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APRIL 2017

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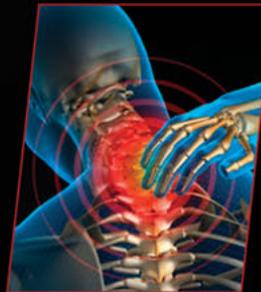
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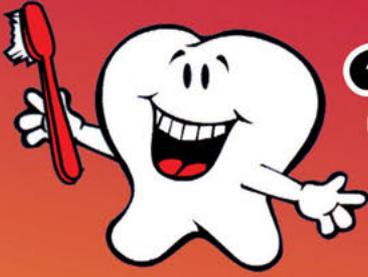


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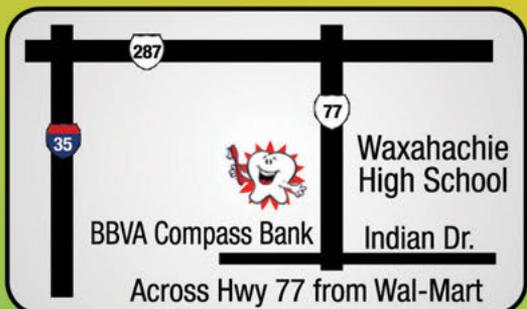
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## ON THE COVER



*The Miracle League of Ellis County brings smiles to many faces.*

*Photo by Dawn Williamson.*

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## Editor's Note

*Take me away!*

Have you ever just wanted to run away? I have. Sometimes the stresses of this life will cause me to close my eyes and dream of that special place somewhere over the proverbial rainbow. In my mind, it will be a lot like the Land of Oz, with its colorful flowers, bigger than life lollipops and those cute little Munchkins who always have silly grins on their faces. But to be complete, my somewhere would have to include an oversized easy chair, a very large TV that continually plays reruns of *Felix the Cat* and *Casper the Friendly Ghost* and, most importantly, never ending boxes of chocolate glazed donuts — the ones that taste beyond wonderful, but add nothing to the hips.

I've been fantasizing in the clouds long enough. I guess it's time to come back down to earth, where when you think about it, life really isn't all that bad. It's exactly how we choose to make it. But, there will still be times when I close my eyes and allow myself to be taken away.

Close your eyes and dream on!

*Sandra*

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WaxahachieNOW Editor  
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# WHE EV



# RE EVERYONE MATTERS

— By Virginia Riddle

*The crack of the bat, the blow of a whistle or the bang of a starter gun — for most children and their families, these are the normal sounds of playing sports. However, for children who are unable to master what many consider the normal demands of sports activities due to physical, mental, emotional, behavioral or sensory challenges, those sounds are all too often experienced from the sidelines due to a lack of inclusive sports in Ellis County. “My son, Brent, has spent much of his childhood watching and cheering on his younger brother, Aaron, but now, through Miracle League of Ellis County, he’s going to have a chance to play, too,” Jim Markele said.*

Jim wears a Boston Red Sox cap. “I’m not a Boston fan, but Brent knows that B on my cap stands for Brent.” We’re all on his team, and I want to help other people who are going through this

same challenge,” he said in explanation of his work as president of the Miracle League of Ellis County. “We want there to be no limits to what a person can do. If you have the willpower, we will see you through to play.”

Founded two years ago as a 501(c)(3) organization, the league’s mission statement is: “To create positive life experiences for children and adults with all abilities through accessible recreational activities.” Programming under the direction of committee chair and special needs parent/advocate Jennifer Smolka includes such sports as golf, baseball, swimming, etc. However, the main issue has been the fact that they have not had a space to call their own — a place that adapts to the demands of their athletes’ medical equipment, their sensory issues, photosensitivity and more.

“There are Miracle League Parks in North Dallas and Waco, but these local children deserve the right to have a playing space in their ‘backyard,’ so to speak,” said Stephanie Schaefer, board vice



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president and mother to two children — one of whom God called home last May after a short, yet inspiring, life battling a rare heart condition. “Chase is the league’s own ‘Angel in the Outfield.’ Chase is no longer here for me to advocate for, but there are other children like Chase who deserve this and every other opportunity possible to live each day to the fullest, like my son did. That’s what Miracle League is all about.”

The United Way of Ellis County and the YMCA initiated the dream of creating



an adaptive field. Land has been donated adjoining the YMCA by City Credit Union, the YMCA and The Avenue Church. The group has also received monetary donations from Walgreen's Distribution Center and Magnablend, but they still have a long way to go until they see "opening day" come to fruition.

Several individuals have joined Jim on the 2017 board. Stephanie serves as the vice president. Others include secretary, Kathy Aulson; treasurer, Steve Murphree; advisors, Dave McSpadden and John Smith; development co-chairs, David Hill and Jimmy Poarch; public relations chairperson, Sandy King; and program co-chairs, Jon McLaughlin and Jennifer Smolka.

David, a local homebuilder and city council member, stated, "We have over 20,000 individuals in Ellis County who have unique needs." David also envisions the new park being a destination location further supporting the continued growth of tourism and commerce in Waxahachie. "We have a few outside groups helping, but we need support from groups in Waxahachie, also."

As a Rotary International member, David is proud that the Rotary Club of Waxahachie has raised and donated \$25,000 toward the building of the field. "I challenge all Waxahachie civic organizations to donate to this cause," he said. "Ours is a generous community, involved in lots of sports activities. I believe that once folks are aware of this great opportunity to allow children, who before now have sat on the



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sidelines, unable to play, the opportunity to run the bases and be cheered on — generosity will be replaced with the blessing of smiling, active children.”

“Waxahachie’s new slogan is The Crossroads of Texas. I can’t imagine a better place for a field of dreams like this. If we build it, they will come, far and wide, but most importantly, if we build it — they can play,” Stephanie said. “This will be a place of refuge for a wide spectrum of miracle children, adults, seniors and even our wounded warriors. And let us not forget the impact having a place where someone understands — where someone gets it — will have on the ironclad strong parents of these children.”

