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November 2007

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Photo by Terri Ozymy.

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Publisher, Connie Poirier
General Manager, Rick Hensley
Managing Editor, Becky Walker
Creative Director, Jami Navarro
Art Director, Chris McCalla
Sales Assistant, Jessica Vasquez

Waxahachie Editor, Sandra McIntosh
Contributing Writers, Stephanie Brewer
Ted Echard • Nancy Fenton • Melinda Hines
Mary Pritchard
Photography, Rod Cordsen • Ivey Photography
Sandra McIntosh • Terri Ozymy
Contributing Editors/Proofreaders, Pamela Parisi
Jamie Ruark • Beverly Shay

Advertising Representatives, Carolyn Mixon
Will Epps • Amy Farrar • Lacy Hightower
Linda Moffett • Terri Ozymy • Steve Randle
Terri Yates
Graphic Designers, Allee Brand • Dale Frie
Marshall Hinsley • Arlene Honza • Steve
Koldjeski • Brande Morgan

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MAGAZINE

Waxahachie NOW

Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

This time of year, I find myself taking a personal inventory of all the things I am thankful for — family, friends, co-workers and all those special individuals I have met along the way. The blessings have continued with this month's issue of *WaxahachieNOW*.

Lyle and Ruth Hunt graciously share a heartwarming tale of downsizing in the home feature, while Julia Morrison reminisces about the journey she has traveled with a dollhouse that came without instructions. Bill Covington dresses up in costume to bring history to life; Vance Richardson, along with many volunteers and contributors, humbly breathes life back into the ECYSA, and Donna Young has a passion for helping young women make wise, responsible choices.

While you read, I will go ahead and put the finishing touches on my fall decorating. During this wonderful season of Thanksgiving, I challenge you to go ahead and count your many blessings.

Sandra McIntosh
Waxahachie Editor



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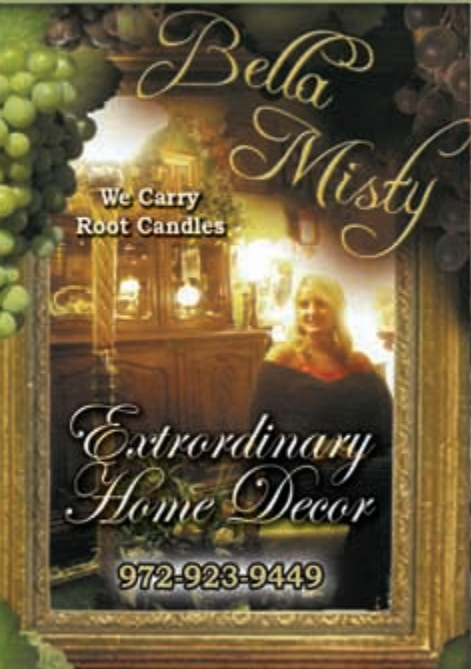
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Remembering Through the Re-enactment

— By Mary Pritchard

Bill Covington, a native Texan born in Fort Worth, holds a bachelor's degree from Texas A&M in anthropology and another from the University of Texas in Arlington in Russian, as well as a master's degree from UT Arlington in history; but none of the above is his best known accomplishment. Bill is best known here, as well as in several surrounding counties, for his Revolutionary War re-enactments.

Bill discovered "living history as an instrument of instruction in the classroom," he said, when he, his wife and young family spent a year in the early 1990s in Illinois. "I took a sabbatical from teaching because I wanted my kids to see what it is like to live somewhere other than Texas. I worked at Wheaton College in the Billy Graham Center, 30 miles west of Chicago," Bill said. "My wife works in fiber arts, and she wanted to join a guild. She found one at a Revolutionary War re-enactment. When I first walked into the encampment, I thought, 'What a great idea for the classroom.' So bit by bit, I began to collect my uniform and equipment."

The uniform of a soldier of the Continental Army is a dark

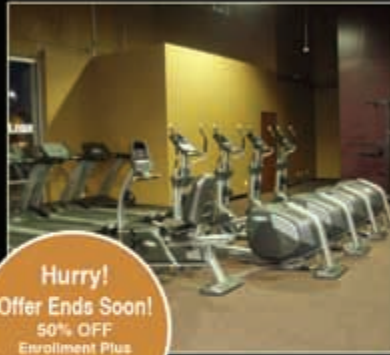


blue coat, mid-thigh-length with red lapels, cuffs and collar. Beneath is a white shirt and white waistcoat (vest). The knee breeches are also white, as are the knee-high stockings worn with low top-buckle shoes. "I keep my hair long specifically for the costume," Bill continued. Most men at that time had long hair pulled back and tied at the nape of the neck."

Period costumes are available in stores, but Bill's wife, June, sews. "She made my shirt and knitted my stocking caps and a pair of mitts," he said. "I buy [other] pieces from friends who work with leather, horn, tin and copper."

The first presentation Bill did was when his son was in fifth grade. "His history teacher wanted me to come to class and talk about the American Revolution," Bill remembered. "When I stepped in the room, I had my musket; there was a collective gasp." Bill told his wife he always wanted to remember that. He had gained their attention. "They had been reading My Brother Sam is Dead. I hadn't read the

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book, but now that I have, I can connect with it," he said. "Every year, the students at a school who saw me last year tell the new class, 'Oh, you're going to have fun when the soldier comes.'"

Initially, Bill only did presentations at schools in Dallas and DeSoto, but he has branched out in the past five years to Bridlewood Elementary

"Living history as an instrument of instruction in the classroom."

School in Flower Mound, as well as schools in Midlothian, Hillsboro, Mansfield and Temple. When Bill does a presentation for school children, he arrives dressed in his 18th century soldier's uniform with his haversack and canteen over one shoulder, a cartridge box for ammo (though he does not bring the ammo itself to schools) and a tri-cornered hat. "I make everything completely accessible to the kids," Bill said. "I spread a blanket over a table and lay out my other equipment: a fake cartridge, so they can see what one looks like; a musket ball, so if students want to pick it up and look at it, they can; my hat, knitted cap and mitts; reproductions of eating utensils and a salt cellar; a tin bottle with cork to hold gun-cleaning oil; a holder for tobacco, a pipe and a wallet from the 18th century; and a pair of lead dice."

Bill added that soldiers of that period frequently made their own game pieces. "I also have a seed from a buckeye tree. Some soldiers were superstitious. They believed that if they carried the buckeye seed in a pocket or in their backpacks, it would ward off rheumatism," Bill explained. This was a common belief of that time; Bill got his off the ground in Illinois. "Another piece of equipment is my fire starting kit," he added. "It consists of a big chunk of flint rock, a U-shaped piece of steel, char cloth



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organizations. Besides those listed, he has been asked to speak at libraries, Kiwanis clubs, to the Sons and Daughters of the Pilgrims in Dallas and to the Colonial Dames in Corsicana and Dallas. He has gone as far north as McKinney, west to Brownwood where he presented a



program at Howard Payne University during their Revolutionary War Days, and also south to Austin, where he spoke to five DAR groups.

