

10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

North Ellis Co. NOW

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M A G A Z I N E

APRIL 2016

Space of Her Own

At Home With Mary Byers

Setting Strategies

Ferris City Manager Carl Sherman has a vision for the future.

Birds of a Feather

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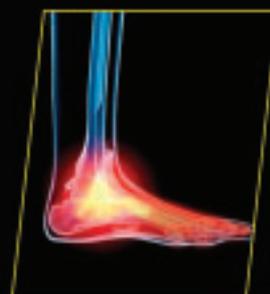
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Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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Editor's Note

Happy Birthday, North Ellis Co. NOW!

It was April 2006, and the sixth of 10 community magazines to be published by NOW Magazines, LLC was ready for viewing. Founder and publisher, Connie Poirier, introduced *Red Oak NOW Magazine*, following the 2004 launch of the pilot publication, *Coriscana NOW Magazine*, which was soon followed by *Waxahachie NOW*, *Ennis NOW*, *Midlothian NOW* and *Mansfield NOW*.

In May 2013, *Red Oak NOW Magazine* received a new name. *North Ellis Co. NOW Magazine* became the inclusive publication covering Red Oak, Ferris, Bristol, Glenn Heights, Oak Leaf, Ovilla and Pecan Hill.

Today, April 1, 2016, NOW Magazines celebrates the birth of *North Ellis Co. NOW Magazine* and its success in telling good stories about good people in good communities. Happy birthday, *North Ellis Co. NOW Magazine*. May there be many more to come!

From my heart and pen,

Jo

Jo Monroe

North Ellis Co. NOW Editor

joanne.monroe@nowmagazines.com

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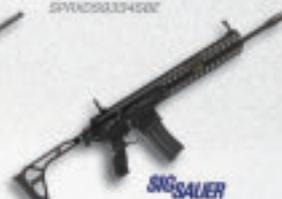
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Setting Strategies

— By Jo Monroe

*Have you ever met someone, and when they stepped into the room, you knew they were present? There are some who are recognized by their quiet demeanor and few words, yet when they speak, they speak volumes into a circumstance. This is the type of individual John Wayne characterized in *The Quiet Man*. When it was necessary to speak and be counted, his character spoke, people listened and things happened. This type of person leaves a footprint wherever they go. Ferris City Manager Carl Sherman is that kind of person.*

As he served DeSoto as mayor, Carl Sherman listened to the people. He knew that doing the same thing over and over would not result in a changed future. So, he found a new approach to community and business growth. The State of the City Address for DeSoto was an event not only honoring Carl's achievements, but also how he brought together the community, councilmen and businesses with dignity for DeSoto's success and growth. For a short span, he has held a dual position as mayor of DeSoto and city manager of Ferris. He will soon step out of his position in DeSoto and focus solely on the Ferris city manager position. The DeSoto City Council meeting on May 3 will officiate his stepping down. However, he will continue to serve in the mayor's role until May 17 when the newly elected mayor will take the reins. Though Carl is sad to leave DeSoto, he is hopeful that others will cultivate the seeds already planted there.



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A man who is a visionary generally faces diverse obstacles, as destiny calls and his life journey shifts. Carl loved attending school in Ferris. In fact, he loved it so much that even though he was on target to graduate early, he really did not want to leave.

After he accepted the city manager's position, Carl has been asked, "Why are you here in Ferris?" as though his résumé might bring loftier goals or aspirations. "But we concluded it is a God thing for me to be here," he explained. "I love Ferris."

"As mayor of DeSoto, my public role is to set the course for where the city is headed. As city manager of Ferris, my role is to set the strategies for how to get the city where it is headed," Carl stated.

"Plans for Ferris are in the making. We are working on a catalyst project on

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I-45, with a four-story, Hilton branded hotel planned for about 90-odd rooms and in front, a restaurant, to go adjacent to the golf course,” Carl said. “Our plans also include the development of much-needed, critical infrastructure like adequate water and sewer lines. These plans also include the reconstruction of the service roads. Economic development follows transportation, so there is a need for a robust thoroughfare through Ferris,” Carl added. “We have a substantial commitment to bring Dallas



Water Utilities here with a \$6 million investment from Dallas County. We are appreciative of Dallas County’s absolute backing for growth in our city, driven by the support of the city’s Dallas County side,” Carl said. “There is now solid commitment for high-speed Internet from Time Warner contingent on merger approval with Charter, of which I wrote in favor.”

