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M A G A Z I N E

April 2008

**From
Cookies to
Character**

**Life's
Transitions**

**To Endure
is to Win**

**Definitely Smarter
Than a Fifth-grader**

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**Dennis and
Glenda Minter**



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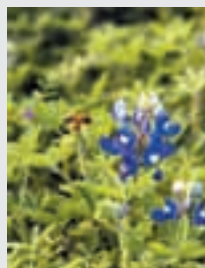
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There is nothing more Texan than
bluebonnets and bumblebees.*

*Photo by:
Lindsay Cordsen*

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Midlothian NOW

Editor's Note

Hello, Midlothian!

Welcome to the month of April at NOW Magazines! This is the month where all that hard work in your gardens starts to pay off. Seedlings have sprouted and flowers have begun to bloom. Many of you have had the pleasure this year of munching on some delicious Girl Scout cookies. If you are like me, you purchase multiple boxes and stick the extra in the freezer to enjoy later. In this issue, Laurie Lundberg, service unit manager for the Girl Scouts in Midlothian, takes you inside the troop. James Wann, a talented singer and actor shares some of his experiences with you in ArtsNOW. In SportsNOW, you will find more reasons to celebrate the great accomplishment of our high school cross-country team at the state meet. In EducationNOW, Lynn Tex takes you into her world of helping fifth-graders become more responsible and disciplined in their studies. So, thaw those cookies, grab a glass of milk, sit back and enjoy reading these and all of the other articles this month.

Betty Tryon
MidlothianNOW Editor



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From Cookies to Character

— By Betty Tryon

Would you like your daughter to grow up to be “honest and fair, friendly and helpful, respect herself, authority and others, make the world a better place”? Then look no further than the Girl Scouts to assist you in the values and behaviors you would like your daughter to exhibit. These traits are all listed in The Girl Scout Law. A big bonus to girls who need a BFF (best friend forever) can also be found written in the “Law” — “to be a sister to every Girl Scout.” As the Service Unit Manager for the Girl Scouts in Midlothian, Laurie Lundberg can appreciate all of the advantages and guidance that the scouts can offer.

“I remember when the educational system was into values education,” she mused. “The Girl Scout Law already



Events like this Girl Scout cookie rally help girls learn about running their own business and managing money. Front row (l-r): Cora Brooks, Rebecca Lipsius, Hannah White, Amanda Lipsius and Aurora White. Middle row (l-r): Abby Hurd, Lauren Butler, Libby Minger, Kristen Kolessar, Charlsie Sims, Bailey Murray and Kara Kolessar. Back row (l-r): Derriene White and Jessica Brewer.

covers that. It is the essence of Girl Scouts. I mean, this is nothing new! The oldest set of values we have is in the Holy Bible.”

Laurie’s values are what brought the family to Texas from Redondo Beach, California. Husband Gregg was working

she said. “My husband’s family lives in Midlothian and his dad started Maxwell Wholesale Plumbing Supply. He ran it for about five or seven years and asked Gregg to come run the company. My whole family lived in California and I knew that if I moved, I would not be

Girl Scouts is about the girls and making friends. It is about being a sister to every Girl Scout, girls who will always be your friend.

14-hour days and did not usually leave the office until 7:00 or 8:00 p.m. For him to be involved with the children was difficult. Laurie herself was working in a demanding job for a hospital, editing the magazine, brochures and all other aspects of literature relating to her job. “Because of our schedules, it was the nanny who took the kids to practice,”

coming back. So, I agreed to move — if I could be home with the kids.

“When we moved here from California, I jumped into being involved with the kids. If I am going to be a part of something then I take a leadership role. It is a pet peeve of mine that if you are going to complain about something, then do something about it. It has



Great things are happening in Our Schools



Kindergarten (Pre-K) Roundup

for 2008-09 School Year
April 21-25, 9:00am-2:00pm

Register your kindergarten child at their assigned elementary campus during April 21-25, 2008 from 9:00am to 2:00pm.

Students who turn five on or before September 1, 2008 are eligible to register. Parents need to provide a valid driver's license and a copy of the child's complete immunization record, social security card, birth certificate and two proofs of residency.

Pre-kindergarten is for children age 4 on or before September 1, 2008, and have a limited ability to speak and/or comprehend English, are homeless, or whose family income allows the child to qualify for free or reduced lunch.

Students attending LaRue Miller Elementary will register at Mt. Peak Elementary.

MISD also offers a Head Start program as an option to Pre-K if the child qualifies. Contact Michelle Lewis at 972-775-4361 for additional information. Contact your campus for more information about the Bilingual Pre-K and Bilingual Kindergarten program.

**Shot Clinic: May 8th from 9:30-11:30;
1:00-3:30 at L.A. Mills
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Educational Showcase

Celebrating Students' Work

Mark your calendar for the fourth annual MISD Educational Showcase on May 7 from 6:30-8:30pm at MHS. This event is an opportunity for parents and community members to see meaningful lessons representing each content area in grades K-12. The public can visit the booths and listen to students explain their lessons. Various fine arts programs will be spotlighted as well.

For more information
call MISD at (972) 775-8296.

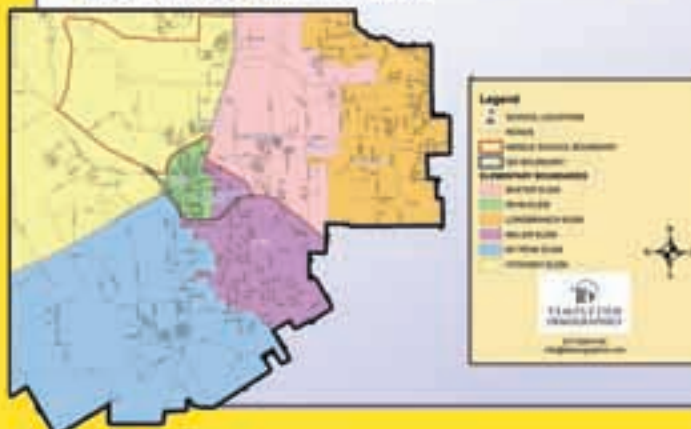


New Campus Attendance Zones for 2008-2009

MISD will have six elementary schools next school year. Elementary attendance zone changes have occurred with the opening of the new LaRue Miller Elementary School. Minor rezoning changes have been made to the two middle schools.

