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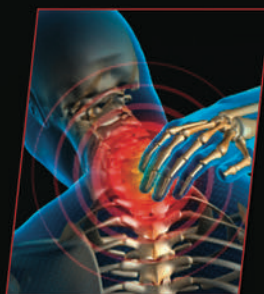
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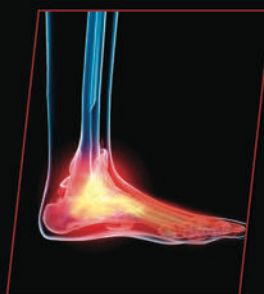
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General Manager, Rick Hensley

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Managing Editor, Becky Walker

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Editorial Coordinator, Sandra Strong

Editorial Assistant, Rachel Smith

Writers, Christopher Schmitt

Zachary R. Urquhart

Editors/Proofreaders, Pat Anthony

GRAPHICS AND DESIGN

Creative Director, Chris McCalla

Artists, Kristin Bato . Morgan Christensen

Martha Macias . Brande Morgan

Shannon Pfaff . Anthony Sarmienta

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography Director, Jill Rose

Photography Coordinator, Amy Ramirez

Photographer, Amy Dishman

Vanessa Polozola

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ON THE COVER



Sarah Martin and Sean Byars help at-risk students graduate from high school.

Photo by Vanessa Polozola.

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Editor's Note

Hello, Neighbor!

Congratulations! You made it to a new year. Now what do you do with it? You can be conscientious and make every New Year's resolution come true. Or, you could ponder with me why there are so many absurd days in January. On January 3rd is Fruitcake Toss Day. Now this is a day with a readymade punch line. The 10th really has me scratching my head with two events.

One is Houseplant Appreciation Day. I'm pretty sure houseplants don't care if they're appreciated or not. Give them some sun, water, food, repeat. They're good. Having Peculiar People Day also on the 10th may not be a coincidence! January 30th is National Inane Answering Message Day. This is where everyone is a comic, but, this one leaves me baffled. "Hello, this is Death. I am not in right now, but if you leave your name and number, I'll be right with you." Honestly, what do you do with that? Leave your name and number for Death? Not me, I need to spend more time with my grandkids in the new year! Have fun with the many more peculiar days in this month!

Happy New Year, Midlothian!

Betty

Betty Tryon
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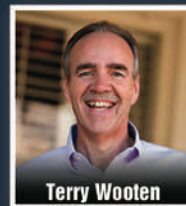
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Nurturer of

The student stomped angrily through the halls of the school. In his present emotional state, anything could happen. However, he wisely went to one of the places he knew would lend a sympathetic ear. He was able to speak to one of the coordinators from the program, Mentors Care, formerly Movement Toward a Future. The coordinators, Sarah Martin at Midlothian High School and Sean Byars at Midlothian Heritage High School, do not proclaim to be miracle workers, but the work they do with students can be miraculous.

Both Sarah and Sean have backgrounds in ministering to children. Sarah graduated from John Brown University with a Bachelor of Science in child and family studies. She went on to study at The University of Texas at Arlington where she earned her master's in social work. She worked with Communities in Schools before coming to the Mentors Care program and has worked here for five years.

Sean served four years in the U.S. Air Force before becoming a minister in youth and children's ministry. Drawn to the criminal justice system, he is currently earning a degree in criminal justice from Texas A&M University-Commerce. Wanting to do more with his life, he spoke to Dena Petty, president and executive director of Mentors Care, and began working for Mentors Care at MHHS.



Possibilities

— By Betty Tryon

"It's just day-to-day survival for them. We want them to think about what their life will be like in five years, and we start nurturing that. We try to present to them that college can be an option."



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The program began at MHS, expanded to MHHS and beginning with this school year, it also operates in Maypearl. “The coordinator there has been amazing,” Sarah enthused. “Dena’s dream is to go nationwide because it is so effective in teaming these kids up with just one person who is a volunteer. Once the kid buys into the fact that this person is here just for them and they are not being paid to be here, that’s when things change.”

Sean is also moved by the bond he sees between the mentor and student. “One of the cool things about it is when the kid connects to that mentor,” he explained. “They have nothing in common. To the student, that’s an old person. But, once the connection is made, if the mentor has to reschedule a date to be with them, you can see their disappointment. It’s amazing to see that, and it’s good to see it happen.”

Students have to be referred to the program by a counselor or teacher. “The student may be at risk because they are failing classes or skipping classes,” Sarah explained. “Or something may have happened in the family that the student has confided to the teacher. When the student comes to our office, we interview them to see if they even want to be a part of our program. They can refuse because it is voluntary.”



