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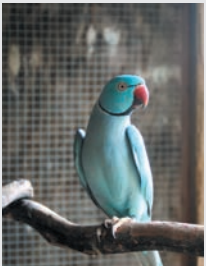
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Editor's Note

Dear neighbors,

One of the concepts for *Red Oak NOW* is to reach out to all corners of our readership area which includes Glenn Heights, Ovilla, Oak Leaf and Pecan Hill. Since all of us together make up a beautiful region, I hope this issue encourages you to experience all of the striking scenery and exciting people our family of cities has to offer.

So, check out this issue's ArtsNOW section where you can spend some time getting inspired by local artist and avid gardener, Kathryn Bradley. Or if sports is more your style, read about how local children are getting involved in the sport of golf in SportsNOW.

If adventure is what you need, then in the words of the Paghi family, who are featured in our At Home section, "Hang on, you're in for the ride of your life!"

Special thanks to Leanne Brindle for recommending me for this great opportunity. I hope to serve you well.

Diana Merrill Claussen

Red Oak Editor


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Taking a Page From the History Books

— By Alex Allred

The Red Oak Parks and Recreation Department is listening, and director Mike Hopping is bringing back the possum – the Possum Trot Trails, that is. In a rapidly growing community such as Red Oak, it is not always easy for local government to respond to the demands of its citizens. When a survey was conducted among residents, one thing was very clear. The people wanted walking trails, so Mike and City Manager Ken Pfeifer were more than happy to oblige. “We did a survey to research what was wanted,” Mike said. “Walking trails were number one; so that’s our goal.”

Unbeknownst to most local residents, the town has a wonderfully rich history in walking. When Red Oak was settled in 1844 by James E. Patton and his family, the area was initially called Possum Trot due to the large possum population living there. Forty years later when the Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad (also known as the Katy Railroad) reached Red Oak, the tracks were set a mile from the center of town. Why? Because the townspeople did not want their sleepy, thriving town turned into a loud, bustling

train station. For them, walking or riding to a train station a little out of the way was far more agreeable. As the results of the survey came in, the Parks and Recreation Department was more than ready to let history repeat itself.

Mike can remember riding his bicycle everywhere as a child. If you did not have a bike, you walked. Today, safety is a serious issue. Busy streets and unmarked paths create a dangerous situation for everyone, and walking has become virtually obsolete. “We want to get people out, have people enjoy our parks and walk,” Mike said.

His description of Red Oak, “a country, little city,” was filled with warmth as he described how he came to the town. Originally from Littlefield, Texas, Mike moved his family here two years ago from Harker Heights, Texas, when he learned of an opening for the position of parks and recreation director. The Texas Tech graduate became intrigued with the idea of a career in building and maintaining parks and recreation programs after talking to professors about the parks and recreation profession while in college.

A man who once thought he would like to be a physical education teacher very much liked the idea of “making a city a better place to live and creating a better way of life for its citizens.” With that in mind, Red Oak was a natural fit. “It’s got that great country feeling, but it’s close in proximity to

anything you would want to do – shopping, movies, Six Flags,” he said, “are all close by.”

For the Pfeifer family, Red Oak had the same appeal. Part of the metroplex with excellent schools, this was the town where they wanted to rear their son. “I’ve always liked the flavor of the small community,” said Ken, who grew up in a small town in Kansas. “My wife and I saw the possibilities in Red Oak and fell in love with it.”

Like Mike, Ken is invested in the idea of using the Parks and Recreation Department to build a stronger community. “The whole emphasis for us,” Ken said, “is the quality of life for our residents. It’s about health and family. We’re very happy we can provide those trails and work in conjunction with the Parks and Recreation.”

While the master plan is to have all kinds of trails for residents to enjoy, the Parks and Recreation Department is currently working on just two trails. It is their intention to develop several more in the years to come, including the exciting project of equestrian trails.

Trails around Old Town Park and the Municipal Center have been slated for determined exercisers and for those who require wheelchair-friendly paths. Once completed, the Parks and Recreation Department hopes to create additional trails throughout Red Oak, making this a town any exercise enthusiast would love.



The task is not an easy one. It is the goal of the Parks and Recreation Department to connect trails through and around Red Oak Creek, Cherry Creek and Red Oak Road. "Getting under I-35," Mike said, "is going to be one of our biggest challenges."

"The department has done an excellent job," Ken said, "using trees, creeks and terrain making walking a pleasurable and welcoming activity for everyone."

With future plans of construction to Red Oak Road, it will be both widened and extended from Live Oak to Highway 342. Mike said people would be able to walk from City Hall to Highway 342.

"The ongoing concept," Ken explained, "is to link the west side to the east side of the city so that pedestrians could travel from City Hall to the historic downtown area."

Truly, the city of Red Oak is committed to the overall health of its citizens, and the city's efforts to

promote good health do not end with walking trails. The department has set an additional goal of creating recreational wellness classes for the community such as Mommy & Me classes, first aid and entry-level

"We're here to build our community of tomorrow."

activities for art and dance, to name a few. Even more exciting than this is Mike's interest in the program called Safe Routes to School. "We're working with TxDOT," Mike said, "to provide sidewalks to schools."

Today, Red Oak is applying for the grant that would allow for the construction of these sidewalks in the city limits. While Mike pointed out Red Oak is competing with multiple cities throughout Texas for this grant, it would coincide perfectly with his walking trails.

Just look at elementary and middle schools today. Two decades ago, most schools had bicycle racks filled with

bikes of every shape, size and color. Today, it is unusual to see more than two bicycles at one time. Simply put, riding a bike to school is not as easy as it used to be. Streets are more dangerous and congested. Families are more

pressed for time and the idea of walking or riding anywhere has eroded away.

It used to be that children thought nothing of riding five or six miles on a bike, but according to the Department of Transportation, less than 30 percent of today's children are willing to ride or walk even less than a mile to school.

