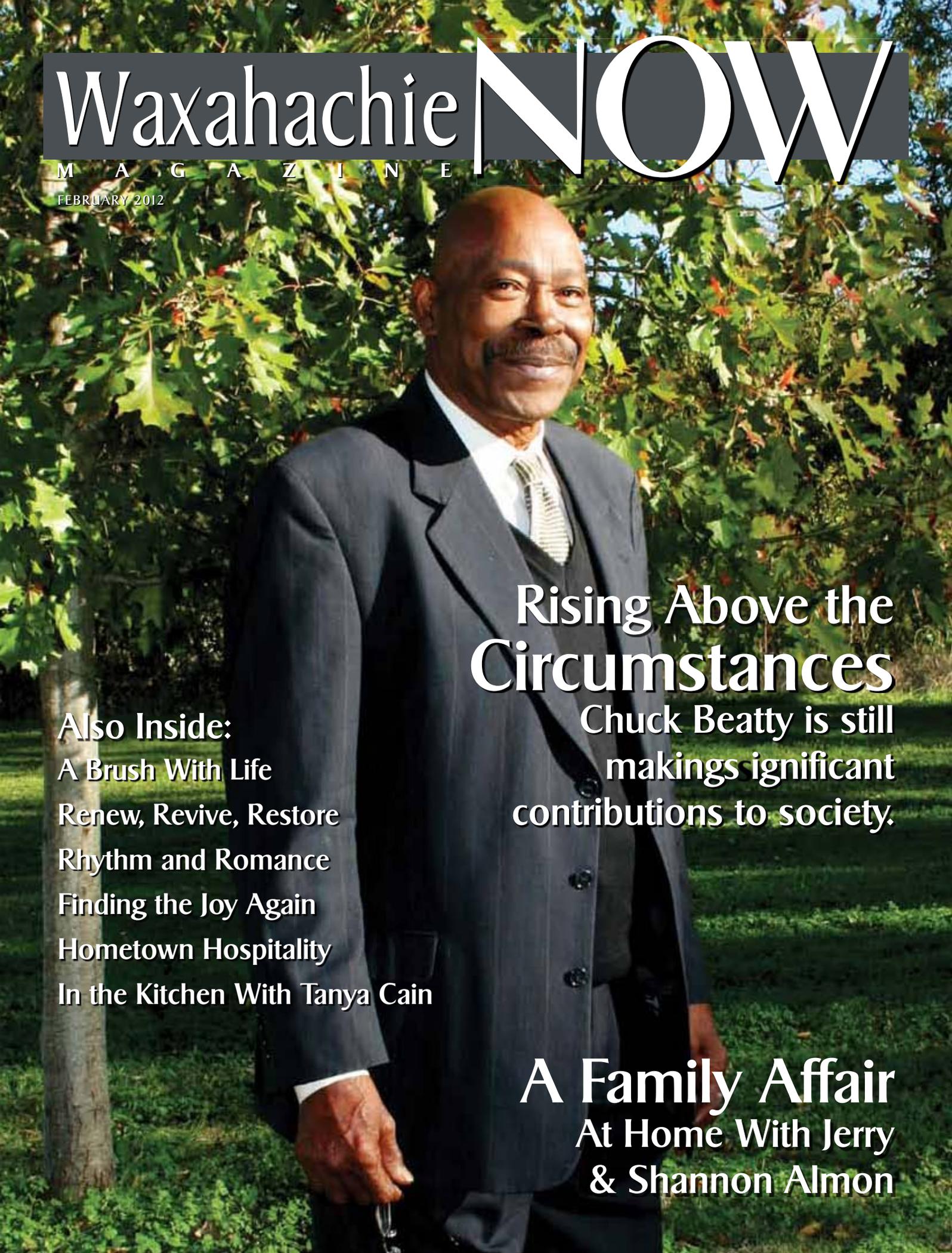


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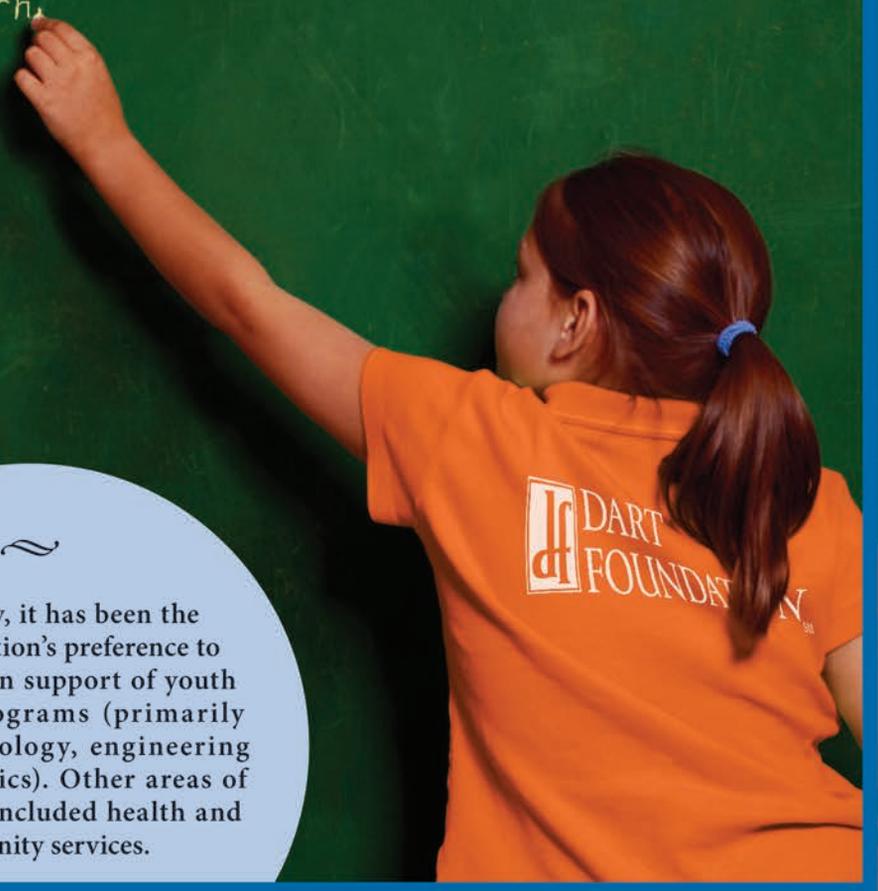
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Chuck Beatty remembers
to make contributions
to society.

Photo by Natalie Busch.

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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

Hello Waxahachie Friends!

Fabulous February – the month you've conquered your resolutions or you've totally blown them. I didn't consciously make any, so I guess you could say I'm moving right along into the New Year. Honestly, I told myself, "Self, you've got to start taking better care of yourself. You need to exercise more and eat less." I really am trying to do both, but it's not easy because February is the busiest month when it comes to holidays, birthdays and anniversaries.



There's Valentine's Day, which is also my husband's birthday. Then I have, not one, but three wedding anniversaries, one of which belongs to me and my hubby. We've been married two years on the 20th. Add five more birthdays to the mix, and that's a lot of cards, cake and ice cream. I guess the extra pounds will come off next month, since I only have two birthdays to contend with.

