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February 2008

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Her Mark**

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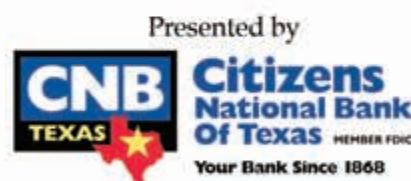
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Photo by Ivey Photography.

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Midlothian NOW

Editor's Note

Hello, Midlothian!

Ahh, February, the month for love and lovers. If you wax eloquently and poetically all day long, or even if you stumble over the words I love you, this is the month for you! So push yourself out there and shine! While you are shining, try to direct some of your rays to those who probably will not receive a Valentine greeting, like the elderly among us, the widow or even the struggling teenager. You can never go wrong when you bring love into someone's life.

February is also Black History Month and we are proud to recognize Mrs. LaRue Miller as our featured person this year. As many of you know, the new elementary school will honor her by being named LaRue Miller Elementary School. Read her incredible story this month.

Warm your heart with a true love story between Councilman Wayne Sibley and his wife Jannis. Enjoy it in our home feature.

Here's wishing you a ton of sappy cards, fattening chocolate, blooming roses and above all, love, this Valentine's Day.

Betty Tryon
MidlothianNOW Editor



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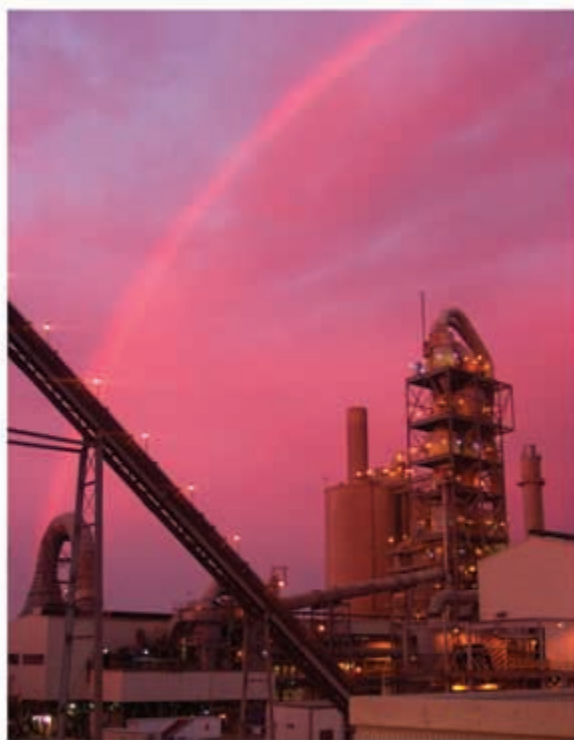
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Making Her Mark

— By Betty Tryon



As the sun chased the darkness away for another day, ninth-grader LaRue Kilgore-Miller, and her brothers and sisters, were already on their way for another day at school. The education building for black high school students was not down the block, but in another city. “We had to catch the Continental bus at 6:30 a.m. from Midlothian to Waxahachie every day. Once there, the bus would drop us off many blocks from the school, and we walked the rest of the way.

After school, we rode the bus home. We couldn’t be involved in after-school activities because the bus left around 3:30 in the afternoon.”

In the early 1940s, black Americans in many parts of the South were not allowed to attend school with the white students. Because of this, LaRue and her siblings had to take their round-trip journey every day to the closest black high school. LaRue did not think much about it growing up. She said, “That was just the time, the way it was.”

Many who know LaRue, know this part of her history. However, her background is rich in familial historical



LaRue Kilgore-Miller reading to Hunter Colburn.

breakthroughs that paved the way for others. She explained, “My dad, Buck Kilgore, was one of the two first black men to live in Midlothian. The other was my dad’s friend, T.P. Turner. They came to work at the oil mill. The oil mill is where cotton, picked in the fields, was taken to have the oil pressed out of the cottonseed. They both worked as cooks and were allowed to hire people to work with them. It was 1906 when my dad started working in Midlothian. At that time, blacks were not allowed to live here because they could not spend the night in the city. Gradually, this changed as more and more blacks came to the city to work at the mill.”

Because black Americans could now live in Midlothian, Buck had the opportunity to meet his sweetheart, Amanda, who was in town visiting with a friend. Buck and Amanda were married and had six children. LaRue said, “I am the



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youngest one. Out of my three brothers, B.B., L.A. [now deceased] and Seth T., only Seth still lives here. My sisters were Earline, [deceased] and Eunice. We were all born here and lived at 511 N. 9th St., the street where most black people lived. That house has now been torn down."

One of the advantages of living on 9th St. was the neighborhood school, Booker T. Washington, for the black children. "Our house was next to our




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Larry Molina, project super-intendent for the LaRue Miller Elementary School, shows Mrs. Miller the plans at the school construction site.

school, and we would use the school playground as our play area. It was for first through eighth grades."

During the last two years of high school, LaRue's mother made arrangements for her to board with another lady in Waxahachie, to avoid the twice-daily trek. LaRue graduated in 1945. After high school, she went to Paul Quinn College located in Dallas and graduated in 1949. While there, she met Arthur Miller and they were married in 1950. The heritage of historical accomplishments extends to LaRue's husband's family, also. "Arthur was very proud of his brother, Doris (known as Dorie) Miller, a known Pearl Harbor hero. LaRue said, "In the movie *Pearl Harbor*, the black man with the machine gun was Dorie." Arthur, like LaRue,



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also taught in Midlothian. He died in 1990. LaRue and Arthur have one daughter, Sherri, who lives in Abilene, and one grandson, Cordale, a sophomore at the University of North Texas.

