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embrace the game

The road to the pros started early for baseball player, Stayton Thomas.

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Mary Cooley.

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L'chayim: To Life!
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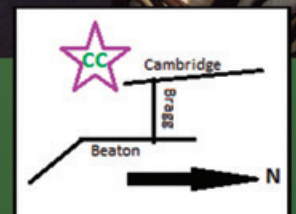


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On The Cover



A fast curve ball leads
straight to success for
Stayton Thomas.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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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 (903) 875-0187 or visit www.nowmagazines.com.

Editor's Note

Happy Easter, Corsicana!

The renewal of the earth is all around us. This year, spring rains began even before the time frame mentioned in the famed quote, "April showers bring May flowers," and they have brought out the beauty of Navarro County. Everywhere azaleas, spring bulbs and flowering fruit trees are rivaling us, as we dress in our Easter bonnets.

As a year-round vegetable and fruit gardener, I look forward to celebrating Earth Day on April 22, as my mature winter garden greets the new sprouts of my spring and summer garden. Earlier in the month, you can celebrate living a long, full life by observing World Health Day 2012 on April 7. I am in the advance guard of baby boomers, who are once again changing society by refusing to "grow old gracefully." I look forward to seeing you walking in our parks, riding bikes and having fun in these delightful spring days. And that's no April Fool's joke!



Virginia

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EMBRACE THE GAME

— By Virginia Riddle

"One of the beautiful things about baseball is that every once in a while you come into a situation where you want to, and where you have to, reach down and prove something," Nolan Ryan, former major league baseball pitcher and current principal owner, president and CEO of the Texas Rangers, said. That once-in-a-while opportunity has come again for Stayton Thomas, a familiar name to Navarro County residents who follow local baseball players through their college years. Stayton, who pitched for Mildred High School, Corsicana High School and The University of Texas at Austin, is embarking on his professional career as a recent recruit for the Tampa Bay Rays. "It's been a long process getting here," he shared. "I am going to be like a sponge and just continue to learn."

Stayton's road to the pros began, like so many players, in organized baseball with T-ball when he was 4 years old. "We have pictures of me playing even younger than that," Stayton revealed. He credits his parents, coaches and trainers for mentoring him along the way. He said of his parents, Robby and Teresa Thomas, "I owe them big-time! My dad was always there to find the best people to push me on." And Robby's list of "best people" is a pretty lengthy list. "Mom paid the bills," Stayton continued, "helped me with equipment and made sure I kept my grades up." He has also enjoyed having his grandparents and other family members cheering him on through his many games.

"My wife and I spent many an anniversary at Sonic because we had a ballgame," Robby remembered.

As a high school freshman and sophomore, Stayton pitched for Mildred High School (MHS) under Coach Justin Terry, and then moved on to Coach Tracy Wood at Corsicana High School (CHS) for his junior and senior years.

"My coaches gave me extra reps and pushed my name. When everyone else was through, they turned the lights back on, and we kept hitting. It was something special when we found high school coaches who took their time to stay out there with me," Stayton remembered. He credits Bernie (Doc), CHS's trainer, with helping him stay fit physically.



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Dub Kilgo became Stayton's pitching coach when Stayton was 13 years old and continued to coach him through his senior year. "He was very knowledgeable. We traveled to Waco to work with him," Stayton said. Summers were spent playing with the D-BAT organization's Show Case Tourneys. "Different colleges come around recruiting. I was noticed for the first time during Tourney 17 in Georgia," Stayton said.

The work paid off. Stayton joined former Navarro Coach Skip Johnson when both joined the Texas Longhorn's team — Johnson as an assistant coach and Stayton as a relief pitcher. Playing for the Longhorns while bleeding orange had always been Stayton's dream. "My mom said that even before I was born I would start kicking when "The Eyes of Texas" was played. I could do the Hook 'em Horns (signal) when I was a year old," Stayton laughed.

Stayton proved his worth with a list of impressive plays and wins throughout his college years, while still paying attention to his academics. During both semesters of his freshman year, he



made the Big 12 Commissioner's Honor Roll, and during each of his other three years, he made the Academic All-Big 12 Baseball First Team. Summers were spent in collegiate wood-bat league play. "I played in different places around the states. I was very blessed to have the host parents I had. They kept me in groceries and just did whatever I needed," he shared.

"College was a rough time," Stayton stated. "With highly recruited guys all around, you have to wait your time as a relief pitcher. It's frustrating." It's not easy to be a college student-athlete. Weight work was from 5:00-8:00 a.m., class from 8:00 a.m.-1:00 or 2:00 p.m., followed by field conditioning until 6:00 p.m. Study time was from 6:30-8:00 p.m. "I was constantly tired. You just keep working and hope that someone sees you and likes what they see." For Stayton, that someone was Pat Murphy, an area scout with the Tampa Bay Rays.

Stayton's chance to prove himself to the Rays began with the opening of spring training camp March 2, 2012, at Port Charlotte, Florida. "It's five minutes from the beach, so I got a two-for-one special," Stayton grinned. He took with him a repertoire that includes the four-seam fast ball, two-seam fast ball, curve and change-up pitches thrown at radar gun speeds of 89-95 mph. "Control is the biggest factor," he stated.

Discipline and dedication are factors of success also. "People don't understand what it takes to get to pro sports. It's not just luck. It takes countless hours to stay in shape 365 days of the year," Stayton explained. "You have to be mentally able to put your body through play every day for seven months while traveling on bus trips for hours from game to game."



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SATURDAY, April 28

Schedule of Events

WEDNESDAY, April 25
11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. : Lunch in the Park
Hosted by ExxonMobil Pipeline, Corsicana
Main Street & Parks/Recreation Departments
Pocket Park - 120 N. Beaton Street
Entertainment by Byron Haynie, FREE hot dogs/drinks

THURSDAY, April 26
5:30 p.m. : "Mystery in Tuckertown"
Art Auction & Poster Contest
Benefiting VOICE, Inc. & Navarro Council of the Arts
Warehouse Living Arts Center Gallery, 119 W. 6th Ave.

