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ON THE COVER



Jeremiah Gaines will play on a full scholarship for SMU this fall.

Photo by Opaque Visuals.

CONTENTS

May 2013 • Volume 8, Issue 5



6 Relentless Competitor

Jeremiah Gaines is a first-class individual on and off the field.

10 Drama Mama

Ferris Junior High theater teacher, Stacey Yee, takes her final curtain call.

14 The Perfect Move

At Home With Everett and Ann Spencer.

22 Woman and Country

Patriotism inspires Beverly Thompson's first book.



28 BusinessNOW

30 Around TownNOW

36 CookingNOW

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Editor's Note

Welcome to the family!

At NOW Magazines, every magazine is like our own child. The communities we cover are family, and we are always excited to bring more people into the fold. With that in mind, this magazine is expanding to cover all of North Ellis County, including: Red Oak, Ferris, Bristol, Glenn Heights, Oak Leaf, Ovilla and Pecan Hill. This increases our circulation to over 17,000 direct mailed magazines each month. Join us in celebrating as we change the magazine's name to *North Ellis Co.NOW* to better reflect the communities we serve. As always, we welcome your story ideas of people you want to see within our pages. Together we'll build a magazine that will do this family proud!

On a more somber note, the heart of Texas has grieved the past few weeks over the tragedy in the town of West. As our neighbors to the south work to rebuild their lives and their town, our thoughts and our prayers are with them.

Angel

Angel Morris
North Ellis Co.NOW Editor
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Relentless

Competitor

By Dianne Reaux

Jeremiah Gaines is the epitome of a well-rounded, successful student athlete. Not one to seek the limelight, Jeremiah is a laid-back man of few words. Although he is reserved, he is a fierce competitor. Whether blocking baskets on the court or blocking opponents on the football field, Jeremiah brings a dedication and discipline to his game that is admired by all who know him.

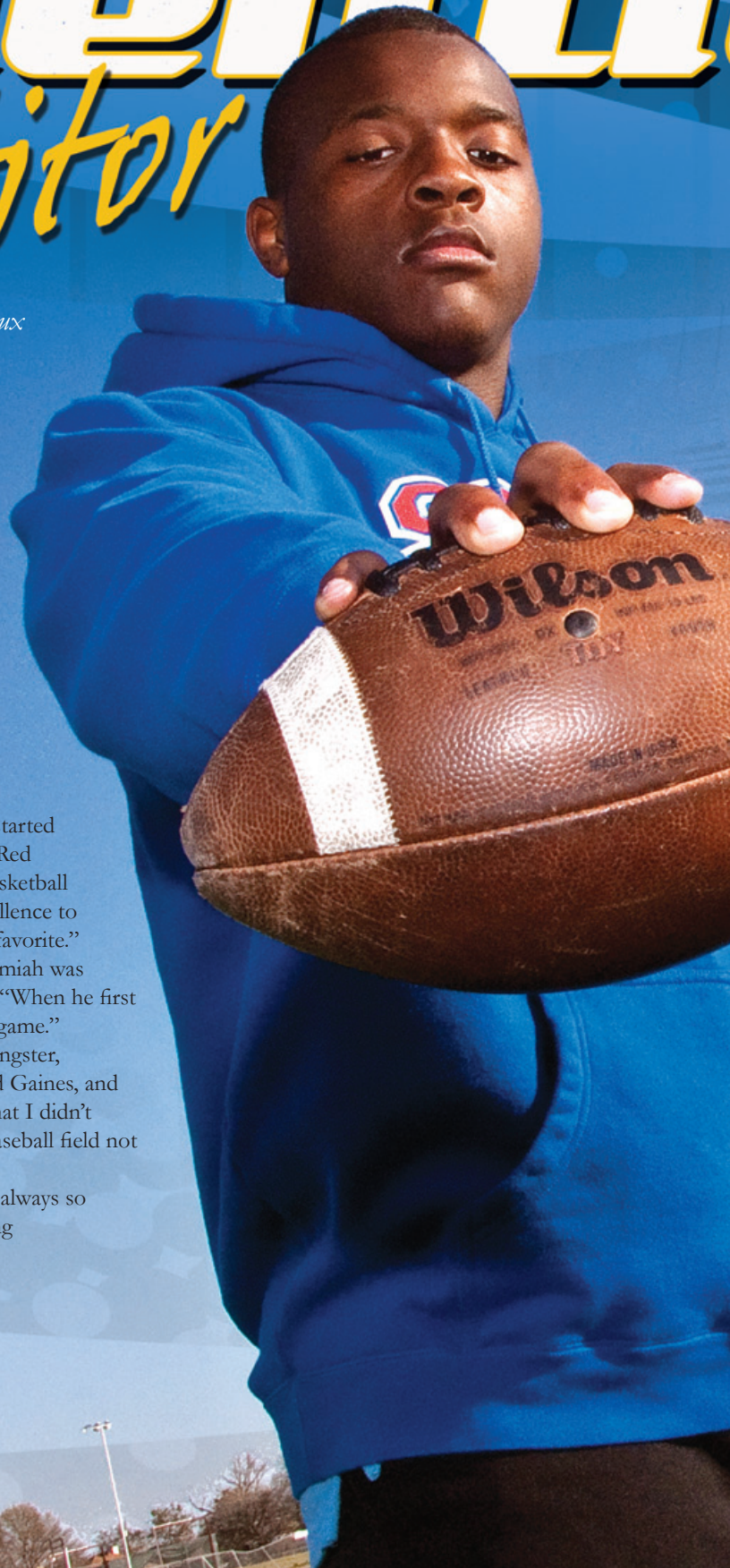
Since the age of 5, Jeremiah has been involved in athletics. "I started out playing soccer and T-ball," he said. He has been a student in Red Oak ISD (ROISD) since fourth grade. He has played football, basketball and participated in track and field, always bringing a level of excellence to each sport. "I love all sports," Jeremiah said. "But football is my favorite."

