

A photograph of Claudia Morris, a woman with short grey hair and glasses, wearing a bright green corded cardigan over a black top. She is smiling and looking at the camera. She is wearing several necklaces, including a long pearl necklace and a necklace with various charms. In the background, there is a wire rack filled with many small paint containers and a window with blinds. The magazine title 'Waxahachie NOW' is at the top, with 'MAGAZINE' and 'FEBRUARY 2013' below it. The main title 'Living in the Light' is overlaid on the image, along with other article teasers.

Waxahachie

MAGAZINE

FEBRUARY 2013

At Home With Claudia Morris

Living in the Light

Plus:

A Different Breed
When Faith Walks In
The Soft Side of a Villain
Good Results

In the Kitchen With Julie Martin

A Teacher's Transformation

Carolyn Stroud shares her
passion for reading in a
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ON THE COVER



Claudia Morris takes color
to a whole new level with her
folk art collection.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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Editor's Note

Fabulously Frantic February!

Schedules slow down for most people following the holiday season. But, that's definitely not the case for me. February is one of the busiest months for me and my ever-growing family. There's so many blue highlighted spaces on my calendar (yes, I color code everything) that my head hurts as I look over the special days ahead. Three wedding anniversaries, including my own, and six birthdays, including my husband's, warrant a fast trip to the card shop. They have all come to expect the best, so only a Hallmark card will do.

For those of you who need to add something to your calendar this month, there's always Greet Your Neighbor Day on the 7th, Valentine's Day on the 14th and Love Your Pet Day on the 20th. Golly, what was I thinking? Now I have three more things to add to my own calendar!

Sandra

Sandra Strong
WaxahachieNOW Editor
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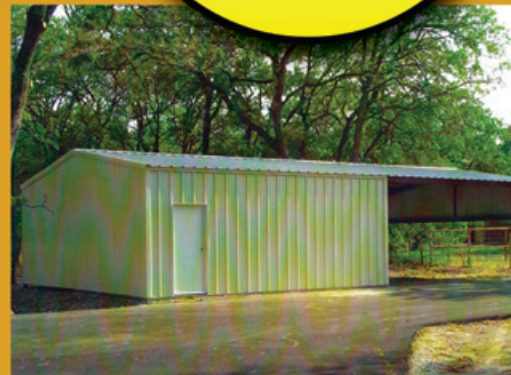


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A Teacher's Transformati

— By Hope Teel

Carolyn Stroud enjoyed a passionate 25-year career in education, teaching reading and language arts. Now retired, her love for reading is reflected during the annual Drop Everything and Read Day celebration, when she dresses up as the fictional character named Miss Tizzy, and reads to the children.

This year marked the 16th annual celebration of D.E.A.R. (Drop Everything and Read) Day, for students from pre-K to

eighth grade in Waxahachie ISD. According to Melissa Cobb, director of Partners in Education for the district, a main goal of D.E.A.R. Day is to emphasize the value and joy of reading through reading role models from the community. With over 500 volunteers from local businesses, organizations, churches, universities and PTOs, D.E.A.R. Day has become an anticipated event throughout Waxahachie as community members return to read to the students year after year. In addition, generous contributions from across the community make it possible for a new book to be placed in each elementary classroom and secondary library yearly. "We are so grateful for the outstanding support from the community for this special reading event in Waxahachie ISD," Melissa shared.

For a few lucky classes, D.E.A.R. Day is even more exciting as



on

“I learned very early that if you respect children, they will respect you back.”

they receive an extra special visitor, Carolyn, in disguise as Miss Tizzy with her cat, Hiram. Carolyn originally wanted to be a nurse, but her love for reading and writing lead her to a degree in education from Dallas Baptist University. For the next 25 years she taught language arts and reading to fourth and fifth graders. “I really believe you have to do what God calls you to do, and when you have that calling, it’s never work,” Carolyn said.

Despite retiring six years ago, Carolyn has continued to share her passion for reading through substitute teaching and her energetic Miss Tizzy portrayal for D.E.A.R. Day. “Although I am retired, I will always be a teacher, and it’s with great joy that I go to Dunaway to do Miss Tizzy,” Carolyn shared.

The idea for the real life character of Miss Tizzy originated with one of Carolyn’s colleagues, Ayn Pullin, with whom she taught in DeSoto. Ayn was the librarian, and they became close friends.

They shared a passion for reading, in addition to an innovative drive for creative and compassionate teaching methods through which they made strong efforts to make students feel welcome and excited to learn. “Reading is an escape. It can take you to places you may never get to go,” Carolyn said. “But the children don’t want to hear that it’s an education in itself, so I let them come to their own conclusions.”

As a teacher, Carolyn stayed involved. She



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changed out the decorations in her room monthly to help create a safe, yet fun learning environment for her students. "I think I did it just as much for me as for them, but I wanted them to feel welcome when they walked into my room and to know they were special," Carolyn explained. Ayn and Carolyn shared these ideals, and similar to Carolyn, Ayn changed out the theme of the library yearly to encourage students to read.

During that time, Ayn began the tradition of Miss Tizzy. The children's book, written by Libba Moore Gray, tells the story of a woman who befriended and taught children from various backgrounds how to love and accept



one another despite differences. Ayn fully embodied the character as she read to the students, and Carolyn said that afterwards, the children never knew Ayn as the librarian again — only as Miss Tizzy.

Miss Tizzy respected the children, and in return she earned their trust and love, which is illustrated when she falls ill, and the children take care of her in the end. The main idea of the story closely aligned with Carolyn's teaching ideals. "I learned very early that if you respect children, they will respect you back," she said. Consequently, Ayn's transformation into Miss Tizzy became very important to Carolyn.

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Upon retirement, Carolyn knew she wanted to do something unique for D.E.A.R. Day — something that reflected her passion for reading. “I wanted it to be pizzazzy,” Carolyn stated. At the time, she was substitute teaching for a fourth grade teacher who encouraged her to revive the tradition. Miss Tizzy has since become an extension of Carolyn, as the book’s central theme is a direct reflection of her goal to teach children by taking the time to connect and relate to them. “To me, reading is just joy. I don’t know how to teach that joy, but I do know that if you can find a book that draws a kid in, it may change their perspective on reading,” Carolyn said. “And *Miss Tizzy*, well, it just grabbed them!”

Every D.E.A.R. Day for the past four years Carolyn has transformed into Miss Tizzy with her mismatched clothes, green tennis shoes, powdered white hair, purple hat and a stuffed cat named Hiram. “They think the green tennis shoes are just awesome,” Carolyn said. She tells the story from the first person point of view to help get the children involved, noting that her introduction is key to the entire performance. “You have to catch them, and pull them in, and then when they have ownership, they become part of the story,” Carolyn smiled.