Sandra

Sandra Strong
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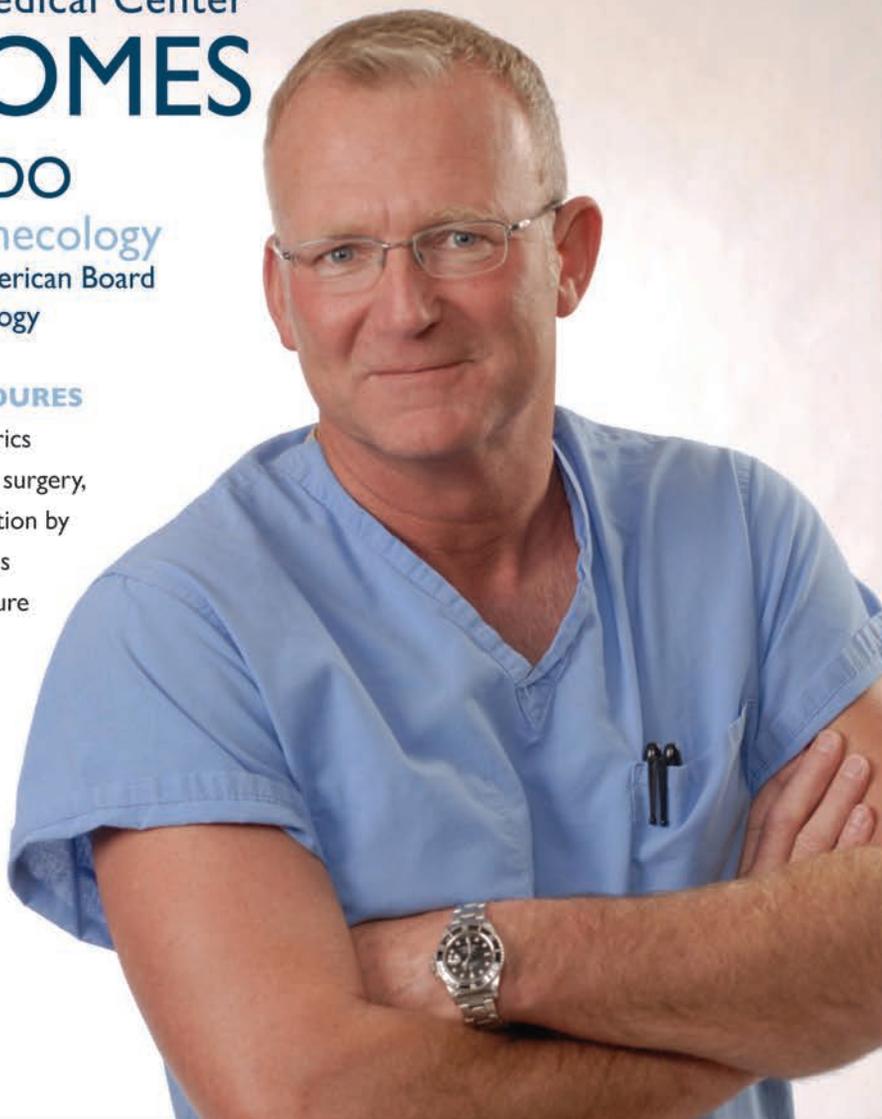
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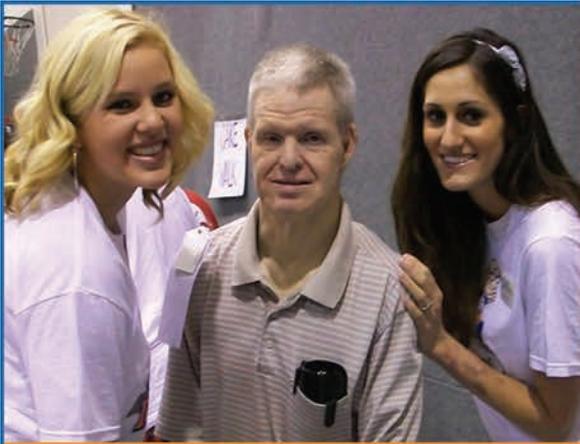
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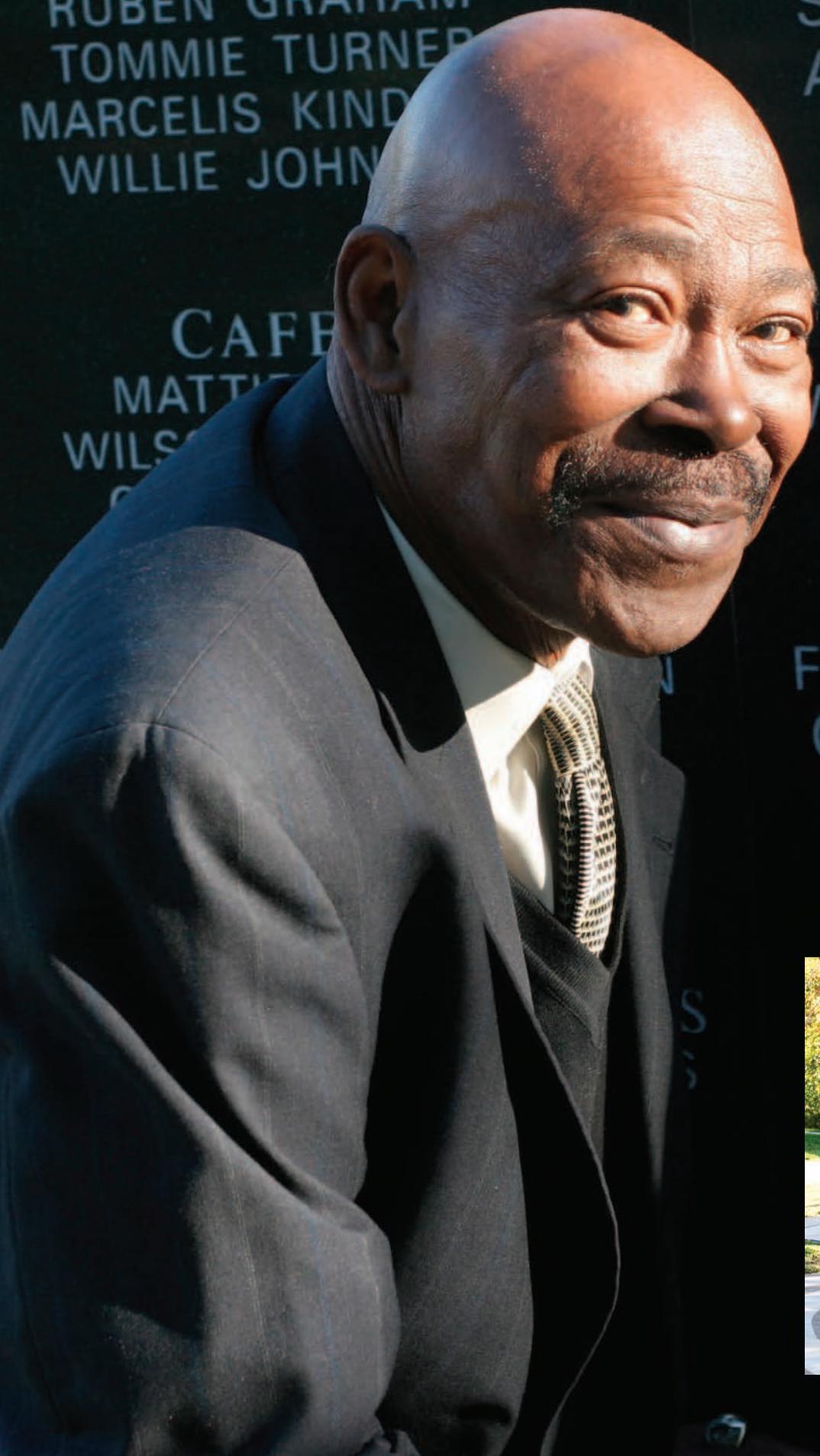
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ng Above the Circumstances

— By Sandra Strong

The story begins in Freedman, a small community located within the city limits of Waxahachie. The all-black area derived its name following the Emancipation Proclamation issued by President Abraham Lincoln on January 1, 1863. From the early 1900s until desegregation was implemented with the passing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Freedman flourished. “It was its own little community,” City Councilman Chuck Beatty said. “Freedman was booming with barber shops,

clubs, food establishments, carpenters, charcoal makers, doctors and convenience stores. We had everything we needed to be self-sufficient. The only things we shared with the whites were the Piggly Wiggly and Hickerson’s Food Store,” he added with a grin.

Landmarks in Freedman were many, but the one that initially comes to mind when reminiscing are the religious institutions. Samaria Baptist Church, the first black church in Freedman, also listed as the first black church in Waxahachie, was organized soon after the Civil War. Although the church building has gone through severe alterations that left

very little of its historic fabric intact, it remains an active and prominent church within the black community. Additional structures built by other black religious organizations include Joshua Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1917 and New Mount Zion Baptist Church in 1927.

Black history holds a great deal of meaning for those, like Chuck, who were growing up in the Freedman community as the changes were implemented. Chuck was born in Midlothian, but reared in Waxahachie. He fondly recalls his trip to North Texas State University, now the University of North Texas. “George Brown, the first black mayor of Waxahachie,” Chuck said, “drove me to college.”

The advice George gave Chuck on that ride is the same advice that brought



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Chuck home, and it's the same advice he tries to live by on a daily basis. "George told me to always remember to make contributions to society," Chuck explained. "Use the talents God gave you, and never let anyone tell you differently."

On that day, Chuck told George he'd be back to Waxahachie one day to make his contributions to his hometown. "I made George a promise," Chuck said. "I was bound and determined to see it through."

Chuck did make it back home, but not until he made his mark in the National Football League. His post-football career consisted of 30 consecutive years of service to the Boy Scouts of America, being elected to the Waxahachie City Council and serving as the third black mayor of Waxahachie from 1997 to 2002. He continues to serve as a city councilman today.

More than likely, it was this service to community that brought the task of Freedman Memorial Plaza to Chuck's realm of responsibility. "Former City Manager Bob Sokoll gave me the task of honoring Waxahachie's three black mayors," Chuck said, pride for the honor still present in his voice. "I decided to expand on the task to include the entire Freedman community, as well as some other individuals. So many blacks have



made significant contributions, and I felt like they all needed to be memorialized and honored.”

Land on which to build the park was the first item on the agenda. The land was donated to the city by former Dallas Cowboy and city councilman, Broderick Sargent. “He made the donation in honor of his grandparents, Ira and Myrtle Sargent and Delmar and Gertrude Erskine,” Chuck stated. “Delmar had once owned a barber shop in Freedman.”

Once the land was secured, the plans for Freedman Memorial Plaza were drawn up. While the park was being erected, Chuck was busy researching all those in the Freedman community who had a made a difference.

Certain criteria needed to be met before individuals could

be added to the memorial. “You had to have been born in Waxahachie or have lived in Waxahachie,” Chuck explained. “You had to have made a significant contribution, while also being of good moral character.”

