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FEBRUARY 2013

The Voice Within

Chloe Pedersen's inner compass took her
on her own path

Hospitable Hosts

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Plus:

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Art Through the Years

The Fence Effect
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ON THE COVER



Chloe Pedersen readies herself for another day of riding.

Photo by Opaque Visuals.

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Editor's Note

Hello, Midlothian!

As newlyweds, we were on a very tight budget. In other words, we were broke. After completing grocery shopping one morning in Dallas, imagine my surprise when a man rushed up to me and grabbed my purse. Totally abandoning my loaded cart, I sprinted after him until I exhausted myself. While trudging back, a car sped up to me and stopped. The group of men inside was cheerily waving my purse, which they had retrieved from the thief! Delight turned to anguish as I remembered the abandoned groceries. Back at the store, I saw two elderly people standing by my car — with my groceries. They had watched them for me until I returned.

How do you say thank you to people like that? You pay it forward and practice acts of kindness in your life. Random Acts of Kindness Week (Feb. 11-17) is a good time to start.

Betty

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THE VOICE Within

— By Dianne Reaux





Growing up, Chloe and her two older brothers, Ty and Tim, were military brats. Born in Rhode Island, Chloe's father's career in the Navy required that their family relocate often. They lived in Colorado for a few years, and then they moved to California. "Growing up, I never seemed interested in typical activities," she recalled. "I remember taking ballet lessons, but I just didn't love it."

While living in California, Chloe announced that she wanted to ride horses. "I don't really remember why I wanted to ride," she said, "and my poor mom looked so confused."

After Lisa, Chloe's mother, recovered from her daughter's declaration, she answered with what was obvious to everyone but Chloe, "Well, there's not a barn within 100 miles of here!" Lisa's wit provided a bit of comic relief, but it was also based on the obvious. "We were stationed at Naval Air Station Lemoore in Central California," Lisa explained. "We were basically in the middle of nowhere."

But at the time, Chloe was unfazed. "I really wanted to ride," she stated simply. The fates must have been conspiring on Chloe's behalf, because not long after she made her announcement, her father, Dan Pedersen, retired from the Navy. He successfully followed up on a job lead in Texas, and in 2003, they packed up and moved to Midlothian. "My mom noticed that there was a barn less than a mile from us," Chloe said. And after they settled into their home, Chloe started taking basic horsemanship lessons on a little pony named Glory.

The Pedersens are a close-knit family, and it didn't take long for horse riding to become a family affair. "My instructor gave my mother riding lessons for Christmas, and my father had already started riding," Chloe shared. "So we were all learning to handle horses and ride."

Soon, providence stepped in for Chloe yet again. A chance encounter at the vet's would align her even closer to what was becoming her passion. "Mac, the first horse we owned, had gotten sick. While we were at the vet's, we started chatting with Doris Himelrick, an Arabian horse owner. She asked me if I wanted to take riding lessons with her, and I said, 'Yes!'"

Learning to ride Arabian horses was an adjustment. Arabian's are a much different breed of horse in comparison to the even-tempered quarter horses to which she'd been accustomed. They are small, powerful, agile horses who are highly sensitive to their rider's body language, and they can be quite spirited.

"The first time I saw Chloe ride Cynsation, a seasoned Arabian, I was impressed," Doris stated. "The horse and rider started out in a trot that would have caught the attention of any judge. They looked happy, as though they were enjoying themselves. Chloe demonstrated the natural balance of a trained rider. She sat in an erect position and looked straight through the horse's ears."

Exhibiting such qualities are the basics of equitation, which is defined as the art or practice of horsemanship. Although each riding discipline has fundamental variations, there are a few

The beginning years of adolescence are perhaps some of the most exciting times of self-exploration and discovery. It's an early chapter in young lives when kids start paying attention to the things they really love, things they abhor, things they might like to try and things they wouldn't be caught dead doing. This was an apt description of a young Chloe Pedersen. She enjoyed being outside and spending time with her friends, but there was a major difference. As other kids chased their recreational pursuits with abandon, Chloe was more single-minded. She wasn't particularly interested in trying out for different sports or taking dance lessons. As a youngster, Chloe had an internal compass that was pointing her in a totally different direction.



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consistent standards that judges look for in each division. “Judges are looking for a rider with the correct position, good hands, not jerking the horse’s mouth and sitting deep in the saddle,” Doris explained. “When a rider asks the horse to change gaits, the horse should look as though he instinctively knows what the rider wants. In essence, the horse and rider should look as though they have become one entity.”

Doris had a perceptive eye for talent. In May 2006, Chloe entered her first show riding Cynsation. “It was an open community show sponsored by the Bluebonnet Arabian Horse Club at






Mystic Acres in Terrell,” Lisa recalled. “Chloe won her first blue ribbon that day and, needless to say, she was hooked.” Since then, Chloe has enjoyed success in hunt seat and saddle seat equitation, hunter pleasure and county English pleasure.

