

The Community Magazine Serving Mansfield and the Surrounding Area

Mansfield NOW

M A G A Z I N E

September 2008

**Marriage
Training**

**American
Dreams**

**The Beat
Goes On**

**A Giant
on the Field**

At Home With

**John and
Renee Lamond**

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Mansfield NOW

Editor's Note

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

In Switzerland, the month of September is referred to as "Harvest Month," but the once-farming community of Mansfield, Texas, has other things to celebrate. September is also the month we honor grandparents, Labor Day, National Hispanic Heritage and, of course, the change to a new season.

Wait until you read the wonderful story of a Dutch couple who traveled great distances to make their dreams come true and find a new home in the U.S. As you read about the tremendous spirit of Carlos Castaneda or the resilience and determination of Hoang Le, you will realize the true significance of our Harvest Month. You will also learn from marriage educator, David Taylor, to harvest or benefit from those positive experiences which can only make our community stronger and our lives better.

Let this be the month that you reap what you sow!

Your friend,
Alex Allred
MansfieldNOW Editor



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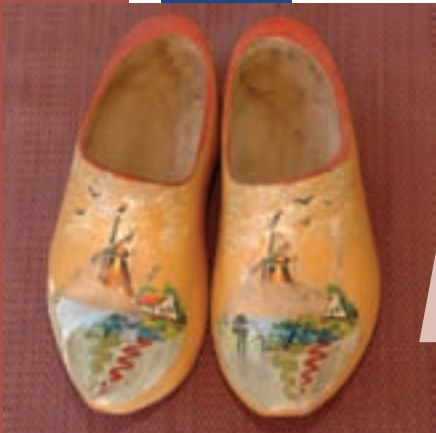
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American Dreams

— By Alex Allred



All things are possible. Certainly, this is what Walter and Martha Peeman (pronounced Pay-man) believed when they traveled the world in pursuit of the great American dream.

In 1959, the young Dutch couple left the Netherlands and moved to the West Indies where Walter had a job as a shipyard mechanic. Both knew it was only a temporary stop on their way to their final destination. Four years later, they journeyed to the United States “for the possibilities,” Walter smiled.

Six couples had shared dreams of moving to the United States, but only Walter and Martha made the trek to New York in 1963. With savings from their job in the West Indies, Walter and Martha purchased a car to travel across the states to Los Angeles. They were undeterred in their journey even though they knew no English.

Today, they laugh at the memory of their first attempts to order food at various diners along rural and interstate highways. “At first, we had to buy

sandwich makings,” Martha laughed.

“We bought all the wrong things!” Walter said, shuddering at the mere thought of the odd things purchased in hopes of concocting a good meal. Abandoning the idea of grocery shopping, they began pointing at menus. Today, after 54 years of marriage, they still argue if some of those early meals they purchased were chicken or fish. Eventually, they made it to Garden Grove, a Los Angeles suburb, where friends invited them to stay until they were able to find their own apartment.

In typical Walter-and-Martha-fashion, both housing and employment were found almost instantly. Walter was a non-English speaking encyclopedia salesman. “It was hard,” Walter said, his accent still thick after all these years living stateside, “but I picked up the language quite quick.”

After two weeks of immersing himself in the English language and the procedure of selling encyclopedias, Walter and Martha eagerly awaited



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their first U.S. paycheck, but when the checks were handed out, Walter received no wages or bonus.

"I asked where my check was!" Walter recalled. The advertisement he had responded to promised "paid training." In fine print, however, this promise was honored only when the salesman finalized a sale.

For the next six months, Walter worked as a security guard in a hospital, and Martha worked as domestic help,



while they both attended night school to learn English. Struggling to make ends meet, Martha remained convinced that everything would work out. Her prophetic viewpoint proved to be true, thanks to a conversation Martha had with one of her employers.

"Martha was working for a lady whose husband was a superintendent at the oil company," Walter said. When the woman put in a good word with her husband, Walter was hired. Because of his days in the West Indies, Walter was well-versed in the oil industry. "He's an expert," Martha said proudly.

Apparently, others agreed, and he quickly climbed the corporate ladder. After a corporate takeover, Walter easily transitioned to Chevron Oil, which included relocation to Arlington, where they stayed for the next 23 years.

During that time, Walter and Martha had a daughter, Carla, who would later join the Air Force, marry, have two daughters of her own and settle in the Mansfield area to work as a nurse

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practitioner. Carla's husband, David, took on the role of stay-at-home dad and homeschooled the girls.

As stories go, Walter and Martha Peeman, through hard work and great diligence, carved out a very successful life for themselves in the United States. As proud grandparents and recent retirees, however, their lives were only beginning.

"We went to an open house at the First Methodist Church in Mansfield," Walter recalled, "and were recruited to the MAC." The Mansfield Activities Center (MAC) had a growing senior center and was in need of volunteers. In no time, Martha was deeply involved with the center's food preparation and service program while Walter became

"As stories go, Walter and Martha Peeman, through hard work and great diligence, carved out a very successful life for themselves in the United States."

the finance director of the senior program. Whatever the need, whatever the time, whatever the function, Walter and Martha were always there, ready to lend a helping hand. Then, in 2001, Walter became an American citizen and in 2003, Martha followed. In 2007, the city of Mansfield honored the energetic couple with the award of Volunteers of the Year.

After more than 40 years of residence, they were officially home. The couple moved onto an 11-acre lot with their daughter and son-in-law to help with their granddaughters. Of all the variety of honors and awards they have received, none is greater than being called Oma and Opa, Dutch for grandma and grandpa.

