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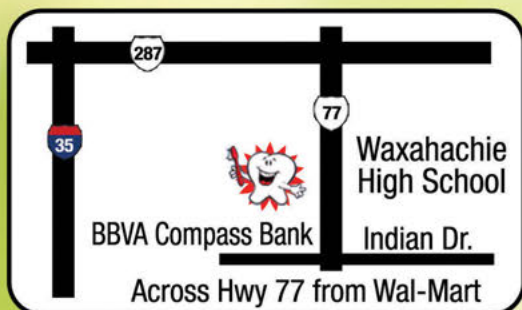
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CONTENTS

- 8** **WINNING AT LIFE**
The Tomahawks use sports to teach important lessons.
- 16** **A BLANK SLATE**
At Home With Daryl and Jill Smith.
- 24** **THE LUNCH BUNCH**
Meals on Wheels ensures that the homebound in our community are fed and cared for.
- 28** **NIGHTLY DAYDREAMING**
A search for answers drives Connilyn Cossette's writing.
- 38** **AN OZARK HAVEN FOR ART AND ARCHITECTURE**
Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art houses colonial to contemporary masterpieces.
- 40** **HERBS AND HONEY**
Take control of what you eat by growing your own food.
- 44** **EDUCATION ADDS VALUE**
Taffy Johnson is making a difference on a global scale.



- 34** CookingNOW
- 36** BusinessNOW
- 52** Around TownNOW
- 60** HealthNOW

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ON THE COVER

Mike Langford is always focused on the fundamentals.

Photo by
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EDITOR'S NOTE



Sandra

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Spring has sprung!

I love a clean house just as much as the next person, but as I've gotten older, I realize there are more important things in my life than a spotless house and a closet filled with clean clothes. Life has so much more to offer than cleaning supplies, chapped hands and a sore back. As I've aged, I've learned that strict schedules can be amended, broken or even forgotten. In my case, I choose to forget them and do what I want when I want as it pertains to my home.

In place of a schedule, I now find myself doing the things in life that bring a smile to my face and joy to my life — taking long walks, digging in the flowerbeds and playing with the grands. I even enjoy a good book every now and then, as well as some mindless TV that always includes *The Golden Girls*, *Blue Bloods* and an episode or two of *Hoarding: Buried Alive*. When I really don't want to clean, it's *very* important that I watch *Hoarding*. That way, my house still feels clean, clutter free and quite wonderful.

What TV shows do you watch that make you feel better?

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For Phelp Benjamin and Mike Langford, youth sports offer an arena to teach children how to be successful on and off the field. “Learning the correct way to play football is important, but so is learning how to be a person of good character,” Mike said.

“Being involved in youth sports gives students something to work toward,” Phelp added. Phelp serves as president of the Tomahawks Youth Sports Organization, which operates under the Waxahachie Youth Athletic Association. Mike serves as vice president.

“We started Tomahawks two years ago with a mission to offer the youth of Waxahachie a safe place to learn and grow as athletes,” Mike explained. Currently, the organization offers opportunities for football and cheer.

INNING AT LIFE

— By Derek Jones

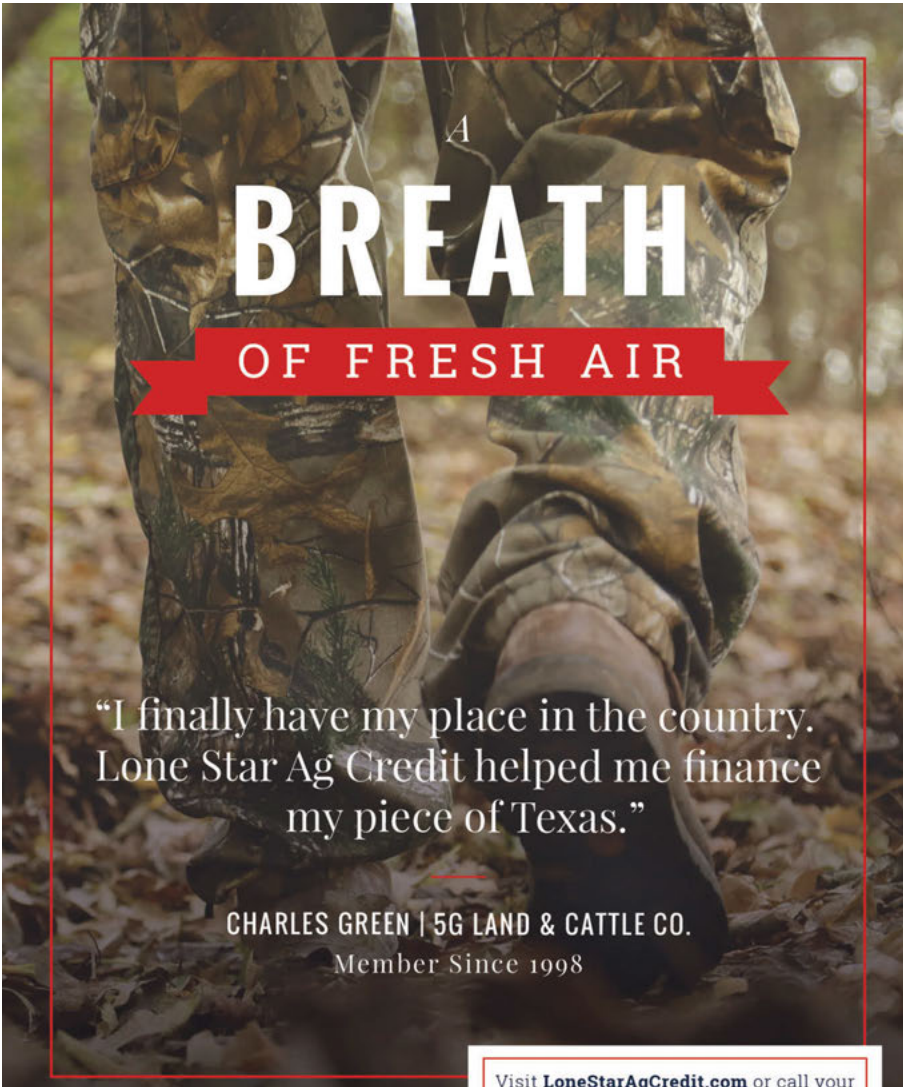




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"The first year of football," Phelp said, "we had around 34 athletes, and this year we had over 80. As for cheerleading, we only had six girls the first year, and we had over 20 this past year." Apparently, the Tomahawks resonate with the community, and the two men expect to see participation numbers grow exponentially over the next few years.

When it comes to football, Phelp and Mike have a straightforward and simple approach. "First, we focus on the fundamentals of the game," Mike said. "Every kid should know the rules of the game and how the game is structured." Their coaching strategy does not stop, however, with just knowledge. Mike explained, "I think one of the things that has contributed to the athletes' excitement to play in this league is we believe every player should get quality playing time. How is a child supposed to get better at the sport unless he is actually able to participate in game situations?"

