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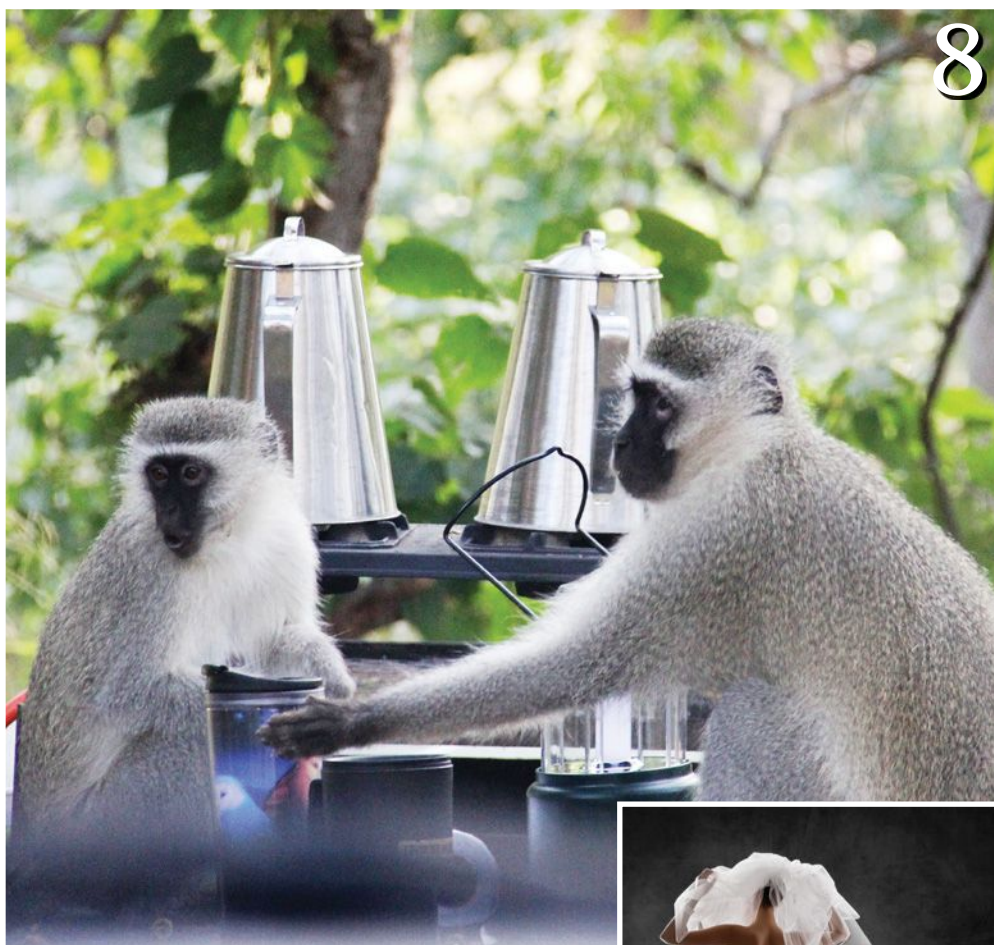


Lacy Mosley enjoys nothing better than being outside in nature.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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Editor's Note

Hello, Midlothian!

"If I could be anything in the world I would want to be a teardrop because I would be born in your eyes, live on your cheeks, and die on your lips." The author of this phrase is unknown, but its essence is typical of the phraseology that is necessary for a proper Valentine's Day greeting. This is the day where the roses can't be too red, the chocolate too rich nor the card too hot with burning love.

The origin of all of this excess reportedly began in ancient Rome. However, it was not called Valentine's Day until a priest named Valentine sent a note to his beloved and signed it "From your Valentine." Romantics still exist and celebrate this day. On February 14, honor your love with all the starry-eyed passion you can summon. You're in good company!

Betty

Betty Tryon
MidlothianNOW Editor
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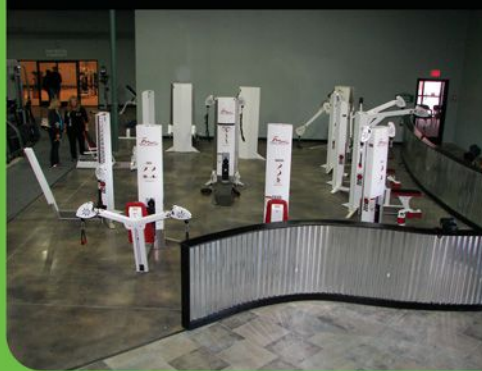
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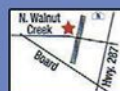


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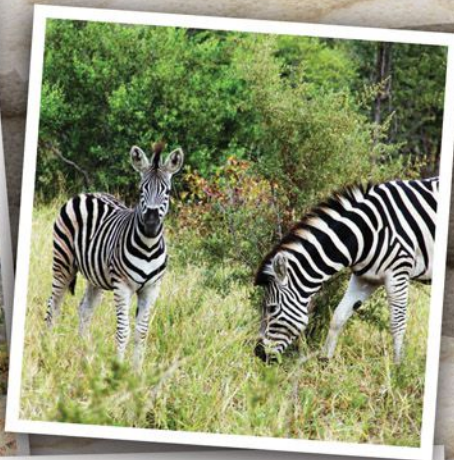
WELCOME TO THE JUNGLE

— By Betty Tryon

During playtime, you can usually find little girls cuddling baby dolls or accessorizing Barbie. Not Lacy Mosley. When her mother wanted to locate her, she headed straight to the backyard. After some searching, Lacy would be discovered, busily looking under rocks, examining leaves, gathering intelligence under fallen logs and just having a wonderful time all by herself. Lacy followed her passion for wildlife throughout her life, and this past December she graduated from Tarleton State University in Stephenville, with a degree in wildlife management.