Has your child's elementary or middle school changed? Visit the MISD Web site to view the elementary rezoning map and a list of street names with the assigned campuses. Contact your child's campus for any questions.

Letters will be mailed to all students listing their assigned school and bus route information.



MISD eNews

Sign-up for district news and events via email. The MISD eNews is a free e-mail listserv that provides current and accurate information. Send your name and email address to subscribe@midlothian-isd.net

Calendar of Events

Find out what events are happening by visiting the MISD calendar page. You can access the athletic, campus, district, and testing calendar of events.

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been better for our family since we moved here and I have never looked back. I felt so much at home. It is a huge blessing to be in Midlothian. The school district has everything together. I am very impressed with the school."

One of the ways in which Laurie became involved with her children was to volunteer in her daughter Emily's Girl Scout troop. In 1999, she




(Above) Caitlyn Hamilton enjoys being a Girl Scout. (Below) The girls learn cooperation and teamwork during a cookie sale.



was asked if she wanted to be a leader in Girl Scouts. Even though she had no experience in the leadership role in scouts, she said yes. She stated, "I had no idea what I was doing. Girl Scouts emphasizes decision-making. The leader is there as advisor. The girls make all the decisions; for example, having a goal with the cookie money. Of course, they need help with their decisions, because young girls don't always have the tools or knowledge to make decisions. I give them options

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as to what it is they want to do. This is a great place for girls to try out for different things and where they can be exposed to lots of different activities. Girl Scouts is about the girls and making friends. It is about being a sister to every Girl Scout, girls who will always be your friend."

Girls can join all year long. The major fundraiser for the troops is



Brianna Dean takes a moment to share a friendly smile.

cookie sales. Girls also spend a lot of time having fun. Laurie said, "One of the troops is taking a cruise this summer. We go to the Salvation Army to do tent camping and horseback riding. We use the camps to learn Girl Scout ways such as the handshake and songs."

In addition to having her own troop, Laurie's duties as Service Unit Manager include providing guidance to all of the leaders in her area by conducting monthly meetings and service unit activities. The Girl Scout council of Northeast Texas provides free training to the leaders.

As the girls grow and progress through the various levels in Girl Scouts, they become more competent and confident; by the seventh grade, they are leading their own meetings. "They make more of the decisions on their



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own," Laurie said. "They decide which badge to work on and what activities they want. I don't think people realize how much stock being a Girl Scout will have on a college résumé."

As Eagle Scout is to Boy Scouts, the Gold Award is to Girl Scouts. This is the highest rank the girls can achieve. The requirements call for a commitment of time, effort and many times, money. The end result of all the hard work should be something, which has been accomplished for the good of the community — a need recognized and addressed in an outstanding way. Members can begin to participate in obtaining the Gold Award as young as 14 years of age. The girls can also receive scholarships.

Laurie feels very grateful for the support Midlothian gives to the scouts. "This community has been very generous. My church, First United Methodist Church, gave us a meeting space to have a Girl Scout room." Laughing, she stated, "I have a dream that we can remodel the Girls Scout's space to make it more attractive. We are looking for sponsors to improve the room."

Laurie enjoys her work with the girls, but acknowledges that more volunteers are needed. "We have 150 - 160 girls in Midlothian. There are 16 troops with 4 - 6 of the troops in middle school or above. There is always more work than people to do it. Most of the leaders we have now work. The best years of your life will go by in a blink. You will never hear me say I missed a soccer game because I was doing laundry. My most important job is being a parent. It is so rewarding, like sharing your faith in Jesus Christ. You don't know what it means unless you experience it."

Many programs exist to help girls develop into responsible, moral young ladies, but there are few with the history and proven results of the Girl Scouts. In being a sister to each other and helping one another reach mutual goals, Girl Scouts can be a girl's best friend. **NOW**

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— By Sandra McIntosh



At Home With

Dennis and Glenda Minter

As Dennis and Glenda Minter reminisce over 42 years of marriage, so many wonderful memories come to mind. They laugh as they look back on what brought them to Midlothian in October of 1976. "We were living in Lubbock, Texas, at the time," Dennis said. "My brother, Ronnie, and his wife, Charla, were already living in Midlothian. Ronnie told me that Gifford Hill was hiring." Dennis applied for the job and did not think much more about it, that was until he received a phone call and the offer he was unable to pass up. "I just



retired in July 2007," Dennis added.

During their first three years in Ellis County, Glenda remained at home where she continued to take care of their two children, Wade and Dionne. In 1979, the Minters decided the family needed a new, more reliable vehicle, so they purchased a used car. "We decided that I'd go back to work just long enough to help pay for the car," Glenda said, explaining that she took a position at David's Supermarket. "Twenty-one years and three months later, I was able to retire. Looking back, that was one very expensive Oldsmobile."

As the children grew up, graduated from Midlothian High School and moved out to start adult lives of their own, Dennis and Glenda once again listened to what Ronnie had to say when he prompted them to move into his neighborhood. "My brother lives nearby," Dennis explained. "We moved into the Midlothian Meadows edition when it was brand new. We'll celebrate our 14th year in this house later this month."

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the community to another, the Minters really did not downsize. Offered several floor plans from which to choose, they finally decided on the three-bedroom, two-bath abode they lovingly call home today. Many who are well-acquainted with the couple use the word "precious" to describe the home's interior. The overall structural style is traditional, but the decor of roses, roosters, chickens and lace Glenda has blended throughout the home gives it a romantic, Victorian style. In fact, when visitors first enter the home, they are greeted with the clean, fresh scent of green tea and

lilies, followed by collections as grand as they are positively overwhelming. "There's absolutely no doubt, chickens are my favorite collectible," Glenda said, further explaining she did not start collecting until she moved to Midlothian. "We vacation every year with Ronnie and Charla in Branson, Missouri, and Eureka Springs, Arkansas," Glenda added. "Every vacation means another chicken that Charla and I add to our collections." Glenda is also careful not to forget all the wonderful "pretties" she has received from Dennis over the years. "The large white and

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black chicken was a gift from Dennis this past Christmas," Glenda said, pointing to her latest Fitz and Floyd acquisition displayed with many others on the brick fireplace hearth.