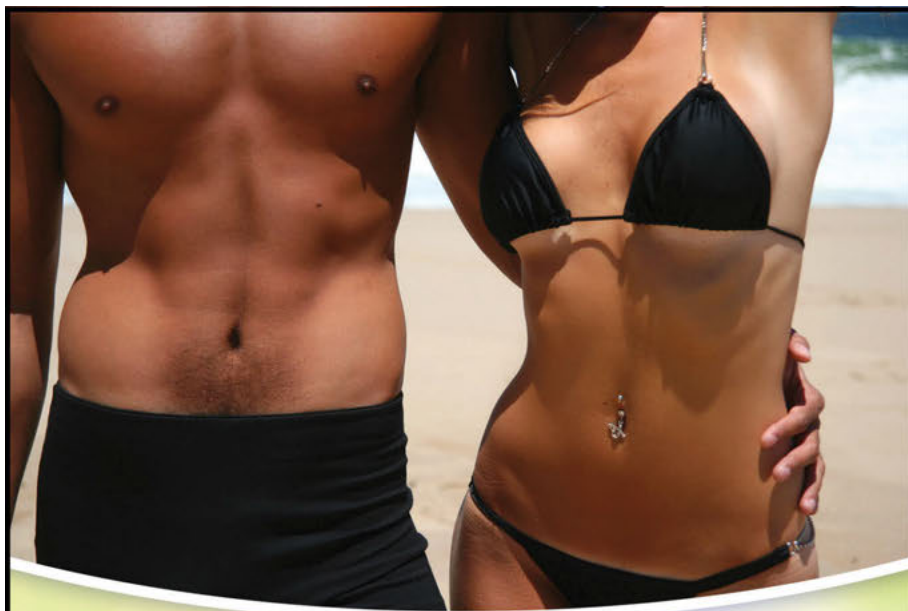
"We strive to make cheer and football a positive experience," Phelp added, "and that is why the kids are excited to participate."



Sports is about community for the Tomahawks, where kids from kindergarten through sixth grade gather to pursue their passion. “All of our practices take place on the same field, so you have the older kids working with the younger ones, stretching together and offering advice and help,” Mike noted. This is different from many other sport organizations where coaches have their practices scheduled at different times and in different locations all over the city.

“It’s cool to see home games where the older kids cheer for the younger ones, because they know them by name from practicing together,” Mike stated. “There is such a strong community bond when kids workout together, and that is what we want to foster in the organization.”

Ultimately, Phelp and Mike hope to see kids progress through their youth and leave with a passion to pursue cheer and football at the junior high and high school levels. “Playing in school is why we focus on fundamentals, such as blocking and tackling,” Mike explained. “We want



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the kids to learn to do it right, so they can develop a proper appreciation for the game.”

“We want to develop these kids so they can contribute in the classroom, on the field and in life,” Phelp added.

The list of people who have contributed to the success of the organization over the last two years is long. “We operate under a board of directors who are committed to the vision of a quality athletics program, and they are dedicated to carrying out that vision,” Mike said.

“We have some of the most dedicated and hardworking coaches, and since we are a nonprofit organization, they don’t get paid,” Phelp said. “They do it for the love of the kids and the game.”

Both Phelp and Mike acknowledge that developing these athletes so they may one day contribute to the success of the Waxahachie Indians is part of their game plan. “I can’t tell you how much we appreciate Waxahachie ISD,” Mike said.

Phelp offered some clarification. “They understand what we are trying to do in preparing a future generation of players and have been fully supportive of our program.”

The last two years have been a huge success, and Phelp, Mike and the board of directors show no signs of slowing down. According to Phelp, “We currently offer programs for cheer and football, but in the spring of 2018, we are going to add a track program, and we hope to add a volleyball program in 2019.”

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"There is no youth track program here, and we have already had huge amounts of interest, so we are very excited about the possibilities track will provide," Mike added.

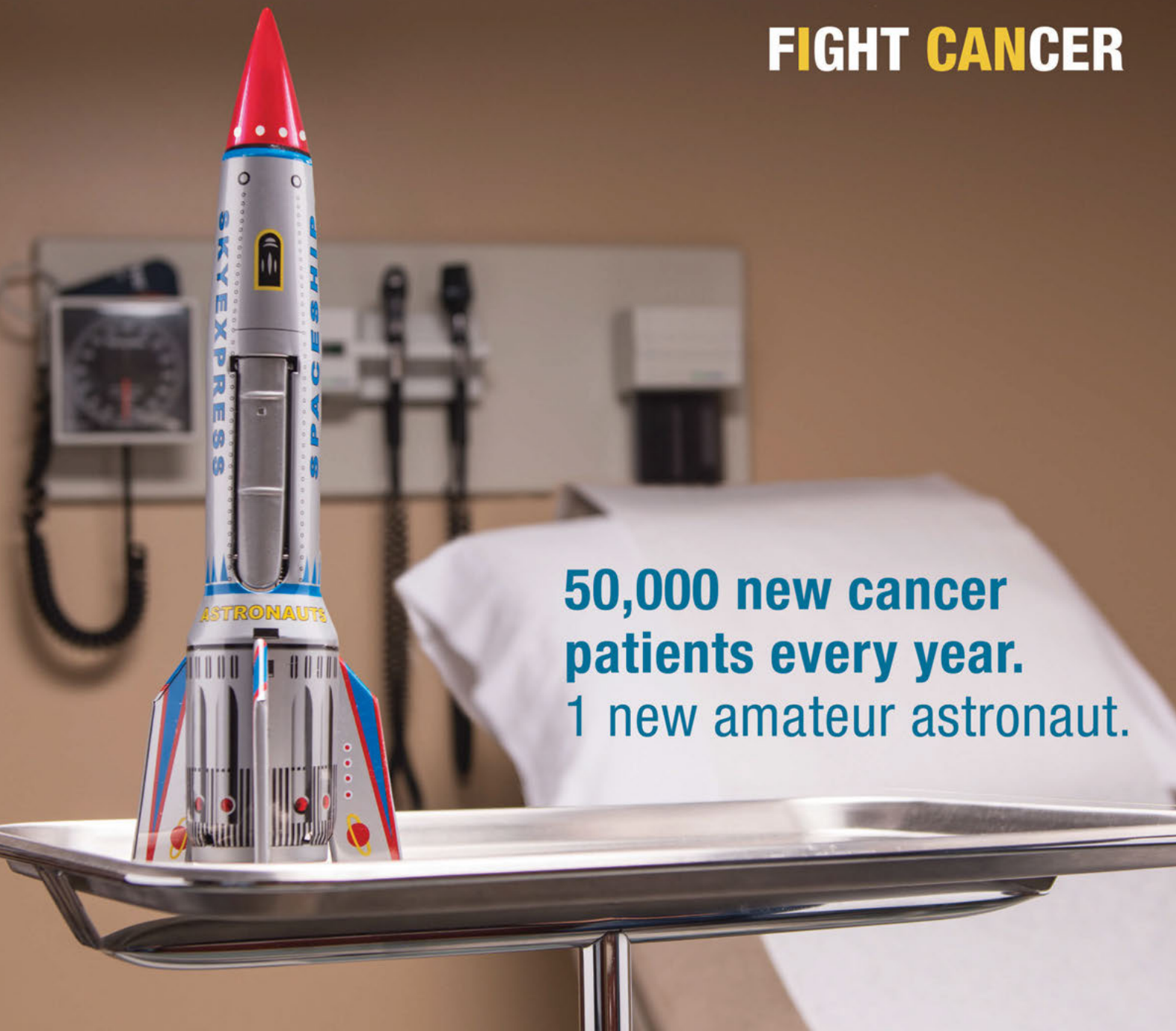
With the Tomahawks continuing to offer summer camps, the goal is to eventually offer programs year-round for the youth of Waxahachie. "The kids and the parents are always so down when the season ends, because they have so much fun," Phelp said, "so, hopefully, expanding our programs over the next few years will guarantee kids have opportunities throughout the year."