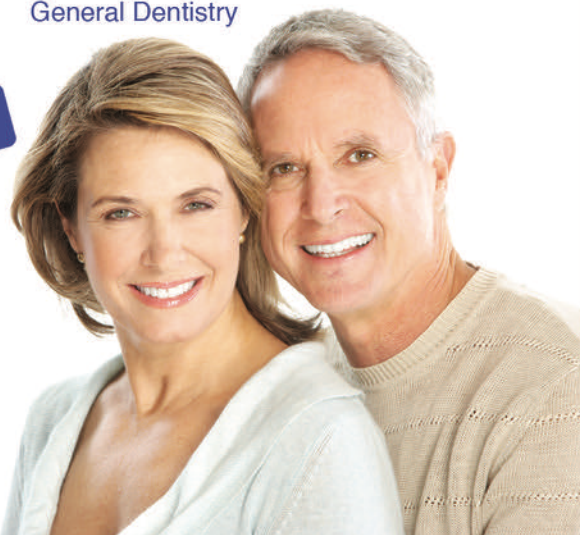
Mentors to the program are vetted and background checked. They are volunteers in the community who want to connect to a student, make a difference and be there for them. When that first meeting occurs, both student and mentor may be nervous. They are encouraged to be themselves and just talk about things. There are prepared topics with talking points given to the mentors to help the conversation along. Although mentor and student usually don't have much in common, the coordinators try to match the two. "I had someone referred to me who didn't fit the usual profile of the students we see," Sarah said, "but after pairing him up with his mentor and after their first meeting, the mentor came to me and said, 'You did it! This kid is me when I was in high school.' They've already had some tough conversations. Part of Sean's role and mine is not just dealing with the kids but helping the mentors. That is one of the neat things about this organization — the kids are not in this alone and neither is the mentor. We're right there with them to guide them and give advice."

"Part of the training we give the mentors is they are a nurturer of possibilities," Sean concurred. "A lot of these kids don't see the possibilities they have later in life. All they see is the

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walls they're in right now. Just telling the kid what you see in them can open up a new door they would've never opened for themselves."

Students may have dubious purposes in coming to the program. Initially some students see this as a way of getting out of class. Sarah and Sean smiled at that revelation, but acknowledge it goes away after they get to know their mentor. Sean assured, "Some mentors bring a drink, and the students look forward to that. But seeing their faces if a mentor cancels, then you know it's about more than getting out of class or getting a drink. It's that they miss the connection."

For this type of program, Mentors Care needs the support of the school. "The principals see the difference in the kids," Sarah remarked. "It doesn't mean they will all start passing, but the students start doing more."

Sean reiterated that student behavior in class improves. He remembers an out-of-control child who'd been sent to ISS, or In School Suspension, and disciplined. The next step would have been expulsion. "He had good parents and lived in a nice home, but he was failing and continued to get in trouble. We matched him with a police officer, and the student stopped being a discipline problem," he shared. "He became accountable to his mentor.



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Mentor Haleigh Stewart tries to personally connect with her students.

Sometimes, it's not the grades that are the problem. Even though they are failing, that is not their worst situation. The kid's parents may be fighting, or maybe they're being abused or bullied. So, getting a 60 in math may not be the biggest issue. We have to address other issues and then focus on the math."

"Many of our kids have never been given the chance to dream," Sarah added. "It's just day-to-day survival for them. We want them to think about what their life will be like in five years, and we start nurturing that. We try to present to them that college can be an option."

The Mentors Care program works to keep students from slipping through the cracks. "As great as the school system is, there are still kids with problems," Sarah said. "The school has to have discipline and order, and I think this program has played a role for some students because it is a softer place to land. Yes, there are consequences to their behavior, but we get why they are acting that way."

As mentors build relationships with students, the students learn how to cope with situations in different ways. "The bottom line is this program is here to help kids graduate from high school," Sara shared, "and whatever it takes to make that happen, we'll do it." **NOW**

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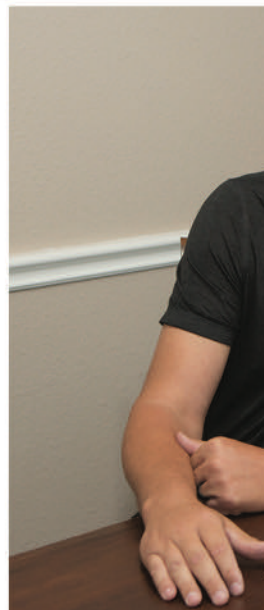
— By Betty Tryon

Wearing mismatched socks, Craig Belcher arrived late to class not knowing it was his lucky day. Norma, his future wife, noticed the tall young man, turned to her girlfriend and said, “That’s the man I’m going to marry.”

To which her girlfriend quipped, “You’d better tell your boyfriend first!”

That first meeting at Mountain View College started Craig and Norma on the way to the rest of their lives together. Just like most young couples, they had no idea of the tragedy and joy ahead. “Once I met Craig and we both knew we wanted to be together, we moved to Midlothian in 1998 because we wanted to live in a small town,” Norma said. Now, many years later, they have Brooklyn, 24, Payton, 20, and Ethan, 9.

