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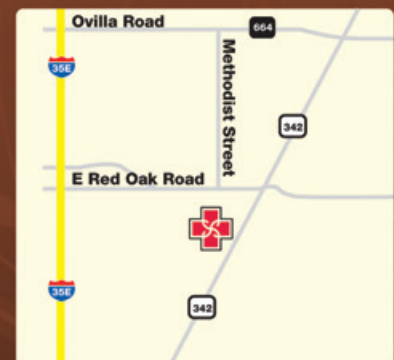
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Red Oak graduate prepares to make her mark in college.

Photo by Opaque Visuals.

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Editor's Note

Reconnect in July!

At any given moment, I can pop online and message 500 of my "closest" friends for their take on everything from Pinterest to politics. If the Internet, mobile devices and social media have us more "connected" than ever, why are we so darned disconnected sometimes?

I'll admit, I have a love-hate relationship with technology. I text far too much and prefer e-mail to conferencing anytime. It's not unusual for my family

to be in the same room, sitting in silence with our faces (and fingers) jammed in separate forms of tech-dom.

On a recent night, however, we were more in touch than we'd been in a while. Pulling out a sketch pad, we challenged each other to guess one another's artistic depictions. Turns out, being disconnected can be the best connection of all.

Angel

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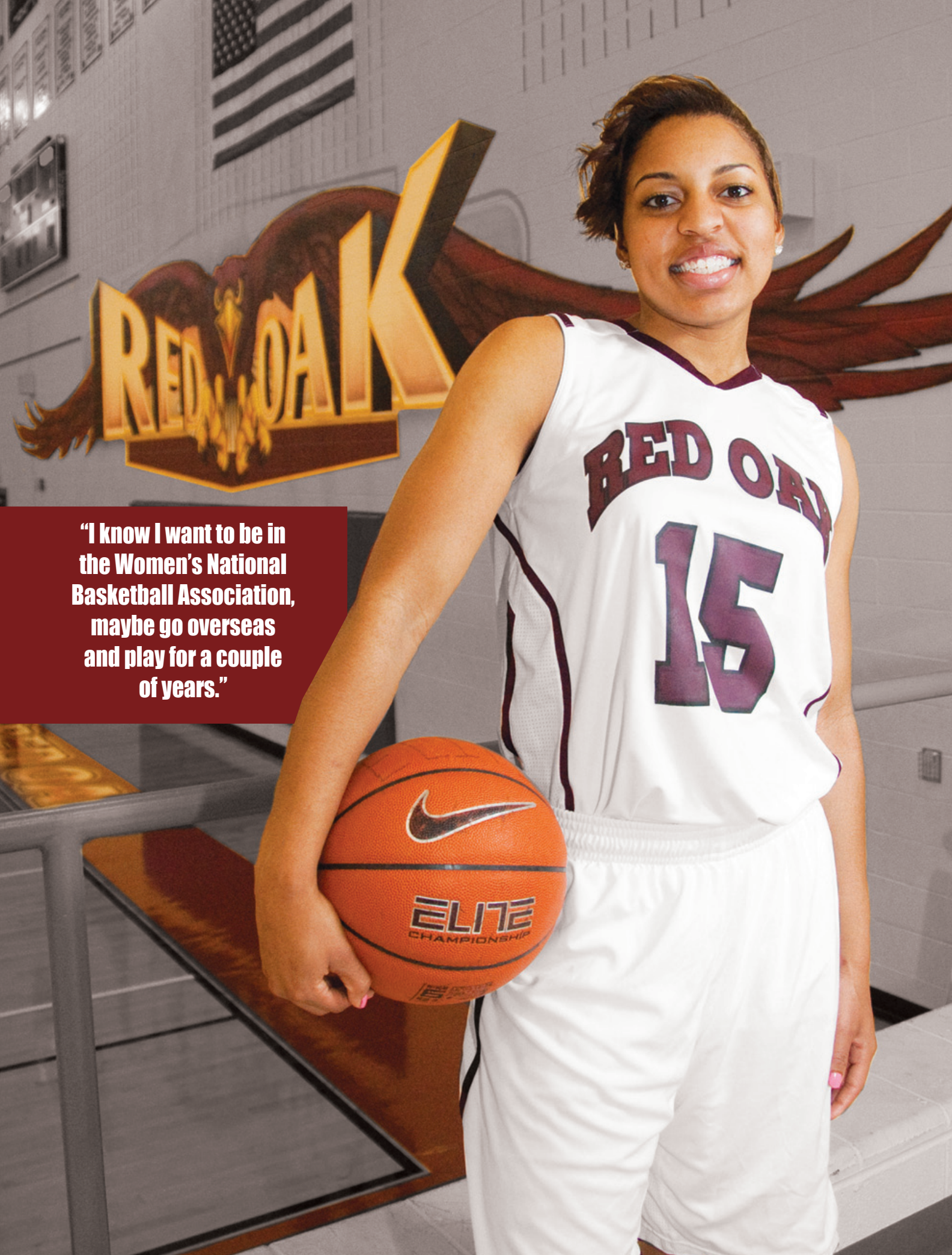


