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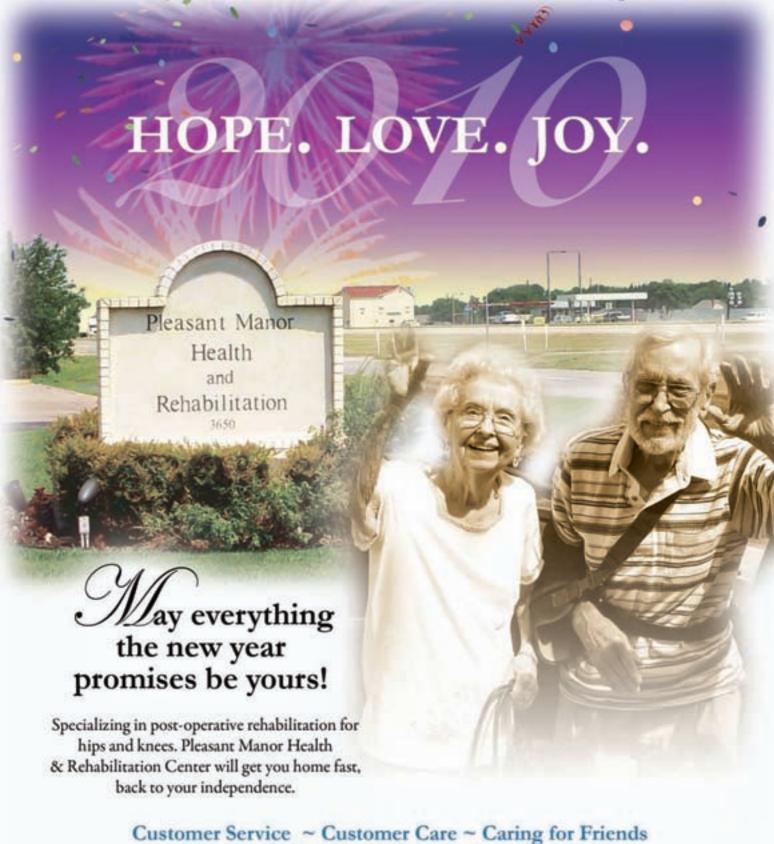


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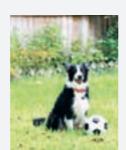
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# On the Cover

Winslow the border collie with his favorite toy a soccer ball.

Photo by Natalie Busch.

# Editor's Note

Happy New Year!

January marks the beginning of 12 months of new resolutions, new journeys and new adventures. There is hope, great promise and anticipation in the air. Last year has been stored away in our memory books and the possibilities for the New Year are endless. We all have new choices to make — choices that can change our lives forever.

It is the time when we can right the wrongs from the previous year and make a difference in tomorrow. My goal for the New Year is to be a mother who listens closer when having conversations with my two sons, a daughter who is available when my parents need me and a person who makes the time for her friends. I wonder what your New Year will bring? I encourage you to make realistic resolutions that you can keep, while finding purpose in your day-to-day lives.

Sandra Skoda WaxahachieNOW Editor





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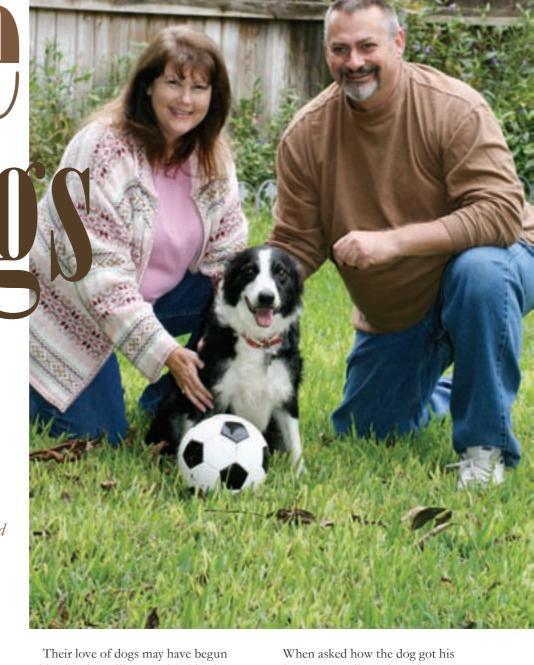
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# For the NO VO

Four-legged family members add memories that last a lifetime.

— By Sandra Skoda

Mike and Denise Kinney have always been dog lovers. "We had just started dating when I got my first border collie," Denise remembered. "His name was Bubba." Mike and Denise laughed as they remembered the fun they enjoyed with Bubba. "After we were married, we moved into an apartment that didn't allow pets," Mike said. "It took the manager a year to figure out we had a dog." How did they get around the fact that they had a pet when pets were not allowed? The couple would put a stocking cap on Bubba's head and sit him between them in the seat. Every day as they passed by the office, it looked as if a third person was in the car.



Their love of dogs may have begun with a border collie named Bubba, but throughout their 26-year marriage, Mike and Denise have owned some very special dogs. They have raised Australian shepherds, heelers and even a pit bull, but none have compared to Winslow, the border collie who became an integral part of the family when he was only 7 weeks old. "That was nine years ago," Denise said. "Mike bought him for me as a birthday gift from a breeder in Cedar Hill. He will turn 10 in March."

When asked how the dog got his unique name, Mike and Denise just smiled at one another as they remembered. Each member of the family came up with a name, but none seemed to fit the new addition to their family until their youngest daughter, Sara, a kindergarten student at the time, made a comment about the cartoon, *CatDog*. "The mouse on the cartoon was named Winslow," Sara said. "Winslow has proven to be a unique name for a very unique dog," Rachel, the couple's oldest daughter, added.

Mike and Denise have always trained their family pets themselves, mostly using a choke collar for leash and collar correction and a newspaper for basic discipline. Winslow needed only minimal correction. "The choke collar worked for Winslow," Mike added. The couple learned early on that "being on the same page" with the discipline might have been the secret to Winslow's early good behavior. Winslow has been scolded some and spanked rarely. "He's just one of those dogs that come along once in a lifetime," Denise said, proud of her furry four-legged family member.

About the same time Winslow came to live at the Kinney household, Mike began coaching a girls' basketball team for the city league. The basketball in



Mike and Denise enjoy trips in their travel trailer and take Winslow and Andi with them wherever they go.

the backyard quickly became a play toy for Winslow. "He started pushing the basketball around with his nose," Mike said. "When he got bored with that, he started pushing it against the fence hard enough that it would return to him so he could push it again and again and again. Our neighbors thought the kids were bouncing the ball off the fence, but it was Winslow."

Pushing the ball with his nose soon









progressed into pushing the ball with a Frisbee. "He learned to entertain himself," Denise said. When the Frisbee broke, Winslow was not discouraged. He went to a stick, then to his front paws and then back to his nose if all else failed.

