Waxahachie M A G A Z I N E

JULY 2011

Fossil Man

A local paleontology enthusiast takes Ellis County history to a whole new level.

Rebuilding the Dream

THE PERFECT MATCH

Also Inside

Rock On

In the Kitchen With Kelly Saunders

Dramatic FAITH

When Women Gather

DEFYING THE ODDS
AT HOME WITH
DON & LYNDA FULGHUM







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Celebrate 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. Johnston 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 shee hours each day. Mrs. Haynes was extremely motivated and compliant with her intense training in schab. 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. Party 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 pengress 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 stillizes 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 Patryl

Mr. Agapito Tievino 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. Tievino 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 case 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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On The Cover



David Harper carved this Indian face into a stone found during a fossil hunt.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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When Women Gather A group founded in 1931 is still benefitting someone, something or someplace.



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Editor's Note

Let Freedom Ring!

As we celebrate our independence on the fourth, let's also remember the men and women who sacrifice so much for our freedom. They're modern-day heroes. Those in uniform made a choice to serve. I encourage you to make a choice when you see an individual in a uniform. Shake their hand or extend something as simple as a smile. They will appreciate it!

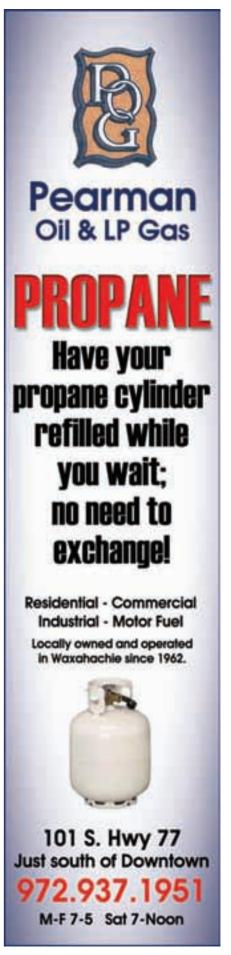


As a child growing up in Palmer, we had a backyard pool. Those "lazy days of summer" were spent floating in the water and seeing who could get the best tan - me or my mom. My mom always won. We should give kudos to our parents on July 24. Thankfully, my parents are finally settled into their new apartment here in Waxahachie after 20 years living in Whitney. It's much easier keeping a closer eye on them now that they're only 10 minutes away!

Sandra

Sandra Strong WaxahachieNOW Editor sskoda.nowmag@sbcglobal.net







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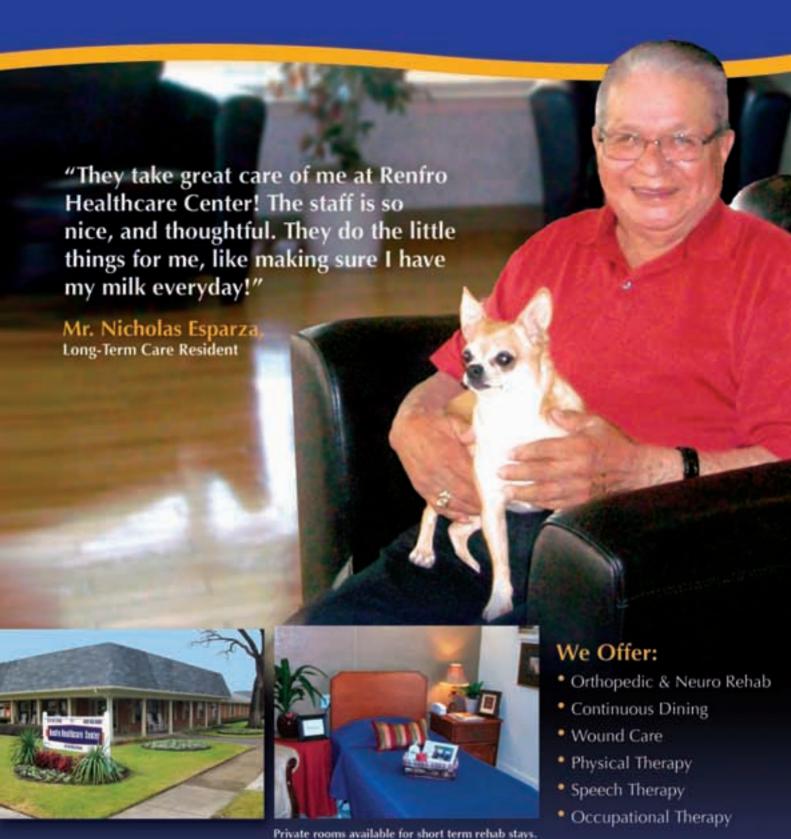




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While many in Ellis County are interested in the rich history of the place they call home, few are knowledgeable about the area before there were cities, farms — or people. But one local man has made the prehistory of North Texas a pastime that has brought him fulfillment, as well as recognition. Ellis County is a hotbed for paleontological study, David Harper maintains, and rarely does he leave it to score fine specimens for his increasingly impressive collection of remnants of this region's Jurassic past. 'Ellis County is absolutely astounding for the diversity of

surface geology to be found here," David said. 'In the far west corner of the county, people have found wooly mammoths, some 15,000 years old. And on the east side there are sea-life fossils dating back 100 million years."

Others may cherish memorabilia from the golden age of the railroad or cotton fields, but David treasures his ancient shark teeth, coral, oysters, clams and petrified wood, nearly all of which have been plucked from local sources. Whether exploring along Highway 287, Interstate 35 or in ditches or ponds around Waxahachie and Ennis, David savors the thrill of locating the well-preserved examples of prehistoric ammonites, sea urchins



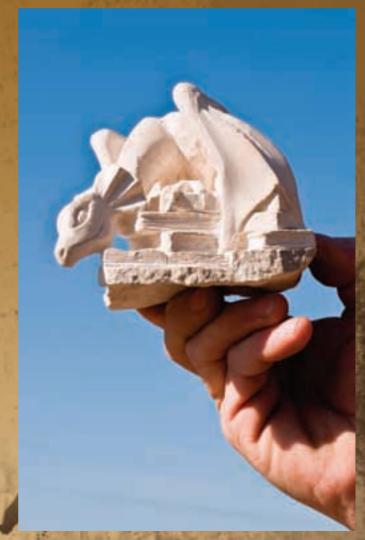


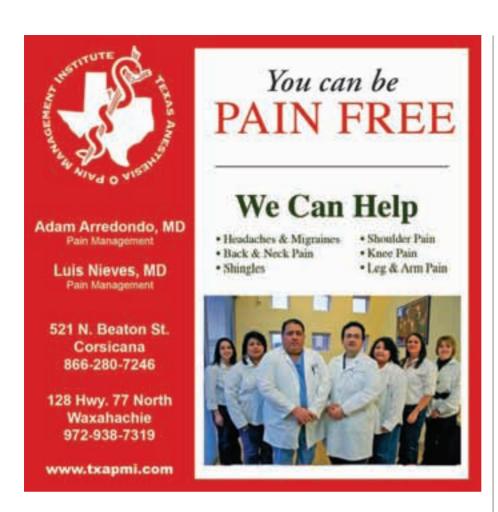
"I can't resist a beautiful rock."

and snails that tell North Texas' own story of the dinosaur age.

Born in Abilene, David currently lives in Alma and for 11 years has worked for Waxahachie's C.A. Wilson Company, where clients of the firm are greeted by a counter full of his favorite fossils. "Customers constantly ask about the collection," David said. "They think it's pretty fascinating." Some have contributed to it — one donation being a 100-million-year-old ammonite pulled from the Sulfur River. Among eye-catching specimens displayed are a fern frond embedded in rock and a small striped stone that looks like a French pastry. "I can't resist a beautiful rock," David explained. Again, most of the fossils on view were collected locally, from roadside ditches to the property of nearby Central Presbyterian Church.

Although David gave a well-received presentation for a recent Master Naturalists conference in Waxahachie, the lanky young









collector with a radio announcer's voice insists he is an amateur and enjoys the freedom of what he calls "smash and grab paleontology." It's an avocation he has enjoyed since childhood. "As a kid it was pretty much all things science," he said. "I was an avid reader and went through a lot of dinosaur books. I also read the Audubon series and spent time drawing cross sections of volcanoes and such."

David has made road trips to other states on fossil hunts, notably Nebraska, but he relishes time spent afield in Ellis County, which is part of the vast paleontological division known as Eagle Ford. So named over 100 years ago by geologist, R. T. Hill, Eagle Ford was the subject of major U.S. Geological Surveys in 1901 and 1918. As early as 1927 the Journal of Paleontology singled out Ellis County as an area of high-potential for researchers: "Fossils are abundant. Fish remains, such as teeth, vertebrae and scales, may be found at almost any level. The teeth vary in size from large shark teeth to those of microscopic size." The same article reported that "many specimens have been collected about three miles northwest of Midlothian in a small creek near the Houston and Texas Central Railroad."

