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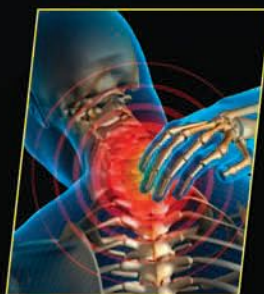
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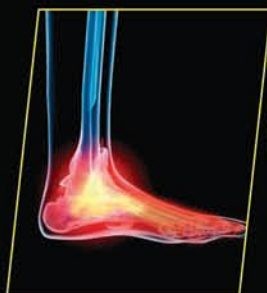
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ON THE COVER



David Kepley thoroughly enjoys his role as a dad.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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Editor's Note

Happy Father's Day!

Hooray, June is finally here! Mid-month, I will be taking a mini-vacation. I plan on sharing it with my grandsons, Easton and Zane. We may spend one morning at the zoo and an afternoon at the movies, but the best thing ever is going to be spending a night at a local hotel. We can watch TV in our king-size bed, but not until we've had the chance to jump up and down on it!

After church on the 21st, I will take time to remember the final six months of my dad's life when he allowed me to help care for him. I'll smile as I remember the time we had. Although shorter than I would've liked, I feel blessed for each shoe tied and every walk in the sunshine. And I won't forget to wish him a Happy Father's Day, as I look up to the heavens and watch the clouds roll by.

Sandra

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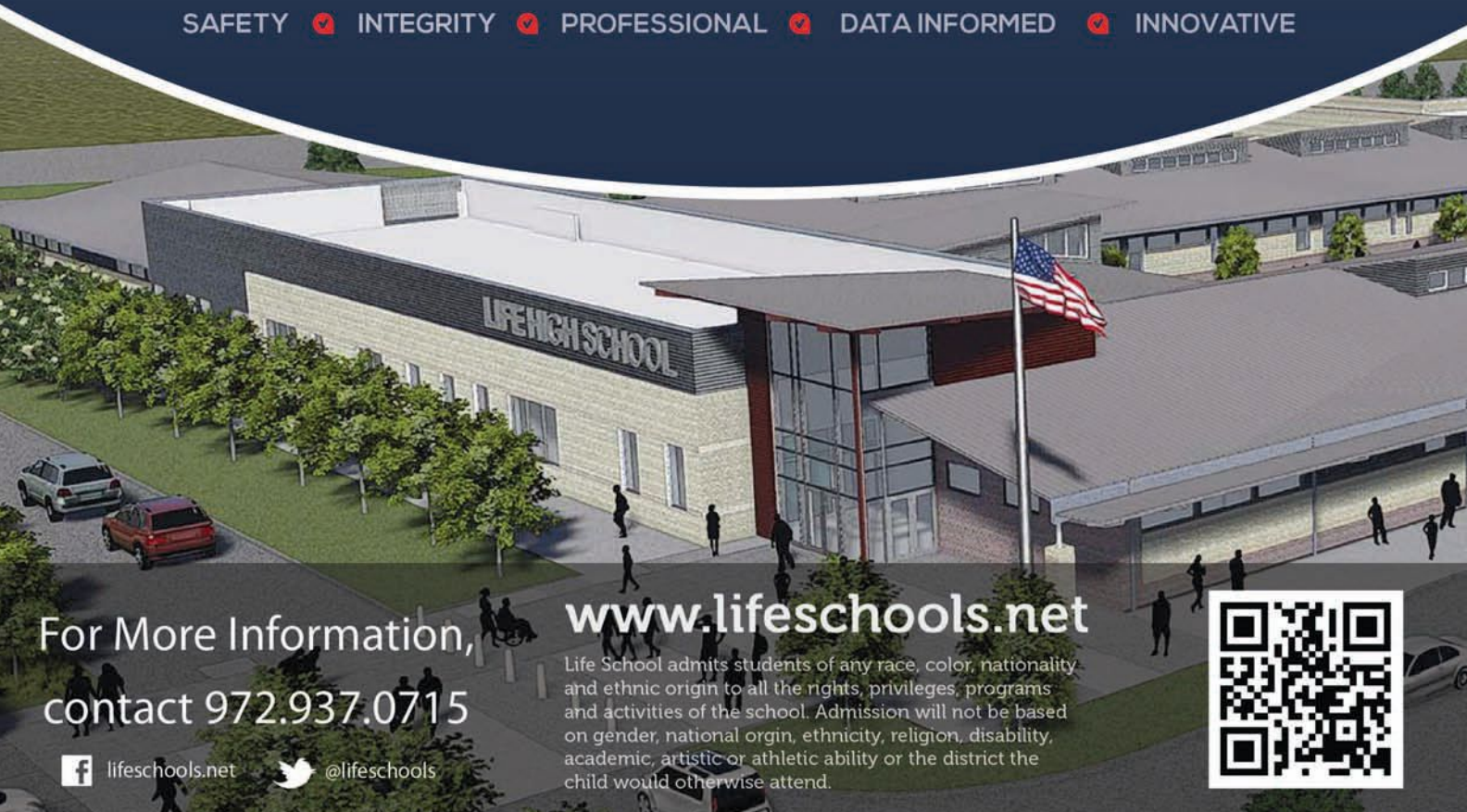
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MODERN FA

— By Sandra Strong

Generations ago, fathers would don their suits and ties, drink a cup of coffee, grab their briefcase, kiss their wives and walk out the door to go to work, or at least that's how life was portrayed on television with shows like Father Knows Best and Leave It to Beaver. This new generation of fathers is breaking the stereotype of what being a dad looks like in today's



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world. If you are a father who wants to hang out with other like-minded dads, then Dallas Dads, founded by David Kepley and co-founder, Jeff Tepper, may very well be the group for you.

Dallas Dads Group is an affiliate of City Dads Group, a dynamic and diverse gathering of fathers dedicated to being active in the lives of their children. “We’re dads who are redefining what it means to be a dad in the 21st century,” David said. “We are definitely a diverse group with

dads of all stripes — stay-at-home dads, dads with flexible schedules, work-from-home dads, freelance dads, working dads and fathers who have a desire to socialize and interact with other guys who also enjoy spending quality time with their children.”

David and Jeff patterned Dallas Dads after a group that originated in New York. They use the name of a large metropolitan area, such as Dallas in this case, but this larger umbrella encompasses all the smaller towns in its surrounding area. The goal is for smaller groups within the umbrella to branch out. “My vision,” David shared, “is to see a group form in Waxahachie that’s a division of Dallas Dads.” And as the Dallas Dads Group continues to grow in number, David’s



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vision may be closer to fruition than even he realizes.

Since its inception on August 27, 2014, this group of dedicated fathers has grown to be 100 members strong, and this number does not include the children who are reaping the benefits of quality time with their male parent. David has been a stay-at-home dad for three years now. "I remember how difficult it was taking my boys, Harrison and Max, to the park," David explained, referring to the fact that most children go to the park with their mothers. "I had a hard time finding a place where my kids could play with other kids, and I could have a conversation with another adult. I didn't want any other dad to feel the way I did — isolated for spending time with my kids. I wanted a place where there were options with and for others like me."