For years, Chloe’s sudden interest in horses had been a source of intrigue for the Pedersen family, because it appeared to have been a random decision. But recently, Chloe’s mother found an old picture of her daughter sitting on a saddle when she was around 3 or 4 years old. On the back of the photo, Lisa had written, “Chloe’s first horseback ride

— she loved it!” Chloe’s interest in horses turned out not to be so random after all. Rather than blindly follow the paths that her peers blazed, she heeded the spark that had been lit as a toddler and blazed her own trail.

Now a senior at Midlothian High School, Chloe has been accepted into Texas State University, where she plans to major in business administration. And lest you think Chloe’s unconventional internal compass was

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a one-time anomaly, well, that just wouldn't be accurate. "I love to bake," she said smiling shyly. In her spare time, she can be found in the kitchen baking cookies, cakes and cupcakes. She is just as comfortable with a recipe to guide

"I remember taking ballet lessons, but I just didn't love it."

her as she is without, culling different ingredients and steps to create her own specialty. "Right now," she said, "I'm interested in entrepreneurialism. One day, I can see myself owning my own bakery."

If there is a lesson to be learned from Chloe's story, it is one that speaks to the possibilities that can ignite from listening to that voice, that internal compass which whispers encouragingly to step outside your comfort zone. Yes, that comfort zone is a cozy, familiar and safe space, and there are no worries of failure. But it is also a space that lacks the exhilaration of triumph and success. One can never see what is on the other side of the unknown, if one is unwilling to take that first step. Who knows, you may just end up surprising yourself and finding success, just as Chloe did. **NOW**

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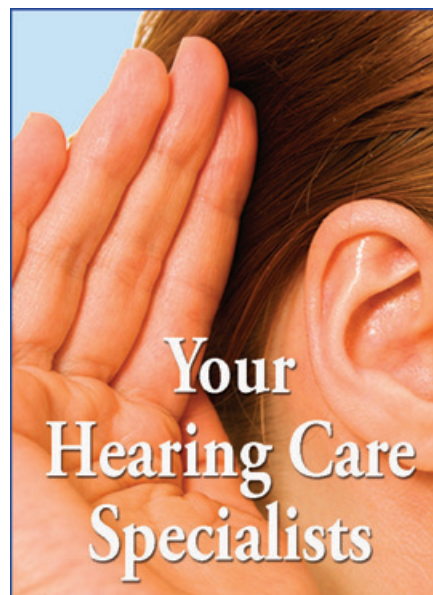
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At Home With
Greg and Tammy
Wimbish

—By Zachary R. Urquhart



You can tell a lot about someone from their home. Houses might be bright or dark, giving a hint of the homeowner's outlook, or they might be spread out or made for optimal space efficiency. A home can even make visitors feel either greeted or unwelcome. For Greg and Tammy Wimbish, there was one clear goal when building their custom home several years ago — to make a home that invites and receives guests as soon as they arrive.

Greg and Tammy met at Texas A&M University. Greg was almost finished with his degree in biomedical science, while Tammy was just starting her freshman year. After dating for five years, they were married in 1997 and moved to Austin. “Two Aggies living in Austin, ha!” Greg joked. “We definitely got back to Dallas fast.” They lived in Waxahachie, where Greg works. But seven years ago, they decided it was time for one more move.

Greg and Tammy were drawn to Midlothian for some simple reasons that she recounted. “We love the community here, and we really liked the school district for our kids.” They have two daughters. Kylie is 10, and Macie is 8.

The couple even knew the area where they wanted to buy. “It seemed like all of our friends at church lived around Crystal Forest,” Tammy explained, “so it was a perfect place for us to move.”

Early in 2006, Greg and Tammy found the right plot of land and started building their rustic, yet comfortable home. Their front drive invites guests right into the heart of the property, and Greg and Tammy's hospitality cements that welcome feel. Once inside, the front entryway leads directly to a space that is part den and part kitchen. It is perfect for visiting, playing games or relaxing in front of the TV. “We love entertaining people, so we wanted to make sure to



have an open feel from the living room to the kitchen,” Tammy explained. From the breakfast nook attached to the kitchen, Greg and Tammy have built an outdoor oasis for family and friends alike.

Walking outside, there are equal parts of comfortable relaxation, manicured lawn and fun and recreation. “If we are home,” Tammy shared, “we are almost always outside.” It has, however, been an ever-changing landscape.

“After a couple of years, we decided to add a pool and do some things here in the back,” Greg added. From the house, there is a porch area with comfortable seating, a built-in grill and a view of the rest of the yard. Landscaped sidewalks

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take you from the porch, along a second casual sitting area, to the swimming pool. They even built an outdoor shower to rinse off after getting out of the pool.

