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Magazine

July 2008

**Staying
the Course**

**More Than
Bandages**

**Catching
Shining
Stars**

**Achieving
Her
Dreams**

At Home With

**Rob and
Misty Carrell**

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Editor's Note

Hello, Neighbors!

While we salute our independence, please join us as we tip our hats to a few of the amazing women who live and work right here in our community. First, we will meet Lieutenant Mollie Dox, who exemplifies the importance of following your heart and always doing the right thing. Local nurse, Sue Brown, and theater instructor, Charla Little, encourage and inspire many local children. Next, meet an amazing mother of triplets, Misty Carrell, and then catch some meaningful life and horseback lessons from riding instructor, Erin Blake.



Here is to all of the amazing women in our lives!

Diana Merrill Claussen
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"When working with crime victims, you have to make sure you do everything to the best of your abilities."

Achieving Her *Dreams*

— By Diana Merrill Claussen

Throughout life, there are pivotal moments that shape and mold us. Those are the moments that have the potential to help us determine our paths. Such a moment happened to Texas native, Mollie Dox.

During Mollie's teen years in Nacogdoches, Texas, she worked at a clothing store in her local mall. "Most of the time, I ended up chasing shoplifters out of the store," she shared. It was the officers who responded to the shoplifting calls who started encouraging Mollie to get into the field of law enforcement. "In Nacogdoches, my dad was pretty involved within our community," Mollie shared. "I also grew up with many of his friends who happened to be police officers. Many of the officers who came to the store knew my dad. They also knew I was the kind of person who would always stand up and do what was right."

It was the officers and her high sense of justice which showed Mollie a career change to law enforcement would be a perfect fit. "I first started as a police dispatcher and then put myself through the police academy," she said. Now with 20 years of law enforcement experience, this admirable lady is known to her peers as Lieutenant Mollie Dox and is the lead detective for Ovilla Police Department.

After starting in Nacogdoches, Mollie later moved to



Cedar Hill and then worked for the District Attorney's office in Dallas. "I worked crime cases," Mollie shared. "Most of those cases were crimes against persons. Many of them involved children. Through the years, though, I

have done a little bit of everything." She has served in dispatch, school resources, community officer positions and has been a member of a SWAT team. Mollie has learned many lessons throughout her career and has met very memorable people along the way.

One of those special people became her husband of 13 years, Will. "I met Will when I worked at the police department in Cedar Hill," Mollie shared. "He is still a 'motor jock' for the city, and we both love motorcycling, camping and are really big animal lovers." Mollie loves caring for animals, but her true passion lies in helping people. "The PD receives many calls where we can help people with their personal situations," she said.

Working with crime victims has allowed Mollie to impact the lives of those she serves. "When working with crime victims, you have to make sure you do everything to the best of your abilities," she said. "Sometimes, there is only so much you can do. You give it your true best so that you can help those in need as much as possible." Mollie shared that





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it is vital to treat each case like it is the most significant. "If the investigation isn't thoroughly conducted, you risk the case getting thrown out," she said.

There have been numerous life-changing moments during her time in law enforcement, as well as occasional challenges along the way — especially being a female working in a predominantly male vocation. Mollie credits many encouraging mentors who have helped her in life and in her career, especially her father, who was

**"Sometimes, there
is only so much
you can do.
You give it your
true best
so that you can help
those in need as
much as possible."**

her biggest role model and inspiration. Her upbringing helped her through tough times and enabled her to reach many of her goals.

"My dad taught me to not be a quitter," Mollie shared. "He also encouraged us to follow our hearts and always do what was right. Plus, I'm the type of person that if you tell me I'm not going to accomplish something, I will try even harder to achieve it." Mollie's father recently passed away; she misses not only him but his constant love and support.

Another mentor who has shown unconditional support to Mollie is Mike Moon, Ovilla's chief of police. "I have known Chief Moon for over 16 years," Mollie said. "He has not only given me guidance, he has also been a friend. I love his wife, too." Chief Moon shared his personal insights about Mollie. "Mollie has a



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real passion, especially when it comes to victim assistance and crimes against women and children,” he expressed. “She helps to take a huge weight off my shoulders while being second in command at the police department when I am not available. We are really lucky to have her.”




The support of her co-workers and the Ovilla community have helped make Mollie’s job a career she dearly loves. “We have a really good department,” she enthused. “All of the guys here are good to work with and the citizens are happy with us, too. That is a very good feeling.”

With a fulfilling job comes personal and professional achievements. In 1999, Mollie was awarded Officer of the Year in Cedar Hill and in 2000 and 2006 she achieved that award again while working for Ovilla PD. Her modest demeanor makes light of her achievements, but those who know her say she has more than earned every single one of them.

Mollie’s modesty adds to her character and makes her an inspirational role model. Her attitude, work and experience is well-admired throughout the department and the community. When asked to share words and thoughts of encouragement, she humbly offered these invaluable and compelling insights on life: “When looking at a potentially new career or life change, take some time to really look into the situation, get to know people who have made that decision and make sure it is a decision or choice you truly want to follow.” For times when it feels like the world is telling you that you cannot, but your heart tells you differently, “Make sure you always do what is right. Don’t let yourself be overcome by bad treatment, and have the mind-set that you have a job to do. Prove those who discourage your abilities wrong,” she advised.

For Mollie, following her dreams was imperative to being true to herself. It was the primary ingredient to finding her purpose and achieving her dreams. **NOW**

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At Home With Rob and Misty Carrell

Always and Forever

— By Sandra McIntosh

Rob and Misty Carrell moved into their new three-bedroom, two-bath home located on a spacious corner lot in June 2005. The traditional style home is a reflection of what means the most to the couple. “Family is extremely important,” Misty said, as she pointed to the most recent family photographs displayed along one wall in the living room. The close ties to family began when Rob and Misty were just children in Cedar Hill and Lancaster, respectively, and have only grown throughout their 11-year marriage.

