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M A G A Z I N E

May 2008

**Restoring
Our History**

**An
Artistic
Gift**

**Gentle Push
Became
Lifetime
Passion**

**Building
on a Solid
Foundation**

**Golden Circle
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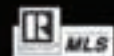
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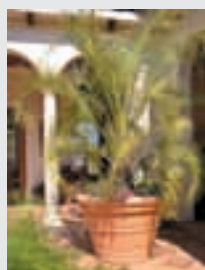
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Publisher, Connie Poirier

General Manager, Rick Hensley

Managing Editor, Becky Walker

Editorial Coordinator, Sandra McIntosh

Creative Director, Jami Navarro

Art Director, Chris McCalla

Office Manager, Lauren Poirier

Corsicana Editor, Samantha Stroube

Contributing Writers, Stephanie Brewer

Faith Browning • Lynda Housley • Dr. Patel

Photography, Rod Cordsen • Ivey Photography

Sandra McIntosh • Terri Ozymy

Contributing Editors/Proofreaders, Pat Anthony

Pamela Parisi • Jaime Ruark • Beverly Shay

Advertising Representatives, Linda Moffett (manager)

Rick Ausmus • Jennifer Burleson • Will Epps

Carolyn Mixon • Jill Odle • Terri Ozymy

Kevin Poirier • Steve Randle • Terri Yates

Graphic Designers, Julie Carpenter

Allee Brand • Marshall Hinsley • Arlene Honza

Steve Koldjeski • Brande Morgan

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Corsicana NOW

Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

It is May, and the birds are chirping, the sun is shining and summer is just around the corner. This month we celebrate Mother's Day, and to commemorate this special day we are highlighting Dolores Stone in our home feature. She welcomes us into her beautifully designed Mediterranean-style home. Our art feature showcases the innate talents of Dolores' daughter, Elise Johnson, a fabulous art teacher at Corsicana High School and an independent artist in our community.



This issue is for all you moms and grandmothers. Mother's Day is your day to relax and pamper yourself as a woman and indulge in the wonders of spring and summer, which surround us with their beauty.

I wish you love and kindness always. Remember, if you have a great idea for a story or feature and want to see it in print, please feel free to contact me.

Samantha Stroube
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Imagine yourself walking down the middle of town when every street was brick-paved, horse carriages passed you by with a slow clipity-clop and the drivers greeted you with a soft Southern, "Howdy-do?" Do you ever long for the days when each sidewalk in front of a house was neatly pruned, each flower box was beautifully filled and every wood-framed house was perfectly maintained and painted with the

greatest of precision? Recapturing that feel is the primary objective of the Corsicana Preservation Foundation.

"We really want to assist the community with the restoration process by bringing Corsicana back to its original state and focusing on its historical, aesthetic beauty," said Hugh Stroube, chairman of the Corsicana Preservation Foundation (CPF). "Our

ultimate goal is to help the community revitalize itself, which we feel in turn will increase our community's pride and stimulate economic growth through outside tourism."

As a newly established board, begun in January 2007, the CPF diligently strives to return Corsicana to its former glory. They want every wood-framed house to be renovated and updated, in keeping with its architectural period, and desire to assist business owners in returning the store-front facades to Corsicana's early days.

"I have only lived here for three years, and I have heard such fabulous stories of what the town looked like when the turn-of-the-century homes lining Third and Fourth Avenues stood grand and bold," interjected Frances (Fran) Townes, CPF treasurer. "But the one thing that did grab my attention was the downtown, and I would love nothing more than to help restore it to its original state."

The CPF may not be able to slow life down, remove the traffic, take away the cell phones and road rage,

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but they are diligently working to make the community aware of sites needing work. They want to assist the home and business owners all that they can with attaining their preservation intentions.

"It originally began when a family, the Halls, contacted the mayor of Corsicana, C.L. "Buster" Brown, about the city purchasing the Halbert House located on Third Avenue in Corsicana,"

"We are proactively trying to educate citizens on what the Preservation Foundation can do for the community as far as economy, tourism and pure existence is concerned."



Hugh and Fran stated, recalling the exact inception of the foundation. Unfortunately, the mayor had to deny the family's request due to the fact that if the city rescued one house, they would be obligated to rescue them all. Unfortunately, there were not enough subsidies for that.

So at that point, the CPF was formed. Buster began talking to quite a few citizens whom he felt would be interested in not only preserving the Halbert House, but many other architectural structures around the area as well. "Once Buster got the word out, a group of grassroots citizens

gathered together and started having meetings,” Fran explained. “After the initial exploratory meeting of what the foundation was going to focus on and how we were going to help the community, we soon held another meeting to elect the officers, which really catapulted the foundation forward.”

Visualized concepts were put into play. They plan to assist the preservation of specific landmarks by guiding people to the resources needed to save particular places or artifacts. For example, they may put a home owner in touch with a general contractor familiar with homes from the turn of the century; or they may help a buyer research and find the original plans of a home in order to fully restore it to its original, glorious state.

The Halbert House, built in the 1880s, is a great example of the research and connection process offered by CPF. It is currently being renovated entirely by one individual, James Hale. James purchased the home after it went up for auction when a family needed to move their ailing father out. The home was dilapidated. CPF served as the middleman, putting James in touch with the Hall family, the previous owners of the home, so he could purchase and save it.

CPF wants to know about any project or facility needing attention; they want to research and focus the appropriate awareness on the project. “It is not an overnight thing; we need several projects to really get the foundation up and running,” Fran explained. “We are open to any suggestions or ideas that the community or board may have as far as preservation needs.”

“We are proactively trying to educate citizens on what the Preservation Foundation can do for the community as far as economy, tourism and pure existence is concerned,” Hugh stated. “Our goal is to draw visitors to Corsicana; we want to make this a



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place that people come to visit like Fredericksburg (in the Hill Country), or Georgetown (near Austin) or Marshall, Texas.”

“We have to build an infrastructure before we can start marketing to the outside world,” Hugh reflected. The



foundation's principal aspiration is to involve the entire community in the restoration and preservation of structures that were the result of this community being one of the fastest-growing oil-boom towns at one time.

One of the ventures the foundation is considering is to restore and transport one of the original oil derricks from Tucker Town (the original oil-boom town next to the Corsicana Municipal Airport) to Petroleum Park (located near downtown Corsicana on the south side of Seventh Avenue on Twelfth Street). But in order to do that, the foundation has to get the funding to

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relocate the derrick, find the proper engineers to do the work and acquire the actual physical labor to make the move occur.