Norma and Craig both work and serve at Manna House — Norma as office manager and Craig as inventory manager. Norma remembers when they decided in the spring of 1999 to become involved with the soccer association in town, and they became kids’ soccer coaches. Over time, they coached several teams. “We met a





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wonderful group of friends through the association,” Norma stated, “and then we joined the adult soccer league. We were all in the same season of life with our kids. We went on vacation together, did Halloween together, celebrated birthdays together. We were family.”

Unfortunately, three of the guys went on a fishing trip to Lake Waxahachie on June 6, 2003, which turned tragic. While on the lake, the boat hit a bridge, and one of the friends died. One was virtually unhurt, and Craig was slammed to the bottom of the lake. “It is a true blessing that I lived,” Craig shared. “The second I came up out of the water, I was thanking God for letting me live.”

By the time Norma reached the hospital, the chaplain had already been sent in because Craig’s injuries were so serious. “His leg was torn up,” she reported. “His back was broken, hip bone chipped and tongue severed. The initial reports were that he would never walk again. They were also thinking about possibly amputating his leg.”

Even after Craig improved, he was discharged with a new diagnosis of cancer, which was found in his thyroid. The doctors also gave him the news that he could forget about having more children. But Craig and Norma felt God had another plan for them. “We knew our life was to be of service to God no matter the circumstance,” Norma declared.

Although their faith remained strong, their finances did not, and the community reached out to help. “The city of Midlothian came together for our benefit and raised money for us,” Norma shared. “So much food was given to our family.



Our rent and our car note were paid for six months. Some of the soccer families helped, and our daughter's elementary school teacher helped. There was such an outpouring of love in Midlothian. We got plugged into our church at Harvest Hill and have been there since 2003."

When Craig survived his injuries, he wanted to do something with such a gift. "Before the accident, I was going out with friends and partying a lot," he recalled. "When the accident happened, my old self died under water, and a new man arose. It changed my life completely. I said I would serve God the rest of my life because I know He loved me that much to keep me here on earth."

Norma acknowledged that when Craig was living the night life, it put a strain on their marriage. "We were on the verge of divorce because of Craig's behavior. I didn't have faith that he would ever change. But after the accident and personally witnessing miracle after miracle, I knew God existed, and there



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was hope. After seeing the town come together for us, we decided we would serve. We've become 'yes' people," she laughed. "It is an opportunity to minister and to serve."

During his recovery, Craig marveled at the way Norma cared for him. "She had to take care of me with my bandages and wounds," he observed. "It astounded me that she would do all of that after everything I felt I had done to her."

But Norma had decided that this was their new life, and they needed to move forward and embrace it. "We had decided that we were in it together until death do us part — for better or worse, sickness and in health. I was in it for the long haul. I saw how he had really changed, and I was ready to move forward."

During this new season of their lives, the couple experienced firsthand how sometimes what's predicted by the expert doesn't necessarily have to be what's true. While Craig was in the hospital, Norma was told she would have to deal with a man with a disability. He had a drop foot and doctors told him his soccer playing days were over."

Norma and Craig celebrate the fact that since Craig's discharge to an oncologist, he has been cancer-free since 2004. Another wonderful outcome was proving he could not only walk again, but played soccer! "It was the neatest

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thing ever when Craig returned to the soccer field a few months later," Norma exclaimed. "All four sides of the field were packed with people who came to watch him play again."

"People were gathered everywhere," Craig enthused. "The whistle blew and the ball was passed to me. A guy was defending me, but I was able to take it down and scored a goal! I'm the type of person that when you tell me I can't do something, I know that in my own strength I can't but through God I can."

One of the best miraculous recoveries turned out to be in the baby department. The Belchers took the matter to God. "When we were told we would never have another baby, we were very specific in our prayer to our intercessory prayer group. We wanted a baby with brown hair, brown eyes and a gentle heart. I've never seen anyone with such a specific prayer request get answered. Maybe I should've included that he clean up his room, too!" Norma quipped. Their miracle baby, Ethan, was born in 2007.

Their daughters celebrate the new life the Belchers have carved and still return home for church outreach and serve at Manna House with their parents. Norma also mentors at the high school, and they both serve at their church wherever they are needed. Many people make promises during times of life-changing events but don't always live up to them. Craig and Norma have, and they continue to say thanks in service. **NOW**

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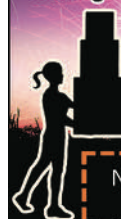
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At Home with Dorothy Coe

— By Zachary R. Urquhart

You would not believe her age. Some people might not even think she is 75, let alone nearly 100. But Dorothy Coe has lived more life than most people could live in twice that amount of time. As she wakes each morning to pray and thank God for another sunrise, Dorothy brightens the halls of Midtownne Assisted Living and Memory Care.

