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Join MEF at Mansfield National Golf Course for a day of food, friends, golf and prizes with proceeds benefitting the Midlothian ISD Education Foundation. See our ad below for more information.

**Star Patrol for Fall Innovative Teaching Grants - December 2012**

Join MEF on their top secret mission to distribute approximately \$15,000 to MISD campuses. We load up the bus with large checks, balloons and the MHS drumline to suprise teachers and students across the district. To join in the celebration, e-mail [foundation@misdef.org](mailto:foundation@misdef.org). Since 2004, MEF has awarded 77 grants and contributed over \$239,000 to MISD through the Innovative Teaching Grant program.

**Stars Telethon - January 28, 2013**

Our newest fundraiser! MEF will host a telethon this year featuring the talents of MISD students and staff.

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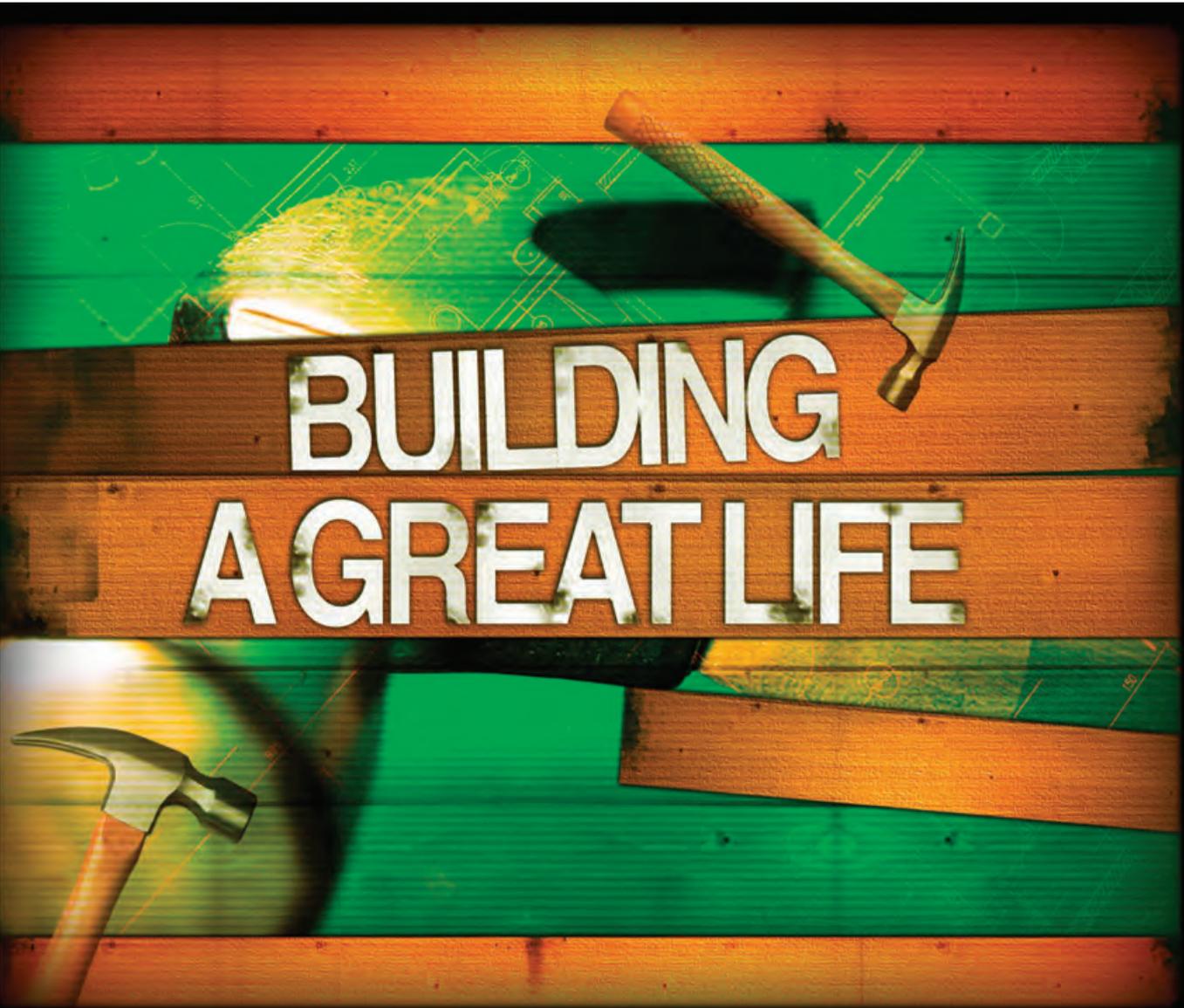
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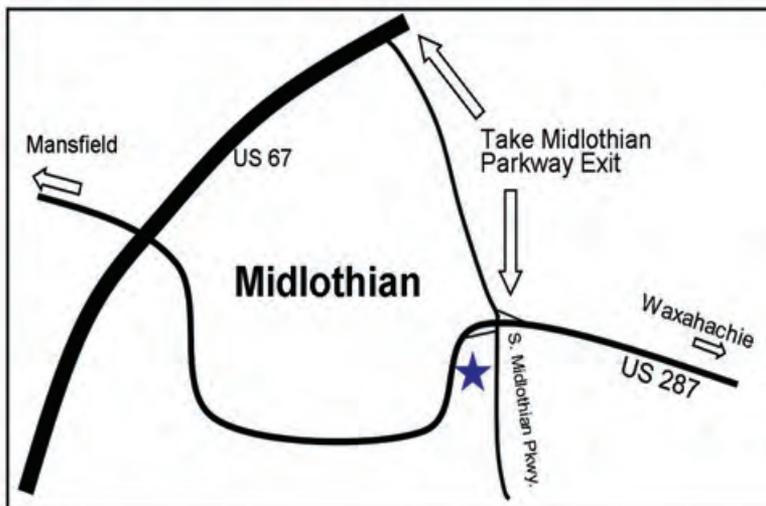
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## On The Cover



Sarah MacDonnell creates beautiful works of art from an active imagination.

Photo by Opaque Visuals.

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Subscriptions are available at the rate of \$35 per year or \$3.50 per issue. Subscriptions should be sent to: NOW Magazines, P.O. Box 1071, Waxahachie, TX 75168. For advertising rates or editorial correspondence, call (972) 937-8447 or visit [www.nowmagazines.com](http://www.nowmagazines.com).



# Editor's Note

*Hello, Midlothian!*

As a brand new year of learning gets under way, many hopes and dreams once again fill the hallways of school buildings and the hearts of parents, students and educators. Many of these wonderful thoughts will be realized as home refrigerators begin to showcase creative drawings and schoolwork sporting smiley faces and gold stars. Hopes will also be realized when students come home triumphant over a difficult test, and athletes save the day for their team. Teachers can then smile in satisfaction knowing they made a difference. Citizens in the community will strive to assist the schools in preparing these kids for a more productive, intellectual and responsible life. Along the way, academia will attempt to open an entire world to them and, hopefully, arouse their curiosity to explore new countries, technologies and learning opportunities bigger than life. Welcome back to school as a new adventure begins!