David can vouch for that. He reports shark teeth can be found everywhere in Ellis County. On a recent excursion with a friend who was looking for Indian artifacts, they hit the jackpot. "Well sort of," he clarified. "We didn't find any arrowheads, but we found all kinds of fossils!"

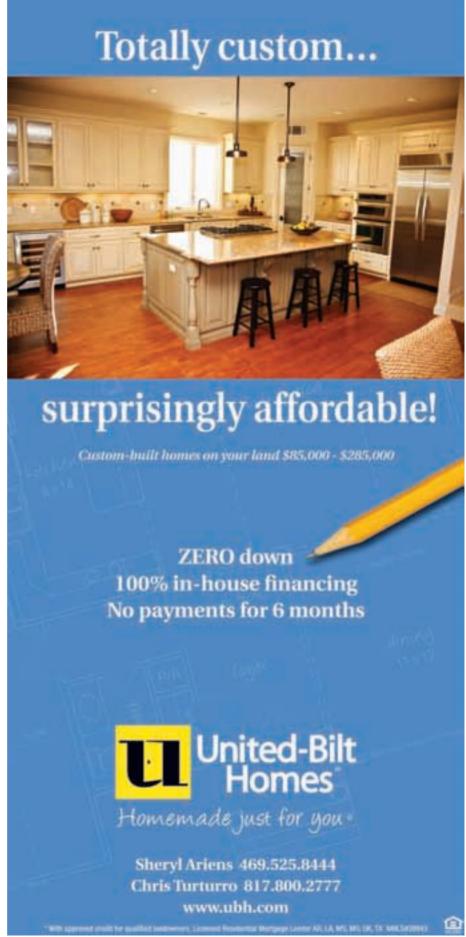
The greatest cache of shark teeth

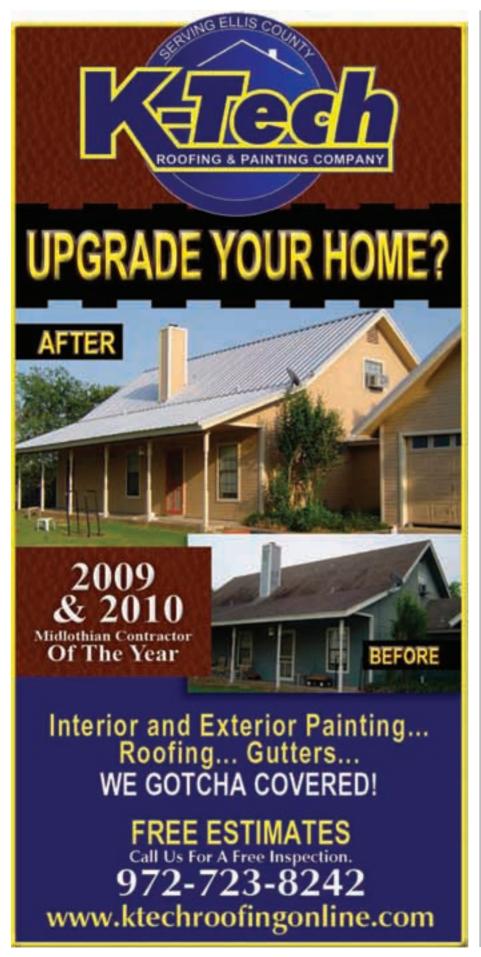


he has discovered was right here in Waxahachie. "On Great House Road, a pond being dug out, and after it rained, the pond was littered with sharks' teeth," David recalled. He noted there were other petrified forms of undersea plant life and fish bones to be found there, all indigenous to shallow salt water, indicating the location had been a lagoon about 90 million years ago. Little digging was needed to find the specimens. The same holds true on his regular hunts: "I mostly find them on the surface." Another nearby location, which yielded plentiful shark teeth at one time, was Lake View Camp. "It's on FM66," he said. "There's a water park there now, but before they built that you could go in and around the hill there, and it was full of shark teeth, fish backbone, everything."

Self-taught in his scope of interest, David has learned as much from PBS television documentaries as he has from books. He also credits modern Hollywood with authentic representations of prehistoric life, both aquatic and terrestrial. "In the old days, when they would show The Attack of the 50 Foot Iguana, the stuff was pretty goofy," he admitted. "Of course, when you're a little kid, it's great. But the Jurassic Park movies are dead on. They really did their research."

Before his countywide searches David likes to wait for a "good heavy rain," adding that "there are certain locales where the rains wash stuff out. So it's a good time to go check." Work and other commitments prevent extended journeys for the time being, and David contents himself with jaunts that allow him "to







be back in an hour." He said his hobby is gratifying, and even if others don't share his passion, he finds they are still interested. Many express their surprise that millions of years ago Ellis County and most of North Texas were undersea. David explained that a sure giveaway of the depth of water the territory was in is the prevalence of white rock limestone or calcium carbonate. "That's

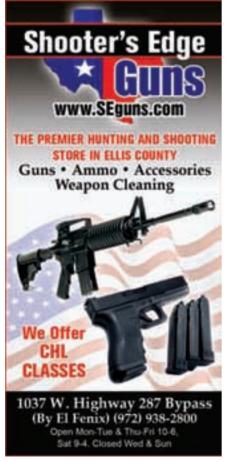


precipitated out of deep sea water," he said, "so wherever you find it, you know there once were thousands of feet of water there."

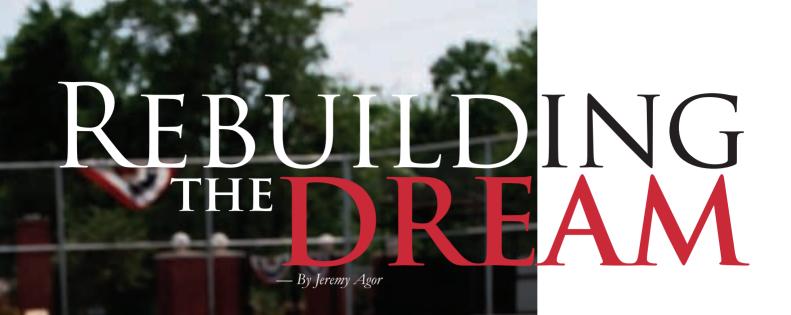
David looks forward to continuing his local runs for shells, shark teeth and other examples of this area's ancient underwater heritage, but confesses he is keeping an eye out for a bigger prize. "I would really like to find something of the dinosaur ilk that's readily identifiable," he said. "I have a short piece of prehistoric jawbone, but I'm not sure to which animal it belongs."

Ellis County's own prehistory historian is modest about the attention he has received, but is glad that others are appreciating paleontology. Through books, TV shows and movies, David believes the once museum-confined subject is becoming more popular, and hopes workday enthusiasts will be inspired to take to the field as he has done, collecting a little treasure of life on Mother Earth when the old gal was young. NOW









Bryan Johnson is a baseball fan and well aware of the history of baseball in Waxahachie. He lives just blocks from the Optimist Fields, which date from the 1940s. He has spent many hours watching his son, Tyler, play ball at the complex.



From Left to right: Chim Curry and Bryan Johnson

Bryan and his wife, Beth, a native of Waxahachie, settled in Waxahachie after they married. They, along with their partner, Shane Leath, owned Wood Master Building Company, which they started in 1990 and grew to a very successful business. They sold the company several years ago, and Bryan wanted to do something for the community. His sights quickly turned to Optimist Fields. Looking at the complex through his builder's eye, Bryan saw a great deal of unreached potential. When the opportunity arose for him to make needed improvements, he jumped at the chance.

The fields were built between 1947 and 1951 as Curry Field. Henry Curry was a local bachelor who owned a sporting goods store. Along with former Major League Baseball player and manager, Paul

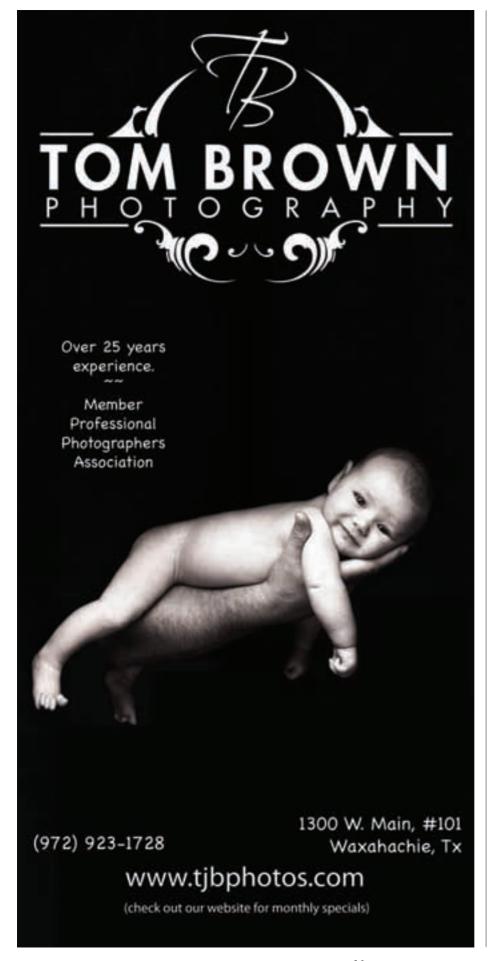


"Really. I just wanted to do something good for the community, which is why I leased the fields and didn't try to buy them."