Safety issues are covered by the land’s proximity to a WFD station and Baylor Scott & White Hospital. The field will meet safety and adaptive regulations. “We play with a wide range of adaptive equipment, from beeper balls to softballs. We bat from a T-ball stand or straight from a pitch. Every player is different, but they each have one common thread — they want to play. And we are going to make that happen. The field will be covered and lit properly for those with light sensitivity issues. The bases will be built into the turf, and the restrooms will have adult-size changing tables,” Jim explained.

Volunteers are welcome to serve as a “buddy” with each participant, enabling them to “step” up to the bat, “run” bases and cross home plate. “Parents and caregivers can register their athletes at

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the YMCA,” Jon, the YMCA’s executive director, stated. “Parents get to be fans, not caregivers. We also offer stand-alone events, such as our Christmas party when we had about 100 kids and their families last year.”

The Miracle League of Ellis County board of directors and its many volunteers can see so much more than baseball on the horizon. In the future, they see parallel play with an emphasis on a Phase II playground and events that will include, but not be limited to: “Movies on the Mound,” picnics, concerts and so much more. They envision a place where everyone is included.

“Our athletes are the best,” Stephanie proudly stated. “Lexie has a 1,000-watt smile. Wesley is a ball of energy. Maggie has courage beyond measure. Jared is so full of life, and he is compassionate to his teammates. Alec has the ‘game face,’ while Gus finds great joy in running the bases. Then you have Byron’s team spirit and Arthur’s swing. They are the greatest blessing, and they deserve a field of their own. Let’s do this, Ellis County!”

“This is such a worthy project,” Jon added. “I’m humbled to be a part of this program. The YMCA and the Miracle League of Ellis County are committed to turning the lights on for these folks.” **NOW**

*Editor’s Note: For more information, email [info@miracleleagueec.com](mailto:info@miracleleagueec.com).*

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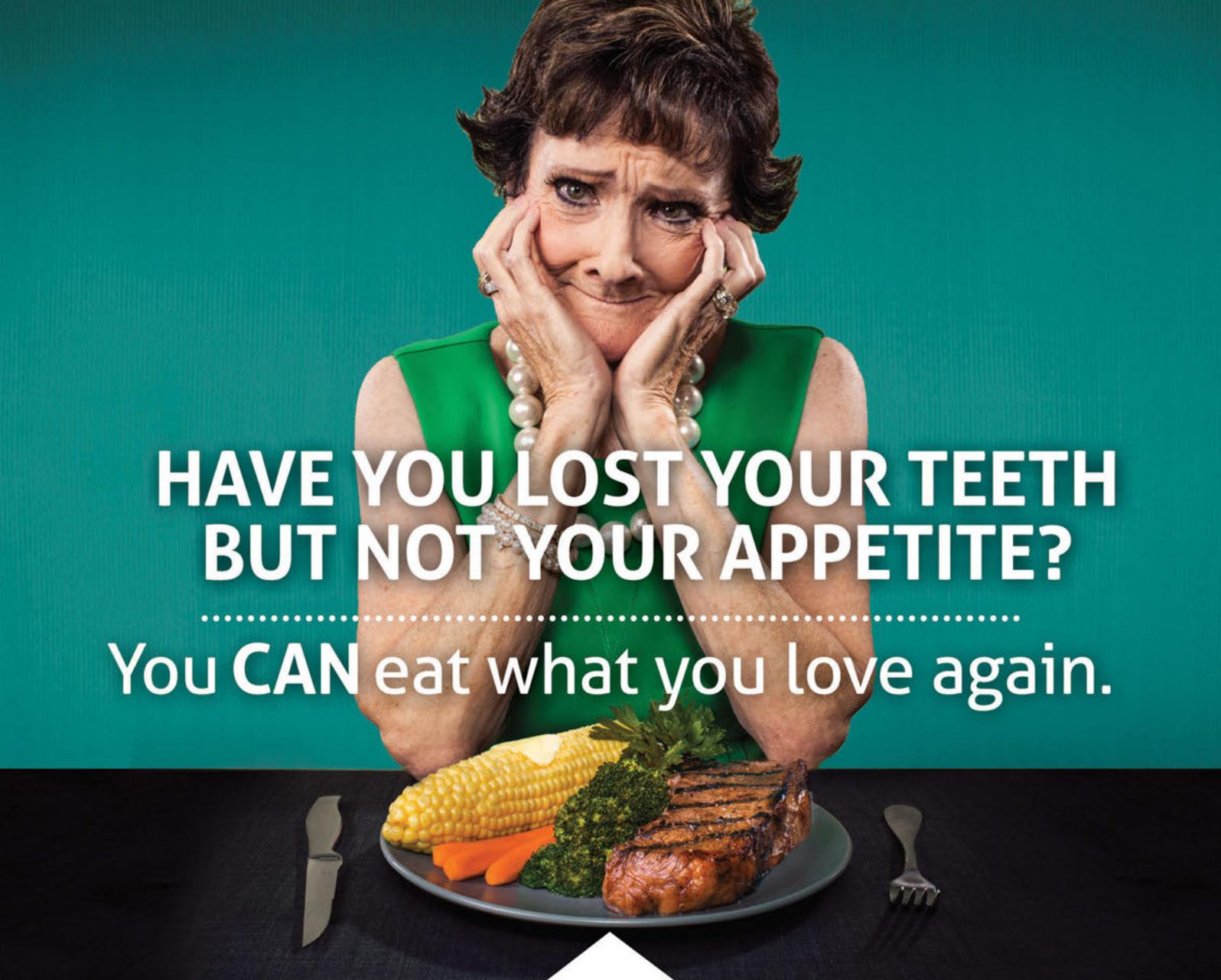
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LIFTING

— By Debbie Durling

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Martha Gonzalez and Marina Monstanto sort through clothes given by the community.

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those in need. It was founded by Frédéric Ozanam and is dedicated to the service of the needy throughout the world. The members of the Society are sent two-by-two into the homes of the poor to respond to their needs. The organization of caring individuals is still much the same as it was then.

It was in 1992 that St. Joseph's Catholic Church formally organized a conference, which reaches out to the surrounding areas. A group of 20 regular volunteers, known as "Vincentians," come together each week to meet as many needs in the community as the donations provided by parishioners of St. Joseph's and other sources will allow. The students of St. Joseph's Catholic School also get involved by collecting food for the pantry and bringing it to the center. A donation bin sits in the parking lot of the church to collect clothing that the community may want to drop off.



