# Midlothian

JULY 2011

## THE MAGIC BEGINS

CRYSTAL HARRIS BRINGS A TOUCH OF BEAULTY INTO THE LIVES OF LIFFILE GIRLS.

#### Also Inside

**Caring College Professor Just For You** In the Kitchen With Peni Andrews

Soul of a Poet

**Fated Bliss** At Home With **Richard & Terri Doss** 



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Crystal Harris' daughters twirl away in their specially made tutus.

Photo by Natalie Busch.

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**College Professor** 

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Crystal Harris taught herself to make tutus and now uses them to offer hope to hurting children.

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#### Editor's Note

These Midlothian kids should be Texas Idols! Duke University conducted a search to identify academically talented seventh-graders across the United States. Of the students identified, those who scored highest on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or the American College Test (ACT) are honored at a state recognition ceremony. Four Midlothian students — Carolina Caballero, Michelle Espinosa, Cierra Wolfe and Hannah Roark — will receive this honor. Congratulations to all of you!



Independence Day, July 4, is upon us. The best way to have a fun and safe celebration is to join your neighbors at Midlothian ISD Multi-Purpose Stadium on July 3 beginning at 5:00 p.m. for the annual Senior Citizens Food Pantry fundraiser. The event is free and will have children's activities, fireworks, wonderful singing and concession stands with ham, hot dogs, hamburgers and barbecue corn! Donations toward the food pantry are welcomed. See you there!

Betty

Betty Tryon *MidlothianNOW* Editor btryon.nowmag@sbcglobal.net





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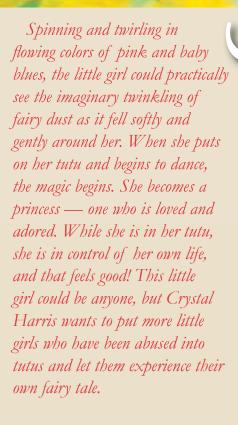


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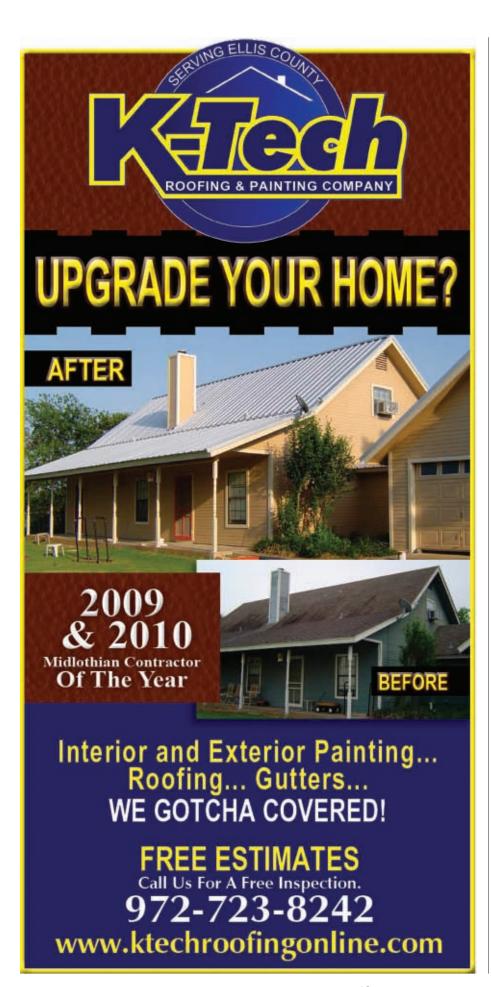


New to tutu making, Crystal started in October 2010. "I was making tutus for my two little girls for Halloween," she explained. "While making them I was thinking and praying and just felt the Lord was telling me to do it as a ministry and business. I thought I could make one for a little girl who has been abused, for every tutu I sell."

Reaching out to abused children is not a topic Crystal just picked out of the blue. "I grew up in a bad situation," she shared. "I was a victim of abuse from a very young age, so that has always been a big part of who I am and where my heart is." In college, her misery continued with the bad choices she was making personally.

One very wonderful choice came in the form of her husband, Bobby, whom she met in college. Bobby is an ordained pastor. Crystal now feels very blessed to have a husband who is loving and caring









and three beautiful children. She counts it as a miracle that she has a ministry like this. "My heart is so ministry oriented, with both of us being youth pastors, and our home is their home," she said. Crystal is still in counseling for what she has been through in her life, but has strong faith. "I went through everything I did for a reason, and I know God has a divine purpose for me," she shared.

Crystal remembers the night she made the decision to start making tutus. "I was thinking, I don't want to do this as a business, but I have to have some sort of funding to bless these girls. I talked to my counselors about it and my friends who are counselors. They thought that would be amazing. They see victims of abuse daily, and this would give the little girls a small bit of hope or freedom for just a little bit. I feel very strongly about it. I feel like a little kid at Christmas every time someone orders one because, yay! I have another order, and I can make one to give away.

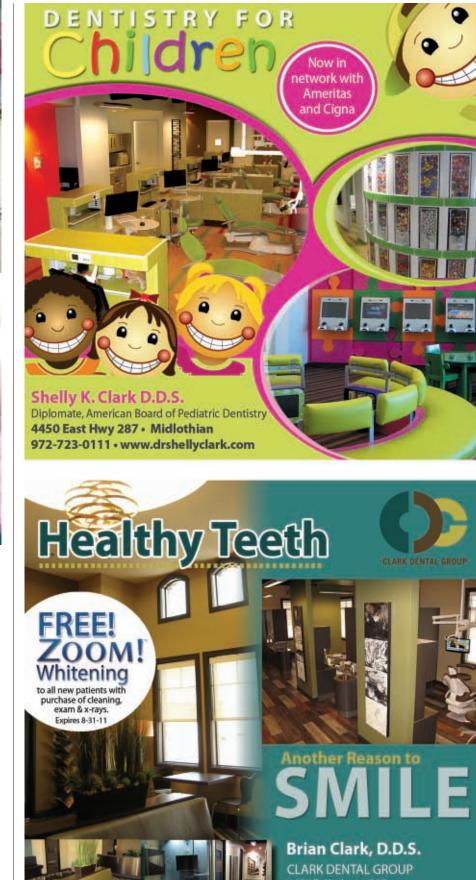




For me it is not about the business but about the blessing behind each one I can give away."

