

Midlothian

M A G A Z I N E

MAY 2011

NOW

Corvette
Way of Life

Love Behind
the Wheel

Also Inside

Your Dream Smile

In the Kitchen

With Annette Prince

Strumming by Faith

A guitar and God
gave Corby LaCroix
a purpose in life.

This Thing
Called
High School

Rebels
in Harmony
At Home With
Eric and Leigh Ann Floyd





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MISD



Kindergarten Roundup for 2011-2012

Any child who will be 5 years old on or before September 1, 2011 is eligible to attend the district's full-day kindergarten. Parents/guardians need to register their child at his/her attendance zone elementary campus during the week of May 9-12, 2011 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Visit the MISD website for more information.

The Midlothian ISD Board of Trustees accepted the recommendation of a citizen's growth management bond committee and voted unanimously to call a bond election for May 14, 2011. The \$97.3M bond program includes high school #2, elementary #7 and additions to Frank Seale Middle School.

High School #2: **\$74,000,000**

- Phase I for 1,000 students
- Core capacity of 2,500 students
- Estimated occupancy date is August 2014

Elementary School #7: **\$20,500,000**

- 750 student capacity
- Estimated occupancy date is August 2014

Frank Seale Middle School addition: **\$2,800,000**

- Expand student capacity from 1,000 to 1,200 students
- Estimated occupancy date is January 2013

Early voting takes place May 2–10, 2011.

The main bond Election Day will be held on May 14, 2011. Early voting and main Election Day will be held at the Midlothian Conference Center. Precincts 103 & 137 will vote at Ovilla City Hall.

The projected growth, tax impact and exemption information is available online at www.midlothian-isd.net/bond.



Summer Sports Camps

Students in grades K - 9 have an opportunity to attend baseball, basketball, football, soccer, softball and volleyball summer camps. Registration and more details available on the athletic website www.midlothian-isd.net/athletics/camps.

Rotary Youth Leadership Award Recipients



Two Midlothian High School juniors, Lawrence Arroyo and Aleana Wallace, are scholarship recipients of the 2011 Rotary Youth Leadership Award (RYLA).

Visit the District and Campus Spotlight Websites for Good News!

Midlothian ISD students are competing and achieving at many levels. The district and campus spotlight websites showcase student achievements, successes and overall good news happening in Midlothian ISD for the 2010-2011 school year.

The WGMS One Act Play *Revenge of the Space Pandas* earned the first place trophy at the recent competition among area schools.

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On The Cover



Corby LaCroix found fulfillment through Christian music and church.

Photo by Shana Woods.

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A change in direction put Corby LaCroix on the path to his destiny.

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Editor's Note

Hello, Midlothian!

Happy Mother's Day to all moms! Remember her not just with gifts, but your presence as well. Trust me — all she really wants is you!

Congratulations graduates! Your new life waits. Planning for success is as crucial as studying to become successful. Make a plan so every step is in that direction. Or, as Yogi Berra said, "If you don't know where you are going, you might not get there."

This school year, I met and shared with you all of the principals in Midlothian Independent School District (MISD). It has been a pleasure meeting them, seeing their commitment to excellence, discovering the individual talents they bring to their profession and, a huge bonus — loads of love for our kids. Midlothian is blessed!

Midlothians, do you want a say in MISD? Educate yourself on the issues and vote on May 14. Early voting is May 2-6 and May 9-10.



Betty

Betty Tryon
MidlothianNOW Editor
btryon.nowmag@sbcglobal.net



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Midlothian ISD Education Foundation

As a part of our new HATS Program, Honor-A-Teacher or Staff, the Midlothian ISD Education Foundation would like to say "Thank You" to all of the dedicated, hardworking employees of MISD that make a difference in the lives of our children. Community members also honored individuals in cooperation with Teacher Appreciation Week, May 2-6, 2011, and more information can be found at www.misdhats.org.

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Register online at www.eatandrun.org. A USATF course map, art contest guidelines and info on how to win in iPad is also available! Don't miss this great opportunity to support MISD!

Strumming By Faith

— By Betty Tryon

Belting out a country western song in his usual nightclub, everything felt familiar and routine. Corby LaCroix did not know that by the end of his song nothing would feel familiar or routine. As a young musician, this was what he wanted to do, what he was trained to do, and country music was his pleasure. “I was right in the middle of a song, and all of a sudden, I knew that I was done with that,” he said. “Every fiber of my being hated what I was doing, where I was, what I was singing and the place I was singing in. It was like God got inside and flipped a switch. I told the club owner that I was not going to be coming back.”

The roots of Corby's dilemma began long ago. Playing the piano as a young boy seemed to be the outlet for his musical talent. However, the piano did not appeal to him as much as the guitar. He remembered the first time he picked up the guitar, at age 10. “At my grandmother's house, I was messing around with a guitar and managed to eke out a song, playing by ear.” By trial and error, he discovered that he could indeed play a song on the guitar just by listening to the tune and figuring out where the notes were on the guitar. His playing by ear style extended to piano playing and caused his teacher some consternation. “I would frustrate my piano teachers. They would put the music in front of me, and I would act like I was reading it because I knew where to turn the page, but I was playing by ear. My teachers were fooled for a while, but then they caught on,” he admitted smiling.

Even though Corby's teachers were distressed at his lack of knowledge regarding note reading, Corby knew his way of expressing music was



“It was like God got inside
and flipped a switch.”



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From left to right:
 Brady Goodwin, Taylor Nowell,
 Corby LaCroix, Mike Garretson,
 Andrea Curran, Sean Robbins

playing by ear. He acknowledged, "Reading music was never a gift of mine. I can read it, but it takes me a while. It is so much more efficient for me to hear the song and play."