The list was amazingly lengthy. It was so large that Chuck had to make a few changes in midstride. “I knew we



weren’t going to be able to list every single name because there were so many,” he admitted, “so it was decided that we would list all the different categories where the contributions had been made. It was the only way to manage all those who needed to be honored.” Categories include, but are definitely not limited to, caregivers, educators, doctors and aviators.

Chuck will never forget the day when the ribbon cutting for Freedman



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Memorial Plaza was held — July 6, 2007. Hundreds of people of all colors had gathered to see history in the making. “Seeing people come together to celebrate black history was something else,” he confessed. “It gave all of us who worked on this project a great sense of pride.”

Explaining the significance of the memorial caused emotion to well up in Chuck’s voice. “The rows on the concrete path symbolize cotton, and the broken chains on the ground represent the end of slavery and emancipation,” Chuck said. “The path leading into the park is descending, symbolizing hallowed ground and the heart of the matter. The memorial found in the center of the park was structured of black granite that came from South Africa.”

The names of different black community leaders and contributors are inscribed on the granite. Names include City Councilmen Roy L. Borders; Will Andrews; H. Henry Herford; Cohn Tatum; A.D. Sweatt; Broderick Sargent; Emmanuel Cleaver, who went on to be the first black mayor of Kansas City and is currently serving as a U.S. Congressman from Missouri; T.J. Patterson, who is mayor pro-tem of Lubbock and who’s also had a library named in honor of him and his wife; and Willie Albert Tipton, who was an aviator in the military and later became the interim president of Prairie View – A&M University. Bessie Coleman, the first black female in United States history to earn her pilot’s license and the first female to earn an international aviation license, was honored in Freedman Memorial Plaza the day following the ribbon cutting. “She flew for the enjoyment of flying,” Chuck added.

The park is an ongoing work with plenty of space for expansion. “Every two years names are added to the wall,” Chuck said. “It’s going to be up to the younger generation to keep the history alive. If you don’t know where you come from, you’ll never know where you’re going.”

The memorial is a loving tribute dedicated to all the brave souls who rose above their circumstances to make the Freedman community an integral part of the history of Waxahachie. To walk the path and see the wall is to fully understand the symbolism Freedman Memorial Plaza has for the entire community. **NOW**

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A Brush With Life

— By Randy Bigam

An Ellis County artist has found her forte. Portraits, murals, jewelry designs — all are part of her repertoire. But it's face painting and body art that Kitty Parris enjoys most, and the public's positive response to her work has validated her passion. "If someone told me several years ago that I'd be painting kids' faces for a living, I wouldn't have believed it," Kitty said. "But now I wouldn't have it any other way."

From local events like Gingerbread Trails and the Fourth of July parade to Dallas-area venues at Halloween and Christmas, Kitty has demonstrated her wide range of designs in face and body painting and glitter tattoos. "The busiest months are October through December, because of all the fall festivals and holiday parties," Kitty said. "Now I'm gearing up for Valentine's Day and Mardi Gras, and I am really looking forward to doing all the heart designs and masks!"

Although Kitty has a bachelor's degree from Texas Christian University, she comes by her talent naturally. She was named after her maternal grandmother, an artist who created oils and tapestries. Kitty also inherited creativity from her father, a retired professional photographer who now farms near Maypearl. "He and my mom are the most influential people in my life," she said. "I got my love of God, people and animals from them, as well as my love of the fresh air of the country."



Before Kitty was lured into face painting, she had a background as a commercial artist and educator. A former art director and art/drama teacher, she has worked as a magazine layout designer and coordinated graphic art for various companies. "There are so many avenues that art has taken me down," Kitty said. "I even made signs, working with Ron Gibson, a master sign painter. We worked well together, and I learned a lot." She is a freelancer at heart, enjoying the diversity and freedom that roll with her lifestyle.

On the road to artistic fulfillment, she discovered face painting. Kitty's first experience with the craft came when a friend suggested she try it some time ago, but it wasn't until recent years she found it to be a passion. She attended a clown college with her church's entertainment ministries group leader, and nothing in the course spoke to her more than the class in face painting. "I knew instantly this was what I wanted to do," she recalled. "The teacher was talking right to me!"

Kitty now paints faces (and assorted arms, legs, backs and ankles) all across North Texas, sometimes joined by her teenage children, who take as much interest in entertaining as she does. "My kids are hams, so they really get into it!" Kitty laughed.



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Matt, a sophomore at Global High School, and Lydia, a Waxahachie High grad now attending Navarro College, contribute by twisting balloons, applying glitter tattoos, putting on skits and doing character work. Lydia recently started face painting as well.

“For the July Fourth parade in Waxahachie, we painted a torso resembling Uncle Sam, fireworks and the flag,” Kitty said, “and we always enjoy the fall festivals in cities and churches.” Kitty credits several key people and organizations for supporting her efforts — such as the city of Waxahachie, the Downtown Merchants Association, the Farmer’s Market and the DFW Airport DPS. Kitty and crew just finished a series of appearances at other city functions in Mansfield, Dallas and Red Oak, and are taking a breather before the next round of events starts up.

Some of the most popular kids’ face painting motifs that Kitty supplies are butterflies for girls and dragons or snakes for boys. “The butterflies were very big at the last Gingerbread Trails booth we had at Getzendaner Park,” Kitty remembered. “The butterflies and tigers are probably my favorites, but I also like to just go freestyle and do whatever comes to me.”

Other themes in demand are tigers, ladybugs, cats, lizards, Harry Potter-style glasses and ninja masks. She works gingerly with very young children, usually with their parents’ help, so that they



aren't afraid of her or the paints and brushes she uses. What Kitty doesn't like about doing large events is not being able to serve all who line up at her station. "I hate closing the line at the end of the day," she confessed. "And it's hard when there aren't enough painters for the crowd, and people have to wait so long to be painted."

The paints Kitty uses are all specially designed for face painting. "They are hyper-allergenic and water-based," she explained. "Even the glitter we use is specially made to not cut if it gets into the eyes." Some of Kitty's designs, particularly her tigers and other "scary creature" masks, are startlingly realistic. The artist cites an incident that happened at home one night a few years ago while she was experimenting on her face with



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some new ideas. "I think I painted a tiger with dripping fangs," Kitty recounted. "I got distracted with chores and forgot to wash the paint off." Suddenly she heard her son calling to her from his room. Hurrying down the hall she wondered what he might want — a glass of water or would she need to check for a monster under the bed? Little did she know she would be the monster at the door when she opened it, switched the light on, and a startled Matt screamed at the sight of his mother in her makeup.

As much as Kitty enjoys face painting, she is a busy artist in other mediums. Murals are a second love for her. She did an 8-by-16 mural depicting a chuck wagon scene for the R & K II Cafe in Weatherford and a 22-foot rustic scene for R & K II Cafe in Grandview. She recently completed a large wall for the children's wing at Chambers Creek Baptist Church near Grandview. She also painted an undersea theme with jelly fish, dolphins, turtles and a pair of whales leaping and diving in the toddler's room. Kitty also designs "domino" necklaces and earrings.

But it's the faces she paints that keep this talented artist motivated. Having satisfied "canvases" in her chair surveying their face in a mirror, well, that can't be beat. "One of my favorite parts is when I've finished with all the paint and glitter, and they check themselves out and smile!" Kitty enthused. "It's that smile that is so rewarding. It is great helping someone have a happy moment in their day." **NOW**

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A Family

Affair

— By Randy Bigham

Jerry and Shannon Almon are keeping it “in the family,” from the home that once belonged to her grandparents to the sense of community they both have instilled in their children. Jerry is from Red Oak while Shannon is a lifelong Waxahachian. “I’m fifth-generation,” she proudly asserted. “I enjoy knowing my family has been part of the community for so long.”

At Home With
Jerry and
Shannon Almon

In addition to the historic abode they have shared for 25 years in one of the most desirable residential districts near downtown Waxahachie, Shannon’s forebears once owned the well-known Harrison House,





now a bed-and-breakfast. “I’ve always loved antiques and anything to do with history,” Shannon related. “But we didn’t move into our house for those reasons. Like most young couples, we were just looking for an affordable place to live.” The pair lucked into the property in the late 1980s, owned at the time by Shannon’s grandparents, W.C. and Mabel Woodson, who moved next door after the newlyweds bought the house.



“It was everything I wanted,” Shannon said. “And the connection to my roots was important.” As for Jerry, he liked knowing his “salt-of-the-earth” in-laws were neighbors and having a pasture for his horses. Though no longer active in team-roping, he still appreciates the large back field, which contains an original barn and other outbuildings dating from the time the property was a working farm.

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A lot of renovation was needed when the Almons purchased the old house. They were glad to undertake the work in order to preserve its history while making it a comfortable home for their growing family, which soon included Jackson, now a junior at Texas A&M University; Taylor, today a senior at Waxahachie High School; and Shanleigh Mae, who passed away four years ago.

