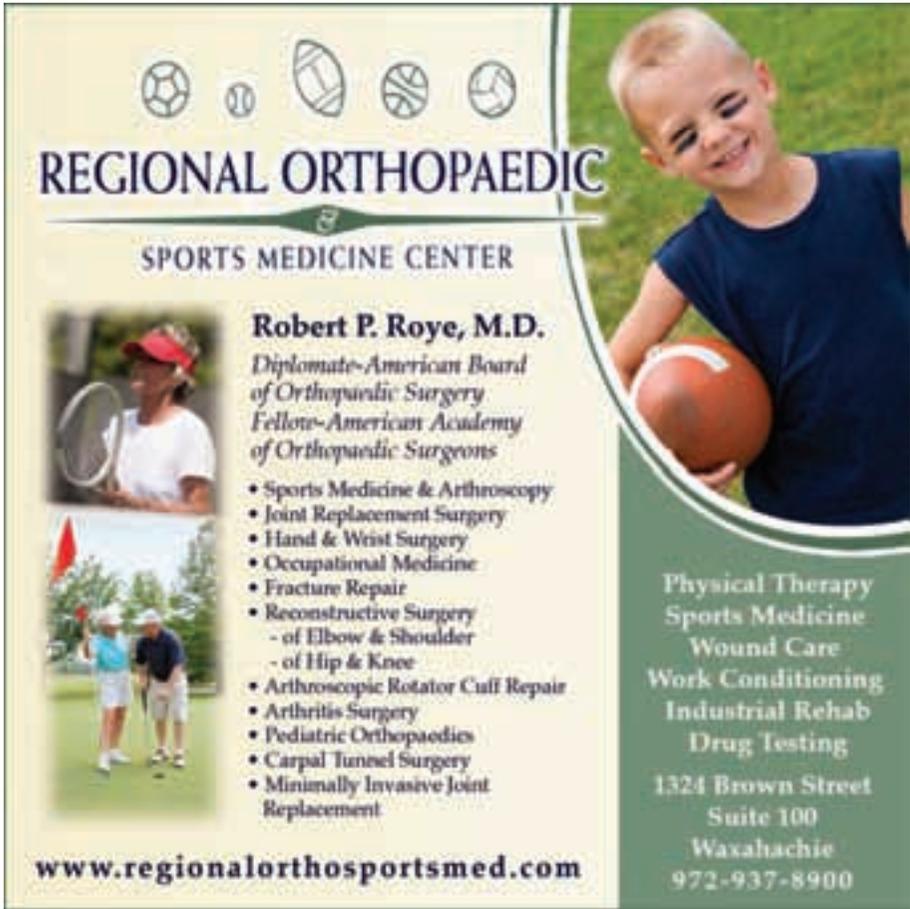
member number. Bob pointed out one veteran shooter passing by. "His member number only has three digits," he remarked. "But then, he's three-and-a-half years older than dirt," he quipped.

Local clubs hold matches each month. The club hosting a match sets up the targets and writes the scenarios (sequence and number of shots) for each stage, and each is different. "You have to be fast; you have to be accurate; and you have to remember what you're doing," Bob emphasized. "Every time you mess up and don't do it right, it costs you time. And every time you miss a target it's a five-second penalty."



Bob can certainly shoot and think on his feet. A veteran of both the Air Force and the Dallas Police Department and owner of a gun shop, he was no stranger to handling guns. He first heard of Cowboy Action Shooting about 14 years ago when a customer, who asked him to reload some spent cartridges for him, explained the game. Incredulous, Bob asked, "You mean you dress up and play 'Cowboys and Indians,' only you use real guns and live ammunition?"

The answer was yes. "So I started loading ammunition for him. It took him about two years to convince me to come shoot a match," Bob said. "But I went with him one day, and once you do it — you're hooked." He won the Texas state championship for his age group in 1998,



