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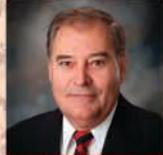
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ON THE COVER



The Davis family enjoys the simple comforts of home.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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Editor's Note

Autumn is on the way, hurry!

Although I've thoroughly loved the summer months spent interviewing new friends and playing nonstop with my grandsons, I'm ready for autumn to hurry up and get here. Autumn, arriving on the 22nd, means one thing — winter is right around the corner. I'm looking forward to longer, and much cooler, outdoor workouts and adding fall flowers to the landscape. I'm also ready for a wardrobe change, aren't you?

Zane Alvis Robinson, my youngest grandson, will celebrate his first birthday on the 26th. His mom is planning a nautical-themed party. I bought his "big" birthday present months ago, the one hiding in the farthest corner of the closet. Now, I'm on the prowl for several smaller gifts that will make him smile. I guess I could call my niece in Florida and have her send me something nautical. Seriously, that might just work!

Sandra

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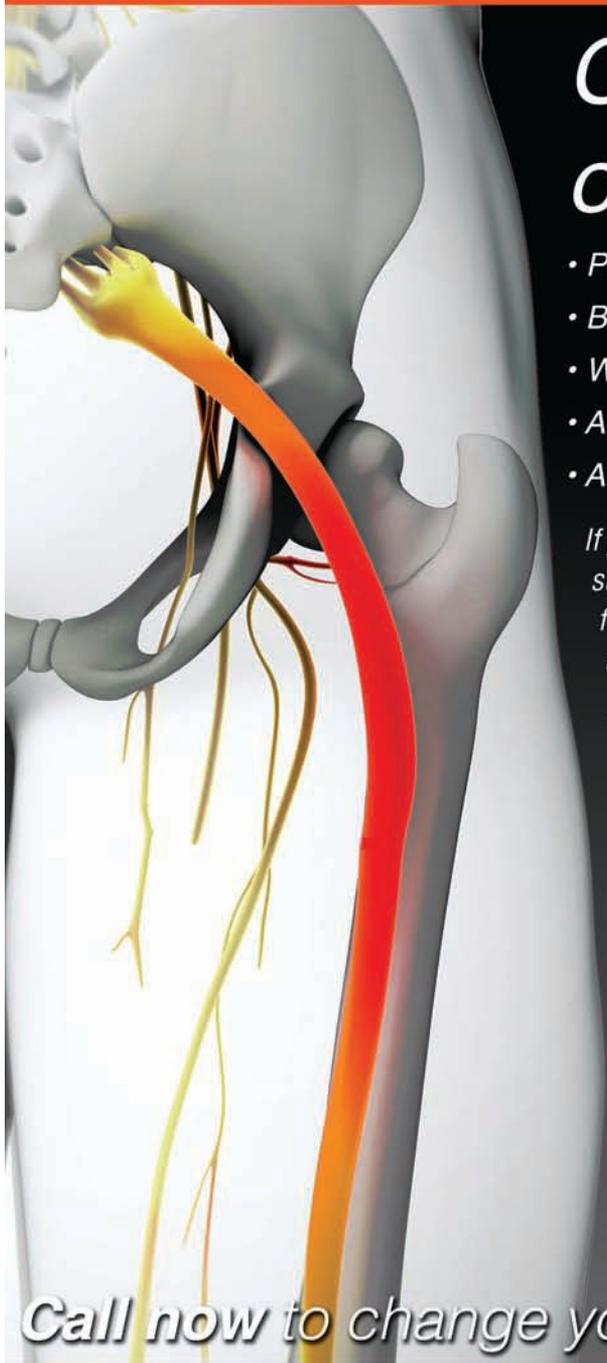
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Fish are Biting

— By Sandra Strong

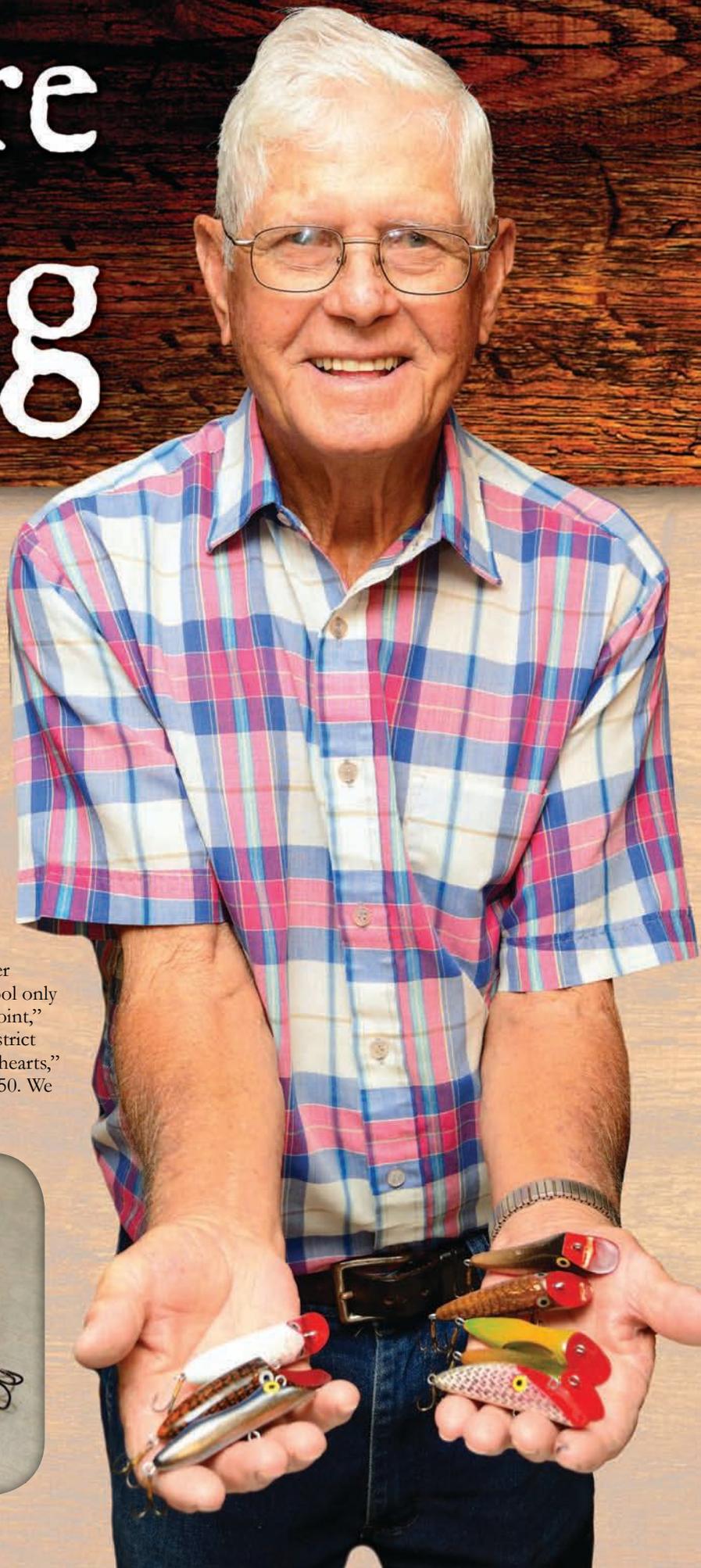
When weather permits, Billy Jeffcoat can usually be found along the bank of his favorite fishing hole or in his boat, meandering along patiently waiting for the fish to bite. Like most dedicated fishermen, Billy loves to fish. “I enjoy bank and boat fishing,” Billy said. “I can’t recall a time in life when I haven’t been interested in fishing.”

“All the kids and grandkids who enjoy fishing got their skills from their PawPaw,” Betty, his wife of 63 years, said with a smile. “He taught them everything he knows about fishing.”

One must travel back in time to fully comprehend the love and understanding Billy and Betty have for each other. Billy grew up in Aubrey, Texas, while Betty spent her formative years in Pilot Point, Texas. In Aubrey, high school only went through the 10th grade. “I finished school in Pilot Point,” Billy said, explaining the need to move to a new school district to earn a diploma. “Betty and I became high school sweethearts,” Billy remembered. “We were in the graduating class of 1950. We married the following year, on March 24.”