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A young woman with short brown hair, smiling, stands in a gymnasium. She is wearing a white sleeveless basketball jersey with "RED OAK" and the number "15" in maroon. She is holding an orange Nike Elite Championship basketball in her right hand. In the background, there is a large "RED OAK" logo with a bird emblem, an American flag, and a wooden basketball hoop structure.

**“I know I want to be in
the Women’s National
Basketball Association,
maybe go overseas
and play for a couple
of years.”**

MAKING POINTS to WIN

— By Rick Herron



It was a cold winter day in Springfield, Massachusetts, back in December 1891, when a physical education instructor, Dr. James Naismith, created the game of basketball at a local YMCA. In the hope of coming up with a game that would keep his gym class inside and active throughout the long New England winter, he nailed a peach basket onto a 10-foot elevated track and wrote a set of rules that started with points scored for every “basket” that was made. Never mind the fact that the peach basket still had its bottom and the balls had to be retrieved after every successful shot. Fortunately, the rules were eventually changed to remove the basket bottom.

A few years later, in 1895, basketball had become established at several women’s high schools, and the sport of women’s basketball began to flourish. The rest, as they say, is history, and Diamond Lockhart is well on her way to making history of her own.

Born in Grapevine, Texas, Diamond grew up in Carrollton and moved to Red Oak in the sixth grade. She remembers picking up her first basketball when she was 5 years old. “I guess it all started when mom asked me what I wanted for Christmas, and I picked up a basketball and showed it to her,” Diamond said.

“All she ever wanted to play with back then was a ball, any kind of ball,” her mom, Miranda Lockhart, said. “She started playing basketball at the Carrollton Recreation Center and knew right away she loved it.”

Diamond remembers always being athletic, even as a little girl. “I started playing soccer when I was 4, and when soccer season ended, I just started playing basketball when basketball season started,” she said.



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With an outstanding record that includes being an Entertainment and Sports Programming Network (ESPN) top 100-point guard and Offensive Player of the Year Most Valuable Player District 15-4A in 2012 for Red Oak High School, Diamond recently scored a major coup when she signed with Texas Tech in Lubbock. She will be playing on their women's basketball team starting in the fall. "I made the verbal commitment on August 3, 2012, and actually signed with them on November 14, 2012," Diamond shared.

She plans on majoring in physical therapy at Texas Tech, but when she's not hitting the books, she will be found in the college gym practicing with the team as a point guard. "I've always been a point guard and plan to continue in that position," Diamond said. "Point guards keep everyone in line and make sure the game is balanced. It's kind of a leadership



role, which I like to do more by example than by voice." At 5 feet 6 inches tall, Diamond is perfectly placed, as shorter players and those who possess the best ball-handling skills and speed are typically point guards.

Diamond has never seen her stature as being any kind of detriment to a career in women's basketball. "I don't think height really makes that much difference," she explained. "If you have the heart, you can



do anything. My mom taught me that. We have a really good relationship.”

Diamond’s statistics over the last few years are impressive. She was named

Newcomer of the Year for District 15-4A All District in 2009 and 2010. In 2010 and 2011, she was named Sophomore of the Year Most Valuable Player for District 15-4A All District Academic first team and Texas Association of Basketball Coaches (TABC) All Region first team.

In 2012 and 2013, Diamond was named Offensive Player of the Year Most Valuable Player for District 15-4A and All District Academic. She also secured a spot on the TABC All Region Team and the TABC All-State Team. Most recently,

she was nominated as a McDonald’s All American.