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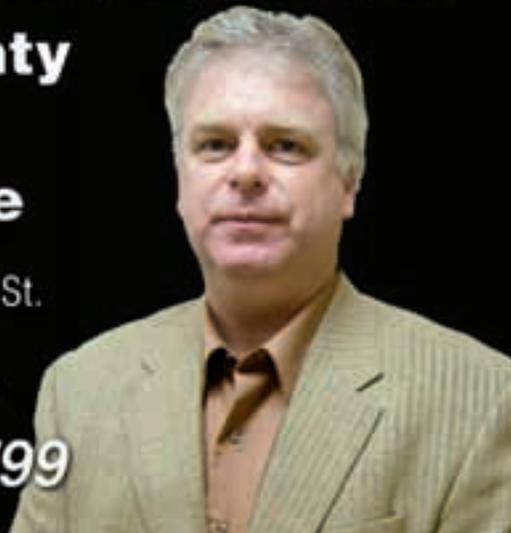
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his first year. But it was only five years ago that he began taking competition seriously. Since then, he has become highly decorated. He has won several championships in Texas, overall championships in Oklahoma and Mississippi and several multi-state region age-group championships. He now competes in the “Silver Senior” category for ages 65 and up.

The top competition is the SASS World Championship. This “End of Trail” match is held each summer near Moriarty, New Mexico. Bob had entered five years in a row, placing fourth or better in his age group, but had never won the coveted World Champion title — until last June, that is. “This year, to win End of Trail, I worked real hard and probably shot 5,000 rounds in the six months before the match. I wanted it big-time.” As a result, Bob proudly wears a fancy “End of Trail 2010” belt buckle bearing the legend, “World Championship — Cowboy Action Shooting — Silver Senior.”

Cowboy Action Shooting emphasizes safety, fun and a code of good sportsmanship known as “The Spirit of the Game.” As part of the code, shooters fully participate in each stage, following instructions rather than looking for loopholes to create an advantage. Bob exemplifies that spirit, volunteering to run timers or do other tasks during matches. He has certainly gained the respect of his peers. His club, the Oakwood Outlaws, elected him “Territorial Governor,” which means he represents the club within the regional and national organization.

Another competitor spoke up. “I’m not lying; Gunslinger is a good shooter — a World Champion. He is also an excellent instructor. People seek him out for little problems. He smoothes those out for them, and everybody gets better.”

Bob modestly deflected the praise: “I have a host of friends. They help me out.”

His friend grinned and retorted, “Yeah, but we don’t go around telling everybody we’re his friends!”

In retirement, Bob still keeps a part-time gun shop, where he does repairs and loads ammunition for other people. “It doesn’t keep me too busy,” Gunslinger said, “but it supports my shooting habit.” **NOW**

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Dr. Barnes believes every human being is the author of their own health.  
— *By Sandra Strong*

Dr. Beth Barnes just happened to be in her final year of chiropractic college at Parker College of Chiropractic when she and her husband, Matthew, learned of her pregnancy. “I’m so thankful as I look back now,” Dr. Barnes said. “I’m glad I was in chiropractic college when I found out we were going to have a baby. It was so helpful in the birth of our daughter, Tyler.”

Since that time two years ago, Dr. Barnes has been educating women on the benefits of chiropractic care before,

during and after their pregnancies. As far as she is concerned, prevention goes a long way in a person’s health and well-being; even more so when the patient is an expectant mother. “As a student, I’d get adjusted on a weekly basis. When my pregnancy began I was adjusted,” she explained. “I continued to receive adjustments throughout the pregnancy. When giving birth to Tyler, I was able to do it naturally, without any pain medications or epidural. And it only took six hours.”



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Dr. Barnes credits her “easy” first birth to the knowledge she gained while in school. It is the same knowledge she wants to impart to her patients. “People told me I was crazy,” confessed Dr. Barnes as she referred to the natural birth. “Some, but not many, of my classmates were supportive. Natural birth is no longer common in this day and age, so hearing my experience allows patients who are expecting to make a conscious choice that works for them. I want to continue being the support group for my patients no matter what choice they make when it comes to giving birth.”

Why did Dr. Barnes continue having regular adjustments throughout her pregnancy? “It’s OK to have adjustments during the entire pregnancy,” she stated, as she held up the belly pillow that makes it comfortable for patients to lay face down on the adjustment table. “The pelvis can get out of alignment as the baby grows. When the bones are out of alignment, the nervous system and the muscles are adversely affected. The nervous system is the ‘master system’ of the body, essentially controlling every function of our bodies.”

Why did Dr. Barnes allow Tyler to be adjusted immediately following her birth? “For much the same reason,” she explained. “Being born is a traumatic experience for the baby. Newborn adjustments allow the baby’s body to function at its best.”