Bill is currently an adjunct instructor at Navarro College in Waxahachie where he teaches European civilization. This fall, he also began teaching at Waxahachie's new Global High School. "Global High was funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The focus is on teaching kids technology, science and engineering," Bill stated. "I teach world geography to ninth-graders. We will add a class each year and have our first graduating class in 2011."

Prior to teaching at both Navarro and Global High, Bill taught social studies and ESL at middle schools in the Dallas area for 14 years. His love of teaching is apparent in his love for re-enacting the history of the American Revolution. **NOW**



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Downsized the House, but Not the Love

— By Sandra McIntosh

After rearing their family in a large, two-story house located at 608 W. Marvin Street for over 40 years, Lyle and Ruth Hunt made one of the most difficult decisions of their union as husband and wife. “We came to a place in life where we realized we had to downsize,” Lyle said. For the couple, finding just the right house proved to be a daunting task.

They looked at many smaller homes in the Waxahachie area before finding the two-bedroom, two-bath house they call home today. “When we began looking,” Ruth said, “we weren’t able to agree on anything. When we saw this one, we both instantly loved it. I think the wallpaper is what sold me. I fell in love with it immediately.”



The couple who had the home listed were being transferred to Amarillo. They needed to sell it in a hurry, and Lyle and Ruth reaped the benefits. "The buyers were anxious to sell," Ruth remembered. "We got it for a bargain!"

Downsizing for some couples is as simple as packing up their belongings and moving them from one location to the next. For the Hunts, it took a yard sale, a living estate sale and three garage sales to downsize enough to relocate into a house half the size of the one they had been accustomed to sharing. Ruth, being an avid collector of antiques and other fine things, had several hard decisions to make. "She decorated the new home with what would fit," Lyle explained. "Several items were taken by the children and all the rest was sold." It was a tough time physically, as well as emotionally, for Lyle and Ruth, but they survived. "And we're thankful we moved when we did," Ruth said.

A year following the move, Ruth went in to see her physician. The doctors discovered she had a blood clot in her left leg. Lyle and Ruth both feel the move to a smaller home with only one level came at just the right time. "If we were still in the bigger house, I'm not sure how well Ruth would be




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able to get around," Lyle said, referring to the difficulty she had maneuvering the stairs of their old house over the last few years. "She seems to really enjoy the smaller house."

Lyle also finds enjoyment in the new home. "I don't have to worry so much," he said. "There's an ease of living and a convenience that comes with maintaining a smaller house." The exterior needed some minor work. Once settled, the shutters and trim were painted. The backyard fence was painted a brick red and Lyle planted three rose bushes in the backyard so Ruth could see them from the sitting area of the master bedroom. The red roses, when in bloom, are beautiful, but the yellow roses tipped with pink are magnificent.

Ruth loved the interior as it was and still is, so that proved to be an added bonus. "The inside was perfect," Ruth said, "and it still is. I can't begin to tell you how much I love the wallpaper. Each room is prettier than the one before, don't you think?" The floor in the kitchen was the only improvement made inside the home. "It was a white tile," Lyle said. "It was very hard to keep clean, so we had wood laminate flooring installed."

The light wood flooring adds warmth to the kitchen decorated in one of Ruth's many collections. "She's always loved roosters. She's collected them throughout our marriage," Lyle said, while opening the cabinet to a stack of rooster plates from which the couple eats on a daily basis. "I sold one set," Ruth

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added. "I've since acquired a second set through replacements."

Roosters are definitely not limited to the plates. They peek out from every nook and cranny in the kitchen, as well as the dining area. The roosters and the burgundy and cream wallpaper compliment each other. "Friends and family are always looking for unique roosters for Ruth's birthday and our anniversary," Lyle said, making sure to note that he and Ruth celebrated their 67th anniversary on October 20. Lyle also pointed out a rooster cookie jar and a framed needlepoint picture sewn by Ruth



dating back to 1973. "Look," he said, "she included a rooster."

Several other collectibles are found in the formal living room and the master bedroom. As the owner of Ms. H. Hallmark for 25 years, Ruth was able to acquire special pieces long before she put them on the shelves for her customers. She has an elaborate collection of cranberry glass displayed in an antique curio cabinet. Four soapstone wall sculptures hang above Ruth's collection of Oriental pieces she has acquired over the years. Two unique Incolay plates are placed on the wall above the family's piano, while an antique kerosene floor lamp, once

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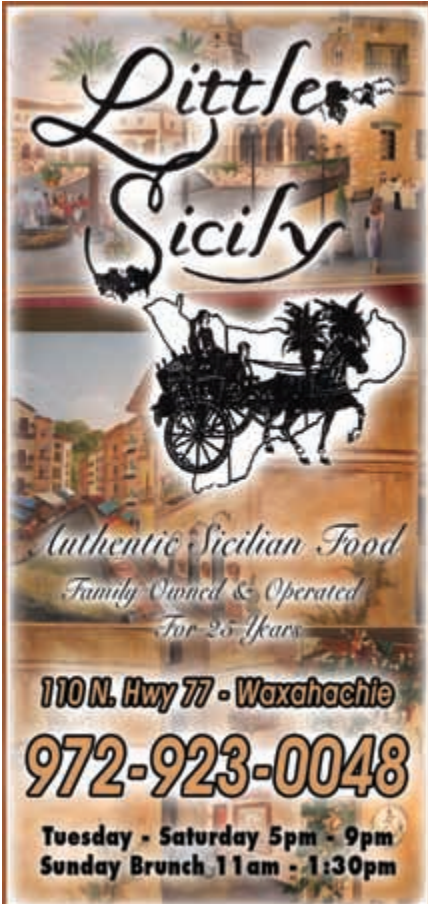
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belonging to Ruth's great-grandmother and now converted to electricity, rests beside a rocker, where many a good book has been read.

The Hunts spend most of their time together in the sitting area of the master bedroom.

Ruth's favorite Precious Moments figurines are displayed on one wall. "The angel on the other wall is from Germany,"

Ruth said. "The mirror behind it once belonged to my great-grandmother. It's well over 100 years old." Not being able to mention everything featured in the home built in the late 1980s, the Hunts wanted to be sure to include the skylight in the master bathroom and the built-in, dresser-like cabinets in the guest bedroom and the den area.



