Midlothian

AUGUST 2017

ne Right Kind of Tough

Jack Freeman and Jon Sanders look to advance further in the playoffs

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and Laura Espinoza

Inside: MISD **Pullout Section**

Claiming Their Identities School's in Session Make a Friend, Sell a H<mark>ouse</mark> Dining Deals In the Kitchen With Freddie L. Butlar

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ON THE COVER



Jack Freeman and Jon Sanders are part of an exciting new football team at Heritage High.

Photo by Hannah Chartrand.

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Editor's Note

Hi, Neighbors!

After graduating from nursing school, I returned to Texas Woman's University in order to complete my prerequisites and enroll in medical school. The first class the school counselor told me to take turned out to be a big error. During that first class, I realized I was in part II of an advanced chemistry course. I'd never taken part I! I also needed algebra for that class. I had to teach myself part I

of the course, keep up with part II and learn algebra — all for one class. Needless to say, that was hard, but I was proud of myself for doing well in it. Great results come with great effort.

Napoleon Hill, author of *Think and Grow Rich* stated, "The strongest oak tree of the forest is not the one that is protected from the storm and hidden from the sun. It's the one that stands in the open where it is compelled to struggle for its existence against the winds and rains and the scorching sun."

This school year, be the strongest oak.

Betty

Betty Tryon

MidlothianNOW Editor
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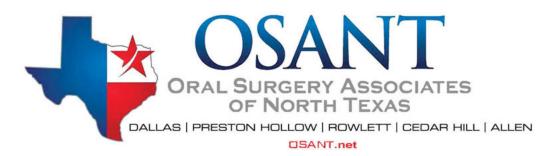




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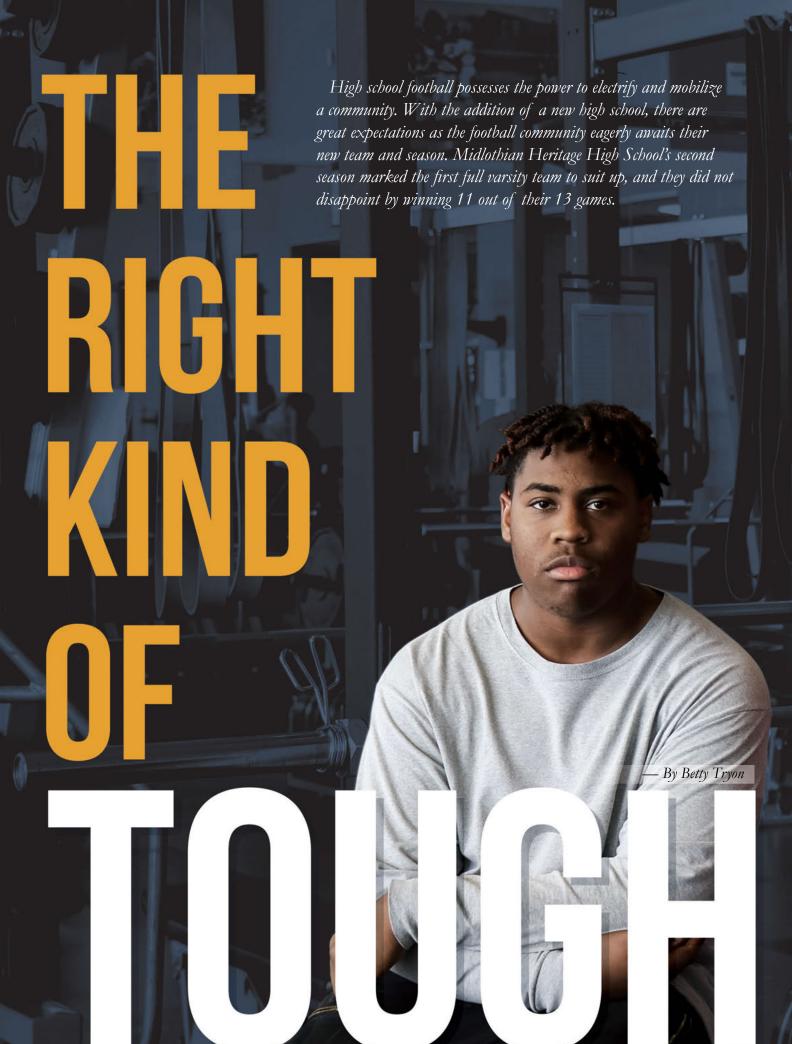
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coach young men like Jack Freeman and Jon Sanders as the Jaguars prove they are a force to be reckoned with.

Two of the players who helped bring about those 11 wins are senior and offensive left tackle Jack Freeman and junior defensive tackle Jon Sanders. "My dad coached Little League and let me practice with his fourth-graders," Jack recalled. "Football was a very big deal in my family."

On the other hand, Jon readily admits his is not a football family, even though he started playing at age 5. "I was riding my bike one day, and a coach saw me and recruited me for his flag team," he shared. "I've loved it ever since. What I love most about it is being able to bond with people. I think that football, out of all of the sports, has the best relationships to come out of it. It's a true team sport where one person can't do it all."

Jack also appreciates football for the brotherhood and the relationships you get to build. "It's not just an individual sport," he explained. "Football prepares you for life. It helps you become a better man, a good father to your kids and to become disciplined. You'll use that in the future when you get a job. You have to be responsible."

Both players participated in the sport through high school, and both played on select teams. Football not only teaches athletes about playing the game, but also other intangible benefits. "Football develops your character," Jon declared. "In football, you have to have leadership. Like Jack said, it builds you up for life. It's not an easy sport. It's one of the hardest ones out there, but in football, you just learn how to deal with things a better way than you would if you weren't as mentally tough and focused."

Both young men are involved in other activities away from football. They are



members of the choir. "Football allows you to do other stuff," Jon explained. "It has to be your main focus. You have to put most of your time into it, but not all."

It cannot be easy to balance a demanding sport yet maintain and develop other relationships and

interests. The players have a response to that, and it works well for them. "Some kids just go to school and go home," Jon explained. "Student athletes have to get to school early before anyone else, stay late and practice all week just to play an hour-and-a-half game. It's about scheduling things right and being organized with everything, such as schoolwork and what you have going on every day."