The first home they shared as husband and wife was located in Midlothian. As they would ride around on weekends, they kept coming back to the Red Oak area. “We knew we wanted to remain in Ellis County,” Rob said, “so when we decided to move, we knew this was the place for us.” While the home was being

built, Rob and Misty lived with her parents in a home directly behind the famous Rockett Café. Once they agreed on a floor plan, the changes during the construction process were minimal. In fact, they recall only being able to make a few modifications to the original plans. “It’s not a custom home, so we had to go easy on upgrades,” Rob explained further. “We started the process in January, and it took a full six months before it was complete.”

The walls throughout the home are a light shade of ecru; almost like the color found in a natural eggshell. The white trim adds an elegance that makes for simplistic and clean lines from the entryway all the way to the back door and includes every room in-between. The most marked change came almost one year ago when one of the two guest bedrooms was converted for some long-awaited and very special family members. “The triplets were born on August 27,” Misty proudly stated. “Rob said no to pink since it wasn’t his favorite color.” The girls’ room is now a pale shade of green with pink, lavender and white accents.

After years of trying to get pregnant without success, Rob and Misty decided to take a step forward into modern medicine. “We underwent a procedure called intra-uterine insemination (IUI),” Misty said. “The first sonogram confirmed I was pregnant.” This confirmation was the first of so many blessings. “We learned Misty was carrying triplets during the second sonogram,” Rob interjected. It seemed as if the blessings just kept coming. “I never had to be put on bed rest,” Misty said, elaborating on the problem-free pregnancy. “The entire



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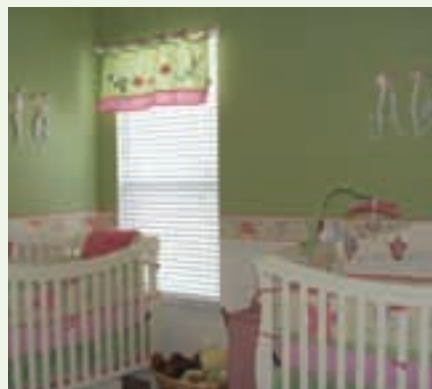
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time I was pregnant was perfect, other than the overall exhaustion that's a natural part of any pregnancy. They were all born healthy and happy. In fact, we all got to come home together a week after their birth."

Thanks to the beauty of modern medicine and the strong desire the couple had for children, Rob and Misty now have the family they had only dreamed of. "After trying to get pregnant for five years without any luck, I wasn't sure we'd ever have children of our own," Misty reflected.



"I look at our three girls every day, and I am utterly amazed at the blessing they are to us." Rob just grinned as he thought about all the things they are learning together. "The way they look at you," Rob said, "just melts you sometimes. The love they show is truly unconditional."

Since the girls' arrival, things around the Carrell household have changed. "We are no longer able to just get up and go," Misty said, as Rob nodded his head in agreement. "Every trip we take has to be planned."

Everything they do as a family must be scheduled down to the minute. "We take preparations and multiply them by three," Rob added. They both admitted that the responsibilities have also tripled. "I was the big kid; now I'm the responsible father," Rob explained. His three daughters have helped him grow up in a way he said was needed. "Everything we do now is centered around the girls," Misty commented. "We are always wondering how they can be included and how they fit into everything we plan to do."

The home's decor is also a reflection of the triplets. What was once the formal dining room has become the playroom with a great view of the front yard. Both parents agree that this is the girls' favorite room. The colors are bright and the innovative, learning toys are plentiful. Maggie, the family's cocker spaniel, has taken to the newest members with zeal, and a somewhat protective nature. "Maggie tries to share her toys with them," Rob said,

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“but she doesn’t really bother their toys.” There is also evidence of triplets in the living room as a trio of automatic swings is lined up along one wall. Cases of baby food and formula line one long countertop in the kitchen, too.

The home’s decor is simple, yet filled with a great deal of sentiment. Misty enjoys decorating with wall art that she has found at area shops and during shopping trips to First Monday in Canton. The sign, “God Bless Our Home,” was handcrafted from barn wood. It hangs above the mantle in



the living room. Another sign is found on the entry hall table. It is engraved with a statement made by George Herbert reminding the family to “give thanks with a grateful heart.”

Misty’s wedding bouquet hangs on one wall of the master bedroom in a glass-encased frame along with the garter Misty’s mother made for her. The words “Faith, Hope and Love” hang over the large windows that look out to the backyard, while the simple, yet meaningful, words “Always and Forever” are placed above the door to

be seen, read and remembered every day as they exit their bedroom. “The same words are engraved on the inside of our wedding bands,” Misty beamed.

Family really is the most important thing to Rob and Misty. So much so that a great deal of thought was put into the middle names they chose for their daughters. “Macie Jane is named after Rob’s grandmother. Sadie Jo is named after my grandmother,” Misty said. “Avery Leigh was named after my stepdad, Lee.” With triplets, a cesarean section was imminent, so Rob and Misty were able to pick the triplets’ birthday. “We made a conscious choice when we picked August 27,” Misty said, further explaining it was the same day Rob’s father had passed away a year earlier. “We wanted to turn a sad day into one of great happiness,” she said. “We wanted to be able to include as many family members as we could in an extra-special way on a very extra-special day.” **NOW**

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ARTS
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Catching Shining

— By Diana Merrill Claussen

Walk into the drama department at Red Oak High School and you might feel as if you have entered a prestigious performing arts center. As you walk further, a left turn leads you to a prop room. Turn right and you are greeted with a hug from the school's theater teacher and all-around amazing lady, Charla Little.