Over the years, Glenda has amassed no fewer than 400 feathered friends in all shapes, sizes and textures imaginable. They are found throughout the house: from the den and kitchen to the dining room and master bedroom. When asked to name her favorite, Glenda was unable to do so. "They're all so special to me that it's hard to pick a favorite," she said. "I love the Fitz and Floyd, but I guess I have to pick the Character Collectibles because they look so real."

Her second favorite collectible is found in her roses. Every shade of pink in the color spectrum can be found in the swags and matching curtains, the tabletop centerpieces and in the wallpaper choices. The guest bedroom and matching bathroom also boast floral wallpaper and a handmade Amish quilt detailed in beige and green with three-dimensional rosebuds. "The quilt and matching curtains were bought in Branson," Glenda said. "So much of what's in the house came from Branson." Dennis and Glenda both agree it has taken many years to decorate the home, but the trips will no doubt last a lifetime.

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The only room that does not boast of Glenda's collectibles is a room that Dennis likes to call the "man's room." "The man's room has a treadmill and stationary bicycle in it," Dennis said, further explaining his need to work out on a daily basis since undergoing knee replacement surgery. Dennis' room may not carry out the same theme as the rest of the house, but he just happens to be a modest collector, too. Before the surgery, Dennis remembers spending long afternoons on the area lakes. A shelf shaped like a boat, also bought in Branson, displays subtle reminders of times when he was able to fish. The



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room is filled with fishing trophies and framed photographs of the "ones that did not get away," as well as Coke memorabilia, John Deere collectibles and several Teddy bears.

A recent photograph (taken in January) almost brings the couple to tears, as Dennis retells the story of their first deer hunting trip. "Our son left us up in a deer stand with two lounge chairs, a single-shot rifle and one bullet," Dennis remembered, as if it were just yesterday. "I felt like Barney Fife on the *Andy Griffith Show*." On that first day, Dennis came back to camp telling of the 16-point buck they

saw, but were unable to take a shot at. "My son didn't believe me," Dennis explained. "On the third day, I was able to prove my son wrong. We came home with a 16-point buck that weighed 153 and 3/8 pounds on the Boone Crocket scale." They continued to laugh aloud as they were reminded that they were only allowed one bullet. "We had a great time," Dennis said, as Glenda continued to smile. "We're amazed at what we came home with."

Glenda takes great pride in being able to put anything and everything to



good use in the decorating process. "I don't discard anything," she said, as she pointed to several home interior pieces. "I'm always moving things around to make changes." Glenda has successfully merged her passions with a few antique items that once belonged to the women on Dennis' side of the family. Those items include a doll that is probably 90 years old displayed in the formal dining area, a large 5-foot mirror hung in the entryway and a bonnet and apron, which complete the ensemble for the "little lady from Branson" who takes her rightful place in the breakfast nook.

Life for Dennis and Glenda has been quite a journey. There have been ups and downs mixed with laughter and tears, but they would not trade a moment of it. "We learned a lot the hard way," Glenda said, "but they were lessons worth the pain of learning." **NOW**

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Life's Transitions

— By Betty Tryon

Life can get in the way of your plans. Sometimes, life's interruptions work out better than you ever imagined. James Wann, employed since 1993 at Siemens Electrocom as a field service engineer and contract manager, stayed busy with his 52 teams in the field. "I have been in every major city in this country at least once," he stated. "I'm also a hair stylist, but mostly only to friends and family now."

One day with no warning, his life changed. "For no apparent reason, my right foot swelled up and was all bruised. I had pain you would not believe. I went to many doctors and specialists, had tests done, and no one could diagnose what was wrong. I became unable to continue my job, so the company gave me a desk job teaching others in the field. Finally, a family doctor in Grand Prairie diagnosed my problem as having gout in my foot. Then, the gout showed up in my hand. I told my wife, Candi, that I would have to go back to school because I couldn't cut hair anymore. All I knew how to do was sing."



James Wann sings with his group, New Life Vocal Band.

After checking his options, James decided to attend Navarro College. "Dr. Harold Nolte, dean of students in Waxahachie, said to me that academics are the same wherever you go, so he suggested I try the campus in Midlothian. I want to study music so I attend the Corsicana campus. I have to drive 105 miles every day. I am now a full-time student, and I cut hair when I can." James wants to earn his bachelor's degree in music vocal performance. "With vocal performance, you are pretty limited in what you can do. You can teach or perform. I am headed for worship ministry. My heart tells me this is what I should do. After Navarro, I want to attend University of North Texas or Dallas Baptist University." While at Navarro, he is a part of the Collegiate Choral, the

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Chamber Singers and the Show Choir, which is a select choir — all at Navarro College, Corsicana campus. His talent and skill in singing earned him an impressive position as first tenor in the state choir.

“I have been told that a vocal



performance degree is one of the hardest to get because of all the pressure of being on the spot. You have to perform in front of a jury of music administrators every semester to get a pass or fail grade,” he explained. “I can sing in front of a thousand people with no problem, but in front of a jury, I get nervous with a lump in my throat.” James has no trouble singing on the praise team for his church, First Baptist Church in Midlothian. “I like to dance and get lively,” he said.

James is now a member of the Southern Gospel Music Association (SGMA) with his band the New Life Vocal Band. James stated, “If you listen to our group, you realize that anyone can be the lead: me, Dad Bob, Jack Titus and Bill Sides. At the Fall Festival for SGMA, we performed ‘At the Cross’ and Bill, our first tenor, just nailed it. The crowd loved it. You can see it in their eyes when a song touches someone; that’s why we do it. Contemporary Christian music is repetitive to get you in the mood for the pastor’s sermon. Gospel music is almost a sermon itself. When I sing ‘Had It Not Been,’ I get choked up every time I sing it. I feel the song so strongly.”