A lure from start to finish.





“I was looking for a hobby when I started making lures. I wanted my hobby to be all about having fun, and it is.”



Their move to Waxahachie was prompted by an employment opportunity. After 38 years of dedicated service to Flexsteel, Billy retired in 1998. With free time on his hands, he soon realized he needed a hobby to go along with his love for fishing. That’s when the creative gene in Billy took over, and he hasn’t looked back since. “When I first retired, I fished about *eight* days a week,” Billy laughed, “but I got to where I wasn’t going as often as before.”

Billy yearned for something constructive to occupy his hands, as well as his mind, so he began handcrafting fishing lures in June 2010. “The process was something I’d thought about at length before actually putting it into a lure,” he explained. From start to finish, the procedure takes a great deal of time and patience, things Billy has a lot of these days.

The first order of business when making a lure is to find the perfect block of wood. Billy has found many of his perfect foundations discarded along the road in the form of solid wood doors and antique stools, as well as in newly purchased white pine. Over the years, he’s grown to love frequenting weekend garage sales with Betty, because he never knows what he might find. “Garage sales are lots of fun. We may only spend \$20, but we enjoy ourselves,” Betty shared.



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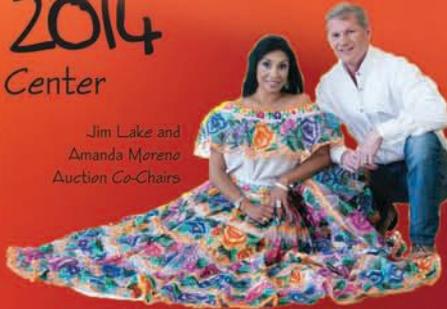
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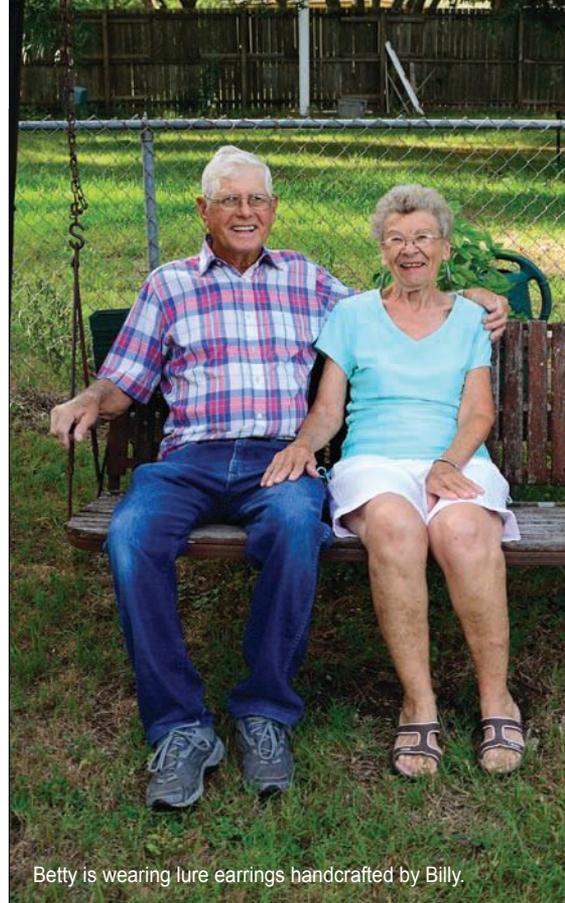
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Betty is wearing lure earrings handcrafted by Billy.

“And I usually come home with lots of supplies. Most of the spray paint I use comes from garage sales,” Billy added.

The initial shape of the lure is fashioned with an electric sander. The smooth edges and attention to detail are mastered by hand with a sheet of sandpaper. Once the base is shaped, Billy will choose a thin paper mat. The mat is wrapped and glued into place with Elmer's glue. Painting the lure to give the appearance of scales is next on the list. Billy wraps a small piece of mesh around the lure, making sure to pull it taut without breaking the mesh. A couple squirts from a spray can and the lure is almost complete. Round eyes are hole-

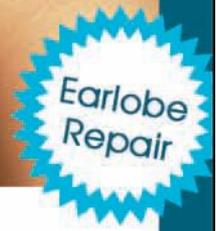




punched from decal labels and applied prior to the sealing process.

Billy coats the lure with clear epoxy using a round toothpick to seal the lure. He "floats" the epoxy to make sure he's getting the smoothest finish possible.

"Floating the epoxy is the hardest and most time-consuming part of the process," Billy stated. "I built my own drying machine from a microwave motor. The epoxied lures are attached to copper arms. The motor turns the arms slowly for 30 minutes until the epoxy is dry." Billy loves his new drying machine because he no longer has to sit with one lure in hand for a half-hour, manually turning it so it will dry evenly, without puddles.



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The first lure Billy designed was named Waxahachie Wiggler.

After the lure has cured for 48 hours, the final step of drilling three holes — two for hooks and one that allows the lure to be attached to the fishing line — can, at last, take place. Billy packages the lures in boxes he also handcrafts. The lure is bubble wrapped, and a certificate of authenticity is numbered and placed in the box under the lure. Once Billy knows who the lure is going to, he will personalize it by hand. “I recycle everything to make the boxes,” Billy said. “And personalizing the lures makes them special for the receiver.”

Billy may sit under the shade of a tree in the front yard or at a table in the backyard. He’s not picky when it comes to a place to work. “I’m always asked where my shop is,” Billy shared. “I always answer the same way. It’s in my backyard, my front yard, under a shade tree, in the den or at the lake.”

As of summer’s end, Billy has crafted over 530 lures. He lists each one in a journal for posterity, and he admits he may have missed recording a few since 2010. Billy finds joy in making these keepsake lures for family and friends. Each year, all the children in the family, regardless of age and fishing expertise, receive one of Billy’s lures on their birthday and at Christmas, as well as a special “something” created using the same process a couple weeks prior to Thanksgiving. “The tags on these will say,

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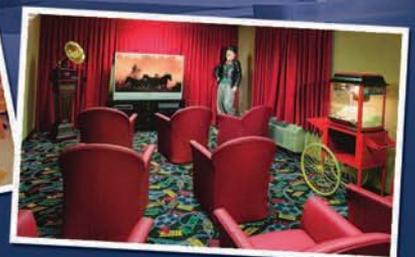
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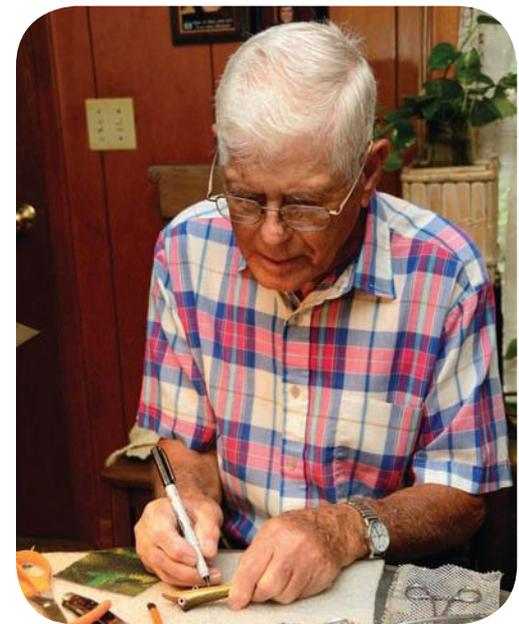
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“Don’t open until Thanksgiving,” Betty said. “We have one daughter who can’t stand to have an unwrapped gift sitting around, so waiting those two weeks is hard for her.”

“One year, I made 21 plane ornaments and another year I made 21 cross ornaments,” Billy said. “I could show you this year’s special gift, but it’s a secret. Oh, and I’ve also started making pierced earrings that are a perfect match to my lures, just a lot smaller.”



Tools of his newfound hobby include, but are definitely not limited to, tweezers, pliers, paper clips, tiny weights, round toothpicks, hemostat clamps, decal labels, empty food boxes, ink pens, pencils, thin paper, epoxy, hooks and fine-point permanent markers. His tools are neatly placed on a card table in the den where he’s able to “play” at his leisure. “I had a good job for many years,” Billy confessed. “I was looking for a hobby when I started making lures. I wanted my hobby to be all about having fun, and it is.”