“Growing up, outdoors was a huge part of my life. Being outside was me. Being in a classroom was *not* me,” Lacy laughed. “Being outside when I was younger, I would keep myself entertained by building forts or looking for different animals. My dad would always take me fishing. The day he put a pole in my hand, I fell in love with the sport! With four sisters, I guess I’m like the son.”

Lacy would often feel the sting of being different from the other little girls and admitted that she didn’t have a lot of friends





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“Growing up, outdoors was a huge part of my life. Being outside was me. Being in a classroom was not me.”

until middle school. “Animals, dogs in general and cows have always been my friends,” she shared. “They were more reliable to me. I was always afraid or worried that I was different. But, I’ve learned that it’s OK to be that way, and I honestly didn’t realize that it was OK until I got into college. If you talk to any of my elementary teachers, they would tell you I was always talking about anything but schoolwork.” Being outside gives Lacy peace of mind and allows her the space to breathe. Classroom environments make her feel enclosed within the four walls. “I’m a very adventurous spirit,” she admitted.

That adventurous spirit took Lacy to South Africa for five weeks while in college. She camped and backpacked across the country for a wildlife internship that was part of her major at Tarleton. “I wanted to go to South Africa

for the education and the opportunity to promote Tarleton and Navarro," she said. "We worked with safari animals and got an idea of not only the people and the culture, but how they use the wildlife to their advantage and how important it is." Lacy stayed the longest in Kruger National Park. At the camping sites there are condominiums for people who don't want to go camping, although the latter sites are surrounded with electric fences. But it's still bone chilling to fall asleep at night with hyenas or lions making noises

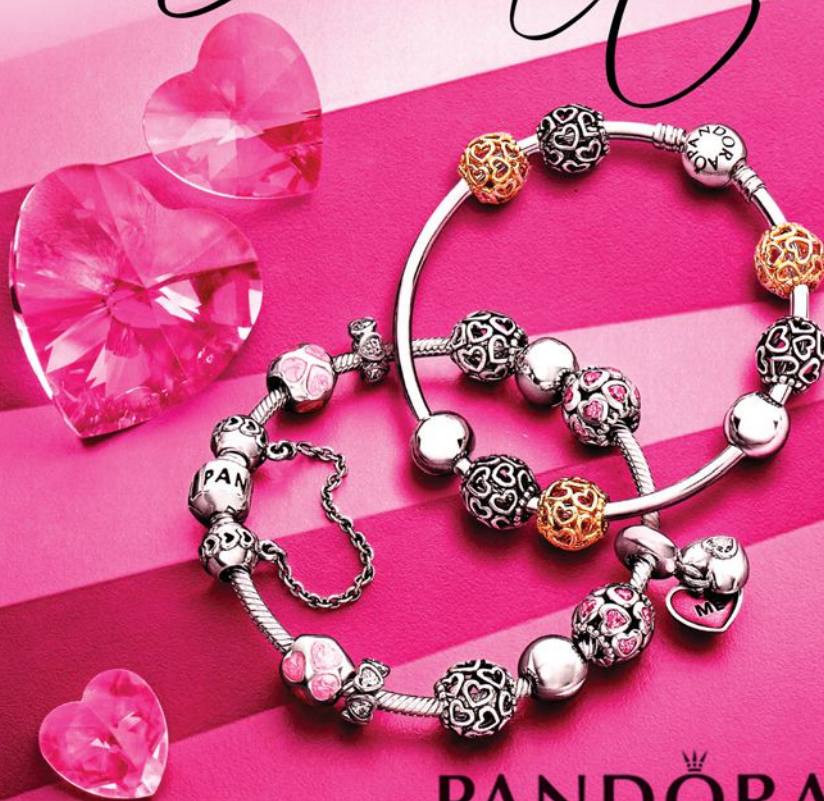


right outside the tent. "They watch you through that fence," she recalled, "and it's like they are plotting!"

The scenery and acoustics around the camp were not all frightening. The baby elephants that passed by their camp were amazing to watch. There were unusual activities inside camp, also. Somehow, baboons got in and raided their personal belongings. By the time the invasion was over, the thieves made off with loot guaranteed to provide the apes with hours of amusement. They took the professor's underwear, his EpiPen and a field camera. Somewhere in South Africa some baboon is wearing the professor's underwear on its head. And, if they figure out the EpiPen and camera, the animals are experiencing extra energy from the adrenaline and capturing all the hilarity on film.

From Kruger Park, Lacy went to Swaziland, a landlocked country in the southern part of Africa, for a week-and-a-half and stayed at a game reservation. Texas A&M and Tarleton man a research station there. "There is no fencing," Lacy described. "You are in there with the animals. We did some guinea fowl research. We also did small rodent

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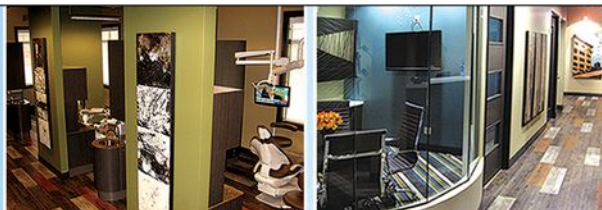


trappings, like field mice, to see what the big game birds, like hawks and eagles, have to prey on and what small carnivore animals have to prey on. We also studied the vegetation for cover and for grazing. When I say wildlife, it's from the soil to the plants to the animals. It's all an endless circle." When Lacy and others were doing field research, they would look over and there might be a giraffe. But the only thing Lacy was truly afraid of was hippopotamuses. The Limpopo River that was populated by hippos was not even a football field away. "They graze at night and are very territorial," she observed. "Hippopotamuses are the No. 1 cause of death from animals in South Africa."