As much as the couple would like to take credit for spending hours teaching Winslow these tricks, they cannot. "These were all self-taught tricks," Mike mentioned. "Winslow also taught himself geometry." Winslow taught himself to kick the ball where it banked off other objects. "He used the trees, the fence and the deck," Denise added, "so the ball would return to him at an angle, instead of just a straight shot." Just like a good game of





pool, Winslow took his game to the next level — pushing it to the members of the family using his banking method.

Winslow responds to 40 voice and hand commands, which include the basic sit, stay and rollover. He prances around in a circle when it is time to be sprayed with cologne after a bath. He becomes a problem solver when a toy has fallen under the couch. The only time he got out of the backyard and ran off, the dog catcher picked him. "He spent a night in 'doggie jail," Mike said. After that experience, he will no longer go beyond the gate, whether it is open or not.

Forgetting what it was like to have a puppy in the house, the Kinney's recently said "yes" to another border collie when the need for a home arose. Concerned about your baby's development?

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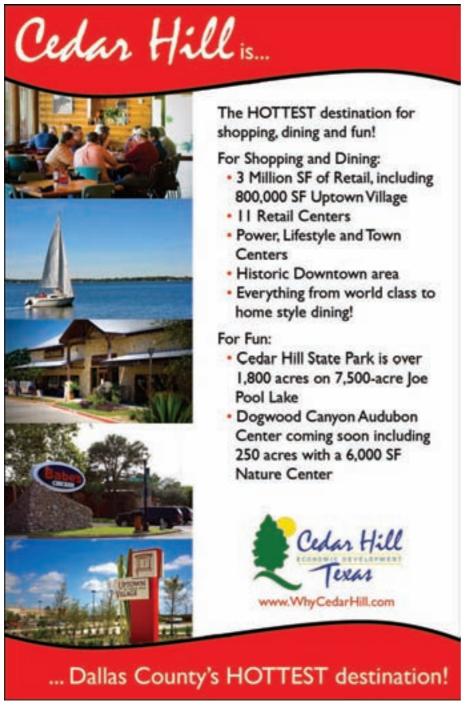
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"What she hasn't demolished," Denise explained, "she's chewed. Mike refers to them as 'North American tear-up' dogs." Right now, Mike and Denise are teaching Andi good behavior because they feel it is much easier to prevent bad behavior than to correct bad behavior. "It's like dealing with a 3-year-old," Mike admitted. "Most of the time, they need more attention than the kids."

The Kinneys agree that dogs change a life forever. When they got Winslow and then added Andi to the mix, they never imagined they would soon invite them into the house. "Border collies are escape artists," Denise said. "We had to train them to be in the house." "Winslow and Andi kept getting out of the fence," Mike interjected. "The only way to keep them safe and happy and out of doggie jail was to bring them indoors."

Leaving the dogs unattended or trying to ignore them has never been an option. "The one time we left Andi out back alone," Denise shared, "I lost a whole bed of elephant ears because she felt ignored. She dug up the bulbs and all." After Denise spanked her with a newspaper, Andi could not get back in the house soon enough.

The couple also loves traveling in their 1951 Spartan Royal Mansion, a 33-foot long, pull-along travel trailer they purchased and totally refurbished four years ago. They have ventured to many places in Texas and Arkansas over the years, and each trip taken has included the company of Winslow and Andi. "The trailer gets lots of attention, but the dogs always make friends wherever we go," Denise said.

Winslow and Andi are not just dogs; they are part of the Kinney family. Once Andi's chewing stage is over, she has the potential to be as smart as Winslow. Both canines are protective of the house and the children. They are easy to train, but need attention and lots of one-on-one time in order to stay "out of the proverbial doghouse."

Denise came to the marriage as an avid animal lover, while Mike's love for the dogs came soon afterward. "She was the animal lover," he said with a smile on his face. "She got me into it." Mike may have had to learn the importance of sacrifice when it came to having dogs, but he said, "It's all been worth it."



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# At Home With Clay and Tiffanie Scarborough

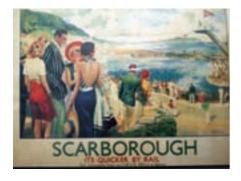


The Scarboroughs have been part of the local community for eight years, living in their red and white brick, one-story, corner-lot home for seven of those years. Clay, a baseball coach at Southwestern Assemblies of God University (SAGU), and his wife, Tiffanie, a flute and piano teacher, enjoy the small-town feeling Waxahachie offers. "It reminds me of where I grew up," Tiffanie said. "It's a growing area close to the city, but you still have that country feel."





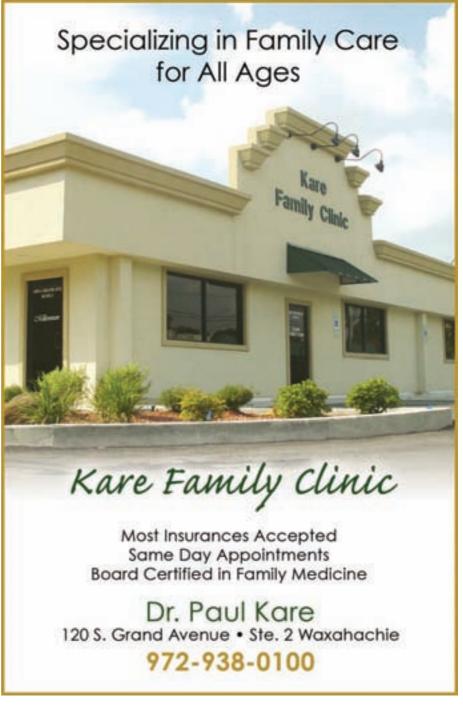
The newlyweds moved to the area from Jacksonville, Texas, in August 2002, to pursue a job offer. Thanks to their niece, Jacklyn, Clay began working at SAGU as a pitching coach. "When they started a baseball program here, my niece approached the guy who was starting it and asked if he needed



a pitching coach," Clay recalled. "We talked on the phone a few times; I came to meet with him, and he said the job was mine if I wanted it." Because the



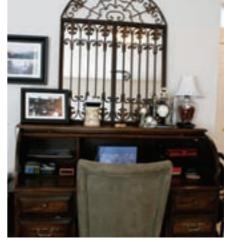






job did not come with a salary at the time, Clay also took a job at the junior high, and has been "working with WISD [Waxahachie Independent School District] and Southwestern baseball ever since," he added. "God opened the doors for every bit of our move because that was one of only two jobs I applied for and everything worked out."

Tiffanie met Clay on an InterVarsity Christian Fellowship retreat two weeks before she graduated from Austin College in Sherman, Texas. "We had a mutual friend who knew each of us pretty well," Tiffanie said, explaining that the friend was Clay's Bulgarian roommate. "He set us up; he made me ride up front in the car with Clay." According to Tiffanie, a never-worn cow hat, given by her father to add to her long-standing cow collection, became part of the story when it somehow found its way out of her hands and into Clay's. "He saw it in my room, and he took it 'cause he knew he would have to bring it back," she laughed. Clay added with a



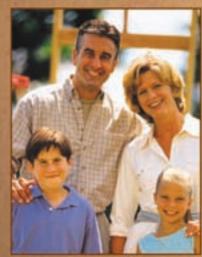
smile, "What can I say? It worked."