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understand the importance of having and pursuing a dream more than Walter and Martha, so when their eldest granddaughter, Sarah, began training for the Junior Olympic hockey team, Oma and Opa were ready to pick up the slack and watch over the youngest, Hope, so that she might accomplish her goals. Sarah has traveled with her father around the nation, including a recent trip to the U.S. Nationals.

"We were traveling through Quebec and the Chesapeake Bay area," Walter said, "when we called David to see how they were doing." When Martha and Walter realized how close they were to Sarah, he recalled, "We told him, 'Don't tell her we're coming!' and we drove out to where they were."

Sarah had been trying out for the U.S. National team in Detroit when Oma and Opa's oversized RV parked in the parking lot near the trials. Sarah was sent out to the car to retrieve some unknown object. "She stopped and just stared at the RV," Martha giggled at the memory. Then Martha burst through the door, and Sarah screamed with joy.

For years, when Sarah was just a little girl, she would walk across the family's property to have breakfast with her grandparents. "Every morning at 7:30 a.m.," Walter said, "we would have breakfast." But as Sarah grew and her aspirations to become an Olympian were realized, the morning breakfast ritual was passed on to Hope, now 5 years old.

"Oh, that one," Martha waved a hand. While Hope shows no interest in hockey, both Walter and Martha are certain she is destined for greatness. Whether their granddaughters become members of the U.S. women's hockey team, great trial lawyers or entrepreneurs, they will always know that all things are possible. They need only look to Oma and Opa, who have traveled great distances to accomplish their dreams. While they have been recognized as outstanding citizens to Mansfield, they are truly great role models for this country and what we represent. **NOW**



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At Home With

John and Renee Lamond



— By Amanda Madden Pitt



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John and Renee Lamond and their two children, Jordan and Nicholas, 7 and 4 respectively, find their home in Mansfield is more than just a place to sleep at night. It is an outdoor haven in a safe neighborhood that mom and dad — both Fort Worth neighborhood police officers — feel is a great place to rear a family.

“We love our jobs, but we didn’t want to live where we work,” Renee said, after a few off-duty experiences in which they ran into people they had dealt with during shifts. “It’s just a 20-minute commute, but it feels like a world away,” John added.

The Lamonds love Mansfield, and it shows when they talk about a neighborhood where three grills manned by dads on Labor Day and Memorial Day can draw close to 100 people to the end of their cul-de-sac. “It almost takes you back to communities of the 1950s,” John said.



MansfieldNOW September 2008



Their home sits on a half-acre backed up to the woods and a creek. Inside, arched doorways lead to an eat-in kitchen and a breathtaking view of an immaculate backyard. "Our daughter will sit at the kitchen table in the mornings and look out at all this," Renee said, "and she'll call out to us, 'The male cardinal is out there. The blue jays just came in.'"

When John and Renee are at home, the family of four often



gathers in the backyard. "We'll all go out there in the evenings when it's cool," Renee said. "It's not anything exciting or spectacular, but we're outside together. We really wanted to raise the kids around nature so



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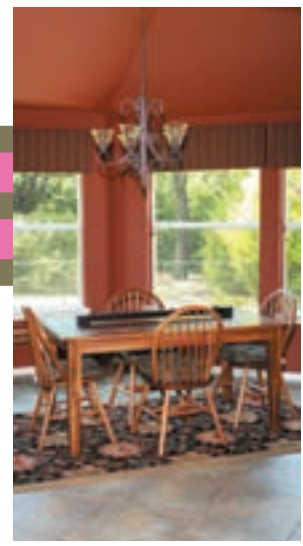
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they could learn to appreciate and respect it.” The woods behind the house provide shelter to local wildlife: birds, squirrels, possums, armadillos and raccoons. “It’s almost like the yard extends into the woods,” John said. “We respect that the wildlife was here long before we were, and we moved into their neighborhood.”

Nestled in Old World-style décor, messages of hope are scattered throughout the home. “Live, Laugh, Love,” “Blessed” and “Pray” are three black, rod-iron pieces that portray some of the Lamonds’ core values. “You don’t even think about those things when you’re decorating. You just do it, and then someone else comes in and it

gives them a little window into your soul,” Renee said. The 2,700-square-foot abode has four bedrooms and two-and-a-half baths. The children’s rooms display hand-painted murals — the woods for Nicholas and a garden with bunnies for Jordan.

A collection of ornate ceramic and pewter crosses hang in a galley near the master bedroom. The bonus room upstairs features multiple displays to commemorate friends and family. It includes an antique set of pewter Army men with which John’s father and uncle played, his grandfather’s guitar, Renee’s father’s antique electric shoe shiner, two guitars for Jordan and Nicholas to learn



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on, an electric keyboard for Jordan's piano lessons and the bass guitar John played in church.

A self-proclaimed band geek, John hopes making the instruments available to the children will encourage their musical interests. "Music is its own language. You have to use both the right and left sides of the brain to learn and play a musical instrument," he explained. "This makes it developmentally invaluable."

When asked what inspired them to become police officers, both John and Renee agreed, "It's in you if you get into it for the right reasons. It was just a calling," Renee said. Fittingly, the couple met at work. One evening their paths crossed in the hallway as John said in passing, "You be careful now, Renee."

"I heard my name roll off his tongue, and it just sounded great coming out of his mouth," Renee said. "Then we courted by running and talking on the phone," she added, smiling at the wonderful memory. Running quickly became more than a pastime, and while dating, the couple promised each other they would complete a marathon together.

Eight years and two kids later, they finally did! They trained for the 2007 Fort Worth Cow Town Marathon. A few weeks before the race at mile 20 of their 22-mile training run, John proposed they finish the race right there. "We completed our goal of 26.2 miles together in Mansfield at Linear Park," John said. "Just private between us." "No photo-finish, no T-shirts, no crowd," Renee said.

