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September 2007

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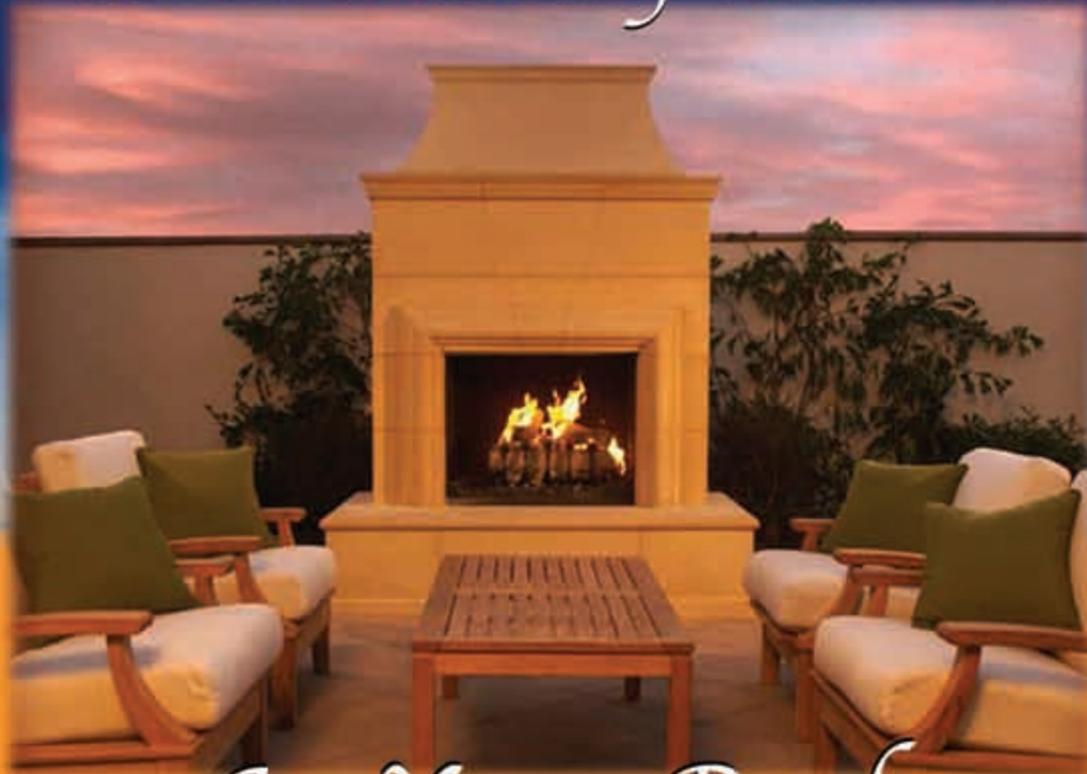


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Midlothian NOW

Editor's Note

Hello, Midlothian!

Welcome back to the world of learning to all the students in Midlothian ISD and Navarro Community College! Education is a treasure; however, the possession of that treasure depends on the effort of the recipient. Do not be afraid to tackle that difficult assignment. As Thomas Edison once said, "Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try one more time."

We look forward to an amazing year and incredible stories in the world of education. Starting out the school year is one special teacher, Dr. Virginia Grossman. As a physician-turned-educator, she is an inspiration to her students at Navarro Community College. For some fun relief from studies, check out our ArtsNow story on the Bus Barn Swing Band, a group of talented Midlothian school bus drivers. Prepare to be amazed when you visit the home of Marvin and Belinda Wade. Look for them in our home feature.

This year, the treasure is yours for the taking. Go get it!

Betty Tryon
Midlothian Editor



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Board certified in Internal Medicine, Dr. Nordstrom received her

medical degree from Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center School of Medicine in Lubbock and her internship and residency at Indiana University Department of Medicine in Indianapolis.

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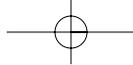
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Just What the Doctor Ordered

— By Betty Tryon

Family physician Dr. Virginia Grossman gets ready for another day at the office. Instead of heading to the world of stethoscopes, medicines and life-saving machines, she travels to Navarro Community College and prepares for a day of teaching students. After being a family practitioner for two decades, her career path has changed from healing bodies to helping minds. “I always liked teaching, and enjoyed working around the nursing students. I felt that 20 years in the medical profession was enough, and I looked around to see if there was something else I could do. Of course, I wanted to use my education,” she explained.

Dr. Grossman’s preparation and practice in medicine has been extensive. This native of New York, grew up in Arlington and graduated from University of Texas at Arlington with a bachelor’s degree in biology. She was accepted into the Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine (TCOM) at the University of North Texas Health Science Center and graduated in 1980. She graduated *summa cum laude* from both college and medical school. After graduation, Virginia said, “I practiced around the Dallas/Ft. Worth area and eventually moved to east Texas and worked at a clinic.” As a family practitioner, she enjoyed general practice “because it was a little of everything.”

“Family practice is not very far from teaching. You spend

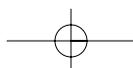
all day educating patients. Teaching at the college is more positive. The students are generally more receptive than patients,” she remarked, smiling. “It’s nice to see the light bulb go on. If you can make them see it, it is fun. The students themselves are fun and funny! It is nice that we have such a mix of students. We have older students, who have been out of education for a while and have jobs, and

we have younger students right out of high school. I thought it would be polarizing, but they get along very well.”

Virginia teaches general biology, anatomy and physiology, microbiology and



nutrition. The college’s minimum requirement for teaching — at least 18 hours in your specialty and to have your master’s degree — was no problem for Virginia to prove. After all, she is a physician. Her biggest challenge was organizing her curriculum. She said, “When I first started, the bio lab was stocked with stuff that other people had ordered, so I had to work with what I had. It was fly-by-the-seat-of-your-pants time! Now I can have the equipment that I need.”



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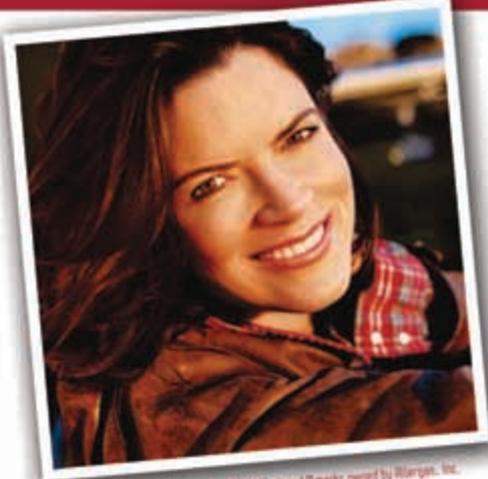


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It was not difficult for Virginia to get into the groove of planning classes because she knew the subject matter so well. She said, "In reading the textbook I made an outline and decided what was important. The microbiology, anatomy and physiology courses were for nursing students. I focused on what they needed to know. I continue to get



my medical journals and keep up with the latest in medical science. I tell my students that science is everywhere. You can't escape from it. I find them watching things on Discovery Channel that captures their interest and we discuss it in class. I found that with some students, things they hear on the periphery of their consciousness and never understood, [when] I explain it, they understand it. Most of the students are excited about science and they participate. I have students whose major is not in science. Some are in music or art, but everyone needs to be well-rounded."



Virginia has stepped into the role of educator as if she was born to it. When she speaks of teaching, her eyes light up and her face comes alive.

"I like it that we have small classes. It's not like when I was in school with hundreds of students in one class. The

large numbers didn't really affect me because I am self-motivated. My science class has a maximum of 24 students. I am able to get to know all the students, their names and learn what their goals are. It is such an easy-going environment here that the students are not just a face in the crowd.

"I know that I can't teach them on a

"I always liked teaching, and enjoyed working around the nursing students. I felt that 20 years in the medical profession was enough, and I looked around to see if there was something else I could do.