## Betty

Betty Tryon  
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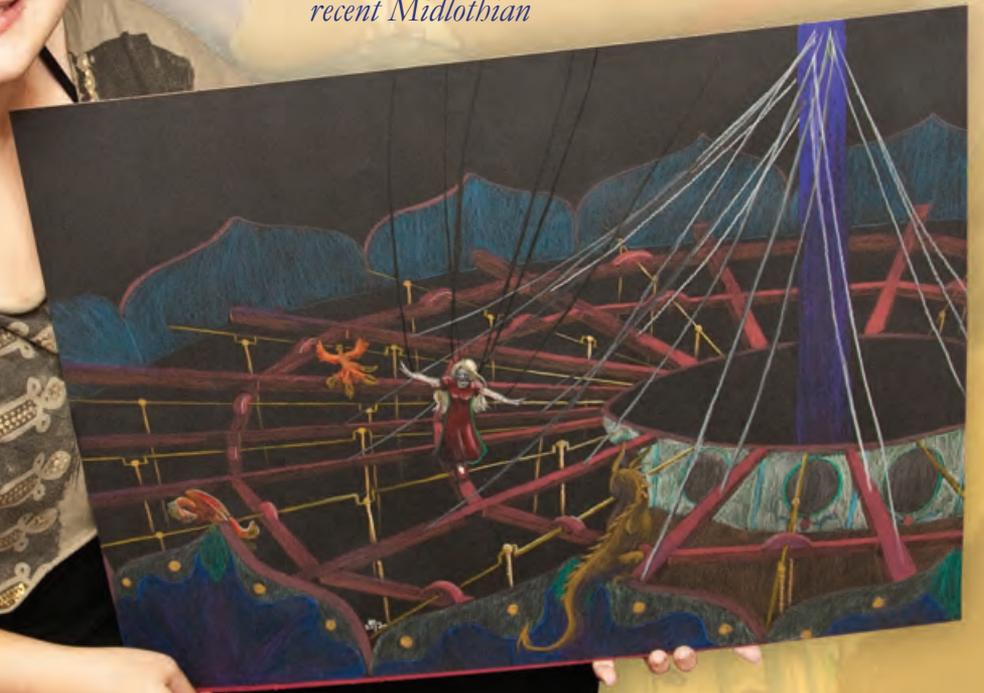
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Inspired by

# Fantasias

— By Zachary R. Urquhart

*Putting pen to paper can be an assignment. Painting a picture of nature might be a hobby. Doodling shapes and designs is, for many, a habit like biting fingernails. But for an artist, creating a scene where before there was simply blank space is not any of these things. Creating art is second nature. For recent Midlothian*



# “It’s just how I feel like I can express myself.”

*W* graduate, Sarah MacDonnell, drawing fantastical creatures and landscapes comes naturally. Whether using simple pen and ink, common colored pencils or rare India ink, Sarah expresses herself by creating original, imaginative artwork.

Sarah has lived in Midlothian since the fourth grade. She moved from DeSoto, where her mother is a nurse at the high school. Her father owns a boat mechanic’s shop in Grand Prairie, and she has a brother who lives in Irving. Sarah has been drawing fantasy scenes for as long as she can remember. “I have sketch books from kindergarten or first grade of dragons and horses and the like,” she said. Some moms keep their children’s early drawings for sentimentality, but for Sarah, her early work foreshadowed the drawings to come. “It’s just how I feel like I can express myself,” she said.

Until recently, Sarah had not taken any classes outside of school, though she did spend her senior year in AP Art IV. “I applied and was really excited to get accepted into the AP program for art,” she beamed. She takes her education very seriously, as evidenced by the fact that she graduated in the top five percent of the class of 2012. Sarah’s excitement for her AP acceptance was based on more than just getting into the program. “I always think there is something I can do to improve, something else I can learn,” she said. This summer, Sarah attended a summer workshop through MHS, and she immediately saw the benefit. “We spent most of the time working on still life, which is not what I am used to, so it made me practice and get better.” Sarah usually focuses on fantasy drawing, which is partly an extension of another of her passions.

For many years, Sarah has worked on and off on a series of novels. “They are kind of along the lines of the *Narnia* series,” she explained. “I have a few select people I let read them, but they aren’t something I would publish.”

Sarah gets some of her best inspiration for her artwork from the stories she has been crafting since her early teenage years. “Early on, I would see something in a book and want to draw it,”



she said. “But now, I will have an idea for my books, and I will want to draw that. I have been working on the writing since sixth grade or so, but every few years, I end up throwing everything out and starting over.”

Most artists have a particular atmosphere and routine in which they best create, and Sarah is no exception. For her, the routine starts with a workspace. Since she prefers drawing in sketchbooks, Sarah does not need an area that is either large or fancy. “I have used my brother’s room ever since he moved out years ago,” she confessed. Once in the room, she sets a certain ambience. “I usually turn on the TV, and I definitely have music

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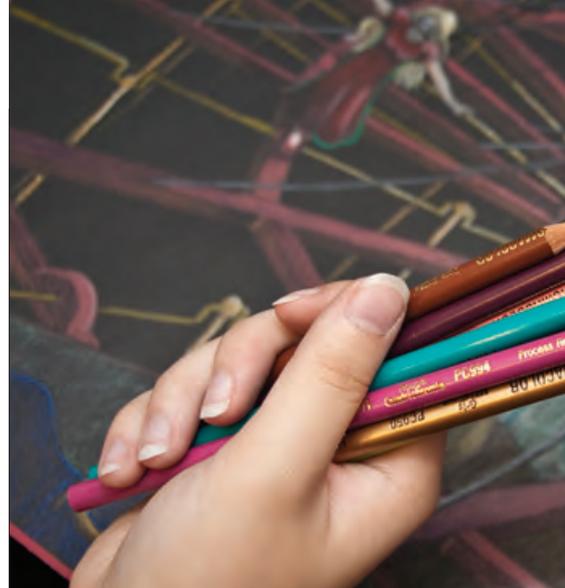
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— very loud music. I did a search on my iPod, and there are 34 different genres, so it could be anything. But there is definitely always music.”

Much like her preference for simple sketchbooks, Sarah most often uses one of the more common mediums: colored pencils. “With classes at school, you use everything. My favorite is colored pencils, but I also like using simple ink, sometimes.” Unlike oil paint or watercolor, coloring with pencils can be somewhat tedious, since there is such a small surface area in the utensil itself. As such, many of Sarah’s works have been very time consuming. While holding a piece roughly 1 foot by 2 feet, she tells of



the time involved. "For something like that, I would get home around 4:00 p.m. and work until 2:00 or 3:00 in the morning," she shared. "Then I would have to finish it the next day, so about 12 hours to finish one of those." Sarah does not mind the time spent, though it did mean she was unable to finish as much of the work as she hoped. "I am not the fastest worker. I get lazy sometimes, but at some point I will finish the carousel series I started for AP Art."

Though she uses certain materials more than others, Sarah has worked with many different artistic means. "One day I went to the Dallas Zoo and drew some of the animals with oil pastels. I rarely use them, so I was mainly just experimenting," she confessed. She has also enjoyed working with a more unique

substance called India ink. "The ink is cool," she said. "You can use it for fine lines in a calligraphy pen, or you can wet it and it is kind of like watercolor. For the pieces I did in class, we would draw with a pen first. Once that dried, you could put another layer, but what you drew originally wouldn't wash out. It's kind of fun, you use the same thing for precise lines and to get more washed out tones."

Though she has excelled in her artwork, especially in the last few years, Sarah has other interests, as well. "I play a lot of video games. I like fantasy games, but really anything. I even thought about going into the video game design

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business, but it is hard to get started.” She also uses her art in some less traditional ways. “I do some character designs for tabletop games for my friends,” she stated. “I have thought about opening a store online to design characters.” There is one other pastime she used to enjoy, but unfortunately, it has been lost in her past. “I used to read a lot, but once I got to high school, there was not much time for reading anything other than textbooks. I don’t think that will change soon, either,” she said.

In spite of her passion for art, Sarah is shifting directions for her college career. “I am studying medical technology, and my goal is to work in a hospital lab,” she shared. “I like the idea of working in the medical profession, but I am not as good at working with people.” Sarah has created some amazing masterpieces in her young art career. Though she is not studying art in college, one look at her work makes it seem likely that she will continue creating fantastical scenes straight from her imagination. **NOW**

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# The Sweet Science

— By Zachary R. Urquhart

*Boxing is often called the sweet science. For centuries, it has served as the ultimate test of fortitude, pitting two combatants in controlled hand-to-hand battle. Boxing can also teach. It builds character in people. Boxing shows people what they can and cannot handle. As Mike Tyson once said, “Everyone has a plan ’til they get punched in the mouth.” For Ray Maldonado, boxing is more than just a sport or a hobby — it’s the fight of his life.*

For Ray Maldonado, boxing is more than just a sport or a hobby — it’s the fight of his life.

Ray Maldonado  
trains Rogelio  
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Ray did not grow up with a passion or desire to box. He was forced into it by his father. "Basically, I grew up in a rough neighborhood, so when I was 7, my dad took me to the gym. He figured I would learn to defend myself, and that's how it started," he said. Ray began training at a young age, and within about a year, he was competing with other young boxers. "I was really bad at first, but I was still learning."