Dorothy grew up in Denison and attended St. Xavier Catholic School until she was 12. “My dad got a new job, so we moved to Mesquite,” she recalled. “It was my first time in public school, and it was a big social shock. My brother came with his tie on, and the other boys took it from him and ran it up the flagpole,” she laughed. “And I remember seeing the segregated water fountains and thinking it was so weird that they divided us like that.”

After graduating from Mesquite High School, Dorothy married James when she was 19. “There was a problem, though,” she said. “I was Catholic, but Jimmy was Protestant, so the priest wouldn’t let us get married on the altar. Well, my dad told me he’d fix it, and sure enough, he went and got the priest and brought him to our house to do the wedding.”

Dorothy and Jimmy were married 72 years before he passed away two years ago. “He was the finest man I ever knew. I never met anyone I’d trade him for,” she beamed. Having served in the Navy during World War II, Jimmy is buried at the National Cemetery, as Dorothy will be one day, too. “Jimmy already told me, he’s not going to heaven,” Dorothy grinned. “He said he’ll be waiting at the gates for me. At this rate, he’ll probably ask what took so long!”

After the war, Jimmy and Dorothy lived in Dallas and owned a dry cleaner, as he had learned to press clothes during his time in the service. “One day, this Navy buddy told Jimmy about a company that was hiring in Grand Prairie,” she detailed. “He was going to go and ask for more money than he thought they’d pay him. Well, he comes home and they had agreed, so he worked for the company that eventually became Raytheon for 44 years.” Jimmy and Dorothy lived






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in Irving, then were moved to Ventura, California, for a while. In the late '60s, Raytheon moved them to Greenville, where they stayed for the rest of their lives together. "We lived on a ranch out there, so we had 75 heads of cattle until it got too hard for us to work it. When he retired, Jimmy and I cruised and traveled the world," she added.

Jimmy and Dorothy have two daughters, Susan and Rebecca. Susan is a retired nurse who teaches English at Navarro, so they liked the thought

of moving to the Midlothian area. Eventually, they decided to get rid of their land, and they liked the complex in Midtowne. "We came and found out about the place before it was built," Dorothy explained. "We had decided to move here, and after Jimmy passed away I sold our place in Greenville and moved in." Rebecca had been living with them for a few years, so she and Dorothy moved into the complex together, and they still live just across the hall from each other. "We were the



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first two residents, so we lived here for two weeks while they finished all of the checks to make sure they could open," she recounted. Now, Dorothy shares newspapers, magazines and meals on a daily basis with fellow residents.

Dorothy fell in love with the facility when she toured it with Jimmy, and it has not disappointed her yet. As one of the original residents, she takes pride in making her apartment stand out from the door throughout the interior. She hangs wreaths on the outside of her place, which complement those she hangs inside, as well. The highlight of her decorating is a collection of paintings and old photographs that are family heirlooms. "The donkey painting was a present for my dad's 14th birthday," she detailed. "And one of my favorites is this picture of my dad courting my mom in front of a horse and buggy."

Dorothy's apartment, one of the largest, has a simple entryway with a table and large mirror next to a kitchenette that she does not have to use often. "They feed us really well here," she said. "And if we don't feel like heading down there, they'll send it up here for us." When she eats in the room, she has a cozy dining room with a small china hutch opposite photos of her expansive family. "I've got the two girls, four grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren," she listed. Next to the photos, she proudly displays the flag Jimmy earned for his time serving the country in WWII.

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The display of Jimmy's service items continues into the combination living room and desk area where Dorothy has a simple computer desk, as well as an antique desk where she can write letters. "I have to start on my Christmas letters early each year to make sure I get them out," she admitted. Between the desks, there is a photo with the hat from Jimmy's service uniform, along with a plaque honoring his years working for Raytheon.

Across the home, Dorothy's relatively simple bedroom includes brown furnishings and more paintings she has collected throughout her life. There are televisions in the bedroom and living room, though Dorothy does her best to get out as often as possible. "I've got some great friends here, and they do lots of things for us," she described. "We have a game room, movie nights, and they even take us on little trips to town." Dorothy also goes to church with Susan every Sunday, as well as makes time for exercise each morning. "We have a little gym, and they even lead workouts some mornings," she detailed. "It's sad that some folks have to stay in their rooms all the time. I wake up each morning and thank God that I'm still perkin'."

Dorothy prays a lot, and has for a long time. "Jimmy had cancer, and so we started praying," she recounted. "After he got his clean bill of health, we knew that our prayers helped heal him." Whenever she hears of another resident that is going through something, Dorothy adds him or her to her prayer list.