FRIDAY, April 27
7:00 p.m. : Line Dance Lessons by McMaw's Misfits
Main Stage on 6th Ave., between Main & Beaton
7:30 p.m. : Wing Eating Contest
Main Stage on 6th Ave.
Presented by Chili's
8:00 p.m. : Lefty Frizzell Tribute Concert & Street Dance
Starring Cornell Hurd Band!
Stage located in Warehouse Theater parking lot
6th Avenue, between Main & Beaton

SATURDAY, April 28
6:30 a.m. : Oil Town Mini-thon
Benefiting Corsicana Lions Club
Registration begins 6:30 a.m.; 1K & 5K Run/Walk begin at 7:30 a.m.
Corsicana YMCA, 400 W. Oaklawn
8:30 a.m. : Biker Bash & Poker Run Registration
\$20 pre-registered, \$25 at the gate; includes lunch, poker hand, T-shirt and games/contests.
The Remington, 122 W. 3rd St.; call 903-654-4874 for information
9:00 a.m. : Chili & BBQ Cookoff
Second Ave. & Commerce Street
9:00 a.m. : Derrick Days Parade
Grand Marshal - Outgoing Derrick Days Chairman Brad Haynie
10:00 a.m. : 1st Annual Derrick Days
Biker Bash & Poker Run Begins
\$25 at the gate; includes lunch, poker hand, T-shirt and games/contests.
The Remington, 122 W. 3rd St.
10:30 a.m. : Oil History Field Tour
Bus leaves from Main St. side of the Warehouse Living Arts Ctr.
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. : Pet Adoptions
By Humane Society of Nav. Co. & Corsicana Animal Shelter
Location TBD
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. : Shakers & Scrapers 9th Annual Car Show
500 N. Beaton St. (old Stewart Motor Co.)
10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. : Summertime Amusements Carnival
Commerce & Collin
11:00 a.m. : Corsicana Cloggers
Beaton @ 4th Ave. (in front of Miles Furniture)
11:00 a.m. : Horseshoe & Washer Tournament
Corner of 2nd Ave. & Commerce St.
Noon : "Corsicana's Oil History" short film
Free Admission, Martin's Music Hall, 201 S. Beaton.
Noon : Washer Pitch Tournament
Corner of 2nd Ave. & 9th St.
1:00 p.m.-3 p.m. : McMaw's Misfits Presents
Little Buckaroos Stickhorse Rodeo + Clogging
& Line Dance Performance
Collin & Commerce streets (Lighthouse of Praise parking lot)
1:30 p.m. : Oil History Field Tour
Bus leaves from Main St., in front of the Warehouse Arts Ctr.
5:00 p.m. : Chili & BBQ Cookoff Awards Ceremony
2nd Ave. & Commerce St. (behind CTBM)

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While waiting for his date with camp to arrive, Stayton returned to his Navarro County roots. A few semester hours from a degree, he will continue his studies during his off-season time. Considered to be an undersized pitcher at 6 feet tall, Stayton worked out daily to keep in good condition. "I am blessed with my arm, a strong core and upper body strength," he said. Yoga for stretching, weight lifting for strengthening and running worked to keep his body in tune. Stayton kept busy giving pitching and weight training lessons to local athletes.

Stayton also made some speaking engagements as area coaches view him as a positive role model. "I tell students that you have to sustain a work ethic once you are in high school. You don't have to be the biggest or the fastest, but you do have to work the hardest if you want to achieve your dream," he said. When his pro ball career is finished, Stayton plans to coach baseball at the college level.

"My CHS teammates were such a great influence in my life. We grew to be family and remain friends today," Stayton shared. His CHS teammates, his girlfriend who attends vet school at Texas A & M as well as family and friends throughout Navarro County are always with him in spirit and will continue cheering for him as he seeks to prove himself with every ball thrown. "I can't believe that I am getting paid to play the game I love," Stayton said. "I embrace this game!" **NOW**

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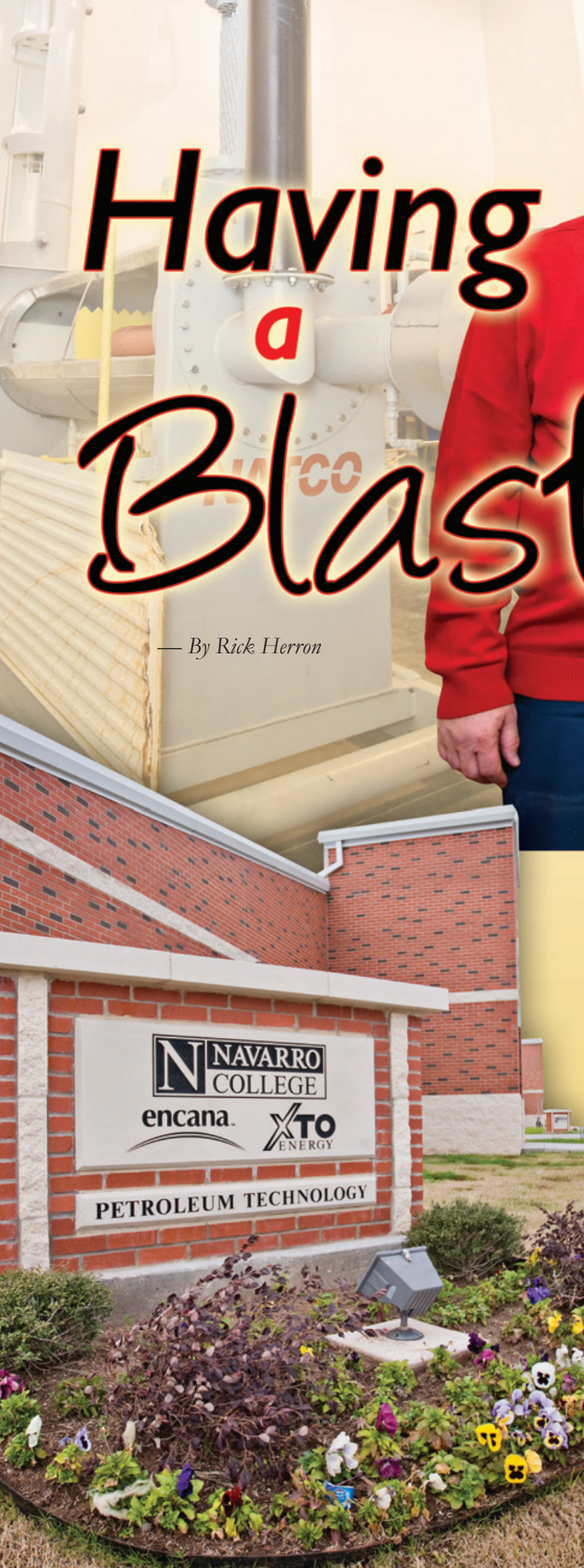
— By Rick Herron

Department chair, Donald W. Capone II, Ph.D.; CBJTG project coordinator, Christy Vincent; and associate instructor, Vern Wilson, P.E.

After oil was accidentally discovered near Corsicana in 1894 during the process of drilling a water well, the city experienced a dramatic change in growth and direction. The discovery of oil — also known as black gold and Texas tea — would transform this sleepy little town into a major East Texas city and home of the famed Collin Street Bakery, Wolf Brand Chili and Navarro College.

Since 1976, Corsicana's annual Derrick Days celebration has commemorated the discovery of oil, and the new oil derrick at Fifth Avenue and Business 45 serves as a visible reminder to citizens and visitors of the far-reaching significance of that discovery. Another reminder is the continued growth, reputation and success of Navarro College's nationally renowned Petroleum Technology Program, now in its fifth year and still enthusiastically guided by department chair, Dr. Donald W. Capone II.

