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September 2009

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Leaving Big Impressions

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The Change That Challenged

At Home With
**Mike and
Elizabeth Tull**



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Editor's Note

Dear Waxahachie,

Wow, the year is nearly over. Time sure flies when you are having fun. Before long, we will be passing out trick or treat candy, basting turkeys and purchasing last-minute gifts for family and friends. I need to "hit the ground running" pretty soon or I will surely be playing "catch up."

With the start of September, the busyness begins with the promise of shorter days and cooler weather. Students of all ages are getting settled back into the school routine. People across America will be celebrating Labor Day, Rosh Hashanah and Grandparents Day, to name only a few of this month's special observances. On September 16, Women's Friendship Day, I will take special time out to honor the women in my life for helping me find success through some of the most trying times in my life. I know I will be forever grateful to each one of them; and they know who they are.

Sandra Skoda
WaxahachieNOW Editor



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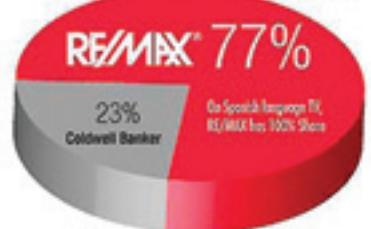
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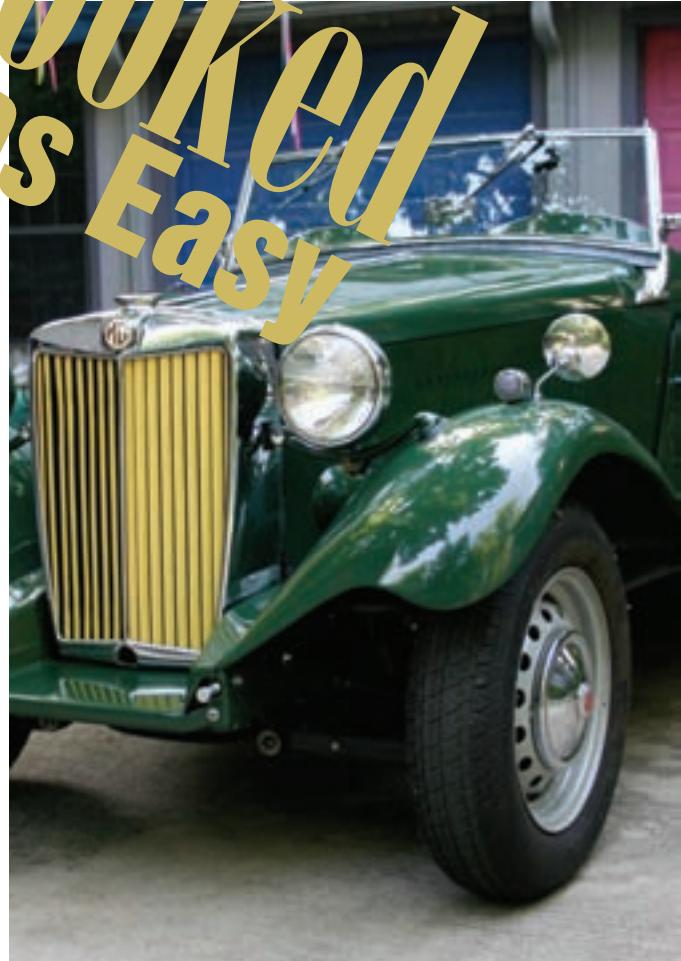
Getting Hooked Was Easy

— By Sandra Skoda

Jim Kauffman and his wife, Becky, met in high school. They sat across the aisle from one another in typing class. "We didn't start dating until our senior year," Jim said. "A mutual friend introduced us." It was also during high school that Jim became the proud owner of a 1952 MG Model TD, a right-hand driven British automobile that is said to have started the sports car craze in America. "My parents purchased it in 1958," he explained. "It was the car I drove my senior year. I actually wanted something different, but my parents had something else in mind. I was so excited when I got the car that I didn't even notice it was a right-hand driven car."