Of course, I wanted to use my education."

level I understand, but I have to keep from making it too simplistic. They are a lot smarter than we give them credit for. I had one student tell me she couldn't take good notes. She was



just handed outlines in school. I told her no one was going to keep handing her things. You have to want to learn. I think that sometimes we try to make life a little easier, just like parents do with their kids, but we are not doing

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them justice when we do that.”

Virginia enjoys teaching so much that it was actually very much a part of her life before she formally became an educator. “I used to teach dog obedience courses for at least 10 years easy.” She took her love for canines another step, and trained and showed



“Family practice is not very far from teaching. You spend all day educating patients.”

border collies. “I have done this for 18 years. I started with a golden retriever, but I now show with border collies. The dog I have now is named Jake. He has numerous titles and lots of ribbons in obedience, herding and agility with the American Kennel Club. At one point, I had a therapy dog named Brett that was licensed through Therapy Dogs International. I used to take him to nursing homes. Brett had a very different personality than other border collies. He was very calm and patient.”

Whether she is teaching obedience to dogs or unlocking the secrets of science for students, Virginia has found her niche. Some of the consistent benchmarks of a good teacher are they all enjoy teaching, care about their students and are highly knowledgeable in their subject matter. She meets all these criteria easily.

Giving an apple to a teacher is symbolic of a student’s affection for an educator. ‘An apple a day keeps the doctor away’ is another familiar saying. What do you do if the doctor is your teacher? In Virginia’s case, both would apply. As an educator, she is just what the doctor would order. **NOW**

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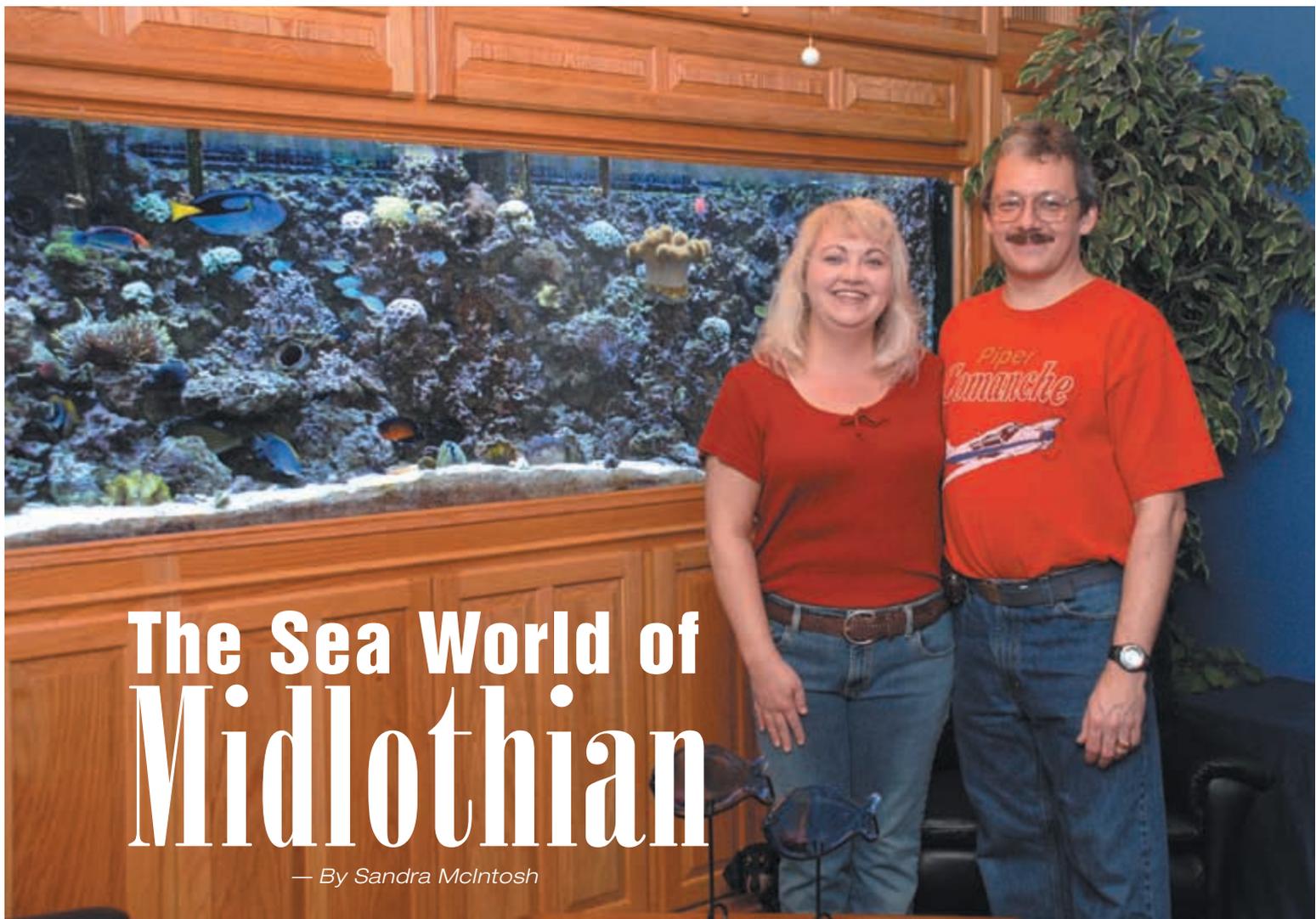
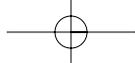
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The Sea World of Midlothian

— By Sandra McIntosh

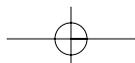
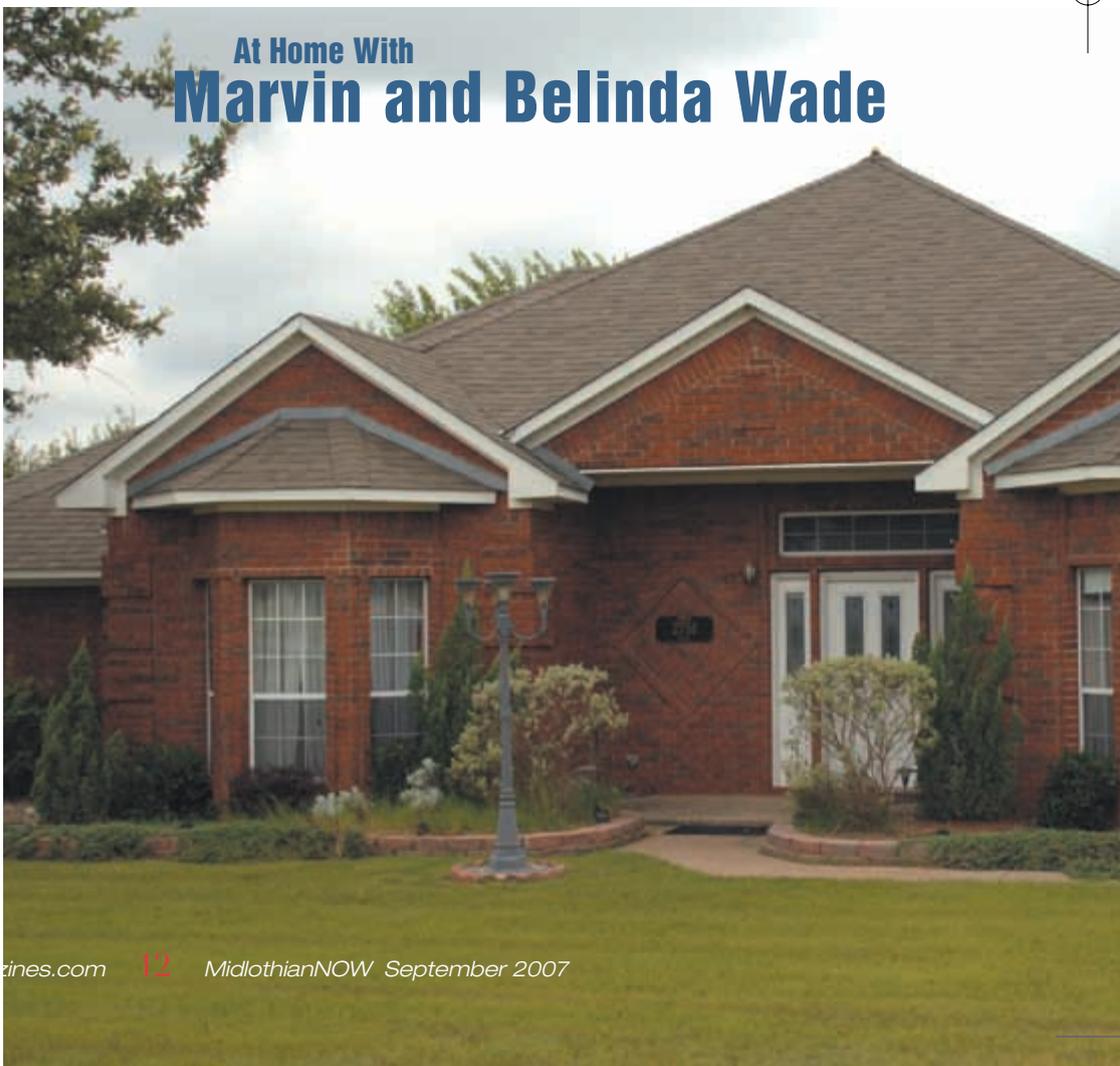
The home resembles several others in the airport community known as Eagles Nest, with its spacious lawn, backyard airplane hangar and ample indoor living space, but that is where the similarities end and the most amazing story begins. Marvin and Belinda Wade's home is uniquely different in more ways than one. "We built the house from the ground up," Marvin said. "We found the design in a book at Barnes and Noble and modified the plans to our own personal specifications."