Though his interest in the guitar began at age 10, Corby did not seriously pursue it until his senior year in high school. "I was really into country music at the time. I listened to songs on the radio to try and figure out what they were doing and how the chords fit together. After a while, I thought, *Maybe I should sit down with someone who has been doing this for a while and shave some time off of my learning curve.*" During this time, Corby was a part of an organization called Young Life. The guitarist who played for their club meetings agreed to teach him some of the finer points of guitar playing. After high school, Corby followed Cari, his girlfriend and now wife, to Waco to attend McLennan Community College (MCC). "I didn't know what I wanted to do until I stumbled upon their commercial music program. It turns out there were only two programs like it in the whole state." In the program, the students could study the music business, music production, audio tech and commercial vocal and instrument performance.

Corby had found the perfect program for his needs. "It was everything from vocal training, ear training, music business, copyright, publishing to management. It was just how to make it in the music business," he stated. An integral part of the program consisted of students who formed bands together within the program. Elaborating, Corby stated, "They had a rock band,

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a Christian band and a country band to play gigs on campus.”

Corby graduated with an Associate of Applied Science in commercial music performance. After graduation, he formed a band named Corby LaCroix and Cuttin’ Loose. The band became popular and started opening for Nashville acts such as the Dixie Chicks, Tracy Lawrence and Diamond Rio. Corby enjoyed a degree of success with his band singing country music, until that night, right in the middle of a song. He felt God was saying that was not where He wanted him to be. Corby remembers telling his band members that night that he could no longer continue. “My band members got mad at me, and the club owner got really mad, and rightly so, because we were supposed to play three nights, and that was just the first night. That was a mistake. I should’ve honored that commitment. But at the time, I couldn’t. I could hardly make it through the first night. This was in November. I did play the rest of the gigs on the calendar, and that was it.”

After Corby quit the band, playing the guitar was not a priority again for almost two years. It wasn’t until he joined Midlothian Bible Church (MBC) that he again picked up his guitar. “I recognized the call to do Christian music and wanted to participate in worship,” he said. “Six or seven months into my job here [at MBC], I went to a worship conference in Kansas City where I was in a songwriter’s forum with Matt Maher. He was talking about his approach to writing songs. It started opening my eyes. Before the forum, I looked at Scripture and noticed that certain songs came out of this verse or

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that verse. But after that forum, writing songs from Scripture was brought into perspective. I started writing songs and realized God was allowing me to see the Scriptures lyrically and to see patterns, especially in the Psalms and in some of



David's writings. So I started writing with Brady Goodwin."

With a collection of songs written, the CD named *Declaration* took shape. Eight of the songs in the album are original, with two of those co-written with Brady. The other two are "re-worked" hymns. "The CD was done in a way to cause people to seek the Lord," Corby explained. "My songwriting style right now is to take Scripture and write songs out of them. I have Scripture references for all of the songs, and Layne Mershimer (pastor of MBC) wrote a devotion for each song. I want it to be not just a music CD but a study guide kind of thing, too — a way to sit down and worship the Lord in music and then to go to His word."

Corby now believes "we are to use our gifts, our resources, our time and our efforts to bring praise and honor to the name Jesus." Doing just that, he has moved from country music and clubs to Christian music and church, using his talent in a way that brings fulfillment to his life. **NOW**



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Everything to Gain 6 p.m., Thursday, May 19

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An Ounce of Prevention 6 p.m., Tuesday, May 24

Dr. Russell Dickey and Dr. Ronald Kline discuss the importance of yearly checkups for early detection/prevention of reproductive and lower GI problems as well as vascular disease.



This Thing Called HIGH SCHOOL

— By Betty Tryon

What makes a good high school principal? In this world of rapidly changing technology, bureaucratic requirements, merging cultures and a growing population, a principal needs to have great insight on the challenges facing kids inside and outside the classroom. They must possess genuine care for the students and be authentic enough to share that with them. In addition, one must ask a high school principal to have a firm grasp on the ultimate goal — graduating students with the tools necessary to continue their lives successfully. Dr. Al Hemmle, Midlothian High School principal, fills these and many more requirements.



The world looks different today than it did when Al was in high school. That is a fact of which he is very much aware. "As a result of being in this position as principal, I see some things in play today having unknown implications," he stated. "Getting our hands on more content is not the challenge anymore. The content is there and readily accessible. For example, with an iPad, you can download an application that can teach you how to solve quadratic equations and not have to sit in front of a teacher to learn it. The world's library can fit in a device small enough to fit in the palm of your hand."

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Al wonders, "Are we really teaching kids how to think and learn versus just knowing content? I'm not saying computers are bad. What I am saying is we can't go overboard with how kids operate today. We want to reach out and connect with kids in terms of how they learn, communicate and how they tick. But we don't want to compromise to the extent that it affects their learning."

Technology can be of great assistance, but Al makes the point, "That is not necessarily the means to an end; it's just another tool." Another side of technological disadvantages can be found in the frustration of English teachers. "Technology, such as texting, can be counter-productive." Laughing he said, "Some of my ninth-grade teachers are ready to pull out their hair when they start seeing *u* for *you*, *becuz* and *bc* for *because* and *idk* for *I don't know*. That is the challenge. We need technology, but on the flip side of that coin, we have these gaps that exist between teachers and students. Sometimes that gap in technology, if it widens, makes it even more difficult. We have to bridge that. That is why we have to embrace technology."

Another area of concern for Al is the safety of everyone in the school. Recently, he attended a police workshop to gain up-to-date information on how to keep our kids safe. "By no means do we have a huge threat, but we are not absolved from this happening. It happens in the best of places, so you've got to assume that you have to put some things



in place. If I had 30 minutes with every parent in this district, I wouldn't tell them that school is important, or to ask kids about their day and go over their homework — all of which are critically important. I would tell them the importance of knowing what their kids are being exposed to. The past 25 years, teen entertainment has hit a new low in violence.”

Participants at the police workshop were shown some

graphic and violent video games. “They took excerpts from the different levels in these games,” explained Al. “I was shocked at the graphic and senseless acts of violence. Many moms and dads think it's just a game, so it's no big deal. There is a lot of violence and gore when you get into the levels of the game. You have to spend a lot of time to get to these levels. I'm not talking about just knocking someone over or running someone over. I'm talking about running them over and backing up and running over them again with sound and animation of blood. They show different ways of inflicting head wounds. I had no idea that [one of these games] would dismember police officers. I'll give you that it is just a game, but what are we subliminally telling kids about authority? In addition, how does that implicate learning?

