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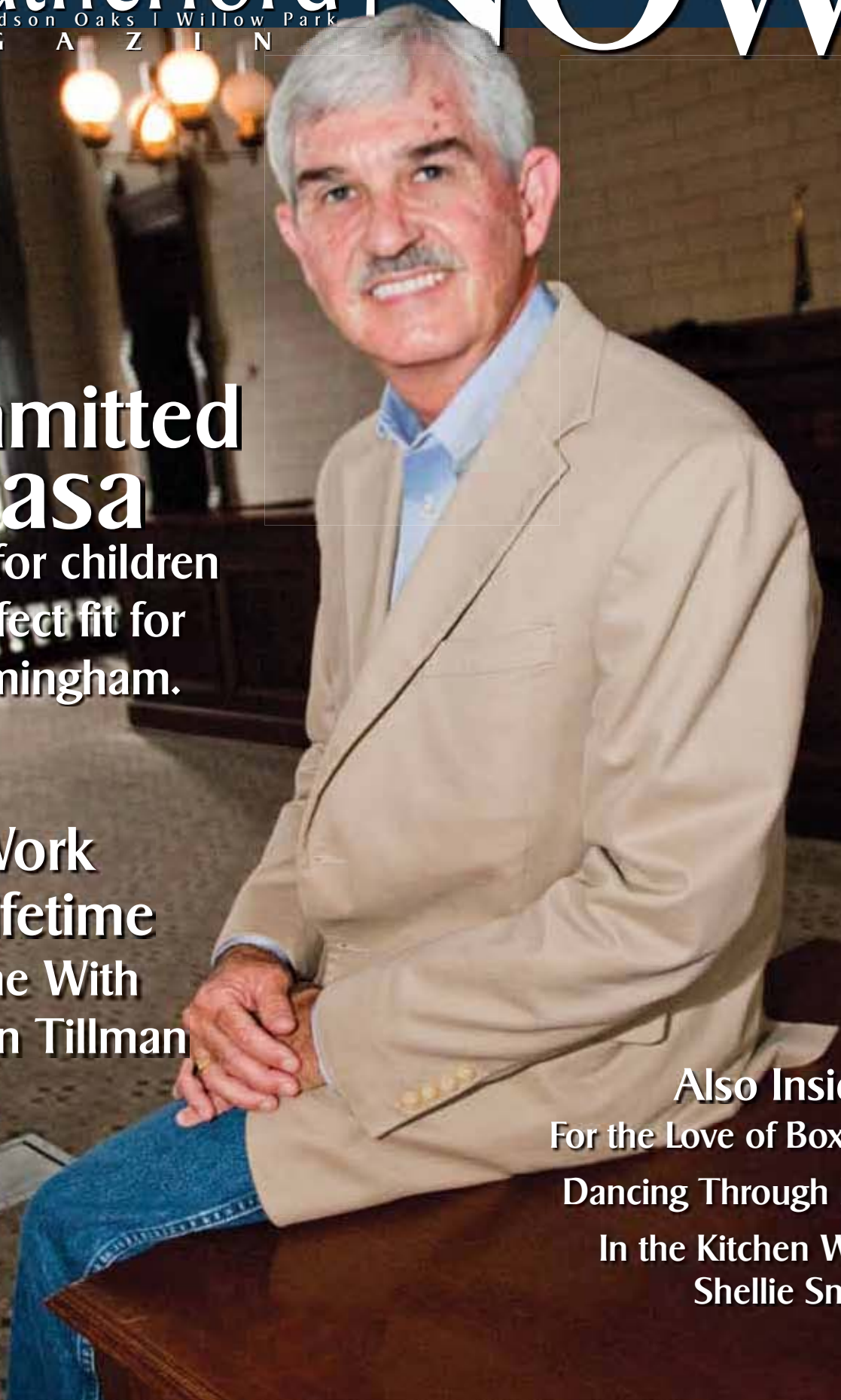
JANUARY 2012

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## On The Cover



Joe Birmingham averages four hours each week helping children.

*Photo by Opaque Visuals.*

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## Editor's Note

*Happy New Year!*

People all around us are continually investing into our liberty, health, happiness, wealth and family and friends. How they accomplish these tasks is fascinating. I encourage you to participate in the 20th annual Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration, where you'll hear motivational stories from three Texans — a science teacher, an attorney and a doctor — who have each changed other people's lives and moved America forward. You'll also get to meet creative youth from our community and enjoy a talent show featuring 10 local acts. Produced by the Weatherford/Parker County Chapter of the NAACP, under the guidance of current president, Jeff Brazzell, the memorial honors Dr. King and the values of courage, truth, justice, compassion, dignity, humility and service. I hope you'll be inspired to new beginnings. Then, I invite you to share with me your plans and ideas — or your neighbors' — for making a difference in 2012.