The Corsicana Preservation Foundation is not desiring credit or recognition for all of their hard work; in fact, they are working closely with numerous other preservation societies in town, such as the Corsicana Historical Society, Pioneer Village (near Jester Park) and the Corsicana Heritage Preservation Commission,



“We really want the community and visitors to know and appreciate the historical treasures this town can offer.”

which works closely with the Main Street Project, just to maintain the original aesthetics of Corsicana.

“We really want the community and visitors to know and appreciate the historical treasures this town can offer, in addition to its architectural grandeur,” Hugh said. “I grew up here, and I remember what this town looked like with every street lined with brick pavers and homes glorifying our streets.”

The foundation is trying to raise enough funds to assist with resources on all projects to beautify the community. As their first fundraiser, the foundation board is hosting The Twilight Ball on May 10 at the Halbert House. It will give people an opportunity to see what a little elbow grease, love and attention can do for one of these beautiful homes. **NOW**

Editor's Note: For more information about The Twilight Ball, see our community calendar.

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Living in the Moment

— By Sandra McIntosh



At Home With
Dolores Stone

www.nowmagazines.com 14 CorsicanaNOW May 2008

Dolores Stone recently had a life-changing epiphany. “I used to think that if I worked hard enough, I could avoid any bad things. I quickly learned that we are put on this earth to live in the now; to live life in the moment,” she said. Realizing there are no guarantees for tomorrow, Dolores takes full advantage of every day she is given, more so now than ever before. This new way of looking at life came after the untimely and unexpected passing of Ken, her husband, soul mate and best friend. The legacy he left behind cannot be denied. “He had a zest for living life to the fullest,” she reminisced. “He was an enthusiastic gentleman with a positive attitude. He was wonderful because he led by example.”

The single-story, three-bedroom, four-and-one-half bath home is also a comfortable, cozy reminder of the talent found in one man.





"He was a third generation carpenter," Dolores proudly stated. "We were a team. Ours truly was a partnership in every way." Part of that partnership involved lovingly designing their home together. Ken began building it in 2002. "You can't talk about home without including Ken," she said. "He was always able to bring my words to life." It was easy for him to visualize in his mind what Dolores was only able to express in words. "He could take a crude sketch and turn it



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into something beautiful," she added.

Visitors do not have to enter the heart of the home to get a feel for those who reside within. The house, located on the corner and taking up space on three lots, does more than welcome you; it beckons you to come on in and stay awhile. The stone walkway leading up to the entrance angles around a beautifully regal water fountain which is the focal point of the front yard. The greenery in the landscape is dotted with "pops" of color, showing that another summer is on its way. The view after crossing the wrought-iron threshold is magnificent. "I just love the outdoors," she said, further explaining that the creek, which meanders alongside the southern portion





of the property, runs into the pond located directly beyond her backyard. "It's such a peaceful view."

Keeping with the Mediterranean style, the home's most unique feature is the covered veranda-like area known as the portal. Its open-air courtyard has proven to be the perfect place for entertaining family and friends. "We took a two-week cruise to the Mediterranean where the majority of the homes seemed to be built around an outdoor courtyard," she said, referencing the inspiration behind their choice of floor plans. "It was definitely a creative process."

All the main rooms, including the gathering room and the formal living/dining room combination, open to the inner sanctuary that Dolores has



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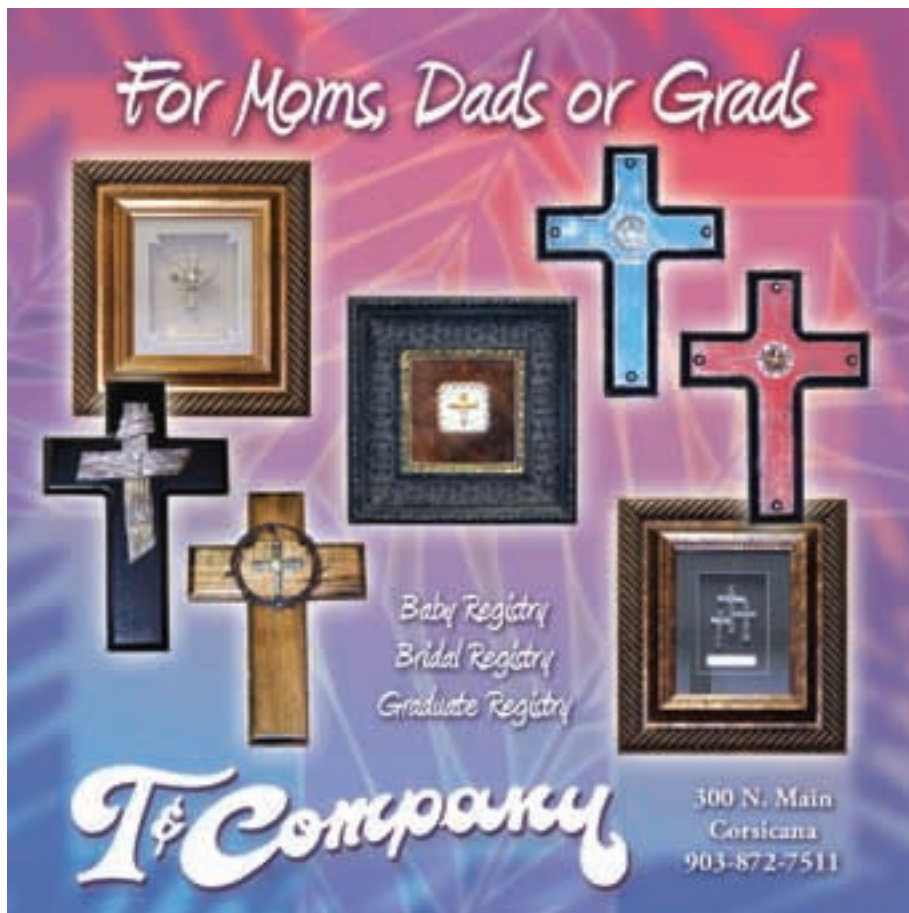
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The working partnership between Dolores and Ken began after the couple's two children started school. Ken, as aforementioned, was a homebuilder and Dolores was the ultimate homemaker, that was until she added interior design to her daily "things to do" list. "I started decorating the spec homes he built," she said, explaining that it was not really planned, it just happened. "What began as a necessity, soon morphed into a passion for both of us."

