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JULY 2017

Days of Apollo

Bernard Suchocki remembers
the race for the moon and a
whole lot more

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and Janet Foster

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ON THE COVER



Bernard Suchocki did his part in making the "giant leap for mankind" possible.

Photo by David Woods -
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Editor's Note

Hello, Weatherford Friends!

Independence Day, Fourth of July, or whatever you choose to call it — it's all about freedom. In 1776, America wasn't a happy place. Our ancestors didn't like tyranny. So many came to this country for freedom in the beginning, but being away from the problem didn't solve it. And so, we fought.

Today, we celebrate the birthday of our country. We love the idea of picnics, grilling, parties and all types of fun activities — not to mention fireworks in Weatherford and surrounding communities. I love the celebrations. I remember one year, I was certain my grandson's arrival would surely pull me away from watching fireworks. He waited two more days before making his way into the world.

Imagine our country if we never broke from the British. How would our country look today? I'm grateful for those who willingly gave their lives for freedom. Take a moment this month to honor those who fought 241 years ago — and those who fight today. Remember first responders who work to serve and protect, too.

Freedom is a beautiful thing!

Lisa

Lisa Bell

WeatherfordNOW Editor

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DAYS OF

“Houston, we’ve had a problem.” No one at NASA welcomes such a sentence — especially when it comes from one of three men far from home and scheduled to land on the moon. Yet in 1970, Bernard Suchocki sat at a console in Houston and heard the words. The men of Apollo 13 weren’t mere heroes on television and radio. They were his friends — men he trained in guidance and navigation.

“At first, I was kind of numb. It was a catastrophic failure. We couldn’t figure out what was wrong,” Bernard shared.

“So many failures — it had to be some kind of instrumentation failure. You can’t have that many failures.”

However, Oxygen tank 2 exploded and took out a panel on the service module. Even worse, debris from O2 hit Oxygen tank 1, which began to leak, leaving the crew precious minutes of oxygen in the Command Module. The initial shock shifted, as Gene Kranz led each team member to focus on personal expertise, and to answer the most important question: How do we get them home safely? From that moment, everyone worked together to do exactly that.

Bernard had degrees in physics and mathematics when he applied at NASA Kennedy Space Center. “It was a big race, a big push,” he said. “We

were working on the technology edge. The command module computer was only 74K yet did a tremendous job.” Programmed by MIT, technology was amazing for that time. Before arriving at Kennedy, Bernard had never seen a computer. Joining NASA after the Apollo 1 fire, Bernard had time to learn. With no how-to books at the time, he studied the computer architecture and programming. The first program took him about two weeks to understand — the second one, about a week. Over time, he finally reached the point where he fully understood the way everything worked, becoming recognized as an expert in the field. When the time came, he was fully prepared to train crews heading into space. He worked on every mission, from Apollo 7 to Apollo 17.



APOLLO

— By Lisa Bell

The astronaut trainers took turns supporting missions in Houston. They knew the men, working with them for years in preparation of the launch. For Apollo 13, Bernard took his turn, not expecting the events during the mission. They launched at 1313 hours on April 11. Everything seemed great until the tank blew on the 13th. As oxygen levels went down, they wondered if the men would make it home, but operations never gave up.

During training sessions, the team inserts malfunctions in the simulator at KSC to train the astronauts. As each mission nears, the training sessions expand to a "Sim-Net-Sim" to train the flight controllers at Houston.

In the last Apollo 11 "Sim-Net-Sim," a lunar landing, Bernard was asked to suggest a malfunction for the computer, which would not abort the lunar landing. He recommended a 1201 alarm. This particular malfunction meant the computer had too many tasks running. The system would put tasks on hold until it processed the primary task. Not an issue in itself, but when this



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happened the sixth time, the computer flushed all data. "I don't know why I picked that malfunction or even what might cause it," Bernard admitted. The Simulation Supervisor (Sim-Sup) decided to use it, and when they inserted the malfunction during powered decent, the flight controllers aborted the simulated lunar landing. The result of this simulation was an order from Gene Kranz for all Apollo computer alarms to be researched in order to determine which ones were "go" or "no-go" for the lunar landing.

"You don't think God's around?" he asked. "Guess what happened on the Apollo 11 mission? A 1201 alarm." The rendezvous radar was inadvertently left on with the landing radar engaged. The computer could not handle the interrupts and started flushing navigation data and displaying a 1201 alarm.

Fortunately, the flight controllers knew what to do and kept giving the crew a "go" for landing. Something many people don't know is that, with critical navigation data flushed, Neil Armstrong overshot the targeted landing. He maneuvered around rocks and craters, finally sitting the LEM down in a safe zone, with 8 seconds of fuel left.

Everyone in the room held their breath seeing the LEM fuel level going down and knowing there was nothing

they could do about it. Armstrong said, "Houston, Tranquility Base here. The Eagle has landed." CapCom Charlie Duke responded, "Tranquility, we copy you on the ground. You've got a bunch of guys about to turn blue. We're breathing again. Thanks a lot."

Bernard wonders what would have happened in the real mission if they had not used the 1201 malfunction in the simulator. "Seems to me God must have had His hand on us," he said.

After the final Apollo mission, Bernard moved to work on the Shuttle. From playing a large part in the space program to working with a very small



piece of software, the challenge was gone. He always wanted to be an attorney, so he left NASA and chased his dream. Eventually, he and his family moved to the Weatherford area. He is now semi-retired and takes on only a few select clients.