It didn't take long for Ray to start finding success in the boxing ring. "I lost my first several fights, but once I figured out what I was doing, it changed. I won 18 in a row from when I was young." Ray's next loss did not come until the

National Silver Gloves Semifinals when he was 10 years old. Even in the



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loss, Ray was able to improve as a fighter. "After the national experience, especially the loss, I came back and was in a different league than the kids I would fight," he explained. "I rarely lost at that point."

Ray's continued success eventually took him to the Junior Olympic team. "One of the highlights of my career was the Junior Olympics," Ray shared. "I had been competing so much. I was really peaking when I was about 16." Ray made it all the way to Marquette, Michigan, where he won silver. He then was part of the American Junior team. They traveled to Mexico to fight. After reaching this peak, Ray took a break from boxing altogether. "My dad passed away when I was 17. I just stopped boxing completely," he said. "Since he had been the reason I started, when he passed away, I quit boxing."

Ray ended up heading to college after high school, a move for which he said he was not well-suited. "I went to Oral Roberts University after graduating in 2001, but it wasn't for me. When I started meeting with a recruiter for the Marines, I felt like that would be a good move." As it turned out, the Marines knew Ray from his earlier boxing days, and they hoped to bring him in to fight in the ring, as well as in the service. Upon joining the Marine Corps, Ray immediately got involved with their boxing team. "I went through the tryouts, but they weren't too bad," he admitted. "I was one of the few guys who had been boxing since I was a little kid. I just had more experience than most of them."

Ray went on to fight for the Marines in several tournaments and meets, and he

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was very successful. "We had a big competition where I fought. I won the Armed Forces Tournament two years in a row. From there, I went on to the international military competition, and I won bronze there. It is really different fighting internationally. There are different rules and styles."

Winning the American Armed Forces Tournament had another benefit for Ray's career, one that helped lead to probably his biggest

highlight. "There are a few tournaments that earn you automatic spots in the Olympic Trials. I got to be a part of the double elimination trials in Tunica, Mississippi, in 2004. Unfortunately, I was the lowest seed, so I had to face the No. 1 guy. I lost, but then I won in the loser's bracket," he said.

After losing to the eventual U.S. Olympic fighter in the trials, twice, Ray figured he would have to settle for having had a good experience. "I thought it was over, but then I got a phone call. They asked me to be a sparring partner for the



Olympics," he stated. "They call it an alternate, but I was really there to help in training. I got to go to Greece and be a part of the team." It comes as no

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surprise that Ray looks at his run through the trials and subsequent trip across the Atlantic Ocean as his single greatest career highlight. “Definitely, going to Greece was awesome. I had fought internationally, but getting to be a part of that was great. And just competing at that high level was a great experience.”

Shortly after the 2004 Olympics, Ray was called away to serve in Fallujah. He served two tours overseas and then got back into boxing when he returned.

When it was time to consider his future in the service, Ray had new priorities. “In ’08, I had two kids, so I decided to get out of the Marines,” he shared. Ray stayed home with his family and entered training to become a police officer, but his position did not last long. “I had gone from the Marines to the cops, but it wasn’t for me. I stayed in for a few months, because I felt like I owed it to them for training me.”

While in this transition time, Ray started training and coaching at several local gyms. Ultimately, the Armed Forces beacons once again. “I’d done the Marines, so this time I enlisted in the Army,” he said. Ray went to Iraq in 2010 but was hit by a roadside bomb, effectively ending his military service. That did give him more time with his wife, Elizabeth, and three kids, Avery, Ray III and Jordan.

In the time since his injury, Ray has focused much of his time on training and coaching. He will soon be medically discharged from the military. He recently coached the first ever Golden Gloves entrant representing Main Street Gym and plans to begin full-time training there soon. He also spends time with Warriors in Training, an organization that aids injured soldiers as they adjust to civilian life after their military service. Ray gets his boxing fill by training others. “I spar with the guys I train. I get to do some cool training stuff though. I’ve even helped some Ultimate Fighting guys work on their boxing.”

Ray has adjusted to his circumstances throughout his life. Growing up in a tough area, he learned to defend himself. Knowing that college was not for him, he found a home in the military, twice. He made a name for himself in the boxing ring, and now that those days have passed, Ray helps others hone in on their skills. **NOW**

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# Cultivating a NEW Life

— By Cindy Malone

*Steve and Jamie Greene have magnetic personalities that draw people to them. Luckily, this is exactly what they want. Always ready for family and friends, Steve and Jamie have decorated their home in a way that invites company to come in, sit down and stay awhile.*

If Steve and Jamie are magnets, then Midlothian represented a metal pillar they couldn't help but be drawn to in 2009 when they were looking for their forever home. "We got married in 2005 and then moved to DeSoto to take care of my parents," Steve explained. "We wanted to find a place that we could really live in forever." After a long search, they knew Midlothian was where they were supposed to be. "I can't explain it, but we were drawn here like nowhere else. We couldn't be happier with our decision," Steve reiterated.

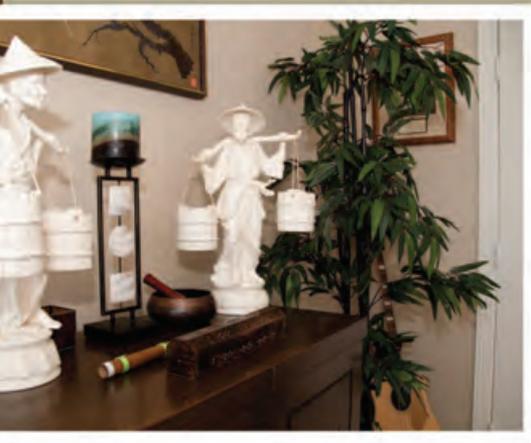
Midlothian is also the midpoint



*At Home With*  
Steve and Jamie Greene

between their children: Ashley in Stephenville and Richard who lives in Frisco with the couple's first granddaughter, Aubree. Spending time with family is their favorite thing to do when they're not working. After serving in the Coast Guard, Steve now works as the general manager of IT for an energy company in Dallas. Jamie, a retired banker, now works as the administrative assistant to the dean at Navarro College in Midlothian. "I wasn't any good at being retired," Jamie laughed. "I took up tennis, worked in retail and now have the job at the college that I absolutely love."

The drive from home to work is very quick for Jamie. It takes Steve a little more time, but he said, "It is worth it to live where I love." The word "love" was a focus when decorating their beautiful home and large backyard, which takes up most of the three-fourths-acre lot. Through the front door, the tall walls of the entryway are adorned with crosses of all colors and sizes. "Some we get as gifts," Jamie explained. "Others we have purchased when we travel. They are really a statement of who we are and how we came together. We met in church, and we both believe in God first in life." In the formal dining area, there are several pieces of decor that remind them of



their families and the love they found in each other. The dining room is also where they display some of the pieces left to them by Steve's parents, like the Tiffany-style lamp.

"I was born in Japan," Steve said. "My father worked for the Armed Forces Services, and I have lived all over." Between Japan and Hawaii, Steve's family collected things with Asian influence

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soups section. She readily admitted, "I am a cookbook junky." The kitchen is open to the living room, and barstools invite visitors to hang around while she cooks. "It was important to us to have an open floor plan," Jamie said. "We really want people to feel comfortable and

and meaning. A small glass Japanese persimmon fruit tree, meant to promote peace and harmony, is as old as Steve and leads the way into the living area. The couches and recliners are vibrant in color but very comfortable and inviting. "We want beautiful things, but it's more important that we have a home people want to come to," Jamie said.

The oak cabinets in the kitchen support neutral, but colorful, granite countertops. The appliances are all stainless steel and very chef friendly. Jamie's cookbook stand is full, and the first book is opened to a summer

included when they are here."

The master suite is richly decorated with purples and gold and the bookshelves, adorned with wedding pictures, hold books about religion and relationships. Her clothes have taken over the closet, but just inside the garage door, Steve hangs his prized clothing. Ever the good guy, Steve keeps a collection of white cowboy hats.

The middle bedroom is the main room in which they display their antique Japanese heirlooms. There are two white ceramic figurines — a mamasan and papasan. They represent family bonds

and strength. They sit on top of an antique, hand-carved dresser, along with a Tibetan singing bowl. In the corner, stands a tall, painted screen. All of the separate pieces are placed about the room, deliberately, in an effort to be Zen.