The volunteers consist of all walks of life: professionals, retirees, homemakers and anyone who wants to be part of an outlet for benevolent ministry to the area. They come together on Mondays to sort clothing, restock the pantry and just get the center “in order” for the operations that will occur for the remainder of the week. “This is an area where we really can use help,” volunteer Francis Volino said. “It doesn’t matter if someone wants to help an hour or a full day. The more hands we have available to us, the quicker we can get the center ready for the needy to come and receive help.”

Francis is one of the volunteers who helps with the general operations of the center. Growing up in Holland, she was not raised to share her faith but to keep it more private and let people see her faith by her good deeds. Her parents were very involved in charities, and being involved here has helped her carry on the tradition. She has been truly touched by the people at the center. “They are so open, ready to share about God and always ready to reach out to others,” she said. She keeps working faithfully because it’s the right thing to do, while also giving her a sense of purpose.

The pantry is open on Thursdays from 9:00-11:00 a.m. On Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays, the center opens the clothing thrift store from 9:00 a.m.-noon. While they are selling the clothes to fill another need, the prices stay very low, so anyone can afford them. “One lady came in and needed help buying the clothes,” Francis remembered, “so we gave her a voucher to use to purchase



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# Take It To THE BOX

*Prescription Drug Return*

### What is THE BOX?

The “box” is a place to dispose of unused or expired medications quickly, safely and anonymously. See where The Box is in the box below.

### Why Do We Need It?

Next to marijuana, the most common illegal drugs teens are using to get “high” are prescription medications, and home medicine cabinets are the number one point of access for these drugs. It is NOT SAFE for the environment to throw away or flush medications.

### How Can I Find Out More?

Contact IMPACT Communities by phone at 972-937-1531 or visit online at [www.drugprevresources.org](http://www.drugprevresources.org). Talk with community partners who are knowledgeable about the safe use, storage and disposal of prescriptions.

### Safe Use

- Do not share your prescription medications with another person.
- Do not take someone else’s prescription medications.
- Pharmacists and doctors can answer your questions ... Just ask!

### Safe Storage

- Keep medicines in a place away from children, teens and guests.
- Lock up medicines if necessary, especially narcotics or mood altering medicines.
- Keep medicines in their original bottle or package.

### Safe Disposal

- Do NOT flush medications down the toilet or throw them away.

## EVENT LOCATIONS — SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 2017

WHS Parking Lot (1000 N. Hwy. 77, Waxahachie) 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Wal-Mart (700 E. Ennis Avenue, Ennis) 9:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Italy Police Department (161 W. Main Street, Italy) 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Town Square (101 N. Main Street, Palmer) 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Maypearl City Hall (104 E. 2nd Street, Maypearl) 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Milford Police Department (107 S. Main Street, Milford) 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.



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FRIDAY APRIL 14<sup>TH</sup> 12<sup>PM</sup> \* SATURDAY APRIL 15<sup>TH</sup> 10<sup>AM</sup>  
SUNDAY APRIL 16<sup>TH</sup> 12<sup>PM</sup>

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Volunteers with the Society are changing the lives of those less fortunate.

the things she needed. She picked out several pairs of jeans and gave back the rest of the money. The center tried to get her to pick out something else, but she refused and told them to please give the rest to someone else who needed it. She only needed the jeans." Francis was so touched. Working at the center has truly built her faith in people.

Financial assistance applications are taken on Thursdays between 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. Each application is carefully considered, and a home visit is done, just like in the old days, two-by-two. A couple of their volunteers will visit the home and offer encouragement and recommendations to help with whatever situation is being addressed. Many times, they go to help someone and end up leaving with donations of clothes to sell. "Some people may think we just write checks and give them out, but we are so much more," Francis said. "As we steward the parishioners' donations, we are careful to look into all requests and find creative ways to help, besides just monetarily."

Many times, when those seeking help get "back on their feet," they turn around and become donors and/or volunteers. "It's easy to become locked up in misconceptions about the needy in our midst," Lin McNamara, the spiritual advisor of the Society shared. "If you have ever hit a bump in the road and have been the recipient of kind and generous hearts who have been moved to care for a need that you may have or help you through a difficult time, the truth that we need each other becomes very real." Lin knows what it's like to be raised in a family where hand-me-downs were the norm. Being the second oldest of eight girls definitely had its advantages, whereby, she was the recipient of the dress or jeans before they were worn



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Jaxon Fox and Wyatt Caverly serve the community through helping the Society.

thin. The biggest gift she remembers ever receiving over the years was the lesson that one man's trash is another man's treasure. "Sometimes, we lose sight of this as a people, and as a result, we miss out on the everyday miracles of God in our midst," Lin admitted.

Lin feels that the Society has blessed her with the opportunity to "pay forward" the benevolence she has received throughout her own life. Many years ago, she stepped out to help sort clothing in the St. Vincent de Paul center. Her main goal was to help the poor. She soon realized she would be the one to receive the greater blessing. The men and women she's met and spent her time to help have far exceeded any gift of time she's put forth.

One person the mission helped stands out in the memory of the workers. She was doing fine until a grocery store she worked for began to cut back on hours, so insurance would not be required for all workers. She had three kids to support and wanted to work, but being reduced to a part-time salary was not enough. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is the hands of the Lord to her and others like her. "The more people join our cause or donate, the more we're able to help 'fill the gap' of hardship, so people can get back on their feet after life throws them a curve," Francis said.

