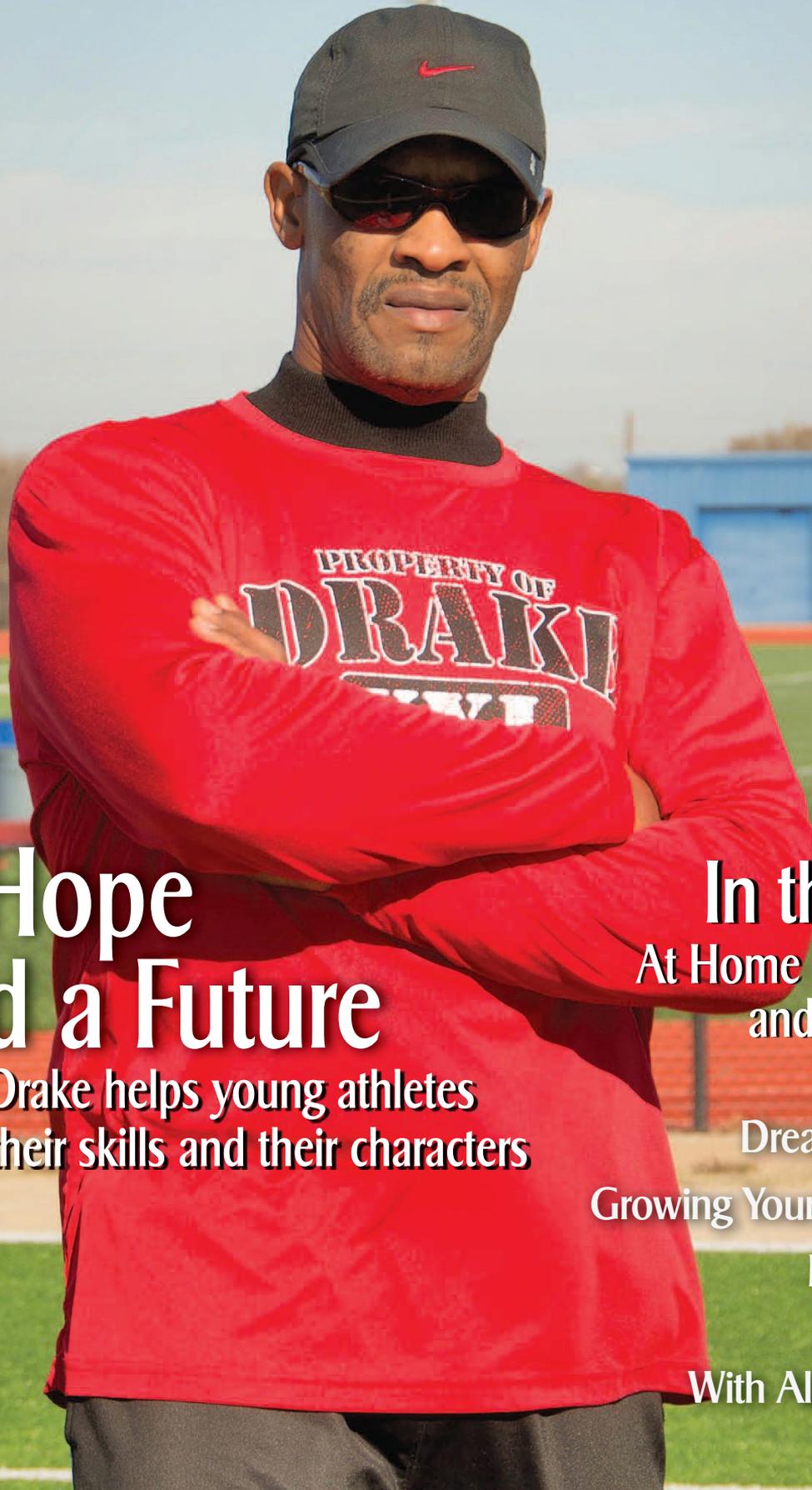


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The Elementary #7 Naming Committee is seeking input from community members to recommend names for the school being built along Shiloh Rd. and Bryson Ln. Deadline to nominate a name is April 10, 2015. The campus will open in 2016-2017

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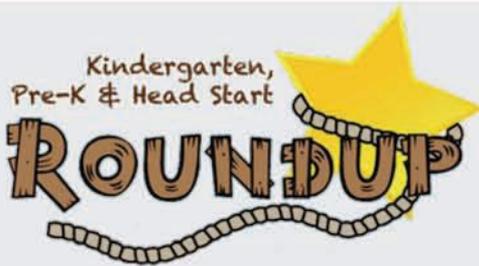
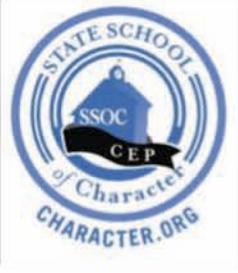
It's
official

Starting the 2015-2016 school year, the MHHS school mascot will be the JAGUARS and school colors are BLUE & RED with a chrome accent.

T.E. Baxter Elementary Named a 2015 Texas School of Character

One of eight Texas schools to receive this honor

This designation is awarded to schools demonstrating implementation of the guiding principles of character education as outlined in "Eleven Principles of Effective Character Education" published by the national Character Education Partnership (character.org). Their application will be sent to Washington D.C. for consideration in the National Schools of Character program. Learn more about Baxter Elementary's courage, character and commitment on the campus website.



Early registration is April 6-9, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at all elementary campuses. Parents are encouraged to complete the registration packet available online in early April.

Any Midlothian child who will be 5 yrs. old on or before September 1, 2015 is eligible to attend MISD's full-day kindergarten. The District also offers Pre-K and Head Start for students who meet the qualifications.

Kindercamp

Parents and students are invited to visit their home campus for an informational meeting about MISD's 2015-16 Kindergarten program on April 28, 6:30 p.m.

Superintendent Search Underway

The Board hired Bob E. Griggs & Associates to assist with the superintendent search process.

February - Met with staff and community groups to receive input on superintendent profile

March/April - Consultants screen, interview and select candidates

April - Board interviews candidates and votes on lone finalist

May - Board approves superintendent's contract



West Point Cadets

March Dudek (right), a MHS and West Point graduate, is pictured with Joe Allen, a MHS senior who recently received an appointment to West Point.



Young Filmmakers

Midlothian High School theater arts students received first place at the UIL film competition in Austin. Their state championship film is called *The 4th Wall*.



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ON THE COVER



Terry Drake encourages youth to strive for excellence in their lives.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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Editor's Note

Hello, Midlothian!

At a Spanish villa nestled in the high Hill Country near Austin, she was a vision in white coming down the spiral staircase. But, I didn't see a bride. Through a mist of memories I could hear the nurse say, "Betty, look at your baby!" My answering cry was, "I got my girl!" She was my true doll baby, and dressing her was like wrapping a present. She was such a girly girl but also the biggest tomboy with her two brothers. I was forever plucking her out of life and death situations. She grew into a self-assured, lovely woman of faith. On February 28, she began a new life, when her father placed her hand in the hand of a wonderful man who will now be first in her life. Howard and I look forward with Aubrey and Diane Smith of Plano in loving and supporting our kids — the newlywed couple of Keenan and Lauren Robinson.