Crystal knows how the young girls she is trying to help feel. "You feel as if everything has been stripped away, like you're not a whole person," she stated. "With the tutus, it's something very simple — some strips of tulle [a type of fabric with very fine netting] and an elastic band. But, my vision for the little girls is that they can put this on for a few minutes and feel like a little princess, like they are not in a bad situation or haunted by memories of horrible things. They can feel normal and run around like a little princess or butterfly or whatever for a moment of time when they're not constantly surrounded by the negative things that have happened to them."

Eventually, Crystal would like to do a little super hero cape with goggles for boys. The premise would be the same to make one and give one. "I want little



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Approved Home Health Care provides a variety of nursing and therapy services to patients and their families in Ellis, Johnson, Tarrant and Dallas counties, and surrounding areas. They are locally owned and operated by hometown folks with over 50 years combined home health experience.



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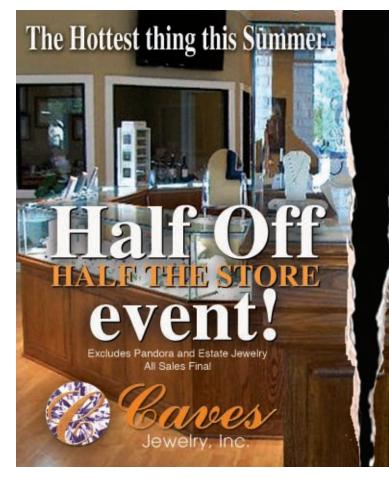
boys to be empowered, as well."

Although Crystal enjoyed doing crafts, making tutus was something she had not attempted before but felt as if it was something she could do. "I started researching online, put a few things together, testing things out and figuring out what I liked the best. I taught myself how to do it. It was a fun and definitely learning process." So far, Crystal has been able to donate 15 tutus since December. She has not met any of the young girls who received the tutus and prefers to keep it that way for a while. "I would like to eventually have a few of my teenage youth girls be 'tutus angels.' I would like to have them pass out the tutus [and] interact with the little girls so they can see good role models."

Since Crystal does not know the little girls receiving the tutus, she works with a couple of local counselors in the area and is in contact with the Dallas Advocacy Center. The center works to help abused children and provides leadership on child abuse issues. Crystal stated, "They are very interested in getting tutus to pass out."

Everyone knows that simply putting on a cute outfit will not erase the sins of others or the sorrow of an individual. However, in life, even one filled with grief, there can be moments of pure joy. If a tutu coupled with imagination can bring a touch of innocence to an abused little girl — that is a wonderful thing. Crystal remarked, "For every one that I make, I pray over it that this little girl will have a different life, and it [the tutu] can bring her a little piece of hope."







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– By Alex Allred

When Terri first laid eyes on Richard Doss, she couldn't have known just how perfectly he would fit into her life. A single mother of two boys, she had become discouraged with finding "Mr. Right." Terri was looking for an honest, spiritual, loving man as interested in familial and communal affairs as she.

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About that same time, Richard complained to a hair stylist that, "There were no good women out there."

"She [the hair stylist] was a friend of mine, and she told me about Richard. But I didn't want a set up, so I told her to just call me the next time she knew he was coming in for a haircut," Terri said. "When she called, I came in, sat down and started reading a magazine."

As soon as Richard walked in the door, "I knew. I knew he was the man I was going to marry."

Richard, a graduate from the



AT HOME WITH RICHARD AND TERRI DOSS



University of Arkansas with a degree in marketing, has family ties as far as California, and he and Terri traveled in different circles. Yet, by their second date, they discovered that his first cousin was best friends with Terri's sister, and that they both had grandfathers named John who had siblings named Thurman and Herman. They knew each other's extended family members, shared family names, old college friends and had even attended the same wedding years prior. "He had served the cake at that wedding!" Terri marveled, noting she had even stood in line for a piece of the cake. They were fated.

In 1999, Richard accepted a job in

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While his career in architectural design took off, Terri finished her degree in human services online through Arkansas Baptist College. As an ordained deacon, Richard helped establish a church in Arlington, became a mayor's appointee to the Midlothian Community Development Corporation or the 4-B board, and more than fulfilled his role as Mr. Right. Even after the honeymoon period was over, he continued to shower Terri with flowers. "He's always done that," Terri beamed.

Meantime, the house was hers. But no sooner had she, an avid HGTV viewer, put everything in its place, than Richard received a job offer in Chicago. Too good of an opportunity to turn down, the Dosses quickly rented their home to a friend and moved to Chicago. "I had told



Richard that I would follow him with his career," Terri said.

In Chicago, "I just got the walls painted the way I wanted them," Terri said, "when we came back." The architectural firm, Oldcastle BuildingEnvelope, called Richard to be their project manager while Terri was once again managing the Midlothian home.

Her decor embraces her family and heritage, a sentiment that is apparent upon entry to the Doss household. A prominent piece is displayed over the dual fireplace in the front entrance. It is a canvass painting of people wearing traditional African garb walking in a New Orleans-style funeral procession. It is both somber and beautiful, as it sets the tone for the home. "I want to celebrate

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Waxahachie, Texas, and married Terri the

following year. By 2002, the couple found

their home in Midlothian. "A friend told

me about Midlothian," Richard said, "so

we drove out here to look around. This

"And we just knew," Terri added.

house was open, so we walked in."



