

The Community Magazine Serving Midlothian and the Surrounding Area

# MidlothianNOW

M A G A Z I N E  
October 2010

## A Kick Start to Education

### ALSO INSIDE:

*I Believe in You*

*Handcrafted Tales*

*Keeping the Temple Fit*

## A Date With a Horse

At Home With  
**Rob Preston and  
Donna Lasater**





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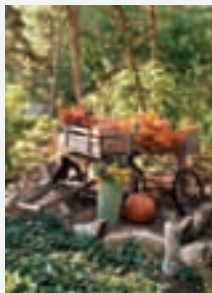
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## On The Cover

Beautiful colors signal the change in the seasons.

Photo by Shana Woods.



## Editor's Note



*Dear Neighbor,*

As I go about the business of meeting and communicating with people in our community, I often ask them why they chose to call Midlothian home. The majority of the time, particularly if children are involved, they move here because of the schools. Smart people! Now, many others outside of our community will have tangible proof of what we have always known. In a recent survey from *Dallas Business Journal* of "Best Places to Work," Midlothian Independent School District, for the year 2009, was ranked the fourth "Best Place to Work"! We were the only school district that made it to the top five. Congratulations to the school board, the administrators, educators and staff who work so hard and with such dedication for our children.

October 31 is for kids, and all of those who still nurture that kid inside. Have fun and stay safe!

Betty Tryon  
*MidlothianNOW* Editor  
btryon.nowmag@sbcglobal.net

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# The bright side of dreams.

Late one night, Laurie Reynolds was awakened by a bad dream. Not all that uncommon, except she dreamed she had breast cancer. Understandably startled, Reynolds immediately performed a self exam, and what she thought was a figment of her imagination turned out to be an eye-opening reality. "There in my bed, in the middle of the night, I found the lump," she says.

Test results later revealed that Reynolds had an aggressive type of breast cancer. Given that her mom and sister were both diagnosed with cancer, she was all too familiar with the situation in which she now found herself.

Reynolds' physician search led her to the healing hands of the doctors at Methodist Mansfield Medical Center. "The doctors made me feel comfortable. They were compassionate and thoroughly explained everything," Reynolds confidently recalls. Being a carrier of the BRCA1 gene (which increases the risk of getting both breast and ovarian cancers), Reynolds chose to follow her physicians' advice and have a double mastectomy, reconstructive surgery, and a hysterectomy — all at the same time.

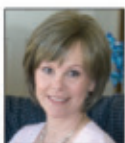
"I chose to do a double mastectomy and hysterectomy because of the link between breast and ovarian cancers and the fact that my family is at very high risk for these."

## "My experience with my doctors and Methodist was extraordinary."

"Choosing this option reduced my risk of recurrence by about 80 percent," explains Reynolds. The nine-hour operation involved three different surgeons and took place at Methodist Mansfield.

"They helped me coordinate all of my procedures," she says, referring to the OB/GYN and plastic surgeon — also on staff at Methodist Mansfield. "I feel I've been blessed with fantastic surgeons," says Reynolds. "And thanks to my doctors at Methodist Mansfield, I can honestly say that I've had a really good experience with cancer."

The most common cancer in women today, breast cancer, affects millions every day. The good news is that when discovered in the early stages, most cancers can be treated. Having regular screenings and being educated about your health is the best preventive medicine. To find an independently practicing physician on the Methodist Mansfield medical staff, call 877-637-4297.



—Laurie Reynolds  
Breast cancer survivor and Methodist  
Mansfield Medical Center patient.



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# MISD

## BUILDINGS and BONDS

Check out the Buildings and Bonds  
at [www.midlothian-isd.net](http://www.midlothian-isd.net).

MISD has a Buildings and Bonds Web site dedicated to the district facility needs and upcoming bond election information.

On September 21, 2010, the School Board officially authorized MISD Superintendent Dr. Stewart to proceed with steps necessary to call a bond election on May 14, 2011. The bond projects will be in one proposition for the total amount of \$97,300,000 consisting of an Elementary School #7, Frank Seale Middle School additions and High School #2.

## We're on the Grow ... Enrollment Numbers Continue to Climb

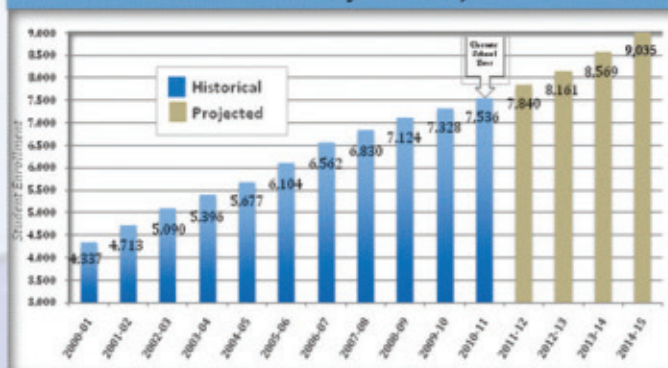
Midlothian ISD is growing! Because many families are choosing to plant roots in the Midlothian area, the district expects to enroll new students throughout the school year. On the first Friday of this school year (2010-11) enrollment was at 7,518 — an increase of 222 students for a 3% gain as compared to last year.



MHS students crowded in the MHS hallway.

Weekly campus enrollment reports are available online under the "About MISD" link.

### Enrollment History and Projections



## Midlothian - a Texas Education Agency "RECOGNIZED" School District

MISD is a "Recognized" school district based on the 2010 TAKS performance and other indicators. A detailed report for each campus accountability rating is available on the MISD Web site.

**Midlothian High School - Recognized**  
**Walnut Grove Middle School - Recognized**  
**Frank Seale Middle School - Exemplary**  
**J.R. Irvin Elementary - Exemplary**  
**Longbranch Elementary - Exemplary**  
**LaRue Miller Elementary - Exemplary**  
**Mt. Peak Elementary - Exemplary**  
**J.A. Vitovsky Elementary - Exemplary**  
**T.E. Baxter Elementary - Exemplary**

*Way to go MISD Students!*

## Gold Award for Financial Transparency



Comptroller  
Leadership  
Circle Member

Midlothian ISD has earned a Gold Leadership Circle Award for the district's Website by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts. The district earned a perfect score (15/15) on the ratings criteria. The Comptroller's office awards local governments that provide clear and consistent information in a user-friendly format, which allows taxpayers easy access to financial information. MISD makes budgetary information, check registers, the annual financial report, and supporting financial data available on the MISD finance Web page. Superintendent Dr. Stewart said, "Midlothian ISD is honored to accept the Texas Comptroller Leadership Circle's Gold designation — the highest designation for financial transparency online. The fact that participation in this program is voluntary makes this designation even more meaningful. MISD is committed to good stewardship of its resources and financial transparency is an important component of this commitment."