For Red Oak, this is an exciting time. The historic Possum Trot Trails are well on their way to reality, and thanks to the ingenuity of some strong community leaders and the voice of the people, the health and welfare of future generations looks promising. When Mike repeated the Park and Recreation's creed, "We're here to build our community of tomorrow," he was not just giving lip service. **NOW**



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Living Well *Means* Laughing Often

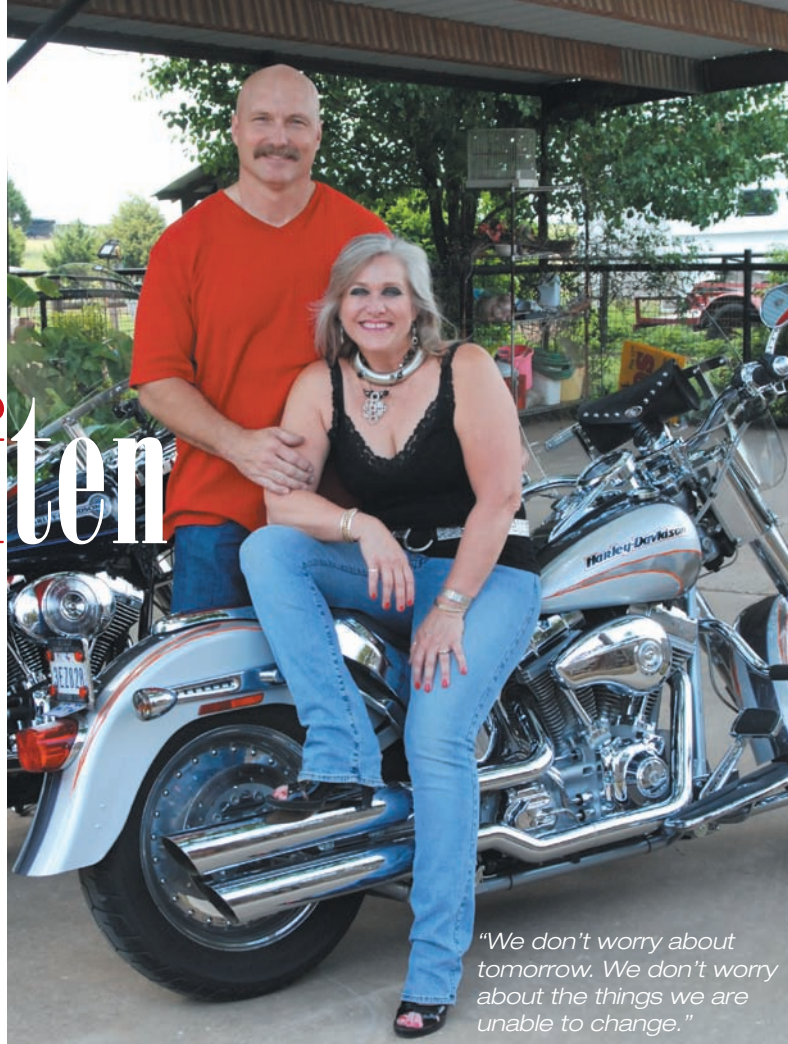
— By Sandra McIntosh

A trip to Mark and Nanette Paghi's home on Bells Chapel Road will surely put a smile on your face and a spring in your step, while adding wonderfully, humorous stories to your repertoire.

The laughter is a sure guarantee from the moment Nanette introduces herself at the door, until Mark makes his entrance after a long day at the office.

When Mark and Nanette first met, she was driving a Corvette. Soon after they were married some 17 years ago, she realized she needed to change a few things. "When buying this home in the country, I knew I no longer needed a Corvette, so I sold it," she said. "I put a down payment on a John Deere tractor, bought the horse I still have today and paid the IRS some money."

The home, when purchased, was well-established in the neighborhood. It was as if the previous owners had broken it in for them. This being a second marriage for Mark and



"We don't worry about tomorrow. We don't worry about the things we are unable to change."

Nanette, they moved in as a couple, but it was not long before Mark's two children, then 5 and 7, moved in with them. "I had to adjust to life with kids," Nanette remembered. "Now, with son, Mark, in the Navy and Jennifer away at college, I'm learning to adjust to what everyone calls the 'empty nest.' Both adjustments were part of the life I've loved living."

The Paghi's property spans 12.64 acres. The three-bedroom, two-bath home rests on four acres, and the remainder of the property is directly across the street. To hear them talk, they have the very best of both worlds.

Everyone who enters the modest home enters through the kitchen. Very rarely does anyone frequent the front door. The home is quaint, cozy and very comfortable. Its "lived-in" feel is warm and inviting.

The living room is where the couple spends most of their indoor time. In this room you will find Sam, a Yellow-napped Amazon parrot, who became part of the family by accident. Nanette and her mother were shopping when they came upon Sam at a bird show. Sam was, and still is, a bold, brazen fellow. "He flirted with me three times in a row," Nanette laughingly



At Home With
Mark and Nanette Paghi



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remembered. "My mom told me to buy the bird, so I did."

On this day, all Sam would do was hang upside down in his cage and make "bird eyes" at Nanette as she bragged about his fabulous vocabulary. "He even sings along to opera music," Nanette said, as she turned the volume on the CD player up. "He's

very much my bird. He talks like me and laughs like me. Sam is my baby."

Other notable items inside the home include the intricately carved fireplace mantle in the living area, a pair of unique iron headboards, the antique table in the kitchen, the sunken tub in the master bath with its priceless view of the back pasture, a hallway filled to overflowing with family photographs and collections of martini glasses and hearts. New projects happen in the house at least once a year. "Mark takes an annual skiing trip with his buddies," Nanette said. "I replaced all the wallpaper in the kitchen, dining room, master bedroom and master bath with beautifully textured walls on his last trip."

Both Mark and Nanette consider themselves to be workaholics, so spending a lot of time indoors is not an option for them. "We love the outdoors," Nanette said. "In fact, we argue over who's going to mow the lawn or work in the flower beds."