The couple, now married for nine years, has set down roots in the three-bedroom, two-bath house they considered a smart move for the future. "We lived in an apartment for the first year we were here. We started looking at houses that were already built, but none fit our needs. When we built, we went smaller on purpose," Clay informed. Tiffanie added, "We wanted something that wouldn't have us on a really tight budget."

Dark woodwork throughout the home accents the neutral colors they have picked for the walls and furniture. The



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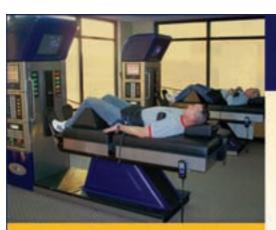
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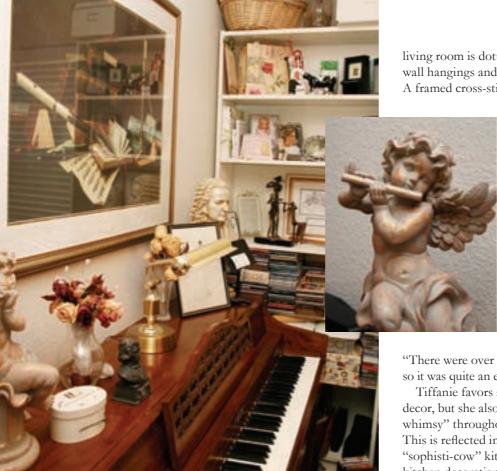




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living room is dotted here and there with palm trees and the wall hangings and throw pillows give a tropical feel to the space. A framed cross-stitch on the shelves above their flat-screen TV

seems like a helpful reminder for Clay when asked the often difficult question for men: "How long have you been married?" One of Tiffanie's students delicately stitched the Scarboroughs' names and the date of their ceremony to commemorate their union. With a grin, Clay joked, "It makes it easy; I can't forget that way!" Tiffanie laughed along with the joke. "He's never really had a problem remembering that date!" she clarified.

Also displayed on the shelves is Clay's trophy and ribbon from the World Sports Festival '09 held in Vienna, Austria, last summer. "I got invited to coach a baseball team, and we won third place," he said.

"There were over 3,000 students there from around the world, so it was quite an experience. It was my first time overseas."

Tiffanie favors a traditional style when it comes to her decor, but she also tries to add what she calls a "touch of subtle whimsy" throughout the home to give it a personal feel. This is reflected in what she has laughingly labeled her "sophisti-cow" kitchen. "When I was little, I saw cow-themed kitchen decorations at a store, and for some strange reason, I just knew I wanted one someday," she remembered, pointing out the myriad of teapots, mugs, sugar containers, plates and



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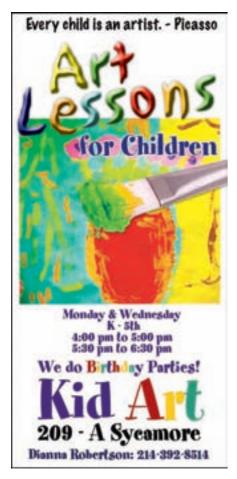
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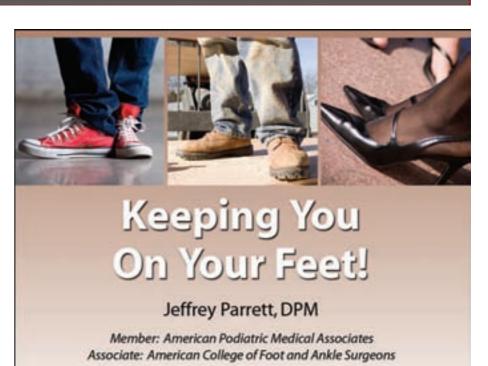
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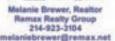


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endless porcelain bovines that decorate the space. "I started collecting cow kitchen things, and people started giving me cow-themed objects, and over the years, it just kind of grew from there. I don't want my kitchen to feel like a country kitchen, though, so I've tried to limit my cows' visibility. I don't want it to feel like a barnyard!"

Tiffanie had a few important criteria





when it came to finding a home. As a flute and piano teacher, Tiffanie instructs over 60 students from Ennis, Duncanville, Midlothian and Waxahachie, both at their schools and from her home. She also gives piano lessons at Trinity Christian School in Cedar Hill. Such a large group of students made a music room an obvious necessity. "We use a French door so that the room is private, but also visually accessible, so parents waiting on their kids can peek in if they want," she explained. "We looked at a lot of houses and none of them really fit what I needed, but when we saw the floor plan for this house, I knew it would work."

The music room holds much more than Tiffanie's piano, acquired from Clay's aunt and uncle. The space is home to a few more of her collections, with bookshelves brimming with her treasures, including a humorous caricature of Tiffanie, "Miss Speedy Lips," playing the flute. "I thought that was so cute,

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I used it for my business cards," she smiled. Angels playing the flute, dolls, more cows, and vases of dried flowers, each bouquet commemorating a special anniversary or event in the couples' lives, spill from the shelves.

A favorite hobby of Clay's has provided the Scarborough home with gorgeous touches of nature. Displayed in the second bedroom are vibrant sunsets,



majestic eagles, colorful seasonal foliage and jagged lightning photos taken in Detroit, New Hampshire, Vienna, The Woodlands, Florida, Wyoming's Grand Teton National Park, the Dallas Zoo and the Devil's Tower in the Grand Canyon. A talented, self-taught photographer, Clay documents their many travels and vacations with his beautiful work. "He started with photography after we got married, and I remember thinking how his pictures were always way better than mine," Tiffanie said proudly. Clay continued, "My dad is a landscape architect and a really good photographer. I've really gotten into it the past few years. I tend to enjoy outdoor photography - preferably landscapes and nature shots."

The Scarboroughs are active at Trinity Church, where Clay is an usher, and Tiffanie is active in the music department. While travel is a shared passion, Clay said, "We love to go to new places and experience new things, but it is always nice to come back home." \*\*MODI\*











# Around Town NOW



Hugh and Faith Browning have a wonderful time at a Christmas party that benefits the ABWA.



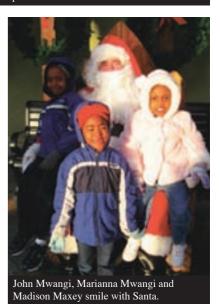
Alba Garcia, Donald Kirschner and Alba Hernandez, members of the WHS Interact Club, are Santa's little helpers.



Dyan Brooke is all smiles while she unwraps one of her many birthday gifts.



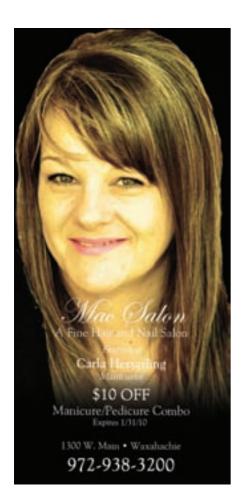
Gina Mazy, Karen Ganbay and Maureen Hudgins celebrate the holidays in their "believing in Santa" jeans and t-shirts.