The beginning of the book shows Miss Tizzy’s neighborhood full of uniform



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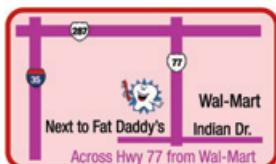
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houses and neat yards, all except for her own. Like Miss Tizzy herself, her house is colorful, and her yard is full of different types of flowers, leading the neighbors to think that she is quite peculiar. Still, the children adore her. Each day, the children and Miss Tizzy do a different activity, like baking cookies or putting on puppet shows or parades. "It's like a miniature family," Carolyn stated. "All of a sudden the children feel like they belong, and then they realize that they love her and in return, she genuinely loves them."

Carolyn remembered her joy when the children seemed to grasp at every page, enthralled in the story. "When you have 25 little wiggly bodies and all of their full attention, that's saying a lot!" she stated. This, she shared, is not something she does for reward or praise, but rather because she loves children and needs that interaction in her life. "They seem genuinely grateful that you came, and that in itself is the reward," she admitted. "I try to teach them whatever you do in your life or wherever you go, just treat people the way you would like to be treated. You know, the Golden Rule, and I try to do things where children still have imagination." **NOW**

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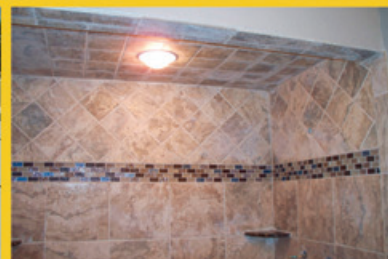


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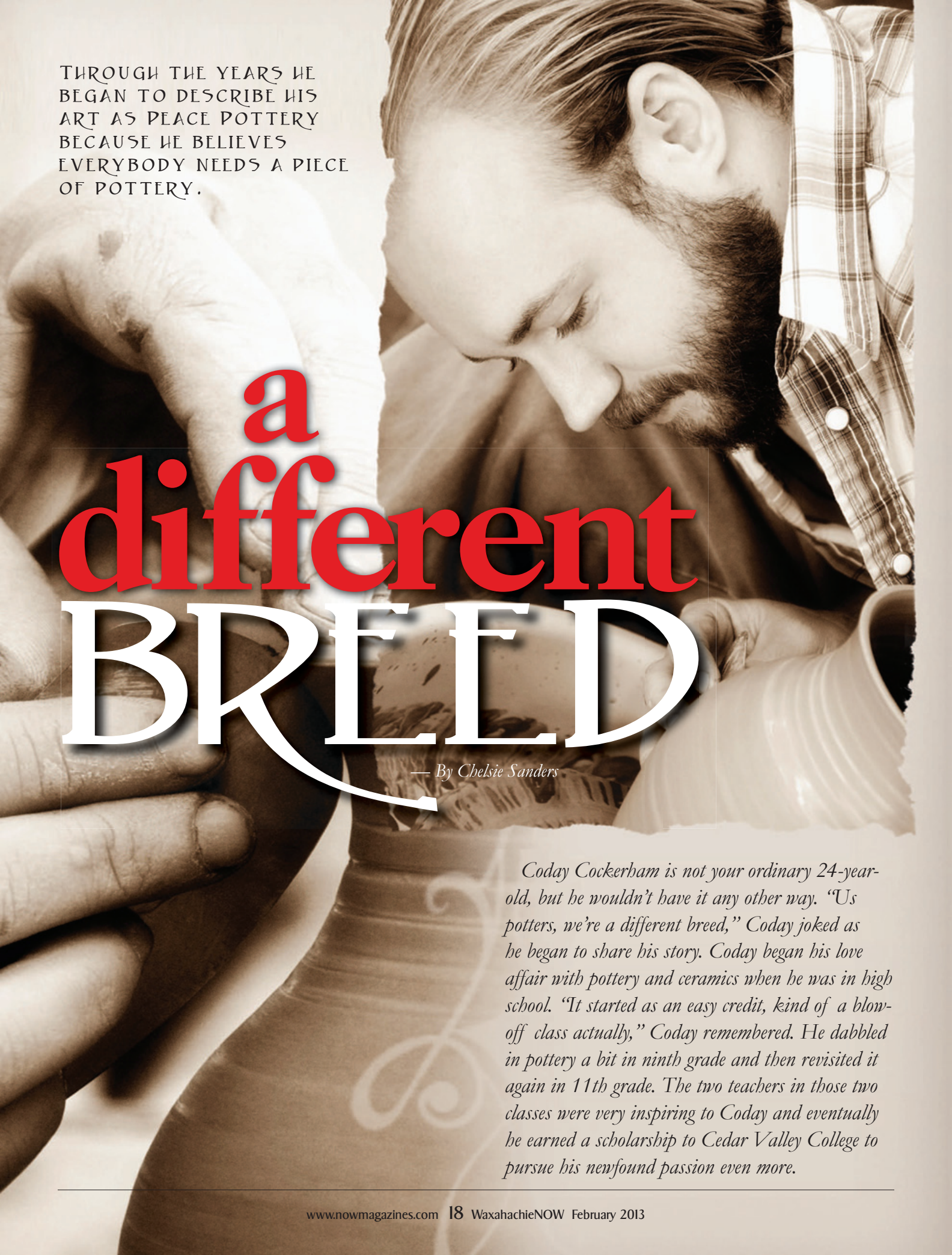
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OF POTTERY.

a different BREED

— By Chelsie Sanders

Coday Cockerham is not your ordinary 24-year-old, but he wouldn't have it any other way. "Us potters, we're a different breed," Coday joked as he began to share his story. Coday began his love affair with pottery and ceramics when he was in high school. "It started as an easy credit, kind of a blow-off class actually," Coday remembered. He dabbled in pottery a bit in ninth grade and then revisited it again in 11th grade. The two teachers in those two classes were very inspiring to Coday and eventually he earned a scholarship to Cedar Valley College to pursue his newfound passion even more.

After two years at Cedar Valley, Coday began to pursue his fascination with pottery even more. Through the years he began to describe his art as Peace Pottery because he believes everybody needs a piece of pottery. He now devotes his life to his pottery, and he appreciates all of those who have supported him along the way. Some of those people include his parents and his grandmother, Nancy, who allows her talented grandson to work from her home.

