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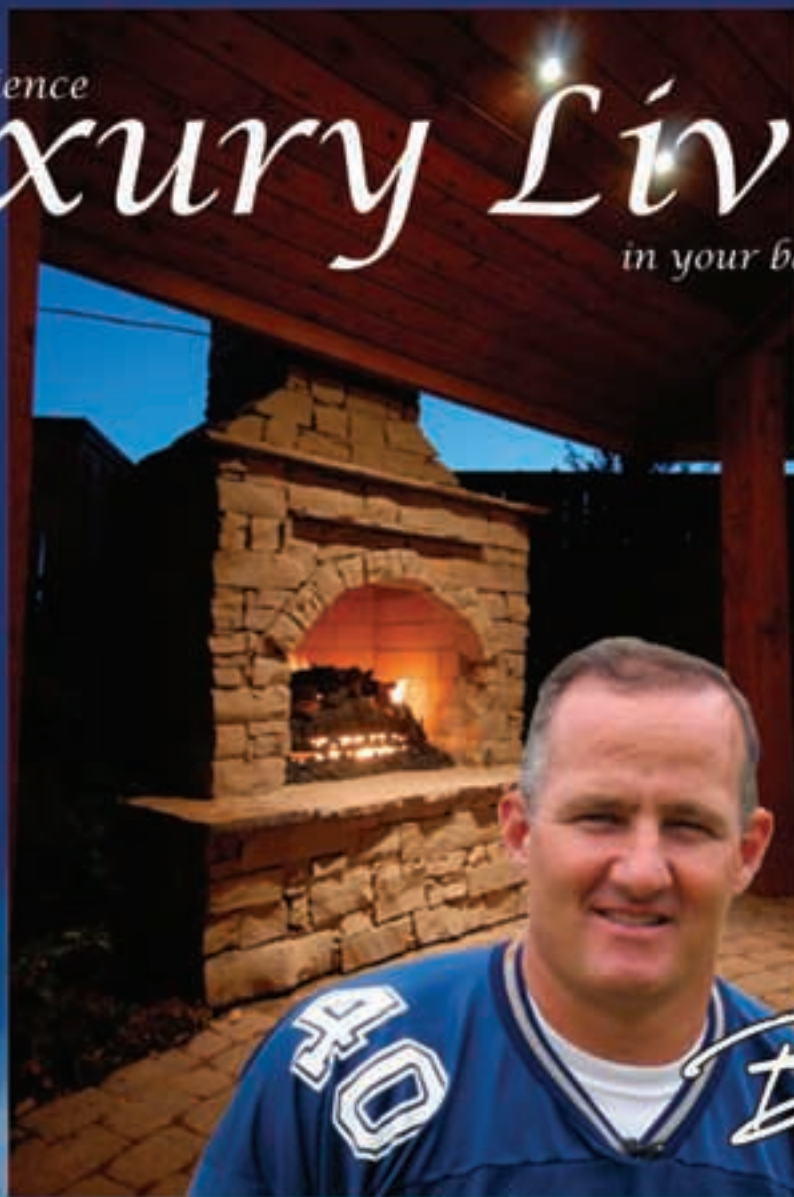
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Frank Guy's pride and joy is
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Waxahachie NOW

Editor's Note

Happy New Year, Waxahachie!

Are you anything like me when it comes to making resolutions? My intentions are always good when I tell myself I am going to eat healthier. Then the temptation of a Snickers candy bar always seems to get in the way. As I take another yummy bite, I console myself by saying, "There's always next year!"

Waxahachie students will once again ring in the New Year with style and tradition. The fourth annual Jazz Café, hosted by the Waxahachie High School Band, will be held at the Waxahachie Civic Center on Saturday, January 31, from 6:30 - 10:30 p.m. Catholic Schools Week is celebrated nationwide throughout the last week of the month. The theme for this year's event at St. Joseph Catholic School is "Celebrate Service." The weekly schedule includes career day, helping a local charity and wearing pajamas to school.

Get yourself a front row seat and enjoy, laugh and be blessed!

Sandra McIntosh
WaxahachieNOW Editor



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Recycling Made Easy

— By Sandra McIntosh



“Going green”

in Waxahachie is more than wearing the colors of the Waxahachie Indians. It is cleaning up an entire community, one neighborhood at a time.”



Recycling has become a way of life for many in today's society. Some decided to “go green” because they like to be on the cutting edge of anything new, while so many others recycle as a way to keep the world functioning efficiently for generations to come.

“Going green” in Waxahachie is more than wearing the colors of the Waxahachie Indians. It is cleaning up an entire community, one neighborhood at a time. “We’ve been recycling in Waxahachie for several years,” said Sonny Wilson, the city’s director of environmental health. “The solid waste plan that is currently in place has included recycling from the start.”

Like most cities, the plan includes curbside garbage pickup

twice a week. All residents have scheduled days of the week depending on their location. The city of Waxahachie included big, green recycling bins in its plans. “Everything recyclable can be dropped into one of these bins that the city provides its single-family residential customers,” Sonny explained. “There is no separation needed when recycling glass, paper, plastic, tin and aluminum,” Amy Hollywood, community relations manager, added. “How much easier can it get?”

The partnership between the city of Waxahachie and IESI, the outside company which handles the city’s waste, began in October 2001 and runs through 2011. IESI does all the pickup, separating the solid waste and trash from the recyclables, thus the reason for different pickup days for different items. One day they will pick up trash and garbage items from the curb, the next pickup day on that particular route will also include emptying the green bins. “The city-sponsored program not only allows each resident the opportunity to recycle,” Sonny stated, “it also offers the city a way to track all solid waste disposed.”