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Singing is not the only art form that has captured James' passion. His accomplishments reach into the world of stage performers. He elaborated, "I participate in local public theatre. I had been trying out for a role in Waxahachie, but was told my voice was needed in *Godspell* in Ennis, so I went there. *Godspell* at Ennis Public Theatre was their most successful show in 24 years."

James has performed in many other



James as the assistant to the shopkeeper in *Hello Dolly*.

plays. "My first primary role was in *Hello Dolly* as the assistant to the shopkeeper." He added, "One of my favorite roles was as one of the fathers in *Fantasticks* at a dinner theatre." James is looking forward to trying out for the *Music Man* for the role of Harold Hill, the con man who defrauds parents out of their money by convincing them he can teach their children to play instruments.

"I love the theatre and I am disappointed that we don't have a theater in Midlothian. Fifty percent of the lead roles in Waxahachie's theatre are held by Midlothians. With the new auditorium at the high school, that would be perfect for a summertime musical. I think we are missing a big opportunity. I would jump at the chance to be involved in theatre here even if I could just sweep the floors to help out." Whether James performs in Waxahachie, Ennis or perhaps in Midlothian sometime in the future, his talent will continue to bring pleasure to us all. **ARTS NOW**

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To Endure is to Win

Midlothian High School's track team for the 2007/2008 school year placed eighth in Division 4-A at the state track meet.

— By Betty Tryon

Their hearts pound at what feels like 100 miles an hour. The saliva in their mouths disappears. Leg muscles are getting heavy and feel sore. They tell themselves, just a few more miles to go. Then, their second wind comes and they feel as if they can do anything. The life of long distance runners requires pushing themselves further than they ever thought possible.

With the guidance and tutelage of Coach Cindy Williams, the cross-country team's performance in 2007 demonstrated they could push themselves further and the results were impressive. Midlothian qualified for the state meet by competing against the top three teams from each of the four regions in Texas for a total of 12 teams. At state, the Midlothian team placed eighth in Division 4-A. That is one place better than 2006 when the team placed ninth. While all the individuals gave a valiant effort, some individual team members performed exceptionally well. The top two runners from Midlothian were Kyle Lister and Carly Kitts. Kyle, a senior, earned ninth place in Division 4-A, running 15 minutes and 56 seconds in the 3K race. Carly, a freshman, placed sixth in Division 4-A, running 11 minutes and 38 seconds for two miles. Two more individuals, Raylon Evans who placed 22nd and Neal Ellis who placed 24th, did a great job representing MHS.

It has taken a lot of hard work and skill to reach that point. Coach Williams comes from a sports-rich background. She graduated from Southern Arkansas in Magnolia where she majored in physical education and health and received her bachelor's degree in science education. She has coached during most of her 24 years of teaching. She is very proud of her Midlothian cross-country team and rightly so. "It takes a special type of athlete to do what they do," she said. "They train so hard. They start training early in the morning around 6:30 and run their mileage at night. Running becomes a part of their lives. These kids are very dedicated."

Kyle knows all about dedication. He started in track in his freshman year. Originally, basketball was his primary sport, but in his sophomore year he switched to cross-country. That decision served him well. Serving as team captain, the year of 2007 was his second year back-to-back, going to state. In 2006, he placed 90th in state. One year later he placed 9th. When asked about his greatly improved showing, Kyle responded thoughtfully: "Running has a lot to do with pain. I learned how to run. If you're not experienced, when you feel pain, you slow down. When I was a freshman, I had a back injury and wasn't running naturally. Feeling tired and

Sports NOW



Freshman Carly Kitts (above) leaps to win during competition.

Senior Kyle Lister (below) sprints to the finish line.



worn out is OK. But a sharp pain, such as when I tore a muscle in my hamstring, is not OK. I started running because I wanted to do good in something. I'm not running just to win, but to dedicate it to something, to God, my family and friends. It motivates me to go faster. I like competing. Some of my friends ask me why I run and put myself through the pain. I like doing something others can't understand why I do it. I also like the team. We get along well. I have grown with everyone on the team."

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Carly shares similar feelings about the team. She stated, "The team is friendlier than others I've been on. We just click. It is very rewarding. I ran over the summer and worked up to 40 miles a week. It took ten weeks to get

"The runners must eat correctly. Hydrating is huge, with no carbonated drinks."

there, but I liked it a lot. It feels good when I run. You feel as if you've achieved something when you finish." Carly ran track in middle school, but had to wait until high school to be on the cross-country team. Coach Williams knew Carly in middle school and was aware of her running abilities, especially when she ran the mile in under seven minutes.

Students do not have to be perfectly fit athletes to join the team. According to Coach Williams, "Some come to get in shape and some just to enjoy the experience." Whether they are in tip-top shape or not, good nutrition is a must. Coach Williams said, "The runners must eat correctly. Hydrating is huge, with no carbonated drinks. I have a meeting at the beginning of the season with the parents regarding nutrition. The team members are self-motivators. By the time they are seniors, they know what to do. Kyle acknowledged, "I get side stitches, so I constantly watch how I drink."

For some, preparation for the race starts the night before. Carly stated, "I don't like to talk much. I eat and drink a lot the night before and I pray right before the gun goes off." Kyle said, "A lot of people think they can't do it, but they can. You can do whatever is in front of you even if you get last place." Coach Williams agreed and said, "It's about growth." **NOW**

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The Man Behind the Smiles — By Alex Allred

In cinematic history, one of the most terrifying and bone chilling scenes comes from the movie, *The Marathon Man*, when dentistry is used as a form of torture. In that moment, audiences recoiled in horror and dentists around the world cringed. “All it takes is one traumatic childhood experience,” Dr. Davis Morgan said. He is all too aware of the long-term ramifications of a bad experience in the dentist chair or even watching one in a movie theater.

When you meet Davis, however, any negative stereotype you may have had of a dentist is gone. His quiet, laid-back manner instantly puts his patients at ease. He is an outgoing, friendly man, who is quite versatile on a variety of topics. A former athlete, he continues

to work out three times a week at the Main Street Gym, plays the guitar, hunts, plays golf and cooks. As a true lover of the arts, Davis sees art in everything he does, including dentistry. “There really is an art to cosmetic dentistry,” Davis said. “Dentistry gave me an avenue to express myself.”

