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On The Cover



Kelly Graham's rodeo background is reflected in his art.

Photo by Opaque Visuals.

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Subscriptions are available at the rate of \$35 per year or \$3.50 per issue. Subscriptions should be sent to: NOW Magazines, P.O. Box 1071, Waxahachie, TX 75168. For advertising rates or editorial correspondence, call (817) 613-1533 or visit www.nowmagazines.com.

Editor's Note

Hello, Weatherford!

The blooming fields and wildflowers might cause us to forget the dry times. According to our Fire Marshal, Bob Hopkins, we have only now left behind our biggest grass fire season. Between January and April, in dry years, low-pressure meteorological conditions create warm, dry, winds of 30 or more miles per hour that are pulled across Texas. They drop the humidity and dew point to the teens or lower. In those dangerous conditions, even cigarettes can start a fire. We have been in one long burn ban because we've been in a drought.

"Typically," Bob said, "by the time everything starts greening up, we're OK until mid-July. We actually have more humidity in the summer, so we're able to fight fires a little faster." Our firefighters are always willing and ready to run mutual aid calls with surrounding volunteer-only fire departments. I encourage you to observe burn bans and support your local firefighters in every way possible, so they can stay prepared for every wind that blows.

Melissa

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AFTER



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His Life and Art

— By Julie B. Cosgrove

For the past 20 years or so, Kelly Graham has lived with his wife, Donna, on a 100-acre spread north of Weatherford on Scott Road. In an unpretentious metal and slab workshop, he creates his own brand of magic. He is known locally for the life-size bronze sculptures of horses in town, but his art is quickly becoming well-known all over the United States.





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When asked how he got started in the art of sculpture he just shrugged. "I used to train cutting horses. I know horses and their characteristics like a parent knows their child." At the time, one of his bronze statues stood outside the workshop, ears perked as if to catch the morning breeze, appearing so life-like a passerby might easily think it was one of the horses on his spread. Kelly nodded toward it. "People bring me their horses, and I keep them here on-site so I can

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study them and capture their essence. I'm refinishing that one." The natural patina on the bronze had been accidentally corroded by a household cleanser.

Kelly explained that the bronze can be dyed to any color — brown, white, black, even a blue jean color. He sculpted a cowboy swinging from a wagon wheel chandelier for the South Point Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas. Even in a photo, the life-sized man looks eerily real, down to the scuffs on his cowboy



boots and the round indentation on his jeans pocket from his snuff can. One of Kelly's earliest pieces was done as a joke. It was a coffee table-sized water spigot with jogging shorts and elongated thin legs sprawled in a fast sprint. His eyes twinkled as he pointed to it, saying, "Get it? That's running water. I didn't quite know about anatomy back then."

He never had any formal training in art. Kelly claimed his talent comes from his father, famous artist Lex Graham, who is best known for his "Back Forty" and rodeo cartoons. Lex also dabbles in sculpting and introduced his son to the art form. Kelly has come a long way. Right now he is working on a memorial for a well-known dignitary affiliated with the National Cutting Horse Association. The crease of the jeans over the boots and the wrinkles in the man's jacket as it fits the torso are perfect. Kelly is still working on the face and the hands. He stated those are the hardest for him. "Since he isn't around to capture his personality and character, I am working off photos. But most people take photos of people from the front only. So it's flat. I need to know how he looked from the sides and the back, as well."

One of his subjects had an unusually large head, but the photos really did not show that. Not until he interviewed the relatives, did that tidbit of information surface. Kelly went to work revamping the head. Suddenly, the man's sculpture came to life. The man's daughter said Kelly had captured her father perfectly. Kelly smiled, "Horses are easier."

Growing up around rodeos most of his life, Kelly sculpts what he knows. He recently sculpted a statue commissioned by the Professional Bull Riders, Inc. (PBR). The statue depicts defending



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champion, Adriano Moraes, riding Little Yellow Jacket, named the Bucking Bull of the Year three times. "It was an engineer's nightmare trying to anchor the bucking bull with his head down and hind legs raised ready to kick," Kelly stated. "Large pipes had to be embedded in the sculpture to sturdy it, then be camouflaged in bronze."

Most recently, Kelly designed a 6-foot-tall by 8-foot-wide rodeo belt buckle for ESPN to display at their Super Bowl XLV Party in Fort Worth. The theme was "Everything is Bigger in Texas." The belt featured the state of Texas and ESPN's logo surrounded by sculpted flowers and scrolls typical on a rodeo champion's belt buckle. On the map of Texas is the Alamo, an armadillo, an oil rig, a rodeo contestant riding a bucking bronco and, of course, the longhorn head symbol for Fort Worth. It has now been entered in the *Guinness Book of World Records* as the world's largest belt buckle. The buckle is owned by ESPN and on display at Billy Bob's in Fort Worth.

Kelly starts off by sculpting his subject in a special artist's Styrofoam, which is much denser than what most people are used to seeing at picnics. He advised that one should wear a mask over the mouth and nose so the fine particles are not inhaled. "Styrofoam is the sculptor's best secret," he admitted. From there, a multi-step process of using different mediums begins. He takes clay which has been heated and softened in a makeshift kiln adapted from an old heating box. Then he begins to work his magic. With the clay, he patiently molds in the details. One piece can easily take several months

to complete, depending upon the size.