"While most couples have his and her towels in the master bathroom, Nanette and I have his and her mowers, weed eaters, chainsaws, dirt bikes, power tools and Harley Davidson motorcycles," Mark added.

An existing barn was in place when the Paghi's made their purchase. Not long after settling in, Mark built onto the rear of the barn. "It became the 'man's room,'" Nanette said. "I knew I needed a man just like my father — capable of doing anything. Mark can weld and do whatever, just like my dad. It's what makes me proud."

It is quite common for Mark to be in his shop welding something or working out on the couple's complete home gym, while Nanette busies herself in the far end of the barn. With three horses, four llamas, a miniature donkey, several goats and close to 50 exotic birds in her outdoor aviary, the barn and the area around it has become Nanette's second home. When asked if Mark loves animals, too, Nanette

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simply stated, "No, but he loves me!"

What quickly became the couple's pride and joy is their private getaway located across the street. "The guest house is secluded, private and inviting," Nanette said, as she pulled the Polaris Ranger to a stop at the cabin's front door. "We spend time here when we just want to feel like we're on vacation, and since we love to entertain, it's also become the perfect location for that as well."

Since Mark and Nanette both love to build, remodel and repair things, the 900-square-foot guesthouse getaway was a great project in more ways than one. The first thing they did was to lift the structure and pour a new foundation. "The floor was bricks laid on dirt," Mark remembered. "We totally redid it from the ground up



while leaving a lot of the barn lumber that was original to the cabin in place." The guest house would not feel like home to Nanette without a few more feathered friends. A trio of peacocks in a cage are found a few hundred feet from the cabin's front porch.

Mark and Nanette are living life to the fullest. They believe that laughter and fun really are life's best medicines. Be prepared when you visit for what Mark and Nanette call the "Paghi initiation ride."

"Hold on," Nanette said, as she pressed her high-heeled foot down on the gas pedal of the Polaris before driving off into a deep ravine, "because you're in for the ride of a lifetime!" The screams and squeals of delight were proof that Nanette definitely knew what she was talking about as she drove her guests along just a small portion of the 730 feet of creek frontage.



Each morning Mark and Nanette read words on a plaque they have come to live by. "Dance as if no one were watching. Sing as if no one were listening. Live every day as if it were your last." Mark smiled in agreement as Nanette said, "We don't worry about tomorrow. We don't worry about the things we are unable to change. We just live well, laugh often and never forget to kiss one another goodnight." **NOW**



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Using Her Talents To Inspire Others

— By Diana Merrill Claussen

Being a mother and wife are priorities to Kathryn Bradley. Anyone who knows her would describe her as not only being delightful, but a talented person as well. Kathryn's talents range from gardening to the arts; and they are not only vast, but quite impressive. In her spare time, she loves to tend her wildflower gardens, teach Christian Yoga and work on her art. To Kathryn, her art has always been a constant activity in her life.

"I can remember drawing since I was a little kid. I remember I'd draw on my bedroom floor," she said.

Kathryn went to an arts magnet school and later, when she was in college at the University of Dallas, she went on a trip to Rome. She credits that trip as the catalyst that helped her decide to pursue a degree in art. "Right after that trip, I decided that I wanted to study art because it was something that I was really interested in," she said.

Now with two degrees in fine arts, this Red Oak mother of two said she still enjoys creating art. She also said that her family members are also pretty creative, too. "Both of the kids like art and creating things," Kathryn said. "My daughter likes to draw and my son likes to build things. The other day, my son made a



"My goal is to come up with a body of work so that I can start trying to exhibit again."

woven basket out of daisy stems, and it looked like a little bird's nest," she said proudly.

Recently, Kathryn has been teaching art classes for her homeschool co-op. She likes the opportunity to work with

the children, using her artistic talents in the process. "Our co-op meets on Thursdays, and I teach the kids' drawing

class," Kathryn said. "It is good that the kids take classes from other parents, because it gives them an opportunity to learn other subjects."

Having a wide selection of knowledge in education is just as important as having a broad understanding of the different



mediums of art. Kathryn creates a wide array of art and her forms are vast. "I have worked in wood, bronze casting, resins, carved stone and combined mixed-media," she said. "Lately though, I've mostly been doing graphite drawings."



Many of Kathryn's drawings and sculptures can be seen throughout her home. Some of the pieces she displays range from hand-sculpted bronze figurines, to wood-carved vessels that she has created. Her original creations revolve around the human form, while her newer works represent recent trips and experiences.

Across from one of her faux masterpieces sits a beautiful limestone sculpture with smooth lines in a silhouette form that she hand carved. This piece was one of the first works she created in graduate school.

"I think the human form is so fascinating," Kathryn said. "Sometimes, I will incorporate photos with still life or use a figurative element such as a person or their hands or feet within the art work. Lately though, I've been incorporating recent photos of where I've been into my art pieces. I'm finding that using an element of architecture, landscape and the human form in my work helps me to create a multi-layered image," she said.

Through these images, Kathryn is hoping to capture the feeling of a particular moment in time and communicate that to the viewer. Capturing such moments, however, are not her only talents. Some of her other



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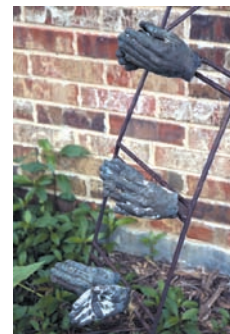
While her home showcases her work, her eye for art extends outside to her beautiful wildflower gardens. "There is a piece I made that is currently in the garden. I named the piece *Dwellings*, and it's a cast-bronze sculpture of various pairs of hands that are welded onto a metal, trellis ladder," she said. "My friends call it the *Praying Hands* piece."

To many, the *Dwellings* piece is inspirational, but to Kathryn, her inspiration is a divine gift.

"There are things God gives you as talents, and they have inspired me to start drawing again within the last few years," she said.