“Playing these violent games can cause kids to gravitate their attention to other areas, and that is where they get their fulfillment versus being involved in activities in school and in social relationships. Rather than being real, they can go to a world that really doesn't exist and be these people. It's much harder to be real because it takes a lot of work, and you have to put yourself at risk where someone may not like you or someone might say something mean to you. Just knowing what is going on can help a parent position that kid to be more successful by limiting that type of exposure. We need today, more so than ever before, to know what our kids are seeing.”



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Al sums up his time as principal as being “a very interesting undertaking in working with all the different types of kids and their backgrounds. That is the challenge because no two of them are alike, but that is the human condition.” Al readily meets that challenge every day. **NOW**



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Rebels in Harmony

— By Alex Allred

There can be domestic tranquility even amongst rebels. Had someone made this suggestion to either Leigh Ann Clark or Eric Floyd a decade ago, however, they would have laughed. Leigh Ann grew up in Midlothian, racing motorcycles at the age of 6. While most little girls were learning cheers or playing soccer, she was racing dirt bikes against the boys and beating them handedly. Competing in motocross, hill climb and cross country, she placed in both state and nationals at the age of 10 and continued to dominate for the next four to five years. “My dad got his first Harley at the age of 13, so my brothers and I got dirt bikes when we were 6,” Leigh Ann said. Later, Leigh Ann graduated to a bigger bike, which she drove to school.



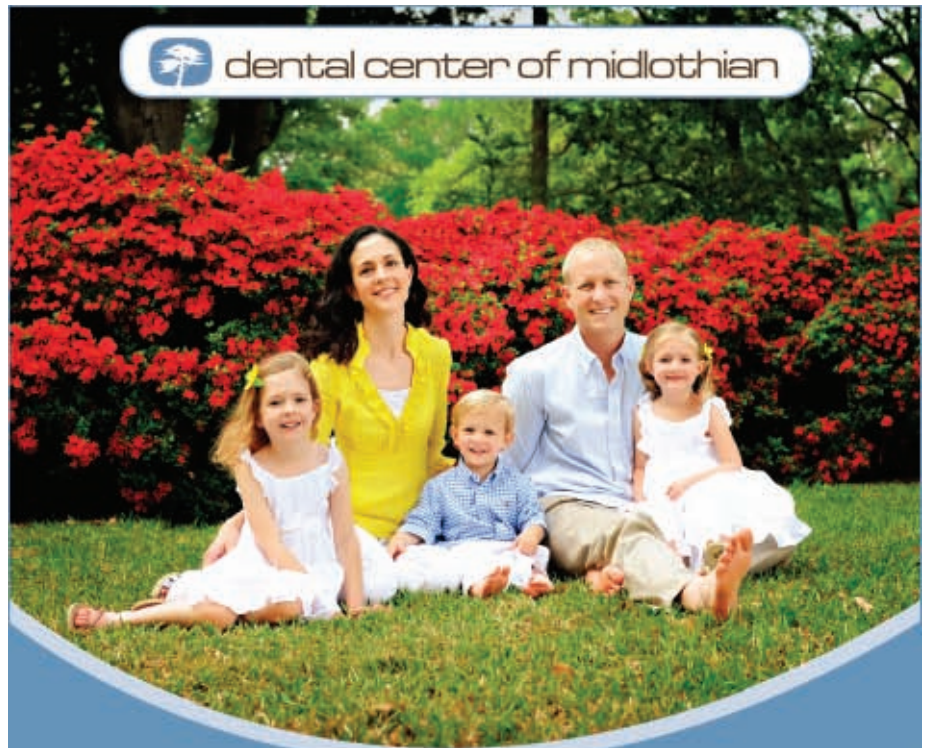
It was during the 1970s and '80s that Leigh Ann's father, Doug Clark, owned the Midlothian Auto Supply in downtown Midlothian and was also a competitive rider. "Everyone knew dad," she said proudly. It was Doug and a group of his friends who set up the Gryphons Motorcycle Club, an organization that recently celebrated its 25th annual toy run, picking up and distributing toys for underprivileged children in Ellis County. Today, both Leigh Ann and Eric are very much a part of the Gryphons Motorcycle Club.

In fact, it is because of motorcycles that Leigh Ann met Eric. Upon graduation from Midlothian High School and Texas Woman's University, Leigh Ann hit the highway, traveling across the United States and, temporarily, working in Salt Lake City, Utah. Not long after she returned home, she attended a motorcycle show in Dallas and met Eric. They became fast friends, and Leigh Ann began setting him up with some of



her friends. "I was seeing someone at the time, or he was seeing someone. We were just friends. A group of us would take vacations together." She laughed at the memory of this. "When you're taking 600-mile-per-day road trips on motorcycles in the summertime, it is not pretty! You really get to know someone." They often averaged 3,500- to 4,500-mile round trips, enjoying every moment of each other's company. Still, she continued to try to find that certain someone for Eric, until one day he said, "I'm not interested in them. I'm interested in you."

After a long engagement, their wedding was spontaneous. Leigh Ann was declared cancer-free of melanoma



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in January 2000, a condition that Eric initially detected, and they were married seven months later in Sturgis, South Dakota. "It's one of the biggest motorcycle rallies! We had 19 friends with us," Leigh Ann laughed. Using just the top half of a wedding dress, Leigh Ann was married in her chaps, "and I had one of those plastic bouquets we got in a little 'five and dime' shop." The wedding took place among friends and motorcycles near a city park. It was low-key and, she says, perfect.

They are a perfect match. Also a rebel, Eric had a different upbringing. His parents are not motorcycle enthusiasts. High academia and cultural upbringing were stressed. But while Eric's sister became a concert violinist, he craved the open road. He joined the Coast Guard at the age of 17, "even though I didn't know a wrench from a screwdriver," he chuckled. He became a diesel mechanic, learning how to rebuild essentially anything.

