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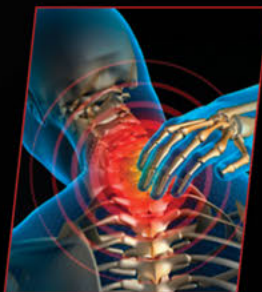
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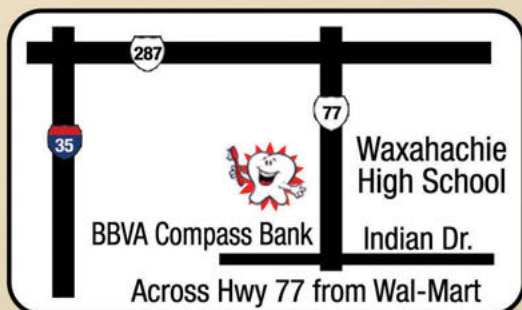
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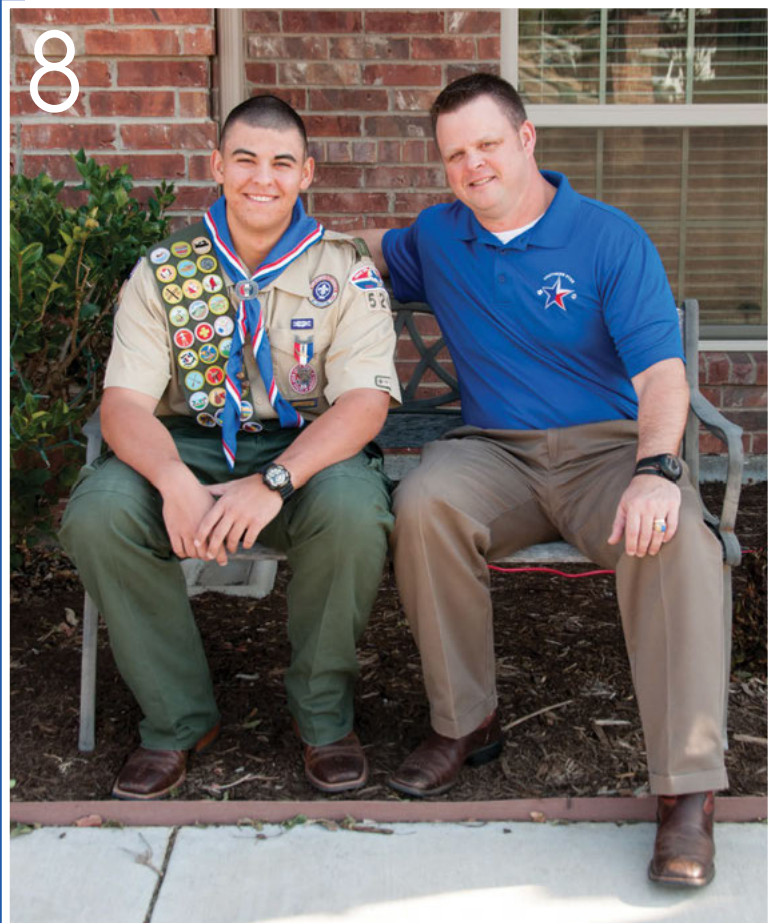
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ON THE COVER

Connor Redhair is proud of all he's accomplished in scouting.

Photo by
Amy Ramirez.

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EDITOR'S NOTE



Sandra

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Happy New Year!

When defined, imagination is the ability of the mind to be creative and resourceful. Is it just me, or have we lost the ability to imagine like we used to do when I was a kid? At one time, I thought using your imagination was a thing of the past. But, once I had grandchildren, I realized their imaginations are alive and well.

One night a discarded box became a sprint car, thanks to Poppy's artistic talent. Another time, a toy that taught about building circuits broke. I wanted to trash it, but my grandson had another idea. "Granny, why not keep the pieces and build them like we do LEGO?" he asked. So, we did!

I'm thankful that my grandchildren don't spend all their time in front of the TV or constantly have an iPad in their laps. Technology could easily rob them of the imaginations they have, and this Granny wouldn't want that. It's too much fun seeing what the next broken item will become or listening as dinosaurs and farm animals battle it out in the Sea of Strong (Granny's garden tub).

Use your imagination as you turn trash to treasure!

P.S. New year, new look and some fresh, new ideas! The NOW Magazines team has been working hard on this project, and we hope you love it. Cheers!

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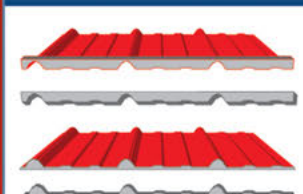


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THE MERITS OF *Scouting*



— By Rick Mauch

When Tim Redhair returned from serving a tour of duty in Iraq in the United States Army in 2010, his life changed forever. He can thank his wife, Melanie, for that, and he is grateful every day. “When I got back from Iraq, my wife said, ‘It’s your turn to take him [their son Connor] to scouting,’” Tim said with a chuckle. “Next thing you know, I’m helping with merit badges.”



He would go on to help Connor, now 18, earn his Eagle Scout badge. And now, he is helping hundreds of other youths advance in Boy Scouts as district executive for the Southern Star District, which includes all of Ellis County.

Tim, 47, is a retired police officer. He took the scouting job in 2016, at the encouragement of a friend. He leads 36 units, over 860 Scouts and upwards of 440 adult volunteers, and he loves it all. “Without them, we wouldn’t have a scouting program,” he said of the volunteers. “That’s where the rubber meets the road for scouting — those adult leaders.”

His work often involves long hours. After all, as he said, the best time for volunteers is usually evenings and weekends. There’s school night recruiting, along with various other evening meetings, such as Explorer and Venture programs. Weekends often feature several events, like the popular

ng

Fishing Derby, held in September. "That is so much fun," Tim said. "We have awards for Biggest Fish, Most Fish, Smallest Fish and Best Not a Fish, which is anything caught that, as it says, is not a fish. One time, this kid pulled a bracelet out of the lake."

There's also the annual Blue and Gold Ceremony, usually held in late January or early February. This event recognizes Cub Scouts for what they have accomplished throughout the previous year.

Each November brings the District Jamboree campout at Wisdom Camp in Duncanville. This event features Scouts from all categories, from Cub to Venture (up to age 21).





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Among the summer highlights is the Twilight Camp. This is an event Scouts attend each evening for a week, participating in a variety of activities ranging from archery to BB gun shooting to STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) events and more. "We've had as many as 150 kids show up each night," Tim said. "And we use a lot of volunteers. We're talking 30 to 40 adults driving to the camp site after having put in a day at their jobs. That's the huge thing that goes unrecognized in scouting — the work volunteers put in behind the scenes. I've been humbled working with these folks."