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From left to right: Martin Fielder, M.D., Robin Johnston, M.D., David Russell, M.D., John Jeffers, M.D., Baron Atkins, M.D., Keryn Dias, M.D., Ellen Parrill, M.D., Russell Dickey, M.D., Byron Kallam, M.D., John Paul Wood, Jr., M.D., Mary Finke, M.D.

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It proved providential that they had their moment at Mansfield Linear Park. Just a few weeks later, Renee went for a short jog and broke her ankle in two places. It prevented them from running in the Cow Town Marathon, yet both believe that it was meant to be. "Not only is it a big deal to run a marathon," John said, "but for it to

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be a major life and marriage goal for us that we completed together." To commemorate the event, Renee suggested that the couple get ankle tattoos reading 26.2. "I pitched it to him and thought, *There is no way*," Renee said, but he agreed. "I had to get mine first so he could watch," she laughed.

Going into the media room — one set of memorabilia stands out above the rest. It belonged to a special friend of John's who was like a brother. His name was Foster Harrington. Some highlights of



Foster's shelf include a uniform, a cell phone and an old Eagle Scout feather John passed down to Foster when they were kids. John was amazed that 20 years later, the feather was perfectly intact. But the most sobering and reverential piece in this collection is the flag of service, which was delivered to John at Foster's funeral after he was killed by sniper fire while serving in Iraq on September 20, 2004.


The shelf not only provides a window into Foster's life, it gives visitors an inside look at John's life. "Foster and I very quickly came to an agreement — what you do with your life if you're thankful for it and you want to give back is to select a life work of service. He went the Marines side and I went the police side," John said. "In addition to being a very, very highly accomplished Marine and receiving the crown jewel of Marines: Recon Team Leader of the Year, Foster was also a volunteer firefighter, a paramedic and a lifeguard."

As John talked about the display in the media room, revelation of what the Lamonds are all about reached a pinnacle. They value God, family and country, but above all else, they honor and respect the lives they have been blessed to share, as well as the lives they daily dedicate themselves to protect. **XXX**





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The Beat Goes On — By Alex Allred



With a new football season upon us, it is easy to get lost in the thrill of the game as friends and family fill the stadium, the smell of popcorn wafts through the crowds and the electric charge of the band gears up for the school song. Will Ludlow, along with his assistants, David Dunbar and Matthew Garret, is in charge of 220 athletes of the Mansfield High School. These athletes are not the football team; they are the high school marching band. “We’re the heart of the school,” Will said.

“People do not understand the level of work and dedication and energy it takes to be a member of the marching band,” Will said. In fact, a quick calculation of practice hours shows the marching band puts in more hours than most high school athletic teams during the summer, “and we do it on concrete,” he added. Specifically, they march on asphalt in the heat of the day.

People also do not realize that while these artist-turned-athletes march, they must hold their instruments in a very specific position, which can prove painful over a period of time. Drums, for example, can weigh up to 45 pounds. “Years ago,” David said, “there was a documentary on marching bands. They hooked up a heart monitor to a young man who was playing drums and it showed the heart rate and calories burned mimicked that of a pro athlete.” For this reason, Will’s competitors must train.

ARTS NOW

During the summer months, while many lounged by the pool, the band started practice at 8:00 a.m. Two days a week, the band marched for four hours in the morning, took an hour break and came back to train for another three hours. On other days, they trained three times a day, from 8:00 to 11:30 a.m., 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.

“It’s a great avenue for kids to be artistic, creative and athletic.”

For Will, David and Matthew, musical talent is an obvious requirement, “but people also have to have the ability to stand the heat and be active for hours and hours,” Matthew said. Few people have that kind of dedication and passion. “Most of our kids lose so much weight sweating during the workouts,” Will added, “that they have to bring an entire change of clothing, even down to their socks and underwear!”

“When we choose our top kids,” Will continued, “they have to [display] physical endurance from top to bottom of the show without passing out. Band members wear heavy wool uniforms and hats while marching in extreme heat and toting instruments varying in weight from mere pounds to the weight of a toddler.”

“Our students must have a hard work ethic and be willing to work through the tougher times,” Matthew said. The three band directors are ever watchful over their young charges, on alert for signs of fatigue and heat exhaustion.

While many spectators at a football game view the band strictly as entertainment, the untold hours of training tell another story. Even the style of marching, requiring tremendous core strength and endurance, demands respect from the most seasoned player on the grid iron. “We have had members of the band who are accomplished



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athletes and they are the first to say that our practices are more demanding than their sport," Will said.

Serving as head band director of Mansfield High School for his second year, Will has big plans for his band. This fall, the 5-A school bands will compete against each other and are planning new, more complicated steps. But with 220 musicians, hours upon hours of practice are needed so each band member can move in sync. "We want no missed notes and no missed steps. We want to be out-of-the-box and artistic but polished." With three band directors, and what Will describes as an excellent team, his goal is to find the perfect balance between a positive educational experience for his students and a winning record. "After all," he laughed, "it is a competitive field. We want to walk away better people — but we also want to win!"

At the end of any practice or competition, however, the very best aspect of the marching band is their bond. "As cliché as it sounds," David said, "We are a family." Through the extreme training conditions and all the blood, sweat and tears, the marching band has developed a kind of camaraderie and respect for one another about which other coaches only dream.

"It's a great avenue for kids to be artistic, creative and athletic," Will expressed, "but it's also an opportunity to be part of a team that teaches core values, trust, a focus on the fundamentals and a strong work ethic."