But when it came time to build their dream home, Eric let Leigh Ann take control. "Every door hinge, every light switch, every tile," she said, "I picked out." Eric chose the town.

"It's funny," Leigh Ann continued. "My parents bought some land for the kids, so it was here if we wanted it. Eric is from North Dallas, so he loved it down here. But at first, I said, 'Are you kidding me? I spent my whole life trying to get out of here!' Now, I love it."

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With its vaulted ceilings and open floor plan, it appears much larger than it actually is. "But we really didn't need a large house," Leigh Ann said. Years prior to building her first home, she had begun picking out pictures of different home designs from magazines. The open living, dining and kitchen area offer both the perfect setting for large gatherings and a feeling of "home." The strong western and Texas motif is blended with red leather furniture, dark woods and stained cement flooring "that looks like cracked leather."

Linens, draperies and towels throughout the master and guest bedrooms as well as bathrooms also have a leather appeal,



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offering a warm lodge feeling to guests. But one of the most attractive features of this home is the stained glass windows throughout. Upon entering the house, the Texas-style door hosts leaded glass in the form of the Texas flag. In the spacious master bathroom, a beautiful stained glass window is set above the garden tub. The glass, imported from Italy, was a wedding

gift from Eric's parents. A similar piece, located in Eric's private shower, is a favorite in the home, as it casts different shades of color in the house when the sun rises and sets.

Still, the kitchen is Leigh Ann's pride and joy. It has a rustic feel but modern appliances, including a sliding door for a



hidden trash drawer, double ovens and a down-draft installed for the range top on the oversized granite island. Beyond the mud and laundry room is their multipurpose garage. "You can never have enough pantry, closet or garage space," Leigh Ann smiled.

Picking up on the western theme, even the garage hosts leather furniture, a large cable spool for a table, which, of course, is painted in the Harley colors, an entertainment center and a pool table. It is also home to their two Harley Davidson bikes and a closet specifically designed to hold all their "leathers."

Outdoors, besides the ever-enthusiastic Lucy, a beautiful Border Collie/Red Healer mix, who is always in pursuit of a good game of fetch when not standing guard, is Eric's 1949 Willy's Jeep. Eric purchased the jeep from an old German farmer and completely restored

the machine so they could use it while hunting. An avid hunter with both the traditional bow and rifle, Leigh Ann and Eric also own land in Leakey, Texas, where they can hunt and, just as they do everything else, bring friends along. But whether they are out on their Harleys or gathering with friends, it is clear that for these rebels there is no place like home. **NOW**



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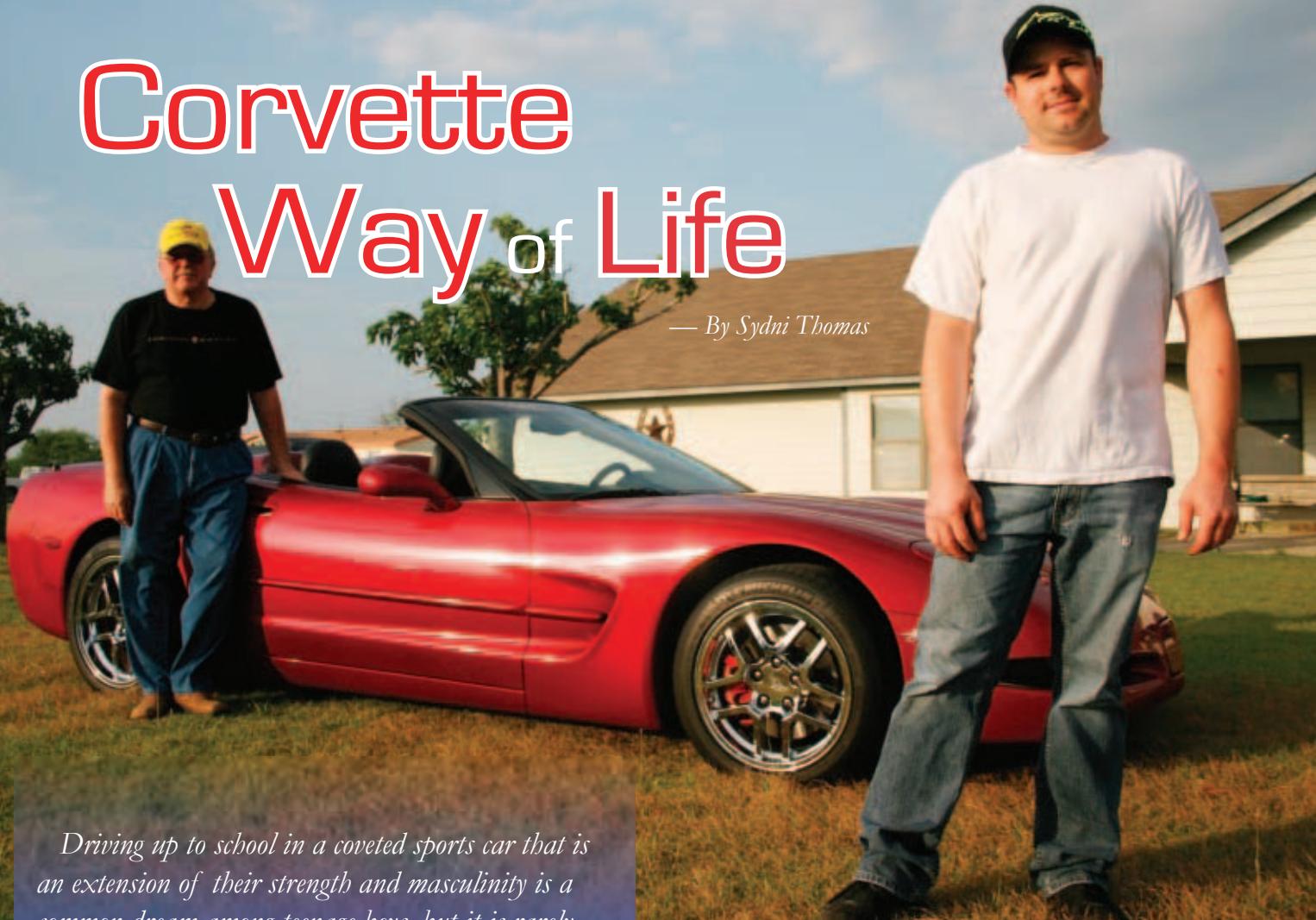
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Corvette Way of Life