She has lived an amazing life. From her upbringing in Mesquite to seven decades of wedded bliss going from city life to raising cattle on a ranch, Dorothy has hundreds of stories spanning the last century. While some people at her stage would be done living, Dorothy greets each morning happy to know she is still perking. **NOW**

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— By Zachary R. Urquhart

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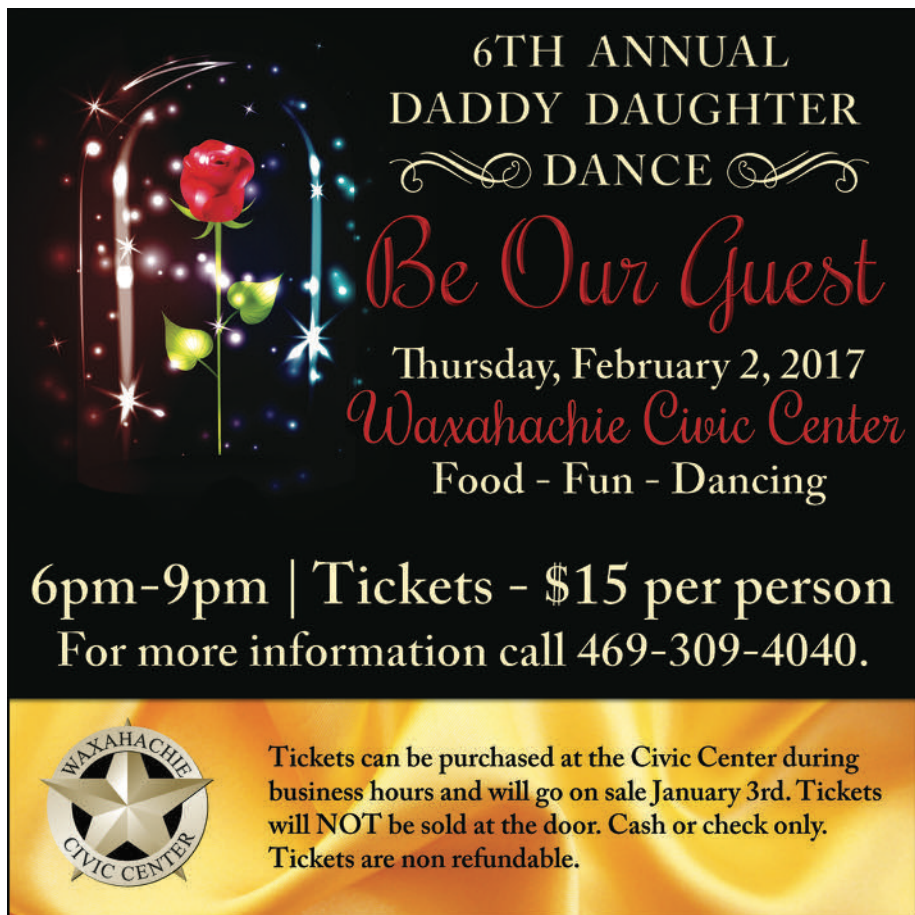
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• *Take one step at a time.* If your current fitness level has you struggling to walk 1 mile without stopping, avoid resolving to run a marathon. Start with walking a length or time without stopping, and then add jogging or auxiliary exercises like pushups or jumping jacks. A good one-month goal for beginning runners is to complete a 5K run within six weeks of starting your training. The same principle applies for those who are already in better shape. If you can walk three miles without a problem, add incline runs or increase the distance to push your limits and increase your results, and try for a half or full marathon.

• *You do not have to overhaul your diet overnight.* Rather than cutting all sugar, fat and bread completely, start simpler. Substitute unsweet tea and black coffee for soda and a latte. Eat one less fast-food meal a week and opt for a homemade salad with a healthy dressing. If you cannot cut out dessert completely, make it a biweekly treat, and limit yourself to one helping. Instead of forcing yourself to eat nothing but kale and water, start with a smaller plate for portion control. As you get healthier, you can increase and adjust your goals accordingly.

MOTIVATION IS KEY

• *Have a partner.* Losing weight, eating right and exercising can all be difficult to do, especially when you go it alone. Whether it's your spouse, a sibling or



just a friend in a similar life stage, have a partner as you start your journey. It is best to have someone who wants to lose around the same amount of weight or hit the same mile time. That way you can push each other, instead of one person being the model for the other.

• *Set up rewards.* In addition to setting incremental goals, you should treat yourself when you hit those goals. You can give yourself a cheat day, a day of rest from running or even something like



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going to a movie or buying a new belt for your smaller waist. You do not have to break the bank, and you can write yourself notes or send yourself cards to encourage yourself along the way.

- *Include healthy competition.* Having someone you are competing against might make you more likely to reach your marks, but do not get upset if you lose a weekly weigh-in. Be sure to give yourself a fair game though. Women typically lose weight at a slower rate than men, and age often slows metabolism. So a 50-year-old woman probably should not compare herself to a young man just out of college.

- *Make it fun.* Find a local group of runners to make your exercise social as well as functional. If you hate running, try lifting weights, cardio-rich workout videos or alternate exercise like CrossFit training. Change up your routine times and locations, so you are not looking at the same scenery every time you work out. Most cities offer recreational sports leagues, so you can get the work in playing soccer, flag football or basketball. If you enjoy what you are doing, you will be much more likely to keep it up throughout the year.