## MHS Students Earn AP Scholar Awards

The District has announced that 21 Midlothian High School students have earned AP Scholar Awards in recognition of their exceptional achievement on AP exams. This is an increase by five students from last year. The exams are taken each spring with results announced in the fall.

**AP Scholars:** Shannon Auvil, Philip Berthelsen, Kings Boachie-Mensah, Jordan England, Ryan Flaherty, Samantha Gummelt, Daniel Hamaker, Austin Hill, Ashley Jackson, Jonathan Kue, Courtney Lish, Kara Marlin, Jenna Mattingly, Andrew Peterson, Elijah Roden, Collin Roland, Brittany Stubbs, Paul Walden and Wendi Wilkes.

**AP Scholars with Honor:** Travis Phille and Christian Velasquez

The College Board's Advanced Placement Program (AP) provides students an opportunity to take college-level courses while still in high school. These students can earn college credits and advanced placement. The College Board recognizes several levels of achievement based on students' performance on AP exams.

National AP Scholars earn an average grade of 4 or higher on a five-point scale on all AP exams taken, and grades of 4 or higher on eight or more of these exams. Scholars with Distinction earn an average grade of 3.5 or higher on all AP exams taken, and grades of 3 or higher on five or more of these exams. Scholars with Honor earn an average grade of 3.25 or higher on all AP exams taken, and grades of 3 or higher on four or more of these exams. AP Scholars complete three or more AP Exams with grades of 3 or higher. Learn more about the College Board AP program at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).

Do you have questions or concerns about MISD? E-mail [communications@midlothian-isd.net](mailto:communications@midlothian-isd.net).



## MISD Bus Driver Wins Award

Tillie Square, Midlothian ISD school bus driver, was honored as the 2010 Midlothian School Bus Driver of the Year. The award is based upon multiple driver attributes: leadership, attitude, perseverance, student and parent relationships and technical skill.



## Advertise on the MISD Web site

MISD offers businesses to place an ad on the MISD Web site for a minimal fee. The district Web site offers a valuable way to reach potential customers 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week. Currently, there are approximately 4,500 Web site visitors per day including employees, parents and community members. For more information call 972-775-8296.

Note: There are Web advertising guidelines and agreement forms that are in compliance with the MISD School Board Policy GKB.

## Get Connected in 2010-2011

MISD offers various communication avenues for parents and community stakeholders to stay connected. Parents can view their child's current grades via Powerschool and access homework online as well. Social media is another way to get the latest district and campus news. Sign-up for the MISD e-News, Facebook and Twitter page — visit [www.midlothianisd.net/social.html](http://www.midlothianisd.net/social.html).

Read Dr. Stewart's Blog at <http://drjstewart.wordpress.com>

Mrs. Smith's first graders at Vitovsky Elementary enjoyed MISD superintendent Dr. Stewart reading them a story called *My Colors, My World*. It is based on the illustrator/author's life in the Mojave Desert. The students determined if you look hard enough, you can see a variety of colors.



## Check out the First Day of School Photos

<http://midlothianisd.smugmug.com>

## Midlothian ISD Education Foundation Appreciates the 2010 Golf Tournament Sponsors

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### 6th Annual Midlothian ISD Education Foundation

# GOLF Tournament

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The Midlothian ISD Education Foundation (MEF) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, tax-exempt, public charity, philanthropic organization of citizens that share a vision of enhancing education in Midlothian ISD. MEF works to increase private support for educational activities at MISD, which benefit students and personnel by supporting activities not funded by tax dollars. M.E.F. fosters creative approaches to education through private grants and involvement, and awards Foundation funds through a volunteer Board of Directors made up of business, community and educational leaders.





Pictured at left: Back row left to right: Sid Kuykendall, Steve Emerson and Bob Emerson. Front row left to right: Lynn Kuykendall, Keri Emerson, Sherry Emerson and Norma Emerson.



# A Kick Start to EDUCATION

— By Betty Tryon

*Every community needs them — individuals or families who give back in a tangible way to make life better for someone else. In Midlothian, the Kuykendall family wanted to honor their brother, Shorty by promoting something that would benefit the community. Shorty, whose real name was Gerald, died in 2002. His family wanted whatever they did to benefit the community to be something that would fit with what Shorty was all about in his life. Doug Kuykendall, one of Shorty's brothers, thought they should concentrate on young people.*



Doug remembered, "There are eight of us kids — six boys and two girls. Shorty was number two on the list. He always had an interest in the youth, whether it was his grandkids, nieces, nephews or with the County Expo. We profited by his involvement with our kids with projects, show animals and things like that. Before Shorty passed away, he encouraged my son, Conner, to be the best he could be in basketball. He played a big part in the building of the Ellis County Expo building. As the plant manager for many years at TXI (Texas Industries, Inc.), he was able to encourage them to be very involved in that

project. He was also able to use their donations of money to buy projects at the auction. He understood that TXI had the resources, so he coordinated and headed them in that direction. They really stepped up to the plate for that."

One day, in mulling over what to do to honor Shorty, Doug and his brother, Sid Kuykendall, came up with an idea. Doug said, "My brother, Sid, mentioned it first that maybe we could start a scholarship fund to Navarro College in Midlothian for some student in Ellis County. He said, 'We really ought to do a party or something to raise money for a scholarship in Shorty's name. Let's do a function, have some music and good food.'" With that thought, The Shorty Kuykendall Memorial Scholarship was born.

The function for the scholarship fund is always held on the same day every year. They do not charge for the event but have donation jars set out in different places for people to use to make their contributions. In giving credit to the community, Sid said, "I can't say enough about the people in the community. Last year, we got a lot of \$20 and \$30 donations.






We hope to build it up each year.”

“It is an understatement to say we are very pleased with the turnout and the support,” Doug added. “We’re overwhelmed, even in this economy. A majority of the funds are raised at the event. Those who can’t make the event can give us the money or take it to Navarro. This is the only function we do.” That is impressive considering the family has raised over \$14,000 in two years.


“We hold it on the Sunday of Labor Day weekend,” Doug stated. “We decided to keep it on the same day every year so people can make plans. We buy all the briskets and beverages out of our pockets. The only thing we pay for out of the donations is for the Amos Moses Band.” Laughing, he said, “The music is free, but they charge us to load and unload their equipment. It is a very small fee, and we are happy to pay it. Everything else goes to Navarro. The event is held at the Silken Ranch, which is owned by Norma Emerson, Sid’s mother-in-law. Others who help with the function are Johnny and Carolyn Hill,

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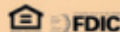
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**M**idlothian, Texas — July 7, 2010 — Community Health Accreditation Program, Inc., (CHAP) announced today that Approved Home Health Care has been awarded CHAP accreditation under the CHAP Core & Home Health Standards of Excellence. This is the beginning of the fourth year CHAP accreditation has been awarded to Approved Home Health Care.