As for the desire to create and grow a quality athletic program like the Tomahawks, they both agree it started at home. "We have kids of our own and simply wanted to create a program we would both want them to participate in," Mike said.

The two men believe a positive relationship between the coaches and community is key. "Our coaches have worked hard to gain the parents' trust and build relationships with the community," Phelp said.

Phelp and Mike are using the arena of sports to build young men and women of character who will contribute in a positive way to their community. The goal of the Tomahawks Youth Sports Organization is much more than winning a game — it is winning at life. **NOW**

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— By Sandra Strong

A BLANK SLATE

AT HOME WITH DARYL AND JILL SMITH

Daryl and Jill Smith had been living in the Garden Valley area of Waxahachie when “life” happened. “My mom was diagnosed with breast cancer,” Jill said, referring to her mother, Marilyn Wright. “We felt in our hearts that she should come live with us. It just felt like the right thing to do.”

Once the decision was finalized to merge the two families, the building process began. They knew they wanted to remain in Waxahachie because their roots are firmly planted here, and they knew they wanted a wing on one side of the home where Marilyn, now 80, could be comfortable. The custom John Houston home originally called for four bedrooms, but Daryl and Jill decided to make some changes. They took two of the bedrooms and converted them into a living area and bedroom with an en suite bathroom for Marilyn. The home also includes two additional bedrooms and bathrooms, a media room, another living space and a study where Jill works from home.

Daryl and Jill took a blank slate and created a warm, inviting home that they enjoy sharing. “Her style is unique,” Daryl said, praising his wife’s decorating ability.

“I don’t really have a theme when it comes to decorating,” Jill said of her home that highlights a mix





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of country with classic chic. “I know what I like when I see it, and I only buy what I love.”

Landscaping was also included in their custom home package. They not only got the house of their dreams, but also the magnolia trees, shrubbery and plants they preferred. Daryl decided he wanted something different, so he outlined the front flowerbeds with a pattern of decorative rocks and stones that are an extension of the detail found



within the home. “The backyard is still a work in progress,” Daryl shared, referring to another blank slate that will be transformed to their perfection in the future.

The home’s interior is a showplace of chandeliers, mirrors and artwork that evokes emotion. “I’ve always loved chandeliers,” Jill confessed. And

she has a few of them throughout the home. “They give off a bling and sparkle that makes me smile.”

Jill is not one to shop for the sake of shopping. She does visit different places to find what she likes. When first decorating the home, she made many trips to and from stores. “I would bring something home and



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if it didn't fit, I'd return it," she explained. She did a lot of returning, but the result is just as gorgeous as it is warm and inviting.

The wall color is Perfect Greige, while the trim color throughout the main house is Popular Gray. A pop of color is the pantry door's shade of aqua that also makes Jill happy. "The colors are very versatile," Daryl shared. They wanted a softness, so the clean lines and neutral colors have given them that, and so much more.

The fireplace in the main living area, also referred to as the gathering room, has an oversized mantel, making decorating for any season trouble-free. A large canvas hangs on the wall beside the fireplace. "That picture reflects the crowns we'll get when we get to heaven," Marilyn said of the headpiece featured in shades of gold.

Marilyn's suite is totally opposite the rest of the house. It is filled with color. Mom and daughter have very different tastes in decorating, but both have great flair when it comes to what they choose. The first chandelier Jill purchased was an art piece that now hangs in Marilyn's bathroom. "We laugh about it now," Jill said, "but when I saw it, I had to have it."

Although so much in the home was new when they first moved in two years ago, there are several pieces that hold special memories for both Daryl and Jill. The china chest in the gathering room belongs to Marilyn, and is filled with tea sets from various countries. The curio cabinet in the dining area once belonged to Daryl's





late mother and, dating back to the late '60s, is now home to some of Jill's special garage sale finds. "I got such a great deal on that china," she said. "I don't think they knew what they had." There's also an antique armoire that belongs to Marilyn in the guest room, which the couple's children use when they come to visit.

An antique player piano, located in the home office, dates to 1914. It also elicits memories for Daryl. "It belonged to my mom," he shared. "None of us play, but the piano is here to stay." The home office can also be closed off with French doors to lend privacy when needed.

Daryl and Jill spend most of their at-home, together time in the media room. The room, with surround sound and dark window coverings, is comfortable, cozy and warm. The unique ceiling fan is one of Daryl's special finds. "This is the place we come to relax and chill," he said. "This is where we live."

The kitchen, like most, is the meeting place where Daryl and Jill entertain family, friends and fellow church members from The Oaks Fellowship, where they have been active members for the past 14 years. The oversized island is the focal point of the kitchen with lighted cabinets and counter space galore. The sunflower arrangement on the dining table invites guests to stay awhile and enjoy the beautiful view from the floor-to-ceiling windows.

These empty nesters turned a blank slate into the home of their dreams — a home they can be proud of. Building their new home to include Marilyn turned out to be exactly the right thing to do. In fact, Daryl and Jill wouldn't change a thing. **NOW**

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The Lunch Bunch

— By Jill Martinez

There are kind souls all around us who volunteer to deliver hot meals to homebound people with Meals on Wheels of Johnson & Ellis Counties. “In 2017, we had 600 volunteers who served over 225,000 meals to almost 1,300 people,” said Lisa Deese, community development coordinator for MOWJEC.

They, in fact, deliver more than a meal. “We’ve been involved with Meals on Wheels of Johnson & Ellis Counties since 2003. It is so rewarding to be able to visit with so many sweet people. Providing a hot meal is important, but it’s the personal interaction that really means the most. Sometimes, we’re the only people they’ll see each day, so it’s nice to be able to give a hug and put a smile on their faces,” said Brian and Kim Holley of Ennis.

Nearly 80 percent of the individuals served by MOWJEC last year were senior citizens, and all were homebound for a short or long period of time. By providing meals and other support services, people can remain in their homes, saving

thousands of dollars in nursing home or hospital expenses. “MOWJEC can serve one individual a year of meals for roughly the same cost as a one-day stay in the hospital or a 10-day stay in a nursing home,” Lisa explained.

There are more than 80 routes where volunteer drivers deliver each weekday, serving 15 Ellis County and 12 Johnson County communities, including Lillian. All of this can be a challenge, but it is one that Lisa has taken on happily for nearly 10 years. “I love seniors and love to serve! I know there is a need in our community, and I have the privilege of sharing that need in all of our communities throughout Johnson and Ellis counties,” she said.

One of the beautiful things about this organization is that people of all ages come together to serve. Some mommy/toddler groups deliver, as do working adults and healthy, mobile seniors. Several organizations also volunteer, such as universities, car dealerships and athletics groups. “Being part of Meals on Wheels has been a blessing to me and my team. Each one of us who delivers views it as a privilege to serve,” said Steve Stafford, general manager of North Texas Jellystone Park.

Community leaders join this lunch bunch, too, from time to

time. Every year during the month of March, Meals on Wheels carries out a campaign called March for Meals. "This is our month-long celebration where we raise funds and awareness. We have businesses, churches and individuals who sponsor meals in their community or county," Lisa said.

One week during this month, called Community Champions Week, draws elected officials from both counties and local celebrities to help. "Dale Hansen joined us last year in Waxahachie!" Lisa said enthusiastically.

Delivering meals is not the only way folks can get involved with this endeavor. Many school-aged children contribute by making placemats or cards. Others donate holiday gifts or their time to wrap them. Recipients' faces light up with joy when they see that others have taken time to remember them. It's beautiful.

