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Editor's Note

Hello, Waxahachie!

I am proud to be an American, where I know I am free — free to read the books I choose, listen to music that soothes my soul and worship without fear of imprisonment or death. All the freedoms we enjoy as a nation did not come easy or without great sacrifice. Thanks to the courage, strength and fortitude of brave men and women who serve in the military, I am able to sit down in front of my computer and compose my July editor's note based on what I think and how I feel.

As they continue to fight for the freedoms we all enjoy, I will continue to pray for their safe return from the trenches. I will salute them daily by speaking words of gratitude. As you celebrate Independence Day, I hope you will take a moment to do the same.

Sandra McIntosh
WaxahachieNOW Editor



Susan Piccolo, CIC, 25 years experience
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A Wonderful Thing

— By Sandra McIntosh

Gene Krueger and his wife, Connie, made the decision to relocate to this area soon after a motor home vacation to Ellis County from their home on South Padre Island, Texas.

“When we arrived, our great-granddaughter ran out to greet us,” Gene said. They knew they had to get to Waxahachie as soon as they could so they would be able to share in the lives of their one child, four grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. “This is where our family lives,” he added, “so we live here now, too.”

Gene, at age 78, has made quite an impression on his peers since moving to Waxahachie nearly two years ago. Almost immediately, he got involved with the Waxahachie Senior Citizens Center (SCC). Looking back, he can probably count on the fingers of one hand the days he has missed at the center in the

past 24 months. “The center provides so much,” he said, also sure to mention his love for his fellow human beings. “There’s the fellowship and camaraderie; the family atmosphere. I get so much more than I give. I sometimes feel a bit selfish.”

Some families experience anger issues, which cause them to split up, but Gene has yet to see anything like that among the “family” members at the SCC. “I don’t really have anything to compare it to, since this is my first experience with a center for seniors, but what we have here is very, very special,” Gene said. He credits the three-member staff — Director Cindy Schneider, Lisa Gonzalez and Linda Buelna — for making the center such a wonderful place. “There are only three of them,” he said, “but they have so much experience with senior citizens. They work so hard to make the center a place we want to come back to day after day.”

Since Gene is at the center most every day, he decided to help himself by sharing his expertise with others who attended the



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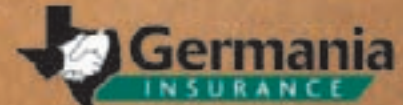
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center on a regular basis. "I began to teach them how to play Texas Hold'em," he said. "We don't play to gamble; we play to keep history alive." The card game is based on the regular game of poker with a few additional rules, which broaden the game considerably. To play, all you need is a deck of 52 cards, poker chips, a dealer and anywhere from two to 20 players.

Terms like "pot," "posting the blinds," "first blind," "second blind," "blind bets," "hole cards" and "flop" are common lingo in the game of Texas Hold'em. The overall goal is to end up with the best hand when combining the cards that were dealt with the




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pocket cards, those cards that are dealt in the center of the gaming table by the dealer. Bets are made as each player around the table takes their turn. There are a total of five rounds, also referred to as "fifth street" or "the river."

Players are allowed to call, raise or fold when it comes time to place their bets. Those players remaining in the game on this fifth and final round show their cards and the person who can make the best five-card hand wins. Winning hands can include, but are not limited to, a royal flush, a full house and a straight.

The rules of play are cut-and-dry and fairly simple, but Gene has learned it is best to teach his fellow seniors by

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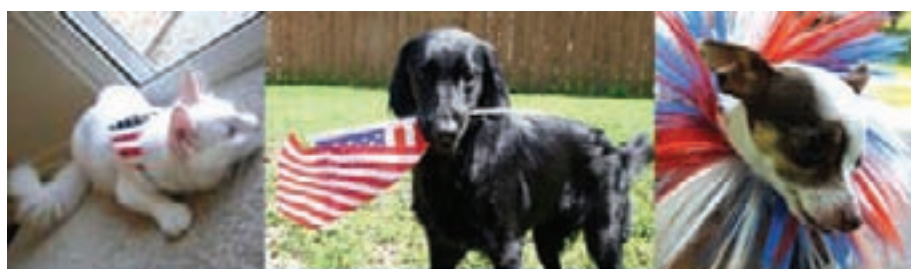
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just dealing the cards and explaining the game as they go along. "And the dealer never seems to win," he laughed adding that he is always the dealer. "I have to deal all the time because some of the players are in their 90s."

Every Tuesday, players donate one dollar to carry on the tradition of the game. All other "bets" are placed with colorful poker chips. At the end of play, the winner gets to keep the dollar bills, but the chips are put away for the following week. The SCC game has grown from one or two tables in the old facility on Patrick Street to twice

**"There's the
fellowship
and
camaraderie;
the family
atmosphere.
I get so much more
than I give. I
sometimes feel
a bit selfish."**

as many tables in the new facility located right off Highway 77 on Park Hills Drive. Cindy could not be happier with the extra room and the growth it has afforded the "poker players." The extra square footage means a fully equipped exercise room, a computer lab with 10 computers and a kiln for the clay and ceramic classes now being offered. "I would love to offer dance lessons in the future," Cindy said. "The choice of things we can offer in the future is limitless."