She remembers when she first started teaching. "When I graduated from Paul Quinn, I talked to L.A. Mills who was the superintendent at that time, about a job. He spoke to the school board and I was hired to teach third through fourth grade at the school I grew up in, Booker T. Washington. The name

**"I have taught
three generations
of students. Having
the new school
named after me,
well, that is the
icing on the cake!"**

was later changed to Central Elementary and then to what it is now, Laura Jenkins Center." Pulling out her first teaching contract, LaRue showed where her beginning salary was \$2,403 for the school year. "That was good money back then," she laughed. "Gas was only 25 cents a gallon, bread was 10 cents and you could buy a pop for a nickel.

"When I started teaching, the superintendent was worried about whether I could handle my classroom because the kids were from my neighborhood. They all knew me as Baby Ruth, my nickname, but I wanted them to call me Miss Kilgore. I am grateful to the parents because they told the kids that they had to respect me as their teacher and not call me by my nickname. I am so proud of what the black teachers accomplished because the students turned out to be so productive. Many went into teaching or became preachers. I recently saw a sign in a teacher's classroom that said, 'Do your best with what you have

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wherever you are,' and that's what we did. We didn't have the equipment that was in the white schools and our books were handed down from them."

Change was stirring in the nation and segregation was nearing its end. LaRue remembered, "The schools became integrated in 1967, and the district took four teachers from the black school; I was one of the four. We went to J.R. Irving to teach. The white teachers were very accepting of us and very helpful. We had never had all the equipment that they used, like the duplicating machine, and they went out of their way to teach us how to use them. The integration in Midlothian went smoothly. I didn't encounter any problems. I also don't remember any incidents or problems with the kids integrating into the school.

I started teaching remedial reading for fifth and sixth grade. T. E. Baxter was the principal at the time. I taught special education for five years and was the Special Education Coordinator for the latter part of that time. It was rewarding to see how the kiddoes improved, but I wanted to do something different."

In trying to manage the ever-growing school population, the district was in perpetual transition. They moved the third- to fifth-graders to the Central School, to L.A. Mills and then to J.R. Irving. LaRue retired from teaching fourth grade at J.R. Irving in 1994. She continues to occasionally substitute teach.

As a charter member of the Midlothian Education Foundation, she continues to serve. When citizens of Midlothian vote, they are more than likely to see her there working as an alternate clerk or an alternate judge.

Midlothian will honor this distinguished lady by naming the next elementary school, LaRue Miller Elementary. LaRue said, "I feel honored and blessed to have lived in Midlothian all my life. I have taught three generations of students. Having the new school named after me, well, that is the icing on the cake!" **NOW**



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Adversity Equals Great Accomplishment

— By Sandra McIntosh

At Home With Wayne and Jannis Sibley

February is the month reserved for sharing love stories — unique, one-of-a-kind stories similar to the one Wayne and Jannis Sibley tell of their 52-year union as husband and wife. To tell the story in its entirety, the couple must return to those days when they walked the halls at Midlothian High School. “Yes, you could say we were high school sweethearts,” Jannis said, still blushing after all these years. “We began dating our sophomore year.” Wayne and Jannis graduated in 1955 and married in September of that same year.

Before returning home to Midlothian, the couple spent the first 20 years of wedded bliss in Arlington, where they reared their three children, Jimmy, Michael and Penny. Theirs is a modern-day love story that has





withstood the test of time, only to be strengthened by adversities — many of their own making.

One would never know to look at it now, but the traditional style, three-bedroom, three-and-one-half-bath abode they call home on Mt. Zion Road is a prime example of adversity, hard work and lots of elbow grease they created for themselves, even though Jannis still says it was all Wayne's doing. "The 20-acre lot where I played as a kid wasn't even for sale when we decided to move back home," Wayne said. "I talked to the owner and she agreed to sell."

Not long after the contract on the land was finalized, Wayne found the perfect house. When many others would have looked at floor plans and talked in length with homebuilders, Wayne went one step further. "This house used to sit on the corner of Fielder Road and 303," Wayne said. "A local grocery chain bought that parcel of land and moved the house over to the side and just left it." Needless to say, while the home sat unoccupied, it was vandalized numerous



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times both inside and out. When Wayne came home and told Jannis of his plans to have it moved to Midlothian, she honestly thought he was joking. When she found out he was serious, her opinion soon changed. "I thought he'd lost his mind," she said. "The house was horrible."

The first step in the long journey was to get the house from point A to point B. "We had it moved here in three pieces," Wayne said, now able to

sit back in his recliner and laugh at the memories. Due to rain and lots of mud, the first stop was in Watsonville. Months passed before it inched its way to a stop just off FM 663. Several more months came and went before the three sections were pulled down to a field close to the property. "The movers got stuck in the mud again," Wayne explained. "I thought we were never going to get it here."

Before Wayne and Jannis could

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actually see an end in sight, they had to first install the plumbing in the foundation before the house could be permanently placed. "We couldn't find a plumber willing to take on the job," Wayne remembered. "Me and a guy from the fire academy did the entire job on Memorial Day, 1975."

Once the year-long process of moving the structure was complete, the Sibleys were able to get started on the necessary repairs, of which there were many.

The aluminum electrical wiring all had to be replaced. "I spent days trying to figure out how to hook up three-way lighting," Wayne said, "and I checked all the wiring with a 6-volt battery." No less than 10,000 new bricks were needed to return the home's exterior to its original state. "The brick cleaning and

washing process," Jannis remembered, "seemed to take forever." The family moved into their new home with concrete floors and one serviceable bathroom in September 1975. "We burned the first fire in the fireplace that year for Christmas," Jannis said, her smiles now turned to laughter. "It

consisted of several candles sitting on a piece of balsa wood." She added that those first six months will go down in her memory as "the longest



camping trip ever."