Many of those served by MOWJEC have pets that act as their steady companions. Through the AniMeals program, deliveries are made once a month, providing precious food for these furry friends, as well. "We have some middle and high school student groups that help to deliver these on a special Saturday route. It's a great way for them to earn their community service hours," Lisa added.

All of the services that MOWJEC provides are covered through donations and government funds. "Last year, 50 percent of our revenue came from local support. We are extremely blessed to serve in very supportive communities," Lisa said. A major fundraiser for the organization is the annual golf benefit held each September. People play individually or in teams, having fun while they support this vital pillar in our community.

Because the aging population continues to grow at a rapid pace, more volunteers and donations will be needed to keep the individuals MOWJEC serves in their home sweet homes. **NOW**

Editor's Note: For more information on the Meals on Wheels program, visit www.monjec.org.



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While the rest of her family is sleeping soundly, Connilyn Cossette, like most busy mothers, is getting her work done. However, most mothers don't do their work each night in a tiny master bedroom closet, and most don't have Connilyn's task of weaving Bible characters through their lives full of trials, tribulations and joys. "In the quiet and solitude of my closet, I can create," she explained. "I get to daydream."


Nightly Daydreams

— By Virginia Riddle






A voracious lifetime reader who learned history through historical fiction novels, Connilyn planned on being a homemaker, but secretly dreamed of seeing a book she'd written on a shelf. "I didn't think I had a story to tell, however," she recalled. Along came marriage to Chad, her husband, who works as a manager at a transportation company, and kids, Collin (13) and Corrianna (11) — two dreams achieved, but still no book written. "That idea got put on a back shelf until eight years ago,





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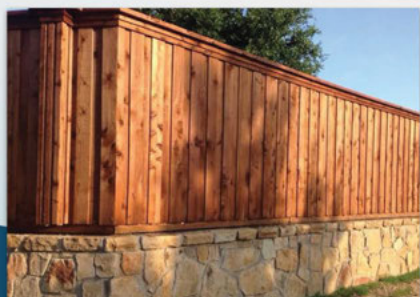
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when I was doing personal study in the Book of Exodus and began to ponder what the Egyptians might have experienced during the plagues, so a first-person story emerged from that," Connilyn explained.

When Chad was transferred to Seattle, Washington, and Connilyn was "stuck in the house with Seattle's rain," she started to "plug away" on a book manuscript. The first book in her series, *Out of Egypt*, was born. "I had started writing 'by the seat of my pants,'" she recalled. "I read library books on writing and researched on the Internet and just started doing it."

After a move back to Texas, she posted on Facebook about her manuscript. "A friend asked to read it and thought it was worthy. I didn't know about literary agents or getting published, but I submitted my manuscript to contests. That first book, *Counted with the Stars*, won the My Book Therapy Frazier Contest and was a semifinalist in an American Christian Fiction Writers contest. She met with agents after the award presentation and signed with The Steve Laube Agency, which led to her books being published by Bethany House Publishers. "When I got that call from my agent, my life changed," Connilyn said. Her writing was a Christy Award best debut novel finalist and was shortlisted for

a Christian Retailing's Best Award and an INSPY Award last year. "The Christy Award, an enormous honor even to be nominated, is likened to the Oscars of the Christian fiction world," Connilyn stated. She blogs as a guest sometimes and keeps up with readers and fellow writers through social media.

The first book in a new series, *A Light on the Hill*, was released in February and the next two will release over the next year. "I can write faster now and finish a first draft in 6-8 months," she said. "Then my manuscript goes through three major edits before it's printed. It's a very intricate process, and I have wonderful friends who critique my work."



As busy as she is with writing, editing and occasional book signings, Connilyn still homeschools her children. Since she writes into the night, school doesn't usually start until 10:00 a.m. — every student's dream! "Homeschooling offers a flexible schedule, and our kids are inspired by what I do," Connilyn, the mom and teacher, said. The family belongs to a homeschool co-op through which she volunteers.

Connilyn admits that procrastination is sometimes a challenge. With all the children's activities and schooling, she's become a master at time management. "I've had to become more disciplined," she said.

Natives of Spokane, Washington, Chad and Connilyn enjoy life in Texas. "When we found out we would be based in Waxahachie, my

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husband was fascinated with living in a town with such an unusual name,” she remembered. “I love the small-town atmosphere and consider Waxahachie as our second hometown. The people make this town what it is, and they’ve been very welcoming and supportive of me. We had more than 120 people at my first book’s launch party.”

She was able to do firsthand research during a trip to the Holy Land last fall. “I went with another author. Our focus was on visiting battlegrounds, past, present and future in Israel, but I enjoyed watching the people and learning about the culture. We rode camels and went to a Bedouin camp to eat. The trip was a fabulous experience and so inspiring. I took a million photos.”

An artist, she enjoys painting and drawing. She loves dabbling in graphic design, and she was a preschool teacher for 14 years before her children were born. Still a reader of history, she loves reading out-of-print history books, watching people and is an earnest note taker.

Spending time with her family, including Chad’s father who also lives in Waxahachie, is always a priority for her. However, there aren’t any other authors in the family. “I don’t know where my writing comes from,” Connilyn said.

She encourages those who wish to follow in her author footsteps to find other writers. She’s a member of ACFW and Romance Writers of America. “There’s such a great camaraderie among writers,” she explained. “They are honest and will challenge me. Writers keep pushing themselves and write even when they don’t feel like doing so. Most of all, have a teachable spirit.”

While open to writing in other genres, Connilyn continues to find inspiration in the Bible and through her travels to the Holy Land. She concluded, “This is where my heart is now.” **NOW**

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CookingNOW *In the Kitchen With* LYLE MATTHIS

— By Virginia Riddle

At age 10, Lyle Matthis learned to cook from his sister. “We grew up having to cook for ourselves because my parents worked long hours,” he recalled. Today he enjoys preparing favorites for his wife and six children. “I cook like an old-school grandmother!” Lyle, who is also no stranger to preparing food for large gatherings of friends or church members, said.

Service to Dallas’ Greater Mount Sinai Missionary Baptist Church is important to Lyle and his family, who volunteer with youth. Lyle is also minister of music. “I love serving others, and cooking is one way I can do that,” he said.

Lyle also appreciates where his family has settled. “We moved from Dallas,” he said, “and love the views from our Waxahachie hilltop home.” **NOW**

Enchilada Casserole

- 4 chicken leg quarters
- 8 oz. Velveeta cheese
- 3 Tbsp. seasoning salt
- 3 Tbsp. Mrs. Dash, or to taste
- 2 10.5-oz. cans cream of mushroom soup
- 2 15-oz. cans turkey or regular Wolf Brand Chili with no beans
- 1 10-oz. can enchilada red mild sauce
- 2 1.25-oz. pkgs. taco seasoning
- 1 13-oz. bag corn chips
- Shredded cheddar cheese, to taste

1. Boil the chicken leg quarters until they are done; reserve at least 4 cups of the broth in the pot after removing the chicken.
2. Allow the chicken to cool; debone carefully. Return the deboned chicken to the pot.
3. Add the Velveeta cheese, seasoning salt, Mrs. Dash, cream of mushroom soup, chili, enchilada red mild sauce and taco seasoning; mix well. Bring mixture to a boil.