Built in 1903, the original two-bedroom structure had a wraparound porch to which Arts and Crafts-style columns were added in the 1920s. Other changes

made over the decades include a brief conversion of the place into a duplex during the Great Depression. When the Woodsons bought the house in 1970, they increased living space by taking in the side porch and sun room, but left the original hardwood floors and mantels in the dining room, living area and kitchen untouched.

Jerry and Shannon launched a full restoration of the house in 2005. "We gutted it!" Jerry said. "It had to be. It had been patched for 100 years. It needed a total overhaul." Despite the

extensive restoration, which allowed for an additional bedroom and two more bathrooms, the Edwardian flavor of the home is intact.

So is the family's dedication to the community they love. Shannon is a sustaining member of the Waxahachie Junior Service League and has volunteered for Sims Library and Special Olympics. During the Christmas holidays, she was involved with the Bethlehem Revisited attraction. Jerry said she is always on the go. "If someone needs her, she's there," he said.



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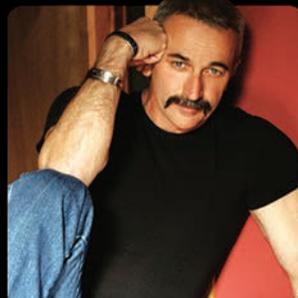
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Shannon imparted her activism to her kids, especially Shanleigh, whose short life was defined by her dedication to helping others through school and church programs. A memorial scholarship in her name has since been endowed at Waxahachie High, where she was a cheerleader, and an annual fundraiser called Bike and Walk for Love benefits the scholarship. This year's event is scheduled for March 17. "Our lives revolved around Shanleigh," her mother said. "This way we can still include her and carry on the work she would have done herself."

Love of family and tradition has influenced Shannon's decorating choices for her beautifully refurbished home. "There are things that remind me of Shanleigh and of my childhood," she explained, "and I want to bring those feelings of home into the rooms." Whether it's a Victorian sampler or a particular color or a kind of glassware, if it resonates with her, it goes into the house. When shopping with friends she may light on a piece in which only she sees potential. "Someone will say, 'That won't go,'" Shannon laughed. "Well, my approach is: if I like it, I'll make it go!"

Shannon adores pretty furniture and accessories, but insists she isn't a price snob, finding bargains and haggling with the best at flea markets and garage sales and even in high-end stores and galleries. "I once came across a beautiful, old picture, a large landscape at a shop in Galveston," she recalled. "It was an original oil painting, and I knew it had to be something special, so I got it for about \$160." Afterward, she and Jerry

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researched the picture, discovering it was by a noted Austrian artist and had an auction value of several thousand dollars. The landscape now has a place of pride in the Almons' formal sitting room.

Shannon's taste isn't exclusively antiques-driven. She likes blending modern elements and period styles. The resulting overall look of her home is a reflection of her own eclectic personality. "I love the unexpected find," she said. "Really I just love the hunt, and if I end up with a great buy, that's icing on the cake."

Jerry indicated his decor-loving wife seldom comes home empty-handed from her excursions. "She lives for her two annual trips to Round Top," he laughed, and Shannon can't deny it.

"I love the sales at Round Top and find a lot of treasures there!" she laughed. Shannon usually keeps herself to a budget, but confesses to splurging occasionally on the samplers she loves to display, including some dating from the 1880s. Shannon's decorative gems are scattered throughout the house, from hand-painted 19th-century tole trays in the dining room to an elegantly framed set of 1950s floral and bird prints that hang in the master bedroom. Family photos, including large portraits of the immediate Almon clan, dot walls everywhere while smaller pictures of ancestors underscore the veneration of history permeating the home. For example, a framed cameo of Shannon's grandmother is perched on her dresser. "My grandfather carried a copy of that picture with him when he was in World War II," she explained, "so it means something."

All life means something to Jerry, Shannon and their sons. Loss has brought a fuller appreciation of family, friends and the importance of giving to others. They are also grateful to live in Waxahachie. "It's charming," Shannon said, "kind of like Mayberry!" She added that even people who have recently moved to the city feel the same. "Friends, who were attracted to Waxahachie through the Gingerbread Trails and moved here, tell us they love it just as we do," she said. "They say they feel they've always lived here."

Shannon knows what that's like. "I'm glad to have been brought up here. I can't imagine being anywhere else." **NOW**



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RENEW, REVIVE, RESTORE

— By Janice C. Johnson



As youth pastors, Robert and Annalise Saenz can tell you the youth of Bethesda Assembly of God Church know all about taking old, useless things and giving them new life. The building in which they meet began as Army barracks.

Bethesda bought the building, circa 1950, and renovated it into a church building, where the congregation met until 1993. From there they moved to a building on Highway 287, and began renting the old building to smaller congregations. This continued until the 2011 snowstorm, when the roof caved in completely.

As a result, no one could use the building, and the church considered having it demolished. However, Pastor Rudy DeLeon, Annalise's father, thought of how the youth ministry had outgrown its space in the new church building and invited Robert and Annalise to meet him at the old site. As they surveyed the broken and soggy structure, he offered the building for their use as a center for the youth ministry, called Rescue Youth. It was apparent this would take a lot of labor. The church hired contractors to do the structural repairs: plumbing, wiring, rebuilding the roof, leveling the foundation. Then, during spring break last year, the students started with





cosmetic work outside. They salvaged many parts of the building, such as windows and paneling for further use. "We tried to keep as much of the integrity of the old building — to remind us of where we had come from," Robert said.

In the sanctuary, for instance, baseboards were made from the old wainscot paneling, and an original wooden pew stands at the back of the room behind the chairs used by the students. The worn stage flooring is now covered with a creative surface made of torn butcher paper painted in various dark colors, glued down and sealed with a polyurethane coating. The mix of old-fashioned and contemporary featured under the black, vaulted ceiling gives the room a gritty, industrial feel.

Since the students did much of the interior work, Annalise remarked, "They took ownership of it. And now they take really good care of it." Rescuing a broken building was not too much of a stretch for the youth, who already had a history of rescuing and caring for people with broken homes, lives or dreams. Robert sees a parallel between the building and the human spirit, remarking how people's lives may seem irreparable, broken and lacking value to others, but can be redeemed into something useful and valuable.

The Bethesda youth reach out to local residents in a neighborly way, sometimes passing out cookies and offering to pray for any needs the families wish to share. On a larger scale, they passionately support Project Rescue, which fights to stop human trafficking and restore hope to victims. Through dramatic videos and other endeavors, they raise both awareness and funds to combat this growing crime. The group has also made

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Robert and Annalise were both reared as pastors' children, with a sense of



responsibility to support their church's ministry programs. Still, Robert feels like a most unlikely youth pastor. For one thing, during his own teen years, his church had no youth pastor whom he can emulate, and as for education, he started out as a marine biology major eventually changing to counseling. He has never been educated for ministry per se, although he is currently a licensed professional counselor intern. "I guess counseling and youth ministry go hand-in-hand," he acknowledged.

Annalise supported that statement. "When you're a young person, you're going through so many changes. Many have self-esteem issues — they're looking for identity and may feel as if they're worthless. Our leaders look for their potential and encourage them." She and Robert encourage the teens to make positive choices. However, when students make poor life decisions, their mentors counsel them with love, grace and truth.

Robert and Annalise have a sense of calling, which came through their love of people and through gradual, step-by-step guidance. "There was no writing on the wall, for sure," Robert laughed. He does not let his lack of formal credentials discourage him. "There can be times of frustration and even times when you feel down, but it's important to focus on the right things and know that individuals must willingly choose their own direction.

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The Saenzes have passed that wisdom on to the younger leaders who assist them. Joe Castillo leads the senior high students, while Gabby Muñoz, one of the Saenzes’ former junior high students, currently leads the junior high ministry. Besides the student members of church families, they minister as needed to young people who are referred by social service agencies. Many students also bring their friends to share the love and purpose that the group offers.



“Our group is very diverse,” Annalise pointed out, “in their ethnic background, style, economic status, the music they like. Diversity is what we’re all about, yet we still come together.”

Meanwhile, the youth building decoration project has continued in the vein of restoring old, cast-off things to usefulness. As the group used can after can of interior paint, Robert noticed the convenient size of the metal paint can lids. Hammering the edges flat, he painted the lids for use as signs for restrooms and other points of interest. Old wood-frame windows became quirky,

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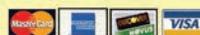
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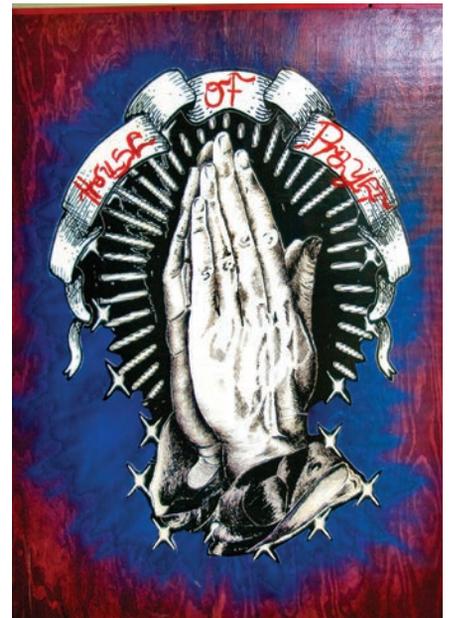
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rustic photo frames. A piece of plywood, protecting the floor while Robert spray-painted some narrow slats, ended up with red-and-blue stripes. Noting the faint resemblance to a U.S. flag, Robert added some stylized stars for a patriotic piece of what he calls accidental art. The leaders even saved a length of a limb from a downed tree on the property and bolted it to a wall among historic church and youth group pictures.