David understood firsthand that there were not enough resources, social groups or services for dads. As he brainstormed and researched, he came across the





New York Dads Group. Not long after, Dallas Dads became a viable website on the Internet where dads could go to find activities for themselves and their children. David and Jeff created an online group that has brought fathers together in person. "This is a destination for active dads. We'll meet several times per month with our kids at parks, playgrounds, museums and parent-and-me classes, as well as in our own living rooms," David said, stating that parks and splash pads are the backbone of the group. "Dallas Dads also organizes parenting workshops and dads nights out to give members the opportunity to socialize, learn and support each other as they navigate through parenthood."

Not all dads have the same schedule, so offering as many activities on the website as possible is important to the continued growth of the group. "More offerings mean more participation," David said. "I encourage dads to throw whatever they are doing out on the site




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to give others the chance to plan outings with their kids." All children deserve to be out in the fresh air and to have friends, so they learn how to act around others who may be different from themselves. "It is definitely a group effort," David added. "Right now, most of the activities for us are at least 45 minutes from home. We are finding guys who live in Waxahachie, Midlothian and DeSoto, so, hopefully that will change."

When a group of dads gather for an event, that meeting is called a "Meetup." "For me, two guys and their kids are considered a Meetup," David admitted. "The largest Meetup to date has been 14 guys with just as many children in tow." When they are out in those numbers, it's common for other parents to approach them about the group. Moms are excited for a place where their husbands can spend quality time with their kids, and dads see guys from all walks of life whose common thread is the desire to be involved with their children.

Most of the outings the Dallas Dads enjoy are free, except for the gas it takes to get to and from the Meetup. Free activities also mean an increase in participation. "I don't want to work against family budgets," David confessed. "I want to enhance the father/child experience, while giving dads choices and places to go." As the group continues to grow, David's long-range goals are to establish free monthly Meetups across the Metroplex and host

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Before he and his wife, Leanne, agreed to make his career change into the world of modern fatherhood, David worked as a flight paramedic for Children's Medical Center. Leanne's job as a flight attendant takes her away from their home a few nights a week, but they are grateful for the opportunity to have a parent in the household, raising their children. David and Leanne, along with many other couples, are breaking the stereotype of what fatherhood and raising a family looks like. "I knew I wanted to be a hands-on dad," David admitted. "Being home with the boys has benefited all of us. Leanne and I work together to make the best life we can for Harrison and Max."

David is thankful to be part of Dallas Dads. This first year has been about building their foundation, but at the end of the day, David and fathers like him are finding comfort in their own skins. "I'm one of many who are working to end a cycle of absent fathers. My co-workers are my fellow dads, and my kids are a demonstration of how I'm doing my job," David said. "I'm proud to be one of the many voices in the modern fatherhood movement." **NOW**

Editor's Note: For more information on Dallas Dads, visit www.DallasDadsGroup.com.

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Historical Opportunity

— By Melissa Swedoski



Traveling far from home is an exciting and exhilarating experience, especially when it's your first time. Making the journey with friends, classmates, teachers and parents is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, at least it was for Dunaway Elementary students last November, as they took a field trip to Austin. The children immersed themselves in Texas history, as well as the adventure of being on the road.

The past school year marked the first time all five fourth-grade teachers at Dunaway were teaching the same grade level. With Maria Galan and Xochitl Vasquez, in bilingual classrooms, and Leon Juarez, Shelby Lehmberg and Amanda Grammer, in the all-English ones, the five found they were the perfect fit. "We are a great team and mesh well," Maria said. "It's like we've been together for years. We just clicked."

When Maria approached the group about taking their students on a field trip to Austin, the team was immediately on board. "My son is an eighth-grader, and the PTO at his school organized a trip to Austin for the kids," Maria explained. "We wanted that for





our kids. Since our students are in a lower socioeconomic demographic, we knew many wouldn't get the opportunity to go." The team talked with Principal Jenni McLemore, who was all for it. "In fact, she came with us," Maria said. "The support we had at every level of the school and district was amazing. The ball really started rolling."

The team created a travel plan in September, deciding to take two charter buses, putting the expense at over \$3,000. The teachers agreed the students would pay some money, but fundraising had to begin. The quintet organized a fourth-grade garage sale in the school parking lot in October, with the principal and Assistant Principal Theresa Burkhalter helping with logistics, and parents bringing food and drinks. They raised over \$700. The PTO let the group take pictures at the Halloween dance, where they earned \$200 from the photo booth, but with November 19 as the travel date, they were far from their goal. "We did a fundraiser with T-shirts, and we also received \$100 from the PTO,





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with parents donating what they could," Maria recalled.

Then, the group received the most unexpected blessing — an anonymous donor contributed half of the needed funds to ensure the students could take the trip. "Suddenly, it was, 'Oh, my gosh! We're going!'" Shelby recalled.

The donor remains unknown, but the teachers know exactly what they would say to him or her if given the chance.



"You changed lives forever, truly," Xochitl said.

"We took our group picture, blew it up, had it signed and framed to give to them," Amanda added. "We want him or her to understand we are greatly appreciative."

Once fundraising was complete, the teachers shared their excitement with the students. "We built it up for over a week,"



Shelby explained. "When we got there, it was like the first time seeing Disneyland."

Maria said all of it was exciting, including being on a charter bus with DVD players. "We built it up like a big experience, and it was. Many have never been out of the area or to Austin," Maria said.

Amanda pointed out that the students really enjoyed "just being together during the time spent on the bus — sitting, sharing and talking. This is a good group of kids." The entire team concurred with the sentiment, as they praised the perfect behavior their students exhibited.

The cafeteria staff had breakfast ready before the bus left at 7:00 a.m., along with sack lunches for those on the lunch program. The 93 students, five teachers, principal, two aides and parents arrived at the Bullock Texas State History Museum at 10:30 a.m. "Everyone was nervous," Maria said. "There was all this excitement, and it was finally here." The students had been studying the Texas



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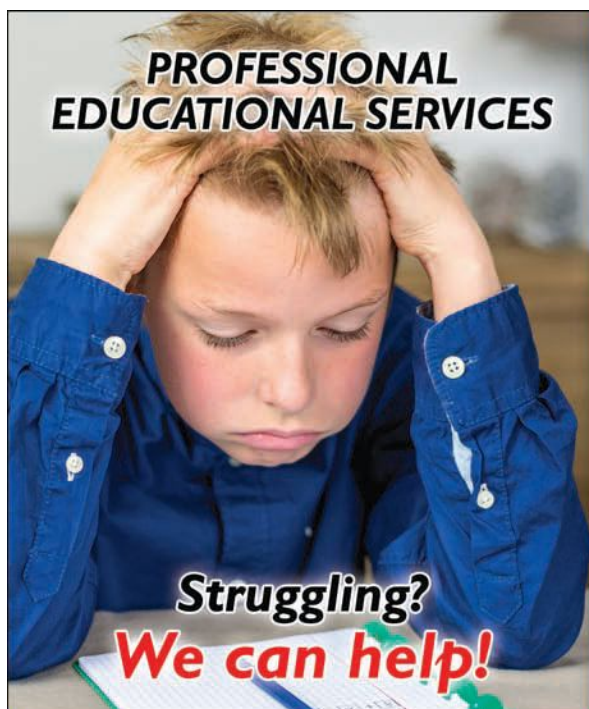
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Revolution, and in the museum, they saw a replica of the Alamo.