About a decade after the Apollo 13 mission, Bernard realized new generations knew nothing about the Apollo space program. "Kids need to know this," he said. Many younger kids never heard of Apollo 13, much less what happened. He made the decision to teach his memories of April 13, 1970.

For the last 35 years, he has taken his PowerPoint presentation to whomever wants to see it. Schools and other organizations open their doors to Bernard. On his own time and expense, purely as a public service, he enjoys sharing his presentation.

The release of the 1995 movie gave Bernard several clips for his presentation, and he can explain all the maneuvers the crew does. The movie is relatively accurate. One notable exception occurred when Tom Hanks, as Jim Lovell, pushed the LES motor

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fire buttons, instead of engaging the tower jet switches. Bernard explained the buttons Tom Hanks pushed would have aborted the real mission.

Bernard especially enjoys teaching kids. He developed many activities and experiences the children get to do, making the presentation more interesting. He loves talking about the theory of gravitational pull, using a hammer and a feather. On earth, they don't drop at the same rate. He has a video of the same experiment on the moon, and they land on the surface at the exact same time.

Bernard ends his presentation with a final thought from space. "He [God] has inscribed a circle on the surface of the waters at the boundary of light and darkness. And hangs the earth on nothing." (Job 26:10, 7b, NASB)

Although Apollo missions ended long ago, they live on in Bernard's thoughts. He longs for generations to know about the space race of the '60s and '70s and to share his memories of the Days of Apollo. **NOW**

Editor's Note: For information or to schedule a presentation, you can reach Bernard at (817) 862-7224 or brsuckocki@txlegal.com.



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Hidden Serenity

— By Amber D. Browne

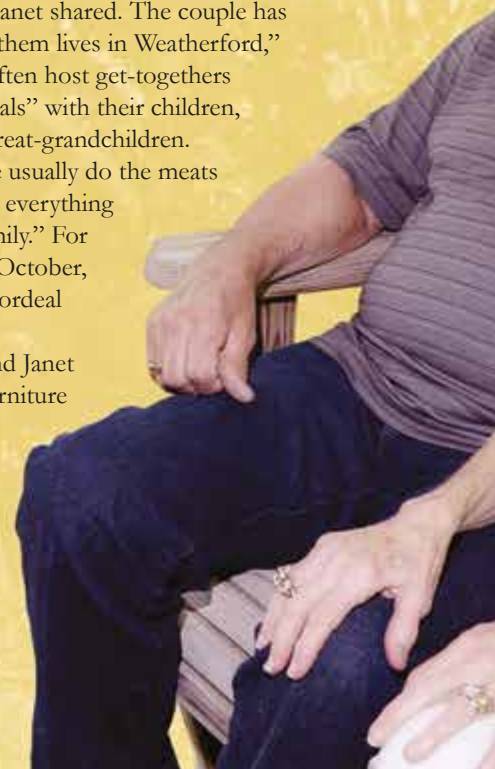
At Home With Charles & Janet Foster

At the end of a long, winding drive in Weatherford sits a serene home nestled among mature trees. The Fosters relish each day they gaze out the large windows of their home at the view of a lush landscape that presents freshly cut grass and colorful flowers. Charles and Janet Foster purchased the sprawling 130-acre property to build their homestead about 20 years ago. Over the years, they've hosted family gatherings, collected antiques and lived a wonderful life together.

The two met decades ago at church. Janet was born and reared in Weatherford. Charles moved to Parker County from Sulphur Springs after graduating from high school. "We started going together, and after about one year, we got married," Janet explained. The couple will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary this fall.

"We have been blessed," Janet shared. The couple has four children. "Every one of them lives in Weatherford," she said. "We love it." They often host get-togethers they lovingly refer to as "ordeals" with their children, 11 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. "Everybody gets together. We usually do the meats and drinks, and the kids bring everything else. We have a big, happy family." For their diamond anniversary in October, their children plan to host an ordeal to celebrate.

Over the years, Charles and Janet have filled their home with furniture and collectibles acquired from various antique stores they've visited. "I like almost anything old," Charles explained. His collections include dozens of clocks — mostly Westminster Chime Clocks.






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"I enjoy the sound of both the ticking and the chime on each hour."

Clocks are displayed alongside ceramic roosters and chickens atop kitchen cabinets, on antique furniture and shelves and hang on nearly every wall in the home. "We honestly don't have any more room for clocks. We have clocks in boxes," Janet confessed. For years, the clocks would chime every quarter-hour, but visits from grandchildren who were unaccustomed to the chiming and time changes forced the Fosters to turn off most of them.

Charles' office houses a variety of collectibles from vintage cowboy hats and bottles to western harnesses and mounted deer and other game passed down from Janet's father. As visitors move down the hallway of family photos, they find a small back

room where Janet houses several antique wooden iceboxes. An old meat grinder is attached to one and atop another is a centerpiece of purple thistles. When Janet was a child, her father would pick thistles for her and display them in one of his old Brogan boots. Charles gets the colorful thistles for her now, but Janet recalls her childhood memories when she catches a glimpse of them. A glass pump top from her father's business, Bounds Premier Gasoline, adds color to the room, as well.