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The residential plan has already proven to be an excellent solid waste management plan when it comes to diverting items which do not need to end up in area landfills. One good example, especially during this time of year, is brush removal. "Residents accumulate a lot of brush throughout the year as they do yard clean up around their homes," he said. "They can put brush out and IESI will pick it up along with the other trash, separating it from the items that will end up in the landfill." Sonny also said IESI allows each resident a four-time-per-year limit on brush and tree limb pickups, included in the contract they have with the city.

The old landfill on Lions Park Road is used for this type of trash — the type which can be turned around and used again in the same yards where it first originated. "The site has even been given a name," Amy noted. "It's called

"Anytime we can reuse and recycle, it saves space in the landfills. Saving space allows the landfills to last longer and operate more efficiently."



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the Citizens Convenience Station."

During the summer months, the city hires a chipping company to come in and mulch all the brush that has been dumped at the convenience station. Then the mulch is available to the residents of Waxahachie at no charge. It has become a full-circle, win-win situation. There are set times for mulch pickup and there is a front-end loader with an on-site operator to help residents load whatever mulch they need. The city has so much accumulated mulch that putting a limit on the amount each person can take has yet to pose a problem. "We always have mulch," Sonny laughed. "It's just in different stages of breakdown. Some will be

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Prior to joining Waxahachie Surgical Specialists, Dr. Graham practiced as a General Surgeon in the United States Air Force. He served in Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, during which time he was awarded the Air Force Achievement medal. He also received the Bronze Star medal for both his service in Iraq and for establishing a field hospital in Kyrgyzstan.

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good for flowerbeds, while some that's even more decomposed would make great mulch for a garden."

The expense of running such a facility could be astronomical if it were not for the citizens of Waxahachie. "A \$3 charge is included on their monthly water/garbage billing statement," Amy said. "It's this money that keeps the Citizens Convenience Station operational." The station can also make the necessary arrangements for larger drops that include, but are not limited to, hot water heaters and old tires.

Amy also stated that the city receives lots of calls from area apartment complexes. Apartment dwellers have a



desire to do their part in "going green," too. "Right now," Amy explained, "they have to come out to the station and deliver their own recyclables."

Businesses also have the same opportunity to recycle, but getting the process started is handled differently. Whereas single-family residents express an interest in recycling to those at the water department, businesses must go straight to IESI in order to get the recycling plan implemented. "They must call IESI and get a working contract in place before recyclables can be picked up," Sonny said. "And I'd be glad to help any business get on board."

The rules are more stringent with businesses, because they handle a vast

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array of items not found or used in residential areas. A good example is scrap metal. "IESI will negotiate the best deal," Sonny explained further. "Other companies can also be enlisted in picking up from area businesses, but several stipulations must be followed when using a company other than IESI."

Right now in Texas, land is plentiful, so much so that landfills are cost-effective. "As we grow, we will eventually run out of land," Sonny said, referring to what is already being experienced on the East Coast. "Anytime we can reuse and recycle, it saves space in the landfills. Saving space allows the landfills to last longer and operate more efficiently."

As simple as the recycling program is, there are still very strict guidelines in place, which residents must follow to make sure items make it to the convenience location and not into the area landfills. "One great example is paper products," Sonny claimed. "Paper must not be wet. Pizza boxes are not recycled because of the grease they retain from the pizza and also because they are glued together." When recycling plastics, be sure to rinse out all plastic bottles such as milk jugs and soda bottles. Remove all caps and lids before flattening the container as much as possible. A good rule of thumb is if the lid screws on, it is considered a bottle for recycling. Aluminum cans which have been rinsed out and flattened when possible are also acceptable items, as are glass bottles and jars of all colors and office computer paper.

Items that are not to be placed in the residential trash or recycling bins include batteries; oil, grease and other lubricants; liquid paints; chemicals and pesticides; tires; and appliances such as refrigerators, air conditioners, toasters and microwaves. Knowing what can and cannot be recycled at the curb takes the guessing out of the equation. "Waxahachie is doing a real good job," Amy said. "Thirty percent of curbside pickups are actively participating in the program. In fact, we are double the national average." 



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Living *in Harmony*

— By Jaime Ruark

A wrought iron gate in the outskirts of Waxahachie opens onto a winding driveway, leading to a beautiful country home where easy living and green living go hand in hand. Frank and Robin Guy are perfect examples of how taking steps toward conserving our natural resources can lead to a low-maintenance, enjoyable lifestyle.

Frank is a retired physicist. He moved from Los Alamos, New Mexico, in 1991 to work on the Superconducting Super Collider (SSC), the particle accelerator being built in Waxahachie. He found the house that would become his home, a four-bedroom, three-bath, 2,500-square-foot oasis built by Jimmy Reavis out in the country. After marrying Robin, a nurse and teacher, who describes herself as a “professional volunteer,” in 2001, he offered to move back to town, as Robin was not accustomed to the country life. “Frank said he would sell his classic car collection and get me a new house,” Robin recalled, “but I said, ‘No, I’ll just redo this one. You have to keep your cars.’ Plus, I just really fell in




At Home With Frank and Robin Guy



love with this place.” That compromise has led to a warm and friendly home, and has turned Robin into a true country girl.

The Guys’ easy banter and camaraderie with each other makes them a joy to be around. Sitting in their living room with the white walls and comfy brown leather couches bathed in warm sunlight from the four large windows facing the backyard, the jokes flew between the two as they recounted the remodeling Robin has done. “This room was all dark green carpet, with no skylights and really heavy draperies on all the windows and dark paneling everywhere,” Robin shared, as Frank interjected comically, “Beautiful paneling,” and Robin agreed, “Maybe 20 years ago!” It took Robin a few years to remake the room into the bright and open area it is now, or as Frank laughed, “It took her that long to convince me to do it.”