Kathryn is certain she will not only continue to create art, but is hoping to achieve some of her newly rekindled goals. "I've decided that I'll be spending more time with art, and we'll see where it leads me," she said. "My goal is to come up with a body of work so that I can start trying to exhibit again."

Kathryn hopes that our city will one day provide more opportunities for artists to exhibit their work. "It would be nice if there were exhibition spaces or art venues," she said. "I'd like to see an art association here, so that artists could work together to display their work more. I think that the people who live here would enjoy seeing art by local artists and it would be positive for the community."



Owner, Jason English with client, Competitive Bodybuilder, Craig Huffman

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Red Oak nurses, top left, enjoy lunch in celebration of ROIDS Nurses Day. Red Oak Fire Rescue, top right, recently attended a swift water rescue training event. Eastridge Elementary PTA, middle left, received a donation check for \$835 from Bossier Chrysler/Dodge of Waxahachie. Barnum & Bailey Circus clowns, middle right, were on hand at the Red Oak Library. The Red Oak Sox, 11u ROBSA Division, remain undefeated. Most of the team, bottom left, have played together for over three years. Renee Chase of Edward Jones takes a moment to pose at her new office.

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Fun for the Whole Family

— By Diana Merrill Claussen

Summer is the season for families to spend as much free and fun time together as possible. During this free time, however, many parents find themselves wondering what they can do together that all family members will enjoy.

There is finally a solution to this often quizzical dilemma, and that solution is to find a hobby or even a sport in which everyone can participate. One sport that caters to people of different ages and skill levels is golf. Why golf? Well, for starters, there are many golfing facilities located in our general area that offer a variety of family friendly services. Some of them have top-notch driving ranges, while others have the facilities on which to play a full round.

The biggest priority for ensuring the whole family enjoys their special time together would be to find a place catering to everyone, including children of all ages. Longtime local golfer Susan Hargrave explained how she got involved in golf and why the sport is so positive for children and families. "I played golf



"Certified Instructor Levy Adger and local golf range owner, Susan Hargrave help teach kids life skills through the sport of golf."



in college and always wanted to be part of a golf facility for kids," Susan said. "Golf is a good sport because it is an organized activity that provides a structured program which keeps the kids interested and disciplined. Every kid can't play basketball or football, but golf is something anyone can play. It's also an activity that the family can enjoy playing together."

A good family golfing facility is one that is well-rounded and focuses on creating both a family-friendly and kid-friendly environment. It is also a nice touch if the facility has highly knowledgeable instructors available in case people feel the need to get a little pre-game training. "A good instructor is someone who is a certified pro that teaches all ages of adults and kids the correct grip, stance and swing," Susan explained.

One local instructor who has played

professionally and in the PGA for over 15 years is Levy Adger. To Levy, teaching the sport he loves to others is one of the many rewards he has experienced in his impressive career in the sport. "I love working with the youth. I especially like seeing them grow and learn, while passing on the knowledge and watching their progression in the sport," he said. "It's really an enjoyable sport, and it's also relaxing to me because I like the outdoors."

Being outdoors and having fun is exactly what summer is all about, especially while the children are out of school and looking for something to do. Learning and playing golf is not only a good way to help keep them busy and active during the week, but it is also an enjoyable way for them to spend time with their parents on the weekends.

Some participants are introduced to the sport through golf camps, while

others follow in the footsteps of parents or older siblings. "Camps really are a good way to introduce the beginning golfer to the sport," Susan said. "They are also helpful in assisting them in making the decision to pursue the game or not. It let's them know if they like the game or not."

All family members can participate in golf without feeling left out or left behind. Every child needs something to excel in. "When they excel in something," Susan said, "it helps to build their self-esteem. It's endearing because all the kids want to be like Tiger Woods."

Building self-esteem is very valuable when it comes to proper child development. Local golfer and father, Mike Hickman, said his 9-year-old daughter, Tori, is not only learning valuable lessons from golf, but she is able to spend good, quality time with her dad by practicing their swings together. "It's important for any kid to be involved in a sport," Mike said. "It teaches them to be dedicated and responsible, while it helps them to form high values. We really have fun practicing together, and I'm looking forward to the day when we're on the same skill level to play a game together, too."

Tori said she likes learning golf with her dad, and she especially likes being on a team with her friends. "I started playing golf when I was 8," she said. "My dad helps me figure out how to improve and, sometimes, we actually teach each other something that we both learned from our coach. I also like golf camp because we get to be on different teams and progress with our friends."

Progress in the game of golf is what makes Tori happy. Quality time spent with his daughter is what makes Mike glad. **NOW**

** Susan Hargrave is owner of Jeremy's Golf Center and Academy located between Red Oak and Waxahachie.*



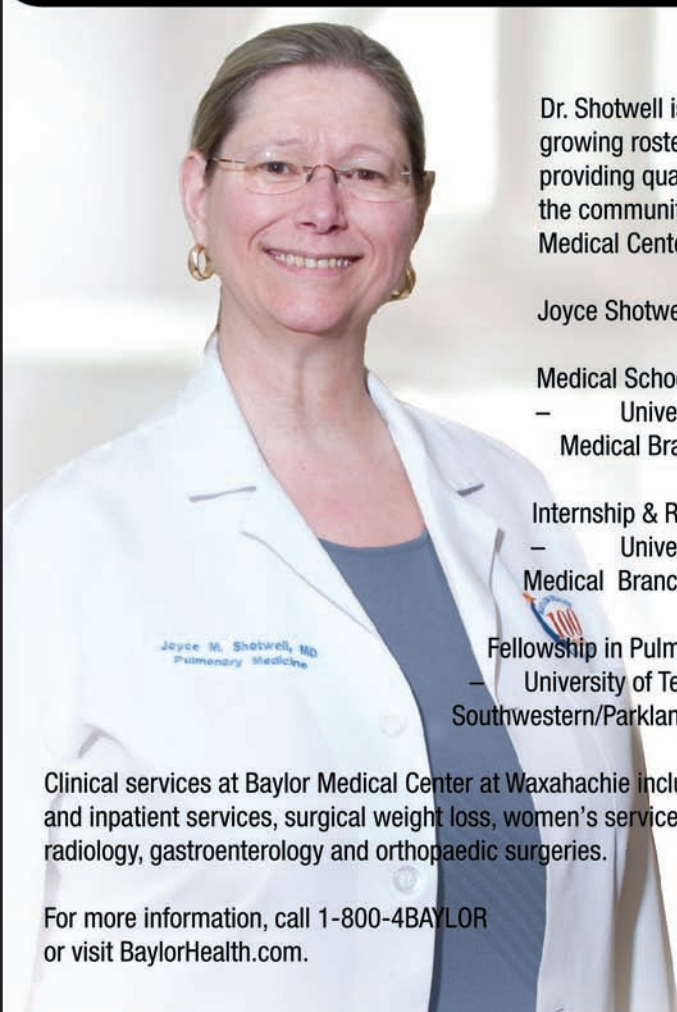
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Fast, Convenient, Affordable

