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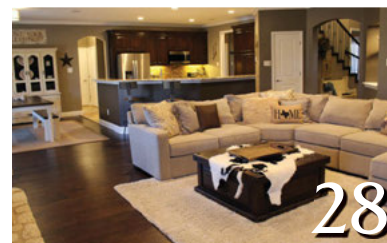
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ON THE COVER



Stefani McDade gives others 21 ways to do what they love.

Photo by Dorothy Timmerman.

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Editor's Note

Greetings Midlothian!

If you made it through the recent holidays, congratulate yourself, take a deep breath and get ready for another one—Valentine's Day. While those other holidays are filled with warm and loving family gatherings, Valentine's Day is not. It is about love. So much uncertainty goes into this day, such as: *Is this the day he asks me to marry him? I wonder if I can give my guy flowers? I wonder if I can get away with giving my girl only flowers?* With all the uncertainty, here's the basic requirement for Valentine's Day: flowers, chocolate and a syrupy card. I, myself, am looking forward to the grand trifecta.

However, I'm not forgetting those who may feel left out. Valentine's Day is not just for lovers. It's for love. For a start, take time to remember that elderly widow who sits alone on her porch, the awkward teenager who tends to be a loner, the single mom who spends all her time working and caring for her kids. They would love a valentine, too!

Fill someone's day with love!

Betty

Betty Tryon
MidlothianNOW Editor
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The rumblings inside her were growing louder and more persistent. Stefani McDade, after 17 years in the field of education and advancing to become principal, decided she wanted to do something different. So, she took the bold step to walk away from her career to essentially nothing but a hope and a dream. "When I walked away from the principalship, I didn't know what direction I was going to take," she admitted. "I just knew it would be different. My children were 1 and 2 years old at the time, and I was very adamant about creating a future that would allow me to be in their lives, so I made the decision to walk away."

— By Betty Tryon

SIGNIFICANCE OVER SUCCES

Stefani's colleagues thought she was crazy! They were full of questions such as, "What if it doesn't work?" Stefani's response was, "What if it does? What if I forfeit an opportunity to do something amazing just because I'm afraid to take a risk?" There are people who work hard and spend their whole life working to provide for the family they love so much, and they end up giving the people who mean the most to them the least of their time. I didn't want that to be the legacy I left for my children."

Stefani still needed to earn an income, so she went to work in the marketing division of an insurance company that serviced schools. She was able to work at home, but



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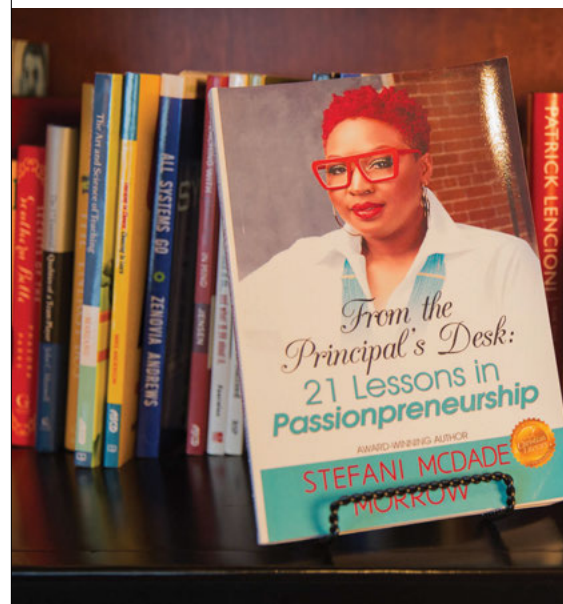


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after 15 months, the company folded and she wondered if she should go back to what was familiar or chart a new course. “I made the decision to move ahead with self-reflection, evaluating what genius or brilliance I had that I could market and package and serve the world with,” she stated.

Stefani used most of 2014 for self-reflection and journaling, and the lessons learned provided the content for her first book, *From the Principal's Desk: 21 Lessons in Passionpreneurship*. “I didn’t set out to become an entrepreneur,” she shared, “but found myself in that place. A name I’ve given myself is I’m a self-proclaimed passionpreneur. People would ask me how I had the courage to leave like I was some hero, so I decided to put the experience in a book.

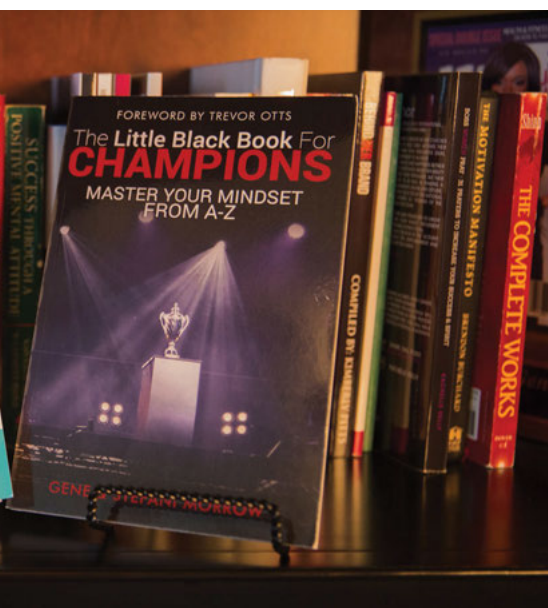


There are a lot of people in my same position who want to make a leap or transition, and they feel as if they have to choose between their job and their dream. I say I can't work harder on my job than on my dream. What most of us do is give ourselves to our jobs but don't bother to build our own legacy, something that can outlive or outlast us in terms of the contribution we make."