In a back bedroom, Steve and Jamie have set up a music room/office. A large wooden desk rests in the corner, but it is not used much as the couple tries



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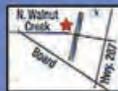
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not to bring work home. The rest of the room is dedicated to music. An elaborately decorated electric guitar stands near the middle of the room. Their love of music is old, but their interest in playing music is relatively new. “We recently joined a



church: First Baptist in Midlothian,” Steve explained. “We want to serve God and others. Isaiah 38:20 speaks of playing stringed instruments to worship, and that verse really struck a chord with us.” So the couple has been working to learn new guitars and hope to someday lead through music.



Jamie learned more about her community and the opportunities to help within it by taking the Leadership Midlothian class through the Chamber of Commerce in 2011. They are also getting to know their neighbors and church family by hosting neighborhood Bunco groups and working with the Home Owners Association. While their new friends are seated at the table, they can enjoy a view of the brand new pool just installed in their backyard. "I saw Jamie sitting outside one day, trying to read, spraying herself with a water bottle. I knew right then we needed a pool," Steve grinned. The custom stone and tile around the pool is in rich colors to complement the house. There are several seating areas around the pool, including an oversized, above-ground spa, tucked under a cedar stained arbor.

The yard is bordered on all sides by shrubs and trees of different shapes and sizes. They are most proud of a purple and white crape myrtle. "My mom had two crape myrtles that she planted together, one



white and one purple. They represented her and my father. Eventually, they grew together into one tree. I moved that tree to the cemetery where they are buried and did the same thing for Jamie and me here," Steve explained.

Like those trees, Steve and Jamie have cultivated a life in a new town with new friends and old family. They want to continue to grow together, adding new life and memories, while still honoring all the people and places that made them who they are today. **NOW**

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# An Acre of

By Betty Tryon

# Good

*As summer burned to an end, the harvesters headed to the crop-heavy fields to reap their reward. The farmers were not the only ones to benefit from the bounty. Their church had waited all year for this bonanza. Members of the First United Methodist Church (FUMC) marked off one acre of their field and donated the entire yield in that area to the church. This act is what gave the name "Lord's Acre" to the annual festival that began many years ago and is practiced by many United Methodist churches. Pam Lowe, past chairwoman, and Cheryl Weadon and Amy Norman, co-chairwomen, along with many other volunteers are helping to organize the FUMC of Midlothian's Lord's Acre Festival that will be held on October 6.*



With the passage of time, donations changed from agriculture to other goods or services. "The hardware store would donate a bucket of nails," Pam shared. "Other people donated what they had. If they had cattle, then they would donate a calf. The last two years, one of the young boys who grew up in our church raised hens. He told his parents he wanted to donate some of them, and we were able to auction them off."

The day of the festival is full of activities for anyone who wants in on the fun. "Some ladies in the church make all kinds of crafts for our Creation Store," Cheryl said. "Others bake wonderful cakes, brownies and cookies. We also sell Christmas decorations and wreaths." There is a bookstore and activities for the kids, such as bounce houses and face painting.

This year there will be a garage sale in addition to a live auction, silent auction and children's auction at the Lord's Acre Festival. The separate auctions employ a system that expedites the process. "We have auction software and credit card accessibility," Pam said.

The live auction appears to be the most popular of the three because of the types of items included. The one item that never fails to generate enthusiasm in the crowd is the legendary dessert package made by Marilyn Patterson. She will donate a dessert once a month for an entire year to the happy winner. "A friend and I wanted to go in halves for the item last year," stated Cheryl, "but someone else had a blank check from their mother with the



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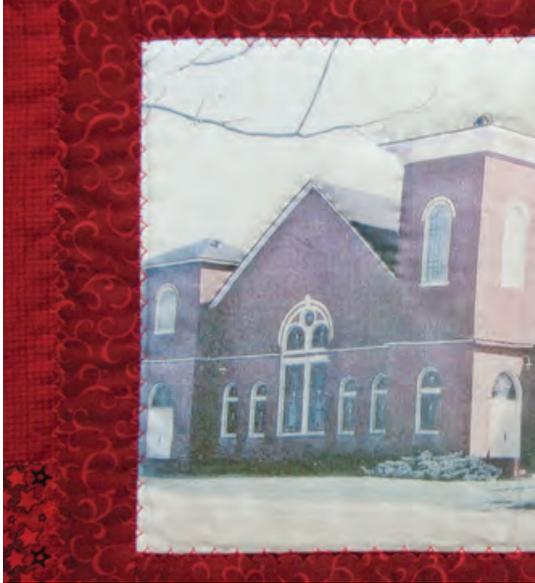
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*“Stitched into the bold colors were many photographs telling the story of the church.”*

instructions, ‘I want it.’ The desserts went for \$500.”

There are many members who have handcrafted their goods for the event for many years. “Larry Murphy made a grandfather clock for us and Don Lish has made knives for us for years,” Pam shared. “Betsy Holstrum made jewelry and donated it to the church.” Pam, her daughter, and others make quilts for the auction. Last years’ quilt was an impressively beautiful, historic quilt about the heritage of the congregation. Stitched into the bold colors were many photographs telling the story of the church. Some of the photos are artifacts and treasures from the original church and its building. One photo is of a couple who were early members in their wedding attire. That couple purchased the quilt and donated it back to the church.

There will be many items available to catch the visitor’s interest. “One year, we had a set of little girl’s furniture that someone donated,” Pam stated. “Another couple took the furniture and painted pink details on it.” The finished result was so eye-catching that the grandmothers in the audience were bidding against each other for the prize. It went for well over \$500. A horse-head bench was donated to their annual garage

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sale in August 2011. Pam remembers putting the object aside for the auction in October. Larry Murphy refinished the bench and made it beautiful.

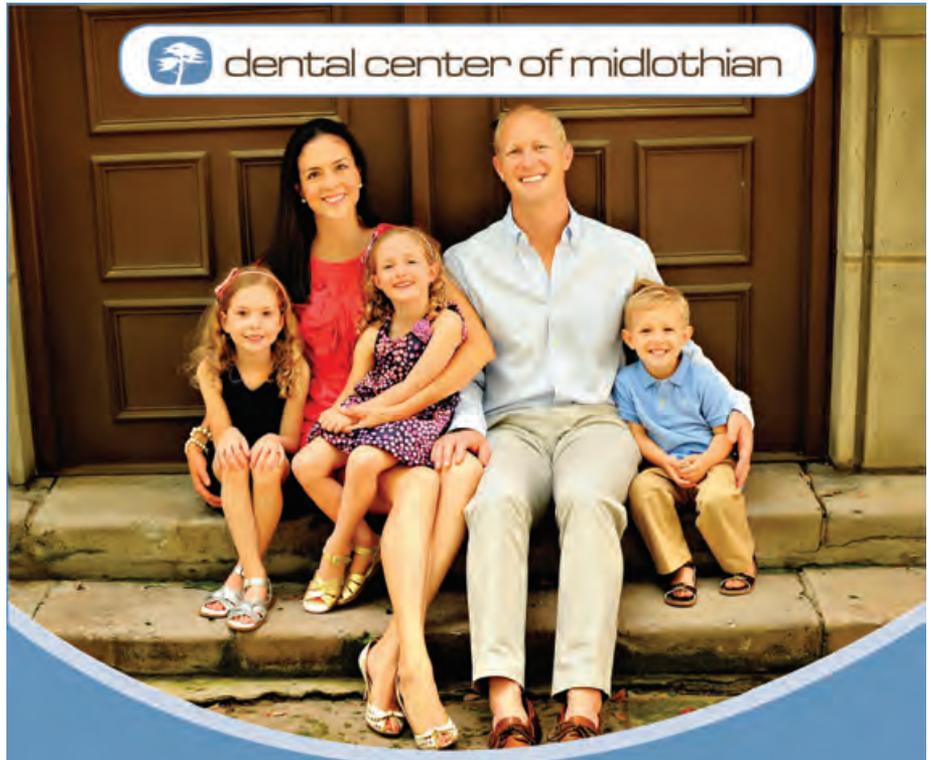
Pam is sure the items to be auctioned this year will be just as appealing. "Last year, we had a stadium seat from the old Dallas Cowboy's stadium. In recent years, we had Nolan Ryan's jersey, and one year we had a Nolan Ryan's baseball," she said. In addition, other items up for auction were Cowboy's tickets, Christmas lighting and Wind Symphony tickets. "We will put some auction items on our Web site, FUMC-midlothian.org, before the festival."