Hippos were not the only animals of concern for the campers. On one of the group's walks through the area, they were stalked by hyenas. Once they saw a leopard standing in a tree. These walks were not only exciting to take, they were educational as Lacy and her companions learned to track animals. In pursuing



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rhinoceroses, they were able to determine by the track and dung whether the animal was a white or black Rhino. The group was very fortunate to see at least one black Rhino, which are extremely rare and endangered. "We were really sad when we heard on the radio that two were killed and poached the next day," Lacy said.

Lacy, an accomplished photographer, has many unique and fascinating photos from her journey. One photo tells the story of two vervet monkeys who came into the campsite and rummaged through their things. One stuck his hand in a pot of coffee and burned it. Jerking his hand out, he went to nurse it at the end of the bench. Lacy captured the image of a fellow monkey offering the injured one some coffee for consolation.

"National Geographic would be my one dream job!" Lacy enthused. "I would want to be on the travel team and be a wildlife photographer. I want to just see the world, put it through a lens and show people that there is more than their backyard. I know there are so many kids right now who think college isn't for them." But she wants them to know it can be. She insists they should embrace their differences, even though it took her a long time to come to the same conclusion. "No, I was not good inside classrooms," she confessed. "My classrooms were outside doing field studies."

Along the way, Lacy has inspired an admirer. Her 10-year-old sister, Liddy, now wants to be a geologist and wildlife photographer. She hopes to travel to Africa and has added Australia to her bucket list.

Lacy has gone from a young girl who had difficulty finding her way in school to excelling far beyond the classroom. She wants to assure kids who feel a little outside the box that there's a world of opportunity waiting for them and that it's OK to be different. **NOW**



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You're ENGAGED... Now What?

— By Shannon Pfaff



He finally popped the question, and you said, “Yes!” Now it is time to plan your wedding. When you sit down to plan, you may be overwhelmed trying to figure out where to begin. Several things should be considered: the date, the location, the cost, etc. But one of the major tasks to think about is finding the dress. No matter how long the engagement, it is never too early to start shopping for your wedding attire.

One of the first things to decide regarding the perfect dress is budget. A good rule is to budget 10 percent of the overall wedding fund for the dress, accessories and alterations. Wedding dresses can cost anywhere from \$400-\$4,000 depending on the store and brand. Larger bridal stores will have less expensive dresses, whereas the bridal salons will have pricier designer dresses with handmade details. If your wish is to have a custom-made dress, expect to pay more. When you decide what your dress budget will be, factor in the cost of alterations. Alterations for your dress can cost \$100 or more. Remember, most dresses don't come with a bustle, so you will have to pay an alteration fee.



Another thing to consider when shopping for a wedding dress, is your body type. Some brides make the mistake of planning to shop for a dress when they have lost weight or ordering a dress in the size they plan to be for the wedding. It is best to shop early and purchase a dress based on your current size. You can always have the dress altered later if you lose weight. Body type is more than just dress size, you need to think about your body shape as well. Are you shaped more like an hourglass? A triangle-or pear-shape? An apple-shape? Or a rectangle-shape? Knowing your shape can help you determine which dresses will accentuate your best features and mask the ones you like least.

Shopping for your dress may be stressful, but it should be fun and exciting as well. Consider bringing a close friend or family member with you while you shop. Second opinions can help when you are trying to narrow down your




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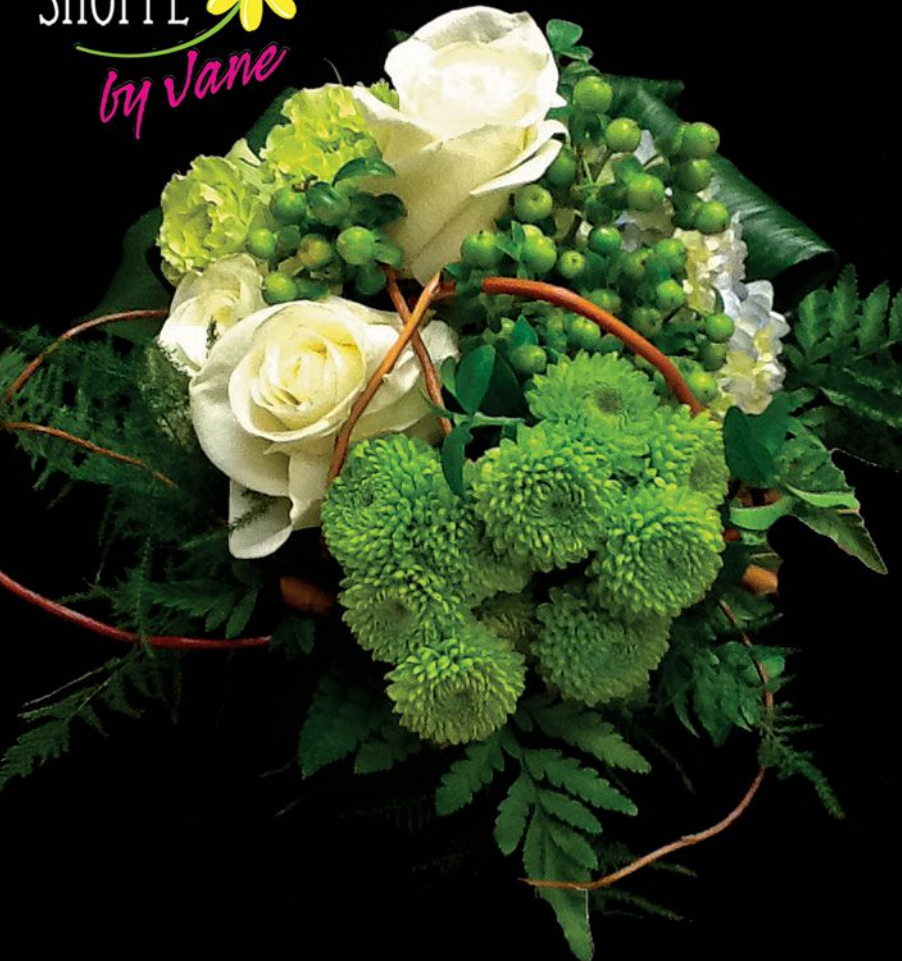
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choices. Then there is the added bonus of having someone who isn't working on commission tell you how beautiful you are. Of course, you can bring more than one person with you while you browse, but don't feel obligated to bring everyone who expresses a desire to go with you.