Another remodel Robin has worked on over the years is transforming what was previously the back porch into a sunroom, which she then transformed into the current exercise room. “It was a lovely sunroom, but I thought, oh, the plants don’t need this lovely sunroom! So now we’ve got the treadmill, the bike and the NordicTrack, which Frank had to stop using as a clothes rack, and

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the exercise ball and everything in there,” she said with a mischievous glare in her husband’s direction. “So now there’s no excuse not to exercise!” Laughingly hanging his head, Frank admitted, “She exercises religiously, but it’s more, um, sporadic for me.”

While the couple may have opposite ideas on some things, their two styles come harmoniously together with their decor. Frank, who served as a lieutenant colonel in the Air Force for 22 years as a physicist and aircraft navigator, has traveled the world, accumulating many keepsakes along the way. Reds and golds accent the pieces Robin described as, “an eclectic conglomerate from around the world.” From the Chinese writing tables and the bronze Buddha statues



in the formal dining room to the African giraffe and bookends in the living room, given to Robin by her niece, and the Philippine masks hanging in the garage, each foreign object with its own special story, finds a home here.

The garage is also home to a favorite hobby for both Frank and Robin, who are members of the Classic Car Club. Four cars reside in the building, three completely restored by Frank. “We take them on road trips and we’re in parades. We always have two of them

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in the Waxahachie Fourth of July parade," Robin said. A 1919 and 1932 Packard and a 1941 Cadillac shine in their antique glory, waiting to be taken out for a spin, while the fourth, an Alpha Romeo, is awaiting his caring touch as a present to Robin. "Packards have a little, dated plaque on the dashboard that tells when they were delivered to the dealer," Frank explained of his "Bluebonnet," the '32 Packard with its rumble seat. "Much to my delight, after I bought this car I found out it's just exactly one month younger than me."



The backyard is an oasis, with 10 acres stretching back, full of trees and even a little park area, where the couple had their wedding reception. Plants and flowers cover the pool area in blooms during the warmer months, and a hanging swing and table under the porch makes a perfect spot for outside meals and get-togethers. A myriad of bird houses and feeders ensure the Guys are surrounded by nature. "There was a lot of talk about a lack of honey bees this year," Robin noted. "We must have had them all here. The two sage bushes out front practically vibrate, buzzing because they're so filled with bees."

With pride, Robin credits her husband with much of their environmentally friendly home. "Frank is the one who has all

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these neat ideas about how to make everything energy-efficient. We have a saltwater pool, so you don't have all that chlorine and all those chemicals," Robin pointed out, explaining that their fiberglass pool requires almost no maintenance. The Guys also installed an ozonator, an environmentally friendly and cost-effective zero-emission machine that purifies and oxygenates water using ozone gas, in their hot tub to cut down on their use of chemicals.

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Solar panels on the roof of the house provide a natural, cost-free way to heat the water for their pool. "The solar panels heat the water and then dump it into the pool. Last year, we were still swimming in November," Robin said, "and if we have sunny days, we can usually start up again in March." Frank added, "It's all free, too, once you just make that first initial step, the initial cost for the equipment."

Frank's next step to making their



home environmentally friendly was to research rainwater reservoirs, thanks to the sound advice of Arlene Hamilton. "We found out that our plants were not doing well on tap water," he noted, "because the water out here has a really high alkaline content." As Robin's resident "computer genius," Frank researched online to solve their problem. "He found a reservoir in Waco, so we went down there in the truck and brought back this huge tank," Robin



recalled of the tank with its system of gutters that now sits to the side of the house. "Now we water all our plants, even the bedded and potted plants, with rainwater."

Easy living and living green — two integral parts of Frank and Robin's world — truly come together in harmony at their house in the country. They live life naturally, and as Robin expressed, "We just love it out here. It's beautiful." **NOV**

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Leaving a Legacy

— By Amanda Madden Pitt

noticed the way the light refracted uniquely across the surface of matter. Always, he was thinking as an artist, and to this day, he still feels a sense of purpose when he paints.

Ron also remembers art lessons with Ralph Baker, a mentor and his childhood teacher. Techniques foundational to Ron's work include: capturing light, subtleties and depth. "I was in an egg phase for a while, because my teacher would say, 'If you can paint an egg and make it jump off the page, you can paint anything.'" For nature scenes, Ron said, "You start with the sky and move out from there — from infinity forward."

Sunsets are of special importance to Ron, and one scene he will never forget came the morning after sniper fire during the Vietnam War. "We were in the jungles and there was the body of a soldier on each side of me," Ron said. "We were taking them back to be buried and the enemy

spotted us." The platoon had to lie on the ground to avoid being shot by bullets that cascaded above.

It was monsoon season, and all night water poured over them like little rivers. Ron prayed hard not knowing if he would survive. He fell asleep and woke up to someone standing over him. As he lifted the hood from his eyes Ron saw something he will never forget. "A ray of light pierced through the clouds like it was from heaven," he said. A rescue team had found them, literally buried from neck to toes in mud by the rain. The enemy had lost sight of them during the night. To this day, the penetrating Vietnam sunrise

"My earliest memories are of my grandmother's house in Louisiana. It was lifted up off the ground with a space big enough for me to crawl underneath," local Waxahachie artist Ron Gibson said. His mom asked then-5-year-old Ron what he was doing under there. He replied, "Just drawing the things I saw today." These drawings were done in the dirt with a stick.

When riding in the car as a child, Ron observed the outside world, taking in the way the clouds moved, noting their depth and variation of color. He was interested in the difference between gasses and solids and their movement. Even then he

ARTS NOW

influences Ron's work.

While Ron was a corpsman with the Force Recon Marine attachment, he shared his artwork with his fellow Marines. "I would use permanent markers sent from home to draw whatever they wanted on their helmets and flak jackets," he reminisced. "It was a fun way to bring normalcy to a stressful time. They started asking for me by name."