4. Pour the corn chips into a baking pan sprayed with cooking oil; pour the sauce mixture over the chips.
5. Using a large spoon, stir the sauce mixture and chips together well; all chips should be covered totally by the sauce mixture.
6. Top with the cheddar cheese; bake in the oven for 30 minutes, or until all cheese is melted and slightly browned.

Broccoli & Cheese Casserole

- 7 oz. Minute White Rice
- 5 cups chicken broth (divided use)
- 1 28-oz. bag broccoli florets
- 2 10.5-oz. cans cream of mushroom soup
- 8-oz. Velveeta cheese
- 1 stick salted butter
- 3 Tbsp. seasoning salt
- Mrs. Dash, to taste
- 2 eggs
- Shredded cheddar cheese, to taste

1. Cook rice according to package instructions in 4 cups of the chicken broth; drain.
2. Pour rice into a lasagna pan sprayed with cooking oil.
3. Add the remainder of the ingredients, except the cheddar cheese. More broccoli florets and seasoning salt can be added, if desired.
4. Mix all ingredients well; cook at 350 F for 30-40 minutes, or until the Velveeta cheese is melted.
5. Remove from the oven; stir well. Add the shredded cheddar cheese; cook for an additional 30 minutes.

Mac & Cheese Casserole

- 1 16-oz. pkg. elbow noodles
- 3/4 cup whipping cream (comes in a carton)
- 1 stick salted butter
- 12 oz. Velveeta cheese
- 3 Tbsp. seasoning salt, and additional to taste
- 2 Tbsp. Mrs. Dash
- 2 eggs
- Shredded cheddar cheese, to taste

1. Cook the noodles according to package directions until almost done; drain water.
2. Add whipping cream, butter and Velveeta cheese; add 3 Tbsp. of seasoning salt, then salt to taste. Add Mrs. Dash.
3. Cook noodle mixture on stove top until the cheese has melted; pour it into a lasagna baking pan sprayed with cooking oil.

4. Mix the two eggs into the noodle mixture; top with the shredded cheese.
5. Bake for 20-30 minutes at 350 F.

Corn Casserole

- 3 15.25-oz. cans corn, drained or
- 2 16-oz. bags frozen corn
- 2 14.75-oz. cans cream style corn
- 1 stick salted butter
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup flour
- 2 Tbsp. seasoning salt
- 1 Tbsp. pepper
- 2 eggs

1. Preheat oven to 350 F; mix all ingredients well in a baking pan sprayed with cooking oil.
2. Cook for 1 hour, or until the casserole is a little thickened.

Spinach Chicken Casserole

- 4 chicken leg quarters
- 10 cups water
- 7 oz. Minute White Rice
- 11.25 oz. Ricos Gourmet Nacho Cheese Sauce
- 1 10.5-oz. can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 10.5-oz. can cream of celery soup
- 3 Tbsp. seasoning salt
- 3 Tbsp. Mrs. Dash, or to taste
- 5 oz. frozen spinach
- Shredded cheddar cheese, to taste

1. Boil the chicken leg quarters in water; remove the chicken, reserving 4 cups of the chicken broth.
2. Boil the rice according to package instructions in 2 cups of the reserved broth. When rice is cooked, add remaining chicken broth and all remaining ingredients, except the cheddar cheese; mix well. *Note:* more seasoning salt may be added, if desired.
3. Pour mixture into a baking pan sprayed with cooking oil; add the chicken leg quarters. Top with shredded cheddar cheese.
4. Bake mixture for 30 minutes at 350 F.

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

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McClain's Total Car Care

— By Virginia Riddle

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Tires, wheels and brakes — necessary auto components if drivers are to go and stop — are sold and serviced by Branden McClain, owner of McClain's Total Car Care. The shop's five-star satisfaction rating and customers' accolades on its Facebook page are a testimony to Branden's experience and expertise. "I started learning this business at age 15 and opened and managed a tire shop in Corsicana by the time I was 17," Branden said. By 19 years of age, he was opening other tire store locations.

Branden learned the business from his dad for whom he worked for 15 years. He then took a corporate job in Dallas, but missing the tire and brake business, he returned to it in Waxahachie. On March 20, 2017, he opened McClain's Total Car Care. "I learned the business portion by managing the shop in Corsicana," he explained. "I wanted to be my own boss and be able to treat people fairly and guarantee satisfaction."

He sells and services tire brands including Mastercraft, BF Goodrich, Mickey Thompson, Cooper, Toyo and Nexen. "I mostly work with tires, wheels and brakes, but I can do almost anything needed on a vehicle. If I can't do what's required, I'll refer the customer to qualified mechanics and shops," Branden stated. "The days of a quality mom-and-pop business operation are almost gone. Come see me. I assure customers that they can't beat my prices, service or wait time. I know how much customers value keeping their vehicles rolling safely with the least

amount of time off the road and for the best price.”

Knowing his customers’ needs is critical. “I want to know what you’re doing with your vehicle, so I can match the right set of tires to your use,” Branden explained. “I’ll question what kind of miles and terrain you drive and what price range you have in mind. There are no hidden fees in the prices I quote. I also offer free rotation and airing up of the tires I sell for the life of the tires. Air is free here.” He accepts cash, checks and all major credit cards as payment.

“I wanted to be my own boss and be able to treat people fairly and guarantee satisfaction.”

It’s not unusual for customers to see a hot rod or classic car in Branden’s parking lot. “I’m a hot rod guy. My forte is custom wheels,” he said. Spending time at his business and with family doesn’t allow for a lot of spare time, but Branden enjoys fishing occasionally.

“I enjoy working with the public,” Branden added. “I’m very satisfied being an independent tire dealer, servicer and businessman. I’m very busy but am looking to expand my business by growing my customers.” McClain’s Total Car Care is a member of the Waxahachie Chamber of Commerce.

A Waxahachie native son, Branden graduated from Waxahachie High School. As a youngster, he not only learned the tire business from his dad, but he also learned car mechanics from his Uncle Joe and learned plumber’s skills from his Uncle Henry in Dallas. He shared, “All of us McClains are still around Waxahachie. While the plumbing business was interesting, I’ve always enjoyed tires and wheels.” **NOW**

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An Ozark Haven for Art and Architecture

— By Linda DeBerry

A forested hollow in the Ozarks may seem like an unordinary place for a nationally recognized art museum, but Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Northwest Arkansas, is no ordinary place. This jewel of a museum brings together art, architecture and the natural landscape for a total package unlike anything you've likely experienced.

The museum itself is an architectural wonder. Designed by international architect Moshe Safdie, the structure is nestled into a ravine in a 120-acre wooded park. Its monolithic concrete walls and curved copper roofs make the building appear to be almost a part of the surrounding landscape. A stream runs through the complex, its waters slowed by a series of weirs to create ponds encircled by the museum's galleries. Two glass-sided bridge structures span the ponds and inspired the museum's name.

Inside, massive oak beams support the soaring ceilings of the galleries, and the walls are graced by hundreds of American masterpieces. You'll encounter familiar favorites like Gilbert Stuart's portrait of George Washington, Norman Rockwell's *Rosie the Riveter*, and Andy Warhol's *Dolly Parton*, as well as breathtaking works that are sure to become new favorites. From colonial portraits to contemporary works, the entire history of America is laid out here in art. Quiet reflection areas offer an opportunity to relax, as well as to take in views of the museum's breathtaking landscape and architecture.