Stefani tackles the hard question of how to reach that point of freedom with the demands of family, home and a job. She believes it is hindered by a lack of inspiration. "It generally is not that one is too tired, but that he or she is not sufficiently inspired. Once you find the thing that inspires you and gives your life a sense of meaning, purpose and value, you'll find the energy and the time. When you find the thing that gives you that jolt, it is very hard to turn off. Once clarity of purpose is realized, then everything you do begins the movement in that direction."

The beginning of her movement to change was not something that happened overnight. She always had those inner stirrings of not being satisfied where she was in life. "For me it's a growth mechanism," she explained. "It's not an unrest or uneasiness. It's just to keep going and keep pushing. Although I've been able to move through the system and be promoted and work with mostly incredible people and learned a lot, I always knew it wasn't a place I would be in the long term. I wasn't overly concerned with matriculating through the system — you know, in moving ahead and being promoted."

Even though Stefani wasn't sure what was for her, part of her awakening was to become clear about where she did not belong or no



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longer fit. "I now realize that the 17 years I spent in the schools was the training ground for the work I do now," she acknowledged. "It served its purpose." Even though Stefani feels as if she is in a good place now, she still feels as if she's finding her own way because she is forever learning and will never get to a place where she says she's arrived. "I've made significant strides in three years, and I think one of the greatest ways to maintain momentum is to set new challenges and goals for myself."

Stefani now does educational consulting and public speaking. She and her husband are certified life coaches and trainers. It supports the legacy she wants to leave her kids. It gives her a flexible schedule and doesn't demand 10- to 12-hour days. "We call ourselves transformational architects because we help people design transformative experiences for their lives," she stated. Due to her previous career in education, she knows and understands the issues there. "I felt that I could serve in such a way to create value for people. I'm working in schools and with principals and teachers. Doing personal development for teachers is really an untapped market. Everyone scrambles to teach the content but what about building the person? If you build the person they can possibly deliver the content in a more impactful way. I'm very grateful to be in this space and to be able to engage in

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this work.” In finding her place in the world, Stefani discovered she loves public speaking. “The stage is magic for me now! With my first paid speaking conference, I told my husband I could not believe they just paid me for this. I was hooked.”

While encouraging people to live their dreams, Stefani never wants to give the impression she is pushing others to give up their day jobs to find happiness. “It might be an option, but people want to feel like what they do matters,” she said. “They want what they do to have an impact. People want significance over success and are searching for meaning and value because they want to leave their mark on the earth. Everyone’s path is different. The journey to create a life of significance is different for every person. There is no ‘one way.’” **NOW**

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THE SIC HER

— By Betty Tryon

By the age of 12, Ashton began writing her own songs. As an artist she not only writes, she sings and plays instruments. When watching the Disney Channel, Ashton would see Hanna Montana and Selena Gomez and think what they were doing was fun. "I always knew I wanted to sing," she said. "When I first started, I wanted to sing pop music. Then I changed my style and started to sing country music but realized



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that was definitely not me. I switched over to acoustic folk, and that's the music I have out now. I also had a really short phase when I was writing a lot of jazzy type stuff."

Although Ashton had changed her style of singing several times, she still had not settled on a genre that suited her. That was not surprising considering her young age. Now at the age of 17, she feels comfortable in her own skin with what she is doing, at least for the present time. "Some say a musician changes styles five or six times before settling on one," she informed. "I feel like I'm in my element right now as a musician. About a year ago, I started singing an acoustic soul/R&B type of thing. I really like that style because I think it is one of the best ways to express emotion because it has a lot of soul and power behind it. It comes so easy from the heart, and it's really great because you can feel the emotion in the lyrics even if you don't hear the music."

The years between age 11 and 17 have been busy for the young musician. Along with singing, Ashton plays the piano, ukulele and guitar. By going to online school, her time is more flexible for her true passion, and she can be available for additional training from instructors in the DFW area in the areas of vocals, instruments and songwriting.



"I used to have a singer-songwriter teacher who taught me the basics of how to put a song together," she explained. "He helped me realize that I can organize my thoughts, and I'm now writing songs completely by myself. Even if I don't finish a song I'm writing, I can always keep the new lyrics to use in other songs later on."

Ashton's first song released on iTunes in 2014 is titled "Break the Distance." She categorized it as a singer-songwriter song because it's heavily based on the lyrics with a catchy melody. It's about an online relationship she has with a friend in Belgium whom she's never met face-to-face. "It's the lyrics that speak to people," she said. "There really hasn't been a song about this. I wrote it because I think everybody needs a song for something they feel in their life. There are so many songs that talk about a boyfriend or girlfriend that lives far away but, there isn't a song that's about a person you've never met before, but you talk to every day and you video chat with them all the time. The response to the song was crazy! I'm grateful that people can relate to it, because that's what I think music is about." Even though the



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song was written two years ago, Ashton still gets messages from people talking about how much the song means to them. "It's nice to look back on that song and know it was written for my friend and also for so many other people," she added.