Approved Home Health Care provides a variety of nursing and therapy services to patients and their families in Ellis, Johnson, Tarrant and Dallas counties, and surrounding areas. They are locally owned and operated by hometown folks with over 50 years combined home health experience.

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who cook all weekend long and don't get paid. There is also Heath and Lori Huff, Ashley and Beth Colburn and Ike and Donna Morrison. Donna makes a ceramic doll every year for the event to be auctioned for funds."

Doug elaborated, "Navarro College decides who the recipient is. We leave all of that up to Navarro and that is by design. We really didn't want anything to do with the selection. We just felt like the staff and the administrators at Navarro could make those kinds of choices much better than us. The only stipulation we put on it was that we give the money to Navarro at the Midlothian campus, and it has to be an Ellis County student."

"Navarro does a great job on screening and choosing who will get the money and go to college," Sid agreed. With a laugh, he continued, "We didn't want to be the one to decide on the recipient because we know too many people in the community! A college degree is important. So many students run up against costs that first year. If it helps them go the first year and develop a liking for college, then that's good. It can kick-start them to go further in their education."

Navarro does place more restrictions on the scholarship, setting certain guidelines that a student must meet to be eligible. Cubie Ward, dean of the Midlothian campus stated, "Students need to have a 3.0 GPA (Grade Point Average) and maintain that GPA for the scholarship to be renewed. We need to receive applications by April 15 for fall enrollment." Cubie lauds the Kuykendall family for their tribute to their brother. "There is no better way of remembering



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— Keith, Midlothian Customer



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The advertisement features a large, stylized "MBC" logo in the top left corner with a cross and the phone number 972-723-0002. A photograph in the top right shows children and a teacher at a table. A group of diverse children is shown in the bottom left corner, smiling and waving. The background has a blue and green splatter effect.





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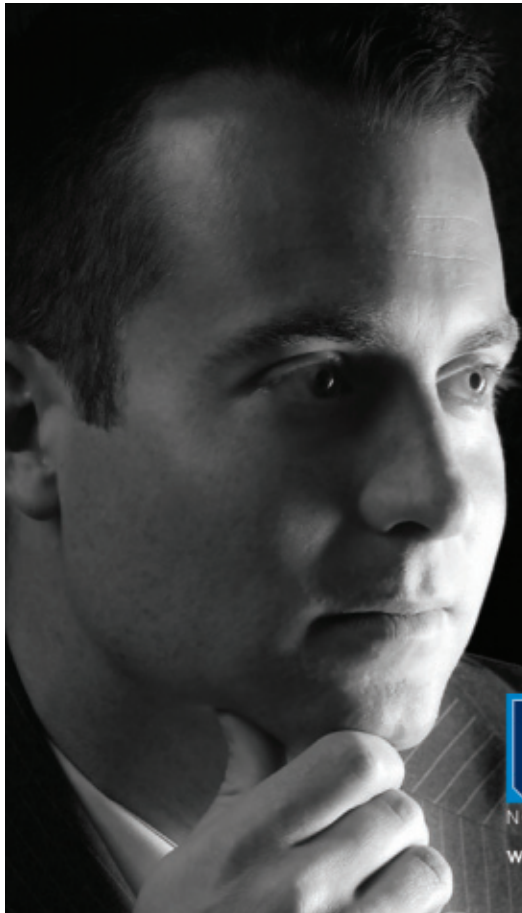


**“Donna makes a ceramic doll every year for the event to be auctioned for funds.”**

Shorty Kuykendall than by educating his community,” he said. “The Shorty Kuykendall Memorial Scholarship will keep alive his memory in the hearts of his beloved family as well as those who contribute to the lives of each scholarship recipient.” The Kuykendalls started the scholarship fund three years ago and two students have benefited from it so far — Philip Tryon for 2009 and Uriel Velazquez for 2010.

One of the ways to relieve the overwhelming sadness of losing someone you love is to reach out and help someone. The Kuykendall family chose to cope with their grief in a positive way by helping students with their education. In choosing Navarro College as the institution that will receive the funds, Doug said, “I think the community college certainly has a spot in the whole educational scheme. The Midlothian campus has doubled in size, so there is definitely a need. Dr. Ward is a great dean and good administrator. The Midlothian community has supported it. I am excited about it. Anything we can do to help our students financially to succeed is critical. We plan on doing this for as long as we can, as long as people keep continuing to support and come out. We are very happy we can do this small part for the Midlothian campus.” **NOW**





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# When Best Friends Marry

*At Home With Rob Preston and Donna Lasater*

— By Carolyn Wills



*Among the fluted columns, corbels, cherubs and ornate cherry wood furnishings, and on the wall in one of the elegant rooms in Rob Preston and Donna Lasater's home is a quote displayed in a tiny frame: "Happiness is being married to your best friend." When one of those friends happens to be a successful real estate agent, property manager and certified staging agent and the other a veteran homebuilder, avid gardener, landscape artist and hands-on carpenter, welder and rock wall builder, "happiness" is likely to be expressed in all that surrounds them. Such is the case with Rob and Donna and their breathtaking French Country home on Ranch Cedar Road.*





"I've been selling real estate for 30 years," Donna said. "I sell approximately 150 properties annually, so I see a lot of homes. When Rob and I bought three-and-a-half acres in Midlothian, I wanted to create a home that would include the best ideas I had seen and something that would be different and unique. At the time, Rob was building our daughter's house and several duplexes, so that gave us about three years to plan and shop. We like old things, so shopping for antique salvage pieces was a treasure hunt."



By the time the first nail was struck on their new house, every possible facet had been envisioned and researched. "This was Donna's home," Rob explained. "I wanted to build it for her." In fact, the floor plan was inspired by a dining room



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and kitchen combination that Donna had seen and loved. "We started with those two rooms," Rob said, "and created the rest of the house around them. I drew up the ideas, took my drawings to an architect and we were on our way."

"Rob is a veteran builder," Donna explained. "He has all this great knowledge, so a lot of the house was literally built by his hands. He did much of the framing and painting; and I would post magazine pictures of very detailed trim work, like the over-mantle piece in the living room and the mantle in the master bath, and he would match it."

The end result is an impressive 4,150-square-foot home nestled inside a gated entrance and winding circular drive, backed by one-and-a-half acres of towering trees and natural woods. Literally, every inch of the four-bedroom, four-bath home with two living areas, state-of-the-art kitchen and inviting sunroom has its own story, either by virtue of architectural

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detail and/or as a result of unique furnishings and design.