Past the pool, the kids still have a full backyard, complete with forts, sports equipment and plenty of space for all of the things kids are supposed to do. Tammy and the girls enjoy gardening, so they have about 150-square-feet of garden. "We like to grow our own vegetables," Tammy said. "We love making homemade salsa."

The most recent design was put in especially for Kylie. "We built a hutch for six rabbits she is getting. Kylie is doing FFA, and others told us rabbits would be the best place to start," Tammy shared.

While they were building the pool, Greg and Tammy added one more substantial part to their home. "We don't have a guest room, so we built a guest/pool house out here, too," Greg explained. "It's perfect for our parents and guests to have a place to stay. Also, if our church has missionaries or guests,

we have offered for them to stay here, and they have their own space." The guesthouse is complete with a living area, kitchenette and single bedroom and bathroom. The rustic style from the house spills over to this addition.

Back in the house, a split floor plan puts Greg and Tammy's master bedroom on one side of the house. The room is elegant and comfortable at the same time. While Greg and Tammy worked to give their room a certain refined feel, they allowed the girls near total freedom

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in choosing their own decor styles. "We looked online for ideas, but we decided to let the girls design their own space," Tammy said. "We had a few limits when it came to the paint colors, but we left it mainly up to them." Macie's room is black and pink and has a refreshingly understated style rarely seen from most teenagers, much less a young lady of her age. Kylie, meanwhile, screams one word with her room — pink, pink and pink! Tammy laughed, "Kylie is definitely our pink girl. Macie is more into athletics, and Kylie is the girly girl." The room features pink walls, bedding, fluff and frills.

As much as they love inviting others into their home, Greg and Tammy also make sure to allow plenty of time for the family. "Instead of a guest bedroom, we have a great TV room," Greg stated. "The girls like to hang out, watch movies or play Wii." The room is in a perfect spot. It can easily be a part of get-togethers, or it can be a safe haven away from a party taking place on the other side of the house.

On the side of the media room, there is a room that one day will be used for exercise. "We want to put our workout



stuff here eventually, but for now, it has become the craft room,” Tammy admitted. “Anything we think we can do on Pinterest, we try. We’ve gotten pretty bold in our crafting.” For now, they keep their exercise equipment in the guesthouse. Greg is an avid cyclist, and Tammy is starting to get involved, as well.

The last room in the house is where Tammy spends much of her time — the office. She was a dental hygienist for several years before staying at home with the girls. When Greg opened his practice, North Texas Regional Orthotics & Prosthetics, in 2005, she started doing the bookkeeping for him. They built a perfect workspace in the front of the house, away from the bedrooms and gathering areas. To keep it from seeming too formal, they have it quaintly decorated with vintage signs.

Greg and Tammy love bringing people into their home. Whether it is their family, friends from the community or a missionary who just needs a place to stay while visiting, they open their doors often, and always with a warm smile. From the front driveway to the farthest corners of their home, Greg and Tammy built a house they knew would be perfect for hosting any occasion. **NOW**

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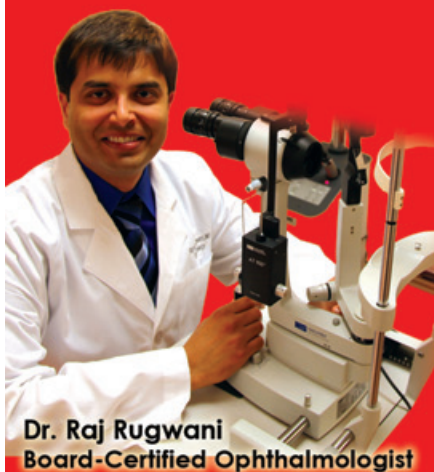
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Marked by a Teacher

— By Betty Tryon





"A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops." These words, spoken by 19th century journalist Henry Brooks Adams, point to the phenomenal amount of impact and power a teacher can wield. Nearly every person who has been to school can point to at least one teacher who left an indelible mark on them that was affirmative and life changing. Theresa Ellinger was one of those students influenced by a teacher who cared, and now she very much wants to be that teacher who leaves a positive mark on her own students. She understands this profound responsibility and welcomes it. "Leaving my mark on my students is important for me," she said. "When I went into teaching, it was a teacher who impacted me."