Billy, at age 82, has been content to make lures, only to give them away. However, with the encouragement from his family, he is considering selling his one-of-a-kind lures and earrings in the future. **NOW**

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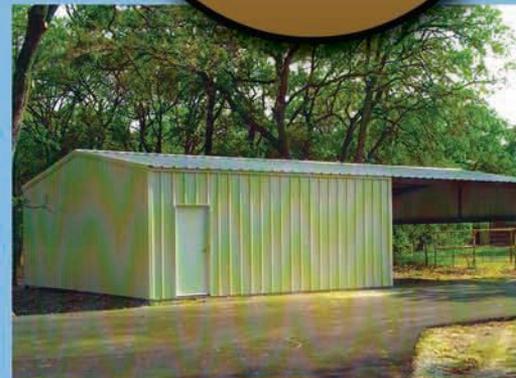
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Helping Hands

— By Sara Edgell



Pat Box is a sprightly and cheerful 84-year-old woman who has led a simple, yet meaningful life. She was married to Dean Box for 55 years before he passed away in 2005. She has three sons, six grandchildren (all girls by the way) and eight great-grandchildren. Her years have been filled with family and helping others, and according to her, she couldn't imagine it being any other way. She has spent her days taking care of people, offering food, love, friendship and kindness, and has no intention of stopping any time soon.



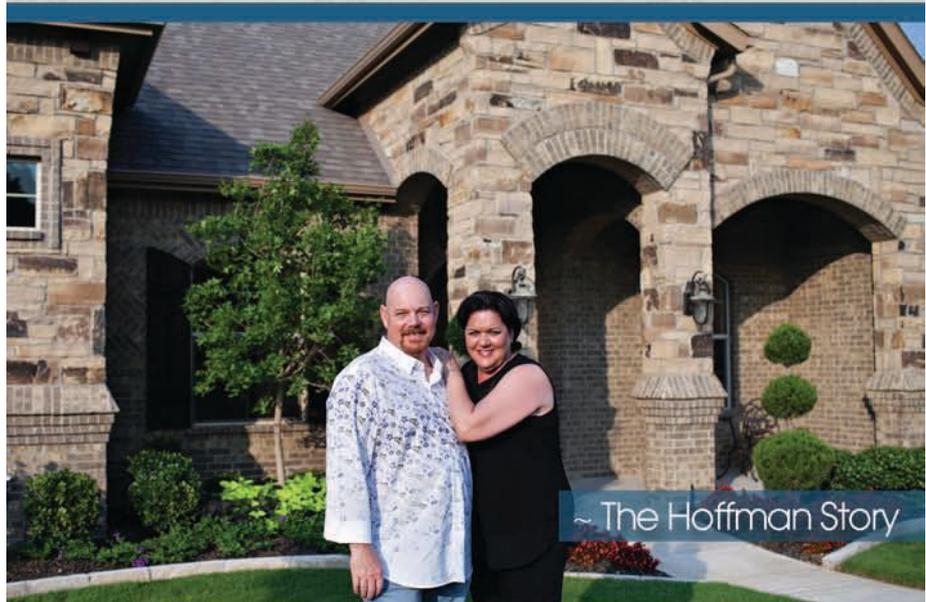


“It’s always good to think about others, so you won’t think so much about yourself.”

“I was brought up to help people,” Pat recounted, “so I have always tried to do what I could for others.” Therefore, working with the auxiliary is just one of the ways in which Pat can achieve this goal. She also does a variety of service work through her church, Brown Street Church of Christ, formerly known as College Street Church of Christ. Pat has been part of the Church of Christ, basically, since she was born. At the age of 13, she began singing at funeral services and has continued to do so throughout her life. When she moved to Waxahachie from Abilene in 1950, she joined her current church where she also married her late husband on June 24 of the same year. Currently, she still sings at funeral services, as well as with the choir,

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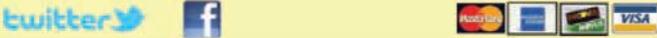
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in addition to making desserts for the church's Thursday night dinners, acting as a greeter for Sunday services and sitting with the ill when needed.

Pat joined the Baylor Hospital Auxiliary in 1989. She became involved with the group when a woman who was making cough pillows for hospital patients became a bit overwhelmed with the task of producing 25 pillows per month all on her own. When Pat and other ladies from the auxiliary took over the cough pillow production, they never imagined it would grow into the ministry it is today. The whole endeavor began as a way to provide people recovering from surgery with a comforting tool to aid the overall healing process and has progressively turned into a highly-needed ministry in the Waxahachie community.

From meager beginnings of 25 pillows a month, the women are now producing 175 pillows each month, 25 of which are specifically made for breast cancer patients. However, the cough pillows are made by careful and helpful hands with lots of love for patients of every age and ailment. Pat anticipates for the number of cough pillows produced to increase even more once the new hospital is opened.

Pat's role in the process, which mimics an assembly line system, is to cut out the pillows. After all of these years, she recently discovered certain types of fabric can be ripped, rather than cut, which saves her quite a bit of time. "When I figured out I could do that, if the fabric



would tear, I thought to myself, *Now why in the world have I been wasting all that time and fabric?*

She cuts each of the 175 pillow casings out in her home's utility room on a makeshift table consisting of an old wooden door atop two sturdy saw horses. The fabric Pat uses comes from donations made by individuals, businesses and various stores. She only has to buy fabric during the Christmas season. With the donated fabric, Pat always makes sure to wash and dry it before measuring and cutting out each pillow. "It keeps me busy," she said, "and that's good."

Pat basically spends all month cutting out the pillows, and then she passes them along to Geraldine Butler of Red Oak, who stitches them together. Geraldine's husband, Angus, then turns the pillow casings right side out and she adds the final preparatory touch by pressing each one. At this point, the pillows are then ready to be stuffed. The stuffing happens at the monthly auxiliary meeting, which takes place at BaylorWorx Rehabilitation and Fitness Center in Waxahachie. On average, about 10 to 15 ladies from the auxiliary gather together and stuff each of the 175 pillow casings with batting. As the pillows are stuffed, Pat makes the final closing stitches along the remaining open end. She also takes on the responsibility of delivering the pillows to the hospital.

While the ladies of the auxiliary do not actually hand-deliver the pillows to the patients, Pat has had the joy of





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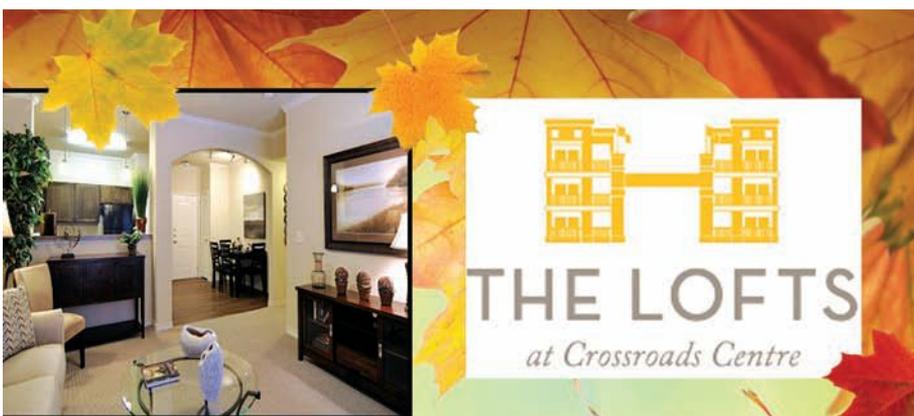




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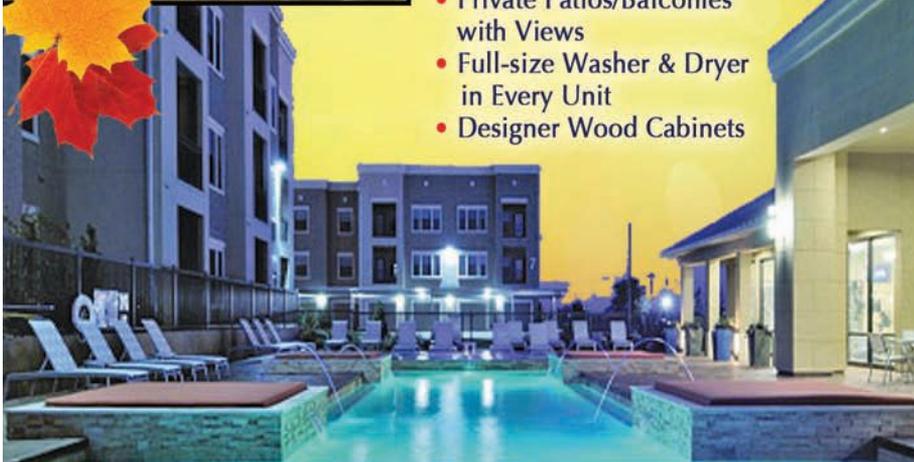
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talking with numerous individuals who have received one. "They are always so thankful for them, because they really need them," she shared. "I enjoy making them, because it gives me something to do. And it's something I am proud to be part of, because I really am helping someone with each pillow I help make."