Belinda looks back now and is able to laugh at the memory. "It's no joke. We built it," she said, waving her hands in the air. "We still have the calluses to prove it!"

When making the decision to move from Bedford over 14 years ago, the Wades knew exactly what they were looking for. "We wanted country living with an airpark," Marvin said. "We had a plane and we needed a place to store it."

At the time they purchased the lot and began the building process, there were only 15 other homes in the immediate neighborhood. Marvin and Belinda recall

At Home With Marvin and Belinda Wade



being the first ones to break ground on their side of the street. "We lived in a very small apartment in the hangar for almost a year," Belinda said. "It took us a full nine months to build the house."

As other houses began to take shape around them, the Wades remained diligent to the project at hand. Looking around them today, they still find a great deal of pride in all they were able to accomplish in the 3,100-square foot, ranch-style home, which boasts of four bedrooms and three bathrooms.

The original plans called for a formal dining room. "That was a room we didn't need," Belinda said. "It's now our home office." The artwork found in this room, located just off the front entrance, is the intricate flooring. Ceramic tile and wood were crafted into a one-of-a-kind design. Twelve-inch wood tiles were ripped and then inlaid into the ceramic tile to create the unique pattern. As a pilot for DHL, who also enjoys rebuilding small planes, it is only fitting that wall hangings in



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the office reflect Marvin's love of aircraft, as well as gliders.

The great room is the place within the home where Marvin and Belinda come when they want to watch their favorite movies. "We can make our own popcorn," Marvin said, referring to the comforts of staying home instead of frequenting a theater. "We

get to watch what we want and we don't have to deal with people talking around us."

Red oak bookcases flank both sides of the oversized plasma TV. The bookcases not only showcase photographs, keepsakes and the eagles Belinda loves, they also house well over 200 movies. The main artwork in this room is a 10-foot map



of the world Belinda received one year as a birthday present from Marvin. He knew this was the perfect gift because she loves to navigate when they fly together.

Many collectibles found in the home are from Marvin's childhood. "My dad worked for Mobil Oil," Marvin explained. "I spent a lot of time in Indonesia, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait as a child." A hand-carved Indonesian wardrobe, the largest piece passed down from Marvin's mom, is also found in the great room.

Belinda's philosophy when decorating the home has been "less is more." She

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has been able to bring simple elegance to the bedrooms, bathrooms, kitchen and library using straight lines, simple decor and warm, relaxing colors. The stained glass windows and crocheted window treatments in the kitchen add to the warm, ranch feeling found throughout the home.

The family room has just recently been renamed the viewing room. What once was a 150-gallon fish tank between the kitchen and breakfast nook recently grew into a 760-gallon, salt-water aquarium that takes up the entire length of the back wall in this new room. Using mere words to describe the miniature underwater world they have created is a daunting task to say the least.

The new tank, designed and built in Canada, is 12-feet long, 35-inches wide (from front to back) and 34-inches tall. The cabinet, housing the work of living art is designed for easy-access to the mechanical workings below and above the tank, while the room directly behind the tank makes feeding, maintenance and general operation possible. "The back room is like a biology lab with a scientific feel to it," Marvin said. "Magic happens in the back room."



To create this Sea World of Midlothian, Marvin and Belinda did their homework. They spent months engrossed in research, educating themselves on every aspect of an aquarium this size. They learned firsthand that it takes a full year to construct a tank of this magnitude. They now understand that all salt-water fish have teeth, while some are poisonous and filled with venom. "Every fish in the tank, except one, is from the South Pacific," Marvin said, "and that one is a desjardinii found in the Red Sea and Indian Ocean."

The rabbit fish is the only poisonous fish in the Wade's tank. When it feels threatened, the tips of its spine will bow up. The venom is found in these tips. "Clown" fish, of which Marvin and Belinda have several colors and species, find safety

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among the anemones, while the blue-green chromis and the elegant anthias swim among their own in what is commonly referred to as schools. The cleaner crabs, numbering over 200, help keep the tank clean. The rock along the walls of the tank came from Germany. It started out pure white. Now one can look at it and see many different colors that represent living organisms. The corals are what make the process so scientific. "It's a full-blown reef with all the critical chemistry," Marvin said. "All the pumps are in the garage. Everything is labeled and color-coded. When needed, an emergency generator changes over automatically."

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and automated maintenance were all key factors in the building process. Marvin and Belinda both have their individual hobbies, but the aquarium brought them together with an idea that grew into a passion. "She's like Elli Mae. She loves critters," Marvin said. "I love the engineering side. We had to learn how to appreciate what the other liked to do."

As the sun goes down on another day, you can almost guarantee that Marvin and Belinda will have eaten dinner off the table in the viewing room. Now they are relaxing back in their recliners, watching a dinner show to beat all dinner shows at Sea World of Midlothian. **NOW**

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The Bus Barn Swing Band — the “magnificent seven.”

In the beginning, a couple of bus drivers from the Midlothian Independent School District (MISD) would hang around in the mornings after all their students had been dropped off at their respective campuses. They did not spend this extra time at the bus barn gossiping or shooting the breeze. “After their bus route, they’d ‘tailgate play’ for fun,” Bill Thompson said, referring to how what is known these days for seven men as the Bus Barn Swing Band started.

Bill remembers how he became one of the “magnificent seven.” “I was tired of driving back and forth every day to my job in North Dallas,” he said. “My daughter-in-law suggested I go to work as a bus driver for the Midlothian ISD.” After giving the suggestion some thought, Bill decided driving a bus close to home would not be such a bad idea. He interviewed with Don Green, bus driver trainer, passed a physical exam

and within a 30-day period, completed his CDL training. “In order to drive, we also had to complete licensing endorsements, which included passenger and safety issues,” Bill said. “I am now in my sixth year as a bus driver.”

One of the first things Bill remembers Don asking him was if he played a musical instrument. Only after Bill answered in the affirmative did Don tell him about the other transportation department employees who were also musically inclined, and who also possessed a passion for playing. The six other band members include Dale Brawner, Clarence “Hootie”



Gladney, John Strange, L.D. Morris, Jerry Thompson (no kin to Bill) and Jerry Vaughn. They are all like Bill, retired from

ARTS NOW

meaningful long-term careers with part-time employment at MISD. "They were still just fooling around when Jerry T. and I came into the group," Bill explained. "We got pretty good."