— By Sydni Thomas



Driving up to school in a coveted sports car that is an extension of their strength and masculinity is a common dream among teenage boys, but it is rarely achieved. That is, except for Paul Alberti, who got his first Corvette, a black 1967 427, while he was in high school. Like most teenage boys, Paul liked to drive fast and had a few speeding tickets to prove it. Finally, his dad had enough of his reckless ways and told him that if he got one more ticket he was taking the keys. “Lo and behold, when the 10 o’clock news came on that night, this black Corvette zoomed across the screen with a rooster tail of dust coming up,” Paul said. “The reporter was talking about the hooligans racing across the grass at White Rock Lake. I looked across the room, and Dad had his hand out waiting for the keys. I couldn’t believe I got caught on television. That was the end of my racing days.”

Forty years later, Paul is still driving his Corvette fast, but this time it is on the track. His collection has grown extensively over the past decade and now includes a 1985 fast-back coupe, 1999 fixed-roof coupe (FRC), 2002 convertible, 1999 FRC builder and a 2001 parts car. After high school, Paul put his love for



Corvettes on hold while he made a career in the Army. During his 22 years in the Army, he served all over the country and in Desert Storm. In 1987, he was able to move his wife, Brooke, and son, Bryan, back to Texas. It was not long after they moved to Midlothian that Corvettes found their way back into Paul's life. When they moved in, he noticed two Corvettes sitting in his neighbor's yard. Dean and Brenda Lackey were longtime Corvette owners, racers and rebuilders. Soon, both families developed a connection over the cars and began traveling to races all over the country together. "We don't do street racing like Mustang folks," Paul said. "Everything we do is on the track."

Both families are members of the National Council of Corvette Clubs, Inc. (NCCC), the largest nonprofit Corvette organization in the United States. They race out of the Southwest Region under the Tejas Vettes Club. Each season there are 105 events divided into 20 runs. Races are scored by points, and they are tallied throughout the entire season. In the late '90s, Paul served as the points keeper for the region. As a network engineer and all-around computer guy by day, Paul was able to develop a system



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for points tracking, which revolutionized how things were done. With weekend work schedules, the Albertis make it to six of the 20 runs each year while the Lackeys are able to make it to at least 15 runs. Dean and Brenda have each earned the honor of being the top racer in the Southwest Region. During the week, they safely transport students to school as Midlothian ISD bus drivers, but on the weekends, they tear up the track. "I'm 60 and still racing," Paul said. "Dean is 72, still racing, and is one of the best guys on the track. When we show up at events, you can hear the other racers groan."

Owning a Corvette is about more than just the races. It's the lifestyle. Paul attends car shows and competitions when he is not racing. There is always a towel in his trunk in case he comes across a show unexpectedly. One Sunday while working at Brookshire's, he heard about a car show on Hwy. 287 and decided to check it out, even though his car was dirty. He ended up taking home first place, thanks to the towel in his trunk. "I'm part of a group called The Corvette Posse," Paul said. "Corvette owners in the area get together and drive between Cleburne, Burleson and Midlothian. We drink coffee and hang out with our cars. We always draw a crowd."

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America Association, a division of the NCCC, is an opportunity for Corvette enthusiasts to introduce their children and grandchildren to their passion in an educational environment. Paul signed Bryan up when he was old enough, and because of it Bryan discovered his path in life earlier than most. To introduce Bryan to racing, Paul

bought him a souped-up go-cart. After his first time flying around the track, Bryan blew the motor. Instead of paying someone to fix it, Bryan taught himself how to rebuild it. When he was 15, his interest in rebuilding Corvettes grew. He took a job at Carlisle Chevrolet while in high school and has been working at a dealership ever since. Corvettes, of course, are his specialty. He is currently the Corvette technician at Bankston Chevrolet and has his own 2008 Corvette Coupe.



In their spare time, Paul and Bryan rebuild Corvettes together. They find rebuilds on the Internet or hear about them through fellow Corvette friends. In 2008, Paul came across a 1999 torch-red Corvette on the Internet. He could not believe what he was seeing and e-mailed it to Bryan, who was just as surprised. Paul ended up buying the car, and he and Bryan worked together to get it in shape. The color alone makes the car a head



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turner. At that point, Paul and Brooke had three Corvettes, and the garage was getting full. Paul was ready to thin out their collection, but Brooke was hoping he would invest in a Corvette convertible. The search began, and the Internet proved useful once again.

Paul took his two 1996 Corvettes to the dealer and tried to make a deal. After a day of haggling, Paul finally cut a deal and left with a 2002 Corvette convertible for only the transfer fee. "When we got it home, we cleaned it up and took it to Thunder Valley Drag Strip in Oklahoma City," Paul said. "We still hadn't tested the car or anything. Bryan, the drag racer in the family, took everyone out with that car, with the exception of one. He lost by seven one hundredths of a second."

Paul hopes he can dedicate more time to rebuilding and racing in the near future. He works as a network engineer for the Navy and also picks up work at Brookshire's as a clerk. As retirement looms over the horizon, Paul has plans to turn his Corvette hobby into a business. "Bryan already has me in retirement mode," Paul said. "In the next couple of years, I'll be building a second barn so we can store and work on more cars. We're going to start with rebuilding them, and then we will see where that takes us." **NOW**

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LOVE BEHIND THE WHEEL



L to R: Shelia Capello, bus monitor; Alyssa S., student; and Tillie Square.

— By Betty Tryon

For students standing in front of their homes on a cold, wet morning, what a relief it is when that big yellow bus pulls up, the doors open and they're greeted with a warm welcome and a smile. School bus drivers are integral to making the school system function smoothly. Midlothian expects a lot from its bus drivers. When speaking of character traits, such as leadership, attitude, perseverance, technical and great people skills, one might be listing qualifications for an executive office.