Richards, he taught boys to play baseball. At the time, Waxahachie didn't have a good field, so he gathered money and built one. Bryan's father-in-law had played for Henry back in 1939.

The complex is privately owned by Optimist International, which also owns the local swimming pool. They had an agreement to let Waxahachie Youth Baseball use the fields as long as they took care of them. However, a dedicated volunteer force, doing the best it could without the proper equipment, was only able to scratch the surface. Bryan noticed the fields were only used four months of the year. So, in 2007, he began making plans to make them available year-round, signing





a lease agreement with the Optimists in February 2008. He has personally paid for all the improvements made.

"When I first started negotiations, a lot of people who'd poured blood, sweat and tears into maintaining the complex were



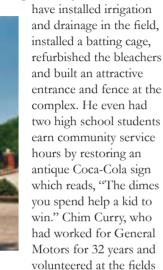
guarded about me taking over. There were lots of rumors that I was going to build houses on the land or only make the fields available for select baseball," Bryan recounted. "Really, I just wanted to do something good for the community, which is why I leased the fields and didn't try to buy them. I'm only the gate keeper. There are many big, new complexes around the state. My son travels all over playing select baseball for the Waxahachie Braves, so I've seen some of the best fields around Texas, but besides Richards Park, we haven't played on any other fields with the hometown feel that the Optimist Fields have."

Bryan's arrangement with the Optimists was attractive to all the parties involved in the deal. The Optimists liked the idea of earning rent on the property. Bryan likes the arrangement, because the rent he pays is used to maintain the community swimming pool and is also put into scholarship funds for local students to pay for books and other expenses when they go to college. Waxahachie Youth Baseball benefits from the arrangement, because it can focus on children playing baseball.

"John Broad (president of Waxahachie Youth Baseball) and the board have done a great job. They're growing by leaps and bounds - my first year they had 350 kids signed up in the spring, but they had more than 750 signed up for this

spring, and they play baseball year-round. They've done a lot for the kids, and it's easier because now they don't have to worry about concessions, mowing the grass and all the detail work," Bryan said.

Since taking over, Bryan and his crew



since mid-1980, retired early to take over field operations full time. "Chim has been instrumental in keeping things running smoothly. He works tournaments, cuts the grass and keeps everything looking great. I couldn't do it without him," Bryan remarked.

The complex hosts tournaments for national groups and has even attracted interest from a team in Mexico. Bryan frequently hears from out-of-town



coaches and players, "Man, these are great fields." That makes him proud because he thinks the old-time feel takes



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people back to the way baseball used to be. In fact, Bryan recounted a story of a couple who came from a neighboring town to watch their son play and ended up moving to Waxahachie because of its hometown feel, the relaxed atmosphere and friendly people they encountered at the ballpark.

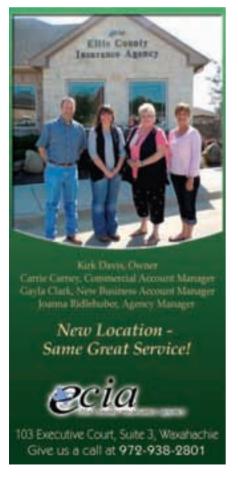
"Baseball is one of our oldest sports. During the Great Depression, people would go to a baseball game to get away from the severity of life for a couple hours. It didn't matter if you were rich or poor, you could relax. I like that history, that tradition," Bryan said. "Coaches teach kids to respect the game. Having nice fields to play on, you can tell those things sink in. When they step across the line, they just play harder.

"Waxahachie's a baseball town. Waxahachie High School has played baseball for over 100 years," he continued. "Football is big, but baseball is deeply rooted. Baseball people all over know Waxahachie. Traditions are pretty strong here, and the kids know they're expected to keep the traditions going. Chim's son, Cody, started his baseball career on the t-ball field and went on to play at McMurray College in Abilene. A lot of people who have played here are now doctors, lawyers, congressmen and professional ballplayers."

While his investment isn't a money maker, it's worth the time and money many times over in terms of his personal satisfaction. "I could've invested in more businesses and made a lot more money, but I didn't do it for the profit," he explained. "Everybody thought I was crazy to do this, but it's my stress reliever. Investing in kids and seeing the smiles on their faces and on their parents' faces is worth it 10 times over. When I'm out here, I want to see the kids' faces when they walk through the gates. They'll be the ones who judge how good a job I did."

With summer here, tournaments will keep the fields busy and Bryan will be a regular fixture at the Optimist Fields. He has plans for improvements to the main Optimist Youth Center building at the complex, and he is excited by the potential of the new season. "You go out there now, the grass is green and freshly cut, and the infields are perfect," he beamed. "You can tell it's time for baseball." NOW









At Home With Don and Lynda Fulghum



The marriage was not predicted to last long. Spectators gave the young couple a lifespan of only a few years. When that deadline came and went, they said the marriage was no match for the seven-year itch, and if they survived that it would not possibly last 15 years. Yet for 53 years, Don and Lynda Fulghum have beat the odds while rearing three children and traveling the world.

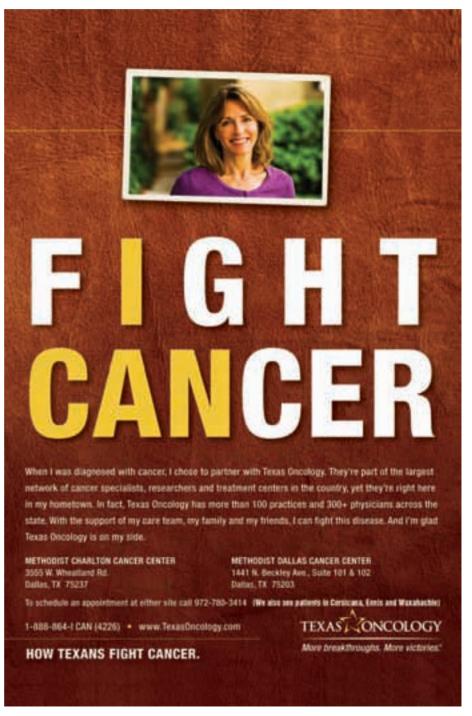
According to Lynda, they have known each other forever. Don's grandfather, father and brothers built the house Lynda lived in for the first 18 years of her life. They grew up in San Angelo, attended high school together and were married shortly after graduating. As a wedding gift, Lynda's father gave Don a Pony 35mm camera. He began documenting their new life together and became the family historian. The builtin bookshelves in their Waxahachie home hold albums from every year of their marriage. Inside are the snapshots Don took of everyday life, world travels and their growing family. Little mementos, like ticket stubs from dates they went on, accompany the photos. "He kept everything," Lynda said. "It's nice having a secretary for the family."



Don and Lynda attended New Mexico State University and studied engineering. At the time, only one in 1,000 electrical engineers was female. Lynda was the first female to graduate from the program there. "The professors didn't know how to handle her," Don said. "I remember when she got pregnant, and they tried to dance around it. She surprised them and never missed a class."

As co-op students, they both took jobs at White Sands Missile Range in south central New Mexico. The Fulghums'







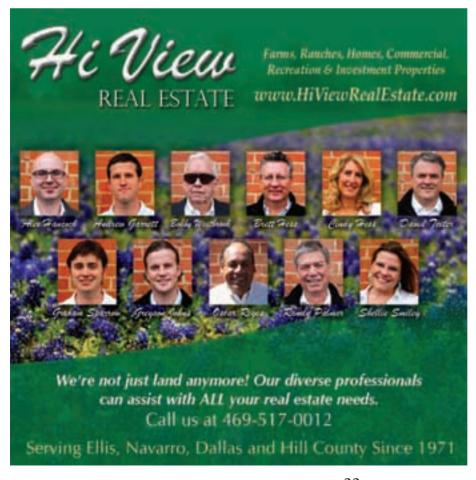
careers kept them moving, — they lived in New Mexico, Florida, New York, Arizona, Oklahoma and Texas before settling in one location for more than a few years. In 1984, they set up home in the Dallas area, and reared their three children, Donald, Paul and Angie, before moving to Terrell. "We were like gypsies before we moved to Terrell," Lynda confessed.