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While this story is about the Waxahachie artist John Wells, it is also the story of Bob Ross and his profound influence on a Waxahachie youth of 13 who discovered a worthy mentor in the frizzy-haired, soft-spoken public television art teacher who developed the Wet-on-Wet Technique® method of oil painting. Although Bob died years before John had the opportunity to become a certified teacher of his method of painting, he has had a lasting effect on John's life in his own effort to spread the word

that, "You can paint your own world," because art is about the individual's inner vision — from the soul.

It is often quoted that, "Eyes are the window to the soul," and if ever an artist possessed an intent gaze, it is John, whose cool blue eyes are only slightly different in hue than the brilliant phthalo blue of the arctic sky in the painting sitting on its easel. John's gaze is the searching gaze of the true artist whose eyes are ever seeking new discoveries from ancient Creation to reproduce. "In painting, I can change or even move mountains in the same way God created nature," explained John, as he demonstrated by dabbing a tree line at the base of a craggy mountain, using the stipple end of a boar bristle paintbrush. "See how I do this with the tip of the brush and keep my brush going in a line across the canvas?"

Though art can be defined as, "The process or product of deliberately and creatively arranging elements in a way that appeals to the senses or emotions," no one person sees art in the same way; therefore, what is art to one person can be an eyesore to another. But, John explained his desire to produce scenes from Creation in this way. "Most people are more interested in landscapes and seascapes. Doing faces is more difficult; one little mistake can ruin the portrait or wildlife."

Art is also about the medium, and John's medium is oil paint on canvas. His chosen technique differs in that instead of painting on a dry canvas that too quickly absorbs the paint, he has adopted the more forgiving method of painting on a wet surface primed with either an oil base white or clear oil paint. There are many reasons John prefers this method. "The Wet-on-Wet method is more forgiving and you can't make a mistake. If you have a happy accident, you just scrape the mistake off the canvas," John said, as he demonstrated how he uses the angular knife to remove lazy oil paint. "You can't do this with a regular canvas."

Oil painting is also made more complicated because mixing

# -Arts MOW

basic colors to produce varieties of colors and their subtleties is nearly a scientific requirement of painting. For instance, blue is never just blue, but a wide variety of blue shades, each hue slightly different from the next and the result of the blending of required hues in shades. John mixes several shades together on a big plastic pallet to produce one delicate hue after another to add

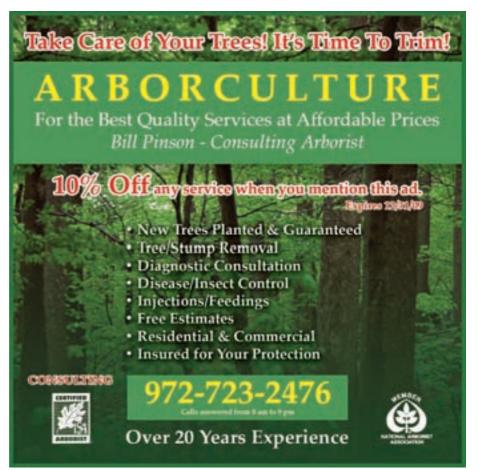


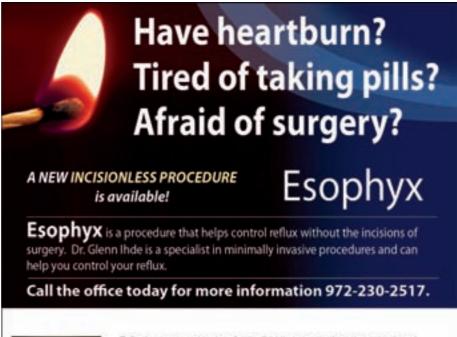


shadow and texture to the sky and its clouds to give it depth. Using this method, it can take as little as three hours to complete a painting, but five days to dry. All of the paints are organic, contain no lead and are environmentally friendly. All the brushes are of boar bristle and dried by beating them thoroughly against the leg of the easel.

Painting figures in a landscape requires a kind of emotional bonding. John, as Bob Ross suggested, recommends giving the tree, or figure, a name. John also recommends working out your own artistic voice. "How are you going to learn if I'm always present to help you?"

After six years of active duty in the Army and visiting places far different than the gentle rolling prairie, John found





Reflux is a term used to describe the fluid that escapes from the stomach and enters the esophagus. It is often very acidic, since the fluid comes from the stomach, but also can contain bile and other digestive enzymes. This leads to the burning feeling you may get when reflux occurs. Reflux is known by many terms: Acid reflux, Heartburn Indigestion GERD, Ensive gastritis, Barrett's Dyspepsia.

Approximately 60 percent of Americans suffer from some form of reflux disease. Approximately 25 percent experience reflux weekly and some 7 percent suffer daily. Reflux disease accounts for 9 million doctor visits per year. Reflux disease accounts for \$10 Billion in health care costs per year.





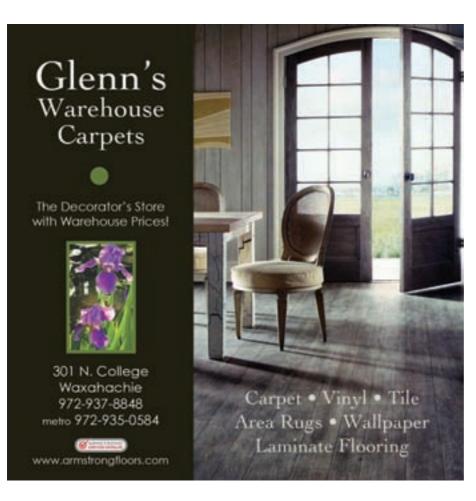
# ArtsNOW

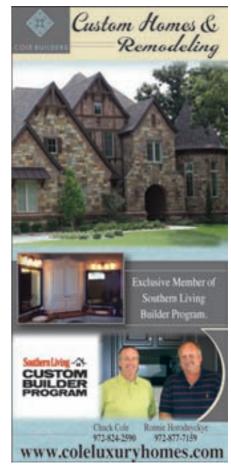


himself on Army business in Orlando, Florida, close to the New Smyrna Beach/Daytona area, where Bob Ross lived and established his school. After making arrangements with his command, he detoured the less than 50 miles to New Smyrna to take the three-week course and became certified, in June 2009, as an instructor of the Ross "Wet" Method. Although he remains in the Army Reserve and has established a studio in the Chamber of Commerce Building at 102 YMCA Drive, Waxahachie, he spends much of his time teaching group lessons or art in retirement communities.

John enjoys his older students. "I teach older people, each at their individual age. Sometimes they take the course for fun or because it's new. Sometimes they want to reproduce a picture. I find the older students are quicker and more eager to learn because of their life experiences."