She was a member of the DFW Elite Traveling Basketball Team, a competitive girls’ basketball organization consisting of girls from the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex and other cities throughout Texas, and has received excellent exposure from the local club director, Corey Hegwood. The DFW Elite Team’s Web site says the team strives to “develop



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In June 2011, Diamond suffered an injury to her anterior cruciate ligament (ACL), a debilitating musculoskeletal injury to the knee where the knee muscle is torn. “I was at the Texas Tech camp doing a defensive drill. We were backpedaling, and a girl stepped on my foot, which caused my leg to go the other way,” Diamond explained. “I kept playing, but as it was still hurting after camp, mom took me to the doctor. I had to go through physical therapy for several months and learn how to build the muscles back up and get my balance back. I’m all over it now.”

When it comes to her little girl leaving home for college and, hopefully, to a career centered on basketball, Miranda is optimistic. “I’m very excited for her, because I know she’s worked very hard,” she admitted. “She trains six days a week and has for a long time. I know going off to college will be a very good adventure for her, as she will grow in basketball and her career.”

Diamond practices just about everywhere there is a gym close by, and will practice either alone on the court or with two or three others. She credits her local trainer, Daryl Horton, for bringing out the very best in her impressive and growing arsenal of basketball court skills. “He’s a father figure in my life, my shooting coach and really my everything coach,” she said. “I hope to continue to work with him during college breaks.” **NOW**



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And They're Off

AT HOME WITH DARREN AND KERRY FLEMING

— By Dianne Reaux



When Darren and Kerry Fleming were married 22 years ago, Darren's unconventional career required they relocate frequently. Thirteen years ago, they returned to Texas and put down roots. And last year, Darren's career in thoroughbred racing allowed the Fleming family to build the home of their dreams.



Darren and Kerry first met as students attending Terrell High School. They dated for a few years and after graduating, they briefly went their separate ways. "After we graduated, Darren moved to Minnesota, and I stayed behind to go to college," Kerry stated.

"At the time, I was trying to become a professional horse racing jockey," Darren explained.

But it didn't take the couple long to realize their futures were brighter together than apart. Kerry left Texas and joined Darren. They exchanged vows, and Kerry began learning all about the competitive world of horse racing. Their new lifestyle was very unconventional for Kerry, but Darren was used to it. "I was born in New Orleans, and my father was a jockey," Darren explained.

"Darren was born into horse racing," Kerry added. "He grew up moving around a lot. He was 2 weeks old when he moved for the first time, and he never attended the same school more than two years in a row."

"The horse racing business is seasonal," Darren explained. "Each track has just a few months to operate, so we moved when the race tracks closed."

After leaving Texas, Kerry realized just how unconventional her new life was going to be. "On our first Christmas morning together, Darren said we had to get up.

It was really early and really cold. I wasn't too

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happy about getting up, and I thought if I reminded Darren that it was Christmas morning, we could go back to sleep. He told me he knew that it was Christmas — but the horses didn't! Our lifestyle was so uncommon. Every few months we had to move, and I would call my mother and give her our new address. My family couldn't understand how someone could have a job where they didn't go to an office and come home to the same address!"

"My dream was to become a jockey, but the height and weight requirements were too restrictive," Darren shared. "The ideal height and weight for a jockey is 5 feet 5 inches and the weight is 115 pounds, but the dietary restrictions were too much. Even though I couldn't be a jockey, I still wanted to be involved with horse racing. So I decided to pursue a career as a thoroughbred horse trainer, and my job is to oversee the training, conditioning, nutritional and medical

needs of the horses."

Most trainers start off working on the track as stable hands feeding the horses and cleaning their stalls. Many move up to become track riders who practice racing the horses. At this point, the jockey competition in the horse racing field tightens up, because there is so little room at the top. The height and weight restrictions whittle down the remaining competition in the field. The field is also narrowed for trainers, because the

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position requires key management skills. Solid communication skills are critical, because of the interaction with horse owners and potential owners.

Darren is a successful trainer and Kerry credits his upbringing. "Darren grew up moving from place to place. It's probably why he's so adaptable. He's very comfortable meeting and mingling with all different kinds of people," Kerry explained. "When you are young and you move around a lot, you learn to become versatile."