— By Sandra McIntosh

There is a new club in town designed to fit any lifestyle. Whether you are a stay-at-home mom or the CEO of a large company, Snap Fitness operates under a philosophy that will fit any schedule. “We are fast, convenient and affordable,” said Rebecca Ihde, owner of the first Snap Fitness center in Texas. “We offer clients a facility where they can get in, work out and get out quickly and efficiently.”

Opening the business was a milestone for Rebecca, as well as for the Red Oak community. Since the club’s grand opening in December 2006, Rebecca and her staff have set the bar high, not only for other Snap Fitness facilities in Texas, but for any fitness center that offers services 24 hours a day, seven days a week. “We are the first Snap Fitness location to open in Texas,” Rebecca said. “We are one of the fastest-growing franchises in the nation with well over 500 active members. We never expected it to grow as fast as it has.”

Rebecca works from a remote location, only frequenting the facility about five hours per week to work at the location and also fulfill her own



Personal trainer Shelley Davis, owner Rebecca Ihde and Mitsy Hollis, manager of Snap Fitness, are eager to serve those in the Red Oak community and beyond.

personal workout regimen. There is no need for her to worry, for she has left the club in the capable hands of manager Mitsy Hollis and Shelley Davis, the club’s personal trainer.

Mitsy has been with the club since day one. She came with years of sales, managerial and paramedic experience, as well as an overall passion for fitness. Once hired, she also completed Snap corporate training. “I love my job and I love my boss,” Mitsy said. “I make it my business to know the members. I never want them to feel intimidated or uncomfortable. I guess you could say I’m their cheerleader.”

Many times, clients who join Snap Fitness have been exercising on a regular basis elsewhere for years. They know

how the machines operate and what they need to do in order to meet their physical fitness needs. Shelley’s job becomes of the utmost importance to those clients who are just beginning to incorporate exercise into their daily routines. “During the fitness analysis, I listen to what they want to accomplish,” Shelley said, referring to the initial consultation that includes measurements, blood pressure and percentage of body fat. “Between the two of us, we come up with an individualized program personalized for them alone. We always try to encourage them to let us teach them the basics.”

Offerings at the club include easy around-the-clock key card access, pay-as-you-go memberships with

no contracts, free weights, circuit equipment, a cardio center with Cardio Theater (a wireless entertainment system), climate-controlled atmosphere, a tanning bed, package add-ons and



scheduled one-on-one time with Shelley. It is the community's full-service fitness club.

Diversified would be the best word to describe the clientele at Snap Fitness. The Red Oak police and fire departments have made the club's location at 205 S. Main Street a regular stop. High school students, young adults, married couples and senior citizens are a common sight at all hours of the day and night.

"Weight loss is the main reason for most people to be here," Shelley said. "I have one lady who came in with no real goals. She just wanted to feel better about herself. Exercising regularly has given her a lot more energy, too."

In this day and age, life is fast-paced and stress-filled. Finding extra time to do anything is difficult, but Mitsy feels exercising can help in every situation. "Exercise helps manage stress, moods and depression," Mitsy said. "Being physically fit is a new way of life; it's a mentality."

Mitsy is making final preparations for the club's upcoming Biggest Loser Campaign to begin later this month. "We are also looking to do a boot camp," Mitsy said, "and a member-appreciation event."

The future looks bright for Snap Fitness. To learn more about how you can be part of the fun, call Mitsy at (972) 576-0388 or visit the Web site at www.snapfitness.com/redoak. **NOW**

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Evening Offers Safety Education

— By Gretchen Kitzman



Detective Boyd Brock's enthusiasm in overseeing the National Night Out (NNO) event is contagious. He has organized it four of the seven years he has served with the Red Oak Police Department and is keen on educating the public at large. It will be held again at Red Oak City Park on Tuesday, August 7, from 6 - 9 p.m. This will be Red Oak's eighth event, but nationally, NNO has been celebrated for 24 years and is sponsored by the National Association of Town Watch. "It's a chance for all the citizens to come together as a community," Boyd said. "We're still small enough to gather in one place to meet."

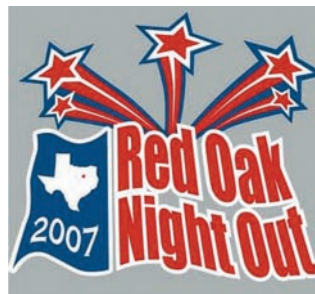
NNO educates people by showing how to limit crime and drug problems

in their neighborhoods, how to get involved with local law enforcement by starting or joining crime watch groups, getting to know their neighbors and by sending a message to criminals that people are organized against their attempts. "We want to reduce crime by uniting and organizing," he added. "We want criminals to see that."

This event is truly a labor of love for Detective Brock. He has to start planning in November in order to have preparations complete by July 1 each year, and he hosts two fund-raisers to generate his budget. Poster calendars bring \$1,700

and T-shirts raise \$500. "We usually give away 600 T-shirts. I buy banners for the event and order fingerprint kits," he explained. "I generally spend \$350 on just crayons, coloring books, badges and whistles to give away." Citizens National Bank also helps fund the overruns. Detective Brock expects 3,000 attendees this year, up from 2,500 last year.