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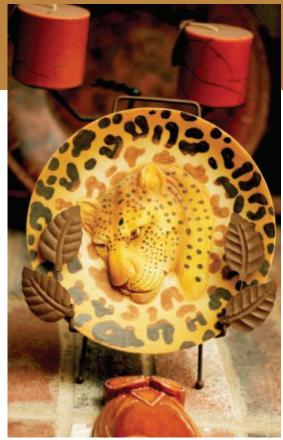


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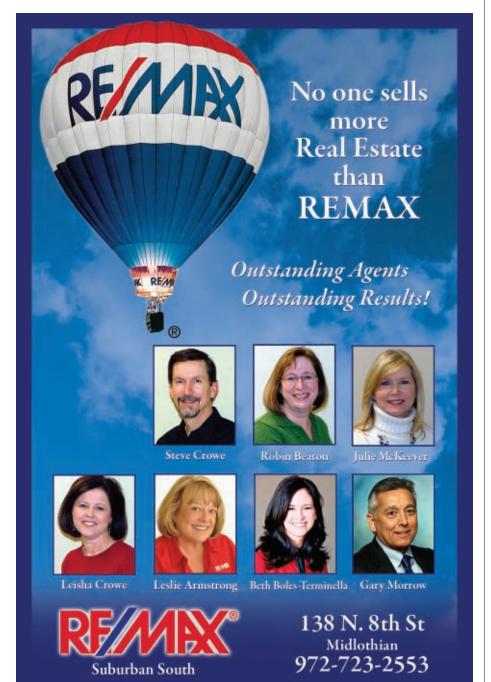
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Lisa Yarbrough



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my black heritage," Terri said.

The two-story, four-bedroom house does just that, with antique furniture and traditional pieces. A three-piece bistro set from Terri's grandmother, estimated to be almost 100 years old, rests in the combination sitting area and formal dining room.

"The only thing I've done is re-cover the seats," Terri said of the dining table and chairs. The dark, heavy oak set also includes a china hutch and dressing table. Pictures of family, from grandchildren to great-grandparents, cover the table while small treasures from Terri's grandmother sit inside the antique china hutch. "This," Terri said proudly of one particular trinket, "is my great-grandfather's shaving kit." With the vintage mug and brush is her grandmother's original china.

"But I am most proud of my safari room," Terri said of the family room. Filled with masks, statues and pictures that family members brought back from trips to Africa, Terri also found animal print pillow covers, carpeting and pictures to bring about the "safari" look. Both exotic and warm, "This is my favorite room. When I finished it, Richard called me and said, 'Babe! This looks great!' And you know, men never notice stuff like that!"

Beyond the safari room is Richard's home office which displays paraphernalia reflecting his love for sports, particularly college football and the Arkansas Razorbacks, but on the walls are more remnants of family history. Framed news stories and certificates highlight their family legacy. Terri's stepfather, the Rev. J. Aaron Hawkins, was appointed by Governor Mike Huckabee to serve on the Board of Corrections from 2000 to 2006 and later had a women's correctional facility named in his honor. Terri's mother was the first black director of nurses in two different hospitals, while Richard became the first African-American of the seven students named valedictorian in his graduating high school class and the first in his family to graduate from college.

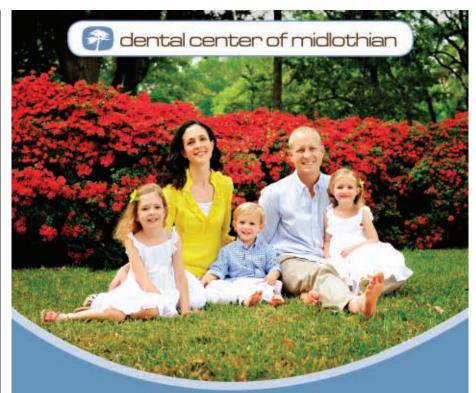
While Richard and Terri celebrate their personal family histories, they also look to their future together. "We like to travel and spend time together," Terri said. After 11 years of marriage, they are still newlyweds. The dozen long-stem roses sitting in the master bedroom are evidence of this. Like the window treatments and "Terri-touches" throughout the home, the master bedroom is a perfect blend of family heirlooms and rich, vibrant colors that Terri has put together. In this room, roses are a constant complement to her grandmother's bedroom suite and fourposter bed.

The best flowers, however, are a permanent fixture on the ledge behind the garden tub in the master bath. "Before we were married," Terri recalled, "he sent me flowers every single day,



Monday through Friday, for an entire year! When we told his florist we were getting married, she said, 'Oh, I have to make the bouquet for you!' It was her wedding present to us, and we've kept it ever since.'' Today, it is yet another piece of history they share together.

Throughout the home, pictures of family events, weddings and birthdays remind them of just how close they were to each other before they ever met. "I can't tell you how many times I would take him somewhere to meet my friends, and he would already know everyone there!" Terri laughed. How poetic that the dried flowers of their wedding bouquet are truly a reminder of their fated bliss. **NOW** 



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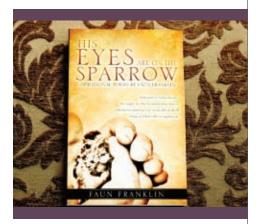


— By Betty Tryon

Seven-year-old Faun Franklin stood next to her grandfather, scared and praying. He was recovering from a massive heart attack, and she was given the temporary job of watching him until her grandmother finished some chores. Although frightened, she did not



mind taking care of him. Faun's early years shaped and groomed her for her true calling in life. "Starting at age 7, I've been a caregiver," she said. "I'm a people pleaser, and my life has always been about people. My prayer life became very strong at this point." Loving and caring for people, even in the most difficult circumstances, led her to write a book of inspirational poetry titled, His Eyes Are on the Sparrow.



"My writing is about true events, miracles, family and hope," Faun explained. "I started taking life events and putting them into poetry." Life gave Faun plenty of events to sculpt into this art form — especially the last 10 years. "I have been a caregiver for my brother, who has cancer; my father, who has Alzheimer's; and my daughter's health issues," she elaborated. "In 2003, I literally lived in the hospital for three months because we had eight family members who died, were seriously ill or terminal."

Ten years before that very difficult year, she nursed her grandmother who had become seriously ill. Growing up in her grandmother's home, Faun had a special relationship with her and had the opportunity to witness and emulate the caring of others demonstrated by her grandmother. "She instilled in me that life was about people and loving them. She raised me to be the same way, and I



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brought my daughter up that way." Faun's opening poem in her book is about her grandmother's last days. In an excerpt from the poem, "Grandmother's Last Days," Faun paid tribute to a life of servanthood:

The cross that she carried never in strife, Was given in services all of her life. Her body was worn her face showed great pain, Still she praised Jesus for eternal things gained.

One of the more powerful poems in the book tells of the miraculous healing of her daughter, Fallon. "My daughter was born with palsy. I was told she would never use her arm. His [the doctor's] exact words were, 'She will never be able to jump rope, and her arm will never mend.' He showed us an X-ray where the nerves were not connected. My grandmother asked me what was I going to do about this, and I said, 'Well, I'm going to pray about it.""