To sit and listen to them reminisce was special. They have fond memories, which go back to their first date. For a couple who began their relationship so many years ago on two small fibs, their love for one another has withstood

the test of time, as well as the need to downsize. "We lied about our ages when we first met," Ruth said, winking at Lyle. "He said he was older, and I said

I was younger." Once they found out that Ruth really was Lyle's senior — only by five years — it was too late. "We'd already fallen in love by that time," Lyle said. "It wouldn't have mattered to either of us anyway." The four-feet, 10-inches of spunk added that she was not going to trade him in for a younger model now, as he said, "I do believe I'll keep her." **WNN**



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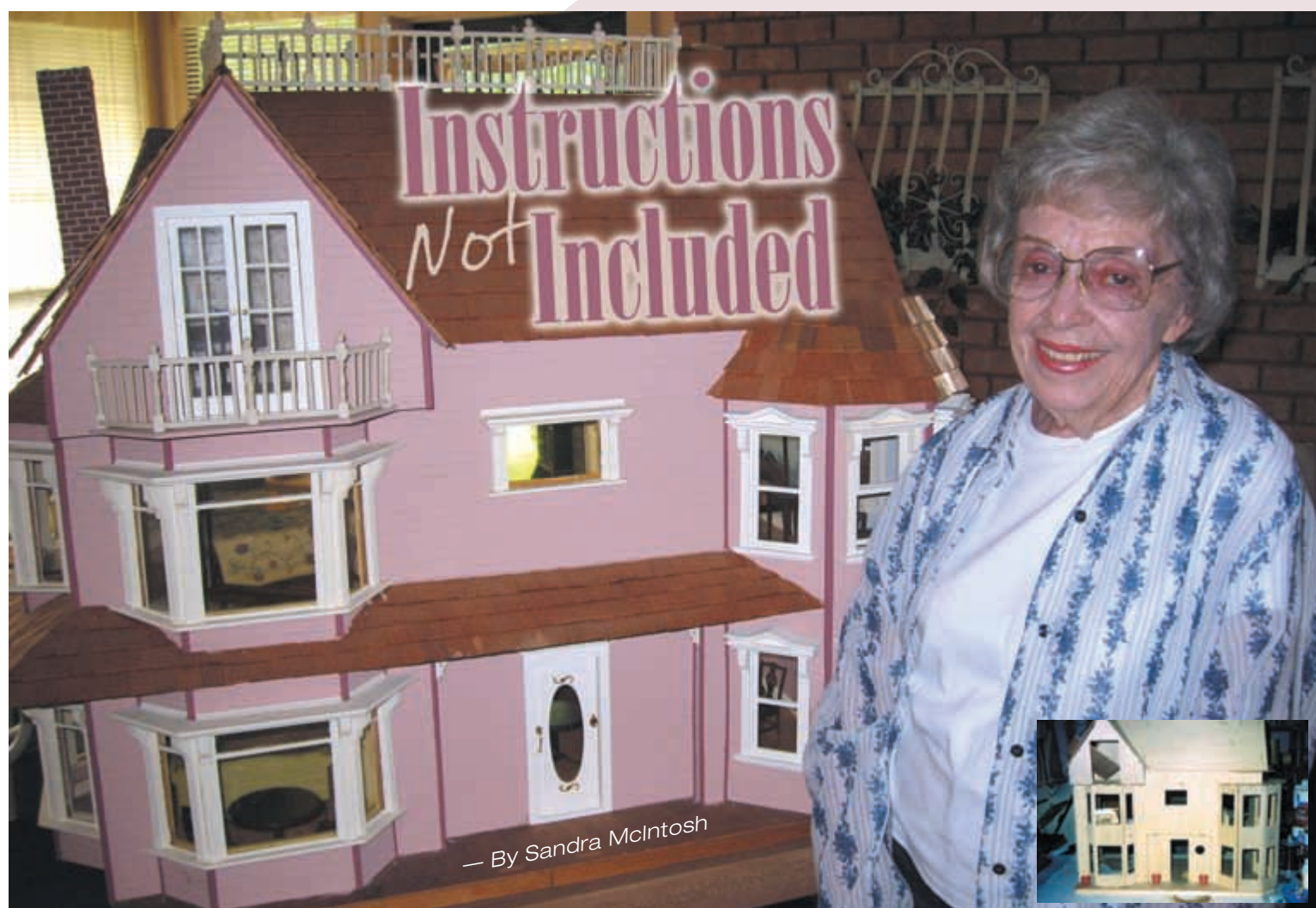
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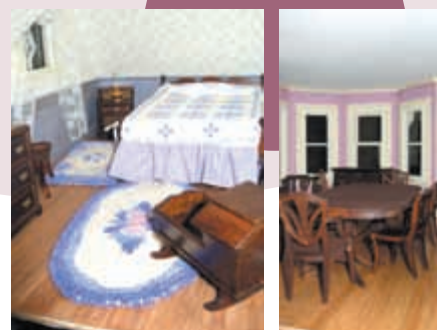


Julia Morrison, longtime resident of Waxahachie, just recently relocated to Maypearl to be closer to her son and his family. Her new home is walking distance from the high school, making it convenient for her grandson, Jimmy Morrison, to come home for his after school snack. When she is not busying herself in the kitchen, she can generally be found in her craft room, diligently working on one specific project that has been years in the making. "I always wanted to play around with miniatures," Julia said. "Back in 1979, I purchased a beat up old dollhouse kit for \$24 from Montgomery Wards just a few days after Christmas. It wasn't just missing half the pieces, it didn't have any instructions either."

Once Julia got the large box home, she quickly hid it under her bed. All she needed was for her late husband, Jim, to see it. "He always teased me about all the projects I have going at one time," she fondly remembered. "He would have said, 'Honey, you're going to have to live to be 2,000 if you ever want to finish everything you've started.'"

The partial kit remained under her bed until 1988. During those nine years, Julia did not forget about her special find. In fact, while rearing her family and working full time, she also collected miniature furniture kits. "Things under the bed started piling up," she said. "It looked like I was collecting junk."

The work on the dollhouse began 18 months after Jim's passing, right in the



ARTS NOW

middle of another, much larger, project. "We had just begun to remodel our home in Waxahachie," Julia explained. "I started construction on 'my house' at the same time I was rebuilding my home and my life without Jim."

To say work on the dollhouse has been tedious and time-consuming would be a correct assessment, but Julia takes it a step further. "It helped take my mind off things and deal with life's frustrations," she said. "I also found it to be relaxing." As the years have flown by, Julia has worked on her



dollhouse off and on. "I'd work for three months," she said, "and put it down for the next seven." Now that she is finally settled into her new surroundings, her intention for the future is to complete her dollhouse. "I'll know it's finished when it's finished," she said. "My goal now is to get one room completely done before moving on to the next."