Now that their backs no longer feel broken and the blisters on both their hands have healed, they are finding great satisfaction and joy in seeing what has been accomplished. They were able to add eight feet to the family room, while also doubling the overall

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size of the garage from 16 feet to 35 feet. Several years later, they had the backyard patio area enlarged and covered. All the major undertakings were completed while their children were still living at home. "They were a huge help," Jannis added.

Three years ago, Wayne and Jannis decided it was time to update the home. "We added all the big baseboards and crown molding you see in the family room, the formal dining area and the kitchen, as well as all the bedrooms," he explained. They rebuilt the cabinets in the kitchen after covering the paneling with wallpaper that resembles painted stucco. Antique collectibles found in the home include a meat block that belonged to Jannis' father located in one corner of the formal dining room with a display of assorted meat utensils. Fire memorabilia from Wayne's days as a fireman takes its rightful place in the master bedroom above a very sentimental keepsake. "Wayne gave me that cedar chest in 1952, when I was a sophomore in high school," she said. "It cost \$49.95," he added. Looking at the photographs lining the



long hallway is similar to looking at an open scrapbook. The couple's three children, and now five grandchildren, are shown smiling from ear-to-ear. Afghans, quilts and window cushions in key locations add warmth to an already cozy home.

Twenty-plus years ago, the Sibley home was the only one in the area. Now, houses have cropped up in all directions, with three of the newest ones belonging to the Sibley children. "They didn't want to be here, when we [first] moved back to Midlothian," Jannis remembered. "Now they have all returned." Unlike their father, they made the decision to build new homes instead of moving vandalized homes into the neighborhood. "We are all



joined together on the original 20 acres," Wayne said. All Wayne and Jannis have to do is jump on their golf carts and take a short ride across the back field, past the barn, the shop and the his-and-hers "playhouses" to spend quality time with the grandchildren.

There are so many stories the couple can share from the past, but seeing them interact with one another today says it best. Love for the couple may have started at first sight, but it has grown ever stronger with life's ups and downs and a few adversities along the way. **XXX**

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Quiet Beauty

— By Sandra McIntosh

When you first meet her, Donna Smith may be quietly reserved. Do not let her shyness fool you, and do not allow her soft-spoken voice mislead you. She is a multifaceted, walking, talking vessel of wonderfully unique design ideas. Great conversations begin and end with her one-of-a-kind, handmade jewelry. “I guess I started making jewelry over 30 years ago,” Donna reminisced, also adding that as far back as she can remember she has always loved shiny, pretty things. “Making jewelry was something I started doing with my daughter, Jodie, when she was 4.”

Donna, a retired nurse practitioner, has honed her natural, God-given talent by taking many classes over the years. Her first

class was taken back home in San Diego, California. “I remember taking my first classes at Shepherdess,” she said, “Shepherdess is a jewelry store that gave classes on anything and everything that related to jewelry.” What makes Donna’s work so versatile is that she has not limited herself to any one medium or any one style. She



uses semiprecious stones, large and small chunks of turquoise, the tiniest of seed beads, Baltic amber, amethyst, Swarovski crystals and aurora borealis, stones that have a sparkle beyond measure. Some of her finished designs are big and massive, while others are smaller and daintier. Most generally, Donna said the stones will



dictate the size of the pieces, as well as the way in which she designs and constructs them.

The choker made of Baltic amber was very striking, to say the least. Each stone she used had what Donna referred to as tiny blemishes. “Those blemishes can be insects, pieces of leaves or even pieces of trees,” she explained. “No two selections of Baltic amber are the same.” Even if she wanted to make two identical, honey-toned pieces, she would find it impossible to do so with the amber.

The bracelets she took from her jewelry box and carefully removed from their protective bags were more than just beautiful. They were seed beads and peyote stitching at its very best. “This type of beading takes many hours to complete,” she said. “I probably spend more than eight hours of straight

ARTS NOW


stringing at any one time." The closures used on the bracelets are called button clasps. They, too, are unusual, yet unique and quite manageable to take off and on.

Other noteworthy pieces include a sterling silver necklace of red coral and turquoise. This is one of Donna's

"Making jewelry was something I started doing with my daughter, Jodie, when she was 4."

favorite examples of what is known as "juxtaposition" in the world of jewelry design. "It simply means placing or using two items that don't belong together in the same piece," she said. "They may not belong together, but once the piece is complete they complement each other wonderfully." A pair of simple turquoise earrings went through another unique process before Donna would call them complete. "The turquoise is set in sterling silver," she explained, adding that the silver is not shiny on this particular pair of earrings. "The dullness is called patina. A successful patina comes from dipping the sterling silver in liver of [sulphur]." It is this dipping process that gives the mounting a worn, darker appearance. "You can [go] back and polish any of the raised areas," Donna said. "Shining the high spots will altogether change the piece."

Her upstairs workroom has everything she needs to be successful at her craft beginning with the large, oversized hinged table her husband, Alan, made some time ago for ease of storage. At least 50 containers with lids are stacked one on top of another, each filled with beads, beads and more beads. The beads range from small to large, in every color imaginable. Donna even has a pair of large, blown glass beads by Tom Boylan, an artist who makes his home in the mountains of Northern



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California. "I am trying to decide how to work one of his stones into a necklace," she said. "I'm thinking about pairing it with Swarovski crystals."

When asked what she has done to collect so many wonderful finds, she said it was easy. "I shop on the Internet," she explained. "Or I go shopping at bead shops and gem shows." There are also rolls and rolls of different gauged sterling silver wire, precious metal clay and tools of the trade.