"In the auction, some of it is stuff and other things are services," Cheryl explained. "Someone might think, *I really don't need more stuff, but I would like a glider ride or someone putting up my Christmas decorations.*"

For those whose taste leans more toward gift certificates, Pam shared, "We will have a whole board of gift



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Individual efforts to donate to the church in the past have included two teenagers who donated their time to go to a person's home and wrap all the Christmas gifts and another individual who volunteered to prepare dinner for someone. Pam added, "We ask our members when they go on vacation to bring something back for the auction. We've gotten things from Germany and Israel to use."

One of the highlights of the day is the turkey dinner. You can even have it to go, if you wish. "If someone can't do anything else for Lord's Acre, they can bake corn bread or a pie," Pam explained. "The turkey dinner is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children and senior citizens."

"We get white, yellow and sweet corn bread. The volunteers take the donated corn bread and mix it all together. We may get 40 different recipes, and the different flavor of our dressing comes from all of the different ways of cooking corn bread," Cheryl said. Along with the turkey and dressing, they serve green beans, cranberry sauce, rolls and homemade pie. "Even our youth get involved during the event. They run a hamburger/hotdog stand for those who don't want a turkey dinner, and their proceeds go back to the church. My family comes early and stays all day. It's a glorious day, and it's open to the entire community." **NOW**

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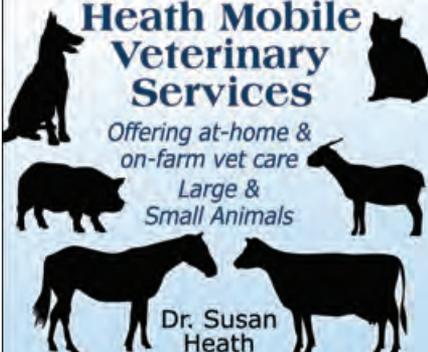
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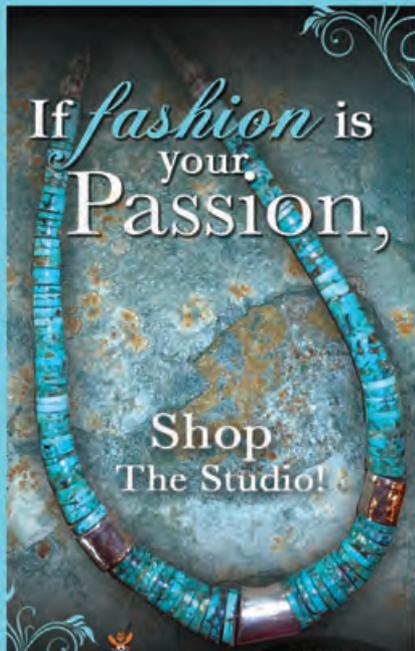
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# Stories IN THE GARDEN

— By Betty Tryon

*In the great tradition of storytelling, Tamra Boteler, registered dietician and storyteller, spun the tale of Pip, a fantasy figure, stabbing black-eyed peas in the garden. It was all for a good cause. Pip was busy gathering as many of the peas as he could to help his sick friend. Tamra's captivated audience consisted of children, whom she hoped to inspire to eat healthy. "I started Storytelling in the Garden to introduce children to good health through imaginative storytelling, so it is not preached to them."*



“I’m just connecting children back to the earth. Not just to see it, but to feel it. The young ones always get so amazed about things.”

Once a month, except for summer when it is too hot, Tamra and interested children, ages 4 to 10, gather at Garden Harvests to experience nature. They get to see it, feel it, taste it and experience it. One key Tamra has seen to having healthy adults is to help them develop healthy eating habits that will last a lifetime when they are young. This keeps them from having the health problems that come with age and an unhealthy diet.

“Diabetes and heart disease are some of the things that come with excess weight,” Tamra explained. “Nowadays we are seeing an epidemic of children being overweight. A lot of it is because children are less active today, due to computers and TVs, and they are not outside as much. I am a big proponent of being outside in nature. It’s just so good for you. It’s good for your health and good for your soul.”

Occasionally, Tamra experiences a little difficulty getting some of the children outside to enjoy nature when they are not used to it. “I’ve found that some kids are actually scared of the outside. They are scared of the little bugs out there. So, I’m trying to expose them to all of the beauty



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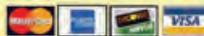
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of nature, the beauty of a little seed that is so magical. You can put it in the dark earth, put water on it and, lo and behold, something comes up and out of it. When it gets big enough, it grows things on it that you can eat and nourish your body. It's a beautiful thing. I try to reach them through the stories using the little characters. I could read from a book, but I like to do it from the heart."

Tamra's stories always include Crooked Root and Pip. These are tiny characters created and fashioned by Tamra and dressed in outfits she made for them. Crooked Root is a wise old man, who lives at the top of the mountain. He is kind of a mentor, because he is the one who has all the knowledge, and Pip usually goes to him. Pip and Crooked Root can exchange little notes in a basket with a pulley. To set the scene, she has carved a deer, squirrel, hedgehog and a wise owl from wood, along with a little stove and dresser for Pip. "I have little animals for the

story, because the children always love animals, and they connect great with them. Pip is very independent. He grows his own food and takes care of himself. He usually has lots of friends, just like the kids all have friends, and they all like to talk about them. Sometimes, there will be a friend in the story





who is sick, and Pip has to help. Black-eyed peas have a healing quality in the story, so that was why he was getting them from the garden. Pip couldn't carry all the black-eyed peas to his friend, so he whittled himself a long spear and was able to stab them and carry them over his shoulder."

Tamra has other characters that might make an entrance. Her

stories are never scripted. Many times she just has an idea, and as she tells the story, the ideas start to flow. She never talks about parents. This is strictly for children. She wants them to imagine being a kid, being out all on your own and eating off the land. "I don't bring the parents in, because I want to reach the kids on their own level," she stated.

Using her props, Tamra makes sure the nature story is quiet and very gentle. There are no big monsters or scary images. After telling the story, she takes the kids on a nature walk to look for some of the things she talked about in the story. "I'm trying to teach them that if we take care of the earth, it will take care of us," she explained. "I just want them to feel the wonder of it all. I don't need to teach them about chlorophyll or anything like that. I just want them to feel amazed. When taking the kids on a nature walk, we definitely want to talk about what was in the story, but nature is




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very unpredictable. So, if we are walking along and see a tomato horn worm or a monarch butterfly, we stop, look at it and explore it. We think about what it is and its purpose in the garden. It's not just the plants and the food. It's actually all the little critters that play a role out here, too."

As the children come to the storytelling, over the course of a year, they see the changes in the seasons and how different things happen. "They see the rhythm the earth naturally has and the different things that will be growing at particular times. When winter closes in, everything starts going to sleep. I'm just connecting children back to the earth. Not just to see it, but to feel it. The young ones always get so amazed about things. Everything is so new and exciting for them," Tamra said.

After the nature walk, they prepare a snack that often has something to do with her story. Tamra tailors her stories and snacks to the season. Last October, her story was about the black-eyed peas growing. They also had pumpkins, so the snack was about pumpkin pots and black-eyed peas. "We made little pumpkin pots," she said. "I want them to like eating vegetables. The trick for parents is finding things their kids will eat. If the kids get to grow the food or come out and see how it grows, when they get to be around other kids eating vegetables, they want to try it, too."