While the state requires dentists to take at least 12 hours of additional training courses per year, since the field of dentistry is always evolving, Davis has taken up to 100 hours and continues to pursue more. “I know that if I want to meet a standard of excellence, I have to earn those credentials. Plus,” he smiled, “I love continued education. It keeps me motivated.”

The love of education is something

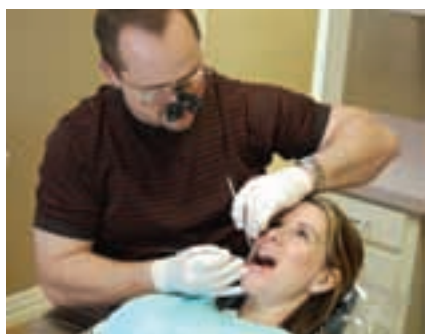
he comes by naturally. As the youngest son of two educators, Davis grew up traveling from school district to school district, while his parents served in the public school system. During his high school years, his father was the principal. “So, naturally I was involved in everything.” From football to choir, Davis learned to engage in anything and everything he could, but it was art and science, his two areas of constant interest that drove him toward the medical field. Briefly, he entertained becoming a doctor, but, “I really like the model of business in dentistry,” he said. It allowed Davis to be more independent and flexible for his wife, Trina, and their growing family.

The story of the Morgan marriage

Business NOW

reads like a storybook. They met as sophomores in high school and were instantly smitten. After his junior year, having survived his first summer away from her, Davis returned home from a job in the oil fields and announced they had to get married. He married his beautiful high school sweetheart and together they had three children, now 16, 21 and 27 years old.

While Davis is quick to point out how instrumental his parents were in



his education, he is truly a self-made man, graduating from Baylor Dental School in 1989 and opening his first practice just one year later. Two years later, Davis and Trina settled in Midlothian, and today, they manage a thriving business on 7th Street in downtown Midlothian. To a first-time patient, the office itself is impressive with rich colors and fabric, hand stenciled walls (by Trina) and patient rooms creatively decorated with fishing and birdhouse themes. But it is the man behind the diplomas and certifications who is most impressive.

"He loves what he does because he knows he can make a difference in someone's life," Trina said, noting that he not only loves what he does, "he's excited about what he does." "If I can give someone hope, make them normal again, bring them good health," said Davis, "that's what I strive for." That, and a really great smile.

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Definitely Smarter Than a Fifth-grader

— By Betty Tryon

The first thing noticed when entering Lynn Tex's fifth grade classroom at J.R. Irvin Elementary School are the bulldogs that decorate the wall behind her desk. "I tell the students that the posters and signs I put up for math and other things around the room are for them," Lynn said. "The bulldog pictures are for me. They make me smile." A smile is a great way to start the day, especially with the demanding day ahead teaching fifth graders the intricacies in the world of math.

"The fifth grade is a hard year for the kids. There are all of the things they've learned and we expand on it. If they don't get it, they are lost."

Because of the weight of the material to be taught and learned, Lynn's disciplined approach, most particularly at the beginning of the school year, challenges the students to excel.

Lynn stated, "I am pretty strict because I want them to learn. A professor of mine always said, 'You can always get nice, but you can't start nice or they will run all over you.' A student said to me she was unhappy when she found out she was in my



class, but after being in the class she said, 'You are nice.' Up until the fifth grade, the kids are babied. Fifth grade can feel as if they have hit a brick wall, because we are making them responsible. They come in to my class and they are leery and scared. My reputation is I'm hard, but I am not mean."

Lynn's determination to help her students learn has reaped happy rewards. "I received a letter from a parent about her son who is now in junior high, but was in my class in the fifth grade. Her son came home from school and said they had talked about order of operation in his math class. The only kids in the classroom who knew what the teacher was talking about were the ones from Irvin. The mother said her son and the other Irvin kids felt so smart!"

Lynn teaches three 90-minute classes of math each day and one 30-minute social studies class. Her approach to encouraging responsibility extends to social studies as well. "I make the students learn



Education NOW

how to take notes on a 3x5 card. I have them read a chapter and choose the most important information to write on the one card. When they read the information, it is gone; when they write it, they learn it. They always want more cards to write on but I say, 'No, you have to stick to one.' I do this



'You can always get nice, but you can't start nice or they will run all over you.'

the last half of the class. If I give it to them early they have a fit," she said smiling. A mother contacted Lynn to tell her how years later, her daughter is grateful she learned such a useful tool.

During Lynn's teaching career, she has taught language arts, reading, social studies and math — all in the fifth grade. She enjoys teaching math the most. Lynn explained, "I like math because it is so black and white. My TAKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills) scores have been nice, mostly in the 90s, but every year I worry about it. I am responsible for all the fifth-graders in math. I tutor about 17 students after school for an hour. That hour after school flies. We go over mostly problems on the TAKS test. Fractions and division are the hardest skills."

During the course of a year, the students learn factors, multiples, probabilities, decimals, fractions, some algebraic formulas such as $(9+4)+0=0+n$, and geometry, mostly naming geometric shapes. In the

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classroom is a large poster of Mountain Math, a math program used in many classrooms. There are 24 problems on the board and each problem represents a different math concept. These problems are worked during the week. Each week there is a new set of problems, once again representing a different concept.



Lynn said, "I like it because of the repetition. Anything that can be repeated helps them learn. It takes them half a year to get it, but they do. I like the ones who ask questions, at least they are trying."

Lynn can appreciate hard work because her educational journey was filled with challenges. As the mother of five children, she decided to become a teacher because of them. It took many years, since she was parenting her children along the way. "When I started school, I had a 2 year old and a 1 year old. By the end of that first school year I was pregnant with twins," she remembered. "I went to school part-time and finished in 1995 from UTA (University of Texas at Arlington) with a Bachelor of Arts in education and a minor in history."