For Will, David and Matthew, the marching band is so much more than music, so much more than cadences and rhythm. "The people I consider my best friends," Matthew shared, "are those I was in band with as a kid." For them, band certainly challenges, but it also means victories, pride and friendships. Now, just as music has always been intended, it is a gift they can give back ... and the beat goes on. **NOW**

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Sports
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A Giant on the Field

— By Michelle Powe

Picture a defensive tackle with the National Football League and Dallas Cowboy Tank Johnson comes to mind, all 6'3" and 300 pounds of him. Perhaps you think of retired Dallas Cowboy defensive tackle and Hall-of-Famer Randy White at 6'4" and 257 pounds or Houston Texan Amobi Akoye at 6'2" and 302 pounds. The picture is not much different in college football: Texas A&M defensive lineman Von Miller of DeSoto is 6'3" and 220 pounds, and University of Texas defensive tackle Brian Ellis of Grand Prairie is 6'5" and 287 pounds.

People are thus sometimes surprised to learn that Carlos Castaneda is a starting defensive tackle for Summit High School's varsity football team. At 5'10" and 225 pounds, Carlos is certainly not one of the biggest guys on the team, but he is a team leader, although it has not been an easy road getting there.

Carlos moved to Arlington from Grand Prairie as a freshman. He wanted to make the football team, but he had never even lifted weights before and knew that most people considered his size too much of an obstacle to overcome. He saw the looks of doubt in people's eyes, but he was determined, so he started lifting weights and running and ignored the naysayers. "There were a lot of doubters," Carlos said. "But I've pretty much faced doubters all my life, because I've never been the biggest guy. Since my freshman year, I've been working hard to show the coaches I can do it."

The coaches noticed. Carlos made the freshman football team his freshman year and the junior varsity team his sophomore year. He made the varsity team his junior year and soon established himself as a leader. This year, his senior year, his coaches expect him to be a central part of the team. "He has become a force to reckon with," Coach Kyle Geller said.



"He's very smart. He never misses a workout. He does what he's told; he gives 100 percent all of the time, and he doesn't go off and do his own thing."

The keys to Carlos' success, according to Coach Geller, are tenacity, persistence, hard work and reliability. "Carlos is extremely coachable," Coach Geller said. "He's very smart. He never misses a workout. He does what he's told; he gives 100 percent all of the time, and he doesn't go off and do his own thing."

In essence, when the coaches ask something of Carlos, he delivers, which is why Carlos won his position as defensive tackle even though he is neither the biggest nor the fastest player on the defensive line. "Carlos is an overachiever," Coach Geller added. "You're blessed to coach a kid like Carlos."

Carlos inspires other players on the team as well as children who may dream of playing. "Other kids see that 'If I work like Carlos, I can achieve what he has achieved,'" Coach Geller said. He is also well-liked by his teammates. "Everybody likes Carlos," Coach Geller added.

Why is Carlos such a hard worker? "I want to show people that I can do it," he said. "You can't judge people by their size or appearance."

He is as determined as he is hardworking. "If I have a bad



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day at practice, it just makes me work harder," Carlos shared. Along with that determination comes a quiet self-confidence. "I know that I'm a hard worker and reliable," he continued. "That boosts my confidence. I know that I'm a good player."

Carlos approaches his role as a leader on the team as he does everything: quietly, seriously and humbly. "I don't think I'm a vocal leader," he said. "I'm not the kind of guy who yells and screams. I try to lead by example."

He certainly sets a good example. He excels in the classroom as well as on the playing field — and not just one playing field, either. He has played on the freshman and junior varsity baseball teams and plans to play varsity baseball this year as well as football. He would like to play football and/or baseball in college, but he is also realistic and has a back-up plan. His long-term plans include attending the University of New Haven in Connecticut to study fire science and arson investigation and becoming an arson investigator.

In the meantime, he is 100-percent focused on the upcoming football season. "We're in a new district with Arlington, so we're being doubted," Carlos said, "but it's like that every year. We have a lot of heart and we work hard. A lot of people doubted us last season because we lost a lot of seniors. We were practically a brand new team." The team finished 9-1, undefeated in its district and went to the playoffs.

Hmm ... a hardworking underdog team proving that it is much more competitive and talented than people initially believed. That sounds a lot like Carlos. As Coach Geller said of Carlos, "He doesn't say a lot. He just goes 100 percent." No chest pounding, no trash talking. He lets his work ethic and his actions on the field speak for him. Indeed, they speak volumes about this giant on the field. **NOW**

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He is All Smiles

— By Alex Allred



Dr. Le and Amy Hanna (center) take a break with their staff.

When Dr. Devine retired from his dental practice in downtown Mansfield and prepared to sell his office, Dr. Hoang Le received a phone call at his Grand Prairie practice. By reputation alone, his services were in demand.

"A friend of one of our patients wanted us to come to Mansfield," Amy Hanna, officer manager, said. Known for his gentle but honest manner, Dr. Le has quickly become a popular dentist in the community, but there was much work to be done with the Mansfield office. "Believe me," Amy laughed, "we had to do some remodeling." The office was, by today's standards, prehistoric. "There were no computers. They actually had a typewriter!"

What they could not change, however, was the size of the office. "It's been very hard for us, the staff, to get used to," Amy said, as Dr. Le added, "but the people are the nicest, friendliest people." For Dr. Le, the clientele has diminished

any woes he and his staff might have had with the office space. People have always been the reason behind his practice and his devotion to dentistry. Mansfield, he said, reinforced that belief, and thus, Rose Park Dental was born. "With Dr. Le," Amy continued, "It's never been about the money. He works six days a week because he wants to. He is so

parent of less-than-modest means, there appeared to be no help available. "But Dr. Le helped him. Later, the mom called us and said, 'You just don't know how you've changed our lives.' The kid couldn't stop looking at himself in the mirror," Amy smiled. "That's why he does what he does."