A cough pillow, also commonly known as a medical or therapeutic pillow, is a 17.5x11.5-inch pillow designed to rest on the stomach of a patient in order to offer both comfort and support, should the patient need to cough. Generally, these patients have undergone serious surgical procedures that leave their bodies weak and sore. Specifically, the extra pressure of the pillow on the abdominal or chest incision area adds bracing for the incision and relieves pain. For those without these types of incisions, the pillows can be used simply as a teddy bear alternative to snuggle and find comfort in.

In addition to making the pillows, Pat

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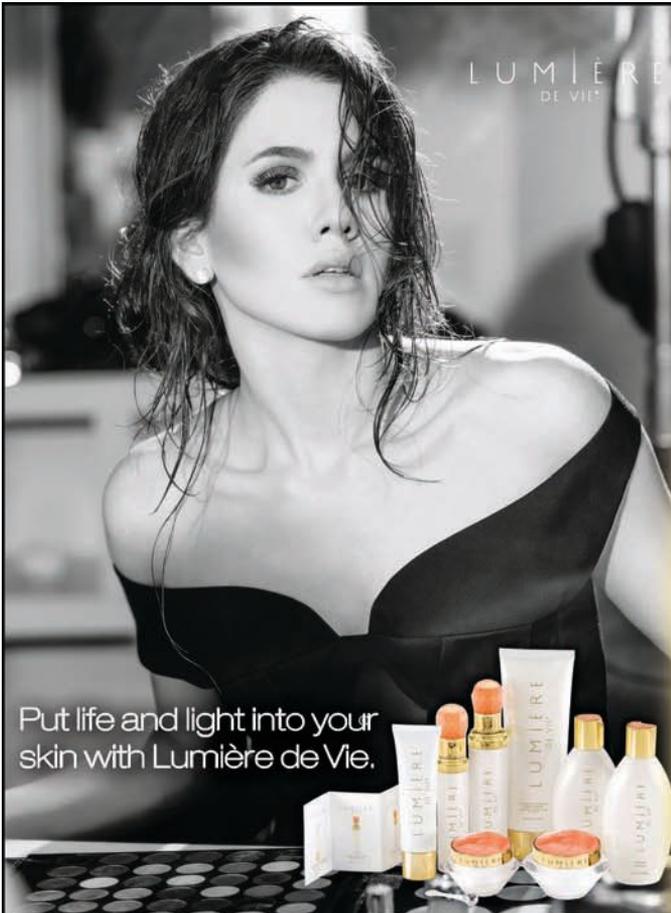


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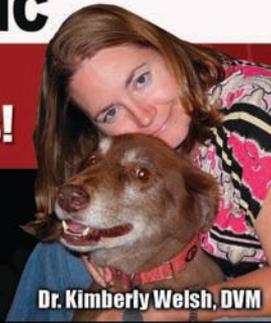
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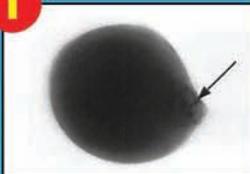
is also involved in a few other charitable services the auxiliary is in charge of. From time to time, she fills in as a backup clerk at The Baylor Thrift Store. "It's different and gives me a nice change of scenery," she stated, which is important to Pat.

Staying active and socially connected with other members in the community creates a strong sense of self within the shared ministry, not only for Pat and other ladies of the auxiliary, but for the people they are helping. Furthermore, volunteering specifically for the Baylor Hospital Auxiliary gives Pat, and others in general, the chance to do things for others and stay actively involved within the community. "What I think is so appealing is it gives people like myself the opportunity to do things they normally wouldn't be able to do on their own," she explained.

In the end, Pat does what she does for a very simple reason. "I have been blessed with good health and a good life," Pat said. She firmly believes in doing good things for others and people in need, so everyone reaps goodness. "It's always good to think about others, so you won't think so much about yourself." **NOW**

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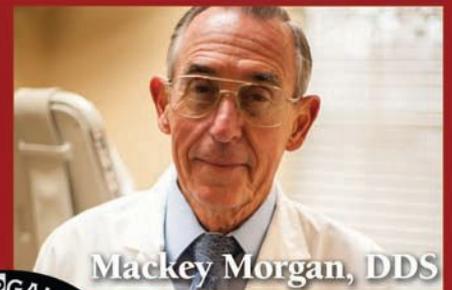


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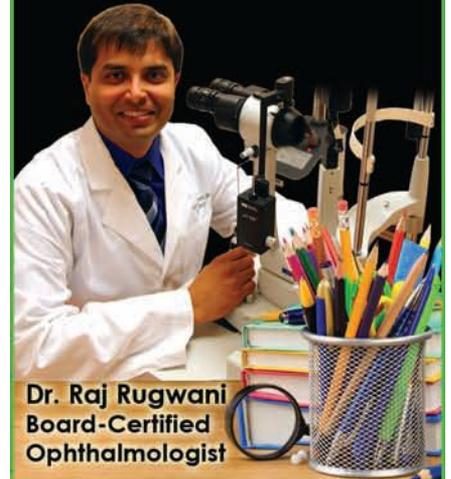
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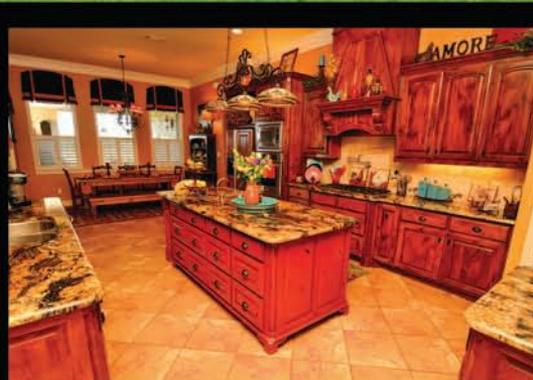


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From the GROUND UP

— By Callie Revell



James and Leanne Davis had it all figured out. Their two daughters, Tiffany and Alisha, were nearing adulthood. Tiffany had left for college at The University of Texas at Austin, and Alisha was still in high school. They downsized to a smaller house

after living in a larger home for 19 years. After a few years on their own, however, they were surprised with a third child, a son named Caden. Soon, James, an employee for Holt Caterpillar, and Leanne, a real estate agent, came up with a new plan.

They knew they wanted to stay in Waxahachie. “I’ve lived here all my life and so have my kids,” Leanne said. “I like the hometown, small feeling.” They were quickly running out of space, and their current home wasn’t kid-friendly. “Caden started getting bigger, and we lived on the corner of a busy street. He didn’t have any friends where we lived. There weren’t any kids. So, me being in real estate, I said, ‘Let’s move



At Home With James and Leanne Davis



and build a house,” Leanne explained. She and James knew the developer of an up-and-coming neighborhood in Spring Creek Grove. “My cousins lived out here, and we thought it would be a good spot,” Leanne said. “I thought it would be the new, popular place. So, we snagged up a lot and built our house.”

The house they built, which was completed in 2008, has four bedrooms, three full bathrooms and



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Of course, James and Leanne made their own adjustments to suit their needs and their budget. “It was a lot bigger house, but I knew I wanted that floor plan. So, I squished it down into a smaller floor plan and built this one,” she said. The final result is a one-of-a-kind home. The living room boasts

parts about his room is his baseball cap collection. One wall is completely covered with caps he has collected throughout the years. “Some of them I wore on teams,” Caden said. “Some of them are just for fashion. It’s kind of cool.” As a brown belt in karate, he uses another wall to display his karate belts.