After brief introductions, Charla got right to business. "I do not teach acting or drama," she informed. "I instruct theater." With over 29 years of instructing at Red Oak, this vivacious actress and educator embraces her trade and encourages those whom she instructs.

"I originally taught English reinforcement and then started the theater program at Red Oak Junior High," Charla said. From there, the program has not only flourished, but her students and their massive array of props and costumes have grown as well.

"We have hundreds and thousands of costumes and props," Charla shared as she ventured into the massive forest-like prop room. Seemingly endless rows of vintage costumes, accessories and props of all kinds jutted out of the walls and draped the closets. It was like stepping back in time.

"We also have a cedar closet to keep our vintage costumes in," Charla said.

With hats, shoes and accessories dating back to the 1800s, the cedar closet was neatly filled to the brim. Being responsible to take care of their props and costumes and returning them to their rightful place is obviously something Charla has worked hard to instill in her students. They learned the lesson because they enjoy working with someone like Charla who both encourages and inspires them.

"You can't have this much stuff and not be fanatical," Charla grinned. "When I was little, I realized as a grown-up I would have to do something professionally. So, when I was 4 years old I became an actress and would perform for our family's herd of cows!"

Charla later went on to college. "My mom, sister and aunt were teachers, and I had decided I wasn't going to be a teacher; I was going to act," Charla

stated. "Once I received my degree, my parents begged me to get my teacher's certificate. They helped me realize I needed to make a living." They also changed Charla's mind about becoming a teacher.

She is thankful to do the two things she most enjoys, teaching and acting. "It's fun. I get to come to school and play all day," she chuckled, flashing an exuberant smile. It is more than evident that Charla not only loves what she does, she lives for it.

"I pray every morning that God would help me do a good job. I also pray that I don't put my foot in my mouth," she gleefully added. It is her imperative mission to truly make a difference in the lives of her students and others. She first starts with a good attitude. "It is so important to be positive," Charla said. "Kids have



ARTS NOW

so much they have to deal with in this world, and they remember all of the experiences they have had — both good and bad. I can remember my first teachers who were encouraging to me. I can also remember the teachers who humiliated me. Both of these types of experiences are something a kid will remember for the rest of their lives.” Charla’s mission is to create a lasting and positive impression, not a hurtful memory. “And it’s a big responsibility,” she shared.

One of the main ways Charla goes about reaching the students while educating them is by teaching theater as a performing art. “I first tell them, ‘If you are going to be an actor, then you have to be a student of the old cinema,’” she stated. “At times, it breaks my heart that kids don’t know who Spencer Tracy or Katherine



Hepburn are. If you are going to be an actor, you *must* learn and study the masters; that’s how I learned to act. I try to impress on them the importance of watching old movies. That helps them to open their eyes and really appreciate the real actors.”

Charla shared why acting and all art forms are so important to children. “All forms of art open up whole new worlds to children — worlds they would have never known existed,” she said. “Art also makes them realize they have talent. Some of the children have never been told they have talent.” Charla adores all of her student stars, and her love and encouragement helps them to shine even brighter. **NOW**

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Staying *the* Course

— By Diana Merrill Claussen

In the world of horses, you can meet many different kinds of people. Some are involved in the equestrian world for the ranch and work aspect, while others are involved with horses for leisure or sporting reasons. Just ask local riding instructor Erin Blake how and why she is involved with these majestic creatures, and brace yourself for an enlightening and exciting answer.

Erin's passion revolves around the high-caliber sport of dressage. Her involvement in this highly prestigious form of riding is one of her most heartfelt accomplishments. The story of how she became involved in the sport is fascinating and inspiring.

"I grew up in Indiana, and my neighbors had horses," Erin shared. "That's how I first started to become involved with them." This was also when her adoration of horses started to develop. "No one in my family was ever into horses except for me," she commented. "I grew up in a middle class, biracial family," she added. During her preteen years, Erin and her family moved to Maryland, and Erin got her first job. "It was at a racehorse breeding farm, and I cleaned and filled water buckets," she remembered.

While working at the farm, Erin decided she wanted to learn as much as she could about the animals and eventually got her first horse when she was 15 years old. "My parents gave me a choice," she said. "I could either become a foreign exchange student in Argentina or get a horse." Later, when Erin got her second steed, she found herself enchanted by equestrian competition and entered "eventing" classes such as cross country and arena jumping along with dressage technique and style.

"Dressage is a French word which means 'training of the horse,'" Erin explained. "It's style and technique, and is a slow and methodical way of teaching which benefits both horse and the rider. It is a way of training a horse in a non-limited way." This style of riding began during the time of the ancient Greeks and was later used during Medieval and European battles. "The movements in dressage actually mimic battle movements," Erin informed.

Dressage requires moves that are not only fluid and beautiful, but, during the olden days of battle, were also highly functional,



skillful and at times, deadly. One such movement is the pirouette, (yes, just like human ballet) where the horse quickly turns into, or away from, an enemy. Another specific dressage movement is called a capriole, which requires the horse to make high leaps over the heads of the enemy. Dressage is not only beautiful, it is a quiet, different and more effective way to work with these large, amazing creatures.

When you ask people familiar with horses what they think of dressage, the sport's reputation is surprising, especially once you find out what the sport really involves. "Dressage has the connotation of being snooty, but I am working on changing that reputation," Erin said. "Being ethnic has never affected my work or clientele, so my involvement in dressage has actually been really refreshing. I feel like the Tiger Woods of the horse world," she added.