"When we started the program in 2007, we were using donated equipment and classes met in the rear bay of the college's John Deere Building," Don recalled. The spring





2008 semester had 30 students, 15 who met during the day and 15 who attended night classes.

The following year, when program attendance reached 100, Don began talking to the college about building a facility to adequately handle the dramatic growth in students within the program. Thanks in part to donations from several oil and gas sponsors including Marathon, Chesapeake Energy, Encana Oil and Gas and XTO Energy, the Navarro College Petroleum Technology Building opened for classes in April 2011.

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classrooms within a space of 16,767 total square feet, was a dream that came true, thanks to those donations, along with tremendous financial and program support from the Navarro College Board of Trustees and district president, Dr. Richard Sanchez. The funds were used for building construction and furnishings. According to Navarro College literature, the building "represents the newest chapter in the college's drive to serve as a premier education and job development hub for the oil and gas sector."

From the start, the program attracted students of a wide demographic range, a trend that has apparently continued. "Most of our incoming students don't have much experience in oil and gas, and it's a diverse group. This semester, of the 62 new students we enrolled this spring, 11 are women. Some of my best graduates are female, probably because they all have such good attention to detail," Don said.

The program provides the opportunity for students to attend either day or night classes each semester. "Our evening program contains students that range in age from their 30s to 50s, many of them career changers from the recent economic downturn," Don explained, adding that the daytime students are generally in their mid-20s who want to continue their education and, as he puts it, "make something of themselves."

With the availability of scholarship funds, as well as internships with prospective employers for graduates, many of which are arranged by the program and potential starting salaries after graduation in the 40K-50K range, participation in the program is, for many, an excellent career choice. "We have a one-year certification to train

lease and gas plant operators and a two-year associate degree that adds additional petroleum-related courses for an expanded curriculum,” Don said. “This fall we will launch our new two-semester certification emphasizing Field Automation in the Petroleum Industry.”

Don added that between 20 and 25 students are placed in internships each semester through positions across the country that range from lease operators and gas plant operators to instrumentation technicians. “The key to succeeding is to get as much experience as possible in the field,” Don said, and he went on to explain how the program includes training in the highly competitive process of job placement.

“During the second semester, Encana Oil & Gas comes down to the college and gives a course to our program students on résumés, cover letter writing and general interviewing skills,” Don shared. “The students then create résumés, which I collect and distribute to our corporate sponsors who review them and decide on whom to interview.” Interviews start during the third semester and, on average, result in one-third to one-half of the students obtaining full-time employment.

Since 2009, the number of graduates from the program has experienced minimal fluctuation and is largely driven by the internship opportunities that are provided to the students. “We have about 15 to 20 students graduate any given semester,” Don explained. “We hold a boot camp one week before each semester starts to teach students the criteria for success, and one of our mottos we teach them is, ‘Get up; dress up; and show up.’ It’s important to get them to start thinking about the importance of internships right away.”

An interesting fact Don mentioned about the Navarro College Petroleum Technology program is that during the economic downturn, which began in 2008, the program remained largely unaffected and, in fact, saw enrollment steadily increase. “We’ve done real well through the downturn in that we added new sponsoring companies to the mix and expanded our outreach to new geographic locations without having to do any formal advertising of our program,” Don said. “I believe

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this addition is due primarily to word-of-mouth and the program's excellent reputation."

Don attributes the program's initial success to a willingness to respond to efforts by leading oil and gas companies throughout the nation who were trying to elicit support from community colleges toward providing well-educated and trained graduates as potential employees. "We ended up as a premier training facility, due to our responsiveness to their growing needs for professionals," he said.

The program includes one full-time instructor, Vern Wilson, formerly with Exxon and Wilson Energy, and what Don calls an "outstanding" group of adjunct instructors: Cheryl Barker, Paul Barker, Chris Breitling, George Brozowski, Paul Kilger, Gary McMullan, Mark Summit, Justin Kuykendall, Rickey Boatright and Craig Wentworth.

Word of the program's success in preparing students for oil and gas production positions has reached across the nation. "We've had at least six programs from places like North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Utah, Alabama and Louisiana and here in Texas, who are developing oil and gas production sites that come to Corsicana to see what we're doing," Don said.

A physicist who got his Ph.D. from Tufts University in 1984, Don came to Texas in 1989 to work on the Superconducting Super Collider project in Waxahachie and was hired by Navarro College in December 2007 to teach the program's first semester in spring 2008. Married with four children, he says he relishes his position as department chair of the Petroleum Technology program. "I'm having a blast," he admitted. "I haven't had this much fun in my whole career." **NOW**

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A Dream

Realized

— By Virginia Riddle

For more than 20 years, Mary Cooley loved a home on a tree-lined street in Corsicana. She always imagined the house being a great fit if it were to go on the market at a time that worked for her family. The two-story home was large enough, and the traditional colonial, sandy brick architecture was just the background Mary perceived would work well with her family heirloom collection of furnishings. Mary and her late husband, Gary, tried once

to purchase the home but were unsuccessful. Five years ago, the timing was right, and Mary realized her dream. "I really wanted this home. I have always loved it. I knew I just needed to live here. It is a perfect fit!" Mary exclaimed.

Gary and Mary, both natives of Corsicana, were married for 33 years. They met at the then First National Bank, where he was an officer and she worked after having attended Corsicana High School and Navarro College. Together they reared two girls and two

AT HOME WITH

boys in another Corsicana home. "We had lived in the other home for 30 years. I had to have three garage sales before I moved here," Mary said. However, the memories, spirit and furnishings that had always made a house a home to Mary and her family came with her to her new abode surrounded by its tree-shaded, immaculately landscaped yard.

Family gatherings are the best of times for Mary. At holidays, especially Christmas, her home fills with her daughters: Laura Cooley Ware, who lives in Corsicana, and Lenora of San






From left to right, Chandler, Laura, Mary and Lenora enjoy family time.

Mary Cooley

Marcos. Her sons, Jon from Houston and Glenn, who lives in Los Angeles, California, visit often. Jon and his wife, Emily, bring baby, Gary, to join Laura's son, Chandler, so the boys can enjoy cousin time. Mary's Christmas trees are loaded with memorable ornaments from Baby's First Christmas to those marking the children's and grandchildren's lives. "Everyone knows on Christmas Eve to go to Mary's home. I don't invite them anymore. Family and friends just come. It's a traditional thing with us," Mary laughed. Laura lives nearby, so Mary enjoys babysitting Chandler, her grandson. "He comes over often. We are very close," Mary said. "Sunday dinners are also regular get-togethers." There is plenty of room, so everyone can enjoy their time together, comfortably.