"The kids were in awe," Shelby said. "There were weapons to see, the line drawn in the sand. It was like we transported them into history." The students saw the painting of the Battle of San Jacinto and statues of Sam Houston and Stephen F. Austin.

Xochitl said it was obvious the kids had listened to their teachers. "Shelby and Maria are so passionate about it, and the social studies come alive," she said. "They make it real, and they help us make the connections in math and science. There are all kinds of connections to history in other subjects. This trip has tremendous value."

The cross-cultural experience was also significant. "Our kids were born in Mexico or hear about Mexico at home, and with this trip, now they can make a connection," Maria said. "I'm from Spain, and there's also the connection to Spanish explorers in Texas."

That information makes a difference, Amanda noted. "We bring diversity from our personal backgrounds to the kids."

"Texas history is super cool," Xochitl said. "There's drama, action, war and heroes. Everything kids love to talk about."

The group walked to the State Capitol and toured the House and Senate chambers to see where laws are made. The students pushed the voting buttons to light up the board and see the democratic process in action. They visited the Texas Land Office, where



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they learned how settlers purchased a parcel of land. The teachers praised the tour guides for their storytelling skills, but Shelby proudly shared, "The guides said they were impressed with how much knowledge our kids had."

Months later, and even as the campus was preparing for the summer break, the students were still talking about the trip, and the teachers agreed, the fourth-graders were changed by it. "They're more of a family," Leeon said. Students each paid \$10 and brought their sack lunches and dinners. The teachers donated all their Box Top funds for snacks. The parents brought extra drinks and snacks and toted a Dunaway sign. All these things indicated just how much the trip was a group effort.

"The parents were crucial to the process," Xochitl said, acknowledging their support, as well as their willingness to learn.

Amanda said the break from structured class time allowed everyone to enjoy the discovery and adventure of the trip. "We got to see different sides of each other and had more time to make personal connections," she said.

"The kids recognized the effort we all made," Maria added.

"Now, throughout the year, they work so hard for all of us," Xochitl said. "They realize now how much we care about them, and they are giving us their best."

As for the teachers, they are already planning next year's trip. As Leeon said, "Get ready to be transported back in time in Texas history." **NOW**



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Important Dates for Back to School 2015



Kindergarten Roundup

Thursday, August 6

*By appointment only**

(9:00-11:30 a.m., 1:00-4:00 p.m.)

Elementary Campuses: Kindergarten

registration will be available during all regular registration days, but campuses will only offer Kindergarten screenings on August 6.

WISD New Student Registration**

Elementary and Junior High Campuses

August 10-14, 17-21

By appointment only (9:00-11:30 a.m., 1:00-4:00 p.m.)*

Waxahachie Ninth Grade Academy

and Waxahachie High School:

August 10-14, 17-18, 21

By appointment only (9:00-11:30 a.m., 1:00-4:00 p.m.)*

**Walk-ins will be accepted, but students with appointments will receive first priority.*

***Please remember to bring proof of residency (a recent utility bill with your name and address on it) when you come to register your child. If you are not the child's parent, please bring proof of guardianship.*

WISD RETURNING STUDENT REGISTRATION

August 1-16

Online for those registered with Family Access.



OPERATION First Day of School

Saturday, August 8

10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Waxahachie Ninth Grade Academy



High School Schedule Pickup

Waxahachie Ninth Grade Academy:

All Students – Thursday, August 20,
8:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Waxahachie High School:

Seniors: Wednesday, August 19,
8:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Juniors: Wednesday, August 19,
1:30-4:00 p.m.

Sophomores: Thursday, August 20,
8:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Junior High Schedule Pickup

Tuesday, August 11, 2015

6th Grade (and any other students not able to pick up earlier in the day):
5:30-7:30 p.m.

7th Grade: 9:00-11:00 a.m.

8th Grade: 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Finley and Howard Campuses

Global High School Schedule Pickup

Freshmen and new Sophomores – Friday, August 21, 2015, 1:00-5:00 p.m.

Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors – Friday, August 21, 2015, 5:00-6:00 p.m.

Bring Your Supplies Night

Thursday, August 20

6:00-7:00 p.m.

Elementary Campuses



First Day of School for WISD

**August 24, 2015
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— By Carolyn Wills



At Home With *Jo Timberman Adams*

Jo Timberman Adams purchased her first home five years ago. "My Realtor and I probably looked at 23 houses," she smiled. The moment they stepped inside a charming, two-bedroom bungalow, they knew the search was over. "The house was move-in ready and the style, floor plan and colors perfectly matched my furniture," she said.

Jo's home is truly enchanting. It's located in an older neighborhood populated by houses of character and variety, towering trees and the sounds of ever-present birds. Though it was built in 1951, the nearly 1,300-square-foot home appears to have been designed and cared for





by owners who, like Jo, enjoy the sense and beauty of earlier times. "People describe it as cozy," she shared. "That's one of the things I love about it." The warm, inviting interior is balanced by tall ceilings, beautiful pine wood floors, crisp white crown moldings and deep base boards.

Inside the front entry is a relatively large, rectangular living room with soft-brown textured walls. "The treatment is called 'leathering,'" she explained. The unique treatment, provided by a previous owner, is a beautiful background to



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Jo's furnishings. Appearing to have been hand-picked for this house, most of her furniture and accessories either belonged to her as a child, were given to her by family or friends or were found through treasure hunting on Craigslist or at garage sales, consignment stores and antique shops.

In the living room, a practically new sectional sofa, given to Jo by a friend of a friend, is the ideal companion to the sofa she already had. "The area rug came from my sister," she said. "The mahogany cabinet was made by my

grandfather in the 1920s and the armoire, which I believe to be an Ethan Allen, was found in downtown Waxahachie at Soul's Harbor."

The living room is a stunning combination of warmth, comfort and history. "It's my favorite room," she admitted. An oil painting above the fireplace, passed down from her grandparents, is at least 100 years old. "The painting has been in our family for as long as I remember," she explained. The lush green landscape depicts the order and beauty of nature. The painting

alone is beautiful, but Jo's gift for artful design has made it part of the larger picture for, in truth, her home is art.

The majority of the living room begins to the left of the front door, and in that space are two light-colored sofas, a coffee table, the TV armoire, Jo's grandfather's cabinet and her childhood chest once used to hold her toys. The back of a sofa defines the space between the living room and a small foyer, featuring Jo's mother's antique, glass-stacked bookcase, an antique Windsor chair and a wall arrangement of antique painted trays.