His studio is in a workshop in Reagor Springs. "That workshop holds my tractor and other equipment, but Coday



has a corner where he works, and he comes and goes as he pleases," Nancy shared.

Coday knows he is very lucky to have such a supportive family, and he thanks them as often as possible. "I am very appreciative of my Grandma Nancy and all the things she provides me with, including an occasional dinner here and there," Coday said with a broad smile.

Workspace is not the only thing Coday

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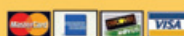
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shares with his grandmother. Every time he opens the kiln he likes to share the experience with her. "He will come get me and say, 'Grandma, are you ready for Christmas in July?' or whatever month it is at the time. We really enjoy that," Nancy grinned, remembering their tradition.

"One time we actually opened the kiln on Christmas, and we had a good laugh about that," Coday added.

His mother is also a big supporter and helps him with his booth at the



Coday and his grandma, Nancy, share time in the studio.

Waxahachie Farmer's Market every Saturday during the months of operation. "I started going to the market just to get my name out, and my mom always helps if I am out of town fishing or hunting,"

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Coday explained. While at the Farmer's Market he is able to share his pottery along with visiting people and building up his cliental. "There are a lot of people who just come up to see me and talk with me awhile," Coday admitted. He is known to some of the people who visit his booth as a sweet, noble potter who just loves to share his creations with the world.

Coday is connected with his pottery, and that is what makes his work even more special. When wrapping a piece up for someone to take home, he likes to explain what he felt when he created it and what he was thinking at the time. "I may never see that piece again, and I want the new owner to know the story behind it," he said as he reflected on pictures of different pieces that have gone to new owners. "When I send a piece home with someone at the market it inspires me to make some more and share my art with people."

He makes a variety of pieces ranging from vases to oil canisters and even chips and dip bowls. At the request of one

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gentleman, Coday made a set of canisters all the same size. Although a bit of a challenge, they all turned out perfectly even. "That was a big project that took me two full days. A skilled artist could have done it in one and made 20 more



"I MAY NEVER SEE
 THAT PIECE AGAIN,
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cups, but I just enjoy it. I get hypnotized by the wheel, so I just stay on one project for a while and get it perfect," Coday remarked humbly.

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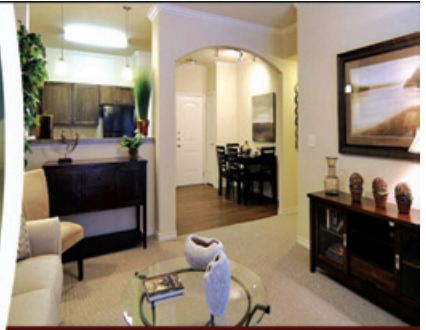


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Coday has also created unique urns and vases using cremation ashes. “He designed seven small urns for my mom’s ashes,” shared Coday’s mom, Janet, “and each one of the kids now have a small piece of her with us all the time.”

As far as his process, Coday explained a few steps and important factors. When beginning a project, he thinks about what he will make and gets the amount of clay he will need. He then begins the process of kneading the clay like dough. Once that is done, he throws the pot and starts the wheel spinning. Coday admits sometimes it is interesting to see what will come out of the process instead of starting with an exact idea. “I usually always know what I’m going to make, but sometimes it’s fun to just go until you get a shape you like and go from there.”

One factor that plays a big role is music. He listens to one station pretty regularly when working on his pottery — an alternative station that plays everything from classic rock to reggae. “I always have music on, and it never goes off. I gotta have it,” he admitted. Not only is it a big part of his process, but currently he is pursuing guitar as a new artistic outlet.

Another part of his trade developed through working at the market — he is now giving lessons in pottery. Sharing his skills with children and adults who want to learn the process has become something he truly enjoys. “I met a young child at the market who was autistic and was very enthusiastic about learning how to create pottery,” Coday stated, “so he came out to my studio. We had a great time. His guardian later told me he really opened up to everyone after that experience.”

As far as an ultimate goal, Coday has a noble hope for his pottery and talent. To him pottery is not a hobby or a pastime, it is something he hopes to continue doing his whole life and eventually develop even further. He wants to create things and help people to create as well. “Ultimately, I would like to have a studio to display my work and offer lessons, while providing a welcome place for people to come. Like one of those places older men come to talk and drink coffee,” he said as he pondered the future. “I think I could be very happy having a place where people came to just to create things.” **NOW**



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LIVING IN THE *Light*

**At Home With
Claudia Morris**

— *By Sandra Strong*



Claudia
has some
artist in her, too.





Some people dwell in the past, while others continually worry about the future. Claudia Morris is one who lives fully in the present. Her two-bedroom, one-bath home is a true reflection of her interests, passions and need of bright colors. ‘I’ve been collecting folk art since 1992. Its fascination is the passion of the artist and the pursuit to fulfill their mission from God,’ Claudia smiled. ‘Some of the pieces I have are from well-known artists, but most of it is not. All are equally loved.’

The duplex Claudia lovingly calls home today was a single-family dwelling when purchased in 1995. Six years ago, it was converted into a duplex. When relocating back to Waxahachie in November 2011, all Claudia desired was a home that offered natural light, lots of wall space for her art collection, a covered garage and a space where family and friends could relax, be comfortable and happy.

She realized her decision to move back had come at the right time. “The renters were moving out,” she said. “With a little paint — a color called Canvas, by Ralph Lauren — I was able to move right in. An added advantage is the location. I can walk to church, the post office, the pub and downtown. I have great neighbors, and my best friend is just around the corner.”

Claudia loves the home she has created. “It may be small, but it’s quaint,” she admitted. “It’s easy to take care of, and I really enjoy that.” Her love for folk art is demonstrated on every wall in every room. Jimmy Sudduth, an Alabama folk artist, began painting at 3 with mud. Three of his *Statue of Liberty* pieces hang on the wall behind the sofa in the living room. “Two were purchased from the Webb Folk Art Gallery, and their companion was found on eBay,” she said.

Another folk artist that can bring a smile to Claudia’s face is “visionary wind tamer” Vollis Simpson of North Carolina. He created the kinetic sculptors at the Olympic Village in Atlanta. Claudia’s sculpture is a red iron ball with blades that move in a circular motion. Displayed throughout the house are face jugs, cups and vases by local artist, Carl Block. “Carl’s colors are so appealing,” she said, “and his subjects are so interesting and unexpected.”