One of Donna's favorite pieces is a necklace of amazonite stones. "They have a rough texture," she said. "They haven't been polished or rolled." These stones are mixed with fresh water beads and a scrimshaw bone carving hangs directly from the center as the medallion. "The whimsical roughness," she said, "is what I like most about this particular necklace."

From the beginning, Donna has liked the design process, but starting from scratch and coming up with a completed piece of wearable art, which is aesthetically pleasing to her eye is second to none. Currently, she is learning how to do the silversmithing work herself. "The plan," she said, "is to do it all myself." Throughout the years, Donna has many times designed and handcrafted jewelry with other peoples' tastes in mind. "Now, I'm only going to design things I love," she added. "If others like them, fine. If not, that's OK, too." **NOW**



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"Control and focus are so much a part of my experience with karate and are huge parts of my other favorite sport, golf!"

The Kick of a Champion

— By Amanda Madden Pitt

It was a warm September day in 2007. The clock was set, and 12-year-old Ty Brecher stood before a panel of seven judges at the USA Martial Arts Academy in Cleburne, Texas. The judges, a group of first-degree through eighth-degree black belts, sat patiently waiting for Ty's moment of truth. Not only was his trainer on the panel, but his trainer's trainer was also there to critique every move. They would test the skills Ty worked almost four years to master. The catch — he had only four hours to prove that he deserved to be a first-degree black belt.

Worse yet, he would be fighting injured. With a broken patella, pads and a brace were all Ty had to protect his knee. He would have to fight through the pain. "I would like to take this time to thank my parents and sister for being on this journey with me and helping push me through to this ultimate test of strength, endurance, knowledge and courage," Ty said, just before beginning a rigorous display of hundreds of katas — detailed choreographed movements practiced solo and in pairs. "If not for the wisdom and knowledge of the Joneses' and their willingness to teach karate," he said, "I would be missing an extraordinary part of my life."

At age 7, inspired by the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, Ty became interested in martial arts, and by age 9, he started karate training in 2003. Taffy Brecher, Ty's mom who is also administrative assistant at the Midlothian Fire Department, learned about USA Martial Arts in Cleburne through Jason Jones, a Midlothian lieutenant fireman, fourth-degree black belt and first trainer in command at the academy. Ty's journey in karate has been more than just for sport. "When I first started karate," Ty said, "I thought 'Man, I'm on a roll; I'm pretty good at this.' As the belts progressed, I started to learn that karate is more than just fun and learning how to defend yourself; it's about discipline and respect for others."

One segment of Ty's black belt test included a demonstration made up of four scenarios, which he choreographed himself,



Sports NOW

depicting effective self-defense strategies. During this exercise, Ty and an opponent performed each staged attack. Throughout Ty's display of the self-defense moves, he explained how each would be effective in a real-life situation. This part was judged according to whether his karate choreography would actually work to ward off a real attacker.



Another test Ty re-enacted was being jumped by four people. Ty had to fight until he took each one to the ground. "Control to me is not acting on emotions when you are being pushed to fight or others are encouraging you to fight. You can use control to say 'no' if you are being tempted to do something wrong," he said. "Control and focus are so much a part of my experience with karate and are huge parts of my other favorite sport, golf!" Ty is an amazing example that when given the necessary support, children are capable of doing almost anything.

Today, Ty is a typical seventh-grader — at least at first glance. He likes hunting, fishing and riding dirt bikes

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and his four-wheeler; plays alto and baritone saxophone in the Frank Seale Middle School band; has karate training on Tuesdays and Thursdays; and plays golf on Saturdays. His sister, Taylor, is a freshman at Oklahoma University. Ty lives in Midlothian with his supportive mom and dad, Tim Brecher. A closer look behind his animated, eager eyes shows Ty possesses the focus and determination of a champion, and at 12 years young he already has the accolades to prove it. He is a member of the National Jr. Pro Golf Association. Last summer alone, he played in 14 tournaments and placed in 10 — first place in four, second place in two and third place in four. His bedroom walls are covered with awards and tokens of inspiration, which have helped him to stay motivated and focused.

Ty recalled that the highlights of his junior golf career have been opportunities to play with Ladies Professional Golf Association Champion Gloria Ehret and the “Winningest Golfer Ever,” Kathy Whitworth. Ty is anything but bigheaded. “Unassuming, respectful and easygoing” are words that his assistant principal and karate instructors use to describe him.

Did Ty win the respect of his trainers on that September day last year? Did he receive the high honor of black belt for his hard work? The answers are yes and yes! According to Ty, this win is one of the great accomplishments of his life, but he refuses to stop there. Ty’s goals are aimed high and include earning a second degree black belt; winning a major 18-hole golf tournament; landing a 10-point buck and even playing pro golf one day. Most importantly, Ty hopes his determination, focus and drive to accomplish his goals can be passed along to other guys his age. “If you have a goal, just stick to it and go for it,” he said. “You’re too young to quit on your goals now!” **NOW**



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— By Dia Catalani

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The use of high-insulation vinyl siding during new construction is an affordable and energy-efficient way to build. By installing vinyl siding on an existing house, you can also increase its value or boost the listing price when you are ready to sell. Rick Lipsius and Johnnie Lipsius, owners of Hawkeye Discount Siding, specialize in home improvements that can make a major difference in the efficiency and value of your home. "I enjoy seeing the change we make to a house. I enjoy meeting people in the community, seeing them after the job is done and hearing how

happy they are with what we've done," Rick said. "We listen to what they want us to accomplish and stay within their budget."