When reminiscing about his high school days, the car and his first date with Becky, a broad smile automatically appeared on his face. "When I picked her up for our first date, she walked around to the right side of the car and stood there thinking, 'This guy is not going to open my door,'" he said, sure to also mention that Becky was unaware it was right-hand driven at the time. "I finally asked her if she'd like to drive. We still laugh about it."

Their first date was just days prior to graduation. The beginning of that summer was filled with fond memories, many of which included the MG. "We had our first date in the car," he said, "and we also shared our very first kiss." Not



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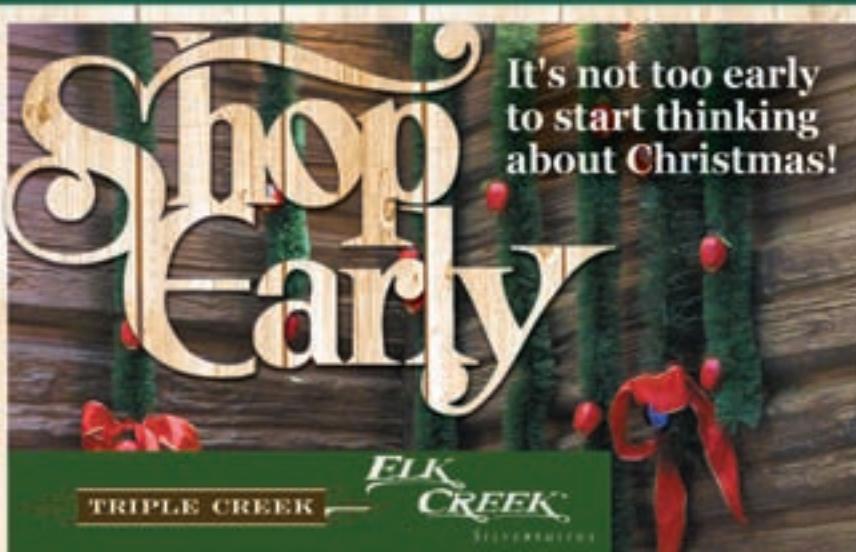
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long after, Jim decided he wanted an Austin Healey instead of the MG. "My mom took ownership of the MG," he said. "She drove it from 1960 until the day in 1969 when she parked it in the garage." The car sat in the garage until 1980, when she gifted it back to her son. He in turn, stored the car until 2001. The real story of love and restoration got underway when Jim finally found the time to move his beloved car from storage to his and Becky's current home on Waxahachie's Main Street. "Once I got it here," he said, referring to home, "I launched into the restoration process."

The easiest part of the restoration was dismantling the car. Flashbacks from his senior year quickly came to mind. "I had rebuilt the engine as a senior," he said. "This time around, I

**"This car
was and is
so dear
to me."**

went back and undid all I'd done to get it back to its original state." When he says he dismantled the car, he means the *entire* car. "Every single part that could come off the car was removed," he stated. "I refurbished most of the parts myself. Only a few had to be ordered or bought from someone selling used parts."

Even at a young age, Jim considered himself to be mechanically inclined. He can proudly say he only used the help from a couple of manuals in the rebuild. "I used them for exact measurements and specifications," he added. He found that the manuals were quite handy when it came time to reverse the modifications he had made as a young man. The manuals helped Jim restore the car to its original state; just like it was when it came off the assembly line. "This car was and is so dear to

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me," he said, admitting that his main desire at the onset was to refurbish all the original parts. "You can take a seemingly insignificant item and spend hours of spare time on it. It's been a work in progress for the past eight years."

As he disassembled the vehicle, he used Ziploc sandwich bags to hold the nuts and bolts, and each bag was labeled. When the disassembly was complete, Jim ended up with a large box of baggies. The next thing he did was to select the parts he wanted to have powder-coated. "Powder coating makes for a really strong finish," he explained. "The dry powder is sprayed on and then the parts are baked in an oven. They come out harder than regular parts, while also allowing for a very nice finish." The frame, springs and suspension are only a few of the parts that Jim had powder coated.

During the lengthy time of refurbishing, Becky was eager for the summer heat, as the higher temperatures made the leather much easier to stretch over the seat frames. When this particular model was built, the vehicle identification numbers did not state interior and exterior colors; they only recorded the year the vehicle was built. Originally, this car had a white exterior with a green leather interior. Jim decided to refurbish the interior in saddle, the other factory-approved interior color choice, and he changed the exterior to the manufacturer's shade of green. The only "non-original" part of the vehicle is the dashboard. "I took the liberty of changing it," Jim said. "I made it a walnut dash."