"The song is used in over 1,100 videos on YouTube and has been downloaded in 120 countries," Cathy said. "So it's definitely a song that speaks to anyone who has a relationship long distance."

Another achievement for Ashton is her first music video, called "Explain it at the Coffee Shop." She wanted to pull in more kids her age to the appreciation of art culture and art history. She explains the video as "a cutesy, romantic song on the ukulele. In writing it, I imagined I was on a date with this guy at the art museum and we saw something we liked. Then we explained it at the coffee shop. As soon as I wrote the song, I thought of what the music video would be. It was really cool when I filmed it, because then I got to see it come to life. It's getting a good response."

Ashton has written over 30 songs. In the process of writing one song, she frequently gets an idea for another. She tries to be authentic and genuine in her music, stating she writes music for the teenager people don't see. "Music is great because when you're angry you

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can express it through music and not through hateful words," she considered. "Everyone writes music differently. I get it that some people have a certain audience they are geared toward, but for me, I want to make sure my music can be listened to by everyone."

Ashton enjoys reading poetry and listening to other artists for motivation and inspiration when writing songs and often uses the voice app on her phone where she records all of her music. "When writing songs, I freestyle random lyrics over guitar chords," she said. "I'll listen to it, and then write it down. Writing songs is a hit-and-miss sometimes. There are days I'll want to write, but it won't come out. I can't force it, because then the song won't sound good. It has to come naturally to me."

As Ashton contemplates her future, there is one thing she is sure about. Music will be in her future wherever she goes. "It doesn't matter where it takes me," she declared. "I just want to be involved in music — maybe as a producer or songwriter for other singers. Maybe I'll be in the theater? I don't know. I just know that I want to make music for people to hear. I don't care if it's selling out a world tour or playing small shows. Wherever it takes me is where I'm supposed to be." **NOW**

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A House WITH A Purpose

— By Zachary R. Urquhart

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Every house has a story, but some homes just have something more! When Brandon and Lanae Humbler found their dream home, it did not take long for them to see it as more than just four walls and a roof. With a story that will likely include growing their family for many years to come, Brandon and Lanae are living in a house with a purpose.



Brandon moved from Louisiana to Texas as a child. He graduated from Mansfield High School before heading to college in San Marcos. "I graduated when Texas State University was still Southwest Texas State. I still call it that," he laughed. Brandon came back to this area and went to work for an aircraft manufacturer. He has worked as a marketing analyst for Bell Helicopter for the last decade.

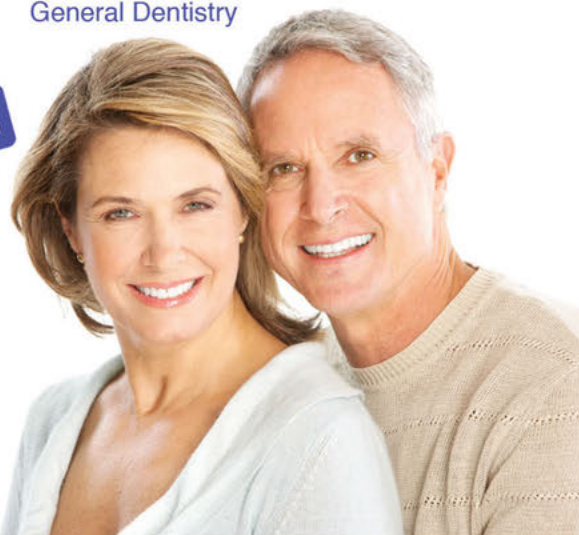
Lanae grew up and graduated from high school in Conroe before heading to Texas State University. "I was actually the second class to graduate when the university changed names, so we give each other a hard time about that," she joked. After college, she moved to the area without much of a plan. "My best friend lived in Carrollton, so I moved there," she recalled. "I 'knew' I was supposed to live in Dallas, I just didn't know why." After she had been in the area for two weeks, mutual friends introduced her to Brandon. "We both went to Texas State, but we didn't meet until hanging out with friends in Carrollton," she described. They began dating immediately in 2005, and they were married in the summer of 2008.



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Brandon and Lanae lived in Arlington during their first few years together. “We actually bought my parents’ old house from them,” he explained. While they lived there, they put in a good amount of work to remodel their home. “When she first mentioned wanting to move, I immediately thought about all the work we had done to our place,” Brandon detailed. While living in Arlington, they had their first child, Tristan, who is a typical, playful and rambunctious 3-year-old.

After seven years in Brandon’s childhood home, the family was just starting to feel settled when Lanae accidentally ended up with a listing for

a house that turned out to be exactly what they needed. “Here was this huge house on an acre. The man selling it had five older kids, so it was a mess,” she exclaimed. “I told the owner at the listing appointment that if I didn’t sell it, I’d buy it!” Brandon was reluctant at first, but Lanae had a plan.