The home is fully customized to their needs, because they had complete control over every detail when building. “We would go see a lot of houses on the weekends,” James said. “We visited dozens of houses to get what she wanted.” Of course, James and Leanne weren’t frivolous when building. “Knowing what you want, that’s the easy part. She can tell you what she wants,” James laughed. “Having the budget and having the space — that all confines it. Trying to put everything she wanted into my budget, that’s where it got hard.”

According to Leanne, building a home is much more difficult than buying. “I would look in magazines, and I had an expandable file with pictures of everything that I wanted, right down to the light fixtures,” she said. “I didn’t



two half bathrooms. The floor plan was inspired by a home Leanne had seen earlier. “It was a ranch, and I loved it,” Leanne said. “The minute I walked in, I thought it was gorgeous. I knew I wanted something like that.”

gorgeous built-ins framing a big-screen TV and leads straight into the extremely spacious kitchen. All countertops in the kitchen are dark granite. The master suite has its own corner of the house, which includes a spacious bathroom and huge walk-in closet. Upstairs, a large game room is perfect for sleepovers or entertaining friends. An unfinished room upstairs currently acts as a storage room, but James and Leanne hope to turn it into a media room or office space.

At age 11, Caden finds his room especially suits him, with his own bathroom and a door that leads directly to the backyard. One of his favorite



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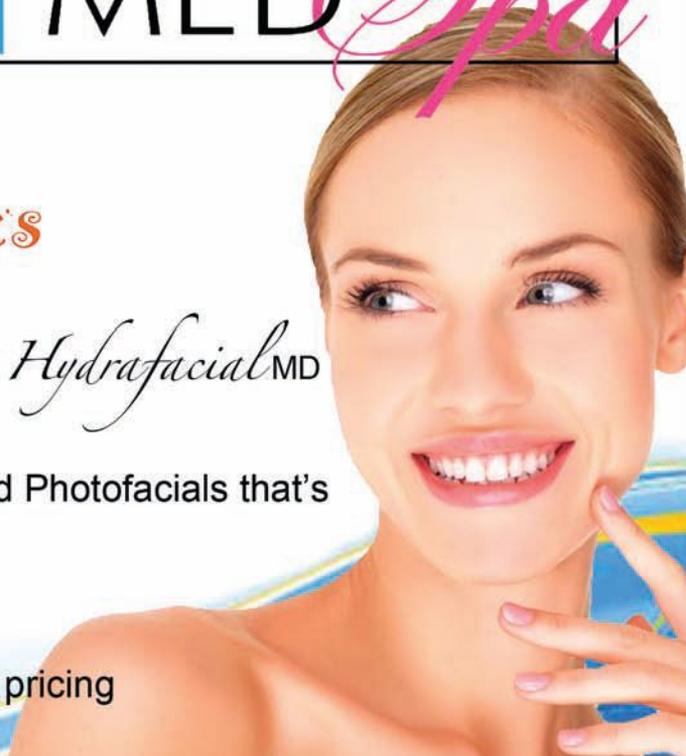


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find everything I wanted, but I got close.” Although Leanne loves her home, she suggests planning very carefully before attempting to build a house. “It costs more to build, and it’s very stressful,” Leanne admitted. “If you’re really detailed about paints, textures and things like that, it gets tough.”

Despite all the hard work, they are very happy with the finished product. “Our living room and kitchen are great,” Leanne said. She and James especially love the large island in the kitchen. “When we have people over, we all congregate around the island,” Leanne said. She



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adores her huge pantry, which makes great use of the space under the stairs. She also likes having all the bedrooms on the ground floor.

The Davis home is also great for entertaining. The spacious kitchen is perfect for cooking large meals. On the back patio, a TV hangs over a fireplace, surrounded by comfortable seating. “When we entertain, very few people hang out in the living room,” James noted. “The girls will be in the kitchen around the island, and the guys will be outside on the patio. The fun part about building this house is hosting everybody.” Comfort is a high priority for James and



Leanne, and they know their house suits that purpose well.

Leanne's decorating style is subtle and familiar, reflecting her desire for comfort and practicality. "It's taken a long time to furnish this house, because the house we came from was a little over 2,000-square-feet, and this one has 4,000," Leanne said. "We just didn't have the furniture to fill the house." Settling into the house has been a slow process for them, but they feel like everything is finally coming together. "Just trying to fill it up with furniture is so expensive," she admitted. "Then there are curtains and blinds. It took us two years to get all our blinds and shutters. But we kind of just slid right in and started living. It was simple." Leanne doesn't keep many knick-knacks around and prefers minimal clutter. "I don't want to have to dust it!" she laughed.

"We don't bring a lot of bling in this house," James agreed. "But look at Leanne." He gestured to her classic, simple jewelry and understated style. "She's not over the top. She's not like that. It's comfortable and subtle." James loves the warm and inviting way his wife has decorated their home. "We have friends' houses where we walk in, and we're scared to touch anything," he said. "We want people comfortable. When they walk in, they can relax. I think that's her personality — just friendly and relaxed."

For now, James and Leanne have put down roots in their custom home, and they don't plan to leave for many years to come. "We downsized once, and then we had to go back up," Leanne stated. "We want Caden to stay out here with his friends." Meanwhile, the comforts of home are always waiting for them and their guests. "This house has a revolving door," Leanne said. "There's always someone coming in and going out." **NOW**

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OPEN MINDS, OPEN DOORS

— By Callie Revell

Imagine a classroom of 3-year-olds playing with modeling clay. They talk to each other in Spanish, asking for green (verde) clay or red (rojo) clay. Some of them break the clay apart and count the pieces: uno, dos, tres. Others form the clay into dogs (perros) or cats (gatos). A classroom like this might seem like a world away, but in reality, it exists right here in Waxahachie.

Shana Deemy uses firsthand experience to support her belief in the power of bilingual education. She graduated from Southwestern Assemblies of God University in 1998 with a focus on early childhood education. “I never wanted to be a teacher when I was young,” Shana admitted. “I never planned on it. During my sophomore year of college, I started working with kids and thought, *You know, I actually enjoy this.*” That year, Shana changed her focus from music or medicine to language education. “I just enjoy watching kids learn to

read, and the world of books being opened up to them,” Shana said. “There’s a point where it clicks with the kids, and you can actually see that they did it.”

Years later, Shana worked as an English teacher at a bilingual school in Honduras. “I went there not really knowing what I was getting into,” Shana said. “I love teaching younger kids, so they put me in a class of first-graders. I taught English and reading. It was very rewarding to see kids, who had never spoken English before speak English after just a few months



and understand me. All of my Spanish speakers were reading very well at the end of that first year.”

For Shana, teaching in Honduras fueled her love of languages, and she carried that love back with her to the United States, where she serves as the director of Fuerte Foundations Preschool and Kindergarten. “I learned bilingual education actually works!” Shana said. “Bilingual schools are everywhere in Honduras. Since then, Shana has dedicated her life to promoting bilingual education in Waxahachie, the Metroplex and beyond.

Children ideally should be introduced to a language early in life. “Kids are learning language skills at a young age,” Shana said. “Their brains are set up to learn to communicate.” The older a child gets, the more difficult it is to learn a new language. “When they learn it in high school or as an adult, it’s broken and doesn’t flow like it does when they’re still learning language,” Shana said. She started learning Spanish in college and learned a little more during her time in Honduras. “For me, it’s been very difficult,” Shana admitted. “I’m still learning. I have very broken Spanish.” Her motivation to learn Spanish was mainly social. “I realized there’s a whole group of people I don’t know, who

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I can't speak to — and they're nice people!" Shana said. "All I could do was smile at them." To practice, Shana tries to interact with Spanish speakers as much as possible. She even attends a Spanish church in Waxahachie, Bethesda Asamblea De Dios (Assembly of God).

Learning a second language is important for anyone, especially children. "With a second language, opportunities to get a job double," Shana said. "They've got a whole field of people they get to speak to and know. The opportunities are endless. For me, I'm limited. My Spanish is still very broken, and I can't communicate the way I want to. I have to think it through. For children who learn a second language early in life, the doors are open."