Whatever dress you decide to wear, make sure you love it. Begin shopping early to allow time to look at multiple stores with plenty of time for shipping your dress. With many bridal store options available, you are sure to find the dress that fits your budget and your body type perfectly. Don't be afraid to go back and try a dress on two or three times. After all, you will be gracing the aisle, and you'll want to feel good about how you look.

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Shopping for your dress should be fun and exciting.

For more help with planning your wedding, here is a timeline to keep you on track:

12 Months Before:

- Select a date.
- Think about the wedding type — formal or informal.
- Set a budget.
- Hire a wedding planner, if desired.
- Reserve ceremony and reception sites.
- Select attendants.
- Select and book caterers, photographers, videographers, florists, musicians, etc.
- Begin compiling guest list.
- Shop for wedding dress and accessories.
- Start planning honeymoon.

Nine Months Before:

- Order your dress and accessories.
- Create a wedding website.

Six Months Before:

- Send save-the-date cards.
- Sign contracts and place deposits for wedding services.
- Reserve rental equipment — tables, chairs, tents, etc.
- Meet with officiant to go over ceremony details.
- Choose attendants' attire.
- Order wedding cake.
- Book honeymoon.
- Begin planning rehearsal.



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Four Months Before:

- Schedule fitting.
- Schedule appointments for hair and makeup.
- Register for gifts.
- Purchase or reserve groom's attire.
- Book accommodations for wedding night.
- Choose and order favors.
- Choose gifts for wedding party.
- Order invitations, announcements and stationary.
- Arrange transportation for the wedding day.
- Compile a music list for your ceremony/reception.

Two Months Before:

- Go over final details with service providers — menu, flowers, etc.
- Address invitations and announcements.
- Make a list of readings for the ceremony.
- Complete the order of the ceremony and reception.
- Print programs.
- Purchase wedding rings.
- Send event schedule to the vendors.
- Shop for ceremony/reception accessories, such as a cake knife and the guest book.
- Schedule rehearsal and rehearsal dinner.

Six Weeks Before:

- Mail invitations.
- Discuss wedding photo ideas with photographer and videographer.
- Send announcement to newspaper.
- Prepare all of the necessary name change documents.

Four Weeks Before:

- Obtain marriage license.
- Make final payments to vendors.
- Arrange for final dress fitting.
- Confirm times with all vendors, including hair and makeup.
- Assign seating for reception.



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Two Weeks Before:

- Notify caterer or reception venue of the guest count.
- Address announcements.

One Week Before:

- Pick up wedding rings.
- Confirm details with all service providers, including arrival times.
- Verify that all attendants have picked up their formalwear.
- Delegate wedding day tasks — transporting gifts, bustling dress etc.
- Make sure attendants know when to arrive for the rehearsal, rehearsal dinner and wedding.
- Pick up your dress.
- Set aside final payments for vendors.
- Pack for honeymoon.
- Advise caterer of changes to guest count.

The Day Before:

- Review seating arrangements with the ushers.
- Make sure groom's attire is picked up.
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The Wedding Day:

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THE EBENEZER HOUSE

— By Zachary R. Urquhart

The beauty of some houses is only apparent with a full tour and knowledge of the background that makes the home what it is. But for some homes, all a person needs to do is quickly pass it to be taken aback by its beauty and splendor. Peter and Shirley Houghton have such a place — a stunning white house on a cul-de-sac that funnels guests to their doorstep.

Peter is from Liverpool, England, and Shirley grew up in New Jersey. In early adulthood, Shirley's best friend was a young woman from England, who just happened to be Peter's cousin, June. After June became a Christian in the late 1960s, Peter began visiting her in America from time to time. June introduced Peter and Shirley, and they dated

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across the ocean for several years. "When I first met Peter, I really felt God telling me I would marry him," Shirley said. Three years of courtship later, Peter and Shirley decided to get married.

After spending time in both countries, Peter and Shirley agreed they should live in America. In getting ready for his move, Peter began taking a Dallas newspaper. "I was a wholesale lumber broker across continents, and one day I found a job advertised in the paper," Peter recalled. Upon coming to the states, Peter found and was offered a job in his unique, yet fluctuating field. "I started in '76 and worked at the same place for three decades, even though the company changed five times while I was there."