Although Gene spends his days at the center, he always finds the necessary time needed to express himself through poetry. He seems to follow naturally in his mother's footsteps. "I found this



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one about three years after her passing,” Gene said, turning to a faded page within the binder where he keeps the poetry that means the most to him. “Mom wrote this one in 1925.” As he shared her words aloud with those at the table, they knew he was sharing something dear, something close to his heart. It was no surprise when Gene stood behind the microphone during the new facility’s grand opening ceremony. “He graciously agreed to recite the poem he wrote about the Senior Citizens Center,” Cindy said, proud of the advocate she has found in Gene.

Moving to the new location proved bittersweet for everyone, including Gene. “We had some wonderful blessings in



the old building,” he confessed. “Who can’t have fun when three ladies greet you with a hug and a smile?” Tears of happiness and sadness were shed at the end of April when the move to the new building was made. “We were limited due to space at the old facility,” Cindy said. “Now we have an even greater opportunity to reach all senior citizens 55 years and older. Several rooms will allow for several activities at one time. We have a place where anything can happen and anything is possible!”

Recent studies show that fellowship with people your own age is a good thing. This rule also applies to senior citizens. Depression is less, physical maladies are fewer and overall mental health is improved. As far as Gene is concerned, “Being labeled a senior citizen is a wonderful thing.” He has worked a lifetime for that title. **NOW**

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So Many Options

— By Jaime Ruark

Kim Phillips' lovely brick home sits at the end of a curving street. Having lived in her three-bedroom, two-bath residence for 15 years now, Kim has a love not only for her house, which she calls a labor of love, but also for the community. "I love Waxahachie. I fell in love with this town about 17 years ago. We'd visit friends who lived here, and the square and the neighborhoods; it was so quaint and it just had a good feel. It has a real hometown feeling that is hard to find," she said.

Along with her 18-year-old son, Price, and her two Bichon Frise dogs, Beau and Chase, Kim welcomes family and friends into her house with a smile as vibrant and friendly as the colors with which she has chosen to decorate. "I have no favorite color. I never have. It's always been impossible for me to pick one. It depends on the day; it depends on my mood. Colors are my



At Home With

KIM PHILLIPS





favorite thing, though — all colors,” she shared. “I’m a very eclectic person. I don’t have a certain style of furniture. I don’t have a favorite style of dress. I don’t have a favorite food. There’s too many options, and I can never limit myself.”

The entire color spectrum comes together harmoniously in each room, from the sunny yellow walls of the kitchen to the living room, where a riot of shades pulls the eye in every direction. “This house is a combination of 10 years of me doing it myself, so you’ll probably find every color of the rainbow somewhere in the house,” she smiled. Kim has always had an interest in art; on almost every wall hang prints of her favorite painter, the Dutch post-Impressionist artist Vincent van Gogh. A pioneer of the Expressionist style of painting, van Gogh used a kaleidoscope of splashy colors, so of course Kim’s bright style is enhanced by his brilliant



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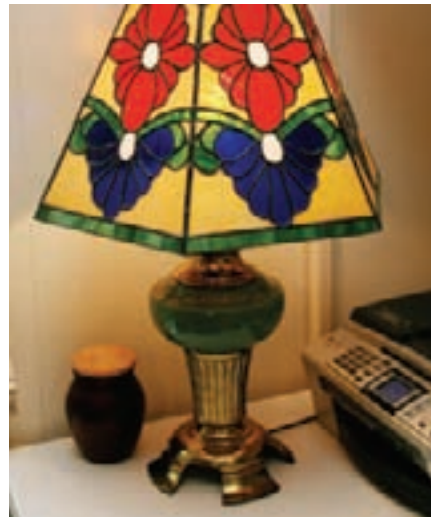
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hues, such as *The Starry Night* print that hangs over her mantle. "I always buy the prints at the gallery I'm visiting, so every print I have is of a painting I have actually seen," she noted.

In almost every window of the home are beautiful stained glass works of art created by Kim's mother. "She's very talented," Kim smiled. A table topped with the vivid stained glass lights up to display gorgeous blue and yellow sunflowers in the living area, echoing the sunflower theme of the kitchen. Laughingly explaining that she comes from a naturally artistic family, Kim said, "The living room is actually my favorite room and the reason I bought the house. I love the big openness of it," she said. "All through high school and after, I've always done art. I can just see things in my mind, and when I saw this house, I envisioned how I wanted this space," she added, pointing out the floor-to-ceiling bookshelves that became the focal point for the design of the area. "I drew up what I wanted and



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my father built them for me.”

Although she could picture in her artistic mind exactly how she wanted the house to look, the process of Kim’s vision becoming reality was a long one. “When I first moved in, all the walls had dark paneling. Everything was really dark and every room had a different carpet color,” she recalled. Although she is a lover of color, the carpet was one of the first things to go, along with the paneling and wallpaper. “Almost everything has been redone. It’s been a long process, because I did each job as I got the money,” she said.

“Building the laundry room and remodeling the kitchen were probably the two major things I did. I gutted the kitchen and started from the ground up. Everything was redone, a complete remodel.”

Because she has such pride and love for her community, Kim used only local contractors for the remodel work, making sure that she was the driving force for every step along the way. “I did it all, from picking out the tile and figuring out dimensions to all the painting,” she noted. “Pretty much everything you see was done by me, even the

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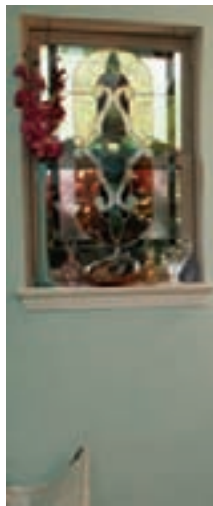
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flower arrangements. This house was really a labor of love, down to every nook and cranny. I have a lot of pride in having done all that work."