Other materials are added to slowly make the mold from which the foundry will pour the bronze. "It is called the lost wax process," he shared. "If I told you in detail about the whole process, it'd make a boring article." Above him on shelves of his two-story workshop are mold pieces of the various works. There are heads of bulls, pieces of a coyote, legs and torso of a cutting horse. Most of the sculptures are chopped up into a jigsaw puzzle of molds that are then reassembled after the bronzing is done. "I'm lucky," he stated. "The foundry I use is up the road near Azle. Some sculptors send theirs off to places like Colorado."

He does tabletop bronze sculptures, as well as life-sized ones. In 1996, he received a contract to sculpt the National Cutting Horse Association's (NCHA) championship trophy. That was his first big break. Since then, his trophies continue to be in great demand.



Horses have mostly dominated his sculpture themes. He has been commissioned by famous horse owners, such as George and Susan Hearst of the Hearst Publishing family and Alice Walton of the Walmart dynasty. The ones created for the city of Weatherford were presented in 1998. Though he does sculpt people, dogs and Texas wildlife, horses remain his favorite. "After all," he said, "Weatherford is the Cutting Horse Capital of the World. I know horses." Looking at the horse sculpture in front of his workshop, which looks as if it could spook any minute, one would have to definitely agree. **NOW**

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AT HOME WITH
Scott and Autumn Ater

The first time Scott and Autumn Ater visited the house on Fourth Street was to buy a car from the older couple who lived there. The idea that the small “box house” and its spacious backyard filled with 100-year-old pecan trees would someday be theirs existed only in a greater plan. “It was in God’s plan. We had been living in Gibtown in Jack County,” she explained. “We needed better access to medical care for our youngest child, and our search led us back to Fourth Street. We moved here in 2002.”



Dwelling on *Fourth* *Street*

— By Carolyn Wills

As quickly as the 1,250-square-foot home welcomed them, the Aters began the strenuous, creative task of remodeling. “We had new piers put under the house,” Scott said. “We wanted to preserve the original piers, so we had them moved to the backyard and they now serve as our fire pit.”

The age of their home was lost when a courthouse fire destroyed the records, yet the best guess is that it was built in the 1800s. “One of our elderly neighbors grew up in Peaster,” Autumn said. “She tells us that back then Fourth Street was a





gravel road, and our home and one down the road were the original houses.”

As they began to remodel, they made another discovery. “We removed seven layers of wall coverings,” Autumn explained, “including sheet rock, paneling and wall paper until we got down to the original blue wall ‘fabric’ with a design shaped like old-fashioned Christmas ornaments. We were amazed to find that mud had been used as insulation! We have been told that the color, design and material of the wallpaper and the use of mud to insulate support the house dating back to the 19th century.”

The Aters renovated their three-bedroom home with a commitment to preserve its history and also to add comfort and efficiencies. As a result, the house now has an additional 600 square

feet, central heat and air conditioning, gorgeous wood flooring and an updated kitchen. “We didn’t replace the original kitchen cabinets because of their character,” Scott said.

Their most important project centered on the addition of a bathroom for their son. “Robert was born with a brain malformation and was profoundly disabled,” Autumn explained, “so we wanted everything for his care to be set up at home.” With the help of friends and family, Robert’s bedroom was transformed into a virtual rainforest. The walls were painted in deep blue and green murals displaying images of birds, trees and breathtaking animals. The large custom bathroom became an extension of his bedroom. “Our son passed away on April 22, 2006, at the age of 14,”

Autumn said. “We miss him so much, and while the enormity of losing a child can be devastating to couples, Scott and I are blessed to have grown closer.” For the most part, Robert’s “rain forest room” has remained unchanged. “We have left it as it was because our grandson loves to play in it, and in a way, it has become Scott’s ‘den.’”

Scott, a native Texan, grew up in Joshua and Watauga, and aside from a brief Army tour in Germany, Texas has always been the place for him. On the other hand, Autumn was born in Englishtown, New Jersey, and moved to Texas when she turned 18. “I had always loved Texas and wanted to go to school here,” she said. “We met in a serving line at Panchos Restaurant,” she smiled. “I was there with a friend and my 2-year-



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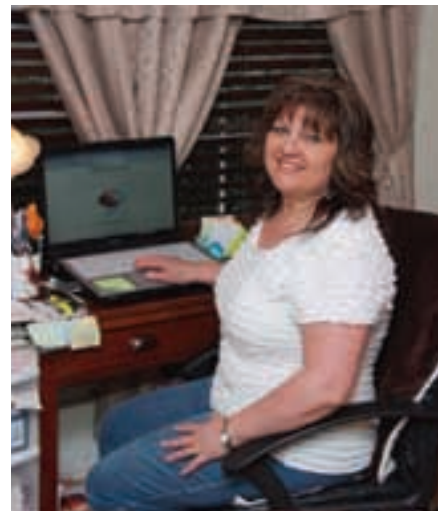
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old daughter. Scott was with his parents. His mom remarked about how cute my daughter was, and when Scott turned to look, we made eye contact. There was such a connection that I surprised myself and invited him to a party, and he said yes! As it turned out, the party was cancelled so we spent the evening talking until 4:30 a.m. We saw each other every day for the next three months and were married the following year on Christmas Eve." In 2007, they celebrated their 20th anniversary on a glorious 14-day trip to the island of Maui and, last Christmas Eve, they welcomed their 23rd year as husband and wife.