The front door and French glass doors at the front of the home were discovered at an architectural salvage yard and, as indicated by the rippled glass in the French doors, they are very old. The fireplace in the living room was recovered from a demolished home in Highland Park that had once belonged to the Morton Potato Chip family. "I made the

chandelier in the butler's pantry," Donna said. "I had seen one like it for \$2,200, so I decided to make it. We bought the grape cluster beads in Napa Valley; the other glass beads came from a catalog, and the whole fixture was made for about \$180."

In addition to Rob's craftsmanship and Donna's design talents, their home features art and handiwork created by local artists, purchased and collected by the couple or presented as gifts from family members and by Donna's clients. The remarkable domed ceiling in the entryway or rotunda was hand painted by Midlothian artist, Robin Bass, and the hand-painted tiles in the workspace off the kitchen were done by B. Hawkins, an artist from Waxahachie. Another hand-painted element is the striking bath ensemble selected on a trip to the Kohler factory in Kohler, Wisconsin. "The history was fabulous, and it was great picking the baths to duplicate, like the spa bath we built with a steam shower and body sprays," Donna explained. "I also picked a hand-painted bath with sink, commode and faucets in the Peony Collection."

As much as Donna is an avid





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decorator, Rob is passionate about the outdoors. “Rob is the gardener and landscaper,” she said. “He works in the yard every day.” Rob’s love of the outdoors is expressed by a swimming pool, tiered stone patio and custom-built rock walls, some of which are topped with embedded pieces of colorful Fiesta pottery. Rob was careful to construct the floor plan to allow views of the outside. “I wanted the sunroom to look like a New Orleans patio with a brick wall, lion’s head fountain and a stained concrete floor,” Donna explained. And, thanks to their planning, the sunroom can be seen from the entryway, the kitchen and the den.

One of the most spectacular areas in the house is the master bedroom and bath. Inspired by the look of an old French hotel room, the bedroom door is topped by a glass transom etched with cherubs and the words “Hotel Le Grand.” The four-poster, or rather four-columned, bed is as imposing as it

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is beautiful. Drapes, purchased from one of Donna’s clients, provide a magnificent remote-controlled covering against the wall lined with windows. “The two big columns in the master bath are my favorite salvage pieces,” Donna said. “Rob thought they were too old with peeling paint until I covered them with ‘crackle’ paint to highlight their age. And the chandelier over the master tub came from the attic of one of our rental properties. We replaced all the missing crystals and made it a showpiece.”

In fact, the whole home is a



showpiece, yet beauty is not its only feature. A major objective underlying all of Rob and Donna's design decisions involved three special residents: Sasha, Scooby-Doo and Asta Jr. Too, three Wire Fox Terriers. "Our life is about dog management," Donna explained, "so our



house reflects that. Rob designed the dog gates so they don't even look like dog gates.

"Our hobbies are going to dog shows and traveling," she continued. "And I love collecting antiques and collectables and sewing and decorating; but our newest and best hobby is our 2-year-old grandson, Kolton. Our daughter had been married for 18 years and turned 40 the week before he was born, so Kolton is truly our 'miracle baby.'"

Rob and Donna have lived in their home for three years now and, as Donna commented, "There's really nothing we would change. We had enough experience building and remodeling homes and enough time to plan and, sometimes 're-plan,' as we were building that we got this one right!" **NOW**

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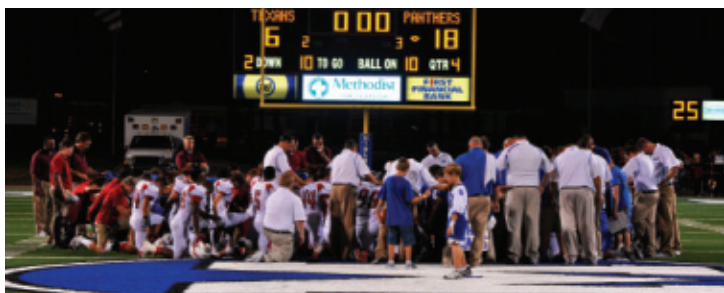
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The community shares in the excitement of MHS's Homecoming Parade and roots for the team at the Homecoming football game. From top left: The MHS cheerleaders ride in a carriage during the homecoming parade; fans cheer as the MHS football team rides by; the Panthers take the field; Gage Winsor celebrates with his coach after an interception was run back for a touchdown; after a great win, the Northwest football team joins in for a prayer.



*TXI Midlothian Cement employees play for the Venus Community Library's summer reading program end-of-year session.*



*Midlothian resident Kaitlyn Lucy reaches for a winning serve against Cambridge.*



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# HANDCRAFTED *Tales*

— By *Alana Williamson*



The very pregnant bride with a rifle-carrying father was set for her big day. The groom, however, wore running shoes for a quick getaway. With the preacher behind a pulpit and two Red Hat Society members as witnesses, the wedding party was complete. What makes this scene even more unorthodox is that the characters are all dolls created by Wouida Thurman. As with all of her dolls, Wouida crafted them with great detail. The bride, for example, carries a bouquet of flowers and has a white wedding dress and matching veil.

Wouida has been sewing all her life. Twenty years ago, she began sewing her own dolls, and what began as a necessity for Wouida, 81, has now become a rewarding pastime. “I’ve been



sewing since I was 6 years old,” she said. Wouida’s mother, who made clothes for the family, taught her how to sew. She began sewing her own clothes as a teenager living in Dallas. Years later, at the encouragement of a co-worker, Wouida took a course on porcelain doll-making and joined a local fiber artists club. After some hesitation, a fellow club member convinced her to try making cloth dolls. “I immediately thought of Raggedy Ann dolls, and was a bit snobbish about the idea.”

It did not take long, however, for Wouida to perfect her own unique style of cloth dolls for adults to enjoy. She makes her own patterns and each one of her dolls has a story of its own. Another character, Parachute Pete, has a fear of heights that is evident by the look of shock that Wouida painted on his face and the wild hair she sewed on his head. Wouida also has several Halloween-themed dolls, including witches. She created one witch using green fabric for its body and added a black dress and purple knitting thread for its hair. Since no witch is complete without a broomstick, Wouida created a matching green stick horse using a tree branch. She often uses creative ways to arrange her doll sets. In this case, she placed two pearl-





headed stick pins through both of the witch's hands to hold the horse in place. At a glance, the pin heads appear to be rings on the witch's fingers.

Wouda can sew a simple doll in less than an hour, but more elaborate patterns take up to 10 hours to complete over the course of several days. "Most of the time, I work in stages for really complicated dolls," she said.