Tim well understands the devotion that goes into helping Scouts grow. He was there alongside Connor as he completed his Eagle Scout project, while providing his son a little extra incentive, as well. "Before I hit 16, dad said I had to get my Eagle project done, or I couldn't get my driver's license," Connor explained.

Not only did Connor complete his project, it was something for everyone to enjoy. He spearheaded the construction of a war veterans memorial in Duncanville that is 20 feet of concrete in diameter, complete with an American flag, Texas flag and veterans flag. The project took eight months.



Connor received the Eagle Scout ranking in January 2017. He was given his award in a ceremony in September of that same year. "What made it really cool was it was me and my two buddies. We were the last in the patrol," Connor said.

Previously, Tim and Connor hiked the legendary mountainous terrain of Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico, which covers over 140,000 acres. Their trip in 2014, was the first of two adventures on the mountain. "My wife and daughter, Natalie, met us as we came down. Natalie said she wanted to do it," Tim said, "so, we started a Venture Crew, so she could get involved. The whole family went



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— me, Connor, Natalie and Melanie. We were there for 12 days and hiked over 75 miles in 10 of those days. We celebrated our anniversary there.”

Connor graduated Midlothian Heritage High School in 2017. He wants to follow his dad into the Army National Guard. “I really like agriculture and working outdoors, but I’m also working on getting my welding certification,” he said. Once done, he plans to attend Texas State Technical College, and then complete his degree in agribusiness.

The benefits of being an Eagle Scout will help Connor as he advances through life. He can already see some of the effects. “I’ve heard how it helps tremendously — not only do you go in as a higher rank or two, but also a higher pay grade or two,” Connor said, referring to the National Guard.

Eagle Scouts have that certain special something employers are looking for, Tim believes. “I would think that’s something an employer would look at as a positive sign, someone who was able to start a project, finish, lead peer groups and work with adults to get support,” Tim said.

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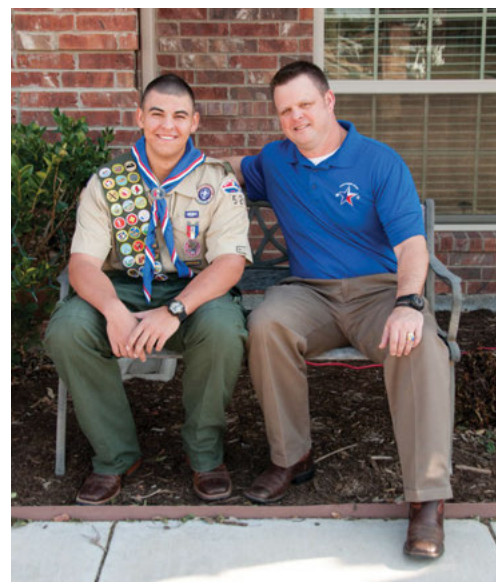
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When he was younger, Tim was also a Cub Scout, but the area in which he lived did not support scouting enough for him to advance any further. He is working hard to make sure that's never the case in his district, which falls under the umbrella of the Circle Ten Council. "In Ellis County, it's growing," he said. "It fills a gap both kids and parents are looking for, especially with Cub Scouts."

Recently, the Boy Scouts decided to allow girls to join. Tim and Connor are OK with this, saying growth and positivity know no genders. "I'm going to wait and see how it's implemented," Tim said. "The whole point is to provide a cornerstone for Scouts, whoever they are."

"Sure, things are going to change, but things are always changing," Connor added. "If it teaches better principles to everyone, that's OK with me."

Another new product Scouts are launching is a Lions Program for kindergartners. This pilot program is much like the Cub Scouts (which begins in first grade) to introduce scouting to kids and parents. "You talk about challenges and adjusting, life is full of them, and we have to stay in step," Tim said. "The main thing is we keep youngsters moving in a positive direction in life." **NOW**



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A New World

— By Carolyn Wills



In 1985, Bud McCluskey built a home on 2.3 acres in a lovely country neighborhood on the outskirts of Waxahachie. By the mid-90s, that 2,000-square-foot house had grown to 3,500-square-feet, and also featured a swimming pool, pool house and detached garage. It was the “big house,” the place where he and his wife raised their son and daughter, where the family shared futures and memories and where, in April 2015, Bud said a last good-bye to his beloved wife.

Bud is an easygoing, bass-fishing Texan with an amazing eye for home design and the skills to make things happen. After a life-changing loss, he searched for a blueprint, a way to move forward and, ultimately, found it in his father's legacy. “I decided not to stay in the big house,” he shared.



*At Home With
Bud McCluskey*



Though he wanted to remain close to his family, to see his grandkids daily and do his part with lawncare and maintenance, the idea of keeping the house until age and disrepair makes it a burden for his kids made less and less sense. "I wanted a plan, something to occupy my hands and mind, so I figured I could redo part of the detached garage and turn it into an apartment," he said.

It was a great plan. In October 2015, Bud gave the big house to his children, and over the next two years, methodically, expertly and courageously designed and built a new home — *his* new home.

Granted, his space is small, a whopping 750 square feet, a tininess potentially magnified by such a tall, lanky Texan, yet with heightened ceilings, linear design, soft colors, minimal clutter and a general sense of openness, it is truly a "big little house."

"I blame this on my dad," Bud smiled. "He taught me to make a small house into a big house." By adding rooms and, then, a separate workshop, his dad had more than doubled the 1,400-square-foot home

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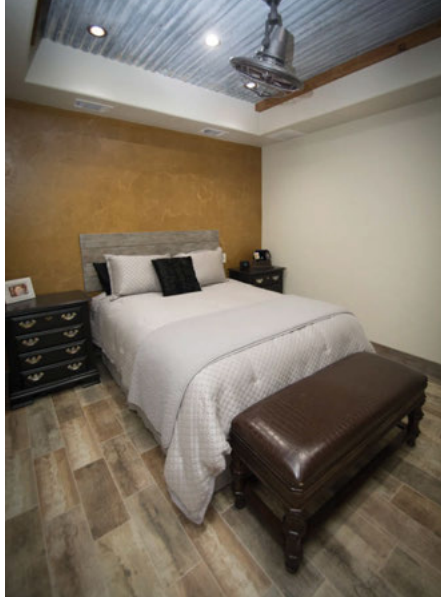
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where Bud and his brother grew up in San Antonio.

Importantly, Bud also now knows the full wisdom of his father's legacy. "Putting myself to work was the best thing to do," he said. Creating a small space where every item and decision has impact meant rethinking his needs and taking a hard look at what to make room for in life. "This was my healing," he smiled. "My home is the



size of an apartment, yet compares to any big house with amenities."