Jim would work diligently for three or four months on a segment and then he would walk away from it for the same amount of time. No one part, segment or portion was more difficult for him than another. "Some just proved to be a lot more interesting," he smiled. "This car is so much simpler than cars today. The newer automobiles are so computerized."

The 1952 MG Model TD is the only road-ready car Jim has ever completely refurbished. He is currently contemplating looking for a two-seater he can build



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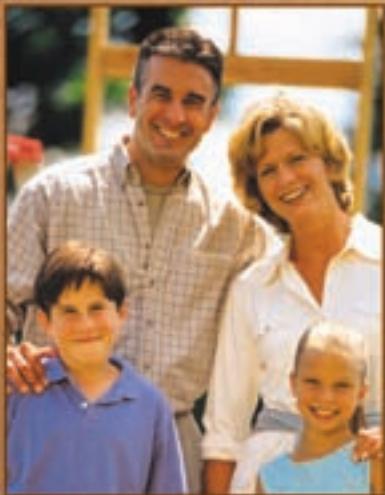
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from scratch. His life has been one filled with racetracks, fast cars and a racer's mentality, which Jim said started with this first car from his high school days. "Racing never really crossed my mind," he mentioned, "that was, until I got this sports car. It inspired my love of racing. It was so easy to get hooked." Jim ended his racing career in 1976, but still looks ahead of him when he is out on the road. "I still try to foresee the faster way to get through the curves," he laughed.

Just recently, Jim and Becky took the MG out for its first road test. The last time Becky remembered being in the car alongside Jim was back in 1961. "That one ride proved to be quite emotional for both of us," he confessed. "Once it's totally complete, we may think about driving it downtown during the Gingerbread Trail event." Future plans also include remodeling the garage. "I'd like to make it look like a den with the MG-TD in the middle," he laughed. "I'm going to be happy to just look at it." **NOW**

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Love Grows Here

— By Jaime Ruark

A circular drive leads to Mike and Elizabeth Tull's beautifully landscaped front yard. A lover of flowers, Elizabeth manages to keep her gladiolas, roses, irises, lantana and her favorite, hydrangeas, blooming despite the Texas heat and dry soil, often bringing her trimmings indoors to make gorgeous, fragrant arrangements. The Tulls, who speak proudly of each other's community work and many accomplishments, will soon celebrate their 13th year in the three-bedroom,

three-bath, 3,000-square-foot brick house they built together in 1996.

Elizabeth has lived in Waxahachie for almost 24 years, but her roots grow deep in the community. "My father was born here in 1919 and his father was born here in 1894. They all left and went into the oil business, but when they retired, they came back here. My grandparents moved back here in 1960 and my father moved back here in 1983," she recounted.

At Home With **Mike and Elizabeth Tull**





"My great-grandmother lived here and I'd visit her as a child, so I've been coming here all my life, but I never lived here until I got transferred with my job." Having married Mike, a former Cedar Hill resident, in 1991, she added with a smile, "I imported him."

The Tulls built their house with their family in mind. "We wanted to have a good space for family get-togethers,



because we have five children," Mike said, as Elizabeth continued. "When we built, not one of our children was married. Now three of them are married, so our lifestyle has changed a great deal. We now have seven grandchildren. The oldest is 7 and we have two newborns, so we have a lot of toddlers around. It's a lot of fun."

The building process had a few small bumps in the road, but nothing

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the couple could not handle together. "When we got married, we sold my house in Cedar Hill. When we decided to build, we sold Liz's house over on Sycamore that was originally her grandparents' house, and moved into a rent house," Mike recalled. "The day we moved into the rent house, they sold it." The couple had to quickly move again, putting many of their belongings into a storage facility because the second temporary rent house was too small. With a laugh, Mike added, "We were definitely working pretty hard to get

our new house finished so we could move in."