Autumn's daughter, Elaina, is now 26 and the mother of 6-year-old Vincent 'Vinny.' Scott's three daughters, Jennifer, Alisha and Jamie Lynn live in Oregon and, in total, have four boys and one girl. "There are no halves or steps in our family," Autumn smiled. "We all know we're family and are here for each other. All of our daughters grew up as beautiful 'tomboys', and they each loved and helped care for Robert." The newest addition to the Ater family is a 5-month-old Yorkshire Terrier named Jasper, whose arrival is sometimes ok with 15-year-old Miss Kitty.

Scott and Autumn manage a family plumbing business. Outside of work, Scott loves to hunt and fish and is known by his friends as the "Dove King." He is also an avid gardener and composter.

Autumn has founded a faith-based, nonprofit ministry committed to serving bereaved mothers. Through its Web site and the efforts of a dedicated board and volunteers, "A Hole in My Heart" is a ministry that is growing



by international proportions. Autumn is often invited to guest speak at events and has been interviewed by numerous media outlets. She has authored "Robert's Story," a chapter in a book entitled *The Triumph Book* by Melanie Davis, and she is currently completing her own book which will be published by Triumph Press.

When describing her home, Autumn calls it homey. "I like the work of the artist, Thomas Kinkade," she said, "and I love angels." While she spends most of her time at her computer or on the phone, her favorite room is the living room. "It's our 'welcome room,'" she said, "and every gift and treasure in here has a special meaning. Although the home faces a heavily traveled road, the backyard is our peaceful sanctuary." The trade-off to facing Fourth Street is the spacious backyard, which accounts for the bulk of the Aters' half-acre. With generous pecan trees and play areas for children, a super tree house, the original piers tribute, outdoor barbeque spot and Scott's "man cave" of an outbuilding, the backyard is a virtual entertainment park.

When not working or volunteering for charities and community events, the couple enjoys camping. "We love the outdoors," she said. "Scott and I have overcome a lot, and we are truly blessed ours is a relationship that works. We complement each other and are so thankful to be each other's best friend."

"Like I always say," Scott added, "baby, it's me and you stuck like glue." **NOW**

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Just Here to Help

— By Melissa Rawlins

Some folks in Weatherford take vacation time so they can work, five days in a row, building a home with someone else. Trinity Habitat for Humanity brings together people who are building homes — and hope — for families who need a little help to get on their financial feet.





“Habitat is the only way I would ever be able to own a house.”

Mike Munson is one of those helpers. Mike actually got started with Habitat four years before he quit working. In his retirement — from a life of giving 40-plus hours a week to his father’s construction company, then to the U.S. Navy and finally to General Dynamics and Lockheed — he gives about 10 hours per week to keep the momentum going for Habitat. As a member of the eight-person steering committee in Parker County, Mike raises funds to purchase

land and home-building materials. He also cultivates volunteers to build the new homes. Only after the wood and nails and labor have been provided does the construction begin.

“When I first started in 2001, it was like, *Well, I’ll go drive nails*. That’s when I learned all about Habitat, while I was around the people who had been working on the Habitat homes for years and years. That’s when I started getting cranked up about it and volunteered to do more and

more, instead of just go pound nails,” said Mike, who learned to work hard as an 8-year-old helping his dad with projects for Munson Construction in Salina, Kansas. Now, “old man Mike” lives in a home greatly customized by his father, Julius Norman Munson.

Recently, Mike has had both knees replaced and has a much harder time doing the physical work for Habitat. Fortunately, there are other men who still prefer to provide the heavy labor.



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In fact, several asked Mike about the construction crew for Melissa Herrera Mellow's house, which the local steering committee named the Parker County Women Build. "Gary Snow asked if that meant he couldn't go work on it. I said, 'Oh no, we're going to need strong guys like you.'

"The way our steering committee planned this spring build, women from around the city would form teams. Linda Tingle, our chairperson, has 22 teams, each trying to get three to four women from their churches to raise the money, and then the women will go out and actually be in charge of the build between April 6 and June 11 — although we know we'll have to have men out there to do some of the really hard work."

When Mike was both elder and mission and outreach director at his church, Grace First Presbyterian, Pastor Charles Bruner gave him The 3 M (Mike Munson Moment) every Sunday. "I'd get up and talk about Habitat, Manna, the Presbyterian Night Shelter, whatever mission and outreach was into," Mike said. He explained how his congregation once responded to his call during The 3 M by providing the \$18,000 Habitat needed to complete a planned build. "I just about had a heart attack. We were able to say, 'Go and build that house for a single mother with two kids!' Directing mission and outreach totally changed my life from just being a go-to-church-on-Sunday kinda guy to someone involved

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in what were the right things. Wow! Why didn't I know about this before?"

Mike himself never had the challenges of the Habitat homeowners. "I think the ones that affect me the most are the single moms, trying to work and not having their own home, whose kids are getting into their teenage years," said Mike, who can empathize because he married Mary Jane after she had spent several years as a single mother of teens. "We know how difficult those years can be."

People all over town have similar aha moments when they get involved

"The way our steering committee planned this spring build, women from around the city would form teams."

in helping others in the community. Churches like Northside Baptist are big supporters of Habitat. "They'll say, 'Somebody's grandfather died, and they're gonna donate that lot to Habitat.' Banks give, businesses give," Mike said.