The volunteers of this Society want people to know they have arms that are open to all those in Waxahachie, Midlothian, Red Oak and the surrounding areas. Everyone can serve, and everyone can come to be served. They will, no doubt, continue to reach out so as to lift others up. **NOW**

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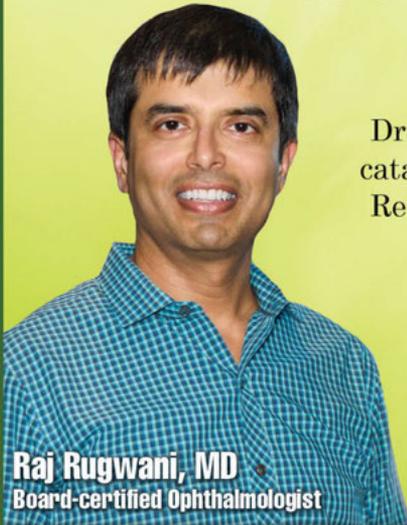
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# Miracle the Win

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*Rising up out of the dust and destruction of a Texas tornado is one tough job, but it wasn't anything that Mike and Mary Steadman couldn't handle with their usual poise and grace. They were out-of-town when the tornado hit their home and neighborhood on December 26, 2015, but the couple's three granddaughters were enjoying their Christmas break while dog sitting at their grandparents' home. "God protected our granddaughters and dogs that day," Mary remembered. "We've given glory to God and feel so blessed."*

That miracle and many more blessings were to come during the ensuing days. Never mind that when Mike and Mary reached home to survey the damage for the first time, their home's walls were leaning, and there was no roof except for the remaining 15-foot section left on either side of the closet in which granddaughters, Kambri, Joely and Karlye, had taken shelter with pillows for protection, along with Fred, the couple's



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STEADMAN

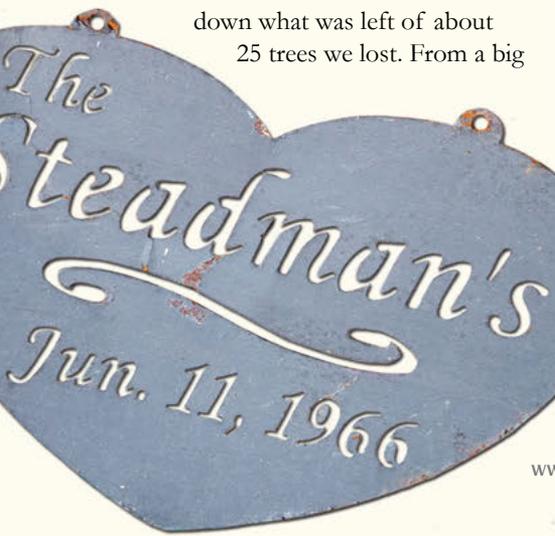
— By Virginia Riddle

black Lab and his companion Basset Hound, Lucy. “That was no doubt a miracle,” Mary stated.

The front porch was gone except for a cross that had been hung there, and the Christmas tree in the formal dining room was still standing with all its ornaments perfectly intact. And very importantly, of course, Mike’s bass boat was OK inside a nearby shed!

When the word was sent out from the girls, folks started arriving, and a lifetime of furnishings, treasured photos and family mementoes were quickly covered with tarps for protection from the rain. “Family members, neighbors and friends were so helpful and kept asking what they could do,” Mary said. By the following day, Samaritan’s Purse had brought in a search and rescue team from East Texas to help Mike and Mary and their neighbors, who were also hard hit by the tornado. “That team raked and cut

down what was left of about 25 trees we lost. From a big



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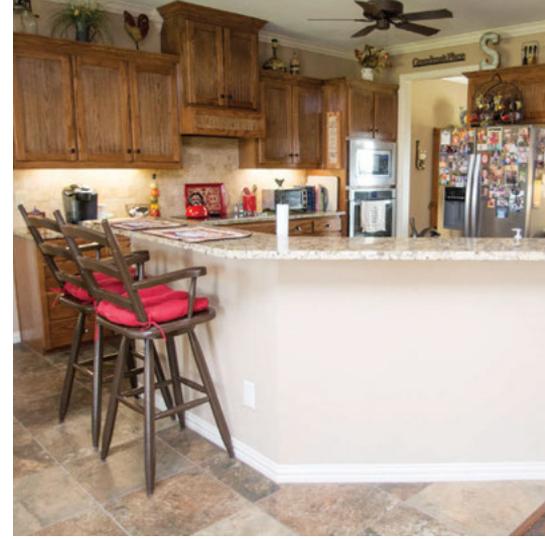


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cedar tree, team member volunteers cut out a cross and made three cross plaques, one each for our granddaughters,” Mike said.

While searching the debris, Mike made his own find — their metal heart etched with *The Steadman’s Jun. 11, 1966*. “I was so happy to find it, since it was our 50th anniversary year,” Mike said.

Mike and Mary’s home of 16 years was a total loss. “Even the slab had to be taken up — it wasn’t usable,” Mike recalled. “I posted on Facebook that we needed a rental house, and got an answer quickly from my Bible study friends. We moved to a nice rental home for nine months while

our new home was under construction,” Mary added. “That was another God thing!”

Using the same lot which still sports the shade of many trees, Mike and Mary’s new home is totally customized to their needs and wants. “When we met with our awesome builder, Pat Cummings from Ennis, a home he had built about 10 years before had almost the same floor plan as our old home’s floor plan. “We couldn’t customize our former home, which we now call our tornado home, but we could do so with our new one. We love the rustic country look of this home,” Mary said.

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That rustic look is enhanced with a stone, brick and cedar wood exterior. A front porch large enough for rocking and talking is surrounded by garden succulents in a bird bath garden. "We are country folks and love our neighborhood and awesome neighbors," Mary said.

Since last September when the Steadmans were able to return home, Mary, who retired after serving 25 years as school secretary at Plummer Elementary School in Cedar Hill ISD, has been busy blending the old decorations and furnishings with newly purchased items.

Mary's cross collection graces a wall above the couple's formal dining room table and chairs that survived with scratches. The eat-in kitchen overlooks the backyard. Mary loves to cook in her kitchen with its beautiful custom cabinets, granite countertops and breakfast bar. A pantry provides additional storage space. A wall plaque declares, *Fruit of the Spirit*. Mary's collection of wall plaque sayings, both humorous and serious, really shines in the nearby utility room.

Mike and Mary's home is shrouded in stars, from the Stars and Stripes throw on the church pew in the entry to the Texas star in the den. Hardwood floors and a limestone rock fireplace complete the rustic, yet elegant, feel of their den. Floor-to-ceiling windows allow a view of the backyard. While there's ample seating, a wall saying declares, *If you want the best seat in the house, move the dog*. Fred and Lucy survived the tornado, but Fred does suffer a little PTSD from the experience!