The house is full of woodwork; the cabinetry in the living room and kitchen is a testament to many hours of Mike's hard labor. "We finished quite a bit of the carpentry and paint work and stained all the cabinetry — a lot of the smaller things that turn out to be not so small," he smiled. Difficulties with their contracted painters resulted in Mike and Elizabeth having to paint almost all the inside of their home, a labor of love they can now recall with a

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smile. "We didn't have electricity yet; it was wintertime, and we both had jobs, so we would take this one light we had and drag it from room to room every night," Elizabeth said.

"I'd never had any aspirations to be a painter, but I learned a new skill and did it!"

The living room, at the center of the house, is filled with art, including works by Marc Chagall, a French impressionist painter who loved vibrant colors. An interesting collection of eye-catching, Christmas-themed plates by Danish artist Bjorn Wiinblad also adorn one wall. "When Mike and I married, he had one of these. I was able to finish his set last year for him, so that was pretty special. Some of them are pretty hard to get," Elizabeth said. "You'll notice throughout our home that while I



decorate very traditional, we have a lot of modern works of art. We like the mix of the two."

Artwork is indeed displayed throughout the house; many pieces are souvenirs from their travels, like the bright tile picture from Santa Fe, which hangs over the door to the backyard. "I had to stand in line at the Spanish market forever to get that, and then they ran out of them right in front of me. So, the lady ended up making one for me," Elizabeth recalled. A wine cork wreath, made by Elizabeth, hangs on

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the same door. Each cork signifies a happy memory or event.

Elizabeth has made sure that her home is a toddler-safe zone. "We do have a few antiques, but they're all passed down from family. I like antiques, but if you notice, we have a lot of



leather," she said, pointing out her leather sofas. "We love our grandchildren and we want them to be able to come over and play. We don't want to have to constantly be on them all the time for doing something wrong; we want them to be children. So we've tried to make our house a family-friendly home."

A guest bedroom is home to one of Mike's woodworking projects. "This baby bed is special because Mike made it," Elizabeth said proudly of the sturdy crib with crisp, clean lines. "He made one for every one of the kids who have

children. Mike can do anything." Elizabeth happily removes the pictures above the crib when her grandchildren visit, because small hands love to reach out and grab. The hallway just outside the room, however, is a gallery of family pictures, from beautiful bridal poses to smiling babies.

A hutch in the large second bedroom holds their youngest daughter, Michelle's, Madame Alexander doll collection. "That collection actually started before she was ever born," Elizabeth shared. "Some of the dolls, like the Little Women dolls on the bottom shelf, are very old. Mike's mother gave them to her."

Elizabeth's favorite color is blue, and she has decorated her home in various hues of the calming color. In Michelle's room, a lighter blue bedspread accents the blue carpet and makes the vibrant colors of the dolls' dresses "pop."

The Tulls recently did some remodeling, installing new flooring and Silestone countertops in their spacious kitchen. Proud grandparent paraphernalia is found throughout the home, from the "I Love Grammy" and "I Love Poppa" picture frames on the bar to the numerous pictures covering the refrigerator. On a nearby wall hangs a special plate painted with the hand and footprints of three of their grandsons; it reads "Love Grows Here." It will soon be joined by another plate for the baby girls. With a smile, Elizabeth said, "We love living in this area. We love the people and we love our church, but most of all we're all about our family. That's what's important to us." **TOWN**



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The Change That Challenged

— By Sandra Skoda

After years of frustration and dissatisfaction, Kathleen Casey challenged herself to make changes that have allowed her to regain control of her life. The challenge — to paint 50 paintings in 50 days — seemed simple at the onset, but in reality it took discipline to remain focused. Kathleen had to quickly learn how to say “no” so she could concentrate on what made her the happiest. “I let myself believe I was making my family happy,” she said, “when in reality all I was doing was cheating them out of the positive, self-assured person I could have been more of the time.”

The idea of challenging herself came at the beginning of the year after she read an article about another artist who was planning to create 100 paintings in 100 days. Since Kathleen’s customer

mailing list at that time consisted of about 70 individuals, she thought 50-in-50 would be a great place to start. “While reading this particular article, I was inspired to establish a set amount of time to paint every day no matter what,” she said. “I knew from past experience that once I got started I would not get another thing done.”