*Melissa*

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# Committed to CASA

*For many, a new year means a new commitment. Joe Birmingham made the commitment to volunteer as a Court Appointed Special Advocate for Parker County just over a year ago. When he first heard about the program four years ago, he thought it might be a perfect fit for him. “Our role is to act as people who care about these children, who are compassionate. At the same time, our role is to employ professional objectivity about their situations,” Joe said. Joe thought the program meshed well with some of the things he was interested in and concerned about, but he also knew the children needed help.*

Once appointed to a case, Joe will review the child's file. If he feels comfortable with the case, he will accept it and begin the process of learning everything he can about the child or children involved. “Every case is a little bit different, but our role is to do a lot of fact finding,” Joe said of speaking with the child's parents, other relatives, teachers or therapists.

Joe will interview as many people as possible to learn all he can

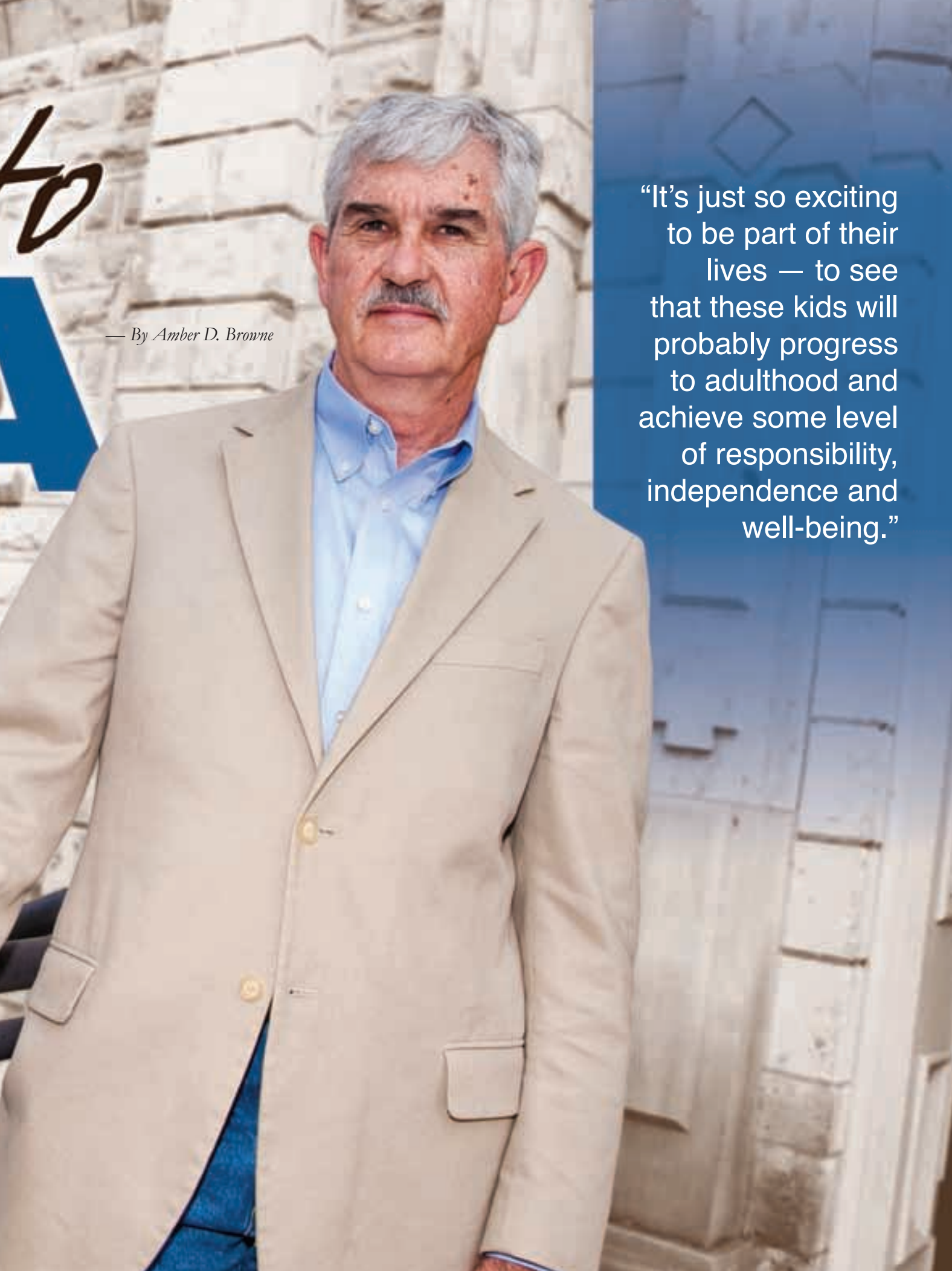
about the child's situation. He will then write a report and make recommendations to the judge about what is in the best interest of that specific child. Ultimately it's up to the judge and Child Protective Services (CPS) to decide what is best for the child.