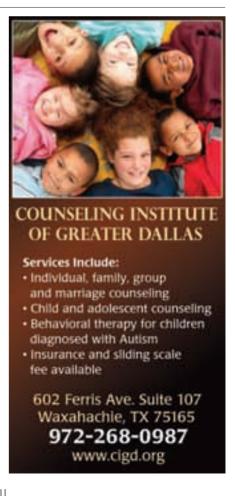
When the children were grown and gone, Don and Lynda began preparing for retirement. They purchased a motor home and were ready to see the world. In1995, they began traveling six months

out of the year. They spent several months driving and touring Alaska, flew to Greece for six weeks, visited Spain for seven weeks and traveled the Australian outback for another month. Each trip was an adventure, and they planned the itinerary themselves, avoiding commercial tours and over-populated tourist sites.



Fearless, the Fulghums visited remote locations, many of which were unsafe for tourists. On the last day of their trip to the Aswan Desert in Egypt, Don and Lynda hired a taxi to take them to Cairo to see the pyramids. With no one around, they roamed the landscape freely. On their way back to the taxi they realized





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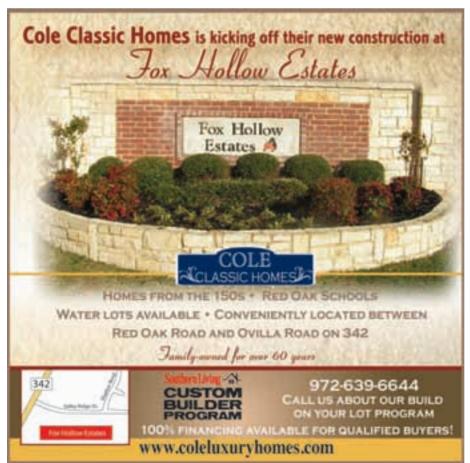
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they had crossed a fence they were not supposed to and spent the day in an illegal area. "In Egypt, we found that for a few coins, the workers would take you down into all of these old ruins," Lynda said. "We toured all kinds of things we didn't know we weren't supposed to see."

In 2000, the couple ended their days of traveling, sold their motor home and bought a house in Waxahachie, close enough to Angie, her husband, Mike Downard, and their two children, Evan and Lily, who lived in Cedar Hill at the time, but also far enough away to give the young family their space. That space got a lot smaller when Angie and her family moved into Don and Lynda's home. The temporary arrangement never changed, and the Fulghum house became a multi-family home. To accommodate the new form of living, Don and Lynda converted their garage into their personal apartment, while giving reign of the other bedrooms to Angie's family. Their apartment has a bedroom, kitchen and den. During the week, Lynda does the cooking for both families in the main kitchen, but on the weekends it's just her and Don dining in their quarters.

While Mike and Angie are at work, Don and Lynda are in charge of getting the kids where they need to be. They take them to doctor's appointments, pick them up for school and even tutor them after school. Don helps Lily, and Lynda helps Evan with his advanced math homework. During the day when everyone else is at school or work, Don and Lynda rule the roost. They are usually preoccupied with the regular household duties of cooking, cleaning and maintenance, but they find time to devote to their favorite hobbies.

Don has spent years researching the

family's lineage. He has several notebooks containing all of his findings, which he keeps in the den. He attends the Fulghum National Reunion and has been able to verify that every Fulghum in the United States is related. Digging into the past, Don has discovered infamous duels, old family diaries and inconsistencies caused by distant relatives who tried to erase family history when they learned of interracial marriages between Fulghums and Indians. "When we had the RV we would visit relatives, and I'd take my scanner with me," Don said. "I've been able to get a lot of photographs I would never have gotten any other way."

Lynda's hobby is more apparent from the street. The vard at their home is unlike any other in the neighborhood. The front lawn has no grass, rather a winding maze of lilies, irises, rosebushes and crape myrtles that lead to the front door. In the spring and summer the colorful array of flowers and greenery greet guests before they even exit their



car. The backyard and both sides of the house are equally as impressive as the front yard. In the back, there is plenty of room for the children to run and play, as well as for Lynda's flower gardens. A creek runs through the back of the property, and the Fulghums have created several sitting areas to enjoy it under the shade of their tress. Lynda spends as much time as she can tending her gardens and planning what she's going to add next. "Every year I come up with a new deck for Don to build," Lynda said. "I have to come up with something to keep him busy."

The Fulghums say they are in Waxahachie for good. The only traveling they do now is to visit their children or to San Angelo to meet up with their former classmates. "Since we were only 18 and 19 when we got married, people used to say 'those poor people,"' Lynda said. "After all of these years, I think it may last." NOW









Claude, Shirley, their child



Perfect MATCH

— By Sandra Strong

Claude Wakeland was diagnosed at the age of 13 with juvenile diabetes. Insulin shots were a normal part of his routine for 42 consecutive years. As he married and had children of his own, the diabetes continued to adversely affect his kidneys. He started having a reaction to the insulin. Daily dialysis treatments soon turned into a "night cycling" dialysis machine. 'T'd hook up to it at 9:00 p.m. and would remain on it until 6:00 a.m.," Claude explained. "The kidney problems had control of my life."



His wife, Shirley, remembers all the times he would fall in and out of consciousness. "It was a real juggling act," she stated. "You get used to the noise of the machine, but it was frustrating for Claude because he was only able to lay on his right side. We learned to live with it."

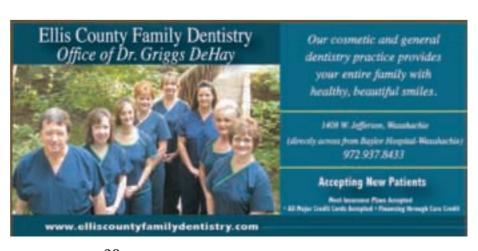
Claude was in need of a new kidney, one that had not been ravaged by a lifetime of diabetes, insulin shots and dialysis. When his name was added to the local donor recipient list, doctors told him it could be at least 18 months or longer before a matching donor would be found. "We weren't sure he had 18 months left," Shirley painfully admitted.

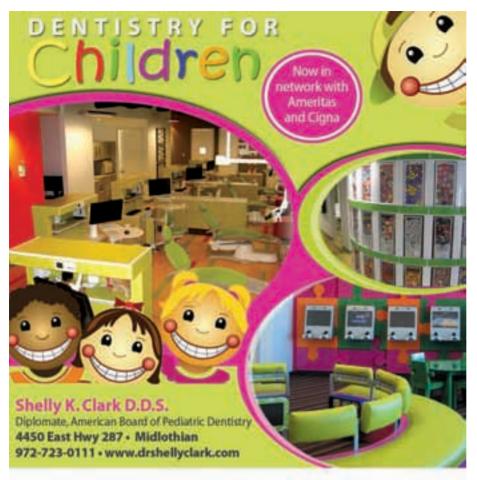
The family didn't have to put the doctor's timeline to the test. Seven months into his wait, Claude received the call he hoped would put him back in charge of his own life. "The hospital called around 10:30 on the night of October 27," Claude remembered. "They said they had a kidney and pancreas and to get there as fast as I could." Claude and Shirley wasted no time getting Claude unhooked from the dialysis machine, dressed and on the road to the hospital. At this time they were one hour away from Methodist Central Hospital.

In order for a transplant to even be considered, the recipient and donor need to be perfectly matched. In most













cases, recipients will be called back to the hospital several times before a match is found. "We had a perfect match on the very first call," Claude stated, still recalling his disbelief. "We were so thankful. All we could do was give thanks to the donor for the gift of life they were giving me."

Earlier that same night, Hermilo Trejo Ir. was just a few miles from his home in

Ferris, Texas, when he had a one-car accident and was sent to Baylor Medical Center in Dallas, unresponsive with no brain activity. At 18, he hadn't vet thought of



checking the donor box on his driver's license, so that decision was left up to his parents, Hermilo Sr. and Sofia Trejo.

As doctors explained the process, one concern plagued Hermilo Sr. He wanted his son to arrive in heaven whole. Only after the family's priest prayed with Hermilo Sr. and explained the spirit leaves the body did he sign the necessary



papers to move ahead in allowing the heart, kidneys, pancreas, liver and corneas to be donated to help people on standby who were in need. Hermilo Jr.'s kidney and pancreas were the "perfect match" for which the Wakelands were bittersweetly thanking God for across town. "We knew someone had lost a loved one in this process," Shirley added. "We have never once forgotten their loss."