Shana believes learning a second language should be a two-way street. "We expect kids to go from Spanish to English, but no one goes from English to Spanish," she pointed out. "All over the world, everybody's learning other



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Claudia Martinez enjoys being a Spanish aide.

languages. It's opening up a lot of doors for other people, so to be stuck in one language doesn't make the best sense." In Europe and Asia, it's common for children to learn two or three languages before they reach adulthood. "Other countries are doing it, so I would like to see this door opened for our children, so they will have more opportunities," Shana said.

In both work and travel, language skills are becoming more and more valuable. Spanish is the second most spoken language in the world, right above English and right below Mandarin Chinese. Someone fluent in these three languages could communicate with a quarter of the world's population. Learning more than one language can have positive health benefits, too. Many studies, including one recently done by the Alzheimer's Association, show that being bilingual keeps the mind sharp, even into old age. "It keeps the mind active," Shana explained. "If you keep



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your mind learning, your chances of getting Alzheimer's do slow down."

According to Shana, learning a foreign language is only step one. Practicing and using it are just as crucial. "My boys were fluent in Spanish in Honduras, but they don't know it anymore. We didn't practice," Shana said. "My daughter still knows it, but she worked and worked at it. The boys, not at all. It'll stay with them for life if they keep working at it."



Spanish is quickly becoming a crucial skill, especially in Texas. "The Hispanic population has grown tremendously," Shana said. "So, you're losing out on a lot if you don't know that second language. There are a lot of people you're missing out on and a lot of misunderstandings can occur, because you can't speak to them." Even in Waxahachie, Shana sees how more bilingual citizens could improve the community. "If you look at our community, we are a Hispanic community!" Shana insisted. "We need it. We need to learn Spanish."



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Ingrid Ochoa, a fellow preschool instructor who teaches Spanish, agrees wholeheartedly. “It’s important here in Texas, and I’m sure everywhere, because it gives them more opportunities as they get older,” Ingrid said. “Companies want to hire people who can speak both languages. It’s a vital skill now. It’s better if they start young.”

Ingrid even notices positive psychological effects in children as a result of learning a new language. “Even their self-esteem goes up,” Ingrid said. “I see how proud they feel in my classroom when they can communicate with me. It’s really cute!” Ingrid knows children have an impressive potential to pick up new languages if given the proper environment. “I took my daughter to Central America when she was 3, and within three months, she was speaking fluent Spanish,” Ingrid said. “I believe it’s powerful, and I’ve seen it happen.”



Overall, Shana hopes to impact a future generation by equipping them with the best language skills possible, and she encourages others to do the same for their own children. “It’s important for children to learn a second language,” Shana said. “It’s a gift that I wish my parents would have given me.” **NOW**

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DESTINATION:

I Do

— By Shannon Pfaff

Planning a wedding can be a hectic experience. The preparation can take months, yet the actual wedding day passes so quickly. With all the details that go into planning the wedding, it seems like the honeymoon is the time to recover. Why not get the vacation started early with a destination wedding? A destination wedding can be a unique and exciting way to get married and have a honeymoon all in one shot!

When considering a destination wedding, it may seem like it would be more expensive than having a traditional wedding at home. Depending on the type of wedding and the location, having a destination wedding may actually save money. Many resorts will include the ceremony for free when you stay and have the reception at their location. This will save you from having to find two locations for the ceremony and the reception. Several resorts also offer credits toward the ceremony package to include: flowers, linens, chairs and the officiant, as well as room upgrades for the bride and groom. Some packages even include table settings and the wedding cake. The cost to the couple is the food, drinks and any additional guests not covered by the package.



The expense of the event will also vary depending on the number of guests and any additional activities paid for by the bride and groom. Since you are requesting for people to travel for your wedding, it makes sense to plan some fun for you and your guests. Destination weddings tend to be more intimate affairs with a smaller guest list, which helps keep costs down. While the couple is responsible for the ceremony and reception expenses, wedding guests should expect to cover their own travel expenses. To help their traveling guests, the bride and groom can arrange a flight and room block to help guests with making arrangements. Some hotels offer group discounts when booking several rooms, which will help your guests save money. This is a great incentive to start the planning process early.

Because the party generally pays for their own accommodations, the bride and groom should choose their attendants as soon as possible. Once the attendants are chosen, the couple should inform them of their plans to have a destination



wedding. This gives each person in the wedding party time to set aside funds for their trip. Encourage your guests to book early as well, which will help them save money. Be prepared to make necessary changes if someone you ask cannot afford the trip. If you can afford it, you can always help someone who is in financial need, but this is not a requirement. Consider having a reception

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If you are planning to travel out of the country, make sure your passport is up-to-date and that you meet all the necessary requirements to get married in that location. Some countries have residency restrictions, so it's important to plan ample travel time to meet the required number of days, if necessary. A wedding planner at your destination is a great tool to help you understand the country's requirements, communicate with vendors, set up travel arrangements and make your dream a reality. A wedding planner close to home is also a great source to help you coordinate your wedding. Whether they help you plan the entire event or just assist you in some of



the details, they can help save time and money in the planning process.

Another wedding professional you should consider hiring is a travel agent. A travel agent can help simplify your travel arrangements. They can research destinations, compare prices, negotiate with hotels, as well as help plan excursions. It's best to select a local travel agent that you can meet personally. When selecting a travel agent, make sure you check their certifications. This will ensure they are certified with credible agencies. You will also want to interview the agent before selecting one. Ask them about their experience and their fees.

Selecting a destination is important in determining the wedding type, travel time and budget for the event. Some popular

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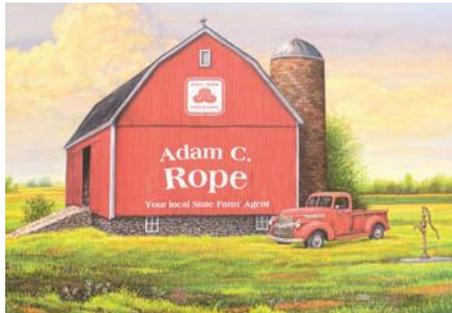
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— By Sandra Strong

Adam Rope is a second-generation State Farm Insurance agent. As a young boy, Adam always knew what he wanted to do as an adult in the real world. “I wanted to be a State Farm Insurance agent just like my dad,” he said with a smile. “I have the utmost respect for my dad. His success encouraged me to be the best I could be.”

The experience he garnered while working with his father encouraged Adam to step out on his own with his wife and business partner, Brana. Adam and Brana opened the office in Waxahachie six years ago with a blank client list, and the continued growth has been well worth the hard work. In the past two years, Adam Rope State Farm Insurance has received

the prestigious President’s Club award for being in the top 50 in automobile policy production out of 18,000 offices in the United States. They were also named the 2014 Best Insurance Agency in Ellis County. “We believe in setting and meeting high standards,” Adam explained. “We always want to give a good image, and we want to be the client’s best option. At the end of the day, we want clients to feel good enough about their treatment to refer State Farm to their family and friends. The greatest compliment a client can give is a referral.”

The approach they take with clients, both new and long-term, is customized to meet the needs of the individual. “Insurance is something people pay for their entire lives, and insurance is all

Business **NOW**

about the 'what ifs' in life," Adam stated. "Our goal is to give them the knowledge they need to fully understand what they actually have and don't have in regards to coverage. There's value in educating our clients."

In the ever-changing world of insurance, Adam's primary concern is for his clients to be as informed as possible. "The main goal following a conversation, whether by phone, home visit or at the office in person, is for the client to say, 'Insurance has never been explained that way before,'" Adam said. "As the business grows more challenging, along with so many options out there, we strive to be the best. Being a mediocre insurance office just isn't an option."

Staff members have a checklist to hold them accountable to the high standards under which Adam operates. Taking their jobs seriously and covering all the bases are key components to exceptional customer service. Another integral key is

"I wanted to be a State Farm Insurance agent just like my dad."

found in the new position of customer concierge Adam recently established. "This position was designed to enhance the overall customer experience once a client is on board," Adam explained. "During the client's first year with State Farm, the customer concierge contacts the client several times to make sure their transition period has been productive, informative and positive."