Visitors and friends can follow the brick-lined pathway past the U.S. flag Mary proudly flies to the decorative double, front-entry doors. Inside the brick-lined entry hall and den, Mikey and Muffin, Mary's two dogs, bark their greetings to all who enter the home. The fireplace with its ornate screen makes a unique focal point. The comfortable

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seating area includes a sofa that once belonged to Mary's grandmother and a coffee table that belonged to her parents. Built-in cabinets, a rocking chair, grandfather clock and rug complete the cozy room.

A breakfast nook provides Mary an office area where she also enjoys her hobby of making jewelry. Inspired by her sister-in-law, Patti Redden, while visiting her brother in Tucson, Arizona, Mary specializes in necklace and bracelet designs. "Patti's real crafty and smart. This is just something that I like to do," Mary said. She has a huge box that houses her bead collection.

A picturesque scene is created by copper pots and pans hanging on hooks over a breakfast bar, black tile kitchen countertops and stainless steel appliances. Mary's collection of



plates with snow scenes are displayed on the plate rack. Roosters standing sentry in the kitchen window complement the rooster-themed wallpaper.

A rooster lamp and bowl carry the theme into the formal dining room, where a desk Mary inherited from her parents is featured. "I guess I am a rooster person. Even the weather vane on the roof is a rooster," Mary said.

A collection of plates that has been passed down from Mary's grandparents to her parents is now proudly displayed in Mary's formal living room. The sofa, her parents' first piece of furniture, is set on a rug that covers hardwood floors. Red walls highlight a large, copper bowl.

A hallway lined with family photos leads to two bedroom



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suites. A baby crib is set in the master bedroom so that grandbabies can nap downstairs, while a crib upstairs provides a quiet nightly sleeping area for the babies. Mary has decorated the baby area with an antique dress theme. The master bath features a window seat and marble bath and shower.

A downstairs guest bedroom features a window seat. The inherited bed and other furnishings are more than 200 years old. The two collage pictures of girls dressed in ribbons and lace once hung in Mary's parents' home.

Two bedrooms and a bath are joined upstairs by a wide hallway that offers a reading nook. "This little area is a good place to just sit down and relax," Mary revealed. The red-themed bedroom features furnishings Mary has refinished.



The animal-themed bedroom honors zoo animals and dogs. "Gary and I just had to have those twin beds," Mary said of the animal-themed beds topped with their doggy quilts. Zoo animals are the focus of a quilt hanging over an antique vanity on which an animal-themed lamp sits. Babies in this family can be rocked

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to sleep in the yellow wicker rocker and sleep well in the crib.

Mary's dream is her home. "I love working in the yard and keeping this house," she said. The backyard, with its covered patio, complements the front view with its statuary placed in the gardens.

Mary enjoys volunteering at her church, Westminster Presbyterian Church, where she is an elder. Her family is close, even though scattered in several states. They communicate through Facebook as well as by phone. "I talk to the kids all the time," Mary said. "My girls



were Corsicana High School cheerleaders. We were active all the time in everything the kids did while growing up."

Upon moving into her home, Mary found that with just a little updating with paint, her dream home was the perfect place for her, her treasures and her friends and family. No remodeling was really needed. "It was just meant to be. People ask me all the time if I live in the Cason House. Proudly, I say 'I do,'" Mary said. Originally built in 1963 by the family of florists, Mary's home now reflects her Corsicana family heritage. "I was born here, went to school here, married a hometown boy and raised my family here," Mary remembered. "We just have good memories being made here all the time." **NOW**

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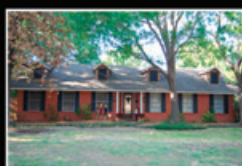
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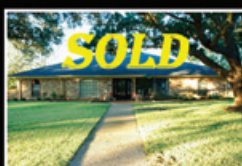
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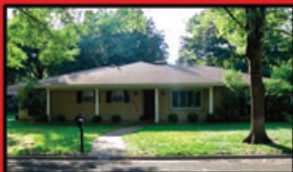


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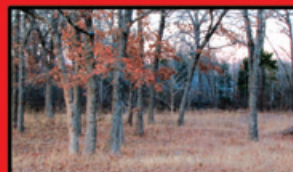
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L'chayim: ט

— By Virginia Riddle

A blind date and a long-distance courtship resulted in bringing Babbette Samuels to Corsicana. A native of Port Arthur, Texas, Babbette was a coed attending The University of Texas at Austin in

1949. During a trip to visit her roommate's home town of Corsicana, a blind date was arranged between Babbette and Irvin Samuels. Many hours spent commuting by train and bus followed, resulting

in Babbette becoming Irvin's bride in 1951. "So much has happened. I've seen so much history. I am so grateful, but I'm greedy. I still don't want to miss anything," Babbette said enthusiastically.



Babbette hasn't missed much to date. She is active in diverse activities around town. "If a group needs someone, I have time. I like to be with people," Babbette explained. The Corsicana City Council appointed her, in 2011, to serve as an at-large member of the citizen redistricting committee. She just took the training course and is now a Corsicana Code Ranger. She is serving on the city's library and park and recreation boards, and, most recently, participated in the YMCA's Jingle Bell Jog. Babbette has served as a docent at the Cook Center and on a United Way committee. Having always had dogs, Babbette cares for friends' pets while their owners are on vacation.

A regular thespian and volunteer with



To Life!

the Warehouse Living Arts Center and Palace Theatre, Babbette was honored by The Palace as one of the 2009 Volunteers of the Year. "We worked hard as waitresses during a fundraiser, but we had a good time doing it," Babbette remembered. "I'm amazed at the talent in this town."

In the recent production of *The King and I*, theater patrons were amazed by Babbette's gymnastic prowess on stage. "It was the hardest thing I've had to do on stage. Getting up on cue was hard," she reflected. "I had asked if they had a part for a little, silver-haired lady, and they did."

Volunteerism is nothing new to Babbette. While her husband, Irvin, helped manage the family store of P. Samuels Men's Clothiers with his brothers and father, both he and Babbette took time to actively rear their children: Philip, Robin and Douglas. Camp Fire Girls, Boy Scouts of America, YMCA Indian Guides, DeMolay International, Little League, Gray-Y Football, PTA and Band Parents were all groups that benefited

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from the Samuels' active participation. "Doing all that was just accepted," Babbette explained.

The family also traveled to 49 states and Canada. "We saw the world fairs in Seattle, New York, Montreal, Knoxville and Hemisfair," Babbette said. National parks were also favored destinations.



Since the children have been grown, she has also been to Israel and Mexico.

On one of those family trips, Irvin, already a woodcarver, saw the figure of Gandalf, a character from J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit*. So entranced by the story and characters, Irvin commissioned a professional wood carver, Ludwig Kieninger, to carve figures representing *The Hobbit* characters. Visitors to the second floor of the Richard M. Sanchez Library on the Navarro College campus can view the resulting 41 figures of the Samuels Hobbit Collection donated by the couple in 1995.