On January 1, 2011, 13 years after the dual transplant, the two families came together as one. Both families had dreamed of doing this from the very beginning, but they all agreed the timing of their first meeting needed to be perfect, too. Christmas decorations were still in place, offering a wonderful backdrop for the conversation that followed all the tearful hugs. Once the Trejos met the Wakelands, they knew they had made the right choice all those years ago. "The drive from Ferris to Waxahachie that day was very emotional," Blanca Morales, Hermilo Jr.'s older sister said. "Yes, there were lots of tears, but the connection was immediate. We felt comfortable the moment we arrived."

Since that first meeting, the families talk to one another regularly and continue to plan outings where they can reminisce together about Hermilo Jr. Recently, they all met again at the Wakeland home, and what a family reunion that turned out











to be. The two families found laughter in the memories they shared. "He was popular, kind and well-loved," Blanca said, with emotion. "He was the average kid who enjoyed helping his father work in the scrap business."

Good memories abound for Claude, too. Medically he will always be considered a diabetic, but he no longer suffers with the adverse affects of diabetes and he no longer has to give himself insulin shots. He can eat any food he wants, and he eats lots of Mexican food. "That's Junior coming out in him," Blanca said with a smile, referring to her family's Hispanic heritage.

"Hermilo Jr. gave me my life back," Claude said, as tears welled up in his eyes. "I've gotten to see my children marry and have families of their own. I've watched my grandchildren grow up. I'm no longer confined to the house."

"Hermilo Jr. restored Claude's quality of life," Shirley added emphatically.

Allowing their son to be a donor not only saved Claude's life, it also added quality to the lives of five additional recipients, whom the Trejos have not met. The donation has also prompted members in both families to consider being donors themselves. Through this journey, they have learned the importance of being a donor. They have seen firsthand the good that can come from giving to another even though hearts are breaking from the loss.

This year, the Trejos invited the Wakelands to Celebration of Life, an event in Dallas for donor families and their guests. As a donor family, the Trejos had been attending the affair for years. This year as Hermilo Jr.'s picture came up on the screen, Claude and Shirley once again realized the full impact of what had been given to them so many years ago. "It's the greatest gift you can give," Claude whispered, "and it's the greatest gift you can receive. Shirley and I will be forever grateful."

Hermilo Jr. changed many lives that fateful day. In death, he gave life and gave it abundantly. "Hermilo Jr. was a giver in life," Blanca said, as the rest of the Trejo family nodded in agreement. "He also gave in his passing." NOW

Editor's Note: Visit www.organdonor.gov to learn more about becoming an organ donor.



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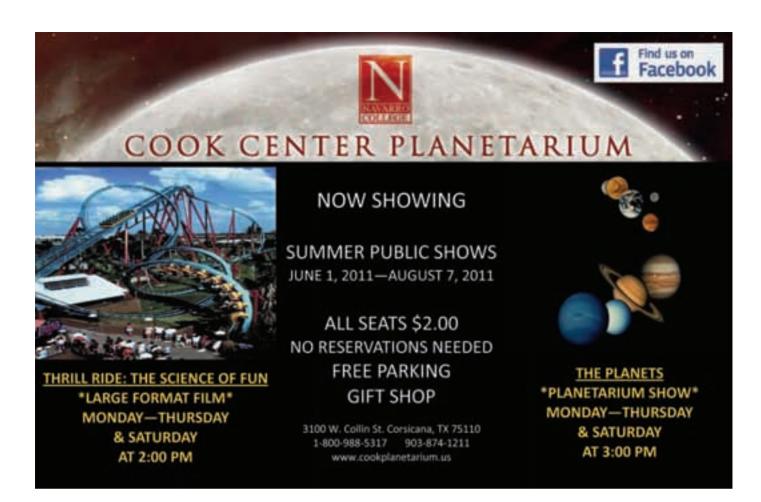
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Dramatic Faith

— By Randy Bigham

The performing troupe at Waxahachie's Farley Street Baptist Church has been the pride of the congregation for over six years. The 30 energetic students, ages 12 to 18, who call themselves Youth Expressions, are adding consistently to their repertoire, their outreach and their laurels. "This is the biggest class to date, and it may be the most enthusiastic," said student pastor, Jason Prewitt, adding, "The young men and women who comprise Youth Expressions have not only entertained at Farley Street, but have represented their church on mission trips to Colorado, Illinois, New Mexico and Arkansas. The hosts at other churches and missions we have visited have all been amazed by our students' dedication to the presentations they give and their willingness to be tools for Christ."





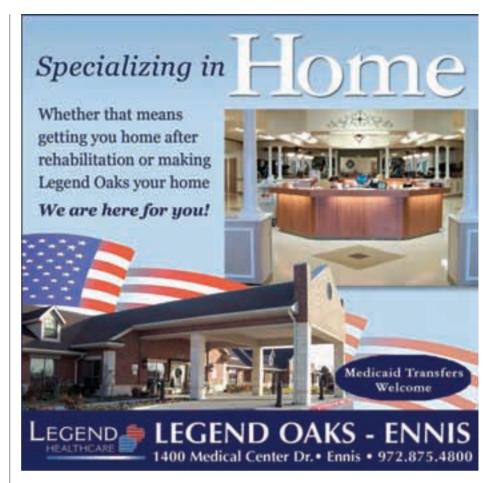






Coordinator Chervl Hawkins also praises the skill, commitment and integrity of the teenagers involved in Youth Expressions. "There are many ways to celebrate worship," she said, "and the students are receptive to that. In fact, they come to us with ideas on how to broaden our scope." Many of the junior high and high school kids enrolled in the program are already interested in drama and music, and are eager to bring Christian messages to the public through performance art and other cutting-edge staging methods. Not only are they proactive, they're also hard workers. "This group is a busy bunch," Cheryl stressed. "We have drill team officers, band members and athletes, which makes it hard to schedule rehearsals. It's a good thing they work best under pressure!"

Hailing from Waxahachie, Midlothian, Red Oak and Palmer, the students are primarily focused on elements of modern theater for the musically-based, dramatic productions they choose. A "black light, white glove" presentation of "Who am I?" by the Christian rock group, Casting Crowns, was Youth Expressions' breakout performance at Farley Street Baptist. "The kids told the story of the song by hand motions, making groupings of words and symbols," Jason explained. This kickoff for Youth Expressions was















very moving for the audience. "To this day," Jason concluded," it's a favorite here, and has won many hearts over the years."

Performing Andrew Carlton's "Hold Me Up" has been another triumph for Youth Expressions, both at home and on missions, as well as at the Daniel Springs Baptist Camp in Gary, Texas, where over 800 of the students' peers witnessed a visual rendition of the lyrics. Those words and special choreography by Marlynne Finch brought many to tears. Other Christian songs around which Youth Expressions has staged powerful productions include "Everything" by Lifehouse and "EveryMan" by Casting Crowns.

Youth Expressions does not shy away from difficult subject matter in its shows, which sometimes reference alcohol abuse and suicide, such as in their rendition of "Everything" first presented at Farley Street on an Easter Sunday. Jason admits the group was taking a chance on a potentially controversial program. "Fortunately, Farley Street supports our students and gives us lots of latitude," he said.

"That presentation was a turning point for many," Cheryl noted. "It made clear to people what our purpose was. It wasn't a typical feel-good Easter message, but it was very relevant, and the reaction was incredible." From that emotional service until today the church "across the board and in every age group" has embraced Youth Expressions and its impactful messages geared to serious issues facing children and young adults.

"The students have a desire to present important work," Cheryl pointed out. "I'm so proud of them. We have kids who have won all-state choir,



homecoming kings, all-star athletes – role models – who aren't ashamed to step out and present the Gospel."

Cheryl is from Red Oak and the daughter of a minister of music. Her work with Youth Expressions is bolstered by a "love of music and worship" and a determination to make "drama a worship tool." Jason, a deacon's son, is originally from Midlothian, "surrendered to the ministry at 18," and hasn't looked back. He acknowledges Cheryl as an integral conduit to the success of Youth Expressions. "I can't see us being where we're at without her heart." The pair has formed a partnership of shared vision, but both insist the credit for all that Youth Expressions has accomplished goes to the young people themselves. "They've carried this way beyond what we envisioned," Jason said. "It's all because of the kids. They inspired us."

The leaders also credit fellow church members for sustaining the group over the years with their expertise – Linda Hamel for teaching sign language to the students for their "Who Am I?" presentation; creative arts minister, Larry Wood, for his advice and direction; and Farley Street Baptist pastor, Richard W. Smith, for his championship and support. "This is a team effort," Cheryl clarified, "and we want everyone to know how much they're appreciated."

