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# Waxahachie NOW

M A G A Z I N E

April 2009

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a Fire**

**Big Cat Lady**

**Touching  
Lives More  
Abundantly**

**The Game From a  
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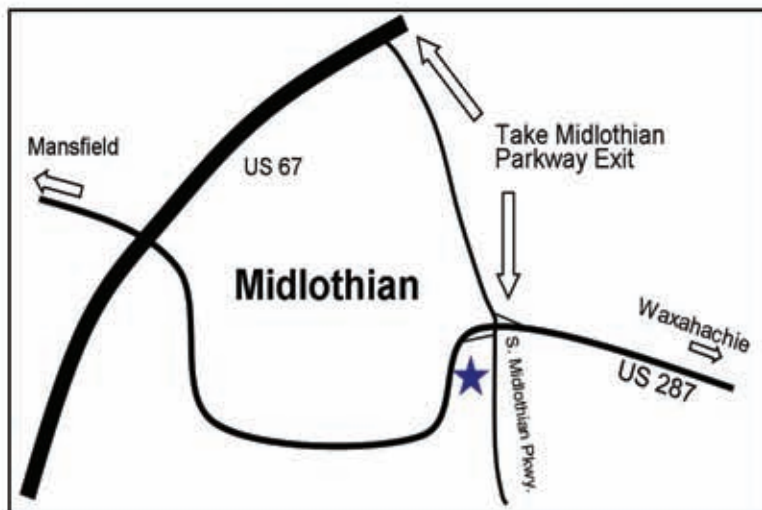
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## Editor's Note

*Hello, Waxahachie!*

April showers are said to bring May flowers. As for me, I am hoping that statement is true once again this year. It is time we all added some living color to our lives; put the gray days of winter aside and enjoy the brilliant colors that spring and summer have to offer.

Brilliant colors will also be found at the Ellis County Art Association Fine Art Center, located at 501 West Main Street, on Friday, April 3, from 5:30-7:00 p.m. The evening will celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Youth Art Show with floor to ceiling original artwork from our area youth, which will include paintings, sculptures, drawings and photographs. Once again this year, it promises to be one of the most impressive youth events held in North Texas. Make the time to stop by. I guarantee you will not regret it.

*Sandra McIntosh*  
WaxahachieNOW Editor



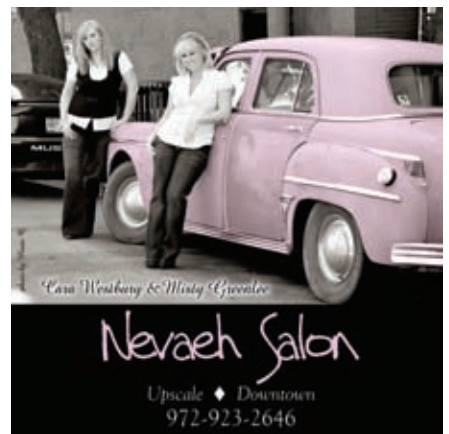
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*Jackie shared a hug with her grandchildren, Jason and Jordan.*

# Touching More Lives Abundantly

— By Sandra McIntosh

Jackie Rosenberger uses her disability as a stepping stone to bigger and better things. Born legally blind has not stopped her from graduating from college, marrying Karl, the man of her dreams, and rearing a family. “At 16, I realized I’d never be able to drive,” she remembered. “That was a crisis that caused some anger.” She soon realized she would have to work through her anger if she were ever going to move forward. “It is what it is,” she said. “I think my flaws and imperfections help my clients feel comfortable. It makes it easier for them to relate.”

When Jackie speaks of her clients, she is referring to the individuals and couples she sees as a psychotherapist at the Wellness Center. Her mother said she has been counseling since she was about 6 years old. “I guess you could say I have

always had the desire to be a counselor,” Jackie smiled.

Her education was acquired while she lived in Pennsylvania. She attended Chatham College, an all-women’s campus, and loved the entire experience. She then moved on to the University of Pittsburgh where she earned a master’s degree in social work. Throughout her tenure as a “person who helps others,” Jackie has worked in several hospitals. “Karl, the kids and I moved to Boston in 1980,” she explained further. “I took a position as the director of the New Hope Counseling Center. I worked alongside five other counselors and several students who were working to earn their internship hours.”

Jackie, who loved her work at New Hope, reflected on the time when she and Karl decided they were going to move to Texas. “Our sons had moved down here for the work,” she said, also mentioning that both her sons are professional engineers. “They encouraged us to come, too.” Once they arrived in January of 2006, Jackie quickly realized that retirement was not for her, at least not right now. “I wasn’t ready to retire,” she admitted. “My calling has always been to help others. I still felt the need to continue helping others.”

Soon after coming to the realization that Jackie was not ready to lay her counseling credentials down, she was offered a position at the Wellness Center. For Jackie, it felt like home almost immediately. “I counsel mostly with adults; marriage counseling as well as individual,” she stated. “I really enjoy counseling couples. I help them find a way to be less focused on themselves. I try to help them smooth out their rough edges, and we all have faults and rough edges.”