Carl reflected back to his first year in DeSoto. “We changed the way we did economic development. I believe we can do a similar thing here in Ferris,” he said. “It’s not the same city. We are posed for some really smart growth.

“Influence is a fleeting thing, because it is only as good as your reputation, and that reputation can be changed by the perception that your motives are not pure, and that there’s some nefarious reason for what you are doing,” Carl continued. “It is something I don’t take for granted, because I understand that even in this position, there are



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SPACE OF HER OWN

— By Jo Monroe



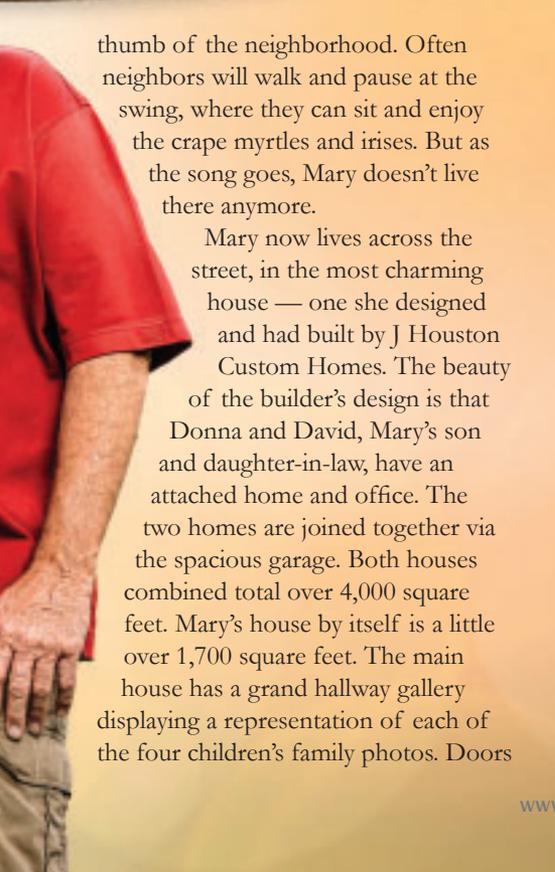
At Home With Mary Byers

Mary Byers was born in 1934. She is a longtime resident of Ovilla and has watched her own children, as well as her neighbor's children, grow up on the once-country cul-de-sac. There has always been a sense of being home with Mary, who has always had a place where the family comes together.

She prides herself in the landscaping and manicuring of her five acres. "I can take care of the yard, but it won't be as manicured as I would like," Mary stated. She is well known as having the green



Mary (middle) with her daughter, Donna, and son-in-law, David.



thumb of the neighborhood. Often neighbors will walk and pause at the swing, where they can sit and enjoy the crape myrtles and irises. But as the song goes, Mary doesn't live there anymore.

Mary now lives across the street, in the most charming house — one she designed and had built by J Houston Custom Homes. The beauty of the builder's design is that Donna and David, Mary's son and daughter-in-law, have an attached home and office. The two homes are joined together via the spacious garage. Both houses combined total over 4,000 square feet. Mary's house by itself is a little over 1,700 square feet. The main house has a grand hallway gallery displaying a representation of each of the four children's family photos. Doors

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open to bedrooms designed for each of the grandkids off of the family room, which features cozy leather sofas and a grand toy box ready to keep the grandkids busy when they come to visit. Each room is unique and designer dressed, with a master bath that is where any woman could destress from a day at work. The design of this property allows Mary to have her own space, and yet, all those kids and grandkids can have room to spread out and enjoy time together. The backyard

is shared by both houses, as is the pool and patio, but when Mary wants her privacy, she just steps through her own back door, and she's home.

Mary's home has two bedrooms that share a grandma's charm, two full baths and an open kitchen and living room area. The kitchen boasts granite countertops, and there is a semiformal dining room that fits her needs for entertaining. Though the living room and kitchen are open and spacious, there are several cozy corners

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to showcase her keepsakes and preserve her home-style decor. An inviting wall of windows is met with a cushioned bench that reaches wall to wall just inside the arched sitting cove. A wedding anniversary keepsake is embroidered and hanging inside the cove, and the cove windows are draped with lace, as are the dining room windows.

Every detail has been thought through down to the dust ruffles on the bed and a quilt stand displaying her favorite throws and quilts. Mary's master bedroom is uncluttered, but there is a menagerie of figurines and photos of her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. There are 38 children in all, and the photos include one of a little girl who will remind you of a baby doll. That grandbaby is now 29 years old.