Architecture is central to the Crystal Bridges experience. On the museum's grounds are works by two American icons of architecture and design: Frank Lloyd Wright and Buckminster Fuller. The Bachman-Wilson House, designed by Wright and

built in New Jersey in 1956, was relocated to Crystal Bridges' grounds in 2015. It is located near the museum's south entrance and is open for public viewing. On the museum's north lawn is a 50-foot dome designed by theorist and architect Buckminster Fuller. Constructed as a prototype for a revolutionary affordable and efficient style of housing Fuller envisioned, the "Fly's Eye Dome" is built of fiberglass — a new material in the early 1980s — and covered in round openings like the lenses on a fly's eye. It, too, is open for public viewing.

Crystal Bridges' expansive grounds are another attraction. The native hardwood forest is threaded with walking and biking trails, and the landscape features natural springs, soaring trees and stone outcrops, as well as several outdoor sculptures scattered along the way. Crystal Bridges' trails connect with downtown Bentonville, offering independent restaurants, galleries, shopping and the modern luxury of a 21c Museum Hotel. Just 40 minutes away is the lively nightlife of nearby Fayetteville, and the funky, artistic Victorian Ozark village of Eureka Springs is just an hour away.

Northwest Arkansas, as a whole, offers an additional array of outdoor activities. From kayaking the beautiful Buffalo River — the United States' first National River — to boating on Beaver Lake, trout fishing at the White River and hiking the many trails at Devil's Den State Park, adventures abound that will make it clear why Arkansas is known as "The Natural State." If cycling is your thing, the area's mountain bike trails are rated among the best in the nation. And the Razorback Regional Greenway is a 36-mile, shared-use trail system that links six communities from Bella Vista to Fayetteville.

Year-round, it's fun to explore the area beyond Bentonville and Crystal Bridges. All you need is a map and a car. But beforehand, check out www.crystalbridges.org/visit/#regional for help planning your total experience. **NOW**

Photos Courtesy of Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, Arkansas.



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Herbs and Honey

— By Zachary R. Urquhart

As food from around the world has become more readily available, a trend has developed with people growing their own crops. If you want to plant an organic garden or harvest honey yourself, here is a quick guide to help get you started.

Have a Plan

- *Know Your Goal.* You may be trying to avoid certain chemicals, wanting to control what goes into your body or just trying to save money. There are many good reasons to start a garden or harvest honey, but different goals might require different plans. You may need other materials for a varied garden than you would if you hope to be the neighborhood tomato supplier.

- *Pick Your Spot.* Before you start tilling soil or installing beehives, make sure you have the right location in your yard. Some cities either prohibit beekeeping or require a

permit, but even if that is not a concern in your area, you will want to keep your hive or garden away from your lot lines so that you do not impinge on your neighbor's yard.

- *Set a Budget.* As with any big project, you will have some cost as you get started. Something to keep in mind is this: If your garden does not produce in its first year, how much money are you willing to invest in the project? If you use your whole budget and get little



to no return, you could face the choice of spending more money or calling it quits.

Get the Right Supplies

• *Organic Can Mean Simple.*

Depending on your location and soil quality, you may only need to put seeds in the ground and keep them appropriately watered. If you do need to buy soil or fertilizer, you can get materials at any lawn and garden supply store. Just make sure you see *Organic* on the bag. For ground covering, you can use your own grass clippings or mulched leaves for a cheap and easy solution.



• *Bees Take a Little More.* You will need a beehive, a suit and a few tools to begin harvesting honey. Unless you happen to live near a specialty bee supply store, you will have to order your supplies online. There are brushes and tools for separating the honeycombs, as well as a smoker, which is crucial for keeping the bees calm as you collect your honey. And, of course, you will have to buy bees from either an existing, local beekeeper or an online retail site.



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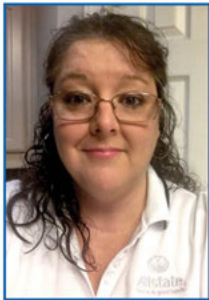
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Time for Work

• *Get Your Garden Ready.* Once you have the perfect spot, decent soil and seeds picked out, you need to start planting. You can, but do not have to, make rows in your garden. Get the soil wet before getting the seeds down. If you water after laying your seeds, you risk pushing them right out of the ground. After you have the seeds down, put a small amount of soil on top and keep the ground moist until you start seeing sprouts.

• *Let Your Bees be Bees.* While there is more involved in the original setup for your beehive, once you get the bees in their hive boxes, they will do most of the work. Early spring is a great time to start a hive, but you should anticipate it taking several weeks before you can start collecting honey.

Growing organic crops and collecting your own honey can be a money-saving and fun new endeavor to start this spring. **NOW**

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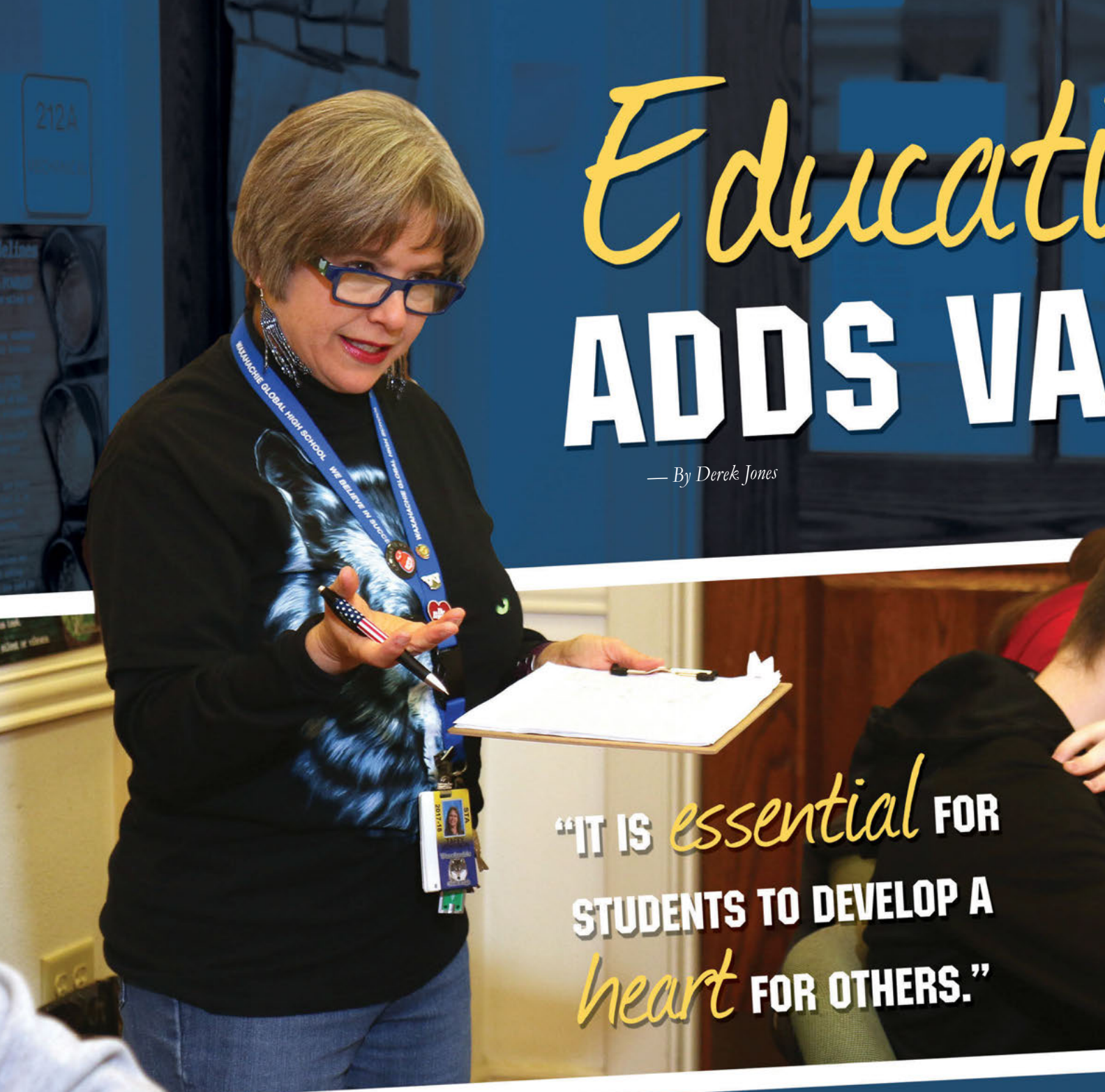
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Education ADDS VA

— By Derek Jones

“IT IS *essential* FOR
STUDENTS TO DEVELOP A
heart FOR OTHERS.”