Born and reared in Houston, Theresa attended the Performing Arts School in Houston for her high school experience. As a talented vocalist, she thought in those early days that she wanted to pursue a music degree and become an opera singer. She received a fun opportunity to sing for a celebrity when attending Texas Southern University (TSU). Michael Bolton, a singer and songwriter, was in



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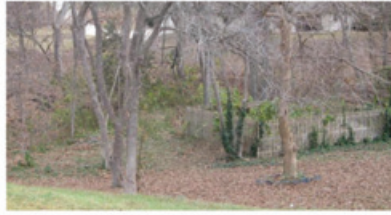
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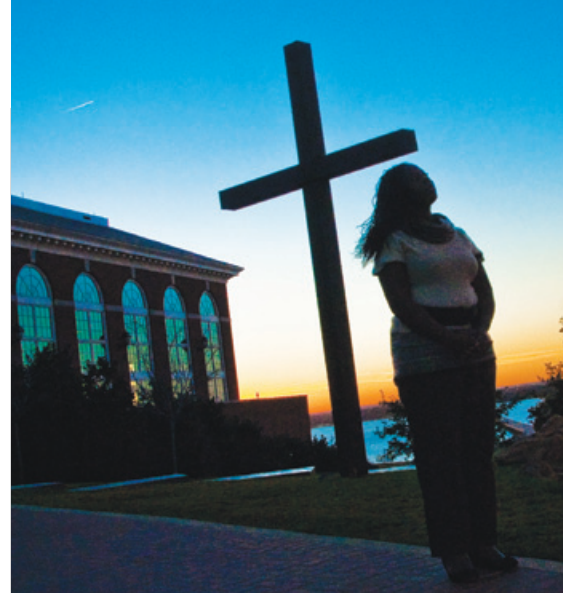
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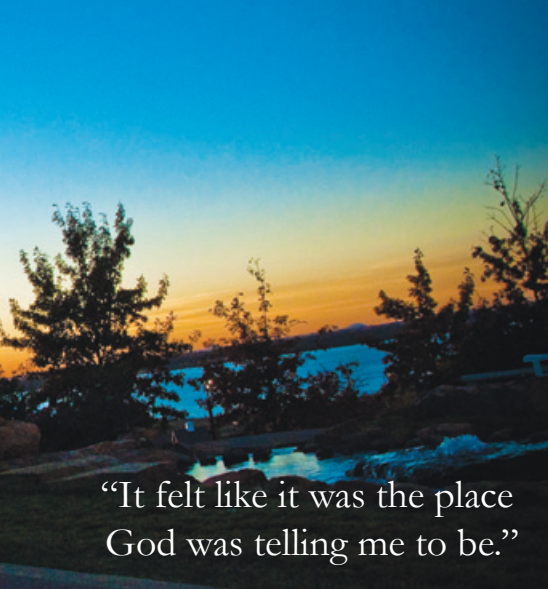
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town for a performance and needed more singers. "I was at TSU when a professor told me that Michael Bolton was looking for a backup singer," she said. "I took time off from school to sing for him. I was with him for six months, until the end of his tour." Theresa enjoyed the ride of being a performer, but being very close to her family, which included her twin and three other siblings, she became homesick and wanted to return to Houston.

After attending TSU for one-and-a-half years, Theresa went to Northern Arizona University (NAU) in Flagstaff. There her interests turned to education. She received a bachelor's degree in education from NAU, and is currently working on a double major to earn her master's in business and in higher education at Dallas Baptist University (DBU). She hopes to complete her studies this summer. "I absolutely love the DBU campus," she stated. "The moment I went into class, I felt like I was at home. It felt like it was the place God was telling me to be. Everyone is so caring, and professors are so hands-on. It's a small school, so you get to know your classmates very well."

While studying for her master's degree, Theresa is currently working at Red Oak Intermediate School. "I love teaching, and I think I would enjoy it more at the college level," she said. "My personality better fits older kids. I enjoy conversing with them. My ultimate goal is to run a dean's department. I think I would be good at it, because I am good at multitasking and working with other people. I like the hands-on part of it. It is a position that is multifaceted and encompasses so many different things."



"It felt like it was the place
God was telling me to be."



Theresa's goal of becoming a dean is very specific. She wants to be the dean of a community college. "That is important to me, because there are not that many African-American deans," she commented. "During one of my higher education courses, we had a guest speaker. She was a black dean for the Tarrant County Community College. She talked about how the issues are completely different at a community college than a university. She said it was more fulfilling, because you help students in the community who tend to work full time and go to college. Many of these students are first-generation college students. They do not always have the support at home to stay in school and finish. I was the first person in my family to attend college. I am also the first one to pursue a master's degree. I feel a connection to students

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with similar circumstances, and I have always wanted to make a difference no matter what I did.”

Theresa believes that every student in her classes is meant to be there at that particular time and place. She wants to be the teacher who helps them in such a significant way that they will remember the moment forever. “There is a reason why those students are with you for that moment,” Theresa stated. “I think about that every day I go to work, about how I will leave my mark on my students in a positive way.”