“When I first walked in, I saw the work it needed, and I hated it,” Brandon admitted. “We had just finished so much at the home we were living in, and I didn’t want to start over.” Brandon relented to Lanae’s request to pray about the home. After a couple of months on the market, the house was still available, so they put



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their own home up for sale. “We sold it super-fast, and the people let us stay there for a few months after we closed, while we gutted and remodeled our new house.” They liked the schools in Midlothian, so finding a house that was ideal for their long-term plans seemed almost providential as they made their move.

Brandon and Lanae moved while Tristan was a baby. They plan on having one more child, but they have bigger plans for their family, and the house! “I’ve always wanted to adopt,” Lanae explained. Over the course of their life together, her desire to adopt has grown to include an openness to becoming a foster family. “Everything has just fallen into place,” she explained. “We found this great big house, and it would be perfect to fill it with lots of kiddos.”

Their home offers a large front patio with several adult- and kid-sized rocking chairs. Inside, the reclaimed wood and multicolor scheme in the home office shows off Lanae’s style. “I love decorating,” she explained. Their kitchen features rich grays and dark browns, with granite countertops overlooking a spacious living and breakfast room.

The master bedroom has dark, chamber-style furniture, wrapped in dark gray walls offset with white trim. They have a refaced fireplace, and just above the mantel is a huge cow skull that they purchased at a local lawn and garden shop. “The owners thought they would never sell that thing,” Lanae said.

The largest project was the master bathroom. “We loved the size, but it needed work,” Brandon admitted. They installed two countertop sinks, framed mirrors, rebuilt the shower and put in an acrylic slipper tub in the space leading to Lanae’s favorite part of the house.

“I loved this house the first time I visited because it had a huge closet,”

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she said. And if there were any doubts, finding out the home's origin resolved them for her without question. "I really like the space in the laundry room, there are hookups for two washers and dryers," Lanae remarked. "It turns out, the first people who lived here had it built as a foster home for special needs children. That's when I knew it was the perfect place for the family we hope to have." With a large family in mind, the house was built to include six total bedrooms.

Tristan's room has gray walls, and is decorated with animals, which he loves. They currently have three additional rooms being used as guest bedrooms. With so much space upstairs, Brandon and Lanae changed the second master bedroom upstairs into a media room. They added decking to the floor to accommodate theater seating. Dark purple walls with glitter, a large projection screen and movie posters give the space the perfect feel for anything from family movie night to an action movie marathon.

The second floor also features a game room complete with pool table and sports decor. "It's funny. I don't care about sports, but I really like collecting autographs," Lanae laughed. The room has balls and jerseys signed by numerous players, many of whom Lanae does not even recognize. In addition to the theater and game room, they have converted the third car garage into a complete home gym. "There is not an inch of this home that has not been completely remodeled," Brandon said.

A large backyard was a must-have for this growing family. Multiple seating areas and a pergola surround an elegant swimming pool. Past the patio and pool, the home's position on the lot allows for a sizable yard. With plenty of space inside and out, filling their home with family and love have allowed Brandon and Lanae to ensure their home is more than just a house. **NOW**

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A Perfect Proposal

— By Carolyn Wills

Somewhere between the magic of falling in love and the union of “I do” comes the all-important question of, “Will you marry me?” It’s the marriage proposal — that thrilling, risky, sometimes awkward hope — asked and answered throughout time. Today, the occasion of becoming engaged remains a special, celebrated passage. In fact, the world is “awhirl” with ideas, options and resources on how to plan the perfect moment.

Wedding-related websites, magazines, consultants, bloggers, florists, jewelers and churches have long provided in-depth information. And, now, specialized companies actually design marriage proposal packages.

There’s even a National Marriage Proposal Day. Who knew? It happens on March 20, coinciding with the first day of spring and the Vernal Equinox. The year it was first observed is unknown, but its origin is credited to ... wait for it ... a fellow Texan named John Michael O’Loughlin.

Has, then, the occasion of getting engaged been elevated to a new art form? In recent years, the important question has been delivered via flash mobs, Skyping, skywriting, texts, Facebook posts, Twitter, YouTube videos, live TV and stadium Jumbotrons, and all while new digital and virtual options keep emerging. According to statistics, though, there’s still something to say about good ole tradition.

A 2013 Engagement Ring and Jewelry survey commissioned by The Knot, a multiplatform wedding resource, suggested that tradition still prevails when it comes to the engaging moment. Overwhelmingly, 91 percent of suitors say they planned their



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proposal, while 47 percent planned it meticulously. Nearly 60 percent "popped" the question privately (between the beloveds), while the remaining 40 percent went public. A whopping 88 percent actually used the words, "Will you marry me?" And 81 percent proposed on bended knee.

Additionally, a 2014 Associated Press-WE tv Poll found that while 75 percent of Americans would be fine with the woman proposing, only about 5 percent of currently married couples polled confirmed that that's what actually happened. Also, according to David's Bridal's "What's on Brides' Minds" survey, brides strongly prefer personal, low-key proposals to elaborate public displays.