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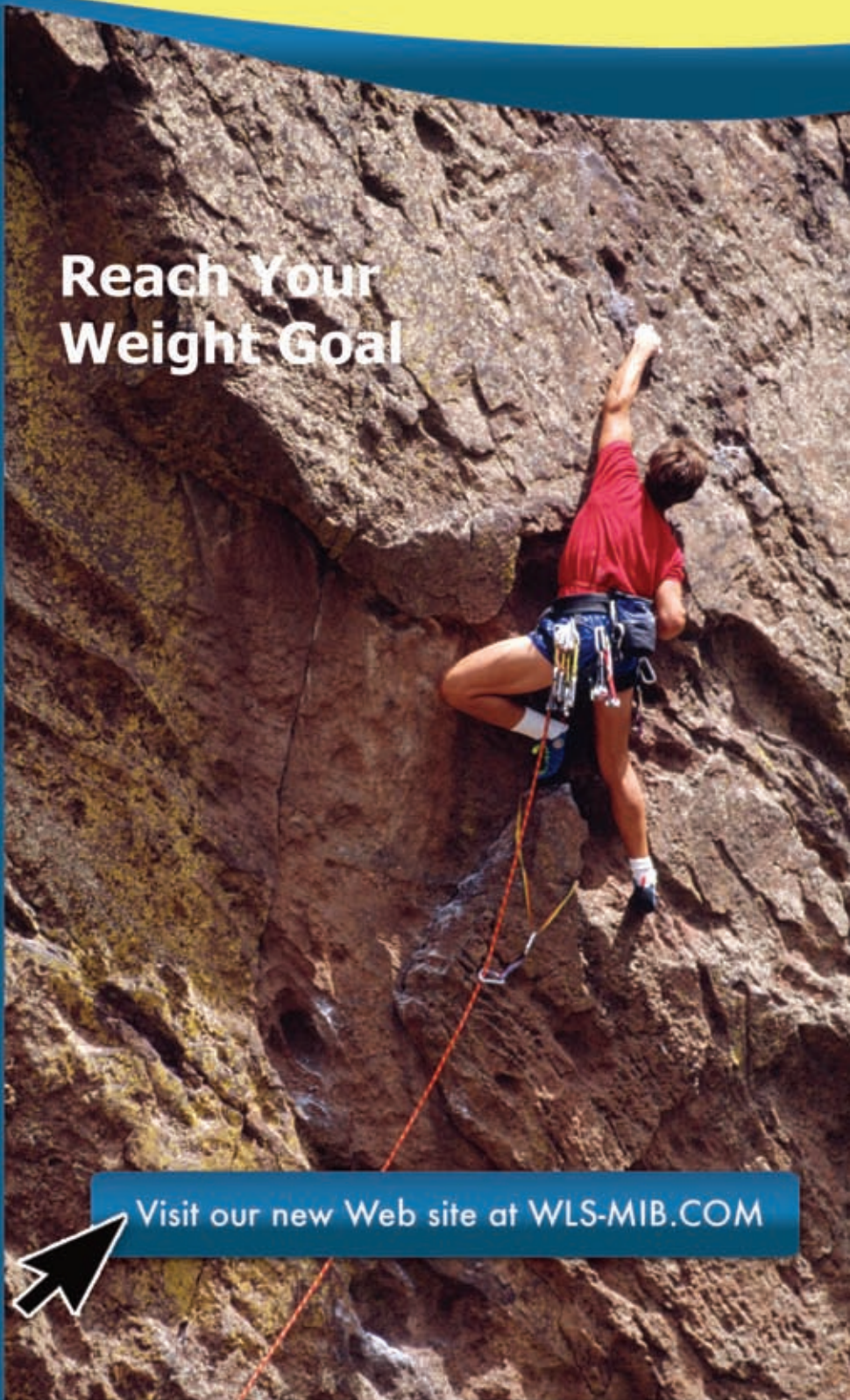
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Almost any problem that besets a person has fallen on Jackie's listening ears. She has seen and heard them all: panic, grief, trauma, anxiety, depression and eating disorders and those couples who are contemplating divorce. "It's a privilege to walk down a road of life with my clients so they may get a better perspective on the rough spots they are going through," she said. "A person is an open book. If they allow you to open them up, you will always find an interesting story. Everyone has a story, and everyone is unique. I've learned I must walk very gently with this privilege."

Jackie's favorite client is one who wants to change. "If they want to change," she said, "they are motivated



*Jackie posed for a photo with co-workers Kristen McFarland and Katherine Donaldson.*

and much more likely to reach their goals. We can see positive changes together when clients are willing to make changes." If a client comes to Jackie with a specific goal, they work as a team to fulfill that goal. Sometimes, clients come to Jackie on a recommendation from their personal physicians. "I talk to these clients at length," she added, "thus allowing goals to be manifested in the conversation."

As she shared a funny story, she could not help but laugh. "A co-worker once asked me if I'd seen a blue sticky note that she left behind. I just looked at her and grinned," she shared. "People forget that I'm blind, and that to me is a huge compliment." Once they meet Jackie, co-workers and clients do





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not give her disability a second thought. This allows her to speak straight to the heart of the matter. Her handicap becomes secondary almost immediately following the initial introductions.

Most every parent's legacy is found within the children they helped rear. Jackie could not agree more, but she also wants her legacy to be found in others, as well. "I hope that God will one day say, 'Well done my good and faithful servant,'" she said, starting with the first and most important one on her list because God has been the greatest influence throughout her life. "I would also like to think the grad



students I trained would be faithful to their calling; that they would serve with professionalism and caring. I hope they took something, even if it was just one thing, away from our time together."

She also mentioned her clients. "I hope they [the clients] would feel their time with me was valuable time spent together," she said. "I hope they took away something that was helpful and meaningful." She also has faith that her colleagues and friends would see her as someone who contributed.

"Even though I do need help in certain areas," she admitted, "I don't want to be remembered as a taker. I want them all to feel life with me has been an equal partnership."

Jackie knows when it is time to slow down. "I have two sweet, sweet grandchildren," she said, referring to Jordan and Jason, 15 and 13 respectively. "When the grandchildren say, 'What's



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so good about having you so close if you're always at work,' I know I must find special time just for them." Jordan loves to help her grandmother in the kitchen. They bake cookies together and Jordan also has a good time putting out the seasonal decorations. Jason enjoys helping his grandma in the yard by cutting the lawn and keeping fire ants, snakes and poison ivy at bay. Since Jackie and Karl are so close and



**"You don't need to be an un-simple person to be used by God."**

the grandchildren are teenagers, they do not come to visit as often as they used to, but when they do, it turns into something special and unforgettable.

Jackie thinks of herself as a simple person. She feels she may have missed a few opportunities in life, but it was not on purpose by any means. "You don't need to be an un-simple person to be used by God," she expressed. "I have been blessed more than I could have ever imagined."