They began to perform as a group on a regular basis not long after "getting

"We are a well-blended group of people. We are all self-taught musicians. Everyone plays by ear and a few of us read music."

pretty good." This year marks their fifth year as a band, finding success in songs which used to be heard only in the early morning hours at the bus barn. "We are a well-blended group of people," Bill said. "We are all self-taught musicians. Everyone plays by ear and a few of us read music."

Dale was the catalyst who got the Bus Barn Swing Band together, or at least that is how Bill and the other members view their first public performances. "We just formed a jam session every Thursday at the Midlothian Community Center. We played for the senior citizens," Dale said. "We were able to practice once a week while also providing entertainment."

Since Dale was already playing on a regular basis with his other band, the Ellis County Bluegrass Band, in Venus, Texas, he asked the guys if they would like to debut the band. "Of course, we said, 'Yes,'" Bill said. "It just took off from there."

"In fact, the Venus folks continue to ask me when the bus band is coming back," Dale said. "From the beginning, things just kind of fell into place." Dale also remembers a long-standing joke, which used to make its rounds throughout the transportation department. "After Jerry T. came on board, the joke was you had to play a musical instrument to get a job here," he said, still laughing

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at the memory. "These guys are super!" Recently, Bill took over some of the scheduling duties, and Dale feels secure in knowing he left such matters in very capable hands. In all honesty, Bill seems to be having a great time with the newfound responsibilities. "I make

"These guys are super!"

sure the group can meet the dates on the schedule," Bill said. "The music we play now is somewhat different than when the band first got started. We've added waltzes, polkas and Cajun bluegrass to the mix of country western, straight bluegrass and gospels that got us started."

Bill plays the trumpet, mandolin and the Cajun zydeco, which is similar to an accordion. Jerry V. plays electric and stand-up bass guitar. Dale, Clarence, John and L.D. have all mastered the guitar, while Clarence also plays the mandolin. Dale, John and L.D. share the stage as vocalists. Jerry T.'s claim to fame is the way his fingers have mastered the keys of a piano. Dale may be somewhat biased, but he said the talent found in the group is second to none. "We each have our own feelings for each song we play," Dale said, as Bill quickly agreed. "We appreciate the musical tastes of one another. I think that's a big part of being a successful band — being able to accommodate one another's likes and dislikes."

The guys in the Bus Barn Swing Band spend most weekday mornings at Caroline's Country Café, planning upcoming events, eating breakfast and sharing one band story after another. Bill did not take long to answer one final question. "The music we play is very much a form of art," he said. "While some artists take a pencil and paper to create a picture, the guys and I paint a picture through our music. We're just playing a picture using our voices and the notes of our instruments." **NOW**

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— By Betty Tryon

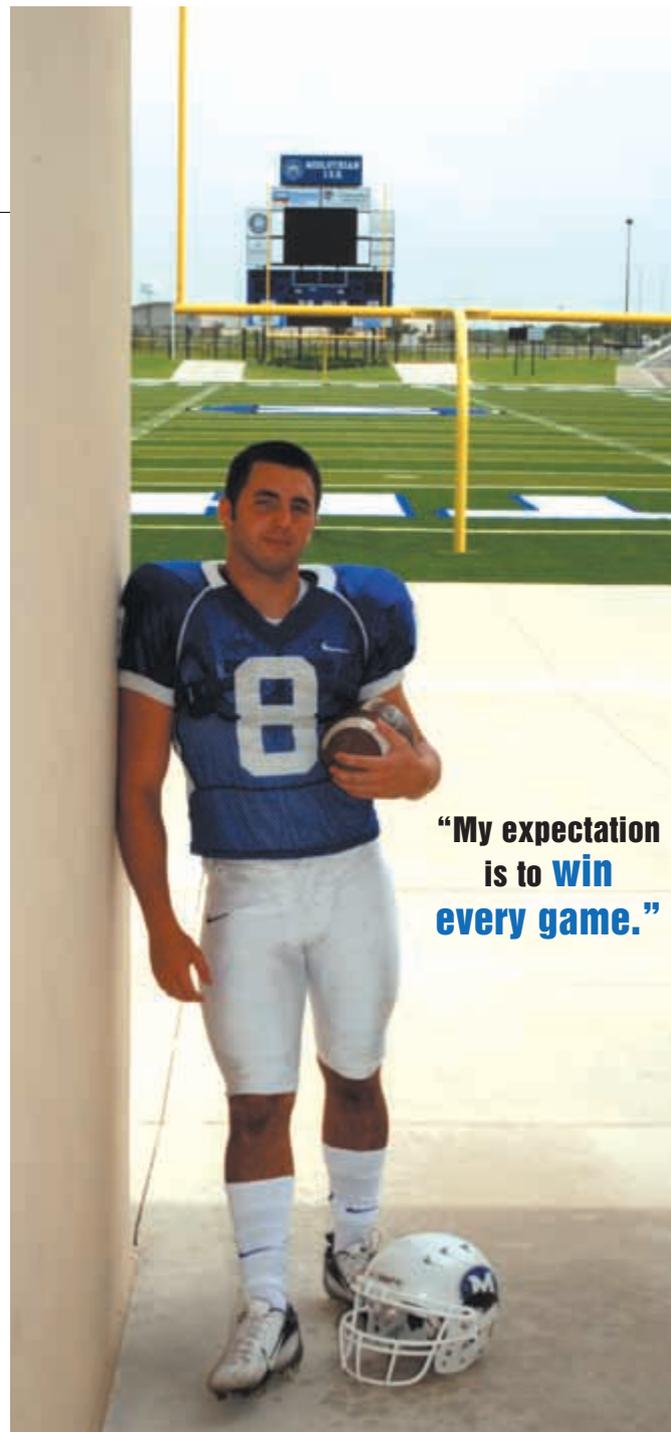
In the movie *Rudy*, the character Fortune said to him, “You’re 5-foot nothin’, 100 and nothin’ and you have barely a speck of athletic ability. And you hung in there with the best college football team in the land for two years. And you’re getting a degree from the University of Notre Dame. In this life, you don’t have to prove nothin’ to nobody but yourself.”

Caleb McEachern, 5 feet 10 inches and 205 pounds, is returning to Midlothian High School as the MVP for the varsity football team. Like Rudy, he is all heart, yet he sometimes feels the need to prove himself repeatedly. “It is not just my size that is a problem for me. There are a lot of kids who look like me, just take a look around the metropex. I use that as motivation to do better. But, there are a lot of things that you can’t see and can’t measure — like work ethic and heart. Those things are not easily seen until you’re around someone for a while,” Caleb said thoughtfully.

Caleb admits to watching the movie *Rudy* “tons of time” for the underlying message of grit and determination. “The movie is inspirational for me,” he said. “Sometimes I look on the Internet for quotes to encourage and inspire me. My parents and grandfathers always told me I can do whatever I want. My dad says I play better when I’m irritated. I’ve had to prove myself with every coach.”



Caleb McEachern poses with Coach Clark.



“My expectation is to win every game.”

Caleb’s tenacity in showing his heart and grit on the field is demonstrated when he said, “When I am on the field with the ball, I see how the offense hole is supposed to open up. I will follow my blockers, but if it is not open, then I am going to open it. I am going to make something happen.

“I am a competitive person. I don’t like losing anything — whether it’s darts or football. The thing I like best about myself is I get better as the game goes on. As I get more tired and more worn out, something tells me to go harder. My expectation is to win every game. I want to win district and state championships every year. A positive season to me would be 8-2 or 10-0. I

Sports NOW

think our coaches are headed in the right direction.”