While it's comforting to learn that tradition has held value, and it's exciting to hear about new options, ultimately and importantly, isn't the unique, meaningful and memorable meeting of two loving people all that really matters? Creating the marriage proposal that adds a happy chapter to a romance and a forever story for the couple and their family throughout the years, starts with two people knowing each other, understanding they are moving in the same direction and, then, paying attention to what is special to both parties, as in the following scenarios:



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Sweet and Simple:

Amy, a mother in Burleson, Texas, with two teenagers, had been single for six years. "I asked God, if it was in His plan, to bring someone into my life," she said with a smile. Not long after, church friends introduced her to Billy. "His wife had passed away," she shared. "By the second date, we 'knew' we were right for each other." For alone time, they would take daily walks and, on one of those walks, they happened onto a new street waiting for houses to be built. It was the beginnings of a new neighborhood and, as it happened, the perfect moment for Billy to propose. "We met in August and married in October," Amy added. "I wasn't expecting a proposal on our walk, but it couldn't have been more perfect."

She Asked/He Answered:

Then, there's Kate and Aaron in Wickenburg, Arizona, who had been

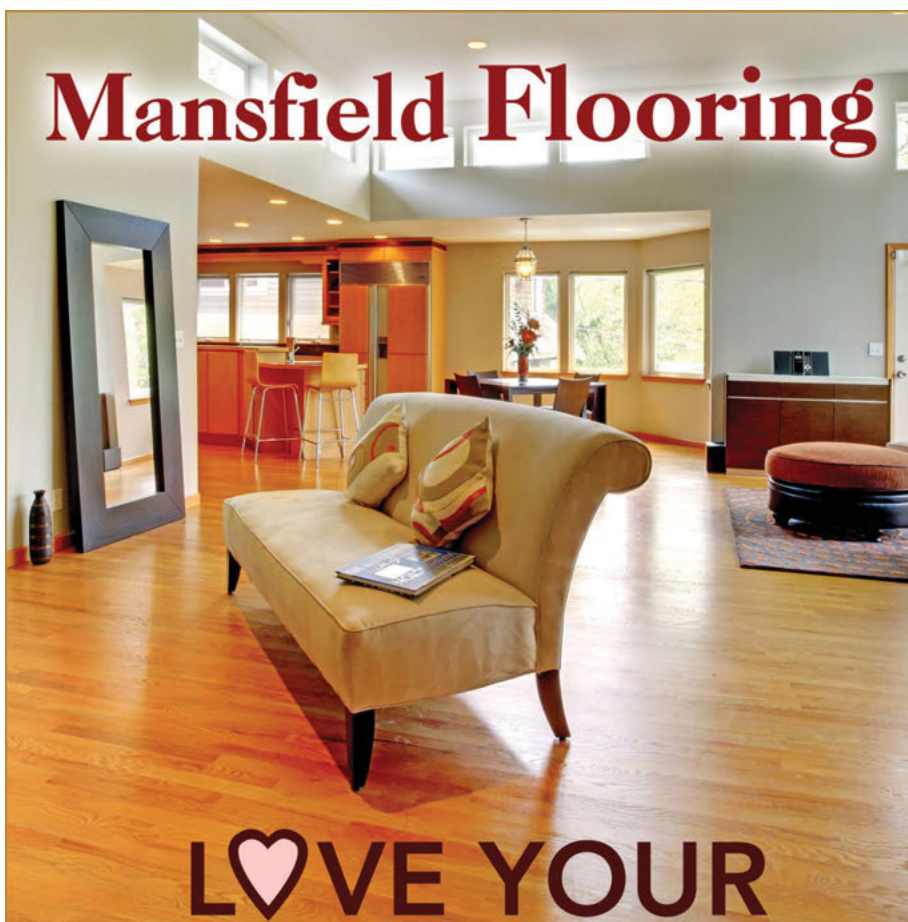


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together for 13 years. "I told him it was time he proposed," Kate said with a grin. She added that it should happen by Christmas Eve, and she wanted to be surprised. As time passed, she would announce that Christmas had come and gone and she was fine with things as they were. Fast forward to April, her birthday and an invitation from Aaron for a morning ride at the ranch, where he is head wrangler. As they headed into the desert, he sidled his horse next to hers. "I could get off and kneel?" he smiled. For Kate, it was a complete surprise.



Bell's Tweet:

Kristen Bell is proof that it works for the woman to propose. Disney's *Frozen* star asked her longtime boyfriend, Dax Shepard, for his hand in marriage via a Tweet!

Two Best Ever Proposals:

Excerpts from "Best Wedding Proposals Ever" by Kate Store, *New York Post*, March 20, 2015 (National Proposal Day):

A prospective groom devoted a year to preparing his proposal. While vacationing in Aruba with his beloved, friends and family, he surprised her with a video of him proposing 365 times.

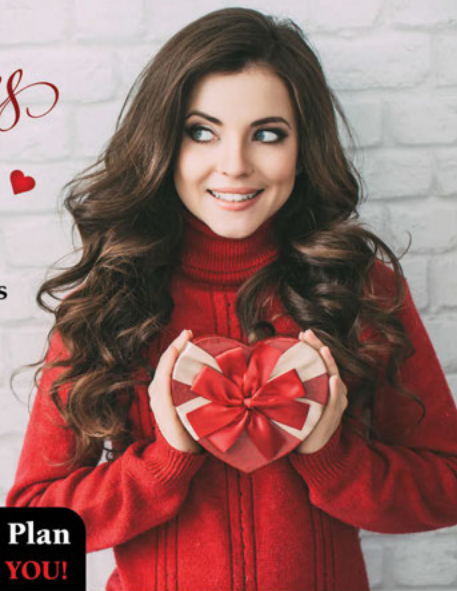
A surprised prospective bride was greeted by a town car after work and taken to a Los Angeles theater where her boyfriend had arranged for their love story to be performed as a musical. For the final act, he appeared on stage, kneeling toward her with a beautiful engagement ring and a hopeful, "Will you marry me?"