Until she feels it is time to retire, Jackie will no doubt keep following her life's calling. She will continue to touch lives more abundantly, while being touched by angels herself. **NOW**



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# Quite a History

— By Jaime Ruark

## *At Home With Chuck and Renee Fouts*

If their walls could speak, Chuck and Renee Fouts' blue and white clapboard home would whisper some interesting, ghostly tales. The 3,000-square-foot house has quite a history; resident adults may recall running past "the scary house" as children, their frightened footsteps haunted by stories passed down through generations. The Fouts, who took residence in December 2000, have a few stories to tell as well, but despite or perhaps because of this, the space has become home for them.

Chuck and Renee came to Waxahachie from Red Oak once their children graduated high school. "We thought about building a new home until we started looking at these older





houses and found this one, which was built in 1892," Chuck recalled. Because of their love of antiques, the house was a perfect fit. "We liked the style of this house and once we walked in we felt at home," Renee added. "It was just meant to be; it was meant for us."

Even though the house has a colorful



history, Chuck and Renee have had a tough time uncovering an authentic and accurate history. "I found some pictures of what the house used to look like," Renee shared. "It was used as a boarding house, with both of the porches enclosed." Much of the information they have found has come from stories and word of mouth from Sharon Shawn and other residents who have spent their lifetimes in Waxahachie. "One of the reasons we've had such a hard time is because, for years, we were looking for information on this address, until we found out that, actually, the address used to be different. Way back when, the street name was apparently different, too," Chuck said. A neighbor even recalls the house being moved, a recollection that proved to be true when Renee compared old Sanborn maps from 1913 and 1926.

It is difficult to imagine the now inviting house as it formerly appeared, with vines and brush growing so high around the boarded-up porch it was



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almost impossible to venture inside. Having sat vacant for 30 years, Sharon purchased the vandalized property and restored it to its original glory. Today, once guests have walked past the white fence and up the stairs of the large, downstairs front porch, the door opens to the parlor, home to a player piano that really works. To the side, the front room boasts red velvet curtains, red floral couches and numerous antique pictures to accent the East Texas curly pine wood floors, original to the home, and the floral-patterned wallpaper, purchased to match what was once original. "We bought the house from Sharon. It used to be a bed and breakfast," Chuck explained. "She called it the Rose of Sharon. She and her husband are the ones



who actually restored it to its original state."

The Fouts have either bought or inherited numerous beautiful antiques, such as a wind-up Victrola and a grandfather clock, many of the pieces acquired after the move. "Our first Christmas, we hardly had any furniture. I didn't think we'd ever fill this house up," Renee smiled. Beds from the 1800s reside in the master and spare bedrooms, along with Renee's Chatty Cathy dolls, while Chuck's office is home to his 1950s cap gun collection.

The master bedroom opens to the upstairs porch, a favorite place to spend time with its white wicker couches and hanging swing. "This is what we absolutely loved about this house," Renee expressed. "It feels like you're up here by yourself because of the trees. You can drink coffee in the morning and



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watch the world go by.” The shining sun illuminates a few of the house’s original 15 colorful stained glass windows.

Renee has painted many of the rooms, such as the “green room” — their second living room with an antique armoire and a roll-top desk that belonged to Chuck’s father. When Renee pulled up the carpet in the room and sanded the floor, she found a funny little surprise. “There’s this old tin can nailed to the floor here. I guess there was a hole there at some point. I think it gives it

character,” she said.

The Fouts credit Sharon with all the difficult restoration work and now spend their time with cosmetic upkeep, such as painting the outside facade and replacing the front porch and fence, as well as a few other minor alterations. “The first winter we lived here we almost froze to death,” Chuck laughed. “When we bought the house, there were eight window units and seven gas heaters. Each room had its own. That following spring, we went ahead and



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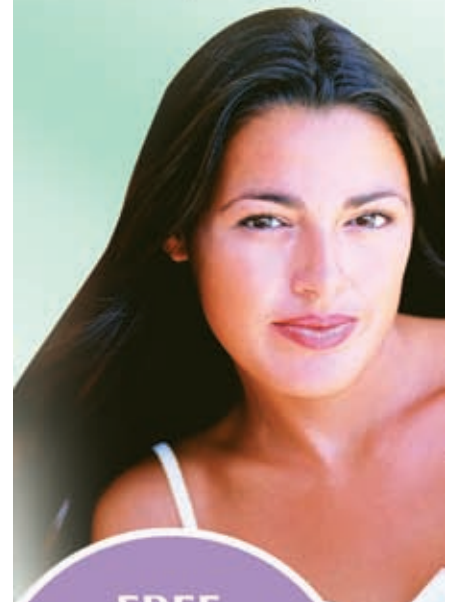
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had central heat and air installed on both floors.”

As to the haunted history, the stories are as interesting as the home itself. “When we were in the process of buying the home, we were doing a walk through with our real estate agent and Sharon,” Chuck remembered, pointing out that neither he nor Renee had heard any of the haunted legends. “We were up in the attic, and I jokingly asked, ‘Are there any ghosts in this house?’”

“Sharon looked at me with a serious look and said, ‘I do believe there are spirits that live in this house, but it’s a wonderful house and I’m never scared.’”

With a smile, Renee added, “We started discovering all these books about haunted bed and breakfasts, and we were flipping through one and sure enough!



There we were. It was kind of unnerving at first, but I just pooh-poohed it because people like to make up stories.”

That surprising discovery has led to many instances that have led the couple to believe the stories are true: noises on

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the stairs, footsteps in the upstairs hallway and apparitions that appear and disappear in the blink of an eye. "The first time I felt something, I was giving my granddaughter, Paityn, a bath in the tub upstairs," Renee recalled, explaining that the tub she was using was a claw-foot bathtub original to the house. "She was in the tub, and I was splashing the water



on her and I got a poke in my side. I thought Chuck had come in the room and I just hadn't noticed, but I turned around and nobody was there. It didn't scare me; you just don't really believe what happened."