The first thing Charles purchased for Janet after they married was an antique curio cabinet, which houses her collection of Carnival glass in the living room. One dish is a Carnival peacock plate that Janet admired as a young girl, while playing at her grandmother's home. Other dishes purchased from antique shops add to her collection.




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The Hope Chest is a program of Parker County Center of Hope.

A round, wooden table in the living room is a quiet place for Janet to find peace during her morning devotionals. Charles and Janet are dedicated Christians and attend Willow Park Baptist Church. "The Lord has blessed us with a great life, a great family, a great business that we have absolutely loved and wonderful health," Janet shared. Many of Janet's friends have passed away, and she has others who are limited in what they are able to do. She knows firsthand how important a person's health is to their quality of life. "I feel greatly blessed," she said.



The Fosters have worked in the real estate industry for about 40 years. "I always said I was the mouth, and he was the mind," Janet stated. Janet served as chairman of the board for the Center of Hope for 13 years and continues to volunteer with their church.

Charles and Janet enjoy traveling together. She also travels twice a year on trips across the country with her three daughters and her granddaughters. "That's a fun thing that we've made a tradition," Janet shared. The girls took their first vacation together in New York years ago. "We have a great time."

Back at the Foster home, the families enjoy birthday celebrations, holidays, baby showers and have even hosted a wedding. Their granddaughter married under a wooden arch they constructed in the backyard. She was just 6 years old when they built the home and wanted her parents to build nearby to be close enough to ride her tricycle to visit her grandparents. Charles and Janet also hosted a shower for her baby, who was named Foster.

The home features a large dining table in the living area and a second table in the kitchen. When they host ordeals,

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Charles and Janet normally have about 30 guests to fill the seats. "I was telling my daughters one day that I don't have enough room for everybody," Janet said. "They said, 'Well if you would get rid of part of your musical instruments...'" A square baby grand by Ivers & Pond sits along one wall in the living area. Charles purchased a second grand piano for Janet several years after they married. It's also in the living room with an organ in the hallway and a player piano elsewhere in the home. Janet previously played piano for a church, but now only plays on occasion if a request is received from Charles.


The kitchen includes more antiques and collectibles including a copper broiler for storing sodas, an old butcher block and Janet's HERSHEY'S collectibles. "I'm a chocoholic." A small sign attests to her statement — *I'm a woman of many moods, and they all require chocolate.*

When they first purchased the property, Janet toyed with the idea of building their house closer to the road.



Charles wanted the home built deeper into the woods. "I like the fact the home is hidden among the trees, and we can't be seen by neighbors or passing cars," Charles shared.

Down the hill about 500 yards from their back door runs Sanchez Creek. "You can step outside and hear the creek running," Janet shared. The grandchildren enjoy getting their feet wet in the creek when they visit. Although the deer population has dwindled over the years, while peering out the floor-to-ceiling windows of the home, birds can be found perched on branches. "I like all the windows because wherever we are, it looks pretty. You can't see anything but trees," Janet shared. "We come home to quiet and peaceful serenity." **NOW**





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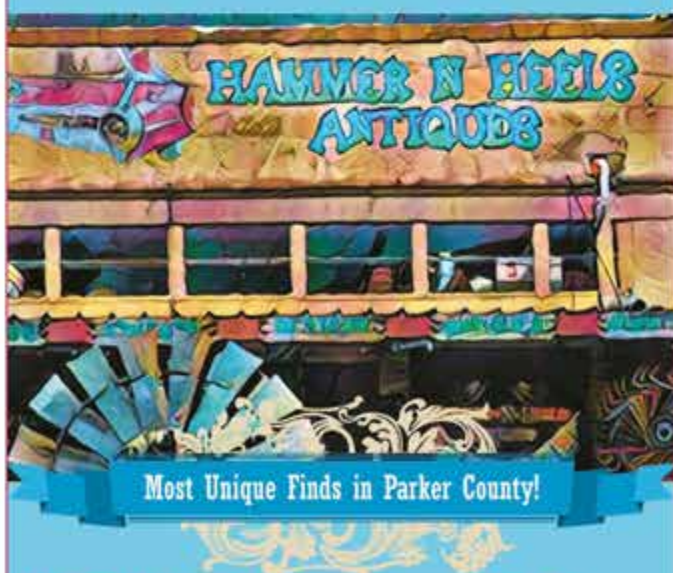
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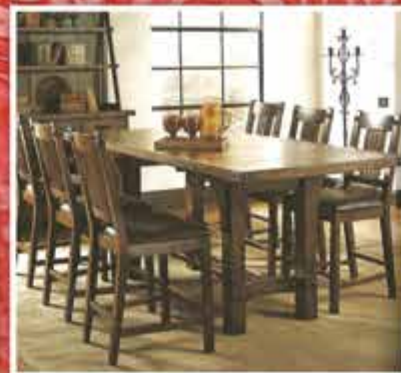
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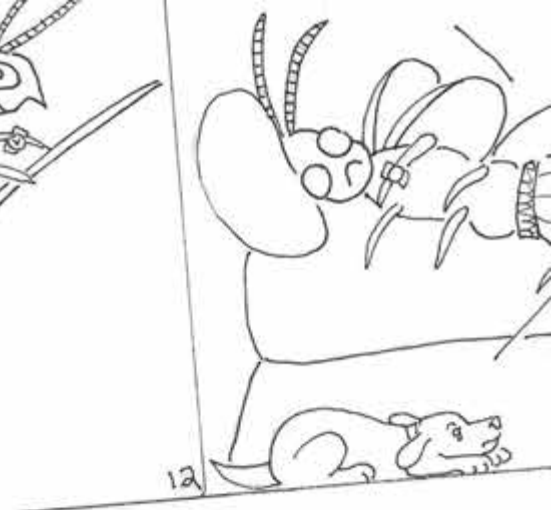
AN ILLUSTRATED