Kim is a collector of art and loves to find pieces that speak of her travels. The walls and bookshelves in her living room are replete with souvenirs from all over the globe, from paintings and gourds to brightly colored red, yellow, green and blue hand-blown glass vases. "My friends and parents would start getting me things from their travels, too, so I have pieces from Kenya, India, Egypt, Mexico, Russia, Boston, New York and Washington, D.C.," she said. Kim also loves to read,



so of course the bookshelves are full of books. "I have many areas within my house where I can sit and read," she added. "I have lots of things I've incorporated from my childhood, like this picture book, *Arty the Smarty*, which

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is the first book I ever learned to read.”

The flower arrangements Kim created throughout the house add touches of color and help to create a feeling of continuity. “I carry themes and colors from room to room. To me, it all starts flowing together,” she said. A large rug with an African animal theme hangs on the living room wall, with a tiger, toucan, zebra and leopard creating another riot of colors that brings brightness to the room. Kim painted the blades of her ceiling fans to match the jungle scene, hiding her dog, Beau, amongst the grass.



Kim’s bedroom and master bath, painted in calming shades of blue, also show her artistic nature. The red of the bedspread brings a vivid “pop” of color to the space. More of her mother’s luminous stained glass decorates the windows and her walls are a gallery of more paintings and prints. “This is one of my favorite rooms and the painting over the bed is one of my favorite pieces,” she shared. “I actually found it at a garage sale, and I just love the colors in it.”

Kim has masterfully created a feeling of warmth and happiness in her home; each room truly represents the artistic nature of the owner. She has made her residence a place she and Price love to come home to. With a smile, she said, “My house is my space. Each piece of art is special. Everything I have is a memory for me.” **NOW**



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“Thinking outside the box” allowed Linda to create some wonderful things using only her camera and her vivid imagination.

Linda Moxley has a keen eye for capturing beauty within the viewfinder of her camera. Whether it be landscapes, buildings, alleyways, windows or an array of detailed butterflies, Linda is able to see what so many others might miss along life’s way. “I inherited my mom’s cameras and her carousels of pictures,” Linda remembered. “She was my inspiration.”

While many well-known photographers spend years in the classroom learning the art form of snapping the perfect picture, Linda has spent the biggest part of her adult life learning from simply doing. She has created an art gallery of sorts upon the walls of her own home, and the placement of her artwork is as unique as the person who took the photographs. In fact, the way things are showcased could also be considered a rare art form in and of itself. “You can hang a picture anywhere,” she smiled. “There is definitely nothing traditional about the way I hang and display my artwork.”



No matter where visitors look, Linda has managed to strategically hang framed photos at every eye level imaginable, thus allowing beauty to be seen no matter where one looks.

Some of her snapshots stand alone, while several others are displayed in like groupings. On first inspection, single pictures of eggs and vegetables in Linda’s kitchen look more like postcards than simple photographs. The colors are deep and rich, giving the illusion that the produce is real and ripe for the picking, instead of captured in timeless beauty on photo paper. There are also photos inlaid on an antique, rustic

Capturing the Beauty

— By Sandra McIntosh

framed serving tray. “These pictures remind me of my trips to France,” she said, explaining that her two most favorite places to snap photos are during her many trips to France and in her very own 40-acre backyard. “I love taking

pictures in France. I also love windows, nature and butterflies,” she added. As the seasons change, so do the pictures in many of her frames.

Linda’s farm animals are regally displayed on an oversized easel. She snapped a unique Christmas photograph incorporating Christmas hats and long, red Christmas stockings. Laughing, she said the animals actually cooperated, thus making this particular

shoot even more fun than she imagined it could be. The fireplace screen is the backdrop for two sunflower photos.

“One was taken in France,” Linda said, “and the other one was taken right here at home.” Although both pictures are of the same type of flower, Linda’s eye captured different lighting in each photograph, allowing them to be totally different in color, clarity and overall presentation.

Along one wall, Linda displayed two separate groupings that include five small, framed prints each. These, too, were taken on her most recent trip overseas. “These were the only photos I had



left," she said, mentioning that her pocketbook had been stolen. "Luckily, I'd selected these pictures before someone grabbed my purse." Every photograph is enveloped in a frame that complements the photo, and no two frames are exactly alike. "Almost everything is framed in bargain basement frames I've found at Corners [Art Gallery & Custom] in downtown Waxahachie," she admitted. For her, finding the frames that best suit her photographs is half the fun.

Linda even has artwork displayed on an antique carrying case that serves as a night stand in her guest room where visitors and guests can easily see it as they enter the room. She used a gate to a chain link fence as a backdrop for several close up butterfly photos, while shots of yellow canaries in a Paris bird market find their home in an antique birdcage.

Taking photographs of the surrounding beauty would be enough for most photographers, but not for Linda. She not only lives among the art form she chose to pursue, she also shares it with others in the form of greeting cards for all occasions. "I started making cards at Christmas when I was a little girl," she explained. "They grew over the years to include my photographs." Personalized, one-of-a-

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kind greeting and note cards are no longer reserved for family. Linda, also known as “Mox” to her close friends, has since started making them for those same close friends. When they receive a Saxon Creek Farm Original, they know the care and time that was spent to send it to them.