Tamra has been having the story time for a year-and-a-half, because of her passion for kids, nature and health. "When you put it all together," she said, "you come up with this." **NOW**

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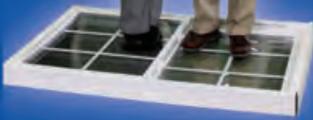
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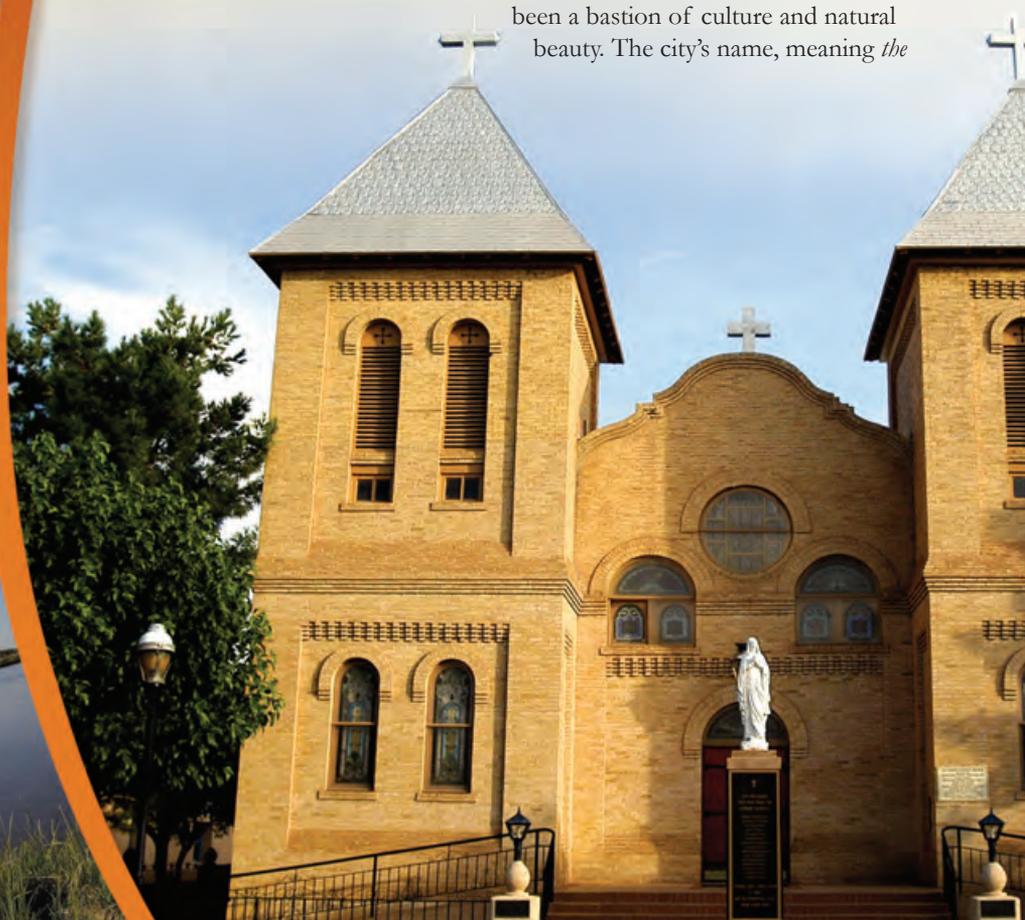
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opportunities abound. The Organs offer a unique nature escape for hikers, bikers and campers alike at diverse scenic locations including Dripping Springs, Aguirre Springs and Baylor Canyon.

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The Las Cruces area also boasts other nearby world-class attractions. Hatch, the chile capital of the world and Spaceport America, the



world's first commercial spaceport are both located within an hour of Las Cruces. As for the city of Las Cruces itself, a temperate to warm climate of more than 355 days of sunshine per year allows for celebrations and cultural fests year-round. Las Cruces is home to



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The Whole Enchilada Fiesta, a three-day extravaganza in September including food, dancing, a carnival, a car show and the making of the world's largest flat enchilada. Celebrations for Dia de Los Muertos, Cinco de Mayo and other events are always a draw.

The city also has an impressive museum scene. Branigan Cultural Center, the Las Cruces Museum of Art, Railroad Museum and Museum of Natural History allow visitors to learn about the city's rich history and culture. Private local galleries provide unique opportunities for collectors and art enthusiasts. A favorite among visitors is The New Mexico Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum,

where stationary exhibits, live demonstrations, live animals and a full-scale outdoor livery recreate the experiences of Southwestern farmers and ranchers. An on-site blacksmith, animal care demonstrations, pony rides, equipment demonstrations and more bring the museum to life.

Las Cruces is home to New Mexico State University, one of the state's major colleges. The university has an anthropological museum, geological collection and multiple art galleries open to the public. Theatrical productions as well as literary readings, book signings and talks are provided year-round.

Although the city undoubtedly has a rich history and old-time feel in places, it has no shortage of dining, shopping and entertainment opportunities. Southern New Mexico is a prime producer of



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many goods, primarily pistachios, pecans, chile and wine. Las Cruces and Mesilla are home to more than eight unique wineries with more choices available within a short drive. From St Claire's exquisite tasting room and bistro to the Rio Grande Vineyard's functioning winery tour, southern New Mexico has something to offer for wine connoisseurs and novices alike.

Visitors will find the area is home to some of the best Mexican cuisine in the Southwest. La Posta de Mesilla offers authentic fajitas, burritos, tacos, flautas, margaritas and more. Si Señor, Andele and My Brother's place are among the many options for true Southwestern cooking. De La Vega's Pecan Grill and Brewery and Double Eagle Restaurant feature a fine-dining atmosphere, while trendy coffee shops such as the Milagro Coffee and Spirit Winds Coffee Bar are great for breakfast and lunch. Other



dining options run the gamut from middle-eastern and Thai food to Italian, Chinese and familiar diner fare.

Las Cruces and Mesilla offer unique shopping opportunities for all budgets. In the Mesilla Plaza, shoppers can find unique clothing, art, furniture, artisan jewelry and other sundries. Visit Nambé on the Plaza, an exclusive retailer selling designer dinnerware, gifts and decor. The Mesilla Valley Mall provides more traditional shopping with familiar stores such as Dillard's, JCPenney, Bath & Body Works, Chico's and more. Plenty of familiar retailers are located around the city to meet whatever shopping needs you may have.

Las Cruces is accessible via I-10 and I-25. For more information about visiting Las Cruces and the surrounding area, go to [www.staysunny.org](http://www.staysunny.org). **NOW**

*By Stephanie J. Montoya. Photos by Ben Chrisman. Courtesy of Las Cruces Convention & Visitors Bureau.*

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# Dogs and Plumbing

*Laurie Reynolds cares for your dogs, and Clay Reynolds demands high quality in his plumbing business.*

— By Betty Tryon

“There is only one most beautiful dog in the world, and everybody owns it.” These words are the sentiments of Laurie Reynolds, owner of All About Dogs. The reason she opened her own business for dog grooming, training and boarding is because of her genuine love for all dogs, especially her own. “I have four dogs. They make my heart sing. I am very particular about where I’ll take them or where I’ll leave them. Because I have those standards for my dogs, I wanted to offer that to others. I know I am not the only one who loves their dogs as much as I love mine.”

Laurie does not cage any of the dogs in her care, and she and her staff manage to keep them all under control. “I’ve never had a dog fight here,” she said. “I take the time to introduce them to

each other. When the owners pick them up, they love to see their dog running and playing with the others.”

Laurie’s services include: canine CPR certification, grooming, boarding and training classes. One of the training classes is an advanced obedience training course delivered one-on-one. The dogs stay in the facility for two weeks, learning the commands of sit, stay, lie down and leave it. “They will be perfect on the leash by the time they go home. They will learn to sit at the door and wait to be invited out, so they are not chasing after the pizza guy,” Laurie remarked. “All training is based on positive reinforcement. We don’t use remote collars, don’t ever shock the dogs, never strike the dogs, never reprimand them or say, ‘Bad dog.’”

Laurie’s big heart extends toward humans also. When an Ellis

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County deputy walked into her shop one day to check pricing, because he now had the responsibility of grooming his K-9 partner, Laurie generously offered free service to all service dogs. She has also offered to transport the dogs of the elderly for grooming, if they need assistance. For Laurie, it's all about dogs.

When not working with dogs, she is helping her husband, Clay. Together, they both own Clay Reynolds Plumbing Inc. He has a master plumbing license and keeps his knowledge up-to-date by doing continuing education once a year. His business does new construction, service and repair, big and small remodels, burnouts and flood houses and has a slab leak detector. "We install water heaters to



a new sewer line," explained Clay. "We do anything that pertains to plumbing."