The families who live in the homes give too, providing 250 hours of sweat equity on their own home. "After building three or four houses in Fort Worth, I went over when they were dedicating a house and got to meet the whole family, hear their story of how this was going

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to affect them. Instead of living in little apartments and paying \$700 rent, they were going to own their own home and their mortgage would actually be around \$500 per month. This is an interest-free mortgage, carried by Habitat. The family can settle down, get down to business and not have stress," Mike said. "Then I saw the Fannie Mae statistics, which totally convinced me when I saw what a difference it made in the lives of the children. It increases their pride. They go to school, do not get pregnant, avoid drugs. That totally blew me away, besides actually being a part of working on the house.

"Once I got involved, my wife and I started seeing all the opportunities to help. Mary Jane to this day still volunteers at Manna, and I help with the Presbyterian Night Shelter. I have become more involved with what's going on at the church. This has just really grabbed me. I feel much better about myself because I'm helping! This can really make a difference for the people who are building the house and who are receiving."

The home built this spring will belong to Melissa Herrera Mellow, who has worked as a certified interpreter for the deaf for Weatherford Independent School District for almost four years. "Habitat is the only way I would ever be able to own a house. An affordable home will allow me to be completely financially independent and get off government assistance," said Melissa, whose new husband, Andrew Mellow, son, Jonathon,



Mike Munson and Linda Tingle.

and daughters, Amanda and Miriam, will now benefit from a college fund the family will start with money they will be able to save. "Financial independence also brings the ability to bless others in need. Knowing that all things come from God, I will be able to give more back to His work."

This attitude is common amongst recipients of Habitat homes. "The very first house we built, the lady's name was Lisa and she had two little boys. She worked for the city, but it wasn't a



high-paying job. She came and did her hours, but later on she came out to work on other people's houses," Mike said. Such tremendous inspiration builds enthusiasm amongst the people working on the homes. Whether volunteers come for framing or finish work, they spend a lot of energy going up and down ladders or standing in awkward, unfamiliar positions. "Yet there is a real gung ho attitude to get stuff done that you wouldn't normally see when you're just doing this as a job," Mike commented. "And of course, there is always prayer going on. That's the way we started." **NOW**



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Little League *Legacy*

— By Julie B. Cosgrove

If you drive by the Carmichael Little League Fields on Charles Street in Weatherford during the day, you will likely see a blue 1967 Chevrolet pickup truck near the field house. That vehicle belongs to longtime coach and supporter John Chesney. Coach Chesney, as the kids call him, is a retired Weatherford High School social studies teacher. Since he began volunteering to coach Little League baseball in 1979, he has been teaching something else — the importance of caring, not only for the children, but for the game and the city in which he lives. That caring shines in his eyes whenever he talks about Little League.



Coach Chesney is the first to admit it is not all about him. "No volunteer is more important than another," he stated. "We have hundreds of volunteers here. I've just been here longer." Little League is based on volunteerism. Because it is a nonprofit organization, each League in each city must depend on donations and volunteers from the community to help it run smoothly. "There is a unique relationship between the city and the Little League here in Weatherford," Coach Chesney explained. "It all began in 1953 as the brain child of the superintendent of schools. Since then, the school district and the city have been very cooperative in the maintenance and support of these fields and the program. And that is not always the case. In Weatherford, it is."

The 11-12 year old boys' All Star team has had more appearances in the state tournament than any other team, except one. Both Weatherford and the west Texas town of Pecos have made it to the state tournament 10 times. That is something to be proud of, because there



are over 800 All Star teams in Texas. Coach Chesney believes the support of the community, city and school district have a lot to do with the success of the program.

The Weatherford Little League has seven fields at the Charles Street location. Young athletes ages 4-16 can try out for Little League. The league supports baseball for boys and softball for girls, with mixed teams at the T-ball level. This year, over 750 children will play in Little League in Weatherford. Sixty-five teams with 12 players on each team are scheduled. Each team takes on a name of one of the major leagues. Coach

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Chesney's team, started in 1965, has been the Cubs, only the uniform colors have changed. "For years we were known as the orange team," he confessed. "Now they wear blue because that is the color of the Chicago Cubs." Little League makes safety the number one issue, according to Coach Chesney. "There have been times when players or spectators suffered an injury from coming in contact with a ball," he said, "but there have been no life-threatening, serious ones since we began playing on these fields in 1970." He points out the true mentor of Little



League in Weatherford is honored by a plaque in his memory on the fence of the tournament field just left of home plate. "Buddy Brunson was central to what we do. He volunteered from 1965 until 2007," he said. "He was my predecessor and dear friend. I owe a lot to Buddy. We all do, and we all miss him."

Coach Chesney went on to explain that Little League's strength is instilled in the children. They are taught to respect, how to handle wins and losses, how to follow rules and how to cooperate with others. "I guess in a way Little League is parentage for a broken world," he admitted, a bit misty-eyed. "There have been so many successful people in this community who've played on these fields — doctors, lawyers, teachers, politicians. I keep thinking I should write a book about that, write all of their names down and tell their stories."