Bud is a project manager at Angiel Electrical Construction Company in Dallas, where he's worked for the past 28 years. Each week, he spends maybe three hours a day at home. For his new space, he needed efficiency, low maintenance and as much openness as possible.

With ideas from Pinterest (yes, Bud is a Renaissance man), he envisioned a rustic-industrial design. "I can look at something and pretty much emulate it," he grinned.

First, he replaced one of the garage doors with an exterior wall of Austin

stone centered with a large metal Lone Star and flanked by a dark-stained front door. That front door now opens to a stunning apartment with an open living room and kitchen, gorgeous master suite, laundry area, walk-in closet and one state-of-the-art spa/bathroom.

It's a transformation that didn't happen overnight. In fact, about a six-month pause happened as Bud welcomed Sheri Collins, a new/old friend, into his life. "Our kids had gone to school together," he said. Sheri had lost her husband three months earlier and understood Bud's project as a way of healing. The two



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began checking in with each other, started dating and, then, Sheri became integral to the process. “She helped with everything from cleaning to design and construction.”

The results are clearly HGTV- and Pinterest-worthy. The living room, sparsely and quietly furnished, features soft leather sofa and chairs, metal, brick, tin and rustic wood, Venetian plastered walls, aged pine baseboards, custom lighting and a single glass-blocked window. Bud built his “signature” coffee table from wire spools, pipes and shelves from pipe, wood and an old C clamp to hold books. For maximum space, he lifted the ceiling to the rafters and installed linear wood-like tile flooring. The few additional accessories include family photos, his father’s fan, carpenter’s T-square and a scattering of old bottles and coins. “You can tell a man is doing the decorating,” he grinned.

The kitchen is delightful and, since Bud’s home has an open-door policy for three grandkids aged 6, 4 and 2, it’s a very important room. “And I love to cook,” he added. The kitchen features alder cabinets, stainless appliances, brick backsplash and concrete counters. “Sheri and I poured the concrete, used a wet diamond polish to reveal



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specks of rock and applied coats of polyurethane,” he explained.

Without question, Bud’s great room/kitchen is stunning. When it comes to luxury and relaxation, though, the master suite has it all. The bedroom features a raised boxed ceiling with an antique oscillating fan, stone-colored walls on a brown paper bag texture, custom lighting and a lightweight gray-stained sliding door as entrance to a most remarkable bathroom.

“The bathroom is my favorite,” Bud said. “It’s a little more modern than industrial.” The 10x9-foot room features custom lighting capable of delivering a light show, and one massive glassed-in, custom-tiled shower with a choice of rain in three modes. “We bought white, gray and black tiles for the shower and installed them vertically,” he explained. “Sheri did the design.”



In the end, Bud did about 80 percent of the work on his amazing conversion. “It’s everything I need, plus the pool and outdoors, and I’m still here with the kids and grandkids.” Exquisite design and great craftsmanship are his results, and a new friend and a special time of healing are his rewards. “This home fits my lifestyle,” he shared. These days, when he’s not at work or competing in a working man’s bass tournament, Bud’s likely enjoying time with Sheri and/or his grandkids or, simply, feeling at home in his new world. **NOW**

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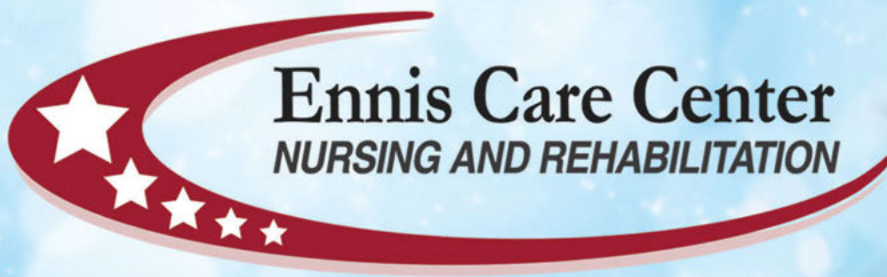
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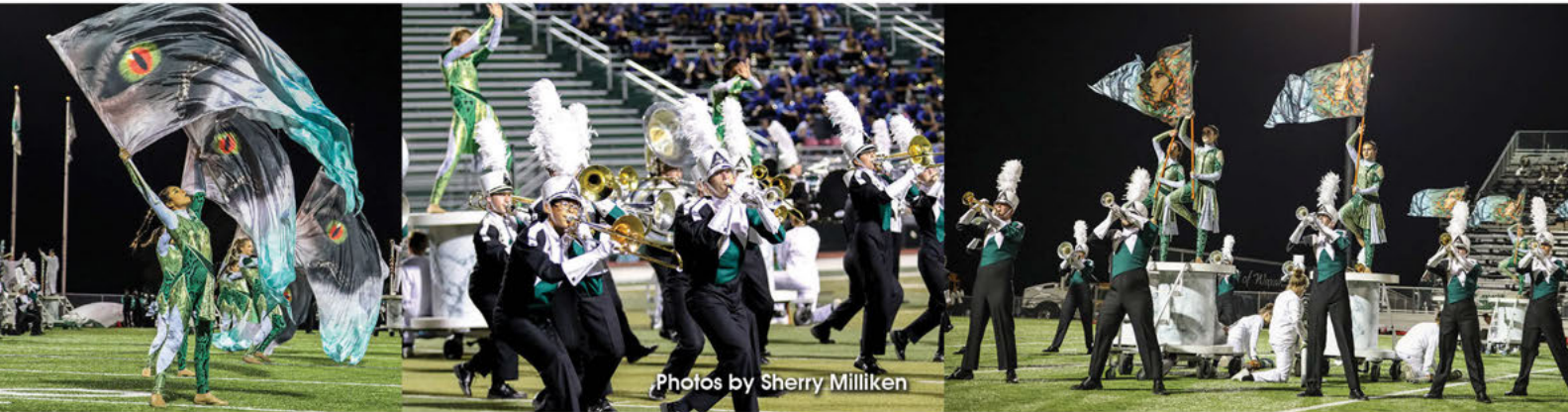
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Where Are They NOW?

Donovan Jones

— By Sandra Strong



Even as a young boy, Donovan Jones knew music would always be a large part of his life. His parents were musically inclined, so it made perfect sense that he would be, also. “I was drawn to it,” he reiterated. “I never stopped learning, playing and composing.”

Prior to his time at Cedar Valley Community College, Donovan reminisced about growing up in Waxahachie and graduating from WHS in 2000. He vividly remembers learning how to play the piano at age 7 and playing electric bass with the WHS Jazz Band during his sophomore and junior years. Sharing his personal philosophy, he said, “I was classically trained. If you learn how to play the piano, you can go wherever you want in relation to learning how to play other instruments.” And that’s exactly what Donovan has done — mastering first the piano and then moving on to the electric bass, guitar, mallet percussion, upright bass, samplers and synthesizers.