The goal was to start the process on her 50th birthday, February 2, but she found she was having a difficult time committing. Finally on February 16 when the weather outside was cold and rainy, Kathleen pulled out some bluebonnet photographs she had taken in the Texas Hill Country and got started. “It was like trudging through mud,” she remembered. “I think that first 5 by 7 acrylic painting took me four hours to complete. I was tired, but I



was elated." The elation she felt after completing the first of 50 was all Kathleen needed to move forward. Every day, the time spent painting became easier. "By the end of the first seven days, I was rushing home, fixing dinner, throwing a load of laundry in the washer and running to my studio," she explained, finally able to smile at the memory of that first hectic week. "I would spend two to five hours each night painting. I would go to bed exhausted, but satisfied."

She laughed aloud as she remembered a "bad hair day" following a particularly difficult night of painting. "I flopped on my bed after a shower and fell sound asleep with a head full of wet hair," she said. "I woke up with a nasty cowlick, one like I'd not seen since the age of 5." Kathleen still remembers the way customers at Corners Art Gallery and Custom Framing, the shop which she manages, looked at her that day. "It didn't matter to me," she admitted. "I was content."

When the process first started, Kathleen thought she would only be able to paint canvases that measured 6 by 8 inches or smaller. She soon found she was able to move up to 8 by 10s, 9 by 12s and even a couple of 11 by 14s. She even went so far as to pull out her oil paints so she could stop on the way home to *plein air* paint in the evenings before the sun went down. Throughout this process of 50-in-50, Kathleen soon learned that she only needed to put down the colors she saw. No longer was she spending precious time "mucking up" her creations with lots of unnecessary detail and layers of paint. "This challenge proved to be a conditioning exercise of sorts," she stated. "Painting like this allowed me to only put on the canvas what was absolutely necessary. I've learned to keep my eyes trained. Now, I put down less information, but the canvas is still very much complete."

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Subjects she captured on canvas during her 50-day challenge included hummingbirds, cardinals, houses, a variety of animals, landscapes that included bluebonnets, old pickup trucks and her father as he was making lanterns for her years ago. "My mom took the picture of my father," she said. "I really liked the photograph, so I decided to paint him." Kathleen's father was the only person she painted during her challenge.

Kathleen taught herself to look emotionally inward during this time, instead of painting so many strokes that were no longer needed. Currently, she is creating no fewer than three paintings per week. The challenge conditioned her to be able to do this with ease. For Kathleen, being an artist has been a lifelong career choice. The challenge taught her a thing or two about balance. She has learned to balance her jobs and her family, while still focusing on her career. Kathleen has noticed an increase in her personal Web site statistics and she has gained several new commissions.

In the fast-paced world in which we live, Kathleen also learned many things to help network her talent such as blogging, twittering, e-mailing and publishing her own newsletters. These are things she taught herself, but she admitted that if she is busy on the computer, she is not painting. "If I am painting daily and studying the art form I love," she said, "I have a much bigger smile on my face!" **NOW**

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Never Quit!

— By Alex Allred

Arguably the fastest-growing sport in the world, especially the entertainment world, is mixed martial arts or MMA. It is the fierce combination of wrestling, boxing, judo, jiu jitsu and Muay Thai kickboxing that demands an athlete to be strong and resilient with the ability to fight standing up or take it to the ground. Of course, the superior fighter must also be quick — Brandon Quick, that is.

"I did the traditional sports," Brandon said of his athletic ventures, "but I always had more of a liking for the combat sports. I like the challenge of a one-on-one." Even as a young athlete, he never liked the idea of a teammate or weather factoring in on how a game was played. "I want to be able to stand toe-to-toe against another man. No excuses."