There are six stages to Wouda's doll-making process. First, she decides what type of doll she wants to create, which in the past included unique characters, such as ballerinas or leprechauns, and a variety of animals, including horses, turtles and cats. "I usually make my own patterns. Sometimes, it takes several tries to get the perfect one," she explained.

Next, Wouda chooses fabric for her doll from her extensive collection. She has organized her fabric choices into a book and assigned a number to each pattern. That number corresponds with numbered boxes of fabric in her attic.

## She makes her own patterns and each one of her dolls has a story of its own.

The next two stages involve sewing and stuffing the doll. For stuffing, Wouda uses fiber fabric fill that she purchases at craft stores. She admitted that this is the most labor-intensive part of the process. "I have special tools, but a pencil eraser works well for stuffing smaller parts, like the arms," she said.

Wouda sews hair on the doll for the fifth stage. She prefers to create a wig, using yarn, artificial hair or knitting thread, and then stitch the wig onto the doll's head. "You can make hair out of almost anything."

To complete her creations, Wouda adds clothes and facial features to personalize each doll. She has the option of sewing, stuffing or painting on doll's clothes. Wouda also uses paint for the doll's face, if she chooses not to embroider it. She proudly displays her finished pieces in her workshop where

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she often entertains guests with the stories of each of her dolls. "My friends like to come out here and see what I'm working on," she said.

When Wouida and her husband, Ralph, built their home in Midlothian 47 years ago, her current workshop was a barn that housed their animals, including cows and chickens. "I was always messing up the table and the house, so I asked my husband if I could have the barn to work in," Wouida said, remembering the remodeling period. "I would love to pass along my knowledge to others," she added.



In addition to working on dolls, Wouida, a retired accountant, also enjoys making clay beads and clay pots. Her family, including a son and a daughter, is very supportive of her hobbies. Her daughter even joined in the family tradition. "I taught my daughter how to sew when she was young, and now she is a better seamstress than me," Wouida laughed.

Wouida's instruction has also extended outside the family. She had the unique opportunity to share her cloth doll expertise to the same fiber artists club that helped introduce her to the craft decades ago. She hopes to continue creating and storytelling for years to come. **NOW**

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# A Date With a Horse

— By Betty Tryon

Picnic basket stuffed with food? Check! Ice chest brimming with cold drinks? Check! Folding chairs and blankets for a long day? Check and double check! Horse? A horse is not usually one of the items you take with you when leaving for a whole day of family fun. However, if you belong to the Midlothian Saddle Club, this day is all about you and your horse. Shanna Horton, a member of the club, recalls many fun days of riding and friendly competition with friends and family at the arena. She stated, “The Saddle Club is a group of families. We have a district playday where every month we ride six single events and three team events. Not every family is there to compete. There are all different riding levels. Some people are there to learn to ride a horse or to learn how to communicate with their horse; some are training horses and some come to just enjoy themselves.”

The club is a member of the National Association of Riding Clubs and Sheriff’s Poses (NARC&SP) which has different districts throughout Texas. According to NARC&SP, all districts and clubs are bound together by a common goal of



“promoting good horsemanship and good sportsmanship in a family-oriented environment.”

In the spirit of promoting good horsemanship, Shanna explained, “We have events such as barrel racing and flag races. Some of the events are speed events where you are doing the event as fast as you can. With the flag event, you ride and grab the flag out of the first barrel and then you have to put it in the other barrel. Accuracy is important. The Pony Express event is a relay race with a bag. One member rides around the arena and passes off the bag to the next member who rides around the arena. It is a speed event and riders of all ages

**“On playday, everyone cheers everyone else on, not necessarily for winning but for communicating with the horse and finishing successfully.”**

and ability participate in it.” Other events are trail rides, the parade and drill teams. Shanna said, “We have drill competitions with synchronized riding. Synchronized riding can be challenging. You have to watch and know where you are supposed to be and you have to gauge your speed.”

Most of these activities take place on playdays, which are very important to the club. “Playdays are a way to raise money to support the clubs,” she explained. “They start in the morning and last until 10 o’clock at night. You don’t have to stay for the whole day. On playday, everyone cheers everyone else on, not necessarily for winning but for communicating with the horse and finishing successfully. That may be just making a correction where they messed up before; they ride it again and fix it. The people there are encouraging. You like to win, but the No. 1 thing is having a good time. It teaches teamwork and with teamwork comes wanting your teammates to do better.” The club holds open playdays where anyone in the community can come, bring their horse and ride.

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of time with your horse and enjoying the interaction. Shanna started riding when she met her husband in high school. "Horse riding is recreation; it's relaxing, and it's exercise. It's all of that in one. Horses are remarkable animals and very compliant. They have big hearts and are compassionate. They can teach us as much as we teach them. A good horse is not going to want to hurt you. Horses can read the rider. Some horses you can put an adult on who knows how to ride very well and in an event, for example, they'll run because they know what to do. Not all horses are that way but some are."

Shanna and her husband, Darrell, wanted their children to enjoy the benefits of horse riding and competition. Each child had a horse when they were growing



up, and they learned how to care for it under their parents' tutelage. "Sports teach kids a lot, and this is just another sport," Shanna said. "Our oldest child got his first horse when he was 3. We taught the kids safety when growing up, for themselves and for the horses. The kids were responsible for feeding them and making sure they had clean water. You have to notice things about them because when they are hurting, they can't tell us. Grooming is a big thing, not so much to make the horse look better, but grooming helps the horse gain trust in you. It also helps you learn about the horse."

The association now allows riders to be sponsored. A family member who is not a member of the club can now participate under the sponsorship of a club member and ride their horse. Shanna stated, "It is a great event and we want to share it with others. You don't have to be a good rider to participate. It's for anyone, and you can make lasting, lifetime friendships." **NOW**



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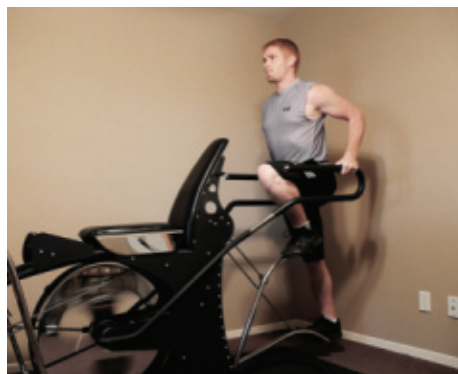
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### From left:

Jon and Becki Gilliam, owners of Temple Wellness Studio; Robyn Trog works out using equipment-based Pilates; Jared Trog utilizes the ROM 4-minute Cross Trainer.