“Thinking outside the box” allowed Linda to create some wonderful things using only her camera and her vivid

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imagination. She mimicked a stained glass window in Bethel United Methodist Church using only two identical snapshots, two pieces of clear glass and a border of lead. One abstract photo she created was too large for its frame when complete, so she hung the photo outside the frame. “This particular arrangement earned first place honors at a local art show,” she added. Whether it be an antique hymnal board, a barren landscape of the Santa Fe Mountains or an empty frame that longs for its own photograph, Linda is able to add her own brand of beauty using what she sees through the viewfinder. **NOW**

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Fishing's Finest Hour

— By Sandra McIntosh

Reggi Stewart started fishing at the age of 5. His memories of going out on the area lake with his father are vivid, and will most likely never fade. “The time I spent as a boy fishing with my dad was quality time,” Reggi commented. “He started the fire in my heart, and it’s grown over the years. I just love to fish.”

While his father, Neely Stewart, got the passion started at a young age, Reggi’s brother, Tommy Stewart, introduced

him to the sport of competitive bass fishing in the early ’80s. “I became a true angler in 1980,” Reggi said. “That’s when I got heavily involved in tournament bass fishing.” When Reggi started in the competitive circuit, he did not leave his father behind. “I got him into bass fishing, too,” he said.

Just like in any other sport, preparation is very important. Fishing outside competitions during the week served as preparation for the weekend

tournaments. “Keeping a personal log book is a great teaching tool that helped prepare me for the big fish,” he said. “I would log what I caught, where I caught it and how big it was, while also making sure to document the water temperature and weather conditions.”

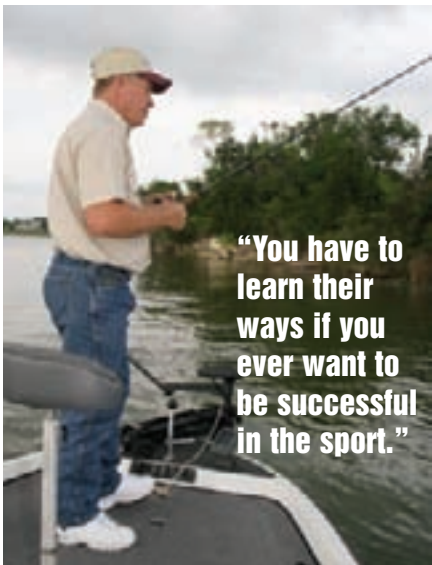
In fact, Reggi fished with his dad and his dad’s cousin one day a week for an entire year before his father was diagnosed with cancer. The recovery time following his dad’s surgery was lengthy, but it did not keep the father and son team from sharing one more day trip to Richland Chambers Creek in Navarro County. “We both caught lots of fish that day,” Reggi said, with the emotion that comes from fond memories apparent in his voice. “It was a great day!”

Fishing to some is as simple as putting a worm on a hook and casting their line into the backyard pond. For others, it is all about the notoriety the sport of competitive bass fishing can provide every weekend if the angler



desires to be gone from his family that often. Before his father's illness, Reggi used to fall into the latter category of fishermen. Looking back now, Reggi recalls the weekends spent away from family. "I was pretty much gone every weekend," he confessed. "I did it for the challenge it offered. Bass are so smart. You have to learn their ways if you ever want to be successful in the sport."

Changes in the way Reggi fished came almost immediately after his father's untimely passing. Brother Gary Morgan of the Cowboy Church of Ellis County handled his father's service. "I was so touched by his words," Reggi confessed, "that I was in attendance at the Cowboy Church the very next Sunday."



"You have to learn their ways if you ever want to be successful in the sport."

Not long after that first visit, Reggi attended a leadership meeting where the idea of the Bass Club Ministry was born. If Reggi leaves for a weekend of fishing these days, you can be sure that he will have his wife, Teri, in the cab of the truck beside him. In the past five years, his view on fishing has taken two separate roads defined only by years. "There's the years before church" he said, "and the years after church."

Life for Reggi did not get exciting until the Bass Club Ministry got started. The group is comprised of no fewer

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than 200 members. Fifty percent are active members of the Cowboy Church. Another 30 percent are members of other churches in the Ellis County area and the remaining 20 percent do not attend church. "Once a month, we all go out on a fishing trip that's no more than an hour's drive from Waxahachie," Reggi said. "Teri and I set up our motor home at the lake."

Reggie enjoys sharing tales from the group's monthly trips, but he gives extra credit to his wife. "Teri makes me look good. She's always at the boat ramp at 4:30 in the morning to get all

"It's also about the friendships we've made and the fellowship we all share."


those fishing signed up," he said, further explaining that Teri takes care of all the paperwork involved in these club tournaments. "All participants are required to attend prayer at 5:30 a.m. and then they begin fishing from 6:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. All the fish caught are weighed by 4:00." At the end of the tournament, before payments are handed out to the winners, Reggi will come out of his angler comfort zone and share a 15-minute devotional. "It's no longer just about fishing," he said. "It's also about the friendships we've made and the fellowship we all share."