Erin is also one of the most certified minority members in our area. She earned her certification from the British Horse Society. "I originally received a Bachelor of Science in Equine Management in the U.S.," Erin shared. "Later, my school sent me to Brinsbury College in West Sussex, England, where I received my BHS instructor certification. While attending, I apprenticed under renowned instructor Jennie Loriston Clarke. The BHS exams usually require many years to obtain; however, my training with Clarke was so intense I was ready for my exams within a year."

The BHS exam is so demanding that during the students'

Sports NOW

teaching assignments, only two of the 25 students passed. Erin was one of those students. "The judges said I was the only student who smiled," she shared. After receiving her BHS certification and training with numerous other dressage greats, Erin proudly shares her qualifications. "I have competed up through Pre-St. George level dressage and intermediate eventing," she beamed. She has also assisted in training horses in all levels up through Grand Prix.

Erin is also a member of the U.S. Eventing Association and the U.S. Dressage Federation. When asked what she loves about the sport, Erin is quick to first share what sets it apart from regular horsemanship. "Dressage was developed for the comfort of the horse, not the rider," she shared. "It involves creating a pure balance, per se, with the horse. The less the horse can feel a rider on their back, the more natural the animal's movement will be."

She then shared some insights regarding riding. "Pretty much our biggest fault in riding is us getting in the horse's way," Erin said. "We either hold the reigns or squeeze our legs too tightly. All riders, not just dressage riders, should learn the correct way to ride because horses are hypersensitive creatures. If they can feel when a fly lands on their back, they can feel if you are tense and holding your breath."

Erin's philosophy echoes the dressage philosophy: get the riders to quiet their state of mind. With this quietness, both horse and rider can communicate with each other. "Dressage is a body language, not a verbal language," Erin added. "To become fluent in riding, you have to understand their language. Eventually, the rider will become constantly fluid and synchronized with their horse."

Dressage is, in Erin's words, "a sport for all people of all backgrounds," she said. "It's also one of the few sports where men and women can compete equally." **NOW**

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Ron Celmer, Tier One C.F.O. and co-owner, and Rex Delgado work hard to provide high quality and reliable Internet access to their customers.

Top of Their

For many within our area, finding high quality and reliable Internet service was not only hard, but in some cases nearly impossible. That was until Tier One Networks set up shop in Ellis County last year. "Our original location started in Red Oak in May 2007," Tier One C.F.O. and Co-owner Ron Celmer said. "Our company's founder, Kevin Weaver, brought our main office here because he saw a primary need for our services."

Those services range from Internet communication via terrestrial radio towers, which can provide wireless Internet, to voice-over IP services. VOIP is essentially phone service which runs over an Internet line. "As of the beginning of last year, cable and DSL services were only available in about 10 percent of our DSL area," Ron shared.

Now that Tier One is available, they have not only grown throughout Ellis County, their services are quickly becoming popular within the DFW region. "We have people call and

TIER

— By Diana Merrill Claussen

ask if we have started service within their area," Ron said. "They tell us they really need our services. As of now, because we primarily use radio signals, we cover 100 percent of northern Ellis County and many areas within Denton, Collin, Kaufman and Rockwall counties."

Tier One's mission statement is to provide reasonably priced broadband Internet access to rural areas. Ron elaborated on why they are glad to be a part of our area. "Although we have expanded, Red Oak is still our home," Ron said. "We are thankful that this community has helped us to build our business and increase our service."

Tier One's service and quality is the company's greatest priority. The way Tier One's services work is by placing tower sites (usually located on top of water towers) throughout the areas in which they service. "Currently, we have 11 tower sites within the Glenn Heights, Ovilla and Red Oak areas," Ron shared. At these sites, Tier One places and positions the

Business NOW



radio towers. "We then go to our customer's site and install a little black box which has both an antenna and a radio," Ron said. "This whole piece is about the size of a small outdoor speaker."

Next, Tier One provides a wireless network card which is plugged into the client's computer. "If the customer has a wireless router we can then provide services to all of their computers within their home or business for no extra charge," Ron informed. By using the latest technology, Tier One promises to do more than just deliver service.

"We hold several FCC licenses in order to provide highly reliable service on regulated bandwidth frequencies," Ron said. "This not only eliminates interference, it allows us to provide Internet services which are more than three times faster than our competitors. We also have the newest equipment, so we are not only better, we are faster and cheaper."

Quality is not the only priority on which this local company focuses. "We provide 24/7 technical support while offering personal service," Ron said. "Our technicians are local and show up when you ask them to. The techs also give customers their cell phone numbers."

Tier One is very involved in giving back to both its customers and the community. "We offer free installation for teachers, fire and police officers who live in Red Oak," Ron shared. "We also provide free service to the city of Red Oak's public library and the city's new fire station."

During the month of July, Tier One will be offering free installation with their Platinum Service plan when you switch from another wireless Internet service provider. They may be reached at (866) 551-1367 or you can learn more about them by visiting www.tocn.com. **NOW**