Although his work contains "pieces of himself," Ron said he also draws inspiration from tapping into the creativity of his clients, and fitting their ideas together like puzzle pieces to create one-of-a-kind masterpieces.

**"A ray of light
pierced through
the clouds like it
was from heaven."**

His artistry is truly an expression of his soul. To those he serves, Ron is a designer, inspirational guru and artistic consultant. "The process of making creative ideas come to life is so rewarding," Ron said, and gathering a palate of information leads to signs, murals, paintings, car and motorcycle detail and basically whatever people want or have imagined.

Ron's career in art began before the days of graphic design and computerized sign making. He still uses antique brushes, some from gray squirrel hair and others more advanced, like his airbrush. You name it, Ron does it — by hand. He uses various techniques to develop a worn or rustic look, and to simulate surfaces such as metal, wood and other textures. He creates show displays in Las Vegas, signs throughout the metroplex and personalizes pieces for a wide range of individuals, including friends and family. He can draw any

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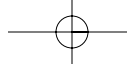
scene he sees or that has been described to him and blow it up to any scale.

As a businessman, Ron caters to the creativity of others, but his personal style goes back to the techniques of the 1930s and '40s. Antique looking signs and car detail were his specialty in the '80s, when he owned a successful business called Gibson Sign Studio. Much of that work remains throughout the Dallas/Fort Worth area today. Ron and his wife, Diedre, reared their only



child, Stephanie, in DeSoto where they lived for 27 years. After selling Gibson Sign Studio in 1989, Ron developed Gibson Creative Art, where he creates each piece himself. Diedre, whom he lovingly calls his sponsor, has been the vice president of a well-known credit union and now works as a consultant in software implementation.

When asked his greatest source of inspiration nowadays, Ron said it is leaving pieces of himself to his family — leaving a legacy. He recently completed a hanging mural for his grandson, Austin's, bedroom wall. It is a beach scene, with sky, sun and clouds, his favorite subject matter; but more than that, it is a piece of Ron that will surely remind Austin of the legacy left behind when we dare to follow our dreams — a legacy that will no doubt last a lifetime. **WAX**



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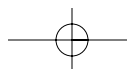
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Closed Doors Open Windows

— By Sandra McIntosh



Matt Daniels grew up in a household where basketball was the family's sport of choice. His best recollections are of his mother and father as they rooted for two different NBA teams, the Dallas Mavericks and the L.A. Lakers, respectively. One might think Matt would have a favorite team with all this competition growing up, but he does not. "I do have a favorite player though," he quickly stated. "I really like Dwyane Wade [of the Miami Heat]."

Matt feels certain his passion for basketball was influenced by these endless hours in front of the television. Growing up in Duncanville, Matt did not have the opportunity to play organized basketball, so he played daily in his own backyard. "That was until I was finally able to take it to the court," he said, referring to his first game as a high school student at Gospel Lighthouse Christian Academy in Dallas. "I was so happy and excited to be on a real basketball court. I also learned a lot about life skills during that time, too."

He learned the importance of building trust with his

team members, understanding that as a guard, his main responsibility was to keep his opponent from scoring. "I also learned to be a leader on the court," he added. "I wanted to be the one the guys followed, so I always rose to the occasion." He was dedicated and hardworking, continually practicing to better his skills.

Following high school graduation, Matt was recruited to play basketball for Southwestern Assemblies of God University (SAGU). He spent four years under the close tutelage of Coach Jerry Boone, while also earning a bachelor's degree in education. He played both guard and forward, but remembers the majority of his time in uniform as a guard. The life skills, which had successfully seen him through high school, were the same life skills he lived by in college. "I always wanted to keep up with the best," he noted, "or be the best."

This never-give-up spirit earned Matt several awards which include SAGU's defensive player of the year award his


Sports NOW

sophomore and junior years, and the co-MVP honor and second team all-conference title his senior year. Matt attributes his success on the court to hard work, discipline and mutual respect for his teammates and coaches.

As college graduation became a reality in May of 2008, Matt realized he needed to find a job. The positions he holds now as the intramural sports director and assistant basketball coach at SAGU were an answer to prayer. "I knew I had a calling on my life to teach," Matt explained, "but I also wanted to coach." The assistant basketball coach took a job elsewhere that same summer, leaving the door wide open. All Matt had to do was walk through it. "Coach Boone wanted me to fill the position," Matt remembered, "but when it was first offered it also meant being the assistant soccer coach and being in charge of some fundraising. I prayed they would offer something different, especially since I do not know anything about soccer and even less about fundraising."

Once again, Matt learned firsthand how answered prayer can change a life; how quickly a window can miraculously open following a closed door. "My prayers were answered immediately," he enthused. "I was reminded again of the power of prayer. I not only got the job of my dreams here at SAGU, I also teach geography, U.S. history, government and economics three days a week to high school students at Waxahachie Preparatory Academy."

Matt wears several hats, each with their own set of responsibilities. As the intramural sports director, he coordinates a schedule of games for those students at SAGU who are not enrolled in the athletic program. "I helped design a program that keeps them healthy," he said, "as well as active." As a high school teacher, he relates to his students in the same manner he wants them to relate to him — by mutual respect.



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Sports NOW

"Respect is reciprocal," he explained further. "Respect between a teacher and his students causes a positive learning experience."

When talking about his responsibilities as the assistant basketball coach, Matt becomes almost animated. Granted, he remains calm, soft-spoken and focused, but there is a hint of excitement in his voice. "I encourage the players physically,




"I encourage the players physically, as well as spiritually."

as well as spiritually," he said. "I push them the same way Coach Boone pushed me. My job is to push them to their full potential, but my main goal is to make sure each of the players has a personal relationship with the Lord."