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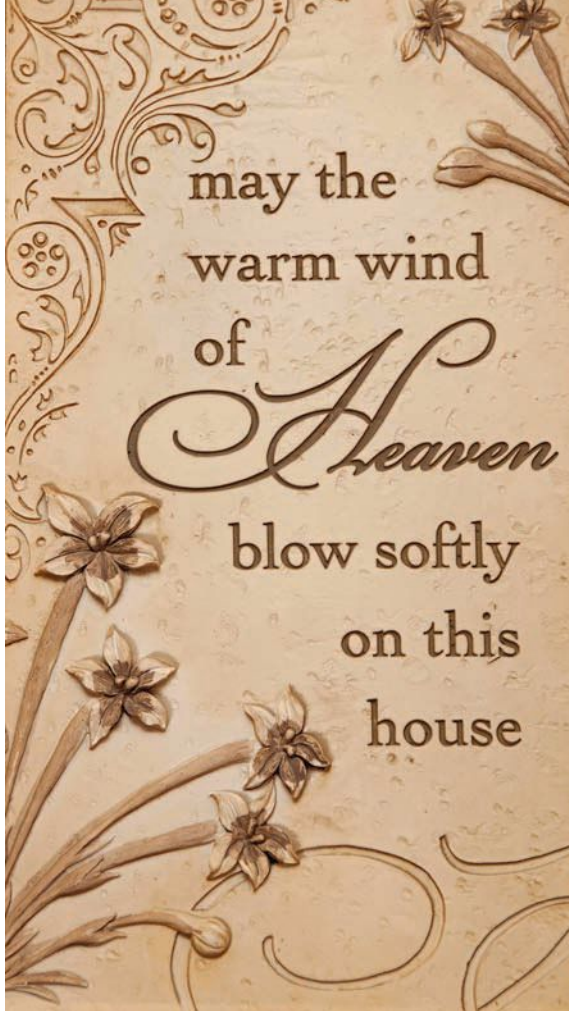
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Beyond the living room is a formal dining room filled with natural light. The walls, again from a previous owner, are a deep burgundy. "I found the dining table through my first experience on Craigslist," Jo remembered. "It has two extensions, and I found the chairs at various garage sales and re-finished them." The table and chairs are elegant, but the room's crowning glory is an antique pie safe. "I'm very sentimental," she said. "The pie safe was mine as a little girl and home to my dolls."

Through the dining room and to the left are two bedrooms separated by a bathroom. The guest room is painted a light olive, and above the antique bed frame is another special art piece. "I was named after my great-great-grandmother Josephine," Jo said. "The painting was done by her with egg yolk and dye." This painting depicts a lovely, small country home surrounded by huge trees. Among Jo's mementoes is a petite framed photo of Josephine as a young woman.

The master bedroom features a magnificent dark-stained, four-poster bed and a unique piece of furniture known as a pants press. "It was in our house as I grew up, and then my mom gave it to me," she explained. "It's actually a chest of drawers and an ironing board. The top lifts to become a pants press."

The kitchen and breakfast nook are at the back of the house, past the dining room. Pine cabinets curving around a corner and a windowed eating nook create a storybook space and the place where Jo enjoys baking and cooking. "Every year for my dad's birthday, I make a coconut cake from scratch," she said. "It takes three hours." While she is a self-taught cook, she believes her love for baking and cooking is also a genetic gift from her grandmother. "She was a home economics teacher and a great cook," she added.





If there is anything Jo could change about her home, it would be a better backyard. "Sadly, I've lost every tree in the backyard," she said. "They were all pecan trees. One had to be removed after falling on my storage shed, and the last one had to go, because it was leaning over my neighbor's yard."

Jo graduated from DeSoto High School. She became a dental assistant 20 years ago and, for the past three years, has been teaching dental assisting. "It was inevitable," she smiled. "We're a family of teachers."

She is the oldest of five children. "My dad and stepmom live not far from me in a big, blue Victorian house. All my sisters, except one, live close, so I enjoy hosting family dinners." Her house is also a favorite destination for her 3-year-old twin nieces. "I have Barbie dolls, complete with cases, from when I was 6 years old, and the twins love to come to Aunt JoJo's to play," she said.

Jo's home is also a Halloween destination. "I was so excited to move in that my first Halloween turned into an annual party," she grinned. She provides food, while neighbors, family and friends bring candy.

It's safe to say that Jo has found a wonderful home. "Waxahachie is a great place to live, and this is a fantastic neighborhood," she enthused. "The mother of one of my friends lives two doors down, and we've also become good friends. Recently, Jo opened her front door to discover a pot of spring flowers on the porch, a surprise gift from the neighbors across the street, and her other neighbor had mowed her yard!"

Among her many art pieces is this prayer: How we spend our days is how we spend our lives. *May the warm wind of heaven blow softly on this house.* Jo spends her days enjoying home, family and friends. **NOW**

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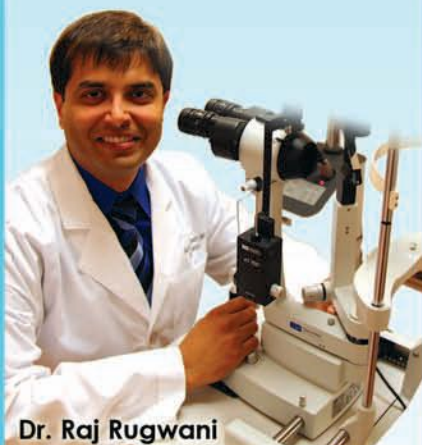
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Katie Ragan and Arelette Cobb offer a valuable service to residents of Navarro and Ellis counties.

Safe Passage

— By Virginia Riddle

Maroon and white buses are a familiar sight on the roadways of Navarro and Ellis counties, so much so that most residents aren't aware of the unassuming but valuable service that Katie Ragan, Arelette Cobb and other employees of Community Transit Services provide. "We couldn't ask for a better job, because we know we help individuals. It's not just a service. It's all about caring and having compassion," Arelette said.

Texans love their trucks and cars, which are needed since most of the state is still rural, necessitating miles of travel between small towns, the farm or ranch and major shopping and medical centers. As they anticipate getting a driver's license, teenagers understand that a license and vehicle represent *freedom*. But what if that freedom is not available anymore? A call to Community Transit Services will be answered by Katie, operations manager, or Arelette, the office manager, and a ride can quickly be scheduled. "There is no income requirement. We serve the general public," Arelette revealed. Their nonprofit service is part of Community Services, Inc., which receives additional funding

**“It’s not just
a service.
It’s all about
caring and
having
compassion.”**



at the state and federal levels and through organizations such as United Way.

Most of the residents served by Community Transit Services are the elderly, disabled (the service is ADA approved) and Navarro College students. As Katie stated, “We are all an accident away from not being able to drive ourselves, at least temporarily.” Children are allowed to ride, with an accompanying adult, age 21-plus. If 7 years of age or younger, the child must be secured in a safety seat. All passengers must be seated and secured with seat belts during rides, and shopping bags must be secured by the passenger. Drivers will load wheelchairs and help riders on the bus steps, but if



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Doris Anderson and driver, Racheal Broughton, board one of the Community Transit Services buses.

passengers need further assistance, they must arrange for a personal care attendant (PCA) to ride with them, but there is no charge for the PCA.