In the coming months, Teri has scheduled four fishing events that will be held at Cedar Hill State Park. The booths that will be set up will teach something different about the sport of fishing. These events promise to be educational and enlightening, as well as fun. Even though he is very busy leading his church ministry, Reggi still finds time to go out on the lake by himself every once in a while. "The time in the early morning when everything around you is waking up is the best time," Reggi claimed. "It's God's finest hour." **NOW**




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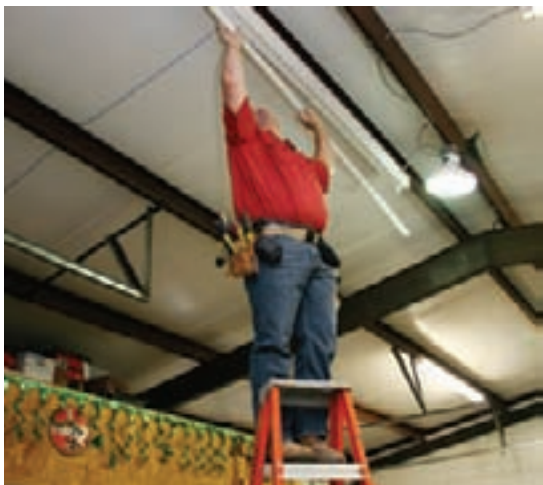
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Keeping It Real

— By Sandra McIntosh



Jeff Belser, owner of Miles Electric, knew what his career choice was going to be as a young teenager. "My family was living in Ingleside, Texas, across the bay from Corpus Christi," he said. "Mom had a service call on an electrical problem she was having, and the man charged her \$25. He wasn't at the house 30 minutes." From that point on, Jeff fondly remembers tinkering with any further electrical problems that arose. "I fixed TVs," he said. "The first ceiling fan I hung was on Mother's Day, 1979. I can't begin to count how many I've hung since then."

While still living in South Texas, Jeff completed high school and then enrolled in the four-year Union Apprenticeship Program offered in his area. He spent the first year working during the day and attending classes every evening. After completing the first 12 months, Jeff was offered a job in Dallas, so he decided to leave the program, moving to the area in 1983. "I worked for this man for 12 years," Jeff stated, also mentioning he worked with a journeyman's license that was secured after his relocation. "It usually takes four years to earn your journeyman's license through the union program. I got mine in three."

In 1996, Jeff left the electrical industry behind to start his own security company, which he still owns today. When the economy started to decline, Jeff began to notice that the security system business was the first item to go on a budget when it came to new home building. When he decided it was time to return to the business of electricity just over a year ago, Jeff knew he no longer wanted to work for someone else. "I wanted to be my own boss," he said. "In order to do that, I had to go back to school. I needed my master electrician's license if I was going to

be competitive in the business world.” The master’s license allows Jeff to be bonded, as well as free to advertise his business. “You must be insured if you want to keep your license in good standing,” he added. Each year, Jeff attends four hours of Internet classes to keep his license current and up-to-date.

Jeff, known as “Peck” to family, friends and customers, was proud to explain where the Miles Electric company name originated. “My middle name is Miles and my son, Brad’s, middle name is Miles, too,” he explained. “It just keeps it real. Maybe one day Brad will take over the family business, but for now, he’s continuing his education and playing his guitar whenever and wherever he can.” When asked to explain the nickname, he smiled as memories of his grandfather quickly came to mind. “He named me after the *Peck’s Bad Boy* reader that was popular back in the day,” he smiled. “I was always into mischief, just like the boy in the book. I got the nickname when I was a boy. My grandfather was the only one to call me that until I turned 16. I guess it just stuck.”

Already knowing what the business end of owning a company was like, Jeff’s struggle with Miles Electric has been centered around the recessed economy. “I do lots of service calls,” he said. “That’s about all you’ll get these days unless you are a long-time, well-established company.” For Jeff, local advertising and word-of-mouth comments pertaining to past work have helped to grow his electrical business. “Getting my name out there is the key,” he said. “I’m not making money if I’m sitting at home.” To contact Jeff at his “office on wheels,” individuals are encouraged to call (972) 877-4776. Oh, and do not be surprised when Jeff wishes you a Merry Christmas at the end of the conversation! “That’s how I’ve always said goodbye,” he laughed. **NOW**

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Making Everyday Art

Extraordinary



— By Danielle Parker

Put a pencil in a 5-year-old's hand and most would call it scribble, but not Dianna Robertson. This Waxahachie art teacher tends to find a potential masterpiece in every design her students create. Dianna started out teaching at Marvin Elementary's kindergarten campus as a teacher's aide, but when an art teacher position came available, she saw a chance to tap into a long-neglected passion. "Even though I taught 500-600 students over three days each week, I loved the kids," Dianna said. "I was determined to give every student an art experience."

After 14 years of teaching at Marvin, Dianna decided to take a break from education, or so she thought. "When I left, some of the parents contacted me, wanting me to do private lessons," she remembered. So in January 2008, Dianna opened up Kid Art, an art studio for children from kindergarten through the third grade, but has since added several fourth-graders. "I have about 32 kiddos in homeschool, private, public and charter schools from Midlothian, Red Oak, Waxahachie and Maypearl," she said. "Quite a few of my students have been with me from the very beginning." She also teaches art every Friday morning to students in kindergarten through seventh grade at First Christian Day School.