As a young bride, Babbette came to a very different Corsicana. Downtown was vibrant with businesses, many of which were owned by Jewish merchants who, just as Irvin's family had done, arrived



with the railroads in the affluent oil boom era of the 1890s. The Temple Beth-El, with its Moorish Revival style octagonal towers topped with onion-shaped domes, was the Reform Jewish worship center, while the building that now houses the Senior Citizens Center originally served as the conservative Jewish synagogue. The Jewish community, once thriving with more than 100 Jewish families living in and around Corsicana, has now dwindled to just a few residents. Babbette remembers a Temple Beth-El with regular services and Sunday school and an active Hadassah group of women. "We had a good time," she recalled.

In 1981, the congregation disbanded, and the following year, a Save-the-Temple committee and the Navarro County Historical Society raised funds to purchase and restore the building. Since 1987, Temple Beth-El has been owned by the city of Corsicana and used for community events. It has the distinction of being the only onion-domed building in Texas and one of three in the United States. The unusual architectural style reflects the European ancestral ties of most of the Corsicana Jewish population.

Currently, once a month, a rabbi holds services in the temple. Babbette is very excited that some of the original artifacts, having been sent away following the decommissioning, are now being returned to their original places in the temple.

Along with the temple and synagogue, the Jewish community established the Hebrew Cemetery in 1877 and the Corsicana Hebrew Cemetery Association in 1887. Both the cemetery and the Temple Beth-El wear their historical markers and designations well. Folks

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driving by the cemetery — located in the 2300 block between 2nd and 3rd Avenues — can often find Babbette working there. Original cemetery maps were made of cloth. Babbette took on a project of correctly recording every grave site in the cemetery. She consulted with an American/Israeli woman living in Israel for Hebrew translations, making the project last eight years.

Now, burial numbers are listed in chronological order, making it easy for genealogists and researchers to do their work. Visitors can find Jewish family names from Mexia, Hillsboro, Ennis and other surrounding communities among the markers, for lack of a Jewish



cemetery in those towns. One of the most interesting graves is that of a tight rope walker who remains otherwise anonymous. His profession resulted in a fatal fall, and the doomed man said that he was Jewish. A Jewish merchant is said to have prayed with the traveling performer, but no one in Corsicana knew the man's name.

While Babbette can be seen driving around town with an American flag that she has flown since 9/11 on her car, she also enjoys her home and yard. She is a green-thumbed gardener, and her yard's springtime display of azaleas is well-known.

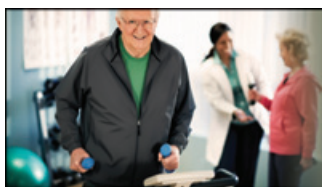
Babbette and her late husband, Irvin, have four grandchildren and a great-grandson blessed with the name of Samuel. The Internet, computer and cell phone are all part of Babbette's life. However, she advises younger people to just be themselves, love nature, get their eyes off [technological] screens, travel, see the country, pass on a love of God and country to others, and, most of all, be proud of Corsicana. **NOW**

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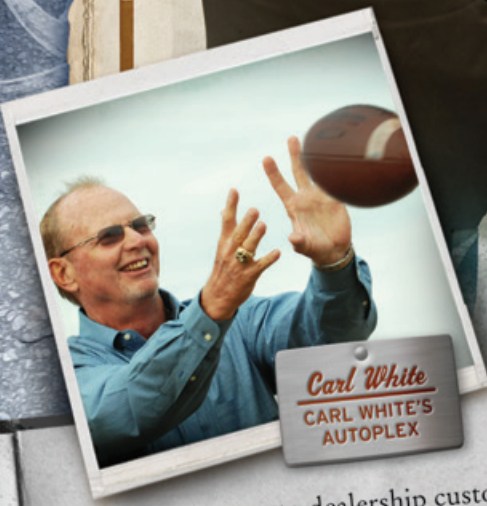
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Tour de Force

— By Randy Bigham



After rearing a family and devoting their professional lives to schooling children, local educators, Gilbert and Jenna Hall, have taught themselves a thing or two about enjoying retirement. Welcoming excitement and exploration is the greatest lesson learned by this couple who left Corsicana behind last spring for the thrills of the road in their RV camper. Wanderlust led the pair to the Canadian Rockies and Alaska on a trip neither will soon forget. "It was a fantastic getaway," said Gilbert, a former Collins Middle School principal. "The best we have ever been on."



Joining the tour group, Adventure Caravans, with 42 other RV-driving, fun-loving vacationers, Gilbert and Jenna traveled over 12,000 miles in 75 days. Leisurely admiring the scenery and wildlife, cooking out, hiking, boating, zip-lining and blogging their experiences to friends back home, the Halls had the time of their lives. "Without a doubt, this was the most amazing trip," Gilbert said. "We saw and did things I never dreamed of."

The vacation, however, almost didn't happen. Gilbert and Jenna were planning on taking a cruise, but when a brochure came in the mail about Adventure Caravans and its Canadian-Alaskan itinerary they decided to exchange their seagoing holiday for the freedom of the road. That the excursion would last nearly three months was a concern at first. "I surprised myself," admitted Jenna, who once taught sixth grade at Drane Intermediate School. "I didn't think I could be gone that long from home, but it was great. We made friends and visited some of the most beautiful places."

The lure of stepping beyond their routine to discover new vistas motivated the Halls to accept the challenge of such a long journey. "We had been to

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Washington, D.C. for the Fourth of July, to Florida for a space shuttle launch, to Mt. Rushmore, Yellowstone and the Grand Canyon," Gilbert pointed out. "But those were all roughly 10-day trips. So this was a big move to be gone for such a long while."

Packing up their RV and hitting the road on May 31, Gilbert and Jenna made the first entry in their blog: "I think we have all the bills paid, prescriptions on hand, paper stopped, yard care arranged. I'm sure we'll think of something, but oh, well!" When they finally crossed the Canadian border, the couple found all they had been waiting to see — snow-capped mountains, green valleys and crystal-clear streams. They met up with their fellow sightseers, and the caravan started its winding way through the countryside. By June 26, Gilbert and Jenna and their new road-savvy pals were lumbering through the Yukon Territory. Their blog that day recorded the pastoral beauty of their surroundings: "Spring is well under way here, and the wild flowers are in full bloom. Some of the valleys are miles wide. It is truly majestic!"

They explored the Tintina Trench in British Columbia and traversed Midnight Dome Mountain near the Yukon's Dawson City. "If you are there at the right time, you can watch the sun set and rise at the same time," Gilbert said. "On the summer solstice, you can watch the sun make a complete circle in the sky without ever setting."