Dr. Barnes’ passion lies in sharing her knowledge with patients who not only come to her seeking chiropractic care for pain they already are experiencing, but who also have a desire to live a painless life. She loves working with the entire family. Teaching prevention is on the top of her list. “Motion is life. If you can keep the spine in motion through adjustments, improved health and wellness follow. Maintenance also goes a long way on cost-effectiveness,” she stated. “If all things are aligned, life’s motions are so much sweeter.”

Dr. Barnes smiled as she remembered the first expectant mother she worked with. “She gave birth naturally to a 10-pound baby,” Dr. Barnes smiled. “She told me she’d do it all over again; it was so empowering for her.” **NOW**

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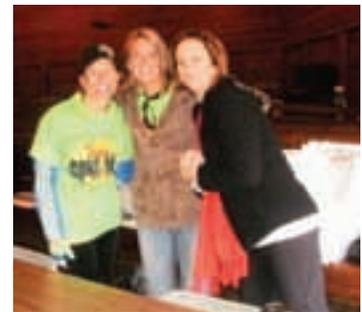
Friends gather to enjoy a movie and dinner on girl's night at *Bonnie & Clyde's Speakeasy*.



Chelsea Perry poses with her dogs, *Coco and Penny*.



Sisters *Joni Hurd and Judy Arnold* celebrate *Joni's Birthday at X6*.



*Jennifer Pope, Amy Leath and Rainey Hick* are all smiles at the *Casa 5K*.

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## Blowing the Smoke Away

— By Betty Tryon, R.N.

If you think this is another attempt to get you to stop smoking, you are right. The persuasion continues. The science against smoking is irrefutable and yet, smoking endures. Recently a *Dallas Morning News* article had medical students and their professors give their thoughts on seeing the dissected remains of cadavers who had lived unhealthy lifestyles. Linda Cunningham, a professor at University of North Texas Health Science Center, said this about seeing a smoker's lung: "Imagine healthy lungs as sponges with holes the size of a needle. A smoker's lungs are riddled with spots of black tar, and the sponge is torn in half with big, gaping holes. What is left is like flimsy tissue paper" — not a pretty picture. Their lungs had been screaming for help and oxygen! Could this be you?

No doubt you have tried to quit in the past but were unsuccessful. It is hard to quit smoking. It gives you a huge payoff. If you have been smoking for many years, you are probably not even aware of each time you pick up a cigarette and light it. Smoking has become such a huge part of your daily routine that you do not even think about it. After eating, you have a cigarette. When you are driving, you have a cigarette. When something stressful comes into your day, you have a cigarette. The habit is ingrained. The problem with most substances that cause addiction is that you need to increase the



amount to get the same payoff you are seeking. Increasing the substance increases the danger.

If you are serious about stopping, contact your health care provider. There are many aids and medications to assist you. For your benefit, some are over the counter. If drugs are not desirable, your provider may be able to direct you to support groups to encourage you in your efforts. The National Cancer Institute's Web site, [smokefree.gov](http://smokefree.gov), offers a wealth of information to aid you in your quest to quit. If you slip up, forgive yourself and move on. Above all, do not use it as an excuse to sabotage the rest of the day and smoke at will. Use it to discover why you relapsed. What was the trigger, and how can you combat it? Rely on your support network to keep up the good fight.

There are many ways to combat the urge to smoke. Try one — try them all until you find the one that works for you. It will be well worth your reward — a breath of fresh air! **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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## A New Start in January

— By Nancy Fenton

Tired of the same old gardens? Try your hand at different looking beds. They are called theme gardens and can be as large or small as you want, but they all need planning.

This month, let's talk about an herb garden. Some herbs do well in North Texas and others do not. Do your homework to find out which ones do well in our heat. The growing medium

is very important, and most herbs need lots of well-drained soil. Sand or our alkaline clay with copious additions of compost and expanded shale will make a reasonable foundation for an herb bed. Planting as soon as the soil warms up in a very sunny area is preferable, but later is acceptable.

As for specific herbs that will winter over, fennel is a good one. It is used in fish dishes. Lavender is used to flavor cookies, and due to its pleasant smell, it is also used to freshen drawers. Myrtle is used in meat dishes or as a substitute for bay. Curly parsley may be used as a substitute for parsley. Rosemary is great on chicken or in seasoned butter. Thyme is used to intensify any flavor or as salt. All these are cold hardy and can survive our cold spells without damage.