But these are the traits required for a Midlothian Independent School District (MISD) bus driver to be honored as School Bus Driver of the Year. Tillie Square, after a difficult year of fighting breast cancer while continuing to drive the kids to and from school, won the award for the year 2010.


The award is sponsored by Edwards Risk Management, Inc. in conjunction with Property Casualty Alliance of Texas. Making the award even more special is the fact that winners are nominated by their co-workers. Those nominations go to a committee, and from there a recipient for the award is chosen.

When Tillie discovered that her fellow bus driver, Ronnie Light, nominated her, she asked her why. Ronnie simply said, "Because you deserve it!" She made it clear that she did not nominate Tillie because of the cancer and explained, "I am not nominating her for that reason, but it is a perfect example of how she perseveres in the worst of circumstances. She has not one day let this illness defeat her. She is a strong woman of faith." In

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Ronnie Light and Tillie Square.

describing Tillie's leadership and attitude, Ronnie wrote, "Ms. Tillie is a perfect example for all her co-workers to follow. She always stands up for what is right. She speaks the truth in love. She is always respectful to others. Tillie is ready to serve and does it with a glad heart. Ms. Tillie always sees the glass half full instead of half empty. She is always positive and looks for the best in everyone — a real pleasure to work with."

Tillie has driven a school bus for 21 years, 13 of those years were in service to MISD. "I have loved every minute of it," she said. "I drove the gen ed (general education) bus for eight of those years and, for the remainder, I've been driving the bus for special needs kids, and I especially love that. The students there need special care, and they want to be treated like everyone else. That's what I try to do. I'm a wimp for special needs. I do home health, too, and take care of older people. I guess I was just born to be a caretaker."

On the special needs bus, Tillie has a monitor with every run to take care of the children while she drives. In addition to physical needs, the children often have medical needs. Occasionally, a student will have a seizure during the drive, and it is up to the monitor to make sure they stay safe during it. The bus drivers all take CPR classes every two years. It is essential that the

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"She is always positive and looks for the best in everyone — a real pleasure to work with."

drivers become familiar with the students, so they can be better prepared to take care of an emergency. "Most of the time, we have the same children for two or three years," she stated. "When we get new children, we are introduced to them and told what is going on. We find out what we need to do with them while they are on the bus with us. We want to make sure they feel comfortable with us and happy about being on the bus. We joke around and sing and just have a good time."

You can get to know students very well by busing them to and from school every day, and sometimes special relationships can evolve with occasional surprises. "One little girl always comes straight up to me and just stands there. I thought, *She must need a hug*. So, I gave her one. Now, every day she comes up to me to get her hug. If my babies need a hug, they get one." Tillie loves to refer to the students on her bus as her babies. It is a mark of her tender affection toward them.

Another one of her "babies" she has fond memories of has graduated, but she still sees him around town, and it is always a joyful reunion. "He is an inspiration to me; he never has a sad day. I drove him for about three to four years, and I saw him sad maybe twice. Those times I think he didn't feel good. He's always happy." Developing such a close relationship with the students, some of whom are

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very ill, comes with a risk. Tillie had one student pass away and remembered how heartbreaking that was. The flip side of that is the joy of witnessing students improve. "We had one student who started with a helmet on, but she came out of that. It was such a blessing when that happened."

In addition to learning more about the children, Tillie makes an effort to get to know the parents. In meeting her, the parents must feel encouraged to know their children are well taken care of while in her care. "It's important that we get to know the parents because we have to communicate with them. I like that because, if something is going on or if you have a problem, you can talk to them




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about it. If we can communicate with each other, it makes it so much better for the child."

There is also personal benefit in developing a relationship with the parents. Sometimes strong friendships can develop. "I came to know the grandmother of one of the kids, and we became close friends. I don't drive her grandbaby anymore, but the granny and I still talk to each other. When I was diagnosed with cancer, she called to check on me to see how I was doing, and that meant a lot to me. I think it is a good thing for us to be communicating with the family, and they know they can depend on us."

As in all jobs, some days were more difficult than others, but Tillie persevered. Her secret? "Take a deep breath," she explained. "Sometimes, you want to throw in the towel, but someone has to take them to school. I think about my sweet babies and about how they are trying so hard. They try to go and want to go to school, and the teachers are so glad to have the kids there. I really love what I'm doing. You have to have a passion to do something for 21 years." **NOW**



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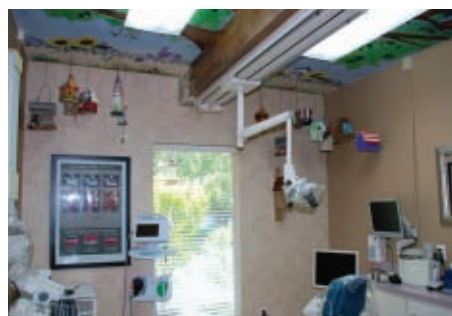


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— By Betty Tryon

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Davis had been out of dental school for five years when he began to pursue knowledge of the more complicated procedures in dentistry. He wanted to offer his patients the comfort and benefit of having all of their dentistry needs handled in one location. “Many patients really resist being referred. So, we do

a fair amount of oral surgery here. Most of the time, I place my own implants — that is another service we offer. Crown placement can be done in a single visit.”

Dr. Morgan seeks to calm his patients’ anxieties in a couple of ways. One is through sedation dentistry. “Many of our patients have had experiences that make them afraid and, as a result, they’ve neglected their mouths for a number of years,” he explained. “Sedation is very safe, and it can really change someone’s life if they can have some positive experiences and start getting their mouth restored.” Anxiety levels are also calmed when patients have the same dentist for all their procedures. Davis can follow the process of the procedures, particularly if surgery is involved, all the way to the end. “I have

the advantage when I go into surgery of knowing what I want as the end result. It really helps us to plan the whole project with the end result in mind. That way, if I need to make a modification during our surgical phase, I know what to do to achieve the outcome I want." With this foresight, the patient does not have to be referred to multiple specialists who may have a different plan in mind.