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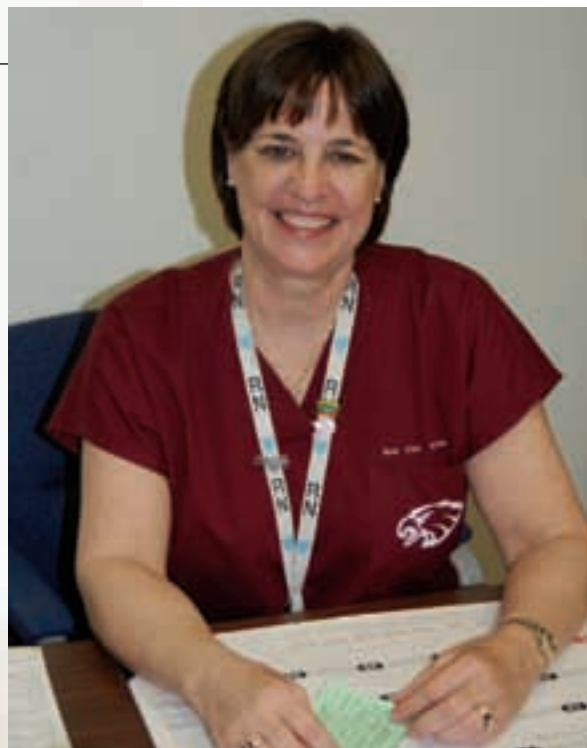
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Education **NOW**

More Than Bandages and Thermometers

— By Michelle Powe



School nursing is not for wimps. Today's school nurse wears many hats: nurse, counselor, advocate, teacher, friend. The successful school nurse must be able to juggle all of those roles gracefully. Fortunately for students at Red Oak High School, Sue Brown is just such a nurse.

"School nursing is more than putting on Band-Aids® and taking temperatures," Sue said. "It's about treating the whole child."

That kind of treatment means caring for students with chronic illnesses like diabetes or asthma, screening not just for vision and hearing problems, but also for diabetes and other serious illnesses. It involves teaching prevention — of illness, as well as high-risk behaviors, and watching for physical or behavioral warning signs. It involves educating the community about resources available for physical and mental health, diagnosing mystery illnesses that pop up around test time and lending a sympathetic ear. "A lot of these kids need someone to talk to," Sue said. "We deal with physical and emotional issues. There's a lot of emotional issues for kids to deal with

at this age, so this is a multifaceted position, dealing with everything from feeding students to helping them with whatever they need."

Sometimes, that help can be provided in-office, and sometimes Sue turns to one of the many resources she has developed in the district in the five years she has been here. She refers students, when necessary, to the counselor's office next door or to a doctor if she suspects a medical condition. She helps homeless students, securing meals, a place to stay and transportation to and from school for each child. Students who do not have health insurance or the resources to get medical attention can also come to Sue for assistance. "Hope Clinic in Waxahachie is a good resource. A lot of people aren't aware of it," Sue explained. "They provide medical care and can prescribe medications."

When hungry children come to Sue for help, she gives them something to eat and puts them in touch with appropriate outreach programs. She helps people who may qualify for Medicaid but have not followed through with the paperwork, and students with disabilities who may

qualify for scholarships of which they are unaware. "There are so many ways we can help," Sue said. "There are so many resources in Ellis County. It's just a matter of making people aware of them."

Advocacy, after all, is just one part of Sue's multifaceted job. Add to that emergency care, chronic illness management, epidemiology, prevention, safety, screening, counseling, health promotion, social work, employee health, community health, pharmacology, computer documentation, resident Band-Aid® giver and temperature taker, and you have one busy school nurse! Let us not forget crisis management, in all of its various forms.

Take, for example, the afternoon a student came into Sue's office after school looking for a half podium. "A half podium?" Sue asked. Yes, did she have one? "Well, no," Sue began, eyeing the student with concern. "How much sleep have you had?" she asked him. He had been up until nearly 4:00 a.m. writing a paper. "When was the last time you checked your blood sugar?" she questioned, adding, "What was your last count?" Despite the student's assurances that he was fine, Sue

Education **NOW**

continued, "Did you check it at noon?" The student paused, then said, "No, at midnight. Do you think I should check it now?" Sue was already nodding to a locker where his glucose meter was. After he had checked his blood sugar and gotten the okay from Sue, she gave him some suggestions about where he might find a half podium and sent him on his way. All in a day's work!

Of course, Sue's background helped prepare her for this job. She is an RN with a bachelor's degree in nursing, and worked for several years in hospitals in nursing and teaching capacities, first in Boston and then in Dallas. She then worked as a nurse for doctors in private practice before becoming a stay-at-home mom for her son, Jordan. When Jordan was in the fifth grade, Sue went back to work as Red Oak High School's nurse.

Jordan is now a freshman, and Sue has found that her work is never dull. "Every day is a new day, and there is always something new," she said. She has also learned that a nurse's workday is never officially over. Her services may be required at any time, whether it means stopping to assist victims of a car accident, giving the Heimlich maneuver to a choking child at a tee ball game or applying compresses to Jordan's broken wrist. "We have crutches at our house. People call and say, 'Sue, come check on so-and-so.'" Sue is there with crutches, bandages and her calm smile, putting everyone at ease.

That is what makes her a good school nurse — being able to work with grace in an unpredictable environment, putting her "patients" at ease. She wears multiple hats — those of nurse, teacher, counselor, advocate, mom, podium finder — and she wears them all well. **NOW**



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Around Town NOW



A ribbon cutting, top left, was held at Red Oak Coin Laundry. Aimee Boone and Melissa Gonzalez, top center, assisted with the North Ellis County Outreach's move to their new location. Emilio Gonzalez, top right, brought his dog, Corky, to the park. Local cheer director Kimberly Washington, second row left, posed for the camera during a local event. Red Oak Peewee Football Association coaches Susie Ragsdale, Craig Thomas and Jeremy Bates, second row center, prepared to meet with local families. Melanie Peterson, in center of photo at second row right, pulled the community together for the annual Canine Carnival at the Red Oak Park. Friends, family and supporters, bottom left, celebrated the opening of North Ellis County Outreach's new facility. A ribbon cutting, bottom right, was held at Stanley Restoration.