Summer schedules for many members of Youth Expressions includes joining church mission conferences, trips and camps, after which they'll return to Farley Street Baptist to present highlights from their "on the road" projects and performances. The group has plans for a special Christmas show, and other ideas are being hatched for next year's itinerary.

For Jason and Cheryl, saying goodbye















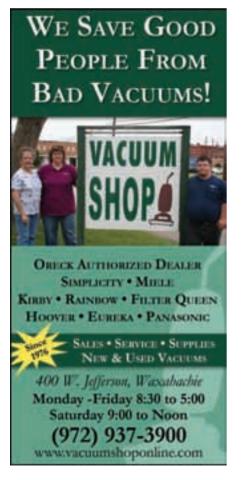


to this year's senior class - some 21 students - is bittersweet, but they're grateful for an event that will bring many of the kids' experience with Youth Expressions full circle. When the young people were freshmen or younger, their first mission trip had been a churchbuilding project in Little Rock, Arkansas. The Waxahachie visitors bonded with their Arkansas hosts and fellow workers. who paid them the compliment that their dedication had enabled the church's growth and success in the community. "Now the kids will return this year to the same area on a new mission trip, and they'll be able to see the fruits of their labor," Cheryl said. "It will be so rewarding for them to see what they helped start."

On a personal level, Jason and Cheryl are feeling rewarded, too. "Helping these wonderful kids find a love for music has been a blessing," Cheryl said. "But it goes deeper than that. I have matured in the Lord through my experience with Youth Expressions."

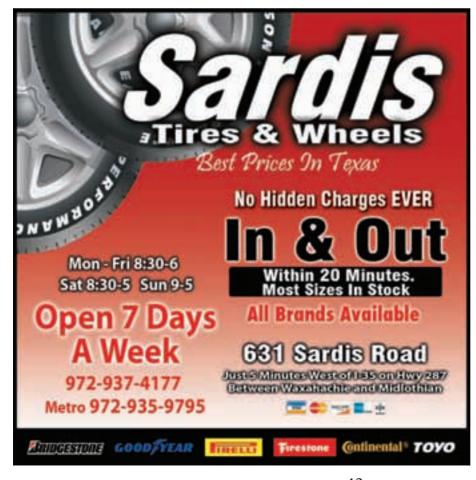
"Seeing the kids grow and soar as young adults has been amazing," Jason added. "They're going to be tomorrow's teachers and businessmen and women, and what they have learned here will become a foundational part of their lives." NOW

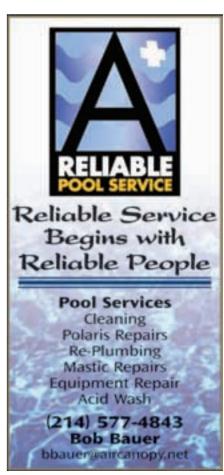




















When When Comen Gather

— By Carolyn Wills

Jane Ann Shipp and Patti Junkin are two very busy women. They each have two children, plus four grandchildren for Jane Ann, and they both work. Jane Ann teaches computer classes at Waxahachie Senior Center and is an adjunct instructor at Southwestern Assemblies of God University. Patti is the chief executive officer of her family's business, Pearman Oil



Jane Ann and Patti

& LP Gas. Inc. What's more. each tirelessly gives back to the community and to a special group of friends. As will happen when women gather, someone, something or someplace inevitably benefits, and this is what forms Jane Ann's and Patti's story.

The tale begins in 1931 when a man named Walter W. Ross was inspired to create a social organization called the National "What to Read" Club. During the Great Depression, he wanted to give women an avenue for self-development, connection and support. Soon after he established the club, he met Sally Rogers McSpadden and with Leona Schroers. The two women convinced him to reframe and rename the organization. Now, 80 years later, Beta Sigma Phi is the largest international women's social organization in the world. Waxahachie is home to three Beta Sigma Phi chapters, and Jane Ann and Patti are two of those members. "The name of our chapter is Eta Omega," Jane Ann explained. "It was founded in the 1940s." Jane Ann joined in 1983 and is the group's current



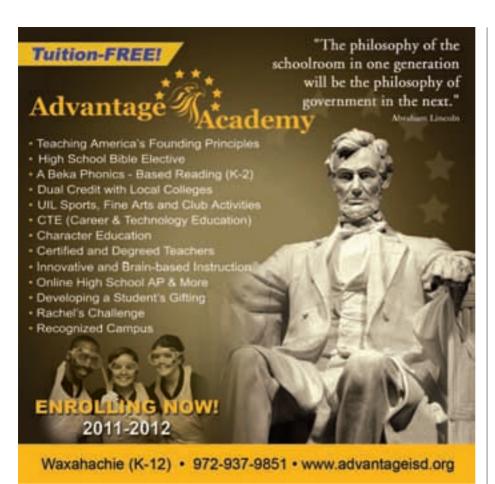
outgoing president. "We do a lot for the community," she said, "but many people don't know we exist. There are probably women in our area looking to get involved but, they don't know about us."

Beta, Sigma and Phi are the first letters in the Greek words for life, learning and friendship, which is the motto of the nonacademic sorority. Basically, the organization is a friendship network made up of women of all ages, faiths,















educational, social and geographic backgrounds. Performing services is not required, yet giving back to the community tends to be the natural outcome of the groups' cultural programs. By working toward selfdevelopment and

supporting other women, Beta Sigma Phi members earn progressive degrees and many stay active throughout their lifetimes.

Patti is chairperson of the Eta Omega Ways and Means Committee and as a Beta Sigma Phi sister since 1981, she is recognized as a lifetime member. "There are 15 women in our group, mostly aged from



Sorority members, who Bradshaw, Peggy Brad

mid-40s to 60s," she said. "Each of us works at least part-time, yet everyone willingly participates, and we are a very active group."



"We meet once a month and have lots of activities," Jane Ann said. "Since everyone works, we meet at a member's home, who then provides dinner and a program. Our programs have ranged from spring gardening tips to making hats for the state convention to reporting on our latest project." "We're always busy," Patti added. They have worked with Carter BloodCare since 2005. "Organizing a

blood drive was something I had



worked and donated blood: Lori Williams, Deatra y, Yvette Johnson, Patti Junkin and Patty Smith.

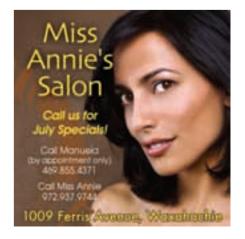
always wanted us to do," Patti said, "so when I proposed it and offered to be the coordinator, everyone said, 'Sure." As it turned out, the blood drive was so successful they had to turn people away. "It was huge," Patti smiled, "so we decided to have it four times a year." In total, Eta Omega has collected 1,397 units of blood and, for the past five years, has been recognized by Carter BloodCare as the area's top performer among government, civic and community groups. "Each unit of blood can potentially save four lives," Patti said. "We are so proud to be a part of this, and we have accumulated credits that can be allocated to someone needing blood. For instance, we were able to help a local leukemia patient who had no insurance."

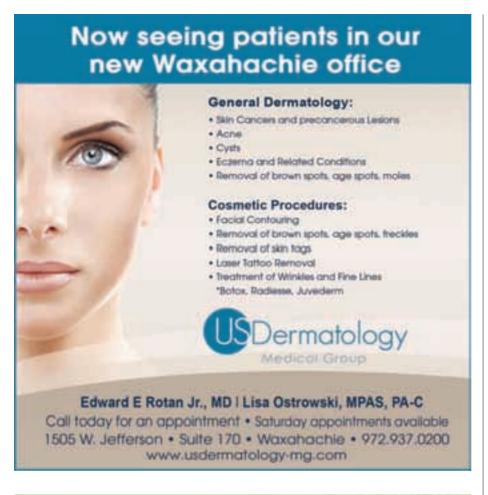
"Our group is willing to do whatever needs to be done," Jane Ann added. "At the Waxahachie Senior Citizens Center, I recently learned about the Meals-on-Wheels 'Ani-Meals' program that helps homebound elderly or disabled people feed their pets. I presented the program to our group and, before we knew it, we had launched our own Ani-Meals fundraiser and are now doing it twice a year. Senior citizens are so appreciative because, for some, this program is the only way they can keep their pets."



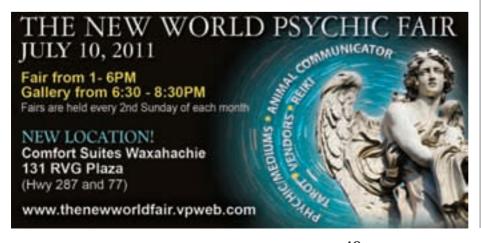












The Eta Omegas donate gifts to the Senior Citizen Center for Bingo night, and each November, they make gift baskets for an auction benefitting the Texas Scottish Rite Hospital. They are also good at turning fun into something helpful. "We discovered that going to a [Texas] Rangers' game can be a fundraiser," Patti shared. "On a fluke, we decided to let people know about a Ranger outing. We sold tickets and chartered a bus, and it became so popular we are doing it twice a year."