Do not for a moment think that the rooms in the dollhouse are stark, bare and without color. They all have carpet or hardwood floors with hand embroidered throw rugs. The wallpaper is in place, paint is on the walls and the glue on the miniature pieces of furniture has long since dried. "I had to select the wallpaper before I started building the furniture," she said, referring to the time it took to decide on just the right paper for each room. "Now, I'm working on the smaller, more intricate details."

The chairs in the formal dining room, as well as those placed strategically in the bedrooms have hand-embroidered



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ARTS NOW

seats. The chandeliers have been created from beads that Julia had dating back to the 1960s. The bedding and window treatments are also all handmade. The dollhouse's sewing room has its very own sewing machine; the room's French doors look out to the front of the house. Every single brick in the chimney was carefully placed one on top of another, one individual brick at a time, same as the shingles on the roof. "The staircase was the most difficult," Julia said, referring to the overall construction of her beloved dollhouse. "I had to do the math to make sure the risers were correctly placed before hand-painting every single spindle that makes up the stair railing. Getting them to stay in place so I could set one in after another was hard work."

Julia's travels have played a huge part in her overall design of the dollhouse. She has been able to incorporate the things she has liked along the way in order to personalize her creation. A great example is the widow's walk she added after seeing one during a visit to Kennebunkport, Maine. "I get ideas from things I see in everyday life," she said. "Right now I'm looking for the perfect throw for the baby's cradle, and I hope to one day find a tiny writing pad for the antique desk."

It is truly amazing what Julia has been able to accomplish without the use of detailed instructions. The partial kit she acquired so many years ago only included a few pieces — the main floor, one side panel, the front panel and two separate sections of the roof. She has been the "magnificent miniature carpenter," as she successfully measured, cut and placed all the missing sections. A Japanese saw and mini-miter box made the job much easier. "The dollhouse has become my main priority," said Julia, as she sat down to complete a cornice board and full set of floor-to-ceiling curtains she just started working on. "It's about time to get it finished, don't you think?" **—NOW**



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Faith Slusher joined Trinity Missions of Italy in June 2007. She's a newcomer to nursing facilities. Prior to moving to Italy, she was a college admissions officer and recruiter for a mid-size university. She has stepped into Trinity Missions as Director of Social Services and enjoys serving a population that is sometimes overlooked.



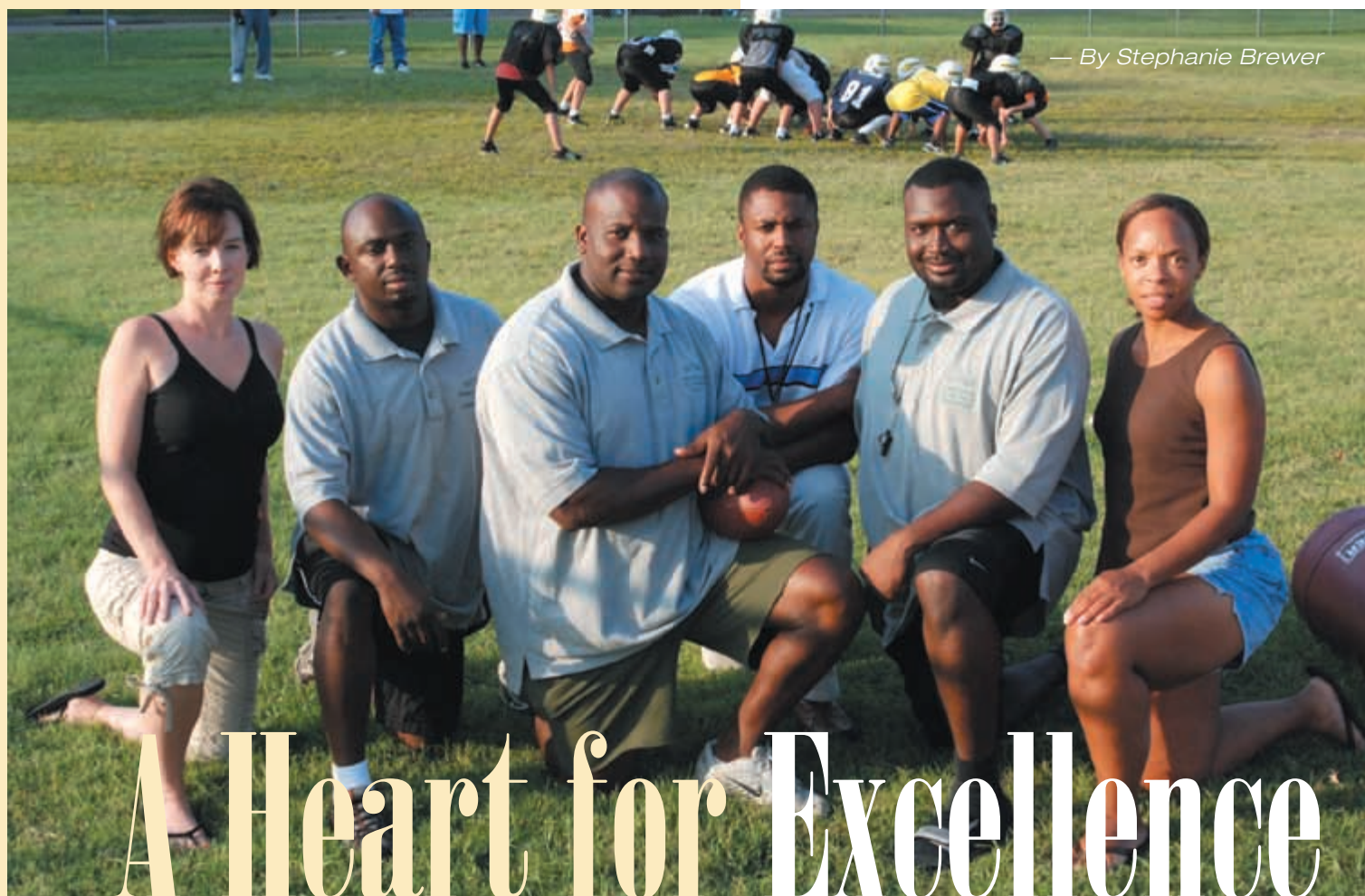
Faith Slusher and Ava Oates, LP

Dr. Ava Oates is a Licensed Psychologist with more than seven years working with Senior Citizens. She is currently employed by Deer Oaks Behavioral Health Organization. Dr. Oates raises horses with her husband on a small ranch in Gatesville.

Life Should Be Worth Living

Sports NOW

— By Stephanie Brewer



Vance Richardson, member of the executive management team of the Ellis County Youth Sports Association (ECYSA), finds that the success of the organization is entirely due to the desire to serve, as well as the commitment and dedication of all the volunteers and contributors. "It's all about men and women who have come with a vision for the change and betterment of each of their own communities," Vance said.