A local artist friend of Robert's helped embellish the base of the stage with words representing needs that Christ offers to fill. For some, seeing those words has planted the seed of hope that



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eventually led them to find a satisfying life of faith. “Investing in someone and seeing the fruit become visible — not only to others, but to themselves — is one of the most rewarding things about our work,” Robert said.

Robert and Annalise, married 15 years with three school-age children, look almost as young as the students they serve. Annalise smiled. “Some people can't believe we're that old. I just tell them, ‘Well, working with teenagers keeps you young!’” **NOW**

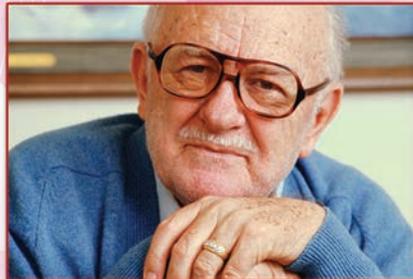
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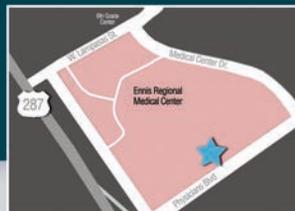
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Rhythm and Romance

— By Randy Bigham

Love is in the air, and so is music, as Maypearl Independent School District's Jazz Band gears up for a special Valentine's Day concert. "This is a new project for the jazz band," announced the director, Brian Cupp, "and we plan on it being an annual event for the community where sweethearts can go and enjoy great music."

Brian, who has led the middle and high school bands since 2009, is excited about the upcoming Valentine's Jazz Night, set for February 13, the evening before the big day of love. "We hope everyone will plan to make a nice, romantic date out of the concert," Brian added. "We welcome all to come out and hear the band."

Jazz Night, a formal dress affair, is still being formulated, but Latin tunes and Big Band swing-style music are expected to alternate with popular ditties on the program. Rehearsals are ongoing for members, who range in age from sixth through 12th grades. Brian and his assistant director, Sara Morris, are proud of the depth of talent and commitment in the students who have joined the after-hours, extra-curricular class in jazz that supplements the regular marching band and choir. "The kids are applying themselves well, and it's inspiring to see," Brian said. "They are really into jazz, and it shows."

For Brian, leading a band is a personal investment of interest dating from his own school days. "Back when I was in sixth grade, I started going to all the football games with my parents," he related. "I must have already been bitten by the music bug, because even then I paid more attention to the band than the



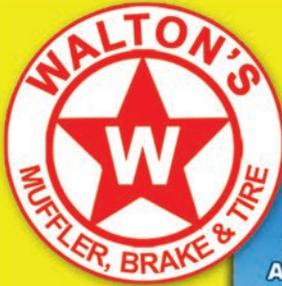
game!" Brian originally planned to be an engineer, but by the time college rolled around, he had decided on music education, and he hasn't regretted it. "It's in my bones," he conceded. "I've loved music my whole life. I first took piano lessons at age 4."

Now a resident of Mansfield, where he lives with his wife, Tracy, and their five children, Brian is in his 13th year teaching, the last two-and-a-half years spent at Maypearl. "I love it here, because we have such a big support system," he explained. "From the band boosters to our school principals to the parents, we have a lot of people who care about our success." The jazz band in particular has been a hit, recently winning an All-Regional placement in ATSSB (Association of Texas Small School Bands), when one of its drummers made it to area level.

Middle School principal, Ernie Amaton, attended the Middle School

"I've loved music my whole life. I first took piano lessons at age 4."





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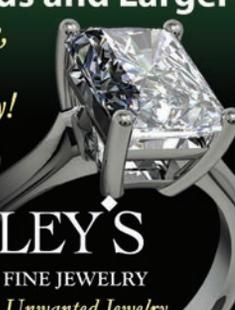
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Concert Band UIL (University Interscholastic League) competition and came away not only impressed by the concert band's sound and ratings, but intent on backing up the group's projects. Appearing before the school board on his return, Mr. Amaton told the board and the public who attended the meeting that the skill and professionalism of the band had been "breathtaking" and urged the district and the community to support the band program. His voice has been heard: a new band hall, long-needed, was built and is now open, serving band members, as well as students enrolled in the school's theater arts classes. "Mr. Amaton has been a real force behind us," Brian admitted. "We can't thank him and the school board enough for being there for us. We are so happy with the new band hall, which gives us the space we need."

Brian's praise extends to the Maypearl band boosters whose unceasing encouragement and fundraising efforts have kept the program going. "The boosters are the ones who have sustained us," Brian said. "A band is an expensive thing to have, so we are grateful for the donations from area businesses and individuals, and for all those who have bought the products that go toward funding our events and trips." Currently, the boosters sell an assortment of items bearing school logos, such as: caps, visors, vests, jackets, bandanas, jerseys, towels and blankets. Some of the merchandise sold on the boosters' Web site is military- and Christian-oriented, and there are pet products available, as well as custom screen printing and embroidery for shirts, bags and other accessories.

Sales go toward covering band expenses, including buying new

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instruments and repairing old ones. Brian confessed the need for financial support as the band expands its reputation and visibility. "State budget cuts have hurt," he said, "but we know people will help us because our students have shown that they are worth the investment." Not only has the jazz band and other music programs brought prestige to the school district, but the students have contributed their talent and time to the community at large. "The kids have really given of themselves," Brian pointed out. "They appear at local venues to entertain crowds whenever they can." Among events at which the band has played are the Cowboy Bank of Texas' open house and Christmas parties at various other businesses. The marching band also annually leads the homecoming parade.

The key to the success of the Maypearl ISD band program is members' involvement in a leadership initiative Brian started when he became director.

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"In the class, students learn how rewarding it is to teach and nurture others," he said. "It's a way to become confident and determined." The skill sets taught in the marching band, which has increased from 30 to 70 students, are enhanced by training camps sponsored by the band boosters. An example of how mentoring has paid off within the leadership course is the recent first division ranking accomplished by last year's Middle School band in the sight reading category at UIL, an accomplishment not seen at Maypearl in over six years. "The leadership mentored them before the contest and really helped instill a winning spirit in them," Brian said. "The seventh graders worked hard and deserved that win."

Along with learning, having fun has its place in the curriculum, and the band has enjoyed extensive trips since 2010, thanks to band boosters' funds. "We went to Disney World the first year," Brian recalled. "We took 30 students and got to perform during Disney Magic Music Days." Last year, band members were bussed out to San Antonio where they attended Six Flags Fiesta Texas. This year's plans are to take a cruise aboard a Carnival ocean liner, where they will entertain passengers; the students set sail from Galveston in May.

Brian looks forward to more adventures with his band, but insists it's not the kudos and field trips that thrill him most. "What is fulfilling for me is helping students achieve what they thought they couldn't achieve," he said. "Seeing these students experience a level of success that gives them pride and inspires them to continue is the real reward." **NOW**



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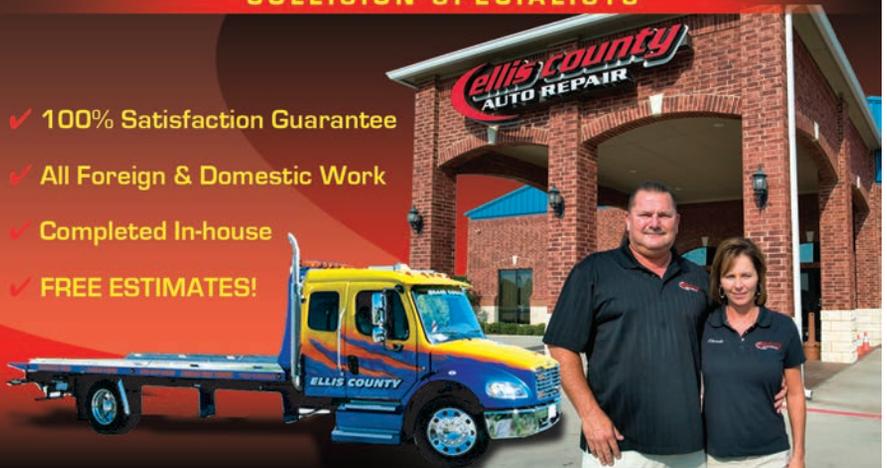
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Finding the Joy *Again*

— By Sydni Thomas

Children are one of the most important things in the lives of Sara and Robby Muetzenberg. Not only do they have two of their own, but they love working with children whenever they get the chance. Once they found out they could not have any more who were genetically theirs, the Muetzenberg's still had room in their hearts that needed to be filled by children. Fostering seemed like the next step, but as they were in the final stages of adopting two children, the biological families stepped in and adopted them.