Few people, however, understand Dr.

"Growing up, I spent a lot of time in the dentist office, and I was able to see what an impact a dentist could have on someone's life."

caring. It's what I admire about him."

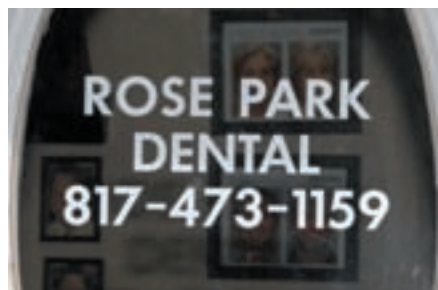
For this dentist, taking care of people and changing their lives is his personal mission. There are countless stories of Dr. Le working pro bono, giving to charities and literally making dreams come true. "We had a 17-year-old," Amy recalled. "His teeth were a mess." As the son of a single

Le's motivation. "I had bad teeth," he explained. "I'm from Vietnam, a Third World country." When he was a toddler, the government issued an antibiotic called tetracycline, which binds to anything with calcium. The end result, for millions of Vietnamese citizens, was terribly stained teeth. With a purplish hue, the teeth are forever ruined, so at

Business NOW

a very early age, Dr. Le learned to look down when he spoke to other people or cover his mouth when he laughed.

When his family escaped Vietnam and made their way to the United States, they were temporarily sponsored by the United Way and set up in a small apartment in Houston. His father worked three jobs simultaneously while his mother worked two jobs. Between their schedules, they watched over their three young children. Over time, they realized the American



dream, were able to put their son in braces and instilled in their children the importance of higher education and giving back to others.

Dr. Le eventually had cosmetic dentistry to fix his teeth. "Growing up," he said, "I spent a lot of time in the dentist office, and I was able to see what an impact a dentist could have on someone's life."

Dr. Le adopted his parents' philosophy of giving back to his community and caring for his neighbors. In fact, all three of the Le children are in the medical field. Dr. Le sponsors numerous sport and summer programs, including the Save A Smile program.

"We like smiles," Amy said. In this office, it is a heartfelt statement. "I can't imagine doing anything else," Dr. Le said and offered the beautiful smile he always dreamed of having and now gives back every day.

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Marriage Training

— By Alex Allred

If you really want to get in shape, test your mettle and go the distance, there may be no greater endurance test than that of a long lasting marriage. Beginning this month, marriage licenses will almost double in cost in the state of Texas, but for couples signing up for a marriage education class the fee is waived. David Taylor, recruiter for the Healthy Marriages — Healthy Families Coalition in Tarrant County, sees it as just good business for everyone.

“Entire communities benefit,” David said. “People who have a healthy marriage are less likely to get into poverty

and their children are more likely to succeed.” Couples have to enter into the program as though they were in training. The Parenting Center in downtown Mansfield, located in the old firehouse station, offers free courses to Mansfield residents who wish to develop better communication skills and healthier marriages. With the current divorce rate in Tarrant County standing at an astounding 58 percent, the state allocated grant money to The Parenting Center “to help strengthen marriages,” David said. “Courses like the Dr. Phil marriage counseling class cost about \$1,600.”

The irony here, of course, is with finances named as one of the leading causes for divorce, who could afford such an expensive program? “But we got a grant from the state to allow us to offer this service,” David said proudly. Already, David and Stacy Pacholick have arranged training for more than 45 marriage instructors. The course, offered through various churches and organizations, is built on the most basic premise that marriage is a sacred relationship which should be embraced and strengthened daily.

It is an interesting philosophy from a man who is himself divorced, but David believes he is a better educator because of the divorce. “When I teach the class,” he said, “I can look at different things and say, ‘Oh, yeah, we did that, but, no, we didn’t do that!’ We were two reasonably intelligent people who didn’t have the skills to keep the marriage intact.”

The skills he refers to are the ability to communicate, properly assess expectations, deal with disagreement and disappointment and learn conflict resolution.

“People don’t get married expecting to get divorced, but things happen in relationships that people don’t know how to deal with in a safe and structured way,” he said. “A snowflake becomes a snowball which later becomes an avalanche.” A snowflake can be something as seemingly small as the trash or washing dishes. “We had a young couple,” David continued, “who had been married for three or four years, but they couldn’t decide who should take out the trash. Everyone [in the group] kind of chuckled about this, but if not resolved, it could become an avalanche. It really wasn’t about the trash; it was about control and the roles.” David used communication drills with the couple and together they came up with a resolution they had never tried before.

Whether issues involve trash, finances or walking the family dog, David urges couples to attend marriage education classes even before there is a problem. “It’s a common misconception,” he said of the classes. “Just the term ‘marriage counseling’ implies problems in the union, so it scares people away. But these [classes] are not just for struggling marriages. Olympic athletes do not train with trainers because they are weak. They train with trainers to improve their skill.”

Just as an athlete must train for successes, to avoid injury

Education NOW

and facilitate recovery, so must a strong marriage. According to David, couples also move through predictable stages in their relationship. "Obviously, newlyweds are very happy, but there is a very natural decline during the fourth to sixth years. The years that follow," he said, "can be a roller coaster ride. At the 15-year mark, couples report being happier than ever. The reality is: it's going to rain. Why not take a class that teaches you to build and use an umbrella?"