The association's focus is on the development of skills such as discipline, self-control, teamwork, community service and academics. "A positive attitude developed in a child, ultimately teaches them how to be a positive contributor to their community — to really know who they are," Vance said. "They need someone to help them realize

their strengths; we have a strong desire to do this."

Vance continued to describe ECYSA's methods of teaching.

The students are "approached through mentoring, academic tutoring and disciplined coaching in organized play," he explained. "Several of the volunteers are teachers by vocation. They bring a lot to the association." ECYSA has existed since the 1950s, but its



current organizational structure began with the vision and experience of Reggie Levingston, former association president, who assembled a new management team in 2006. Reggie

Sports NOW

had a goal: to establish a foundation of committed, positive leadership that would continue pursuit of their 501c3 nonprofit status with new league directors and a new board of directors. "The accountability and strength of each member is apparent throughout the organization," Vance added.



"It is important to keep the children active and off the streets."

Current enrollment has developed into 12 football teams with 23 players per team and eight basketball teams with eight players per team. "The basketball program was started because of strong interest and need," Vance said. "No other programs like it existed at the time."

Approximately 50 percent of the enrollment comes from low-income families. The association has what they believe to be the lowest enrollment fee in the state. For \$55, a child may participate in an entire season of sporting activities. "The affordable, yet effective, learning environment ... will affect them the rest of their lives," Vance commented.

The ECYSA stresses model behavior, respect and hard work, in addition to community involvement through volunteer work and fundraising. "It is important to keep the children active and off the streets. These methods

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Sports NOW

work,” Vance said. Future goals of ECYSA are to include baseball, track and field and soccer programs. Vance explained, “The heart of ECYSA is to add onto existing organizations such as we’ve accomplished to date by asking, ‘What can we do to make it more successful, more affordable and to build more business and community



support and involvement?”

Vance recalled those who have gone on to greater achievements after participation in the association. One such success story is Brian Waters of the Kansas City Chiefs, who provides a day of free training, school supplies and is the organization’s largest fundraiser. “We couldn’t do it,” Vance added, “without the help and guidance of Coach David Reams, Waxahachie’s head football coach.”

ECYSA offers instruction in each area of activity, beginning with how to set and attain goals. “Observation of, and experience with, many of the youth has proven they may come with little ability to focus,” Vance explained. “They don’t know or understand their strengths. After enrollment and participation, the kids can go from barely passing in school to ... achieving higher-than-expected results in academics and in life. I recall a young player who had been kicked off a team due to what they believed was uncontrollable behavior. This young man, when matched to the right coach, showed positive results. We don’t give up!”

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increased by 20 percent. All volunteers are vetted through a background check and application system before being approved by the board. "We have the desire to take the responsibility and opportunity to build future leaders," Vance said.

The association will implement "no



"We have the desire to take the responsibility and opportunity to build future leaders."

pass, no play" guidelines in the future. Currently, there are individual tutoring and class times throughout the week, along with six hours of practice, two hours of game time and eight to 10 hours per week in fundraising. Coaches, those in other leadership positions and volunteers perform odd jobs such as yard work for donations to the organization. Vance added that volunteers donate anywhere from 20 to 40 hours per week. "We don't see our efforts as a sacrifice, but as a must; a need that can, and will, be met no matter what," he continued. "The positive, forward direction is our only focus."

There is also time spent in "fellowship" with the youth by taking them for snacks or pizza after practices and games. "This imparts a sense of family," Vance said. "We want to take them places through personal mentoring and by example." The ECYSA offers a "contagious" influence that outlasts the four-month season. "We do it for the love of it," Vance said. "We're here because we really care." **NOW**



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Business NOW



Service With a Smile

— By Sandra McIntosh

The staff of Waxahachie Cleaners & Laundry believe in going the extra mile for their customers. Pictured from left to right: Manager Angie Henley, Shirley Henley, Debbie Martinez and Kristie Lara.

Waxahachie Cleaners & Laundry, conveniently located at 112 W. Marvin St., is a great place to work. Just ask manager Angie Henley. "Our number one goal is to keep our customers happy," Angie said. "It's always service with a smile, and I won't settle for less."

Owner Kyle Wilson could not agree more. "Customer service, quality and taking the extra effort to get the job done right the first time is what it's all about," Kyle said. "It's the foundation of the company. I believe it's what keeps customers coming back."

Angie's tenure with the cleaning business, which includes two sister locations in Ennis also owned by Kyle, began over 10 years ago. Initially hired to clean under Kyle's guidance, Angie has been able to work her way up the proverbial ladder. In doing so, she feels better equipped to understand and appreciate her employees. Her experience has proven invaluable in the position she holds today. "I don't mind getting in there and helping," she said, referring to all phases of the dry cleaning/laundry business. "Being the manager doesn't exclude me from making sure the job gets done."

Waxahachie Cleaners & Laundry offers superb dry cleaning services and so much more. Many a pair of blue jeans are

dropped off, only to be picked up starched to perfection. The same also holds true for the wash and fold laundry service that is growing in popularity. "We have several wash and fold jobs a day now," Angie said. "Customers bring their clothes in expecting a quick turnaround and we don't let them down."

Following wishes and personal preferences will almost always insure repeat customers. Whether Waxahachie Cleaners & Laundry uses their own supply of detergent, softener and bleach when taking on a laundry job at 85 cents a pound, or products supplied by the customer, the end result is what will keep bringing them back time and time again. "We'll wash, fold and even hang the clothes," Angie added. "It's whatever the customer desires."

Going the extra mile, Kyle said, also means taking notice of the garments that are dropped off. "If we see a button missing," he said, "we don't hesitate to sew a new one on before the customer returns. It's just one more way we provide customer service that's second to none."

All dry cleaning, starching and laundry services offered can be "same day services," it just depends on the time of day customers choose to drop off. If dry cleaning is brought in by 8:30 a.m., the customer can pick it up that day after 5 p.m.

Business NOW

"The same goes for items that need to be starched," Angie said, "but if customers drop off after 8:30 a.m., then they can pick up the next day when the doors open for business."

Angie realizes that she could not successfully operate the Waxahachie



store without the help of her dedicated employees – Debbie Martinez, Shirley Henley, Haley Buchanan and Jessica Moore. Debbie has been with Waxahachie Cleaners & Laundry since Kyle took over as owner three years ago. "She's my right-hand girl," Angie said. "Her sincere friendliness has set the example the new girls coming on board follow."