THE RIGHT TOOLS FOR THE JOB

- *Take out the guesswork.* People often think running is running, but when it comes to weight loss, there is a science involved.

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With a good heart rate monitor, you will be able to maximize your workouts by staying somewhere between 55 percent and 85 percent of your maximum heart rate.

- *Work to scale.* If your plan hinges on losing a specific amount of weight, you will need to make sure you have a good scale. On the other hand, if you are simply trying to improve your strength and endurance, a scale may hinder progress. When your maximum lifts increase and your running times decrease, stepping on the scale and finding out you have not lost any weight can kill the momentum of your exercise success.

- *Have a plan and write it down.* When it comes to exercise, do not just throw weights around or run without purpose. There are varying ideas as to what the perfect workout regimen is, but you should use a workout journal no matter what plan you try. Have your workouts written down ahead of time, so you stay focused. Jot notes as you go to adjust intensity, as needed. The same goes for your food intake. You probably do not need a note to remind you how unhealthy donuts are, but keeping a record of calories, noting healthy recipes you want to attempt and listing what times you should eat each meal and snack will drastically improve your overall success. With these tips, you can make this the year you remain resolute. **NOW**

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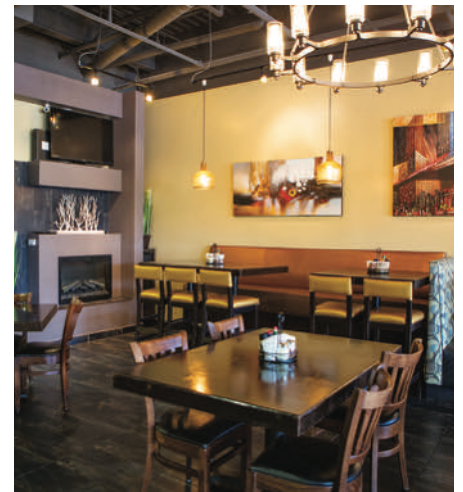


Palio's Pizza Café

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Hours:

Sunday-Thursday: 11:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m.
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Zak Kassem, owner of Palio's Pizza Café, offers a beautiful dining experience for his patrons.

Just Delicious

Palio's Pizza Café makes tasty gourmet pizza that's sure to delight.

— By Betty Tryon

Here in Midlothian, you get to enjoy true gourmet pizza hot from the pizza oven. There's only one way to describe Palio's Pizza Café. It's just delicious! The thin wheat crust made from scratch, gluten free and topped with sauce made fresh daily with natural products, vine ripened tomatoes and vegetables will make eating pizza a healthy meal to enjoy.

Palio's Pizza Café also has sandwiches made on-site daily when you order. There are six different kinds of salads made with farm fresh produce. If you're in the mood for a tasty pasta dish, Palio's serves Lasagna, Chicken Alfredo, Chicken Parmesan and even Baked Mac & Cheese along with other pasta dishes. "They are excellent and made fresh daily," Zak Kassem, owner of Palio's Pizza Café, said. "Freshness at a

great price is one of the things that separates this restaurant from other Italian restaurants. Another is this kind of atmosphere is usually in high-end restaurants. We are probably one of the few pizza places that serves gluten free and wheat thin crust, and everything is prepared here daily."

If you prefer other types of crust, and gluten free is not a priority, then they are happy to prepare your preference. Lunchtime is the perfect time to get together with friends and enjoy one of the daily lunch specials Monday through Friday with a pizza, salad and drink for \$8.99 — a great deal for a gourmet lunch. If you're looking for a cozy, yet classy, place for a business meeting or even a private birthday party, Palio's has a room for you. It is equipped to put up a projector

for business, and large screen TVs are strategically placed. There is a fireplace, and best of all, the room is free of charge as long as you order food. "Our facility is BYOB, bring your own beer and wine," Zak explained. "You can save money, and take your time and enjoy. We'll even give you the bottle opener and glasses."



Zak is a familiar employer in Ellis County. He owns another Palio's in Red Oak, as well as the Taco Casa in Midlothian. There are 50 locations of Palio's Pizza in the Metroplex, with the brand expanding. There are projections of 75 locations to be operating in 2017. In addition to owning the eating establishments, he also owns businesses in fuel named Tri Gaz and Kaserati, Inc. in West Texas. "I'm an engineer and have a company called PC Warehouse," he shared. "I knew things would change because the internet would change the way we do business. I decided I wanted to do something with what people will always need — food and fuel. I've created over 500 jobs with my businesses. I like to promote from within the company. To expand, you have to give a piece of the pie and reward hardworking people you've entrusted to work for you."

Zak chose Midlothian as a community to build in because of his respect and fondness for the people who live here. It shows in his philosophy of doing business. "I want to provide good food, good customer service, a good atmosphere and make sure everybody leaves the place happy." **NOW**

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The MHS newspaper staff decorates the media Christmas tree.