Although Claudia’s home is predominately decorated with folk art, she boasts of several other collections, including: whirligigs, Coca Cola items, ink bottles, old scissors, pressed glass, ironstone dishes, old Bibles and hymnals, favorite quotes and her new favorite obsession — women with one arm raised. “I thought this might limit me,” she confessed, “but surprisingly, it hasn’t.” The first in her collection, a commemorative Statue of Liberty, is found on the living room fireplace mantel, alongside one her son, Nick, created totally from small car parts. A larger Statue of Liberty rules over the front porch. A third much more rustic and crude lady stands in the backyard. It was also made by Nick, using larger car parts. Another rustic lady by Mike Hastings



guards the driveway. "As you can see, I like old metal stuff, too," she added, pointing to the 400-pound elephant greeting visitors at the front door. At one time, he was a thrashing machine artistically recycled by David Strickland.

Claudia has some artist in her, too. She enjoys painting TV trays, holiday ornaments, old books and small wooden plates. She loves using lots and lots of color. "I don't like coasters," she stated. "That's why I paint books and plates. I



seal them with clear acrylic and use them as coasters." Yes, they are works of art, but the overall beauty for Claudia is that they are practical and fun.

She added decoupage to her palette when she decided to paint a pair of cowboy boots. The boots tell so many stories with the Hit Cookie label, a Tootsie Pop wrapper, a ticket from a Disneyland trip taken in the '70s and a quote Claudia repeats often, "Make sure of your feet before you start to climb,"

scattered haphazardly on both boots. "The object you paint on will itself dictate the colors you use and what you paint," she added. "You just add your feelings to it."

As whimsical and eclectic as the house may be, it doesn't hold a candle to its proud owner. Years ago, she was the owner of Sweet Magnolia. During this time, she became known by her pearls and dangling bracelets. "I remember watching a movie with Julia Roberts,



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**“Julia wore pearls
all the time,
even with jeans.
I decided to
wear my pearls
all the time, too.”**

Robert Duvall and Dennis Quaid,” she said with a smile. “Julia wore pearls all the time, even with jeans. I decided to wear my pearls all the time, too.”

Bracelets became a signature as soon as Claudia found out how easy they were to bring home from her travels. “I buy bracelets as souvenirs,” she said, reminiscing about a funny story. “My husband, Bob, and I were at the Baltimore Airport when a man threw a \$5 bill down on our table. Laughing, he told Bob he could keep the money if he could tell him how many bracelets I was wearing. Bob proudly answered, “Twenty-one.”

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Needless to say, Bob's count was correct, but the story within the story is what makes it worth retelling. "I started the day with 18," Claudia admitted. "I bought two and got a third free from one of those airport kiosks. That was the one and only day Bob knew exactly how many bracelets I was wearing." Bob tried to give the man his \$5 back, but the man just shook his head and said, "A deal is a deal."

The treasures found in the home are too many to mention, but Claudia's love for antiques and all things folk art come together beautifully to create the peaceful, cozy haven she calls home. Even though every day "cannot be a feast of lanterns" (Chinese proverb), Claudia chooses to live in the light of each day. **NOW**

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— By Randy Bigham

The gift of trust, bestowed in a beautiful yet unlikely setting, recently invigorated a young Waxahachie student, and she hasn't looked back since. For 16-year-old Taylor Kvapil, the world and her place in it suddenly has new meaning. Her change of heart and mind happened during an exercise at a youth outing where she and others from St. Joseph Catholic Church were preparing for the sacrament of confirmation.



Shy and disinterested, the last place the pretty teenager cared to be was cavorting around Camp Hoblitzelle, a Midlothian retreat center operated by the Salvation Army's evangelical ministry. "I didn't want to be there," Taylor recalled. "I thought I didn't need it or anybody. I was telling people, 'Let me go home,' and 'Leave me alone.'"

But they would not leave her alone, and today Taylor is grateful they didn't. The three-day retreat involved a ceremony called a trust walk, in which blindfolded members of the group formed a line in an obstacle course. It might have been a scene out of an episode of *The Amazing Race* or *Survivor*, but Taylor had no idea the reality TV-inspired setup would impact her own reality so profoundly. "During the trust walk, you have to rely on God and the people around you to guide you," she explained. "You have to use your senses and learn to trust others, so you can be delivered to this breathtaking place on the other side of the course."

As in life, candidates for the sacrament ran into a lot of barriers along the route. But Taylor made it through, and as she emerged she knew something was different. She was different. "I had changed," she said. "I don't know what part of it affected me, but something just clicked. Learning to trust and have faith really changed my attitude." No

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longer resistant, Taylor wanted more from the experience, which led her to accept her current role as a peer minister at St. Joseph Catholic Church, witnessing and guiding other children and teens as they prepare for the sacrament. She's no longer introverted and enjoys interacting with other youth at school and church. Just like the peer ministers who helped her gain strength, Taylor knows what to say to support a candidate for confirmation who expresses misgivings. With calm words she soothes them, and with a caring ear she listens.

One of those who encouraged Taylor most during her confirmation was St. Joseph's director of faith formation, James Speelman. "Truthfully, James is one of the reasons I came back to help as a peer minister," Taylor said. "His rapport with the kids is great, and he has plenty of patience."

James is gratified by Taylor's progress and continues to support her growth as a mentor. With some 600 children and teenagers in his charge, he's also grateful for her help. Conducting the sacrament of confirmation at the annual retreat at Hoblitzelle is a high point in the young



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people's religious education, and he relies with confidence and pride on his cadre of 20 peer ministers. "The trust walk is a simile of our relationship with God," James pointed out. "Our peer ministers lead candidates through a maze using nonverbal communication. It teaches us



that while we can't see or hear God, He does lead us through trust and faith."

Taylor has risen to the challenge of her calling, becoming a shining example of how positive an influence young people can be. "Taylor has great enthusiasm," he observed, "and a raw honesty, because she is searching for good in all the people she meets. We can all learn from that." Moreover, James finds Taylor to be a fine

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representative of the youth at St. Joseph. "This is an incredible group of young men and women, coming together to share their gifts with the church," he said. "Many view teenagers as self-absorbed, but these young people are the opposite of that. They constantly want to give of themselves. It's very inspiring."

James sees the kids' desire to back each other up in their faith as the ideal way to head off issues that might not be addressed if only adults were providing counseling. "This is where our peer ministers are so critical," he admitted. "Candidates for the sacrament are so much more open to sharing when others their own age are there to comfort them. It's much better than listening to one of us adults, talking about, 'Back in my day,' etc."

In her two years as a peer minister, coaching and guiding others, Taylor has found fulfillment, a process that's not only delighted James, but has also touched Taylor's parents, Daryl and Julie Kvapil. Both are excited to watch their daughter mature, socially and spiritually, through her devotion to church work.