The Night Out event promises to be fun with free food and drinks and a variety of things planned for the children. The 4-H Club will be in charge of face painting, and there will



Red Oak ISD Education Foundation

What is the Red Oak ISD Education Foundation?

The Foundation is a nonprofit, 501 (c)(3) community organization operating independently under its own board of directors.

Why was it established?

The Red Oak ISD Education Foundation was established in 2002, as a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting and enhancing educational programs for both student and staff. Its mission is to generate and distribute resources for innovative programs and projects that enhance the quality of education and provide students with opportunities they may not otherwise experience.

To date, the Red Oak Education Foundation has awarded 65 grants totaling
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be pony rides as well. "We'll also have FBI fingerprinting and DNA kits that collect a hair follicle and fingernail clipping. We give the kits back to the parents," Boyd said. "In a temperature controlled environment, they are good for 15 years and they don't degrade."

The Drug Enforcement Agency will bring out drug awareness materials that will be very helpful in the education process. Both Care Flight and PHI

"Giving Crime and Drugs a Going Away Party."

Med Star Flight for Life helicopters will land at different times. Additionally, the Police and Fire departments and the military will be represented.

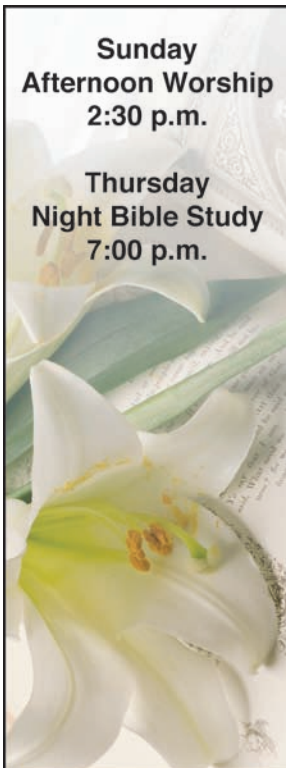
"Last year, we had 35 businesses come out and participate. The Chamber of Commerce really helped get them involved," Boyd said. He would like to increase participation this year, too. "I always get T-shirts printed up for the businesses," he said. "It helps them promote themselves as they give them out at their individual booths."

"It's just a fun night for everybody," he added. "We have a good time and I try to keep it fresh every year to keep people coming back. I don't want it to get dull." Boyd hopes to have 100 antique cars in the auto show this year, in addition to the Interstate Battery Nascar and possibly a jet fuel dragster. There will be bounce houses and a dunking booth in which Mayor Ron Bryce has agreed to sit. "It's just a safe, good, clean environment for families," Boyd said. "It's always fun to watch a plan come together and have the cooperation from everyone involved to make it happen."

There will be a live radio broadcast with music and performances by the Red Oak junior high cheerleaders. There are also plans for a volleyball or horseshoe tournament. Boyd does call

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backs once a week until there are commitments, since all the participants are donating time. The Red Oak Lions Club also helps cook hot dogs donated from Brookshire's.

In addition to organizing this whole event, Boyd is in charge of the seven

"It's just a safe, good, clean environment for families."

Crime Watch groups in Red Oak. They include Pleasant Ridge, Stainback West, Crump Estates, Fox Hollow, Oak Tree Estates, Cobblestone Estates and Garden Gate Community. There is no crime at Sierra Grande because those people call us," he said. "The best neighbor is a nosy neighbor, in my opinion. I see drug arrests and burglaries go down after National Night Out and calls on suspicious vehicles do go up because of increased awareness," he said. "I wish I could have 100 percent of time to devote to the neighborhood watch groups, but I try to maintain awareness in the community throughout the year."

Boyd will offer Crime Watch training programs on home safety. "I teach homeowners about throw latches on sliding glass doors, auxiliary latches on windows," he explained, "and how to disable the red line on their garage doors to better protect their homes and properties." He also schedules ID theft seminars on fingerprinting with the Ellis County District Attorneys' office. Detective Ryan Getty and attorneys from Joe Grubbs' office help him with these endeavors to educate the public. "Joe Grubbs and his office have always been very proactive when it comes to things like these," he said.

The theme of this year's National Night Out is "Giving Crime and Drugs a Going Away Party." Detective Brock intends to make this year's event a memorable one for all of Red Oak. **NOW**

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Look Who's Cooking

— By Sandra McIntosh

IN THE KITCHEN WITH HEIDI YAHANNA

Heidi Yahanna grew up on a dairy farm in Minnesota. In the evening, she had the choice of milking cows or cooking meals. "I was cooking and baking at 9 years old," Heidi said. "I think all those years of meat and potato cooking may have burned me out a little, because cooking daily meals is not one of my favorite things to do now."

Fortunately for Heidi, her husband likes to cook. She said he prepares at least half of the meals for the family each week. "I still enjoy baking cookies and other treats for my kids," she said. "When we go back to the farm, the kids and their cousins will devour an entire recipe of molasses cookies in the blink of an eye!" **—NOW**

MOLASSES COOKIES

3/4 cup shortening
1 cup sugar
1/4 cup molasses
1 egg
2 cups flour
2 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 tsp. cloves
1/2 tsp. ginger
1/2 tsp. salt

Cream shortening and sugar. Add molasses and egg, beating well. In a separate bowl, sift together flour, baking soda, cinnamon, cloves, ginger and salt. Add dry mixture to wet mixture. Mix well. Form dough into 1-inch balls and flatten with the bottom of a glass dipped in sugar. Bake at 350 F for 8 - 10 minutes.