Dianna has built upon what her aspiring artists learn in school. "This way, they not only get an additional hour, but

also a deeper art experience," she explained. "When you are working with 400-600 students, it's difficult to give every one the attention they need or provide the resources for that many children to really be able to get the full experience."

For Dianna, the "experience" includes getting messy, making mistakes and learning something new. "If there's one thing I want, I want my students to have the love for art and creativity," she said. Because the arts are a part of the world around her students, Dianna believes it is vital that they take in all it has to offer. "Whether it's music or writing or painting, art is a part of our culture," she said. "Art makes students better readers and writers because they have to use their imagination. They learn how to stop and pay attention to details and then create what they perceive. That's why it's important that these children experiment and explore."

In efforts to see her students delve into the world of art, Dianna provides them opportunities to let their imaginations take flight. "I let the kiddos do a lot of free art. I call it free art because that's what it is," she said. "Taping, gluing, cutting, folding and stapling. It doesn't look like much, but it's wonderful because it's fun. It broadens their imaginations and shows them they don't have to stay in the box."

It was that type of artistic freedom that gave Dianna the enthusiasm she now carries into her studio and classroom. "I

Education **NOW**

have no formal training in art, but I love it," she admitted. "I'm inspired by what I see. I remember growing up, my twin sister and I always had some type of project on the kitchen table. That's where we made memories and unique creations."

With that foundation of free art, the sky is the only limit for Dianna's students. "We try not to do 'crafty' projects," she said. "We use art elements — lines, patterns, colors, textures, space — instead of premade crafts. It is not about the end product as much as the process. 'What color? What texture?' It really has nothing to do with what it looks like. They can do a whole page of scribble, but as long as they put thought into it, I'm proud of them."

Dianna is not the only one giving recognition to her students. "This year, we entered in the Ellis County Art Association Youth Art Exhibit. Everyone did really well. Seven [of my] kids were awarded. It is important to me that they get to enter these types of things and get the feel of a real art exhibit. Plus, it gives them the experience of displaying their work and feeling proud of it."

Dianna's goal is to both put tools in her students' hands to help them create works of art to hang on the wall or refrigerator, and to teach them life skills. "My main focus is for their hands to be moving," she said. "I want to help them focus and stay on task, so it is important that they finish projects."

Beauty truly is in the eye of the beholder, and though Dianna may not be teaching the next Michelangelo or Picasso, she does believe she is preparing young men and women to be successful at whatever they do in life. "Seeing them love it makes me passionate about art," she said. "I'm not going to squish what they have in them to make what I want it to be. I give them the tools, but they can create what they want it to be, and that, to me, is what life and art is about." **NOW**


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Around Town

NOW



• Beautifully handcrafted quilts, top left, were displayed on the downtown square during Gingerbread Trails. • Aaron Middleton and Kollin Butler, top center, attended the Ninth Grade Academy Awards event where Aaron won several awards. • Fred Herbert of Fort Worth, top right, spent several days painting outdoors in Waxahachie during the annual Paint Historic Waxahachie event. • The final group of kindergarten students at Marvin Elementary, second row right, graduated in the lunchroom crowded with proud parents and family members. • Laura Locklear and Teri Moore, bottom left, needed a glass of iced tea after a long day on the lake at Waxahachie Creek Park. • Terry Moore, bottom right, was in charge of the fire underneath the shish kababs.



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Look Who's Cooking

By Faith Browning

IN THE KITCHEN WITH SISTER LUCY SALA

ITALIAN PASTA GRAVY (RED SAUCE)

1 cup olive oil
6 medium onions, chopped
2 whole pods garlic, chopped
3 8-oz. cans tomato paste plus 9 cans of water
6 12-oz. cans tomato sauce plus 6 cans of water
1/2 cup sugar
1/4 cup parsley flakes
2 Tbsp. garlic salt
2 Tbsp. onion salt
1 Tbsp. oregano
2 Tbsp. sweet basil
2 Tbsp. TexJoy Steak Seasoning
2 Tbsp. Italian seasoning
1 Tbsp. black pepper
Put olive oil in a large pot. Add onions and garlic; sauté until lightly brown. Add remaining ingredients; bring to a boil. Turn heat to low; cook for at least 3 to 4 hours,

stirring frequently. Gravy will thicken as it cools. Smell, taste and add more TexJoy, garlic, onion or basil if desired. Cook another 2 hours after adding meatballs. Place lid on pot, leaving slightly ajar, not closed completely.

ITALIAN MEATBALLS

2 lbs. ground beef
2 lbs. ground pork
3 eggs, beaten
2 medium onions, finely chopped
5 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
1/2 cup seasoned bread crumbs
1/2 cup water
1 Tbsp. TexJoy Steak Seasoning
1 Tbsp. onion salt
1 Tbsp. garlic salt
1 Tbsp. Italian seasoning
1 Tbsp. parsley flakes

1 tsp. pepper

Mix all ingredients in large bowl with your hands. Form into small balls; put on a cookie sheet. Bake at 400 F for about 25 minutes. Place meatballs into pot of Italian gravy; cook together for about 2 hours.