Depending on the situation, Joe spends an average of four hours each week volunteering for Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA). He tries to build relationships with the children. “I think that's very important. In many cases, these children have been removed from the home,” he stated. “Sometimes, they have very little consistency in their lives.”

Many CASA cases involve children ranging from toddlers to teenagers. “Somebody comes in the middle of the night, and the police are there. Someone from CPS is there to take the child away,” Joe explained. “The children don't know any of these people, and it can be very frightening.”

When the advocate first meets the child, the child may not be too receptive. Over time, the children recognize their advocate is there to help them. Joe says many cases are heartbreaking. “There are times I wish I could step in there and do something to help the child, but that's not our





to  
A

— By *Amber D. Browne*

“It’s just so exciting  
to be part of their  
lives — to see  
that these kids will  
probably progress  
to adulthood and  
achieve some level  
of responsibility,  
independence and  
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role. As CASA, that's not our job." That's someone else's role to play, and Joe is always hopeful that it is played out well.

"There are sad situations where things don't work out as well as you would like them to," Joe explained. Some children are placed into a residential treatment center to get the help they need, while others may age-out in the system after turning 18. "But on the other hand, there are incredibly heartwarming cases," he added. Many children are adopted or find comfort in foster homes. Others are reunited with their parents or are placed with a relative or close family friend.

The CASA volunteer program is for people who want to try to make a



difference in a child's life. "We become part of the system that helps that child," Joe said. "It's just so exciting to be part of their lives — to see that these kids will probably progress to adulthood and achieve some level of responsibility, independence and well-being."

Joe recommends the CASA program for anyone who wants to get involved. "There are so many children who are neglected and abused and taken into the court system. There are just not enough CASAs to be assigned to the cases," he said.

For children in the court system, staffers and case workers may come and go. Often, their CASA volunteers stay the same. Many volunteers want to stay with



the program for the sake of the child, but things do happen. Some people move away or simply cannot take on the case anymore, so another advocate is assigned to the child.

Although Joe has been involved with five cases over the past year, CASA volunteers will normally only work two or three cases at a time. Joe retired from his position as president of Weatherford College in 2009, so he has the extra time to volunteer. Joe feels his 35 years of experience as a college administrator helps him with his volunteer work. CASA volunteers must analyze case information, have the ability to interview people and know what kinds of questions to ask.



"It's an important attribute to be able to take the facts and shape them into a format for a report," he said.

Dealing with the CASA program can take an emotional toll on volunteers.

"This is a part of society we normally are not familiar with. We normally don't see situations where there is child abuse or neglect," he said. "We have to deal with it as unemotionally as we can, because our role is to have professional objectivity about what's going on. At the same time, we have a compassion and concern for these children," he explained. His cases do affect him, but Joe has learned to cope with it himself.

Evelyn, his wife of 39 years, is very supportive of his volunteer work with

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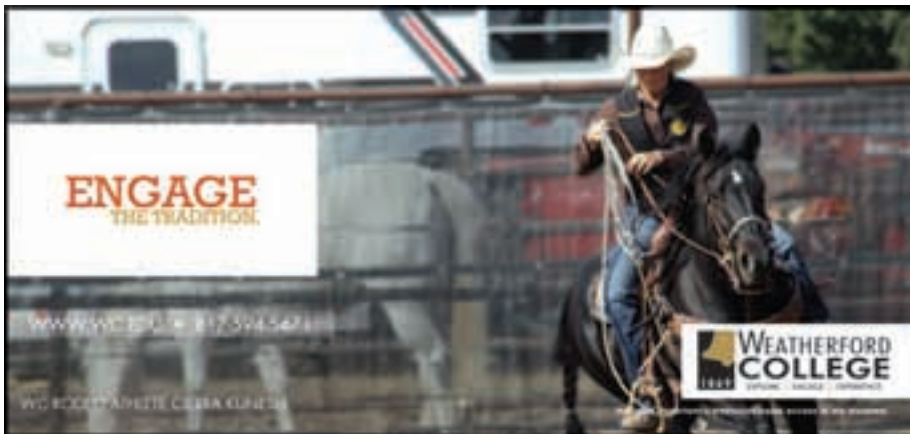


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CASA. Evelyn is a social worker in Fort Worth. “She understands 100 percent of what I do,” Joe explained. Over the years, Joe has listened to many of Evelyn’s cases, in a very generic sense, so he has an understanding of the challenges these children face.

The CASA of Parker County office is there to help its volunteers. The centralized office is an important support function, and staffers are always there to offer advice. Orientations are held for interested advocates, and training sessions are also provided for potential advocates. An advocate must complete 30 hours of training to become a volunteer. The Parker County office manages recordkeeping and communication from the District Attorney’s Office, Texas



Department of Family and Protective Services and other involved parties. Program officials then communicate that information with the advocates.