Matt spends a great deal of time correcting poor playing habits players picked up while in high school, stepping up a sometimes mediocre defense and keeping his team grounded, while at the same time teaching when to take the "dunk" if and when the opportunity presents itself.

Right now, Matt is enjoying his full life. Upcoming plans include marrying his fiancée, Kelani Keoho, and one day earning his master's degree. Regardless of what the future holds, Matt's philosophy of "God first, family second" will remain unchanged. **NOW**




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People Helping People

— By Sandra McIntosh

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Children usually follow in the footsteps of their parents when it comes to choosing an insurance company. Such has

been the case over the years with residents of Waxahachie and beyond. “We have third- and fourth-generation customers,” Joanna explained. “Children just want to follow the family members before them.”

ECIA takes great pride in distinguishing itself from the direct insurance companies available. When calling their office, conveniently located at 116 N. Rogers Street, you will not hear an automated voice asking you to push a specific button. Whether calling ECIA for new insurance coverage or to file a claim, you will talk to a person qualified to meet your needs from the start. “I’ve always said a claim can make you or break you,” Joanna stated. “When calling our offices about a claim, there is always someone available who can talk to the customer directly.”

As Joanna continued to speak about claims and the importance of great and timely customer service, Lisa Guthrie Gardener and Kirk Davis, the company’s account executives, both nodded their heads in agreement. “It’s a scary time for the customer when a claim needs to be made,” Kirk said. “People need someone to talk to.” Lisa contributed her work philosophy as she said, “We need to know when to talk and when to listen. We also need to show compassion.” They all agreed they may start out as an agent or adviser, but nine times out of 10 they become friends with their clients.

Business NOW

Lisa and Kirk both reside in Waxahachie. Lisa moved to the area at the age of 4 and Kirk "got here" as a fourth-grader. Between the two of them alone, they have 23 years of valuable experience selling both commercial and personal insurance policies. As agents, they consider it an added bonus to live within the community they serve. They also take great pride in offering individuals, whether they are homeowners or business owners, exactly what they need when it comes to insurance coverage. They are able to pull from a vast number of companies that are available to them.

Lisa specializes in commercial transportation, while Kirk finds his niche with area churches. ECIA handles almost every type of insurance a person could need or want, but the three they deal with the most are the policies pertaining to home, auto and commercial customers. When sitting down with a new client, Lisa and Kirk go over all coverages available, making sure not to oversell. "People hate insurance until they need it," Lisa stated. Lisa and Kirk's main goal is to round out the account, while making sure each client has the coverage they need. A large part of the company's business comes from commercial insurance policies. In fact, they feel that is what sets them apart. "Because of the commercial knowledge we have to offer," Kirk said, "we often get referrals from other local agents."

The staff at ECIA finds great fulfillment in helping people. This personable attitude may very well be the reason for the company's longevity. "The customer always comes first," Joanna interjected. "We're good people serving a community of good people." For more information, please call the office at (972) 938-2801, Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. or visit their Web site at www.elliscountyins.com. **NOW**

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Education NOW

Lifetime of Education

— By Sandra McIntosh

How would you like to be the oldest student in all your college classes? Would you feel out of place or right at home? At 71, Jan Jenkins felt as if she had entered a new dimension. "When I got in my car, I got in the college mode," she said, still smiling at the memory. Putting the worries of the household behind her allowed the trip to the University of North Texas Dallas Campus to be one of peaceful contentment. "I just felt so comfortable, and I got along with everybody," she expressed. "I had a 'buddy' in every class and even made friends with several professors."

Jan has always believed that "you are never too old to stop learning." For Jan, every day has been, and will continue to be, a learning experience. Right out of high school, Jan went straight to college, graduating *magna cum laude* with her associate's degree in dental hygiene from Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1956. She quickly went to work as a dental hygienist in Wausau, Wisconsin, the city in which she was born and reared.

A year later, she married and started having a family of her own. She worked full time until her children were born. "I then started working part time off and on," she said. She continued working part time in Wisconsin, until the family relocated to a small suburb outside Chicago, Illinois. Several years after the move, Jan's life took a drastic change. "After 36 years of marriage, my husband and I divorced," she confessed. "It was a very difficult time in my life."

The divorce forced Jan to get a full-time job. She applied at a school in Illinois, working her way up to the position of secretary, learning everything she could along the way. "I started where I could," she said, vividly remembering the test she took to land the position. "I applied for the job on a basic typewriter," she recalled. Her skills during this one test were so impressive they hired her for the job, but failed to



mention that the office did not have a typewriter. "When I got to the office, all I saw was a computer," Jan stated. She quickly decided it would be worth looking into an enrichment class in computer skills.

During this time of change in Jan's life, Joe Jenkins' life was going through a change as well. "Sometime after his wife's passing, we got together," she said, "and we celebrated 13 years last August."

So many things in her past prepared Jan for the seven years it took for her to earn her bachelor's degree in applied arts and sciences. She is thankful for the secretarial job that forced her to learn to type on a keyboard; otherwise, she feels she never would have made it through college a second time. She also feels that without Joe's encouragement, the journey would have been impossible.

"From the moment we moved to Waxahachie, Joe encouraged me to get involved in clubs within the community," she explained. "He wanted me to expand my horizons right here at home." When the hunger for education raised its head and needed to be fed, Joe stood wholeheartedly behind his wife's decision to return to the classroom.

Education NOW

The list of subjects mastered and classes taken is lengthy, to say the least. The nature of many assignments allowed Jan to use her connections with people and places right here at home. The public affairs and community services class required her to do an internship. "I [completed] my 30 hours of volunteering at The Gingerbread House children's advocacy center," she said. "I took a different class that required students to acquire brochures and pamphlets from community service organizations. I got all mine here in Waxahachie — so many that aren't commonly seen every day."