When Heritage's varsity UIL 4A football team began in 2016, the team's value, matched up against opponents, was unknown. "Last year, everyone just saw us as it being our first year in varsity," Jon said. "They would come out to games and think they were going to sweep through us. But this year, they won't have that mindset because they know who we are. We're on the map, and a lot of teams are hunting for us. One of the teams in our district was predicted to win district, but we knocked them off of first place. So, I know they are one team that will be hunting us. When we come out, we have to be sharper than we were last year. We have to be mentally better, and we have to be physically better."

When recalling some of last year's most memorable games, Jack remembered his best play. "We were playing Sanger, and it was our homecoming. On this particular play, I rolled around and let the defensive end go. Kerrion Fields got the ball and started running my way. I rolled back around and just blindsided the defensive end, and Kerrion ran for 30 yards. It was one of the craziest moments in my life, and all I could hear was the crowd going, 'Ooh!' It was pretty crazy. We ended up with a touchdown from that play. My best game







was Kaufman. It was our second round of the playoffs, and I played better than I had all year."

For Jon, he thought his best play was during the district championship. "I was trying to fight off the blocker, and the quarterback started running straight ahead. I was able to fight off the blocker and stop the quarterback from getting a first down. It was the end of the half, and for me, it was a cool play and a cool moment."

When all of the great moments in high school football are over, the boys must have a plan for after graduation. Jack is committed to the University of Houston, where he has been offered a full scholarship. "That's where I'll be going," he noted.

As a junior, Jon's future is less certain. "I love everything about college football, and it is my dream to play it," he shared. "Even as a little kid, before I started playing football, I would sit in front of the TV and watch it. With my family's circumstances, the only way I can go to college is through a full-ride scholarship. My family is more musically inclined with singing."

Jack interrupted with, "He's really good!"













"I'm OK," Jon continued modestly. "I'm just blessed with athleticism. I feel like God has a different path for me. I would like to shoot for the National Football League. In reality, it's a one-ina-million chance, but who's to say I can't shoot for it? This summer, I will start attending football camp. My focus now is getting stronger and gaining weight."

Both players recognize the impact of others on their lives. "My teammates and coaches are the reason I am the way I am," Jack declared. "They've helped me in every aspect, making me faster and stronger, a better athlete and a better person. One of the best parts of football is if you're down and something personal is bothering you, you can go to any of the coaches or teammates and just talk about it. You know they'll be there for you. Our coaches are our mentors, too."

Ion concurred regarding the positive influences. "We wouldn't be who we are without our teammates and coaches. They constantly encourage and support us — even outside of school."

The Midlothian Heritage High School Jaguars are gearing up for another season. As they do so, the support, the mental and physical toughness, as well as the determination to get the job done, appear to be right on track. NOW

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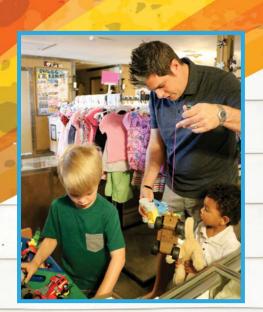
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For Larry and Nikeesia Ranson, any moment to help a child is a moment that matters. Always exuberant, these two know no strangers. Their hope is about faith, relationship, activities and a place where every child has choices and self-esteem. Their actions are about strength, commitment and hard work. What Larry and Nikeesia do for foster kids is vitally important, and, as they quickly added, they don't do it alone. "Our mission is to serve," Nikeesia said with a smile. "That's why God brought us together."

In 2014, they founded a nonprofit organization known as SWAGG Programs. What SWAGG is, how it came to be, the many children's and families' lives it's touched and what its future might be is truly a remarkable story.

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every item of necessity and joy and, on the other hand, a place of self-affirming programs with names like SWAGG Bag, Art and Recreations, The Beauty in Me, The Man to Be, Prom Prep Day, Orphan Awareness and Holiday Support.

Its beginnings likely started even before Larry and Nikeesia met and fell in love, weathered Larry's six-year commitment to the United States Air Force, raised three sons and devoted countless resources to helping others. "We both grew up with mothers deeply rooted in the will to serve," Nikeesia shared.



Throughout their 25-year marriage, and largely as a result of Nikeesia's 17 years as an educator and school principal, she and Larry often had an opportunity to assist children, including providing their home as a temporary shelter. Five years ago, they were called to do more.

With sons Larry, Kameron and Nikolas, ages 18, 15 and 14 at the time, Larry and Nikeesia agreed it was time to become a foster family. "We applied for a group of siblings in hopes of alleviating some of the fears of separation that often occur with foster children," Nikeesia explained.

The day they welcomed three brothers, ages 12, 8 and 5, was a happy day at the Ransons' house. The



combination of three brothers was familiar and seemed ideal for everyone. As it happened, though, there was more to know. "The boys were essentially nonverbal at first, and then the oldest began asking about their two sisters and two more brothers," Larry said. Sure enough, Larry and Nikeesia would learn of four younger siblings who were also in foster care.

"We sprang into full-help mode," she said with a grin. Not only did the four younger siblings eventually join their older brothers, but in 2014, and at a moment that definitely mattered, Larry and Nikeesia decided to adopt all seven children. "It hurt our hearts to think these kids might be separated again," she shared. "They are our seven from heaven, and in the end, the decision to adopt wasn't even a long conversation — but more of a realization."

It was life-changing. Nikeesia transitioned from educational administrator to a stay-at-home mom. Larry focused on working from home as a telecommunications specialist. The office became a girl's bedroom. The media room became the 12-yearold's bedroom. "His own so he could be young again," Nikeesia said with a smile. Life became filled with Hello Kitty toothbrushes and rubber duckies, meals served in phases, medical and dental issues, emergency room visits and, of course, trading the family car for a 12-seater van.

All of this and, yet, there was an overriding question. "We kept asking ourselves, 'Once we adopt, then what?"" Nikeesia said. "We didn't know how we would continue our mission to bless others." As always, the answer





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was revealed in family prayer, as they considered some important questions: "What was God telling us to do? What did we want our kids to have? And, then," Nikeesia shared, "we asked the children, What do other foster kids need?""

In that moment, SWAGG was born. "Foster children need our help," Nikeesia said. "That's the reality." With their savings and lots of labor from Nikeesia's parents and all of the Ransons' family, friends and volunteers, Larry and Nikeesia created a place and a way for the community to take care of the community. Since Thanksgiving 2014, a leased, stand-alone building on Waxahachie's Ovilla Road has served children from as many as nine counties.