When it comes to volunteering with CASA, Joe thinks the advocate must be able to withhold judgment about others. In many cases, some of the parents may not have acted properly with their children. “I think it can cloud your professional judgment if you are too emotional or too judgmental,” Joe rationalized. He tries to accept this world and work with it for the best outcome. In some cases, things do work out very well for the child. “You just couldn’t ask for anything else.” **NOW**



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# For the Love of BOXING

— By Amber D. Browne

*With his baritone voice, Jarred Kemp commands the boxing gym on his property in Weatherford. “I love to box,” Jarred admitted. But he’s more than just a professional boxer. He’s also a teacher.*

Jarred gives a lot of his free time to his students on the Weatherford Boxing Team, and he does it for free. “There is no way in my heart I could charge a child, let alone an adult, to get pounded in the head,” Jarred said. He takes donations to pay for gym utilities and for his students to travel to matches out of state. Families will also donate junk metals, which Jarred uses to buy uniforms for the team members.

He works full time in the concrete business and then spends about four hours each day, Monday through Friday, out in his un-air conditioned gym training his students.





Children, teens and adults from the local area learn discipline and the art of boxing. His boxers train on the speed bag and jump rope, and they also work out on the treadmill and spar in the ring. On Saturdays and Sundays, while Jarred spends time with his family, the gym remains open. "I have to take a break sometimes," he admitted.

Not everyone who visits his gym fights competitively. "Some come just to work out and learn how to stay healthy." When it comes to boxing or any sport, getting a good work out is the key. "Don't worry about other people. Too many people worry about what that girl or that guy is thinking. If they just worry about themselves and take care of themselves, everything would be a lot better," Jarred explained.



A former Marine, Jarred spent four years in active duty and four years in the reserves. His time spent in the military helps him in the ring and in training his students. "Boxing is a disciplined sport, and military training instills even more discipline," Jarred said.

Some of his students have gone on to serve in the military and then attend college. "Not every kid is going to go to college, not every kid is going to become a boxing champion," Jarred rationalized. He feels that if he can direct them into the military, they will learn and grow and then come out doing better things in life. Jarred hopes his students want to strive to do better in everything, because fighting "takes a lot of heart."

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Of his students over the years, four have turned pro fighters. He is thrilled to see his young students grow into professional fighters. "When they become champions and make millions," he grinned, "they won't forget about me."

His students travel the Fort Worth region, stretching from Abilene to Grand Prairie and from Denton to Waco. If they win, they move on to the national level. Many travel the country for competitive boxing matches. "I get more excitement seeing these kids the first time they get into the ring," Jarred said. He has some students, who begin training competitively at the young age of 8 for the nationally recognized Golden Gloves. All of his competitive boxers are registered with USA Boxing. The team





members pay an annual \$45 registration fee to USA Boxing, which helps pay for their insurance to cover possible injuries while training in the gym or boxing in the ring. As a coach, Jarred is also registered with USA Boxing. He was required to complete a clinic and pass a test to teach competitive boxing to students.

The 43-year-old has been boxing for more than three decades. He was born in Los Angeles and grew up in south central Fort Worth, where he spent time boxing at the local Boys & Girls Club. "I opted for boxing and have been doing it ever since," Jarred said. He moved to Weatherford during the summer of 1983. He went on to win five Golden Gloves titles and competed at two Olympic trials for boxing.

"Nearly every fighter wants to compete in Golden Gloves," Jarred said. "If you don't become a professional fighter, you can tell your grandkids that you fought in the Golden Gloves." Athleticism runs in Jarred's family. One of his family members was an Olympian boxer. His father, also a former Marine, actually went to the Olympic trials for swimming, which Jarred compared to boxing. "It's all the way you coach the movements," Jarred said, as he moved his arms through the air much like a boxing punch and the crawl stroke.

Both of Jarred's sons are champions in the ring. He has been training 12-year-old Randall and 16-year-old Jarred Jr. since they were just babies. Randall is now the Golden Gloves 2011 Champion for the Fort Worth region, while Jarred Jr. won the open title for

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2011. Jarred's 17-year-old daughter, Jessica, also spent some time in the ring competitively. She was a two-time Texas female boxing champion. She does not get in the ring anymore, her father grinned. "She thinks she's too pretty to box."

"They box because they want to box," he continued. "I'm not one of those daddies who force his kids to box." Jarred has had parents who wanted their children to fight in the ring, but he says the children just did not want to box. "I let them find out here that boxing is not for them." He has even told some parents, "Hey, would you like to get in the ring and try it? Not everybody can be a fighter," he explained.