Kyle's mantra is simple. He insists on quality and instills that same strong work ethic in his employees, as well. Angie does not settle for anything less either. "My girls must be friendly," she said. "If they aren't happy, I do whatever I can to fix the problem, regardless whose problem it is – theirs or the customers."

When Angie smiles and says she loves her job, she truly means it. "I really do love my boss, my job and my employees," she said. "The customers also make the job so rewarding. They've taught me there are still a lot of nice people out there in the world."

Waxahachie Cleaners & Laundry is open for business Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. - 7 p.m. and Saturday from 8 a.m. - 1 p.m. For more information, please call (972) 937-9288. **WAXAHACHIE**

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Education **NOW**



— By Sandra McIntosh

Donna Young came to WRC Pregnancy Center of Ellis County as the new executive director in March, with 10 years of valuable experience under her belt. She had been working closely with pregnant young women and mothers through Hannah's Ministry, an educational program that was offered through the Texas Baptist Home. Once the home decided to convert back to a full foster care facility, Donna found herself looking for a new place to hang her hat — a new place in which to help young women move forward. "We give them factual information through brochures, videos, classes and Bible studies," Donna said, referring to clients who come to WRC for advice, answers and a safe place to share their concerns and feelings. "Once a relationship is formed, we explain that all options have consequences. We build on that, and they gain wisdom for the future."

WRC Pregnancy Center was established in June 1995 as the crisis pregnancy center for all of Ellis County. The center

was founded by a small contingent of concerned citizens who were seeking to offer support and practical assistance to women by addressing their physical, emotional and spiritual needs with an emphasis on pregnancy. "We do this through one-on-one relationships, support groups, resource contacts

and a large selection of printed material," Donna said. "It's all about offering them options."

Some may know the center under its old name — Women's Resource Center. The name changed in mid-May for a multitude of reasons.

"We wanted to bring pregnancy back into the name since that's where the center's main focus lies," Donna explained. "WRC is an acronym for 'wise, responsible choices.' It's these wise, responsible choices that are at the center of our being, as well as the center of our homes."



Education NOW

WRC is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization, staffed by volunteers. "We are not a medical clinic," Donna said. "It is our purpose to provide women a hope and a future by meeting all their needs through education." The center operates on the generosity of others. Donations pay the bills and keep the facility operating successfully.

**"They are not alone ...
there's still help and hope."**

In fact, Donna finds this the most challenging aspect of her position as executive director. "We have several churches and individuals who give on a monthly basis," she explained. "The resale shop operates solely from donated items and all money made at the shop goes back into the operating budget." WRC relies heavily on the donations received during the annual dinner, as well as through occasional grants.

All services offered through the center are free of charge, and all information shared throughout the process is strictly confidential. Services include, but are not limited to: free pregnancy testing, maternity clothes as available, diapers, baby clothes (up to size 2T), baby care items, baby equipment as available, peer counseling and prenatal education and parenting classes, offered in both English and Spanish. The Earn While You Learn voucher program offers educational opportunities for clients to earn "baby bucks" that go toward the purchase of the items aforementioned. The program also helps clients answer many of their questions, as well as ease feelings of anxiety. "This is a huge thing in teaching clients responsibility," Donna added. "Clients can come in every week to work a lesson; it's really up to them."

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Education

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also known as modules, include worksheets which are answered following a short, informative video on the subject discussed in that particular lesson. Topics discussed include: nutrition, the trimesters of pregnancy, bonding with your baby, how to provide a safe and healthy environment for the newborn, car seat safety and learning how to discipline with love. It is only after completion of each lesson that clients receive baby bucks to help them with supplies along the way.

Donna explained the process from start to finish for clients ranging in age from 14 to 42. "The first trip a prospective client makes is usually for a pregnancy test," Donna said. "We get a short background on them prior to the self-administered test." If the client's test is positive, the next step is for Donna to pair them up with a volunteer client advocate. "It's important to build a relationship with the client," Donna said. "Once they realize they have come to a safe place, grounded in the framework of our faith in Jesus Christ, they begin to share. Once they get comfortable, we discuss options." Active participation in the program is encouraged until the child's second birthday. Many times the client will learn that the pregnancy test came back negative. "In these cases," Donna said, "we still believe in empowering individuals to make wise, responsible choices."

Donna, along with other facility volunteers, teaches them the importance of starting over again by offering them a different set of options. "It's about choices," Donna reiterated. "Fathers come with mothers, husbands come with wives. No matter what path they've walked to get here, we still care. We want them to know that they are not alone by helping them recognize that in a world of confusion and disappointment, there's still help and hope." **NOW**

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Around Town NOW



Several children performed, top left, during the annual Oktoberfest event benefiting St. Joseph Catholic School. A ribbon cutting, top right, was held at Salon 507. The Waxahachie Junior High football team, middle left, leaves the field for half-time. Two more ribbon cuttings were held: Fantastic Sams, middle right and Marie Q Photography, bottom right. Hunter Wernecke, bottom left, enjoys playing with watering cans. Tom McAfee and Beverly Worthington, bottom center, attended the annual Chamber of Commerce auction held recently at the Waxahachie Civic Center.

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Around Town NOW



Vickie Old Crow, Carolyn Mixon and Renee Chase, top left, posed for a photo during the Chamber of Commerce Auction. A ribbon cutting was held, top center, at Mosaic Madness' new location in downtown Waxahachie. Ken Roberts of KBEC, top right, served as the master of ceremonies for the Chamber auction. The Rise & Shine Networking Breakfast, left center, was held at the Waxahachie Civic Center with over 200 in attendance. Miniature golf, bottom right, was a popular event for the children during Oktoberfest. A re-grand opening ceremony was recently held at Splash Auto Bath.

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IN THE KITCHEN WITH DAN SMITH

Dan was in high school when he began trying simple recipes, and now he prepares just about anything. "I am a food network addict," he said. "I follow recipes verbatim the first time and, eventually, start making changes to them."

Dan has taken cooking classes from the Kitchen Store in Arlington and a few Italian cooking classes from Pat Smith (no relation). Dan has several close friends whom he considers his "test kitchen." "I let them try out my creations before I make them for larger groups," he said. While Dan cooks for family and friends, his church has a dinner group that he enjoys, too. "Every quarter we put together new groups of eight, and we take turns hosting dinner once a month," Dan added. **WNN**

ROASTED ASPARAGUS

1 bunch asparagus
2 Tbsp. olive oil
2 chopped green onions
1/4 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. pepper
2 Tbsp. lemon juice
1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Remove tough ends from asparagus. Place asparagus on small baking sheet. Add olive oil, green onions, salt and pepper and toss. Cook at 400 F for 10 minutes. Sprinkle with lemon juice and grated Parmesan cheese.