Considering the miles traveled, the fares are made affordable to most customers. A \$10 bus pass allows the customer four stops within hub cities, but they can customize their options. The fare is \$4 without a pass per one-way stop within hub cities and \$5 per stop within a county. For customers wishing to travel between Navarro and Ellis counties, the charge is \$1 per mile. "The majority of our customers use the bus pass for our customized, concierge, curb-to-curb service when they need it," Arelette stated. When calling the service, customers must give accurate times of appointments, addresses and dates. All reservations are based on availability, so customers are encouraged to call a day in advance. Rides between counties must be reserved two weeks in advance. "We can handle some same-day calls, but it's all based on availability," Arelette said. Katie told of an instance where a mom got home and realized there was no food for the children that night. "That's when we will do whatever we can. We are a family here, and that includes our customers."

Common stops in Waxahachie include but are not limited to: Baylor Scott & White Medical Center, Liberty Dialysis, Wal-Mart and H-E-B. Common stops in Midlothian include Wal-Mart and Brookshire's.

Katie has been an employee for 13 years, and Arelette has been with the




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service for seven years. Both ladies personally know the daily distances covered by the fleet of 2006-2016 Chevrolet and Ford cutaway models and their drivers. Since drivers start each day from the Corsicana location, Ellis County routes average 300 miles per day, while Navarro County routes average about half that. Katie and Arelette arrange regular maintenance and repairs with different area vendors. "It's rough when a bus is out of commission. We do oil changes and rotate and align tires every 5,000 miles," Katie explained.

"We have to make sure the vehicles are safe," Arelette agreed. Drivers are responsible for taking care of cleaning bus interiors. "We provide masks, gloves, and Clorox, so they can keep it as germ-free as possible, since we transport people with compromised immune systems," Katie added.

Drivers must have a current Texas CDL license and the special temperament

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required of those who work with the public. "We have to be patient. We see people's good and bad days. Some of our customers are on dialysis. Others are cancer patients. Sometimes we don't know what that person is going through," Katie explained.

Customers are encouraged to be waiting at pick-up sites, since drivers do not wait more than five minutes. However, exceptions are made. "If a driver knows that person's routine, and they aren't answering their phone or door, we check on them or have an apartment manager or someone check. We know when something is happening that's out of character for that customer," Arelette said.

Likewise, regular customers get to know their drivers. "They have their favorites and may request a certain driver," Katie remarked laughingly. Longtime customers who know Katie and Arelette call to check up on them. "One lady just calls to talk. She always tells us, 'I love ya'll,'" Katie said.

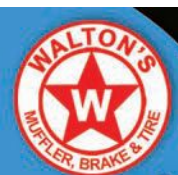
However, there are challenges. Time slots and routes are built daily, and having sick drivers or equipment failure can make the original schedule impossible to keep. Texas weather is especially challenging. "It's very hard to keep the buses clean

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when the weather is bad," Katie said. The drivers run the buses through car washes or outsource the job. If the roads get too bad, the service has to shut down. "That causes us double duty, since we have already scheduled everyone, and then have to call to cancel and reschedule," Katie explained.

Currently, the service runs Monday-Friday from 5:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., which requires drivers going to Midlothian from Corsicana to leave as early as 4:15 a.m., but Community Transit Services is not daunted. Future possible changes include expanding service to Saturdays and transporting veterans to and from the Dallas VA hospital.

Both Katie and Arelette enjoy their jobs so much, they find it hard to leave after clocking out some days. Both ladies are Corsicana natives and graduates of Corsicana High School. They can easily recall why they do this challenging job. "I have been able to meet so many new people," Katie said.

"It's the joy of seeing a 90-year-old lady who's tickled that she can get where she wants to go, and as a driver, I was able to see new places in neighborhoods and rural areas I had never gone to," Arelette revealed. "I can say I have been to Italy and Venus all in one day!" **NOW**

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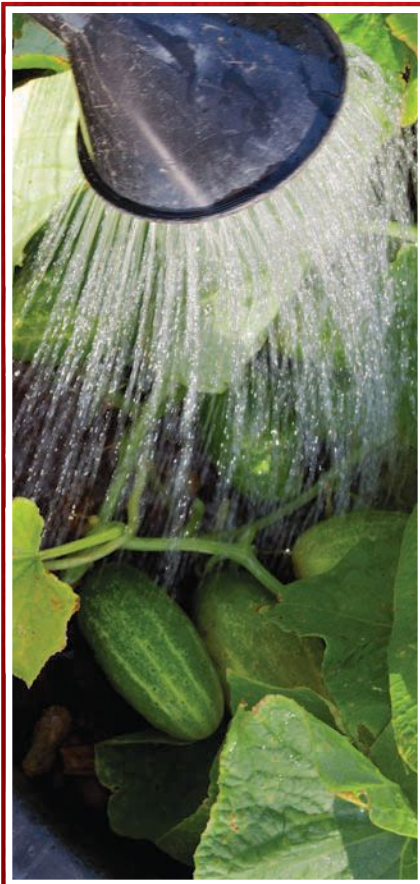
— By Virginia Riddle



By June, vegetable garden rows or containers full of your favorites should be standing at attention in full flower or should be producing the beginning fruits of your springtime labors. But if you are to keep your kitchen stocked with fresh produce, you must master the challenges your thriving young vegetable plants will face during these Texas summer months.

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Some helpful watering hints include:

1. Watering too much or too little is a problem. When soil is dry to the touch, water to a depth of 1-2 inches at least once a week. Remember, leaves can wilt from being too wet or too dry.
2. Use drip or trickle irrigation to avoid waste. Run hoses slowly in furrows so every costly drop soaks in, and use overhead irrigation only as a last resort, since watering in this fashion allows water



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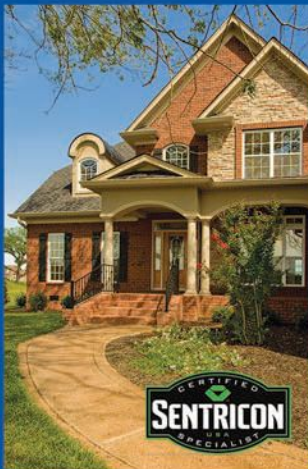
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to evaporate rather than soak in and promotes disease on leaves and rot of fruit. Use wicking or refillable watering bottles available at your garden center for container plants.

3. Water early in the morning or early evening to avoid greater evaporation during the heat of the day.

4. Keep your garden weeded since weeds drink precious and expensive water. Use a Cape Cod weeder, swan hoe and/or collinear hoe for weeding.

5. When plants are at least 4-6 inches tall, add more mulch around the stems. The best types of mulches are organic — bark, compost, pine needles or shredded leaves. However, if you use a black plastic liner, cover it with a thick layer of organic mulch, since it will soak up the summer sun's heat if left bare. Organic mulches lower or moderate soil temperatures.