Betty

Betty Tryon
MidlothianNOW Editor
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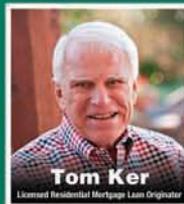
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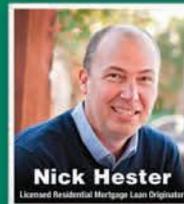
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A HOPE AND A

— By Betty Tryon

Remember Roger Staubach's Hail Mary? If you are a Dallas Cowboys football fan, then you've either seen it or heard about it. Many people remember great plays and great players long after the games are over. Some of those athletes continue to impress in other ways when no longer on the field. Terry Drake, former player for Winnipeg Blue Bombers in the Canadian Football League and presently president, CEO and founder of Drake Athletics, now puts his efforts into working for humanity in the game of life.

Like most football players, Terry started in Pee Wee football and played through college. After college, he played professionally until an injury ended his career. By this time Terry

had married Teresa and eventually had five children: Mike, Rick, Terry Jr., Justin and Britney and six beautiful granddaughters. He found his way back into sports after joining the Army by coaching a football team. He now has 28 years of coaching successes behind him. During his time as the head football coach at Trinity Preparatory School in Winter Springs, Florida, he was named Coach of the Year in the state of Florida. During his coaching years as the head football/athletic director at Trinity Christian School in Cedar Hill, TX, he was once again named Coach of the Year in the state of Texas. In addition to those wow factors, Terry earned four Class 4A State Football Championship rings. He currently coaches football, basketball and track at Shelton School in North Dallas. Today, he is an active member of the National Football League Players Association.

Terry doesn't talk much about his glory days. He would rather discuss his young athletes. "Coaching is a passion with me," Terry shared, "as well as getting young student athletes to know



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and understand the importance of their academics and guiding them into the next chapters of their life. Some have that burning desire to play on the collegiate or professional level. We really stress academics first and then athletics.”

Drake Athletics’ origins are rooted in Terry’s time spent living in his coach’s home while in the ninth grade. The coach’s influence throughout Terry’s high school years prompted him to want to be a coach also. “I still hold records at Ft. Worth Christian School today that



have never been broken,” he shared. “I wanted to have the kind of impact on kids that my coach had on my life with that discipline, hard training and teaching of respect.”

Using those elements in his coaching, as well as other positive reinforcements, made Terry the coach he is today. He has developed very close and lasting relationships with many of the athletes he has coached. “I get the phone calls when the first baby is being born and the weddings. When I see them, it’s like a reunion,” he shared. “It’s because I was given that and with Drake Athletics I’m in a position to give back. When I went

into coaching, I didn't reinvent the wheel. I used the same tactics my coach used with me and just adjusted them to every kid."

Drake Athletics is a 501(c)(3) organization that specializes in working with the needs of underprivileged children from the ages of 5 to 14. The organization holds fun celebrity summer sports camps around Texas. "The first camp was in 1990 with 15 former pro athletes, and we have



done celebrity camps ever since," stated Terry. A number of celebrity athletes from different sports have participated, for example, Bill Bates, former football player with the Dallas Cowboys and Jim Morris, former baseball player with Tampa Bay Devil Rays.

Terry coordinates the events with the local head football coach/athletic director. The camps focus on whatever sport is needed whether football, baseball or soccer, in addition to cheer camps. During the camps, the kids are trained in the fundamentals of the sport. The celebrity athletes give life-skills lessons and work with kids on character building. Cheer camp takes place simultaneously, and the girls learn cheers, stunts, dance and a routine they perform at the end of camp for the other athletes.

On December 5, 2015, Drake Athletics will hold a Character Bowl to be hosted at Cedar Hill Stadium consisting of Pee Wee teams of boys and girls ages 11 and 12. Terry picks an all-star team from South and North Texas. For instance, from the southern

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part of Texas, the Houston area Fort Bend Youth Association has over 3,500 boys and girls with 18 teams. From that bounty, he will choose only 34 of the top athletes and 17 cheerleaders. For the northern team, he will choose the same number of players and cheerleaders from the leagues here. Transportation is provided for the children. To be chosen, each child must have great character and grades in addition to their athletic ability. "I make it look like a mini version of the Rose Bowl," Terry stated. "There is an autograph signing session with pro athletes getting autographs from the little athletes, and the little athletes getting autographs from the pros. The winner gets a state championship trophy and everyone receives medals."

The Drake Athletic Toy Drive is another great affair the organization hosts. Terry works year-round for this annual Christmas drive. He enlists the cooperation of coaches and gets the athletes to buy toys, clothing, gifts and sports equipment. "What is unique about the toy drive is the athletes are buying them," Terry explained. "The reason I want them to do it is found in Rick Warren's book, *A Purpose Driven Life*. The first sentence is: 'It's not about you.' I want the kids to know the importance of

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The toy drive started with four schools and a couple of universities. Last year, they had 20 schools and universities participating. “Every year, it gets bigger with schools calling to be a part of it. At Waco Midway High School, it has caught on so well that it has now led me to get a 26-foot truck to fit it all in,” he exclaimed. “It was full from front to back. I’m so passionate about what we do with the drive, because my mom always made sure that my brother and I had Christmas. We served over 1,000 kids at the Sugar Land area.”

Because Drake Athletics is a nonprofit organization, it is powered by donations and volunteers. Terry does it because, “These kids all have a dream,” he shared. “They all have hope. We do whatever we can to help. I firmly stand on the ground of Jeremiah 29:11 where God says, ‘I know the plans I have for you. Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’” Terry’s desire to help little athletes build their skills as well as their character is a great play for this former player. **NOW**

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— By Betty Tryon

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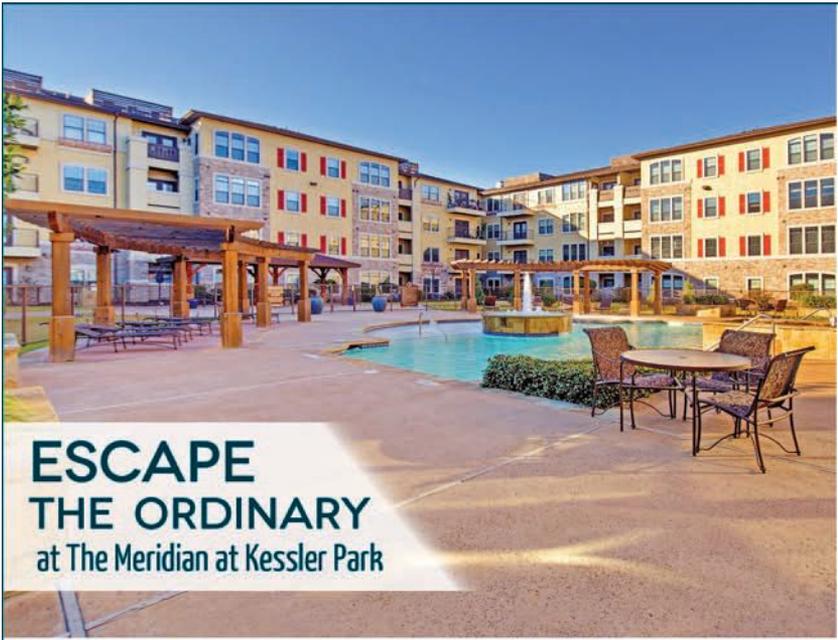
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bachelor's degree right here at home. Because of Tarleton's agreement with Navarro, a student can now get a Bachelor of Business Administration and/or a Bachelor of Science in Applied Science with an emphasis in business administration. "This is great for students," Carolyn Monk, manager of community college outreach Midlothian programs declared. "They may want to go to the university but don't have the money to leave home and live somewhere else with housing expenses, room and board, meals and transportation. Many don't have the funds to do that, or they just don't want to live away from home."