At 3 months of age, little Fallon's uncle noticed she was beginning to move her arm, and in the next few days, she started lifting her arm all the way up. Delighted, Faun took Fallon back to the doctor's office, at his request. After taking another X-ray, he came back with startling news. "He said, 'I don't know how to tell you this, but we have witnessed a miracle.' He showed me the X-ray, and her nerve endings were as if it never happened. They were all connected! You can say you have faith, and you can hear things and wonder if that is really true, but I knew God had healed her." In the poem titled, "The Great Physician's Touch," Faun poured her heart into the words:

The day she came into this world, I loved my precious baby girl. Because the doctor was not there, Her little arm they could not spare... Then on a very special day, On the couch our baby laid, Her little arm she lifted high, All of us began to cry! The doctors could not understand, The Great Physician's mighty hand. He has the power to touch and heal, If we but ask it be his will...

Fallon was able to share her miracle story in front of millions of people when she performed on the television show *America's Got Talent*. There she sang, played guitar and shared that she can do everything the doctor said she would never do.

Faun's brother, who recently passed away, was the longest-living Glioblastoma multiforme brain cancer patient. He was stage 4 when diagnosed and given weeks to live. But, he lived eight years. Faun prepared meals for him and his family for the entire week, every week. In experiencing so much hardship, Faun looks upon it as a spiritual quest. "I think it made me stronger," she explained. "I have always been a person of faith. I saw God's hand in a lot of the adversity going on in my life. I finally came to the point that I was put here to be a caretaker because that is what I've always done."

Writing poetry is Faun's way of coping.









Levels I-VII • 5 sessions over the summer American Red Cross Curriculum Taught





387 E. FM 1382 • Cedar Hill, TX 75104 • 972-293-0022 2009 CFA Properties, Inc. Good only at Cedar Hill Location. One coupon per person per visit. Coupon not valid with any other offer. Closed Sundays, Coupon valid from NOW magazines only. Please use by July 30, 2011. It became an outlet where she could be productive in another way that was positive just for her. "When you put your life on hold for years, you think, *OK, I can do this for a year,*" she shared. "But when the year becomes five and 10 years, I think you have to have an outlet."

Caring for those who are ill requires a tremendous amount of effort. "I'm human, and sometimes I have a hard time dealing with what I've been given, but I have learned to be strong. It's been a long journey, but I feel blessed to be able to do the things I've done." Her husband is another reason she can be strong in that he supports and encourages her.

Just as many of the events in Faun's life are chronicled in her poems, so is the dedication of the book to a lady named Pauline Brooks. Faun got to know her



when she worked in a nursing home ministry. "My grandmother had died, and I just needed to take care of someone and God brought this lady into my life," she said. "The first year of working there in the nursing home was such a wonderful blessing. All of these different races of grandmothers who just adored me, and I adored them," she admitted smiling. "Mrs. Brooks had lost all of her children. She was a light to me, because in adversity, she pressed on; she endured. I loved that about her."

Faun pours her emotion into her poems to touch people's lives. "Whatever I write about, I want it to be inspirational. All of the proceeds from my book go to charity. Nothing comes to me. It's about touching someone in a way to make them happy. The creativity that God has given you ought to be used to bless other people with. It's not about me receiving recognition. It's about touching a life, helping a person. Being a servant is the greatest thing."NOW



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Caring College Professor

Dr. Steve Thompson might appear to be a formidable professor if not for his approach to teaching and a track record that suggests it more than works. "It takes about 30 years of change in the classroom to figure it out," he smiled, "if you get it at all. I start my English classes with a writing assignment entitled 'W ho am I?' Students describe themselves, and then I look for the one thing about each of them that connects the two of us. If a teacher cares about a student's interest outside the classroom, that student, in turn, will show interest in the subject."

"I enjoy teaching communication skills because they are a must in today's world."



He told a story of a gifted basketball player who had trouble making it to class. "He was a good athlete," Dr. Thompson said, "so I made the effort to show up at an out-of-town game about 30 minutes early so he would be sure to notice. The next time he was late for class, I told him, "This isn't fair. I go out of town to watch you play, and you won't walk across the parking lot to come to my class.' He came to class on time from then on. It isn't necessary to go to such extent with every student. Do it with one, and the whole class will understand that you care," he said.

Tall and commanding with a sense of humor as dry as a harvested wheat field, Dr. Thompson teaches English and kinesiology at Navarro College in Midlothian. He is a contributing columnist for The Progressive Farmer, the magazine with a million-plus circulation, and he is a respected lecturer. What's more, he oversees at least 100 cows and grows wheat, corn and hay on his 1,000-acre farm. He is a specialist on hay baler tying systems and an expert on electronics and diesel engines. His favorite author is William Faulkner, all-time movie is The Sting and "Elizabeth" by the Statler Brothers is his favorite song. He has the heart of an entrepreneur and business owner, is a husband, father of two daughters, fiveAt this office our mission is to improve the quality of your life. We strive to have our patients reach their fullest innate potential.

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time grandfather and the proud owner of a dog named Jack.

Dr. Thompson is a "renaissance man" whose love for farm equipment and farming began with his first ride on a tractor, at the age of 6. "Farming is my hobby," he said, "but it's also big business that requires luck and good communication."

Though his passion for teaching is not as traceable as a ride on a tractor, his educational achievements speak volumes. After graduating from Irving High School, he earned a bachelor's degree at Texas A&M University-Commerce, a master's degree at the University of North Texas and his Ph.D. at Texas A&M University-Commerce. He is first in his family to become a teacher, and he finished with a double major in English and physical education. "I enjoy teaching communication skills because they are a must in today's world," he shared. "Good communication skills will get you a job, but more importantly, they will help you keep a job."