Children entering foster care or a new home often have little or nothing of their own, and most arrive with their belongings in a trash bag. On top of that, they're understandably frightened and confused. "At the SWAGG store, we serve one family at a time every 30 minutes," Nikeesia explained. "By having their own time, there's no shame. They can come in, relax, shop and try on clothes. It's also a good time for foster parents to learn about and bond with their child."

The store carries everything from hygiene items, medicine and cosmetic items to clothing, uniforms, diapers, shoes, socks, underwear, purses, jewelry, school supplies and SWAGG bags duffel bags they get to fill with items they choose. The bags become theirs to keep through any transitions they may have. "We want children to have choices and opportunities to claim their own identity," she added.

Misty Mitchell is a foster parent who visits monthly from Decatur. "I make the long drive to SWAGG because, in addition to getting help with physical items, I'm given invaluable advice, prayers and encouragement," she said.



Whitney Urquhart from Midlothian heard about SWAGG through Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services and her foster care community. "There really is no program like it near Midlothian or the south Dallas areas," she commented. "Not only did we shop for clothes, diapers and essentials during those first few months of a new child placement, but Mrs. Ranson was a wealth of knowledge and support."

"If it weren't for SWAGG, I don't know what we would do," Julie Gonzales, from Red Oak shared. "These are awesome people, and I thank God every day for bringing them into our lives."

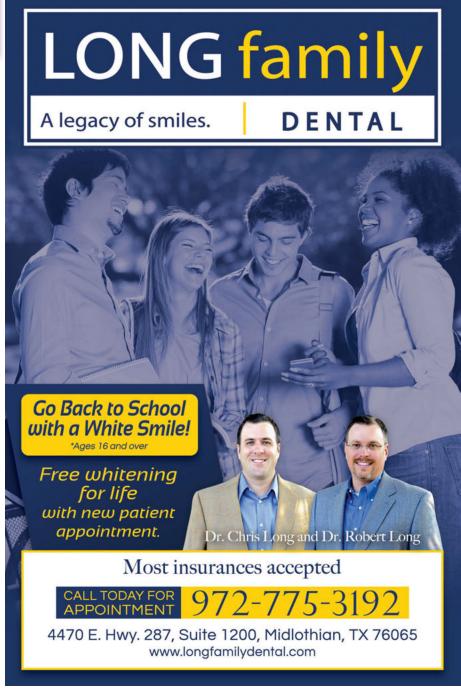
Nikeesia's hope is for every county to have their own version of SWAGG, and they would be thrilled to share resources and experiences. "SWAGG relies on volunteers, partners, sponsors and everyone who donates time and items," she said. "We are so grateful. At this point, our prayer is to receive help with expenses and, ideally, a donated location."

"The minute our family stepped into the SWAGG home, we felt the love," Maria Miller from Waxahachie shared.

Larry and Nikeesia know that helping children matters. They live it, and, in awareness of the special challenges of children who are homeless or in foster care, they were moved to create this nonprofit organization to meet the needs. That's what SWAGG is all about. NOW

Editor's Note: For more information, visit www.swaggprograms.com.







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Our teachers, principals and staff have the privilege and responsibility to foster those dreams. We have a deep calling to ensure each student is equipped with the necessary skills to have a fulfilled and productive life. Our vision statement says, "Inspiring excellence today to change the world tomorrow." Each word has meaning, rooted in purpose. "Inspiring" is what we want

for every child – inspired to learn and grow every day. "To change the world tomorrow," signifies the world is ever-changing and our students must have the knowledge and future-ready skills to adapt, persevere and succeed as they pave their own future.

On behalf of MISD, I look forward to working side by side with our community as we continue to make MISD the best district in Texas. Let's all be #MISDProud together!

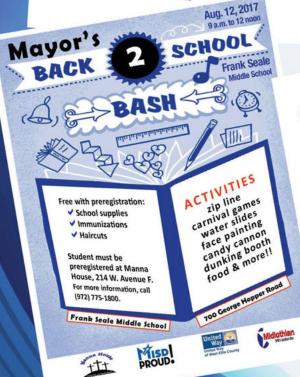
Sincerely,

Lane Ledbetter, EdD

Superintendent of Schools



Pull Here





We hope you have a great school year. It is an honor to partner with Midlothian ISD to ensure that you and your family are kept healthy this

In order to help you with the many back-toschool year. school decisions this year, we have provided and includes a handy enrollment checklist, a district calendar, as well as an you with this booklet. It contains helpful information about the Back 2 School Bash

introduction to a few new safety and teaching tools.

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Midlothian Independent School District

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- ☐ Original birth certificate
- □ Vaccination record
- Original Social Security card
- □ Withdrawal form from previous school
- ☐ Review Student Code of Conduct and Dress Code
- ☐ Complete online enrollment forms
- ☐ Set up breakfast/lunch account or submit free/reduced lunch forms
- ☐ Review Device Handbook
- ☐ Device Protection Fee
- ☐ Submit Athletic Physical Form, if applicable
- School supplies







Checklist for returning MISD students

- ☐ Complete online enrollment forms
- ☐ Activate breakfast/lunch account
- Review Student Code of Conduct and Dress Code
- ☐ Review Device Handbook
- ☐ Device Protection Fee
- ☐ Submit updated vaccination records, if applicable
- ☐ Submit Athletic Physical Form, if applicable
- ☐ School supplies





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Crisis Prevention **Email Tipline**

As an added safety measure. MISD's Crisis Prevention email tipline will go live on Aug. 15. This email tipline will be posted on the front page of the MISD website, www.MISD.gs, and campus websites. Any parent or student may anonymously share safety concerns for any MISD student ranging from bullying, cyber bullying, suicidal ideation and campus safety concerns.

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Back-to-school information in this advertisement is sponsored by Methodist Mansfield Medical Center.