In addition to assisting with preparation for confirmation, Taylor is active in the youth group's involvement in charitable enterprises such as its Hands and Feet outreach. This program, started last year, is a week-long service project in which kids volunteer to help others. In partnership with the

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Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Corsicana, Taylor and fellow youth members from St. Joseph divide into groups of 10 to aid people in need in the community. They lend a hand with everything from painting houses for the elderly or disabled to serving food in shelters for the homeless. Taylor derives much satisfaction from the work. "It's great to help someone and see their expression of gratitude."

Taylor is also dedicated to the ongoing campaign to raise money for a new worship facility at St. Joseph and to fund a mission trip in July. Taylor and James are hoping to repeat last year's successful mission to Honduras, in Central Mexico. "We needed about \$1,000 a person to make that trip," James recalled. "And the church just came together like nobody's business to help us — raising \$24,000 in four months." The group is now selling chocolate candy to raise money, and other fundraising venues are being planned.

After graduating from high school, Taylor hopes to go to college, maybe to Sam Houston State University or Texas A&M University. She may go into teaching or youth ministry, following James' footsteps, or she may want to be a veterinarian. She hasn't made up her mind. What she does know is that whichever path she pursues, it will be because of the love and acceptance she found as a youth minister at St. Joseph. "Without a doubt the youth group has been like a second family," Taylor enthused. "If I need anything, they will be there. And I'm there for them. I know now that we all need each other." **NOW**



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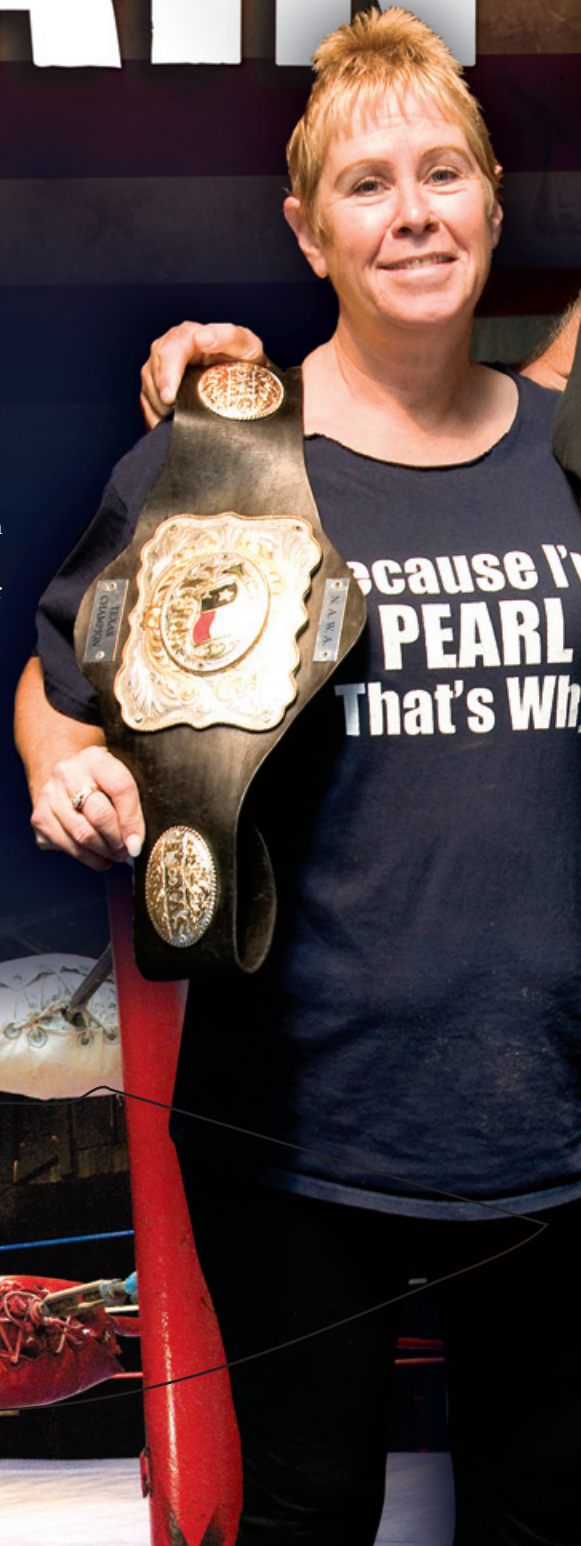
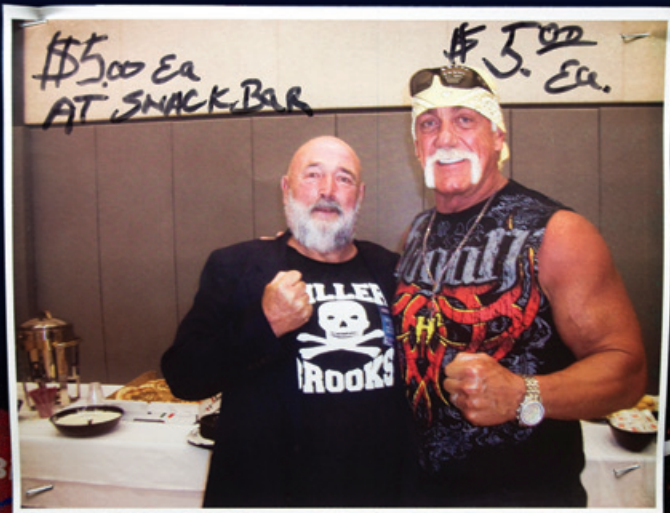
— By Sydni Thomas

Killer Brooks has made a career out of being the bad guy, but his real life personality, one of generosity and caring for others, is far from it. After decades of traveling the world wrestling, Tim Brooks is now permanently stationed in Waxahachie where he puts on wrestling shows for families and teaches the tricks of his trade to younger generations.

Wrestling wasn't a career Tim had put much thought into while growing up. His uncles, Lloyd Murdock and Hoyt Murdock, as well as his cousin, Dick Murdock, were professional wrestlers, but he didn't know much about wrestling as a career. After getting out of the Army, Tim began working at General Dynamics. At the time his aunt passed away, he traveled to Amarillo for her funeral, and that was when wrestling became a contender in his life. His cousin Dick, also known as Captain Redneck, convinced him to not go back home after the funeral, but instead to travel from

town to town as part of his wrestling show.