His students might get hurt, but he teaches them not to quit. The students realize, "I better train hard" and know when to go down, but never throw in the towel. "If you get in the ring, you better fight," he reiterated.

Mike Hill is the team's assistant coach and says Jarred gives his all to the team. "Jarred is a heck of a coach. He doesn't get enough credit. He gives his whole life to this gym." This comment only made Jarred, humble man that he is, blush.

Jarred enjoys training his students, even if they do not become champions in the ring, because he sees a change in them. "To see them try something that other people will never have the guts or the heart to try," he explained. "It's all worth it."

As for his bucket list, Jarred wants to fight in a cage match one day. He plans to continue to box or be ringside forever. "I even have an old hat like Mickey from Rocky," he chuckled. **NOW**





*This large group of children from Aledo enjoys singing Christmas carols in front of Brookshire's.*



*Toby Mize, gardener and groundskeeper, helps to keep Chandor Gardens beautiful through every season.*



*Baylor opens its new office with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.*



*Two families from Christian Outreach Church attend the Parker County Community Choir's performance of Handel's Messiah.*



*Brandi Thomas is surrounded by supportive family as she exhibits her work at the Weatherford College Student Art Show.*



*Kenneth Murphree catches up with Keith Young at the farewell party for retired Weatherford ISD superintendent, Dr. Deborah Cron.*





At Home With

*Kathleen Tillman*



# The Work of a Lifetime

— By Melissa Rawlins



*Peace reigns in Kathleen Tillman's home, where she sews and cooks and welcomes her family to enjoy the work of a lifetime under her new metal roof. The original roof, also metal, topped a circa-1900 four-room bungalow, which was moved onto their property by a team of mules. Kathleen and her late husband, Dan, poured on the elbow grease when they moved to their new place in 1967. "The house was made of single-board walls and a sheet iron roof. It had hay stored in it. We should have burned it," Kathleen quipped. Instead, the Tillmans lived in the relic and fixed it up, while they also commuted to their respective jobs. Dan had completed his contract with*





*the U.S. Army, and by 1967 was working at a metal finishing company in Hearst. Kathleen had gone back to college and trained for nursing after their three children entered school. By the time they bought their land, neighboring Charles Goodnight's homestead, Kathleen was working in the emergency room at John Peter Smith Hospital in Fort Worth.*

Eventually, she took time off to work on the farm. Even while she and Dan renovated their home — adding every modern convenience from plumbing to air conditioning and turning the front porch into a kitchen — Kathleen sewed almost all the clothes she and her children wore. The family bulldozed timber, burned trees, bottle-raised calves and planted 300 peach trees. “For two or three years we made peaches. The kids would pick them in the morning, and I would get up at 3:00 a.m. and drive them to Dallas, sitting over there until we sold out,” Kathleen remembered. The family also planted three acres of viniferous grapes, which are not native to Texas. During their third year, an extremely hard freeze killed all of them.

After several years, work in Weatherford's hospital took Kathleen off

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the farm. During her free time, Kathleen added a new form of sewing to her repertoire. She began making doll clothes after a visit to Amarillo, where her sister-in-law was making dolls. "She sent me home with the doll and a pattern for a dress. I made it, and it was fabulous," Kathleen said. Using only silk and cotton, Kathleen sewed reproduction doll clothing for two women who won every competition. In her guest bedroom closet, Kathleen keeps the antique dresses that she uses as patterns for antique reproduction clothes for people's dolls. She sells her dainty clothes at one doll show a year, in Houston, where there are always buyers for antique reproduction dolls and their specialty costumes. A Bru doll wearing



a costume Kathleen made stands on a table in her living room. Kathleen had everything necessary to sew the little burgundy top coat, beige dress and matching hat in her workroom, where she

keeps hundreds of precious buttons in an antique oak filing cabinet.

Along with her large collection of antique dolls, she displays her bears in every room of the house. Kathleen is as proud of her bears as anything. A sweet beige rabbit hangs out with several fuzzy, six-inch-tall bears on top of a table near the antique roll top desk Kathleen uses as a wine rack in the dining room. On the floor is a miniature oak chair with a burgundy tapestry seat her great-granddaughter

plays with. Across the room sits the Hoosier, holding a decanter of Kathleen's homemade peach brandy. Around the corner, sharing the top of her roll top desk with an antique toy Boxer and a few pieces from her extensive collection of

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Carnival glass, stand several 24-inch tall bisque girls in Victorian attire.

A new audience has been watching Kathleen since 1988, when she took a quilting class in Weatherford. She was one of 10 founding members of the Quilter's Guild of Parker County, and now spends the majority of her time quilting in the traditional manner. On a rack in her living room, several of



her own quilts are displayed along with antique ones she has fallen in love with. "I started giving my quilts away to family members," said Kathleen, who recently made a few for the raffle supporting the senior center. In 2004, the senior center earned over \$7,000 for Meals on Wheels by selling raffle tickets for the Courthouse quilt. The quilt was lovingly put together by Kathleen after guild members made the blocks containing pictures of the three Weatherford log cabins, including the Nadeen Murphree cabin that has been moved to Fort Worth.