The notoriety of the house brings many strangers to the Fouts' front door, but for Chuck and Renee, it has become their comfortable and beloved home. "It's been an experience living here," Renee admitted, "but we've grown to love the house. You can't build this kind of character anymore." **NOW**



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# Big Cat

— By Sandra McIntosh



A lifetime is filled with one season after another of education and personal growth. Many individuals like Cathy Rachesky get married and rear a family before moving into a season of artwork and self-expression. “Everyone is so supportive of my passion to create and express myself through art,” she said.

The educational portion of her journey is just about over. Cathy is just one math class away from earning her associate’s degree. She credits the art teachers she has been blessed with along the way for her success thus far. The first 18 months were spent commuting to and from Cedar Valley College where she learned under the expertise of Linda Ridgway and Randy Broadnax, two world-renowned artists. “Linda taught me closely the first semester,” Cathy explained. “I learned drawing, print making and sculpture from Linda.” Randy taught her the basics of ceramics, while also giving her several pointers to help with her sculpting. “Bill Crawford also helped me in the area of computer graphics,” she added. “Cedar Valley has some fantastic teachers.”

Cathy has spent the past 18 months at Northlake College. Her main instructor

there has been Byron Black. “He’s been teaching me Adobe Creative Suite 3, which includes Photoshop, Illustrator, Flash, Animation and Dreamweaver,” she said, explaining that the journey to college was to earn a degree where she could move into the career field of graphic design.

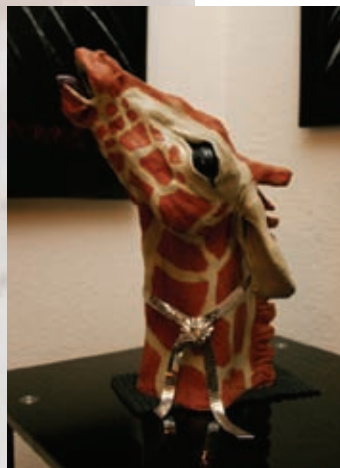
Cathy found her educational wings and so much more. She has always been able to draw, but going back to the classroom has created an artistic genius of sorts. “There’s really no medium I can’t do,” she offered. When entering her home studio, the truth in this one statement is easily seen in oil paintings, sculptures, charcoal renderings and unique prints that were created using all Cathy has learned in her graphic art classes.

The early days in the classroom taught Cathy how to take her natural talent for drawing to the next level.

The cat eyes that look out from every corner of the studio are proof positive she has mastered oil painting. She just recently learned another medium that she is putting to her canvases now. “All

paintings through January were done with oil,” she said. “In February, I got into another class on drawing, but the teacher taught me how to use acrylics.” Cathy explained that this class was an open acrylics class. “This type of acrylic paint doesn’t dry as fast,” she stated. “I need the paint to remain wet so I can blend the colors properly.”

Cathy is known as the “big cat lady” in the classroom, around town and within her home. In fact, she takes great pride in the nickname. “I decided to paint big cats — lions, tigers, jaguars, cheetahs and leopards — because they are so majestic and regal,” she shared. “They are intense. If you capture the eyes, you capture the cat’s overall intensity.” Eyes are definitely Cathy’s





specialty when it comes to her paintings. "I focus on the eyes because they are the most beautiful thing there is to look at when it comes to any living thing," she said. "I drew my own eyes with soft chalk pastels while looking at them in the mirror," she added, pointing to an abstract piece in one corner of the room. She mentioned that she never completed the self-portrait because she was so intrigued with the eyes in their abstract form.

The first painting Cathy completed was given to her daughter as a birthday gift. Cathy's second painting was a copy of this first big cat. "It was the same



**"If you capture the eyes,  
you capture the cat's  
overall intensity."**

picture, but the colors were blended much differently," she said, pointing to this second canvas hanging in the center of one wall in the studio.

Cathy's first award was an honorable mention. She won this award with her rendition of a horse created from core board. "The planes in the core board fit together so that at any angle the shadow reflected a perfect horse," she said. "There was also a print that went with the core board to show the process I went through to get the completed horse. It was called an instructional

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print." Cathy was able to sell the print, but the three-dimensional core board was damaged in transit.

The second place ribbon she earned in the amateur division of the Midlothian Chamber of Commerce Art Show inspired her further and gave her the push she needed to continue painting big cats. "I draw them on the canvas first with charcoal," she said, "and then



I paint the picture." Linda, the teacher that Cathy gives so much credit to, always told her to keep a canvas even if she did not like it.

Several years later, Cathy is finally beginning to understand the reasoning behind Linda's statement. "I learned the concept behind Linda's statement through my husband, Clark," she recalled. "I erased a painting with a rag and some mineral spirits, only to learn later that Clark loved that particular painting." Cathy may not love every piece she creates, but the rest of the world may find it amazing and well worth keeping. As the big cat lady, Cathy is learning this lesson on perspective one canvas at a time. **NOW**





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**“Everything makes you better, and this has made me a different person.”**

From the dugout, Brianna Banda watches her teammates play. While she is usually positioned behind home plate, this freshman softball catcher is learning about her team and herself from a different perspective.

For more than 15 years, this Waxahachie native has loved the game of softball. “My dad is the one that got me into tee ball,” Brianna recalled. “I then started playing softball in fifth or sixth grade. My sister and I played for different club teams and would travel as far as Colorado and Florida for tournaments.” It was through club softball that Brianna was recruited by college coaches.

“If it wasn’t for my coach, I would not have had the opportunity to play college ball,” Brianna said. “He put together profile books for coaches to look at. That is what got most of



# The Game

## From a Different Angle

— By Danielle Parker

us into playing college ball.”

Playing softball in several club organizations and at Waxahachie High School made recruiters take notice of Brianna’s talent. “Navarro coaches had been looking at me since my freshman year,” she said. “They got in contact with me the fall of my senior year. I went on a visit, and absolutely loved the school.”

Brianna was recruited to play as catcher for Navarro Community College in Corsicana. She first fell into the position of catcher when she was in junior high. “The team I was playing for didn’t have a catcher, so I tried it out for the first game,” she explained. “I have been playing that position of catcher now for six years.”