Throughout their 47-year marriage, Dolores and Ken did a great deal of

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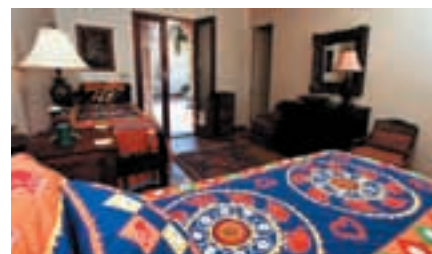
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traveling. The home's interior decor is a reflection of those trips. "We would see lots of things while on those journeys," she remembered. "Between the two of us, we were able to come home and incorporate what we saw into the design." Dolores also mentioned that if an item is beautiful to her, she can always find a place for it in her home. "Maybe we started out eclectic as a young couple because we had to," she quipped, "but now I choose to incorporate a wide range of items I like, so I guess you could say I'm still eclectic."

The warmth of the home is not limited to one area. It is prevalent throughout the home, starting in the formal living and dining areas. If the antique Steinway piano could sing, it would surely recite tales of Dolores and both children tickling the old ivories. The furniture is befitting, yet it is not pretentious or overbearing. Minimal artwork, collectibles and memorabilia are displayed. "I seem to like clean lines," she said, referring to the way she has chosen to decorate her home. "I admit, I'm a scavenger hunter when it comes to bargains, but I believe less is more." The granite tabletop in the formal dining room was crafted especially for the room, and Dolores said it is indestructible. "Since it's square, I'm easily able to seat 10 family members," she said. The carved, wooden base and the



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chairs are all original to the dining set. The chairs, upholstered with crushed velvet that appears to be worn and trimmed in decorative ball fringe, makes the arrangement unique while also adding character to the room.

The kitchen is home to many of Dolores' roosters. A rather large selection of Talavera plates are displayed along one wall in a hutch-like shelf. The kitchen cabinets, designed by Dolores and handcrafted by Ken, are pine with a mahogany stain. The oversized doors

balance the room that boasts of 10-foot ceilings. Italian tile with smaller Talavera insets is found not only on the bar and countertops in the kitchen, but also on the bathroom countertops, in the showers and on the flooring, both inside and out. A small area of the master bedroom, located to the right of the breakfast area, serves as an office. "It allows me to work in the comfort of my own home," she said. The view from her bedroom, as well as from any room in the house, is spectacular. Everywhere



you look, there is something beautiful and breathtaking to look at — from the natural landscaping to the backyard pool, which is inlaid with flagstone.

Dolores loves to travel, and she also enjoys quality time spent with her four grandchildren who range in age from 17 to 23. She believes that a home should be a reflection of the people who reside within it. Her home brightly reflects her love of family, as well as her boldness to step out and live in the moment. **BY**



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Building on a Solid Foundation

— By Samantha Stroube

Gazing out her window, Paula McNeel, the elementary school principal for Mildred Independent School District (MISD), gleamed with pride as she talked about her anticipation for the completion of the brand new elementary school which is currently under construction. “According to the contractors, it will be ready for the 2008 - 2009 school year,” Paula stated with great enthusiasm.

“Our school district has needed and wanted this facility for almost five years now,” Paula said. “The bond was finally

passed in October of 2006, and we were able to break ground in August of 2007,” she said, pointing to the hard hat and shovel resting in the corner of her office. “There is really only one word for me to describe my feelings for this facility, and that is *excited!*” she enthused.

Paula has watched the progress on a daily basis, which is easy for her to do with the construction going on just a few hundred yards from her office window. “Sometimes, when I haven’t been down there in a while or need a bit of time to myself, I tell the girls in the office that I need some hard hat time, and they know that I will be out of the office for about 30 minutes admiring the new facility,” Paula shared.

MISD caters not only to the town of Mildred, but the towns of Eureka and Navarro as well. The school board’s decision to build a new elementary school excited both the educators and the parents. “By building this new school, we will have the space we need to spread out,” Paula said, thrilled about the expansion. “Building an elementary school is much less expensive than building a high school or a middle school. You don’t have to worry about things like expensive science labs or other accommodations at that level.”

A product of MISD herself, Paula’s pride for the district and the community is quite obvious. “There is a specific pride to be found in Mildred,” she stated. “All of our schools have the best and most dedicated teachers, in addition to an amazingly dedicated community.”

After graduating from Mildred High School in 1967, Paula headed off to Navarro College and then went to the University of North Texas where she obtained her bachelor’s degree. From 1972 to 1981 she split her time between teaching at the second and sixth grade levels and working on her master’s degree. Since 1981, she has served as the principal for Mildred Elementary.



Elementary Principal Paula J. McNeel, P.E. Teacher Linda Rees, Assistant Superintendent Becky Burns and Site Superintendent Tommy Dean at the construction site for the new elementary school.



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"I have been in education for over 37 years, and loved every minute of it," Paula gleamed. "I can't think of anywhere else I would rather be. I just love it."

During her time as principal, Paula has seen changes and growth within her school district. The three levels of education in Mildred are all combined into one large building, separated into their respective grade levels. Right now, the elementary school consists of prekindergarten through the sixth grade, and the high school and middle

"I feel the way the school has been designed is much safer for the children, and a lot more conducive to our traffic needs."

school overlap in space. This expansion is therefore crucial to everyone — the students, the teachers and the district. With the growth around Richland Chambers Lake, the three communities that are combined to make MISD have really increased in population, thus the need for additional space.

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provide the latest technology for these elementary students. "Each room will have a computer connection and a television cable connection, if needed," Paula explained. She further explained that there will be three classes for each grade level, with around 20 to 25 students in each class.

Not only will this facility have the latest in all educational advancements, but its architectural plan has been configured to address two particular



problems. One of these problems is particular to MISD — the fact that the traffic on Highway 287 runs directly in front of both schools. "I feel the way the school has been designed is much safer for the children, and a lot more conducive to our traffic needs," Paula said. The second problem the architects addressed is a problem that most schools run into — the need for expansion over time, without the use of portable buildings. According to Paula, the plans were ingeniously designed to allow for future physical expansion.

Paula went on to explain that her grade levels are not the only ones receiving a bit of attention from the bond passed in 2006. The high school and middle school are also receiving a few tiny face lifts. A majority of the portable buildings surrounding the existing school will be removed to enhance the aesthetics of the campus. Also, two distinctive buildings will be added to the campus — a new field house and a new facility for the band



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and drama department. "We have a fantastic drama department," Paula commented, justifying the need for a new facility for those students.

As Paula lifted the venetian blinds once more in her office, the twinkle in her eye made it apparent how much this project means to her. "I was getting



a little nervous there for a while, that it wouldn't be complete," Paula admitted. "But now that the foundation is complete, the contractors assured me that it will move a lot faster." Paula has already instructed her teachers to start packing up their rooms. "A lot of them have been here for years, and there is no telling what they have rat-packed away; I can only imagine!" she mused.