— By Lindsay L. Allen

It was always her dream to illustrate a children's book, and after decades of longing for this, it was no coincidence that Diane Brown's first published book was about a boy who couldn't fall asleep and dream. The boy's inability to sleep resulted in him finding a book-loving monster in his closet. "I love how the pictures in children's books tell the story just as much as the words do," she said. "These illustrations aren't just decoration, but they're part of the storytelling, and I have always admired how the story and the art form one piece of work."

GOAL

Diane can't recall a time when she wasn't interested in drawing, but she can remember not being old enough to draw when she was a very young girl and improvising by asking her grandma to draw a flower or a cat and more for her, so she could watch her hold the pencil and draw. With a dream to do this for a living, she began her college studies in Kansas with an art degree, but after considering the narrow job options with this field of study, Diane graduated with an elementary education



degree. "I taught for a few years and then raised my three babies, and the whole time I was still drawing on the side and telling myself, 'By the time I am 30, I will have illustrated a book.' That was my goal and my dream, and I only missed it by about 30 years!" she said with a laugh.

The dream started to come to fruition in September 2015 when Diane was attending a festival where a children's book author had a tent set up. "I was too scared and nervous to talk to him on the spot about how I had always hoped to be an illustrator," she recalled. "So I got his business card and emailed digital copies of my work to him, asking if



he thought this was something I could pursue and where I should begin if so." One thing led to another, and Diane received five manuscripts to choose from and illustrate. "They told me I could pick one or some or all to illustrate, and, of course, I wanted to do all five!" she said.

With one of her books, *Forty Winks*, already published and in libraries, including the East Parker County Library; another book completed and ready to be published; and a third one in the works, Diane is well on her way. The process

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for illustrating a book is not an overnight task. It takes months and months to complete the project with the help of an art director. "When I get a manuscript, it is just that, words on a page and nothing else. If the author isn't very descriptive of the scenery or the characters, I have to create this world for the characters to live in and hope it aligns with what the author has envisioned," she said. "Throughout the process, I, as the illustrator, only work with the art director. I don't visit with the author until the very end when everything is complete, and there is no room for changes."

The beauty, Diane admitted, is that she gets to rely on her creative side and let her imagination go as she visualizes the pages she will draw. For example, in *Forty Winks*, the only description of the book-loving monster was that he was the size of a fat cat and had eyes that bugged out on springs. "With that description, I could have drawn him a number of ways, but I also had to be mindful of the children and not make him look too scary, especially because in the end, he is a good monster," she said.

When illustrating children's books, it is very important to create consistency, so that the children reading the book recognize the characters from page to page. "In *Forty Winks*, it was important to make sure the main character's facial structure, hair color and wardrobe remained exactly the same from page

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"These illustrations aren't just decoration, but they're part of the storytelling, and I have always admired how the story and the art form one piece of work."

to page," she said. "In the book I am working on now, *Simon's Skin*, the character transforms into a different animal on each page, so the way children can identify that it's still Simon is that Simon always wears the same outfit."

Every drawing Diane does begins with pencil, and then in most cases, it is finished with watercolors. "I do have a favorite art technique called stippling, which is when you dip a toothbrush into the paint and flick the paint from the bristles on to the paper," she said. Additionally, she loves to teach art classes to all ages. Recently, she has been teaching Manga classes, which is the art form the Japanese use for their comics.

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"I have never considered illustrating adult or teen books, but with Manga becoming so popular, there might be opportunities there," Diane admitted.

Most of her art, apart from the children's books, centers on florals, portraits and cars. In fact, one of her favorite drawings, although she admits that whatever her current project is seems to always be her favorite, was a portrait she did of Pope John Paul, which now hangs in the Catholic church in Weatherford.

"Asking about my favorite piece is like asking who my favorite child is, but I have always loved a portrait I did of one of my sons holding an American flag," she admitted.



After chasing a dream for over three decades, Diane looks back on that time and says she waited too long to do it. "I didn't want to be told, 'No,' because I loved drawing. I just made excuses about how I was too busy and how I would pursue it when the kids got older," she recalled. "The real reason was I was scared. I finally woke up one day and told myself that I didn't have forever. If I was going to pursue this dream, it needed to be now. I was so nervous initially that I would be told, 'No,' and then I was actually told, 'Yes,' which I think was even scarier." Fortunately, Diane's story is that she loves to illustrate children's books and enjoys getting lost in the pages and scenes she creates. **NOW**

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— By Zachary R. Urquhart





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• *Do not wait.* Dogs, cats and, yes, even fish benefit from yearly checkups with your trusted vet. Aside from going once a year, if you notice something wrong with your pet, you should head in. Lethargy is a common sign that something is wrong. Your dog or cat will likely lay around more than normal, and your fish may be swimming a lot less than is typical. If you think there is a problem, the best option is to let your vet take a look.