While the catcher’s position behind the plate may appear to be minor, Brianna’s job on the field is not as easy as it may seem. “It’s hard work being a catcher,” she said. “I am down in a squatting position for most of the game. I sometimes have to run down to first and block for the baseman. It’s also my job to make sure runners don’t steal bases or score. I have an overview of the field from behind the plate to provide input on how to help the defense and let the pitcher know where plays have to go.”



Although the position is demanding, Brianna has become a natural over the years. "Leadership is a big key," she pointed out. "Communication is so important on the field, so I have to be one of the loudest ones out there. It can be chaotic depending on the situation. When runners are on the bases, it can make for some pretty intense innings, especially when the game is on the line, so it's important that I stay focused."

Despite her years of training, Brianna was unprepared for the position she was about to take in the game. In July 2008, Brianna was in a car accident that would interrupt her aspirations. "After the wreck, I had a few checkups, but there was nothing major wrong," Brianna said. "I started working out and felt sharp pains in my back. I went back to the doctors and they determined



that I had a slipped disk and my L4 vertebra was pinching a nerve."

After a number of visits to the doctor, Brianna underwent back surgery, which put her out for the season. With such a devastating blow at the start of her college career, Brianna admitted that it was her loved ones who pulled her through the difficult time. "My family and I sat down and talked about everything going on, and I determined no matter what, I was going to stick

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with my goals. If it weren't for support from family, friends and teammates, I would not have tried to recover to play again," she expressed. "They have been so encouraging."

Despite the rough road to recovery, Brianna has determined to contribute to her team just the same. "I'm still going to practice every day, just showing that I want to be there and doing what I can for my team," she explained. The situation may seem bleak, but Brianna is taking this opportunity to grow as a teammate and a softball player. "I am learning about my players and myself," she added. "I'm really trying to be the

**"If it weren't for support from family, friends and teammates, I would not have tried to recover to play again."**

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team player everyone needs me to be. I'm getting a different view of the field, and it's preparing me for next year. I know what to look forward to, and it shows me where I need to improve and challenges me to step up."

With hopes of playing next season, Brianna is training to regain her strength and agility. "Right now, I am trying to get ahead in my schoolwork," she said. "I am taking it easy and getting into shape, so I can fully recover because there's a slight chance I could hurt myself again. I'm doing little things and pushing myself to where I was before the accident. I have a strict workout program to get back to where I was."

As Brianna continues to support her team on and off the field, she is discovering much about herself. "I have learned everything happens for a reason," she said. "Everything makes you better, and this has made me a different person. I have learned to grow up and mature the way I need to." **NOW**

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# Achieving Dreams

— By Sandra McIntosh

Jim Dawson grew up in the country between Maypearl and Waxahachie. He graduated from high school at Waxahachie ISD and then went on to earn his bachelor's degree in agriculture business with a minor in business administration from Sam Houston State University in May 1979.

For Jim, employment with the Farm Credit System came at the most opportune time. "I was selling firewood and winter was just about to come to an end," he said. "I needed career employment, and I needed it quickly." Thinking he would farm with his father, Jim was quite surprised to come home one day and get a phone message from his mother. "She told me some guy from a bank in Corsicana had called," Jim said, explaining that the man in question was Harold Brown, who was a representative of the Federal Land Bank of Corsicana at that time. "He was looking for someone to serve as the loan officer for the land loans in the Corsicana area." Needless to say, Jim

traveled to Corsicana to meet Harold and the board of directors in person. "That was in February of 1980," he smiled, "and I've never looked back."

As the vice president of lending services for Ag Texas FCS, Jim has vast experience in the lending business, from finding opportunities and selling loans to collecting those loans should they



break down. He has an office in Burleson but enjoys the freedom of working from his truck in their current delivery structure. In fact, he considers it his office on four wheels. Jim loves working with people, and his love for the industry where he has spent almost 30 years is

even greater. "It's all about helping one another," he said. "I get a lot of satisfaction helping those who love the country way of life as much as I do."

Ag Texas Farm Credit Services is one delivery "arm" of the nationwide, stockholder-owned cooperative known as the Farm Credit System. The "arms" that actually deliver the loans are referred



to as Associations. The Farm Credit System as a whole is the largest holder of rural loan volume, with over \$180 billion in outstanding loans throughout America and Puerto Rico. Formed in 1916, the goal of the Farm Credit System is one of "helping rural America



achieve sustainable incomes by supplying a stable source of credit."

Ag Texas FCS was formed through the merger of two Associations in 1999. "We have volume of over \$500 million with a diverse portfolio of real estate and operating loans," Jim said, "and we have offices located in Central and West Texas with 78 full-time employees."

**"I get a lot of satisfaction helping those who love the country way of life as much as I do."**

As a cooperative, Ag Texas FCS pays patronage dividends to its many members annually at the direction of its board of directors. The mission for Ag Texas FCS is very simple. "We are helping Texans achieve their dreams," Jim stated. "We accomplish this mission by providing operating credit in addition to real estate financing for farmers, ranchers and agriculture businesses, as well as those who desire to live a rural lifestyle." According to Jim, the face of rural America has and is changing.

Jim has worked his entire 29-year career for the Farm Credit System, and the last 14 years with Ag Texas Farm Credit Services. "It's all about relationships," he said. "It's the journeys in life; it's not where you start or where you finish that's so important, but how we grow from the journeys that life provides us."

Jim's journey has taken him on a country trail that has led to helping others fulfill their dreams and ultimately back to the area where he grew up. Dealing with Mother Nature and working with wonderful people who know and love the country as much as he does have been the catalyst for Jim's overall success and happiness. For more information, call Jim at (817) 313-3657. **NOW**

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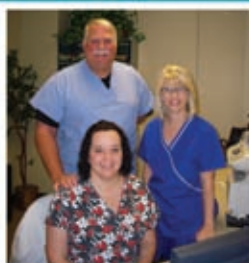
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# Lighting a Fire

— By Sandra McIntosh

When thinking of a firefighter, you may recall and then faintly hear the alarm as it sounds. You may envision the firefighters jumping to immediate attention, pulling on their fire suits and boots. You may even remember a time or two when you pulled over to let a fire truck speed by to its destination. Firefighters take an oath to protect and serve. Their main objective when going to a call is to put the fire out. So why then did the Waxahachie Fire Department start a fire three years ago that continues to blaze today?