Adam and Brana's drive for success is based on the lifestyle they want for their children, Curry and Porter. "We want to leave a legacy that will continue to care for their children and their children's children," Adam shared. "Still, at the end of the day, we want people to see we have the options right here at the local level, and if you want to do business on Saturday at 1:00 p.m., we can make that happen, too!" **NOW**

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Postman Jason Ragland takes his son, Matthew, for a walk on his day off.



A ribbon cutting is held by the Waxahachie Chamber for IMPACT Waxahachie.



Ellis County Master Gardener Susan Clark offers freshly grilled veggies to market shoppers to celebrate their annual Grill Fest event.



DeWayne Walton greets his customers with a smile.



Don Merchant and Cody Skoda, with DC Texas Construction, host an open house.



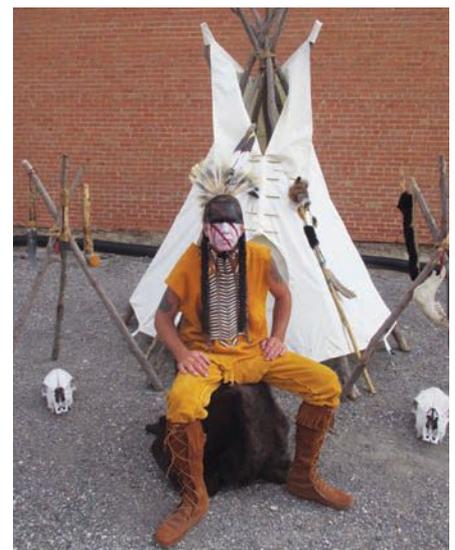
Field to Meal poses in front of a beautiful crepe myrtle for the ribbon cutting at the Waxahachie Chamber of Commerce.



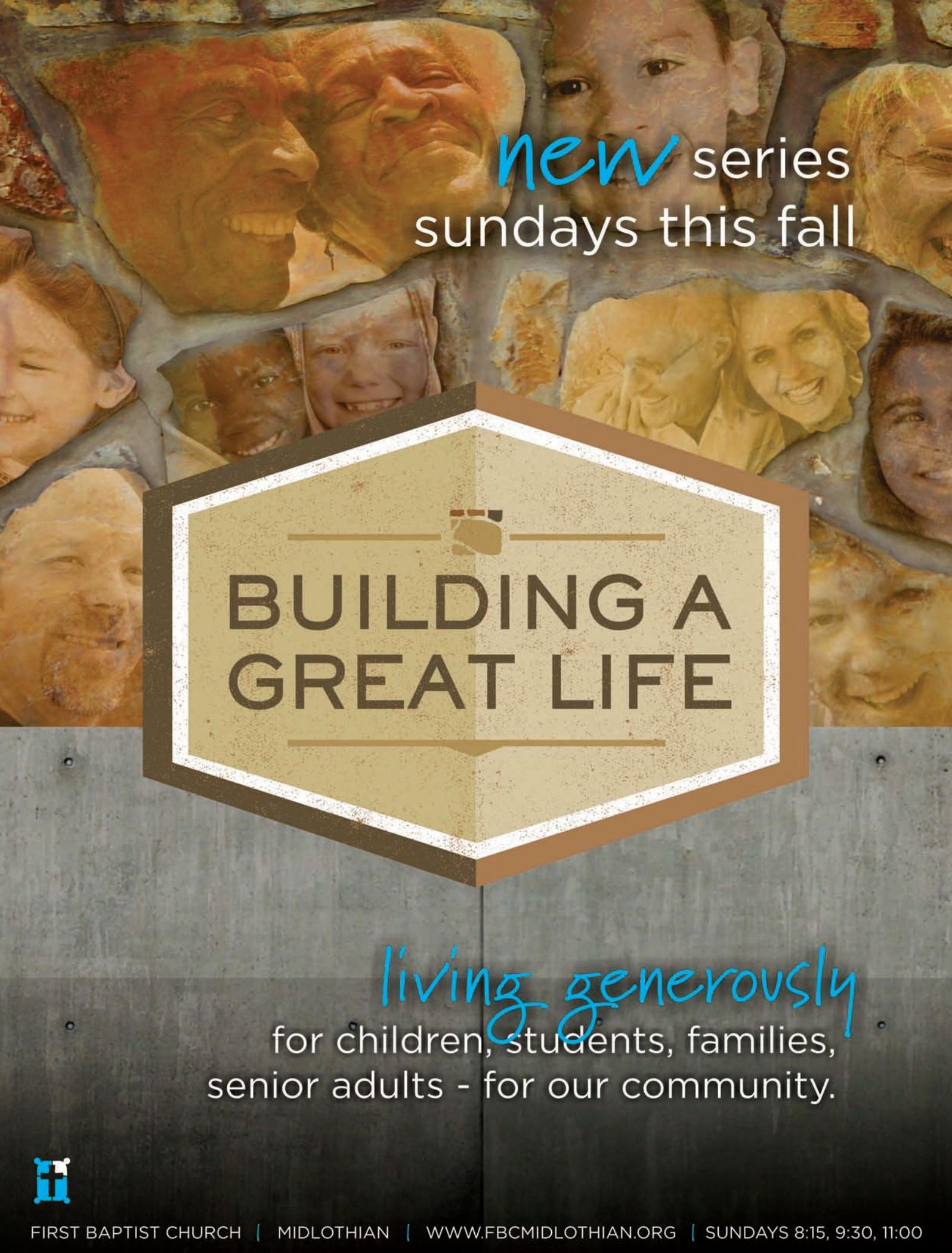
John Saurenman, IT support representative at Sims Library, shows a new patron how to search for information on the computer.



Ladies from the community meet for lunch to celebrate Jeanie Blake's birthday.



Jon Fowler, also known as Spotted Horse, sits for historic Indian photos at the Waxahachie Farmer's Market.



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How Can We Possibly Save for Retirement and Our Child's College Education at the Same Time?

It's seldom easy to achieve a balance between saving for your retirement and saving for the ever-increasing costs of a college education within your present income. Yet it's imperative that you save for both at the same time. To postpone saving for your retirement means missing out on years of tax-deferred growth and playing a near-impossible game of catch-up. To accomplish both goals, you may need to compromise.

The first step is to thoroughly examine your funding needs for both college and retirement. On the retirement side, remember to include the estimated value of any employer pension plans, as well as your Social Security benefits. This evaluation will likely prompt you to examine some deeply held beliefs about your financial goals. For example, is it important that you travel regularly in retirement, or is it more important that your child attend a prestigious Ivy League College?

If you discover that you can't afford to save for both goals, the second step is to consider some compromises:

- Defer your retirement and work longer.
- Reduce your standard of living now or in retirement.
- Increase the family income by seeking a better paying position in your present career, getting a second job or having a previously stay-at-home spouse join the work force. Beware, though, of potential drawbacks like day-care costs, commuting costs and tax disadvantages on the increased income.

- Seek out more aggressive investments (but beware of the risks).
- Expect your child to contribute more money to college. Some parents may find it difficult to accept, but the majority of college students finance a portion of their education with student loans.
- Investigate less-expensive colleges. You may find that some less-expensive state universities have more to offer in certain programs than their pricey private counterparts.

The third step is to re-evaluate your plan from time to time as your circumstances and wishes change. Remember, the important thing is to earmark a portion of your present income for both goals and do the best you can. **NOW**

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Todd Simmons is a Raymond James Financial Advisor in Duncanville.



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September 5, 6

Dale Hansen Football Classic: Lumpkins Stadium. For more information, call Nicole Mansell at (972) 923-4631 or via email at nmansell@wisd.org.

September 6

Dallas String Quartet: 7:00 p.m., SAGU Performance Hall, 1200 Sycamore St. \$20 at the door. Call (972) 938-1181 for more details.

September 9 — 13

Northwest Texas Annual Conference of the AME Church: Waxahachie Bible Church. For more information, contact the Rev. Samuel Baker, Pastor of Joshua Chapel, at (972) 923-9490 or by email at pastor_sbaker@sbcglobal.net.

September 14

11th Annual Bridal Extravaganza: Waxahachie Civic Center. For time and further details, call

(469) 309-4040 or visit www.waxahachieciviccenter.org.

September 18 — 21

Texas Motorplex NHRA Fall Nationals: 7500 W. Hwy 287, Ennis. For more information, call (972) 878-2641 or visit www.texasmotorplex.com.