There have been students who moved to Stephenville, the location of the main campus of Tarleton, and then decided that living away from home wasn't for them. So, they return home and complete their education here. Another alternative is to attend both campuses. "We have had several do that," Carolyn explained. "We've had some students go to Stephenville and take classes there Monday through Wednesday, come here to take a class on Thursday and be home for the weekend."

Carolyn's story is similar to the Midlothian woman mentioned above. "I was one of those who went to school late in life, got an associate degree and finished my bachelor's and master's degree," she explained. "When my daughter started college, I decided I would go back." Carolyn grew up in Ft. Worth but has lived in Midlothian for 30 years. She attended Mountain



View Community College in Dallas and earned her associate degree. Her undergraduate and graduate work in business management was completed at Dallas Baptist University.

For many years, she and her husband ran a successful family business. However, working in the colleges has become her passion as her second career. "It's come full circle, because everything I used to use in my business I now use in the classroom," she stated. "I basically advise students and help them get through the process. I also teach some management courses." She teaches one class per semester along with her administrative duties.

Tarleton State University here in Midlothian is part of MITC (pronounced mitcey) for Multi-Institutional Teaching Center. It is one of the few MITCs in Texas that exists as a state initiative to bring affordable, accessible tuition to areas that don't have state institutions. "We are getting all kinds of students," she remarked. "Traditional students who come and finish their associate degree want to keep going. Adult students who left the educational system with their associate degree years ago because of family and life are now coming back to finish, because they need it for jobs or promotions."

Tarleton accepts students from Navarro who have completed their lower level courses and earned an associate degree. At Navarro there are two options for higher education with A&M-Commerce and Tarleton State University

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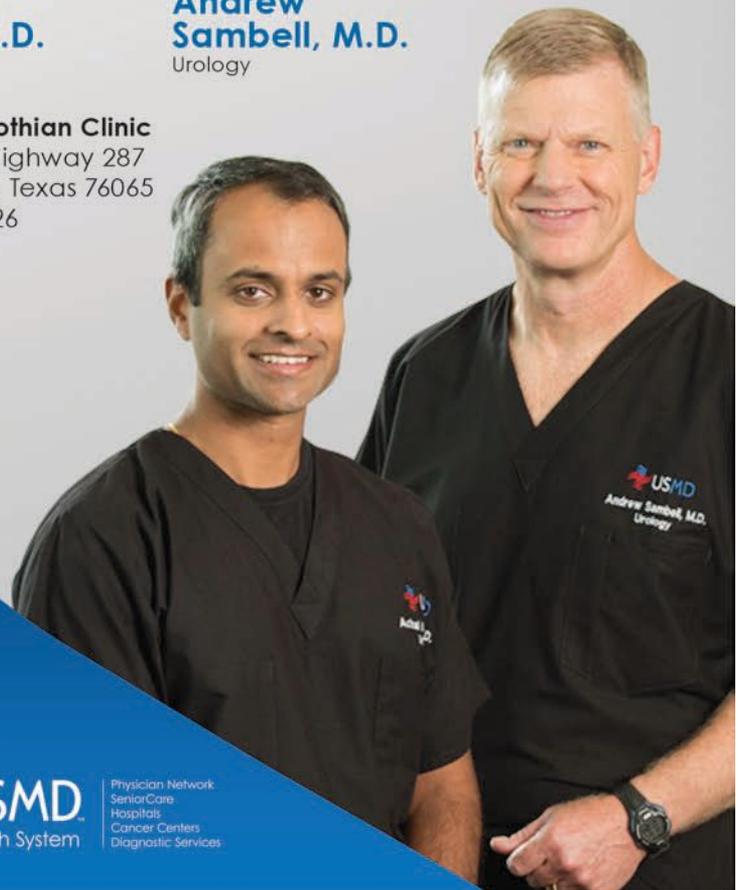
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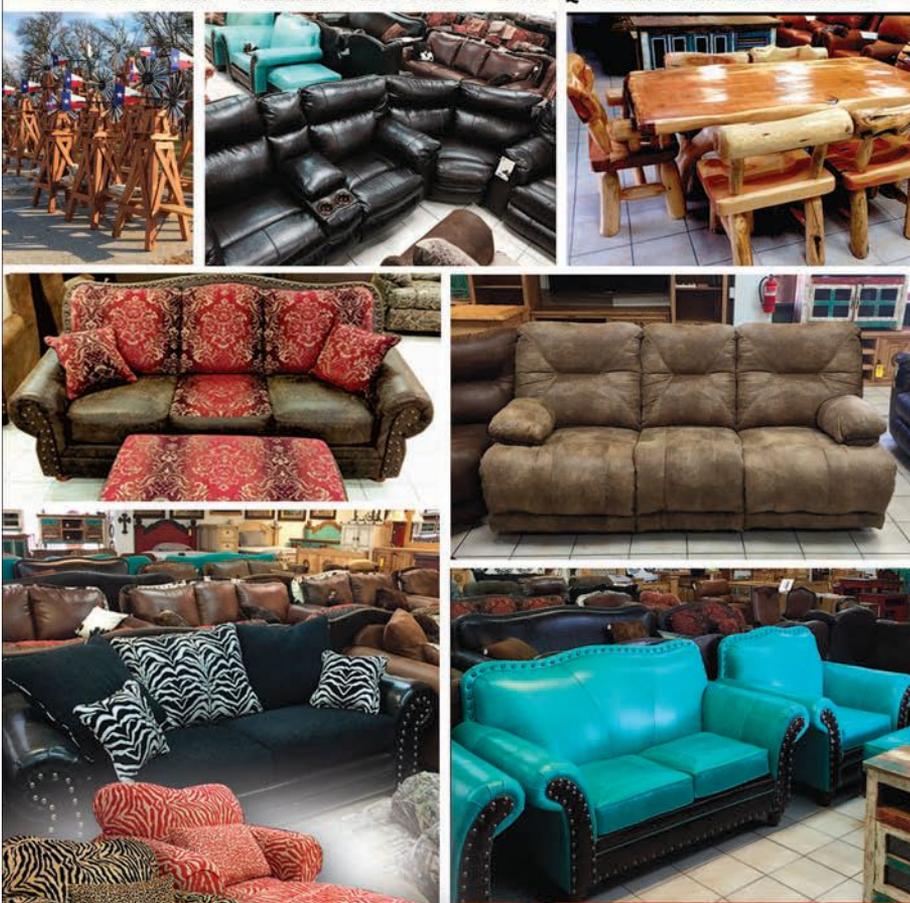
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depending upon what degree program the student wants to pursue. “Commerce mainly offers education,” Carolyn explained. “Tarleton offers several options — business, psychology, criminal justice, manufacturing and industrial management. We have a new program called Agri Business Management. Tarleton also offers two master’s programs in the psychology area.”