The answer is fairly easy. While some fires need to be extinguished immediately, others need to be stoked to their full potential. One such fire that continues to burn is the Blazing a Trail for Literacy program first mentioned by Dusty Griffin, a fireman with the Waxahachie Fire Department. “I heard about the program the city of Lewisville had in place,” Dusty said, referring to the reading program that gives young students an incentive to open a book and read for enjoyment and pleasure.

When Dusty first thought a reading program like Blazing a Trail for Literacy would be beneficial to the community, he spoke to Don Alexander, the union president. “He was totally on board with the idea,” Dusty recalled. Then Dusty talked to Fire Chief David Hudgins. “He said we were already involved in DEAR Day [Drop Everything and Read Day], but this was just another great idea for further school involvement,” Dusty stated. “I typed up a cover letter and presented it to the chief.” Needless to say, the chief and the school district were all for it. Once the program was approved and a second partnership between the WFD and the WISD had been forged, a few changes were incorporated to make the reading program their own.

The guidelines for the reading incentive are simple, basic and easy to follow. The reading contest is designed for Waxahachie students in the first through fifth grades. All children have to do to participate and have their hours counted is pick up any reading material, read everyday during this two-week period and have their parents or guardians sign a tally sheet on a daily basis. The reading material is of the students’ choosing, and can include magazines, newspapers and books. “Parents are asked to tally the total number of minutes read, per day, on a time sheet provided by their child’s teacher,” Dusty explained further. “Then the parent will sign where indicated to confirm the information.”

This year, the program started on March 9 and continued through Spring Break. The student who accumulated the most minutes for his or her grade level will be declared the winner later this month. “There will be a total of five winning students per elementary school, one student in each grade level from one through five,” Dusty added. Each year, the prizes won may change, but the ride from the fire station to the school has, and will once again this year, remain the same. “On scheduled days, two winners will show up at the firehouse about 15 minutes before it’s time for them to be at school,” Dusty said. “They will tour the front section of the fire station and learn the basics of the firehouse.” Once they board the fire truck with two firemen, their excitement mounts because they realize they will be wearing headsets from the firehouse all the way to their campus. “That’s how we talk to one another on the way to school,” Dusty smiled. “About a block from the school’s front entrance, we turn on the siren and



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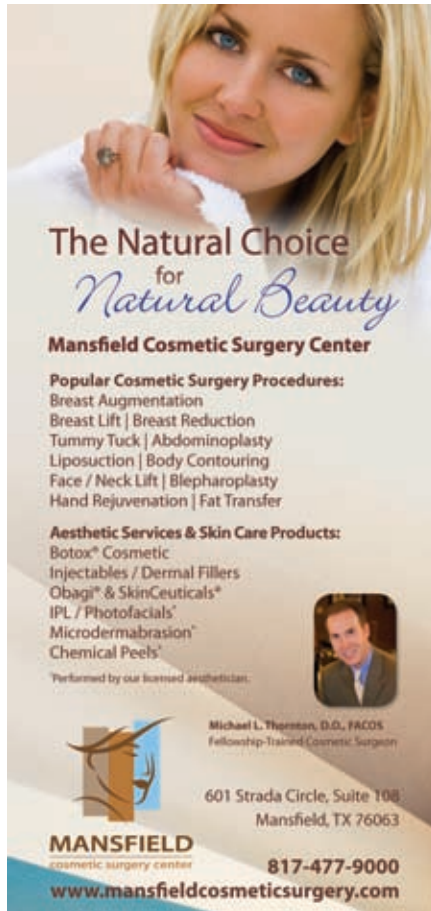
Some campuses, Dusty mentioned, even allow all the students to come out to watch their fellow classmates arrive at school on a fire engine. "That's a great idea," Dusty admitted. "It not only makes the winners feel good, it promotes the reading program to a much higher level." Pictures can also be taken on the engine and the firemen will walk the winning students to their classrooms, but only if they want a uniformed escort.

The program means a great deal to Dusty, not because he brought it to the forefront, but because it offers something he does not remember getting while he was a young student at his home in Carrollton. "I was never a big reader in school because I had no incentive," he confessed. "This program gives the young students of Waxahachie the incentive

**"This program gives the young students of Waxahachie the incentive and desire to read for enjoyment when they don't have to."**

and desire to read for enjoyment when they don't have to. Through Blazing a Trail for Literacy, students are learning to read for fun."

The reading program allows students to have a better understanding of their local fire department, while allowing the fire department to continue their effort for community service and support. "It's important that we're seen within the community when we aren't fighting fires," Dusty noted. It also keeps students reading over the Spring Break holiday. "Keeping them reading is the key," Dusty commented. "It's a good, clean competition with a lasting, positive effect." This is one fire that Dusty and his fellow firemen will not be putting out anytime in the near future, of that you can be sure. **NOW**



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DEAR Day at Dunaway, top left, was a huge success. Even the youngest Dunaway Elementary students, top right, enjoyed the DEAR Day experience. Max Navarro, second row center, was Dunaway's Spelling Bee winner. Fifth grade students from Dunaway, second row right, learned the importance of positive comments during the Random Acts of Kindness week held recently. Each student and teacher is represented in the hallway with a photograph and descriptive words of kindness. The Waxahachie Fire Department, bottom left, volunteered once again this year to read to students during Drop Everything And Read Day. A groundbreaking ceremony, bottom right, was held for City Credit Union Uptown Location.