"Clay is a perfectionist and has a very high standard for his plumbing," Laurie said. "The customers love Clay. He is very honest, highly skilled and reputable."

Clay agreed and offered, "I insist on strict professionalism and high quality. When we go into a home, we want the customers happy when we leave. Our construction company has been built on referrals. We really cater to the Midlothian community." His company does not charge a trip fee, and he considers it a 24/7 business — always available for emergencies. Clay gives discounts to seniors and stated, "We don't take advantage of after-hours."

The husband/wife team of Laurie and Clay Reynolds would love your business. Whether it is for dogs or plumbing, high-quality service is at the top of their priority lists. **NOW**



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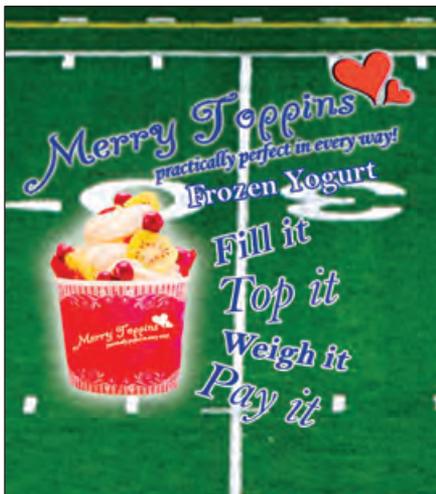


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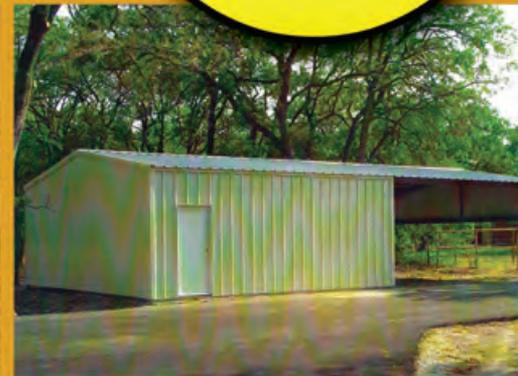


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On September 2, 1945, the articles of surrender were signed aboard the USS Missouri, in Tokyo Bay, and this marked the official end of World War II. President Harry Truman declared that this date be "VJ Day" or "Victory over Japan Day". When the Japanese came aboard the USS Missouri, General MacArthur directed the representatives of Japan to sign the two Instruments of Surrender, one each for the Allied and Japanese governments. At 9:04 AM, Foreign Minister Shigemitsu signed, followed two minutes later by General Umezu. General MacArthur then led the Allied delegations in signing, first Fleet Admiral Nimitz as United States Representative, then the representatives of China, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, Australia, Canada, France, The Netherlands and New Zealand. All signatures were in place by 9:22. Following a few brief remarks by MacArthur, the ceremonies concluded at 9:25. The number of minutes it took officially ending World War II was 21 minutes. World War II started September 1, 1939 (almost 6 years. exactly from beginning to end). One interesting fact we learned about this ceremony was General MacArthur had men, 6 foot in height and/or taller, be on the main deck next to the Japanese delegates. Therefore, the petite Japanese were surrounded by tall, statuesque American men. Also, since 1948, VJ Day is a legal state holiday only in the state of Rhode Island. What can you do with 21 minutes? Spend time with one of our practitioners! We all greatly appreciate what all servicemen and servicewomen have given up so we can make choices freely.



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# Put Out the Fire

— By Betty Tryon, BSN

As you lie down in bed hoping for a good night's sleep, that dreaded, familiar pain assaults you once again. Like an erupting volcano, the lava-like flow of stomach acid fills your esophagus, creeps into your throat and steals another peaceful night. If you have acid reflux, the symptoms sound all too familiar. The esophagus is the tube that connects the back of the throat to the stomach. With acid reflux disease, stomach acid manages to flow back into the esophagus, setting the scene for pain and an assortment of complications.

At the lower end of the esophagus there is a circular set of muscles called the lower esophageal sphincter. Normally, when you swallow, the sphincter opens to allow the content into the stomach. It will then constrict and close to prevent a backwash of acid from the stomach into the esophagus. If the sphincter is faulty, there will be a leakage of acid. With acid reflux, the first symptom you will notice is a burning pain in the chest called heartburn. The pain can be so intense it interferes with sleep, and some people fear they may be suffering from angina or having a heart attack. Heartburn may become more pronounced when lying down or bending over. Certain foods such as onions, tomatoes, chocolate, dairy products, spicy food and citrus can cause heartburn.

Another symptom experienced is regurgitation of the stomach's

contents into the throat. It has a sour or bitter taste and constant regurgitation into the mouth can cause erosion of the teeth. Unrelenting hiccups, burping and nausea can also occur. If you have these symptoms more than twice a week for several weeks, you should probably consult your health care provider. Your doctor may want to run tests to rule out other conditions that can cause the same symptoms.

Relief from acid reflux may be as simple as watching what you eat. Avoid those foods notorious for heartburn. Placing blocks underneath the head of the bed to elevate the body may alleviate those attacks at night. The most common medication chosen for this condition is an antacid. However, antacids have a limited effect. For longer lasting relief, your doctor may recommend over-the-counter medications such as H2 blockers. These medications sell under the names of Tagamet, Pepcid, Axid AR and Zantac. Another group of medications used to treat persistent symptoms are proton pump inhibitors. They are found under the names of NEXIUM, Prilosec and Prevacid to name a few. If medications do not work, more invasive procedures may be necessary. Acid reflux can be treated with trial and patience. **NOW**

*This article is for general information only and does not constitute medical advice. Consult with your physician if you have questions regarding this topic.*

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## September 3

Free Yoga classes with live music from DJ Sukha followed by an open house celebration: Basic Yoga: 8:30-9:30 a.m.; Mixed Level Yoga: 9:45-10:45 a.m., Crescent Yoga Studio. For more information, visit [www.crescentyogastudio.com](http://www.crescentyogastudio.com).

Dynamic Yoga 4 Love Celebrates DFW Free Day of Yoga: Hot Power Yoga: 8:45 a.m.; Outdoor Yoga at Heritage Park in Ovilla: 10:00 a.m.; Hot Community Yoga Nation: 5:45 p.m.; Gentle Heat Yoga 101 Fluid Power: 7:00 p.m.; Pilates Core plus Zumba: 8:15 p.m. For more information, please visit [www.yoga4love.net](http://www.yoga4love.net).

## September 4

Fall 2012 Citizens Police Academy: 6:00-9:00 p.m., Midlothian Police Department, 1150 Hwy. 67, Suite 100. Classes will be held on Tuesdays, September 4-November 6. For more information, contact Billy Seals at (972) 775-7611.

## September 6

Grand Opening of Hope Mansion: 5:30-8:00 p.m. Tour, light refreshments and ribbon cutting. Contact Jenaie Franke at (214) 232-2230 or [jenaie.franke@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jenaie.franke@sbcglobal.net) or Angie Hammond at (972) 814-5502 or [angie.hammond@hopemansion.org](mailto:angie.hammond@hopemansion.org) for details.

## September 8

Movies in the Park: 8:00 p.m., *Happy Feet Two*. Bring blankets and lawn chairs. Concessions available.

Midlothian Chamber of Commerce 2012 Annual Auction & Dinner: 5:00 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center, 1 Community Circle. Reservations are \$40 per person in advance. Please RSVP to [carissa@midlothianchamber.org](mailto:carissa@midlothianchamber.org) or you can call (972) 723-8600.

Community Garage Sale hosted by Red Oak High School Class of 2013: 7:00 a.m.-noon, 200 Live Oak Rd., Red Oak. Contact Toni Hafner at (972) 979-0577.

## September 13

Meals-on-Wheels 25th Annual Golf Benefit: 7:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Cleburne Golf Links. Tee times: 7:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Event benefits Meals-on-Wheels of Johnson and Ellis Counties. For more information, visit <http://servingthechildrenofyesterday.org>.

## September 14-15

PCSP Ranch Rodeo: 7:30-10:00 p.m., Parker

County Sheriff's Posse Arena, 2251 Mineral Wells Highway. On Friday, the first night of the Ranch Rodeo, eight teams perform in events. On Saturday, the grounds open early with a \$10 chuck-wagon dinner served at 6:00 p.m. For more information, visit <http://www.parkercountysheriffsposse.com/pages/Ranch-Rodeo.htm>.