September 20

Hike for Life: 8:30 a.m.-noon, Getzenderer Park on the Lions Hike and Bike Trail. The 5K walk is sponsored by the Knights of Columbus. Hike registration and donations at www.Hike4LifeTexas.org.

September 22 — December 18

Lighthouse for Learning Community Education fall/holiday semester begins: 6:00-8:00 p.m., all classes taught at WHS on Monday and Thursday evenings, 1000 Hwy. 77N. There are well over 50 classes to select from. For class information and registration details, contact Melissa Cobb at (972) 923-4631 or visit www.wisd.org.

September 27

Oktoberfest: Waxahachie Civic Center. Call Marissa Geary at (214) 642-3601 or email at marissa.gearytx@gmail.com for more details.

Chautauqua Preservation Society and HEB present "Taste, Toast and Talk of Texas": 11:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Chautauqua Auditorium, Getzenderer Park, 300 S. Grand St. For more information, call Maureen Moore at (972) 937-8887 or visit khmm@sbcglobal.net.

Tim Zimmerman and the King's Brass:

7:00 p.m., Waxahachie Bible Church, 621 N. Grand Ave. Free concert. Doors will open at 6:15 p.m.

October 4

Dentistry From the Heart: 7:30 a.m., registration begins for the first 50 patients, Waxahachie Family Dentistry, 125 Park Place Blvd. Special free event is for people ages 18 and over. Patients will be seen on a first come first served basis. Services include a choice of filling, extraction or cleaning. This is an annual event. Please see ad in the magazine for event details or visit www.waxfamdent.com.

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

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In the Grip of a Cramp

— By Betty Tryon, BSN

Muscles that contract are doing what they were made to do. A problem occurs when the muscle does not return to a relaxed state. A muscle or muscles can create incredible pain when the contraction continues and becomes a cramp. Involuntary muscle cramps can last a few seconds to almost an hour. Regrettably, on occasion, they can last longer.

We have three types of muscles: smooth, cardiac and skeletal. Smooth muscles line the inner organs in the body. For example, they are what propel food through the digestive system or cause you to regurgitate something unpleasant. Cardiac muscles power the functions of the heart. Smooth and cardiac muscles are involuntary, meaning you can't control their action. Skeletal muscles are voluntary and can be controlled by you. They are what allow you to move your arms and legs at will. The majority of muscle cramps occur in the skeletal muscles. You can see the muscle bunch up and become hard while in the grip of the cramp.

Muscle cramps can be alarming, but they are not uncommon. They occur most often in older adults. Cramps can be caused by a variety of conditions. Injury to a muscle or nerve can cause cramping. Dehydration, cold weather, pregnancy, depletion of certain minerals and deficiencies of some vitamins can be the source of muscle cramps. Overusing a certain group of muscles or even being in one position an extensively long time might trigger cramping. Cramping can be the side effect of some medications. Medical problems, such as peripheral artery disease, can also be the cause of cramps because of inadequate blood flow to an area.

The treatment for muscle cramps is relatively simple. If it occurs from injuries, then medications such as muscle relaxants and/or anti-inflammatory drugs, may be prescribed. Usually, stretching alleviates the cramped muscle.



Relief can also be found with the use of heating pads or soaking in a tub of warm water. Massage can bring a reprieve from the pain. If the disorder is occurring from a medical or physical condition, then that needs to be addressed. If you develop cramps from dehydration, rehydration should solve the problem.

Prevention of muscle cramps should focus on the reason the cramp is taking place. If cramps occur in a calf muscle from running, then stretching adequately before exercise will help. Make sure you are well-hydrated before exercising. For nighttime cramping, stretching before bedtime may help. If you think a medication is causing your cramping, consult your doctor. Do not discontinue medication before seeking the advice of your physician. With a little investigation and preparation, you may be able to keep muscle cramps at bay. **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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In the Kitchen With Cletis Escobar

— By Sandra Strong

Cletis Escobar enjoys cooking, whether it's in the kitchen or on the grill. "Several years ago, I began competing in barbecue cook-offs," Cletis shared. "I needed to come up with my own original barbecue sauce. I took a handful of basic recipes and began experimenting with the flavors until I came up with something unique, something all my own." And that's how he comes up with most of his recipes. "I like taking a simple recipe and tweaking it until I can bring out the bolder flavors in food."

Originally, family and friends were the only ones enjoying Cletis' cooking. Now Cletis finds himself cooking for fundraisers, parties, weddings and business gatherings. "The best part of cooking is watching others truly enjoy the food I've prepared." **NOW**

Chicken Rub

- 4 Tbsp. brown sugar
- 2 tsp. salt
- 1 Tbsp. garlic powder
- 1 Tbsp. black pepper
- 1 Tbsp. paprika
- 2 Tbsp. Old Bay Seasoning
- 1 tsp. chili powder
- 1/4 tsp. cayenne pepper (optional)

1. Mix all ingredients thoroughly.

Grilled BBQ Chicken

- 1 whole chicken, cut up
- 1 16-oz. bottle Italian dressing
- Chicken rub (see previous recipe)
- 1 18-oz. bottle Four Escobars Original BBQ Sauce

1. Marinate chicken in dressing for at least 4 hours. Remove chicken; discard excess marinade.
2. Lightly coat both sides of chicken with rub. (For best results, also apply the rub under the skin of the chicken.)
3. Grill over medium heat until internal temperature reaches 170 F, turning midway through cooking. Apply sauce with a basting brush 15-20 minutes before removing from grill and again 10 minutes before removing from grill.
4. Let chicken rest (cool) for 10 minutes prior to serving.

Creamy Mac & Cheese

- 1 16-oz. bag macaroni noodles, any style
- 12 oz. evaporated milk

- 4 oz. butter
- 4 oz. cream cheese
- 1/4 cup milk
- 16 oz. Velveeta cheese

1. Cook the noodles as directed on the package. Strain excess water, but do not rinse.
2. Over medium heat, mix evaporated milk, butter and cream cheese with noodles, stirring until the cream cheese has melted.
3. Add milk and Velveeta, stirring until Velveeta is melted.

Black-eyed Pea Dip

- 2 15-oz. cans black-eyed peas, drained and rinsed
- 1 purple onion, diced
- 4 Roma tomatoes, diced
- 1 jalapeño, seeded and diced
- 1 avocado, diced
- 1/4 tsp. garlic powder
- 1/3 cup Catalina dressing (or to desired taste)
- Salt and pepper, to taste

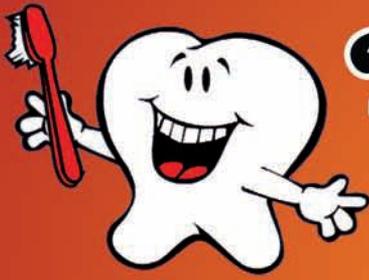
1. Mix first seven ingredients together. Salt and pepper to desired taste.
2. Serve chilled with corn tortilla chips.

Veggies in Foil

- Aluminum foil or foil pan
- 1 yellow squash
- 1 zucchini
- 1 medium sweet onion
- 10 oz. mushrooms, sliced or whole
- 3/4 cup brown sugar
- 2 oz. butter
- 1/2 tsp. black pepper

1. Preheat oven to 400 F. Create a foil pack (or use foil pan).
2. Cut squash, zucchini and onion into medium-sized pieces. Place in foil pack/pan. Top with remaining ingredients.
3. Seal foil pack. (If using a pan, cover securely with foil or lid.) Place in oven. Cook for 35 minutes or until veggies are tender. (Veggies can also be cooked on the grill over medium heat for 20-30 minutes.)
4. When cooking is complete, open pack to prevent from overcooking.

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



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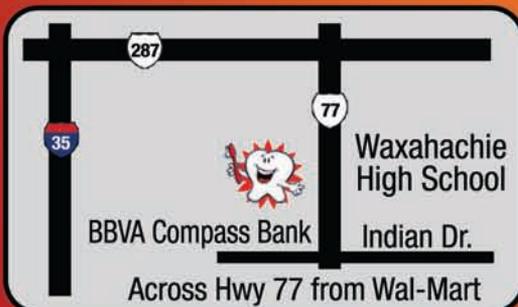
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