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# Look Who's Cooking

— By Faith Browning

## IN THE KITCHEN WITH PAT MCGLENDON

Like many women today, Pat began cooking as a child. “I got my love for cooking from my mother,” she explained. “She was a good cook, and since I was an only child, I learned early to help in the kitchen.” Now Pat enjoys cooking and making lasting memories with her nine grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. Her fondest memories are Thanksgiving nights spent with her grandchildren. “We decorated the Christmas tree the next day,” she reminisced. “We had Monkey Bread and chocolate milk for breakfast. It’s OK for Grandmother to spoil them.”

Pat gets most of her recipes from family, friends, newspapers, magazines or her three to four dozen cookbooks. “I like to cook most anything, but baking is my favorite,” she expressed. “I’m always looking for recipes!”

To view more of your neighbors' recipes, visit our archives at [www.nowmagazines.com](http://www.nowmagazines.com).

### TATER TOT CASSEROLE

- 1 1/2 lbs. ground beef
- 1/2 onion, finely chopped
- 1 12-oz. can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 16-oz. can whole kernel corn, drained
- 1 12-oz. can Ro-Tel tomatoes
- 1 pkg. frozen tater tots
- 2 cups cheddar cheese, shredded

Brown ground beef and onion; drain. Add soup, corn and tomatoes to meat. Pour mixture into 9 x 12-inch greased casserole dish. Top with cheese, then tater tots. Bake at 325 F – 350 F until tater tots are brown and crispy, about 35 to 40 minutes.

### FAVORITE CHOCOLATE SAUCE

- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 1/2 cup cocoa

- 1 cup evaporated milk
- 1/3 cup Karo Syrup
- 1 tsp. vanilla

Combine sugar and cocoa; whisk in milk slowly to keep mixture smooth. Bring to boil over low-medium heat; boil 1 minute. Whisk in Karo; bring back to a boil. Remove from heat; stir in vanilla. Makes about a pint. Must whisk while cooking or mixture will stick and burn. Good over pound cake or ice cream.

### POUND CAKE

- 3 cups flour
- 1/4 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. salt
- 3 cups sugar
- 1 cup butter-flavored Crisco
- 6 eggs
- 1 cup buttermilk

- 1 tsp. vanilla

Combine flour, baking soda and salt; set aside. In large mixing bowl, beat sugar and Crisco until fluffy. Add eggs one at a time until mixture is well mixed and smooth. Add flour mixture alternately with buttermilk, starting and ending with flour. Mix well until smooth; add vanilla. Pour into prepared Bunt pan. Bake at 325 F for one hour; check for doneness — could take another 5 minutes. Good plain with coffee, with strawberries and Cool Whip or our family's Favorite Chocolate Sauce. This cake freezes well.

### CHICKEN SALAD

- 4 cups chicken breast (4 breasts), cubed
- 2 bay leaves
- 1/2 tsp. sage
- 1/2 tsp. poultry seasoning





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# Who's Cooking **NOW**

1 chicken bouillon cube  
1 tsp. salt  
1 tsp. pepper  
1 cup green grapes, halved  
1 cup red grapes, halved  
1/3 cup dried apricots, chopped  
1 cup celery, finely chopped  
2 Tbsp. onion, finely chopped

## DRESSING:

1 cup mayonnaise  
1 heaping Tbsp. Dijon mustard  
2 Tbsp. honey  
salt and pepper, to taste

Cook chicken in water seasoned with bay leaves, sage, poultry seasoning, chicken bouillon, salt and pepper. When cooled, cube to make 4 cups. Add remaining ingredients. Combine dressing ingredients; stir into chicken mixture. Refrigerate 3 to 4 hours to let dressing and chicken mixture meld.

## BROWNIES

2 cups flour  
2 cups sugar  
1 cup buttered-flavored Crisco  
1 cup water  
1/4 cup cocoa  
1/2 cup buttermilk  
2 eggs  
1 tsp. baking soda  
1 tsp. vanilla

## FROSTING:

1/4 cup cocoa  
1/4 cup milk  
1 stick margarine  
1 box powdered sugar  
1 tsp. vanilla

Combine flour and sugar in large bowl. In saucepan, combine Crisco, water and cocoa; bring to boil. Must whisk continuously to keep mixture smooth. Start mixer, pouring cocoa mixture over flour mixture. Mixture will be hot, so add remaining ingredients in order. Mix on medium-high speed until well combined and smooth. Pour into a 17 1/2 x 15-inch pan sprayed with Pam. Bake at 390 F - 400 F for 20 minutes. Test for doneness; do not overbake. While brownies are baking, prepare frosting. In saucepan, combine cocoa, milk and margarine; bring to a boil, whisking continuously to keep from burning. Remove from heat; add powdered sugar. Mix until smooth; add vanilla. Leave in pan to keep warm until brownies are done. Pour and smooth frosting over brownies as soon as they are removed from oven. (If frosting seems too stiff, add more milk 1 Tbsp. at a time.)

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— By Adam Rope

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If you already have a traditional IRA, plan to make a contribution prior to the April 15 deadline. If not, talk to a financial professional as soon as possible to start one.

There are restrictions governing who may contribute to a traditional IRA. If you don't qualify, consider a Roth IRA. You won't get the federal tax advantages now, but qualified withdrawals can be made free of federal income tax during your retirement years.

Either way, having a plan for retirement is important. You owe it to yourself to make the best plan as soon as possible. **NOW**

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# Irritable Bowel Syndrome

— By Betty Tryon, R.N.

*Oh no, it is starting up again,* you think despairingly as you clutch your abdomen and bend over in agony. If you are a sufferer of Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS), you know the drill. You are in for a lot of pain, diarrhea and that weak, wasted feeling when it is all over. The only thing that makes this bearable is knowing it will not last long.

Irritable Bowel Syndrome, for all of its distressing symptoms, is one of the more common gastrointestinal disorders. Some of the different names assigned to IBS are spastic colitis, spastic colon and irritable colon. While not a disease, it is a functional disorder with a collection of symptoms consistent to this condition. IBS is not a progressive disorder, does not cause cancer, inflammation or abnormal changes within the bowel tissue. No one knows what causes IBS.