There is an en suite just off the master bedroom. The room has a wall cabinet. Surprisingly, behind half of the doors are not towels and linens but photo albums. Mary has collected family photos back to her baby days. She laughed as she opened one of her treasured books holding photos of her childhood, school days and every event between. She found a photo she had been looking for earlier, in which she is wearing a special brooch. "I still have that pin," she said. In 1954, girls looked more like women, and some like movie stars. "Here's my favorite, and I'm not even wearing makeup," Mary grinned. Girls went naturally beautiful then, and Mary certainly was among them.

Mary offers some advice to women who are now over 60, single or widowed and still living in the large house in





which they raised their families. "Make your decisions while you can and stay active," she said. "There are more women over 60 still living in their own homes." Because Mary is a woman who always has a project going, or one in the making, she has found being active in the yard, gardening and making plans are great ways to stay healthy. "I am planning to do a raised garden this year," she shared.

After having a hip replacement and going to rehab, Mary was determined to go home, not to a nursing facility. She definitely wasn't ready for anyone to take care of her, because she had always been active. Now, with a new hip, she saw an opportunity to have a new start. It might have slowed her down for a while, but she had a plan to build a new home. "It isn't easy, but having your own place is worth it," Mary stated. "I love my family to death, but when you are sharing the same house, the same kitchen, you don't have your special items, not even to cook with," Mary shared. "I didn't even know where there was a rolling pin!" she laughed.

"I think I grieved leaving my home across the street, but the family helped in the transition. You can do it," Mary asserted, "but you should do it when you can make your own choices."

So, now, Mary has a beautiful new home, a familiar yard to garden in and a place where the family comes together. At 81 years young, Mary is busy this spring with a new beginning and a comfortable lifestyle in the same neighborhood she has known for so many years. **NOW**





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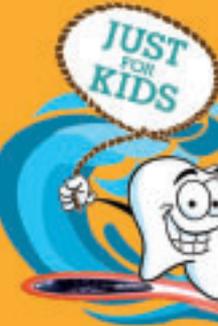
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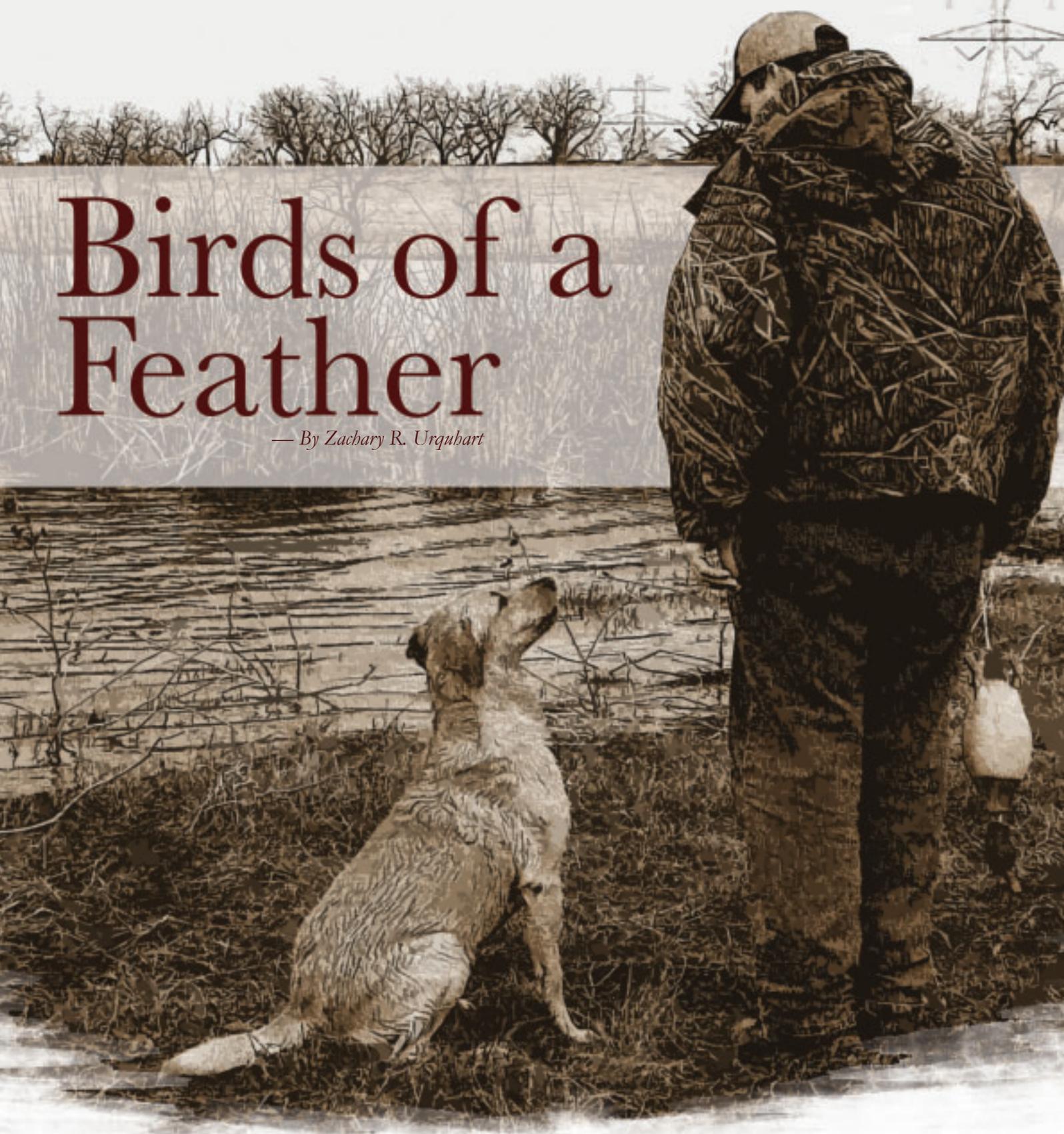
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A photograph of a person in a full-body duck decoy costume, including a hat and a large, textured body, standing in a field. A dog is sitting on the ground in the foreground, looking up at the person. The background shows a line of trees and utility poles under a pale sky. The title 'Birds of a Feather' is overlaid on the left side of the image in a large, dark red serif font.