She has poured her heart and soul into the educational system of Mildred. From her time there as a student to her current role as an administrator, Paula's life has been built on a solid educational foundation. "It is all just so exciting getting to be part of this new adventure, and knowing that it is actually going to happen," Paula beamed. "I know I will definitely enjoy it, too. We won't all be on top of each other all the time now."

Even though the new elementary school is the apple of her eye, so to speak, her students will always be number one in her heart. "The most important thing to me in this job is the kids," Paula stated. "It is so fun to watch them grow, come back and visit and remember all the times they had here." **NOW**



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“Elise is extremely dedicated to her craft and her God-given talent.”

An Artistic Gift

— By Samantha Stroube

Just coming down from her high over the recent art exhibit featuring her works at the Warehouse Living Arts Center, Elise Johnson, hurriedly scampered around her art classroom at Corsicana High School, gathering up various paintings and artworks to share stories about each of them. She fluttered around them as if they were her children. Some of the pieces were

incomplete, but their potential was evident. “I can’t just work on one piece at a time,” explained Elise, who has managed to parlay her passion for art into a lifetime of happiness. “It’s funny that I am now an artist; I didn’t take a single art class in high school,” she said. “The only place my talent really showed up in high school was on all the cheerleading posters I drew.”



ARTS NOW

Elise is extremely dedicated to her craft and her God-given talent. In addition to being one of the talented art teachers found within the walls of Corsicana High School, she is also currently pursuing her Master of Liberal Arts at Dallas Baptist University. Despite her busy schedule, however, she still manages to produce gorgeous works of art, featuring all facets of life, for friends and upon client request.

During her recent exhibit at the Warehouse Living Art Center, Elise was able to display and sell some of her pieces to friends, family and the community at large. "I was fortunate to be at the place I was in my studies, because I had produced numerous pieces that I was able to display," Elise commented.

Feeling that her artistic side is an innate gift she acquired from her parents, Elise said, "My mother is extremely talented; I think I got a lot of my talent from her. But my dad was an extremely talented carpenter, so he was artistic in a different way." She went on to explain that her entire family is quite talented, including her daughter, Kate, who is extremely gifted in floral arranging and bead work for jewelry. "Kate is very symmetrical. That is why I think she does so well with arrangements and jewelry beading; everything has to be aligned just perfectly," Elise stated. Elise's son, Steven, is extremely talented with Photoshop and drawing. "Steven is fantastic; he does all the Photoshop I need on the photos I take."

Elise has managed to combine her passions so that one does not overshadow another. "It is good to be a student and a teacher; it gives you energy," she said, explaining the fulfillment she receives from learning new techniques and sharing them with her students and vice versa.

Art is therapy for Elise; it is her escape from reality. "It is an avenue for

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ARTS NOW

me to really express my feelings. It allows me to show things that I can't say or put into words," she enthused. "I purge myself through art."

Her favorite piece proudly hangs over the fireplace in her home. "I call it *Three Pears*," Elise said about the beautifully colorful and translucent painting of three pears quietly leaning against one another. "It is probably my favorite piece because it was the most



"It is an avenue for me to really express my feelings. It allows me to show things that I can't say or put into words."

difficult to manipulate all the various acrylic colors around together.

However, I love to paint portraits; I just love to watch the personality of the subject develop onto the canvas."

Although art is what Elise does and loves, it is definitely not who she is. She is a mother, a wife and a teacher. You can see her love for life show through in each piece of work — whether it is a charcoal, an oil painting or a portrait, whatever she may be focused on at the time. Her true passion



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is in reality. "I love to teach," Elise stated. "I think you are called to be a teacher. I feel blessed every day, because I am rewarded every day."

Earlier in her career, Elise taught a seventh and eighth grade art class on pottery at Collins Middle School. There was a young boy who made a beautiful pot, and once it was finished he came back numerous times each day to see if it was ready. After about three days of checking on his pot, it was finally complete and had been fired in the kiln. It was ready for him to take home. With tears streaming down her cheeks Elise reached into her cupboard and pulled out the most gorgeous turquoise and brown bowl you have ever seen. "I will never get rid of this bowl," Elise stammered.



"Once his bowl was complete and ready to take home, he offered it to me. But I insisted he take it home to his mother for Mother's Day, and so he did. But the very next day, he returned with the bowl and handed it to me, stating that he needed me to have it as a gift. I have never been so touched or moved in my life. I think he took it home that night, just to be able to touch and feel it," she said. "It was like he needed to tangibly touch it, to know what he had done."

Elise has truly been given a gift from God. Through her innate talent she has the ability to create beautiful art, but she also has the ability to really see the beauty of art through life and pass on her knowledge to others. **NOW**



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Sports NOW



Golden Circle Volleyball

— By Faith Browning

Having graduated from Corsicana High School, Amy Starling had established roots strong enough to pull her away from coaching in New Mexico and draw her back to Corsicana. After returning two years ago, Amy and her husband, Joel, were soon involved in church, extra curricular activities and sports. With their four children, Annie, Abby, Aly and Josh, with ages ranging from 13 to 18, they are involved in many activities, but Amy's greatest love is volleyball. "I don't think there is anyone who loves volleyball more than I do," Amy said. "I have always loved the game!"

After attending their girls' volleyball games, Amy and Joel were shocked at the huge difference in the level of play between Corsicana and other teams.

"That is when we found out that these other teams came from areas with established select clubs which have been around seven to 10 years," she said. Fitting in everyone's activities once the girls got involved in select clubs required a tight schedule. To save time and money, they realized the need to start their own select club in the immediate area. The Golden Circle Volleyball Club was created to meet this need.

The Golden Circle Volleyball Club is a member of the USA Volleyball Division of the Junior Olympics, and the North Texas region has over 3,000 girls participating in established clubs. The club's main objective is to improve volleyball skills for girls wanting to play at high school and college levels.

"There has never been one like it in this area," Amy said. "If you want your daughters to improve at their game, they're going to have to do clubs." She suggested that girls around age 12 should start playing on select teams to stay on top of their game.

The Golden Circle's first season started in 2007. There was not enough participation in the Corsicana area, so they needed to pull from surrounding communities. After contacting 10 districts, they received interest from girls in Blooming Grove, Ennis, Fairfield, Rice and Mildred. "Even though we are pulling from areas we play against, it's beneficial for everybody," Amy explained. "The girls broaden their horizons by making new friends with the small area schools."

Sports NOW

They currently have two teams consisting of their daughters' age groups of 14 and 17. Amy coaches the younger team, the Cyclones; Joel coaches the older team, the Elite. Even though they are only in their first season, they have surprised the North Texas region by already placing in both silver and gold brackets. In mid-March,

"I don't think there is anyone who loves volleyball more than I do. I have always loved the game!"

they made it to the highest level of competition, the championship bracket.