The master bedroom is decorated in soothing browns and creams. A walk-in closet is complete with a built-in chest-of-drawers, and custom cabinets complete the look of relaxed elegance.



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“Pat built frames for the bathroom mirrors, and they’re just beautiful,” Mike said. An oversized, glass-encased shower with seat completes the bath.

“Mike’s room” readily conveys his lifelong love of hunting and fishing — loves that he’s enjoyed sharing with their son, Todd. “Mary puts up with my hobbies. This room’s really mine and Fred’s, depending on who is in the doghouse that day,” Mike quipped.

A family photo gallery hangs in the hallway. “Most of our photos survived the storm,” Mary said. Memories with daughter, Kelly; son, Todd and his wife, Sharla; grandson, Jake; and “bonus granddaughters,” Laura and Heather; and Kambri, Joely and Karlye are chronicled with the saying, *Amazing Grace*, hanging protectively over them.

Family heirlooms decorate the guest bedroom. Mary’s mother’s chifferobe stands stately under a musical clock that plays several different songs on the hour. Her mother’s quilts lie on a stand, and a quilt warms the bed. *Home is where the heart is* was a saying that the couple counted on during those days away.

Mike, from DeSoto, and Mary from Cedar Hill, met at the Cedar Hill Skating Rink when they were in the seventh and eighth grades. They were married during Mike’s senior year at Baylor University. Mike has worked in sales for Trinity Floor Company for 40-plus years. Vacation time is often spent on cruises with family. Friends from over all those years called and came to help. “Our family and friends meant everything,” Mike said. With them and God’s miracles, this couple has conquered the storm. **NOW**

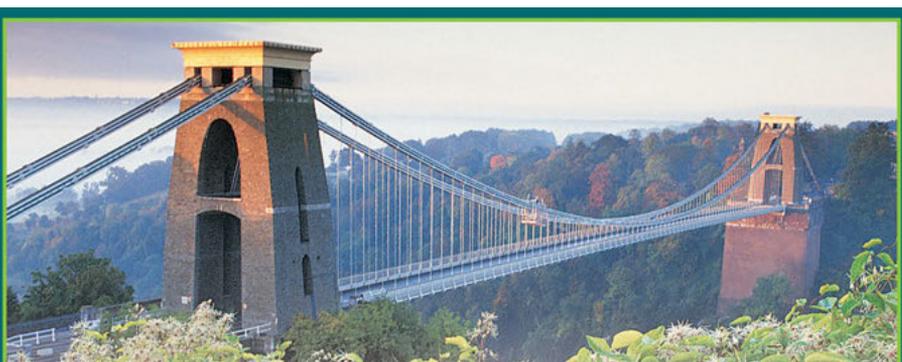
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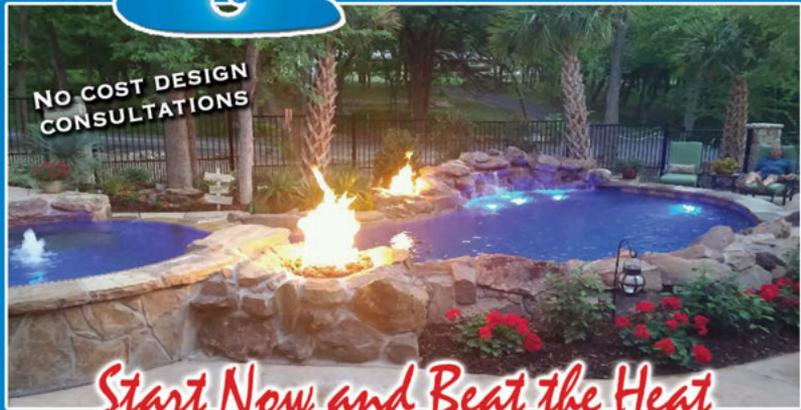


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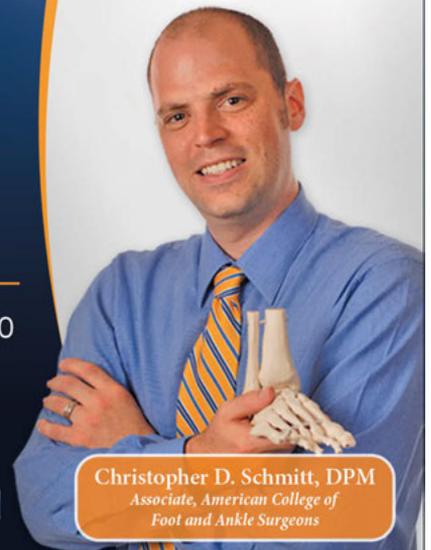
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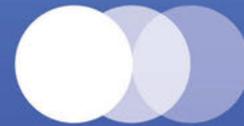
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# MAKING NEW HISTORY

— By Rick Mauch



*Greg Gober played for a pair of Waxahachie Athletic Hall of Fame basketball coaches — Jack Aldridge and John Nickols. Now, as head coach of the Runnin' Indians himself, he is hoping to bring those same kinds of memories to the current players and fans. Greg won a state championship as a player for the Indians in 1983 under then first-year Head Coach Nickols. It was an unforgettable way to cap his high school career that had included back-to-back state tournament appearances the previous two years under Coach Aldridge.*



In recent years, however, the Indians have found it difficult to even challenge for the playoffs. That is why Greg, 51, was brought on board. He has had great success at his previous head coaching stops, leading Abilene Cooper to three regional tournaments in his three seasons at the helm, followed by 11 playoff appearances in 14 years at Colleyville Heritage.

He has also spent five seasons working with the Texas Titans, one of the premier select basketball teams in the nation, and he was athletic director at Frisco Legacy for a year. But, he admits that in

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the back of his mind, he has always been interested in “coming home.”

When he graduated from WHS, Greg didn't plan on being a coach. He didn't even plan on playing college basketball, despite receiving numerous offers from “very” small colleges. Instead, he walked onto the football team at Stephen F. Austin State University as a strong safety. “I had dreams of playing in the NFL, but I quickly realized that wasn't going to happen,” he admitted. “It was a tough thing to accept, but it was what was meant to be, and things worked out OK.”