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Look Who's Cooking

— By Faith Browning

IN THE KITCHEN WITH KATY MARCHANT

Creative cooking” describes Katy’s particular cooking style. “I love mastering a recipe,” she said. “I love adjusting recipes to my own taste and the tastes of my family.” Katy enjoys searching the Internet for several versions of the same recipes. “Most will have similar ingredients, but they are never exact,” Katy said. “I like figuring out how to make a recipe in a way that will be closest to what I want.”

Having a Japanese heritage has put a unique twist on Katy’s family gatherings. “New Year’s Day is always a good time for everyone to get together and make enough egg rolls for the first half of the year,” Katy said. “I felt very good last year when I mastered my grandmother’s egg roll recipe!” **NOW**

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

CHERRIES AND CREAM ROLL

1 cup sifted cake flour
1 tsp. baking powder
1/4 tsp. salt
3 eggs
3/4 cup sugar
1 Tbsp. frozen orange juice concentrate, thawed
2 Tbsp. water
1 21-oz. can red cherry pie filling
2 cups (1 pint) heavy cream
1/2 cup confectioner’s sugar
1/2 tsp. almond extract
Grease a 15 x 10 x 1-inch jelly roll pan. Line bottom with wax paper; grease paper. Preheat oven to 375 F. Sift flour, baking powder and salt onto a fresh piece of wax paper. Beat eggs in a medium size bowl with an electric mixer at high speed until thick. Beat in sugar, 1 Tbsp. at a time. Continue to beat at high speed until mixture is thick and creamy. Turn mixer to a low speed; beat in orange juice and water. Sift flour mixture in little by little; beat until smooth. Pour into prepared pan, spreading gently to corners. Bake in preheated oven for 12 minutes or until center springs back when lightly touched. Loosen cake around edges with a paring knife. Invert onto a clean towel that has been dusted with confectioner’s

sugar; peel off paper. Trim 1/4 inch from all sides with a sharp knife for easier rolling. Roll cake and towel up together, starting with one of the long sides. Cool completely on wire rack. Put cherry pie filling in sieve and let most of the liquid run off. Beat cream in medium mixing bowl until stiff. Beat in confectioner’s sugar and almond extract. Unroll cake; spread with half the cream. Spoon 3/4 of the cherries over the cream. Roll up cake and filling, using towel to aide rolling. Place roll, seam side down, on serving plate. Spread with remaining cream; garnish with remaining cherries.

EVERYTHING COOKIES

Makes about 5 dozen cookies.

1 cup (2 sticks) butter
1/3 cup white sugar
1/3 cup brown sugar
2 eggs
2 tsp. vanilla extract
1 tsp. almond extract
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 tsp. ginger
pinch of salt

2 1/2 cups oatmeal
1/2 cup pecans, finely chopped
1/2 cup dried cherries, cut into smaller pieces
1/2 cup mini chocolate chips
1/2 cup butterscotch chips
1/2 cup toffee bits
Preheat oven to 350 F. Cream butter with sugars. Add eggs, vanilla and almond extracts; beat well. Combine together flour, baking powder, cinnamon, ginger and salt. Add dry mixture to sugar mixture. Fold in oatmeal; beat well. Fold in nuts, cherries, chips and bits; mix well. Place teaspoon sized rounds of dough on foil-lined cookie sheets. Bake 7 - 8 minutes.

EGG ROLLS

3 or 4 dry shitake mushrooms
1 lb. ground chuck
1 lb. pork breakfast sausage
1 large onion, chopped
1/2 can water chestnuts, drained and chopped
3/4 pkg. broccoli sprouts
pickled ginger to taste
1/2 cup water
2/3 Tbsp. cornstarch
salt, pepper, soy sauce to taste



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Who's Cooking **NOW**

2-3 packages of egg roll skins

About half an hour before cooking, place dried mushrooms in a bowl of water. Brown ground beef, pork sausage and onion together in a large pot. Chop mushrooms, water chestnuts, sprouts and ginger to a smaller size and mix them into the meat mixture. Add water and cornstarch. Season with salt, pepper and soy sauce to taste; simmer until thickened. Let cool and then dip 1 spoonful onto egg roll skin and use a cornstarch or flour paste to seal edges. Egg roll skins have instructions on the best way to roll the egg rolls. Deep fat fry in vegetable oil at 375 F until crisp. Drain on paper towels.

FRIED RICE

This is the recipe my mom learned from my granny.

2 cups ham, sliced into thin strips or sausage,
crumbled and browned

4 green onions, chopped

2 cups rice, cooked and cooled

1 egg

soy sauce, to taste

2 carrots, shredded

Fry chopped ham or sausage and green onions together. Stir in cooled rice. When rice has started to warm up, scoot it to the sides to make an empty center in the frying pan. Scramble egg with soy sauce; pour into the center of the pan. Begin to let it cook. Be patient. If you stir the egg into the rice too soon, it makes all the rice mushy. After the egg has cooked about halfway, stir it up off the bottom of the pan; stir it into the rice. After rice is hot, stir in shredded carrots; let cook until carrots just begin to go limp. Do not overcook; carrots should still have a crisp texture.



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Declare **Your Financial Independence Day**

— By Renee Chase

As we get close to the Fourth of July, you may be thinking of where you'll be going to attend a picnic, watch fireworks or engage in any of the other activities that accompany the holiday. And while it's always meaningful to commemorate our nation's many freedoms, you may want to take this opportunity to think about another celebration of liberty — your own "Financial Independence Day."

However, unlike the Fourth of July, Financial Independence Day won't just show up on the calendar; you have to work to make it happen. Here are a few suggestions for doing just that:

- **Liberate yourself from debt.**

You don't have to be a free spender to rack up a lot of debt. The cost of living is high, and sometimes you need to use

loans and credit. But the more money you owe, the harder it is to achieve financial independence, so try to reduce, consolidate or eliminate as many debts as possible. You may have to drive that old car one year longer or postpone that vacation until you can pay for it up front, but these and similar moves may pay off down the road.