But, Coach Chesney has a story, too. Currently on the Little League board, he began playing baseball as a boy, and continued to play on teams in high school and college. He has always loved the sport. "There is something to starting over each year," he nodded. "The smell

of freshly cut grass and the crack of the bat, as the poem goes.” According to Coach Chesney, there is symbolism in starting a new season, like wiping the slate clean and beginning over again. When asked his favorite time of year, John smiled. “Any day there is practice. I mean that.” He goes on to say there are two days he particularly looks forward to each year. “I really love the try-outs we have in February and then draft day, too.”

Coach Chesney himself was in Little League. He also coached his son, Tate Chesney, in Little League on the Weatherford fields. Now, Tate’s boys are playing in Little League there. Nathan, age 12, plays in the majors; Caleb, at age 9, plays in the minors; and 6-year-old Micah has started coach-pitch ball this season. “The eldest, 14-year-old Jacob, is into track and football in school,” Coach Chesney said, “and that’s ok. I’m proud of him.” Tate and his sons live in Fort Worth. That is where this three-generational story takes a unique twist. Little League rules state a child must play in the community in which they live. This helps the parents and the children take pride in where they live and give back to their neighborhoods. However, the Little League International Council gave Coach Chesney’s grandsons a special waiver to play where their grandfather coaches. His eyes glisten with pride and gratitude. He smiles and swallows hard. “That’s just not done all the time.”

He is the first to admit his son and grandchildren give back to their home community in other ways. But he is glad they make the effort to play ball in Weatherford. “It’s a mini-family reunion each time they come,” he smiled. He enjoys watching his son as a volunteer parent and his grandsons grow in the sport that has personally meant so much to him. Coach Chesney will never admit International’s waiver is in honor of his longstanding volunteer efforts. He is far too humble a man for that. But, he is proud to be what he calls “a small part in making Weatherford Little League what it is today. I owe a lot to this community, the parents and the kids. When the time comes that I can no longer do this, I’ll be very sad.” So will Weatherford. No doubt, Coach Chesney will be in the stands with his wife, Dotti, his angel and main supporter, watching and rooting for the children. **NOW**

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Shelia Evans, pharmacist-in-charge; Sandi
Glover, registered technician-in-training; Janis
Keener, registered technician-in-training; (not
pictured: Crystal Chancellor).

Here for You

The people at Best Value Hometown Pharmacy treat you like family!

— By Melissa Rawlins

How sweet it is to receive the help you want when you need it. Sheila Evans runs Best Value Hometown Pharmacy on Santa Fe with the concerns of her customers kept front-and-center. “We give personal service that helps people know Hometown Pharmacy is here for them for the long haul,” Sheila said. “I have four great people: two registered technicians and two technicians-in-training. When you surround yourself with great people, you’ll have a great business.”

Those who come in sick, tired and hurting will find what they need, be it medicine, advice or advocacy. “I’ll call the doctor if I can get a better prescription at a lower cost, anything I can do to help with the pricing,” Sheila said. “We try to go the extra mile

by calling the insurance companies to find out why the price is so high or why the co-pay is different or why they’re being turned down.”

As pharmacist-in-charge, Sheila is available to the public when they need advice. “I monitor dosage and strength, even if it’s over-the-counter, and can tell a person whether the drug they are taking is safe or not,” she said, recalling a movie she saw during college about a woman whose pharmacist warned against a bad prescription and in the process saved her child’s life. “Because of that one movie, I knew that’s what I wanted to do! I am making a difference in people’s lives.”

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tweaked, compounding can be done at Hometown Pharmacy's central compounding lab in Fort Worth. You can get such items as Tamiflu, an anti-viral suspension, and Promethazine, an anti-nausea gel. They also produce veterinary compounds and bio-identical hormones suited specifically for you. When a customer's prescription is presented by 2:30 p.m., it will be returned by 11:00 a.m. the next day. "We accommodate special circumstances as the need arises," Sheila said.

Free services from Hometown Pharmacy include a fabulous Web site — where people can order refills and register to get their medication list for tax purposes — as well as delivery within Weatherford city limits. Sheila also provides complimentary counseling for patients filling their prescription for hCG (Human Chorionic Gonadotropin), a pregnancy hormone that you inject every day for 40 days in order to lose weight.

Other services offered at Hometown Pharmacy on a walk-in basis — every day, except Tuesdays — include vaccinations, flu and pneumonia shots, cholesterol and blood pressure testing, glucose monitoring and B12 shots. Throughout the summer, Sheila and her staff will be happy to see kids and young adults who want to get a jump start on their vaccinations for the next school year. "For people suffering now, during allergy season, it's amazing the inhalers and products that are available," Sheila said. "If their allergy is a chronic problem, I really want them to see the doctor."

The professionals at Hometown Pharmacy get most prescriptions filled in 10-15 minutes. Customers who wait inside the store find that the pharmacy's health and wellness section offers the necessities, from tooth brushes to women's health items. At their drive-through window, Sheila will counsel customers who are picking up their prescriptions. "Something that will take more than a minute, I will ask them if they have time to pull around and come in so I can talk to them longer about it." She is always a phone call away for people with any questions, which she answers with a smile. Now that really is treating you like family. **NOW**



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WHS students Mathew League, Charlesie Rosander and Barbara Snyryn will compete in the state VASE (Visual Art Scholastic Event).



Weatherford's Lady Roos varsity softball outfielder, Ashlyn Wren, rounds second base following her third-inning single against North Crowley in the District 4-5A opener.



Chaley Wilson's first grade class at Ikard Elementary displays their favorite types of graphs.