“Robby listened to his brain,” Sara said. “I was listening with my heart. He knew we couldn’t handle another devastating break, and we decided not to foster again. God led us to where we are. Shortly after our hearts were broken, He filled that hole in my heart with the kids at my new job as preschool director and children’s minister at Creekside Church of Christ. There are always babies around who need to be loved.”

The Muetzenbergs had attended Creekside for seven years, but left for a brief period of time. Four months after their return, Sara was asked to become director of the preschool program. In July she accepted the job, and shortly after the children’s minister position was vacated, and Sara took that job as well. Under Sara’s leadership, the preschool program is

growing and now has a certified pre-kindergarten teacher. She hopes that as they grow, they will be able to hire more certified teachers and expand to kindergarten. When she isn't working on the preschool program, Sara is planning church events for the children's department. Each year she is in charge of putting together retreats, church camps, the fall festival, an Easter egg hunt and baby blessings. She even works with the finance department for both programs. "There are many responsibilities that come along with both of the positions I hold now," Sara said. "Each day I work in curriculum, communications, teaching and creating partnerships with parents."

Sara met Robby during their freshman year at Abilene Christian University (ACU). Both had a passion for working with children and teenagers and fell in love after she learned how to say his last name! Sara's time at ACU was filled with more than just classes and hanging out with Robby. She was on the gymnastics team and took on a full course load, but still found time to work with children. At 18, she began substitute teaching in public schools. She planned her course load around days that she could sub at schools. "No matter how busy my life has been, I have always made time for children," Sara said. "I began working with them at 18 and have not been able to stop. My purpose in life is to teach."



Robby took a job as a youth minister after graduating from college. This gave Sarah her first experience working as a minister. While Robby focused on the boys, Sara had the opportunity to minister to girls in junior high and high school. "There were six boys and 15 girls," Sara said. "I had to step in and

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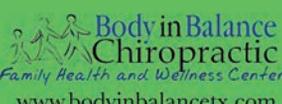
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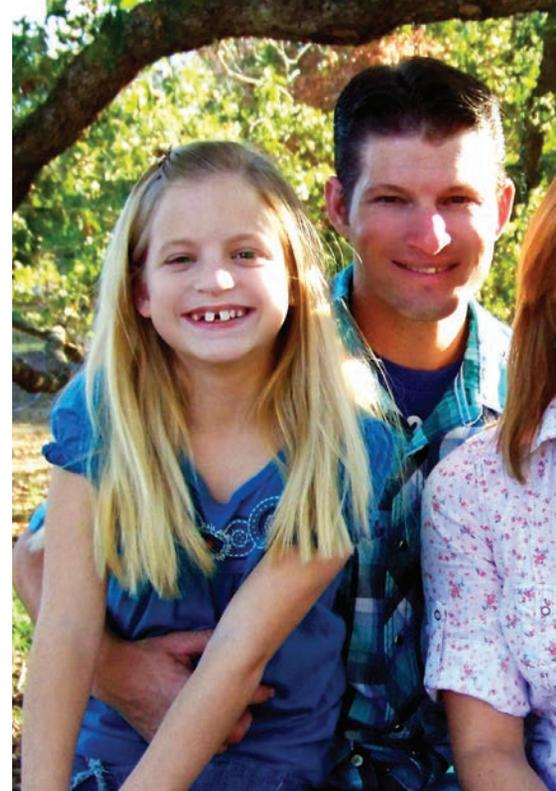
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help. I always knew I wanted to be a youth minister or children's minister, but it is not typical for a woman to be in those rolls."

After they left that church, Robby became a firefighter. Sara went back to work as a teacher once their two children reached kindergarten age. She worked at the same school they went to and taught in Waxahachie for eight years. During those years, Sara worked in kindergarten, second grade, fifth grade and was the varsity cheerleading coach. As a firefighter, Robby works 24 hours straight and is then off for 48 hours.

Getting everyone where they needed to be was a challenge at times, between their busy schedules and Sara working in the public schools.

In her new position at the church, Sara has the flexibility needed to maintain their sometimes difficult schedule. "The biggest difference in working for a private school, as opposed to a public school, is the flexibility in schedules and teaching," Sara said. "I'm able to pick up the kids every day from their school and go to their programs. In public schools, you are



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sometimes limited in what you can teach and say. Here, I have the freedom to talk and teach about God.”

Sara’s schedule is very different from the one she followed as an educator in the public sector. She works Sundays through Thursdays and has the opportunity to work from home. This helps when Robby is on duty, and she has the ability to take care of the kids. While her new job is a perfect fit for her and her family, there are still things that Sarah misses about her time at public schools. “I miss being in the same schools as my kids,” Sara said. “I also miss the team



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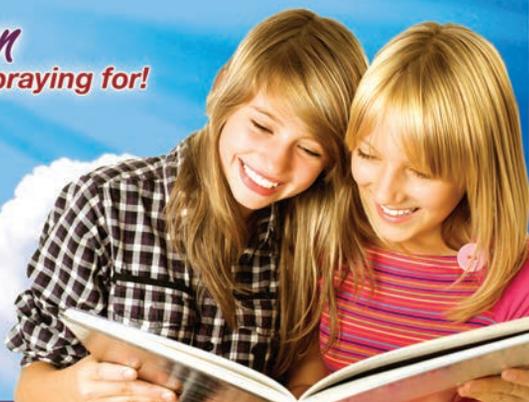
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aspect teachers have in public schools. However, I love my new job, and I have a new type of team.”

While she was still working in public schools, Sara finished earning her master's in Christian education leadership from ACU. After finishing, she decided to switch from teaching to administration. She took an assistant principal position with Waxahachie. “Making changes is scary,” Sara said. “After I finished the master's program, I took a leap of faith and took an assistant principal position.”

Sara missed teaching, and the assistant principal position turned out to be a less-than-perfect fit. After a year in the position, Sara and Robby had to sit down and figure out what went wrong. Through prayer and studying, the couple decided it would be best for Sarah to

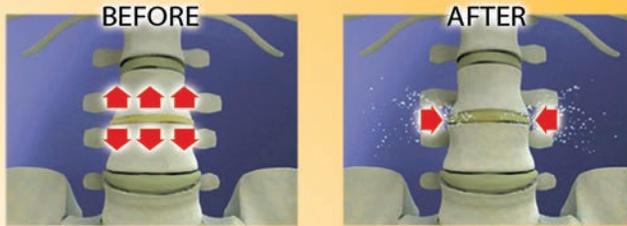


leave the position. “Our journey of faith has been tested many times,” Sara said. “I quit my job without having another one lined up. We began praying and studying. God continued to provide for our family. We never went without anything we needed.”

Finding out where she needed to be has been a long journey for Sara and her family. By putting all of their faith and trust in God, a position that uses all of her talents and passions was presented to her unexpectedly. Although it was another leap, and they had to face many heartbreaks to get here, Sara and Robby took it and have not looked back. They are thankful for everything they've been through. “When I'm teaching I feel as though I'm using my talent and fulfilling my purpose,” Sara confessed. “At one point, teaching became a job. I struggled to find the joy in it. I had to step back and find what I liked and disliked about it. I have found the joy again.” **NOW**

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— By *Sandra Strong*

Hometown Chiropractic is a state-of-the-art chiropractic health care facility designed to provide the very best patient care. “It is our objective to provide our patients with quality care in a friendly atmosphere,” Dr. Natasha Maza said. “We also offer convenient hours, professional services and no waiting.”

Most insurance plans are accepted at Hometown Chiropractic. All financial programs are fully explained to each patient once the experienced staff has verified coverage. Dr. Maza possesses the perfect combination of extensive experience and innovative techniques. “Our friendly staff, which includes patient care coordinator, Robin Maulden, and insurance specialist, Julie Svehlak, makes patients feel like they are family,” Dr. Maza said.

“Our no-wait policy allows patients to quickly and conveniently come and go for their chiropractic treatments.”

Diagnosing the cause of a patient’s problem is the first concern for Dr. Maza. A thorough history and examination, including X-rays, muscle function study, orthopedic, neurological, as well as chiropractic evaluation are performed to make the correct diagnosis and determine treatment recommendations. “If, after the evaluation, it is determined we can effectively treat your condition, you will be accepted as a patient,” Dr. Maza explained. “If we are unable to help you, we will refer you to the appropriate health care provider.”

“It is our policy to only accept those patients we truly believe

we can help,” Dr. Maza added.

At Hometown Chiropractic, Dr. Maza mainly treats patients with neck pain, back pain and headaches. With over nine years of training and experience, she covers many areas of chiropractic care, including: pediatric, geriatric and prenatal. “We provide patients with full spinal X-rays at the beginning of treatment,” Dr. Maza stated. “We also provide advanced spinal correction using state-of-the-art chiropractic techniques.”