As a child, Jeremiah was large for his age and very active. "Jeremiah was always really good at sports," his mother, Sonya Gaines, recalled. "When he first started playing soccer, he always scored five or six goals in every game."

Although he loves all sports, there was one sport that, as a youngster, Jeremiah just didn't enjoy playing. "When I was 5, my father, Fred Gaines, and I were leaving T-ball practice, and I just came out and told him that I didn't want to play anymore. I remember standing around out on the baseball field not doing very much. It was just too slow for me," he explained.

"And I was fine with his decision," Fred added. "Jeremiah was always so active, and we felt our job was to focus that energy into something constructive. As parents, we didn't try to steer Jeremiah into playing one particular sport. We exposed him to all kinds of different sports, but we let him make his own decisions on which sports he wanted to play."

Athletics have played



LOSS



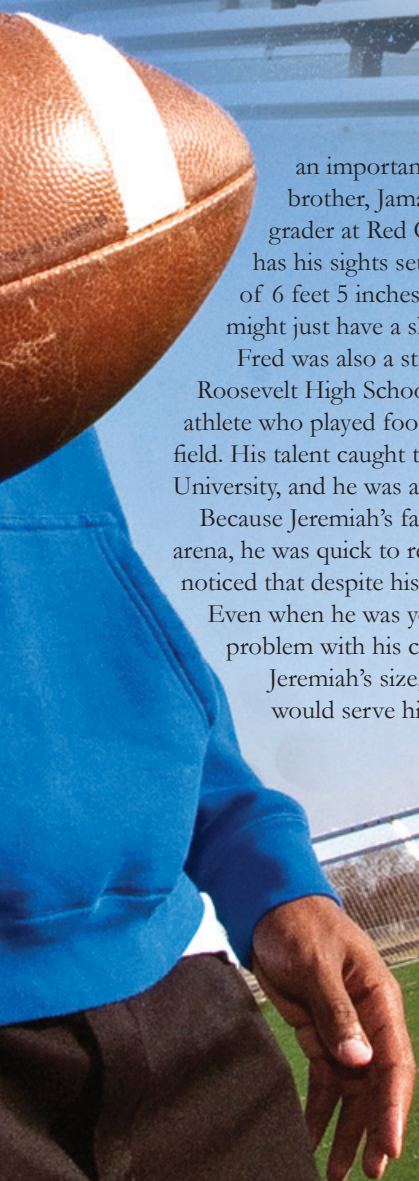
an important role in the Gaines family. Jeremiah and his brother, Jamal, are both talented athletes. Jamal is a seventh-grader at Red Oak Junior High School, who plays basketball and has his sights set on playing professionally. With a current height of 6 feet 5 inches, and likely to grow a few more inches, Jamal might just have a shot of reaching his NBA dreams.

Fred was also a standout high school athlete at Franklin D. Roosevelt High School in Dallas. Like his sons, he was a competitive athlete who played football, basketball and participated in track and field. His talent caught the eye of football scouts at Oklahoma State University, and he was awarded a full athletic scholarship.

Because Jeremiah's father had spent so much time in the athletic arena, he was quick to recognize that Jeremiah was gifted athletically. "I noticed that despite his size, he never went through an awkward phase. Even when he was young, he was very agile, and he never had a problem with his coordination," Fred recalled.

Jeremiah's size, strength and agility would serve him well as he

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began his high school athletic career. And it didn't take long for scouts to notice the same talent and skill that Jeremiah's father had recognized.

As a freshman, Jeremiah's athleticism and confidence landed him on the varsity football roster as a starting defensive



player. His high school debut was during the Tom Landry Classic when Red Oak played Highland Park. It would be the first opportunity for the coaches and fans to watch Jeremiah shine, and he did not disappoint. Jeremiah had two interceptions and was named Defensive Player of the Game. He continued to train hard both on the field and off, and it came as no surprise when, after completing his first season on the football field as a freshman, he received his first scouting letter from the University of Oregon.

Over four years of playing high school football, Jeremiah caught the attention of several college scouts. Texas Tech, Texas A&M, Purdue, UC Berkeley, Wake Forest, Boise State and Texas Christian were just a few universities eager to add Jeremiah and his talent to their roster. Jeremiah received more than 25 full scholarship offers, with 15 from Division I schools. And his accomplishments prove why. In 2011, Jeremiah was named the All-District Tight End. In 2012, he was named District 15-4A's Most Valuable Player. He was elected team captain twice by his teammates, and he is Red Oak's all-time leader in touchdown receptions and receiving yards.

"It's difficult to find the words that describe Jeremiah. He is one of the most athletic players and best students Red Oak has ever had. On the football

field, he has played different positions including inside and outside linebacker and safety. He also played half back where he ended up as tight end, wide receiver, full back or tail back. He's even played some wildcat quarterback," ROHS varsity head football coach, Mike

Shields, shared. "Jeremiah is an unselfish player. When he wasn't carrying the ball, he blocked just as hard for the other players. As a student, I've only heard positive things about Jeremiah from our teachers and administrators. He's definitely a first-class individual, both on the field and off."

Among the scholarship offers was a letter from Southern Methodist University. In the letter, Bert Hill, SMU's defensive line coach, stated, "We noticed Jeremiah's size and agility when he was a sophomore. He is fairly quiet and reserved, but don't mistake his kindness for a weakness. When it's time to compete, he is relentless."

For Jeremiah, a visit to the campus sealed the deal. "I picked SMU because I really liked the atmosphere and the fact that it was a small campus. I have a really solid support system in my family, and it's good to know they will continue to be close while I am in school." While

"When it's time to compete, he is relentless."

attending SMU, Jeremiah plans to major in sports management and minor in theology.