In her city planning and economics class, Jan had a "very long paper" to write. It included visits to specific places, once again right here within the community. She started the interviewing process at the Waxahachie Civic Center and ended up at the city of Waxahachie. "I found out about buildings, new construction and the upcoming new projects," she added. "I met so many great people along the way."

Other classes she took include, but are definitely not limited to, gerontology, sociology, English, math and child development, as well as what seemed to be a myriad of electives. Her favorite by far was sociology, while math proved to be the one she disliked most. "The lessons I learned from the diversification I came in contact with are the most important," she admitted, referring to the different cultures and backgrounds she was exposed to in relation to her fellow students. "I grew immensely during this whole experience." Jan considers the entire experience to be a privilege.

Looking back over the years she spent commuting to and from UNT, where she also graduated *magna cum laude*, only good memories come to mind. "All my fellow students were wonderful to me," she said. "I don't know if I could ever duplicate those seven years. They were just perfect for me. It was an experience of a lifetime." **NOW**



Around Town NOW



Ribbon cuttings were held at: Buffalo Creek Cowgirls, top left; Beau's Place at Navarro College-Waxahachie Campus, top center; Attitudes Spa & Salon, top right; Curve's, third row left; and Troy Priddle Custom Homes & Estates of Garden Valley, bottom right. Colorful floats, second row left, were a big crowd pleaser during last year's homecoming parade. A groundbreaking ceremony, bottom left, was recently held for Show Biz Cinemas 12-Plex.



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Look Who's Cooking

— By Faith Browning

IN THE KITCHEN WITH HEATHER CHANDLER

ASIAN BEEF AND NOODLES

1 1/4 lbs. ground beef or beef stir-fry strips
2 3-oz. pkgs. Oriental flavor Instant Ramen Noodles
2 cups water
2 cups frozen vegetable mixture (or use a mix of your favorites)
1/4 tsp. ground ginger
2 Tbsp. green onion, thinly sliced
In large nonstick skillet, brown beef over medium heat 10 to 12 minutes or until beef is no longer pink, breaking up into small pieces. Remove with slotted spoon; pour off drippings. Season beef with one seasoning packet from noodles; set aside. In same skillet, combine 2 cups water, vegetables, noodles (broken up), ginger and remaining seasoning packet. Bring to a boil; reduce heat. Cover; simmer 3 minutes or until noodles are tender, stirring occasionally. Return beef to skillet; stir in green onion. Makes 4 servings.

BACON CRACKLE CORN BAKE

6 slices bacon
1/2 cup onion, chopped
2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour

1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. pepper
1/2 tsp. garlic, minced
1 cup sour cream
2 16-oz. pkgs. frozen whole kernel corn, thawed, drained
fresh or dried parsley, chopped (optional)
Heat oven to 350 F. In large skillet, cook bacon until crisp. Remove bacon, crumble; and set aside. Add onion to bacon grease; cook until tender. Remove onion; add to bacon. Drain off fat except for 1 Tbsp.; stir in flour, salt, pepper and garlic. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until smooth and bubbly (about 30 seconds). Stir in sour cream, corn and 1/2 bacon/onion mixture. Pour into 1 1/2 qt. casserole dish; sprinkle with remaining bacon and onion mixture. Bake for 25-30 minutes or until heated through. Sprinkle with parsley.

CHICKEN AND RICE

1 stick butter
1 pkg. onion soup mix
1 cup instant rice
1 chicken, cut-up, skinless
pepper to taste

3 cups water

Melt the stick of butter; add soup mix and rice. Stir thoroughly; place on the bottom of a 9 x 13-inch pan. Add chicken pieces on top of mixture and lightly pepper it. Add water over top of mixture. Bake covered in oven at 375 F for 1 hour. Uncover; let cook until liquid is absorbed.

CZECH CREAM CHEESE ROLLS

DOUGH:

1/2 cup melted butter
1/2 cup sugar
1 tsp. salt
1 8-oz. container sour cream, cool to lukewarm
1/2 cup warm water
2 pkgs. yeast
2 eggs, beaten
4 cups flour

FILLING:

2 8-oz. pkgs. cream cheese
3/4 cup sugar
1/8 tsp. salt
1 beaten egg
2 tsp. vanilla

GLAZE:

Time spent with family and friends is very important to Heather. Her childhood memories of family vacations gave her the desire to produce the same memories for her daughters, Kyla and Kate. Having acquired a new RV will help in allowing Heather and her husband, Joe, to create happy memories. "My husband and I enjoy sharing great getaways with our family," she said. "Quick or long, we can always find something to do."

Sharing most meals as a family is a characteristic Heather established in her home. "Two of the most important traditions in our household are to sit down to dinner as a family whenever possible and to attend church as a family each week," she stated. "We know we have been blessed and we have much to be thankful for." **NOW**

To view more of your neighbors' recipes, visit our archives at www.nowmagazines.com.

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Who's Cooking **NOW**

2 cups powdered sugar

4 Tbsp. milk

2 tsp. vanilla

Heat butter over low heat; add sugar and salt; add sour cream. Put warm water in large mixing bowl and sprinkle yeast over water; mix well. Add sour cream mixture, eggs and flour; mix well. Cover tightly and refrigerate overnight or 8 hours. Prepare filling by combining all ingredients; beat well.