John signs his name with a cross through the "h," making his signature both distinctive and reflective of his spiritual position. Jesus said, "A pupil is not superior to his teacher, but everyone completely trained will be like his teacher," and although Bob Ross left this earth in 1995, he has an apt pupil in John Wells, who is the most outstanding tribute to his own gentle method of teaching and a splendid example of his legacy in art. \*\*\*\*\*TON\*\*











# Sports NOW







# Movements With Meaning

— By Sandra Skoda

Chris Biles, D.C. has one major goal when it comes to individuals in Ellis County and the surrounding areas. "I want to see as many people in the area get physically fit as possible," he said. This has been Chris' vision since coming to Waxahachie as a chiropractor in October 2001. What is new is the physical fitness/sports boot camp he offers to people of all ages and fitness levels, which began in April 2009. It started with only a few willing participants, but has grown to include several weekly classes of no more than 20. "Boot camp has come a long way," he admitted. "It's evolved in a short time to include a group of core people who come workout on a regular, consistent basis."

On "good weather days," Chris and his group can be found at Chapman Park, working outdoors in the fresh air and sunshine. When people hear the words "boot camp," they oftentimes think of grueling workouts, a leader who barks orders and participants who have been forced to work diligently through a specific program designed to cause pain and sometimes humiliation. This is not the case with the boot camp Chris offers. "This boot camp offers a general physical fitness workout for a group of individuals who are all at different fitness levels," Chris explained. "It's a group setting with a broad range of needs where everyone benefits."

Chris remembered a time when he

tried to come off as a boot camp drill sergeant. "It didn't work," he smiled. "Those in the class just laughed when I tried it. They all know I'm pretty laid back." Those who engage in the boot camp workouts also learn firsthand that they need to be self-motivated. "I'm here to show them the proper way to do specific exercises and encourage

"This boot camp offers a general physical fitness workout for a group of individuals who are all at different fitness levels."

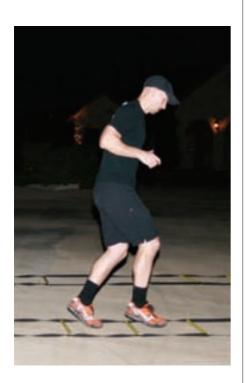
them to meet the fitness levels they have envisioned for themselves," he said, "but they have to be motivated to show up and follow through with the program."

Participants not only include those individuals who have made resolutions to get into better shape for the coming year, Chris also sees people who are looking to rehabilitate following surgery or get back on the playing field after a sports-related injury. He understands firsthand what it means to experience an injury that hinders overall performance. "I injured the L5/S1 disc in my back while skateboarding [in high school],"

# Sports **NOW**

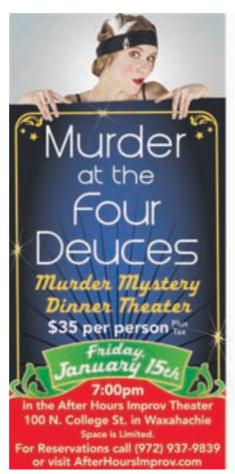
he said. "I rehabbed and went back to playing soccer, but it seemed as if my back never stopped hurting."

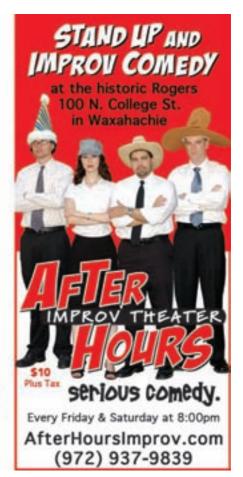
One exercise in his rehabilitation regimen that he has incorporated in the boot camp workouts is the "deadlift." He did not learn until his adult years that he had been doing the deadlift improperly all that time. Before mastering the proper way in which to do the deadlift, Chris' back would go out and he would find himself incapacitated; sometimes spending the better part of an entire day in bed. "Since training and learning the

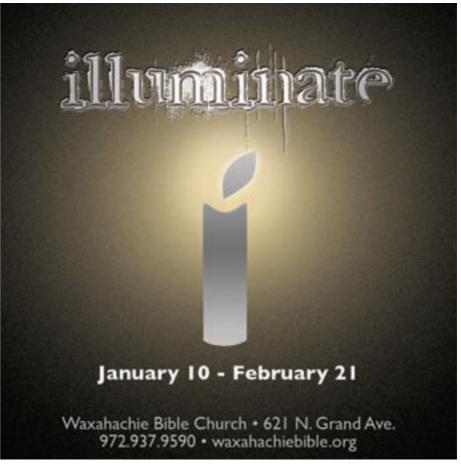


proper way to do the deadlift, I don't have the same problems," he stated. "It's my favorite exercise, and it's one that I perform almost every week." Chris is currently able to deadlift over twice his own body weight. "The deadlift is something everyone does almost every day," Chris added. "It's a good thing for the seasoned athlete, the weekend warrior or the stay-at-home mom. You do know that picking up a toddler is a deadlift, don't you?"

To keep the boot camp experience fresh and enjoyable, Chris is constantly changing up the workouts, sure to always include functional movements. A real squat is as common as sitting down in a chair and like Chris mentioned before,











# Sports NOW

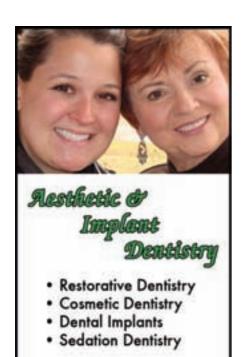
most everyone does at least one deadlift per day, whether they realize it or not. "The key to a proper squat or deadlift is keeping the core tight and using your legs to do the work," Chris said. "These exercises work and strengthen the core much better than crunches or sit ups since the abs are used more for midline stabilization than trunk flexion."

Every movement has meaning that targets a specific area of the body during the workout. Some days, the workout consists of spurts or intervals where participants walk and run, followed by "burpees," an exercise where the individual drops down to do push ups and jumping repetitions which all depend on the overall workout goals of each individual. "Modifications are part of the workout since we have so many fitness levels in each group," Chris noted, sure to mention that safety is first and foremost. "We all start and stop around the same time, but each person follows a plan within the workout designed



specifically for them." Other common movements in boot camp include: sit-ups, 400-meter runs, jumping pull-ups, tossing a medicine ball and kettlebell swings.

Boot camp has seen many success stories. A local football player returned to the field after experiencing problems with his low back and sciatic nerve. A young volleyball player hit the court after undergoing ACL knee surgery. For Chris, physical fitness and success stories are what boot camp is all about. "Seeing and helping others meet their physical fitness goals is my passion," Chris said. "I feel like it's what I was meant to do."