Tarleton does not accept freshmen at the Midlothian location. They must have at least 30 hours to come aboard with Tarleton. “That means they’ve gone through community college or dual credit. If they don’t have the hours, then we send them to Navarro,” Carolyn explained. “Credits have to be TSI (Texas State Initiative) complete for English, math and history. They either have to pass the testing or take those courses before they can come to us.”

A great benefit the college offers is something called the consortium forum where students can take two classes from Navarro and two classes from Tarleton and still be considered as a full-time student for aid. “We really work together well to help a student get all the requirements they need,” Carolyn shared. “They can be dual enrolled if they need to be for degree completion.”

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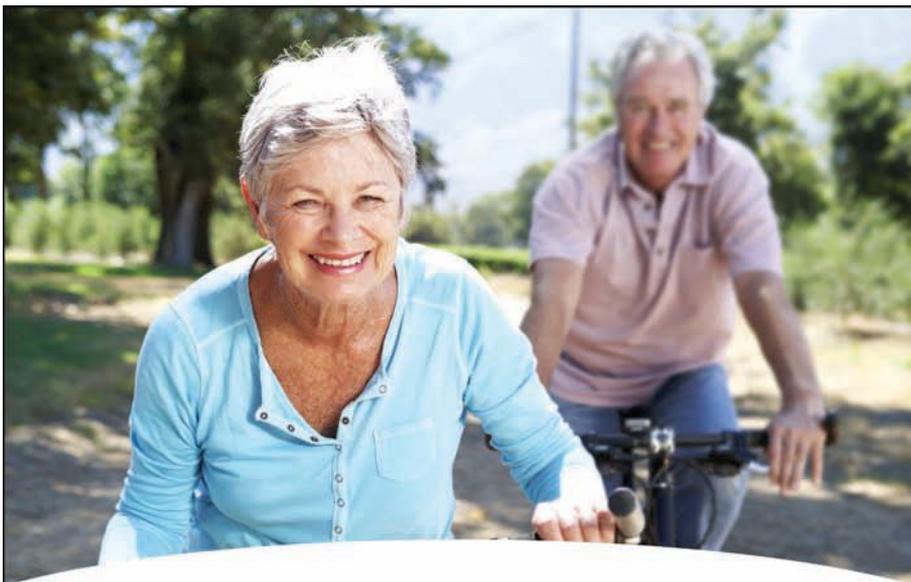
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This situation can arise if an adult student from another community college has been out of school for several years and may need a couple of courses from Navarro but are ready to begin at Tarleton. "Traditional students aren't really traditional students anymore. I see more of students who graduate from college having 30 hours or having a full associate degree when they graduate from high school."

Another great advantage with Tarleton is students can get up to 36 hours for their vocational degree. For example, if someone is getting their firefighter degree with Navarro, they can use up to 36 hours of that vocational degree to get the Applied Science degree. "A lot of degrees don't take vocational hours, but we have a degree that does take up to 36," Carolyn continued. "It's good for those who have that vocational degree but now want a four-year degree and want to use some of those credits. We want to use as many of their hours and as much of their investment as we can to help them get that degree."

Carolyn enjoys her position at Tarleton. She was able to come to the college at the beginning of its startup in Midlothian, and this is her third year. She really enjoys her second career and what she is able to bring to the lives of some of the students. "Helping others reach their goals so they can have a better life motivates me. I think seeing the change in students when they first attend and the transformation once they have completed their degree is very rewarding. Some do not believe this goal is attainable but find out they can do it and conquer their fear. The look of pride on their faces when they earn a degree is priceless. We walk this journey with them, I personally love watching the light bulb go off as students connect classroom learning to real world situations," she mused.

The college makes an effort to integrate itself into the Midlothian community by participating in various city events. On April 9, the college hosts a Career Expo. It's not too late to make your dreams of higher education come true. With help from Tarleton, you can make it. **NOW**

Editor's Note: For additional information on Career Expo go to tarleton.edu/careers.

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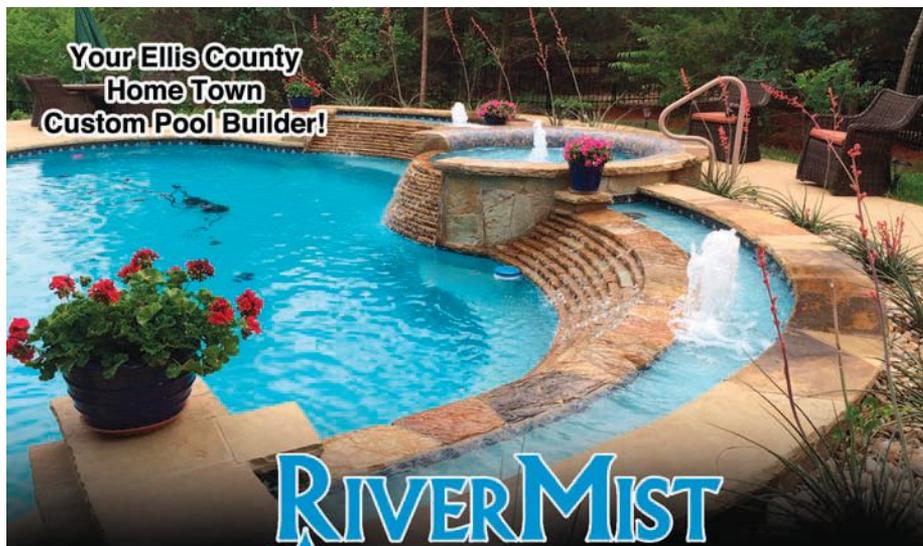
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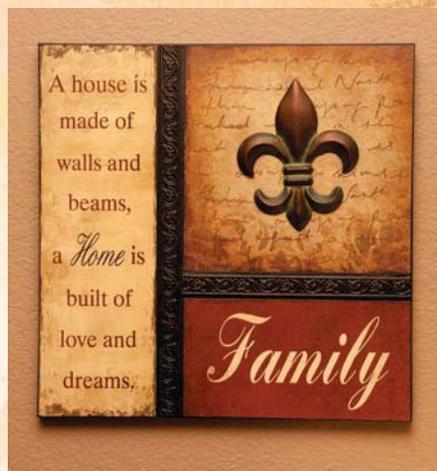
AT HOME WITH Tommy and Allison Hale

If recent local history has shown nothing else, it has proved this fact — people want to live in Midlothian. Midlothian has boomed progressively and exponentially since the 1980s. People who were part of the growth 20 years ago are now watching, wide-eyed at times, as the city continues to sprout and flourish. Two of those people are Tommy and Allison Hale, who moved here almost two decades ago and have seen continued growth in their neighborhood and throughout the city.