Divide dough into 4 parts. Working with one section, roll out on floured pillowcase or baking cloth to about 8 x 12 inches. Spread cream cheese on one-half of rolled dough. Spread melted-butter on other half of dough. Using your cloth, begin rolling dough from the cream cheese side. Place roll, seam side down, on parchment paper-lined cookie sheet. Repeat above steps with remaining 3 dough segments. Place 2 rolls on each cookie sheet and let rise for 1-2 hours. After rising, slit tops of rolls with knife about 2 inches apart. Bake for 15 minutes at 375 F. Prepare glaze by mixing together all ingredients in a small bowl; add to rolls while they are hot.

MOTHER'S MEATLOAF

This is a favorite of the whole family, especially the kids.

1 lb. ground chuck

1/4 - 1/8 cup quick-cooking oatmeal, uncooked

1 tsp. onion powder

1/4 cup ketchup

1/8 cup milk

1 large egg, lightly beaten

1 heaping tsp. horseradish

1/2 tsp. salt

1/8 tsp. pepper

PASTE:

1/4 cup ketchup

1 tsp. horseradish

1 1/2 Tbsp. brown sugar

1 tsp. mustard

Combine meatloaf ingredients. Shape into one loaf or multiple individual small loaves for faster cooking and easier serving. Place on lightly greased rack in foil-lined broiler pan. Bake for 30 minutes at 350 F for small loaves or for 40 minutes for large loaf. In a small bowl, combine ingredients for paste. Spoon over meatloaf; bake an additional 5 minutes.

TEXAS TURKEY-BEER CHILI

2 lbs. ground turkey

2 Tbsp. olive oil

1 onion, chopped

8 cloves garlic, minced

1 small green pepper, chopped

2 fresh jalapeño peppers less seeds, chopped

1 tsp. salt

1 lb. can tomatoes, chopped

1 6-oz. can tomato sauce

1 can beer, at room temperature

1 Tbsp. oregano

3 bay leaves

1 Tbsp. chili powder

1/2 tsp. crushed red pepper

1 lb. can chili beans

Sauté turkey in 1 Tbsp. of oil; drain well to minimize the fat in the chili. Sauté onions, garlic, green and jalapeño peppers in remaining oil. Combine remaining ingredients; simmer for 3 hours. Remove bay leaves before serving.

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Stretch IRA Trust: How to Maximize Generational Inheritance

— By John D. Hale, Attorney at Law

If you own an IRA (Traditional or Roth), or another qualified retirement account, such as a 401(k) or 403(b), you can make elections that can maintain the tax-deferred status of your IRA over the lives of you and your heirs. This new Multi-generational IRA (sometimes called a "Stretch IRA") can be worth millions to your spouse, children and grandchildren.

With a traditional IRA, you must begin taking the annual required minimum distribution (RMD) at age 70 1/2. Withdrawing only the RMD allows the remaining IRA dollars to grow tax-deferred to the maximum extent possible.

Example: Jack and Jill, both ages 65, have a traditional IRA with a balance of \$250,000 earning 8.00 percent. During their lifetime, Jack and Jill take only the RMD. They have a 45 year old son, Kyle and a 20 year old granddaughter, Laura. Assuming Jack passes away at 82 and then Jill at age 85, Jack and Jill would have received a total of \$355,321. The IRA value at Jill's death would be \$585,288.

Jack and Jill designated Kyle (son) and Laura (granddaughter) as equal beneficiaries of the \$585,288 IRA. Kyle, now age 65 and Laura, age 40, have some important decisions to make.

Smart Decision: Kyle and Laura decide to stretch their IRAs. Now, instead of using Jack and Jill's life expectancies to determine the RMD, Kyle and Laura's life expectancies can be used. This means that less money will be distributed, allowing the IRA to grow substantially. Over the next 21 years, Kyle will receive \$583,114 in total after-tax distributions. Over the next 44 years, Laura will receive \$1,948,520 in total after-tax distributions. Collectively, Kyle and Laura will have received \$2,531,634 after tax.

Not So Smart Decision: Kyle and Laura both take a lump sum distribution of \$292,644 and close the IRA accounts. Unfortunately, they will both have to pay \$89,517 (at a 33.00 percent tax rate) when they file their next tax return. Collectively, Kyle and Laura will receive \$406,254 after tax. (That is less than 20

percent of what they would have received had they simply stretched the IRA.)

If you are serious about helping your children and grandchildren, a Stretch IRA is probably the most effective way to build generational wealth. Stretching an IRA is not automatic, nor likely. IRA beneficiaries almost always make the mistake of withdrawing more than the RMD, thereby losing tax deferral on the withdrawals. In most situations, such as the case with traditional IRAs, the withdrawals are income taxable. This is called a Stretch IRA blowout.

A Stretch IRA blowout most often occurs because: 1) the beneficiary does not understand the rules and choices of how they receive distributions under their newly inherited IRA; 2) the IRA custodian simply sends a check to the beneficiary; 3) a non-spouse beneficiary attempts to rollover the IRA; or 4) the beneficiary is a spendthrift.

The solution is a Stretch IRA Trust. A Living Trust will not work. The Stretch IRA Trust can ensure that the IRA is stretched according to plan. It can also provide protection against your beneficiary's creditors or in the event of divorce. **NOW**

John D. Hale is an attorney based in Waxahachie.

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Health NOW

Going Too Fast

— By Betty Tryon, R.N.

Do you sometimes feel as if your world is moving at a frantic speed? If you looked up the word *hyper* in the dictionary, would your face be there in lieu of words? Everyone feels this way at some point in his or her life, but for those who have hyperthyroidism, their internal speed is taken to the extreme and their body pays the price. The thyroid hormones are in charge of the metabolism of the cells. They determine whether the body has too little of the hormones (hypothyroidism), too much (hyperthyroidism) or produces a normal output.