- **Emancipate your investments.**

To achieve your long-term financial goals, you need your investments to provide you with the combination of growth potential and income that's appropriate for your individual needs. To accomplish this, though, these investments need to be "free" from being raided constantly to pay for the costs of everyday life. That's why you should establish an emergency fund containing six to 12 months' worth of living expenses. By keeping this fund in a liquid account, you won't have to tap into your investments the next

time you have a major car repair, need a new appliance or face an unexpected medical bill.

- **Unchain the potential of your retirement accounts.**

Every time you get a raise, boost your contributions to your retirement plan at work — i.e., your 401(k), 403(b) or 457(b). Your money has the potential to grow on a tax-deferred basis, and you typically contribute pre-tax dollars, so the more you put in, the lower your annual adjusted gross income will be. But if you're not contributing the maximum allowed, or at least as much as you can afford, you're putting "shackles" on the ability of these plans to help you attain the retirement lifestyle you've envisioned.

- **Free your family from threats to your income.**

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Financial independence will always be elusive unless you protect your family from the potential loss of your income, and that's why you need adequate life insurance, especially in the years when your children are young and you're still paying on your house. At the same time, you may need disability insurance to replace your income if you can't work due to illness or injury. Your employer may offer a disability policy, but it might be insufficient to meet your needs, so you may need to add extra coverage.

By taking these and other steps, you can go a long way toward turning Financial Independence Day from a goal into a reality — so take action soon. **NOW**

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

Health
NOW

Suffering With Arthritis

— By Betty Tryon

Do you have joint pain, stiffness and swelling for no apparent reason? You may have arthritis. An estimated one in three adults in America suffers from this affliction. The crowded field of sufferers lets you know you are not alone with this painful condition. Because so many people suffer from chronic joint pain of some type, much attention in the area of research focuses on treating this ailment.

Many think of arthritis (joint inflammation) as one disorder; however, the term covers over 100 medical conditions with symptoms including swelling, inflammation and joint pain. The spectrum for this disorder can include mild discomfort to irreversible physical damage to any organ or system in the body. There are two common forms of arthritis: osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis.

Osteoarthritis, also called degenerative joint disease, results in the breakdown and loss of cartilage in the affected area. The symptoms are related to the degenerative effects of the cartilage tissue loss: decreased function of the affected joint, swelling, tenderness to touch, pain and sometimes a grating sensation caused by bone rubbing against bone. Osteoarthritis is more likely to occur as we age; the repetitive use of our joints causes the cartilage to deteriorate. Obesity increases the risk factor of developing the disease and can worsen the symptoms. Heredity can be a factor in its development. Joint injury can also cause the beginning of osteoarthritis.

The second most common form of arthritis is rheumatoid

arthritis. Unlike osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis presents itself as an autoimmune disease that attacks healthy joints, instigating the development of inflammation and resultant joint damage. Rheumatoid arthritis will usually exhibit itself bilaterally. The symmetrical pattern of the affliction helps to distinguish this disease from other types of arthritis. This disease possesses the potential to limit everyday activities such as buttoning a shirt or holding objects. The encouraging news is that not everyone responds the same way with the same degree of severity. In addition, there can be periods where the symptoms may diminish or disappear.

At this time, the cause of rheumatoid arthritis is unknown. Something triggers the immune system to attack the body's organs or joints. There are many theories as to what precipitates the attack, including: the role of genetics, the environment, hormones and possibly an attack by a virus or bacteria.

Unfortunately, there is no cure for arthritis. Treatment consists of a combination of drugs and physical therapy. Some have found relief with holistic methods. Your physician can assist you in tailoring a treatment plan that is best for your needs. If you have joint pain, swelling or stiffness for more than two weeks, consult your doctor. **NOW**

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

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July 2008

Community Calendar

Every Monday

Summer Reading Club, 7:00 - 8:00 p.m., Red Oak Public Library. Register at library. Performances by a magician and yo-yo champion and live animals. Weekly prizes. www.redoakpubliclibrary.org.

First and Third Tuesdays

Red Oak Lions Club meeting: 7:00 p.m. at 207 West Red Oak Rd. (972) 617-3577.

Second Tuesday

Wagon Wheel Saddle Club meeting: 7:30 p.m. (972) 223-8118. www.wagonwheelsaddleclub.com.

Third Wednesday

Ellis County Christian Women's Connection luncheon: 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., Waxahachie Country Club, 1920 W. Hwy. 287. \$13.00. Vouchers for child care available. (972) 937-2807 or (972) 937-9984. windchime@charter.net.

Third Thursday

American Business Women's Association meeting: 5:45 p.m., Waxahachie Civic Center. (972) 938-0703 or stephanie@customcaregivers.com.

Last Thursday

DeSoto Art League meeting. www.desotoartleague.com.

First Saturday

Red Oak Fire Rescue CPR classes: 9:00 a.m. Register in advance. (469) 218-7713. www.redoaktx.org.

First and Third Saturday

Family Story Time: 3:30 - 4:30 p.m., Red Oak Public Library, 200 Lakeview Pkwy. (469) 218-1230. www.redoakpubliclibrary.org.

Every Saturday in July

Waxahachie Downtown Farmers Market, 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., Franklin Street between Rogers and College. Call (972) 938-2101, ext. 198.

July 5

Waxahachie Songwriters Saturday in the Park: 7:00 - 10:00 p.m. at Chautauqua Auditorium by Getzenaner Park. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. (972) 938-9990.