Caleb’s dad, Mike, stated, “Caleb is the scrappiest, gnarly little guy I know. He never gives up. It is fun to watch. Some of the things he makes happen on the field are amazing. We didn’t let



him play football until he was in the sixth grade. We wanted to make sure he started with a good coach. When he was seven, I would play catch with him. He had me throw the ball and he would dive to catch it. Caleb would get upset if he thought I was not throwing it hard enough.”



Part of Caleb’s savvy regarding football almost certainly comes from one of his grandfathers. He said, “My grandfather, Bill Glass, played 12 years in the National Football League. I remember

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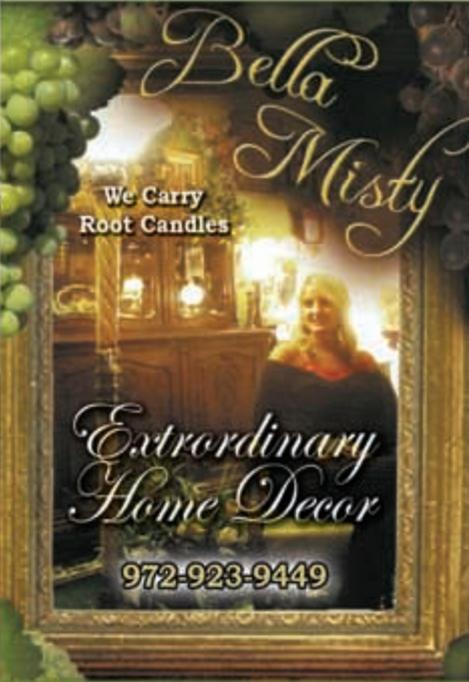
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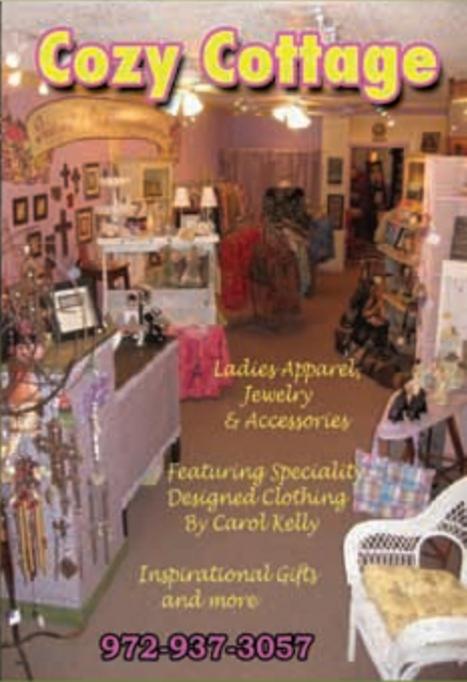


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best, something positive will come out of it. With our team goals everyone is on the same page and have the same goals. I have never had a problem walking into Coach Clark's office to talk."

Caleb remembers a game with Corsicana, which turned into a very special one for him. He said, "One of the coaches came to me and said, 'If I give you the ball 20 times, how many



"The night before a game I'll lie in bed and visualize what I will do tomorrow. I think a lot and prepare myself mentally."

yards do you think you'll get? Seventy or 80?' I said, 'One hundred.' He said, 'What if I give it to you 30 times?' I said, 'Two hundred fifty yards.' I actually got the ball about 39 times, and I ran 255 yards that day. That stat was listed at the top of the page in the *Dallas Morning News*."

Daniel Ruettiger, the real Rudy, said, "'Rudy is someone who is persistent, who has desire, determination ... [about] how the individual treats adversity. It's the contribution, commitment to their dream.'" Caleb demonstrates on the field the same principles, which the real Rudy has shown in life. **NOW**

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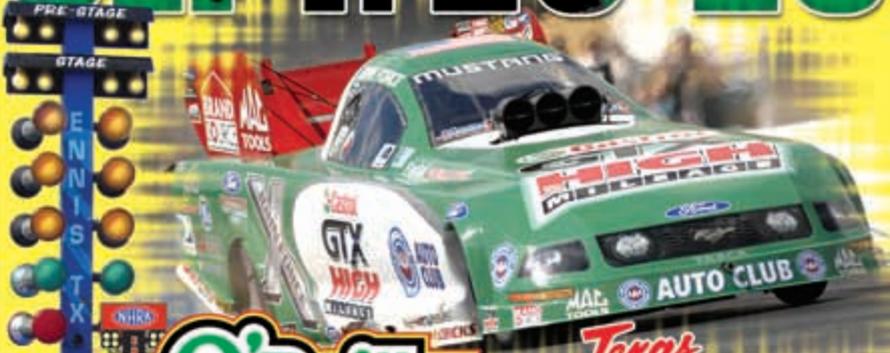
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The Best Course

— By Betty Tryon



From left to right: Kevin McDonnell, Gary Brown, Lori Green and Steve Burnett

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Steve Burnett, attorney- and counselor-at-law, said, "We can take care of just about anything for anyone who comes in the office. I am in general practice, family law and criminal defense. Kevin and Garry are in probate litigation, tax law, guardianship litigation and business law. When someone comes in needing our services, we divide it up. If it's tax or probate, then Kevin or Garry gets it.

It is handled sort of like a triage."

Kevin McDonnell, attorney-at-law and certified public accountant, stated, "I have an accounting firm as well. I am a CPA (certified public accountant), and

what is best for the client by finding the least expensive and most practical course of action. We are not interested in going to court just for the sake of going to court. Occasionally, we have

turned people away. We tell them that it is not in their best interest to pursue legal solutions. Sometimes, it is not a meritorious claim."

"People are upset when they seek legal representation," Kevin said. "They want to take that person to court and tell the whole world



my wife is also a CPA and handles the business. I mainly run the legal side of it."

According to Steve, "We try to do

about how bad they are. That is not always the best solution. They can be fined by the court if their case is not

Business **NOW**

meritorious. We dig for facts and let the facts drive the procedure with the documentation we get." Steve agreed and stated, "We have to counsel some clients when someone doesn't have a legal basis for litigation. There is more of the need for counseling with family law."

"We try to do what is best for the client by finding the least expensive and most practical course of action."

Garry Brown, attorney- and counselor-at-law, acknowledged the emotional side of family law by remembering a particularly difficult case. "I had a child custody battle that went on for two years and was very nasty. It was at the end of that case that I realized I had enough and wanted to do something else." Garry now works with probate, tax and business law cases. Steve remarked, "No one wins at the end of a case like that with child custody disputes. People get embittered and entrenched in their positions. The court can do anything it wants, as long as it is in the best interest of the child and it may not be what either parent wants."

Steve was the first lawyer who moved to their new building on Main Street in 2004. Shortly thereafter, Garry and Kevin joined him in practice. In going into the law profession, Steve remembered something his dad had said to him, "He didn't know what I would do in life, but [said] if I get a professional license I can provide for myself." Steve chose law as a profession because "I was a child of the '60s and I wanted to change the world and the law seemed the best way."

Steve, Kevin and Garry have the chance to change a small part of the world for good every day as they help their clients with practical solutions and the best course of action.

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Catch a Kid

— By Betty Tryon

How do you motivate a child who wants no part of the educational process? Beginning educator, Eli Espinoza, practices the teaching style which works best for him. He does not give up. "If the kids see that you care, they will do things. When I notice that a student is not coming to class or not handing in assignments, I stay on them, until they do what is required. I do pester them about it. I think some of them get their work done because I annoy them and they do it to get rid of me!" he said, laughing. "I get on students the same day they miss an assignment. They tell me, 'You always know everything I didn't do.'