Theresa acknowledges the teacher who inspired and encouraged her the most. “Mrs. Bonner, one of my high school teachers, was the first teacher who gave me a chance,” she shared. “I wasn’t always good in school nor did I have the best grades, but what she did was tell me I could do it. I had a lot of adversities, and she would say, ‘Don’t worry about those things. I believe in you.’ She took the time to form a bond and have a personal relationship with me. She inspired me to work hard and go to college. She said I was good enough, and all I had to do was believe in myself like she believed in me. Her belief in me made me work hard, because I did not want to disappoint her.”

That dedication and caring was enough to make Theresa think she might want to become a teacher herself. Now, Theresa begins her own workday at school thinking of her students and the one thing she can help them with that might make a big difference in their lives. She reminds her students that getting an education is important. “I want to instill in my students a love of learning,” she confessed. “I try to give them daily examples of how I am a lifelong learner and how the things we learn in class relate to the real world. I tell my students that an education opens up doors for them to pursue anything in life. I tell them to dream big, and if they work hard enough, their dream will come true. As a teacher, I have to always believe that this might be the student I was meant to encourage. I take that role very seriously.”

Teachers and educators literally hold the future in their hands every day as they work to help each child grow, learn and reach their potential. Theresa never loses sight of the fact that what she does will make a difference. **NOW**

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Art Through The Years

— By Chelsie Sanders

Harry Bush was reared in a family of artists and musical talents. Harry remembers being a 5-year-old boy who looked up to his grandfather, an Englishman, who was an exceptional pen and ink artist. “He taught me how to hold a pencil,” Harry explained.

“I started drawing airplanes, rocket ships and automobiles from the comic strips like Flash Gordon and Buck Rogers.” His grandfather was an inspiration to him as a child, with his wonderful drawings and beautiful calligraphy, but there were others in his family who inspired Harry as well.

**“Sometimes,
I made as
much as
25 cents a
drawing.”**



Almost everyone in his family played an instrument or was artistic in one way or another. Harry himself not only learned to draw as a child, but he started playing trumpet at a young age, which only furthered his love for art. "All my life I have been involved in artwork," Harry stated. "In high school, I took mechanical drawing and architecture. In college, drawing was my best subject. I even made a little extra cash doing homework drawings for students. Sometimes, I made as much as 25 cents a drawing."

Throughout the years, Harry worked in many aspects of engineering, architecture and design. In the mid '70s, he was in the residential custom home building business in Houston. "I designed homes," he said. "I was a contractor. I did everything but lift a hammer." After retiring from the engineering/construction business, Harry became an instructor of technical drawing, structural drafting and strength of materials at

Lee College in Baytown for several years. Harry always loved



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working in engineering and architectural design, but he also loved other aspects of art, as well, such as painting landscapes. His passion for landscapes developed from the time he spent outdoors. This is why he primarily paints the landscapes he loves.

Harry started working with oil instead of just watercolor, which was something he had wanted to do for a long time. "I used to paint watercolor, but oil is a much more sophisticated painting and accepted by upscale galleries and museums. The old masters never used watercolors," he explained. "You can't show depth in a watercolor like you can in an oil painting."

His true passion in depth and clarity of landscape and nature is evidenced by his beautiful artwork displayed throughout his home and in his portfolio.

Harry went out and took photographs of landscapes or made a creation from his own imagination, turning either into beautiful artwork on canvas. Not only did he go looking for things to paint, but multiple times he had friends send him pictures and request a custom painting for their home. He also collaborated with other artists throughout the years on different works of art that he cherishes.

Although they had lived in Beaumont for many years, Harry and his wife,



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Beverly, planned to move to Midlothian in the future. Hurricane Ike expedited their plans. About three years ago, they made the move to Midlothian to be closer to family. Once they were all settled in, Harry started devoting more time to his personal artwork and his love for landscape and nature. "I like landscape because everywhere you look there's a painting," he shared. "I mean all you have to do is look here and there. There's millions and millions of paintings out there."

Since moving to Midlothian, Harry has continued his love for landscape and nature scenes. When he finds something he wants to paint, he paints it with great detail and passion. He even does plein air paintings sometimes. Plein air is a French term for in the open air. Sometimes this involves a model, but most of the time he will set up in an ideal spot somewhere outdoors and do a quick sketch. Then he takes the sketch home and turns it into



another work of art to display around his house or in an art show. Sometimes, Beverly will take multiple photographs of a scene, which he then paints in his studio at home. "I will work on it for a few hours one day, come back the next day and work on it a little more and so on," he added.

Harry has not been involved with many galleries or shows where he could display his work lately, but he has painted many different scenes he found in his area. He eventually joined the Ellis County Art Association and began participating in their mini shows, which anonymously declared him the first place



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winner multiple times. He continues to be an active member and tries to participate in as many opportunities as possible. One show he has participated in is the Ellis County Art Association's Paint Waxahachie event, which is one of the only events where he has been allowed to display and offer his artwork to the public.