Hyperthyroidism is caused by an overactive thyroid gland secreting an overabundance of the thyroid hormone. This hormone greatly affects the metabolic rate in the body. While the promise of weight loss with an increased metabolism may be seductive, unfortunately one does not get to pick and choose all of the side effects which come with the disorder. The glut of hormone being secreted into the body manifests itself in many signs and symptoms such as: nervousness and

agitation, excessive sweating, palpitations (rapid heart beat), increased bowel movements, tremors (usually in the hands), insomnia, hair loss and of course — weight loss.

Diagnosis is an easy matter. The physician is initially clued to the possibility by clinical presentation of the person. Blood tests can confirm the diagnosis. The blood tests will test the levels of TSH (thyroid stimulating hormone), T3, T4 and T7. Once the blood tests have confirmed the diagnosis, the physician will want to examine the cause of the abnormality. A radioactive iodine uptake test measures how much of the iodine tracer the thyroid gland absorbs from the blood. Another useful tool is a thyroid scan, used to check the gland's shape, size and the presence of lumps or any other abnormalities.

Treatment for hyperthyroidism can be very effective, and there are several options. Medication aimed at relieving the symptoms is sometimes prescribed. Anti-thyroid drug therapy can be administered to block the production of hormones in the gland. Radioactive iodine proves to be very successful as part of the treatment plan. It works by stopping the function of some of the cells in the thyroid. If the cells no longer produce the thyroid hormone, the symptoms lessen and/or disappear. The most drastic treatment is surgical removal of part of the thyroid. This treatment is usually reserved for those who are not candidates for the other treatments, such as a pregnant woman or those with very large glands. Although hyperthyroidism can be disruptive to everyday life, this disease can be easily diagnosed and treated. **NOW**

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



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Leaves and More Leaves

— By Nancy Fenton

The leaves just keep falling! If you are as allergic to raking as I am, I have some thoughts on what to do with those leaves. The easiest is to run your mower over them with the mulching blade working away. I set the height on the mower one level down from where I usually mow, so it gets all the bits and pieces. Even if you do not have a mulching mower, just block the throw vent or let it spread the chopped leaves for you. These bits and pieces will compost themselves over the winter keeping your grass roots warm and feeding them, too! The mowing part speeds up the decomposition and keeps the bigger leaves from forming a water repellant mat on your lawn and beds.

I do use my rake to pull the bigger leaves from my beds onto the yard so I can get at them with my mower. I do not catch my own leaves, but I do chop and catch my neighbor's

bagged ones to put back on my flowerbeds! I throw them out on my driveway, set my mower down as low as it will go and chop away. The chopped leaves go straight onto the flowerbeds or into an old 30-gallon trash can to end up as part of my compost pile. I have even been known to pick up a few extra bags from good looking (leaf-free) yards around town to put beside my out buildings for future use. If the leaves are bagged, they can be chopped and used any time.

If chopping is not your thing and you want to make compost, try the "bag method." Add one cup of high nitrogen fertilizer (21/0/0) and one to two gallons of water to a black bag of leaves (heavy duty sacks only). Tie up the bag, place it out of the way and let nature work wonders through the winter! The leaves will begin to compost, and can be used come spring on most new beds by digging them in or just dropping them on top. Using leaf compost is important because the leaves themselves contain most of the missing nutrient elements, providing the reasoning that local composts and mulches are the best kind for our plants. Think about the forest and how well it uses its leaves for compost! **NOW**

Nancy Fenton is a Master Gardener in Ellis County.

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January 2009

Community Calendar

Second and Fourth Tuesdays

Get Smart: Strategic Marketing and Research Technologies (formerly Waxahachie Business Interchange Networking) is held from 7:30 - 8:30 a.m. Network with other professionals and promote your business. Bring \$1 entry fee and plenty of business cards. Coffee and pastries will be furnished. Call (972) 937-2390 for location of the next meeting.

January 6

Sims Family Movie Night presents Kung Fu Panda, voiced by Jack Black, Jackie Chan and Angelina Jolie. The animated adventure is rated PG. The movie will begin at 6:00 p.m. at Sims Library, located at 515 W. Main St.

January 8

Dutch Treat Out to Supper with the Senior Citizens of Waxahachie at 5:30 p.m. at local eateries. Call the center at (972) 937-8271 for upcoming location.

January 10

Come celebrate 2009 from 10:30 - 11:30 a.m. during the Sims Library New Year Party. Those attending will make calendar crafts and play party games. Children 2 - 10 are invited along with their adult parents and/or guardians. For more information, call (972) 937-2671.

January 20

Plan to have a fun day trip to Choctaw Casino in Durant, Oklahoma. Buses will leave the Waxahachie Senior Citizen parking lot located at 219 Patrick St. at 8:00 a.m. Bus seat reservations are \$10 for anyone over the age of 21. When the bus arrives at the casino, you will receive a \$10 play voucher good for any game. A \$5 coupon will also be given to use in any of the eateries. All proceeds will benefit the building campaign for the new Senior Center. For more information, call (972) 937-8271.

January 21

The Ellis County Christian Women's Connection will host their monthly luncheon at the Waxahachie Country Club, 1920 W. Hwy. 287 at I-35 East, Exit 401B. The cost is \$13, all inclusive. Nursery vouchers are available. Reservations preferred, walk-ins welcome. To make reservations, please contact either Kay at (972) 937-2807 or Mary at (972) 937-9984, or e-mail Kay at windchime@charter.net no later than the Sunday prior to the luncheon.

January 22

ABWA - Empowering Women Express Network will meet at 5:45 p.m. at the Midlothian Conference Center, located at 1 Community Circle in Midlothian. Please RSVP to Daphne Brewer at (972) 723-6551 or visit www.abwa-empoweringwomen.org for more information.

For more community events, visit our online calendar at www.nowmagazines.com.



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 April 4 - May 25 (Weekends Only)
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