"Patti coordinates everything," Jane Ann said. "She's the glue. One time, the game was called due to rain, so we got back on the bus and still had a great time!"

"We go to the annual state and area conventions, and it's always fun to meet women from other Texas chapters," Patti said. "The state convention was in Austin this year, and the area convention in September will be held in Frisco." Both international and local membership dues are charged, and, in an average year, Beta Sigma Phi members raise more than \$3 million for local charities and donate over 200,000 volunteer hours. "We donate to the international fund, too," Patti explained. Millions of dollars donated by all chapters go toward causes, such as health research and hunger relief.

"Each April, we invite the other two local chapters to our Founders Luncheon," Jane Ann said. "Members in one of the chapters are younger than our group and, in the other, they are older. We're all friends." A program called Friendly Ventures encourages Beta Sigma Phi groups to establish new chapters. "We know it can be tough for women with younger children to make time for clubs, but we would love to help form another local chapter," Jane Ann admitted.

Over the years and through many community projects, there is something else the Eta Omegas share — friendship. "We have secret pals to help celebrate birthdays and other occasions, and that's a lot of fun," Patti said. "We're also here to support each other at times of crisis. When a member has surgery, we're there with food, and should a family member pass, we're there with compassion." As evidenced by Jane Ann and Patti's story, Eta Omegas proves that when women gather, someone, something or someplace inevitably benefits. NOW







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Jaxson Bishop, Carly Bishop, Gene Behne holding Kingston Bishop, Kim Behne, Papa

Back row - Hudson Nichols, Bella Bishop

ROCK ON

Catering to customers isn't really a job to Gene Behne.

— By Sandra Strong

Gene Behne is no stranger to the business of masonry. He has worked with the tools of his trade — rocks, bricks, stones, flagstone and mortar — since the late 1970s. "Yeah, I joined the brick layer's union in 1978," Gene remembered. A year after he got out of the union in 1980, he decided to leap out in faith by opening his own commercial brick business, which at the time dealt solely with the building of new homes and commercial properties.

As the years have gone by, Gene still finds himself in many "new builds," but his main focus these days is the Rock Pile, the family-owned and -operated stone and natural rock business Gene started five years ago. "What I offer at the Rock Pile is more popular now," Gene said, referring to the extensive inventory

of stones and natural rocks, both large and small; flagstone, in a variety of cuts and colors; slate and large slabs of natural stone for countertops, as well as fireplace and backyard patio kits. "Due to the economy, people just aren't able to travel like they used to do," Gene explained further. "They're making vacation spots in their backyards. They're bringing the indoors out."

Inventory comes from all over the country. Gene goes where the rocks are in order to have one of the best selections around. Inventory is trucked in from Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, Arkansas and Oklahoma, to name only a few of the larger distribution states. When asked what the Rock Pile stocked most, Gene answered without hesitation. "Flagstone," he said. "It's my main stock, but I also try to keep a large supply of

Business NOW

everything I think customers might want on hand. I always try to have the very best." With the natural style of new homes and backyard havens that include kitchens and fireplaces, Austin stone has also become a popular item which Gene keeps readily available. "I also have really good prices on bulk rock for new home builders," he added.

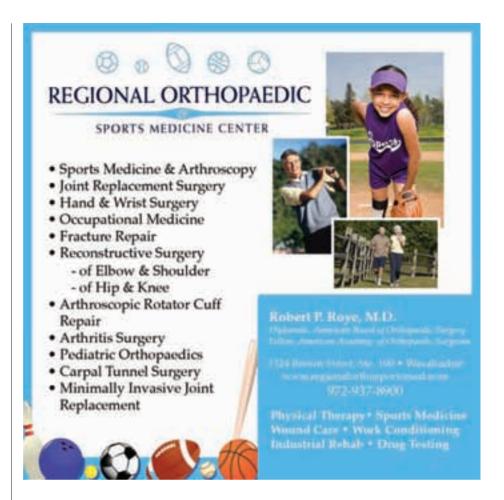
The Rock Pile employs six hardworking stone masons, along with oe Roy Wood — one dedicated individual. "Pop", as Joe Roy is known to family and friends, is a mainstay at the Rock Pile. "I couldn't do this without him." Gene said of his father-in-law. "He gets here in the morning before I do and stays all day."

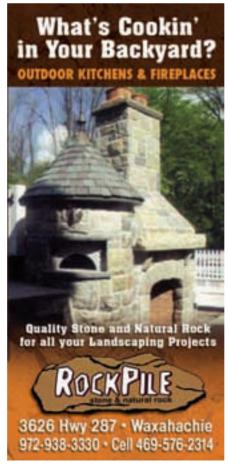
Prices on inventory and freight have risen considerably over the past five years, but Gene is proud to say his prices at the Rock Pile have stayed the same. Customers are his number one priority.

"I like to cater to people, always have. I'd like to think I'm a people person."

"They have to travel from somewhere to buy what I'm selling," Gene stated. "When I'm here on-site, I try to wait on every person that comes in." And it doesn't matter the size of the order five small stones to complete a flower garden or five pallets of slate to create a patio — Gene treats everyone the same. "I like to cater to people, always have," he admitted. "I'd like to think I'm a people person."

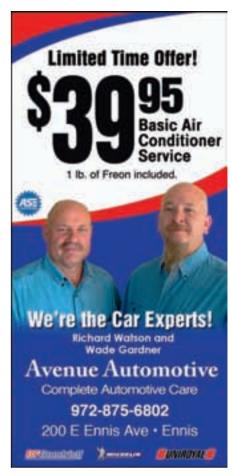
Gene makes his home in Ennis with Kim, his wife of 30-plus years. He tries his best to spend quality time with his two daughters and their families, which include five grandchildren. But, he admits his home away from home is the Rock Pile. "I guess you could say I live out here during the week," he stated with a laugh. "As you can probably tell, this really isn't a job to me." NOW



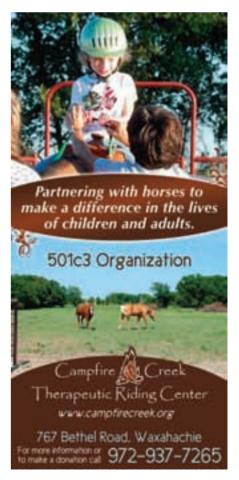






















Chamber President, Debra Wakeland, and team pose at the 2011 Gingerbread Golf Classic.



Adam Walker spends the day in costume at Scarborough Faire.



Waxahachie Gymnastics Center's Gina Six and Neighborhood Credit Union's Aaron Penny assemble their team for a quick shot during the Chamber's Golf Classic.



Charles Kozlovsky gets his daily workout in the exercise room at the Waxahachie Senior Center.



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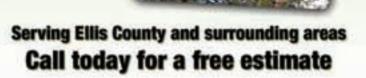
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Mary Jane Is Not the Same

— 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.

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. **NOW**

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 vard. 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!

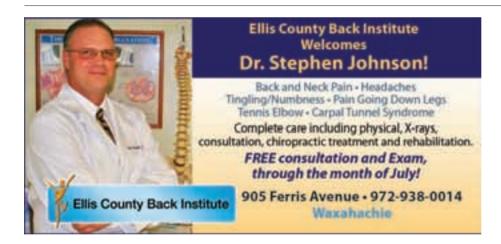
My first line of attack is to mow it as short as possible with the mower (being properly outfitted in long pants and sneakers with socks). I use the theory that the plant must have the leaf area to make the food it needs to survive. By cutting it at the roots or as close as I can get, I can effectively 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. NOW

Nancy Fenton is a Master Gardener.









Work Toward Your Own Financial Independence Day

- Presented by Tanisha Wilson

On July 4, we shoot fireworks, attend picnics, watch parades and otherwise celebrate our nation's independence and the many freedoms we enjoy. But as you go through life, you'll find out how important it is to work toward another type of freedom — financial freedom. That's why you need to put strategies in place to help you work toward your own Financial Independence Day.

And there's no way to "sugar-coat" this task, because it will be challenging. In recent years, a combination of factors — including depressed housing prices, rising health care costs, frozen or eliminated pension plans and the financial market plunge of 2008 and early 2009 — has made it more difficult for many of us to accumulate the resources we'll need to enjoy the retirement lifestyle we've envisioned. In fact, the average American family faces a 37-percent shortfall in the income they will need in retirement, according to a recent report by consulting firm McKinsey & Company.