Just as Darren's family had moved frequently, so did he and Kerry. But soon, the couple wanted their own space. In the spirit of compromise, they did what successfully married couples do — they met in the middle with a small travel trailer. The arrangement worked well for them, even when their daughter, Allie, was born. "I always said that I could handle one child in a travel trailer," Kerry stated, "but when we decided to expand our family, I wanted a home."

Timing is everything, and that was certainly the case for the Fleming family when they moved back to Texas. "We were able to move back in 1994, because the horse racing circuit finally made its way to Texas," Darren stated.

"Finally," Kerry interjected gleefully. "Sam Houston Race Park opened in 1994, San Antonio opened Retama Park in 1995 and Lone Star Park opened in Grand Prairie in 1996, and that's the year we discovered Red Oak."

Darren and Kerry purchased land and built their first home. They also had two more daughters, Laney and Drew. For 13 years, they were quite content, and the family continued to expand, but not with children. With the addition of a miniature horse, a larger horse, two sheep and then an adopted donkey who then had a baby, they decided they needed more room. But Darren was diplomatic about their situation and chose not to blame their need for more space on the animals. The reason for the move, he believed, was much more obvious. With four women under one roof, he laughed and declared, "We needed another bathroom!"

The Fleming family has come a long way from their days in a travel trailer. Earlier this year, the family moved into their 3,300-square-foot, custom built home. Kerry helped design the

floor plan which features a rustic entry decorated with equestrian paintings. The entry also grants visitors a peak into the comfortable family room, which flows seamlessly into the kitchen. "I wanted these two rooms to be large and open, because it's where we spend the majority of our time," Kerry stated. The kitchen cabinets were built from knotty alder wood, and the dark granite countertops complement the cabinetry perfectly. One of the most beautiful features of the kitchen is the oversized, granite-topped island. The island seats four people, and the lighting hanging above it is an ornate wrought-iron pot rack with French Country copper accents.



Each of their daughters' rooms are decorated to show their personalities. Seventeen-year-old Allie's room is full of motivational quotes and championship ribbons. Eleven-year-old Laney's room is painted a bright turquoise with colorful peace signs on the walls and bedspread. Drew's room is befitting the 8-year-old with walls painted in bright pink, green and yellow pastel colors, accented with flowers and butterflies.

The beauty of the Fleming home isn't just aesthetic, it emanates from the strong bond that exists in their close-knit family. They genuinely enjoy being together, and they love spending time with their animals. The Flemings love their new house, and so do all of their animals, who now have 13 acres to roam and call home. **NOW**



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Rosie Garcia works in the compounding lab at Red Oak Drug.



Family Pharmacy

Red Oak Drug meets modern medical needs with old-fashioned personal care.

— By Angel Morris

Almost 30 years ago, Mike Boyd, RPh, opened Red Oak Drug to offer the city and communities around it a hometown pharmacy with personalized service. Mike and his wife, Mary, pride themselves on customer service, which has resulted in a loyal customer base not just in Red Oak, but at the Boyd's sister pharmacy, The Prescription Shop, in Waxahachie, as well.

"Mike and Mary's dedication, partnered with the support of Red Oak, allowed the pharmacy to continue to grow and then expand to a sister pharmacy in Waxahachie a decade ago," employee Cody Zajicek explained. "Most importantly, both facilities have been able to change with the times, yet continue to offer great customer service and all of the things a hometown pharmacy should."

"Offering prescription medication and over-the-counter

medicines, but also medical equipment supplies, the pharmacies specialize in finding the hard-to-find items customers won't typically see on the shelves of a chain store," Cody said. Medical supplies for the elderly — from walkers and rollators to compression stockings — are available, as well as a variety of braces and supports for sports injuries.

The pharmacies also tout a state-of-the-art I.V. Certified Compounding Lab. "Our compounding is done on-site, and customers can watch what's happening through the lab's glass. That's another thing that makes us different — no matter what job we hold in the store, customers can walk right up to us and ask us anything they need," Cody noted.

The slogan "Proud To Be Your Personal Pharmacy" is the Boyd's and their employees' way of letting customers know


they are more than just a provider of medicine. "We want to be our customers' partner in health by offering quality care and personal attention to their needs. If a customer calls, a human being will answer the phone. If they come in, they can walk right up and talk to the pharmacist, or any of the other employees who are here to meet their needs," Cody said.