Above her quilts, Kathleen hung a Bart Forbes buffalo print. "I read a book called *Heart of the Country*, which gave me a heart for the buffalo," Kathleen said. She has a heart for all wildlife. Two blue birds, painted by her mother, hang over the golden couch that is flanked by two Stiffel lamps found at a flea market at Will Rogers Auditorium. An old tractor accessory that Dan anodized in bright white and topped with cut glass serves as a coffee table, covered in art and travel books. A porcelain kitty she bought in Japan guards the entrance to her bedroom, where she keeps the antique dresser that was her first purchase.

"My second purchase was a dresser



with a top cut out of marble from the bathrooms in the old Medical Arts Building in downtown Fort Worth. I had spent my childhood going there and getting my teeth worked on,” Kathleen recalled. Her new iron bedstead only looks antique, yet its two nightstands originally graced her mother’s home. Made out of oak by patients in Occupational Therapy at the United

States Public Health Service Hospital in Fort Worth, they are reproductions of tables in the Smithsonian Museum.

Art, history and service are constants in Kathleen’s life. Every Wednesday she delivers Meals on Wheels, and she recently enjoyed serving on the jury. When



she relaxes in her family room, she gazes at American Indian art. A photograph of a wild Texas sky hangs above a rustic, western couch, opposite a print of an Indian superimposed on the face of an eagle. Her own grandfather had Indian blood as well as Scottish. Grandpa Brown, born in Brady, died during a gunfight dispute over water rights — yet his grave has not been discovered. At the end of Kathleen’s days, surrounded by beautiful mysteries and memories, she brings in her five dogs and three cats. In front of the huge wood-burning Ashley stove, installed 30 years ago, everyone hangs out right where they belong, in the comfort of home. **NOW**





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Beni Moorman, Alyson Smedley, Brooke Winter, Susan Laskey (manager), Whitney Moore (owner), Lindsay McMahon, Mindy Alvarez.



## DANCING THROUGH LIFE

*Dancers at Foot Works Performing Arts Center learn lessons for everyday life! — By Melissa Rawlins*

Behind the pink door at the corner of Bethel and Tin Top, you'll find some fancy foot work going on. Children and adults are learning the basics of dancing through life from the nine professionals at Foot Works Performing Arts Center. During classes in jazz, lyrical, ballet, tap, tumbling, hip-hop and even drill team, the instructors often give motivational speeches to uplift the spirits and focus the minds of girls and young women.

Dance shaped Whitney Moore, the owner, into a successful woman. Born in Lubbock, Whitney moved to Fort Worth at a young age and danced at Bruce Lee Dance Factory through high school. She earned a Bachelor of Science in psychology with a minor in business from The University of Texas at Arlington. She began teaching dance in Weatherford about eight years ago, and opened Foot Works Performing Arts Center in 2008. Decorating the walls of all four dance rooms in Weatherford

and in Benbrook are vinyl records that Whitney listened to while growing up — including Michael Jackson, Alvin and the Chipmunks and the soundtrack to *Cinderella*.

Foot Works' faculty cares about their students' development and coaches them to achieve much more than they might think possible. Lindsay McMahon, the company co-director, enjoys working with the serious, dedicated competitive dancers, as well as the students who come to learn the basics of dance. Lindsay builds her students' self-confidence. "I'm constantly offering constructive criticism so they have a positive environment in which to learn and grow," Lindsay said. "We make the kids work to learn new and harder things. It gives them more of a sense of accomplishment when they have to strive to achieve what we challenge them with."

"Teenagers typically are there for competition," Whitney said,



adding that January 28 is Foot Works' first regional competition, in Kennedale. They serve a large group of girls ages 7-9, yet the instructors mentor each student — especially the teens. Younger recreational dancers look up to older students as role models. "And our big kids can tell you every one of those little kids' names. They sit together with the little kids at competition and cheer each other on."

Support is the name of the game at Foot Works, where Whitney works with families to make dance and competition affordable. This year, she began offering

## "DANCE SHOULD BE YOUR OUTLET."

a 20-percent military discount to those rearing children on a military salary. Also, families can access the Foot Works' Family Business Directory — which currently lists 37 local businesses that use part of their profits to fund Foot Works dance instruction for their own children. Catering to parents through efficient, trustworthy customer service, Susan Laskey manages a Web site with parent portals for conducting secure business online. Susan will happily answer questions about availability while parents are registering online.