## Keeping the Temple Fit

Becki Gilliam uses her faith-based, wellness philosophy to help others. — *By Betty Tryon*

This is for everyone looking for a magic bullet for achieving good muscle tone and expending energy to burn hundreds of calories. And, just to make it all interesting, this has to happen, not in hours per day, but in less than five minutes per day! Meet your magic bullet — the ROM machine! Located in Temple Wellness Studio, the owner of the ROM 4-minute Cross Trainer, Becki Gilliam explained, “The ROM stands for range of motion and is referred to as a four-minute cross trainer because you basically only do four minutes of workout. But within that four minutes, if you are doing your maximum, it is equivalent to an hour or an hour-and-a-half of workout. You have to try it to believe it.”

Although the ROM machine is fun and effective, Becki’s main focus with Temple Wellness Studio is Pilates, which is performed in a different room. Pilates is a low-impact form of exercise that increases flexibility and strengthens muscles. She stated, “The Temple Wellness Studio teaches equipment-based Pilates, which provides greater benefit and is truer to the original Pilates principles. It’s very focused and very controlled. Usually when you think of Pilates, you think of a mat class. That’s what is taught in the gyms. Here it’s one-on-one training. I can watch your whole body and make sure your alignment is correct. Basically, it’s a rehabbing program, but it is also strength training



and fitness. Some of the main benefits of Pilates are core strengthening and long, lean muscles, so you're not getting bulk but flexibility. You can also deal with back and arthritic issues, because we are controlling and balancing the whole body. For example, if you overwork the front of your leg, that is going to throw your hip and everything off. So we bring your body into balance."

Another room houses spa services. A large, comfortable, infrared sauna dominates the room. "The infrared sauna provides soothing heat, radiated directly to the body to assist in relieving muscle tension and pain, excreting toxins, relieving stress and helping with weight loss," Becki stated. She also noted, "Infrared saunas are frequently

**"In I Corinthians 6:19-20, it talks about how your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, and He wants you to glorify Him in the body."**

recommended by medical professionals to relieve pain and even prevent illness." One of the ailments the sauna helps is fibromyalgia. Becki is trained in a technique called Bowen therapy that is a muscle-balancing system. The technique is performed on the massage table, although it is not a massage. It is "a bodywork system that stimulates the healing process by activating the body's natural ability to heal itself."

Becki has her Temple Wellness Studio in her home because it gives people an alternative to gym life and offers privacy. "I just want people well, functioning and enjoying life," she stated. To her, wellness is a spiritual goal as well as a physical one. She said, "In I Corinthians 6:19-20, it talks about how your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, and He wants you to glorify Him in the body. We emphasize the whole deal of developing a stewardship mentality in caring for the body. To me, it's how can I get to functioning in my life better. God knows how many days we have; we don't. We can't add years to our lives, but we can add life to our years. We can live a better life with the choices that we make." **NOW**

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# I Believe in You

— By Betty Tryon

knows their students well enough to sense it, understand it and say, 'I still love you.' That is what those teachers did for me."

Dee's insight into the emotional side of the student is one of the things that made her such an effective teacher and now an administrator. "If you're a great teacher, you wear a lot of different hats. One of those is you are a mother or father figure. You're a mentor, amateur psychologist and all of that contributes to making a great teacher. I feel like it's a calling. It is a hard job, but you're reminded of why we are really here when we make those connections with kids. My number one thing with my staff is making that connection with kids. If they feel like you believe in them and you care, they can do great things."

Dee understands the high stakes involved in treading the minefield of a teenager's fragile ego. She said, "Between fifth and ninth grade[s], so much of a child's self-image for life is forming, and we have to remember that when a 12- or 13-year-old comes to us upset because their best friend is now not talking to them or their boyfriend broke up with them last period. It is traumatic, and it can feel as if the whole world is crashing around them. If you love middle school and have a heart for it, then you understand that and validate the kiddo. After listening and validating, you provide tools and strategies for the next time it happens. What can you do differently, and how can you deal with it? We have to remember that their tool bag for life is only 12 years old. That is why part of our mission statement is about helping kids with the physical and emotional changes they go through in middle school."

As part of her duties as principal, Dee has the privilege of

How do you know if you really have what it takes to lead those sometimes maddening, sometimes charming, adolescent students standing on the gateway of maturity? Well, if your idea of a pleasurable escape is to go to the cafeteria during sixth grade lunch period just to watch them, that could be a sign that you do. Dee Arterburn, principal of Frank Seale Middle School (FSMS) fits the definition gladly. "It's fun at middle school! When I have a day when I am inundated with the business of running a school, going to watch the kids reminds me of why I'm here. They are so vastly different. In sixth grade, they are making Fu Manchu moustaches with their sandwiches. Seventh-graders are starting to be interested in the opposite sex, and they have lots of things going on. Eighth-graders are sometimes too cool for school. They are *so* ready to go to high school."

Dee's love for the students equals her passion for teaching. When she was in high school, two teachers demonstrated both of these concepts to her and ignited her desire to become a teacher. She recalled, "They made a dramatic impact on my life. They loved teaching and were so caring. They made all of the students feel special. I wanted to make that impact on students. Students have their own set of needs. You have to have an educator who realizes that and who



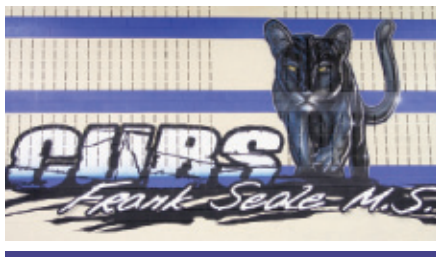


## Education **NOW**

hiring and introducing new teachers to the school. One of the things that is important to her is a teacher's heart for the students. She explained, "It is an expectation that the colleagues have with each other. Great teachers have that innately. When I look at interviewing, I look at character. I can train them for what goes into teaching, but if they don't have a heart for teaching, I can never develop that. I can never give that to them. That comes from within."

In keeping with that spirit, Frank Seale Middle School takes the extra step of recognizing the excellent teachers who have taught there through a visual tribute. Displayed on the walls at the school entrance are the names of the Ring of Honor honorees. Dee stated, "The Ring of Honor highlights the people with true hearts who gave to kids and brought their best every day. That is a reminder constantly to the faculty and students."

Dee actively encourages parents to come and be involved at the school. This school year they will focus on



improving communications with parents by reaching out through technology. Dee acknowledged, "We want to make sure that our parents know that it is an open door and never to feel that they can't come up here." There is a welcoming attitude for parents to come with their questions and to help by volunteering. At Frank Seale, there are many opportunities for that because of the many varied interests for middle school students.