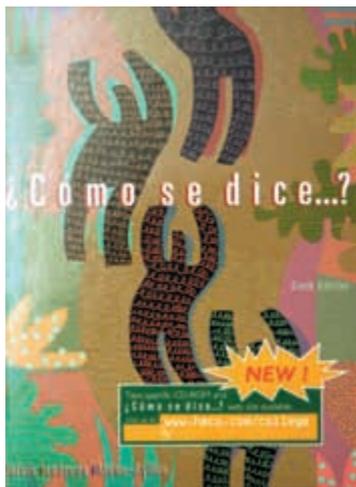
"I had so many students with challenges, and it is inspirational to see how far they have progressed in one year. I do not like to hear, 'I can't do it.' Where there is a will, there is a way. There must be a change in their attitude of not being able to do something. I want them to succeed. It is really cool sometimes to watch that process. You catch a kid and find a connection. For example, with the kids who play sports, I find a sport analogy to reach them. I am very accessible to students when they need extra



"I had so many students with challenges, and it is inspirational to see how far they have progressed in one year."

help. Sometimes they ask for help in other subjects like science or math, rather than just in Spanish."

Eli's lack of experience in teaching did not preclude him from having some of the more difficult students in his Spanish class. "I had 12 alternative school students," he said. Alternative schools are special schools whose curriculum focuses on specific needs of the student. Eli's alternative school students were part of an at-risk program. These students command extra time from their instructors because their work cannot be completed within the same framework of students who have face-to-face daily classroom time. "The students in this program require a lot of work. I have to send very detailed notes to them and respond to all of the questions



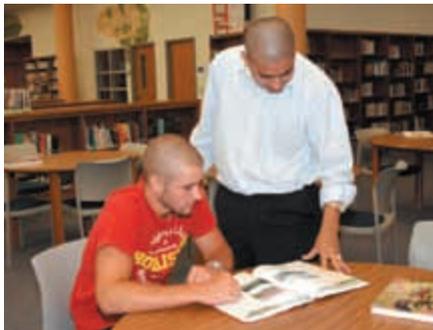
Education **NOW**

that they send. That is a lot of work.”

Eli remembers one special student who attended class at the high school and needed extra time. “He did a lot of playing-out behavior and putting up a tough exterior. I don’t always know what is going on in a students’ life at home. With this student, I was able to find out that there were serious problems in his home life. I could see a lot of potential in him, a lot of good. He’s a good kid. I would spend extra time talking to him letting him know he could talk to me. It was great that he was able to pass the class.

“I wanted the kids to learn and enjoy learning, and be a positive influence on them. I wanted to be personable and as open as possible with the students. However, I did discipline when needed. I am only a mean guy when I have to be,” he stated with a smile.

Part of Eli’s approach to his teaching philosophy stems from his faith. He and his wife, Ashley, are associate pastors at Midlothian Worship Center where Eli plans to start a community outreach program of English as a Second Language



(ESL) classes. He stated, “I have been accepted into the ESL certification program. I want to be a light in the city, to go wherever God leads. We are loving the people here and want to bloom where we are planted.

“When I was in the school system, I never forced my beliefs on students or anyone. They knew I was in the ministry and sometimes would ask me

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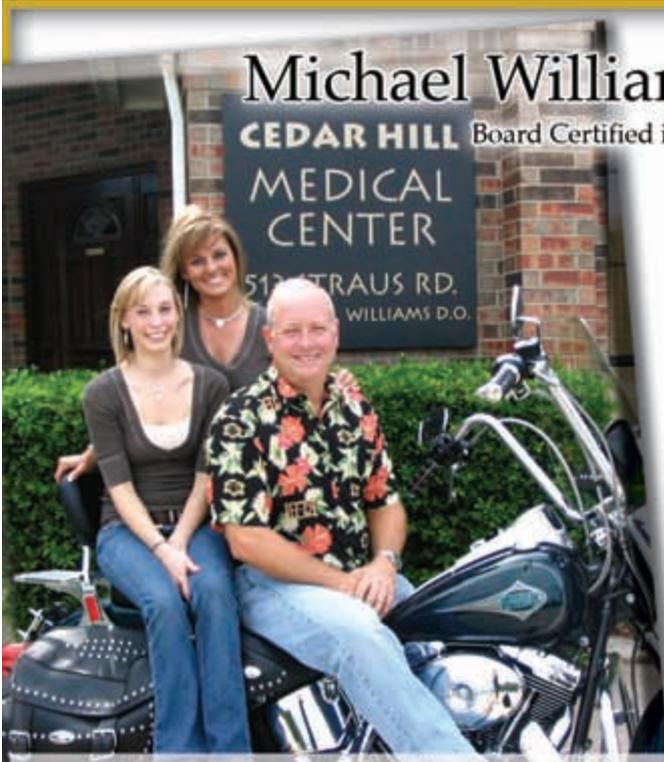
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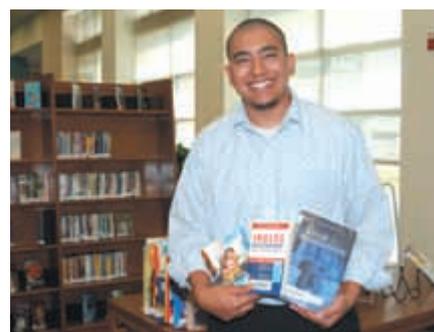
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to pray for them.” This was a pattern Eli started as a child. “My dad is a pastor, and I have been around ministry all my life. I felt the call as a teenager and embraced it. I tried to be a light in my school. The other kids knew that if they needed prayer, they could talk to me. I got a reputation for being a witness for God.” Eli attended



“I want to be a light in the city, to go wherever God leads.”

Southwestern Assemblies of God University in Waxahachie and received a degree in church ministry and associate degrees in Spanish and social science.

One of the ways Eli reached his students was through his music. “Music is my passion. I have one CD out and am currently working on another one. I play guitar, bass and drums. Piano is my main instrument. I also sing. It is a God-given talent. I learned to play by listening to music.” Eli used his gift of music as part of his teaching plan. “I would take my keyboard to the school to have the kids sing songs in Spanish. One of the kids put my music on his MySpace. I like to sing in Spanish, it is more emotive.”

Whether Eli goes back to the high school or continues his career at the church, he will always give his best to the world of education. “I love studying, love learning. Life is more fun when you learn.” **NOW**



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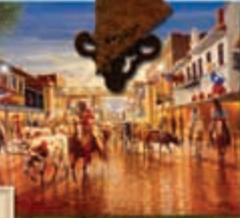
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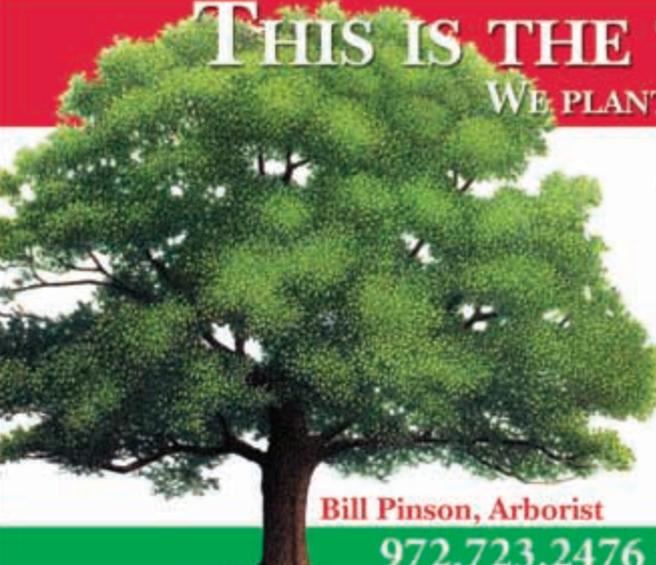
Around Town **NOW**



Ribbon cuttings were held at Grand Homes, top left, Ellis County Music Center, top right, DFW Premier Realty-Ellis County Exclusive, middle left, and Styles on Main, middle right. Three children, middle row center photo, had fun finding "hidden treasures" during the groundbreaking ceremony held at Elementary School No. 6. Bert and Janet Calvert of Lagniappe Development, Inc., bottom left, were joined by family, friends and business associates to break ground and celebrate the upcoming construction of the first building of the new Towne Center at the Meadows. A ribbon cutting was held at Life Church, bottom right. They currently meet at Longbranch Elementary.