His love for music allowed Donovan to tour the world with This Will Destroy You, a band he was an active member of until two years ago. “A friend told me a local band needed a bass player,” he recalled. “I tried out. I got the job. And in doing so, I was able to tour the world doing

what I love.” He was with the band for eight years, and they toured many times in Europe, Asia, Australia and Japan. They even produced a live album from their performance in Reykjavik, Iceland.

Although he is no longer playing with the band, Donovan is still making music and traveling to perform live and in person. He currently lives in Oak Cliff and enjoys composing for his solo project, *Black Taffy*, and producing for other artists, as well. “I still have to work a day job,” he admitted, “but making music is meditation to me. I am compelled to do it.” On weekends he may be found on one stage or another. He’s played shows in Austin, Deep Ellum, Oak Cliff, East Dallas and even as far away as Los Angeles, California. “I still travel wherever my music takes me,” he added.

His composing style is one of “grab and repurpose,” and his genre is mostly instrumental — ranging from ambient/experimental to lo-fi hip-hop/trap. “There are generally no vocals to my style of music,” he explained, “so, there are no language barriers.” He feels quite certain that’s why his previous band had such success overseas.

Time in the evenings is spent listening to records. As he

listens, he samples a melodic phrase, cuts it into pieces with his sampler and rearranges the melodic pattern. Percussion, bass and synthesizers are then added to this repurposed collage piece. "I may flip a song everyone knows like 'Clair de Lune' and turn it into something completely different, while still keeping the mood of the original piece."

And, he rarely pencils any of these new creations to paper. "I mostly work using a sampler and various synthesizers. When I perform, I almost never play the piece the same way twice," he stated. Donovan is a modern-day, one-man band, and a newly created piece may include nuances, such as flies buzzing or footsteps on snow. "It's a collage in music, and the musical notes capture the feeling," he explained.

"I was able to tour the world doing what I love."

Up to this point, Donovan's love of music has kept him moving forward. He readily admits that it's been an uphill climb financially. "The money is inconsistent," he shared, "but I will keep composing because the music is in me." When he performs in live venues, samplers and synthesizers are generally his main instruments of choice.

Donovan considers himself to be just a "dude with a girlfriend and a day job, who happens to be obsessed with music." The journey has definitely had its difficult moments, but Donovan has no desire to stop. For as long as the music is in him, he will continue sharing it with those who care to listen. **NOW**

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Longevity of Learning

— By Sandra Strong



Twenty-five years ago, Father David Colella had a dream. Today, children are still reaping the benefits of that vision. Once the idea was spoken aloud, eight couples who were active members of St. Joseph Catholic Church came together as a core group to see the school Father Colella had once only imagined come to fruition. Charlie and Debbie Timmermann were one of those couples. “I was elected as the first president of the school’s board of directors,” Debbie remembered. “At the time, I was also teaching in the Waxahachie ISD.” Debbie didn’t come on board as the principal at St. Joseph Catholic School until six years ago.

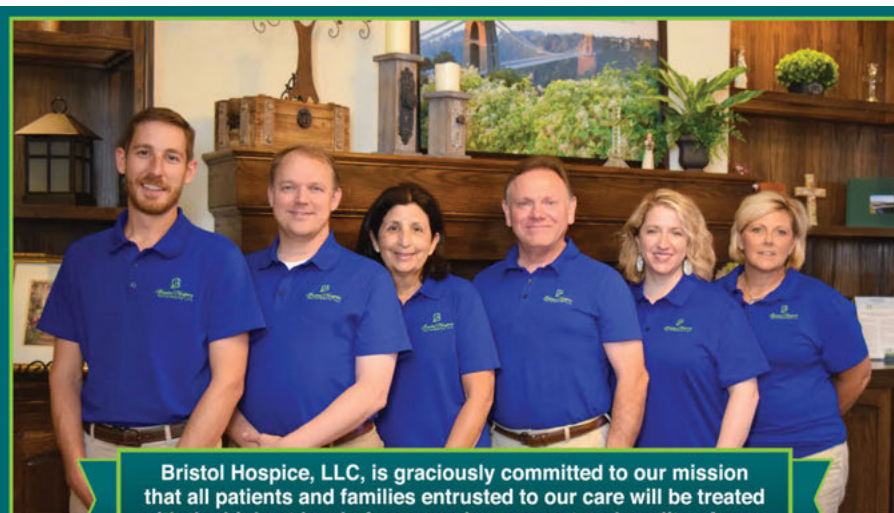
The school first opened to students from pre-K through the first grade. Over the years, the enrollment numbers have grown to include children from pre-K through the eighth grade. “The school is for all children, not just those of the Catholic faith,” Debbie said. “We’re always taking new enrollment, and about one-third of the school’s students are from the Ennis area.”

The first time Debbie walked the halls of the school as its fourth principal, she felt as if she’d come home. “The atmosphere here is accepting and family-oriented. The kids are loving, caring and very respectful,” she said. “New students aren’t new for long.”



Life skills classes and the arts, along with all the regular classes found in public and homeschools, are taught at SJCS. Some classrooms can only hold a total of 12 students, while the largest class this year has an enrollment of 17. "Class size is dependent on the grade level and the need," Debbie shared. "The rooms that at one time were used as Sunday school classes are now where the students learn band, choir and computer skills."

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Debbie believes in the importance of staying current with the changes in education and technology. “One day, students may be working on Smartboards, and other days, they may have a lesson in shaving cream,” Debbie shared. “We also opened a new playground area late last year that includes garden space for all grade levels. We are teaching the children the importance of self-sufficiency. The world is constantly changing, so we must live up to those changes in the way we teach.”

When the student enrollment numbers increase, Debbie can hire an additional educator, thanks in large part to their annual fundraisers — Casino Night and Oktoberfest — always held in May and September, respectively. Casino Night is always held at the school campus. At one time, the festivities for Oktoberfest were held on campus, but due to the school’s growth and the increase in the event’s popularity, the fundraiser moved to the Ellis County Expo Center for several years and then on to the Waxahachie Civic Center.

And Debbie gives credit where credit is due. “Without our parent volunteers, neither of these fundraisers would happen, nor would they be successful,” she added. “The money raised at these fundraisers subsidizes tuition, keeping enrollment costs down.” The extra funds allow Debbie to pay her instructors during the two non-teaching, non-tuition



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months of summer. "It all goes back to the operating account," she added.

Their success as a school, she believes wholeheartedly, can also be attributed to the support they have received from the priests who have come after Father Colella, as well as the church itself. "Students are seen as the future," Debbie said. "Just last October, Bishop Edward Burns made a special trip to SJCS to celebrate our 25 years. The children handled all parts of the celebratory morning mass. Afterwards, the reception was held in the Parish Family Center."