Midlothian Independent School District

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- (x) Secondary grading periods

Staff development

Aug 14, 15, 16, 18 Sept. 11 Oct. 16 Jan. 8, 15 Feb. 19 April 9

Staff work days

NOVEMBER

Aug. 17 June 1

May 18

Teacher/aides comp days Aug. 11

2017

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	22	23	24	25		27
28	29	30	31			

Holidays

Labor Day Sept. 4 Thanksgiving Nov. 20-24 Winter Break Dec. 25-Jan. 5 Spring Break March 12-16 Memorial Day May 28

Bad weather day 1 Feb. 16 Bad weather day 2 March 30

Elementary grading periods

Aug. 21-Oct. 20 Oct. 23-Jan. 12 Jan. 16-March 23 March 26-May 31

Early release days Dec. 21, 22 May 30, 31

Secondary grading periods

Aug. 21-Sept. 29 Oct. 2-Nov. 3 Nov. 6-Dec. 22 Jan. 9-Feb. 23 Feb. 26-Apr. 13 April 16-May 31

2018

77,370 instructional minutes / 173 student days / 187 teacher days

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Inclement Weather Policy & Notification

During inclement weather, MISD constantly monitors all weather situations. In the event of inclement weather, we consider the safety of our 8,500 students and 1,000 employees when making decisions about school closures. MISD administrators will determine school cancellations or delays based on the safety of all students and staff district-wide.

If school is cancelled or delayed due to a weather-related event, parents and staff members will be notified via multiple platforms, including MISD's parent callout system, websites - including all campus websites - Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. For the most instantaneous notification, visit our website at www.MISD.gs and/or follow us on Twitter @MidlothianISD.







connected

Please know MISD works diligently to keep you informed as quickly as possible, but know that some forms of notification may be slightly delayed due to the demands of mass messaging. As always, MISD will keep parents, students and community members informed with the most up-to-date information through these communication platforms.





Midlothian Independent School District



School locations

- T.E. Baxter Elementary (Pre-K-5th)
 1050 Park Place Blvd.
 Ph: 972-775-8281 Online: misd.gs/baxter
- J.R. Irvin Elementary (K-5th)
 700 West Avenue H
 Ph: 972-775-8239 Online: misd.gs/irvin
- Longbranch Elementary (Pre-K-5th)
 6631 FM 1387
 Ph: 972-775-2830 Online: misd.gs/longbranch
- Mt. Peak Elementary (Pre-K-5th)
 5201 FM 663
 Ph: 972-775-2881 Online: misd.gs/mtpeak
- J.A. Vitovsky Elementary (Pre-K-5th)
 333 Church St.
 Ph: 972-775-5536 Online: misd.gs/vitovsky
- LaRue Miller Elementary (K-5th) 2800 Sudith Ln.
 Ph: 972-775-4497 Online: misd.gs/miller
- Frank Seale Middle School (6-8th)
 700 George Hopper Rd.
 Ph: 972-775-6145 Online: misd.gs/fsms
- Walnut Grove Middle School (6-8th)
 990 N. Walnut Grove Rd.
 Ph: 972-775-5355 Online: misd.gs/wgms
- Midlothian High School
 923 South 9th St.
 Ph: 972-775-8237 Online: misd.gs/mhs
- Midlothian Heritage High School 4000 FM 1387
 Ph: 972-775-6509 Online: misd.gs/hhs
- 21. Dolores McClatchey Elementary (Pre-K-5th) 6631 Shiloh Rd. Ph: 972-775-5266 Online: misd.gs/mcclatchey

MISD ancillary facilities and service locations

- A.H. Meadows Library
 923 South 9th St.
 Ph: 972-775-3417
- MHS Agricultural Building 925 South 9th St.
- MHS Arena/MISD Athletic Dept. 923 South 9th St. Ph: 972-775-8174
- L.A. Mills Administration Building 100 Walter Stephenson Rd. Ph: 972-775-8296 DAEP/LEAP Ph: 972-775-5311
- Auxiliary Center
 601 East Avenue E
 Ph: 972-775-1805
- MISD Childcare Center
 Laura Jenkins Development Center
 315 East Ave. E
 Ph: 972-775-8955
- Multi-Purpose Stadium 1800 South 14th St. Ph: 972-775-6434
- Midlothian Sports Complex 1000 South 14th St.
- Agricultural Science Facility 1851 Mockingbird Ln. Ph: 972-775-3762
- Maintenance Building
 South 2nd Ave.
 Ph: 972-775-1148

Riding the school bus

Bus service is provided to MISD students who live two or more miles from school or who would encounter hazardous areas while walking to school. Visit www.misd.gs and select the bus icon to see if your child qualifies for bus service. Back-to-school information in this advertisement is sponsored by Methodist Mansfield Medical Center.





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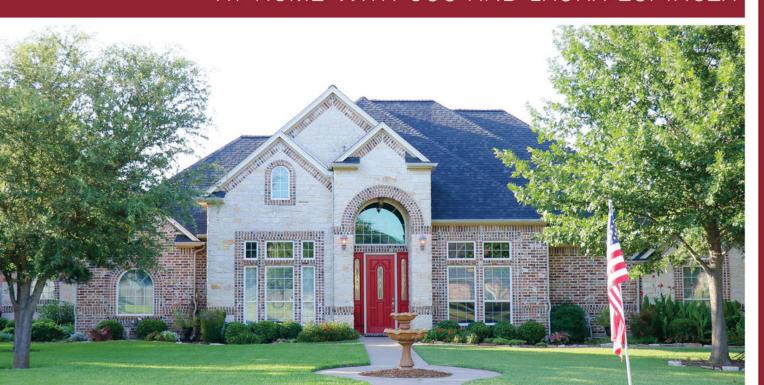






TO — By Zachary R. Urguhart SERVE

AT HOME WITH GUS AND LAURA ESPINOZA





Some houses are more than just homes. Gus and Laura Espinoza have built a house that is as much a gathering place as a place to lay your head at night. Without realizing it, they built a home that was made to serve.

Gus grew up in Oak Cliff, going to Kimball High School before studying all over the place in college. "I went to Mountain View, then to Southwestern and graduated from Northwood with a degree in business management," he detailed. After college, he went to work for the Dallas Housing Authority for 20 years before deciding to transition into a greener industry. "I was really impressed with Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART), so I started there about eight years ago," he added. In addition to his job with DART, he also has a HUD inspection business, and is a co-campus pastor for New Church. Live, which meets in Midlothian at Walnut Grove Middle School.

Laura was born in England to a military dad and a British mom. "Gus likes to joke that I'm the immigrant





in the family," she laughed. "We moved to Oak Cliff when I was 5, so I say I've grown up in Dallas." After graduating from Kimball, she studied business at Northlake College and worked for Abbott Labs in Las Colinas. She then stayed at home with the kids for years, and has worked for Coldwell Banker for the past five years.

Gus and Laura met in junior high, and ran in the same group of kids for years before they started dating. "Junior year, she took me to see *Endless Love*," Gus explained. After dating for a few years, they were married in 1985, living in a few



places before settling in the Midlothian part of Ovilla almost two decades ago. "I wanted acreage, and she wanted a neighborhood. So we settled on an acre in a neighborhood," he admitted.