Guides informed the Halls and fellow vacationers that Dawson City was part of the Gold Rush during the 1890s, its population swelling to 65,000 at the peak of the phenomenon. Highlights of their stay in Dawson City were eating real



"Klondike" ice cream bars, attending a show and playing blackjack at a vintage saloon called Diamond Tooth Gertie's. "I came out even, and Jenna lost \$8," Gilbert recalled. "But the show was great. Diamond Tooth Gertie sang and fooled with the men in the audience, and she had a group of girls who danced the cancan."

Making it to Alaska on the 21st day of their trip,



the Halls and the Adventure Caravan had to cross the imposing Top of the World Highway. Jenna considered it a "hairy" experience, but Gilbert was excited. "The highway literally runs atop the mountain range, and it's incredible," he explained. "You could see for miles across plunging valleys to the next mountain range. The road in many places was hanging on the side of the mountain with one lane or the other next to a sheer drop."

At Skagway, some 15 members of the caravan, including Gilbert and Jenna, braved a zip line staged more than 800 feet above a canyon. "A swift moving mountain stream tumbled over huge boulders throughout the course," the Halls blogged that day. "It was an amazingly beautiful sight, but a somewhat frightening course to zip."

On July 28, the 51st day of their journey, Gilbert and Jenna joined other members for a cruise aboard a catamaran to Juneau for one of the most spectacular scenic adventures of the whole trip. Along the way, they photographed humpback whales spouting and diving, huge waterfalls spilling down mountainsides from

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melting glaciers, salmon jumping and bald eagles standing guard on rocky ledges. Another amazing moment the Halls captured on camera was a group of bears salmon hunting. "Shortly after we started back to Skagway," the couple blogged, "the captain slowed the boat and swung it around. He said he thought a mama grizzly and her cub were fishing in a stream flowing into the fjord. Later, we circled a lighthouse in the middle of the fjord and watched otters in the water and seals on the rocks."

One of the places that stand out in the couple's memories of the Alaskan leg of their trip was a tiny town called Chicken. With a summer population of 40 (and only four year-round residents), the little hamlet has made an attraction out of its comedic name. "We were told that the town is called Chicken because the miners who founded it couldn't spell their first choice, ptarmigan — a local bird," Gilbert laughed. "So since ptarmigans taste like chicken, Chicken it was!"

Among other jokes the townspeople tell tourists is that they have a school, Chicken University, where the team is called The Peckers. Jenna also recalled a funny incident that happened in Chicken. "We were getting ready to turn in for the night when there was a terrible explosion," she said. "We thought something had hit the RV!" But it was just some local revelry — the firing of a canon at a saloon down the street, a holdover from the town's wilder heyday as a mining town.

Gilbert and Jenna are already gearing up for another trip with Adventure Caravans, though nothing as extensive as their last. "We can't top that one," Gilbert said.

Jenna agreed, "It was a once-in-a-lifetime trip." **NOW**



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— By Virginia Riddle

While April showers are bringing May flowers to Corsicana, Maui Tan is meeting its clients' needs for just the right tan to display with the shorts, sleeveless shirts and sundresses that Texas spring temperatures bring out of closets after sweater season is over. Emily Ferguson, Maui Tan's manager, welcomes clients with a smile that lights up the already bright, tropical paradise that was created so clients receive a relaxing and enjoyable tanning experience. "We are strictly in the tanning business. We help clients get the tan they are really looking for," Emily said.

Prospective clients are welcomed with a tour and a face-to-face consultation. "The first tan is always free," Emily said. The consultation is important since clients can choose from the five

different levels of tanning offered while sitting up, standing or laying down. Maui Tan offers the Mystic spray tan booth with three different levels of tanning: Level 1 is light, Level 2 is medium, Level 3 is dark. There are 20 tanning beds to choose from, encompassing different types of beds. There is also a leg tanning booth. "We have 21 different ways to customize your tanning experience and are getting ready to add more, which gives a lot of variety of choices for customers," Emily said. "We want to make sure that we have the services that each client prefers."

The client is also asked questions about his or her skin problems and concerns, as well as goals during tanning. The staff needs to know if the client burns easily. A client's skin

condition and appearance can be helped by use of the red light therapy bed that treats collagen with non-invasive laser therapy. It can smooth and reduce fine lines, firm aging and/or tired skin, advance moisture retention and increase circulation. "It's our miracle machine," Emily said. Additionally, skin conditions such as psoriasis, acne and eczema can benefit from tanning.

Maui Tan offers four product lines: Australian Gold, an advanced bronzer; California Tan, an anti-aging and firming bronzer; Swedish Beauty, an organic, all-natural ingredient, hypo-allergenic with no irritants line; and Designer Skin, a favorite line with the most variety. "It's really hot stuff," Emily said. Clients can also choose to whiten their teeth while

"We have 21 different ways to customize your tanning experience and are getting ready to add more."

tanning. "We have lots of really neat products," Emily added.

Although Maui Tan has been in business since 2004, it has new owners. Judi Randall and sons, John Bishop and Russell Randall, who own the H & R Block franchise next door, purchased the business in May 2011. Valorie Steele became the business manager, and Maui Tan employs six people.

Cleanliness of the facility is paramount to the employees and owners. Bed cleaners use a special spray, which they leave on for one minute, clean and then re-apply. Goggles are submerged in the same sanitizing solution. The facility and beds are constantly cleaned.

The facility is a member of the Corsicana Chamber of Commerce, the International Tanning Association, Better Business Bureau and Smart Tan. Emily recently earned an Ambassador Level certification through Smart Tan. "We are here for our clients," Valorie stated. Maui Tan is always open to suggestions from each client so his or her tanning experience is perfect. **NOW**

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Heath Cummings, Jessica Weisheit and Shelley and Jordan Golden enjoy the Wade Bowen Concert.



Ruth Neal and Mae Walker, Navarro College staff members, sport spring break smiles while the coaches anticipate working through the break.



Betty Russell (L) and Betty Kuykendall (R) are ready for Zumba at the Navarro County Regional Hospital Healthy Woman and YMCA Fitness Extravaganza.



Lucille Long and her granddaughter, Lindsey Brown, visiting at ArtisticEdge.



City employees, Don Wofford and James Blakeslee, take a break from work to smile for the camera.

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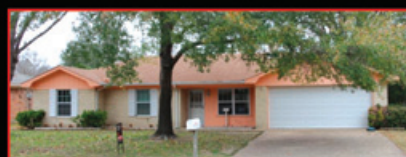
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To the Beat of a Different Drummer: An irregular heartbeat may increase stroke risk.

Approximately 15 percent of strokes — 75,000 to 100,000 each year — are caused by untreated atrial fibrillation. Many people still don't know what atrial fibrillation is, or if they have it.

Atrial fibrillation, a disorder involving the speed and rhythm of the heartbeat, occurs when the upper chambers of the heart do not contract in proper synchronization with the lower chambers. This fibrillation (or quivering) of the heart's upper chambers, produces a rapid and irregular heart rate.