DIET AND EXERCISE

• *Exercise for fun and for fitness.* No matter what kind of pet you have, there are things you can do to encourage and ensure plenty of exercise. While you may not be inclined to take your ferret or iguana on a walk, making sure they have fun climbing equipment and toys in their living space is important. The same idea goes for cats, who generally cannot be leashed and taken on walks unless trained from their earliest days. You can invest in climbing and scratching posts, or even build a cat gymnasium if you are handy enough to do so.³

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- *Diet is important, too.* People have gained an incredible understanding of nutrition and diet over the last few decades. Just like you need to balance your starchy carbs with plenty of protein, fruits and vegetables, pets need a balanced diet, as well. That can mean giving your furry friend pet food with all the nutrients they need, or giving them a variety of foods. You probably do not eat the same meal every day, so remember that your pet may enjoy a variety, too. Be sure that over the span of several days you are feeding them the full spectrum of nutrients they need to grow and thrive.⁵

- *Some pets need special diets.* Most pets will thrive with a standard, balanced diet appropriate for their breed. Some, though, will require a special diet for issues including, but not limited to, heart and liver disease, weight problems or bladder stones. Some pets even have allergies, so you may have to find or make special food to keep them going and growing. If you suspect your pet is having dietary issues, get a detailed diet from your vet.

OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER


- *No one likes to sneeze.* In addition to potential food allergies, dogs and cats can also suffer from seasonal allergies. If you notice your pet scratching, licking or rubbing its face on coarse surfaces, it is probably trying to satiate its itchiness much like people will move their backs on a door frame to get those hard to reach places.⁶




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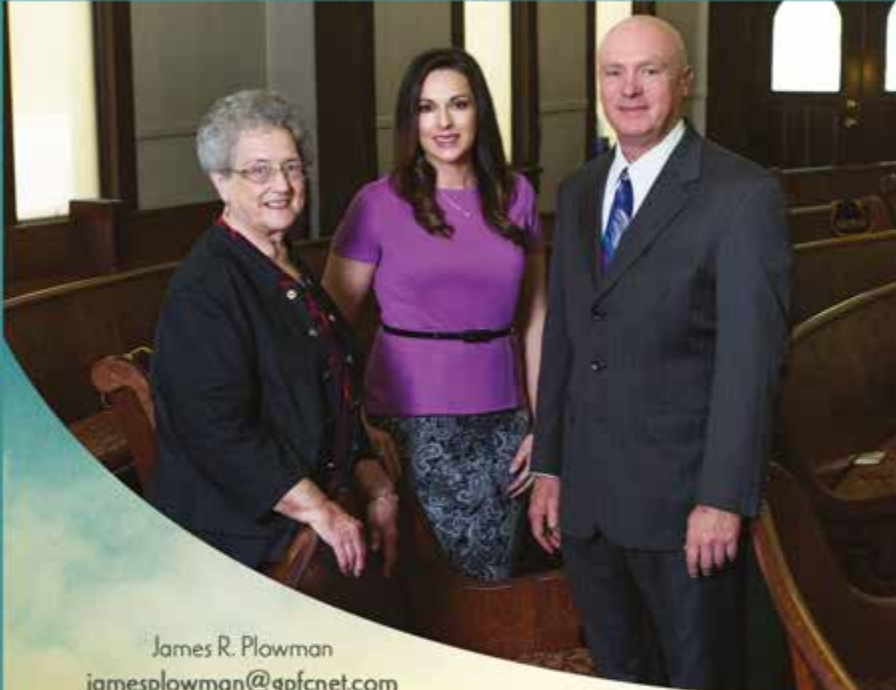
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A less common symptom for allergies left untreated is hair loss. When you see any of these things, get to the vet, so you can get medication quickly. In the meantime, give your pet baths more regularly, and keep floors clean by vacuuming and by washing your pet's feet frequently.

- *Consider pet health insurance.* One of the reasons people sometimes neglect to take a pet in for a visit is the cost. While emergencies can be costly, and long-term care can seem daunting, pet insurance is a great way to offset potential expenses. If you do not have pet insurance, the easiest first step is to go online to get quotes and compare rates. Many familiar companies like GEICO and Progressive offer various plans, so you can decide how much coverage your pet needs.

It is never easy to say goodbye to your beloved pets, but the fact is that most pets will pass on before their owners. With these helpful tips, though, you can help the furry members of the family live a long full life. **NOW**

Sources:

- ¹<http://pets.webmd.com/pet-vaccines-schedules-cats-dogs>
- ²https://www.aaha.org/pet_owner/about_aaha/why_accreditation_matters/about_accreditation/how_to_choose_the_right_veterinarian.aspx
- ³http://www.petmd.com/cat/wellness/evr_ct_exercising_with_your_cat_a_how_to_guide
- ⁴<http://www.animalplanet.com/pets/healthy-pets/10-fun-ways-to-exercise-your-dog/>
- ⁵http://www.whole-dog-journal.com/issues/15_7/features/Home-Prepared-Dog-Food-Nutritional-Information_20568-1.html
- ⁶<http://iheartdogs.com/10-signs-your-dog-has-seasonal-allergies/5/>

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Wednesday: 3:00-6:00 p.m.



Dr. McAfee encourages patients to get regular adjustments since preventative care is easier than treatment.