"Middle school is a time for extra interests such as band, choir, student council, chess club or skateboard club. It's the time to find a niche," Dee said. "They start finding their path here in middle school. We encourage them to get involved because, as our motto says, 'Everyone is someone at FSMS.'" **NOW**

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# In The Kitchen With Mark Cleveland

— By Adam Walker

Mark Cleveland is a hunter and fisherman, who works as a sheet-metal fabricator. He learned to cook as a boy at the deer lease and now enjoys grilling and down-home cooking. He also keeps his mother-in-law's recipes alive since his wife and sister-in-law convinced her to pass on her secrets for holiday dressing and potato salad to him. He likes to

invent his own recipes, but also gets ideas from family, friends and the Food Network. "Sometimes, I taste something at a restaurant," he said, "then I make it at home, adding what I think it needs." He flavors his brisket with his "secret spice," which he will not reveal. He has gone through as many as 11 briskets in one day at Ovilla Founders' Day. **NOW**



## BRISKET TACOS

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Mark's "secret spice" (You will have to make do with your own favorite seasoning!)

**Flour tortillas**

1. Prepare the smoker with hickory wood.
2. Wash the brisket and place it on the smoker, fat side up. Cook at 250 F to 275 F for 20 to 24 hrs., until tender.
3. Slice and chop the brisket.
4. Sprinkle with seasoning.
5. Place in flour tortillas.
6. Serve with Mark's homemade hot sauce.

## HOT SAUCE

**1 extra-large onion**

**6-8 Roma tomatoes**

**2-3 fresh jalapeño peppers**

**Olive oil**

**1 Tbsp. garlic salt**

**1 tsp. black pepper**

**Cilantro, about a handful**

1. Peel and slice onion into thick slices.
2. Place onion slices, whole tomatoes and whole jalapeños on a cookie sheet and drizzle with olive oil. Sprinkle on garlic salt and black pepper.
3. Place all items on a hot grill until you get a little black on all sides.
4. Place grilled vegetables and cilantro in a food processor and blend.
5. Add more salt, if needed.

## STUFFED BANANA PEPPERS

**8 large sweet banana peppers**

**2 jalapeño peppers**

**2 tsp. olive oil**

**3/4 cup chopped onions**

**2 medium-sized, ripe tomatoes**

**2 1/2 cups of Monterey Jack cheese, grated**

**8 slices of bacon**

1. Preheat oven to 400 F.
2. Slit each banana pepper lengthwise. Gently scrape out the seeds and wash.
3. Slice jalapeño peppers in half lengthwise, scrape out the seeds and trim stems away. Mince the jalapeños into very small pieces. Set aside.
4. In a small skillet, heat olive oil. Add onion

and minced jalapeño; cook just until onion is translucent. Remove from heat and set aside.

5. Peel tomatoes and remove seedy pulp. Finely dice the remaining "meat" of the tomato.

6. In a small bowl, mix the grated cheese, tomato, onion and jalapeños. Stuff each banana pepper with mixture.

7. Wrap each stuffed pepper with a piece of bacon from top to bottom, and secure bacon with wooden toothpicks. Place peppers in a greased casserole dish and bake for 30 minutes, or until bacon is crisp. Or, even better, place on foil and grill.

## VENISON WRAPS

**Back strap or steak**

**Garlic salt, to taste**

**Black pepper, to taste**

**Swiss cheese, to taste**

**Jalapeño peppers, sliced**

**Bacon**

1. Slice meat into 1/8- to 1/4-inch thick and about 1 1/2-inch wide strips.
2. Sprinkle each piece with garlic salt and black pepper.
3. Place cheese and peppers on one end of the meat and roll up.
4. Wrap bacon around the rolled meat and stick with toothpicks.
5. Place on tin foil and cook on grill (or in oven), until done.

## RE-BAKE POTATOES

**4 large baking potatoes**

**Cooking oil**

**4-6 strips of bacon**

**1/2 cup green onions, chopped**

**1 cup sour cream**

**1 cup cheddar cheese**

**4-5 dashes of Louisiana Hot Sauce (or to taste)**

1. Rub potatoes with cooking oil, wrap in foil and bake at 350 F for 60 minutes, or until tender when pierced with a fork. Allow to cool. Cut potatoes in half lengthwise and scoop out pulp. Be careful not to tear potato skins.
2. Fry Bacon, until crisp.
3. Place potato pulp in a large bowl and add bacon, green onions, sour cream, cheese and hot sauce.
4. Place mixture back into potato skins.

5. Bake at 350 F, until warm.

**NOTE:** Instead of using large potatoes, small red potatoes can be substituted making a great appetizer for parties.

## EASY MEXICAN CASSEROLE

**1 can mild enchilada sauce**

**1 can cream of chicken soup**

**1 medium jar picante sauce**

**1 pkg. corn tortillas**

**2 1/2 lbs. ground meat, browned**

**1 medium onion, chopped**

**1 lb. grated cheddar cheese**

1. Combine enchilada sauce, soup and picante sauce.
2. Place a ladle full of mixture in the bottom of an 8 x 11-inch casserole dish.
3. Make layers starting with 6 tortillas, then meat and onion, sauce and cheese.
4. Continue layers, until all ingredients are used, ending with cheese.
5. Bake at 350 F for 25 minutes.

## APPLE DEW

**1-2 Granny Smith Apples**

**1 pkg. crescent rolls**

**1 stick butter**

**3/4 cup sugar**

**5 oz. Mountain Dew**

**1 tsp. vanilla**

**Cinnamon, to taste**

1. Peel and core 1 apple. Cut into 8 equal slices.
2. Wrap each apple slice in a crescent roll.
3. Melt butter in microwave and add sugar, Mountain Dew and vanilla.
4. In a 9 x 13-inch casserole dish, add a small amount of liquid mixture to bottom. Add crescent rolls and dust with cinnamon.
5. Cut second apple into small pieces and place around dish, for extra apple (optional).
6. Bake at 350 F for about 30 minutes.
7. Serve hot with vanilla ice cream.

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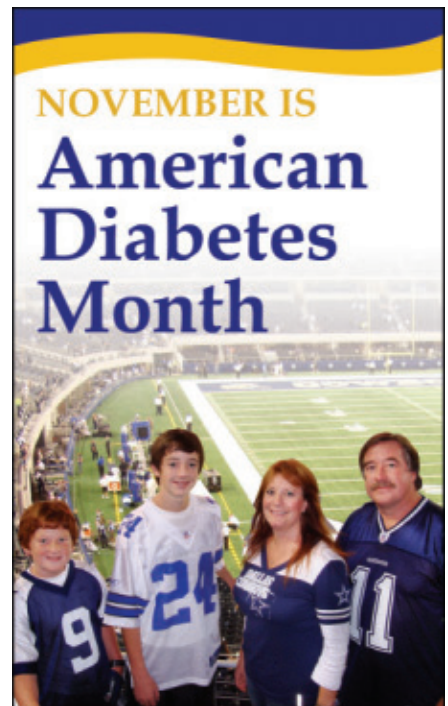
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# Breast Cancer Awareness

— By Betty Tryon

The list no one wants to be on is endless. You cannot be rich enough or famous enough to escape it if you have it. Christina Applegate, Elizabeth Edwards, Amy Mickelson and Sandra Day O'Connor can attest to that. Their names are only a fraction of the numbers of people with breast cancer. Thankfully, many famous people have willingly shared their stories in order to bring more awareness to the subject. Here is a sobering fact for you — more than one in four cancers is breast cancer. Besides skin cancer, it is the most common cancer in the United States. It is so common that even men can fall prey to this disease. Richard Roundtree the actor and former Massachusetts senator Edward W. Brooke can attest to this.