Ready to begin their lives as a new family, Peter and Shirley moved to DeSoto in 1976, and they still look back at that transition as a huge blessing. "I had no money, and Peter couldn't get American credit cards," Shirley explained. "But they gave him a home loan simply on his word." It took three days for them to drive from New Jersey to DeSoto, but after that trip they never looked back. Peter and Shirley have five kids:

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Buddy, Colleen, Reenie, Eileen and Sean, all of whom are married with children of their own. The Houghtons have 14 grandkids and six great-grandchildren, and as Shirley shared, "One grandson lives in L.A., but out of everyone else, the farthest away anyone lives is Waco."

Several years ago, Peter and Shirley began thinking about retirement and where they would live. "While we were in DeSoto, we spent summers, sometimes, in England and thought we might do



that when we retired," Peter said. "But we decided to stay close for all of the kids and their families." In 2004, Peter and Shirley built their picturesque home in the AsheMore neighborhood on the border of Midlothian and Ovilla.

Approaching the home, two things stick out immediately, the landscape and the unique exterior material. Shirley bragged on her husband: "Peter is an amazing gardener. He grows prize Bearded Irises, so our home is his hobby." On their one-acre lot, Peter has

several gardens that take up about half of the overall land. "He is out there pretty much every morning for a few hours," she added.

Along with the beautiful gardens, the white-painted home has what first looks like siding but is actually a somewhat unique facade. "Working in the industry, I decided to use Hardie Board for the exterior of the home," Peter pointed out. "It is 80 percent concrete, mixed with wood for a great finished product." The material repels water and leads to a



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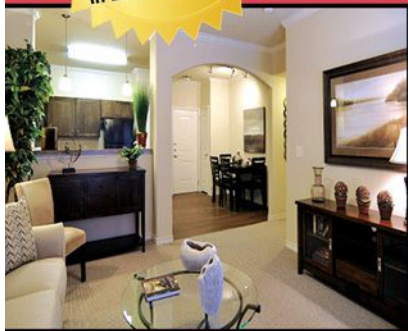
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more climate-controlled interior. Because of this, Peter and Shirley's house is considered a "green" home. Sandwiching the house are two enormous porches, each with ample room for sitting to visit, or just enjoying the beautiful scenery surrounding the property.

Inside, Peter and Shirley have rooms reflecting much about their lives. In the cavernous living room, Peter has decorated most of the space with things from his English heritage. One of the highlights is his Toby mug collection. "It has taken a long time to get some of those collections," he said. "We have Henry VIII and all six wives. That was a tough one." Peter's English keepsakes are combined with oversized furniture, making the living room a perfect place for relaxing and reminiscing, and Peter has plenty of stories from his life, both in England and since moving here.

One of the most impressive rooms in the house is the kitchen. With so many family members nearby, Peter and Shirley built an enormous kitchen with two stoves, two sinks and plenty of seating. The '50s diner-style, mixed with current technology, gives the room a unique feel that seamlessly blends two time periods. "We have what we call a retro kitchen," Peter shared. "We also have a collection of Depression glass."

Next to their spacious kitchen, there is a quaint formal dining room that includes several collections. "Along with our china, there is a collection of Hull pottery from the '30s to '50s," Shirley mentioned. "The Queen Victoria chest isn't necessarily unique. I just loved it because of the irises."



Upstairs, there are two kids' rooms, each with its specific color. "When the kids are here, the boys don't let the girls in the blue room, and the girls don't let the boys in the pink room," Peter declared. The girls' room is, as they described, Pepto-Bismol pink and full of frills and lace. The boys' blue room has a nautical theme seen in almost every aspect of design and decor.

The minstrel gallery loft, leading upstairs, flows into a large playroom. "We have all of the toys in here, and there is plenty of room, no matter how many of the kids are here," Shirley observed.

When they decided 10 years ago to build in Midlothian and stay close to their family, Peter and Shirley thought they were making the right call. Having now lived here for a decade, they know for sure it was the perfect choice. "We used to travel a little, but now even when we go somewhere we stay closer because of the kids," Peter admitted. "Those little ones keep us ticking."

These days Peter and Shirley spend their time around the house, spoiling their grandkids and great-grandkids and swimming. "I swim almost every day," Shirley said, "and Peter is my coach. He makes sure I have my towels and things, and he comes with me to the pool." Peter and Shirley are also proud members of the Cowboy Church, a sign of the faith that brought them together in the first place. The house itself is a daily reminder of that faith. "In England, they name their houses," Shirley said. "Well, we call this the Ebenezer House, which means 'without God's help, it would not be possible.'" **NOW**

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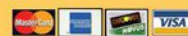
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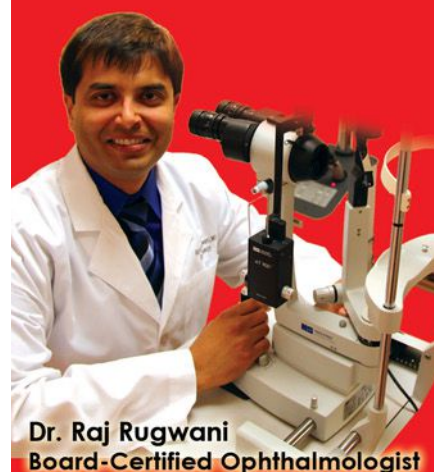
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Step Lively

At All About Dance students bop and twirl their troubles away.

— By Betty Tryon

In a kindergarten class a few decades ago, the teacher asked the question, “What do you want to be when you grow up?” The majority of the class raised their hands and shouted, “I want to be a lawyer!” Or, “I want to be a doctor!” But a little girl named Lindsey raised her hand and said, “I want to be a dance teacher!” Now Lindsey Underwood, owner of All About Dance, is living her dream.