Twenty-five years of past school yearbooks were culled through so as not to leave anyone off the invitation list. People came from all over to extend their congratulations. Those same guests mingled until well after the noon hour, reminiscing about the longevity of learning at SJCS. "Our goal is to keep growing in numbers," Debbie said.

Debbie has never viewed a single day as the SJCS principal as anything too difficult. She understands that nothing in life is perfect, but as she remembers back to her first day on the job, she realizes the reception she experienced was as close to perfect as a person can get. "The cordial, polite attitude of the staff and the students overwhelmed me," she confessed. "Once I caught my breath, I realized it was a breath of fresh air."

Although several of the teachers have a lengthy tenure with SJCS, one



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Longtime educator Jodi Kowalski poses with Principal Debbie Timmermann.

has been with the school for 24 of its 25 years. Jodi Kowalski has witnessed everything — from the school's early beginnings to all that staff and students enjoy today. "Changes are inevitable, and I know I've seen a lot over the last 24 years, but from the very beginning our core values have stayed strong," Jodi said. "When you work with children, every day is full of surprises and challenges, but at the end of the day, I always feel like I've made a difference in someone's life."

Debbie came to the position of principal with many years of education experience. The majority of her 17 years as a teacher in the classroom was spent in what was once referred to as a self-contained classroom, where all subjects were learned in the same classroom, by the same instructor. When things changed to include moving from one classroom to the next, Debbie taught math, and then moved into the position of principal, where she remained for many years in public school prior to taking the helm at SJCS. "I see myself as part of an outstanding team of educators. I'm on the concrete every morning. My face is the first one students see once they step out of the car," she explained. "I lead by example because we all want the same thing for the children — success in and out of the classroom." **NOW**

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Shiniqua Taylor Freeman grew up watching her mom and grandmother cook. “My grandmother was an amazing cook. Because of her, I love to cook, especially bake and grill, for my family and friends,” Shiniqua, a customer service representative, said. “I enjoy watching cooking shows. The new talent is very inspiring.” Soul food is Shiniqua’s specialty, and she especially enjoys time spent in the kitchen with her husband, Rico.

Working for a residential treatment center for young men, Rico remembers his mother being his biggest influence when it comes to cooking. He is also a para-educator at Red Oak High School, and he likes to read and write songs and poetry. “My motto is if you are willing to learn,” he said, “I’m willing to teach.” **NOW**

Chocolate Bomb Cake

Cake:

- 1 cup oil**
- 1 1/4 cups milk**
- 4 eggs**
- 2 Tbsp. sour cream or natural Greek yogurt**
- 1 18.25-oz. box chocolate cake mix**
- 1 10.25-oz. pkg. brownie mix**
- 1/4 cup chocolate chips or chunks**
- 1 cup chocolate pudding (optional)**

Frosting:

- 1 14-oz. can condensed milk**
- 1/2 cup milk**
- 2 spoonful HERSHEY’S chocolate cake frosting**

- 1. For cake:** Preheat the oven to 350 F. In a large bowl, mix the oil, milk, eggs and sour cream or yogurt well.
- 2.** Add the cake and brownie mixes, mixing all ingredients until the batter is smooth.

- 3.** Add the chocolate chips or chunks; fold into the batter.
- 4.** Pour the batter into a well-greased Bundt cake pan. If desired, add chocolate pudding. *Note:* The pudding doesn’t need to be stirred into the batter; drop it in for a smoother consistency.
- 5.** Bake 55 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the middle comes out clean.
- 6. For frosting:** In a saucepan, add all ingredients; stir on low heat until the frosting bubbles.
- 7.** Let the frosting cool for 20-30 minutes before frosting the cake.

Pan Seared Ribeye With Herb Butter

Herb Butter:

- 3 Tbsp. butter, softened**
- 2 tsp. fresh thyme**
- 2 tsp. fresh rosemary**
- 1/4 tsp. salt**
- 1 tsp. lemon juice**

Steaks:

- 2 8- to 10-oz. ribeye steaks**
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil**
- Salt and pepper, to taste**
- Lemon wedges**

- 1. For herb butter:** Add butter, thyme, rosemary, salt and lemon juice to a small bowl; mix well.
- 2.** Place the herb butter in a plastic wrap sheet; roll into a log. Place in the refrigerator for 20 minutes, until the log hardens.
- 3.** Preheat the oven to 500 F; place a 10-inch, cast-iron skillet in the oven for 5 minutes.
- 4. For steaks:** Season both sides of each ribeye steak with olive oil, salt and pepper.
- 5.** Remove the skillet from the oven; place on a burner set to high heat.
- 6.** Add the steaks; sear each side 4-5 minutes.
- 7.** Place the skillet in the oven; cook steaks for 2 minutes on each side. Remove from oven. The steaks will be medium rare; if well done is desired, cook for another minute on each side.
- 8.** Cover the skillet with foil; let the steaks sit 2 minutes. Top with herb butter and a lemon wedge.

Beer Can Chicken

Rub:

- 1 Tbsp. brown sugar**
- 1 Tbsp. dried tarragon**
- 1 tsp. salt**
- 1 tsp. black pepper**
- 1 Tbsp. smoked paprika**

1 tsp. garlic powder
1/2 tsp. chili powder

Chicken:

1 can beer
1 whole chicken
3 Tbsp. olive oil

1. For rub: Mix all ingredients together.
2. For chicken: Preheat oven to 425 F. In a roasting pan that's been placed on a baking sheet, pour about 1/4 of the beer into the roasting pan; set the can of beer in the pan's center.
3. Clean the chicken, removing any giblets; pat chicken dry with paper towels.
4. Sprinkle the rub over the chicken; massage into all the chicken's nooks and crannies.
5. Place the chicken upright over the beer can; drizzle olive oil over the chicken.
6. Bake about 1 hour and 15 minutes, or until the chicken is golden brown and cooked. To check doneness, insert a knife into the thickest part of the thigh; the juices should run clear.

Sour Cream Enchiladas

2 cups sour cream, plus additional for garnish
1 cup green onion, chopped
3 cups sharp cheddar cheese, grated (divided use)
1/2 tsp. ground cumin
1/4 tsp. cayenne pepper
1 20-oz. can enchilada sauce
Canola oil, for frying
12 whole corn tortillas
Green onions, sliced (divided use)

1. Preheat oven to 375 F; mix together the sour cream, green onions, 1 1/2 cups cheese, cumin and cayenne pepper.
2. In a saucepan, heat the enchilada sauce.
3. In a skillet over medium heat, add the oil; using tongs, fry the tortillas one at a time for about 5-10 seconds per side. Don't allow the sides to crisp.
4. Remove each tortilla from the oil; dunk the tortillas in the enchilada sauce.
5. Lay each tortilla on a plate; spoon 2-3 Tbsp. of the sour cream mixture in the middle. Roll each tortilla; place face down in a 9x13-inch baking pan.
6. Use any remaining sour cream mixture as a dip for chips.
7. Cover the dish with the remaining cheese; bake 15-20 minutes until bubbly.
8. Add a dollop of sour cream on each serving; top with sliced green onions, if desired.