"We loaded up and headed for the Ector County Coliseum Fair Grounds in Odessa," Tim said. "The plan wasn't for me to become a wrestler. I was just there to help. I didn't have any training or



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experience. The only thing I knew was from watching it.”

Once they arrived in Odessa, complications began with that night’s event, a battle royal where 10 men



wrestled to the end in the ring. One of the men scheduled to fight, The Turk, had been put in a Mexican jail the night before, and they needed a fill in. Dick volunteered Tim, the then 20-year-old with no experience. After a quick makeover of hair grease, yellow and green trunks and a sheep skin seat cover converted into a robe, Tim was ready for his first battle royal.

“They said ‘Don’t worry, kid, we’ll take care of you,’” Tim recalled. “Those are the famous words of any wrestler to a new guy. And take care of me they did. They beat me up so badly as soon as the fight started and threw me over the ropes. I didn’t stand a chance. One by one as they’d come back into the locker room, they’d tell me I had done a good job. I thought they were going to take care of me, but I guess I misunderstood what that meant.”

After the fight, the promoter gave



him a brown envelope full of cash, and that was the beginning of Tim's new and adventurous wrestling career as a villain. Two weeks later, he made his first television fight appearance, and his traveling show continued nonstop after that. His group would arrive early for each show and would train him before each match. Over the years, Tim picked up what he needed to know to play the best villain by wrestling some of the greatest opponents out there, including the entire Von Erich family. He was dubbed "Killer" by a promoter in Ohio in 1971.

Tim has seen many changes in the wrestling industry since he started. One of the major differences is he once worked six to seven days a week and rarely had any time off. If he wasn't wrestling, he was driving to a match. There were no luxury plane rides, action figures and pay-per-view match paydays. Some weekends he would wrestle three different events in one day. The money was great for that time, but it wasn't the millions that some wrestlers make today. "The wrestling life is nonstop," Tim said. "Sometimes I was making \$800 per week in the 1970s. That's pretty great for a young guy, but I was always working. Very rarely did I get time off."

Killer Brooks made his last wrestling appearance at the Boys & Girls Club



of Waxahachie in 1996. Now he runs a wrestling school, Killer Brooks' Big Time Pro Wrestling, founded in 1988 in Lancaster, Texas, and has wrestling matches at his home wrestling arena once

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a month. Tim and his wife, Julie, moved back to Waxahachie 12 years ago and are continuously working on the barn behind their house to make it the best wrestling arena around. From the outside, looks are deceiving. Inside the plain metal barn is a professional quality ring and seating for up to 200 guests.

"Wrestling is a family event," Julie said. "I remember growing up and watching



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wrestling with my family on Saturday nights. That is where I first saw Tim. I've always been a fan of Killer Brooks."

"It's important to me for families to be able to enjoy this sport," Tim said. "I've created a safe place where grandparents can bring their young grandkids."

Tim credits Julie, also known as Mrs. Killer Brooks, with being able to run his successful wrestling school and monthly wrestling matches. Both Tim and Julie were previously married. Each year Tim would stop by the roadside store where Julie worked on the way to see

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his brothers and ask her jokingly if she would like to join his wrestling team. This went on for years until one trip through town when Julie said, "Yes."

"We've been together ever since," Julie said. "We came together at the right time. I was at a place in my life where I needed Tim, and he needed me. He is the reason I made it through."

Competing as the bad guy was one of Tim's favorite parts of wrestling, but once he was out of the ring, he was back to being the man who tried to find ways to help others out whenever he could. From charity wrestling events to restoring old bicycles he collects back into working condition so he can give them to those



without transportation, the Brooks have made giving back to the community a priority in their life. He has donated over 50 bicycles to Souls Harbor and Waxahachie Care.

"Wrestling keeps us busy," Tim said, "but we find time to help our community. Waxahachie has given so much to us and we want to give back to it."

Tim has traveled all over the world, wrestling in Japan, Australia, Nigeria, Canada and New Guinea. A career that may not have happened if he had not gone to his aunt's funeral, led him on a once-in-a-lifetime adventure with endless tales of epic matches between good and evil. "As the bad guy, I'd get booed as I'd enter the ring," Tim said. "But near the end of my career fans would boo at me and then cheer because they never knew if this was my last time out there. They hated me as the bad guy, but loved me because they'd seen me for decades. I loved my life as a wrestler, and now I love teaching the younger guys how to take over." **NOW**

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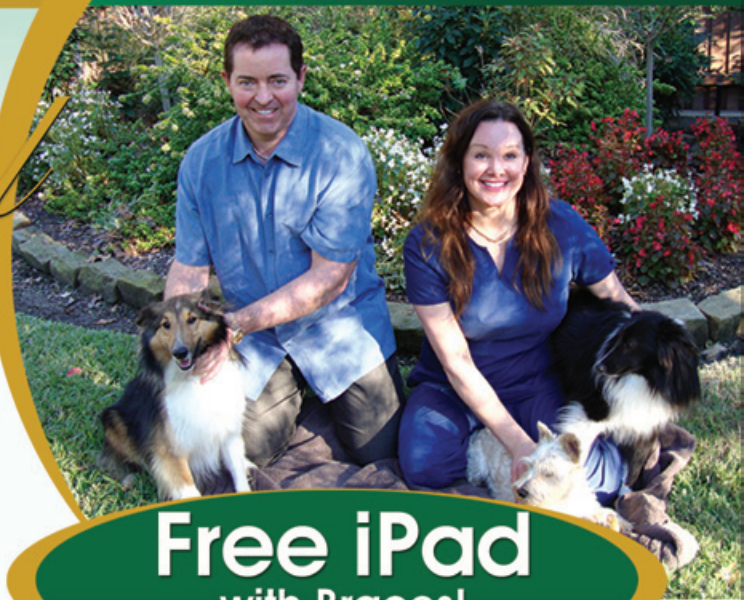


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— By Sandra Strong

Nancy MacDonald, D.C., hasn't always been a chiropractor and esthetician. "I used to fly and work on hot air balloons for a living," she said with a smile. "That was until my neck started hurting." A married couple who befriended Dr. Nancy while she was in the hot air balloon business just happened to also be chiropractors. "She gave me a neck adjustment, and my neck felt great," Dr. Nancy admitted. "It felt even better 24 hours following the adjustment."

Having never been to a chiropractor prior to that first adjustment, Dr. Nancy really had not formed an opinion about chiropractic care one way or another. She just knew that first adjustment put her on the path to a new journey in life. "I sold

my hot air balloon business in 1980 and used the money to go to chiropractic school," she explained. "Now — 25 years later, I'm so glad I made the career path change when I did."