The Weatherford Chamber of Commerce hosts a grand opening and ribbon-cutting ceremony for Kerrie Devlin Scroggins Allstate Insurance.



William Adams, left, helps Thomas Orr and his uncle, Brian Hobson, prepare to put some solar panels in place.



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Wash Your Hands

— By Betty Tryon, BSN

Hepatitis A is a great example of why it is so important to wash your hands. Someone infected with the disease can transmit the virus to others via contaminated food or water or by direct contact if good hygiene is not practiced. Complicating matters is the fact the infected person will be contagious for at least a couple of weeks before they are aware they have the disease. If their personal hygiene is poor, meaning, if they get the virus on their hands after using the bathroom, neglect to wash their hands and then handle food that others will eat, they can easily infect many people before they become ill.

The hepatitis A virus (HAV), found in the stool and blood of an infected person, causes an infectious disease of the liver. Some of the symptoms of hepatitis A are jaundice (yellow skin), dark urine, pale or clay-colored stools, fatigue, nausea, stomach pain and poor appetite. A physical examination for any tenderness, a thorough investigation of symptoms, blood tests and a medical history are all usually part of any visit to the doctor for diagnosis. The doctor will also want to know if you have been exposed to hepatitis A or if you have been traveling.

There are no specific medications to treat hepatitis A. Rest and avoiding vigorous exercise is recommended. One may need to take an absence from school or work if performing those

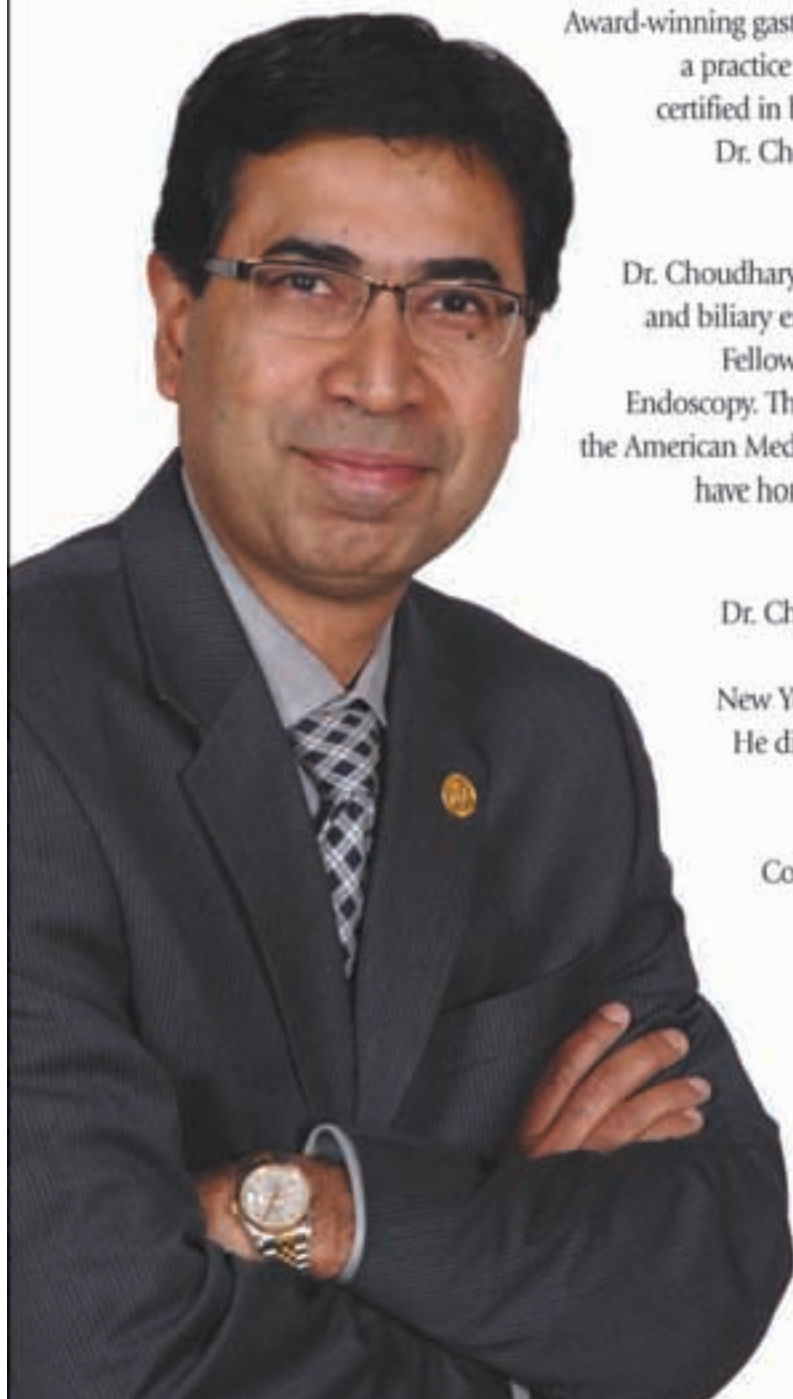
activities requires too much energy. It is important to try to eat a balanced diet during this period and to drink plenty of fluids. Because of the gastrointestinal upsets with this virus, sometimes eating several small meals a day is better than three large ones. Because the liver is where substances are broken down, it is important to avoid those things that are toxic to it, such as alcohol. Even Tylenol, which may seem benign, can cause serious damage to the liver if not taken properly. Consult with your health care provider before taking or stopping any medication if you have hepatitis. Symptoms last an average of two to six months.