But now that we've gotten the "bad" stuff out of the way, let's turn to the good news: You can do a great deal to work toward financial freedom during your retirement years. Here are some suggestions that can help:

• Save and invest more. Obviously, the younger you are, the greater the benefit you'll get by increasing your savings and investments. But whatever your age, you'll find that it pays to save and invest more. During difficult economic times, of course, it's not always easy to boost your savings and investments, but try to find ways that are as "automatic" as possible. For example, whenever you get a raise, increase your 401(k) contributions, which come directly from your paycheck. And whenever you get a "windfall," such as a tax refund, try to use part of it for your

IRA or another investment account.

- Rebalance your portfolio. It's always a good idea to periodically rebalance your investments to make sure they are still aligned with your goals and risk tolerance. But it's especially important to rebalance as you get older and you near retirement. At this stage, you'll want to decrease the volatility in your portfolio and lock in what gains you've achieved, so you may want to move some (but certainly not all) of your more aggressive investments into less volatile ones.
- Cut down on debts. It's easier said than done, but anything you can do to reduce your debt load will free up money to invest for your retirement. Work diligently to pay off whatever debts you can and examine your lifestyle to find areas in which you can reduce spending.
- Consider working part-time during retirement. Many Americans are now living longer and enjoying happy, healthy retirements. In fact, the concept of "retirement" has changed so that it now includes any number of activities including part-time work in a completely different area from one's previous career. If you are willing to do even a little part-time work during your retirement years, you can greatly reduce the financial pressures you may face during this time of your life.

The Fourth of July comes and goes quickly. So put strategies in place now to help you work toward your own Financial Independence Day.

Prepared by Edward Jones for use by Tanisha Wilson, Financial Advisor, Waxahachie TX.





July 2

Crape Myrtle Parade, Battle of the Bands and H-E-B Fireworks Show: 10:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m., Waxahachie Sports Complex, 151 Broadhead Rd. Event includes the always popular "tailgate party." Call (972) 937-2390.

July 3

Celebrate Independence Day: 5:00 p.m., MISD Multi-Purpose Stadium. The event is free with children's activities, fireworks, singing, concession stands with ham, hot dogs, hamburgers and barbecued corn. Donations toward the Senior Citizen's Food Pantry are welcome.

July 8

Summer Moonlight Movies: 9:00-11:00 p.m., in historic downtown Waxahachie on Franklin Street between Jackson and College. Featured movie: *Despicable Me.* Please call for more information (972) 937-7330, ext. 198.

July 14

Thundering Thursday: Texas Motorplex. The event includes fireworks.

July 15, 16

Waxahachie Lions Club Annual Mini Grand Prix: historic downtown Waxahachie. Contact race director Tim Bass at (972) 804-2237 to enter a car or for more details.

Creative Quilters Guild of Ellis County Quilt Show: 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center, 1 Community Center Circle, Midlothian. \$5 per person, \$4 for all those 60 and above. Over 120 judged quilts on display.

July 22-24

Summer Balloon Classic & AirFest: Friday 4:00-8:00 p.m., Saturday 6:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m., Sunday 6:00 a.m.-noon, Mid-Way Regional Airport, off Hwy. 287 between Midlothian and Waxahachie. Admission is free and parking is \$10 per vehicle. Something for everyone! Call (469) 371-9218.

July 29

Summer Moonlight Movies: 9:00-11:00 p.m., in historic downtown Waxahachie on Franklin Street between Jackson and College. Featured movie: *How to Train Your Drugon*. Call (972) 937-7330, ext. 198 for more information.

Ongoing:

Third Mondays

Ellis County Aggie Moms meeting: 7:00 p.m., Waxahachie First United Methodist Church, 505 W. Marvin. Visit www.elliscountyaggiemoms.org.

Tuesdays

Waxahachie Sunset Lions Club meeting: 6:00 p.m., Cancun's Restaurant. Questions may be answered by directing them to Karen Butner at (214) 587-1273 or by attending a meeting.

Fourth Tuesdays

Ellis County Technology (ECT): Networking: 6:30 p.m.; presentation: 7:00-8:30 p.m., Waxahachie LaQuinta. Call Wendy Merritt at (469) 256-8989.

Thursdays

Celebrate Recovery: 7:00 p.m., 408 Water Street. The purpose of this group is to help people live free from addiction, compulsive or dysfunctional behavior. Contact Brandon Jones at (214) 949-5725 or Brandon@thefrontiercommunity.org.

Third Fridays

Veterans Networking Group: 6:00 p.m., Zula's Coffee House, 1804 W. Hwy. 287 Business. Contact Mike Lamb at (214) 763-0378 or at vetsnetgrp@att.net.

Fourth Saturdays

Bristol Opry: 7:00 p.m., featuring local singers and musicians. Sponsored by Bristol Cemetery Association and Caring Hands of Bristol. Contact Jim Gatlin at (972) 846-2211.

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







In The Kitchen With Kelly Saunders

— By Sandra Strong

Kelly Saunders loves being in the kitchen. Her dad taught her how to cook, but she credits her mom for teaching her the art of baking. She admits she loves doing both, but if she had to choose just one, it would definitely be baking. "I get in 'the zone' when I bake," Kelly admitted, "especially when I'm decorating a cake. I love working with fondant."

Having grown up as a preacher's kid in Mississippi, Kelly enjoys hearty, soulful food. One of her favorites is a cornbread dressing recipe that has been passed down for four generations. Spending quality time in the kitchen with her husband and two daughters is of the utmost importance to Kelly, too. "It's always a mess," she laughed, "but it's so much fun."

Nana's Italian Cream Cake

1 stick butter

1/4 cup vegetable shortening

2 cups sugar

5 egg yolks

2 cups all-purpose flour

1 tsp. baking soda

1 cup buttermilk

1 tsp. vanilla

2 cups coconut

I cup chopped pecans

5 egg whites, stiffly beaten

- **I.** Cream butter and shortening. Add sugar and beat until mixture is smooth. Add egg yolks; beat well.
- **2.** Combine flour and baking soda; add to creamed mixture alternately with buttermilk. Stir in vanilla. Add coconut and chopped nuts.
- **3.** Fold in stiffly beaten egg whites. Pour batter into 3 greased and floured 8-in cake pans.

4. Bake at 350 F for 25 minutes or until cake tests done; cool. Frost with Cream Cheese Frosting (recipe below).

Cream Cheese Frosting

2 8-oz. pkgs. cream cheese, softened 1 stick butter

2 lbs. powdered sugar

1 tsp. vanilla

Chopped pecans

- **I.** Beat cream cheese and butter until smooth. Add sugar; mix well.
- 2. Add vanilla and beat until smooth.
- **3.** Spread frosting between layers and on top and sides of cake. Sprinkle top with pecans.

Baked Potato Soup

8 slices bacon 1 cup yellow onion, diced 2/3 cup all-purpose flour 6 cups hot chicken broth 4 cups baked potatoes, peeled and diced 2 cups heavy cream

1/4 cup fresh parsley, chopped

1 1/2 tsp. garlic, minced

1 1/2 tsp. dried basil

1 1/2 tsp. salt

1 1/2 tsp. Tabasco sauce

1 1/2 tsp ground pepper

I cup cheddar cheese, grated

1/4 cup green onions (white part), diced Garnish: crumbled bacon, chopped fresh parsley, grated cheddar cheese

- **1.** Fry the bacon until crisp. Drain on paper towels and crumble; save the drippings.
- **2.** Cook onion in bacon drippings over medium-high heat until soft, about 3 minutes. Add the flour, whisking to prevent lumps. Cook for 2 minutes.
- **3.** Add the chicken broth slowly, whisking to prevent lumps; cook until the liquid thickens.
- **4.** Reduce the heat to a simmer; add potatoes, cream, crumbled bacon, parsley, garlic, basil, salt, Tabasco sauce and pepper. Simmer for 10 minutes. Do not boil.
- **5.** Add the grated cheese and green onion. Heat until the cheese melts. Serve, garnished as desired with crumbled bacon, parsley and grated cheese.

Mini Cinnamon Rolls

Rolls:

I can refrigerated crescent rollsI/4 cup butter, softened2 Tbsp. brown sugarI/2 tsp. cinnamon

Glaze:

1 1/4 cups powdered sugar tsp. corn syrup 1/2 tsp. vanilla 1-2 Tbsp. milk

- **I.** For rolls, separate rolls into 4 rectangles; press perforations. Spread with butter.
- **2.** Combine sugar and cinnamon; sprinkle over rectangles.
- **3.** Roll up each rectangle. Cut each roll into 5 slices. Place each slice cut side down in ungreased miniature muffin pan. Bake at 350 F for 15-17 minutes.
- 4. Glaze warm rolls.
- **5.** For glaze, stir powdered sugar, com syrup, vanilla and enough milk to make drizzling consistency.

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

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