Dr. Nancy's first office was located in Mesquite. In 1987, she took a hiatus from the business to relocate to Spain with her daughter, Marilyn, who had a desire to study abroad. "I became just a mom at that time," she confessed. "We moved from Spain to London when my daughter was in high school." Upon Dr. Nancy's return to the Dallas area in June 2005, she began teaching chiropractic care at Parker College of Chiropractic, the same college from which she had graduated from the second class so many years earlier.

For a short time, she worked from a small office in Red Oak. While in Red Oak, she also decided to expand her knowledge of the human anatomy by returning to the classroom to earn her certification as an esthetician. She brought her years of chiropractic experience and her newfound knowledge in skin care to her present location in Waxahachie. She can't help but boast about her good fortune. "My new office was my favorite color — purple — when I moved in," she said. "I didn't have to change a thing."

In regard to adding esthetician to her list of accomplishments, Dr. Nancy unhesitatingly remarked, "They both give such good results," she said. "Chiropractic care allows patients to feel better without pills, drugs or surgery, while microdermabrasion and facials make skin smoother and softer, allowing the client to look and feel younger."

Chiropractic adjustments are always \$25, while a one-time microdermabrasion treatment is on special for \$65 or three for \$120. "I recommend that you try one microdermabrasion treatment for those who have never had one before," Dr. Nancy shared. "Then you go from there."

Dr. Nancy finds nothing difficult or hard about her present career path. In fact, she finds great pleasure in helping patients to look and feel their best. "When you feel bad, you don't want to go out and do anything," she said, speaking from experience. "Once patients feel better, they have a much better quality of life."

Her most important word of advice is to not wait when in pain. "Don't allow your pain to get out of control," Dr. Nancy recommended. "The longer you wait, the longer it will take to feel better. Call me at the onset of pain, and I guarantee you'll see good results."

Dr. Nancy loves what she does. "I will do this until I am no longer able to," she admitted. "I find such gratification in helping others." **NOW**

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IcyLee Photography's Denaze Springer gets creative during a portrait session with the Herrin Family at the Waxahachie train depot.



James Robinson and his horse, Cajun, enjoy a Sunday morning walk around the square with Jacqueline Board and her horse.



Skateboarders Nathan and Sam McGee stop for a quick rest and a photo.



The Rodriguez Family enjoy lunch at Plato Loco.



Local artist, Jon McKenzie, and model, Ghanema Kaoud, enjoy an afternoon on the square.



Actors at Bethlehem Revisted explain how to make spices.



Lili Montoya and Isaiah, Jerimiah and Victor Garcia enjoy playing outside on a Sunday afternoon.



A large crowd gathers for the ribbon cutting and open house at Cornerstone Home Health.



Kaithynn Strong has fun opening her Christmas gifts.

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Five Financial Goals for Young Adults

— By Adam Rope

Five ... four ... three ... two ... one ... Happy New Year! Ring it in with resolutions that will help you strengthen your financial position and set the stage for long-term success. Here are goals you can set and start working toward today:

Save for a house.

"If a home purchase is in your future, check your credit report now," urged Marc Shaffer, a certified financial planner in Overland Park, Kansas. You'll be able to review your credit history and report any errors or omissions to the credit bureaus. You'll also have more time to improve your score. A good credit score can improve the rate you get on your loan, which can save you thousands of dollars in the long run.

Be budget-savvy.

Identify where and how you are spending your hard-earned dollars so you can plug money drains. "You really do need to track everything and create categories to put things in perspective," Shaffer said. Software and apps such as Quicken, Microsoft Money and mint.com make budgeting and tracking expenses easy.

Reign in credit card debt.

Review your card statements to see which debt you can tackle first. Get a feel for the payoff amount using an online calculator.

Get insured.

"As a young professional, your biggest asset is not your retirement account, but your ability to earn money," Shaffer said. Protect your paycheck by obtaining disability and life insurance coverage. Disability insurance coverage replaces a portion of your income if you cannot work due to a disabling accident or



illness. Life insurance offers long-term security for you and your family if something unexpected were to happen.

Give back.

When you reach a stage where you're making good money and meeting your financial goals, consider giving charitably to your university, church or a mentor organization. "It's great to give back to organizations and institutions that helped make you successful," Shaffer said. Contact your financial advisor to learn about an insurance and financial review and what it can mean for your long-term goals. **NOW**

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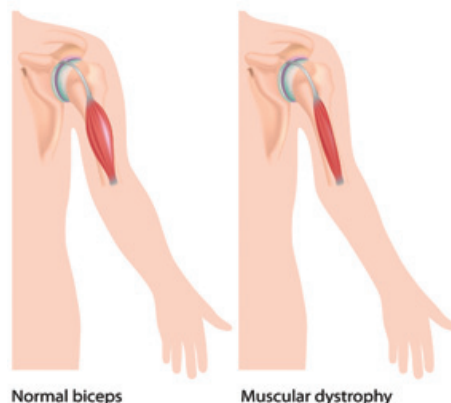
There Is Hope

— 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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Porch Orchids in Texas?

— By Nancy Fenton

Some rumors have been running around about orchids. In many of our minds (mine included), they are delicate parasites and difficult to grow. Since I am still bending very gingerly, I am going to try plants I can grow on my porch for a while. Growers in Dallas swear several orchids native to Mexico will flourish outside in our zone. They are not parasites, but they do get their nourishment from the air and water. These orchids are the ones that have pseudo bulbs (false bulbs) and a six-month dormancy period from November to April. They take off in the spring and bloom through October! These are not usually the disposable orchids found in large stores, but are a more pure species that, with proper care, will outlive a person! The best way to cultivate success is to go through local stores in our general area and ask for a specific plant. Dallas Orchids and Gunter's (in Richardson) are both highly recommended sources. Le Selve Orchids in Bryan also keeps a good stock on hand.

One of the many reasons to put these orchids on the porch is their susceptibility to harsh sunlight. They grow naturally in shaded forests, so to even put them on the edge of a porch would create unwanted problems — burn, baby burn! They are

better mounted on a rough branch (detached, of course) with some coconut fiber (sold for use in lining baskets), securing it with nonrusting galvanized wire. Then the orchid can be placed on the branch with its roots spread out over the whole thing. Wet sphagnum secured over the roots with more wire will complete the mount. You are now ready to hang this on your porch! Keep your sprayer bottle with rain or regular tap water ready and give them a spray when you walk by. New roots should appear to really anchor the new plant within a few weeks. The hotter the temperature the more sprays it will need. If the temperature does drop into the 20s, be prepared to cover the plant or bring it into the garage overnight just to be safe! More next month on species that have been grown successfully in our area.