A Royal Proposal:

According to Britain's *Daily Mail Reporter* (November 2010), Prince William proposed to Kate Middleton in an isolated log cabin (no electricity and

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accessible only by air or horseback) while on a stopover during a Kenyan holiday. Kate reportedly said, "It was a wonderful 24 hours ... so romantic!"

Clearly, the prospective couple who respect each other's dreams and boundaries down to the tiniest of shared interests, favorite colors, flowers, foods, music, humor and traditions can take heart. When the moment of the all-important question arrives, the question will already be answered. **NOW**

Sources:

1. National Marriage Proposal Day: www.dates.about/traveling-the-world.com/special-holidays/national-proposal-day
2. The Knot 2013 Engagement Ring and Jewelry Survey Infographic by Hearts on Fire: www.heartsonfire.com
3. 2014 Associated Press and WE tv Poll: ap-gfcpoll.com/uncategorized/our-latest-poll-3
4. David's Bridal's "What's on Brides' Minds" survey: "Most Brides Don't Want An Elaborate Marriage Proposal" www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/02/06/marriage-proposals
5. *New York Post*, March 20, 2015: "Best Wedding Proposals Ever," Kate Store
6. *Daily Mail Reporter*, November 2010: www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1331191/Prince-William-proposed-Kate-Middleton-remote-Kenyan-hut

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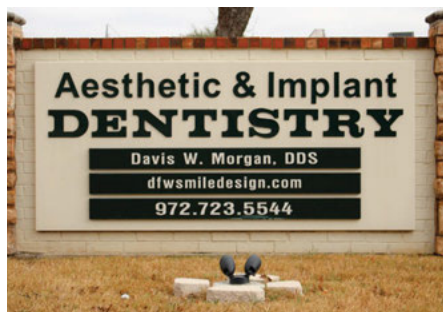
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Smile in Design

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— By Betty Tryon

It is no fun to go through life always covering your mouth with your hand when you smile or smiling with your lips closed. Everyone wants to flash a brilliant smile. Dr. Davis Morgan of Aesthetic & Implant Dentistry can make that happen. As someone with an eye for art, his focus on cosmetic dentistry was a natural fit for his general dentistry practice. “I did well in my dental education with anything that involved hand/eye skills,” he said. His training in this area continues today as he actively pursues many continuing education or CE classes at some of the most respected dental education centers. The Texas State Board of Dental Examiners only requires 12 CE hours, but Dr. Morgan earns over 50 almost every year.

Dr. Morgan became interested in placing his own implants when a patient presented with a less-than-ideal front tooth implant. This improper placement made it difficult to restore. He determined that he was best suited to place his own implants. “I knew if I was going to do implant dentistry, I needed to be well trained,” he stated. “So I did a one-year preceptorship program at The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. I also did a two-year surgical and prosthetics program with Dr. Carl Misch. Dr. Misch is the most published and recognized leader in implant dentistry worldwide.”

As a general dentist with an emphasis on aesthetic and implant dentistry, Dr. Morgan added dental 3D imaging in 2011 as another

diagnostic tool. "Because of all the dental implants, I wanted to see a three-dimensional view of that area before we placed the implant," he explained. "It has become part of our comprehensive exam because of its diagnostic view from ear to ear."

Another development that excites Dr. Morgan relates to cosmetic dentistry. He recently completed a course on minimal prep veneers. This is a relatively new procedure whereby extremely thin porcelain veneers are placed without having to prepare the teeth with a drill. "It's a big deal to not have to drill into someone's healthy tooth structure," he exclaimed. "We still have to use the drill for smoothing, shaping and polishing, but we don't cut on the teeth. With the micro-thin veneer, we're not damaging the teeth in any way, making this a good option for any age of patient wanting a more beautiful smile."

Another great benefit to his patients is the single visit crown or veneer. "Because we have the CAD/CAM technology of the CEREC machine onsite, we are able to complete some procedures in one appointment. Patients really love this," he stated. "An added benefit is that there are no messy impressions needed. The patient leaves with their new crown."

Although his emphasis is on cosmetic dentistry, his office covers all general dentistry needs. He also makes traditional dentures, as well as implant dentures. The team at Aesthetic & Implant Dentistry works well as a cohesive unit. Several employees are longtime loyalists, with his hygienist, Dee Jones, celebrating 20 years of employment this year.

In serving community and humanity, he often chooses to do free dentistry after much contemplation and discussion with staff members. Dr. Morgan works with Texas Mission of Mercy, which is sponsored through the Texas Dental Association. This past year, he went to Honduras with Baptist Medical and Dental Mission International to serve the people there.

Because of his relationship with the Midlothian community, he stays active with the Chamber. His immense experience works for his patients, as he helps them to have the best smile possible. **NOW**

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Cash the Eagle and Erika Middlebrooks help Texas Trust Credit Union celebrate at their grand opening.