Dancers who are unsure whether they want to compete will find January the perfect time to join Foot Works. Recreational dancers go behind the pink door as often as they want, even if only one day a week, yet still have the opportunity to perform three times throughout the year: at MayFest, then at the end-of-year recital at Will Rogers Auditorium May 23-24 and again next Christmas. For kids 5-17 years of age who want to join the competitive company dancers, there is an audition process before being placed on one of seven teams. New registration cut-off date is February 1, so there is enough time to get a costume ready before the end-of-year recital. Still, fancy foot work is not all about performance. As Whitney tells all her students: "Dance should be your outlet. Whether you have had a good day, bad day, sad or happy day, drop it at the door and dance it out." **NOW**

## Have stock questions? Let's talk.



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## Five Good Reasons to Create an Investment Strategy

— By Gregg Davis

Some people buy investments here and there, now and then. Others open an Individual Retirement Account (IRA), put some money in it and then forget about it. But this type of haphazard investment behavior can lead to haphazard results. On the other hand, you've got five good reasons for creating and following a comprehensive, long-term investment strategy.

• **Reason No. 1:**

You want to enjoy a comfortable retirement lifestyle. For most people, building resources for retirement is the most powerful reason to invest. As a key part of your investment strategy, you'll want to consider investments that have growth potential. The proportion of your portfolio devoted to these growth investments should be based on your individual risk tolerance and time horizon. And, as you move much closer to your actual retirement date, you may decide to shift some — but certainly not all — of your portfolio from growth-oriented vehicles to those investments that can provide a reliable income stream and incur less volatility.

• **Reason No. 2:**

You need to stay ahead of inflation. Over the past few years, we've experienced relatively low inflation, but over time, even a low inflation rate can dramatically erode the value of your savings and investments. That's why you may want to consider investments that provide the potential for rising income.

• **Reason No. 3:**

You need to help manage the unexpected. You can't predict what life will hold in store for you. To cope with unexpected costs, such as a major car repair or a new furnace, you'll

need to create an emergency fund containing six to 12 months' worth of living expenses so that you won't be forced to dip into your long-term investments. And to deal with other major uncertainties of life, you'll need adequate life and disability insurance.

• **Reason No. 4:**

You need resources for major life events. Your retirement may eventually require the bulk of your financial resources — but it's not the only milestone for which you'll need to save and invest. You may need a down payment on a house, or you may someday even want to purchase a vacation home. And if you have children or grandchildren, you may want to help them pay for college.

• **Reason No. 5:**

You'll want to keep in mind investment-related taxes. Taxes, like inflation, can eat into your investment returns. You'll need to evaluate whether you can benefit from tax-advantaged investments and retirement accounts, such as traditional or Roth IRAs.

So there you have it: five good reasons to adhere to a unified investment strategy that's tailored to your situation. This type of "blueprint" may not sound glamorous, and it's certainly not a "get rich quick" formula, but it will help you stay on track toward your important financial goals. **NOW**

*Gregg Davis is an Edward Jones representative based in Aledo.*



### January 8, 15, 22, 29

Life Drawing Class, sponsored by Weatherford Art Association: 1:00-4:00 p.m., Firehouse Gallery and Art Center, 119 West Palo Pinto Street. Cost: \$40/person. Live models. Bring graphite, charcoal, paper and boards. The dress code is casual. Contact Bobbie Narramore at (817) 599-3278.

### January 10-April 6

PAINT: **Tuesday-Saturday**, 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., **Sunday**, 1:00-5:00 p.m., The Doss Heritage and Culture Center, 1400 Texas Drive. Exhibit of oil and acrylic paintings created out of doors. Admission: \$5/adults, \$3/seniors (60-plus), \$3/students, free/children under 6 and members. Contact [www.dosscenter.org](http://www.dosscenter.org) or (817) 599-6168.

### January 12

Gardeners Club of Parker County meeting: 10:00 a.m., St. Francis Church, 117 Ranch House Road, Willow Park. Visitors welcome. Steve Woodward presents a program on "A Better Backyard Birding Experience," followed by refreshments and short meeting. Contact Anita Beckman at (817) 919-6280.

### January 19

20th Annual MLK Celebration: 2:00-9:00 p.m., Shirley Hall Middle School Cafetorium. Hosted by the Weatherford/Parker County Chapter of the NAACP, three panelists will speak from 2:00-3:00 p.m. Award ceremony for Annual MLK Essay and Art Contest winners starts at 5:30 p.m. Talent show featuring 10 acts: 6:00-9:00 p.m. Contact Jeff Brazzell at (214) 793-3215.

### January 28

Thai Cooking Classes: 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., Clark Gardens, 567 Maddux Road. Learn the basics of some of Thai cuisine's most revered dishes and flavors. Registration deadline: **January 24**. Cost: \$85; \$80/members. Contact [www.clarkgardens.com](http://www.clarkgardens.com) or Beverly at (940) 682-4856.