Tommy was born in California, but moved to Waxahachie when he was 9. “I just say I’m from here, I graduated from Waxahachie High School in 1980,” he explained. “I started working for the police department within a few weeks of graduation,” he continued. “In 1988, I moved from the Waxahachie Police Department to the Dallas DA’s office and



was assigned to a federal task force while going to college. I received a bachelor's in business management from LeTourneau



University in 1992." In 2012, Tommy retired from the DA's office and returned to Ellis County where he continues a law enforcement career.

Allison grew up in New Orleans. She went to Louisiana State University and received her BSN. She got her master's degree in clinical research administration



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from Walden University in 2013. "I have been a nurse for 25 years, and for most of that time, I have worked for Bristol-Myers Squibb monitoring clinical research trials," she explained. As part of her career, Allison does a lot of traveling, and it was in those travels that she met Tommy. "A mutual friend introduced us when I was in Dallas on one of my trips," she recounted.

After dating for about a year, Tommy and Allison were married in May 1999. "I lived in Waxahachie, and Allison was moving from New Orleans," Tommy detailed. "We knew we wanted to live within the Midlothian school district, and we liked the feel of living in the country, so we came out here. Most of the homes around here have popped up since we



moved in," he said. Tommy and Allison moved to Ovilla Oaks, where they have lived ever since.

They bought their home once married. Tommy already had two kids, and they wanted to be ready for the new family dynamic. Amanda is 29. She graduated from Maypearl High School, has a BS in criminal justice, works for Capital One and lives in Dallas. Allen is 24. He also graduated from MHS, is a State Trooper and lives in Sulphur Springs. Just as they were getting settled into their new community, Allison got pregnant with their youngest. "Alex, now 13, plays football and basketball, and he really loves hunting," Tommy said. Alex plays right tackle and defensive end for Walnut Grove



Middle School, and he is hoping to follow in his brother's footsteps. "Allen was one of a handful of guys who got scholarships to play in college from here," Tommy continued. "He played at Southern Arkansas University, and even was invited to tryout at several NFL combines."

The house has been a perfect home for their big family and is a great oasis for country living, away from what has become the fast-growing, city-feel you get in town. This becomes evident immediately while turning onto the rural street that leads to Tommy and Allison's lot. "People tell us we live in the sticks," Allison joked, "but we love it out here." Their corner lot is long, extending from the street well past their house. Inside, the

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house splits into several directions from the entryway. "I am in the field four days a week, but I use my office most Fridays," Allison said of the office just inside the door. A staircase divides the paths to the kitchen and one of two living rooms.

An expansive kitchen and dining area is marked by granite counters and an open feel, free of an island. It is the perfect space for Allison to cook, and sometimes her son even joins her. "I come from a family full of chefs," Allison said. "And Alex likes to get in here with me. Sometimes I will look over, and he is putting together a recipe out of nowhere. Allen was like that, too." The dining area houses a beautiful, granite table that does not match, but nicely contrasts, the counters.

The back living room contains overstuffed seating areas and provides access to a large backyard. The front living



room is furnished with leather couches that give a comfortable feel, perfect for watching television or playing games. The room also offers the first of many glimpses into Allison's heritage. "I think she has some kind of decoration from New Orleans in every single room," Tommy remarked. From posters to paintings, with plenty of fleur-de-lis in

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between, there is an obvious New Orleans feel throughout the house.

In Tommy and Allison's bedroom, a large four-post bed is centered among several pieces of rich, dark wood furniture. The hardwood extends the elegant flow from the rest of the house. Their bedroom also offers access to their workout area. "Sometimes, it becomes the junk room, too, but we have our weights and treadmill and stuff in here," Allison laughed.

In the midst of all of the downstairs rooms, a simple formal dining room houses a collection of Waterford Crystal. "Every year, I get another piece," Allison expressed. Across from the collection is one of the more eye-catching mementos from her past, a colorful poster from a Jazz Fest several years ago. "I still travel there for work, so I have really stayed in touch with my roots," she said.

Upstairs, there are several empty rooms since the two oldest kids have moved on, which is great news for Alex in one



particular way. "His room used to be ours, until we added on a downstairs master," Tommy detailed. "So now our 13-year-old has his own master suite all to himself." The room is decked out with antlers from animals he has hunted, some of which he even mounted himself. "We came in one day and he had cut, bleached and put the horns on a plaque," Tommy said with a smile.

Perhaps the best room of all, though, is not a room at all. Recently, Tommy and Allison built a full-sized kitchen on their back patio. "Tommy loves to cook, so he has a flat-top grill, a big Green egg and a normal pit," Allison accounted. This outdoor kitchen is the start of a wonderful outside experience. A fire pit, swimming pool and plenty of trees complete the scene. With their serene surroundings, Tommy and Allison have made for themselves the perfect place to call home. **NOW**

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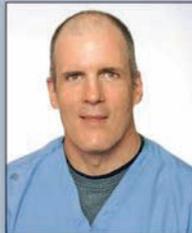


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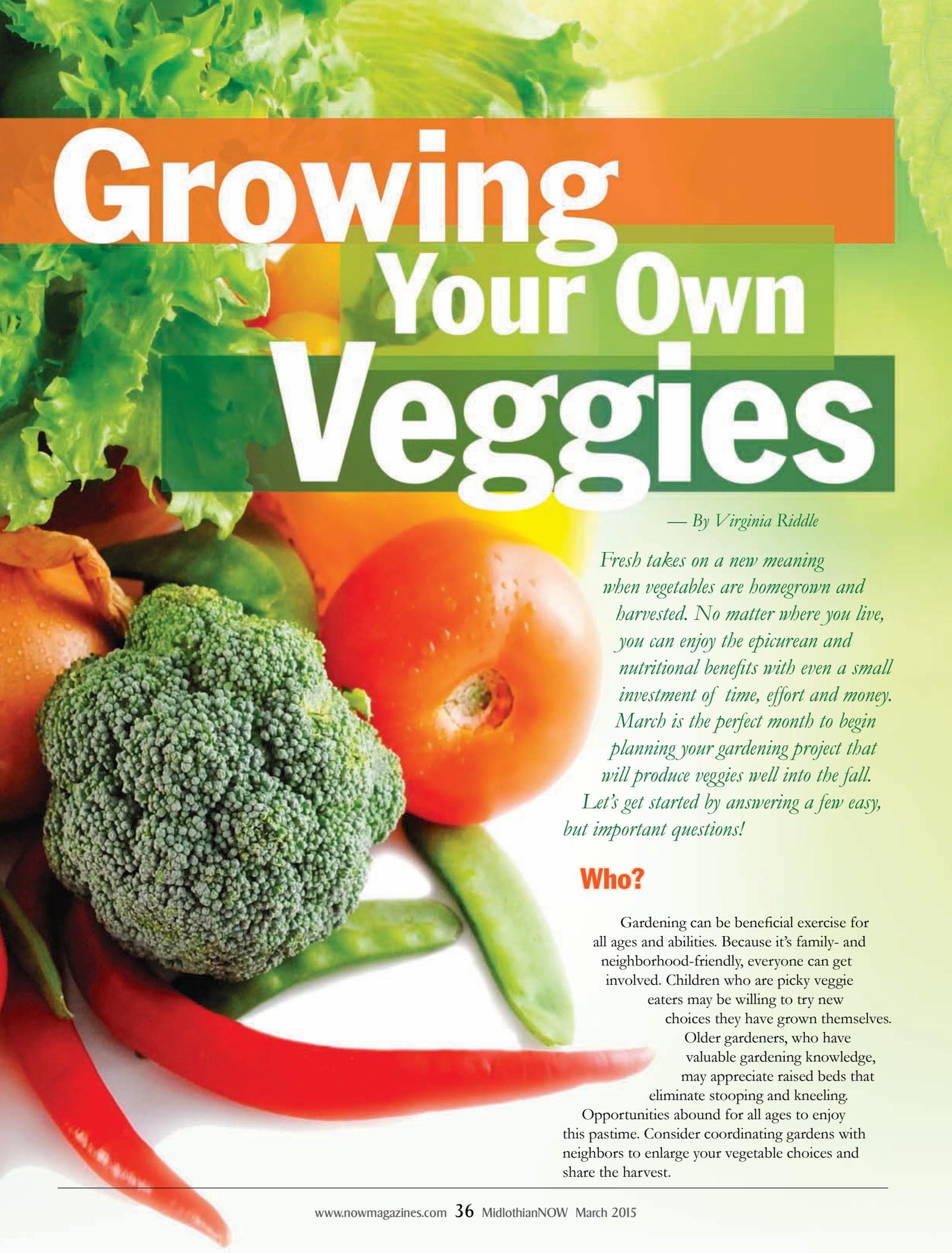