They have three kids varying in stages of life. Gavin is 27, married to Natalie and is a youth pastor for Life. Church in Oklahoma. "They are the reason we learned about network churches and decided to get involved," Laura explained. Ariel is 25, has a biology degree from The University of Texas at Austin and is getting ready to start dental school at Marquette University. Garrison is 17 and is starting his senior year at Midlothian Heritage. "He plays football, 7 on 7, and always has his squad over here on the weekends," she added.

Gus and Laura have a great piece of land with mature trees and an interesting fountain-style birdbath in the center of their walkway. The landscaping features well-manicured shrubbery dotted with colorful seasonal flowers. Inside a bright red door, the hand-finished concrete floors are an instant eye-catcher. "We actually did the floors ourselves," Gus explained. "The only problem was once













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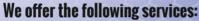


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we started with a certain motion, we really had to keep that throughout so the look was consistent."

The living room offers comfy seating, a giant built-in in the corner and is painted a relaxing sea foam green. The fireplace brick matches the exterior of the house, and pops nicely against the backdrop of the green hue on the walls. The dining room is formal with a gold-edged table and china hutch, but maintains a simple and inviting feel by minimizing its accessories and accoutrement.

From the foyer, you can see views of the front yard from the dining room, and views of the backyard from the living room. The kitchen ties its surrounding spaces together with traditional, honeystained cabinets, chrome appliances and fixtures contrasted by a green island and pantry door. "I saw the idea on Pinterest, and we liked it," Laura said. The nook has a rustic wooden table that matches the feel of the wood trim surrounding the marble kitchen counters.

The kitchen also leads to Gus and Laura's favorite spot — the pool and expansive backyard. "Kind of like the acreage I wanted, I wanted a boat and got a pool instead," he joked. They built the pool just after finishing the house, and over 15 years, they have had many guests. In serving with different ministries of the church, they have hosted countless youth groups, birthday parties and graduations. "We're about to have a baptism service out here with New Church.Live," Gus added. Past the pool, their acre sits long, giving the look of an even bigger yard.

The bedrooms in the house are split between two floors, with the boys both staying upstairs. "We gave Ariel her room and bathroom down here because we figured she didn't need to share with one of the boys," Laura explained. Ariel's room is still cutely decorated, with a lighter hue of sea foam accented with simple black decor pieces.



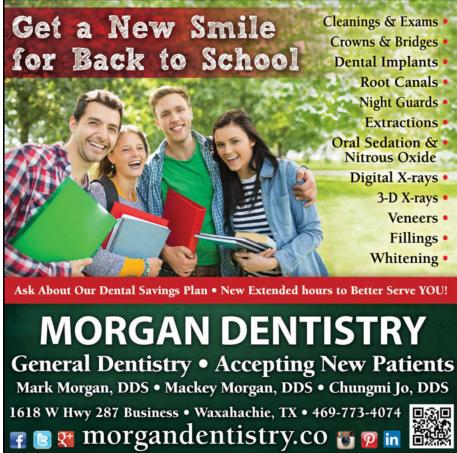


Across the house, Gus and Laura's master bedroom is beautiful with a newly redone black and gray color scheme and new floors. "We had carpet in here, but we were ready for something different," Gus recalled. An exquisite four-poster bed is the biggest of several pieces of black furniture. Three full-length mirrors serve as the dressing area, which leads to the master bath that features split-level, Jack-and-Jill sinks and its own new color scheme. "This was another Pinterest idea she loved," Gus mused.

The stairs are bookended by art niches that have been custom painted to enhance the decor pieces included in the space. On the top floor, the boys each have a room of their own, though Gavin's beige room is less decorated than Garrison's sports-themed room, which is painted bright blue. Though the one room is still technically Gavin's, Garrison uses it like a suite when he has friends over. "Honestly, the theme of Gavin's room ends up being up to whoever of Garrison's friends get there first. It takes on the theme chosen by the friend — it could be a soccer room or a football room. Our rule is that Garrison has to have everything cleaned upstairs before the guys can come over the next weekend."

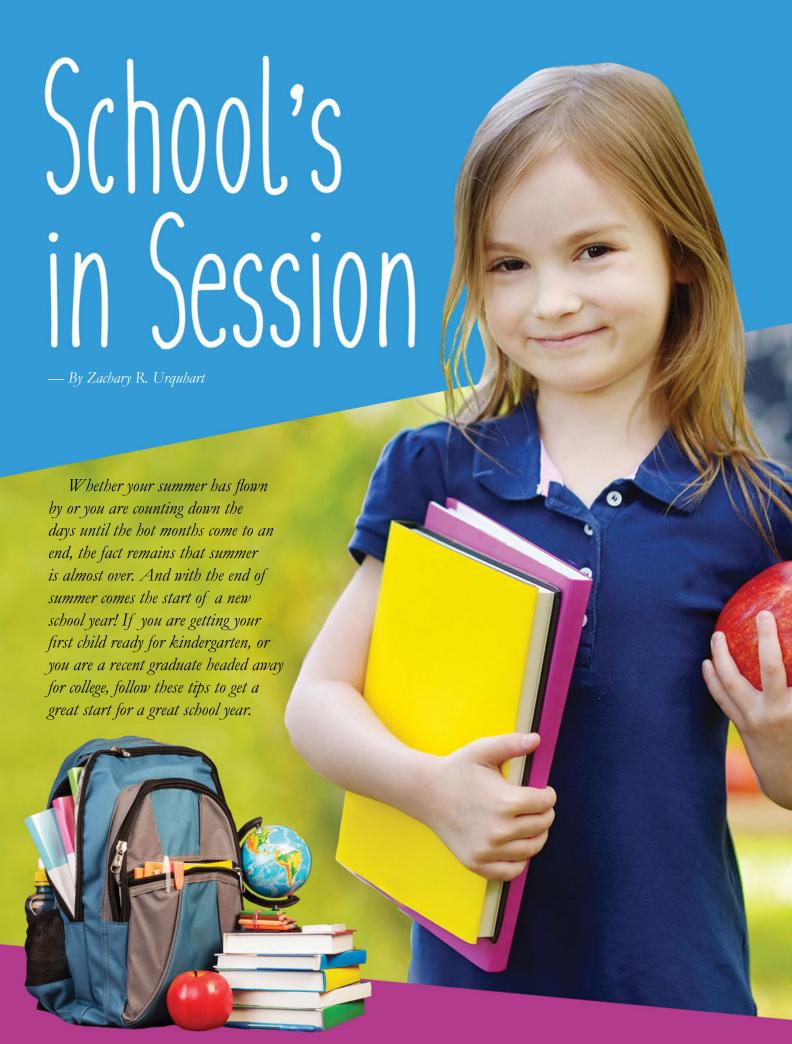
Along with two bedrooms, the upstairs has a media room that connects to the upstairs restroom. It is the perfect setup for a teenager and his friends to spend the weekend watching television, playing video games, and it still has plenty of space to sleep.