Sixteen years ago, Dr. Thompson was invited to join the faculty at Navarro College in Corsicana to head the new John Deere Program. By that time, he had invested several years in farming and ranching and had owned, operated and sold a successful lawn equipment dealership. His educational accreditations and technical knowledge of diesel engines, hydraulics and electronics made him especially qualified. "I started the technical program and also taught English," he



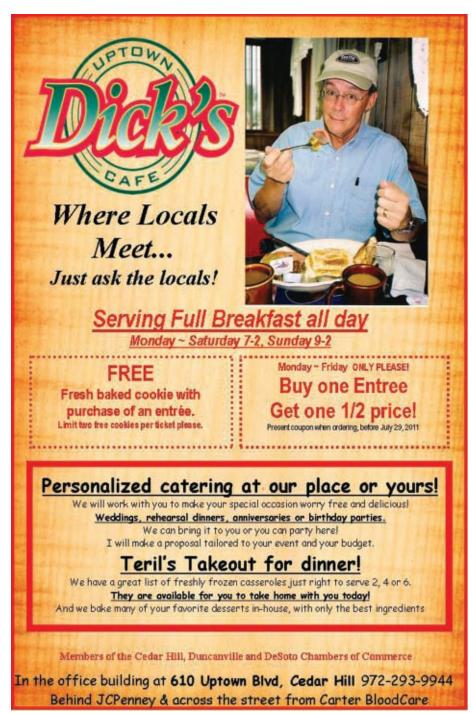
said. "Years later, when the Midlothian campus opened, I transferred and have been teaching English Composition and Rhetoric I and II, technical and business writing and kinesiology. I also write a column for *The Progressive Farmer* called 'Ask the Mechanic.""

As a working writer and someone accustomed to public speaking, Dr. Thompson has an inside perspective on the challenges facing his students. "College English is taught at a much higher level than high school English," he said. "When students master skills in high school, especially writing, they will find them to be helpful in college. One of the most difficult things for them to develop is the ability to limit a subject. If a subject is too broad for the length of the paper, it is impossible to write a good paper." Essay writing is stressed in Composition I while research, short stories, poems and drama are central in Composition II. "Often we will read a story and then watch a video of the same piece. We'll discuss the setting, and then write an essay describing the effectiveness from the written version and the video." He requires that some papers be written in class. "Sometimes we go to the computer lab, and sometimes we work with pen and paper. I always want to see examples of both."

The second and most challenging element of college English is rhetoric. "Students tend to struggle with speaking in front of people," Dr. Thompson explained, "yet having that skill is important in the work world." Students



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are required to give presentations, often with the aid of PowerPoint. "A major accomplishment is learning to stop the habit of starting every sentence with the word well," he said. "I also encourage students to read their essays aloud in class as another opportunity to speak in front of an audience."

Dr. Thompson began his career as an English teacher and coach in the Irving Independent School District. "The classroom has changed a lot since then," he said. "Today, so much communication is through the Internet and electronic devices have added an abundance of flexibility." The Navarro College system has a network called



Blackboard, which allows students to participate in online and hybrid classes. "Hybrid classes generally meet once a week," Dr. Thompson explained. "Notes, assignments and resources can be posted through the network, and most of the work is done outside the classroom. Hybrid classes are especially good for students with outside jobs since they usually can arrange to attend one weekly class. With the online classes, it is possible to never see the students." He added that online classes are most successful for mature students who can and will make time to do the work.

"My typical class is about 25 students," he said. "I teach six classes a week, and, right now, they are all traditional with two hybrids." Navarro College is a commuter college and most of the students are local. "Midlothian ISD kids are great," Dr. Thompson said. "Their parents tend to have good work ethics, and the kids seem to have picked them up. For some reason, they work hard, are respectful and well-behaved. We don't really know why these Midlothian students are so great, but we love the fact that they are!"

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# Just For You

Building your home with a focus on what you want is Reliable Custom Homes' specialty. — By Betty Tryon

You are now ready to build your dream home. After months, maybe years of researching and gathering material, you know exactly what you want. Mike Houston of Reliable Custom Homes and his team have the experience and resources to make your dream a reality. "I work with my wife, Carrie, and my son, Brandon. All three of us are partners. Brandon is on-site every day at every home," Mike explained. "My family has been in the homebuilding business since the 1940s. I'm the third generation and my son is the fourth generation of homebuilders."

Mike started Reliable Custom Homes three-and-a-half years ago. To date, they have built about 80 houses. Last year, they built approximately 25 houses in Benbrook, Midlothian and Waxahachie. They also did something special for the business last year. They brought a designer on staff, Rich Ean, a Texas A&M graduate. "We bring you in, listen to what you want, and he can design it," Mike said. "He is a very good listener and can design from scratch."

In designing homes, even their smaller tract-like homes are semi-custom and can be adjusted to your needs or built to suit your preferences. "It doesn't matter the size of the home or where you are building it; you will get full customization of it," stated Rich. "We don't turn anyone away. We also think about cost. If you have a room of a certain size, moving a wall 4 inches or 6 inches can save you hundreds of dollars on a room

## Business **NOW**

depending on how the lumber lays out. That's an aspect most people don't think about during the design process."

All of their custom homes are energy efficient and have a modern plan design. Some of the energy-efficient features that can save you money are located in the heating and cooling units and the windows. "We've raised the standard insulation value in our attics," noted Rich. "A person can go beyond the standard if they want to exceed it. Everything is a possibility. Our biggest asset is flexibility."

Restoration is another service they offer. They have done more roofs and

"We bring you in, listen to what you want, and he can design it."

fences because of storms. In addition, they can build a safe room in your home for shelter from a tornado. "We have the buying power and knowledge to get it done and are restoring a home built in the 1890s right now," said Mike.

Although they have a 7,000-squarefoot showroom in Dallas that they utilize, they also have a local showroom for their customers' convenience. They have different selections of bricks, granite samples, custom wood floors, tile, marble and travertine [a form of limestone] to show the customer. "A lot of times people will look at two or three bricks, and we will give them an address of a home with that type of brick, so they can see what it looks like on a home," stated Mike. It is all a part of putting everything together to construct your dream home. "It's exciting when people bring in their magazine clippings, drawings and photos of how they want their home to look. We listen to what people want and make it work. The main thing with us is attention to detail. Our volume is big enough that we have buying power, but we are small enough to give customized, high-quality service. Whether it's a 1,400-square-foot house or a 4,000-square-foot house, we build every house like we are going to live in it."NOW

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# Around Town NOW



Eli Altman is up to his neck in summer fun.



Xavier Rojas holds a plane prop at the Annual Pancake Breakfast Fly-in at Mid-Way Regional Airport.