6. Keep plastic buckets handy and use them to cover your smaller plants before occasional hailstorms occur.

Insects

By including cilantro and mint in your garden plantings, you will attract beneficial insects, which include: bees, lady bugs and green garden spiders. For



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grasshoppers, spider mites and other problem insects that eat what you love, purchase horticultural oils and soaps that are sold at garden centers and use them as directed. If you use heavily based chemical sprays, be sure to scrub your veggies well before eating them!

Animals

Bambi is cute until he consumes your nearly ready-to-eat corn. Deer, raccoons, skunks, wild hogs and/or rabbits can be discouraged by installing small-charge electric fencing that can be turned off and on. Additionally, a live animal trap can be used to capture, relocate and release small animal poachers into a more suitable habitat. Finally, mesh netting can be laid on the ground for about 10-15 feet surrounding the garden. Secure netting with ground staples. Deer and other four-footed hooved animals don't like poor footing. They are less likely to walk on something that might entangle them. Old CDs can be hung to scare away animals and birds.

Beneficial animals include: nonvenomous snakes, toads, frogs and earthworms. Be sure to know your snakes, and always stick your long-handled hoe under or into plants to check for their presence before you risk a snake or spider bite!

Fertilizing and Feeding

Feeding vegetables during this growth spurt season is important, especially if your plants are growing in containers. Choose an organic or nonorganic, soluble complete-and-balanced plant food or high nitrogen fertilizer that is the right complement for your soil, based on its previous test. Your garden center expert or county extension agent can advise you. Follow the package directions for application and frequency. It's best to spray early in the morning, keeping the fertilizer off leaves, and water thoroughly right after feeding to avoid fertilizer burn from the hot sun. Organic compost tea or manure tea can be made by mixing a bushel of either with 20 gallons of water in a plastic

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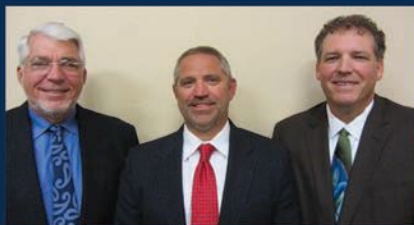
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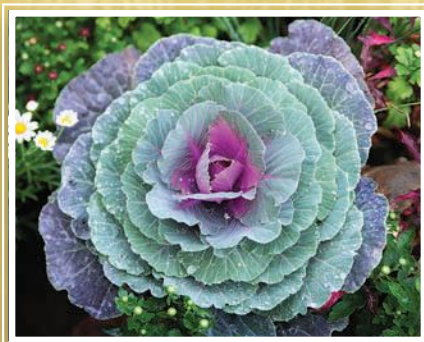
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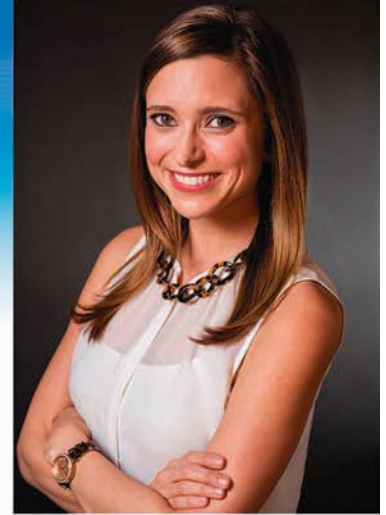
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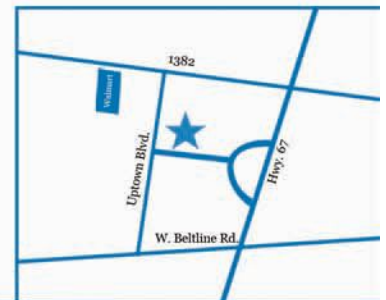


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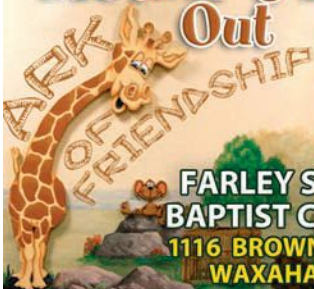


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Tammy Settlemyer, Thea Nichols, Kaley Settlemyer and Mikey Settlemyer stand ready to help customers with all their vacuum cleaner needs.

Keeping It Clean

Saving good people from bad vacuums is what The Vacuum Shop does best.

— By Sandra Strong

The Vacuum Shop has been family-owned and -operated since 1977. Thea Smotts Nichols and her husband, the late Richard Smotts, came to Ellis County in the mid-'70s to sell the Kirby brand vacuum cleaner. "We didn't have jobs at the time," Thea recalled, "and we had six children at home." After selling Kirby vacuums door-to-door for a year, they soon realized a service center was needed in the area for all types of vacuum cleaners. "We opened a service center in our home, in town, next to Video Station," she shared.

After 10 years, they soon realized it was necessary to upsize the business, so they started looking for a convenient location in town. The corner lot on Jefferson was offered to

them, and needless to say, they jumped on the offer. Richard and Thea ran the store, with the help of their daughter, Tammy Settlemyer, and her son, Mikey, until Richard's passing in 2011. Tammy took over as owner and manager in January 2012. "I had been laid off from the bank in 2009," Tammy explained. "I immediately came to work here and learned how to do it all. Mom was glad, because she was ready to retire from full-time work." Thea still helps out during the busy times and on those rare occasions when Tammy is able to take a vacation. "I couldn't do it without her," Tammy admitted. Tammy's daughter, Kaley, also helps out when she can.

Over the years, many changes have taken place in the vacuum cleaner service industry. When the center first opened, you could count the models available on one hand. Today, as an authorized dealer, The Vacuum Shop offers new and used sales, services and supplies on Miele, Dyson, Oreck, Simplicity, Hoover, Rug Doctor, Royal and Dirt Devil. As an authorized dealer of these specific brands, they are able to do any warranty work that's needed. They also service other brands — Kirby, Rainbow, Filter Queen, Panasonic, Bissell, Eureka, Sanitaire and Electrolux. "We can fix almost any cleaner," Tammy stated. "We save good people from bad vacuums."

The company's growth now includes the bagless models. "Bagless is a whole different type of vacuum beast," Tammy admitted. "I go to continued education classes, when needed, but I read a lot of literature online to learn what I need to know." This growth has kept The Vacuum Shop moving successfully into the future. Tammy realized early on that staying in tune with the latest models and technology was going to be a key component to The Vacuum Shop's continued success.

Mikey grew up at the shop. "Thea watched him at the shop when he was young," Tammy explained. "He's been such a big help. He carries the vacuums in and out for customers, and he's graduated to sales staff. He can do just about anything." Customers look for Mikey and his smile when they come to the shop, because his customer service skills are second to none.

Tammy admits there's no real downtime at the business. She thoroughly enjoys what she does and looks forward to seeing her customers, many of whom are second and third generation. "We have a wonderful relationship with our customers," she said. "They return because they know we care. We treat them the same way we want to be treated — with care and respect. Our customers become our friends and extended family." **NOW**



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Kinsley Gutierrez enjoys her turkey leg at Scarborough Renaissance Festival with her dad and sister.



Ron Stewart, with Marriott International, addresses the crowd during the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Fairfield Inn & Suites.