She expects a lot from her students and receives a lot in return. With 14 years of teaching to her credit, Lynn has found her niche with the fifth-graders. **NOW**

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The turnout at the Midlothian Expo, top left, was great as evidenced by the crowd shot. A ribbon cutting, top right, was held at Madearis Studios. The Midlothian Pantherettes, second row left, won numerous awards at the American Regionals held at Rowlett High School. Several attendees, bottom left, posed for a photo at the Chamber Awards Banquet. Lonnie and Brady Rapp, second row middle, relaxed before dinner at the MHS Cheerleader Banquet. Ribbon cuttings were held at the U.S. Army recruiting office, middle right, and at Lakeridge Storage, bottom right.





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Around Town NOW



Jana Hathorne, top left, represented the MISD at the Expo. Stuart Pryor, middle top, was the recipient of the Gene Rodgers Community Service Award. Danny Rodgers and Paul Nelson made the presentation. The Midlothian wrestling team, top right, held a party marking the end of another successful season. Paul Nelson and Paula Bascum, second row left, presented the Small Business Award of Excellence to Amy Foshee Holmes. Ashley Cox and Danielle Crespo, bottom left, passed out lollipops during the Chamber Expo. The jazz band known as Mirage, second row middle, provided the entertainment during the "All That Jazz" evening event. Ribbon cuttings were held at Vintage Bank, third row right, and Lights Galore and More, bottom right.

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Look Who's Cooking

— By Stephanie Brewer

IN THE KITCHEN WITH LAURIE JONES

Laurie is a dedicated wife of 13 years and mother of two beautiful girls, Reagan, 7, and Grayson, 2. She experienced the joys of cooking by watching her mom and grandmother in the kitchen as a youngster. "As a child I used to love to bake homemade bread," Laurie said.

Laurie is all about comfort foods. She enjoys reading cookbooks and scouring the food sections of newspapers for new recipes. "I love Paula Deen and Rachel Ray. I'm a cookbook junkie," Laurie added.

While growing up, Laurie's mother experimented with new recipes and they would watch cooking shows together on TV. "Someday I would love to go to culinary school," she said. "In the meantime, I could spend hours and tons of money in Central Market." **NOW**

To view more of your neighbors' recipes, visit our archives at www.nowmagazines.com.

PROSCIUTTO PINWHEELS

- 1 sheet frozen puff pastry, thawed
- 4 Tbsp. honey mustard
- 1/4 lb. thinly sliced prosciutto, chopped
- 1 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 egg
- 2 Tbsp. water

Preheat oven to 400 F. Roll out pastry on a lightly floured board into the shape of a rectangle. Thin dough slightly with a rolling pin. Spread mustard on pastry. Arrange the prosciutto evenly to cover all the pastry; sprinkle with cheese. Lightly press the cheese into the prosciutto with a rolling pin. Starting at the long end, roll up the pastry like a jelly roll just to the middle of the dough; roll the other side the same way. Where the two rolls meet in the center, use a small amount of water to seal. Using a serrated knife, cut the rolls into 1/2-inch slices. Place the slices on a lightly greased cookie sheet. Flatten slightly with a spatula. Refrigerate at least 15 minutes or until ready to bake. Beat egg with 2 Tbsp. of water; brush each pinwheel with egg wash. Bake 15 minutes, until lightly golden. Turn pinwheels over

and bake 5 - 10 minutes more. Serve warm.

BLT BITES

- 20 - 25 cherry tomatoes
- 1 lb. bacon, cooked and crumbled
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1/3 cup green onions, chopped
- 3 Tbsp. grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 Tbsp. snipped fresh parsley

Cut a thin slice off each tomato top and a very thin slice off each tomato bottom so that it will stand up. Scoop out and discard pulp. Invert the tomatoes on a paper towel to drain. In a small bowl, combine all remaining ingredients; mix well. Spoon mixture into tomatoes. Refrigerate for several hours.

BACON WRAPS

- 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
 - 2 tsp. garlic salt or powder
 - 12 slices uncooked bacon
 - 24 4-1/2-inch long sesame bread sticks (one package)
- Preheat oven to 350 F. Mix Parmesan cheese

with garlic salt or powder in a shallow bowl; set aside. Cut slices of bacon in half so that each is approximately 5 inches long. Wrap one piece of bacon around a bread stick, starting at one end of bread stick and finishing at other end (the bacon adheres to sesame bread sticks better than plain bread sticks). Place on a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper. Repeat this process, using all of the bread sticks. Bake for approximately 15 minutes, or until bacon is browned. Remove from cookie sheet and immediately roll bacon wraps in cheese mixture. Let cool and serve at room temperature.

ARTICHOKE DIP

- 2 14-oz. cans artichoke hearts, drained
 - 1 cup mayonnaise
 - 1 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
 - 3 cloves garlic, minced
 - dash Tabasco pepper sauce
- Preheat oven to 350 F. Chop the artichokes; mix with remaining ingredients. Place mixture in a casserole dish and bake until thoroughly heated

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THAI CHICKEN STRUDEL

10 sheets phyllo dough
2 large boneless, skinless chicken breasts
3/4 cup bottled oriental peanut sauce
2 carrots, julienned or grated
2 green onions, chopped
1 cup grated Monterey Jack cheese
2 Tbsp. chopped cilantro (stems removed)
1 stick butter, melted

Preheat oven to 375 F. Keep phyllo dough covered with damp dish towel while working. Boil chicken breasts in water that is seasoned with carrot and celery, or boil in chicken broth. Shred chicken; mix with the peanut sauce, carrots, onions, cheese and cilantro. Filling may be made ahead and refrigerated. Butter baking sheet and lay out 1 slice phyllo, brush with butter. Repeat layers until all 10 sheets are used. Sprinkle the chicken mixture along the long side of the dough. Roll up and bake seam side down on a jelly-roll pan because the peanut sauce is oily. Bake 20 - 30 minutes, until golden. Slice in 1-inch slices. Serve on small plates with forks. NOTE: As an alternative, that makes for an easier way to serve, I have made this recipe using phyllo cups instead of the sheets. Simply place the filling in the individual cups and bake as directed.