Watch for more information on the Ellis County Master Gardeners' Spring EXPO on March 15. For more information call Texas AgriLife extension (972) 925-5175. **NOW**

Nancy Fenton is a Master Gardener.

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February 2

Jazz Café presents "A Night of Memories:" 6:30-10:30 p.m., Waxahachie Civic Center. Tickets: \$30 in advance, \$35 after January 20. For more information on where to purchase tickets, go to www.spiritofwaxahachie.com/jazzcafe.

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. For more information, contact WCT at (972) 646-1050 or e-mail wct.texas@gmail.com.

February 9

Mardi Gras Parade: historic downtown Waxahachie. For more information, contact Wayne Strickland at (972) 938-2062.

Valentine's Dinner & 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 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.

February 23

Waxahachie Symphony Association: 7:00-9:00 p.m., Waxahachie Civic Center, 2000 Civic Center Dr. The Dallas String Quartet will provide the entertainment. Call (972) 938-1181 for more information.

Charity Bull Shoot (dart throwing contest): Wolter-Ashley Memorial Post 3894, V.F.W., 1405 N. IH 35, benefitting The Gingerbread House. For more information, contact Erik Lusk at erik_lusk@yahoo.com or Nanette Cox at nanette.cox@sbcglobal.net.

February 26

Girl Scout Monthly Volunteer meeting: 7:00-8:00 p.m., Brown Street Church of Christ, 2471 Brown St. For more information, visit joinus@gssu251.org.

February 28

85th Annual Chamber of Commerce Awards Banquet: 6:30 p.m., Waxahachie Civic Center. For details, call (972) 937-2390.

March 2

Fresh Grounded Faith: The Avenue Church, 1761 N. Hwy 77. The event features best-selling author, speaker and Bible study teacher Jennifer Rothschild. Other special guests include Lysa Terkeurst and Dara Maclean. A large number of area churches are involved in this area-wide women's event. For more information, visit www.FreshGroundedFaith.com or call the church office at (972) 937-5301.

March 3

Lifestyle Business, Health & Wellness Expo: 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Waxahachie Civic Center, 2000 Civic Center Dr. For more information, contact Randall Chase at rchase@waxahachiechamber.com or call (972) 937-2390.

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



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In The Kitchen With Julie Martin

— By Sandra Strong

Julie Martin's love for cooking began when she was a little girl. "I would help my grandmother in the kitchen," Julie remembered. "She let me help make eggs, homemade biscuits, cookies and anything else she was preparing at the time." Through the years as one of three children, Julie has enjoyed the meals that involved everyone sitting around the dinner table. "When we were able to sit down together, I always enjoyed it!"

She admits she gets somewhat bored cooking for her husband and children because they are "low maintenance" when it comes to meals. "They enjoy the same things, but that's OK," Julie smiled. "I just invite a bunch of girlfriends over for Bunco so I can feed them, or I host a Bible study." **NOW**

Salmon Pasta

- 1 box angel hair pasta, whole grain or wheat, prepared according to box directions**
- 4 Tbsp. olive oil**
- 4 salmon fillets (approximately 3 1/2 to 4 lbs.)**
- 1 cup frozen spinach**
- 6 Tbsp. total fresh rosemary, basil and oregano, chopped (to taste)**
- 7 1/2 oz. sundried tomatoes, drained and chopped**
- 7 1/2 oz. artichoke hearts, drained and chopped**

- 1.** Heat oven to 400 F. In a colander, drain prepared pasta and toss with 1 Tbsp. oil.
- 2.** Brush filets with 1 Tbsp. oil. Bake salmon for 10 minutes per inch of thickness, usually 12-14 minutes total. Remove and set aside.
- 3.** Heat 1 Tbsp. of oil in a large skillet and combine all remaining ingredients, except

for pasta. The salmon will flake into smaller pieces when mixed with other ingredients.

- 4.** When spinach melts and ingredients are warmed, gradually add pasta and another Tbsp. of oil, if needed; toss. Serve immediately.

Chicken Alfredo Lasagna

- 30 oz. Alfredo sauce**
- 4 chicken breasts, cooked and shredded**
- 2 garlic cloves, roasted and mashed**
- 2-3 Tbsp. total fresh oregano and basil (to taste)**
- 8 oz. Mozzarella cheese**
- 6 oz. Parmesan cheese**
- 16 oz. cottage cheese**
- 7 1/2 oz. sundried tomatoes, drained and finely chopped**
- 7 1/2 oz. artichoke hearts, drained and finely chopped**
- 2 Tbsp. pesto**
- 6-9 lasagna noodles**

- 1.** Heat oven to 350 F. In large bowl, combine Alfredo sauce, chicken, garlic and herbs. In a separate bowl, combine three cheeses. In a third bowl, combine tomatoes, artichokes and pesto.
- 2.** Cover bottom of 9x11-inch pan with chicken Alfredo mixture. Add a layer of noodles over the mixture. Add a layer of the tomato mixture. Lastly, add a layer of the cheeses. Repeat these steps a second time, preferably ending with cheese mixture on top.
- 3.** Cover with foil. Bake for 35 minutes. Remove foil; bake for 10 more minutes.
- 4.** Remove lasagna from oven and replace foil. Let stand for 10 minutes before serving.

Bacon Cheddar Meat Loaf

- 3/4 cup barbecue sauce (your favorite type)**
- 2 Tbsp. brown sugar**
- 1 tsp. Dijon mustard**
- 2 lbs. ground round beef**
- 1 pkg. Lipton Onion Soup Mix**
- 1 egg**
- 1 1/4 cups corn flakes**
- 6 dashes Worcestershire sauce**
- 1-2 pinches sea salt and freshly ground pepper**
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese**
- 4 strips bacon, uncooked**
- Jalapeño jelly, to taste**

- 1.** Heat oven to 350 F. In a small bowl, combine barbeque sauce, sugar and mustard. In a large bowl, combine the meat, soup mix, egg, corn flakes, Worcestershire, salt and pepper. Mix in the barbeque mixture using your hands.
- 2.** Spread half of meat mixture into a loaf pan. Spread cheese over the top of the meat; top with remaining meat mixture. Lay bacon across the top.
- 3.** Bake for 45 minutes; check to see if it is done. (May take 1 hour.) Remove and set the bacon aside. Tilt the loaf pan to remove the grease. Let stand for 5-10 minutes. Crumble bacon. Top with jelly and bacon.

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

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