Birds of a Feather

— By Zachary R. Urquhart

There is a group of people who wants very badly to help preserve nature, and you probably would not guess it. They raise funds, increase awareness and spend a considerable amount of energy working to create and sustain wetlands for dozens of animal groups who desperately need help. When most people see the simple duck-head profile that serves as the logo for Ducks Unlimited, they may not know that is what the group is all about. But John Reagan and the members of Ellis County Ducks Unlimited are doing what they can to help birds of a feather flock together.



John grew up in Waxahachie and, after high school, went to Abilene Christian University. He met Holly in sixth grade, and they dated throughout high school and college. "We went to Brown Street Church of Christ together, and then went to ACU together," he explained. John and Holly were married in 1999, and they have two children, Jackson and Madelyn. "Jackson really likes getting out to hunt with me," John said. "Holly and Madelyn enjoy going, but they aren't crazy about it." John is a financial advisor for Wells Fargo Advisors, and Holly teaches at Dallas Christian School in Mesquite, where their kids attend school.

John and his family moved to Midlothian almost 15 years ago, so other than his college years, he has lived somewhere in Ellis County most of his life. He has been involved in many things throughout the area, and that involvement includes serving as the chairman of the Ellis County chapter of Ducks Unlimited for over a decade. "There's no crazy story about it," he recounted. "I have been an avid hunter and fisherman all my life, so I knew about DU even as a kid. Fifteen years ago, I went to an event with a friend, and I started helping out." Helping out quickly turned into taking a leadership role with the organization. "About a year after my first event, the current chairman told me I should take over, and I've been the Chairman of Ellis County Ducks Unlimited ever since," he added.

Though it was his hunting background that originally got him involved, John is quick to point out that Ducks Unlimited is not just an organization for hunters.

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“The group started in the 1930s to conserve wetlands,” he explained. “We raise money that is spent trying to get laws to protect habitats from development, designing new wetland areas and increasing awareness around the nation.” One of the things DU does is work with farmers and ranchers to preserve their natural wetland areas. “For a lot of farmers, if they can plow it, they will,” John said. “We encourage them not to give up their land for development, and we also offer incentives not to fill in their marshes.”

While part of Ducks Unlimited’s work is keeping people from destroying wetlands, they also have to react to natural wetland destruction. “Rising water levels and other geographic factors have destroyed a lot of wetlands in the Gulf Coast, especially in Louisiana,” he detailed. “That is where we will have engineers figure out ways to pump water in and out of areas during different seasons to increase land for ducks and other water fowl.”