In the past year, Harry has not been painting as much as he would like. He was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease early last year, which has been interfering with his artwork. "When I paint now, I do have to paint with two hands to help keep my painting hand steady," he admitted. Although it has slowed him down, he is not ready to stop creating artwork just yet.

Sometimes Harry gets discouraged that his abilities are not the same now, but he is surrounded by encouragement. Since he was diagnosed with Parkinson's, he has been going to therapy where a young lady he worked with encourages him to continue to paint. She asked him to paint her a rose, so he went home and started on it for her. It took him awhile, but eventually he was able to bring her what she had requested. "I got so mad," he confessed. "I kept wiping it off, but eventually I put three pink spots up there and created her painting. She loved it and hung it in her office."

Even though Parkinson's might have slowed Harry down a bit this past year, he will continue to paint for as long as he can. It will definitely take more than that to keep him from his passion. His love for art and his journey to where he is now is just too important for him to quit. "I am painting at 85," Harry said with a smile. "I will be painting at 100." **NOW**

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Wes Ross, owner of Ross Fencing, has installed fences all over Midlothian.

The Fence Effect

Ross Fencing can beautify your home and give it a brand new look.

— By Betty Tryon

Fencing improves the value of property. “I’ve never heard someone say they didn’t want to buy a house because it has a fence,” declared Wes Ross, owner of Ross Fencing. Wes, who has been in the fencing business for 10 years and the owner of his own business for four years, has seen the dramatic affect a new fence has for a home, many times over. “A lady who put her house on the market had five or six people look at it, but because of her fence, no one wanted to mess with it. We put her new fence up on a Thursday and Friday, and that Saturday she had an offer on her home,” he stated. “Fencing is one of the products where you can see a drastic before and after difference. A fence makes the home look better.”

Wes learned construction while in high school, and out of all of the skills necessary for that occupation, he loved doing fencing the most. Fencing is very difficult physical labor, particularly here in Midlothian where the ground is mostly rock. However, it has become a passion for Wes. He has been doing this for a long time in Midlothian and commented, “There is not a neighborhood in Midlothian that I don’t have a fence in.”

Wes works mostly with home owners but also with commercial developers, general contractors and home builders. “Residential is 85 to 90 percent of my business,” he stated. “Much of it comes from word-of-mouth referral. My joy is

interacting with homeowners — seeing and building what people really want. They tell me what they want. I give them some ideas, and at the end of the day, I can give them a product. Many times, it is more than what they wanted. I did a fence for a lady who called me three times to thank me for it.”

Ross Fencing can install any type of fence — vinyl, wood, wrought iron, chain link, electric gates and many other types. “We do everything from barbwire to vinyl fences. There is no fence that we can’t do or don’t do,” Wes said. “Wood is most common, and wrought iron is also very popular. Many people are getting away from chain link fences, although I still put some up. It is whatever will fit in people’s budget these days. We can do handrails, custom balusters and balcony rails. We also do custom entry gates. I have a company where I can have anything cut, and I also have a plasma cutter here at the office.”

“There is no job that is too big or too small for us.”

Ross Fencing can handle landscaping, irrigation, arbors, pergolas, decks, outdoor kitchens, fireplaces and covered patios. The company offers all types of repair work for fences and will re-stain, recondition and resurface. “I do everything outdoors except build a pool,” Wes said. He has a portfolio of his work, in case you need ideas for your next outdoor building project.

Ross has 13 workers to help him, but he deals with customers one on one, he stated. “We want to give customer satisfaction at the end of the day. A fence is definitely an improvement where you will get your money back. It’s not a wasted investment.” **NOW**

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References Available

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A happy birthday is celebrated at Midlothian Senior Activity Center.



WGMS RoboCats complete at the FLL North Texas Robotics Qualifier Tournament.



Sunshine preschool from the Church of Christ sing and bring goodies for the seniors.



Ann Stanley gets a cut and style from Jane Cox at Retreat Salon and Spa.



Mrs. Bowman's class make a "Wacky Class Band" with homemade instruments.



Allie the Alligator, from Dr. Shelly Clark's office, teaches students at Cobblestone Learning Center about dental health.



Navarro College Bridge students volunteer to make apple pie.



The Midlothian Campus of Navarro College's parade float was one of this year's winners.



First graders make gingerbread houses.



Anna Traylor wins Wildcat Idol.



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There Is Hope

— By Betty Tryon, BSN

For many, muscular dystrophy is synonymous with the *Jerry Lewis MDA Labor Day Telethon*, which has now been renamed *MDA SHOW of STRENGTH*. Because of the telethon, countless numbers of people have been educated about this disease, and for many, hope abounds. Muscular dystrophy (MD) is not one disease but defines a collection of more than 30 genetic diseases. In simple terms, the most characterizing factor of these diseases is that the muscles grow weaker, degenerate and become nonfunctional. The diseases are genetic. You can't catch this from someone. You can't do something to your body that sets off a chain reaction of destruction. It is inherent in your genes, and there is no cure.