Staying on top of all of the advancements in dentistry is no easy feat, but Davis has taken the challenge to further his knowledge. He spends many hours every year on continuing education. "I enjoy what I do and don't want to be stagnant," he stated. "I started dentistry 21 years ago. Over the last 15 or 16 years, every year I seek out those programs I want to gain more knowledge in. The main thing that I see changing the most rapidly and having the most dramatic impact on us is the technology.



That technology over the last 10 years has begun to evolve at an increasingly rapid rate." Davis has been using technology that gives him the ability to do virtual implant surgery prior to doing the implant surgery. This helps to make the surgeries as simplified and predictable as possible.

Caring about his patient's total dental health is Davis' goal. "I like being able to solve someone's problems," he said. "My goal for every patient is to eliminate any kind of disease or deteriorating process and get them established with a healthy oral environment where they really don't need me, but [rather] my hygienist for cleaning and maintenance. I really want to help patients not only have the smile they want to have but to be able to maintain their teeth for the rest of their life." **NOW**

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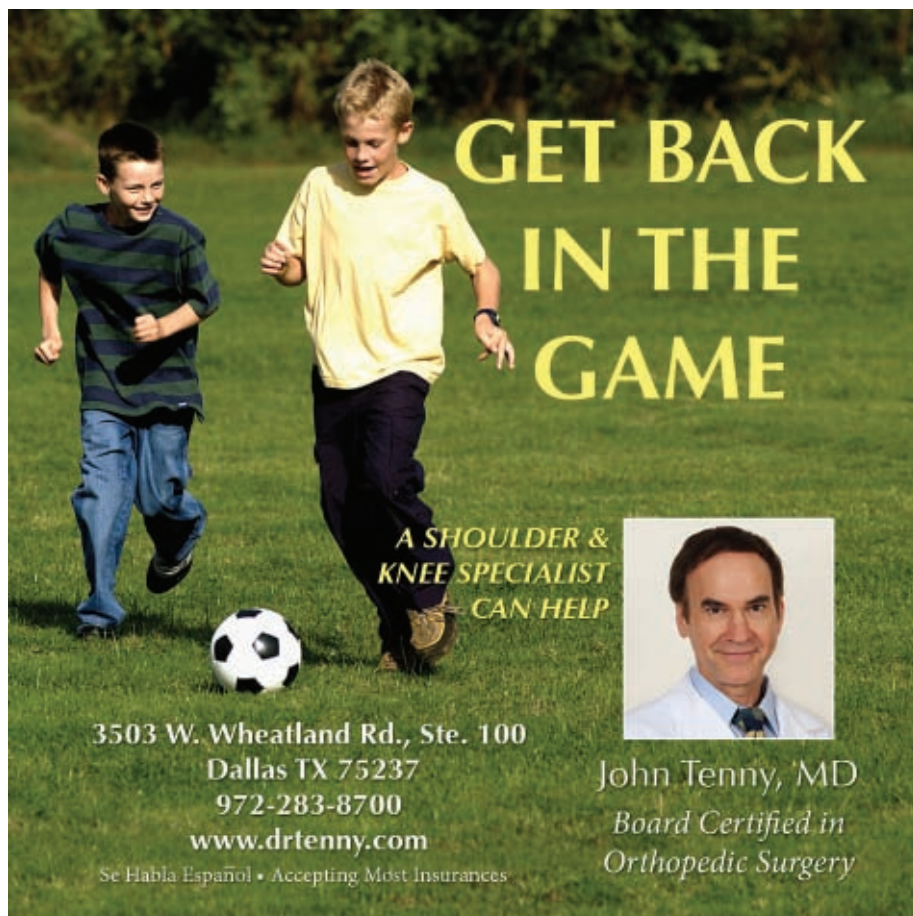
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Plantar Fasciitis

— By Betty Tryon, BSN

Waking in the morning, just like most of the populace, you are ready to bounce out of bed and welcome a new day. However, as soon as your foot touches the floor, the similarity ends, and a sharp, stabbing pain shoots through your foot. You may be afflicted with plantar fasciitis — a condition that occurs with inflammation of the plantar fascia ligament. Located in the bottom of the foot, it attaches your toes to your heel bone.

The cause of this condition is not very clear, but if the plantar fascia ligament suffers tears in its structure, or becomes irritated and inflamed, then plantar fasciitis can develop. When it becomes inflamed, walking can become a painful ordeal. The pain may be intense with the first few steps in the morning, but as the foot limbers and warms up, it usually decreases. During the day, if you have long periods of standing or sitting, the pain can return.

Many risk factors may increase your chance of developing this condition. Most common during middle age, this condition can develop from faulty foot mechanics, such as having an abnormal way of walking, which puts extra stress on the foot. It can also

be caused by being flatfooted or having high arches. Physical activities, such as running and occupations that require you to be on your feet for long periods, can cause difficulties. Those high heels may look beautiful, but they are not the best equipment for your feet. Shoes that do not protect or support the feet well can cause tears in the ligament.

If you are having pain in your foot, consult with your health care provider. Usually, the first line of treatments recommended are palliative ones you can do at home. Rest your foot; use ice; and with your doctor's advice, take nonsteroidal, anti-inflammatory drugs for pain, such as Advil or Aleve. Identify what is causing the stress to your foot and change it. Make sure your shoes fit correctly and support your feet properly. Avoid allowing the condition to become prolonged. If it becomes advanced, more invasive or time-consuming treatments will become necessary. In addition, plantar fasciitis can lead to back, hip and leg complications. A physical therapist can teach you exercises to increase muscular strength in your legs and to stretch out that ligament. Using an orthotic device in your shoe and a night splint can help alleviate pain. Treatment may take as long as a year, but with diligence and correct therapy, you do not have to suffer with foot pain. **NOW**

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

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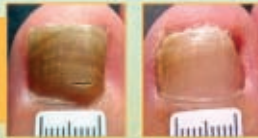
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Calendar

MAY 2011

May 2-6

Early voting: 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center.