“I’ve been in dance my entire life,” she shared. “I started when I was 2 years old and fell in love with it.” It has been a joyful, fulfilling path to where Lindsey is today. She worked at a dance studio in Rockwall and taught all the classes. Moving to Midlothian in 2006 from Cedar Hill, she opened her own studio and named it All About Dance.

Lindsey has big plans for her business. Originally housed on 9th St., she quickly outgrew the building and is now in the process of constructing a new one with two full-size dance floors, a dressing area, larger waiting room for parents and a video system, so they can watch their children on monitors. Lindsey will also have a dancewear store to sell shoes and clothes not only for her customers but for Pantherettes, Cub Dancers and Wildcat dancers. “The store will be available for them to come to us, if they want to,” Lindsay explained. “The closest place to buy dancewear is in Arlington.” Lindsey has parents’ night out once a month where the kids can come for a few hours to dance, play games, eat pizza and watch a movie. She also rents her studio for birthday parties and other events.

Business **NOW**

"At the studio, we start at age 2 with ballet and go all the way to adult," Lindsay said. "My oldest student this year is 64 years old. We offer tap, jazz, ballet, hip-hop, drill team prep, 'mommy and me' classes, cheer, tumble and Adaptive Dance class. Our Adaptive Dance class is for special-needs students. We now have 12 students from age 11 through 26. That class is probably the most rewarding. They can come in here and can freely express themselves and not be judged for who they are or how they move. They do what they can, and whatever that is, it is great."

"I try to teach my students about the passion in dancing by telling them the story behind the dance and then try to get them to feel the emotion the artist in the song is portraying."

One thing All About Dance focuses on is keeping girls little and innocent as long as possible. "I'm very picky about the music I do," Lindsay admitted. "Our music has no foul language, drug references or anything like that. When it comes to costume choices, I think about every individual in that class. I think about body type, shape, size and if the costume will look age appropriate."

Lindsey wants to instill in her students the same love for dancing that she has. "Dancing is what I do to get away," she said. "It is my happy place. Anytime I'm frustrated I can just dance or think about dancing. Some people write poetry or stories. I express myself through dancing. I try to teach my students about the passion in dancing by telling them the story behind the dance and then try to get them to feel the emotion the artist in the song is portraying. As long as they love it, then my job is done!" **NOW**



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Piper, McCrae, Megan, Stephania and Tori enjoy food and fellowship during an FBC Midlothian small group bonfire outing.



Head Start students from LaRue Miller Elementary make butter during the annual Super Outrageous Science Day.



Frank Seale Middle School band, cheerleaders, cub dancers and cub mascot help kick off J.R. Irvin's Spirit Day for Red Ribbon Week.



The Walnut Grove cross country teams finish up their regular season in preparation for the district meet.



Finn Wilson, of Midlothian, stops by to check out Marty Logan's boat at the Chris Kyle fundraiser.



Midlothian's Lucab Frye catches a keeper, but throws her back!



Abbie, Mendi and Mikah Melton, of Midlothian, show off a few of their favorite books while shopping.



The third graders at J.R. Irvin Elementary apply their knowledge of economics as they participate in Market Day.



Mrs. Mayer's fourth grade class at Mt. Peak did their community service project at Renfro Healthcare Center.

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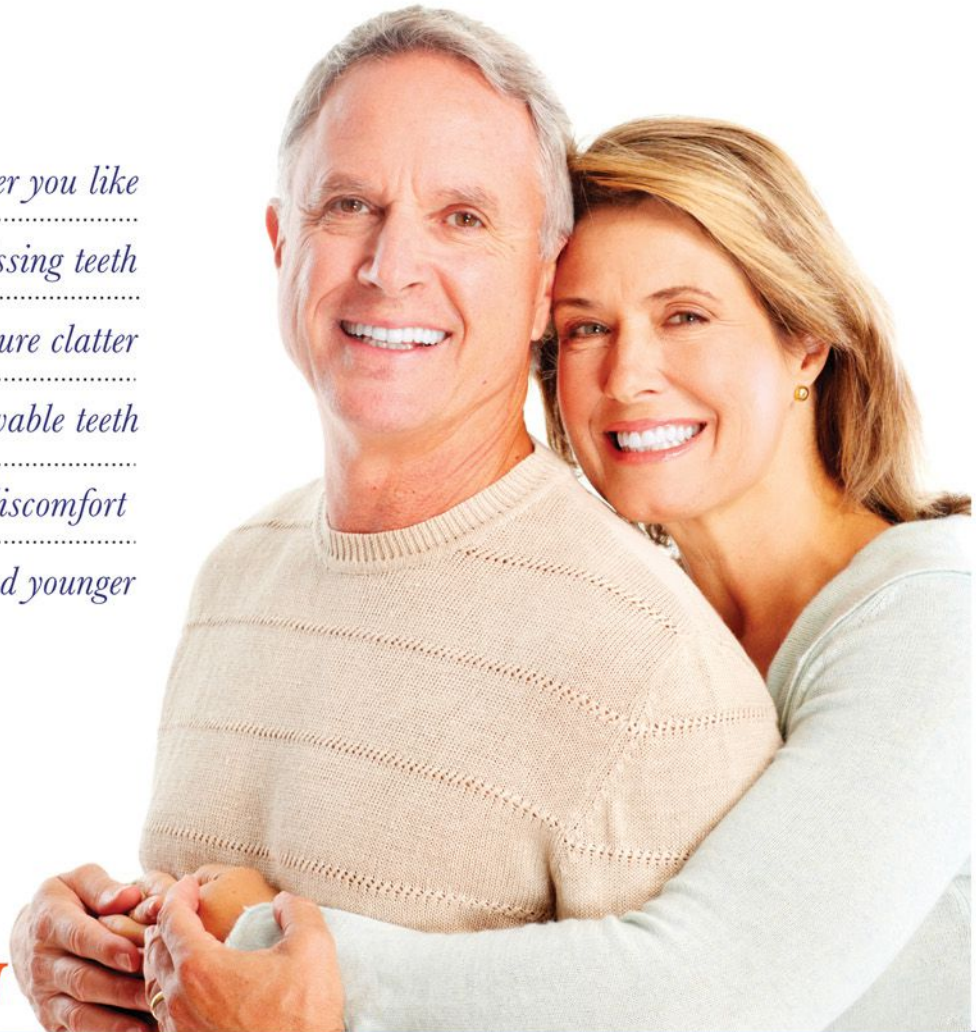
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Not Just a Guy Thing