Then, Greg got some life-changing advice from Coach Aldridge. He told Greg to follow his heart and become a coach, a conversation that led to a lifelong friendship. “He said, ‘You've always wanted to be a coach, so get certified, and I'll help you find a job,’” Greg recalled. Coach Aldridge would even become Greg's assistant years later at Colleyville Heritage. He passed away from Alzheimer's disease in May 2015.

Though Coach Aldridge did not coach Greg to a state title, Greg well remembers seeing his hero in the stands the day the Indians won state. It was one of the many reasons Coach Aldridge was more than a coach. He was always there for his players, even if they were no longer officially his players.

“When we were celebrating at state, I remember looking up and seeing him watching. He was so happy for us, but he stayed up there and let us have our moment,” Greg said. “What we had was more than a player-coach relationship.”

Greg moved to Waxahachie in 1977 with his parents from Michigan. As he went into high school a couple years later, Coach Aldridge took him under his wing.



Greg is still inspired by Coach Aldridge, as he tries to revive the greatness the Runnin' Indians basketball program once enjoyed. "He gave me a start, and I hope to pass along what I've learned to other players and help them get a good start on their lives, too," Greg said. "The way we played (under Coach Aldridge), everybody felt important, from every starter to the last guy on the bench. We also played an exciting style, fast-paced. We averaged 80 points, and there wasn't even a three-point shot then. We made threes, but they just didn't count as threes."

Greg's son, Colten, is also a coach as a student-assistant at The University of Texas at Arlington. His daughter, Tyler, now married and living in Dallas with her husband, David Beneski, was a cheerleader. His wife, Gyna, still teaches

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business at Colleyville Heritage. And they've all been a part of the family's basketball tradition. Greg said it wasn't unusual for them to travel to games with him as the kids were growing up. "I am so blessed that my family not only understood what I did for a living but has been a big part of it," he said.

Waxahachie Athletic Director Greg Reed knew right away Greg was the right man for the job, partly because of that family spirit. He applauded the new coach's determination to restore the "it factor" to the program. "That's what we're after — our whole community being involved," Mr. Reed said. "I'm so excited. He was the right guy at the right time."

Greg inherits a program that hasn't had much recent success. However, last year they finished 20-12 and narrowly missed the playoffs. Of the returners from that team, about five saw solid playing time. "They were learning how to get things done. The core group of players they had are back," he said.

"Back in the days when Greg and I played, we had to turn people away because the gym was so full," former teammate, Chris Wright, said. "I think we can get it back there again with Greg."

Greg took over for Damien Mobley, and Greg is focusing on moving forward. "We're going to play hard, smart and have fun," he said. "But fun will come last. There's a tremendous tradition here. The motto I brought in is 'Bring it back.'"

It's been a long time since the Indians had the kind of success they dream of again. In fact, Greg said some of his teammates in the early 1980s now have grandsons who play. "I try to use that to my advantage," he said. "They can revive that tradition."

Doing so, however, will not be an easy task. The Indians play in District

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But Greg is optimistic. Along with the returners, he said several players could come up from the sub-varsity to make an impact, along with some football players he called "difference makers." "Watching the intensity and what he's got going, it's great to see," Chris said. "He's got folks excited."

He also takes pride in staying in touch with his players. He remembers getting stranded in Oklahoma during a snow storm when he went to see a former player. "If I tell a kid I'm going to come watch him, I go," Greg said.

That kind of loyalty is a big part of what connects him to his players, and now that he's "home," in many ways it's like he never left. He's reconnected with some folks he hasn't seen in 30 years, all for a common cause. "It's like it was yesterday," he said. "It's nice to win, but I coach to know I made a difference in somebody's life, and that they made a difference in mine." **NOW**



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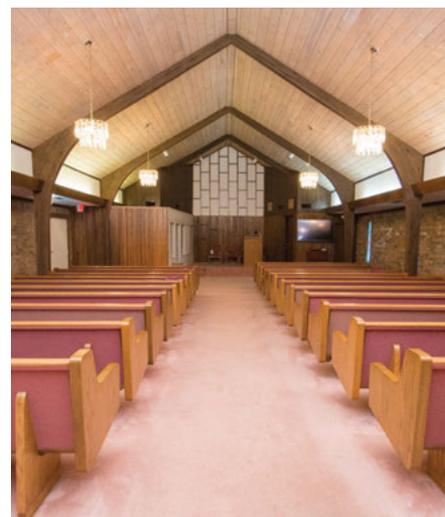


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Before Waxahachie Funeral Home opened its doors to the public in 1987, it was the home of a church. How it became a funeral home is a unique story about a want for a career change and the encouragement of a good friend. “When it came up for sale, John Snyder, a longtime, local funeral director, said, ‘You should buy the building,’” owner, Kenneth Dollar, remembered. “He said, ‘You should convert the building into a funeral home.’”

Once the conversion was complete, John Shocklee was the home’s funeral director in charge. Herb Corpany was hired and oversaw the daily operations at Waxahachie Funeral Home from March 1988 until his retirement in 2012. “I was here on a part-time, as-needed basis,” Kenneth shared. “I came on as a funeral director in 2004 and worked alongside Herb until his retirement.”

Kenneth and his wife, Leta Dollar, and Roger Dollar and his wife, Heidi, are the owners of the funeral home. Kenneth is now the funeral director in charge, and Leta is the full-time office manager. Taking a week’s vacation has never been an option, but when they do have to leave town for any reason — like the birth of another grandchild — they find comfort in knowing they have qualified people on staff who can carry the load until their return. Dave Meizler does all the embalming. He was hired in 2013 and continues to be a great asset to the funeral home. His wife, Delta, helps in any capacity, as well. “If we need to go out of town for any reason,” Leta said, “we know we can leave it in their hands. We are confident they will take care of things in our absence.”