Julia Vincent and her granddaughter, Cadence, enjoy lunch at Don Chano's Mexican Restaurant.



Meals-on-Wheels recieves support for the AniMeals program.



Visitors tour the airfield during the Annual Pancake Breakfast Fly-in at Mid-Way Regional Airport.







# Around Town NOW



Main Street Gym's Midlothian Running Club represents at the 3rd Annual Fire Dept. 5k Fun Run.



*Timothy K. and Bryan D. show everyone their great dance moves during field day.* 



Dr. Stewart, MISD superintendent, kicks off JAV's fifth-grade Dream Academy.



The Midlothian Chamber of Commerce welcomes businesses with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. From left: MidTex Machine Services and Millco Enterprises.



# Mary Jane Is Not the Same

- By Betty Tryon, BSN

"This is not your father's marijuana," intoned the narrator from a recent *National Geographic* documentary. It is no longer the same because it is now stronger. There has been a determined effort to grow the plant with higher concentrations of THC (Tetrahydrocannabinol), the substance found in marijuana. Many sources of marijuana come from agriculturalists who seek perfection in their crop. With the perfection, comes a stronger plant that produces marijuana with a higher degree of potency.

Health NOW

The scientific name for marijuana is *cannabis sativa*. Other names for the drug are: weed, pot, ganja and Mary Jane. With close to 200 million people worldwide smoking marijuana, it has the label of being the most widely illicit substance in the world. In America, possession of this drug is illegal in all 50 states, but that has not slowed its growth. A common misconception is that marijuana is harmless.

All of the effects and risks associated with this drug have risen over the years because of its increased potency. Long-term use of marijuana can lead to addiction and opens the door to experimentation with stronger and more lethal illicit substances. Marijuana affects the circulatory and respiratory systems. The drug is inhaled into the lungs, which absorb the chemicals in the smoke. Marijuana smokers hold smoke in their lungs as long as they can to get a bigger hit or achieve a better high from the drug. That smoke can contain up to 70-percent more carcinogenic hydrocarbons. The amount of tar in marijuana that settles in the lungs has been estimated to be up to four times the amount of tar in an unfiltered cigarette. The blood vessels carry chemicals from the lungs to the heart. These chemicals cause the blood vessels to dilate, which gives the body a flushed, warm feeling and red eyes. The blood pressure starts to fall, which makes the heart beat faster and can lead to abnormal heart rhythms. A marijuana user's risk of having a heart attack quadruples in the first hour.

Mentally, the drug affects the parts of the brain that influence memory, thinking, concentration, coordination and perception. The effect on memory and difficulty in learning can last for weeks after the effect of the drug has worn off. This presents obvious problems for someone still in school because comprehension and thinking skills are impaired.

For those who smoke marijuana, it is wise to realize the risks to your health and mental capacity. Don't impair your future for a few moments of floating high.

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



# Getting Rid of That Itch

— By Nancy Fenton

Let's take a break from our specialty gardens series and look at all that glossy, three-leafed foliage coming up in our yards. *Toxicodendron radicans*, commonly known as poison ivy can strike fear into the heart of some of the stoutest gardeners. This year seems to be a really good one for poison ivy; at least it is in our yard. It's sprouting in ground covers and at the base of trees where I haven't seen it before. Master Gardeners tell me the birds are bringing it in through their droppings, but no matter how "natural" it is, I want it gone!

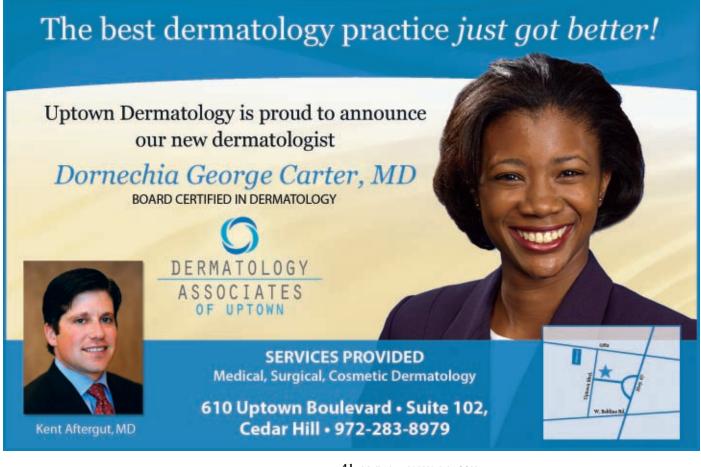
My first line of attack is to mow it as short as possible with the mower (being properly outfitted in long pants and sneakers with socks). I use the theory that the plant must have the leaf area to make the food it needs to survive. By cutting it at the roots or as close as I can get, I can effectively starve it out. Please note: It is not a good idea to use weed eaters for this step since they send the cuttings flying. (It would be my luck to catch a stray leaf in the face!)

For the poison ivy growing among the plants I want to keep, I take a different plan. I use what I call the plastic bag approach. Using regular storage plastic bags with ties (any size will do), I stuff the leading part of the vine into the bag, give it a very hardy spray of Roundup and tie it off. A small square of paper toweling in the bag helps keep the poison in the bag as you tie it. The bag protects the surrounding plants, concentrates the systemic poison on the vine and increases the heat Roundup needs to work. I leave the bag tied on for several months and watch the poison ivy shrivel up and die all the way to the ground!

Be aware poison ivy can pop up almost anywhere the berries can roll or the birds can fly. Special care should be taken when collecting and bagging clippings. Any sap can start an allergenic reaction (i.e. the "big itches"). Smoke or ash in the air from burning poison ivy can also start a severe reaction. Be careful; glove up; and get rid of your unwanted ground cover!

For more information on the plants that cause the "itches," call the Master Gardeners at the AgriLife Extension office at (972) 925-5175 or ask a Master Gardener at their booth at the Waxahachie Farmers' Market.

Nancy Fenton is a Master Gardener.



## Travel NOW

# Architectural Vignettes of New Orleans

New Orleans, with its richly mottled old buildings, its sly, sophisticated air and its Hispanic-Gallic traditions, has more the flavor of an old European capital than an American city. Townhouses in the French Quarter, with their courtyards and carriageways, are thought by some scholars to be related on a small scale to certain Parisian

"hotels" — princely urban residences of the 17th and 18th centuries. Visitors particularly remember the decorative cast-iron balconies that cover many of these townhouses like ornamental filigree cages.