Jackie Mims and Linda Crim serve as election clerks during early voting for the WISD bond election.



A ribbon cutting is held for Baylor Scott & White Cancer Center.



A ribbon cutting is held for Ellis County Orthopaedics in their new location.



Georgi Horn celebrates her 10th birthday with friends at Pole Position Raceway in Frisco.



Boyce Feed Store employee Kari Mulkey lets a young Farmers Market shopper pet one of the baby ducks.



Elisabeth Grimes, age 5, enjoys a small container of mac and cheese.



Darlene and Jennifer man the SPCA table during the Lifestyle Expo.



Lyndie Medford shows off several of the rustically unique offerings at The Rust Shack, a specialty shop she co-owns with her husband, Mike Medford.



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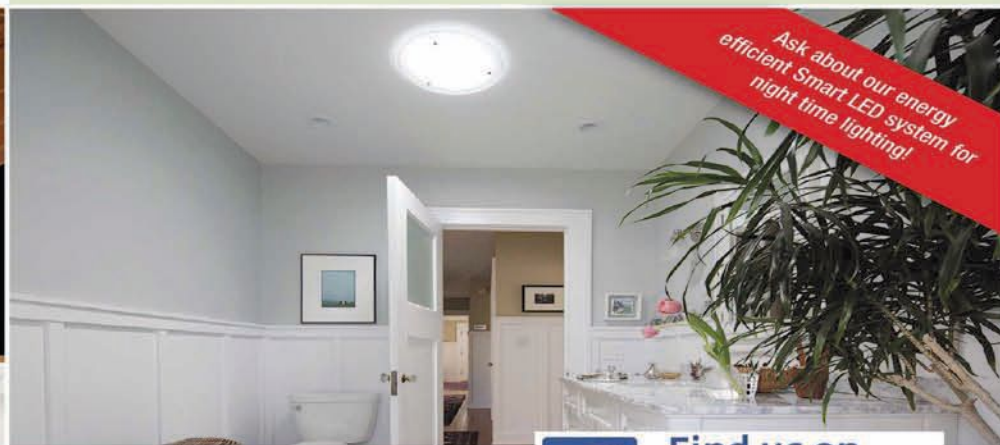
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Start Saving Early – Put Time to Work in Your Retirement Corner

Here's a valuable tip parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts can convey to a young college graduate who has just landed an exciting new job: first, express your congratulations, then whisper "save early for retirement." Now, this is unlikely to fit into any young person's definition of "exciting," but years from now, when it is time to enter a comfortable retirement, you'll occupy an honored position in his or her mind.

That is simply because it makes supremely good sense to start saving for retirement during the early years. How much sense?

Consider the case of a 25-year-old who puts \$5,000 into a tax-sheltered IRA or 401(k) every year for 10 years (\$50,000), then stops. Left untouched, and assuming a 10-percent annual return, this portfolio will grow to \$1.755 million by the time he or she reaches 65.

Later – Good, but Not Better

Now imagine someone at 35 who saves \$5,000 a year for 30 years (\$150,000). At the same rate of return, he or she will have \$904,717 at 65. Good, but only 53 percent of the total for the saver who started at 25. What's at work in favor of the early contributor is compound interest.

The real trick here is to interest young wage earners in retirement savings. Try hitting these themes:

1. Establish a savings habit before getting married, acquiring a mortgage, having a family and supporting a gas-guzzling sports utility vehicle.
2. Save in a 401(k) or individual retirement account to take advantage of the tax shelter. Consider the Roth versions

– you'll receive no tax benefit now, but you'll pay no taxes when you withdraw the funds.

3. Start small if need be. Of course, pay off your student loans and other lingering debt, but when those expenses decrease, add that freed money to your retirement savings.

4. Set up an automatic payroll deduction, savings or transfer plan if possible. It's far easier to save money you've never seen.

To be sure, retirement may seem as remote as the moon to someone in their early- to mid-20s who has just landed a dream job. And perhaps saving \$416.66 every month (to reach the \$5,000 example quoted above) isn't possible. What's important is to start saving early, to contribute regularly to a tax-sheltered investment and to take the long-range view that every step you take influences the structure of the rest of your life. If you'd like to discuss more pivotal points to make to that younger relative, contact your financial advisor. **NOW**

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The hypothetical examples illustrate the advantages of tax deferral and are not indicative of any security's performance. Expenses have not been included in the examples. They will affect performance. Any withdrawals may be subject to income taxes and prior to age 59 1/2 a 10-percent federal penalty tax may also apply.

Jonathan Pope is a Raymond James Financial Advisor based in Duncanville.

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Waxahachie Gingerbread Classic Golf Tournament: Waxahachie Country Club.

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June 6, 7

Gingerbread Trail Historic Home Tour: 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Tickets: adults, \$20. Tickets are available at 201 S. College St. (972) 937-0681.

Gingerbread Trail Arts & Crafts Show and Antique Market: Getzender Park. Admission and parking is free. Call (972) 937-0681 for more details.

June 10

A Visit From the Dallas Zoo: 10:00-11:00 a.m.,

Sims Library. The Dallas Zoo will bring the zoo to the front lawn of the library.

June 12

Summer Moonlight Movies: *Big Hero 6*: 9:00 p.m., downtown Waxahachie. Admission is free. Don't forget to bring your lawn chairs and/or blankets. Concession stand is available onsite. For more information, call (469) 309-4111.

June 12 — 14

Waxahachie Community Theatre presents *G.I. Jukebox*: First United Methodist Church, 800 S. 9th St., Midlothian. Tickets are \$25 per person. Prepaid reservations are required by **June 10**. Seating is limited. For performance times and further information, call (972) 646-1050 or email wct.texas@gmail.com.

June 20

The Longest Day: Alzheimer's Information Event: 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Sims Library. **10:30**, Alzheimer's and Legal Matters; **11:45**, Understanding the Disease; **1:00**, Capturing Memories Before They Fade Away; **3:00**, Taking Care of the Caregiver. For more information, contact Holly Browning at (972) 937-2671 or at adult@simlib.org.

June 22 — 25

Vacation Bible School: 9:00 a.m.-noon, First Baptist Church of Waxahachie, 315 N. Rogers St. For more information, visit www.fbcwax.org.

June 27

Waxahachie Cow Creek Country Classic Bike Ride: sponsored by the Waxahachie Rotary Club. For more information, visit www.cowcreekcountryclassic.org.

July 3

Crape Myrtle Festival Concert and Fireworks: gates open at 5:00 p.m., Waxahachie Sports Complex. Free to the public.

July 4

Patriotic Parade: 10:00 a.m., down Main Street lined with crape myrtles in full bloom. Free hotdogs, provided by Remedy Church, will be served following the parade in Getzender Park.