ONE DISH PIZZA

1 1/2 cup flour
2 tsp. sugar
1 tsp. salt
2 envelopes rapid rise yeast
1/4 cup olive oil
3/4 cup very warm water (120 - 130 F)
1/2 lb. ground beef
1/2 lb. sausage
onions to taste, if desired
8 oz. pizza sauce of choice
1 1/2 cup chopped red and/or green peppers
black olives, to taste
1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
1/4 cup Parmesan cheese

In pre-sprayed 8-inch baking pan, combine flour, sugar, salt, yeast, olive oil and warm water. Spread evenly in the baking pan. Brown ground beef and

sausage, adding onions. Mix meat and onions with pizza sauce. Spread evenly over batter. Sprinkle peppers, black olives and both cheeses evenly over the meat sauce. Place in a cold oven, set temperature to 350 F and bake for 30 minutes or until cooked through.

MONSTER COOKIES

1 cup sugar
1 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup butter
3 eggs
12 oz. peanut butter
1 tsp. vanilla
1 Tbsp. corn syrup
2 tsp. soda
4 1/2 cups quick oats
1 cup chocolate chips
1 cup M&M's

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Cream sugar, brown sugar and butter in a bowl. Add well-beaten eggs, peanut butter, vanilla and corn syrup. Mix well. Add soda. Mix. Add quick oats, chocolate chips and M&M's by folding into mixture. Drop by tablespoons onto cookie sheet. Bake at 350 F for 10 minutes. Do not overbake.

CARAMEL SYRUP ROLL

1 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup butter
2 Tbsp. corn syrup
2 Tbsp. water
cinnamon to taste
sugar to taste
1 loaf frozen dough, thawed
butter (for spreading)

Combine first 4 ingredients in a saucepan. Heat on low just until sugar dissolves and mixture is smooth. Do not boil. Spread thawed dough over bottom of 9x13 pan. Spread the dough with butter and pour saucepan mixture over dough. Sprinkle with cinnamon and sugar and roll up jelly-roll style. Slice into 1 1/2-inch slices.

POTLUCK CHILI CORN BREAD SALAD

1 pkg. corn bread mix
1 4-oz. can chopped green chilies
1/8 tsp. cumin
1/8 tsp. oregano
1 cup mayonnaise
1 cup sour cream
1 envelope ranch dressing mix
2 16-oz. cans pinto beans, rinsed and drained
2 16-oz. cans whole kernel corn, drained
3 medium chopped tomatoes
1 cup chopped green, red or yellow peppers
1 cup chopped green onions
8 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled
2 cups shredded cheddar cheese

Prepare corn bread according to package directions. Add green chilies, cumin and oregano. Spread in greased 8-inch pan. Bake at 400 F for 20 - 25 minutes. In a small bowl, combine mayonnaise, sour cream and ranch dressing mix. Crumble half of corn bread into the bottom of a 9x13x2 pan. Layer with half the mayonnaise mixture and half the amount of pinto beans, corn, tomatoes, peppers, onions, bacon strips and cheddar cheese. Repeat layers. Dish will be very full. Cover and refrigerate for two hours.

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Three “Must-do” Steps to Work Toward Successful Investing

— By Renee Chase

You’ve probably seen plenty of magazines featuring pictures of affluent-looking people who have “made it big” in investing. While these photos may grab our attention, the articles can be more illuminating. If they are honest, they will usually reveal that those investors who supposedly “hit the jackpot,” actually earned their prosperity by diligently following a few simple steps over many years. You, too, can make the same moves. What are these “secrets to success”? Here are three to consider:

• Create a plan

If you do not have an investment plan, you are susceptible to making all kinds of costly mistakes. For example, you may be tempted to chase after “hot” stocks only to discover that, by the time you buy them, they are already cooling off. Or, you may randomly invest in a stock here, a bond there, a CD next month, a Treasury bill next year and so on. You will not increase your chances of success just by adding more and more investments. That is

why you need to create an investment plan that is based on your risk tolerance, your specific goals and your time horizon. By putting together a diversified array of high-quality stocks, bonds and other vehicles, you may be able to make steady progress toward your objectives. You can draw up this type of plan by yourself, of course, but you may find it easier – and more productive – to work with a financial professional who knows your situation and who can make objective recommendations.

• Keep investment performance in perspective

Many people make one of two mistakes when it comes to tracking their investments. They either forget about what they own, or they zealously follow every single price movement, large or small. Both of these moves can be troublesome. If you pay absolutely no attention to what you have invested in, you could someday find that your investments are no longer suitable for your needs. On the other hand, if you are constantly fretting about price movements, you will be tempted to make hasty “buy” and “sell” decisions that ultimately may work against you. Instead of following either of these paths, look for a middle ground. Be aware of how your investments are performing, but always keep this performance in perspective. A stock could have a bad month, or even a bad year, and yet still have a promising future. Conversely, another stock may be “hot” at the moment, but face daunting challenges for future success. The bottom line?

Review your portfolio regularly – at least once a year. Evaluate how your investments have done in the recent past and what they may do in the coming months and years. Most important of all, try to determine if your holdings are still doing what you want them to do. Are they growing at the pace you need? If they are designed to provide income, are you getting the amount you want? Again, when you are reviewing your portfolio, you can benefit from working with a financial professional.

• Invest for the long term

It sounds easy, but it is not. To really invest for the long term, you need patience, perseverance and the ability to focus on events that will not occur for several decades. That is not to say you will not have short-term goals, such as a down payment for a house, a family vacation, etc. There are some investments that are well-suited for these needs. Overall, though, you will probably find that most of your portfolio will be devoted to achieving your long-term objectives – a comfortable retirement, college for your children, etc. So, you must build, and maintain, the mix of investments that have the “staying power” you will need.

There you have it – three moves you will need to make to be a successful investor. By following these suggestions, you may never land on a magazine cover, but you should be pleased with the results. **NOW**

Renee Chase is an Edward Jones representative based in Red Oak.