Gina Moore celebrates her daughter, Jaclyn's, participation in the All City Choir.



Ashton Edminster, up and coming singer, performs for Genius Hour at Longbranch Elementary.



Krystal Hughes, owner of Jane Dough Bake House, displays goodies for the opening of 220 Lofts in Midlothian.



Dennis Tucker, owner of Best Texas Insurance Services, is ready for a day of festivities at the Midlothian Fall Festival.



Mrs. Story's kindergarten class creates Rudolphs to go with the book, Rudolph to the Rescue.



The Pallet to Palette helps LaRue Miller educators create some amazing boards for the holidays.



The All City Choir wows during their Christmas performance.



Prayer leaders from Midlothian Foursquare Church give out free prayers at the Midlothian Fall Festival.

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Check Pain Management Off Your List of Foot Surgery Worries

Insight on managing pain after surgery

With any surgery comes reasonable concerns. Depending on the person, your mind could start racing anywhere from the seriousness of your condition, to the procedure itself, to out-of-pocket costs or the required downtime. However, when it comes to foot and ankle surgery, there is the inevitable question: How bad will it hurt afterward?

Even if you have a high tolerance for pain, the unfortunate truth is that pain can accompany the healing process following any surgery. But, with the proper care, healing after foot and ankle surgery can be more comfortable than people might expect.

With the availability of such a large variety of highly effective pain medications, fear of pain should be the last deterrent keeping patients from having foot or ankle surgery. Patients can take comfort in knowing that their surgeons have an equally vested interest in keeping them comfortable, so their surgical experience is positive and they have a speedy recovery.

Patients can receive a local, long-lasting anesthetic immediately following surgery, which significantly decreases pain. Also, in today's health care climate where efforts to reduce prescription drug

addiction are at an all-time high, there are stronger anti-inflammatory medications available, which can eliminate the need for pain relievers containing narcotics.

Ultimately, if a patient needs to undergo surgery, it clearly means something is wrong and requires medical correction or extraction. That in mind, we want to help patients feel good about their surgery and think about how much better they will feel afterward, versus the pain during healing.

In addition to medication, a tried and true method in controlling pain following foot or ankle surgery is to apply rest, ice, compression and elevation (RICE). Using the RICE method reduces swelling in the surgical area. By reducing the swelling, inflammation is minimized, which in large part lowers pain. Talk to your foot and ankle surgeon before having a procedure to determine how much pain you can expect and the plan of action for managing that pain after surgery. **NOW**

Christopher Schmitt, DPM

*Associate of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons
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Calendar

JANUARY 2017

January 3, 10, 17, 24, 31

City Council meeting: 6:00 p.m., 104 W. Ave. E. Call (972) 775-3481 for more information.

Midlothian Rotary Club meeting: Noon, Midlothian Civic Center, 224 S. 11th St. Call (972) 775-7118 for more information.

January 4

Test of the Outdoor Warning Sirens: 2:00 p.m.

January 10

The National Active and Retired Federal Employees (NARFE) Chapter 1191: 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., covering Ellis, Navarro and surrounding counties, rotating between Ryan's Buffet in Waxahachie, Sirloin Stockade in Corsicana, and the Grand Ennis Buffet in Ennis. Email rjcarey1@gmail.com or call (972) 775-2463 for more information on meeting location.

Ellis County Veterans Networking Group meeting: 6:00 p.m., Ryan's Steak House, Hwy. 287 Bypass and 77, Waxahachie. Come join the group for dinner and listen to what the guest speaker for the evening has to share. For more information, call Mike Lamb at (214) 763-0378 for more information.

Midlothian Area Historical Society meeting: 7:00 p.m., CNB, Community Room, 310 N. 9th. For more information, contact Edwin Bateman (972) 743-2379.

January 10, 24

Rag-Tag Readers Book Club: 10:00 a.m., A.H. Meadows Public Library, 923 S. 9th St., Midlothian. Join lively discussions of books chosen by the club members. For more information, call Sandy at (972) 775-3417.

January 16

School Board meeting: 6:00 p.m., MISD Administration Building.

January 21

Pet Adoption Event: 9:00-11:00 a.m., Walmart Garden Center, 400 U.S. 67 Frontage Rd. Monthly adoption event. Animal shelter pets will be available for adoption.

January 23

The Creative Quilters Guild of Ellis County: 7:00 p.m., Waxahachie Bible Church, 624 N. Grand Ave., Waxahachie. Visit www.elliscountyquilters.com for more information.

January 28

Corsicana Ducks Unlimited Banquet and Auction: 6:00 p.m., I.O.O.F. Event Center, Corsicana. For more information, contact Ross Reamy at (903) 654-7704.