Both Amy and Joel have obtained the strict credentials required for all select coaches — passing both the USA Volleyball Coach Training Course and their background checks. Amy is also an experienced aerobics instructor and was a personal trainer for the National Academy of Sports Medicine. She utilizes her knowledge to train the girls in agility, speed and explosive movements. Amy requires the girls to individually keep up with their own cardiovascular training, and keep a calendar of their progress. "The calendar keeps them aware that an exercise routine must be a part of life," she explained.

The select teams play tournaments almost every weekend in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. They play double elimination, so it is possible to play 12 to 16 games in one tournament. Some tournaments can last two days, making it necessary to spend the night in a



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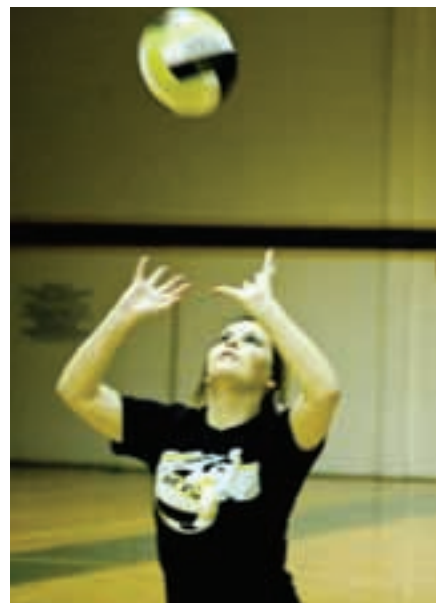
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Sports NOW

hotel when they have early morning games the second day. All team members must participate in tournament duties after their games. "It is hard when you lose your last game and then we have to stick around to work the next game," Amy commented.

Tournaments start in December and run through April. "We must be flexible, since we have girls from different



schools," Amy said. "We sit down with parents and go over our calendars. We try to accommodate everyone's schedules before committing to tournaments."

The phrase "it takes a village" is part of Amy's coaching philosophy. "I have amazing parents," she proudly said. "They have been so supportive." She truly recognizes how valuable the parents are to the teams. They plan menus, take photos, chase balls and put up nets. "So many people have stepped up," she said.

The club is very grateful for their sponsors. "Our sponsors have been so generous financially," Amy expressed. "Select clubs can be expensive. That's why we chose to do it ourselves. We cut the cost by not accepting coaching fees." Their budget includes: tournament



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costs, overnight expenses, practice facility fees, uniform cost and fees for two assistant coaches from Navarro College's team. Their goal is to build up enough funding so they can give scholarships to deserving new members.

The club's parents have admitted they can see the benefits their daughters have received. "Parents say they can see huge improvements in their girls," Amy said. Seeing her girls reach the



goals they have set for themselves confirms her love for coaching volleyball.

Amy encourages any girl who loves the sport to watch the local paper for sign-up dates. Her plans for the girls are more than honing game skills. "I want them to learn how to treat each other well and also have fortitude when things get hard," she expressed. "These lessons are beneficial for learning to build teamwork and character for all parts of life." **NOW**

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Business NOW



Selling Service

— By Samantha Stroube

Miles Furniture Store is located in historic downtown Corsicana on the corner of Beaton Street and Fourth Avenue. Currently in its 89th year of operation, it originally opened its doors in 1919. The former owners, the Coe family, successfully owned and operated the business for years, passing it down through three generations of their family before they sold it to Cliff Patterson and Patti Gardner, current owners and partners.

Patti and Cliff began their professional relationship in 1994, when Patti went to work for Cliff at a furniture store he was working for in Palestine, Texas. That professional relationship turned into a lifelong friendship. “She is like my sister,” Cliff said smiling. Patti added, “We are partners, and we always get along. We may not always agree with each other, but we do always get along.”

In 1999, Cliff moved to Austin and

Patti began working in Corsicana at Miles Furniture Store. “I have always worked in the furniture business,” Cliff said, recalling his 17 years at the furniture store in Palestine and the

19,000-square-foot building herself. Walking around the store, you can see the very essence and soul she put into each individual living area created for display purposes. “Decorating is a



additional five years he spent in Austin, Texas, prior to purchasing Miles Furniture. Then, in April 2004, Cliff had the opportunity to purchase Miles Furniture Store and he approached Patti about becoming partners.

Patti beautifully decorated the

knack that she has picked up,” Cliff boasted. “I couldn’t imagine trying to decorate this huge building. It just all seems to flow.”

There is a definite sense of family unity within the infrastructure of the business. Everyone in the store works

Business NOW

extremely well together. "We love what we do," Patti said. "Our time is invested in our future." They have their definite places and responsibilities in order to keep the business running effectively. Cliff's principal duties are handling the finances and inventory,




while Patti manages the buying and decorating of the store. "But selling is both of our primary objectives," he stated.

"There is something here for everyone," Cliff stressed. "We recently added a new mattresses center in the rear of the store, offering customers various mattress options. They can choose from air beds, memory foam mattresses and inner spring mattresses just to name a few."

"We sell service here," he continued. "And we stand behind everything we sell." Because of their commitment to customer service, 50 percent of their clientele consists of repeat customers from all over the area. "We deliver to customers in Dallas, Mexia, Hubbard, even the Cedar Creek Lake area," Patti said. "We also have some newcomers that also come in from all over, especially the Richland Chambers Lake area."


Stop by and visit the store and you will be amazed by their selection and inventory. Whether you are looking for a mantle clock or an entire living area arrangement, Cliff Patterson and Patti Gardner, partners, owners and friends will always greet you with a warm smile and offer you the assistance you need to meet your home decorating needs, no matter how big or small your project may be.

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Education

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— By Sandra McIntosh

Patti Harlan Bowen has been teaching all her life. She did not wait until she graduated from Central Missouri State University in 1964 before she stood in front of a classroom of pupils. That would have been like putting her talent in a box. At the tender age of 6, her father saw something in her. "As far back as I can remember," Patti explained, "my daddy wanted me to be a teacher. He set up a little school room for me in the basement, so I guess you could say I've been teaching since age 6." Once her father got the chalkboard in place, Patti wasted no time choosing the "smartest" dolls in her collection. "I would put them in chairs," she said, laughing fondly at the memories, "and go to teaching."

Her father, Chester Snider, had family members in the field of education. To say he gently pushed his daughter forward would be true. "He wanted me to always be able to take care of myself if I ever had to," she said. "His push became my passion."