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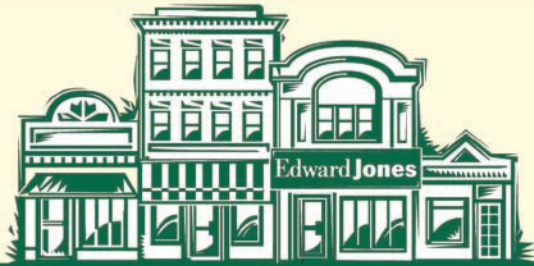


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Planning for BABY

Planning for a baby requires more than just picking out a name and nursery decor. Preparing your body to nurture your little bundle of joy is extremely important. David Morehead, D.O., obstetrician and gynecologist on the medical staff at Baylor Medical Center at Waxahachie, answers some of the most common questions women have when planning to conceive.

Before I become pregnant, are there any habits or activities that I should give up?

Dr. Morehead: "Yes. If you are a smoker, it's important to quit before you become pregnant and especially during your pregnancy. Smoking has been connected to a variety of problems for both mother and baby, including low birth weight, preterm deliveries, and lower IQ scores in children of smoking mothers. Also, studies have shown that smoking can actually

contribute to difficulties with conceiving. Currently, there are smoking cessation programs available in the community as well as new medications that can aid in smoking cessation. Consult with your physician to find out which options are best for you."

When should I begin taking supplements? Are there any nutritional guidelines that I should follow?

Dr. Morehead: "Most physicians recommend taking prenatal supplements after stopping any birth control methods, as they should ideally be taken for 30 days before conception. The supplements that have proven most beneficial to mother and baby contain folic acid, which is found in most kinds of prenatal vitamins. Folic acid can help protect your baby from some birth defects, including spina bifida and other spinal malformations. If you are not already taking prenatal vitamins, then once you become pregnant your doctor will usually prescribe them to help cover any nutritional deficiencies you might have. Many doctors also recommend an omega-3 fatty acid supplement (such as DHA) during pregnancy and breast-feeding. As far as nutritional

guidelines, it is a good idea to stay away from alcohol, caffeine and some types of seafood. Certain types of seafood contain mercury, which can be harmful to a growing fetus. Consumption of seafood such as: tilefish, swordfish, king mackerel and shark should be eliminated."

Are there any health conditions I should be tested for that might be harmful to the baby?

Dr. Morehead: "The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists suggests that women who are planning to become pregnant should see their doctor for a preconception visit. During this visit, your physician may test for any sexually transmitted diseases that can be linked to pregnancy complications and will make sure you have had the proper vaccinations. Women with preexisting conditions should see their obstetrician or specialist to determine what affect their condition will have on the baby during pregnancy. It is also important to let your physician know of any over-the-counter or prescription medications you are taking as some medications can be harmful to a growing fetus."



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I have been taking birth control pills for several years, will it be difficult for me to become pregnant?

Dr. Morehead: "For most women using oral contraceptives, it is possible to conceive within the first menstrual cycle after stopping birth control, but often takes two or three months. Using birth control does not lower the long-term chances of becoming pregnant after stopping — in fact, some women are more fertile when they first stop taking birth control pills. After stopping the pill, or any other hormonal birth control, it is best to wait until after the first spontaneous menses before trying to conceive." **WAXAHACHIE**

** Physicians are members of the medical staff at one of Baylor Health Care System's subsidiary, community or affiliated medical centers and are neither employees nor agents of those medical centers, Baylor Medical Center at Waxahachie or Baylor Health Care System.*

First and Third Mondays

Red Oak Lions Club meeting, 7 p.m. at 207 West Red Oak Road. For information, call (972) 617-3577.

Second and Fourth Mondays

Texas Ladies Networking meets from 11:45 a.m. – 1 p.m. at Fire Mountain Grill in Waxahachie. For information, call (214) 587-1221.

Second and Third Wednesdays

Red Oak Public Library and Red Oak Fire Department host a children's story time from 11 a.m. – noon at the library. For information, call (469) 218-1230 or visit RedOakPublicLibrary.org.

Every Thursday

Celebrate Recovery, a Christ-centered ministry, meets at First Baptist Church of Red Oak, 103 West Red Oak Road. For information, call (972) 617-3591.

Second Thursday

A cancer dialogue support group, sponsored by American Cancer Society, meets at 7 p.m. at First United Methodist Church of Red Oak, 600 West Red Oak Road.

July 7 - 8

Texas Motorplex O'Reilly Bracket Series #9, 10 & Good Guy #4. Visit texasmotorplex.com or call (972) 878-2641 for more information.

July 9, 2007

Summer Reading Club - Crafts With Maureen: Clay Modeling, 7 p.m. at the Red Oak Public Library. Contact (469) 218-1230 for information.

July 9 and 23

Methodist Health System's mobile mammography van will offer

mammograms at Methodist Midlothian Imaging Center for women age 35 and older. Appointments are required. To schedule an appointment, call (972) 775-7410.

July 16

Rise and Shine Networking Breakfast, 7 a.m. in Cedar Hill. Contact the Midlothian Chamber for information.

July 19

Summer Reading Club - Stories With Lyndale the Lion, 7 p.m. - 8 p.m. at the Red Oak Library. Contact (469) 218-1230 for information.

July 19

Amateur Radio Club meets at 7:30 p.m. at the Waxahachie Fire Department station on Water Street. For more information, visit wd5ddh.org.

July 23

Creative Quilters Guild of Ellis County meets at St. Paul Episcopal Church, Hwy. 287 at Ovilla Rd., Waxahachie. 7 p.m. Visit CQGuild.org for more information.

Summer Reading Club - Learn About Animals With Zooniversity, 7 p.m. - 8 p.m. at the Red Oak Public Library. Contact (469) 218-1230 for information.

July 23 - 26

Red Oak Hawks Summer Football Camp at Red Oak High School for 4th - 9th grade students, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. Contact Mike Shields (972) 268-2201.

August 5

Motorcycle Rally at New Beginning Bible Church. Free barbecue and refreshments starting at 10 a.m. at 1970 FM 983, Ferris, TX. Call Kenneth Dunlap at (972) 842-2800 for information.

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