PASTA AND GARLIC

1 14-oz. wedge Parmesan cheese
1 pod garlic, chopped
1 cup olive oil
1 lb. thin pasta
2 Tbsp. TexJoy Steak Seasoning
1 Tbsp. garlic salt
Separate cheese into small chunks. In a frying pan, sauté garlic and cheese in 3/4 cup oil until garlic is light brown and cheese is soft. Cook pasta in lightly salted water and 1/4 cup oil. When pasta is half cooked, remove 1/2 the water to save for later. Pour garlic and cheese mixture over

St. Joseph Catholic School is blessed to have Sister Lucy Sala teaching their 4-year-old students. She works at creating an atmosphere of family, love, caring and sharing. "I try to instill in them a sense of value, self-worth, self-respect and to develop self-control. They can do anything in life if they have themselves under control," she explained. "Children do love to have boundaries. It makes them feel secure."

Sister Lucy is full-blooded Italian and has been cooking since she was 5 or 6 years of age. "Everything I cook has an Italian flavor. My motto is: smell it, taste it and look at it. If it doesn't smell, taste or look right, keep adding ingredients. Usually, the smell will tell me I need to add more," she said. "Cooking is a God-given gift!" **NOW**

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Who's Cooking **NOW**

pasta. Add seasonings; cook about 3 minutes. Add reserved water; cook until done. Serve with grated Parmesan.

MAMA'S BROILING SAUCE

2 Tbsp. olive oil
2 1/2 cups water
1/2 cup lemon juice
1 cup white vinegar
2 cloves garlic, pressed or finely chopped
1 small onion, finely chopped
1 tsp. oregano
2 Tbsp. TexJoy Steak Seasoning
1 Tbsp. garlic salt
1 Tbsp. onion salt
1/4 tsp. black pepper
Combine all ingredients in a quart-size jar. Let sauce sit 4 to 5 hours before using; refrigerate after using. Will keep well in the refrigerator for about 2 months. Time enhances the flavor. Good for broiling meat, fish or chicken.

SISTER LUCY'S BAKED CHICKEN

2-4 chicken breasts
Mama's Broiling Sauce
TexJoy seasoning, to taste
2 cups Italian bread crumbs
Marinate chicken in Mama's Broiling Sauce overnight in refrigerator. Remove chicken from sauce; set aside sauce. Season chicken with TexJoy seasoning; bread chicken with bread crumbs. Place chicken in a baking pan; broil and brown on both sides. Pour sauce over chicken; cover pan tightly with foil. Bake for 45 minutes at 350 F.

PATA AND LENDEKI (LENTILS)

2 large onions, finely chopped
1 pod garlic, chopped
1 cup olive oil
1-lb. bag dry lentils
6-8 cups water
3 Tbsp. TexJoy Steak Seasoning
1 Tbsp. garlic salt
1 Tbsp. onion salt
1 lb. small shell pasta
grated Parmesan
In large pot, sauté onions and garlic in 3/4 cup oil until light golden brown. Add washed lentils and water. Add seasonings; bring to a boil. Cook on low heat until lentils are soft, about 3-4 hours. Cook pasta in lightly salted water and 1/4 cup oil until half cooked. Drain almost all of water; return pasta to pot. Add several cups of cooked lentils to pasta; cook together for about 5 minutes. Serve with grated Parmesan and remaining lentils, if desired.

MAKING HEADLINES WITH GOOD REASON

In June 2009, for the second consecutive year, Raymond James led the list of full-service brokers in *SmartMoney* magazine's annual broker survey, earning top ratings for customer satisfaction and brokerage statements.

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Do Your Employees Need a 401(k)?

— By Adam Rope

With so much talk about Social Security and the need for retirement planning, there are a number of actions small business owners may take. Establishing a retirement plan for small business employees may sound like a huge undertaking. The reality is that setting up a 401(k) can be easier than you think.

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There are many reasons you may want to begin a retirement plan for your employees. The ease at which you can establish a Safe Harbor 401(k) could make it an appropriate choice for your small business. **NOW**

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Psoriasis

— By Betty Tryon, R.N.

The scenario is painfully familiar. You stretch your hand in greeting but notice the recipient of the handshake cringes and tries to distract you from the handshake. You look down and notice that your shirtsleeve has risen up on your arm more than you thought, and there it is — that red, scaly rash with all of the flaking and cracked skin. Embarrassed, you quickly cover yourself; score one for psoriasis.

Psoriasis has become the bane for an estimated five to seven million Americans. Psoriasis presents itself as thick or raised skin areas with a reddish appearance covered with scales that are silvery in color. The more troublesome symptoms of this condition are the skin becomes itchy, burning, cracked and bleeding.

Psoriasis occurs when there is a malfunction in the production of skin cells, which results in an overproduction of cells. Normally, new skin cells develop underneath the skin; over time, they move to the surface and the dead skin sloughs off or sheds. For someone with psoriasis, the cycle becomes dysfunctional, and what would normally take about 30 days, occurs 10 times as fast. The resulting cells that reach the surface gather in abundance.

The body is not able to shed the cells quickly enough, so they pile on top of each other and create thick, irritating lesions.

The condition varies from person to person. For some, it can only be a nuisance; for others, the symptoms are debilitating and can interfere with daily tasks and necessary functions such as sleep because of the discomfort. The quality of life can be greatly affected depending upon the severity of the symptoms. Cosmetically, this disease can be very distressing, particularly if the lesions show in areas apparent to the public. The disfiguring look of psoriasis can make some individuals feel isolated and lead to depression.