Natural Healing

Dr. McAfee works to remove kinks and let the body heal itself. — By Lisa Bell

Many people think of chiropractors as “bone doctors,” but Trisha McAfee snipped that myth quickly. Dr. Carl McAfee is indeed a doctor and has the degrees to prove it. Although much of chiropractic care involves realigning bones, treatments really are more about the nervous system. Trisha compared it to a kinked electric cord. When a bone presses against a nerve, the patient’s nervous system doesn’t flow as it should.

While Dr. McAfee doesn’t oppose prescription drugs, he believes they mask the real physical issue instead of correcting it. His philosophy means addressing the root of pain, corrective treatment and allowing the body to heal itself naturally.

Dr. McAfee is no stranger to chiropractic medicine. In fact, an injury led him to pursue it as a career. He always played baseball,

but during college, he hurt his back. A chiropractor relieved him of pain without surgery and got him playing baseball again — something doctors said wouldn’t happen.

Already pursuing sports therapy as a major, his own experience made him rethink his career. He decided to become a chiropractor and help people from birth all the way to their final days. Both he and Trisha finished their undergrad work in Arkansas, but came back to Texas, where he finished his education at Parker University in Dallas. She grew up in Mansfield. He grew up in Kennedale. Although not a chiropractor, Trisha stays very involved with the business.

Besides typical adjustments, McAfee Chiropractic offers pressure point therapy, electric muscle stimulation, neuromuscular

re-education and pediatric care.

"Chiropractic care isn't just for adults," Trisha said. "Our two sons had their first adjustment the day of their births." Their third child, due in July, will soon have a first adjustment. In addition, McAfee Chiropractic performs spinal decompression for necks and backs, and on-site digital X-rays, which makes them unique in Weatherford.

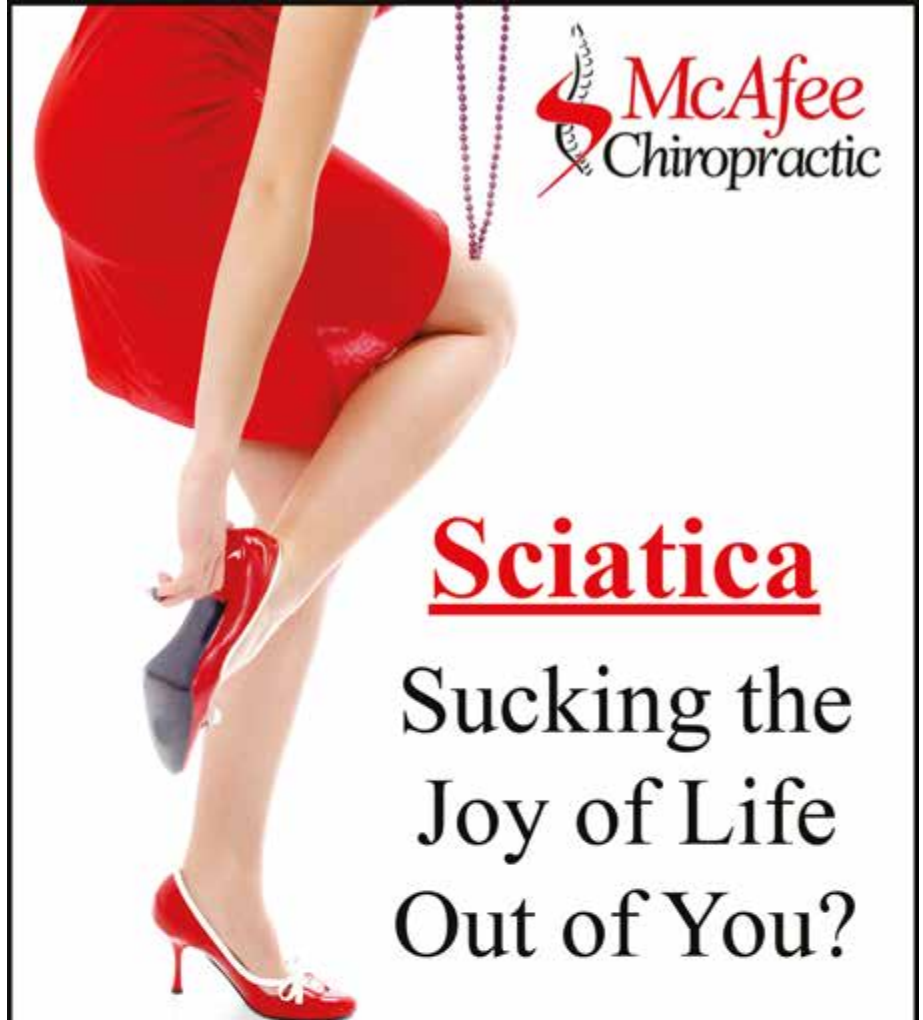
Dr. McAfee makes sure his wife, kids and their staff members get an adjustment at least once a week. Preventative care is much easier than treatment and costs less. Trisha encourages everyone to see a chiropractor and check their spines. While many come the first time because of pain, she suggested continuing regular visits, similar to maintaining a car — or even better, coming before pain. "Don't wait too late," she said. "It's important to get checked out."

In addition, Trisha suggests taking care of text neck. Most people spend far too much time with necks bent downward texting on their phones and/or looking at computer screens. Keep computers at eye level to help position your neck in proper alignment. Also, for those who spend most of the day seated, make sure to stretch, stand up or walk around every hour.