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Ribbon cuttings were held at Tim Tobey State Farm Insurance, top left, Designs by J&S Affordable Pools and Landscapes, top right, Valvoline Express Care, middle left, Wells Fargo Bank, middle right, and Mansfield Dermatology, bottom left. A groundbreaking ceremony, bottom right, was held on July 24 at the Elementary School No. 6. Future students were a big part of the ceremony.

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Look Who's Cooking

— By Melinda Hines

Cooking has been a large part of Heidi's life. "I am so blessed that I am in wonderful health, able to enjoy life. I love to have my family over to eat," Heidi said. Heidi began cooking when she was 8 years old. "The first thing I made was a Sunshine Cake," she remembered. "Later, I cooked and cooked for my husband and four children, and now my favorite thing to cook is fish. I have a great marinade that I have used since 1960."

As a young naval officer's wife, Heidi would often whip up her famous versatile casserole with whatever she had on hand. "You can use any leftover meat like ham or beef or even tuna with rice and it's wonderful," Heidi said. **NOW**

IN THE KITCHEN WITH HEIDI LEWISTON

VERSATILE CASSEROLE

- 1 cup Uncle Ben's Original Rice
- 2 cups bouillon broth or soup
- 2 cups water, hot
- 1 stick butter
- 1 8-oz. can mushrooms
- 1 12-oz. can tuna
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. pepper

In oven-proof casserole, lightly sauté rice in butter. Add liquids and all other ingredients. Cover and bake at 375 F for 35 to 40 minutes. May substitute leftover ham, beef or chicken for tuna and chicken broth for bouillon. Pineapple chunks are a nice addition to the ham and green pepper and onion are nice additions to beef or chicken.

BARBECUE SWORDFISH

- 1/2 cup soy sauce
- 4 Tbsp. ketchup
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley
- 1/2 cup orange juice
- 2 cloves chopped garlic
- 2 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 tsp. oregano
- 1 tsp. pepper
- 5 swordfish steaks (1 inch thick)

Mix the first eight ingredients and marinate with the swordfish for two hours. Brush or baste with sauce while grilling or broiling about 15 minutes, turning once. Fish is good served with kidney beans and salad of greens, tomatoes and red onion rings. Cod or halibut can also be used. If baking, use oven at 425 F for 20 minutes.

CHILI CON QUESO

- 2 cups chopped onion
- 2 cups chopped green pepper
- 2 cups chopped tomatoes
- 4 Tbsp. margarine
- 4 eggs
- 2 lbs. grated or cubed Velveeta cheese
- 8 chili tepines crushed

Sauté onion, pepper and tomatoes in margarine until soft, but not browned. Remove from heat. Stir in eggs. Add grated cheese and chili tepines; return to low heat and stir until cheese is melted and smooth. Serve with tortilla chips.

HEIDI'S COCONUT PUDDING TORTONI

- 1 pkg. coconut cream pudding (not instant)



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Who's Cooking **NOW**

- 1 1/4 cups milk
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1/4 tsp. almond extract or 1/2 tsp. rum extract
- 1/4 cup coarsely chopped maraschino cherries
- 1 cup heavy cream, whipped (I use Dream Whip)
- 1/4 cup Angel Flake coconut, toasted

Combine pudding mix, milk and sugar in a saucepan. Cook and stir over moderate heat until full boil. Cool. Beat pudding, add cherries and extract. Fold in whipped cream. Pour into foil cupcake liners and sprinkle with the coconut. Freeze approximately three hours until firm.

MY HUSBAND ANDY'S FAVORITE COOKIES

- 1 stick butter
- 1 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 3 eggs
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 2 Tbsp. water
- 6 Tbsp. dry nonfat milk
- 2 1/4 cup whole wheat flour
- 1/4 cup wheat germ
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 cup chocolate chips
- 1 cup peanuts
- 1 cup raisins
- 1 cup sunflower seeds

Combine all ingredients. Form into balls and drop on greased cookie sheet. Bake for 10 minutes at 350 F.

HALIBUT RAGOUT

- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1/2 cup chopped onions
- 1 clove minced garlic
- 1/4 cup chopped green peppers
- 3 celery stalks, sliced diagonally
- 3 carrots, julienned strips
- 2 1-lb. cans tomatoes
- 2 cubes chicken bullion
- 1 tsp. salt
- pepper to taste
- 1/4 tsp. thyme
- 1/4 tsp. basil
- 3 Tbsp. minced parsley
- 2 lbs. halibut, cubed

Sauté onions, garlic, green peppers and celery in olive oil. Add remaining ingredients except halibut and simmer for 20 minutes until carrots are tender. Add halibut and simmer for another 10 minutes. Serve over rice.

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Are You Financially Exposed?

— By Tim Tobey



Many people realize the need for life insurance but keep putting it off until it is too late. You may think that life insurance is confusing, expensive and complicated. You may think you do not know enough to make the right decisions for you and your loved ones. Postponing this decision leaves you and your family exposed financially.

Assumption #1: I will always be able to buy life insurance. You could develop a health condition that makes you uninsurable or could make life insurance too costly for you.

Assumption #2: I will get life insurance later when I am older or have a family. Life insurance may be needed at all stages of life. Whether married or single, male or female, with children or without, you may have financial obligations that need to be met. Life insurance provides financial security for you and your loved ones.

Assumption #3: My family and I are covered by the group insurance at work. To meet the future needs of your family, you need to have seven to 10 times your annual income. Most group term insurance amounts offered by employers will not meet this need. When you do not work for that employer any longer, you usually lose that coverage.

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Assumption #4: My husband has life insurance so I do not need it. Women often live longer than men, but not always. There are countless stories of men who had to shoulder the family financial burden along with the emotional burden after their wife passed away.

Assumption #5: My family can cover funeral and burial expenses. Burying a spouse or loved one is the most stressful time in a family's life. Having life insurance can reduce financial concerns for the family. Take the time now to review your needs and provide adequately for yourself and your family. **NOW**

Tim Tobey is a State Farm agent based in Midlothian.

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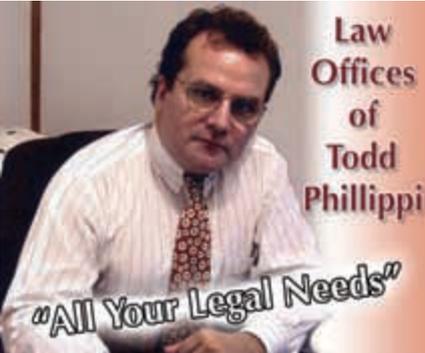
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Diabetes: Millions Suffer From It and May Not Know It

Diabetes is a chronic disease affecting more than 20 million people in the United States. It is a condition that results from the body's inability to produce or properly regulate insulin, a vital hormone needed to convert sugar, starches and other food into energy.

Common symptoms of diabetes include an increased thirst, increased urination or change in appetite. Other frequent symptoms include fatigue, blurred vision, slow-healing infections and impotence in men. Diabetes can be caused by genetic and environmental factors, such as being overweight and inactive.

There are three common types of diabetes:

Type 1 - The pancreas fails to produce insulin. Roughly five to 10 percent of Americans with diabetes have Type 1.

Type 2 - The body fails to properly use the insulin that it produces. Type 2 is the most common form of diabetes,

affecting adults and sometimes children.

Gestational diabetes - Four percent of all pregnant women or about 135,000 cases are diagnosed in the United States each year.

"All patients with diabetes or pre-diabetes should work with their physician to develop a healthy diet and exercise program, as well as discuss medication options," said Dr. Jeffrey Astbury, internal medicine physician on the medical staff at Baylor Medical Center at Waxahachie and the volunteer medical director of the Baylor Diabetes Center at BaylorWorx Fitness Center in Waxahachie. He teaches his patients that "learning about diabetes is essential in managing your blood sugar," recommending all diabetic patients attend a diabetes education program.