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



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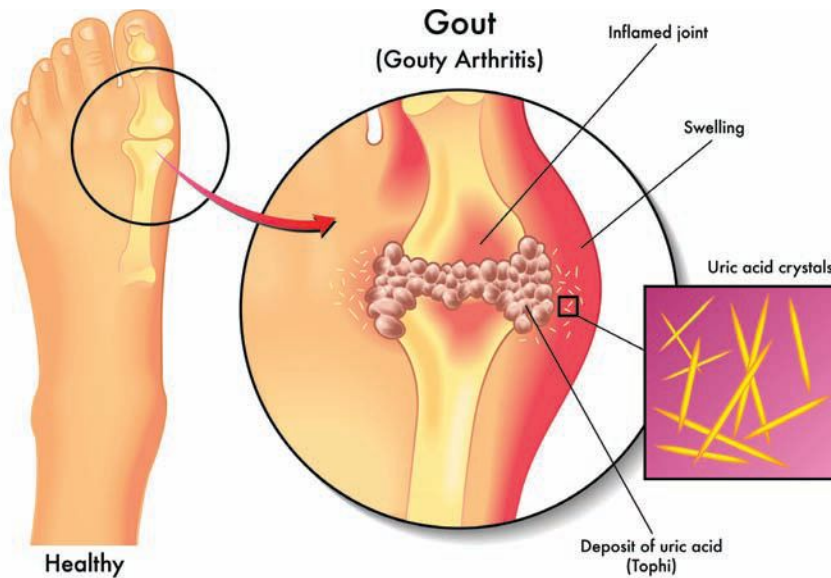
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Painful Crystals

— By Betty Tryon, BSN

Your big toe feels as if it is spouting red-hot flames. Red and swollen, it seems to be holding on to the cauldron of fire. You may have gout. A veteran at a VA hospital said this about gout, “I’ve been shot, beat up, stabbed and thrown out of a helicopter, but none of that compared to the gout.”¹ The good news is it’s very treatable and even possible to lessen the risk of a recurrence of an outbreak, or at least to minimize the flare-ups.

Gout is the buildup of too much uric acid in the body, which causes it to solidify in joints. Uric acid deposits are crystals in a needle like formation, and they are very painful. Many times the big toe is the initial point of attack of the uric acid, but other joints can be affected, in addition to or even without involvement of the big toe. Feet, heels, ankles, knees, fingers, wrists and elbows are some, not all, of the joints that can be targeted. All of the joints affected are subject to swelling, inflammation and pain.

You can be predisposed to develop gout by some things you do and by who you are. Eating red meat, particularly large quantities of organ meats, such as liver, heart and kidneys, can raise the level of uric acid. Some seafood, such as anchovies, sardines and herring, can also raise the level of uric acid. Another consumption that can predispose one to gout is alcohol. Drinking more than two beers a day can raise your uric acid level. Men

are more likely to develop gout than women. However, after menopause, a woman’s risk increases. Obesity poses a greater risk, because a greater amount of uric acid is produced, and people who are very overweight have the added burden of it developing at an earlier age. If you have a family history of gout, the chances are greater for you.

Treating gout is something your physician will discuss with you in order to prepare a plan that addresses your specific needs. Some of the medications used are nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs). Some of these, such as Aleve and Advil, may be conveniently purchased over the counter. Stronger ones are available by prescription. Colchicine is sometimes prescribed to help with the pain. Corticosteroids may be prescribed to help with the pain and inflammation.

If you experience any of the symptoms of gout, seek the care of a physician with the first flare-up. Ignoring it can lead to joint damage. There is help out there to lessen the symptoms and the recurrence of this condition. **NOW**

Source:

1. <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/144827.php>

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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In the Kitchen With Kim Bauman

— By Sandra Strong

Kim Bauman and her students at Pettigrew Academy love to cook. They prepare different cultural dishes to go along with what they are studying in Spanish, geography, math and/or reading. “Measurements incorporate math, while following recipe directions will help students understand what they are reading,” Kim explained. “Cooking as a class teaches the students how to work as a team.”

The cooking class is also learning how to make “healthy” snacks for better nutrition. Haley, a seventh-grade student at Pettigrew, believes that any recipe can be converted into a healthy dish by changing some of the ingredients. Haley’s favorite is Black Bean Brownies. “Many skills and much fun can be had in the kitchen cooking with children,” Kim said. “We are learning so much!” **NOW**

Mexican Wedding Cookies

1/2 cup butter, softened
1 1/2 cups powdered sugar
 (divided use)
1 cup flour
1 tsp. vanilla
1/2 cup pecans, finely chopped

1. Preheat oven to 300 F. Using an electric mixer, combine the butter and 1 cup powdered sugar, beating at medium speed until smooth and fluffy.
2. Sift the flour; blend into butter mixture, mixing thoroughly. Stir in vanilla.
3. Form dough into 1-inch balls. Place on an ungreased cookie sheet. Use two fingers to flatten slightly.
4. Bake for 25-30 minutes, or until firm and light golden in color. Cool slightly on a rack. Sift remaining 1/2 cup powdered sugar. Roll cookies in powdered sugar and pecans while they are still warm.

Black Bean Brownies

1 tsp. butter
3/4 cup black beans, cooked
1/2 cup vegetable or olive oil
2 eggs
1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
2/3 cup sugar
1 tsp. instant coffee or espresso
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1/2 cup mini chocolate chips
 (divided use)
1/3 cup flour
1/2 tsp. baking powder
1/2 tsp. salt
1/4 cup confectioner’s sugar, for dusting

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Using butter, grease a 9x9-inch square baking pan.
2. In a blender, puree the beans with the oil. Add eggs, cocoa, sugar, coffee and vanilla. Melt half the chocolate chips and add to the mixture in the blender.

3. Blend on medium-high until smooth. In a small bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder and salt. Add to the blender and pulse just until incorporated. Stir in remaining chocolate chips.

4. Pour into the prepared pan. Bake until the surface looks somewhat matte around the edges and still a bit shiny in the middle, about 20 minutes.

5. Let cool at least 15 minutes before cutting and removing from the pan. Dust with confectioner’s sugar and serve.

Fancy Fruit Bowls

Each piece of fruit in the bowl list makes 1 bowl. Use fillings and toppings of your choice.

Bowls: apple, kiwi, pear, plum

Fillings: honey, ground nutmeg, yogurt, grated cheese, peanut butter

Toppings: choice of blueberries, strawberries, raspberries

1. To make bowl: Using a small melon baller or spoon, scoop out some of the fruit from the apples, kiwis, pears and/or plums to allow for the filling and topping.

2. Add your choice of filling to the fruit. You may choose to stir honey and nutmeg into the yogurt, according to your taste. Suggested mixtures: apple with peanut butter, kiwi with yogurt and pears with grated cheese.

3. Garnish with your choice of berries.

Pear Butter

6 cups pears, cored
8 Tbsp. butter, melted
1-2 cups sugar, to taste (depends on sweetness of pears used)
1 Tbsp. cinnamon
1 cup water
1 tsp. nutmeg (optional)
4 6-pt. canning jars

1. Cook down pears; mash with a fork. Combine with all other ingredients in a saucepan over medium heat. Bring to just a boil, stirring constantly.
2. Ladle mixture into scalded jars. Keep in refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

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

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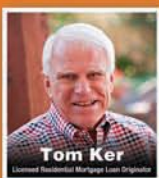
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