Jeremiah may be a person of few words, but he does offer some wisdom for student athletes. "Make sure you have your priorities straight," he said. "It's good to train hard and play hard, but you have to always have a Plan B. For me, my education comes first. Anything can happen in life, but I will always have my education." **NOW**



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DRAMA MAMA

— By Angel Morris



Highly dramatic and fiercely competitive are two ways longtime theater arts teacher, Stacey Yee, could be described. But the best depiction of her would be enthusiastic, dedicated and loving. After countless achievements in her 27 years as theater arts teacher at Ferris Junior High, Stacey has seen students through one final curtain call and now prepares for retirement.

“I’ve shed a lot of tears, and God and I have had a lot of talks. He has prepared me for the fact that I’ve served my purpose here, and it’s time to go,” Stacey said of her decision to retire from Ferris ISD (FISD) this year.

Before Stacey became known as queen of educational theater, she made a name for herself on the stage. Growing up in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, she was introduced to theater in junior high and began competing in humorous interpretation in high school. “I never lost a competition, and I won nationals in 1977,” Stacey recalled. Her prowess led to a full scholarship at North Central University and ultimately to a degree in theater and elementary education — plus an endorsement in dance choreography.

While Stacey had her sights set on “becoming a big-time actress,” she ultimately found her calling in teaching and landed a position at a private Christian school. “I had amazing opportunities to teach the way I think children learn best — to



volunteer at hospitals when we had a unit on health; to intern for a week with local media when we studied communication. Real-life, hands-on learning!” Stacey said.

After three years at that school, Stacey began to feel the stress of single parenting and full-time teaching and decided to move closer to family. In 1986, she interviewed in Ferris and Red Oak. “When I came out of my interview with Red Oak, I got a call from Ferris offering me a job. Then I got a call from Red Oak, too. I just took the first one that made the offer, and that’s how I ended up in Ferris,” Stacey said.

The job was in first grade at Ferris Elementary, where Stacey’s theatrical background continued to come into play. “I taught using music and hand puppets and doing plays. It caught on with other teachers, too,” Stacey said.

Two years later, Stacey moved to fifth grade for a year, then third grade at the new intermediate school where she first started doing productions. *You’re a Good Man, Charlie Brown* was her first community musical, and spawned a future professional actor. “Jordan Willis played Charlie Brown, and now he invites me to all his professional shows!” Stacey said.

Shortly thereafter, the Ferris Junior High (FJH) principal asked Stacey to return to fifth grade, where she taught reading and developed her signature style of couches instead of desks, soft lighting and custom soundtracks she created to intensify the reading experience in her classroom.

“I was thrilled to see Ferris could compete with the big dogs.”

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"We would curl up on the couches, and I'd start the music that would build up the mood of what we were reading. The intensity would build to the end of a chapter, and when it was time to stop the kids would be so disappointed!" Stacey said.

Stacey's enthusiasm led to her "inheriting" the cheerleader sponsorship at FJH, and before she knew it, Stacey had developed an entirely new love. She started the Jacket Cheer Club (JCC), rented a building, purchased mats and equipment and built squads that would go on to win nationals and grand nationals. Coaching both her daughters was a bonus, but she felt all her cheerleaders were like daughters.

"I had JCC for eight years, and when it closed I let all the girls come back and take a trophy. I kept the grand nationals trophy for many years, until I heard one of my members was pregnant," Stacey said. "I tied her baby gift to that 6-foot tall trophy, took it to her baby shower, and we both cried!"

Stacey's own babies — Jennifer, Zachary, Adam and Skylar — now grown, were all in at least one of her theater productions. Stacey also has hundreds of other children she considers her own from theater, musical theater, one-act play, and speech and debate classes she has taught through the years.

"We became known as the ones to beat in UIL competitions, where they took many first place awards. I was thrilled to see Ferris could compete with the big dogs," Stacey said. "I took competitions very seriously, and the kids knew it. But they also knew me as their mom-away-from-home. They could count on me for

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anything from rides to church to lunch money if they needed it.”


Being part of Mrs. Yee’s classes became an honor, and students still invite her to the big moments of their lives. “I get graduation announcements and wedding invitations, but the most special thing is just when a student sees me around town and comes up to give me a hug,” Stacey said.

From her final pep rally, where former cheerleaders returned to wish her well, to the close of last month’s *Little Shop of Horrors*, Stacey has approached every moment with positivity — a trait she hopes has served her children not only in the classroom, but in life, too.

“I was never a sit-behind-a-desk teacher, and everything is a big deal to me. I’m very, very dramatic ... my poor husband,” Stacey said of Duane Yee, her spouse and former FISSD School Board president whom she married in 1990. “I never taught to a test. My kids learned what they were supposed to learn, but I never wanted it to be because they *had* to.

“I wanted to take each child and make them believe in themselves and have them become enthusiastic about learning,” Stacey continued. “Because if you believe in yourself and you approach things with enthusiasm, then you really can continue to learn the rest of your life. Then you really can *be* anything or *do* anything.”


Now Stacey looks forward to approaching her next phase of life enthusiastically. “I believe if you live your life to God’s purpose that’s all that matters,” she said. “I’m honored to have served His purpose for me in Ferris, and I’m very excited to see what He has in store for me next!” **NOW**



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I have firsthand knowledge of how a food allergy can change your life in the kitchen. My nephew, Reid, started out life with allergies to eggs, milk and peanuts. Going to the grocery store before Reid came to my house was a chore!! I had to read ingredients of every product before serving them to Reid. My sister and her husband had to use recipes that were altered by replacing milk and cheese products with a different product or leave it out all together. Reid has had a few allergic reaction episodes. Most memorable for me: a serving utensil was used in a bowl of vegetables that contained butter. The same spoon was also used to scoop vegetables, from a small bowl with no butter, to serve Reid. He reacted and had all of us in a panic!! He then suffered a severe allergic reaction. He had a wheezing type of cough, broke out in rash, starting around his mouth, and then began to itch all over. Over the last couple of years, his allergy specialist has had him do an egg challenge and milk challenge, which involves introducing these foods (in a medical setting) a little bit at a time. I'm happy to say, Reid can eat milk and cheese products that have been cooked using certain methods... peanuts are still on the No-No list. Reid wears a bracelet to alert teachers, adults and friends he has a food allergy. Always ask about food allergies if having guests or children over at your house and are serving food items. Your adult guest, with food allergies, will enjoy your menu prepared with them in mind. The parents of children, with food allergies, will be most appreciative that you acknowledge a medical condition their children live with daily and you were willing to accommodate their particular situation.