Dr. Maza attends numerous continuing-education conferences and programs, always mindful to stay abreast of new developments in patient care, since patient care is her first priority. Never in the history of chiropractic care have chiropractic doctors been able to provide the level of help and expertise which now exists. “These newer methods are safer, more comfortable and more effective than ever before,” Dr. Maza said.

The spinal and postural screenings offered can reveal important health information, which can unlock the door to improved health and well-being. Hometown Chiropractic provides screenings at community events, health fairs and individual places of employment. The goal is to educate individuals on the benefits of chiropractic care.

Many services and programs in rehabilitation are also offered. They include: a state-of-the-art rehabilitation center, corrective exercises, home-care programs, physiotherapy, as well as programs focused on shoulders, wrists, elbows, fingers, necks, backs, hips, knees and ankles. “We teach our patients special ‘blueprint’ exercises designed just for them, to help them strengthen and correct their own unique problem,” Dr. Maza stated. “Specific exercise and stretches can help your body stay in a healthy balance.”

Good health is essential to a happy life. This is a documented fact. Unfortunately, realization does not often come until we are threatened by loss of our health. Make Hometown Chiropractic your choice for friendly, courteous service with a professional and comfortable atmosphere. **NOW**

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Dr. David and Natasha Marcial

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leg. When these nerves are irritated or affected by the inflammation of nearby soft tissues, doctors refer to this as sciatica.

One of the most common causes of sciatic leg pain is the vertebral subluxation complex. It can be accompanied by the bulging or herniation of the soft pulpy discs which separate each spinal bone. This can irritate or put pressure on the sciatic nerve roots as they leave the spinal cord. The result can be an intense pain shooting down either or both legs.

Sciatica, like other health problems that can be traced to the spine, often responds dramatically to the restoration of normal spinal function through conservative chiropractic care.

Pain is caused when the sciatic nerve roots are irritated, scraped, twisted, stretched or pinched as they exit the spine. Causes of the impairment may be chemical, physical or the emotional stress of everyday living. A full-blown sciatic flare-up can involve the entire sciatic nerve path, resulting in symptoms of lower back pain, burning, cramping or numbness that radiates into the thighs, legs, ankles, feet and toes. Pain may also be limited to various points along the nerve, such as the buttocks, knee area and calf.

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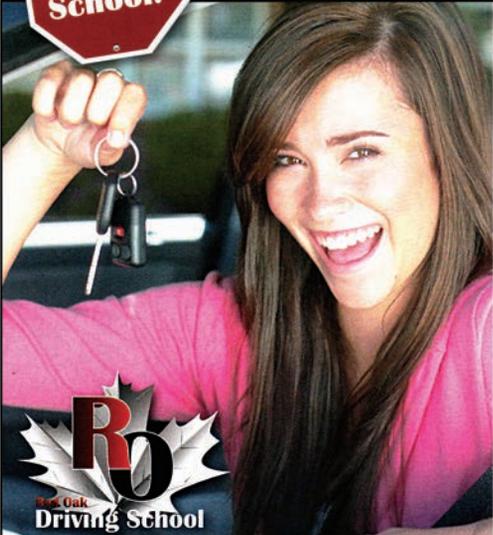


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Spotlight on Precancers

— By Dr. Michael Sonabend

What are AKs?

One of the most common conditions treated in the dermatology office are precancerous lesions called actinic keratoses (AKs). AKs are abnormal collections of cells induced by the sun.

AKs can appear fairly subtly as a pink-red scaling patch of skin. They are very common in areas repeatedly exposed to the sun, such as the back of hands, forearms, face and bald scalp. They are especially common in fair-skinned persons or those who have worked outdoors for long periods without skin protection.

The reason it is important to recognize and treat AKs is that when left untreated, a small portion of the growths will develop into a type of skin cancer known as a squamous cell carcinoma. Squamous cell carcinomas can become quite serious and require surgical removal. The risk of squamous cell carcinoma occurring in a patient with more than 10 actinic keratoses is about 10 to 15 percent.

Traditional Treatment

The good news is that AKs are usually quite easily recognized by the dermatologist and are easily treated. When they occur in isolation, the most common method of removal is freezing them off, a procedure known as cryotherapy. Liquid nitrogen causes blistering and shedding of the sun damaged skin. AKs treated in this way can take up to two to three weeks to resolve. A light

freeze usually leaves no scar, but longer freeze times (which are necessary for thicker lesions) result in a pale mark or scar.

Newer Treatments

Recently, dermatologists have started to expand their arsenal to treat AKs beyond just freezing. Now we will often treat an entire area, such as the face or forearm, to remove all obvious AKs along with the microscopic ones that would have presented later in time. To accomplish this, we either use a topical cream (5-Fluorouracil or Diclofenac) or a light-based procedure called PDT.

The 5-Fluorouracil cream is applied onto the skin once or twice daily for two to four weeks. The treated areas become red, raw and uncomfortable during treatment. Healing starts when the cream is discontinued, and the eventual result is usually excellent.

PDT is the most exciting new development in the treatment of AKs. The treatment involves applying to the affected area a type of chemical that makes the skin sensitive to light (photosensitizer), and then after the application of the chemical, exposure to a strong light, known as a blue light. The treated areas will become red, raw and uncomfortable, but often heal within 10 days. The result is similar to application of the 5-FU cream, but uses a short, in-office procedure to replace the three weeks of home application, leading to less downtime. **NOW**

*Dr. Michael Sonabend, Dermatologist
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February Gardens

— By Nancy Fenton

Did you get started last month readying your garden for a great year? If you didn't, it is not too late. Just use organic-based products that will not burn new seeds, because now is the time to start planting those cool weather vegetables. I mean cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, radishes, carrots, spinach, lettuces, beets, turnips and peas. All these vegetables can weather a cold snap or two and really need the shorter days and cooler temperatures. The standard rule of thumb is to plant a seed in a shallow trench and cover with soil about three times the depth of the seed. Gentle watering will finish the planting process. The sprouts will start to show in five to 10 days depending on the variety of vegetable you are planting. Once up, you have to make the hard decisions about which seedlings to get rid of. Each plant needs some growing room, so be ruthless! Even in the most carefully tended garden, a plant will need several inches on each side to grow well. This is the hardest part for me!

Certain varieties of all these vegetables grow better in our alkaline soils than others. Texas A&M offers the following

recommendations: Beets — Pacemaker III, broccoli — Premium Crop, Brussel sprouts — Prince Marvin, cabbage — Early Jersey Wakefield or Royal Chantenay, cauliflower — Snow Crown, garlic — Texas White, lettuce — Buttercrunch or Salad Bowl, peas — Sugar Snap or Little Marvel, radishes — Inca (red) or White Icicle, spinach — Melody. Onions should be planted by sets or seedlings, usually available at your local feed and seed stores. Irish potatoes can be planted now as seed chunks in a depression, adding rich soil as the plants grow. This is a fun project for a family and can be done in a large bag or container on the porch! Many of these vegetables will convert to good pot plants with a great harvest, if fertilized. Try some this year and have your own garden!

For more information on good varieties for North Texas, call the Ellis County Master Gardeners at (972) 825-5175. **NOW**

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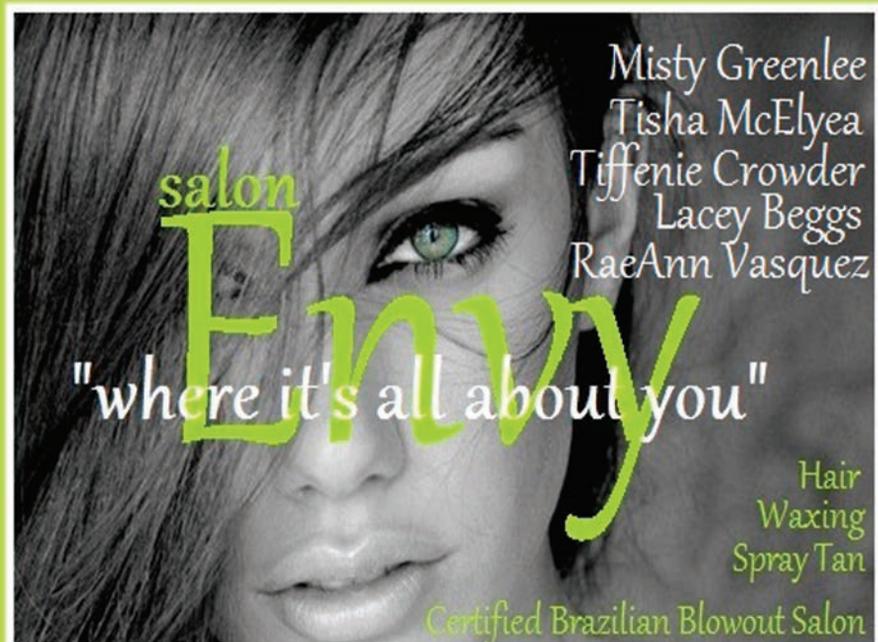
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Is a Rollover in Your Future?