Taffy Johnson is on a global mission to use her knowledge of the Spanish language to add value to others. When not teaching students at Global High School in Waxahachie, she can be found traveling the world with her husband, sharing with women the power of love, forgiveness and commitment. Taffy confessed, “Education is just part of my calling. I love teaching Spanish and using my knowledge of the language to help others.”

After completing high school, Taffy spent eight years living in Mexico. “I feel blessed to have been given the opportunity to teach students in Mexico how to speak English,” she admitted. “It was a truly amazing experience because I knew that I was there for a purpose.”

During her time in Mexico, Taffy saw many instances of the power of education. “One of the most rewarding experiences was seeing kids fall in love with teaching and desire to become Spanish

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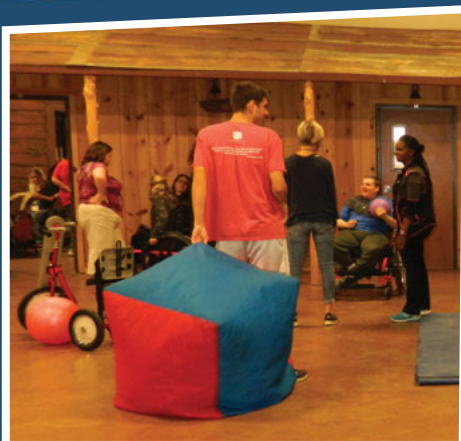
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teachers themselves,” Taffy explained with a smile. “For example, one of my former students from Mexico ended up marrying my son, and now I have a daughter-in-law who teaches bilingual classes here in the States.” All six of Taffy’s children are fluent in Spanish, demonstrating her value of bilingual education.

After many years away, Taffy had the opportunity to return to her hometown of Waxahachie. For the last six years, she has taught Spanish I and II at Global High School. “I love Waxahachie, and my parents still live here,” she shared. “I even graduated from Waxahachie High School, so I was excited to return home to teach something I am so passionate about.”

Her commitment to helping others does not stop with teaching Spanish. She is a sponsor of the Interact Club at Global High, which is sponsored by the Waxahachie Rotary Club and offers students the chance to participate in community service projects. “These projects are important,” Taffy explained. “Part of being a good student is learning to become a good citizen.”

The Interact Club is involved in many important service-based projects. For example, the students

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participated in collecting 150 bags of school supplies for those who lost everything in Hurricane Harvey and adopted a displaced family living in Waxahachie to help them get back on their feet. From partnering with The Salvation Army at Christmas to helping with the Waxahachie Senior Activity Center, Taffy and the Interact students are working to make their community and world a better place. "Time and time again, I hear students comment on how thankful they are for what they have after doing these service projects," Taffy shared. "It makes it harder to take the blessings in your life for granted." Service projects are planned throughout the year, so students involved in Interact



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One of the most significant projects the club is involved with is Hidden Miracles. According to Taffy, "This program requires students to spend the first Saturday of the month with a special needs child." During this time, Interact students spend time with a child and help him or her participate in various activities like playing in the ball pit, singing karaoke and/or riding tricycles. Taffy acknowledged the importance of these types of partnerships. "It is essential for students to develop a heart for others. I think you'll find that when people develop empathy for others, they will value them, and things like teasing or making fun of people because they may be different will decrease." Taffy has discovered the longer she has been a part of Interact, the more impact it has had on her own life.

Taffy's husband, Buddy, travels the world due to his job with the Baptist Missionary Association of America. Taffy laughed, "We like to play a game in my class called 'Where in the World is Mr. Johnson?' because he is always in a different country." Since her husband spends so much time traveling, Taffy is always looking for opportunities to travel with him during the summer. "I especially like when we go to parts of the

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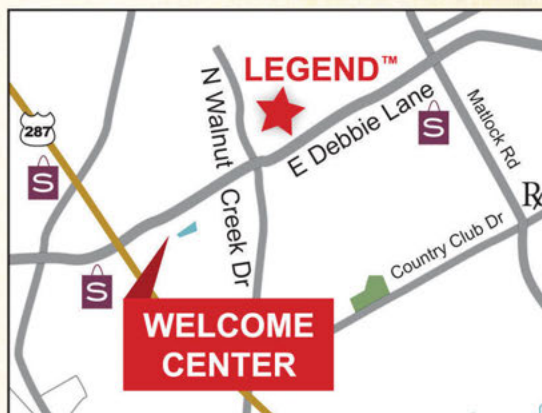


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world that speak Spanish, so I can communicate with the women of that culture,” she confessed.

During these summer trips, Taffy speaks to women through women’s conferences. “I love sharing with others the power of forgiveness,” she explained. “So many women have been hurt, but when they are able to forgive, it is like a huge burden has been lifted from their shoulders.” Taffy is passionate about encouraging others, whether at home in Waxahachie or on the other side of the world.

Taffy feels blessed to have many opportunities to share her heart and passions. “Another part of the message I share with women at the conferences and with my students in Interact Club is the importance of commitment. Be committed to your family, your obligations and each other,” she stated. “Let’s make a commitment to work together to make our community and world a better place.” From traveling the world with her husband as part of his ministry and leading women’s conferences to her passion for her students at Global High, Taffy and her students are truly making a difference on a global scale. **NOW**

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Zoomed In: Ruben Santos

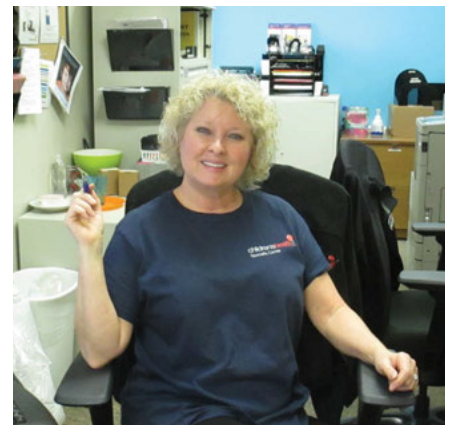
By Sandra Strong

Many times, who you know will be the open door you need to get the job, and in Ruben Santos' case, that proved true. "I have an aunt and five cousins who work as mail carriers throughout Dallas," Ruben shared. "My aunt told me about an opening in Irving. I got the job and not long after, I transferred to Waxahachie." Ruben has been a mail carrier locally for the past five years.