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— By Virginia Riddle

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Taking care of the largest human organ, the skin, is dermatologist Dr. Andrew Word's calling. "I want to help people with their outward appearance and general, overall health," Dr. Word said. "At Word Dermatology, we offer a breadth and depth of services, while always seeking to get patients' needs under control as quickly as possible."

As patients step into Dr. Word's office suite that's decorated in soft blues, grays and creams, they are greeted

with a spa-type atmosphere of soft music and his office manager, Melissa Andrews, who Dr. Word says "wears all hats" in helping the office operate smoothly. The picture window's wide vista offers an outdoor presence. Patients of all ages are accepted into Dr. Word's practice that covers medical, surgical and cosmetic dermatological treatments as detailed on the practice's website, through which appointments can be arranged. "It's very important to me that we offer patients from Ellis County and surrounding areas the best of service in a peaceful, pleasant and friendly atmosphere," Dr. Word explained.

Medical assistants — Nidia, Marlena and Esther — help Dr. Word in patient care and serve as patient advocates. "There's always a medical assistant in every room with every patient," Dr. Word stated. His practice also employs two additional part-time staff members — Jan and Harper.

Most major medical insurance providers' plans are accepted as payment along with Medicaid and Medicare. Payments can also be made through most major credit cards, cash and by check. Financial arrangements can also be made through Care Credit.

Dr. Word grew up in Vernon, Texas, where he was valedictorian of his class at Vernon High School. After earning a bachelor's degree in biology, with honors, at The University of Texas at Austin, he earned a Doctorate of Medicine from the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas where he worked an internship in internal medicine and as chief resident in dermatology.

"Dermatology's challenging with a broad diversity of medical issues," Dr. Word explained. "There's something different every day." Living in the area since 2008, with his wife, Jennifer, he saw Waxahachie and its surrounding area's need for a full-time dermatologist. He is board-certified by the American Board of Dermatology and is a member of the Dallas County Medical Society, the Texas Medical Association, the Texas Dermatological Society and the American Academy of Dermatology.

Staying current with the rapid changes in medicine is important to Dr. Word, not only for the treatment of his patients, but also for the sharing of knowledge with other medical professionals. His lists of papers presented to professional gatherings and the vast number of professional articles that have been published can be found on the Word Dermatology website where his many awards are also listed. Locally, Dr. Word is in demand as a speaker at civic groups and offers skin screenings at the Midlothian Senior Citizens Center. "I like learning something new," he said. "I'm always learning, and treating my patients is a pleasure." **NOW**

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Getaway to Good Times

— By Emily Nipps

Northwest Florida often gets less attention than Miami and Orlando, but it makes an ideal spot to explore and relax without the crowds. Sugar-sand beaches, emerald waters, historic landmarks and sunny outdoor adventures await families or couples designing the perfect getaway.

You don't have to venture far beyond the Alabama-Sunshine State border to find a treasure of activities, ranging from museums and mini-golf to waterfront dining and fishing. At the northwest tip of Florida sits beautiful Pensacola, known for its protected beaches and 18th century-era restored neighborhoods.

To get a real-life feel for Pensacola's past, start your trip by passing through Historic Pensacola Village. Whether you explore on your own or discover the area with a guide, don't

miss seeing the T.T. Wentworth, Jr. Florida State Museum, built in 1908.

Aviation geeks won't want to miss visiting the National Naval Aviation Museum. Located on Naval Air Station Pensacola, the museum features more than 150 aircraft on display. It's also where the Blue Angels Naval aerobatics team trains.

Pensacola owes its pivotal role in American aviation history to its famous warm climate and sunny skies. With free museum admission and free guided tours, the National Naval Aviation Museum is an affordable and fun adventure.

From Pensacola, it's about a one-hour drive along Scenic Highway 98 to the unspoiled beaches of Santa Rosa Island. Enjoy luxury beach houses, upscale dining and the unique

artist colony known as Gulf Place. Santa Rosa Beach also has several entrances to Point Washington State Forest, a 15,000-acre preserve known for rich hunting, off-road bicycling and hiking.

Santa Rosa Island is home to five fascinating all-brick forts built to defend coastal Florida after the War of 1812. Fort Pickens, finished in 1834, was active until 1947. Walk through the halls where soldiers were in the Civil War, World War I and World War II and where the great Apache leader, Geronimo, spent seven months after he was captured in 1886.

Fort Barrancas was built on the ruins of an old Spanish fort and finished in 1844. Fort McRee was built too close to the water with too much wood in its construction and was blasted to bits by artillery in the first months of the Civil War. The ruins are clearly visible near the surf at Perdido Key.

If the family is up for another three-hour drive continuing east on US-98, St. George Island is a perfect getaway along the water. Climb the 92 stairs to the top of the Cape Saint George Lighthouse, built in 1852, for a beautiful view of the island and surrounding waterways. St. George Island is also home to 17 miles of paved bike paths and numerous off-road trails for exploring. Jolly Roger Beach Shop rents bikes by the hour, day and week and is located in the center of the island.

For sunset, stop by the Blue Parrot Oceanfront Café for fresh seafood, cocktails and a great view of the water. Don't miss trying the fresh Apalachicola Bay oysters while you're there.

And if you want an even closer look at the sparkling waters, check out Journeys of St. George Island to charter boat trips for great fishing, rent kayaks or take your little ones on the guided dolphin tour or sunset cruise.

Whether you wish to relax or explore, look no farther than the sunny shoreline of northwest Florida. Its rich history combined with soft beaches and nature trails make it your getaway for good times. **NOW**

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A Brand New You

— By Zachary R. Urquhart

There's never a bad time to start exercising, dump bad habits or learn a new skill, and the beginning of the new year can be the jumpstart needed to make a change. If eating healthier is your goal this year, here are some ideas for a fresh start on becoming a new you.

Gluten-free vs. Low-carb¹

- *Know why you are changing.* Celiac disease and wheat allergies cause a small percentage of people to be unable to digest the protein from wheat properly, but many others have cut gluten and seen improvements in their health. It isn't clear if everyone would be healthier on a gluten-free diet, but if it means you avoid cookies or donuts and don't drink beer, less gluten would make you healthier. The key is understanding what you are avoiding and why, so you don't miss nutrients like fiber.