Over time, high blood sugar can damage the blood vessels, nerves and organs and, if left untreated, can eventually cause serious complications or death. Following is a list of some of the most common complications:

- Increased risk for heart disease, heart attack, heart failure and stroke. According to the American Diabetes Association, over 65 percent of people with diabetes die from heart disease or stroke.

- A diabetic's risk for a heart attack is as high as someone who has had a

previous heart attack.

- Increased risk for diabetic retinopathy, a condition linked to blood vessel problems in the eyes. Diabetes is a leading cause of preventable blindness; cataracts and glaucoma.

- Increased risk for peripheral neuropathy, a condition caused by reduced blood flow to the nerves. This condition, brought on by high blood sugar, can cause nerve pain, burning and numbness.

- Development of serious leg and foot infections due to poor blood circulation, lack of oxygen and nutrients to tissue and nerve damage.

- Diabetic nephropathy, or kidney damage can cause kidney failure.

Risk factors for diabetes include:

- A parent, brother or sister with diabetes
 - Age greater than 45 years
 - Ethnicity (particularly African Americans, Native Americans, Asians, Pacific Islanders and Hispanic Americans)
 - Gestational diabetes or delivering a baby weighing more than nine pounds
 - High blood pressure
 - High blood levels of triglycerides (a type of fat molecule)
 - High blood cholesterol levels
- "While there is no cure for diabetes,

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treatment usually involves medication, a healthy diet and exercise to control blood sugar and prevent symptoms and complications,” Dr. Astbury explained. “But the good news is that complications are not unavoidable. With proper management of the disease, diabetes can be controlled.”

If diabetes is left untreated, serious complications can develop. Some people can go for years without knowing they have diabetes, so if you are considered high-risk or begin to experience some of the symptoms mentioned above, do not wait — consult with your doctor right away. **NOW**

** Physicians are members of the medical staff at one of Baylor Health Care System's subsidiary, community or affiliated medical centers and are neither employees nor agents of those medical centers, Baylor Medical Center at Waxahachie or Baylor Health Care System.*

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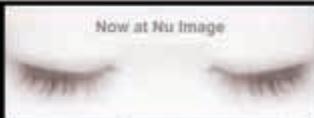
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Divide *and* Conquer

— By Nancy Fenton

September is finally here, so can fall be just around the corner? It is time to think in terms of what you want your yard and beds to look like next year! Any of those big clumps of perennials (the ones that come back year after year) that did not bloom as well as you would have liked, or have outgrown their space, need to be attacked this month. A sharp spade will help get them out of the ground so you can ruthlessly hack them into two or more parts. Use several large pieces to fill the space back in, and then spread them around! Just remember to water them daily for a week after you make the move, and then let nature take its course.

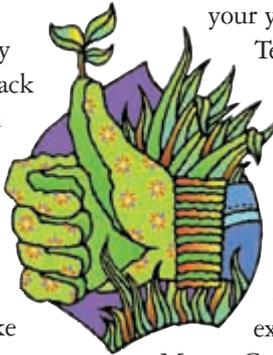
Daisies, irises, daylilies and Turk's-cap lilies all respond well to division with added vigor and blooms the next year. If you just want to trim back some of your grasses and

bushes, now is the time to consider doing it. If you wait too long, the new growth stimulated by the trimming will not have time to harden off before the first freeze.

If you are planning to put new plants in the ground this fall, you might want to spend an evening with me in the Waxahachie adult sessions in September. I am talking about soils that will grow anything! Call the WISD administration at (972) 923-3641 for information and dates.

Wait awhile before putting that last bit of fertilizer on your yard. The most recent news from the gurus at

Texas A&M suggests waiting until the leaves start falling, which could be November around here. This late application will protect the yard and trees from freeze damage on still-growing plants. Our heavy clay soils really only need extra nitrogen, and that only in small amounts. When in doubt, get a soil analysis from Texas A&M. Call our local extension office at (972) 825-5175 or catch a Master Gardener at the Farmers' Market in Waxahachie on Saturdays to ask for information and forms. **NOW**



Nancy Fenton is a Master Gardener in Ellis County.

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September 2007 Community Calendar

First and Third Tuesdays

Training Academy for Dental Assistants holds free informational sessions at 5:30 p.m. For details, call (972) 842-2999.

First and Third Thursdays

Midlothian Lions Club meeting, 7 p.m. at Midlothian Civic Center, 224 S. 11th Street. Call (972) 775-7118.

Second and Fourth Mondays

Texas Ladies Networking meeting, 11:45 a.m. - 1 p.m., Fire Mountain Grill in Waxahachie. Call (214) 587-1221.

Second and Fourth Tuesdays

Toastmasters, 6:30 p.m. inside Baylorworx, 507 N. Hwy. 77 in Waxahachie.

Midlothian City Council meeting, 6 p.m. at City Hall.

Every Tuesday

Midlothian Rotary Club meeting, noon at Midlothian Civic Center, 224 South 11th Street. Call (972) 775-7118.

September 3

Labor Day Holiday

September 4

Welcome Reception for Leadership Midlothian Class of 2007 - 08, 4 - 6 p.m.

Small Business Committee Meeting, 9 a.m., Chamber offices. "Diabetes Mellitus Type 2" seminar presented by Vonda Mayfield, RN, CDE at the Midlothian Wellness Center (Methodist Imaging Center), 2210 Bryan Place, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. Free admission. Contact Vicki Hallum at (972) 775-7410.

September 7

Ribbon cutting for HILCO, 11 a.m., new offices on Silken Crossing.

September 7 - 9

Texas Motorplex Fun Ford Weekend. For more information, call (972) 878-2641 or visit www.texasmotorplex.com.

September 10 and 24

Methodist Health System's mobile mammography van will offer mammograms at Methodist Midlothian Imaging Center. Women age 35 and older with no breast implants or current breast problems are encouraged to be screened. Without insurance, the mammogram costs \$111. Payment is due at the time of service. Appointments are required. To schedule an appointment, call 972-775-7410.

September 11

Ribbon cutting for Ellis Hill REALTORS, 11 a.m., Chamber offices.

September 12

Business luncheon, 11:30 a.m., Conference Center. Guest Speaker: Rep. Jim Pitts.

September 13 and 27

Leads to Success Group meets, 8 a.m., 2nd @ Main Place.

September 13

Meals on Wheels of Johnson and Ellis Counties 20th Annual Golf Benefit, Hidden Creek Golf Course in Burleson. Contact Amy Jackson at (817) 558-2840 for more info or visit www.servingthechildrenofyesterday.org.

Chamber Board Meeting, Chamber offices, 11:30 a.m.

September 15

2007 Licensed to Thrill Auction and Dinner, Midlothian Conference Center.

September 17

Regular School Board Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

September 19

Ribbon cutting for One of a Kind Pony Party, 11 a.m., Chamber offices.

September 19 - 23

Texas Motorplex O'Reilly Fall Nationals. Call (972) 878-2641 or visit www.texasmotorplex.com.

September 21

MISD Homecoming.

September 22

The Lights of Ennis Fundraiser Gala at La Galleria.

September 24

Creative Quilters Guild of Ellis County meeting, St. Paul Episcopal Church, Hwy. 287 at Ovilla Rd., Waxahachie, 7 p.m. www.CQGuild.org for information.

September 28

MISD Education Foundation 3rd Annual Golf Tournament, 12:30 p.m., Mansfield National Golf Course. Call (972) 775-8296.

October 20

Midlothian Chamber of Commerce's Annual Fall Festival, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., George Hopper Road. Arts and crafts, food, live entertainment and martial arts demonstrations, and the Chamber's 5K Race - the Midlothian OctoberFAST Downhill Dash. Vendor registration has begun. Contact Mary Rustin at (972) 723-7919 or Amanda Miller at (972) 723-8600. Applications can also be downloaded at www.midlothianchamber.org.

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