The Boyds have always listened to customers by expanding services and products to meet various needs such as bioidentical hormone replacement therapy. Pharmacists are available to consult with customers about their hormonal status, and if needed, Red Oak Drug offers easy, at-home saliva testing to determine hormonal balance. Once the results are received, pharmacists can work with any physician to compound a customized hormone prescription. Red Oak Drug and the sister location, The Prescription Shop, also carry a full line of pharmaceutical-grade vitamins and supplements that aid in hormone balance, adrenal support, mood support, cardiovascular, immune and bone and joint health.

"Some patients require customized strengths, dosage forms or their commercial medication is not available. Our compounding specialists are the 'go to' technicians to meet some of the most difficult prescription needs," Cody said.

And that specialized care doesn't end with human customers. Red Oak Drug and The Prescription Shop are also personal pharmacies for many pets, providing medicines in just the right dosages and flavors pets will accept. "Veterinarians know and trust us to help the pets of our communities with customized prescriptions in pet-friendly flavors," Cody said.

For Cody, watching medicines begin to work for customers is the most rewarding part of his job. "When a customer begins taking an ongoing medication and you see the difference it makes in their lives from month to month, that is really wonderful," he said. "And, when customers find equipment they need, to see them get excited and test it out in the store is really fun. That's what being a hometown pharmacy like ours is all about!" **NOW**




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Ferris kids agree it's never too hot for summer fun on the playground!



Henry, Michelle and Seth Trojacek enjoy a meal at the 342 Grill & Bar.



Revel and Rachel Barrett receive their favorite frozen treats from Rosi Martinez at Red Oak Chill.



Bentley Strickland and Kynlee Cronin have a blast at the slides at Pearson Park.



Red Oak ISD Education Foundation Star Students were the top 25 students of the ROHS Class of 2013.



Local author, J Niswonger, leads storytime at Red Oak Library.



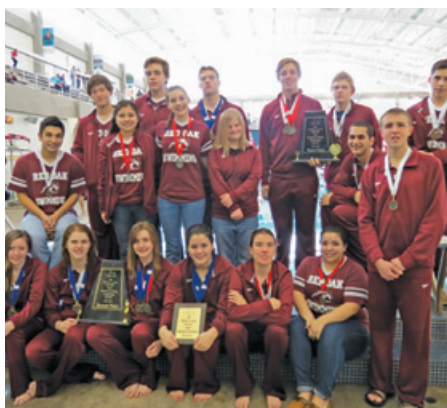
Michael Smith, Mark Michell and Dailon McCollister learn how lima beans become plants during science class at Red Oak Elementary.



LaTasha, Zaneta, Angie and Anastaisha Palmer look for books at the Red Oak Public Library.



Christian Mendoza volunteers with Ferris Fire and Rescue to keep the city safe.



The ROHS girls swim team places second and the boys team places third in district.



The 6U Red Oak Diamonds play hard. They took second place in the Cedar Hill Classic softball tournament in May.

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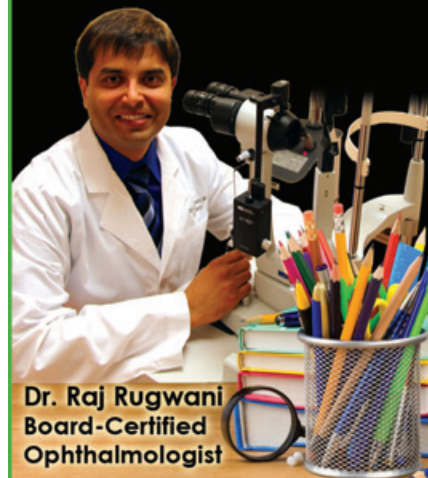
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Understanding Ulcerative Colitis

— By Betty Tryon, BSN

After going to the bathroom for four to 10 times a day for the second straight week with painful bloody stools, the afflicted person may wonder if they will ever get their life back. They suffer from the disease ulcerative colitis (UC). There are two states of being with this illness — flare-ups and remission. Flare-ups are when symptoms are present and the disease is active, and remission is when there are few to no symptoms. UC is a chronic disease that is classified as being one of the forms of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD). The other form is Crohn's disease. With many of the same symptoms, the most defining difference between Crohn's disease and UC is that the latter primarily affects the lining of the large intestine (colon). It becomes inflamed and develops ulcers or sores.