The greatest control measure in preventing the transmission and spread of this disease is for people to wash their hands. This does require vigilance on an individual's part — particularly those who work in day care centers with all of the frequent diaper changes. Speak to your physician about receiving the hepatitis A vaccine to avoid this disease. If you have been exposed, an injection of immune globulin (IG) given within two weeks may prevent you from getting hepatitis A. **NOW**

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

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Award-winning gastroenterologist Adil M. Choudhary, M.D., has a practice at Huguley Memorial Medical Center. Board certified in both internal medicine and gastroenterology, Dr. Choudhary treats inpatients and outpatients for conditions of the liver and digestive tract.

Dr. Choudhary has extensive training in gastroenterological and biliary endoscopic procedures. He is one of only 277 Fellows of the American Society of Gastrointestinal Endoscopy. The American College of Gastroenterology and the American Medical Association, among other organizations, have honored Dr. Choudhary with many awards and recognitions.

Dr. Choudhary completed his residency in internal medicine at Bellevue Hospital Center and New York University Medical Center in Manhattan. He did a three-year fellowship in gastroenterology and hepatology at Yale University Gastroenterology Program in Bridgeport, Connecticut, and he received advanced training in therapeutic gastrointestinal endoscopy at Tulane University Medical Center in New Orleans.

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Is a Rollover in Your Future?

— By *Craig and Kim Bagley*

Have you recently left one employer to begin working for another? Were you covered by an employer-sponsored retirement plan, such as a 401(k)? If so, you may be wondering about the future of your account.

In the event of a job change, there are many options available to you regarding your employer-sponsored retirement account assets. The options you have will depend on the provisions of your former employer's plan. Sometimes, your money can stay in the plan with your previous employer until you reach a specific age, and you then can begin taking withdrawals without a tax penalty.

Remaining with your old plan may have drawbacks. Sometimes, fees are charged to former employees to offset managing the account. A minimum asset balance may also be required. Other times you must take your money out when you terminate employment. You should contact the Human Resources department or benefits counselor of your former employer to determine your options. If you withdraw plan assets, you may need to find another funding vehicle.

Transferring the balance of the assets in your previous employer's tax-qualified account to a plan sponsored by your new employer may be an option. This can be done without paying taxes if the money goes directly to the new account (known as a direct rollover). However, your new employer may not allow a rollover, thus you will need to look at further options.

One choice to consider is rolling the balance of your account to a Traditional Individual Retirement Arrangement (IRA). With this choice, you are able to control the investment options within the IRA. You can also avoid the need to make a further

rollover if you change jobs again. Rolling your 401(k) assets into a Traditional IRA can be costly if not done correctly. If you take a withdrawal, the trustee of your old plan must withhold 20 percent of the money for federal income tax purposes. You have 60 days to roll the distribution to a new qualified retirement vehicle if you do take a withdrawal. The 20-percent withholding will count as a distribution if you do not roll over that amount to an IRA or other qualified plan. A 10-percent tax penalty will usually apply if you are under age 59 1/2 and you don't roll the entire amount into an IRA or other qualified plan.

In order to avoid the 20-percent federal income tax withholding, a direct rollover should be considered. The assets of your employer-sponsored plan are transferred directly from your former employer's plan to a Traditional IRA or other qualified plan. You don't touch the money, and neither does the government. Your assets can grow tax-deferred until you begin withdrawals.

Once you determine where you want the money to go, the IRA custodian can request the money from your employer-sponsored plan in the form of a check or wire transfer.

Your current IRA contributions are not affected by a rollover. You may contribute the allowable limit to an IRA even after rolling a substantial amount from your previous plan.

With so many choices available, it may be in your best interests to discuss a Traditional IRA rollover with a financial professional. You have some options. Take advantage of one with which you are comfortable. **NOW**

Craig and Kim Bagley are State Farm agents based in Weatherford.

April-August

"Along the Navajo Trail — A Look at Culture, Tradition and Craft": Tuesday-Friday: 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.; Saturday: 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., The Museum of the Americas, 216 Fort Worth Hwy., Weatherford. This new exhibit features photographs, pottery, baskets, hand-loomed Navajo rugs, silver and turquoise jewelry, folk art carvings and sand paintings. Admission to the museum is always free. For more information, contact Harold or Elizabeth Lawrence at (817) 341-8668.

April 2

Weatherford Christian Annual Golf Tournament: 8:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. flight times at Canyon West Golf Course. This event will include 18 holes of golf on the beautiful Canyon West Golf Course as well as a skeet-shooting and horseshoe-pitching contest. For more information, call (817) 596-7807 or e-mail leslie.chalmers@wcsliions.org.

Fish Fry Fundraiser for Brock-Dennis Fire Department: 4:00-8:00 p.m., Station 1, 1107 FM 1189. The all-volunteer Brock-Dennis

Fire Department provides search & rescue, hazardous material response, firefighting and vehicle rescue and extrication to people in almost 70 square miles of Parker County. The 20 firefighters are equipped with engines, attack four wheel drive units, tankers and rescue equipment. Bounce houses for kids, who can dress up in bunker gear and squirt water from a real fire truck; live auction as well as a silent auction for adults. Most auction items are handmade by community members or donated from local businesses. Auxiliary ladies prepare lots of homemade pies. For more information, contact Jeff O'Neal, (817) 773-2585; Cheryl Smith, (817) 319-6892; or Chief Travis Scrimshire, (817) 881-0197.