— By *Adam Rope*

Have you recently left one employer to begin working for another? Were you covered by an employer-sponsored retirement plan, such as a 401(k)? If so, you may be wondering about the future of your account. In the event of a job change, there are many options available to you regarding your employer-sponsored retirement account assets. The options you have will depend on the provisions of your former employer's plan. Sometimes your money can stay in the plan with your previous employer until you reach a specific age, and you then can begin taking withdrawals without a tax penalty.

Remaining with your old plan may have drawbacks. Sometimes fees are charged to former employees to offset managing the account. A minimum asset balance may also be required. Other times you must take your money out when you terminate employment. You should contact the Human Resources department or benefits counselor of your former employer to determine your options. If you withdraw plan assets, you may need to find another funding vehicle.

Transferring the balance of the assets in your previous employer's tax-qualified account to a plan sponsored by your new employer may be an option. This can be done without paying taxes if the money goes directly to the new account (known as a "direct rollover"). However, your new employer may not allow a rollover, thus you will need to look at further options. One choice to consider is rolling the balance of your account to a Traditional Individual Retirement Account (IRA). With this choice, you are able to control the investment options within the IRA. You can also avoid the need to make a further rollover if you change jobs again.

Rolling your 401(k) assets into a Traditional IRA can be

costly if not done correctly. If you take a withdrawal, the trustee of your old plan must withhold 20 percent of the money for federal income tax purposes. You have 60 days to roll the distribution to a new qualified retirement vehicle if you do take a withdrawal. The 20-percent withholding will count as a distribution if you do not roll over that amount to an IRA or other qualified plan. A 10-percent tax penalty will usually apply if you are under age 59 1/2, and you don't roll the entire amount into an IRA or other qualified plan.

In order to avoid the 20-percent federal income tax withholding, a direct rollover should be considered. The assets of your employer-sponsored plan are transferred directly from your former employer's plan to a Traditional IRA or other qualified plan. You don't touch the money, and neither does the government. Your assets can grow tax-deferred until you begin withdrawals.

To complete a direct rollover, contact a financial professional to discuss your options. Once you determine where you want the money to go, the IRA custodian can request the money from your employer-sponsored plan in the form of a check or wire transfer. Your current IRA contributions are not affected by a rollover. You may contribute the allowable limit to an IRA even after rolling a substantial amount from your previous plan.

With so many choices available, it may be in your best interests to discuss a Traditional IRA rollover with a financial professional. You have some options. Take advantage of one with which you are comfortable. **NOW**

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February 4

Annual Mission Sale: 7:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., First United Methodist Church gym, 505 West Marvin.

Family Valentine's Day Craft: 10:30-11:30 a.m., Sims Library. Fun for the entire family. Call (972) 937-2671 for more information.

February 10-12

Waxahachie Community Theatre presents *Harvey*. Dinner shows are **Friday and Saturday** at 6:30 p.m. and **Sunday** at 1:30 p.m., Park Meadows Baptist Church, 3350 N. Highway 77. Dinner and show tickets: \$20/person. Seating is by prepaid reservation only. Show-only tickets: \$10/person. For information and reservations, visit www.waxahachiecommunitytheatre.com. Tickets are also available from any cast member or by calling

the WCT box office: (972) 646-1050.

February 13

Valentine's Jazz Night: 6:00-9:00 p.m., Maypearl High School, 500 Phillips Street. Three bands, including the Maypearl Jazz Band, will perform. (972) 435-1020.

February 26

Bridal and Special Event Show: 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center. Admission is \$3.

Waxahachie Junior Service League Prospective Member Tea: 2:00 p.m., First United Methodist Church, Foundation Basement, 5050 West Marvin. For more information, contact Kimberly Koelzer at mkkolzer@gmail.com.

February 28

Adult Volunteers for Girl Scouts in the Waxahachie Area: 7:00-8:30 p.m. For location and additional information, visit www.gssu251.org or www.facebook.com/gssu251.

March 2-3

State Championship Barbecue Cook-off: Mid-Way Regional Airport, off of Highway 287. The event benefits Knights of Columbus 8417

Charities and the 2012 4-H and FFA Live Stock Show. For more information, contact Dennis Williams at (214) 399-0081 or dwilliams05@sbcglobal.net or Ron Naizer at (817) 909-6484 or rnaizer@yahoo.com.

March 3

Bowl For Kids' Sake: 11:00 a.m. or 1:30 p.m., Hilltop Super Bowl, 2010 W. Business 287. Proceeds benefit the children served in Ellis County by Big Brothers Big Sisters. There are several "friendly challenges" taking place. For a team packet or more information, visit www.bowlforkidsake.org or contact Diana Phillips at (972) 573-2420 or dphillips@bbbstx.org.

The Canterbury Episcopal School "Retro Rewind" Gala: 6:00 p.m., Ruthe Jackson Center, 3113 S. Carrier Pkwy., Grand Prairie. Annual fundraiser features dinner, music, dancing, live and silent auctions, retro costume contest and prize raffle. For more information, call Sherry Bowers at (972) 293-5877 or e-mail cesgala@yahoo.com.

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your event details to sskoda.nowmag@sbcglobal.net.

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In The Kitchen With Tanya Cain

— *By Sandra Strong*

Tanya Cain's favorite hobby is baking. At times, it becomes a family affair. "As my children have gotten older, they have also taken an interest in baking, too," Tanya said. "We can spend an entire day making sugar cookies." She learned as a youngster to always have something sweet around the house in case company should show up unexpectedly.

Cooking and baking also serves as Tanya's form of relaxation, especially when she can smell warm apple pie or a carrot cake baking in the oven. She firmly believes in the old saying, "Home is where the heart is." "In our house, the heart of the home is found in our kitchen," she admitted. "I only hope to pass this tradition on to our children and grandchildren." **NOW**

Cut-out Sugar Cookies

- 3/4 cup shortening,**
butter-flavored recommended
- 1 cup sugar**
- 2 eggs**
- 1/2 tsp. almond flavoring**
- 2 1/2 cups flour**
- 1 tsp. salt**
- 1 tsp. baking powder**

- 1.** Mix shortening, sugar, eggs and flavoring together. Add the remaining ingredients.
- 2.** Chill 1 hour. Roll and cut; bake at 400 F for 6-8 minutes.

Perfect Apple Pie

- 2 pie shells**
- 6 cups apples, peeled and thinly sliced**
- 3/4 cup sugar**
- 2 Tbsp. flour**
- 3/4 tsp. cinnamon**
- 1/4 tsp. salt**

- 1/8 tsp. nutmeg**
- 1 Tbsp. lemon juice**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 425 F. Place 1 pie crust into a 9-inch pie pan.
- 2.** In large bowl, combine all other ingredients; toss lightly.
- 3.** Spoon apple mixture into pie pan. Top with second crust and flute; cut slits in several places.
- 4.** Bake for 40 to 45 minutes or until apples are tender and crust is golden brown.

Carrot Cake

- 4 eggs**
- 1 cup vegetable oil**
- 1 tsp. vanilla**
- 2 cups flour**
- 2 cups sugar**
- 2 tsp. baking soda**
- 2 tsp. cinnamon**
- 4 cups carrots, grated**
- 2/3 cup nuts, chopped (optional)**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350 F. Lightly spray two 9-inch round pans with cooking spray.
- 2.** In a large mixing bowl, beat eggs until foamy; add oil and vanilla and beat well.
- 3.** Mix flour, sugar, baking soda and cinnamon; add to egg mixture and mix well.
- 4.** Fold in carrots and nuts. Pour into prepared pans. Bake 30-35 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.
- 5.** Invert pans on grid and cool for 10 minutes.
- 6.** Frost with cream cheese icing (recipe below) if desired.

Cream Cheese Icing

- 3 8-oz. pkgs. cream cheese,**
slightly softened
- 3 cups powdered sugar**

- 1.** Beat cream cheese until smooth. Add powdered sugar; mix thoroughly.
- 2.** Beat at high speed until smooth. Do not overmix.

Best Cherry Pie

- 1 20-oz. can pitted sour cherries**
- 1 cup sugar**
- 1/3 cup flour**
- 1/8 tsp. salt**
- 2 Tbsp. butter**
- 1/4 tsp. almond extract**
- 1/4 tsp. red food coloring (optional)**
- 2 pastry pie shells**
- 1 egg yolk**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 425 F. Drain cherries, reserving 1 cup liquid.
- 2.** In a saucepan combine sugar, flour and salt. Stir in cherry liquid; bring to a boil, stirring often. Reduce heat; simmer for 5 minutes. Mixture will thicken.
- 3.** When mixture is thickened, add butter, almond extract, food coloring and cherries. Cover and refrigerate.
- 4.** On a lightly floured surface, roll out half the pastry into an 11-inch circle. Put into 9-inch pie dish. Roll other half of pastry into another 11-inch circle; with a knife or pastry wheel, cut 8 1/2-inch strips.
- 5.** Pour cooled cherry filling into pie dish. Place pastry strips horizontally, then vertically, across the top of the pie and lightly brush with egg yolk.
- 6.** Bake 30 to 35 minutes. Cool before serving.

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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.”

For a physician referral or for more information about orthopaedic services, call **1.800.4BAYLOR** or visit us online at BaylorHealth.com/WaxOrtho.

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