Symptoms may become severe in about half of those afflicted with UC. The condition may at times require hospitalization, or it may go into remission for a time. The most common symptoms of abdominal cramping, persistent and urgent diarrhea containing blood and/or pus should be monitored by your doctor. During flare-ups, too much blood loss can lead to anemia and weakness. Some patients must receive blood transfusions, because they have lost so much blood from the colon area. The constant diarrhea with the loss of many valuable nutrients and fluids leads to fatigue. Loss of appetite and weight loss are common.

UC has no definitive cause, but research has yielded a few theories. Although no clear line of inheritance exists, there is a distinct familial tendency for developing UC. Some discussion has taken place regarding the role bacteria and viruses may play in this. Another possibility is the immune system may be functioning abnormally. While stress does not cause UC, stress will aggravate the situation.

A varied range of treatment modalities for UC are available depending upon the severity of the illness. The goal is to reduce symptoms and aim for remission. Medications are prescribed to help reduce inflammation and improve the immune system. Diet and good nutrition play an important role. Although certain foods do not cause UC, there are some that might trigger symptoms, such as spicy food, raw veggies, popcorn, caffeine and alcohol. Dietary counsel and awareness of what you eat is necessary. If conservative treatment does not work, surgery may be necessary with the removal of the colon. The type of surgery will depend upon many factors your surgeon will discuss with you. UC can affect every area of your life. For your emotional health and coping strategies, support groups can be a great resource, as is receiving encouragement from family and friends. **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.

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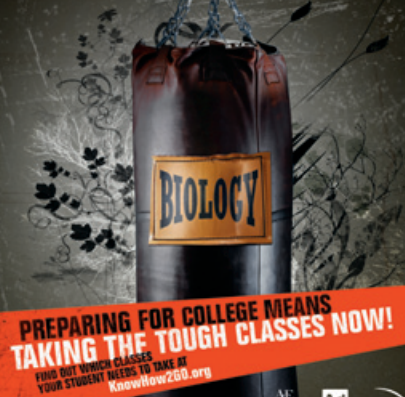
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July 5

Movies on the Square: 8:45 p.m., downtown pavilion, Ferris. Bring chairs and blankets for the movie *Independence Day*. Concessions available; no coolers.

July 6

Independence Celebration: 4:00 p.m., downtown Ferris. The Ferris Downtown Association hosts family-friendly activities for the community and area restaurants donate food for A Taste of Ferris. Call (214) 245-8520.

July 8

Local Author Group: 6:00-7:30 p.m., Museum Room, Red Oak Library, 200 Lakeview Pkwy. A discussion/critique group run by local author Donald Horne.

July 9

Magic Show: 7:00-8:00 p.m., Ronald Reagan

Room, Red Oak Library, 200 Lakeview Pkwy. James Wand shows kids that the most important skills a secret agent needs are reading and writing.

July 15

Red Oak Book Club: 7:00-8:30 p.m., Red Oak Library, 200 Lakeview Pkwy. Free and open to all adults in Red Oak area. Refreshments served.

July 20

Ferris Trade Day: 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., downtown pavilion, Ferris. Vendors welcome. Call (817) 992-9204 for more information.

July 21 — 22

2013 Ellis County Quilt Show: 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center, 1 Community Circle, Midlothian. Presented by the Creative Quilters Guild of Ellis County. Visit www.elliscountyquilters.com for details.

July 22

Indian Trail Master Naturalist Chapter meeting: 6:00-8:00 p.m., Ronald Reagan Room, Red Oak Library, 200 Lakeview Pkwy.

July 22 — 26

Vacation Bible School: 9:30 a.m.-noon, Ovilla

Road Baptist Church, 3251 Ovilla Rd., Ovilla. Call (972) 617-8544 or e-mail office@orbcc.org.

July 24

Chamber Luncheon: Noon-1:00 p.m., 200 Lakeview Pkwy. Networking opportunity for local businesses. Members with reservations \$12; members without reservations \$15; non-members \$20. RSVP: katherine@redoakareachamber.org.