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Growing Your Own Veggies

— By Virginia Riddle

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

Who?

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

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

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

What?

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



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

Where?

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

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

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

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

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

When?

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

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directions on the seed packet. The trays are easy to set outside during warm days



and nights but move them to a heated location when temperatures dip down below 40 F.

How?

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

If your veggie garden is going to encompass more than a few square feet, rent or purchase a tiller from an area garden center or hardware store. Break the soil and turn the subsoil at a depth of about 6 inches. Remove rocks, make



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furrows for proper drainage, plant seeds or seedlings and lay down a 3-inch layer of mulch for weed control and water retention.

Plan your plantings so mature, larger plants will not shade smaller ones. Larger plants, like tomatoes, may need to be



staked as they grow. To save space, beans, peas, melons and squash can be grown on easy-to-construct trellises, cages or A-frames.

Check your garden daily for insects and pull weeds that crowd your plants, taking water and nutrients from the soil. Water when moisture cannot be felt 1-inch deep into the soil and fertilize on

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recommended cycles. Harvest veggies when they are at their ripest point or before damaging weather, such as hail is predicted.

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

- **Most veggies can be frozen, canned or dehydrated for future use.** Research methods online or with your county extension agents. Follow food-handling safety tips exactly.

- **Donate produce to a local food bank.** Their clients love to see fresh vegetable offerings. Your charitable donations may be tax deductible — check with your income tax specialist.



- **Share with friends and family.** They will know it is a gift from your heart!

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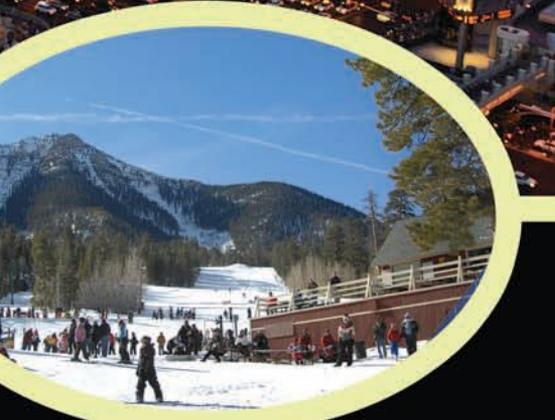


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First Methodist Mansfield is thrilled to invite you to celebrate Easter with us at one of our three services at the Mansfield ISD Center for the Performing Arts. The story of the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the most amazing story ever told. In a world too often defined by despair, at Easter, God comes to us in hope, the hope that life wins. Easter was defined by God to be a new beginning, a beginning where the Easter story becomes the foundation of what life can be.

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The Arts Factory in downtown Las Vegas houses several artists' studios and contemporary art galleries.

Las Vegas is making a name for itself as a place to see great theater. Many of the performances on the Las Vegas Strip are among the most innovative in the world, from the internationally acclaimed Cirque du Soleil and Blue Man Group to Broadway productions such as *Jersey Boys* and *Rock of Ages*. Meanwhile, community theater is receiving attention from southern Nevada's residents and visitors alike. The city of Las Vegas also features a comprehensive cultural arts program with events scheduled throughout the year.

Las Vegas is built around tourism and ease of access. The airport is within 10 minutes from major hotels on the strip, many of which are luxury-driven and completely nongaming. For instance, Trump International Hotel has no casino or shows, so it's easy to control what your family is exposed to.

A great deal of information can be found on lasvegas.com to aid your research into hotels, shows and dinner reservations. The Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority owns and operates five visitor and welcome centers in Boulder City, Laughlin, Mesquite, Primm and the Las Vegas Convention Center. Travel counselors are able to answer any questions. For more information on how you can change your reality through a visit to Las Vegas, call (877) VISITLV or (877) 847-4858. **NOW**

Photos courtesy of Las Vegas News Bureau.

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DATES

March 1 Tatiana Mayfield & Victor Cager

March 8 Carelle Flores

March 15 Daybreak Express w/ Dave Zoller

April 12 Artina McCane (piano) & Icy Renee Simpson (soprano)

April 19 Andrea Dawson

May 3 Leena Conquest Trio

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Gabriel Colon, Stephanie Bean and Rachel Houts guide students along their musical path.



Melodic Tunes

Perfect Pitch Music Academy helps others produce beautiful sounds. — By Betty Tryon

With her tiny little legs swinging underneath the piano stool during her piano lesson, Stephanie Bean, had no idea that one day she would own her own business — Perfect Pitch Music Academy. “I always loved music ever since I was a little girl,” she shared. Both of her parents played instruments and taught her to love music as much as they did. “I remember starting out with piano as a little girl with my mom as teacher.” When Stephanie’s skill level surpassed her mother’s, another more advanced teacher was found to continue her training.

During this time, Stephanie was taking voice lessons as well. All during her school years she continued taking lessons in both piano and voice. Competitions sharpened her skills. “I enjoyed vocal competitions and sang in choirs from elementary through high school,” she shared. It was only natural that when going to

college, she chose music as her career field. “I wasn’t sure about a major, and my dad suggested music. So, I did it!” In 2008, Stephanie graduated from Harding University in Searcy, Arkansas, with a music degree and earned the chance to do what she loves every day.