The McAfees are very involved in the local community. They frequently support school fundraisers and support the Weatherford Education Foundation annually. Dr. McAfee is a proud member and past president of the Weatherford Noon Lions Club. They are also active members of Northside Baptist Church.

"I am a head coach for a very reputable consulting company for chiropractors," Dr. McAfee said. "I travel the U.S. monthly, teaching other chiropractors how to better communicate and serve their communities more effectively."

The couple moved to Weatherford and opened their practice in April 2011. "In a very short amount of time, we established an incredible reputation founded on exceptional results, loyal relationships with patients and integrity," Dr. McAfee said. When he isn't practicing, or educating chiropractors, Dr. McAfee can be found on his 150-acre ranch in Weatherford with his beautiful family living, laughing and serving. **NOW**



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Cecilia House recently moved to Weatherford with her husband who is a Vietnam veteran.



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Mackenzie and Heith Lewis start the summer with their goats.



Several generations celebrate the Taste of Parker County.



Warrior Baseball 9u takes second place at the Global Mother's Day Tournament at Parker County Baseball Academy's Buzz Fence Field.



The Carpenter Family enjoys dinner at Tequila's after a day at the stock show.



Jeff Lehmkuhl still serves in the military after 12 years.



Kylie Williams, Brooklyn Lovern and Ashlynn Cobron enjoy working at the new Academy.



Mrs. Roe's Kindergarten class at Coder Elementary presents a play to raise money for polar bears.

Declare Your Financial Independence Day

We're getting close to the Fourth of July, when we celebrate the freedoms we enjoy in this country. The U.S. Constitution grants us many of these liberties, but we have to earn others, such as our financial freedom. What steps can you take to achieve the financial independence you need to reach your long-term goals?

For starters, always work to build your resources. Contribute as much as you can afford to your IRA and your 401(k) or other employer-sponsored retirement plan. At a minimum, put in enough to earn your employer's matching contribution, if one is offered. If you don't take advantage of this match, you are essentially leaving money on the table.

While how much you invest is an essential factor in gaining your financial freedom, how you invest your money is equally important. So make sure you have sufficient growth potential in all your accounts. While growth-oriented investments, such as stocks and stock-based vehicles, carry investment risk, you can help moderate this risk by also including other investments, such as bonds.

Another way to gain your financial independence is to liberate yourself from the shackles of debt. This isn't always easy, of course. Most of us have experienced times when our cash flow simply wasn't sufficient to meet our expenses, so we had to take on some type of debt, either through a credit card or a loan. But the more you can control your debts, the more money you'll have to save and invest for your future.

One way to manage your debt load is to build an emergency fund, containing three to six months' worth of living expenses, which you can use to pay unexpected costs, such as a major car repair or a large medical bill. Ideally,

you should keep this money in a liquid, low-risk account, so you can access the funds quickly and without penalty. Aside from possibly helping you control your debts, an emergency fund also may enable you to avoid dipping into your long-term investments to pay for short-term needs.

Thus far, we've only discussed achieving your financial freedom through methods of saving and investing. But you also need to consider your protection needs, too. If you were to become ill or suffer a serious injury, and you could not work for a while, your financial security could be jeopardized. Your employer might offer you disability insurance as an employee benefit, but it may not be enough for your needs, so you might need to purchase some additional coverage on your own. And to help ensure your family's financial security, you'll also need sufficient life insurance.

You also might want to protect yourself from the catastrophic costs of long-term care, such as an extended nursing home stay. The average annual cost for a private room in a nursing home is more than \$92,000, according to the 2016 Cost of Care Study issued by the insurance company, Genworth. And Medicare generally covers only a small percentage of these expenses. You may want to consult with a financial professional to learn about ways you can protect yourself from the long-term care burden.

By following these suggestions, you can go a long way toward declaring your own financial independence. Consider taking action soon. **NOW**

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Gregg Davis is an Edward Jones representative based in Willow Park.

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In the Kitchen With Jacquie Case

— By Lisa Bell

As a Camp Gladiator Primary Trainer in Aledo, Jacquie Case often hears about boredom with the same foods. “Change it up,” she suggested. “I enjoy finding new healthy, easy, recipes I know will be good for me.” Grilling is her favorite method of cooking. “You can grill anything.” Crock-Pot cooking is her other favorite, since a hot meal waiting at home helps her avoid fast-food temptation. Her friend and co-trainer, Bethany Richardson, enjoys cooking as well and sharing some fun recipes.

Jacquie grew up with a cooking family. “My mom is an amazing cook. My dad can make some mean grilled buffalo wings, and Mamaw has home-cooking down,” she said. “Growing up around this showed me, at an early age, that cooking is fun and way better than always eating out.” **NOW**

Egg White Muffins

Makes about 8 cups of filling to be divided into 1- or 2-cup portions.

Coconut oil cooking spray

Fresh spinach cut up, to taste

1 pkg. chicken apple sausage (Trader Joe's Sweet Apple Sausage) or 1 lb. ground turkey sausage

1/2 green bell pepper, or more to taste

1 tsp. garlic powder

1 carton AllWhites Egg Whites (or substitute whites from regular eggs)

Fresh salsa (optional)

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Spray a muffin tin with coconut oil spray.
2. Cut spinach, sausage and green bell pepper into bite-size pieces.
3. Place the veggies and meat into muffin cups. Sprinkle evenly with garlic powder.