Inclement weather may be the least appealing part of his job, but the people he meets are by far his favorite. "My business route takes me from one end of town to the other, as well as to the downtown square. I enjoy talking to people and finding out how their day is going."



Matt Ballard puts the finishing touches on a concealed holster.



Shelly Nekuza with Children's Health Specialty Center always greets clients with a smile and a kind word.



Justin Citron, Mo Hadzovic, Michael Citron and Keith Browning raise their glasses as a new day at Bistro 115 gets underway.



Lesleh Gage adds roses to an already beautiful floral arrangement.



Janet Smith, armed with safety vest and stop sign, is ready to help Marvin Elementary students cross the street.



Dave Liby, Mike Lamb and Steve McClurg visit with each other during the Ellis County Veterans Networking Group at Ryan's Steakhouse.



Mason Yarbrough, WHS student body president, poses with her mom, Tara, at a recent Waxahachie City Council meeting where Mason sat as honorary council member.

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Find us on  

Calendar

March:

2

Sporting Clay Shoot: Ellis County Sportsman Club. The event is hosted by the Waxahachie Rotary Club. For more information, visit www.waxahachierotary.org/event/rotary-club-sporting-clay-event/.



3

Sweethearts & Orphans Car Show: 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., downtown Waxahachie.

An Evening with Mark Lowry: 6:00 p.m., Hagee Communications Center at SAGU. For more information, visit www.sagu.edu/events/2018-03-03-mark-lowry.

8

2nd Thursday Ladies Night Out: 5:00-8:00 p.m., participating downtown merchants.

10

BOGO 2nd Saturday: participating downtown merchants.

Junk in the Trunk: 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., downtown Waxahachie.



16 — 18

Vintage Market Days presents Vintage Love: 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., **Friday** and **Saturday**; 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., **Sunday**, Ellis County Expo Center, 2300 U.S. 287 Bypass. For more details, visit www.socentraltexas.vintagemarketdays.com.

17, 18

Waxahachie Gun & Knife Show: Waxahachie Civic Center.

23

Brown Bag & History: Noon, Ellis County Museum. For more information, call (972) 937-0681.

23, 24

Waxahachie Old Fashioned Singing: **Friday**, 7:00 p.m.; **Saturday**, 3:00 p.m., Chautauqua Auditorium, Getzender Park. For more information, visit www.WaxaOFS.com.

24

Easter Egg Hunt: 10:00 a.m., Rockett Christian Church, 135 Maple Leaf Dr., Palmer. Everyone is welcome.



Spring Lawn & Garden Expo: Waxahachie Civic Center, 2000 Civic Center Ln. There will be over 100 exhibits, speakers and demonstrations. For more information, call (972) 825-5175 or visit www.ecmga.com.

Waxahachie Symphony Association – Classical Masters: Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra: 7:00 p.m., SAGU Hagee Communications Center Performance Hall, 1200 Sycamore. Visit www.waxahachiesymphony.org for more information.

23 — 31

Ellis County Fair & Rodeo: Ellis County Expo Center. The event is sponsored by the Ellis County Youth Expo. For more information, call (972) 937-2390 or visit www.waxahachiechamber.com.



April:

30

Festival of the Arts: 5:00-8:00 p.m., Worship Center at ORBC, 3251 Ovilla Rd. Free admission. For more information or for details on submitting artwork, email Jami Navarro at jnavarro@ovillachristianschool.org.

Ongoing:

Mondays

Bridge Club: 12:15 p.m., Waxahachie Senior Center, 122 Park Hills Dr. For more information, email Jeanee Smiles at smilestoremember@gmail.com or call (469) 309-4280.

First and Fourth Mondays
Avenue Moms: 10:00 a.m.-noon,
The Avenue Church, 1761 N. Hwy.
77. Register online at www.events.theavenuechurch.com or call the church office at (972) 937-5301 for more information.

Fourth Mondays
Texas Master Naturalists Indian Trails Chapter: 6:00 p.m., First United Methodist Church, Waxahachie. The program begins at 7:00 p.m. For more information about the group, visit www.txmn.org/indiantrail.



Tuesdays
Lariat Bridge Club: 6:30 p.m., Boy Scout Cabin, 1139 Brown St. For more information or to confirm the meeting, email Shari at weatherscf@yahoo.com or call (505) 270-4017.

Mondays and Thursdays
Fitness Revolution: 6:30 p.m., Salvation Army, 620 Farley St. \$15 per month. Call (214) 477-1164 for more information.

Tuesdays
Waxahachie Toastmasters meeting: 6:30 p.m., Lyceum at Sims Library. For more information, call (469) 245-8681.

Thursdays
Junior Master Gardeners Club: 3:45-4:45 p.m., Sims Library. Club is for children ages 5-12.

Buckout Arena Ministry: 7:00 p.m., Cowboy Church of Ellis County, 2374 W. Hwy. 287 Bypass. For more information, call (972) 935-9801.

Second Saturdays
Cheesy Striders Multiple Sclerosis & Parkinson's Self Help meeting: 10:00 a.m., Waxahachie Bible Church, 621 N. Grand St. For more information, contact Linda DeFrank at (214) 514-5236.

Fourth Saturdays
Bristol Opry: 7:00 p.m., featuring local singers and musicians. For more information, contact Jim Gatlin at (972) 846-2211.

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

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HealthNOW

Breast Cancer Screening Is Essential

In the U.S., one in eight women will be diagnosed with invasive breast cancer during her lifetime. While awareness of breast cancer has improved, the disease, unfortunately, remains the second-deadliest cancer among American women.

Early detection with regular mammograms remains the single most effective way for combating the disease. As physicians, we know that the earlier we can detect the disease, the more effective treatment can be. When detected early before it spreads, women have a 99 percent survival rate after five years. Mammograms can detect the majority of breast cancer in women, but they are not the only way to identify breast cancer.

Women should begin monthly breast self-exams in their 20s. Women in their 20s and 30s should have a clinical breast exam every three years. Women in their 30s and 40s should discuss their breast cancer risk level with a physician to determine the most appropriate cancer screening options. Women age 50 and older should have a mammogram and a clinical breast exam at least every two years and, if recommended by a physician, an annual MRI screening. If any changes in the breast are detected, contact a physician immediately to be evaluated.

A common myth is that only women who have a family history of the disease develop breast cancer. While the majority of cancer happens by chance,

about 5-10 percent of people with cancer have an inherited cancer. Women with a family history of breast cancer should discuss genetic testing with their physician. If genetic tests indicate a woman is BRCA-positive, there are a number of risk reduction strategies to discuss with her physician.

Age, diet and exercise can also impact risk. Approximately two-thirds of invasive breast cancer cases occur in women over age 55, though the disease can occur at any age. Being overweight and/or physically inactive increases your risk.

It's also important to watch for warning signs and symptoms. The signs for breast cancer are not the same for all women, and some women show no signs in early stages.

- A lump in the breast
- Change in breast size or shape
- Thickening of breast or underarm
- Nipple retraction
- Dimpled skin near the breast
- Tenderness
- Pain in breast or nipple
- Nipple discharge
- A lump under arm or around collarbone
- Irritation, redness, scaliness or swelling on the breast, nipple or skin near the nipple

Until a cure for breast cancer is found, regular screenings, awareness and healthy lifestyle choices, such as eating well and exercising regularly, are among the best tools a woman has to reduce her risk of developing the disease. **NOW**

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April 1, 2018

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| 10:15 am | Bible Study |
| 11:15 am | Contemporary Worship (in Epton Hall) |



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