Heart Disease Remains Top Killer of American Women

Each October, as the leaves turn yellow and orange, a lot of other things seem to turn pink in recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. While these efforts have certainly been a huge boost to increasing breast cancer awareness, leading to better prevention and higher survival rates, many women may not realize that they are far more likely to fall victim to heart disease than breast cancer.

Heart disease is often still thought of as a "man's disease." But in reality, it's also the top killer of American women. In fact, women are six times more likely to die from heart disease than they are breast cancer, and by the time a woman reaches 80, her risk of dying from heart disease actually surpasses that of a man.

February is National Heart Month. Between this national recognition and Valentine's Day, what better time to focus on matters of women's hearts?

Putting Her Heart in Jeopardy

Many of the risk factors for heart disease are the same in both men and women, including:

- Family history
- Hypertension

- Diabetes
- Obesity
- High cholesterol
- High triglycerides

However, there are some risk factors either unique to women, or that play a much bigger role in the development of heart disease in women than in men. For instance, smoking seems to be a bigger risk factor in women than in men. Other examples include:

Menopause — After menopause, the reduced levels of estrogen rapidly accelerates a woman's risk of heart disease, especially in blood vessels.

High Stress — High stress can put women at risk for broken heart syndrome, a life-threatening condition unique to women that mimics a heart attack.

Depression and Metabolic Syndrome — While men's hearts can be affected by depression and metabolic syndrome (belly fat combined with high blood pressure, high triglycerides and high blood sugar), these conditions seem to take a greater toll on women's hearts.

Symptoms for Women

Both men and women often report heart disease's

classic symptom: angina. Angina is pain radiating from the chest to the neck, arms and legs. But women with heart disease frequently suffer from less obvious symptoms as well:

- Incredible fatigue
- Abdominal discomfort
- Upper back pain
- Swelling in the ankles

Heart Guard

There are many things women can do to keep heart healthy.

- Take time out to relax, get a massage or otherwise reduce stress.
- Stop smoking.
- Eat a low-fat diet.
- Exercise regularly.
- Get a heart screening if there is a family history of the disease. **NOW**

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February 4

Midlothian Area Historical Society meetings: 7:00 p.m., Midlothian Civic Center 224 S. 11th St. For more information, contact Beverly Sink at beverlysink@sbcglobal.net or (469) 628-1907.

February 6

2014 Daddy/Daughter Dance & Dinner: 6:00-9:00 p.m., Waxahachie Civic Center, 2000 Civic Center Ln. Tickets: \$15 per person.

February 11

Sky Ranch Summer Camp Preview Night: 7:00-8:00 p.m., Canterbury Episcopal School, 1708 N. Westmoreland Rd., DeSoto. Learn about the Christian day camp to be held in June. Free preview for parents and children, ages 5-11. RSVP at CharlesE@TheCanterburySchool.org

February 13

Asperger's Syndrome Community of Ellis County meeting: 7:00 p.m., 208 S. 4th St. Support group for adults with or living with Asperger's Syndrome. For more information call (972) 268-4572.

February 14 — 16

Waxahachie Community Theatre announces the dinner theatre performances of *The Foreigner*: **Friday** and **Saturday**, 6:30 p.m.; dinner, 7:30 p.m. show; **Sunday**, 1:30 lunch; 2:30 show, Park Meadows Baptist Church, 3350 N. Hwy 77. Tickets are \$25 per person and prepaid reservations are required by **Feb. 12**. Seating is limited, so order tickets early. Contact the WCT at (972) 646-1050 or email wct.texas@gmail.com for more information.

February 18

Social Media Presentation and Breakfast: 8:00-9:30 a.m., Midlothian Conference Center, Contact (972) 723-8600 for more information or go to info@midlothianchamber.org.

February 28, March 1

Midlothian Got Talent: 7:00 p.m., Midlothian High School Auditorium.

March 1

Waxahachie Symphony Association presents Stephen Nielson, international Steinway artist: 7:00 p.m., Central Presbyterian Church, 402 N. College St., Waxahachie. Contact Sherry at (972) 938-1181 for more information.

March 15

"Halloween in March" Saturday Social Dance, a free children's inclusion dance hosted by For Maddie's Sake, Inc.: 6:00-8:00 p.m., Midlothian Civic Center, 224 S 11th St. Come in your favorite costume or come as you are. Adult supervision required. No drop offs. Donations welcome. Volunteers appreciated. Visit www.formaddiesake.com or call Donna Dixon at (972) 571-6904.