April 9

Parker County Master Gardeners Annual Spring Plant Sale: 8:00 a.m.-noon. Texas AgriLife Extension Services Office, 604 N. Main, Weatherford. Rainwater Harvesting demonstration, assistance with plant selection and answers to gardening questions with Master Gardeners specializing in several areas, including plant propagation, composting, vegetable

gardening, Earthkind roses, design, etc. For more information, contact Ava Blais at blaisbunch@yahoo.com or (817) 597-0186.

April 24

Opening of Prayer Walk and Unveiling of "Mary and Jesus" Statue by Paul Gajcy: 10:30 a.m.-noon. Clark Gardens, 567 Maddux Road, Weatherford. For more information, visit www.aholeinmyheart.com or contact Autumn Ater of A Hole In My Heart Ministries at ater@att.net or (817) 596-0104.

May 14

Dreams on Wings 5K and 1-mile Fun Run: 1-Mile Fun Run starts at 8:00 a.m. The 5K starts at 8:30 a.m. at Parker County Physical Therapy, 879 Eureka, Weatherford. Early registration for the Dreams on Wings Fun Run ends May 1. You may register online at www.hemifoundation.org. For more information, contact Tracy Payne at (817) 594-9200, ext. 56.

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your event details to melissa.rawlins@nowmagazines.net.



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In The Kitchen With Lesli Sanders Edwards

— By Melissa Rawlins

“People love dessert,” Lesli Sanders Edwards exclaimed. “It is a stress reliever. *Desserts backwards is stressed!*” And for Lesli, cooking desserts makes her as happy as serving them. She remembers cooking real food for her dolls on the Susie Homemaker Oven she received when only 2 years old. Now, from the family homestead, she prepares unusual cheesecake and brownie recipes for people all over Parker County. Her secret, the recipe for the crust that makes her cheesecakes heavenly, is shared below. She cooks for her family and has her mother try all her new recipes. “I know she will tell me the truth,” Lesli said, adding: “Life is too short not to love what you do. It makes me a better person, mother and wife.” **NOW**

Sponge Cake Crust for Cheesecake

Makes one 8-inch crust to fill with your own unique filling.

- 1/4 cup sifted cake flour**
- 1/2 tsp. baking powder**
- Pinch of salt**
- 3 medium eggs, separated**
- 1/4 cup sugar**
- 1 tsp. pure vanilla extract**
- 2 Tbsp. real butter, melted and cooled to room temperature**
- 1/4 tsp. cream of tartar**

1. Preheat oven to 350 F and generously butter bottom and sides of an 8-inch spring form pan. Wrap the outside with aluminum foil, covering bottom and extending all the

way up the sides.

- 2.** In a small bowl, sift flour, baking powder and salt together.
- 3.** Beat egg yolks in large bowl with an electric mixer on high for 3 minutes. With mixer still running, slowly add 2 Tbsp. of sugar and beat until thick, light yellow ribbon forms. Beat in extracts. This is where you can make it your own! Add lemon extract or any extract you like — just 2 drops will change the taste.
- 4.** Sift the flour mixture over the batter and stir it in by hand, just until no more white flecks appear. Blend in the cooled melted butter.
- 5.** Wash mixing bowl and beaters really well and dry. With a paper towel, wipe down the bowl and beater with vinegar. This will insure there is no fat on your bowl and beater, and will help stabilize the egg whites. Put the

egg whites and cream of tartar into the bowl and beat with the mixer on high until frothy. Gradually add remaining sugar and continue beating until stiff peaks form. Fold about one-third of the whites into the batter, then the remaining whites.

6. Spread batter over the bottom of the pan; bake just until set and golden, about 10 minutes. Touch cake gently in center. If it springs back, it is done. Leave crust in pan and place on wire rack to cool. Leave oven on while you prepare your favorite cheesecake filling. Tip: You will bake the crust in the same spring form pan you are using for cheesecake. Watch the crust closely. Since it is so thin, it needs only 10 to 12 minutes to bake. Crust should not look wet or sticky.

My Easy Popovers

- 4 1/2 tsp. cooking oil per 9 popovers**
- 1 cup flour**
- 1/2 tsp. salt**
- 2 extra large eggs**
- 1 cup milk**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 400 F.
- 2.** Very important: Heat 9-muffin pan with 1/2 tsp. oil in each muffin tin for about 12 minutes while preheating your oven.
- 3.** Beat all ingredients together for 2 minutes, until creamy smooth.
- 4.** Take pan out of oven and divide batter between the 9 muffin molds. Fill halfway with batter.
- 5.** Bake for 30 minutes, or until puffed and brown. Serve hot with butter.

Hot and Spicy Crackers

- 1 box Saltine crackers**
- 1 pkg. Hidden Valley Ranch Dip mix**
- 1 cup canola oil**
- 1 1/2 Tbsp. crushed red pepper**

- 1.** Mix all ingredients in a large 1-gallon, Ziploc bag.
- 2.** Shake all ingredients until crackers are well-coated.
- 3.** Let stand for at least 4 hours (overnight if possible).
- 4.** Serve with your favorite dip or eat as is.

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

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