February 2

6th Annual Daddy Daughter Dance "Be Our Guest": 6:00-9:00 p.m., Waxahachie Civic Center. Food, fun and dancing. Tickets are \$15 per person and can be purchased at the Civic Center during regular business hours. Tickets will go on sale **January 3**. Tickets will NOT be available the night of the dance.

February 3

FirstLook's Pregnancy Medical Clinic TX Life Investors' Celebration banquet: 6:00 p.m., check in; 7:00 p.m. elegant dinner, Waxahachie Civic Center. \$50 per person or \$400 per table of 8. Register to attend by **January 13** at txlifeinvestors.org or call (972) 938-7900 for more details.

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your current event details to betty.tryon@nowmagazines.com.




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In the Kitchen With Patty Busby

— By Betty Tryon

Patty Busby learned cooking from her mother and grandmothers, who she said were fabulous cooks. She also gained knowledge from experimentation and her own creations. Her only cooking class was at Sur La Table, which taught her how to make a soufflé. She also learns from friends. “My best friend and I get together every year in the fall and spend hours in the kitchen cooking, sharing recipes and learning from one another. I’m also inspired to find ways to recreate meals I may have eaten in a restaurant.”

Patty is bringing back pies! “It seems pie-making is becoming a lost art.” She touts Patty’s Pies as one of her greatest successes. They are old-fashioned, homemade pies from scratch. **NOW**

Lemon Chess Pie

Unbaked piecrust, (homemade or prepared)

2 cups sugar
2 Tbsp. cornmeal
1 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
1/4 tsp. salt
1/2 cup butter or margarine, melted
1/4 cup milk
1 Tbsp. white vinegar
1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
4 large eggs, lightly beaten
1/3 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
Lemon zest from two lemons
Powdered sugar, for garnish (optional)

1. Fit piecrust into a 9-inch pie plate and crimp edges. Line pastry with aluminum foil; fill with pie weights or dried beans. Bake at 425 F for 4 to 5 minutes. Remove weights and foil; bake 2 more minutes or until golden and cool.

2. Stir together sugar and next 7 ingredients until blended. Add eggs, stirring well. Add lemon juice and zest. Pour mixture into piecrust.

3. Bake at 350 F for 50-55 minutes. Cover crust edges with aluminum foil or pie shield when it begins to brown to prevent it from

becoming too dark. Cool completely on a wire rack. If desired, garnish with powdered sugar. Note: If the pie doesn’t appear to be set, turn off heat and let pie sit in the oven about 30 minutes.

Baked Potato Soup

8 slices bacon
1 cup yellow onions, diced
2/3 cup flour
6 cups chicken stock
4 cups (5 lb. bag of the large bakers) baked potatoes, peeled and diced
2 cups half-and-half
1/4 cup parsley, chopped
1 1/2 tsp. garlic, minced
1 1/2 tsp. dried basil
1 1/2 tsp. salt
1 1/2 tsp. black pepper
1 1/2 tsp. red pepper sauce
1 cup cheddar cheese, grated
1/4 cup green onions, diced

1. Fry bacon until crisp. Chop bacon and set aside; reserve drippings.

2. Cook onions in remaining drippings over medium heat until transparent. Add flour, stirring to prevent lumps. Cook until it begins to turn golden. Add chicken stock gradually;

whisk to prevent lumps until liquid begins to thicken.

3. Reduce heat to simmer and add potatoes, half-and-half, chopped bacon, parsley, garlic, basil, salt, black pepper and red pepper sauce. Simmer, but do not boil.

4. Just before serving, stir in cheese and green onions until cheese melts. Garnish with additional chopped bacon, green onions, parsley and cheese.

Chicken and Dumplings

Chicken:

1 whole chicken or 4-6 chicken breasts with bone in
2 tsp. salt
2 tsp. pepper
2 tsp. poultry seasoning
1 cup onion, chopped
1 cup celery, chopped
1 14-oz. can chicken stock
(Use additional stock for richer flavor.)
1 12-oz. can evaporated milk
1 pint half-and-half
Additional salt, pepper and poultry seasoning, to taste

Dumplings:

4 cups all-purpose flour
1 to 1 1/2 cups water (or more as needed)
1 to 1 1/2 tsp. salt, or to taste

1. For chicken: In a large roaster, bake whole chicken or breasts in water seasoned with salt, pepper and poultry seasoning until tender. Remove chicken and set aside to cool. Add onions, celery and chicken stock. Cook until vegetables are tender. Bring mixture to a boil.

2. For dumplings: Mix ingredients together until well-blended. Knead dough on floured board until lumps are out. Roll out until thin (like pie crust). Cut into small strips, narrow or wide. Toss dumplings in flour to coat.

3. Drop dumplings into boiling mixture.

4. While dumplings are cooking, chop chicken. Add chicken to soup once dumplings have cooked a while. Add evaporated milk, half-and-half and additional seasonings to taste.

To view recipes from current and previous issues, visit www.nowmagazines.com.

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