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The

Perfect Move

— By Angel Morris

The first question people ask upon seeing the big, old house on the hill is, "How in the world did you get this house up here?" The very next question for Everett and Ann Spencer is, "How in the world did you two find each other?"

The Spencers are happy to answer both questions and share the story of their house and their marriage. The two are proud owners of the 1897 Stiles-Pigg home that originally stood on Ellis County's first successful cotton farm in the Boz area. The house was moved for the Super Collider project and now sits on about 25 acres of former cotton farmland.

After the house was cut in half for its move to Ovilla, a second floor was built and the original half story placed on top as a third story. Gingerbread trim was hand-cut to match for the second floor; first floor windows (still intact with original wavy pane glass) were matched with double-pane glass for the second



AT HOME WITH

Everett & Ann Spencer



floor; and original dormer windows were incorporated into a large third-floor loft master suite. The widow's walk on top was a period addition, and the home has seven gables.

"Old timers call this Indian Hill," Everett explained. "They used to find arrowheads down in the pasture after plowing or in the creek bed. We keep an eye out for them even now. Legend has it that Bonnie and Clyde hid out along this same ridge."

Describing it as "Victorian farmhouse meets traditional style," the Spencers respect the home's architecture but emphasize "comfortable farmhouse" more than "Victorian." The 4,700-square-foot home has four bedrooms, three baths, two living areas, a music room and formal and casual dining rooms. The central hall layout brings lots of light and a sight line from the front of the house through to the back, where the breakfast area/sunroom looks down onto woods filled with red oaks, burr oaks, cedars and wild magnolias.

Entering the home, guests find 12-foot ceilings throughout the first floor, with extensive crown molding, window molding and wide baseboards, along



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with the home's original solid hardwood flooring. The house is captured for future generations in an oil painting in the entry hall. "Ann commissioned the house painting as a wedding anniversary surprise," Everett said.

Their eclectic gathering of "Sunday painter art" includes an abstract piece a friend painted for Ann's 55th birthday and a small gathering of oils painted by

Helen Morton, wife of former Ovilla Mayor Charlie Morton.

The first floor main rooms open to the central hallway, true to Victorian architectural style. The home formerly had rooms separated by pairs of French doors and 8-foot dropped ceilings, changes that had evolved during the early and late 20th century. During renovations, the dropped ceilings were

opened to their original height, doors were removed and columns added to create a more open concept layout.

The library features a coffered ceiling and large matching bookcases opposite the original fireplace. "Everyone comments on the huge gold leaf mirror above the fireplace that came from an old hotel in Washington, D.C.," Everett said.



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"The ceiling medallions in the first floor rooms were cast from antique plaster molds, and the light fixtures are antique."

The couple doesn't hesitate to admit that they are "nesters," so just about every piece of furniture and accent piece has some memory or story. Whenever they travel, they mail a postcard home to themselves as a memento. They also collect Christmas ornaments from their trips. Scattered throughout the house are sea shells gathered from annual trips to Sanibel Island, Florida.

Everett has an old Victrola, which serves as an accent table in the music room. In the library, a bishop's chest where priests kept their vestments, is an antique piece from Ann's late mother, originating from a Catholic diocese in Beaumont, Texas.

"Our home is unique," Everett said. "Everyone who comes out here says they wish they could stay longer and just enjoy sitting on the porch. There aren't too many places, especially in the Dallas area, with this many trees and the feeling of being away from it all, but it's just a short drive to suburb shopping and even into the big city."

Everett commutes to downtown Dallas, where he has worked for 27 years as an environmental scientist with EPA Region VI. Ann commutes to near Love Field for her job as communications editor for Southwest Airlines Pilots' Association. They both stay active at Ovilla United Methodist Church, and Everett has been a volunteer firefighter

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with Ovilla for 10 years. He was named Firefighter of the Year two years in a row because, despite his downtown commute, he manages to make 300-400 fire calls a year.

The couple first met in January 2002 when Ann was running the Orange, Texas, district office of a former East Texas congressman. Everett was assigned to handle an environmental issue that Ann was working on for a constituent city. Ironically, both are Baton Rouge natives — actually born in the same hospital three years apart. Everett was reared in Baton Rouge and graduated from Louisiana State University. He moved to the Dallas area in 1985. Ann was reared in Orange and graduated from Texas Tech, but her parents were born and reared in Louisiana.

“We had an instant connection,” Ann said, “especially after Everett asked about my accent and learned I was born in Louisiana, and just about all my family cheers for LSU!” They began dating in April 2003, after Ann moved to Huntsville to open an additional district office, and they married in 2005. Today, the couple has four adult children from previous marriages — two daughters and two sons — and a toddler granddaughter.