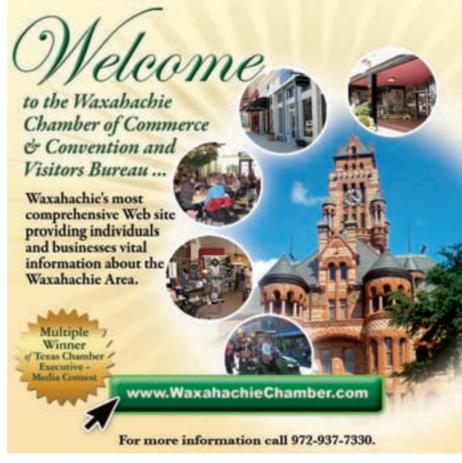


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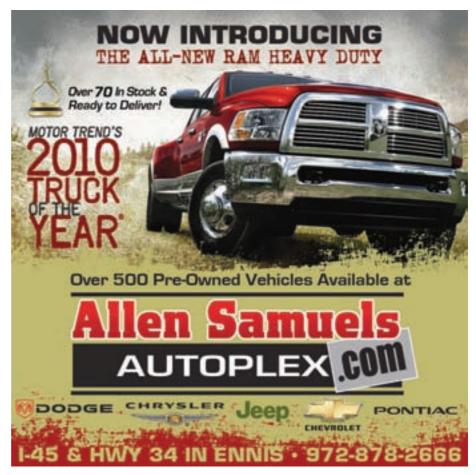
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# **Business NOW**





# Positive Dentistry

Just For Kids Dental in Waxahachie makes your child's dental health its priority.
— By Sandra Skoda

Providing the highest quality of dental care for patients ranging in age from birth to age 18, including those with special needs, is what Just For Kids Dental in Waxahachie is all about. Located conveniently at 1710 W. Business 287, Suite 140, the staff greets its patients with smiles, positive attitudes and lots of kindness. "We are ever-mindful of the needs of our patients and their families," said Dr. John Kempton, one of four doctors on staff and the most recent addition at Just For Kids. "The interaction between the staff, the patients and the patients' families is crucial."

Great customer service at Just For Kids is of the utmost importance to each staff member. They offer and deliver dental care in a professional, caring and "kid-friendly" atmosphere that allows every child and every parent to see firsthand how important they are to the continued success of the practice.

Making the "whole" family comfortable is what they do best. The office itself is bright and cheerful, with lime green walls and royal blue carpet. Wall murals, balloons and a Wii game for the older children and teens to enjoy round out the dental hygiene experience, while mounted above each dental chair patients will find flat-screen TVs. "Our adolescent patients can watch a movie while they lay back in the chair and receive their treatment," Dr. Kempton said. "It makes the dental experience something patients look forward to." The goal at Just For Kids is to make each



From left:

Just For Kids Dental dentist Dr. John Kempton; the movie-inspired waiting room; one of the fun and funky dental chairs.

### **Just For Kids Dental**

1701 W. Business 287 Suite 140 Waxahachie, Texas (972) 351-9700 www.justforkidsdental.com

### Hours:

Monday - Thursday, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

# Business

child's experience a good one.

As the "new kid on the block," Dr. Kempton came to Waxahachie by way of Arizona and Iowa. He attended college at Arizona State University and went to dental school in Iowa, but his training time in the field of pediatric dentistry was spent in Texas. When asked the reason he chose Waxahachie to build his practice, his answer was simple and to the point. "I like the smaller town atmosphere," he said. "I found out a space was available when I spoke to Dr. Jon Ousley. I came on board at the end of June 2009 and went full time in September. It's worked out well."

With so many choices, Dr. Kempton had another good answer when it came to

"Our adolescent patients can watch a movie while they lay back in the chair and receive their treatment."

why he chose to make his medical career in the field of dentistry. "I have 11 siblings and 54 nieces and nephews. Family has always been very important to me," he explained. "I've always loved being around children, and I always wanted to work with kids." The neighbors he grew up next to also inspired him to seriously look into the field of dentistry. "They were dentists who became my friends," Dr. Kempton said. "It just seemed like a natural fit for me to specialize in pediatric dentistry after I received my degree in general dentistry."

The doctors and staff at Just For Kids utilize the newest and most advanced dental technology including digital X-rays and state-of-the-art sterilization techniques, while also offering the basics, such as growth and nutrition evaluations for children, teeth cleaning, fillings and prevention measures. "I'm very happy with what I do," Dr. Kempton said. "The office is busier than I anticipated, but I'm enjoying the interaction with my patients. At Just For Kids, it's all about making the dental experience positive for the children and their families."



# **Education NOW**



# What's Cooking in Kindergarten?

Do you remember your kindergarten teacher? Toya Hagwood does, and those memories have helped to inspire a career.

As a child in New Orleans, Toya was deathly afraid of swimming. She remembers, "I would get so scared I would hyperventilate, but Ms. Simone would take me aside and worked with me on reading and math." Toya never forgot the kindness or Ms. Simone. In fact, her kindergarten teacher made such an impact on her life that after studying

child psychology and working for several years in the business world, Toya realized that she was missing her true calling and decided to teach.

This is one passionate kindergarten teacher brimming over with creative ideas for unique learning experiences. While she is sure to include all the state standards in her lesson plans, she does not stop there. She is always striving for the "ah-ha moments" when students truly understand a concept and go home all excited, telling

their parents what they learned.

Toya's goal is to teach her students to be independent. Many children come to kindergarten not knowing how to wash their hands, fasten buttons or buckles, or even how to hold a fork safely. Toya makes sure they learn how to do these things for themselves in her class. Toya said, "Sometimes parents find it easier to do things for their small children, but kids need to make mistakes to learn how to do things on their own so they can learn to be independent." Toya's kindergarteners learn to cut things out for themselves. They have their own cubbies where they store their own materials so they learn how to organize, sort and put things back where they belong.

Sometimes friends or family will ask her, "Doesn't all that drive you crazy?" Toya simply answers, "No." "My mother gave me a T-shirt that says 'Teaching is the toughest job you'll ever love," she said, "and that's the truth."

Toya teaches lessons like why we have rules, why it is good to be polite when talking to adults or classmates and how to get what you want the right way. Her students learn to walk quietly in the halls, that there are consequences for actions and that they have real choices to make.

Toya makes sure that her students are exposed to technology through computer time and using the "active board," a souped-up, interactive whiteboard. Long gone are the chalkboard and filmstrips of yesteryear. The active board allows Toya to play video clips of the animals they learn about. They play games where the students pull objects out of a "magic yellow box" on the active board using a light pen. Then they sort the objects, depending on whether they start with the letter of the week or with some other sound. They are also able to manipulate objects on the board to complete patterns.

Everyone remembers learning their ABCs by singing the alphabet song and chanting the letters over and over, but in Toya's class, the children cook their way through the alphabet in the Kindergarten Café. While learning about the letter *B*, Toya's students make Bubbling Bubble Juice. When it is time for the letter *M*, it is time for Marvelous Monkey Bread. *N* brings nachos. During the week when

## Education **NOW**

they learn about the letter R, they make Rainbow Salad where the students have to arrange their fruits in the order of the rainbow - red, orange, yellow, green, blue, violet and indigo — before they get to eat their salad with whipped cream clouds!

Through these edible-cooking lessons, the students learn about following directions, reading, counting and measuring. They also learn lessons about how the heat of cooking changes textures and how mixing ingredients changes colors. Kindergarten Café includes cooking Christmas foods from around the world and other delights from different lands. While the students think they are having fun cooking, Toya has taught

## "Teaching is all about creating meaningful experiences."

them reading, math, science and social studies. Then at the end of the year, each student gets a personalized cookbook of all the recipes they learned to make, with pictures of him or herself cooking.