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Use Your Refund Wisely

— By Clay Money, CLU, LUTCF

So your 1040 is filed and you are now anxiously waiting for your refund. What do you plan on doing with it? Go on that long-awaited cruise, get a new set of golf clubs or buy that wide-screen TV you have had your eye on? There are so many ways you could spend your refund, but there may be better alternatives to consider.

According to the Internal Revenue Service, over 75 percent of American taxpayers received a federal tax refund, with the average around \$2,500. It is what you do with your refund now that may create a better financial future for you and your family later on.

Instead of spending your refund this year, consider funding an Individual Retirement Arrangement (IRA), setting up a college savings fund for a child or paying down credit card debt. These options will help to improve your financial situation.

First on your list of priorities should be paying down any high-interest credit card debts you have incurred.

By paying only the minimum each month, you may be paying just the interest (or less) on the debt, with little or nothing going toward the principal. Paying down the debt can free up additional money for other important financial needs.

If debt is not a problem, your tax refund could provide you an excellent opportunity to fund an existing IRA or establish a new one. For the 2007 tax year, you can contribute up to \$4,000 to an IRA. If you are 50 years or older by December 31, 2007, you can add an additional \$1,000 to the account. Making a tax-deductible contribution to a traditional IRA is an option if you are not participating in an employer-sponsored retirement plan or, if you are participating, your adjusted gross income falls within

eligibility guidelines.

A Roth IRA may be a more appropriate choice, depending on your eligibility. Contributions to a Roth IRA are not tax deductible. However, qualified distributions are received free from federal income tax.

Your refund could also be used to fund a Coverdell Education Savings Account (ESA) or 529 Plan for your child. Contributions are not deductible, but withdrawals to pay qualified educational expenses are free from

federal income tax.

One thing to remember after you have decided the fate of this year's refund: the check you received is not a windfall, rather it is the return of an interest-free loan you provided the government.

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may get from receiving a large check each tax year, adjusting the amount withheld by Uncle Sam to reduce the amount of future refunds may be an appropriate course. You may not get a refund in April, but there may be more in each paycheck to contribute to a Coverdell ESA, 529 Plan, IRA or to pay down debt throughout the year.

Take some time to consider your options before making the down payment on that cabin cruiser. The earlier you start saving for your future, the more you may have during your retirement.

If you have questions about these options and others, you owe it to yourself to contact a financial services professional that you know and trust. Your financial future may depend on it. **YOW!**

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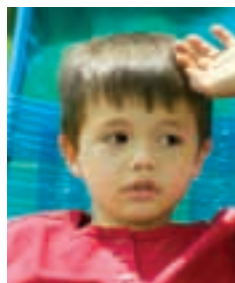
— By Betty Tryon

A mother shopping with her son had dressed him in an unusual T-shirt. It read "I'm not a bad boy; I have autism." There you have it — the incredible challenge parents face as they integrate their autistic child into society. The cause of autism, a developmental disorder in the brain, has not been fully determined. It could be either hereditary or environmental or both. Part of the social stigma stems from the fact that although the child looks normal, by common social standards he or she behaves inappropriately.

The most defining trait of autism is social dysfunction, and poor social

interaction is descriptive of one form of the disorder. The child's behavior does not result from lack of parental or personal discipline. He lacks control over his behavior, exhibiting characteristics such as: avoiding bodily and eye contact and resisting human touch like cuddling or hugging.

The autistic child also behaves in an awkward manner socially due to problems with verbal and non-verbal communication. The child may speak phrases repeatedly or may never speak at all. Autistic children demonstrate difficulties in interpreting facial expressions or cues that others may be sending about a social situation. They also lack empathy — the ability to understand another person's feelings. As a result, many autistic children can initially make friends, but the friendships typically do not last long.



Another manifestation in their social behavior is repetitive movements, which appear purposeless, such as body rocking and flapping of arms. They may engage in the self-destructive behavior of biting themselves. Compulsive and ritualistic

behavior are also a part of the disorder, and children afflicted with autism may become highly agitated if routines or schedules are changed. Stability becomes an anchor to them in their unstable world.

All children affected with this disorder will display symptoms differently and with degrees varying from mild to extreme. Consequently, the disorder can be a huge challenge for a family, but the autistic child can improve with treatment and with age. Treatment focuses on educational and behavioral interventions tailored to the child's needs. Medications are directed toward



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Although there is no cure, there is hope that with intervention, the child can learn and gain a modest amount of independence. The earlier the intervention, the more positive the outcome. The amount of support needed to sustain people with autism as they grow into adults will be directly proportional to the severity of the disorder. The National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke conducts research in order to better understand the nature of this disorder and to find and provide relief.

You can find more information about this subject at www.autism-society.org, the Autism Society of America. **NOW**

This article is for general information purposes only and does not constitute medical advice. Consult with your physician for questions regarding this topic.

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April 2008

Community Calendar

Every Tuesday

Midlothian Rotary Club meeting, noon, Midlothian Civic Center, 224 South 11th Street. (972) 775-7118.

Second and Fourth Tuesdays

Midlothian City Council meeting, 6:00 p.m., City Hall, 104 West Avenue E.

First and Third Thursdays

Midlothian Lions Club meeting, 7:00 p.m., Midlothian Civic Center, 224 S. 11th Street. (972) 775-7118.

Thursdays

American Sign Language class, 7:00 - 8:00 p.m., Meadows Library. Mrs. Shelley Barrett, a certified ASL instructor, will offer the class for \$10. Contact Susie Yarbrow at Susie_Yarbrow@Midlothian-isd.net or (972) 775-3417, ext. 1061 or 1057.

April 3

Early Registration for Navarro College Summer and Fall 2008 classes begins. Contact Navarro College.

April 5

MISD Band Booster Fundraiser, noon - 4:00 p.m. MISD Multi-Purpose Stadium Trash-off.

April 7

American Business Women's Association

(ABWA), Great Visions Charter Chapter Midlothian Monthly meeting, 6:15 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center. \$10.00 for dinner. Please RSVP to Amanda Miller at (972) 948-0811. Guests are welcome! Visit www.midlothianabwa.com.