DRUNKEN CITRUS SALAD

6 cups drained citrus salad mix (buy 2 1-quart

jars orange and grapefruit sections, available in refrigerated section of market)
1 nip or 3 shots of gin
2 tsp. lemon zest
2 Tbsp. finely chopped fresh mint leaves (plus a couple of sprigs for garnish)
2 pinches of salt and pepper

Combine all ingredients and serve immediately or chill for several hours until ready to serve.

AMARETTO GLAZED CARROTS

1 16-oz. bag sliced carrots
8 oz. orange juice
1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. pepper
3 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 stick butter

1/4 cup Amaretto liqueur

Place sliced carrots in a plastic container. Add enough orange juice to cover. Add salt, pepper and garlic. Cover and shake gently. Place in refrigerator a minimum of 3 - 4 hours before cooking. Place butter in a medium-to-large pan, melt over medium-to-low heat. Drain carrots and reserve juice. Add carrots to melted butter; add just enough orange juice to cover. Raise heat to medium. Cover pan and cook one hour. Remove cover and add 1/4 cup Amaretto. Allow mixture to reduce for 15 - 20 minutes. Serve when ready.

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Who's Cooking **NOW**

Kosher salt
2 Tbsp. olive oil per steak
1 minced shallot per steak
3 Tbsp. butter
3/4 cup port per steak
3 Tbsp. honey

Remove steak from refrigerator 2 hours before cooking to bring to room temperature. Mix pepper and salt on a plate; dredge each steak on all sides in the pepper and salt mixture. Preheat oven to 400 F. Heat a large pan to medium-to-high heat. Add olive oil and allow to come to temperature. Add steaks. Once placed in pan, do not move steaks so they will sear. Cook on first side for 2 minutes. Spoon minced shallot over each steak. Turn steaks and sear for two minutes on second side. Transfer steaks to a flat baking sheet and cook in oven for eight minutes. This will result in a medium rare steak. For a higher degree of doneness, extend oven-cooking time. Add butter, port and honey to pan; reduce mixture 8 - 10 minutes. To serve, place a spoon full of port mixture on plate, set steak on mixture.

MEDITERRANEAN SCAMPI

1 tsp. olive oil
5 garlic cloves, minced
2 28-oz. cans whole tomatoes, drained and coarsely chopped
1 cup chopped fresh parsley, divided use
1 1/4 lb. large shrimp (20 - 30 count), peeled and deveined
1 Tbsp. basil paste, can be found in HEB organic produce section
1 cup crumbled feta cheese with basil and garlic
2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
1/4 tsp. freshly ground pepper

Preheat oven to 400 F. Heat oil in large skillet over medium heat. Add garlic; sauté 30 seconds. Add tomatoes and 1/2 cup parsley. Reduce heat; simmer 10 minutes. Add shrimp; cook 5 minutes. Add basil paste. Mix 3 - 4 oz. of feta cheese into shrimp mixture during sauté. Pour mixture into a 13 x 9-inch baking dish, sprinkle with cheese. Bake at 400 F for 10 minutes. Sprinkle with 1/2 cup parsley, lemon juice and pepper. Yields 6 servings, and may be served over cooked pasta or as an appetizer with ciabatta bread toast.

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— By Ted Echard

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have in place may need to be adjusted to make sure you are still headed in the right direction. If you do not have an action plan in place, you may be asking yourself, "Where do I start?"

Consider enlisting the help of your agent or a qualified financial services specialist. Today, several companies offer personalized services designed to help you come up with practical solutions for achieving your financial goals. The important thing is to get started today. The sooner you clarify and prioritize your goals and create a road map for how you will get there, the greater success you will have at achieving what is most important to you. **NOW**

Ted Echard is a State Farm agent based in Waxahachie.

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Health NOW

Surviving Diabetes Requires More Than Just Managing Blood Sugar

For the nearly 20 million Americans living with Type 2 diabetes, monitoring their blood sugar levels is a critical and daily task. While keeping blood sugar numbers in check is essential for managing the disease, paying attention to cholesterol and blood pressure levels is just as important.

According to the American Diabetes Association (ADA), about 73,000 diabetics die each year from diabetes-related complications. Topping the list of complications is cardiovascular disease. In fact, the ADA estimates that two out of three diabetics will eventually die from heart disease or stroke. While cardiovascular disease is a serious and common complication of diabetes, only 18 percent of diabetics are aware of this, according to a survey done by the ADA.

So what is the link between cardiovascular disease and diabetes? Jeffrey Astbury, M.D., internal medicine physician on the medical staff at Baylor Medical Center at Waxahachie said that over time, high blood glucose levels can lead to increased fatty deposits on blood vessel walls, affecting blood flow and increasing the risk of clogging and atherosclerosis (hardening of the blood vessels) ultimately increasing the risk for a heart attack.

"While high blood sugar is indeed dangerous and can cause other complications such as damage to the eyes, kidneys and nerves — unchecked cholesterol and blood pressure levels are even more so," Dr. Astbury said. "Even if a diabetic is meticulous about controlling their blood sugar, they are still at risk for heart disease."

Dr. Astbury said to help prevent heart disease, diabetics should work with their physician to determine the best treatment plan. He recommended the following guidelines:

- Maintain normal blood glucose levels. "Blood glucose levels vary depending on the time of day, what and how much you have eaten, as well as if you have exercised or not, but a 'normal' blood glucose level is in the low to mid 100s."
- Keep blood pressure under 130/80, using medication if necessary. "High blood pressure puts diabetics at risk for heart attack, stroke, eye problems and kidney disease. Have your blood pressure checked regularly if you are a diabetic. It can usually be controlled with medication and lifestyle changes."
- Keep cholesterol levels under control, using medication if necessary. "There is no

way to tell if your cholesterol levels are high without a blood test. It is recommended that diabetics keep their LDL (bad) cholesterol levels below 100 mg/dl, their HDL (good) levels above 40 mg/dl and their triglyceride levels below 150 mg/dl."

- Maintain a healthy weight. "In most cases, weight loss can lessen the symptoms of Type 2 diabetes and in some cases keep it under control without the use of medication."

- Exercise regularly. "Regular exercise is crucial for Type 2 diabetics and it is never too late to start. Exercise can lower your blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol levels and actually increase your energy level."

- Maintain a heart-healthy diet that is low in fat and salt. "Try to avoid food that is high in fat as this can increase your cholesterol levels and anything high in sodium can increase your blood pressure. Try to eat a balanced diet with lots of fruits and vegetables, whole grains and choose lean meats and low-fat dairy. Most importantly, Type 2 diabetics should avoid sugar."