### January 28 and 29

Weatherford Art Association Auction: **Saturday**, 11:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.; **Sunday**, 1:00-4:00 p.m., Firehouse Gallery and Art Center, 119 West Palo Pinto Street. Art has been donated by members to raise funds for possible relocation of the Gallery & Art Center. Contact Bobbie

Narramore at (817) 599-3278.

### January 29

Parker County Bridal Fair: 1:00-5:00 p.m., The Doss Heritage and Culture Center, 1400 Texas Drive. Free event features over 30 exhibitors: photographers, caterers, florists, venues, cakes, decays, gifts and more. About \$3,000 in door prizes will be given away! Call (817) 599-8491.

### January 31

Weatherford Chamber of Commerce new member reception: 4:00-6:00 p.m., Baker's Ribs, 1921 South Main. Members who joined the Weatherford Chamber of Commerce in the last year will be special honorees. Whether you are looking for referrals, ways to promote your business, to be a good corporate citizen, to network, to be involved in the community or to just save money, the Weatherford Chamber of Commerce means business! Call (817) 596-3801.

*Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your event details to [sskoda.nowmag@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sskoda.nowmag@sbcglobal.net).*

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## In The Kitchen With Shellie Smith

— *By Melissa Rawlins*

Experimentation just might be Shellie Smith's middle name. "My mom taught me many of the basics of cooking, which was probably more out of necessity for preparing regular family meals," Shellie said. "But it was both of my grandmothers whom I remember teaching me to bake and delve into the wonders of old-fashioned recipes and canning." One recipe friends and family often ask for is Porcupine Meatballs.

Pure joy, for Shellie, is cooking at home for family, especially since one of her sons always joins in the fun. During these winter months, entertaining is simple: "We make a big pot of stew or chili or soup and call up friends, and let all the kids roast marshmallows for s'mores in our fireplace on our patio." **NOW**

### G'Mom's Porcupine Meatballs

**1 1/2 lbs. extra lean ground beef**  
**1 cup instant rice, uncooked**  
**1/2 cup onion, finely chopped**  
**1 tsp. celery salt**  
**1/4 tsp. salt**  
**1/4 tsp. pepper**  
**1/2 tsp. garlic powder**  
**2 1/2 cups water (divided use)**  
**4 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce (divided use)**  
**1 15-oz. can tomato sauce**  
**1/4 cup brown sugar**

**1.** Mix ground beef, rice, onion, celery salt, pepper, salt, garlic powder, 1/2 cup water and 2 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce in a bowl. Mixture should be slightly watery.  
**2.** Roll into 2-inch balls and place on greased cookie sheet. Bake at 425 F for

25-30 minutes.

**3.** While meatballs are baking, place tomato sauce, 2 cups water, brown sugar and 2 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce in pan and start heating to a slow boil.

**4.** When meatballs are done, remove from oven and place in the tomato sauce mixture. Simmer for about 30 minutes.

### Nana's Cheese Rice

**4 cups rice**  
**1/2 lb. bacon**  
**1/2 bunch of celery, cleaned and sliced**  
**1 bunch green onions, sliced**  
**8 eggs**  
**1 lb. ground beef**  
**1/4 tsp. salt**  
**1/4 tsp. pepper**  
**Soy sauce**

**1.** Cook rice according to package directions, set aside.  
**2.** Slice up bacon into small pieces and brown in a skillet until crispy. Add to cooked rice.  
**3.** Remove all but 1 Tbsp. of the grease from the pan into a reserve cup.  
**4.** Add celery and onions to remaining grease in skillet. Cook until tender. Add to rice.  
**5.** Pour a little more bacon grease in pan. Scramble eggs in skillet and then add to rice mixture.  
**6.** Add a little more grease to pan and cook hamburger. Add to rice.  
**7.** Take remaining bacon grease and add to the whole mixture of rice and veggies and meat. On low heat, stir mixture for a few minutes to incorporate the bacon grease throughout.  
**8.** Salt and pepper to taste. Serve with soy sauce.

### Bacon-Potato-Onion Soup

**12 strips bacon, diced, fried and drained**  
**2 leek stalks, washed and sliced (use only bottom 3 inches, do not use green tops)**  
**1 1/2 onions, chopped**  
**10 Yukon gold potatoes, peeled, chunked**  
**Water**  
**1 stick butter**  
**1 1/2 cups half & half**  
**Salt and pepper to taste**

**1.** In a skillet, cook bacon, leaks and onions. Drain.  
**2.** Place bacon and onion mixture in the pot with potatoes; cover with water. Boil potatoes until soft, but not mushy.  
**3.** After potatoes are cooked, drain, leaving about 4 cups of the potato water in the pot.  
**4.** Add butter, half & half, salt and pepper. With a potato masher, mash some of the potatoes, leaving some in chunks. Simmer on low heat until heated through and butter is melted.

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