This competitive drive combined with his intense work ethic earned him the nickname "Never Quit" Quick and has made him one of the most sought after experts in the world. Unquestionably, there is much more to Brandon than what is seen on the typical résumé of an MMA fighter. He entered the world of martial arts at the age of 12 and by his late teens, he was teaching young children martial arts. While it can be very difficult to teach both the principles

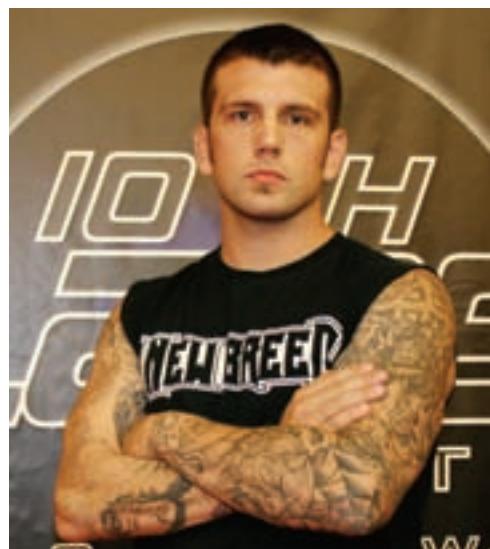
and concepts of martial arts and translate that into an action children understand, Brandon thrived on the challenge.

When he joined the U.S. Army and was deployed to Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003-04, a new world opened to Brandon. He began training with U.S. military personnel.

Eventually, while stationed at Fort Carson, he began working with U.S. Olympic athletes at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado. When he left the service, he became a certified personal trainer and went on to train at the famous Hollywood Legends Gym, a launching pad to his prestigious MMA career. He trained under the notorious Eddy Bravo and by 2007, relocated to Texas to create the first 10th Planet Jiu Jitsu School outside of Hollywood. Briefly, he rented out mats at the Lone Star Martial Arts school in downtown Waxahachie until he found a following. Today,

he credits the graciousness of Lone Star owner, Bill Perry, for introducing jiu jitsu and mixed martial arts to Waxahachie. In 2008, Brandon was able to open his own school, Trinity Combat.

Mastering previously unheard of moves such as the Rubber



Guard, Twister Side Control, Monkey Mount and the half guard position dubiously titled Lock Down, Brandon became a force on the international circuit as well. While the mission of his mentor, Eddy Bravo, is to continue finding innovative ways to attack and counter, "Never Quit" has traveled around the world teaching U.S. servicemen and women the art of combat, self-defense and that "never

"I'm most proud of being able to teach as well as being a competitor."

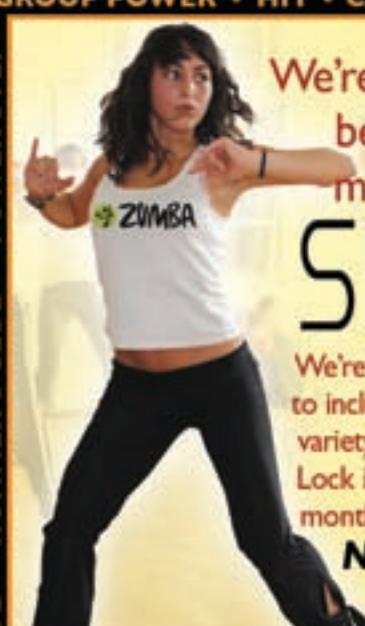
quit" attitude that has made him famous.

At just 27 years of age, Brandon has the No. 1 selling DVD on the market for grappling and jiu jitsu moves, including sales in Japan and the Scandinavian countries. Today, his online training can be viewed in 32 countries. "Outside of Eddy," Brandon said, "I have the first DVD out on chokes [holds]. Of course, I want to compete at the highest level of grappling that I can. I want to compete no matter what, but I want to train MMA fighters, too."

In fact, Brandon serves as a corner man in competitions, manages athletes and trains up-and-coming athletes full time. "I'm most proud of being able to teach as well as being a competitor," he said. Recently Brandon was nominated by *Undefeated* magazine as "Coach of the Year" in the state of Texas. "It means a lot to me that I can pass this knowledge along."

It is more than knowledge that he passes along, however. It is a lifestyle. It is a philosophy. A deeply religious man and new father to an infant daughter with wife, Veronika, Brandon has so much more he wants to teach. While his claim is simply, "I want to help people who want to change the way they live," he already has done so in numbers too big to count. Athletes

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have relocated from around the world so they could live close to, and train with, Brandon. He has helped people turn away from drugs and alcohol and has worked with people who were once attacked, giving them both the confidence to go out again and be able to defend themselves. Testimonials of thanks and praise come almost daily from around the world. For the man with the motto to never quit, being a champion of dogged perseverance and determination is far more important than winning a title belt in mixed martial arts.