Like their house, the Spencers have moved from where their stories began to create their own history in Ovilla. “We appreciate the farming community and family histories all around us,” Ann said. “We are both happy to make our own memories here.” **NOW**




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Woman and Country

— By Randy Bigham

*Beverly Thompson, a painter who specializes in watercolor, pastel and acrylic, has added words to the mediums she has mastered. But her first book, *The Colonel is a Lady*, is an expression of the author's patriotism, as well as her artistic scope. A biography of Jamie Jamison, an Army nurse who served in three wars and was the driving force behind the Vietnam Women's Memorial, Beverly's book is thrilling and heartbreaking. "I'm a patriot, so when I heard Jamie's story, it was like kismet," Beverly recalled. "I instantly knew I wanted to write about her."*

With a foreword by Ross Perot, and Jamie's full cooperation, *The Colonel is a Lady* has met with deserved success. A well-researched, passionately written account, the book tells of the struggles and accomplishments of one of the unsung heroines of World War II, Korea and Vietnam.



Jamie, who rose in the ranks to become a lieutenant colonel, is still thriving today at the age of 93 and lives in California.

Inspired by Jamie's selfless deeds, the artist put away her watercolors and picked up her pen. Herself a Red Cross volunteer in Japan during the Vietnam War, and married to a Naval officer, Beverly was convinced she could accurately flesh out her extraordinary subject and the difficult times both had witnessed.

Beverly has enjoyed the round of TV, radio and print interviews that have come her way, not for any personal acclaim, but because she delights in spreading Jamie's story of bravery, devotion and sacrifice. One of the most rewarding press junkets for her book was a speech Beverly recently presented at the Frontiers of Flight Museum in Dallas. "It was really moving to see that room filled with 150 men eager to hear about a woman veteran," she remembered.


Beverly insists Jamie's story carries such universal appeal because of the unswerving allegiance the Army nurse showed to her country. "Like the rest of her generation, Jamie is a case in point of morality and modesty," Beverly



pointed out. "She was born in Iowa, the bread basket of the country. She's 'good people,' as we say — unselfish, big-hearted, with a phenomenal work ethic."

Beverly explained that the real-life heroine of her book was never a proponent of the feminist movement but instead led by example. "Jamie just wanted to be a nurse and help people. She did live in an era when men got all the jobs, but she never felt put down. She simply did her work and loved it, and was admired for that."

There's much to admire — and respect — in the career of Evangeline "Jamie" Jamison, who joined the Army



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Whiplash is a common ailment after a rear-end car collision. Even low-speed car accidents can result in whiplash, which is the result of a sudden jolt that causes unnatural movement of the cervical spine located in the neck. The result is often painful, stiff muscles and an inability to move the head in certain directions without discomfort.

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Whiplash usually takes us by surprise. But don't let a sudden, unexpected injury like whiplash derail your life. Seek qualified medical care and diagnosis by a professional, and remember chiropractic care is the safe, effective way to treat whiplash and not just mask the pain it causes.

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Nurse Corps in 1942, serving for the duration of World War II in Australia, New Guinea and the Philippines. Beverly's book outlines the hardship and danger Jamie faced, from the suicide of



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a senior nurse to the scramble to escape the encroachment of Japanese troops. Beverly writes that even in her early 20s, Jamie had foresight and strength of character and was able to rally fellow staff members in moments of crisis. "She was very close to the war, and helped take charge when she needed to," Beverly said. "She rolled up her sleeves and went to work. She was out there in the center of everything."

For all the courage Jamie showed during WWII, it was her independence of mind in matters romantic that astounded Beverly most when she began her research. "I was so impressed by her commitment to serving her country," Beverly enthused. "Jamie was so focused on her work that she even turned down the love of her life, an Army Air Corps captain she met in New Guinea." The pilot wanted to marry Jamie, but she was already wedded to her work and would remain so through two more wars.

As a captain, Jamie served during the Korean War, stationed in Japan where she was assigned head nurse of the United States Army Hospital's neuropsychiatric

ward. Following the war in 1953, Jamie returned stateside, joining the Letterman Hospital in San Francisco as psychiatric supervisor. But her time overseas wasn't over. She served again during



the Vietnam War as chief nurse of the 93rd Evacuation Hospital at Long Binh. As Beverly related in *The Colonel is a Lady*, Jamie's tour of Vietnam may have been her most courageous stint of all. Although 45 years old when she landed in Saigon in 1966, Jamie was determined to support the young nurses on the team she would lead through some of the darkest days of the conflict.

Caring for hundreds of wounded soldiers flown in by helicopter every day was a mammoth undertaking. But Jamie never wavered. "Her experience in two wars had toughened her for the tasks at hand," Beverly wrote. "She had huge reservoirs of calmness and strength." Even after she narrowly avoided being shot three times, her bravery and sense of humor were equally unruffled. When a fellow nurse praised her luck, Jamie agreed, "It pays to be Irish."

Retiring as lieutenant colonel two years later, after 25 years in the service of her country, Jamie didn't rest long on her considerable laurels. When a monument in Washington, D.C., paying tribute to the women who served during the

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Vietnam War, was proposed in 1983, she contacted Diane Carlson Evans, who was spearheading the campaign. Jamie told her she wanted to honor the “wonderful girls who had been her nurses in Vietnam.” Diane immediately appointed Jamie to the organizing committee as fundraising chairman.

Despite numerous obstacles and setbacks over the next 10 years, Jamie helped steer the project to fruition. When the Vietnam Women’s Memorial was finally dedicated in 1993, the war-savvy nurse, then 72, confessed it was “my greatest accomplishment.” Jamie’s contribution was officially recognized on the 10th anniversary of the monument’s



unveiling when Diane announced at a ceremony that Jamie was “the grand dame” of the memorial.

It wasn’t until about 15 years ago that Beverly first met the now legendary lady behind the monument that pays tribute to the 11,000 women who were stationed in Vietnam. At a Veterans Day flag raising in Beverly’s native California she heard an elegant, silver-haired lady speak eloquently, and she was hooked. “I knew her story was in me,” Beverly said. “I wanted to give her the recognition she deserves. And I wanted to empower women with Jamie’s story.”