Some people with atrial fibrillation have no symptoms at all. Others may have the following symptoms:

- Rapid, irregular heartbeat
- Fluttering, "flopping" or thumping sensation in the chest
- Fatigue, especially when exercising • Lightheadedness or dizziness
- Shortness of breath • Fainting • Anxiety • Confusion
- Excessive sweating • Chest pain or pressure

Atrial fibrillation may only happen periodically, with symptoms that come and go. It may also be a chronic, long-term condition. The risk of developing atrial fibrillation increases with age. The good news is, atrial fibrillation — and its associated stroke risk — can be reduced by taking good care of your heart. This may range from simply cutting back on caffeine, to addressing an existing

health condition such as an overactive thyroid. Lifestyle remedies that you can implement on your own include: eating a healthy diet, being more active, losing excess weight and taking steps to lower high blood pressure and high cholesterol.

If you are experiencing symptoms, or you are concerned about your risk, talk with your doctor. The right treatment is different for each person, and may be as simple as visiting your physician regularly for heart rate monitoring, or may require daily medication to control symptoms and prevent complications. In some cases, a pacemaker procedure to repair the heart's electrical system may be necessary. **NOW**

Sources:

American Heart Association, www.heart.org
American Stroke Association, www.stroke.org
National Heart, Lung & Blood Institute, www.nhlbi.nih.gov
Everyday Health, www.everydayhealth.com.

Remember that this information is not intended to replace the advice of your doctor, but rather to increase awareness and help equip patients with information and facilitate conversations with your physician that will benefit your health.

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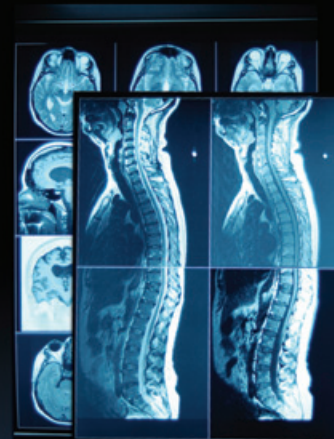
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Retirement Planning — Changing Jobs

— By *Lynda Housley*

Changing jobs can be stressful, between wrapping up tasks with your former employer and adjusting to your new position and responsibilities. But when you pack your personal belongings to move on to your new place of employment, don't forget about your retirement plan.

The money in your 401(k) may be one of your largest assets. While these funds are valuable now, they're invaluable for your future — so making an informed decision about what to do with them is important. Thankfully, you have several options, although some may be more financially advantageous than others.

Rollover to a Traditional IRA

You can take control of your funds with a rollover to a Traditional IRA. This is a lump-sum distribution from your previous employer's 401(k) that is deposited directly into a Traditional IRA.

The amount you rollover to a Traditional IRA isn't subject to income taxes, nor does it trigger a 10-percent penalty tax for early withdrawal. Plus, with a Traditional IRA, your assets remain in a deferred plan.

You may opt for a Traditional IRA if you like greater control over your retirement assets. After all, employer plans are designed to meet the needs of many people, not just yours, and you may have different investing ideals. In addition, you may want to simplify your retirement planning by having all of your investments with one financial provider.

Leave Your Money With Your Previous Employer

Quite possibly, you can do nothing. The easiest action may be leaving your assets in your previous employer's retirement plan, but keep in mind that you'll remain limited to that plan's investment choices and payout options. If you do this, be sure to keep your contact information up-to-date, so you'll continue to receive statements and other pertinent information.

Generally, you're only able to leave your money in your previous employer's plan if your account balance is over \$5,000.

Review your current plan carefully for its specific conditions.

Rollover to Your New Employer's Plan

You may be able to transfer your assets from your former employer's plan directly into your new employer's plan. This direct rollover allows your money to remain invested in a tax-deferred plan, and you incur no taxes or penalties for the move.

You'll want to review the new investment choices and flexibility in your new employer's plan. Investment choices and withdrawals may be more limited than your previous employer's plan. In addition, you may have to wait a year or more to be eligible to participate.

Cash Out of Your Old Plan

You don't have to wait until you retire to access the money in your retirement plan. It's yours, and cashing out will provide you with a lump-sum cash distribution in the form of a check payable directly to you.

Be forewarned: There are many caveats to this option, mainly that you'll have depleted your retirement savings account and will need to start over again. Also, you won't receive the balance of your account — that amount will be taxed significantly. Not only will you pay income tax on the distribution, your employer will be required to withhold 20 percent for federal income tax purposes. You may also be assessed a 10-percent penalty tax for making a withdrawal from a 401(k) before the age of 59 1/2.

Cashing out of your plan is typically the last option you should choose. In most cases, you'll receive far less than if you'd left the money invested for withdrawal upon your retirement.

Keep an Eye on the Future

Remember, saving and planning is key to a comfortable retirement. Whatever you choose to do with your 401(k) when you change jobs, be sure your decision is in line with your retirement goals. **NOW**

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"Sky Quest," "The Cowboy Astronomer" and "Galaxies": **Saturdays:** 2:00 p.m., 3:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m., respectively, at Cook Center Planetarium. Call (903) 874-1211 or 1-800-988-5317.

April 4

Kinsloe House Children's Fashion Show and Luncheon: Adult tickets: \$12; children's tickets: \$5. Reservations must be made by **Monday, April 2**. Call (903) 874-5791.

April 7

Annual Easter Egg Hunt: 10:00 a.m., American Legion Post 22, 632 N. Beaton. For all children ages 1-10. Easter eggs, food, contests and prizes. Call (903) 874-3938.

April 12-21

The Musical Comedy Murders of 1940: Warehouse Living Arts Center. Call (903) 872-5421 or e-mail info@warehouselivingartscenter.com.

April 13

Navarro County Retired Teachers Association meeting: 9:45 a.m., Northwest Apartments Community Center. Retired school employees are invited to attend. Visit <http://local.trta.org>.

Senior Circle Pot Luck Luncheon: 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Navarro Regional Hospital. Call (903) 872-5411.

April 13-14

Corsicana Newcomers Club Spring Trip: Destination is Jefferson, TX, where the group will enjoy food, fun, fellowship and an overnight stay in a local B&B. Contact Denise Wranischar at (903) 879-1989.

April 14

Derrick Days Golf Tournament: 8:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. shotgun starts, Open Trails Golf Course. Contact David Owen at (903) 879-3094.

Sixth Annual Community Health Fair: 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Martin Luther King, Jr. Center. Sponsored by the Navarro County NAACP. For more information or to schedule a mammography appointment, contact Barbara Kelley at (903) 872-7973.

April 16

Navarro College Spring Art Show and Reception: 4:30 p.m., Caston Fine Arts Building. Call (903) 875-7381.

April 25-28

Derrick Days: For daily schedule of all events visit <http://www.derrickdays.com> or contact Steve Dieterichs, Corsicana Visitors Center/Main Street at (903) 493-7205.