Muscular dystrophy can make its presence known anytime from infancy to adulthood. The progression of the disease, age of onset and degree of muscle weakness depends upon which disease manifests itself. The most common form is Duchenne MD, which primarily affects boys and occurs in early childhood. The first symptoms are a weakening in the limbs, where it becomes increasingly difficult to run, then to walk. The progression of the disease is relentless, and by age 12, most boys are unable to walk. At some point in the later stages of this disorder, to breathe a respirator may be necessary. The heart muscle may be affected also. Duchenne MD is rare in girls, but they can inherit the gene and pass it on to their children.

Myotonic dystrophy, which is also called MMD or Steinert's disease primarily affects adults. The name myotonic comes from myotonia, which means the muscles have a difficult time relaxing after contraction or rather, after use. Myotonic MD is characterized by prolonged spasms and contractions, primarily affecting adults. This disease also affects the endocrine system, causes cataracts, cardiac abnormalities and affects the central nervous system. Some sufferers have long thin faces and droopy eyes.

Although there is no cure, the news is not all gloomy. For some with the disorder, the disease progresses slowly, and they can enjoy a normal life span. For others, it helps to know the research is intensive, ongoing and impressive. The Muscular Dystrophy Association is proud of the fact that they are "the world's largest nongovernmental sponsor of research seeking the causes of, and effective treatments for, neuromuscular diseases." There are medications and forms of therapy that can slow the progression of the disease and not only add to the quality of life, but prolong life as well. Medical advances continue to march steadily forward. Never give up hope. **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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February 1 and 2

Man Caves & Fairytales Marriage, A Weekend Marriage Enrichment Conference: **Friday** 7:00-9:00 p.m., **Saturday** 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. and 5:00-8:00 p.m. for Date Night, hosted at Midlothian Bible Church. Cost is \$75.00 per couple. For more information, e-mail www.midlothianbible.org.

February 2

Midlothian Plaza 1st Chili Cook Off and Blood Drive: 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Midlothian Plaza, 1000 E. Main St. Vendors and food, games, silent auction, cash prizes, door prizes. Proceeds go to Midlothian Firefighters Association. For more information, e-mail Carrie@mmhgallery.com

February 7 and 8

Midlothian High School Theatre Performance "Pride and Prejudice": 7:00 p.m., MHS auditorium.

February 8 through 10

Waxahachie Community Dinner Theatre presents *Taffeta Memories*. Park Meadows

Baptist Church, 3350 N. Hwy 77. Tickets are \$25 per person. Prepaid reservations are required by **February 5**. Seating is limited. For more information, contact WCT at (972) 646-1050 or e-mail wct.texas@gmail.com.

February 9

Valentine's Dinner and Auction Benefiting CASA of Ellis County: 6:00 p.m., Waxahachie Civic Center. Tickets are \$50 per person. For more information or to purchase tickets, call (972) 937-1455 or visit www.CASAOofEllisCounty.org.

February 11

Metro Beekeepers: 6:30-8:30 p.m. Review survey of members' results, bee diet and bee biology, Location to be determined, Contact Stan Key, (817) 888-0470, or visit www.metrobeekeepers.net.

February 12

Midlothian High School Winter Band Concert: 6:30 p.m., MHS auditorium.

February 15 through 17

12th Annual Chili Cook-off and Barn Dance: Ellis County Expo Center, 2300 US 287 Bypass. Contact John Wyckoff at (972) 937-1870 or visit www.elliscountycac.org. for more information on the weekend event. ekend event.

February 25 and 28

Paws for Reflection Ranch event: 4:30-5:30 p.m., 5431 Montgomery Rd. **February 25**, GALS (Girls' Animal Lover Society), an interactive program for girls 7 and up who love animals. **February 28**, CHAPS (Cowboys Honoring Animal Partners Society), an interactive program for guys 7 and up who love animals. For more details, call (972) 775-8966.

March 1 and 2

Midlothian's Got Talent/Elementary Performance: 7:00 p.m., **March 1**. Midlothian's Got Talent/Secondary Performance: 7:00 p.m., **March 2**. MHS auditorium.

March 2

Fresh Grounded Faith: The Avenue Church, 1761 N. Hwy 77, Waxahachie. The event features best-selling author, speaker and Bible study teacher Jennifer Rothschild. For more information, visit www.FreshGroundedFath.com or call the church office at (972) 937-5301.