March 22

2014 Experience Midlothian Community Expo Featuring A Taste of Midlothian: 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center, 1 Community Circle. Deadline for sponsorship participation is **Feb. 14**. Experience Midlothian provides you visibility within the community as well as the opportunity to network with area businesses who participate. Presenting sponsor is Brookshire's. Contact Midlothian Chamber of Commerce at (972) 723-8600.

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



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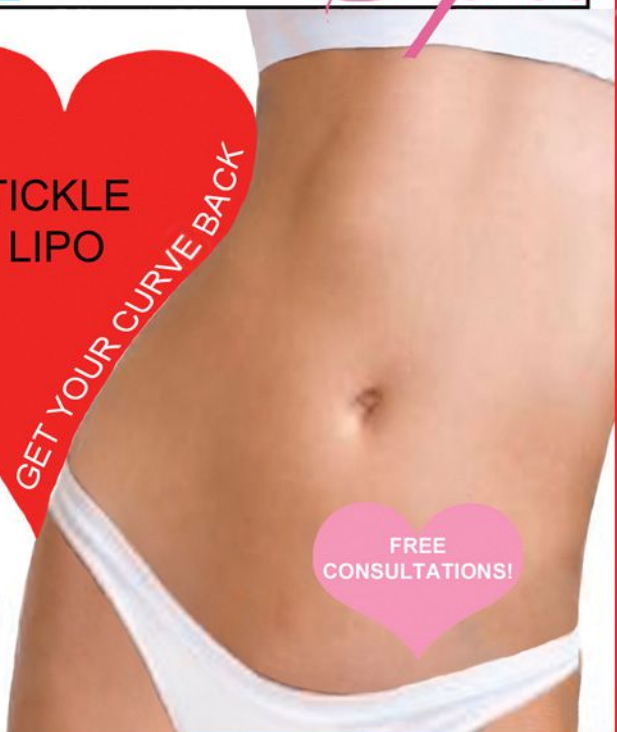
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In The Kitchen With Amy Wiens

— By Betty Tryon

Amy Wiens enjoys cooking for the most selfless reason — to give to others. “It’s a way to share with others, whether at a church social or when we provide a meal to a family during an illness or death,” she said. Sometimes, her cooking is just the perfect gift for someone. “One of my favorite times,” Amy recalled, “was when I provided my child’s teacher with a few meals throughout the year.” Amy was once a full-time educator and knows how time consuming it can be.

Amy prefers to use fresh ingredients as she prepares meals for her family. Her cooking is influenced by her parents, who were reared on farms, and by her husband’s parents, who have Mennonite and German backgrounds. **NOW**

Bierock Casserole

2 tubes crescent rolls
1 1/2 lbs. hamburger
1/2 cup onion, chopped
1 small head cabbage
1 10.75-oz. can mushroom soup
Salt and pepper, to taste

1. Press one tube of crescent rolls into a greased 9x13-inch pan.
2. Brown hamburger and onion; drain.
3. Add thinly sliced cabbage and mushroom soup; cook until cabbage is tender.
4. Season with salt and pepper. Place mixture over crescent rolls. Lay second tube of rolls on top. Bake for 30 minutes at 350 F.

Grandma Hatter’s Butter Custard Pie

1 cup sugar
1/2 cup flour
1/8 tsp. salt

1 cup milk
1 tsp. vanilla
1 unbaked pie shell
Butter, to taste

1. Mix first 5 ingredients together; pour into unbaked pie shell.
2. Dot with butter.
3. Bake at 300-325 F, until set.

Buttermilk Cornbread

1 Tbsp. Crisco
1 1/2 cups corn meal
3 Tbsp. flour
1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. soda
2 cups buttermilk
1 egg

1. Melt Crisco in cast-iron skillet.
2. Mix all ingredients well; pour into oven-heated, skillet with Crisco on the bottom.
3. Bake for 20-25 minutes at 450 F.

Cornbread Dressing

2 cups celery, chopped
1 cup onion, chopped
1/2 to 3/4 cup butter
12 cups buttermilk cornbread crumbs
1 Tbsp. salt
1/2 tsp. pepper
2-3 raw eggs (can use hard-boiled if you prefer)
1 1/2 to 2 cups chicken broth

1. Sauté celery and onion in butter.
2. Add to crumbled cornbread. Season to your liking with salt and pepper. Add raw eggs and broth. You want it a little soupy looking. Bake 1 hour or more at 350 F, stirring every 15 minutes.

All-Bran Rolls/Monkey Bread

2 yeast cakes or dry yeast
1 cup lukewarm water
3 tsp. sugar
1 cup Kellogg’s All-Bran cereal
3/4 cup Crisco
1 scant cup of sugar
1 cup boiling water
2 eggs, well-beaten
2 tsp. salt
6 cups flour, or enough to make dough stiff
1/2 stick melted butter (Use more as needed for dipping.)

1. Dissolve yeast in water; add 3 tsp. sugar.
2. In a separate bowl, mix together cereal, Crisco and scant cup of sugar. Pour boiling water over mixture.
3. Allow cereal mixture to cool; add to yeast mixture.
4. In a separate bowl, mix eggs, salt and flour. With a fork, stir flour mixture into cereal/yeast mixture.
5. Put dough in a greased bowl; cover and refrigerate until chilled.
6. Roll out dough on floured mat. For rolls: Cut circles, dip in melted butter and then fold top one-half over bottom half. For pull apart monkey bread: Cut rolled dough into 1-inch strips, both directions, creating small diamond-shaped pieces. Dip each diamond into melted butter, overlapping pieces into pan of choice (Bundt, tube, aluminum, gelatin ice-ring molds).
7. Let cut dough rise 1 1/2 to 2 hours. Bake at 350 F, until cooked through and lightly browned.

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