The end result of the organization’s massive fundraising and conservation effort is seen in their raw numbers. In the last 75 years, Ducks Unlimited has conserved well over 13 million acres of land across North America and influenced another 118 million acres on the continent. One of their major works is protecting breeding areas, especially in the Northern United States and Canada. “The money we raise in Ellis County goes to the central office in Memphis, Tennessee, and they send it where it’s needed,” John explained. “A lot of the

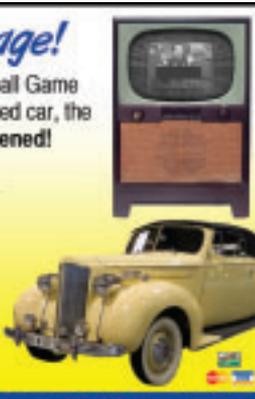
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funds go where the ducks are breeding, because if they don't have somewhere to breed, nothing else will matter."

Many people think of Ducks Unlimited as a hunting organization. Though that is not quite accurate, John admits that hunters and outdoorsmen do typically support the organization. "By preserving wetlands, you increase habitats for ducks, but you are really increasing lands for birds, deer and other wildlife, as well as people," he described. One effect is an increase in animals for hunting, so it is not surprising that hunters are key supporters of Ducks Unlimited, and that's why John and the Ellis County group raise funds in the ways they do.

The committee's goal is to raise as much money as possible to send to Memphis each year. "We have two annual fundraisers," he said. "We sell a calendar every fall, and for 50 bucks, you become a member, you get the calendar, and you are entered into a raffle each day of the year. We give away over 700 guns, and two times a year, we give away four-wheelers." The big fundraiser, though, is the annual banquet the committee organizes every April.



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“We may or may not raise the most money, but the Ellis County event is the biggest by attendance across the state of Texas,” he boasted. When John took over more than a decade ago, their yearly banquet was hosting a couple hundred people. Thanks to his work and that of the rest of the committee, though, Ellis County Ducks Unlimited ranks near the top in the state and across the nation. “There are over 2,600 chapters nationwide, with 145 in Texas,” he explained. “Ellis County was number eight in the state and in the top 20 for the nation in funds raised last year.” They have routinely filled the largest local venue over the past few years with their annual banquet. “We couldn’t have a bigger event unless we left Ellis County, but then we would lose some of the hometown feel,” he added.

The banquet is typically the last Friday in April, and it has become a social event that joins family, friends and co-workers together to support a great cause. In addition to a meal catered by a chef that comes in from Louisiana, the evening is full of fun. “We do a 50-gun raffle, which everyone loves,” he detailed. “We have dozens of packages from duck calls to a Heli Hunt package that will be offered in the live and silent auctions, as well as many other raffle games and door prizes.”

While the yearly banquet largely attracts a crowd of hunters and outdoorsmen, the cause is about so much more. John and Ellis County Ducks Unlimited are creating and preserving wetlands, one banquet at a time. **NOW**

Editor’s Note: This year’s banquet will be held at the Waxabachie Civic Center, Friday, April 29. For more information, email elliscountynu@earthlink.net or visit www.ducks.org/texas/events/40887/ellis-county-dinner-waxabachie-tx.

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The staff at Animal Hospital of Ovilla understands your pets are part of your family. — By Virginia Riddle

When Dr. Stephanie Gorman was but a teenager growing up in Midlothian, her dog, Barney, was diagnosed as having diabetes by Dr. Mark Stanfill, veterinarian and owner of the Animal Hospital of Ovilla. “I learned how to give insulin shots, which sparked my interest in the field, and then I started working at AHO when I was 17, eventually returning as a veterinarian,” Dr. Gorman recalled.

Doctors Mark Stanfill, Anne Owen, Stephanie Gorman and the AHO staff of licensed vet techs, certified vet assistants and client and patient care specialists, along with the groomers, offer general practice and preventative care services. In addition, AHO provides high-tech diagnostic services, surgery and special treatments and emergency and critical care. The clinic provides care for all pets including exotic pets, reptiles and birds.

“We’ve been a part of treating clients’ pets as though they are our own since we opened AHO in May 1999,” Dr. Stanfill said. “We started out with one tech and myself and have grown to a staff of 21. We’ve brought some pets into the world and then helped them leave this world, and have developed long-term relationships, real attachments and trust.”