Beverly has achieved her goal in patriotic spades. At lectures and book signings, Beverly often meets young women aspiring to success in the nursing and medical fields, and she’s happy knowing Jamie’s example of self-sacrifice will help guide them on their paths. **NOW**

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A Happy Dream

This Red Oak day care is the fruition of Ms. Noma's love and prayer.

— By Angel Morris

What began as an enthusiasm for teaching Sunday school resulted in Red Oak's Happy House Day Care, which was founded by Noma Lankford 38 years ago. "Working with various ages of children through church Sunday school enforced how much I loved teaching and guiding them. I knew if it was God's will, He would provide a way for me to do this full time," Noma recalled.

Moving to Red Oak in 1970, Noma and her husband met a couple at Hillcrest Baptist Church who would later give them a bargain-basement deal on a home and three accompanying lots. A series of other small miracles helped the Lankfords fund the deposit required to open a day care, make repairs to and buy supplies for the facility.

"I have never doubted that Happy House is my calling. I've been blessed with anything I ever needed, and because of that, I run the day care with my heart, not my head," Noma admitted.

Today, with the help of her daughter, Connie Easdon, Noma's original mission of bringing Christian love and care to children continues. Connie, who has attained Professional Administrator and Child Development credentials, serves as day care director. "Being family owned and operated helps us give the place a homey atmosphere. We pray before meals, teach character qualities, have Bible study and sing," Connie said.

Teaching biblically and educationally, Happy House uses manipulatives, music, phonics, songs, art, dramatic play and science. Infants through prekindergarten experience the Your

Baby Can Read program and have a graduation ceremony and reception for preschoolers upon completion of pre-K.

"We offer large classrooms and a variety of equipment for the children. We also have special events for the children," Connie noted. "Summertime is full of center-based activities including: Olympics, Sprinkler Days, PJ Days, parks, hayride and picnics, just to name a few." Children who have completed kindergarten can also take part in private swimming at the Optimist Pool in Waxahachie.

Happy House's services grew over time, with a two-story building being added in 1979 and a gymnasium plus two separate playgrounds in 1985. "The gym is such fun for the children to be physically active when it is too hot or cold to go outside," Noma said.

"I know that they loved being a part of our family and want their children to have the same experience."

Their offerings inspire former day care attendants to bring their own children back for care. "When Happy House children bring their own children, I know that they loved being a part of our family and want their children to have the same experience. I also love it when the [grown] kids stop by to see me," Noma said.

The staff of Amanda Kraus, Erica Hernandez, Cathy Cook, Tandy Schvaneveldt, Kortney McGaughy and Kaye Miller maintain an assortment of child care training hours yearly, have transportation safety training, SIDS training, CPR and first aid training and is FBI fingerprinted in accordance with Texas Child Care Licensing Division. Happy House is a 4 Star Texas Rising Star Facility with Workforce Solutions of North Central Texas and offers drop-in care and a half-day care program.

"Our staff has a mission to train children for life," Noma said. "Happy House is not just a center, we are a family. Each child and his or her family is an extension of our own!" **NOW**

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Children learn about equipment and safety at a special Red Oak Library presentation by the city fire department.



Nicole Garduno enjoys spring temperatures on a playground in Ferris.



Ovilla's Dylan Sills (right) escorts Raven Hawkins of DeSoto as they are named Homecoming Prince and Princess at Canterbury Episcopal School.



Ace Perez puts the finishing touches on his freshly washed Mustang at Total Car Auto Bath.



College students, Chad Watson and Alan Nava, have fun playing soccer at Goodloe Stadium while home for spring break.



Muddy's House Coffee & Deli barista, Camille Holt, serves up a hot coffee beverage for Scott Osbourne.



Susan Ward enjoys dinner at Plato Loco with her children, Micah and Eliana.



Infant CPR was part of a community education program led by Red Oak Fire-Rescue Division at the local library.



Officer Johnson of the Ferris Police Department keeps a cruiser in top shape.



Judy Ford, Sandra McGill, Rick Crabb, Carolyn Pallett, Ava Cook, Cindy Harrison and Jenette Crab share wine and Italian cuisine at Moni's Pasta & Pizze.



Local students earn weather safety certificates during a North Texas Storm Chasers presentation at Red Oak Library.



The ROISD Special Olympics Team competes at the first Nancy Spigener Track and Field Meet.

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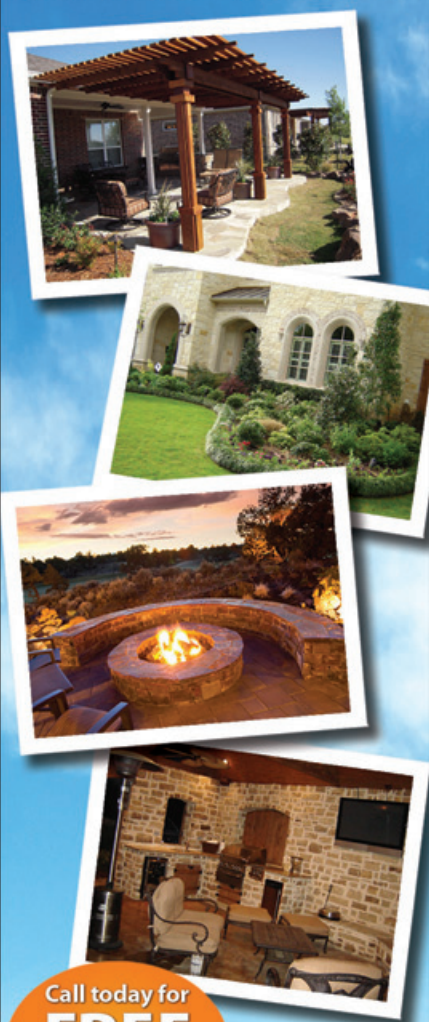
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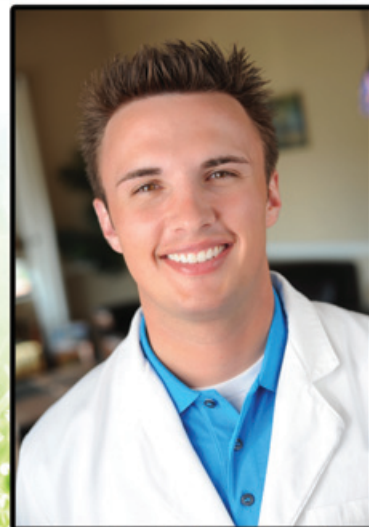