"Life is not always easy," he insisted. "You have to kick off the dust and move on." Whether he is teaching a group of children, school teachers, military personnel or young men with big dreams of winning those title belts, Brandon expects everything from his students. He expects no more and no less than what he does of himself — and he has never been one to quit. **NOW**

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— By
Sandra
Skoda

Amanda Chaffin used to work for others before relocating to the Waxahachie area. She cannot remember a time when she was not a “girly girl.” “I had my nails done my junior year,” Amanda said, referring to high school. “It was then that I decided that’s what I wanted to do for a living.” Thanks to the elective courses offered at Duncanville High School, she was able to attend beauty school on campus her senior year.

Working in salons owned by others helped Amanda perfect her talent as a manicurist. This valuable experience gave her the confidence she needed when the time came to open her own shop, MAC Salon, located at 1300 W. Main Street, Suite 101. “I was a co-owner of a shop in Duncanville for six years,” she explained. “After moving to Blooming Grove, I had a desire to migrate to Waxahachie. I worked for another seven years before finally deciding to become my own boss.”

Amanda strictly did manicures and pedicures. She never had a desire to branch out further, until last year. “I took a continuing education class on permanent makeup,” she stated. “Now I not only do manicures and pedicures, I’m also in charge of permanent eyebrows, eyeliner and lips. I can even ‘build’ lips for those who have thin lips.”

Since Amanda’s passion is nails, she had to find a group of

women to handle the other offerings at MAC Salon such as hair, facials, massages and air-brush tanning. She also wanted a group who could get along with one another. “What happens outside the salon,” she said, “stays outside the salon. We are a family, but we’re also a business. We must conduct ourselves as such.” It must be a team effort in order for the business to run successfully. “Getting along just helps the workday flow smoothly,” Amanda added. The staff members on the MAC team are Charlotte McGraw, Felicia Newland, Kelsey Baker, Bree Carpenter, Kelley Wallace, Hollie Choate and Sheri Bobo. The second nail technician is Carla Hensarling. Sisters Ann Oliver and Becky Maxwell serve as the massage therapist and esthetologist, respectively.

Each employee on the team is an independent contractor who offers one or more of the aforementioned services. Each member has no less than 10 years of experience on her résumé. As with any business, customer service is key. All this experience under one roof has been a true blessing for Amanda. “Quality customer service is very important,” she said. “If you don’t have customers, you will soon be out of business. We try to please everyone all the time. Attitude and personality are also key to the customer service offered at MAC Salon. We want you to feel at home when you’re here.



It's all about the 'me time.'"

Twenty-two years in the business did not come without long hours, a dedicated staff and a commitment to the community she serves. With operating hours from 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday, Amanda comes in early and stays late. She provides her staff with a comfortable place to work each day, so they in turn can offer that same comfort to their clientele. It may



not have come easy, but Amanda and her team of talented beauty specialists enjoy the rewards of their hard work and dedication. "We've all been busy," Amanda said. "Busy means happy and I like happy!"

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Leaving Big Impressions

— By Kate A. McClendon

Many people cannot wait to graduate or get out of school, but not Becky Wilson. After a long teaching career, she found a way to come back to the classroom. Becky resides in Waxahachie with her husband, Rickey, a senior sergeant for the Dallas County Sheriff's Department, stepdaughter, Tasha, and granddaughter, Sandy. They have lived in the area for 11-12 years. "I love the small town, family-oriented feel," Becky said. "To me, this is actually one of the largest towns I've ever lived in; I'm from a very small town."

Becky was born in Oklahoma, where her father was a Baptist preacher. Her family moved to Texas shortly after she was born. "We moved around quite a bit, so I just call Texas my home," Becky said. "I've been in the Panhandle and the deep West. This is about as far east as I've gotten." She taught elementary school in Corsicana for 14 years and in Ennis for eight years. "I just loved being with the children; it's just so fascinating to see them make their accomplishments," Becky said.