As the years went quickly by, the teaching "bug" instilled inside her continued to grow. With a bachelor's degree in elementary education, she journeyed to Navasota, Texas, where she taught girls physical education, remedial reading

and coached the junior high cheerleaders and the high school tennis team, taking one young man to the State playoffs. "That was an unbelievable year," she said. "It was a good thing that I possessed lots of energy because my schedule was so full."

In 1965, Patti made her way to Corsicana, accepting a teaching position at Lee Elementary. For five years, she stood before real, living dolls as a first grade teacher. Those years gave her the confidence she needed to open her own business — a business based solely on education. "My daughter was turning 4 and there were no opportunities open for her at such a young age," Patti said. Wanting her daughter to have well-rounded experiences meant only one thing to Patti, she had to provide those times herself. Although the first-graders meant the world to her, Patti knew she had to put her daughter's needs at the forefront. "I was able to open a place for my daughter and her friends," she said, referring to the First Baptist Church Weekday Preschool that opened its doors in 1971. "I had a strong desire to start something and the church was interested in finding a ministry." Merging the two proved to be a blessing from God, as well as a

Education NOW

successful business venture.


From the time the doors opened until the preschool closed in 2007, Patti was teaching, directing or both. The half-day program was designed for children 4 and 5 years of age. Only 50 students were enrolled at a time. "We only took in the number of children the old church parsonage

**"He wanted me to
always be able to
take care of myself
if I ever had to.**

**His push
became my
passion."**

would hold," Patti said. "We taught four separate classes each day and no class had more than 13 students. Many years, we had a waiting list." Patti realizes her success comes from two strong, talented women who worked alongside her for 25 years. "Pam Burns and Shirley Bowen were constant and committed," she said, also stating that she and Shirley are not related, they just happen to share the same last name. "They were the glue that held it all together."

Each year, the preschool performed a spring production with music, a story line and elaborate costumes. When asked to share her fondest memory, Patti said it would have to be those productions. "Children I taught who are now adults with children of their own stop me on the street," she said, getting a bit misty-eyed. "They have such fond memories of these special times. Their memories made the work worthwhile and rewarding." For Patti, teaching so many people means daily benefits — even after retirement.




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"Many of 'my kids' grew up to be valedictorian and salutatorian of their graduating classes. What a return on my investment," she said. "That's the paycheck. It just keeps on giving."

During those years, Patti also found great rewards as the Corsicana High School cheerleading coach. The "wall of spirited fame" in her home office is a testament to the lifetime of joy she has found as an educator. She also taught English as a Second Language (ESL) during this time. "To see the ESL kids succeed was rewarding," Patti said. "To know they did it the right way means so much."

When Patti decided to close the



doors to the preschool in May 2007, she did so with mixed emotions. It was the crossroad into retirement that she desired, but it was bittersweet nonetheless. "It was a sad thing, but we were all ready for the next chapter in our lives to begin," she explained. "I had a real peace about it." In retirement, she is now spending more time with her grandchildren and traveling with her husband, Max. Looking back over her life, she cannot help but think of her parents. "My mom, Joan, was my main influence when it comes to my strong faith," Patti enthused, "while dad steered me into the field of education." Patti's parents influenced both her heart and mind so she was able to create something positive for the children of Corsicana. No doubt, Patti will be missed. **NOW**



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Around Town NOW



Chase and Chance Paschal, top left, spent leisure time with their new baby colt named Booger. Many individuals, top right, mingled at the recent grand opening ceremony held in early April for Navarro Regional Medical Complex. Tim-bo Steely, second row left, celebrated his 7th birthday with all his friends on Engine No. 2 as Fireman James Reed looked on. Tim-bo Steely, second row right, used one of his many new birthday toys to take his dad, Tim Steely, down to the ground in combat. Jason and April Grant, bottom left, celebrated their three-year anniversary and Valentine's Day by taking a carriage ride. Charlotte Paulk and Cheryl Blanton, bottom center, spent a fun evening on the town. Evonne Blackwell and Ricky Dyer, bottom right, shared dinner and a hug.

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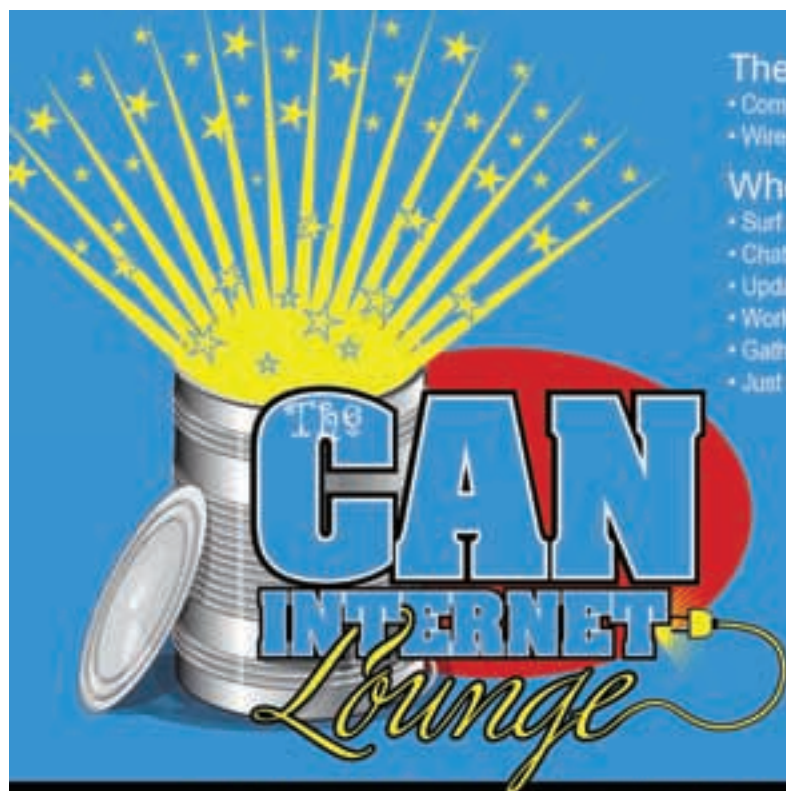
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Look Who's Cooking

— By Stephanie Brewer

IN THE KITCHEN WITH CAROL DOTSON

Carol Dotson is a native of England with a rich background filled with inspiration. She loves to travel, so she has found her inspiration at every stop along the way. "I was inspired by interesting food in Spain, France and Greece, along with restaurants in the United Kingdom and the United States," Carol said. While living with friends, she learned to cook out of necessity. "Nobody else was inclined to cook," Carol explained.