Since it is a functional disorder, portions of the intestines function improperly. Some physicians think this is because of faulty signals between the brain and the intestines. Because of the malfunction or miscommunication, the contractions in the intestines may speed up and trigger diarrhea or they may slow down causing constipation. Another cause of IBS could be hypersensitivity in the bowels of people prone to this syndrome.

The more prevalent symptoms are abdominal cramping, bloating, gas, diarrhea and/or constipation. There can be mucus in the stool. The severity of the symptoms may differ on a daily basis. Diagnosis can be made from the troublesome symptoms and findings through a physical examination. The physician may run tests to rule out other problems. Since the cause is

unknown, alleviating the distress from IBS remains the best treatment. Some relief can come from avoiding situations, which trigger this condition, such as managing your stress level, eliminating foods in your diet that may provoke symptoms, such as dairy products, caffeinated drinks and fatty foods. Being aware of how some medications affect you may also prove helpful. There is some evidence women with IBS





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will experience an attack due to hormonal changes. Medication can be prescribed for the abdominal discomforts of constipation, diarrhea and pain.

If you experience any of these symptoms, it is important to visit your physician. There are many health problems which can occur with problematic intestinal symptoms. Presently, there is no cure for IBS, but if you take care of yourself and follow your doctor's guidelines, you can minimize the symptoms. **XXXX**

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



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# Weep, Creep and Leap!

— By Nancy Fenton

Are you planting yet? Flowers, shrubs and trees are only going to be as beautiful as the care given to them merits. This includes planting! The old wives' tale about perennials, shrubs and trees "weeping, creeping and leaping" makes sense if you watch your plants and think about it.

All plants need to be planted in our clay at ground level or a bit higher, so they do not start out with soggy feet. The roots need to be loosened from that tight ball they get in while in those little pots. I have even taken a knife or spading fork to them if they are in a giant ball! You can see why they might "weep." Just the shock of planting can set some back for quite

a while. New plants need a good cover of mulch (three-four inches) to protect them from heat and drought. If your plant is very small, just take the mulch up to within two inches of the plant until it grows a bit, then move it on in closer. Trees need to have the mulch pulled back from the trunk at least two-three inches to lessen the possibility of fungus or disease.

I am watching a certain tree right now. It did not do much last year or the year before, but I hope it will have established itself and be ready to "leap" up and grow like mad this year. If it does not, I may have to do some digging and check out roots. If they did not

get unwound, they will still be growing round and round. That tree will not be very stable (watch out for high winds) plus it will exhaust all the food and water in that confined area. Not a good situation for the tree!

If you are planting annuals, be sure and loosen up the roots as you put them in the ground. Those tight little squares do not do much for water and food acquisition. Our plants really are pretty resistant and can take a bit of handling if given a good soaking.

Farmers' Market begins in May, so I may see you there! **NOW**

Nancy Fenton is a Master Gardener.



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# April 2009

## Community Calendar

### First Thursday

ABWA - Empowering Women Express Network meeting: 5:45 p.m. at the Midlothian Conference Center, 1 Community Circle, Midlothian. Please visit [www.abwa-empoweringwomen.org](http://www.abwa-empoweringwomen.org) to RSVP a seat and dinner reservations.

### Third Wednesday

Ellis County Christian Women's Connection Luncheon: Waxahachie Country Club, 1920 W. Hwy. 287 at I-35 East, Exit 401B. \$13. Nursery vouchers available. Walk-ins welcome. For reservations, contact Mary at (972) 937-9984 or Kay at (972) 937-2807 or [windchime423@yahoo.com](mailto:windchime423@yahoo.com) by April 12.

### April 4

Sims Annual Easter Egg Hunt: 10:00-11:00 a.m. at Sims Library, 515 W. Main St.

### April 8

Special Olympics pep rally at Waxahachie High School's gym: 3:30 p.m.

### April 9

Special Olympics track meet at the Waxahachie football stadium: 8:30 a.m.

### April 15-20

"Cost of Freedom" American Veterans Traveling Tribute will be held at Grimes Park, located at 500 E. Centre Park Blvd., DeSoto. For more information, contact the DeSoto Chamber of Commerce at (972) 224-3565 or [info@desotochamber.org](mailto:info@desotochamber.org).

### April 17-19

Bluebonnet Trails Festival in Downtown Ennis. Friday: 11:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday: 9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.

### April 18

Kid's Day in the Park, sponsored by Connect 4 Life Church: 8:30 a.m.-noon at Getzender Park. The free fun day for the whole family will offer games, music, food and prizes, while also promoting healthy lifestyles for children and increasing community awareness. The YMCA 5K and Fun Run will begin at 9:00 a.m. For more information, call (972) 937-2641.

### April 18

Texas Baptist Home for Children's "Spirit Night" at Chick-fil-A in Waxahachie: 5:00-8:00 p.m. Texas Baptist Home for Children will be sponsoring

a pajama drive for the foster children in our community. Come on out and help us by bringing new pajama sets to Chick-fil-A!

### April 25

Bluegrass Showcase, sponsored by Southern Welding and benefiting John David Dodd: 2:00 p.m. at the Ellis County Expo Center. Events include a free classic car show, a silent auction and a Texas Country Concert that begins at 6:00 p.m. Admission for the concert is \$30 at the door. Pre-sale tickets are \$25 and can be purchased at all Vintage Bank locations, Lone Star Western Wear, One Fine Day Spa of Waxahachie and Farmers Insurance - Clay Schoolfield of Ennis.

### May 2

The first ever Downtown Waxahachie Cinco de Mayo Fiesta will be held from 11:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m. at Singleton Plaza. The day-long event will include food, vendors and music featuring Baraja De Oro, The Tequila Boyz and more. A kids' corner will offer bounce houses, face painting and lots of fun. Free admission. For vendor information, contact Andrew Sanchez at (214) 336-5314 or visit [www.waxahachie5de5.com](http://www.waxahachie5de5.com).

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Saturday, April 18  
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