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“We’ve brought some pets into the world and then helped them leave this world.”

Dr. Stanfill knew at a young age that he wanted to be a veterinarian. “I always had a niche with animals, and I like the calming effect and joy they give us,” he stated. Dr. Stanfill is a graduate of Red Oak High School, Texas A&M University and its College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences. “Karen and I came back home to serve people we’ve known our whole lives,” he said. The couple has a daughter at Texas A&M University and a son attending Red Oak High School. Dr. Stanfill serves on the Red Oak ISD school board and is past president of Dallas County Veterinary Medical Association (DCVMA). He volunteers with the Red Oak Education Foundation and is a Boy Scouts of America leader. Dr. Stanfill travels on mission trips and is a youth counselor at Ovilla United Methodist Church. Karen Stanfill oversees the practice and has her degree in mechanical engineering.

Dr. Gorman is a graduate of Midlothian High School, Texas A&M University and Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine. She and her husband have three cats and five dogs. “My parents live near the clinic, so I grew up here,” she said.

Dr. Owen is a graduate of Oklahoma State University Center for Veterinary Health Sciences. All three doctors are accredited veterinarians by the USDA and are members of the American Veterinary Medical Association and the Texas Veterinary Medical Association. AHO is a member of the Red Oak Area Chamber of Commerce. **NOW**



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Abby and Ruby Johnson proudly pose with their dad, Dustin, with their cake from the Ovilla Service League's cake walk and fundraiser.



Barry Hill and his wife, Julie, new owners of The Lonestar Burger Bar, welcome the Red Oak Chamber of Commerce to their first Business After Hours of the year.



Mike Dooly Ovilla, Animal Control Officer, smiles for the camera.



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Leslea Rogers at Land Headquarters takes a moment to pose for a picture.

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April 2

North Ellis County Business & Community Expo: Contact Red Oak Area Chamber of Commerce for more information by calling (972) 617-0906.

Spring 2016 Midlothian Marketplace: 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center. Shop local merchants and learn about local businesses. Taste of Midlothian will keep you full while you shop. \$5 admission. Seniors and kids under 12 free.

April 9

Red Oak Fire Rescue Community Awareness Day Open House: 10:00 a.m. -2:00 p.m. Live demonstrations of extrication rescues, technical rescues and fire extinguisher demos. Special appearances from Sparky the Fire Dog, Smokey Bear, 9-1-1 Red-E-Fox and Sally Cell Phone. Come meet your firefighters, take a tour of the fire department, check out the fire trucks and equipment – a family fun day.

April Baylor Health Mobile Mammography Unit on site at the Red Oak Fire Rescue Community Awareness Day Open House: 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., 547 N. Methodist St. To schedule your mammogram on this open house day call (214) 820-3040.

Dr. Seuss Dance: 6:00-8:00 p.m., Midlothian Civic Center. All children invited with and without a disability. Adult supervision required. Music by DJ C-Dov, food, photos, prizes, free admission, donations welcome. For more information, call (972) 775-2151 or go to email@midlothianciviccenter.org.

April 9, 10

Midlothian Spring Market: **April 9**, 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.; **April 10**, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center. Gifts, arts/crafts, food and more. Come out and support small, local business. Canned food drive to benefit Midlothian's Manna House and the Golden Food Pantry. The SPCA is scheduled to be on hand to offer pet adoptions.

April 16

Warrior Run & Flapjack Breakfast: 8:00-11:00 a.m., 1000 Butcher Rd., Waxahachie. 5K for all ages, 1/2-mile Fun Run for ages 7 and under and 1-mile Fun Run for ages 12 and under. Flapjack Breakfast included with event registration. Register online at www.thedrivenet/event.race or call (972) 937-0440 for more information.

April 23

Rowdy Run 5K: 8:30 a.m., Kimmel Park,

USATF-Certified Course and Chip-Timed run/walk benefitting the MISD Education Foundation and MISD Rowdy Runners Club. Register online at www.tinyurl.com/rowdyrun5k. For more information, contact chelsi_frazier@misd.gov or (972) 775-8296.