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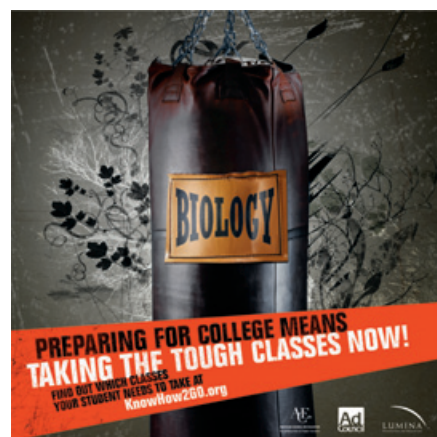
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May 3

Chamber Golf Tournament: 7:00 a.m. sign in, 8:00 a.m. shotgun start, Countryview Golf Course, 240 W. Beltline Road, Lancaster. Breakfast, lunch, prizes and giveaways. (972) 619-0906 or admin@redoakareachamber.org.

May 3 — 5

Guys and Dolls: **May 3-4**, 7:30 p.m.; **May 5**, 2:30 p.m., Chautauqua Auditorium/Getzender Park, 400 S. Grand Ave., Waxahachie. (972) 646-1050 or wct.texas@gmail.com.

May 4

Lions Club Pancake Breakfast: 7:00-11:00 a.m., 207 W. Red Oak Rd. \$5 all-you-can-eat.

Second Annual Race for the King 5K: 8:00 a.m. 5K begins; 9:00 a.m. Prince/Princess Fun Run. Yellow Jacket Stadium, 1008 E. 8th St., Ferris. Benefiting Kyle King Scholarship Fund. (972) 544-2279 or tdrodrig@ferrissisd.org.

May 7, 14, 21, 28

Free Tennis: 4:15-5:30 p.m., Red Oak

High School courts, 122 Hwy. 342. For Kindergarten-eighth grades. Dainta.Calhoun@redoakisd.org.

May 10 — 11

Central Ellis County Relay for Life: 6:00 p.m., Waxahachie Town Square/Ellis County Courthouse, 101 W. Main St., Waxahachie. Luminaria event will include memorial to former Ovilla Fire Chief Donnie Pickard. (214) 949-9549 or Fawn Martwick@NavarroCollege.edu.

May 11

Bristol Volunteer Fire Department Annual Barbeque and Barn Dance: 6:00 p.m., Bristol Fire Station, 101 S. Walnut Rd., Bristol.

May 18

Hooked on Fishin' Angler Class: 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Pearson Park Pavillion, 200 Lakeview Pkwy.

May 20

Red Oak Book Club: 7:00-8:30 p.m., Red Oak Library, 200 Lakeview Pkwy. Free and open to all adults in Red Oak area. Refreshments served.

Indian Trail Master Naturalist Chapter Meeting: 6:00-8:00 p.m., Red Oak Library Ronald Reagan Room, 200 Lakeview Pkwy. Indian Trail Chapter serves Ellis and Navarro counties.

May 21

Back-to-Back Fairytales: 7:00-7:30 p.m., Red Oak Municipal Center, 200 Lakeview Pkwy. Phoenix Repertory Players present fun-for-all-ages plays.

May 22

Chamber Luncheon: Noon-1:00 p.m., 200 Lakeview Pkwy. Networking opportunity for local businesses. Katherine@RedOakAreaChamber.org.

May 26

Ice Cream Social: 2:00-4:00 p.m., Uncle Willie's Pies, 600 Methodist St., Suite 2110. New line of homemade ice cream kickoff. (972) 576-5582 or www.unclewilliespies.com.

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your current event details to angel.morris@nowmagazines.com.

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In The Kitchen With Judy Melton

— *By Angel Morris*

On Monday nights, a Glenn Heights kitchen warms with the cooking of Judy Melton for her weekly Dine and Shine card group. “I love creating dishes and seeing friends and family enjoy them,” said Judy, who learned to cook at age 5 alongside her mother.

Outside the kitchen, Judy sings with a southern gospel trio to give thanks for her blessings. Growing up in a poor household taught her to appreciate what she had. “I’m inspired by looking at ingredients on hand and bringing new recipes to life,” Judy, who favors comfort foods and baked goods, said. “We have homemade chicken and dumplings instead of usual holiday meals. I make cobblers and pies with from-scratch crust and great sweet tea with real sugar!” **NOW**

Judy’s Biscuits

3 cups plus 4 Tbsp. self-rising flour
(divided use)
1 cup Crisco
1 1/2 cups milk
4 Tbsp. cooking oil

1. Cut 3 cups flour into Crisco with pastry cutter or fork. Add milk and stir until thick.
2. Spread 4 Tbsp. flour on pastry sheet or waxed paper. Pour batter onto sheet, bringing edges in with finger tips to make a round ball. Flatten dough to 1/2 inch.
3. Cut out biscuits with a biscuit cutter or glass and put into baking pan with 4 Tbsp. oil on bottom. Turn once to oil both sides for browner biscuits.