July 27

Benefit Golf Tournament honoring Kyson Daniel and Karter Henley Montelongo: 8:30 a.m., Old Brickyard, Ferris. Four-man scramble, \$75 per person. Contact Linda Bruton at (972) 351-4521 or Dusty Montelongo at (972) 268-1954.

July 29 — August 2

Vacation Bible School: 9 a.m.-noon, First Baptist Church Red Oak, 320 E. Ovilla Rd. Contact (972) 617-3591 or aduckett@firstredoak.com for details

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In The Kitchen With Kathy Higginbotham

— *By Angel Morris*

Kathy Higginbotham had a mom who cooked from scratch and a dad who gardened fresh vegetables. In her tweens, Kathy treated them to meals she made for special occasions, leading to her current love of cooking for her family. “Boxed items and frozen dinners had no place in my childhood. We ate very healthy, and I cook in much the same way now,” Kathy said.

While an attempt to impress her husband early in marriage was disastrous, Kathy since learned what a clove is and how to mince. Now lasagna is a family favorite. “After I married, and especially after having kids, I was inspired to try different recipes,” she said. “Cooking gives me great satisfaction. It’s relaxing and lets me bring others joy!” **NOW**

Jean’s Spinach Salad

1 lb. fresh spinach
1/2 lb. fresh mushrooms
6-8 green onions, chopped
8 slices bacon, fried and crumbled
Salt and pepper, to taste

Dressing:

1 cup salad oil
2/3 cup sugar
1/3 cup vinegar
1/2 tsp. dry mustard
1/2 tsp. salt

1. Clean spinach and remove stems. Clean and slice mushrooms.
2. Combine spinach, mushrooms, onion and bacon in large bowl.
3. Combine dressing ingredients and blend in blender until thickened.
4. Pour on salad and toss. Season with salt and pepper. Serve immediately.

Rice Pilaf

Makes 4 servings.

1/2 cup onion, chopped
1/2 cup fresh mushrooms, sliced
1/4 cup celery or green pepper, chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
1 Tbsp. margarine or butter
3/4 cup long grain rice
1 1/2 tsp. instant chicken or beef bouillon granules (I use cubes.)
1/8 tsp. pepper
1 1/2 cups water
2 slices bacon, cooked crisp, drained and crumbled

1. In a saucepan cook first four ingredients in margarine or butter till tender but not brown.
2. Add rice, bouillon granules, pepper and 1 1/2 cups water. Bring to boil; reduce heat. Cover and simmer about 15 minutes or till rice is tender and liquid is absorbed.
3. Stir in crumbled bacon before serving.

Kansas Janet’s Lasagna

1 lb. hamburger
1 lb. Italian sausage
1 onion, chopped
1/2 tsp. oregano
1 Tbsp. sugar
1 Tbsp. sweet basil
2 Tbsp. parsley flakes
2 oz. canned mushrooms
3 cloves garlic, minced
24 oz. tomato sauce
8 oz. lasagna noodles
2 eggs
15 oz. cottage cheese
1 1/4 lbs. mozzarella cheese, grated
Parmesan cheese, grated

1. Brown hamburger and sausage; drain.
2. Add next 8 ingredients; cover and simmer 20 minutes.
3. Boil noodles per package directions.
4. In a separate bowl, mix eggs with cottage cheese.
5. Grease a 9x13-inch pan and layer noodles, meat sauce, cottage cheese mixture and mozzarella. Repeat layers.
6. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese; bake at 400 F for 35-40 minutes.

Grilled Salmon

1 1/2 lbs. salmon filets
Lemon pepper, to taste
Garlic powder, to taste
Salt, to taste
1/3 cup soy sauce
1/3 cup brown sugar
1/3 cup water
1/4 cup vegetable oil

1. Season salmon fillets with lemon pepper, garlic powder and salt.
2. In a small bowl, stir together soy sauce, brown sugar, water and vegetable oil, until sugar is dissolved.
3. Place fish in large, re-sealable plastic bag with soy sauce mixture. Seal and turn to coat. Refrigerate at least two hours.
4. Preheat grill to medium heat. Lightly oil grill grate. Place salmon on grill and discard marinade. Cook 6-8 minutes per side, or until fish flakes easily with fork.

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