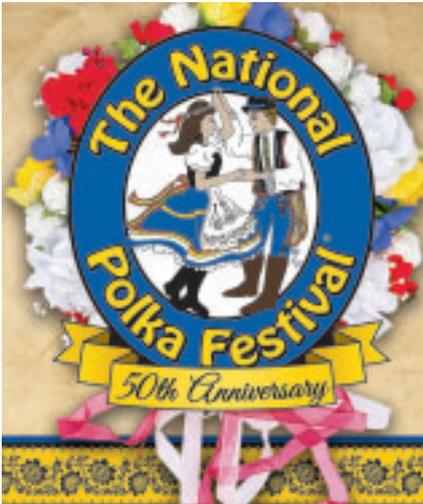
April 26

Beth Oakes Art Festival: 5:00-8:00 p.m., 3251 Ovilla Rd., Worship Center at ORBC. The event, hosted by Ovilla Christian School, is free. For more information or for details on submitted artwork, email Jami Navarro at jnavarro@ovillachristianschool.org.

April 30

Bark For Life of Ellis County: 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Ellis County Expo Center. Doggie games, dress up contests, demonstrations, therapy and police or rescue dogs. For more information, email karena.sara@cancer.org or call (214) 819-1249.

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



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In the Kitchen With Terri Marie Childers

— By Rachel Smith

Cooking shows and Girl Scouts sparked a flame of passion for cooking in Terri Marie Childers' heart. Through preparing Wednesday night church meals and catering retreats for her own ministry, she has been blessed with rising confidence in her skills. "When I was a young wife and mother, I prepared family recipes that have been handed down for generations," she recalled.

Terri takes special pleasure in cooking for her grandchildren. "Now that I am 'Nunny Bunny' to my four granddarlings," she said, "my favorite times in the kitchen are when a kid is standing on a chair beside me stirring batter or cracking eggs." Chef Craig Claiborne, author of *Craig Claiborne's Kitchen Primer*, once stated, "Cooking done with care is an act of love." "That is certainly true for me!" Terri admitted. **NOW**

Tryst Kisses (Chocolate Truffles)

1/3 cup heavy cream
6 oz. semisweet chocolate chips
 (divided use)
White or milk chocolate, melted
 (optional)

1. Place a bowl in a saucepan, boiling 2 inches of water. Heat cream in the bowl until it simmers. Add half the chocolate chips to the cream on low heat, stirring constantly, until melted.
2. Transfer to another bowl, and place the chocolate mixture in the refrigerator for 2 hours. Remove chocolate from refrigerator; then roll into balls. Freeze until firm.
3. In another pan, boil water and then turn

off heat. Pour remaining chips into the bowl and stir until melted. Using a fork, dip each frozen truffle into melted chocolate. Tap off excess chocolate, place on waxed paper and refrigerate. If desired, decorate with melted white or milk chocolate drizzle. Variation: for white or milk chocolate truffles, follow same instructions but reduce cream to 4 Tbsp.

4. Remove from fridge 60 minutes before serving.

Peach Cobbler With Grandma's Pie Crust

Can be prepared in a pie dish or baking dish.

Crust:
3 level cups flour
1 tsp. salt
1 rounded cup shortening

1 egg
1 Tbsp. vinegar
5 Tbsp. ice water

Filling:
2 29-oz. cans peaches
1/2 cup sugar
1/4 cup flour
1/4 tsp. cinnamon
Pinch of salt

1. *For crust:* Combine dry ingredients in a bowl. In another bowl, combine wet ingredients. Mix wet and dry ingredients together lightly, until well blended.
2. Divide dough in half and chill. Roll out each half to create a top and bottom crust.
3. *For filling:* Drain peaches. Mix all dry ingredients together. Add dry ingredients to the peaches and stir lightly.
4. Place bottom crust in baking dish and prick well with a fork. Pour in filling mixture.
5. Top with second crust, sealing edges well. Cut a few slits to vent. Cover edges with foil and bake at 425 F for 35-45 minutes. Remove foil for last 15 minutes.

Elegant Pear Salad

Salad:
2 16-oz. cans pear halves
1 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened
1 Tbsp. orange zest
2 Tbsp. sugar
1/4 cup walnuts, chopped

Dressing:
1 cup whole cranberry sauce
1 Tbsp. sugar
1 Tbsp. vegetable oil
1 Tbsp. lemon juice
Dash of salt

1. *For salad:* Drain pears, reserving 3 Tbsp. of syrup.
2. Blend cream cheese, orange zest, sugar and syrup together. Mix in walnuts. Fill pear halves with cheese mixture.
3. *For dressing:* Blend all ingredients together in a blender until smooth and drizzle over pears.

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

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