French tarragon, sweet marjoram, Mexican mint marigold and rose geranium are all great tasting as well as great looking. With a littler cover and care, they will survive the year. If you are short on space, you can try containers. Just remember to repot often!

Remember that the herbs may be small when you get them, but they will be much larger when grown with full sun. It will help to plan accordingly. All theme gardens will have several common characteristics: They will all need the right soil, sun and water for the plants you are planting. Mature size should also be taken into account. Next month, we will talk about rose gardens for North Central Texas. **NOW**

*Nancy Fenton is a Master Gardener.*

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# A Few More Reasons to Save

— By Adam Rope

Many people set goals to save more money to support a comfortable retirement. Even if your retirement seems well into the future, there can be some instant gratification. By opening an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) before April 18, 2011, you may be able to take advantage of some potential tax benefits on your 2010 tax return.

For the 2011 tax year, individuals can make annual contributions to a traditional or Roth IRA of up to \$5,000 or 100 percent of earned income, whichever is less. Married couples filing jointly can contribute up to \$10,000 (\$5,000 per IRA) provided either spouse has earned income of at least that amount. As an added benefit, individuals age 50 or older are eligible to take advantage of a catch-up provision and contribute an additional \$1,000 to an IRA.

Customers can set up an IRA with a minimal initial contribution. By continuing to add to that on a monthly basis or when their finances allow, the account has the potential to grow on a tax-deferred basis and becomes a great resource to help save for the future

and provide the comfortable retirement they desire.

There are several products that can be used as an IRA funding vehicle. Depending on factors such as your time horizon, risk tolerance and other financial goals, some products may be more suitable than others. Contact a professional to help assess your financial situation and determine what type of

IRA or funding vehicle may best meet your needs.

An IRA can become a crucial part of your personal retirement savings program. The sooner you begin, the more time you have to take advantage of the benefits an IRA provides. The time to establish an IRA has never been better. **NOW**

*Adam Rope is a State Farm agent based in Waxahachie.*



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# Calendar

JANUARY 2011

**Master Gardener Photo Contest:** Contest is currently underway. Deadline for entries is February 15, 2011. Entry categories include "single specimen" and "in the garden." Think about vegetables, summer gardens and fall and winter when taking pictures. There is no cost and individuals may enter as many as five photos. Prizes will be awarded. Enter online at [www.ecmga.com](http://www.ecmga.com).

## January 7

**VFW Post #3894 Steak Dinner:** Steak dinner includes a 10- to 12-ounce rib eye cooked on an outdoor grill with baked potato, salad and dessert. \$11 per person. Steaks served between 6:00 and 9:00 p.m. Karaoke begins at 8:00 p.m. For more information, contact L. Duncan Faught at [Duncan@faughts.org](mailto:Duncan@faughts.org).

## January 7—9

**Dinner Theater:** Friday and Saturday: 6:30 p.m.; \$15 for adults, \$10 children 12 and under. Price includes meal. Sunday: 2:30 p.m.; \$12 for adults, \$6 children 12 and under. Price includes dessert. Park Meadows Baptist Church, 3350 Highway 77 North. Call (972) 937-0073 for more information.

## January 8

**Acts 29 Community Bible Study and Breakfast:** 6:00-7:30 p.m., Chick-fil-A. This is a time of fellowship for women of Ellis County. For more information, contact Siyan Fayiga at [fayiga@sbcglobal.net](mailto:fayiga@sbcglobal.net).

## January 14

**January Birthday Luncheon:** 11:30 a.m., Senior Citizens Center. Seniors whose birthdays fall in the month of January eat lunch free and are presented with a special dessert. Lunch for all others will be the customary \$3.50.

## January 19

**Potluck Lunch:** 11:30 a.m., Senior Citizens Center.

## March 26

**Texas K9 Team Classic:** All-day event, registration will be held from 9:00-11:00 a.m., Waxahachie Rodeo Grounds, 701 Howard Road. For more information, visit [www.TK9TC.homestead.com](http://www.TK9TC.homestead.com).

## Fourth Mondays

**Creative Quilters Guild of Ellis County:**

6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Waxahachie Bible Church, 621 Grand Avenue.

## Tuesdays

**Waxahachie Sunset Lions Club:** 6:00 p.m. at The Dish in the Rogers Hotel in downtown Waxahachie. Questions may be answered by directing them to Laura Hargrove at (817) 673-0356 or by attending a meeting.