Residential property developers and homeowners enjoy fair labor prices, quality products and expert installations by Hawkeye Discount Siding. As longtime Midlothian residents, Rick and Johnnie noted the importance of an ethical business reputation. "We treat everyone's home just like it's our own. We make certain it's kept clean at all times," Rick said. "If I'm not happy with something on the job site, I fix it. I don't wait for the homeowner to bring it up."

Hawkeye Discount Siding specializes in the use of Alside vinyl products, which is one of the industry's highest-rated brands. Alside manufactures vinyl siding, rain systems, windows and other types of outdoor products that beautify and improve a property. Rick said Alside is

among his favorite manufacturers due to its high-tech engineering processes, high insulation values and durability. "Vinyl siding is definitely worth the investment," Rick said. "It also makes your home's exterior maintenance-free and is the only way you'll never have to paint your home again."

Exchanging your old windows for new ones is also a smart way to save money on your energy bills. Today's energy-efficient windows provide a crystal clear view and an excellent sound barrier. Even in brick houses, these new windows are easily exchanged and no interior drywall work is required. Solar screens are an instant fix to blocking the intense rays of summer sun, and also eliminate the need for window coverings. "When we're installing anything on someone's home, we are very careful when working inside and outside. We take care not to disturb landscaping and

Business NOW

flowerbeds and that everything is just as we found it," Johnnie said. "We treat their home as if it were our own."

Prior to the installation of siding or windows, Hawkeye Discount Siding will conduct a thorough inspection of your home's exterior. Rick noted that unforeseen problems could lie underneath a house's current facade, such as inadequate ventilation, insect damage or mold. Structural damage must be addressed before proceeding



Above/Below: Hawkeye Discount Siding will remove old, dull materials that date your home. Below/After: Bright, clean lines make a world of difference.



with any new installation. "We worked on a home recently that had been completely sealed off by caulking and there was no outside air getting in at all. The damage was pretty extensive," Rick said. "When I encounter something like that, I advise them of their options and we take it from there."

An on-site inspection and estimate is your first step to turning your house into a beautiful, energy-efficient home. See the wide selection of home improvement options online at www.hawkeyediscountssiding.com, and view the before-and-after photos of your neighbors' homes. Call Hawkeye Discount Siding weekdays at (972) 754-0515 or send an inquiry through their Web site. **NOW**

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Education **NOW**



"It's cold and flu season — yuck! Remember to wash your hands after coughing and sneezing!" said Jane Crawford, school nurse at Longbranch Elementary School during early morning announcements. After lots of reminders to wash hands frequently, Nurse Crawford and her Band aids burst into a rousing song of "Put your right hand in, put your left hand in, get some soap and water, you scrub, and rub and rinse," all sung to the tune of the "Hokey Pokey." On Wednesday mornings, children are learning about healthy life choices in a creative and entertaining way.

The Band aids, who have willingly joined Jane in her campaign for wellness on Wellness Wednesday, are the school's principal, secretaries and counselors. "I make up the words to the songs," Jane said, "but I use popular tunes for the music. The kids love the songs."

Having health tips presented to the children in this fashion makes it more likely that they will remember them, particularly if they already know the tunes. The transference of the words makes the concept easy to remember. Jane concurred, "They talk to their teachers about washing their hands, which is something I really stress. There are some teachers here whose kids are in the school, and they have mentioned to me how some of the wellness tips come up at home, such as reminders to eat healthy. I have a song called "Couch Potato." I want them to get up and move. I encourage them to not sit around and watch TV all day. With obesity in kids, I try not to draw too much attention to them. The goal is

Education **NOW**

to promote healthy eating.”

Wellness Wednesday is an idea that did not originate with Jane, although she has improved it with her own creative ideas. “I got the idea for Wellness Wednesday at a seminar of the National Association of School Nurses. While there, I got ideas for wellness tips such as: drink lots of water, get enough sleep, drink milk instead of pop, eat fruits and vegetables and always use seatbelts for safety.”



Another program that ties in with Wellness Wednesday is the CATCH Program (Coordinated Approach to Child Health). CATCH is a school health program designed to help elementary school-aged children improve their dietary habits and promote good physical activity. Jane explained, “This is a program that is mandated by the state. We coordinate with the cafeteria, the P.E. department, in the classroom and at home.”

Another method Jane uses to communicate good dietary health in the cafeteria is found in the form of three large signs that hang on the wall. These signs are the length of the wall, and students are encouraged to illustrate their perception of what each sign means by cutting out pictures of different types of food to glue onto the sign. “Our green sign is labeled ‘Go.’ This is the cue for the kids to eat lots of these types of foods. They have put up pictures of milk cartons, applesauce containers, raisins, salads and muffins to represent whole grains. The yellow sign is labeled ‘Slow.’ Those are foods they can eat, but in moderation, such

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Education **NOW**

as baked chips and fried chicken. The red sign is labeled 'Whoa' and they are to avoid these foods. The kids have put pictures of desserts, candy bars, chips and fast foods."

In addition to educating children regarding their health, Jane also writes a column in the newsletter that goes home with every report card. "I give parents information such as, keeping their kids home for 24 hours after their fever is gone. I keep the parents informed of screenings for hearing and vision testing. The main message of the column is about being healthy and taking care of themselves. The biggest challenge I have as a school nurse is the asthmatic kids. The number of kids is increasing, and they are also becoming harder to manage.

"Type 2 diabetes is also a challenge. I do a visual check for that looking for acanthosis nigricans." Acanthosis nigricans is a dark hyper pigmentation of the skin that is present as a ring around the folds of the neck. It is not necessarily a prerequisite for a diagnosis, but it does bear investigation into the possibility of diabetes.