- *Eat less bread.* If you aren't actively staying away from breads and wheat-based starches, you are likely eating more bread than you need. While enjoying a roll with dinner may not be a bad thing, going for third and fourths is over-consumption.

- *There are other carbs.* The gluten-free trend stemmed from an earlier craze of reducing carbohydrates. But there are many types of carbs. Fruit is high in natural sugars, which is better than foods with added sugar, but too much fruit can still be a bad thing. The key in low-carb eating for weight loss is to avoid sugar and sugar substitutes like aspartame and sucralose as much as possible. If you need something other than water to drink, try unsweetened tea with a fruit wedge, instead of diet soda.



Diabetic Diets²

- *Control your glucose.* Diabetics should eat at regular times, with a focus on healthier foods like fruits, vegetables and healthy carbs. This helps the body produce and regulate the insulin it either makes or gets from injections.

- *Know what to avoid.* Diabetics are at a higher risk of heart problems, so limiting the amount of both saturated and trans fats is important. Fats in avocados and almonds are healthy in moderation, but animal proteins and processed foods aren't. Sodium and cholesterol should also be limited.



Heart Healthy³

- *Eat better to live longer.* If the goal is long-term health, you will want to make some long-term diet decisions. Choose whole grains over refined flour or calorie-high muffins and pastries. Add plenty of fruits and vegetables, while limiting sodium. Keeping portion sizes down to limit your caloric intake will improve your overall health.

- *Make good choices.* A heart-healthy menu includes good fats like those in healthy oils, nuts and seeds. Limit saturated fats and avoid untrimmed beef or hot dogs. Instead, choose



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good proteins like lean ground meat or poultry, eggs and legumes.

• *Follow a plan.* Find a variety of healthy options and buy groceries with a menu in mind to get food that meets your nutritional needs, while limiting the unhealthy options you are trying to avoid. And include a sensible “cheat” meal once in a while to curb cravings for unhealthy options.

Whatever your diet and health goals are this year, your first steps should be researching and deciding on a firm plan to follow. No matter your goal, knowing what to and what not to eat will help you become the new you that you are hoping to be. **NOW**

Sources:

1. “Is Eating Gluten-Free Healthier” obtained from <http://www.eatingwell.com/article/9943/is-eating-gluten-free-healthier/>
2. “Diabetes Diet: Create your healthy-eating plan” obtained from <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/diabetes/in-depth/diabetes-diet/art-20044295>
3. “Heart Healthy Diet: 8 Steps to prevent heart disease” obtained from <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/heart-disease/in-depth/heart-healthy-diet/art-20047702>



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Zoomed In: William Little

By Sandra Strong

William Little was born and raised in South Texas. He spent time in college and then 33 years in Houston before moving to Dublin, Ireland, as a post grad student. "I came home to Texas three years ago to be near my sisters who had moved to Waxahachie 10 years earlier," he shared. "It was time to be near family."

Soon thereafter, William met the local district attorney, who in turn offered him the assistant county and district attorney position. William's mode of transportation is what makes him unique. "I learned to walk while I was in Ireland," he shared, "and I've just continued on with my lifestyle change here." As he walks, he finds enjoyment talking to people along the way.



Kay Willingham and Suzy Keane are the Bright Tree Winners at the annual Festival of Trees event benefiting Habitat for Humanity.



Juli Sloan, Pat Pratt, Virginia Sevier and Mary Needham enjoy helping shoppers find what they are looking for at Secondhand Treasures, a resale and thrift shop in downtown Waxahachie.



Several volunteers pose for the camera in front of the Senior Angel Tree at the Waxahachie Senior Center.



Those in line wait patiently for 5 Below to open for after-Thanksgiving shoppers.



Barbara Ball spends quality bicycling time at the Waxahachie Senior Center.



Mary Anderson braves the crowd at Wal-Mart to get some of her Christmas shopping done.



John Dzymczak stands in front of the manger scene he constructed for the silent auction.

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Calendar

January:

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Katie Knight LIVE Concert: 8:00 p.m., doors open; 9:00 p.m., show begins, The Oasis Bar and Grill, 4720 Ruby Ave., Midlothian. Come hear American country music singer-songwriter and guitarist, Katie Knight, perform live. The event is for ages 21 and older. Tickets are available for \$5 at ticketfly.com.

13

Feast of St. Voloc: a costumed event benefiting Scottish Rite Hospital. Purchase tickets in advance at www.willowdenfoundation.com.

15

The Writers' Circle: 6:00 p.m., A.H. Meadows Public Library, 923 S. 9th St., Midlothian. The group is open to the public to provide support, motivation and writing tips. For more information, contact Ashley at meadowwriterscircle@gmail.com.

20

Extraordinary Women's Conference: Haven of Hope, 1107 S. Clay St., Ennis. Equipping women to serve in leadership roles at their local church. Event includes breakfast, lunch and door prizes. Tickets are \$25 donation.



25

Nunsense: Ennis Public Theatre, 113 N. Dallas St., Ennis. Show will play through **February 4**. For more information, visit www.ennispublictheatre.com.

February:

9

TX Life Investors' Celebration: On a Mission from God: 7:00 p.m., Waxahachie Civic Center. An inspirational evening of dining, laughter and investing. John Ensor, president of PassionLife will serve as the guest speaker. RSVP by **January 20** at www.txlifeinvestors.org or call (972) 938-7900 for more information.

23

WISD's 21st Annual DEAR (Drop Everything & Read) Day: 8:45 and 10:15 a.m. reading times. Contact www.wisd.org or call (972) 923-4631 to reserve your place to read.



26

WISD's Lighthouse for Learning/Community Education: spring semester begins. Contact www.wisd.org or call (972) 923-4631 for registration and class offerings and information. Early sign up is encouraged since classes fill up quickly.

Ongoing:

Mondays

Celebrate Recovery: 7:00-9:00 p.m., The Avenue Church, 1761 Hwy 77. For more information, call (972) 937-5301.

Celebrate Recovery: 6:30 p.m., Cowboy Church of Ellis County, 2374 Hwy. 287 Bypass W. For more information, call (972) 935-9801.

Celebrate Recovery: 7:00-9:00 p.m., The Lighthouse Church, 1400 N. 9th St. A Christ-centered recovery program designed to help those struggling with hurts, habits and hang-ups. For more information, please email jason@dfwlighthouse.org.



Fourth Mondays

Texas Master Naturalists Indian Trails Chapter: 6:00 p.m., First United Methodist Church, Waxahachie. The program begins at 7:00 p.m. For more information about the group, visit www.txmn.org/indiantrail.

Mondays and Thursdays

Fitness Revolution: 6:30 p.m., Salvation Army, 620 Farley St. Work out to fun aerobics choreographed to upbeat Christian and wholesome music. \$15 per month. Call (214) 477-1164 for more information.