## Wednesdays

**GriefShare Recovery Seminar and Support Group:** 6:15 p.m. at Palmer Christian Child Care and Day School, located at 510 S. Dallas Street. For more information, call Vivian Saladino at (214) 802-2256 or e-mail [griefshare@fbcpalmer.com](mailto:griefshare@fbcpalmer.com).

## Second Saturdays

**Songwriter Second Saturdays:** 6:00 p.m. social time, 6:30-7:15 p.m. dinner and fellowship, 7:30-8:15 p.m. opening act, 8:30-10:00 p.m. featured artist. For more information, contact Randy Tredway at (972) 938-9990 or e-mail him at [randy@inthemusicroom.com](mailto:randy@inthemusicroom.com). Bring beverages for yourself and a covered dish to share. Seating is limited.

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# In The Kitchen With *Alice Woodard*

— By Adam Walker

Alice Woodard only remembers eating out twice before she turned 16. She learned Southern cooking from her Mississippi mother. She enjoys preparing comfort foods and Tex-Mex and sending food home with dinner guests. “I excel in smothered meats and gravies using raw onions and fresh garlic,” Alice explained. “I prefer baking cakes and cobblers to pies. And like Paula Dean, I don’t think you can ever have too much butter.”

Alice likes when her family visits. “Our large family of 19, including the grandchildren, gets together for backyard barbecues. We down-sized when I retired from the Postal Service after 30 years of service. There is not enough room in the house for everyone, so we created a large outdoor room for entertaining.” **NOW**

## SANTA FE STYLE HEALTHY SOUP

- 1/2 lb. boneless, skinless chicken thighs or breasts
- 1 tsp. sea salt
- 1/2 lb. Earl Campbell’s sausage links, sliced
- 1 onion, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 large can Wolf Brand chili without beans
- 1 packet dried buttermilk ranch dressing
- Lawry’s Seasoned Salt, to taste
- 1 tsp. garlic powder
- 1/2 head cabbage, cut in little strips
- 1/2 cup carrots, chopped
- 2 stalks celery, chopped
- 1 green bell pepper, chopped
- 1 yellow squash, chopped
- 1 zucchini, chopped
- Avocado
- Sour cream
- Santa Fe style tortilla strips

1. Fill a large pot 3/4 full with water, boil chicken and sea salt until chicken is tender.
2. Fry sausage, onion and garlic in olive oil for about 8 minutes.
3. Remove tender chicken from broth and chop.
4. To broth, add chili and seasonings. Adjust seasoning to taste.
5. Add half of chicken and sausage.

- Then add all vegetables, followed by remaining meat.
6. Return to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes until vegetables are tender crisp.
  7. Ladle soup into bowls and top with 1/4 slice of avocado, a dollop of sour cream and some tortilla strips.

## ALICE’S NO-BAKE BAKED BEANS

- 6 slices bacon, fried and crumbled
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 green bell pepper, chopped
- 1 medium can Ranch Style beans
- 1 small can pork and beans
- 1 1/2 cups brown sugar
- 1/2 cup ketchup
- 1/4 cup regular mustard
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- 1 tsp. garlic powder

1. Sauté onion and bell pepper in bacon grease.
2. Add beans. Stir in brown sugar, ketchup, mustard, cumin and garlic powder.
3. Heat until bubbling. Add bacon. Serve.

## ALICE’S GERMAN POTATO SALAD

- 10 lbs. potatoes
- 2 sticks Imperial margarine

- 1 large jar plus 1 cup Kraft mayonnaise
- 1/3-1/2 cup mustard (or to taste)
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 12 boiled eggs, chopped
- 1 jar Best Maid miniature dill pickles, chopped
- 2 medium onions, chopped
- 1 large jar minced pimientos

1. Peel and boil potatoes. Mash.
2. Add margarine, mayonnaise, mustard, salt and pepper.
3. Add eggs, pickles, onions and pimientos. Serve while warm.

## CRAB DIP

- 4 cups sour cream
- 3 Tbsp. dried onion flakes
- 1 packet dry Hidden Valley Ranch buttermilk ranch dressing
- 1 lb. imitation crab meat, chopped

1. Combine sour cream, onion flakes and dry dressing. If too thick, add milk until dip reaches desired consistency.
2. Add crab. Keep refrigerated until time to serve. Serve with Ruffles.

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## “Thanks to hip resurfacing at Baylor, I’ve got my kick back.”

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

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