With Jane, Longbranch Elementary gets the equivalent of two professionals for the price of one. Jane is well-qualified to promote good nutrition, as she also has a Bachelor of Science degree in nutrition from Texas Tech and a degree in nursing from Northern Oklahoma College.

Jane started her career as a school nurse in Midlothian as a substitute for the school nurse at Baxter. She also worked at L.A. Mills as a school nurse while it was still an elementary school. Jane has been at Longbranch for 11 years. Helping students change unhealthy habits into beneficial choices that can last a lifetime is a big job. But, Nutritionist and Nurse Jane Crawford is up to the task. She sums it up, "I try to make it fun so they will incorporate it into their lifestyle." It is a great beginning. **NOW**

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Around Town NOW



Payne A. and Jannette V., top left, worked together on a thinking map in Ms. Garrett's room at Vitovsky Elementary. Ms. Hawthorne's prekindergarten class at Vitovsky Elementary, top right, played a learning color game. Mountain Peak CBI students, middle left, learned how to develop social and menu skills during a visit to McDonald's. A ribbon cutting was held, bottom right, at AdvoCare. First-graders at J.A. Vitovsky Elementary, bottom left, were astounded as they watched Miss Vaughn's volcano erupt.





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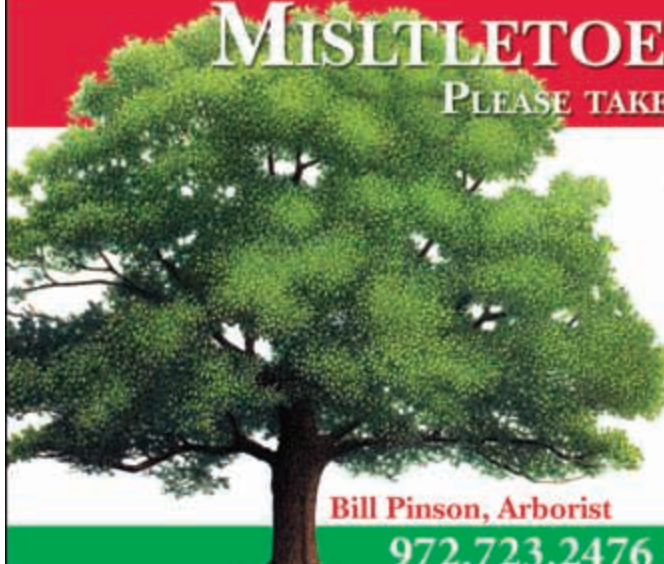
Around Town **NOW**



Ribbon cuttings were held in Midlothian at left, from top to bottom: Approved Home Health Care, Carlisle Chevrolet-Cadillac-Jeep, Dusti the Clown and Whispers Boutique. Courtney Kilgore, left, and her sister, Elizabeth, top right, spent an evening at the Chautauqua Auditorium in Waxahachie watching David Allen perform as the late Elvis Presley. TXI Midlothian Cement plant manager Randy Walser, bottom right, presented a check to Vitovsky principal Cherie Wagoner and Communities in Schools representative Florence Foster.

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Look Who's Cooking

— By Stephanie Brewer

IN THE KITCHEN WITH SHEREE HART

SHEREE'S KOLACKY

2 cups flour
2 sticks butter
2 egg yolks
1/4 cup water
1 can SOLO Brand Pastry Filling
(available in specialty stores)

Mix flour and butter together. Add beaten egg yolks and water. Mix into a ball. Cut mixture in half. Roll out one-half of mixture on a floured surface to 1/4-inch thick. Cut into two-inch circles. Place a small amount of filling into center of each circle. Bake at 350 F for 20 minutes or until medium brown. Let cool. Sprinkle with powdered sugar just before serving.

SNICKERDOODLES

1 cup butter
1 1/2 cups sugar
2 eggs
2 3/4 cups sifted flour
2 tsp. cream of tartar
1 tsp. baking soda
1/2 tsp. salt
2 Tbsp. sugar
2 tsp. cinnamon

Cream the butter and sugar together for 4 minutes. Add eggs, one at a time,

making sure to scrape the bowl. In a separate bowl, sift the flour; add the cream of tartar, baking soda and salt. Add this mixture to the creamed mixture. Chill the dough for one hour. Roll into balls the size of walnuts; roll them in a mixture of 2 tablespoons of sugar and 2 teaspoons of cinnamon. Place them about 2 inches apart on an ungreased baking sheet. Bake at 400 F for approximately 8 - 10 minutes, until lightly browned, but still soft. Watch them carefully. Start with five minutes and then add a minute or two each time.

QUICHE SHEREE

(Chef Sheree Hart)

CRUST:

1 cup plus 2 Tbsp. flour (unsifted)
1/4 tsp. salt
1/3 cup Mazola Oil (must be this kind and measured in a liquid measurer)
2 Tbsp. ice water

EGG WASH:

1 egg

FILLING:

8 oz. sliced mushrooms
1 Tbsp. olive oil
1 bunch fresh spinach (washed and heavy stems removed)

Sheree Hart has enjoyed cooking since taking home economics as a freshman in high school. "It was my dream from then on to go to culinary school," she said. As a wife, mother and part-time educator with Midlothian Independent School District, Sheree inspires up-and-coming cooks by way of small cooking classes. "I incorporate cooking and children," she added.