“My goal was to teach private music lessons. After graduation I worked as a private vocal instructor with the Midlothian High School choir for four years. My student base kept growing, so I decided to open a business.” It was a good time for Stephanie and her husband, David. Their daughter, Grace, was born in June 2013, and now their family has the happy news that she is pregnant again.

Perfect Pitch Music Academy opened in March 2013 and almost immediately started filling with students. With so many

Business **NOW**

students, she brought another instructor, Rachel Houts, on board to help. "She is great with the students," Stephanie expressed. "She teaches beginner piano and voice." Soon afterward, Gabriel Colon joined the group to bring another dimension to the studio. Gabriel teaches saxophone, intermediate piano and guitar. Stephanie teaches all levels of piano and voice including advanced lessons.

"I always loved music ever since I was a little girl."

"We start taking students at 4 years of age, and my oldest student was an 80-year-old woman who took voice lessons," Stephanie explained. "Usually our students are elementary through high school children. We do have some adults who want to learn how to play an instrument and develop a certain skill."

Stephanie and all the teachers have the same philosophy about teaching the children. They want them to learn all of the foundational techniques that go along with the lessons. They also want the students to enjoy the process of learning their instrument. "If the students enjoy the lessons, then they can develop a love for music and want to continue it for a lifetime," she stressed.

The music academy uses Faber Curriculum for the elementary group up to about age 13. "It gives them a good musical foundation and background," Stephanie stated. "For the older kids age 14 on up to adults we use the Bastien Adult Course. It does the same thing as Faber but only in an adult manner. The lessons start with basic building blocks upon which we add higher levels of technique and theory. Those studies will give our students the foundation and building blocks they need."

If you have a budding prodigy in your home, or someone who is a little reluctant about learning how to play an instrument, Perfect Pitch Music Academy is ready to teach and nurture them in their efforts. Hopefully, they'll enjoy the process along the way. **NOW**

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Mrs. Story's kindergarten friends at LaRue Miller Elementary do their research about a special person, Mrs. LaRue Miller.



Addison Coffman tidies her queendom while wearing beels.



Target Distribution Center volunteers help out at the Senior Center.



Main Street Gym owner Suzie Devitto speaks to the newest Biggest Loser contestants.



Mrs. Timmerman, the librarian at J.R. Irvin Elementary, creates a MLK march in the library for students to learn about Martin Luther King, Jr.



Members of Life Church participate in groundbreaking ceremony.



Midlothian Soccer Association is honored at the Volunteers In Parks Appreciation Dinner.



The Stout Family celebrate Philly Cheesesteak Factory's grand opening.

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Five Roth Rules

As an investor, there are always choices to make — pros and cons to weigh with your advisor. Deciding on your retirement savings vehicles is no different. There are so many options, but a Roth IRA, if you qualify, can really help with your retirement savings if you follow the rules.

1. Make Money, but Not Too Much

The IRS doesn't allow individuals making more than \$129,000 to contribute. Joint filers can earn up to \$191,000 and still partially qualify. Keep in mind, though, that these are the maximums, and there are always exceptions. Be sure to consult your advisor and a tax professional before moving forward.

2. Stay Within the Lines

If you qualify, you can sock away up to \$5,500 if under 50 for 2014; \$6,500 if over 50. You have until tax day 2015 (no extensions) to do so for 2014.

3. Make Smart Withdrawals

Roth IRA distributions are entirely tax-free, if you play by the rules. They can be complex, with different provisions covering your initial contribution and your earnings, but a knowledgeable financial or tax professional can walk you through them. Although penalties apply to withdrawals made before age 59 1/2 or within five years after you open your Roth, they can be avoided in certain circumstances (e.g. disability, first-time home purchases or higher education).

4. Lengthen Your Roth's Life

Named beneficiaries can inherit your Roth IRA tax-free. Your heirs are able to gradually withdraw the money, while the rest continues to grow tax-free throughout their lifetimes. That means choosing a younger beneficiary may be a smart move, as it lengthens the amount of time the money can remain in the inherited Roth.

5. Convert

Conversion means taxpayers at any income level can place tax-qualified assets (typically from a 401(k) or traditional IRA) into a Roth IRA. You'll have to include the amount of previously deductible contributions to the converted IRA as taxable income, but since Roth IRA income is tax-free, it might be worth paying the tax now to save more later. This may make sense particularly for those in higher tax brackets, you'll pay taxes after the conversion, but you'll eventually receive a portion of your retirement income tax-free. A gradual conversion may also make sense for some. It's a good idea to consult your financial advisor to see if a conversion would be in your favor.

Unless certain criteria are met, Roth IRA owners must be 59 1/2 or older and have held the IRA for five years before tax-free withdrawals are permitted. Converting a traditional IRA into a Roth IRA has tax implications. Investors should consult a tax advisor before deciding to do a conversion. **NOW**

The information contained herein has been obtained from sources considered reliable, but we do not guarantee that the foregoing material is accurate or complete. Please note, changes in tax laws or regulations may occur at any time and could substantially impact your situation. Raymond James financial advisors do not render advice on tax or legal matters. You should discuss any tax or legal matters with the appropriate professional.

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This article was prepared by Raymond James for use by its Financial Advisors. Donald Pope is a Raymond James Financial Advisor based in Duncanville.

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The No-cavity Diet

Yes, you still have to brush and floss, and have your friendly neighborhood dental hygienist clean the areas you might miss. But if you keep your pearly whites sparkly clean and still find yourself on the wrong side of the dentist's drill, it's very possible your diet is at least partly to blame. Not to worry, though, you won't have to make celery sticks and raw apples your primary source of calories (although they are great). Follow the guidelines below to make your next checkup much more pleasant.

Kick the sugar habit for good

No dentist enjoys being a broken record, but it bears repeating: Most of us eat and drink far too much sugar. If you are one of those who consumes liquid sugar in any form (juice, soda, sweet tea, energy drinks), this is absolutely where you should start to cut back. Water and unsweetened green tea are your best options. And sugary food doesn't only include candy and desserts. Any food that contains highly processed grains will convert into sugar very quickly, and should be drastically decreased. This includes crackers, cookies, breads and pasta — even whole grain and gluten-free versions.

Balance acids

When the bad bacteria in your mouth consume sugar, they excrete acid as a byproduct. In normal circumstances, your saliva neutralizes this acid quickly enough so that no damage occurs to the teeth. However, when there is so much acid that your saliva can't keep up, your tooth enamel begins to weaken, eventually causing a cavity. The first reason you might have excessive acid is excessive sugar intake, as discussed above. The second reason is the length of time you allow acid

to bathe the teeth. This is why sipping sugary drinks throughout the day, or grazing on pretzels all day at the office, is much more harmful than having these kinds of treats with a meal. The last diet-related reason your teeth are exposed to too much acid is the extra acid some folks eat, or more often, drink. Drinks with added acid, like soda and sports drinks, are the worst offenders. Coffee and distilled bottled water are also acidic (tap water, or water with added minerals, is most likely to be neutral). Even squeezing lemon in your water is damaging if sipped on all day.