This cookbook is just one of many books the students take home from the class. Tova's students make other books from their own drawings, and she hopes to provide her students with digital cameras to use in the classroom so they can make even more books about their nature walks, transportation week and other experiences. She makes sure that each of her students gets a free book each month when her class orders books. Then for Reading Night, she sends each student a colorful invitation to which they must R.S.V.P., dons her pajamas and serves milk and cookies while reading to her students. You might have already guessed that Toya loves books. "I'm a huge book fanatic," she said. "I have over 600 children's books at home. My goal is to help students start building their own libraries at home so they will read with their parents.

"Teaching is all about creating meaningful experiences. It's about providing a safe, fun, nurturing environment," Toya said. "I wouldn't trade teaching for the world." She just might mean that.





## Who's Cooking WOW

## In The Kitchen With Katherine McKee

— By Faith Browning

Katherine McKee has never been someone who watched as the world passed by. Around age 15, when she was not doing laundry, milking cows or working in the fields, she built a road in Mississippi several miles long which is now paved and to this day bears her name. "I cut down the trees and dug up the stumps," she recalled. "I could never sit idle. I always had to have something to do."

These days, Katherine stays busy with her house and yard work. She loves playing Chinese Checkers and bingo, attending Foundation of Life Church and senior citizens functions. She has worked for Christ For The Nations in Dallas for over 43 years. "I now work three days a week," she stated. "I love it better than any other job I have ever had except for being a wife and mother." "NOW"



## **MARINATED CORN-BEAN SALAD**

3/4 cup vinegar

3/4 cup sugar

1/2 cup vegetable oil

1 Tbsp. water

1 tsp. black pepper

1/2 tsp. salt

17-oz. can whole kernel corn, drained 16-oz. can French-style green beans, drained

1 cup onions, chopped

1 cup green pepper, chopped

- 1. In a small saucepan, combine vinegar, sugar, oil, water, pepper and salt.
- 2. Bring to a boil; remove from heat to cool.
- 3. Place remaining ingredients in a large bowl. Pour vinegar mixture over the vegetables.
- 4. Cover and chill for 4 hours. Serve with a slotted spoon.

## **PREGO CHICKEN**

6 chicken breasts, boneless 3 cups Prego sauce (your choice of flavoring)

1 cup Parmesan cheese, grated

- 1. Cut chicken into smaller pieces.
- 2. In a bowl, mix Prego and Parmesan.

- 3. Dip the chicken pieces in the sauce until well-coated. Place coated chicken into a large, long casserole dish; pour remaining sauce over chicken.
- 4. Cover and bake at 375 F for 50 to 60 minutes.

## WHIPPING CREAM POUND CAKE

3 cups sugar

1 cup butter

6 eggs

3 cups all-purpose flour

1 tsp. almond extract

1 cup whipping cream

- 1. Using an electric mixer, cream the sugar and butter together.
- 2. One at a time, add in eggs.
- 3. Add flour, alternating extract and whipping cream; mix well.
- 4. Pour batter in a greased and floured tube pan.
- 5. Place pan in a cold oven. Bake at 325 F for 1 hour and 25 minutes.
- 6. Remove from pan when cool. Serve plain or with fruit and whipped topping.

## MANDARIN ORANGE PIE

1 can sweetened condensed milk 1/3 cup fresh lemon juice

2 cans Mandarin orange slices, drained
1 lg. carton COOL WHIP Whipped Topping
1 cup pecans, chopped
2 graham cracker or vanilla wafer
piecrusts

- 1. Combine the milk and lemon juice.
- 2. Add orange slices, COOL WHIP and nuts; mix well.
- 3. Pour mixture evenly into piecrusts and chill.

## **FIVE AND ONE-HALF HOUR STEW**

2 lbs. round steak, bite-size pieces

1 can cream of mushroom soup

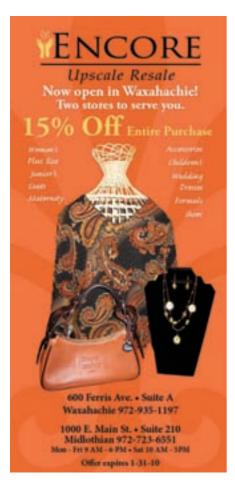
1 can cream of chicken soup

1 envelope onion soup mix 1 cup mushroom pieces

1 small onion, frozen or canned

- 1. Combine meat, soups and soup mix.
- 2. Bake in a covered casserole dish at 250 F for 5 hours.
- 3. Add mushrooms and onions; bake an additional 30 minutes.
- 4. Serve over noodles, rice or mashed potatoes. Add a quick salad for a complete meal.

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





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# Are Your Final Expenses Covered?

— By Adam Rope

Are you worried about how your loved ones will pay the expenses incurred at the time of your death? While death is an inevitable part of life, financial questions associated with final medical bills, funeral expenses and estate settlements should not be.

According to a 2006 General Price List survey of the National Funeral Directors Association, the average cost for final expenses is \$7,000. Preparing for those costs today could prevent family members from dealing with a



financial burden in addition to coping with the loss of a loved one.

One way you can assure that your final expenses are covered without placing the responsibility on your family is to make certain you have a life insurance policy that will meet your needs. Your life insurance policy can be an important part of your financial planning. Taking the time now to review your coverages and benefits may give you the peace of mind you deserve.

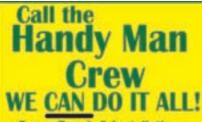
The death of a loved one can be

enough of a physical and emotional burden for your family. By planning ahead, you can prevent it from being a financial hardship as well.

Visit with your insurance agent and discuss how a life insurance policy can cover your final expenses. It will only take a few moments of your time, but may go a long way toward easing the burdens of those you leave behind.

Adam Rope is a State Farm agent based in Waxahachie.





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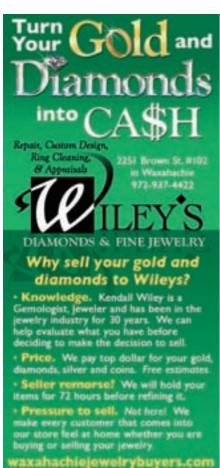
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## Mother Knows Besty Tryon, R.N.

The fear is palpable as swine flu sweeps across our nation. To employ an oft used phrase — take a deep breath. Information has, and always will be, the cure to lower fear. Swine flu, or the H1N1 virus, is an influenza virus that came to the attention of Americans early in 2009. It spreads in much the same way as the seasonal influenza virus, which is by droplets in the air from emissions (sneezes, coughs) of infected individuals and by touching a contaminated object and then touching your nose or mouth. A common scenario for this would be if an infected individual has droplets of the virus on their hands, fails to wash or disinfect their hands and opens a door or picks up an object thereby contaminating it. Since the virus can live up to many hours outside the body, an uninfected person can handle that object, fail to wash or disinfect their hands, pick up something to eat and unwittingly pass the virus into their body.