The fruit of Sheree's labor has been quite the harvest. She is known as "Chef Sheree" at Mission Midlothian. "My protégée is Brooke Hufferberger, a motivated and very interested second-grader at J.R. Irvin Elementary School," Sheree explained. "Brooke really enjoys our one-on-one time and enjoys all of the challenges I put before her. I love to see the pleasure that my baking and cooking gives to others." **NOW**

3 large eggs
1 cup heavy whipping cream
1 Tbsp. milk (optional)
1 Tbsp. chopped fresh dill
salt and pepper to taste
1 cup grated Gruyère cheese

CRUST: Combine flour and salt. Mix in oil. Add ice water; mix with a spoon just until it forms a ball. Roll out between two sheets of wax paper. Place in pie pan. Poke all around with a fork. Bake at 425 F for 10 minutes. (Or blind bake — using pie weights or rice and beans and parchment paper.) Remove from oven. Let cool, and then egg wash crust as follows.

EGG WASH: Whisk one egg with a little water. Brush on crust with basting brush. When you touch it and the egg has dried, then it is ready.

FILLING: Sauté freshly sliced mushrooms in olive oil and set aside. Steam 1 bunch fresh spinach. Chop steamed spinach and set aside. Whisk together eggs and heavy whipping cream. Thin with a little milk if it appears too thick. Add chopped fresh dill. Add salt and pepper if desired.

ASSEMBLING QUICHE: Take pie crust that has been egg washed. Add layer of spinach. Add layer of mushrooms.

Who's Cooking **NOW**

Pour in the egg and cream mixture. Top with Gruyère cheese. Bake at 425 F for 15 minutes. Reduce temperature to 300 F and bake additional 30 minutes. Quiche is done when a knife inserted in the center comes out clean. Let rest for 10 - 15 minutes before cutting.

SPINACH LASAGNA ROLL-UPS

12 lasagna noodles
3/4 cup chopped onions
2 Tbsp. butter
2 10-oz. pkgs. frozen chopped spinach (thawed and well-drained)
1 1/2 cups (6 oz. package) shredded mozzarella cheese
1/2 cup sour cream
1 egg, slightly beaten
1/4 cup butter (1/2 stick)
1/4 cup flour
1 1/2 tsp. instant chicken bouillon
1/8 tsp. pepper
1 cup milk
1 cup half-and-half
1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 350 F. Cook lasagna. Cool in cold water. Sauté onions in 2 Tbsp. butter until tender. Combine spinach, onions, mozzarella cheese, sour cream and egg; set aside. Melt 1/4 cup butter and stir in flour, bouillon and pepper. Stir in milk and half-and-half. Bring to boil, stirring constantly. Boil and stir 1 minute. Remove noodles from water; pat dry with paper towels. Spread 1/4 cup spinach mixture over each noodle. Roll up jelly-roll fashion starting at short end. Spread small amount of sauce on bottom of buttered 2-quart, rectangular baking dish. Place rolls in dish. Spoon remaining sauce over roll-ups. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Bake 30 - 35 minutes until hot and bubbly. May add spaghetti sauce if desired.



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— By Clay Money, CLU, LUTCF



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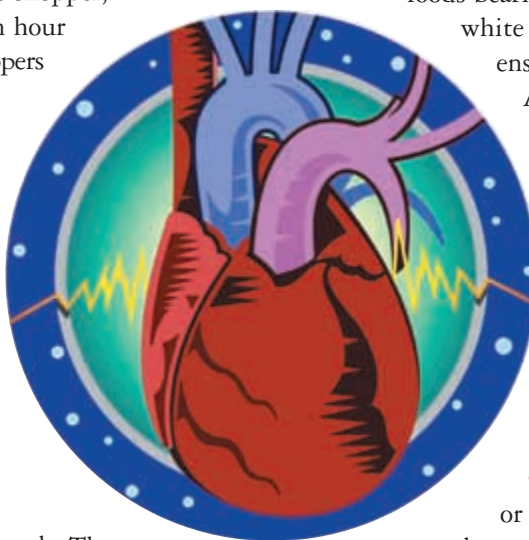
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Made Simpler

(NAPS) - If you're like the average shopper, you spend nearly three-quarters of an hour on each trip to the grocery. Many shoppers spend even more time scrutinizing food labels and packages, studying ingredient lists and labels for low fat, low cholesterol items. In fact, eight out of ten Americans say they are seeking out these types of foods in order to reduce their risk of heart attack and stroke.

Fortunately, heart-healthy shopping can be simpler than many people realize. According to dieticians, it helps to look for foods carrying the American Heart Association Food Certification Program's heart-check mark. The



foods bearing the Association's red heart with the white check mark have been evaluated to ensure they meet the American Heart Association's nutritional criteria and can be part of a heart-healthy diet for healthy people over the age of two. In order to carry the heart-check mark, a single serving of a food product must:

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"Heart-healthy shopping can be simpler than many people realize."

The heart-check mark is a convenient grocery shopping tool because you can see the information on food products when you're making your purchasing decision. Amid the dizzying array of food healthy claims, you can rely on the American Heart Association's heart-check mark. Shoppers can be confident because the information comes from what many consider the public's most reliable source of nutrition information, the American Heart Association.

For more information on diet and nutrition, visit www.americanheart.org or call toll free (800) AHA-USA1 and ask for a free copy of the *Shop Smart With Heart* brochure.

For a complete list of certified products, visit heartcheckmark.org.

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NEW THERAPY FOR SWALLOWING DISORDERS NOW OFFERED AT Renfro Healthcare Center

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

Known as VitalStim® Therapy, the treatment uses non-invasive electrical stimulation to help re-educate the throat muscles needed for swallowing. Cleared for use by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, VitalStim® Therapy is applied externally and delivers small electrical currents to the neck to stimulate inactive or atrophied swallowing muscles. With repeated therapy, throat muscles are retrained until the patient reaches an optimum level of swallow function.