One of the

truly amazing aspects of New Orleans' architecture is the sheer number of historic homes and buildings per square mile. Orleanians never seem to replace anything. Consider this: Uptown, the city's largest historic district, has almost 11,000 buildings, 82 percent of which were built before 1935 — truly a "time warp."

The spine of Uptown, and much of New Orleans, is the city's grand residential showcase, St. Charles Avenue. The St. Charles Avenue streetcar line represents the nation's only surviving historic streetcar system. All of its electric cars were manufactured by the Perley Thomas Company between 1922 and 1924 and are still in use. Hurricane Katrina flood waters caused severe damage to the steel tracks along the entire Uptown and Carrollton route and had to be totally replaced and reelectrified. The cars themselves survived and are included in the National Register of Historic Places. New Orleanians revere them as a national treasure.

Creole cottages and shotgun houses

dominate the scene in many New Orleans neighborhoods. Both have a murky ancestry. The Creole cottage, two rooms wide and two or more deep under a generous pitched roof with a front overhang or gallery, is thought to have evolved from various European and Caribbean forms.

The shotgun house is one room wide

and two, three or four rooms deep, under a continuous gable roof. As legend has it, the name was suggested by the fact that because the rooms and doors line up, one can fire a shotgun through the house without hitting anything. Some scholars have suggested that shotguns evolved from

ancient African "long-houses," built here by refugees from the Haitian Revolution, but no one really knows.

It is true that shotguns represent a distinctively Southern house type. They are also found in the form of plantation quarters houses. Unlike shotgun houses in much of the South, which are fairly plain, New Orleans shotguns bristle with Victorian jigsaw ornaments, especially prominent, florid brackets. Indeed, in many ways, New Orleans shotguns are as much a signature of the city as the French Quarter.

New Orleans' architectural character is unlike that of any other American city. A delight to both natives and visitors, it presents such a variety that even after many years of study, one can still find things unique and undiscovered.

Photos and text courtesy of the New Orleans Metropolitan Convention and Visitors Bureau, 2020 St. Charles Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70130 • (504) 566-5019 www.neworleanscvb.com.









Calendar

#### July 3

Independence Day celebration with the annual Senior Citizens Food Pantry fundraiser: 5:00 p.m., MISD Multi-Purpose Stadium. Join your neighbors for this free event with children's activities, fireworks, entertainment and concession stands. Donations toward the food pantry are welcomed.

#### July 4

Annual Independence Day Parade: Line up: 9:00 a.m. Parade start time: 10:00 a.m. The theme this year is "Let Freedom Ring." Visit City Hall at 104 W. Ave. E or visit www.midlothian.tx.us.

#### July 9

Movies in the Park: sundown, Kimmel Park, 801 W. Ave. F and North 2nd Street. Featured movie: *Polar Express*.

Household Chemical Waste Collection: 9:00 a.m.-11:00: a.m., Public Works Service Center, 1050 N. Hwy. 67. The Fort Worth Environmental Collection Center "Crud" Cruiser will be on hand to collect household chemical waste. Must purchase a voucher from Utility Billing. Residents: \$20; nonresidents: \$47. Call (972) 775-1083.

#### July 21

Rustlin' Up Grub: 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Paws for Reflection Ranch. A three-hour course led by a licensed dietician for ages 11-14, this event focuses on healthy eating, "teenager style." Teens learn how to make informed choices. Hands-on class includes food preparation and consumption. Class size limited. Cost only \$40, which includes all supplies. Visit www.pawsforreflectionranch.org or call (972) 775-8966.

#### July 22-24

Summer Balloon Classic & AirFest at Mid-Way Regional Airport, between Midlothian and Waxahachie off Hwy. 287. Friday: 4:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.; Saturday: 6:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m.; Sunday: 6:00 a.m.-noon. Balloon flights at 6:45 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. Saturday Balloon Glow at 8:00 p.m. Mid-Way to Skies Air Show on Saturday: 3:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m. Free admission. \$10 parking per vehicle. Exhibits, vendors, food, aircraft flights available, kids' area, live music. Visit www.summerballoonclassic.com or call (469) 371-9218.

#### **Ongoing: Tuesdays**

Midlothian Rotary Club meeting: Noon, Midlothian Civic Center, 224 South 11th St.

#### Call (972) 775-7118.

#### First Tuesdays

The Midlothian Area Historical Society meeting: 7:00 p.m., Citizens National Bank Community Room, 310 N. 9th St. Please e-mail us at midlothianhistory@hotmail.com.

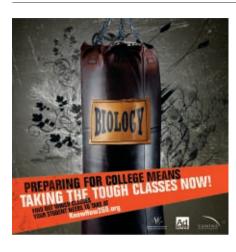
#### Third Wednesdays

The Ellis County Christian Women's Connection, affiliated with Stonecroft Ministries, monthly luncheon: 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. at the Waxahachie Country Club, located at 1920 W. Hwy. 287 and I-35 East (Exit 401B). The cost is \$13, inclusive. Reservations are preferred. Contact Kay at (972) 937-2807 or windchime423@yahoo.com, or Margaret at (972) 937-1016 or pmestepp@yahoo.com.

#### Third Friday

Veterans Networking Group for Ellis County: 6:00 p.m., 1804 W. Hwy. 287 Business, Waxahachie. Please respond if you plan on attending. Call Mike Lamb at (214) 763-0378 or e-mail vetsnetgrp@att.net.

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your event details to btryon.nowmag@sbcglobal.net.







### JULY 2011

# Cooking **NOW**



## In The Kitchen With Peni Andrews

#### — By Betty Tryon

At the tender age of 10, Peni Andrews showed her competence in the kitchen by making an impromptu breakfast of homemade biscuits, eggs and sausage for her siblings. "Our parents had gone to town early, and we were hungry. The biscuits were lumpy, but they were good to us." Many years later, Peni continues to churn out tasty meals for her family and taught her son and his sons how to cook.