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



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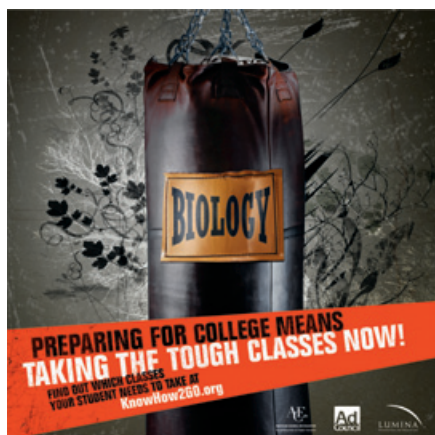
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In The Kitchen With Katie Allred

— By Betty Tryon

There is no doubt about Katie Allred's current passion. "I enjoy cooking because I am in love with food," she enthused. "So, I figure, if I can always make the food, I can always have the happiness!" So far, it looks as though lots of happiness is ahead for this rising food star who wants to major in nutrition and dietetics. Her fascination with food has a lot to do with being healthy. "I guess my inspiration is in the body. I have to balance my love of food with my love of fitness. So, for me, it is always exciting to find recipes that are both delicious but also low in fat and calories." **NOW**

Roasted Banana Bars With Butter-pecan Frosting

Servings: 24 (1 per serving);
221 calories; 0 grams fat

Bars:

2 cups sliced bananas
1/3 cup brown sugar
1 Tbsp. butter, chilled and cut into squares
2 1/4 cups cake flour
3/4 tsp. baking soda
1/2 tsp. baking powder
1/4 cup nonfat buttermilk
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1/2 cup butter, softened
1 1/4 cups granulated sugar
2 eggs
Baking spray

Frosting:

1/4 cup butter
2 cups powdered sugar
1/3 cup cream cheese, softened
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1/4 cup chopped pecans, roasted

1. For bars: Preheat oven to 400 F.
2. Combine bananas, brown sugar and butter in an 8-inch square baking dish. Bake

for 35 minutes, stirring after 17 minutes. Cool slightly.

3. Reduce oven temperature to 375 F. In a large bowl, add flour, soda and baking powder.
4. In a separate bowl, combine banana mixture, buttermilk and vanilla.
5. Place butter and granulated sugar in a large bowl; beat with a mixer at medium speed until well-blended. Add eggs and mix well. Add flour mixture to sugar mixture alternating with banana mixture, beginning and ending with flour mixture.
6. Pour batter into a 13x9-inch baking pan coated with baking spray. Bake for 20 minutes, or until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool completely.
7. For frosting: Melt butter in a small saucepan over medium heat; cook 4 minutes, or until lightly browned. Cool slightly.
8. Combine browned butter, powdered sugar, cream cheese, and vanilla in a medium bowl; beat with a mixer until smooth. Let the cake cool and then apply frosting. Let stand/cool for 20-30 minutes before cutting into bars approximately 2 1/2 x 2 1/2-inches in size. Sprinkle with pecans.

Spinach Manicotti With Fontina

Servings: 6 per serving; 637 calories;
36 grams fat

12 dried manicotti
1 Tbsp. olive oil
1 medium bulb fennel, cored and chopped
3 garlic cloves, minced
16 oz. packaged spinach (about 6 cups)
1 egg, lightly beaten
15 oz. carton ricotta cheese
2/3 cup Parmesan cheese, shredded
1/2 tsp. dried Italian seasoning, crushed
1/2 tsp. shredded lemon peel
17 oz. jar marinara (2 cups)
10 oz. container Alfredo pasta sauce
4 oz. Fontina cheese, shredded

1. Cook pasta and drain; preheat oven to 375 F.
2. Add oil to skillet; cook fennel and garlic in oil over medium heat for 3 minutes. Add spinach; cover and cook for about 2 minutes. Press spoon to spinach mixture to remove excess liquid.
3. In large bowl, combine egg, ricotta cheese, Parmesan cheese, Italian seasoning, and lemon peel. Stir into spinach mixture.
4. Spread half of the marinara into rectangular baking dish. Using a small spoon, fill pasta with spinach mixture. Arrange pasta on top of marinara sauce in baking dish. Top with remaining marinara sauce. Pour Alfredo sauce over pasta and sprinkle with Fontina cheese.
5. Bake for 25-30 minutes, or until bubbly around edges.

Smoked Caprese

Serving: 1 slice toast per serving;
63 calories; 0 grams fat

1 long loaf Italian bread
Balsamic vinegar
Olive oil
4 large tomatoes
Mozzarella cheese, shredded
Fresh basil
Salt and pepper, to taste

1. Cut bread loaf into 1-inch slices and arrange on baking sheet.
2. Lightly drizzle each slice with balsamic vinegar and olive oil.
3. Top each with slice of tomato.
4. Sprinkle mozzarella cheese over tomato; garnish with basil.
5. Lightly toast slices on broil. Salt and pepper as needed.

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

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