The picture of psoriasis can appear to be bleak; however, it does not have to be. Treatment is available from over the counter medication (OTC) to light therapy to prescription drugs. Many options are available. No doubt, your first action may be experimenting with OTC medications. Salicylic acid may prove helpful in removing scales and or hydrocortisone to help with inflammation. Some find relief in using coal tar, which slows the production of the cycle of skin cell production and can provide some relief from inflammation and other symptoms such as itching. There is hope. Your physician will be invaluable in helping you decide which path to take.

Persistence and a willingness to keep trying may give you the results you seek. **NOW**



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

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Crape Myrtles

- the Lilacs of the South

— By Nancy Fenton

It is July already! I hope you have driven through the area and admired the beautiful crape myrtles. They have been called the lilacs of the South, and they are blooming like mad. If you do not have any, it is not too late. They bloom for three months or more and are available in many colors and sizes. They love the sun and are perfect for a hot, dry spot. They need water the first year or two, but after that, they do well on their own. A little nitrogen in the spring and fall will support the growth and give you fat and sassy blooms.

The main problem with the crape myrtles around here seems to be the powdery mildew, which gets on the new growth and turns the leaves gray to white. You can always spray with a good fungicide if you already have it, but the best solution to this disease is prevention. Sun and lots of air circulation will help, but choosing a variety that is resistant is even better. The good guys at Texas A&M, in conjunction with the good guys at Louisiana State University, have come up with a list of varieties that are extremely hardy and disease resistant for our area of the country.

Their favorites are as follows:

- **Natchez** - a gorgeous plant with "weeping" branches reaching 30 feet tall with white blooms
- **Basham's Party Pink** - upright to 30 feet with lavender-pink blooms
- **Tuscarora** - upright to a height of 25 feet with coral pink blooms
- **Muskogee** - upright plant reaching 20 feet with lavender blooms.
- **Sioux** - vivid pink blooms reaching to 15 feet
- **Tonto** - smaller plant reaching 12-14 feet with deep red flowers
- **Acoma** - smaller "weeping" plant with white blooms reaching to 14 feet.

Notice all the different sizes. This will help with the need to prune and prune and prune. Crape myrtles do not need a lot of cutting back if the plant is the right size to begin with. I like mine upright so I lop off the suckers at the bottom as soon as I see them. Like many other plants in my garden, anywhere the branches rub on each other is a good place to consider pruning. The severe cutting back in the spring is not needed to promote blooms nor is the trimming of the spent blooms. This is my kind of plant, one that loves the heat, blooms and does not require much other than my admiration. **NOW**

Nancy Fenton is a Master Gardener.

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July 2009

Community Calendar

Third Monday

Ellis County Aggie Moms meeting: 7:00 p.m., Waxahachie First United Methodist Church, 505 W. Marvin St. For more information, contact Cheryl Bell at (972) 723-0341 or rb4cj@sbcglobal.net.

July 3, 4

12th Annual Grape Myrtle Festival and Parade. The patriotic celebration begins at 6:00 p.m. on July 3. For information about the various activities taking place around town, contact the Chamber at (972) 937-2390 or www.waxahachiechamber.com.

July 9-11

The Friends of Sims Library annual book sale: 515 W. Main St. All proceeds will benefit Sims Library. For more information on hours of operation and general questions, call (972) 937-2671.

July 11

Missoula Children's Theater presents an original production of *Jack and the Beanstalk* at the Waxahachie High School Fine Arts Center. Cast of 60 children in first-12th grades. Presentation times are 3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. Admission is \$5 for

"children" of all ages. For more information, call (972) 923-9744.

July 11, 12

Trade Days of Waxahachie: Saturday: 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. and Sunday: 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Trade Days will offer a "Christmas in July" promotion, so bring your gift list and shop early. The two-day event will also offer unique arts and crafts, commercial items, produce and more. Admission is free. For more information, e-mail tradedaywaxahachie@sbcglobal.net, or call (972) 617-8156.

July 15

Ellis County Christian Women's Connection, affiliated with Stonecroft Ministries, monthly luncheon: 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Waxahachie Country Club, 1920 W. Highway 298 at I-35 East, Exit 401B. The cost is \$13, all inclusive. Nursery vouchers are available for those with young children. Reservations are preferred; however, walk-ins will be welcomed. To make reservations, contact either Kay at (972) 937-2807 or Mary at (972) 937-9984 or e-mail Kay at

windchime423@yahoo.com by Sunday, July 12.

July 16-19

Refiners Fire Ministries International will host Todd Keene and the Power Team: 7:00 p.m. nightly. This event is slated to be the world's greatest exhibition of power, strength, speed, inspiration and motivation. A suggested donation of \$2 will be taken at the door. RFMI is located at 1611 W. Ennis Ave. For more information, call (972) 875-6006 or visit www.thepowerteam.com.

July 18

The Ellis County Children's Theater will present *Boudreaux, the Lake Dog* in a premier performance at 3:00 p.m. and again at 7:00 p.m. at the Waxahachie High School Fine Arts Center located at 1000 N. Highway 77. Children in first-12th grades are invited to audition on Monday, July 6, at 9:00 a.m. at the same location. For more information, call (972) 923-9744.

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



Grape Myrtle Festival

July 3 ★ HEB Fireworks Show and concert featuring The Cannons sponsored by Chicago Title and Hampton Inn. Have a tailgate party and bring your lawn chairs. Gates open at 6pm. FREE Admission.

July 4 ★ Peace, Love, and Grape Myrtle! patriotic parade downtown. 10am

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