Along with cooking, Peni enjoys researching her family lines. "I love the challenge of finding them. It is like detective work, very interesting. I have been researching since 1993." Peni takes pictures of family members when they are all together. She challenges others, "Put names on your photos and get them out of shoeboxes!" **NOW** 

#### Salmon Cheese Ball

I can salmon, deboned
8 oz. cream cheese
I Tbsp. horseradish
I Tbsp. liquid smoke
I tsp. lemon juice
Dash of Tabasco
Dash of salt and pepper
Parsley, to taste
Nuts of your choice, to taste

**I.** Mix together all ingredients except parsley and nuts. Chill overnight.

**2.** Put on waxed paper sprinkled with parsley and nuts.

**3.** Roll into a ball shape and coat with remaining parsley and nut mixture.

#### Sopapilla Cheesecake

2 cans Pillsbury Crescent Recipe Creations refrigerated seamless dough sheet
16 oz. cream cheese
1 cup sugar
1 tsp. vanilla
1/2 cup butter or margarine, melted
1/2 cup cinnamon sugar

 Using a 9 x 13-inch baking pan, unroll one can of Crescent Creation seamless dough and line the bottom of the pan.
 Mix together cream cheese, sugar

- **2.** Mix together cream cheese, sugard vanilla.
- anu vanina. 2 Epread over crocci
- **3.** Spread over crescent rolls.
- 4. Unroll the other can of crescent rolls and

place on top of cream cheese mixture. **5.** Pour melted butter or margarine over the top and sprinkle with the cinnamon sugar mixture.

6. Bake at 350 F for 30 minutes.

#### Meat and Spanish Rice

1 1/2 lbs. ground beef
1 cup onion, diced
3/4 cup green pepper, diced
1 can mushroom stems and pieces
1 No. 2 can tomatoes
1 cup celery, diced
3/4 cup rice
Salt and pepper, to taste

 Cook ground beef in a large frying pan until brown; drain grease, if needed.
 Add remaining ingredients.
 Cover tightly and cook on low to medium heat until rice is tender, about 30 minutes.

#### **Baked Beans**

- I large or 2 regular cans of pork and beans
- 1 tsp. mustard
- 1 Tbsp. barbecue sauce
- 1 Tbsp. Karo Light Corn Syrup
- I small onion chopped
- 3 or 4 slices of bacon (or to taste)
- **I.** Mix all ingredients together.
- **2.** Put in a 9 x 13-inch baking pan.
- 3. Put strips of bacon across the top.
- 4. Bake 35-40 minutes at 350 F.

#### **Corn Casserole**

8 oz. cream cheese1 stick butter2 cans shoe peg corn, drainedSmall can of green chilies, drained

 Melt cream cheese.
 Beat cream cheese and butter together until mixed.
 Combine remaining ingredients with cream cheese mixture.
 Bake in a casserole dish at 350 F for 30 minutes.

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

# elebrate Patient Success



Mrs. Bonnie Johnston was admitted to Pleasant Manor on February 2nd, following knee replacement surgery. She was referred by a local physician for short-term rehabilitation. She had been living in her own home prior to her hospitalization, but the pain in her knees made it difficult for her to complete tasks. The pain made walking and simple tasks difficult. Once she was admitted to the skilled unit at Pleasant Manor, she began a carefully tailored physical therapy plan to rehabilitate the function of her right knee and regain range of motion so she could walk freely with no pain. She also received occupational therapy, which assisted with compensatory strategies to complete dressing tasks and return to her activities of daily living. Mrs. Johnston was a hard worker and made significant gains during her stay. After only three weeks of fast-track rehab, Mrs. Johnston returned home to be with her loving husband. Pictured is Mrs. Johnston giving the thumbs up along with the Charlotte Pless, her physical therapist, and Crystal Collier, administrator. Mrs. Johnson stated, "Thank you all for the wonderful stay. The therapy department did a great job, and I am grateful to be home again."

Una Haynes was referred to Pleasant Manor Rehab following a right hip arthroplasty performed by a local orthopedist. Prior to her admission here, Mrs. Haynes lived at home with her husband, and she performed all her own homemaking tasks independently using a rolling walker. She participated in physical and occupational therapy five days a week up to three hours each day. Mrs. Haynes was extremely motivated and compliant with her intense training in rehab. With her family support and her frequent visits from her husband and her little dog, she was eager to return home. After only two weeks of fast-track rehabilitation, Mrs. Haynes returned home using a rolling walker and demonstrated increased range of motion in her right knee, the ability to walk up to 300 feet before requiring rest break and improved activity tolerance and muscle strengthening to prevent falls. Mrs. Haynes is joined by the therapy staff in her farewell picture.





Ms. Patty Foreman was referred to Pleasant Manor Health and Rehab after hospitalization in March 2011. She participated in physical and occupational therapy five days a week. Prior to admission, she lived at Sterling House Assisted Living in Waxahachie. Ms. Foreman depended on a wheelchair for her mobility and was able to dress and care for herself independently. Her goal while at Pleasant Manor was to restore as much function as possible to allow her to return back to assisted living, Ms. Foreman overcame several challenges during her stay, such as medication management and several health complexities, which enabled her progress with her rehab. After 30 days of intense rehab, Ms. Foreman was able to return to Sterling House and is independent with all activities of daily living and utilizes a rolling walker for her mobility versus a wheelchair. She demonstrated significant gains in all functional areas allowing her to return to the community. With the love and support of her sister, Sharon Wilf, Ms. Foreman was motivated and determined to reach her goals. Best wishes to you Patty!

Mr. Agapito Trevino was referred to Pleasant Manor on February 11th following a total left knee replacement performed by a local orthopedist. Prior to his stay at Pleasant Manor he lived at home with his wife and family using a rolling walker to get around. The chronic knee pain he suffered, prior to his surgery, made tasks difficult to complete. After twenty days of intense rehab, physical and occupational therapy, he returned home with his wife and family. Mr. Trevino was a very hard worker and participated in rehab five days a week, twice a day, for a total of three hours each day. He made significant progress with his range of motion with his left knee and improved his strength by one grade. On the day of discharge, Mr. Trevino walked out the front door using a single point cane walking independently up to 300 feet and was able to safely go up and down steps, curbs and ramps. Mr. Trevino stated, "Thank you all for the great rehabilitation. I know exactly where I will be coming when they do my right knee. Save me a room!"





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