After living there for 17 years, Gus and Laura have seen what a great home they built. "Even the floors are perfect. We didn't think about it with the stained concrete, but with all of the wet kids who have been in and out of the house over the years, it was perfect to have floors that we didn't have to fuss about," Laura stated. They may not have known what it would eventually become, but Gus and Laura have a home that, like them, is made to serve. NOW













Be Ready for the First Day

- Dot your I's. One of the biggest jobs for parents getting ready to send kids to school is finishing paperwork. When you are starting, be ready with shot records, birth certificates and proof of residency, so that you can enroll without a problem. If your children are in sports, get the school's physical form and head to your doctor or a nearby clinic, so they are ready on day one. There is also a mountain of surveys, financial forms and demographic sheets that will take time to complete, so do not wait until the night before the first day of school.
- Get the gear you need. No matter which school your child attends, supplies will be needed. Most large stores will have copies of lists from the local schools, so you can head there ready to shop. If your young student is apprehensive about starting, let him



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or her have fun picking out colors and characters, but be sure you know which supplies are shared by the class. This will help you avoid your son happily picking a themed box of tissues only to find out that the class uses each other's boxes communally. And if you are running short on time, most elementary schools use fundraising companies that will package a complete set of needed supplies for a small fee.

• Older kids need stuff, too. Though your high-schooler may not take the same pleasure in picking out school supplies, you cannot neglect that part of his or her year. Some teachers at that level will have specific requirements for their class. So while you may not be able to get an exhaustive list until your student comes home the first week, you know that they will need paper, pen and pencil and a notebook or two.

Look the Part

• Find a style. Unless your school has a dress code, there are endless options when it comes to dressing for the day. These days, kids can wear almost anything and fit into some style category. Whether they want to have a common theme in their dress, or they



want to change it up each day, they can shop anywhere from a thrift store to the fanciest boutiques to come up with great looks for the year.

• Function matters. High school students normally have a regulated schedule, complete with time to change for athletics or other special activities. But in elementary school, kids often have a different activity every day of the week. Be sure to include a variety of clothes and shoes, so your daughter does not overheat trying to run in wooly leggings or ruin a fancy dress painting in art class.



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Get in Rhythm

- Start a routine now. Summer nights are great for staying up, enjoying sunsets and going on late night excursions. With school fast approaching, though, it is time to get your little ones back into a bedtime routine. The first few weeks might be tough regardless, but making sure they are getting to bed early now should help ensure a better start to the year.
- Routines are good for everyone. While it may seem like a losing battle to ask your teenagers to go to bed early with several weeks left of summer, encourage them to start waking up when they will need to be up for the school year. After a few weeks of being forced out of bed before noon, they will naturally get to sleep at a more reasonable hour. And if your high-schoolers drive themselves in the morning, spend the week before school helping them get the timing of waking up, getting ready and heading out the door in time to get to school before the bell rings.



College Is Not Just a Party

• Take care of the little things. If you are a college student, on your own for the first time, you may be overwhelmed with your new responsibilities. It is a good idea to make a monthly and quarterly checklist to ensure you pay your rent and bills, keep your car maintained and do things like changing air filters and taking care of the yard.



- Make a budget. One of the biggest changes for many college students is budgeting money. Figure out how much money you need for utilities, housing, basic grocery purchases and any regular bills you will be paying like insurance or phone service. Compare that to your sources of income, and be sure not to spend more than you have.
- Be careful with credit. College students are easy targets for cards with ridiculously high rates. Their free shirt is not worth opening a high interest credit card where a pair of jeans paid for over time can cost you hundreds in fees. On the other hand, you might consider getting a card with good rates and making one or two purchases that you pay off immediately. That can help establish good credit that will help you buy a car or a home down the road.

For anyone sending a child off for the first time, or shipping a graduate into the borderline adulthood that is college, using these tips will ensure a successful start to school. NOW











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Judy McGraw's 30-plus years of living in Ellis County give her an advantage that benefit her real estate client.

Make a Friend, Sell a House

Realtor Judy McGraw invests her years of experience into helping her clients. — By Betty Tryon

Do you remember purchasing your first home and the feeling of walking through the door with your heart bursting with pride and thinking this kingdom, whatever size, now belongs to you? There is a lot at stake with your purchase, and Judy McGraw, Realtor with Century 21 Judge Fite Company understands.

"I always wanted to be in real estate because I remember how it felt to have my first house," she shared. "I just wanted to be a part of that. I do a lot of business with first-time buyers and enjoy being able to help with that." Judy's experience in selling real estate and being involved in those memories spans many years. "I've lived in Ellis County for the last 30-plus years and have been selling real estate for 14 of those years," she stated. Judy worked with Century 21 Judge Fite when it was located in

Waxahachie. When the company expanded to Midlothian, she moved her office to the city in which she lives.

"Most of my business is built through referrals and from past clients," she said. "I always felt like I enjoy this business because I go out and make a friend, and then sell them a house. Some of my best friends I met through working with them while buying or selling property."

Part of being a Realtor is to advise clients of all the opportunities available to them, including financing options. When Judy meets a client for the first time, she checks to see if they have been pre-qualified for a loan. "If they haven't, I try to help them in that direction," she explained. "With a buyer, the most important thing is to get pre-qualified," Judy stressed.

Business NOW

"I'll show anyone one house, but after that, they really need to talk to someone. You'll look at houses you can't afford and be disappointed.

"We work a lot with Cendera Funding," Judy continued. "They can help buyers overcome issues they may have in qualifying for a home loan. If you can't qualify, the Home Partners program may help." The Home Partners is a national group of investors who have a Lease with a Right to Purchase Program. This can be a viable option for those who have bad credit. "Home Partners will buy the house. If a person is looking to purchase the house through them, then they have three years to make that decision."