## September 17

Groundbreaking Ceremony for High School #2: 4:30 p.m. The public is invited to the official groundbreaking ceremony for the new high school #2 (phase 1), located on the 118-acre corner lot of FM 1387/Walnut Grove Rd.

## September 22

Movie in the Park, presented by Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas: 6:00-9:00 p.m., Kimmel Park. Everyone is welcome! There will be information, crafts and a movie at dusk, with popcorn and lemonade. For more information, please contact Johnnie Lipsius at (972) 754-1320.

## September 27

Defining Successful Leadership for Women: 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center, 1 Community Circle Drive. Go to [www.gswbcc.org/bwib](http://www.gswbcc.org/bwib) for more information on purchasing tickets, placing ads in the program booklet, registering for breakout workshops, learning more about 200 Business Women in Black or to get information about exhibitor booths.

## September 29

The Green Garden Club Garden Tea Tour: 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Guests will enjoy five beautiful gardens and a complimentary progressive tea throughout the tour. The event will feature three chefs and an artist from the Ellis County Art Association will be painting en plein aire at each location. Tickets are \$50 per person, and are available online at [www.greengardenclub.org](http://www.greengardenclub.org). Proceeds benefit Green Garden Club, an organic garden club in Ellis County. For more information, call Carolyn Mixon at (214) 914-6030.

## October 1-26

32nd Annual Piecemakers Quilt Guild Quilt Show: Monday-Friday: 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.; Saturday: 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Warehouse Living Arts Center, 119 W. 6th Street, Corsicana. Admission is free. Quilts that are going to be displayed need to be delivered to the Warehouse from 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., **September 27**. Exhibit only is free. Judged entries are \$5 per entry.

## Ongoing:

The Last House Group of Alcoholics Anonymous: Sunday: 11:00 a.m.; Monday-Saturday: 7:00-8:00 p.m., 110 West Ave. F, Suite 100, downtown Midlothian (across the street from the log cabin and in the RE/MAX building). If you want to drink, that's your business; if you want to stop, that's our business!

## Mondays

Celebrate Recovery: 7:00-9:00 p.m., Lighthouse Coffee Bar, 1404 N. 9th Street. This is a Christ-centered recovery program designed to help those struggling with hurts, habits and hang-ups.

## Fourth Mondays

The Ellis/Navarro County Indian Trail Chapter of Texas Master Naturalists meetings: 6:00 p.m., Waxahachie First United Methodist Church. Chapter meetings are free and open to public. Contact the AgriLife Extension Service Office at (972) 825-5175 or [ellis-tx@tamu.edu](mailto:ellis-tx@tamu.edu).

## Tuesdays

Midlothian Rotary Club meetings: Noon, Midlothian Civic Center, 224 South 11th St. For more information, call (972) 775-7118.

## First Tuesdays

The Midlothian Area Historical Society meetings: 7:00 p.m., Community Room at Citizens National Bank, 310 N. 9th St. For information, e-mail [midlothianhistory@hotmail.com](mailto:midlothianhistory@hotmail.com).

## Third Wednesdays

Ellis County Christian Women's Connection, affiliated with Stonecroft Ministries, monthly luncheon: 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Waxahachie Country Club, 1920 W. Hwy. 287 and I-35 East (Exit 401B). The cost is \$13, inclusive. Reservations are preferred. Vouchers for child care are available. Contact Kay at (972) 937-2807 or [windchime423@yahoo.com](mailto:windchime423@yahoo.com), or Margaret at (972) 937-1016 or [pmestep@yahoo.com](mailto:pmestep@yahoo.com).

## Every Saturday

Farmers Market: 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Heritage Park. For more information, go to [info@midlothiandba.com](http://info@midlothiandba.com).

*Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your event details to [btryon.nowmag@sbcglobal.net](mailto:btryon.nowmag@sbcglobal.net).*



## In The Kitchen With Jennifer Even

— By Betty Tryon

As the very busy mom of four children, Jaysa, 8; Jaryn, 7; Trace, 2; and 10-week-old Jordy, Jennifer Even shuns the norm of taking the easy way out. Fast-food restaurants are not a favorite with her. “I believe that just by making the choice to prepare your own meals at home and staying away from those pre-made, store-bought meals goes a long way!” she declared. She has a strategy when shopping. “When grocery shopping, I try to do my best to stay on the perimeter of the store where whole foods like vegetables, fruits, meat and dairy are located.” She also uses healthy fats such as: real butter, olive and coconut oils, avocados and nuts. **NOW**

### Individual Creamy Chicken Pot Pie

Makes about 8 cups of filling to be divided into 1- or 2-cup portions.

- 2 chicken breasts
- 1 qt. heavy whipping cream
- 1 Tbsp. dried thyme
- 2 Tbsp. dried parsley
- 1 Tbsp. chicken bouillon
- 10 Mezzetta Imported Cocktail Onions, halved
- 2 or 3 fresh mushrooms, sliced
- 1 16-oz. bag frozen peas and carrots, thawed
- 1 box of piecrusts
- Pyrex cups for individual servings

1. Place 2 frozen chicken breasts into Crock-Pot, and cook on high for a couple of hours, until cooked.
2. In a large saucepan, warm up all other ingredients, except the piecrusts.
3. Once chicken is cooked, cube it and add it to the saucepan. Pour the warmed mixture

into individual Pyrex cups.

4. Place piecrust over the top of each individual Pyrex cup; cut crust large enough to pinch it around the edges.
5. Place them on a cooking sheet and into the oven at 350 F for 30 minutes, until crusts have turned to a golden brown.

### Four Cheese Chicken Fettuccine

- 8 oz. fettuccine
- 1 10 3/4-oz. can cream of celery soup
- 1 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese
- 1 cup whipping cream
- 1/2 cup butter
- 1/4 tsp. garlic powder
- 3/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/2 cup shredded mozzarella
- 1/2 cup shredded Swiss cheese
- 2 1/2 cups cooked cubed chicken

#### Topping:

- 1/3 cup seasoned bread crumbs
- 2 Tbsp. melted butter
- 1-2 Tbsp. grated Parmesan

1. Cook fettuccine according to package directions.
2. Meanwhile in a large kettle, combine soup, cream cheese, cream, butter and garlic powder. Stir in cheeses. Cook; stir until cheeses are melted. Add chicken and drained noodles.
3. Pour into a buttered 2 1/2 qt. baking dish. Combine topping ingredients and sprinkle on top. Cover with foil and bake for 30-35 minutes at 350 F. Uncover and bake 5-10 minutes longer or until golden brown.

### FAGE Chicken Salad

- 1 cup FAGE Greek yogurt
- 1 tsp. Lawry's Garlic Salt or Mrs. Dash seasoning, or to taste
- 2 or 3 green onions, diced
- 1 cup red grapes, halved
- 1 cup walnuts, chopped
- 2 cups cooked or canned chicken

1. Mix yogurt, seasoning, green onions, grapes and nuts together.
2. Stir in chicken. Serve on croissants, bread or wrap it in a lettuce leaf.

### Tender Taco Chicken

- 3 to 4 chicken breasts
- 1 pkg. taco seasoning
- 1 10-oz. can diced tomatoes with green chilies

1. Place chicken breasts, taco seasoning and can of diced tomatoes with green chilies into a Crock-Pot. Cook on high until tender enough to shred chicken with two forks. This will be the most flavorful, tender chicken taco meat you have ever tasted!

### Chicken Tortilla Soup

- 2 cans beans (navy or pinto)
- 2 cups frozen corn
- Fresh cilantro
- 2 chicken breasts cooked according to the Tender Taco Chicken recipe instructions.
- Cheese, FAGE Greek yogurt, chips or corn bread for toppings (optional)

1. Add two cans of beans (including liquid), frozen corn and fresh cilantro to cooked Tender Taco Chicken in a Crock-Pot. Cook until hot.
2. Add toppings of your choice and serve.



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Office located at 106 S. Monroe, Waxahachie, TX  
Call (972) 923-5195 for information or go to [www.co.ellis.tx.us](http://www.co.ellis.tx.us)**

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