April 26

Corsicana Newcomers Club Meeting: 11:00 a.m., Kinsloe House. Program is a book review by Shirley

Nussbaum. For information or reservations, contact Marge Oslick at (903) 872-3508.

8th Annual VOICE Spring Luncheon: 11:30 a.m., Cook Center. Contact Gina Dieterichs at (903) 872-0180.

June 2

Annual Pancake Breakfast Fly-in: 8:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m., Mid-Way Regional Airport, off of Hwy. 287 between Waxahachie and Midlothian. Event and parking are free. Breakfast tickets: \$6 for ages 8 and up; \$3 ages 3-7; free ages 2 and under. Call Tammy at (972) 923-0080.

Ongoing:

Tuesdays and Thursdays through April 15

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site:

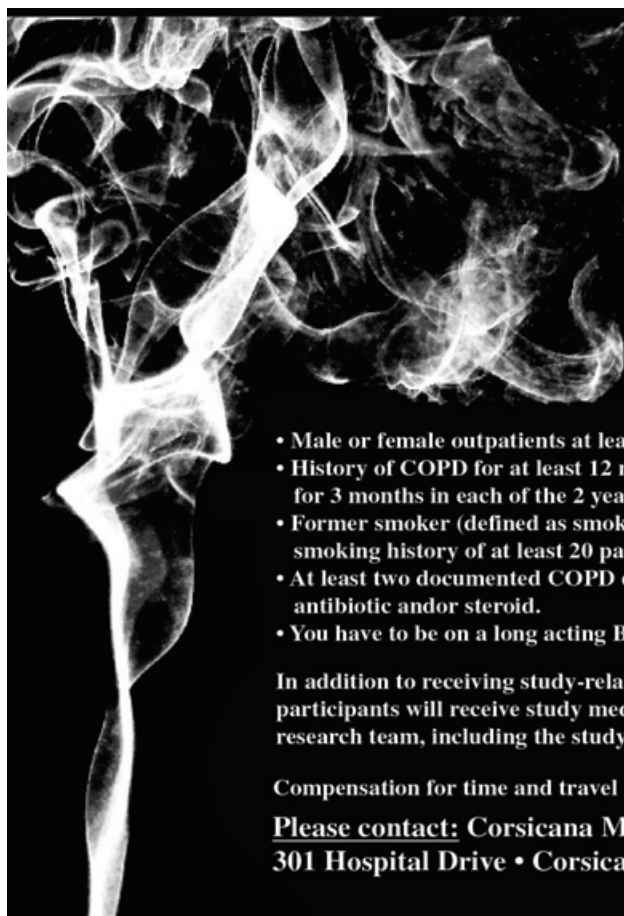
Tuesdays: 2:00-5:00 p.m.; **Thursdays:** 2:00-7:00

p.m., Corsicana YMCA. Contact George Burrell

at (903) 879-2091 or Stuart Schoppert at

(903) 874-8276, ext. 3900.

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your event details to virginia.riddle@nowmagazines.com.



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In addition to receiving study-related physical exams and laboratory services at no charge, participants will receive study medication at no cost and will be monitored by a medical research team, including the study physician.

Compensation for time and travel may be available. Ask your doctor if this study is right for you.

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In The Kitchen With Kevin Farmer & Adam Montgomery

— *By Virginia Riddle*

Kevin Farmer and Adam Montgomery met as Corsicana firemen and became hunting and fishing buddies quickly. “A fireman’s job is the best job in the world. You spend one-third of your life with them,” Kevin, now retired, said. Adam spends his off time working with Kevin’s Texas Lawn Care service, but the guys also find time to include Heath Warren and Kevin’s son, Tucker, and other friends in hunting and fishing trips. “My Daddy took me squirrel hunting when I was 5 years old. Tucker is a fourth-generation hunter. If something happens, we know we can survive,” Kevin said. The group hunts deer with bows and guns, catches boat loads of yellow catfish and enjoys cooking the resulting outdoor feasts. **NOW**

Deer or Pork on a Spit

Hind quarter of deer or pork
Favorite seasoning mix, to taste
1/2 cup apple cider vinegar
2 cups brown sugar

1. Rub seasoning mix on meat. Mix apple cider vinegar and brown sugar, and then rub sugar mixture on meat.
2. Refrigerate overnight.
3. Build a fire in a pit and reduce it to coals only.
4. Place meat over fire on spit at a height of 30 inches from coal bed.
5. Sear meat until lightly brown. This usually takes an hour. Turn skewer 90 degrees at a time.
6. Wrap seared meat with several layers of aluminum foil.
7. Continue to cook, rotating a quarter of a turn every 15 minutes.
8. Meat must be tended to constantly in order to keep heat regulated. Heat may be

controlled by raising and lowering skewer.
9. Meat will reach desired doneness within 5-6 hours.

Lonesome Man Chili

4 lbs. venison steak
1/2 cup all-purpose flour
1 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. cracked black pepper
5 Tbsp. olive oil, divided use
4 garlic cloves, peeled
1 cup beef broth or water
1/2 cup whiskey
6-10 dried small red chili peppers, chopped

1. Trim steak. Cut into large, 1 1/2-inch square chunks.
2. Combine flour, salt and pepper and roll meat in mixture.
3. Heat 4 Tbsp. oil on medium in a Dutch oven.

4. Brown meat on all sides and remove from skillet.
5. Reduce heat and add remaining oil and garlic.
6. Cook until garlic is golden. Add broth or water, whiskey and chili peppers. Put browned meat on top of garlic mixture.
7. Cover and cook slowly for one hour or until beef is tender.

Sam Rayburn Sausage

1-2 lbs. smoked sausage
1 large onion, sliced
1 poblano pepper, diced
Barbeque sauce, to taste
Choice of liquid, to taste
Choice of bread or rice

1. Place sausage on a length of aluminum foil that will completely cover it. Seal the seam length wise and cross wise on one side.
2. Place onions and peppers inside foil pouch.
3. Pour barbeque sauce and liquid generously into foil pouch and seal completely.
4. Wrap pouch four to five times with more foil, and place it on coals and turn every 5 minutes.
5. Cook until aroma indicates all ingredients have cooked well together.
6. Remove pouch from coals. Cut pouch open. Serve sausage, onions and peppers wrapped in bread or over rice. (If cooking several sausages, they can be placed in a Dutch oven or a foil pan on a pit.)

Chicken Fried Deer Steak

3 lbs. deer steak
Pepper, to taste
Salt, to taste
Garlic powder, to taste
1 cup milk
1 egg
1/2 cup all-purpose flour
Vegetable oil

1. Season steak with pepper, salt and garlic powder.
2. Mix milk and egg in a bowl.
3. Flour meat and place in milk/egg mixture.
4. Remove meat from mixture, flour again and place breaded meat in skillet with 3/4-inch deep vegetable oil on medium heat.
5. Turn steaks and cook until golden brown on each side.

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