As a wife of 41 years with two children and two grandsons, it is a certainty that Carol is not short on inspiration when it comes to preparing meals for her family today. Her most requested dish is her homemade bread. "Always use good ingredients," Carol advised, "and try to stay away from margarine." **NOW**

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

SIMPLE BREAD

2 pkgs. active dry yeast
4 cups warm water (110 - 115 F)
8 cups all-purpose flour (recommend Harvest King)
4 tsp. salt
2 Tbsp. sugar
1 Tbsp. melted butter

Preheat oven to 350 F. Dissolve yeast in 2 cups warm water. In a large bowl, combine room temperature flour with salt. Stir sugar into yeast mixture and pour over flour. Add remaining 2 cups of warm water and stir until all is combined. Cover and let rise in warm place for about 1 hour until dough has doubled in size. Punch down and divide into 4 balls on floured board. Let rest a few minutes. Liberally grease 4 1-quart casserole or oven-proof bowls with butter. Shape into 4 rounds and place in bowls. Brush each round with butter or leave plain. Let rise in a warm place again until doubled in size — about 1 hour. Bake for 45 minutes. Remove from pans/bowls. Serve warm if desired. Can freeze for up to 1 month.

ALMOND STUFFED DATES

1 lb. pitted dates

4 oz. blanched whole almonds
2 12-oz. pkgs. thinly sliced bacon

Preheat oven to 400 F. Stuff each date with an almond. Cut bacon strips into thirds and wrap around each date. Secure with a toothpick. Place dates on foil-lined baking sheet. Bake for 12 - 15 minutes until bacon is crisp. Drain on paper towels and serve warm. Dates can be stuffed with walnuts or pecans for an optional flavor.

PARTY CRAB DIP

1 bunch green onions (use entire onion)
1/2 cup chopped parsley
1 stick butter
2 Tbsp. flour
1 pt. whipping cream
1/2 lb. grated Swiss cheese
1 lb. crab meat
3 Tbsp. dry sherry
salt to taste
paprika for garnish

Sauté onions and parsley in butter over medium heat. Do not brown. Blend in flour; add cream and cheese until melted. Mix in crab, sherry and salt. Heat but do not boil.

Serve hot, sprinkled with paprika and parsley. Fresh crab is expensive, so you may choose to use fake crab or drained, tinned crab.

CHICKEN CASSEROLE

6 - 8 boneless chicken breasts
1 2 1/2-oz. jar dried beef
6 - 8 bacon slices
1/2 pt. sour cream
1 10 3/4-oz. can cream of mushroom soup
1 cup sliced mushrooms
parsley

Preheat oven to 275 F. Flatten chicken breasts and wrap around 2 pieces of dried beef. Wrap a bacon slice around each piece of chicken. Place in a casserole dish. Mix sour cream, soup and mushrooms and pour over chicken. Bake for 3 hours. Garnish with parsley and serve over rice.

PAULOUA PYRAMID

4 egg whites
1 1/2 cups fine sugar
1 tsp. white vinegar
1 level tsp. corn flour

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Who's Cooking **NOW**

1/2 pt. whipped cream
fruit to garnish

Preheat oven to 225 F. Place a sheet of buttered foil on an oven tray. Beat egg whites until stiff. Continue to beat egg whites while gradually adding half of the sugar. Fold in the rest of the sugar with vinegar and corn flour. (This gives a firmer meringue.) Tip onto foil. Form mixture into a circle about 8 inches in diameter and pile high in center. Bake for 3 1/2 hours. Turn oven off and leave mixture in oven to cool. Remove from foil before completely cool to prevent sticking. Cover with whipped cream and garnish with fruit of your choice.

SLIVERED ALMOND CRISPS

By Leah Jones

1 cup butter
3 Tbsp. sugar
2 cups unsifted flour
1 cup slivered almonds
1 cup angel flake coconut
1 tsp. vanilla

Preheat oven to 275 F. Mix all ingredients together and then make into 3 rolls about the size of a 50 cent piece. Wrap in wax paper and refrigerate overnight. Cut slices 1/4-inch thick and place all cookies on 2 cookie sheets. Bake for 20 minutes. Rotate cookie sheets in oven placing top sheet on bottom and bottom sheet on top rack. Bake 25 minutes longer until coconut looks darker than cookie dough. Cool and gently roll in powdered sugar.



Pediatrics

**Meet
Dr. Johnston**

Dr. Amber Johnston is dedicated to serving the children of this community by providing comprehensive, family centered care. The Johnston family is very excited to return to their Texas roots, and they look forward to being a part of the community.

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Finance **NOW**

Giving the Gift of Education

— By Lynda Housley

School days can be expensive days. The U.S. Department of Education says college costs are increasing at an average annual rate of more than six percent. And, according to *Trends in College Pricing 2006*, tuition and fees for a public college or university average \$5,836 per year. For private colleges and universities, the average tuition and fees have increased to over \$22,000. And that's just tuition, not room and board, books and supplies and other expenses.

The U.S. Census Bureau shows people with a bachelor's degree earn an average of 80 percent more than those with only a high school diploma. Over a lifetime, the gap in earning potential between a high school diploma and that of a higher education degree is more than \$1 million. That means if it's a choice between saving for your child's college education and getting that big-screen television, you'd be smart to start putting money away now.

I speak to people every day who either have children or love someone else's dearly. What better gift can you give than the gift of education? Most of us want our children's quality of life to be better than our own and a Coverdell ESA or 529 Plan can help meet those goals. You don't have to be the parent to contribute — grandparents, aunts, uncles and friends can contribute on behalf of a child.

Coverdell ESAs were created to provide qualified individuals

with a flexible alternative when saving for the education of a child under the age of 18. ESAs allow \$2,000 annually to be contributed to the account of each beneficiary.

Some of the benefits of Coverdell ESAs include:

- ✦ Any growth of assets in an ESA is tax-deferred and may be distributed federally income tax and penalty tax free when used for qualified education expenses associated with elementary, secondary or higher education.
- ✦ Qualified withdrawals may be used to pay for tuition, fees, books, supplies (including computers) and, in certain circumstances, room and board.
- ✦ Assets can be rolled from the account of one beneficiary to an ESA of a qualified family member.

529 Plans are available to help families and friends save for a loved one's future college costs. Some of the benefits of 529 Plans include:

- ✦ 529 Plans have higher contribution limits than ESAs, allowing greater amounts to be invested for education.
- ✦ You make after-tax contributions to the account, but you don't pay taxes as the account grows.
- ✦ As long as withdrawals are used to pay for qualified higher education expenses such as tuition, books, supplies, fees and certain room and board, your investment earnings are received free of federal income tax¹.