Jennifer Haridos, Laurie Reynolds, Mysti Boehler and Sofia Graham with their canine friends at the Streets to Sheets adoption day.



These Miller kindergarten students built a tall tower during MakerSpace time.



John C. Capps, with the NRA, displays one of many auction items for their fundraiser event.



Rick Anderson, manager of Tractor Supply, accepts his Midlothian Chamber plaque from Cammy Jackson.



Panther Reader Jerreth Sterns, #4 quarterback, enjoys reading to 2nd grade classes at Mt. Peak.

Gingivitis and Your Heart

— By Betty Tryon, BSN

Having a pretty smile is not the only reason for good dental health. For the last 20 years, researchers have been investigating the possibility that poor dental health may be a potential link to heart disease. Although there is a definite connection, the premise could not be definitively proven. One thing the researchers were clear about was good dental health does not prevent heart disease. Because the connection seems strong, it does warrant a deeper look into the possibility of a link and a more focused and consistent attitude toward care in maintaining good oral health.

Gingivitis or inflammation of the gums is a condition that should be treated as soon as possible. This could be a reason or link that may predispose one toward an increased risk of developing the complications of heart disease. Inflammation is a sign of gum disease. The bacteria that resides on the gums gets into the circulatory system and sets up the scenario for heart disease and other complications.

Normally, your mouth is full of many different types of bacteria that belong there. It's a certain type of pathogenic bacteria that finds its way into your mouth that will cause decay and gum inflammation. These types of bacteria will break down the barrier healthy gums provide and allow harmful bacteria to enter the circulatory system. Wherever the bacteria land and begin to colonize, they set up the process of inflammation that damage tissue, including blood vessels in

the heart. This disease process can not only predispose one to cardiac disease, it can also make existing heart problems worse. If you have a heart condition, you should check with your cardiologist to determine if antibiotics are necessary before any dental procedures.

More research is needed before anything definitive can be proven. The findings, so far, are very suggestive of a link, so good dental health is vital. Any gum disease or signs of a disease, such as sore and swollen gums, should be treated. Daily dental care is important in keeping the mouth as clean as possible. Your toothbrush can harbor a multitude of germs and should be rinsed thoroughly after each use and stored upright to air dry in between brushings. Replace it after three months or when the bristles start to turn up. Daily flossing is necessary to clean in between teeth. It's important to have regular dental checkups to make sure your mouth and all its parts are healthy. Keeping a clean, fresh mouth makes sense both aesthetically and medically. **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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DivorceCare: 6:30-8:00 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 800 S. 9th St. For more information, call (972) 723-3993.

February 2

6th Annual Daddy Daughter Dance "Be Our Guest": 6:00-9:00 p.m., Waxahachie Civic Center. Food, fun, dancing. Tickets \$15 per person can be purchased at the Civic Center during business hours. Tickets will **NOT** be available the night of the dance.

February 2 — April 12

AARP Tax Assistance: 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., **Thursdays** only, Sims Library, 515 Main St., Waxahachie. Call (972) 937-2671 for additional information on what documents to bring.

February 3

FirstLook's Pregnancy Medical Clinic TX Life Investors' Celebration banquet: 6:00 p.m., check in; 7:00 p.m. elegant dinner, Waxahachie Civic Center. \$50 per person or \$400 per table of 8, Visit txlifeinvestors.org or call (972) 938-7900 for more details.

February 3, 10, 17, 24

Preschool Storytime: 11:00 a.m., A.H.

Meadows Public Library, 923 S. 9th St. Story, craft and snack provided. For more information, call (972) 775-3417.

February 10 — 12

Waxahachie Community Theatre's Dessert Theater: *Smoke on the Mountain*: **Friday** and **Saturday**, 7:30 p.m.; **Sunday**, 2:30 p.m., Living Hope Church of the Nazarene, Waxahachie. Tickets are \$15 each and can be purchased online through the theater's website at www.waxahachiecommunitytheatre.com. A service charge will be added to the price of each ticket purchased on line. Preschool children are free with a paid adult admission. Tickets are also available at the offices of Dr. Jerry Ellis, DDS, in Midlothian. Contact the WCT box office at (972) 646-1050 or email wct.texas@gmail.com for more information.

February 17

Ellis County Amateur Radio Club: 7:30 p.m., Ellis County Sheriff's Office Training Center (County Farm), 2272 FM 878, Waxahachie. For more information, visit www.wd5ddh.org.

February 18

Midlothian Opry Country Music Show: Midlothian Civic Center, 224 S. 11th

St. Goodtimers Band. \$5 admission. Call Davonna at (214) 676-1706 or go to Facebook Midlothian Opry for more details.

February 24

Midlothian Chamber of Commerce Inaugural Clayshoot: registration: 8:00 a.m.; shoot time: 9:00 a.m.; Alpine Shooting Range, 5482 Shelby Rd., Fort Worth. Deadline is **February 22**. For more information, call (972) -723-8600 or visit info@midlothianchamber.org.

February 25

Mayor's Winter Walk: 10:00 a.m., Mockingbird Nature Park. Nature activity stations along a one-mile trail hosted by Indian Trail Master Naturalists Chapter. Enjoy goodie bags and healthy snacks while supplies last. Rainout date is **March 4**. Online registration at midlothian.tx.us/winterwalk or call (972) 775-7177 for more information.