4. Cook in preheated oven at 400 F for 20 minutes, or until brown.

Made-up Soup

1 to 1 1/2 lbs. chicken or pork, cooked and cut up
1 can hominy
1 can creamed corn
1 pkg. frozen stew vegetables
2 qts. water
2 Tbsp. chicken bouillon
1/2 tsp. cumin
1/2 tsp. garlic salt
1 tsp. crushed red pepper (optional)
2 Tbsp. parsley flakes
1/2 onion, diced

1. Mix ingredients and simmer over medium heat for 20 minutes.
2. Serve with shredded cheese, chips, bread, salsa or jalapeños, sour cream, etc.

Chicken Casserole

3-4 chicken breasts
1/2 cup onion, diced
1 Tbsp. vegetable oil
1 can cream of mushroom with roasted garlic soup
1/2 cup sour cream
1 can green chilies
1 can water chestnuts, sliced
1/2 tsp. cayenne pepper (optional)
Salt and pepper, to taste
Tortilla chips
Shredded cheese

1. In skillet, cook chicken breasts and onion in oil.
2. In a bowl, mix cream of mushroom soup, sour cream, chilies, water chestnuts, cayenne pepper, salt and pepper.
3. Cut chicken and add chicken and onion to mixture.
4. Layer with tortilla chips, ending with chips and shredded cheese.
5. Bake in oven at 400 F until hot, about 30 minutes.

Chicken Stuff

1 box or large can roasted red pepper and tomato soup
1 can Ro-Tel tomatoes
1/2 cup Parmesan cheese (divided use)
1 tsp. garlic salt
Salt and pepper, to taste
1 to 1 1/2 lbs. cooked chicken (could use canned), cut up
2 cups shredded cheddar (divided use)
2 cups noodles or spaghetti, cooked and drained

1. Mix soup, Ro-Tel and 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese, garlic salt and salt and pepper. Set aside.
2. Line a 13x9-inch casserole dish with half of the chicken; top with 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese and then a layer of pasta. Repeat layering.
3. Pour soup mixture evenly over chicken, topping with remaining shredded cheddar and Parmesan cheeses. Heat in preheated oven at 400 F for 45 minutes, or until hot.

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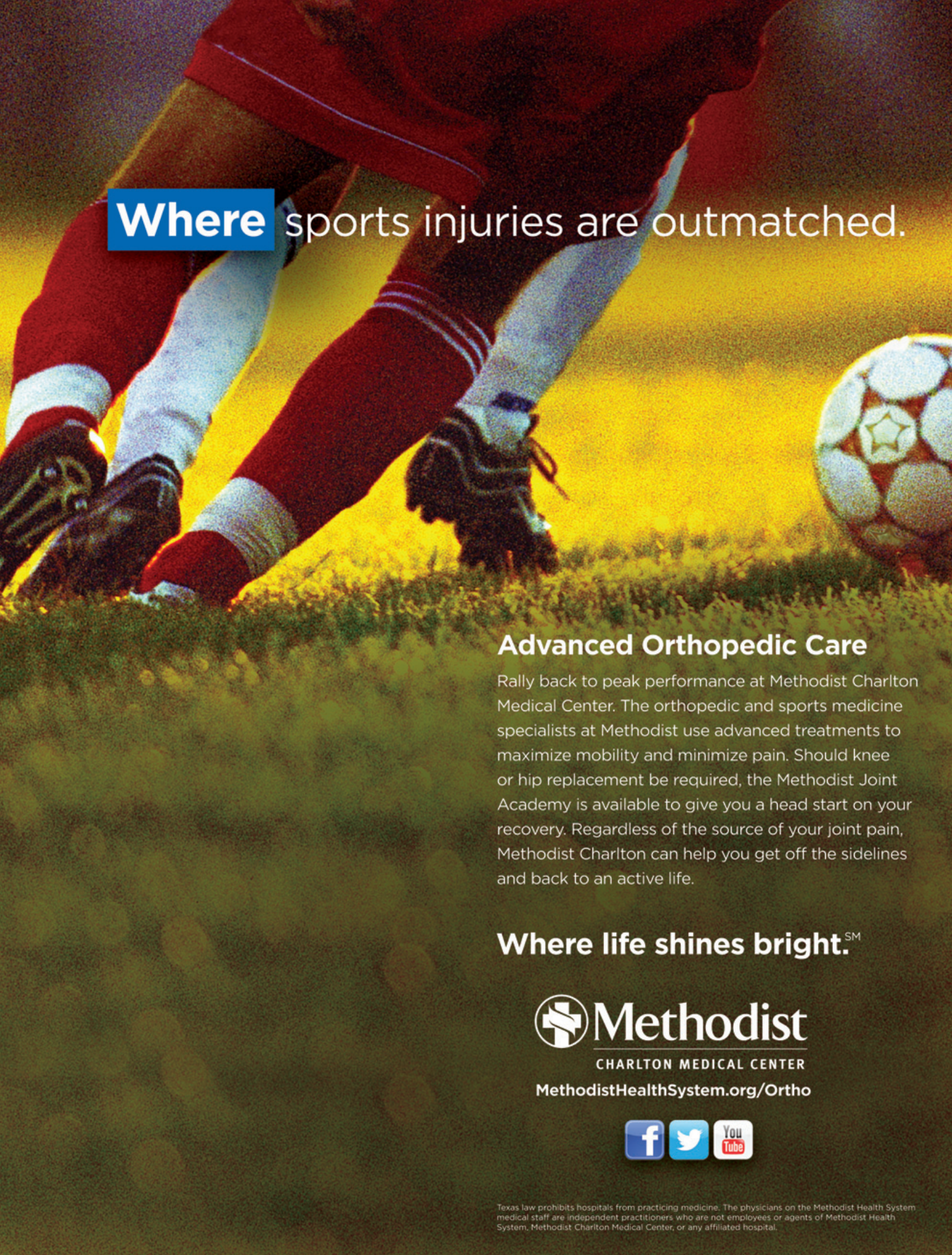
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