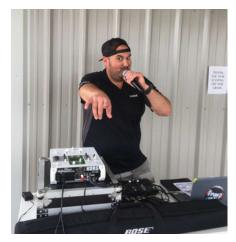
"I DO A LOT OF **BUSINESS WITH FIRST-TIME BUYERS AND ENJOY BEING ABLE TO HELP WITH THAT."**

She counsels caution when looking for lenders, especially online. "I always tell people that this is probably the biggest thing you'll ever do money-wise. Don't you want somebody you can sit down with face to face? If something goes wrong, I'd like to be able to knock on their door and ask, 'What do I do now?""

With her years of helping others find their homes, there is one award Judy especially strived to achieve — the Centurion Award. Last year, she received it after selling 78 properties. However, the award she is most proud of is the Quality Service Pinnacle Award, which is the highest quality service award she's won each year since 2011. "That comes from client surveys," Judy explained. "That's what lets me know I did a good job." When looking for a new home, Judy McGraw is ready to use her experience to help you find that perfect one. NOW



Around Town NOW



Pun the D.J. mixes it up at the TexPlexPark.



Craig Bonham, general manager at Blaine Stone Lodge, cuts the chamber ribbon.



Karen Ross, master mixologist, and daughter, Alex, serve up specialty drinks at a Midlothian Chamber After Hours event.



Judy McGraw, Cathy Altman, Cammy Jackson, Haleigh Bush and Kaitlyn Bush brave the rain for the Midlothian Independence Day Parade.



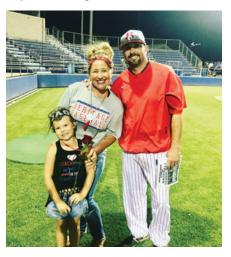
Caleb Hachet joins a team from Youth Missions International for a mission trip to Peru.



Brookshire's store manager Kris Garrison gives Paws for Reflection Ranch a donation of \$1,000 for their veteran programs.



Mayra, Heather and Dani help USMD celebrate their grand-reopening in Midlothian.



Brooklynn, Heather and Justin Blackwell rejoice in his new position as the head baseball coach for Heritage High School.



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A Mind on the Run

— By Betty Tryon, BSN

"I can't sit still." Those words come from an online blogger, who just needed to vent about ADHD, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. She went on to chronicle her struggle with her thought patterns. "Like, I should have one thought that's supposed to do its thing. Instead, it feels like there's hundreds, all darting in different directions and confusing the others." ADHD is a neurodevelopmental disorder that begins in childhood and can last into adulthood.

There are three types of this condition: inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity. It is possible to have only one or a combination of the types. All of these behaviors can occur in anyone, but when they reach a level that causes everyday routines to be disrupted on a frequent basis, it is characteristic of ADHD disorder. Behaviors will differ from one person to another. Some will exhibit a combination of symptoms of this condition. Whatever symptoms are most predominant determine the diagnosis. Males are more likely to have this disorder than females. ADHD often coexists with other behaviors, such as anxiety disorders, learning disabilities and depression.

Inattention is characterized by someone having difficulty with organizational skills. They have problems keeping things in order and manage their time poorly. They make careless mistakes performing important tasks and are constantly losing items. There is difficulty in focusing and staying on task. When it comes to performing tasks that require mental focus, those with inattention may completely avoid them.

Hyperactivity and impulsivity are often seen in combination. When a person is hyperactive, that behavior will often be seen in very unhealthy ways, and being impulsive is a part of that. An example of the predominantly hyperactivity-impulsivity presentation is a person who fidgets constantly and can't seem to sit still. Engaging in quiet activities is difficult. This patient seems to be the type of person who has to go, go, go all the time, is impatient, has trouble standing in line and engages in nonstop talking.

The cause of ADHD is still unknown. Environmental toxins have been blamed, possible brain injury, genetic factors and even cigarettes and alcohol are all suggested causes of ADHD.

The goal of treatment for ADHD is to reduce symptoms for better function. The treatment has to be patient specific and age appropriate. What works for children might not work for adults and vice versa.

When helping children with ADHD, it's important not to label them as "bad" kids. Their behavior is not meant to disrupt and with treatment can improve. Managing this disorder gives the person a chance to live a more normal and calmer life. 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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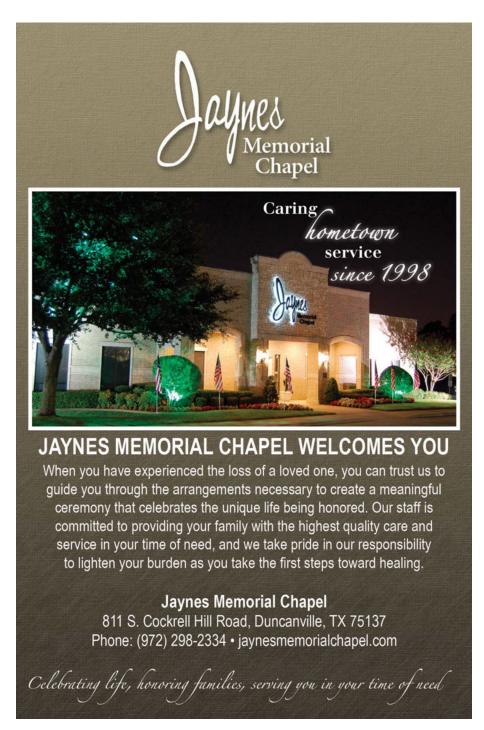
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August 5

Mt. Peak Cemetery Association Ice Cream Supper/Fundraiser: 6:00 p.m., auction of cakes, baked goods and arts and crafts; 7:00 p.m., ice cream, hot dogs and drinks will be sold. Bounce house and face painting for the kids. All proceeds are used for the maintenance of the cemetery.

August 5, 19

Midlothian Market: 8:00 a.m.-noon, Heritage Park, 234 N. 8th St. Various vendors including crafts and food in open air market.

August 8

The National Active and Retired Federal Employees (NARFE) Chapter 1191, covering Ellis, Navarro and surrounding counties, meeting: 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., rotating between Ryan's Buffet in Waxahachie, Sirloin Stockade in Corsicana and the Grand Ennis Buffet in Ennis. Email rjcarey1@gmail.com or call (972) 775-2463 for more info.