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In the Kitchen With Cindy Miller

— By Betty Tryon

Cindy Miller and her mother learned early on how to coexist in the kitchen. Her mom disliked cooking, and Cindy hated cleaning the kitchen. So they switched roles. “I became the family cook, and she became the dishwasher,” Cindy said. “I had an after-school job working at Minyard’s Grocery Store, and it became an adventure to create meals out of the sales items each week.”

Cindy had the opportunity to create more diverse meals when she joined the Marine Corps and lived in many different areas of the country. “I believe God gave each of us a talent, and mine is cooking. It is a natural love I can’t explain. I enjoy pleasing my family and friends.” **NOW**

Meatball Soup

Serves 4 and can be doubled easily.

Meatballs:

1 lb. ground meat (beef, turkey, pork or combination)

1 tsp. salt

1 tsp. pepper

1 tsp. garlic, granulated

1/2 tsp. oregano

2 tsp. grape seed oil

Soup:

6 cups beef broth (divided use)

1 tsp. oregano

1 large bay leaf

2 tsp. garlic, granulated

1 cup raw carrots, cut into 1/4-inch discs

1 cup raw zucchini, cut into 1/2-inch half moons

1/2 lb. thin spaghetti or angel hair pasta

2 medium tomatoes, petite diced (can substitute canned)

1. For meatballs: Combine all ingredients except oil and form into 1-inch meatballs; brown in heavy skillet with oil. Don’t worry about cooking all the way through. Transfer to large stock pot.

2. For soup: While skillet is hot, pour in about 1/2 to 3/4 cup of broth to help scrape up browned bits. Pour all broth, including the broth with the browned bits, into the stock pot; add spices.

3. Add carrots and bring to a boil. Boil for 5 minutes then turn down to medium heat.

4. Add zucchini; continue cooking for about 3-5 minutes. Remove bay leaf.

5. Add pasta. Cook just until pasta softens, usually 1 or 2 minutes longer than package instructions, since soup is not at a rolling boil.

6. Add tomatoes; remove from heat. Serve with crusty French bread or cornbread.

Pozole

Serves 6.

1 2.5- to 3-lb. pork butt roast

1 28-oz. can enchilada sauce (No MSG.)

2 15-oz. cans white hominy

2-3 cans water (use enchilada sauce can)

1/2 cup cilantro, chopped

1/2 cup onion, chopped

1 cup cabbage, finely shredded

Flour tortillas

1. In a Crock-Pot, combine the first 4 ingredients. Cook on medium for 6-8 hours.

2. After cooking, shred roast into medium-sized chunks. Serve in bowls with cilantro, onion and cabbage as garnishes and with tortillas.

Pulled Pork

Serves 6.

2 tsp. paprika

2 tsp. garlic, granulated

1/2 tsp. cumin

3 Tbsp. light brown sugar (divided use)

Salt and pepper, to taste

3 lbs. pork butt roast

2 tsp. grape seed oil (can substitute vegetable or canola oil)

1/2 large onion, sliced

3-4 cups water

1/2 cup apple cider vinegar

1 Tbsp. prepared mustard

3 Tbsp. tomato paste

1. Combine paprika, garlic, cumin, 2 Tbsp. brown sugar, salt and pepper. Rub over roast; marinate overnight in the refrigerator.

2. The next morning, using a cast-iron skillet, brown the roast on all sides in oil over medium-high heat. Transfer to a Crock-Pot and cover with onion.

3. Pour water into the hot skillet and scrape up the browned bits; set aside.

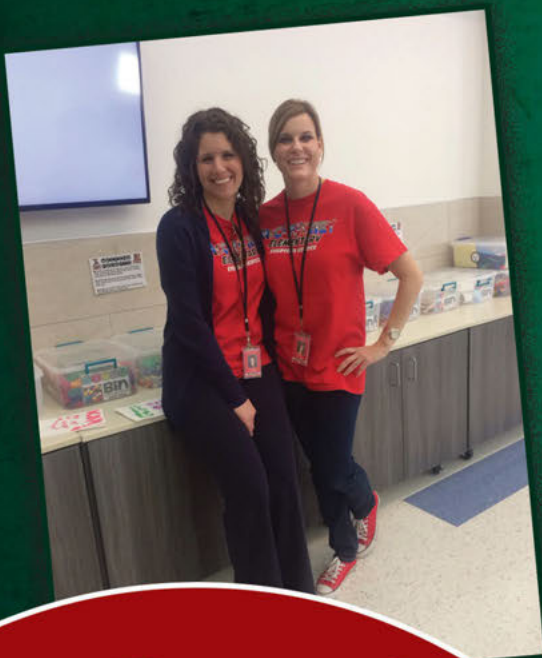
4. Mix together remaining Tbsp. brown sugar, vinegar, mustard and tomato paste. Add water with browned bits to vinegar mixture and pour over roast.

5. Cook on medium heat for 6-8 hours. Remove roast from Crock-Pot and pull apart. Serve on buns with reserved juices for dipping. Leftovers are great in tacos or on nachos.

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