Beyond the marriage education, other valuable communication skills can teach singles "how to avoid marrying a

"I wish people knew that they can have the kind of relationship they want and deserve, but it takes honest to goodness work."

jerk or jerkette" and teach newlyweds what to expect after marriage. "There are just so many benefits for people who live in a healthy marriage," David said. Couples are healthier, happier, have higher aspirations and tend to live more prosperously, but David added that "for me personally, my passion is about the outcome for the children."

While the divorce rate is disturbingly high, the fact not lost on educators and legislators is that more than the economy and civil courtrooms lose out. "It is more difficult for children who come from single-parent homes. They are more likely to drop out of school, smoke, attempt suicide and are less likely to go to college," David expressed before quickly pointing out there are many wonderful single parents. "There are so many more wonderful, protective factors that come with a two-parent home for children."

Communication, however, is vital and learning how to hone that ability is truly a skill that David believes to be attainable. "I wish people knew," he added, "that they can have the kind of relationship they want and deserve, but it takes real honest to goodness work." **NOW**

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Around Town NOW



Billy Roland, top left, enjoyed a beautiful morning fishing with his sons. Karen Borta, Channel 11 news anchor, top center, practiced her serve. Karen Supen, top right, spent the day with her children at the park. Mike Shreve and his son, Brandon, second row left, went for an afternoon bike ride. Ellis Westley, second row right, also enjoyed a bike ride. Erica Fisher, bottom left, took her young family for a walk. Karen Borta, tennis pro Craig Mione, Elaine Walker and Spring McCurdy, bottom right, spent time on the local tennis courts.

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Look Who's Cooking

— By Faith Browning

IN THE KITCHEN WITH DHALMA “DOLLY” MORALES-CACCIOLA

PUERTO RICAN COQUITO

3 14-oz. cans condensed milk
3 12-oz. cans coconut milk
3 12-oz. cans evaporated milk
3 - 4 egg yolks
cinnamon to taste
nutmeg to taste (be careful)
1 cup rum (I prefer Captain Morgan's.)
1/2 cup brandy
Mix milks in the following order: condensed, coconut and evaporated. Beat egg yolks; add to milk mixture. Add cinnamon and nutmeg, then rum and brandy. Pour into empty water bottles.
Note: Makes a nice gift to give to your hostess during holiday celebrations.

PERNIL DE CERDO ASADO

8 garlic cloves
8 black peppercorns (or 1 tsp. black pepper)
2 tsp. dried oregano
2 Tbsp. corn oil

2 Tbsp. cider vinegar
2 Tbsp. salt
1 5 1/2 to 6-lb. pork shoulder
Combine the first six ingredients in a mortar and crush. Make deep cuts into the meat and insert this “adobo.” Rub whatever is left over the meat. Refrigerate for at least 3 hours or preferably overnight if possible. Preheat oven to 350 F. Roast the pork in pan for 3 - 3 1/2 hours, or until the skin is very crispy, turning it every hour. Serves 6 to 8.

MAMA'S SPECIAL CHICKEN

2 lbs. chicken, cut into bite-sized pieces
2 2-oz. envelopes of Sazon Goya
2 Tbsp. Goya Sofrito
1 6-oz. can tomato sauce (Goya, Del Monte or store brand)
1 1/2 Tbsp. oil
1 12-oz. can beer (whatever brand you like)
salt to taste

dash of black pepper
Place chicken and all other ingredients in a pot; bring to a boil, then lower heat to simmer. Cover and cook about 45 minutes to 1 hour. Serves 4.

HABICHUELAS (BEANS)

1 16-oz. can beans, any kind
1 1/2 can water (use the can from the beans to measure)
1 2-oz. envelope Sazon Goya
1 Tbsp. Goya Sofrito (tomato cooking base containing onion, garlic, green pepper and cilantro)
1 Tbsp. oil
1 small potato or carrot, cut into small bite-sized pieces
1 2-oz. envelope of Goya Sabor a JAMON (HAM flavored concentrate) or a few pieces of smoked ham
Put all of the above ingredients in a pot; bring to a boil. Cover; reduce heat to simmer. Allow to

Moving from New York to Texas seven years ago has strategically placed Dolly and her husband, Robert, in between her two sons. With Keith living back in New York and Craig living in California, Dolly's home is now their special gathering place. “Although I will always consider New York ‘home,’” she expressed, “if I have to live anywhere else, I can't think of a nicer place than Mansfield.”

Dolly incorporates her Puerto Rican heritage into her daily meals. Before her sons visit, they plan a menu of all the dishes they have been missing. “They will usually say, ‘Whatever, Ma, as long as you make it,’” Dolly said fondly. “After a line like that, what mother would not go crazy cooking up a storm?” **WWW**

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thicken, about 45 minutes, or to desired consistency to make a nice sauce. The Goya ingredients: Sazon, Sofrito and Sabor a JAMON can be found at Kroger's or Fiesta Supermarkets. Enjoy! Or, as we say in Puerto Rico, *Buen provecho!*

ARROZ CON GANDULES

- 1 16-oz. can Goya Gandules
(Green Pigeon Peas)
- 1 2-oz. envelope Sazon Goya con Culantro y Achiote (seasoning with coriander and annatto)
- 1 2-oz. envelope Goya Sabor a JAMON
- 1 Tbsp. Goya Sofrito
- 1/4 cup oil, canola or corn
- 4 to 4 1/2 cups of water
- salt, to taste
- 2 cups long grain rice

Pour all ingredients except rice in a large pot; bring to a boil. While waiting for the pot to boil, clean and wash rice. Add rice; mix well. Cook over medium-high heat until water is absorbed. Stir rice from the bottom; turn heat to low. Cover and cook 30 to 45 minutes. Serves 4.