Healthy fats and fat-soluble vitamins

Recent evidence shows that people deficient in vitamin D have more cavities than people who have adequate blood levels. And the Weston A. Price foundation has long promoted the healthy fats from grass-fed, pasture-raised animals as a way to enhance tooth health. Consuming bone broth from these animals is an easy, inexpensive way to get more minerals and omega-3 fats, and absorb those fat-soluble vitamins, like vitamin A, D, E and K. One very important added benefit to consuming more healthy fats is they make meals more satisfying! As you decrease the amount of sugar and refined carbohydrates you eat, healthy fats can fill that void without making you feel hungry or grouchy.

Lastly, ask for help! Your dentist or a registered dietitian would be happy to guide you through the process of improving your nutrition, in order to improve your dental visits. **NOW**

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Musicians Needed: We are looking for adults who play or have played a band instrument or current high school band students who are interested in helping form a concert band for the Ellis County community. If you are interested in joining, email your name, your email address, instrument(s) played, years of experience and the name of the Ellis County town in which you reside to dapotter@ectisp.net.

March 1

Annual Bridal Special Event Show: 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center, 1 Community Circle Dr. Admission is \$3 per person. For more information, call (972) 723-7919 or visit the website at midlothiancenter.com.

March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31

Community Prayer meeting: 7:00-8:00 a.m., Midlothian Conference Center.

March 8, 16, 19, 21

Midlothian Tennis Association World Tennis Play Day: 2:00-4:00 p.m., Midlothian Sports Complex, Spring Leagues begin: Ladies Double League starts **March 16**, 7:00 p.m.; Men's **March 19**, 7:30 p.m.; Youth starts **March 21** for a six-week session. All ages and

levels welcome. For more information visit midtennis.org.

March 7

Deeper Journeys with Nichole Nordeman, Lisa Harper and Tammy Trent: 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., The Avenue Church, 210 YMCA Dr., Waxahachie. For more information, call (972) 937-5301. For tickets, visit theavenuechurch.com/events.

March 9 — 13

MISD Spring Break.

March 14

The Midlothian Marketplace: 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center. There will be shopping booths, service booths, Taste of Midlothian and food trucks as well as door prizes from the vendors. Admission is \$5 for adults, kids under 12 and seniors get in free. Admission price includes a bottle of water.

March 19

One Act Play Performance: 7:00 p.m., Midlothian High School Auditorium.

March 21

Mockingbird Night Hike: 7:00 p.m., Mockingbird Nature Park.

March 28

Easter Egg Hunt: 10:00 a.m., back lawn of Sims Library, 515 W. Main St., Waxahachie. The Easter Bunny will be hopping through to visit, too.

April 9

Career and Internship Expo Tarleton State University: 2:00-6:00 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center. Registration is \$30 per company and includes dinner and refreshments. Presented in partnership with Midlothian Economic Development. Tarleton will offer on-campus interviews to any companies wishing to interview potential employees and will extend its Hire a Texan recruiting system, available through the Tarleton careers website: tarleton.edu/careers/.

April 18

Rowdy Run 5K: 8:30 a.m., Kimmel Park, Midlothian. For more information, go to misdef.org or call (972) 775-8296 ext. 1281.

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

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In the Kitchen With Alice Hernandez

— By Betty Tryon

Alice Hernandez's handy style of cooking — always having precooked frozen ground meat or shredded chicken on hand — has served her well through the years. “This allows me to be ready for unexpected guests,” she said. As one of 12 children, Alice brings the influence of her heritage to her cooking. “We love to make and eat Mexican food. My mom has been a big influence in the dishes I prepare.”

One of the family's cooking traditions is on Mother's Day. Her sons will cook a special meal and bake a dessert to honor her special day. For those special occasions, eating in the dining room and using the good china is always a special treat for her. **NOW**

Flan

- 1 cup sugar**
- 5 eggs**
- 1 14-oz. can sweetened condensed milk**
- 1 12-oz. can evaporated milk**
- 1 pkg. 8-oz. cream cheese**
- 1 tsp. vanilla**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350 F
- 2.** In a medium saucepan over medium-low heat, melt 1 cup of sugar until liquefied and golden in color. Carefully pour hot caramelized sugar into a 9-inch round glass baking dish, turning the dish to evenly coat the bottom and sides. Set aside until it hardens.
- 3.** In a mixer, combine eggs, condensed milk, evaporated milk, cream cheese and vanilla until smooth. Pour mixture into the baking dish that has the hardened caramelized sugar.
- 4.** Bake for 1 hour or until golden brown in

a hot-water bath. Let cool.

- 5.** When completely cool, carefully invert entire flan onto a serving plate with edges. The caramelized sugar will be on top.

Frijoles (Beans) A-La Charra

- 3 1/2 cups dry pinto beans**
- 2 Caldo de Tomate bouillon cubes with chicken flavor**
- Salt and pepper, to taste**
- 1/2 lb. bacon, diced**
- 2 fresh tomatoes, diced**
- 3 to 4 diced serrano peppers**
- 3/4 cup fresh cilantro, chopped**

- 1.** Place pinto beans in a pot and completely cover with water. Add bouillon, salt and pepper. Cover and cook on medium heat on stove top for 2 hours or until beans are soft.
- 2.** Once beans are cooked, fry bacon in a skillet over medium heat until evenly brown. Do not drain the fat. Mix in diced tomatoes,

serrano peppers and cilantro; cook until heated through. Transfer to pot of beans, stirring into the beans.

- 3.** Cover and continue cooking for 20 minutes on low heat.

Green Chile Chicken Enchiladas

- 4 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves or store bought rotisserie chicken, shredded**
- Garlic salt, to taste**
- 3 Tbsp. canola oil**
- 12 6-inch corn tortillas**
- 1 28-oz. can green chile enchilada sauce**
- 1 can Ro-Tel tomato sauce**
- 1 10.5-oz. can cream of mushroom soup**
- 1/3 box Tortilla Chicken Broth (enough for sauce not to be too thick)**
- 3 cups All American cheese (blue box), shredded**
- 1 16-oz. pkg. Monterey Jack cheese, shredded**
- 1 8-oz. container reduced fat sour cream**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350 F. Lightly grease medium baking dish.
- 2.** Season chicken with garlic salt. Arrange in the prepared baking dish. Bake 45 minutes, until no longer pink and juices run clear. Cool, shred and set aside. If using rotisserie chicken, do not recook.
- 3.** Heat oil in a small frying pan over medium heat. With metal tongs, grease each tortilla on each side until lightly softened.
- 4.** In a saucepan mix green chile enchilada sauce, Ro-Tel tomato sauce, cream of mushroom soup and chicken broth; bring to a boil.
- 5.** Combine shredded chicken and All American cheese. Place mixture on corn tortilla and roll. Place in a 9x13-inch baking dish. Repeat for all tortillas.
- 6.** Pour sauce on top of wrapped tortillas and top with 1/3 Monterey Jack cheese or until enchiladas are fully covered with cheese.
- 7.** Cover, and bake 30 to 45 minutes until cheese is melted. Cool slightly before serving. Serve with sour cream on top.

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

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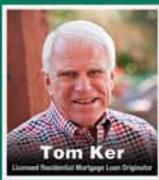
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