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



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Great Outdoors
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Blooming Trees for Springtime

— By Nancy Fenton

Hopes for spring are around the corner, and all those pretty blooms are more than a sparkle in the eye. Did you plant for spring color? It is a bit late for this year, but you can put in some small ones now for a burst of color next spring. Look around and decide which ones you like best and get to it!

The showy white blooms on the 12 - 20 foot sprawling trees are dogwood. The roughleaf is a good variety for our area. Those orchid-shaped white, pink or burgundy colored flowers are signs of the desert willow, a sure thing for our alkaline, dry soils. Bright pink flowers on a 12 - 20 foot tree will indicate Mexican or red buckeye, Mexican plum or redbud. While most of these are under-story trees, growing best in the dappled shade of our old oaks, the more sun the better for the desert willow and buckeyes. All of these smaller trees have bright colors that shine through while the larger trees are just beginning to bud out and contrast nicely with the golden daffodils and multicolored crocus on the ground. By the time the trees leaf out fully and the temperatures rise, they are ready to rest awhile and grow more branches for bloom the following spring!

Vitex is one of the versatile plants which can be as large as you want it, and it can be pruned into a large tree or a large shrub. Its vibrant purple or pink blooms resemble a lilac and droop much like a lilac. One of the largest I have seen is in Waxahachie's Getzendaner Park, directly across from the new restroom facility. There are several large vitex hedges around the town if you know what you are seeing. Those showy small bushes that are covered with many blooms in yellow, pink and cranberry are probably japonica. There are several varieties, but they are all beautiful in the spring.

Look with fresh eyes as you drive around and decide which ones fit into your yard and then start looking for the plants. You can plant containerized trees anytime of year, but fall and spring are best. Just remember to plant those trees high so that as the ground settles the root flare will still be visible, mulch them heavily, and water once a week for at least the first year. You, too, can be the envy of your neighborhood with beautiful spring-blooming trees! **NOW**

Nancy Fenton is a Master Gardener in Ellis County.

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February 2008

Community Calendar

First and Third Thursdays

Midlothian Lions Club meeting, 7:00 p.m., Midlothian Civic Center, 224 S. 11th Street. For more information, call (972) 775-7118.

Second and Fourth Tuesdays

Midlothian City Council meeting, 6:00 p.m., Midlothian City Hall in Council Chambers, 104 West Ave. E.

Every Tuesday

Midlothian Rotary Club meeting, noon, Midlothian Civic Center, 224 South 11th Street. Call (972) 775-7118 for information.

JGC Youth Monthly Golf Classes 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

For additional information, contact susan@jeremysgolfcenter.com or call (972) 351-9223.

Every Friday

Story Time at Meadows Library at 11:00 a.m.

February 2 and 16

JGC Ladies League Golf Clinic, 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. For additional information, contact susan@jeremysgolfcenter.com or call (972) 351-9223.

February 3

Superbowl Golf Blast, 2:00 p.m. For additional information, contact susan@jeremysgolfcenter.com or call (972) 351-9223.

February 4

American Business Women's Association (ABWA), Great Visions Charter Chapter Midlothian monthly meeting, 6:15 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center. \$10 for dinner. Debbie Hoover, a productivity trainer for individuals, businesses and corporations, will present "Back on Track Solutions," with advice on getting organized to improve productivity. Please RSVP to Kit Montgomery at (214) 333-5209 or kit@dbu.edu. Members are encouraged to bring

co-workers and friends. Guests are welcome! For ABWA membership information, visit www.midlothianabwa.com.

MHS Parent Orientation, 6:30 p.m., Midlothian High School Auditorium.

February 7

Elementary Rezoning Meeting, 7:00 p.m., Midlothian High School. With the new LaRue Miller Elementary school opening in August 2008, the MISD elementary attendance zones will need to be redrawn. There will also be a few middle school rezoning changes.

February 11

Freshman Registration, 2:00 p.m., Frank Seale Middle School.

February 12

Leadership Midlothian State Government Day, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m., Austin (tentative).

Freshman Registration, 2:00 p.m., Frank Seale Middle School.

February 13

Freshman Registration, 2:00 p.m., Walnut Grove Middle School.

February 14

Freshman Registration, 2:00 p.m., Walnut Grove Middle School.

February 14 and 28

Leads to Success Group meeting, 8:00 a.m., Chamber offices.

February 16

JGC Ladies League Golf Clinic, 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. For additional information, contact susan@jeremysgolfcenter.com or call (972) 351-9223.

February 16

Midlothian ISD School Board meeting, administration building, 6:30 p.m.

February 19

Midlothian Rotary meeting, noon, Midlothian Civic Center.

February 23

Midlothian Business Expo 2008, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center. Now signing up sponsors.

February 25

Creative Quilters Guild of Ellis County meeting, 7:00 p.m., Waxahachie Bible Church (new meeting location), 621 N. Grand Avenue (across from SAGU). Visit www.cqguild.org for directions and more information.

February 28

Midlothian Community Development Corporation Board meeting, 6:00 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center, located at 1 Community Circle.

March 1

CASA of Ellis County is hosting a fundraiser featuring Carson Entertainment. Doors open at 6:30 p.m., show starts at 7:00 p.m. Tickets are \$10. Contact the YMCA at (972) 937-9622 for more information.

March 29

Master Gardeners of Ellis County's annual Ellis County Lawn and Garden Expo, Waxahachie Civic Center, 1950 N. I-35 E from 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. This comprehensive educational extravaganza will include over 100 lawn and garden-related exhibitor booths, keynote speakers, gardening workshops for children from 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. and a variety of adult workshops. Speakers include: Gaye Hammond, Neil Sperry and Dotty Woodson. For sponsorship and exhibitor information, please send an e-mail to expo.ecmga@yahoo.com or call James at (972) 814-0699.

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