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Life Insurance vs. Mortgage Protection

— By Lezlee Liljenberg

An ongoing question for many homeowners is whether to purchase mortgage protection or standard life insurance. Both options have benefits, and all homeowners should have one or the other in order to secure the future of their family. While mortgage protection limits payment to only paying off the mortgage, life insurance allows the beneficiary to utilize the money as they deem necessary under



their individual circumstances.

Mortgage protection is also called mortgage life insurance by many carriers. This coverage pays off the mortgage in the event of death. Some people question the wisdom of mortgage protection life insurance because of its limiting factors. However, these limits can prove to be a major benefit, especially, if for some reason an insured cannot obtain or afford standard life insurance. This often occurs due to an existing or pre-existing illness or if one's weight-to-height ratio makes it difficult for a person to obtain affordable insurance.

Another pro-mortgage protection argument is that many people cannot make good financial investments. This bears the thought they will make poor spending decisions should they be given a large sum of money, as is the case with a true insurance policy.

It is possible to purchase mortgage insurance from the bank or mortgage company, but generally control of the policy is lost. A better option might

be to carry term life insurance as mortgage protection. By carrying term life insurance, the purchaser is in the driver's seat. All benefits will be paid to the beneficiary of choice, not the bank or mortgage company. This allows the beneficiary to maintain control of the situation.

The beneficiary may want to pay off the mortgage in one lump sum. By carrying term life insurance, this person can also decide whether to pay off the house, use the money for other investments or retirement, send children, grandchildren or perhaps themselves to college.

Term life insurance also allows the opportunity to purchase more coverage for competitive rates. It makes great sense to do this when coverage is needed for a specified period of time such as the life of the mortgage. With term life insurance policies the premium and the death benefit remain constant which is contradictory to a mortgage protection plan. In these cases, the premium remains



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the same, however, as the amount of the loan decreases the amount to be paid out upon death decreases.

Bottom line, it does not really matter in which of these options you most believe. Just take action on purchasing one or the other. If you own property of any type, it is a wise financial decision to make arrangements for the payment of the loan on that property in the event of death. Single, married, divorced, children, no children, no matter your situation, never assume that you are not leaving someone behind to pick up the pieces. You never want to put your family or friends in the financial situation to be selling a home in a time of grief, whether it is by their own decision or out of necessity. Taking action today provides peace of mind tomorrow. **NOW**

Lezlee Liljenberg is an Allstate Insurance representative based in Arlington.



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Health
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Cholesterol Can be Good

— By Betty Tryon

Tim Russert, the successful moderator of the political talk show *Meet the Press*, died suddenly from cardiac arrest with a history of high cholesterol. Mr. Russert's death rang a serious wake-up call for many. High cholesterol gets its bad reputation with good reason. However, it may surprise many to discover that cholesterol is not all bad and it is in fact, necessary. It is so necessary for some of our bodily functions that not only do we receive this product from some food sources, our bodies naturally produce it.

Cholesterol, a fat-like substance and waxy in its texture, is found in all parts of the body. It is essential in producing certain hormones such as testosterone and progesterone. The use of Vitamin D and the production of bile acid to digest fats depends on cholesterol. It also assists in the production of cell membranes. Our body only needs a small amount of cholesterol to meet these needs. The excess cholesterol results in fatty deposits in the blood vessels and begins to build up and narrow the passageway of the arteries. When it starts to build up, it can harden and form plaque which can be a precursor to cardiovascular disease.

There are two types of cholesterol: LDL (low-density lipoprotein), commonly called the bad cholesterol and HDL (high-density lipoprotein), commonly called the good cholesterol. LDL cholesterol is the form that causes the

clogging of the arteries. HDL earns its sterling reputation because unlike LDL, it does not build up in the arteries and helps usher the bad cholesterol out of the blood vessels.

There are several factors to examine when determining risk factors. The most obvious is the diet. Foods that are high in cholesterol and saturated fats should be limited or avoided to lower your blood cholesterol levels. Exercise can increase your HDL which can help lower the bad cholesterol in the blood. An unhealthy weight can lead to increased LDL levels. The good news is that losing weight, moderate exercise and watching your diet can lower your blood cholesterol.

Some of the risks factors cannot be controlled. There is some evidence that some persons may be predisposed to higher levels because of genetics. If high cholesterol levels run in your family, have yourself tested in order to know your levels. Increased age can lead to higher cholesterol levels, particularly in women who have reached menopause.

The key to prevention is knowledge. Forearmed is forewarned. If you know you have high cholesterol, you can now work with your physician for the health care plan best for you. Whether it is a lifestyle change or medication, help is available. **NOW**

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



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September 2008

Community Calendar

Monday – Friday

The Young At Heart (ages 55 plus) meeting, 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., Mansfield Activity Center (MAC). (817) 453-5420, ext. 2227.

Every Tuesday

Bouncing babies story time for infants to 24 months, 10:30 – 11:00 a.m., Mansfield Public Library.

Every Thursday

Mansfield Public Library hosts Toddler Story Time for 2 year olds, 11:00 – 11:30 a.m.

Every Friday

Kiwanis Club of Mansfield meeting, 6:45 a.m., Methodist Mansfield Medical Center, 2700 East Broad St. (817) 473-9886.

Every Saturday

Get a pet at the City of Mansfield Animal Control. Weekdays: 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Saturdays: 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Volunteers are always needed.

September 2 and 16

Training Academy for Dental Assistants' free informational session, 5:30 p.m. (972) 842-2999.

September 4

Mansfield Child Care will discuss "You don't have to

do it alone" at 7:00 p.m. in the Mansfield Library community meeting room, 104 S. Wisteria St. www.mansfieldchildcare.com.