July 11

Waxahachie Summer Moonlight Movies Under the Stars: 9:00 p.m., downtown at East Franklin St. between Jackson and College St. Bring your blanket or lawn chair. (972) 937-7330, ext. 198.

July 12

SETTLES Nature and Science center: 9:00 a.m. - noon at Pettigrew Academy, 806 East Marvin Ave., Waxahachie. Featuring the Dallas Zoo Nature Exchange. Free children's event. (972) 923-1633.

July 12 - 13

Waxahachie Trade Days, located at the Ellis County Expo Center, will be open Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. and Sunday 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Call Dean Worley at (903)

286-0183, e-mail waxtradedays@yahoo.com or visit www.waxtradedays.com.

July 18 - 20

Heart of Texas Arts and Crafts Show, Waxahachie Civic Center, 2000 Civic Center Lane. Friday: 3:00 - 8:00 p.m. Saturday: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Sunday: 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. \$3 admission for adults. Children under 12 are free. (903) 217-8081.

July 26

Downtown Ovilla Days: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. at Heritage Park at the intersection of Main St. and Ovilla Rd. / FM 664. Arts, crafts, antiques, refreshment vendors and free entertainment. (972) 515-8550.

July 28

R.O. Pee Wee Football Association will distribute equipment to teams for full practices to begin. (972) 576-2211.

August 3

NBBC "Run Toward the Son" Motorcycle Rally: 10:15 a.m., New Beginnings Bible Church, 1970 FM 983, Ferris. Motorcycle games, contests and door prizes. Enjoy free hot dogs and bottled water. Register online at www.new-beginningsbiblechurch.com or call (972) 842-2800.

For more community events, visit our online calendar at www.nowmagazines.com.



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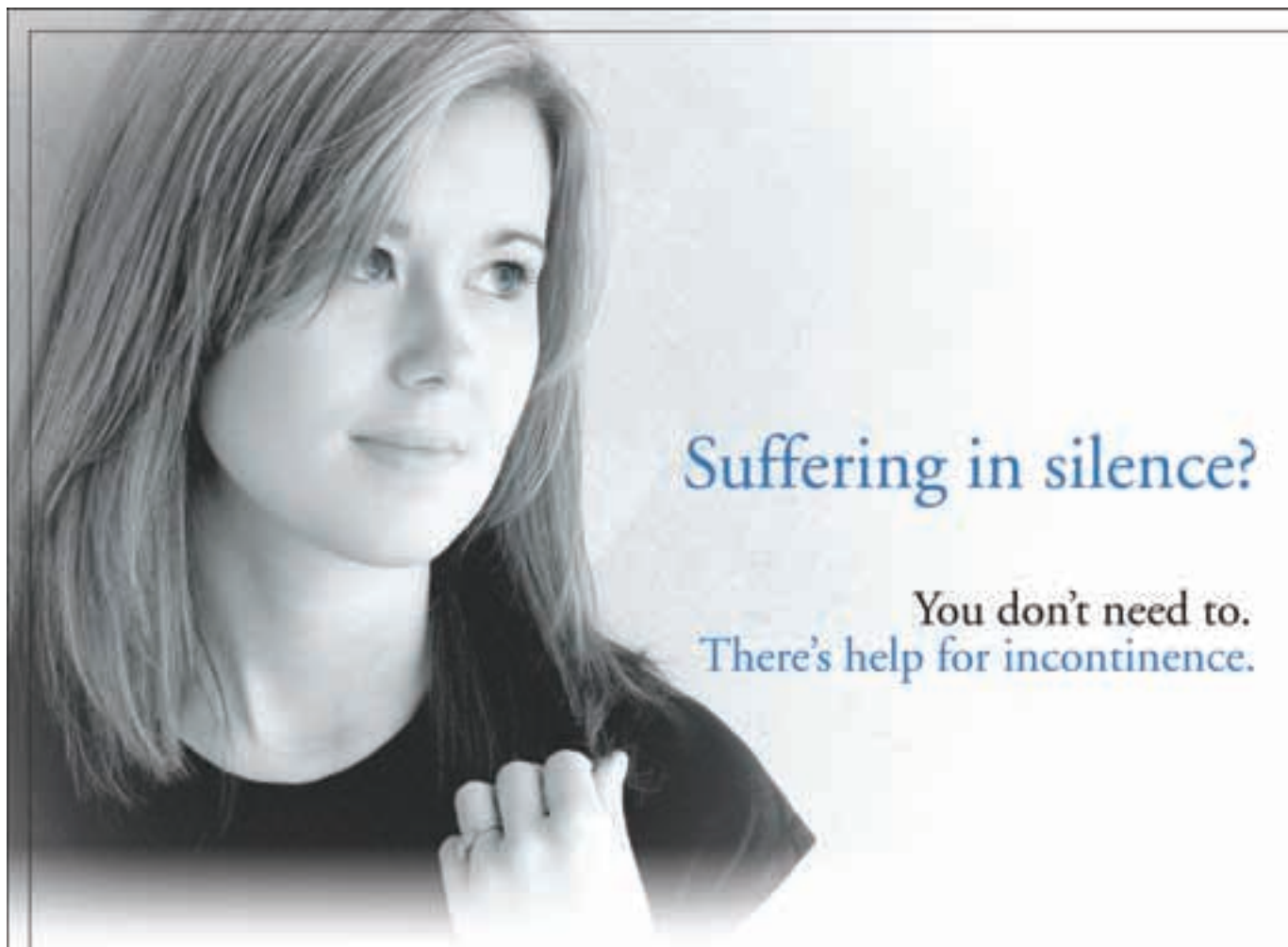
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