Other valued employees at Waxahachie Funeral Home include Sonny and Kay Sides. They both work on a part-time basis — Sonny as a driver and Kay as an office assistant. Louis Garcia assists with funerals and helps families prearrange funerals. Jason Harris is the pastor of Forreston Baptist Church. Jason is the home's family service provider. He directs the preneed department and, also, helps families prearrange funerals. Louis and Jason both have studied and earned their insurance licensing certifications, thus allowing them to write plans, while also serving as the home's prearranged funeral planning counselors. The prearranged funeral packages available at Waxahachie Funeral Home help those who want to remove the burden for the family at the time of passing.

It's extremely rewarding to know we are helping families make those difficult decisions."

The offerings at Waxahachie Funeral Home include most anything the grieving family members want for their loved one. The entire service can be held on-site, if desired, or the visitation can be held on-site while the funeral services are held at a church or graveside. "We do whatever is best for the family," Kenneth said. "One family wanted the burial in Colorado. Leta and I drove their loved one up, held a graveside service and drove back home. We can go anywhere to pick up and lay to rest."

The most rewarding aspect of any day for Kenneth and Leta is knowing they are helping people get through life's most heartbreaking situation — the passing of a loved one. The most difficult situations are those where children and young adults are concerned. "Dealing with families who have lost a child is not easy," Leta admitted.

"This is the last place they want to be," Kenneth added, "but the situation itself requires them to be. It's extremely rewarding to know we are helping families make those difficult decisions." **NOW**

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The Cat in the Hat and Nicole Matthews are on hand during the Ellis County Expo with information about the offerings at Sims Library.



Eliana Juarez, soon to be 2, plays at the newly revamped park on Farley Street.



Obinna Ononobi is proud to announce the upcoming grand opening of Altus Emergency Center coming soon to Waxabachie.



Johnny Walker, as Uncle Sam, helps offer tax help from Sun Loan Company.



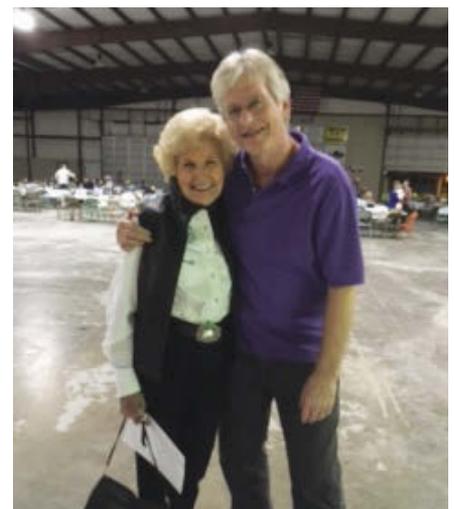
Staff members from Fiesta Mart are in attendance at the Civic Center with smiles and giveaways.



Nathan Guidry, Maddie Guidry and Ben Juarez enjoy an afternoon of swinging at the park.



Lexie Owen poses with Tasha and Raylee, two of the Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders who were in Waxabachie for a fundraiser recently.



At the end of the evening of the 16th Annual Barn Dance, former Board Member Peggy Atwell and Executive Director John Wyczkoff reminisce about old times when Peggy served on The Gingerbread House board.



## Golfers: Don't Be Handicapped With Foot Pain

As millions of avid golfers get ready for another season of pars and bogeys, they should be aware of potentially serious foot problems that can result from years of playing the game. Although golf is not considered a rigorous sport, the physical act of repeatedly swinging a golf club in practice and on the links can lead to a condition known as hallux limitus, a jamming and deterioration of the big toe joint.

The movement and weight transfer that occur during the swing's follow through can cause this problem and other chronic foot ailments. When golfers follow through on their swing, they can overextend the big toe joint on the back foot. Those who have played the game avidly for several years can eventually wear out the cartilage or jam the big toe joint. The likely outcome, if left untreated, is painful arthritis in the big toe, which would make it very difficult to continue playing golf.

Golfers who have pain and swelling around the big toe joint or have less mobility in this area than other parts of the foot should visit a foot and ankle surgeon for an examination and appropriate treatment. A history of trauma to the big toe area and bone structure can also precipitate the condition. Individuals with a long first metatarsal bone (big toe), for example,

are more susceptible to joint compression and hallux limitus. If golfers experience pain in the big toe area when playing, they should consider it a warning sign that intervention is necessary before the joint becomes arthritic. In most situations, orthotics can be prescribed to provide relief, but others with advanced cases may require surgery.

Another foot problem that is common in golfers is a neuroma or pinched nerve at the bottom of the foot. The weight transfer to the front foot that occurs in the follow through applies pressure that, over time, can cause a pinched nerve.

Golfers should not wear shoes that have a spike located directly beneath the ball of the foot. The pressure from that single spike, magnified by the several thousand steps taken during an average round, can cause intense pain and swelling in the ball of the foot. Any pair of golf shoes can be made more foot-friendly without sacrificing traction by removing the poorly located spikes. **NOW**

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### Through Spring

WISD Lighthouse for Learning Spring Semester/Community Education Classes: registration and a full class offering can be found by visiting [www.wisd.org](http://www.wisd.org) or by calling (972) 923-4631.

### Through April 12

AARP Tax Assistance: 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., **Thursdays** only, Sims Library, 515 Main St. Call (972) 937-2671 for additional information on what documents to bring.

### April 1, 2

Waxahachie Community Theatre: 7:30 p.m., **Saturday**; 2:30 p.m., **Sunday**; Living Hope Nazarene Church, 2420 Brown St. Three plays will be performed during each show: *Jack and the Beanstalk*, *Little Red Riding Hood* and *The Power Mutants*. Tickets are \$10 each. They can be purchased online at [www.waxahachiecommunitytheatre.com](http://www.waxahachiecommunitytheatre.com) and will also be available at the door one hour prior to each performance. For questions, call (972) 646-1050 or email [wct.texas@gmail.com](mailto:wct.texas@gmail.com).

### April 8

Ellis County Bowl for Kids' Sake: three

sessions: 10:00 a.m., noon, 2:00 p.m., Hilltop Lanes, 2010 US 287 Business. For more information, visit [bbbstx.org/EllisCountyBowl](http://bbbstx.org/EllisCountyBowl) or call Susan Smith at (469) 644-9876.

Ellis County Youth Expo Sale of Champions: 11:00, barbecue lunch; noon, sale begins, Ellis County Expo Center.