Because of the prevalence of breast cancer in our society, the media swamps us with information regarding it all year. Nevertheless, October is the official month of Breast Cancer Awareness. This month, there will be an increased effort in helping people become aware of what they can do to better their odds at preventing this disease or for early detection to increase their chances of survival.

Becoming aware is your first step; action is the second. Do your monthly breast self-exam. Information about how to do it properly is literally at your fingertips. Do not neglect getting your yearly mammogram. Plan to have it done in a location near you. Yes, it might be a hassle, and sometimes uncomfortable, but invasive cancer will cost you far more hassles and the uncomfortable part is off the chart. Become aware of what your community has to offer for free or minimal-fee testing. Investigate your family's health history and discover your risks. Educate yourself about the proper diet, lifestyle choices and medications that can increase your risks. Discuss your concerns with your health care provider to determine the best course of action for you. Be your own best advocate for your health care!

Get the word out! Communicate to family members and friends the importance of being aware, and encourage them to take the necessary steps for their health. If you can, donate to reputable organizations that seek to meet the needs of those diagnosed with this disease. There are many opportunities to make a difference. Organizations that further the

research of this disease are critical, but they need your help to find a cure. Breast cancer can be a frightening diagnosis, but knowledge is power. Improve your odds of survival by arming yourself with all the proper tools to fight this disease. **NOW**

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





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## Happening **NOW**

### First and Fourth Mondays

School Board meeting: 6:30 p.m.

### Second Monday

American Business Women's Association Great Visions Charter Chapter — Midlothian meeting: 6:30 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center. Cost: \$15. Our program will be "Business Budgeting" by Debi Choate. Guests are welcome! For ABWA membership information and to RSVP, contact abwainfo@gmail.com or (972) 723-0017.

### Third Monday

Ellis County Aggie Moms meeting: 7:00 p.m., Waxahachie First United Methodist Church, 505 W. Marvin, Waxahachie. [www.elliscountyyaggiemoms.org](http://www.elliscountyyaggiemoms.org)

### Fourth Monday

Creative Quilters Guild of Ellis County, 6:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m., Waxahachie Bible Church, 621 Grand Ave., Waxahachie. "Brown Bag" Guest speaker Darlene Williams will speak on "Putting the Pieces Together."

### First Tuesday

The Midlothian Area Historical Society meeting: 7:00 p.m., Community Room, Citizens National Bank, 310 N. 9th St., Midlothian. [midlothianhistory@hotmail.com](mailto:midlothianhistory@hotmail.com)

### Every Tuesday

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

GED Class: 6:00 p.m., Meadows Library, located at Midlothian High School.

### Second and Fourth Tuesdays

Midlothian City Council meeting: 6:00 p.m. at City Hall, 104 West Avenue E.

### Third Wednesday

The Ellis County Christian Women's Connection, monthly luncheon: 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Waxahachie Country Club, 1920 W. Hwy. 287 at I-35 East (Exit 401B), Waxahachie. Cost is \$13, inclusive. 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) no later than Sunday, October 17.

### First Thursday

ABWA — Empowering Women Express Network monthly meeting: 6:00 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center, 1 Community Circle, Midlothian. Please RSVP at [www.abwa-empoweringwomen.org](http://www.abwa-empoweringwomen.org) for more information.

### First and Third Thursdays

Midlothian Lions Club meeting: 7:00 p.m., Midlothian Civic Center, 224 S. 11th Street. For information, call (972) 775-7118 or to RSVP, call (972) 723-0017 or e-mail [julia\\_mainplace@sbcglobal.net](mailto:julia_mainplace@sbcglobal.net).

### Every Saturday Through October

The Midlothian Downtown Farmers Market, MISD Multi-Purpose Stadium. Held in conjunction with the Fall Festival on Oct. 16, 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. If you are interested in being a vendor, please contact the Midlothian Downtown Business Association at (972) 441-4501 or visit [www.midlothiandba.com](http://www.midlothiandba.com).

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# Happening **NOW**

## October 2

First United Methodist, Midlothian's annual Lord's Acre festival, all day event. Featuring "Hearts to Hands" country store, church wide garage sale and bookstore with books, magazines, CDs etc. Turkey dinner with all the trimmings: 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. followed by an auction. Contact Pam Lowe at (214) 392-0204 or e-mail plowe2110@sbcglobal.net.

## October 9

Sardis United Methodist Church's Lord's Acre celebration: 10:00 a.m., 640 Sardis Rd., Midlothian. Crafts, games, homemade items. Barbecue brisket lunch: 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Live auction: 1:00 p.m.

## October 16

The Midlothian Chamber of Commerce's Annual Fall Festival: 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Midlothian ISD Multi-Purpose Stadium, 1800 S. 14th Street at the Highway 287 Bypass. Vendors, bounce houses, petting zoo, food and entertainment. Call (972) 723-8600, e-mail info@midlothianchamber.org or visit www.MidlothianChamber.org for more information.

## October 19

WRC Pregnancy Center of Ellis County's 15th Anniversary Dinner: 6:30 p.m., Creekside Church on Highway 287 between Waxahachie and Midlothian. Guest speaker: Laurie Westlake. Tickets are complimentary, but reservations are required. Call (972) 938-7900 or (972) 878-0784.

## October 22-24

Waxahachie Community Theatre presents *Fiddler on the Roof* starring Jerry Ellis as Tevye and Leslie Everett as Golde, Chautauqua Auditorium, Getzendenan Park, Waxahachie. Tickets \$12 and \$10 at the door. www.waxahachiecommunitytheatre.com. October 22 and 23: 7:30 p.m. October 24: 2:30 p.m.

## October 29

The Midlothian Downtown Association's Downtown Trick-or-Treating: 4:00-6:00 p.m. If your business would like to participate, please call (972) 775-2151 for details.

## October 29-31

Arts Festival at Lighthouse Coffee Bar, 1404 N. 9th Street, Midlothian. Join us for three fun-filled days of visual arts, music and crafts. For more information, call (972) 723-JAVA (5282).

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