The most common signs of a heart attack include:

- chest pain or discomfort
- Pain or discomfort in your arms, back, jaw, neck or stomach
- Shortness of breath
- Sweating or light-headedness



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"If you experience any of these symptoms, take them seriously and call 9-1-1 right a way," Dr. Astbury said. He added that Type 2 diabetes is manageable, especially if it is detected in the early stages before any significant damage has been done. "Common symptoms of Type 2 diabetes include frequent thirst and urination, weakness and fatigue, blurred vision and tingling or loss of feeling in the hands or feet to name a few. If you suspect you may have Type 2 diabetes, talk to your physician about taking a blood glucose test." **NOW**

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

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Renfro Healthcare Center in Waxahachie has introduced an innovative new treatment for patients who suffer from dysphagia, a painful and often debilitating swallowing disorder.

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"VitalStim Therapy is truly a breakthrough in treating dysphagia", said Sara L. Brianas, MS, CCC-SLP, Speech-Language Pathologist at Renfro Healthcare Center. "Since introducing VitalStim at Renfro, we have seen some exceptional outcomes that probably would not have been possible with traditional approaches to therapy. Patients have shown dramatic improvements in their ability to swallow and have returned to more normal diets - and a better quality of life - much sooner than we've seen in the past. Even patients on feeding tubes have responded well to the therapy".



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Time to Plan Ahead

— By Nancy Fenton

November is here, and we can look forward to some cooler weather for a while. It is time to look at the yard and make some decisions as to what we want it to look like next year. Have you split up those perennials yet? Have you planted those spring blooming bulbs? There is still time to get to it. I like the ones that naturalize, like the narcissi, crocuses and jonquils. I have just enlisted my grandsons' help to put in another 300 bulbs in our natural area across the creek. The boys are a lot closer to the ground than I am!

It is too late to trim back those shrubs and trees, but not too late to

plant new ones. Try some that might be new ones to you, like the possum hall holly or vitex which will survive our hot and dry summers.

The *Farmers' Almanac* is predicting another hot, dry summer for northern Texas. With our changing climate at the poles, it could happen. Bed preparation with shale and compost, plus the selection of plants that can tolerate the heat, will help your landscape maintain the look you want. The trees that shade us absorb 2,250,000 tons of CO₂ per tree each year and produce oxygen for us. Think about planting a tree for every member of your family. Just remember to plant it high, mulch it heavily and give it a weekly watering even through the winter.

Christmas is coming, and if you are already thinking about your gardener friends, order magazines like *Birds and Bloom* (birdsandblooms.com) or *Texas*

Gardener (texasgardener.com). It takes six weeks or longer for the magazines to get it together, so you need to start working on it this month if you plan on giving them as Christmas presents.

It is also the time to take a look at your tools to see if any of them need repair, replacement or general cleanup. As the shorter days approach, a brief swipe with sandpaper and a little oil will make those tools shine and last for another season! The mower can stand a cleanup, blade sharpening and oil and air filter change before it turns cold. Let's pass up the frustration of a mower that does not want to start next spring by spending a little time with it this month!

Have a great Thanksgiving, and plan ahead for a glorious spring! **NOW**

Nancy Fenton is a Master Gardener in Ellis County.



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November 2007 Community Calendar

First and Third Tuesdays

Training Academy for Dental Assistants' free informational sessions begin at 5:30 p.m. (972) 842-2999.

Second and Fourth Mondays

Texas Ladies Networking meets from 11:45 a.m. - 1 p.m. at Ryan's in Waxahachie. (214) 587-1221.

November 1

Wine & Cheese from 4:30 - 7:30 p.m. at Southwest Funding, 1009 Ferris Avenue. Come socialize and network while learning about and trying a variety of wines.

CURB Recording Artist, Star De Azlan, CD Release Party at 224 N. Center Street, Arlington. Call (817) 266-4400 to purchase tickets.

November 2

Ribbon Cutting & Grand Opening for the new JC Penney store, 8:45 a.m.

Mom's on Mission scrap night. (972) 937-5083.

November 3

Mom's on Mission family trip to Canton. Meet at Ferris Avenue Baptist Church parking lot at 8 a.m. to carpool. (972) 937-5083.

"Lighten Your Load" Conference presented by Celebrate Moms, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. at Ferris Avenue Baptist Church. Win a washer and dryer. (866) 324-2893, ext. 4414 or e-mail mhowell@celebratemoms.org.

November 9 - 11

2007 WW II on the Square. Re-enactors will take over downtown and recreate the feel of Nancy, France, in 1944, just prior to being liberated by the U.S. Army. Visit www.kilroyboys.com/waxww2weekend or call (817) 276-4776.

November 10

"Walk for Hope" benefiting the Susan G. Komen foundation, 9 a.m. at Getzendaner Park. (972) 658-9204.

Ellis County Veterans Appreciation Day, 10 a.m. at the Waxahachie Civic Center. Honor the men and women of our nation's armed forces in a moving tribute honoring veterans past and present from Ellis County. (972) 937-2390.

After Hours Improv Comedy Show, 8 p.m. at the Texas Theater. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$6 for children 10 and under. Buy tickets at www.AfterHoursImprov.com or by calling (972) 937-9839.

November 11

"Magical Christmas" Tour of Homes, noon - 5 p.m. Hosted by the Circle of Friends of Ellis County, benefiting the Make-A-Wish Foundation - North Texas Chapter. (469) 688-8849.

November 13

Waxahachie Chamber of Commerce Business Interchange Leads Group meets at Hastings Entertainment, 7:30 a.m. (972) 937-2390.

Jason Foundation grand opening, 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. at Hickory Trail Hospital, Desoto. The Jason Foundation Inc. is

dedicated to the prevention of youth suicide. RSVP to (972) 937-2390.

November 14

Ellis County Early Childhood PTA meeting, 10 a.m. - noon at the First United Methodist Church Family Life Center, 505 W. Marvin. Check-in for child care, 9:30 a.m. Featuring Debbie Barnard and her holiday decorating ideas. E-mail Courtney at ceptamembership@hotmail.com.

November 23 - 25

Downtown Waxahachie Victorian Christmas Celebration at the Courthouse Square. Hours are 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Friday - Saturday, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. Sunday.

November 26

Creative Quilters Guild of Ellis County meets at 7 p.m. at St. Paul Episcopal Church, Hwy. 287 at Ovilla Road in Waxahachie. Visit CQGuild.org for information.

November 27

Waxahachie Chamber of Commerce Business Interchange Leads Group meets at Hastings Entertainment at noon. (972) 937-2390.

November 28

Waxahachie Chamber of Commerce Ambassador Luncheon, Chamber Conference Room, 7:30 a.m. (972) 937-2390.

November 30 - December 2

Bethlehem Revisited, behind Central Presbyterian Church, 402 N. College, 6 - 9 p.m. (972) 938-9617.

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