Waxahachie Symphony Association – Dallas Jazz Orchestra: 7:00 p.m., SAGU Hagee Communication Center Performance Hall, 1200 Sycamore. For more information, visit [www.waxahachiesymphony.org](http://www.waxahachiesymphony.org).

### April 8 — May 29

Scarborough Renaissance Festival: **Saturdays** and **Sundays** only, 2511 FM 66, Exit 399A on I-35E. For more information, call (972) 938-3247 or visit [www.srfestival.com](http://www.srfestival.com).

### April 20 — 23

Crossroads of Texas Film Festival: For more information, visit [www.crossroadsoftx.com](http://www.crossroadsoftx.com).

### April 22

Adoption 5K – Back to the 80's: 8:00 a.m.,

registration, Getzendaner Park. For more information, visit [www.tbhc.org/adoption-5k-201-donation-form/](http://www.tbhc.org/adoption-5k-201-donation-form/).

Kelly Boston Give & Grow Scholarship Benefit: 4:30-11:00 p.m., Sokol Hall, 2622 E. Hwy. 34, Ennis. Admission: Adults \$10, children 12 and under are free. Barbecue plates will be available from 5:30-8:30 p.m. for \$10 for adults and \$6 for children. For more information, contact Penny Boston at (214) 354-6656, Caleb Skrivaneck at (972) 921-2697 or Matthew Zajic at (214) 801-8908.

### April 28

Brown Bag & History: Noon, Ellis County Museum. For more information, call (972) 937-0681.

### April 29

Spring Fiesta: 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., St. Joseph Catholic Church, 600 E. Marvin Ave.

*Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your current event details to [sandra.strong@nowmagazines.com](mailto:sandra.strong@nowmagazines.com).*



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## In the Kitchen With Erica Frye

— By Virginia Riddle

After a hectic day, Erica Frye, a Waxahachie native, relaxes by cooking something healthy. Erica learned to cook from her mother who continues to inspire Erica to prepare homecooked dinners often. Erica inherited many of her family’s recipes but adds her own touch. “Through cooking healthy for my family and friends, I have reversed my husband’s Type 2 diabetes diagnosis,” Erica said.

She enjoys cooking with coconut oil because of its versatility. “I enjoy down-home cooking, baking, grilling and ethnic cooking,” Erica explained. “Baking allows me to prepare quick, healthy dinners — especially during the week. I also invent my own dishes and enjoy entering them into cooking contests. Cooking allows me to just flow freely in the kitchen without any rules, boundaries or restrictions.” **NOW**

### Three Squash Garden Salad

Salad:

- 1 each: large green squash, yellow squash and white squash**
- 1 medium purple onion**
- 1 ripe, red tomato**
- 1 medium cucumber**
- Romaine lettuce**
- 1/4 cup Gorgonzola cheese, crumbled**

Tomato Vinaigrette Dressing:

- 1/2 cup tomato jelly**
- 2 Tbsp. garlic, minced**
- 1 Tbsp. dry basil**
- 1/3 cup EVOO**
- Pinch of sea salt**
- 1/4 cup red wine vinegar**
- 1 Tbsp. spicy brown mustard**

- 1.** Cut all vegetables into bite-sized cubes; toss together; set aside.
- 2.** Mix all dressing ingredients together; combine with tossed vegetables.
- 3.** Chill vegetables in refrigerator for 30 minutes. Place vegetables on a bed of lettuce; top with cheese prior to serving.

### Baked Eight Ball Zucchini

- 1 cup barley**
- Vegetable broth**
- 1/2 yellow onion, chopped**
- 1/2 small carton sliced mushrooms**
- 2 yellow squash, chopped**
- 1 green pepper, chopped**
- Coconut oil**
- Oregano, garlic powder, salt and pepper, to taste**

- 2 cups mozzarella cheese (divided use)**
- 5 eight ball zucchini, cored with tops removed**
- Olive oil**

- 1.** Cook barley in vegetable broth according to package instructions.
- 2.** Sauté the onion, mushrooms, squash and green pepper in coconut oil, until tender; add seasonings.
- 3.** Put a small amount of cheese in the bottom of each ball zucchini.
- 4.** Mix the barley and sautéed vegetables together; add an equal portion to each ball zucchini.
- 5.** Sprinkle tops with remainder of cheese; lightly drizzle each zucchini half with olive oil; bake at 350 F for 20-25 minutes.

### Oatmeal Butternut Squash Pancakes

- 1/2 cup rolled oats**
- 7 ice cream scooper scoops mashed butternut squash**
- 1/2 tsp. flax seed**
- 1 1/2 Tbsp. brown sugar**
- 1/4 tsp. nutmeg**
- 1/4 tsp. cinnamon**
- 1/4 tsp. Himalayan salt**
- 1 Tbsp. pure vanilla**
- 1 Tbsp. coconut flour**
- 1 egg**
- 1 1/2 tsp. baking powder**
- Maple syrup**

- 1.** Using a food processor, blend the oats until fine; mix in all other ingredients, except the syrup.
- 2.** Make pancakes by pouring 1/4 cup of mixture for each pancake onto a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.
- 3.** Bake at 400 F for 10 minutes; remove and flip pancakes.
- 4.** Return to oven; bake for 2 additional minutes; serve with syrup.

To view recipes from current and previous issues, visit [www.nowmagazines.com](http://www.nowmagazines.com).



## April Events!

- April 8 BOGO Saturday
- April 13 Ladies Night Out
- April 20 - 23 Crossroads of Texas Film Festival
- April 20 - 23 Girl Camper & Sisters on the Fly Rally

Visit [DowntownWaxahachie.com](http://DowntownWaxahachie.com) for more information.



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Our garden tour homes are located in Waxahachie, Midlothian, Ovilla and Palmer. Ellis County Master Gardeners will be available at each home for questions and conversations.

*Event will happen rain or shine.*

For more information on the Ellis County Master Gardener Association (ECMGA) Spring Garden Tour, please contact: Mattie Thompson (214) 315-4373 • Shelia Cloonen (214) 837-9716 • Kathy Graves (972) 489-5507

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