August 12

"Dodge for a Cause" Dodgeball Tournament: 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Claxton Gym, SAGU, Waxahachie. This is a community, family fun,

event – concessions, souvenir team photos and fun activities. Entry fee at the door for spectators will be \$5 and T-shirts will be available for \$10. We are hoping each team participating can donate/raise \$500 for the cause. For more information, visit bbbstx. org/EllisDodge or contact Susan Smith at (469) 644-9876, ssmith@bbbstx.org.

August 16

The Women's Connection of Ellis County meeting: 11:30a.m.-1:00 p.m., Waxahachie Country Club. Cost is \$13. Vouchers for mothers requiring childcare are available. This is a very positive, uplifting and refreshing time for women and includes a delicious lunch and featured guest speaker each month. Reservations are due the **Sunday** before the meeting. For reservations, women can contact Barb Jacobs at (214) 463-5064 and at barbjacobs19@yahoo.com.

August 17

Ellis County Amateur Radio Club: 7:00 p.m., The Salvation Army Boys & Girls Club Waxahachie, 620 Farley St., Waxahachie. Talkin on the 145.410 machines. All are welcome. For more information, visit www.wd5ddh.org.

August 19

2017 Movies in the Park - *Beauty and the Beast*: 7:30-10:30 p.m. Rated PG. All movies shown at dusk at Hawkins Spring Park.

August 21

Ellis County Veterans Networking Group: 6:00 p.m., Ryan's Steakhouse, Waxahachie. Come join the group for dinner and listen to what the guest speaker for the evening has to share. For more information, call Mike Lamb at (214) 763-0378.

August 26

Ellis County SPCA Paws for the Cause Tailgate Party: 6:00 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center, 1 Community Dr., Midlothian. The event will include dinner and a silent and live auction. Sponsorship opportunities are available. Tickets are \$40. Reserved tables are \$500 and up. Tickets may be purchased online at ecspca.ejoinme.org/2017ECSPCA. For more information, email director@elliscountyspca.org.

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your current event details to betty.tryon@nowmagazines.com.







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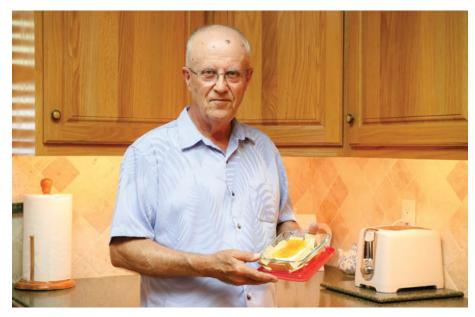
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In the Kitchen With Freddie L. Butlar

— By Betty Tryon

Freddie L. Butlar loves Buttermilk Chess Pie. Not knowing how to make one, he decided to give it a try. He purchased the frozen pie crust and all the ingredients needed to assemble it, and put the pie immediately into the oven. "After baking and cooling, I got ready to cut a big piece and noticed there were two pie crusts. I didn't realize this when I put the pie together. So, I peeled the bottom one off, cut the pie and the rest is history!"

He enjoys the challenge of putting things together and trying to make them taste good. For him, TV cooking shows and church potlucks are a gold mine for finding new recipes. NOW

Quick Dip With a Kick

Great snack! It won't last long.

- 1 8-oz. block Philadelphia Cream Cheese
- 1 qt. jar KA-RANCH Habanero Peach iam (can be purchased at the 4L Marketplace here in Midlothian)
- 1 or 2 boxes Wheat Thins
- **1.** Place the block of cheese on a plate: drizzle the jar of jam over the top.
- 2. Surround the cheese with Wheat Thins, and dip to your heart's desire.

lack's Stew

Serves 6 to 8 people.

1 Tbsp. olive oil 2 pkgs. lean stew meat, diced into small bite-size pieces 1/2 white onion, diced

- 1 Tbsp. garlic, minced
- 2 Tbsp. salt
- 2 Tbsp. fresh ground black pepper
- 4 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1 Tbsp. onion powder
- 2 Tbsp. beef bouillon
- 1 Tbsp. garlic powder
- 1 Tbsp. garlic salt
- 1 tsp. ground rosemary
- 1 tsp. cumin
- 1 tsp. ground tarragon
- I tsp. red pepper flakes
- 2 Tbsp. paprika
- 3 stalks celery, diced
- 3 large carrots, diced
- 4 Irish potatoes, diced
- I small turnip, diced
- 1 10-oz. pkg. frozen corn
- 2 14.5-oz. cans tomatoes, diced 2 to 3 5.5-oz. cans V8 juice
- 1. In a Crock-Pot, put the olive oil, stew meat, onion, garlic, salt, black pepper,

Worcestershire sauce and onion powder; add water to cover the meat. Let it cook on low overnight.

- 2. Add remaining ingredients; let cook, covered, on low for 24 hours, stirring occasionally.
- **3.** Turn off the heat; let sit for 8 hours. Reheat and serve with cornbread or crackers. (It just gets better every time you reheat it.)

Pork Chop Supper

A supper in one dish.

- 2 Thsp. olive oil
- I small white onion, thinly sliced (divided use)
- 4 pork chops

Lawry's Seasoned Salt, to taste

- 4 Irish potatoes, quartered
- 4 carrots, cut into 1-inch pieces and then halve each piece
- 1. In a large baking dish with a lid, drizzle the olive oil; place half of the onion slices over the bottom of the dish.
- **2.** Lightly sprinkle both sides of the pork chops with Lawry's Seasoned Salt, and place them on top of the onions. Place the potatoes and carrots around and on top of the pork chops.
- **3.** Arrange the rest of the sliced onions over the top of everything. Lightly sprinkle Lawry's over the top. Place the lid on the dish; cook in a 350 F oven until the potatoes and carrots are fork tender.

Buttermilk Pie

3 eggs

1/2 cup butter, softened

 $1 \frac{1}{2}$ cups white sugar

3 Tbsp. all-purpose, flour

1 cup buttermilk

I tsp. vanilla extract

1 Tbsp. lemon juice

1/8 Tbsp. nutmeg, freshly grated

1 9-inch unbaked pie crust

- **I.** Preheat the oven to 350 F.
- 2. Beat eggs until frothy, add butter, sugar and flour. Beat until smooth.
- 3. Stir in buttermilk, vanilla, lemon juice and nutmeg; pour into pie shell.
- **4.** Bake for 40 to 60 minutes, or until center

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







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