Tuesdays

Story Time at Sims Library: 10:00-10:40 a.m., children 3 and older. Program features themed book readings, songs, puppets and crafts that teach children early literacy skills in preparation for kindergarten. E-mail children@simslib.org for more information.

Waxahachie Toastmasters meeting:
6:30 p.m., Lyceum at Sims Library. For
more information, call (469) 245-8681.



GriefShare meetings: 4:00 and
6:30 p.m., Cowboy Church of
Ellis County in the Youth Center
Kindergarten Room. For more
information, call (972) 935-9801 or
visit www.cowboyfaith.org.

First and Third Thursdays
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visit elliscountyheals@gmail.com or
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Last Thursdays
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meeting: RFMI, 1611 W. Ennis
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Fourth Saturdays
Bristol Opry: 7:00 p.m., featuring
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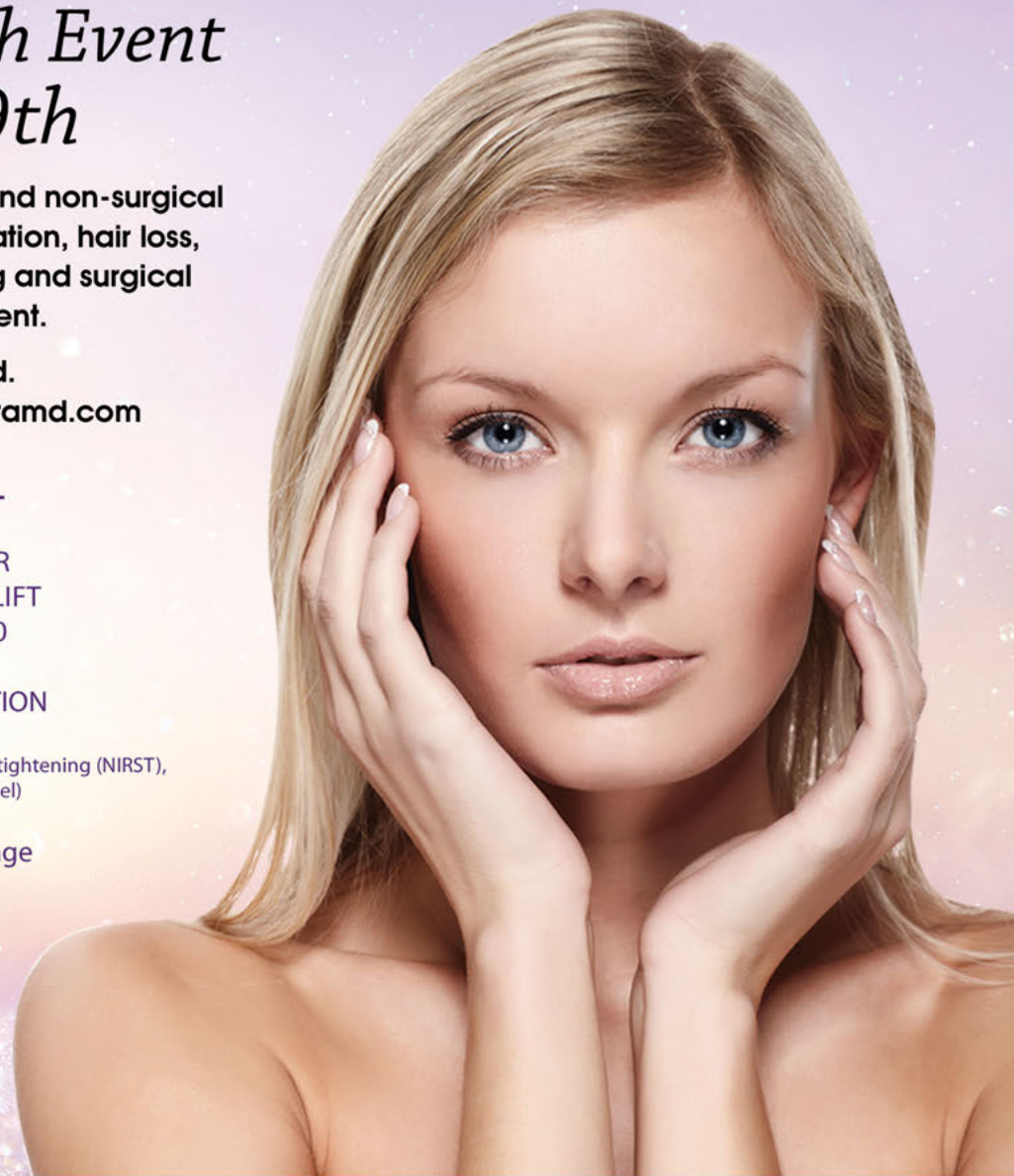
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HealthNOW

Scoliosis

— By Betty Tryon, BSN

It could not happen at a worse time — a diagnosis of scoliosis right before puberty. Scoliosis is an abnormal sideways curvature of the spine. The progression of the atypical curvature happens most often during the growth spurt of the teenage years. Children commonly compare themselves to others, and a condition that causes physical deformity such as scoliosis can severely impact the emotional well-being of a young person on the cusp of adulthood. At a time when they struggle with normal body-image issues, they must now face the prospect of contending with a condition that will alter the physical shape of their body.

The most common type of scoliosis is Adolescent Idiopathic Scoliosis (AIS). Idiopathic means the cause is unknown although there is some evidence of hereditary factors contributing to this condition. Many children with AIS do not experience pain. It is when the spine curves beyond its normal range that the child and others will notice a problem. A beginning clue that something is wrong may be one leg seeming to become longer than the other one, which would cause clothing not to fit properly. When bending over, the curvature of the spine is more noticeable as one shoulder

is higher and protrudes more than the other one. There will be visible curving of the spine to either the right or the left. A serious case of scoliosis can alter the chest cavity and affect the person's breathing capacity. Left untreated, the deformity could become severe. However, with proper treatment, there is a good possibility that progressive curvature can be stabilized as the child grows. A brace properly prescribed and worn will help prevent the condition from worsening. The brace may have to be worn until skeletal maturity and the bones stop growing. In some cases, surgery is necessary to straighten and provide support for the spine.

As the spine curves and becomes more noticeable, the child's body image shifts also. Significant psychological distress may be noted. Some children complain of feeling isolated socially and not having many friends. A treatment plan for the physical condition should consider their emotional well-being as they often have low self-esteem. Providing a support group for pre-teens and teens would give them an outlet for their frustrations. In addition, speaking with other kids who have successfully undergone treatment and/or surgery could give them a great boost of confidence.

It is important for parents to understand all of the risks and benefits associated with any treatment plan. Understanding what is happening gives the family more options for an optimal outcome. **NOW**

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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