4. Fill up the muffin cups with the egg whites.

5. Bake 15-20 minutes. Add salsa to top, if desired.

Crock-Pot Chicken

Makes so much you can make tacos, chicken bowls, put it on salads and lettuce wraps — whatever you want.

1 1/2 lbs. boneless, skinless chicken breasts

1 1.25-oz. pkg. low-sodium taco seasoning (or one can of low-sodium Ro-Tel With Green Chiles)

1 16-oz. jar of your favorite salsa

Corn tortillas, to taste

Shredded lettuce, to taste (optional)

Chopped tomatoes, to taste (optional)

Shredded cheese, to taste (optional)

Black beans, to taste (optional)

Corn, to taste (optional)

Chopped avocados or guacamole, to taste (optional)

Reduced-fat sour cream, to taste (optional)

Hot sauce, to taste (optional)

1. Place chicken in the bottom of a Crock-Pot.
2. Sprinkle taco seasoning or pour Ro-Tel over chicken.
3. Pour salsa on top of chicken.
4. Cook on low for 6-8 hours, or on high for 4 hours.
5. Just before serving, use two forks to shred the chicken. Stir to distribute salsa evenly throughout chicken.
6. Serve immediately with tortilla chips and desired toppings.

Guilt-free Cookies and Cream Popsicle

Provided by Bethany Richardson.

4 oz. fat-free cream cheese, softened

4 oz. fat-free plain Greek yogurt

1/4 cup fat-free milk

2 Tbsp. powdered sugar

6 chocolate cookie sandwiches, crushed

1. Combine cream cheese, yogurt, milk and powdered sugar together in a medium bowl. Beat until smooth and creamy.
2. Stir in the crushed cookies.
3. Pour mixture into a Popsicle mold of your choice.
4. Place in the freezer until set and frozen.
5. Remove from mold and guiltlessly enjoy!

Easy Breezy Coconut Margarita

Provided by Bethany Richardson. Amounts shown are for 1 serving.

Ice, to fill glass

1.5 oz. tequila

1/2 lime

3 oz. Bai Molokai Coconut Sparkling water

1. Fill glass with ice; add a 1.5 oz. shot of tequila.
2. Add the juice from the lime and the Bai Molokai Coconut.
3. Top off with sparkling water. Shake or stir.
4. Note: Bai is filled with tons of antioxidants making this healthy, as well as only 100 calories per serving.

Calendar

JULY 2017

July 1 — 9

Rapunzel & Hyronomous A. Frog: Friday-Saturday, 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, 2:00 p.m., Theatre Off the Square, 114 N. Denton St. \$5 Fridays for kids 12 & under. Call (817) 341-8687 or visit www.theatreoffthesquare.org.

July 4

Spark in the Park: 4:00-10:00 p.m., Heritage Park, 315 Santa Fe. City fireworks display with live music, Charlie Robison and Tommy Alverson. Free to the public.

Weatherford Toastmasters Club: 7:00 p.m., Central Christian Church, 1602 S. Main St. Would you like to overcome your fear of communicating? We can help. For information, contact John Payne at (817) 596-9841. Repeats **July 11, 18, 25.**

July 5

American Red Cross Blood Drive: Noon-6:00 p.m., Weatherford Public Library. For appointments, visit www.redcrossblood.org and search for sponsor code parkercountycare or call 1-800-REDCROSS.

July 8

33rd Annual Parker County Peach Festival:

8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Historic Downtown Weatherford. Visit www.parkercountypeachfestival.org for details.

July 14

Spring Creek Musical: 6:00 p.m., 102 Spring Creek Rd. Country, bluegrass and Christian music. Currently looking for new bands to join the 75-year-old tradition. Free admission. Call (817) 386-6474 for additional information.

July 17

Zentangle: 6:00-7:30 p.m., Weatherford Public Library. Learn the eight steps of Zentangle Methodology. Taught by Donna MJ Kinsey. No cost to attend. To register, email donnamjkinseyquilts@gmail.com or call (214) 763-9953.

July 20

Book Club: 6:00-7:30 p.m., Weatherford Public Library. Adults of all ages are welcome to attend and discuss the book selection of the month. July Selection: *The Shadow of the Wind* by Carlos Ruiz Zafón.

July 22

Parker County Aggie Moms Club 2017 Howdy Party: 4:00-9:00 p.m., Parker County Sheriff's Posse Grounds. Festivities include catered meal, guest speaker and auctions (silent and live.)

Call Kate (817) 564-3062 or email pcaggiehowdyparty@gmail.com for tickets or sponsorship information.

July 24 — 26

Classical Conversations of Willow Park Parent Practicum: 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Northside Baptist Church, 910 N. Main St., Weatherford. Designed for parents of homeschooled children. Visit www.classicalconversations.com for details.

July 25

Books and Bagels: 10:30-11:30 a.m., Weatherford Public Library. Share thoughts on a book of your choosing and add must reads to your list. July theme: an award-winning book.

July 27

Storm Warrior Safety Rally: 5:00-8:00 p.m., Doss Heritage & Cultural Center, 1400 Texas Dr. Join the Storm Warrior team as they help our community prepare for severe weather at the Storm Warrior Safety Rally.

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your event details to lisa.bell@nowmagazines.com.

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