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The main goal is to establish a savings plan to provide the money needed to send your child to college. What this boils down to is that whatever sacrifices you (and the child's grandparents, friends, etc.) might make for college today may pay dividends in the long-term. **NOW**

Notes:

1. Pursuant to the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Recognition Act of 2001, effective Jan. 1, 2002 through Dec. 31, 2010, unless legislation changes. Earning must be used to pay for qualified higher education expenses to be federally tax-free. The earnings portion of a nonqualified withdrawal will be subject to ordinary income tax at the recipient's marginal rate and subject to a 10 percent penalty.

The information presented in this document does not constitute tax advice. State and local tax laws vary. Additionally, your home state may only offer favorable tax treatment for investing in a 529 plan that your state offers. Please consult your tax advisor for specific information about your tax situation, including any state tax consequences of the investment.

Lynda Housley is a State Farm agent based in Corsicana.

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Health NOW

Anemia

Types and Treatment

— By Dr. Patel

As the most common blood condition in the U.S., anemia affects about 3.5 million Americans. Anemia is not like a cold that can be “caught” at any time; it develops because of a genetic condition or specific circumstances. The condition develops when blood lacks healthy red blood cells, which transport oxygen to the body. Without healthy red blood cells, blood cannot provide adequate oxygen to all of the parts of the body.

- Anemia can be caused by three things: blood loss, destruction of red blood cells or inadequate production of

red blood cells. Each cause calls for a different course of treatment.

- Anemia from blood loss can be the result of heavy or irregular menstruation, childbirth or internal bleeding. It is not the result of a minor injury, like a cut or regular menstrual cycles. To treat the problem, a physician will identify the source of bleeding, stop it and address any additional symptoms associated with the anemia.

- Anemia that develops as the result of red blood cell destruction can be caused by internal or external factors. The body may not make red blood cells strong enough to survive the circulatory system, which is usually the result of an inherited condition, such as sickle cell anemia. External factors that may destroy red blood cells are certain infections, toxin build-up in the body, tumors, venomous bites or severe burns. To address this form of anemia, a physician will treat the

external factors with medication, surgery, blood transfusions or a combination of therapies. Inherited conditions, such as sickle cell anemia, cannot be cured, but a physician can improve the quality of red blood cells through drug treatment and blood transfusions.

- The inadequate production of red blood cells can be caused by certain inherited conditions or by iron deficiency, vitamin deficiency or bone marrow problems. To treat this form of anemia, a physician will provide additional iron or vitamins through diet changes, injections or medication. Anemia caused by bone marrow problems is more serious and requires more intense treatment.

- The symptoms of anemia will vary based on the underlying cause and any compounding health problems associated with the condition.

The most common symptoms of anemia are:

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Health NOW

- Easy fatigue and loss of energy.
- Unusually rapid heartbeat, particularly with exercise.
- Shortness of breath and headache, particularly with exercise.
- Difficulty concentrating.
- Dizziness.
- Pale skin.
- Leg cramps.
- Insomnia.

Your physician can perform a series of blood tests to determine if you have anemia and what its underlying cause may be. Based on blood tests, symptoms and family history, your physician can tailor a treatment to address the anemia and its source. Because anemia has many causes, it is important to receive a diagnosis from a physician to determine the best treatment options for you. **NOW**

*Dr. Patel, Internal Medicine
Navarro Regional Hospital*

Gastroenterologist

Meet Dr. Syed



Dr. Syed is committed to improving the health and well-being of his patients and our community by providing high-quality service aimed at the prevention and treatment of gastrointestinal related illnesses. He is a Board Certified physician in both Internal Medicine and Gastroenterology. Dr. Syed and his family are excited about becoming part of our community.

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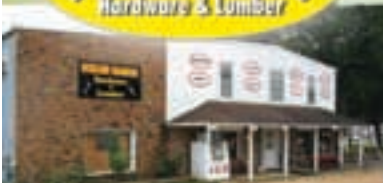


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May 2008

Community Calendar

The time for fishing tournaments is near. Contact the Corsicana Chamber of Commerce for more information. chamber@corsicana.org.

May is "Better Hearing Month." More than 31 million Americans have some type of hearing problem. Call Joan at Advanced Technology Hearing Center to schedule a free hearing evaluation to determine the type and degree of your hearing loss. (972) 935-0327.

April 10 - May 12
Navarro Council of the Arts 10th Annual Youth Art Show.

May 2
2008 Chamber Golf Classic, Corsicana Country Club. Registration available in advance.

100 Years of Broadway, 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m., The Palace Theatre, 112 W. 6th Ave. (903) 874-7792.

May 3
Corsicana Opry. Dining: 6:00 p.m. Show: 7:00 p.m., Martin's Music Hall, 201 S. Beaton Street. Cost: \$10. Dinner is additional. (903) 872-8226.

May 5
Cinco de Mayo.

May 9
Navarro College Cook Center Planetarium, along with astronomers from the Three Rivers Foundation's (3RF) Comanche Springs Astronomy Campus (www.3rf.org) in Crowell, Texas, will set up world-class telescopes for the general public in front of the Cook Center from sunset to 10:00 p.m. Amateur astronomers will explain the use of the telescopes as well as the objects of the night. Free star shows, 7:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. at the planetarium. This event is free and requires no reservations.

May 10
Corsicana AirSho*, Corsicana Airport, (CRS), five miles south on Highway 287. Gates open at 8:30 a.m. Air show: 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Hosted by the Coyote Squadron unit of the Commemorative Air Force. Features flying and static displays of World War II aircraft, Warbirds, precision flying teams and many other military and civilian aircraft. There will also be model aircraft performances, classic cars on display, food and drinks and many exhibits featuring automobiles, trucks, tractors, boats, lawnmowers, four wheelers, hunting vehicles, etc. Admission: \$5 per person or \$10 per car load. Veterans free. (AirSho* is a trade name.)

Corsicana Preservation Foundation's Twilight Ball. Visit www.corsicanapreservationfoundation.com.

Gospel Music Concert at Martin's Music Hall. Show: 7:00. Cost: \$10. Dinner is additional. (903) 872-8226.

May 12
Corsicana Education Foundation Top 10 percent graduating senior banquet, 7:00 p.m., Navarro College Cook Center.

May 15
Leadership Corsicana Navarro County 2007-2008 Sessions.

May 16 and 17
Navarro County Relay for Life Race, Community Park next to the YMCA. www.events.cancer.org/rflnnavarroctb.

May 17 - July 5
Navarro Council of the Arts National Juried Art Show.

May 22
Main St. Project's "Preservation Celebration," 5:30 p.m. It is a time to honor and recognize the people who have promoted the concept of maintaining the historic glory of Corsicana. (903) 654-4851.

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