April 8

Leadership Midlothian Health Care and Medical Day, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Leads to Success Group meeting, 8:00 a.m., Chamber offices.

April 12

"What to Know About Forming Your Own Business" presented by attorney Vernon Witherspoon, 10:00 a.m., 2nd @ Main Place. Free admission. RSVP to Julia at (972) 721-0017 or mainplaceinfo@sbcglobal.net.

April 12-13

Waxahachie Trade Days, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Ellis County Expo Center, 2300 W. US Hwy. 287, Waxahachie. Contact Gerald Huckabee (903) 865-1385.

April 16

Midlothian Community Blood Drive, sponsored by Carter Blood Center, 8:00 a.m. - noon, Northwest corner of Midlothian City Hall. Anyone is welcome to donate. Contact Tina L. Raz at (972) 775-7127 for more information.

April 19

The Midlothian FFA Booster Club's 6th Annual Golf Tournament, Tangle Ridge Golf Course in Grand Prairie. Teams, individual players and hole sponsors are invited to participate. For information and entry forms, contact Tom Henry at (972) 291-7382 or tnhenry@juno.com.

April 21

MISD Board Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Administration Building.

MISD Kindergarten Roundup, 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Parents/guardians are encouraged to register their child at their assigned elementary campus. Students attending the new LaRue Miller Elementary will register at Mt. Peak Elementary. For more information, visit www.midlothian-isd.net.

April 24

Leads to Success Group meeting, 8:00 a.m., Chamber offices.

To have your events posted on the community calendar, e-mail us at: btryon.nowmag@sbcglobal.net.

For more community events, visit our online calendar at www.nowmagazines.com.

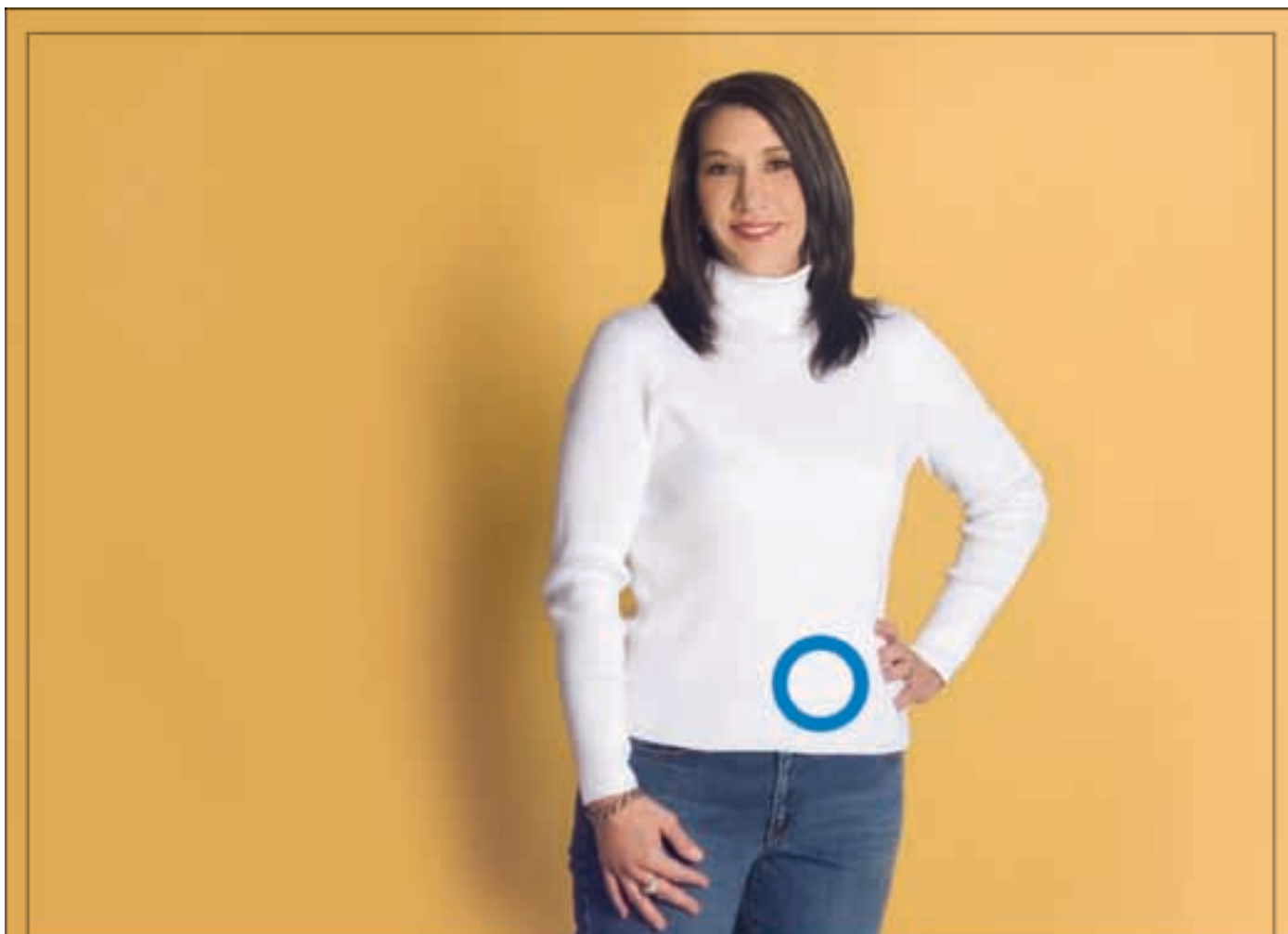


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When nurse Renee O'Daniel saw the success of her weight loss surgery patients, she says, “I wanted the surgery, myself.” That was 100 pounds ago. Two years after bariatric surgery at Baylor Waxahachie, Renee says, “I feel wonderful. I had diabetes and asthma before. Now my diabetes is totally controlled without medicine, and I haven't used my inhaler since.” Baylor's comprehensive weight loss program offers advanced weight loss surgery as well as support and education before and after surgery. “Everything is different,” she says. “People open doors for you.”

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Individual results may vary.

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