May 6, 7

3rd Annual Cinco de Mayo Fiesta: 5:00-8:00 p.m., downtown Waxahachie. For details and a complete listing of activities, call (972) 937-2390.

May 7

3rd Annual Victims of Fire 5K fun run/walk: 8:30 a.m., 235 N. 8th St., Midlothian, Midlothian Fire Station #1. Sponsored by Midlothian Firefighters Association Local 3685. Cost: \$10-\$20, depending on shirt size. Visit www.midlothianfire.com/aboutus.htm.

May 9

American Business Women's Association Meeting: 6:30-8:00 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center. Cathy Altman will speak regarding the upcoming bond election.

May 9-10

Early voting: Midlothian Conference Center, 7:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.

May 9-12

Kindergarten Roundup: May 9-12, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Parents are encouraged to register their child at their attendance zone campus. Any child who will be 5 years old on or before September

1 is eligible to attend the district's full-day kindergarten.

May 13

Counseling — Horse Style: 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Paws for Reflection Ranch. Workshop designed for counselors to learn more about Equine Assisted Counseling (EAC) through hands-on activities with horses. Three CEUs are available for LPCs. No previous horse experience is necessary, and all activities will be on the ground. Cost: \$75 for three CEUs or \$35 for non-CEU participants. Light lunch included.

May 13, 14

2nd Annual Love to Eat & Run (& Vote): 6:00-8:00 p.m., MHS cafeteria. Hosted by the Midlothian Education Foundation. Pasta dinner cooked by MHS culinary students, MISD student art contest and art auction and performances from various MISD student groups.

5K USTAF certified run shot-gun start at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, leaving from the high school parking lot off Walter Stephenson. One-mile fun run/walk at the practice field/track. For more information contact Kristin Zastoupil with MISD at (972) 775-8296.

May 14

Election Day: 7:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m. Vote at your assigned precinct.

Methodist Health Systems presents Midlothian's Family Night at the Movies at Hawkins Spring Park. Featured movie: *Secretariat*. Show begins at sundown, about 8:30 p.m. Free admission. Contact Midlothian Parks and Recreation.

May 20-21

Midlothian Relay for Life: 7:00 p.m.-7:00 a.m. at Don Floyd Field. For more information visit: www.relayforlife.org/midlothiantx.

May 28

4th Annual Street Dance: 7:00-8:00 p.m., 8th Street between Main and Avenue F, Midlothian. Sponsored by Firehouse Kids Christian Day Care Center in Ovilla. Admission is free. Contact (972) 775-7777.

May 30

Memorial Day, No school.

June 4

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

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your event details to bttyon.nowmag@sbcbglobal.net.

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In The Kitchen With Annette Prince

— By Betty Tryon

As the youngest child of eight children, Annette Prince learned how to cook from someone who obviously had a lot of experience — her mom. “I was also taught by my mother-in-law, Me Maw,” she stated. “I just enjoy cooking. It makes me feel good when I can please everyone.”

Annette, who is in her first year as manager in the kitchen at Vitovsky Elementary School, stated, “I really like feeding all the kids.” In addition to pleasing everyone with her cooking, Annette enjoys teaching others. She has passed her skill of cooking on to both of her sons and one of her two grandchildren. “My granddaughter’s favorite dish is the Chocolate Peanut Butter Balls.” That recipe is listed below. **NOW**

Broccoli, Rice, Ham, Cheese Casserole

- 1 20-oz. pkg. frozen broccoli
- 1 small onion, diced
- 1/8 cup butter
- 2 cans cream of mushroom soup
- 2 cans cream of celery soup
- 1 soup can of milk
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 3 cups cubed ham
- 2 cups instant rice

1. Cook broccoli as directed on package.
2. Mix all ingredients. Bake at 350 F for 45 minutes.

Cream of Mushroom Meatballs

- 1 lb. hamburger meat
- 3 Tbsp. instant minced onion

- 1/2 cup dry bread crumbs
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/8 tsp. pepper
- 1/2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1 egg
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- 1/2 cup milk

1. Preheat oven to 400 F.
2. Mix first eight ingredients. Shape into meatballs and place in an ungreased pan. Bake 10 to 15 minutes or until done.
3. In a large skillet, add soup and milk. Place meatballs in soup mixture. Cover and simmer until heated thoroughly.

Chocolate Peanut Butter Balls

- 1/2 cup melted margarine
- 2 cups peanut butter
- 1 16-oz. pkg. powdered sugar

- 1 12-oz. pkg. semi-sweet chocolate morsels
- 2 Tbsp. melted shortening

1. Combine margarine, peanut butter and powdered sugar in a large bowl. Mix well.
2. Roll mixture into 1-inch balls and set aside on waxed paper.
3. Combine chocolate morsels and shortening and place in top of double boiler. While heating over hot water, stir until chocolate is melted. Place several balls in chocolate. Roll with spoons to coat evenly. Place on waxed paper. Refrigerate candy to prevent stickiness.

Taco Soup

- 1 1/2 lbs. ground beef
- 2 cans Ranch Style Pinto Beans
- 1 can whole kernel corn
- 2 cans stewed tomatoes
- 1 can Ro*Tel Diced Tomatoes and Green Chilies
- 1 pkg. taco seasoning
- 1 pkg. Hidden Valley Ranch dry dip mix

1. Brown meat in a large pot. Drain grease.
 2. Add all ingredients. Simmer for 30 minutes.
- Note: You may use Ranch Style Beans with jalapeños if you like it hot.

Me Maw’s Sauerkraut With Sausage

- 1/2 onion chopped
- 1 Tbsp. oil
- 2 cans sauerkraut
- 1 can beer or water
- 2 Tbsp. brown sugar
- Dash garlic powder
- 1 pkg. smoked polish sausage
- 2 medium potatoes, peeled and sliced large

1. In a large skillet, sauté onion in oil. Add sauerkraut, liquid, sugar and garlic. Stir.
 2. Slice sausage and lay on top of sauerkraut mixture. Add potatoes.
 3. Cover and cook over low to medium heat for 20 minutes or until potatoes are done.
- Serves 4.

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

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