One of the reasons the swine flu inspires such fear is the potentially devastating effect on children. Children are always at high risk for the flu. Underlying health conditions and/or respiratory problems can cause serious complications with a child who has the flu. That is why vaccination is so important for them.

Some of the symptoms of the flu are cough, sore throat, fever, body aches, chills, vomiting and diarrhea. Antiviral medications are the best treatment for the flu. Addressing the discomfort of individual symptoms is the only other option available for treatment of the influenza. High fevers can quickly dehydrate the body so keeping yourself hydrated at this time is very important. Remember, your body is fighting a battle. Proper rest is required to allow your immune system to function at its peak.



The control of swine flu can best be summarized as — listen to your mother. Wash your hands frequently. Keep your hands out of your mouth, nose and eyes. Cover your mouth when you sneeze and then clean your hands. If you use a tissue when you sneeze or cough, throw it away. Use alcohol-based hand wipes if soap and water is not available. Use hand sanitizers. Stay home and rest when you are sick, not just for your health, but also for the health of others. A good rule of thumb is to stay home until you have been fever free for at least 24 hours. A little common sense will lower the incidence of swine flu and the fear.

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





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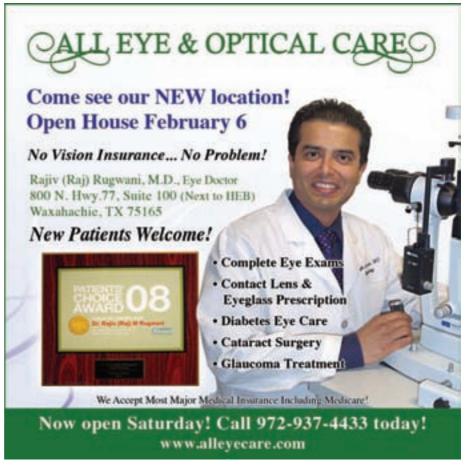


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## Inside Gardening

— By Nancy Fenton

With the cold weather, it is a good time to review all those plants you have brought into your nice, warm house such as ivies, poinsettias or Christmas cacti. All will add oxygen to your recycled inside air and can go outside again in March. I also bring in my Chinese Evergreens to provide some color and oxygen for the colder months, but I have to wait to put them back outside until the leaves on my pecan trees come out so they will have shade and avoid burning their tender leaves.

If you received azaleas for Christmas, enjoy them in the house and then throw them away unless you are willing to change out the soil in a flowerbed for them. They love very acid soils and just "turn up their toes" at our alkaline soils.

When plants are brought inside the house, they need a bit more attention when the heat is on because they have a tendency to dry out quickly. A good technique to determine if they need water is the weight test. If they are light when lifted, water them. If they are heavy, wait a day or two. After soaking my plants in the kitchen sink, I let mine drain in the second sink



before sticking them back in their container or foil to avoid water in the bottom that might cause root rot. A good soak for 15 to 30 minutes when dry (usually once a week) will help keep them in fine form throughout the winter months. **NOW** 

Nancy Fenton is a Master Gardener.







## -Happening<mark>MOW</mark>

## All Month

Local muralist, Brad Smith's large scale paintings display and sale: M Lounge, 835 Foch St., Fort Worth. Paintings will be there indefinitely and are changed out periodically to include new work. (817) 295-5802.

## **Every Tuesday**

Story Hour at Sims Library: 10:00-11:00 a.m. following the WISD schedule (no story time on the days that school is out). Waxahachie Junior Service League volunteers share stories and crafts for children ages 3 and up. Check out www.simslib.org for January's themes. (972) 937-2671.

## **Every Wednesday**

Toddler Time at Sims Library: 10:00-10:20 a.m. following the WISD schedule (no toddler time on the days that school is out). Waxahachie Junior Service League volunteers provide songs and stories for children ages 2 and under. Check out www.simslib.org for January's themes. (972) 937-2671.

## First Thursday

ABWA Empowering Women Express Network meeting: 5:45 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center, located at 1 Community Circle in Midlothian. Please visit www.abwa-empoweringwomen.org to RSVP a seat and dinner reservations.

## Second and Fourth Tuesday

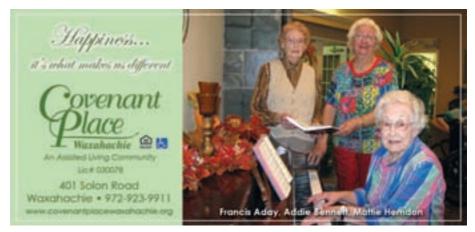
Get Smart: Strategic Marketing and Research Technologies (formerly Waxahachie Business Interchange Networking) meeting: 7:30-8:30 a.m. Network with other professionals and promote your business. Call (972) 937-2390 for location of the next meeting.

## Third Monday

Ellis County Aggie Moms meeting: 7:00 p.m., Waxahachie First United Methodist Church, 505 W. Marvin St. Contact Cheryl Bell at (972) 723-0341 or rb4cj@sbcglobal.net.

## **Every Friday and Saturday**

After Hours Improv Theater: Stand-Up Comedy Show: 8:00 p.m., 100 N. College St., Suite 11, in the Rogers Hotel. The evening will feature touring, professional stand-up comedians. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$8 for groups of 10 or more. Call (972) 937-9839 or visit www.AfterHoursImprov.com.





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## **Happening MOW**

## January 5

Family Movie Tuesday at Sims Library: 6:00-7:30 p.m. in the meeting room. Please call (972) 937-2671 for more information.

## January 9

Applications for the Master Gardener Training, scheduled to be held in February, need to be turned in to the Ellis County AgriLife office. For more information, call (972) 825-5175.

## January 23

American Girl workshop: 10:30-11:30 a.m., Sims Library meeting room. The presentation by Amy Hedtke will introduce young readers to several girls of various ethnic and societal backgrounds during different periods of U.S. history. Children will be given an overview of geography, crafts, customs and foods that the characters would have experienced. For further information, please call (972) 937-2671.

## January 30

The Covenant Class of the Waxahachie First United Methodist Church, located at 505 W. Marvin St., will host the annual Pancake/Chili Day. Pancakes will be served from 7:00-11:00 a.m. and chili will be served from 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Pancake breakfast is \$4 and chili lunch is \$5. Children 10 and under eat for \$2. Both meals come with all the fixings. Frozen casseroles and baked goods will also be for sale. All proceeds benefit missionary work. For more information, call (972) 937-4400.

## February 6

Jazz Café, an evening of elegant dining, dancing and great jazz and Big Band-era music: 6:30 p.m., Waxahachie Civic Center. This year marks the 5th anniversary of Jazz Café, featuring the Waxahachie Jazz Orchestra with guest artists that include professional jazz trumpeter Larry Spencer. A silent auction with a variety of great prizes will benefit the Waxahachie Band Boosters. Tickets: \$30 in advance or \$35 after the February 1 deadline. E-mail jazzcafe@ spiritofwaxahachie.com or visit www. spiritofwaxahachie.com/jazzcafe.

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







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