September 6

Mansfield Fire Department offers free CPR classes to Mansfield residents and those who work in the city. There is a \$45 fee for those who neither live nor work in Mansfield. Classes limited to 20 people. 8:00 a.m., Station 3, 3100 East Broad St. Register in advance by contacting Steve Gutierrez at (817) 804-5772.

September 8 and 22

City Council meeting, 7:00 p.m., Mansfield City Hall, 1200 Broad St.

September 9

Downwinders At Risk is hosting a meeting regarding air quality at 7:00 p.m., Arlington Police Station, 20200 New York Ave. Guest speaker, power point presentation and exciting news about the future. (972) 230-3185.

September 12

Registration date for the annual Guns, Hoses and Friends' Golf Tournament to be hosted by the Walnut Creek Country Club on October 6. For more information, contact Officer Curtis Phillip at (817) 276-4757 or Tom Ritter at (817) 473-9393. All proceeds go to the

Friends of Police and the Mansfield Police and Fire Department.

September 16

Adult book club at the Mansfield Public Library will be reading and discussing *The Appeal* by John Grisham. Contact the library for further details.

September 21

Empowering Women Express Network (ABWA) monthly meeting, 5:45 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center, 1 Community Circle, Midlothian. Please RSVP to Daphne Brewer at (972) 723-6551. www.abwa-empoweringwomen.org.

September 26 – 28

Annual Arts Amateur and Professional Contest and Exhibition at the Midlothian Conference Center. For more information, contact www.MidlothianCenter.com.

October 3 – 4

Women's Conference at Mansfield Bible Church. "The God of All Comfort – Seeking God and Comforting Others." www.mansfieldbible.org.

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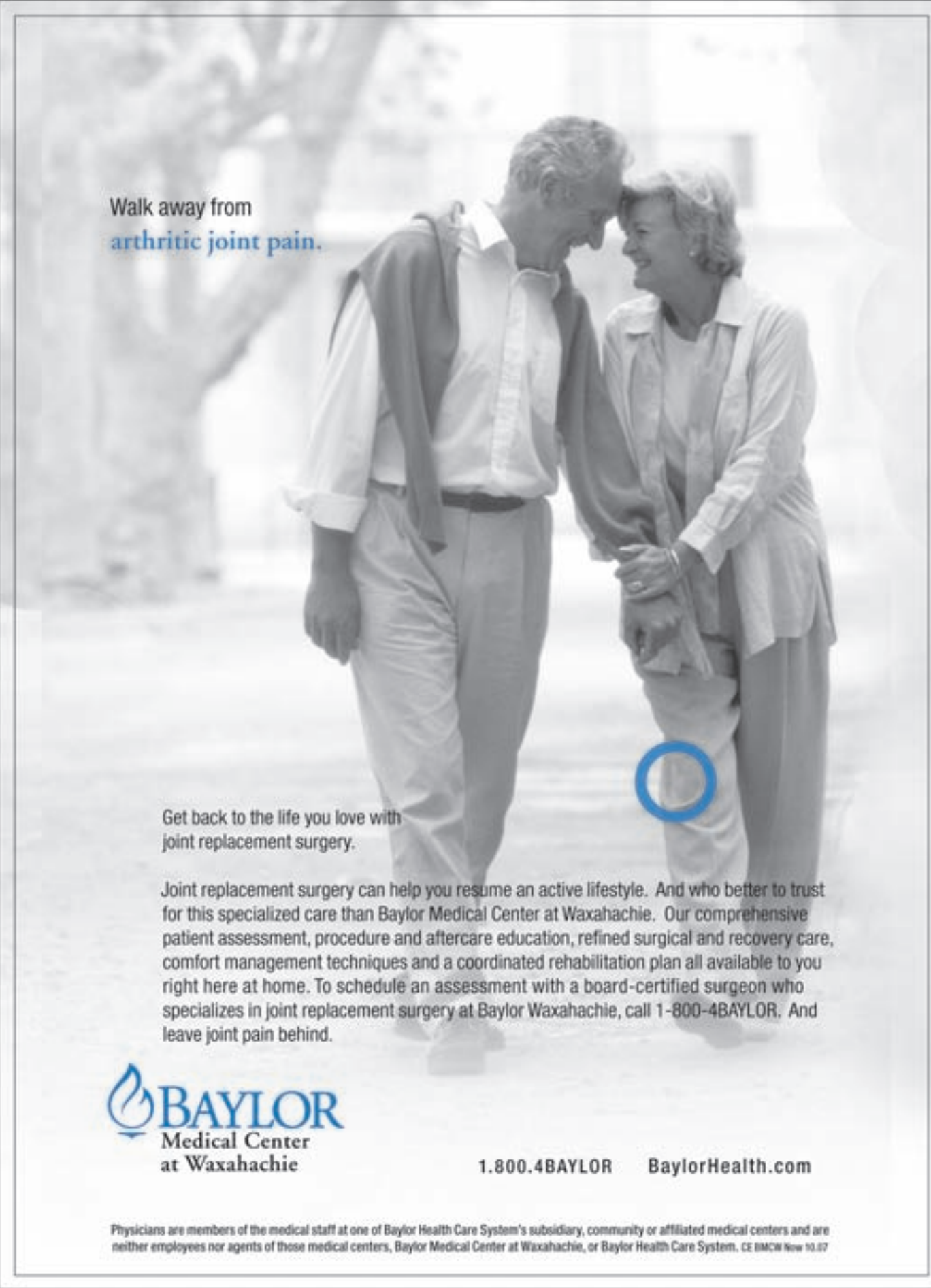
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