Since retiring from teaching a few years ago, Becky has missed everything about being in the classroom. "I miss the kids. I miss the challenge of learning something exciting. I miss the camaraderie with the other teachers. I just miss all of it," she said. Becky's granddaughter, Sandy, is a third-grader at Dunaway Elementary School in Waxahachie. "When she was born, she became the light of my life," Becky said. Becky tries to be around Sandy as much as possible, so she decided to become a volunteer at Sandy's school.

Becky helps out in the classroom, giving presentations and doing what she can for the students. "I do art and I do music. I assist with hearing-impaired students. I like to incorporate sign language into my lessons — that's a love of mine. I enjoy the excitement of science experiments — anything that can



challenge their imagination. I also love reading to them."

Becky basically helps out whenever and wherever the teachers need her. "I'd like to do it more often," Becky said, "but I'm torn between several things I'm involved with." Being able to be with children and teachers in a classroom

again brings back memories of her days as an educator. "It just feels so comfortable. It's just something I'd love to do all the time," she said. "I love watching the faces of the kids light up."

Becky has even created some special projects for the children in her granddaughter's class. "[During the 2007-2008 school year], I wrote a play for Jobeth Grubbs's first-grade

class and they performed it. It was quite an honor. I love doing things like that." The children seem to love her, too. "I think they call me a 'grandfriend,' but most of the kids call me 'Nannie,' because that's what my granddaughter calls me," Becky said. "And that's fine with me."

Becky has a strong passion to help children, and the classroom is not the only place where she is able to fulfill her calling. She is also a member of Bikers Against Child Abuse (BACA). "We're an organization that, after a child has called the police and had an appointment with Child Protective Services, we come in and empower the child," she said. "We let them



Becky and Rickey Wilson joined Bikers Against Child Abuse (BACA) because of their love for children.

know they're number one. We pretty much 'adopt' them into our family."

The members of the organization make the children feel special. "A motorcycle group visits the child, and there are anywhere between 10 to 100 of us that show up. There are two

"I love watching the faces of the kids light up."

primaries, (BACA members) assigned for a child or family that contacts them regularly, [to] celebrate their birthdays and attend their extracurricular activities. We also don't let them go to court alone. Anywhere between one to 40 of us will accompany them. We're a nonprofit organization and we just do this because of our love for kids. Anyone who has access to a motorcycle can join."

Becky also volunteers for Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), another organization that helps children in need. "I love my work with CASA," Becky said. "We are appointed by Judge Wilhelm to help children and we are very fortunate to have a judge like him. We give the child a voice. We will either accompany them to court or we will represent them while vocalizing their wants and needs."

The volunteers visit with the children and their parents, grandparents and support system to find the best place for the child, while the parents get the support they need. Helping children is something Becky holds dear to her heart, but she feels everyone should think of the impression they make upon the younger generation. "I just think it's important for adults to realize that every day we make a memory in a child's life, and we need to be aware of what memory we leave with a child," Becky said. "We make a big impression and my goal is to be a positive role model." **NOW**

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- Carol Darling and Amy Ellison, top left, enjoyed lunch at Irene's Kitchen.
- Children at Chick-fil-A, top center, enjoyed the time they spent at the parking lot petting zoo. • Shari Alfura and Aden, top right, enjoyed a fun time at Chick-fil-A. • Connie Poirier, Publisher of *NOW* Magazines, bottom left, posed for a picture with her grandchildren, Keira and Madelynn. • A large crowd, bottom center, attended the summer reading program at Sims Library.
- Samantha Howard, bottom right, assisted Daniela Morales at an award ceremony for the Campfire Creek Therapeutic Riding Center.

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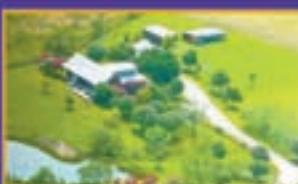
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Look Who's Cooking

— By Faith Browning

IN THE KITCHEN WITH DOROTHY TAYLOR

KOOL-AID PICKLES

- 1 48-oz. jar whole dill pickles
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 cups water
- 3/4 cup cherry flavored Kool-Aid

Drain and discard pickle juice. Remove pickles; cut in quarters (spears). Place pickles back in jar. Heat water, sugar and Kool-Aid until warm; pour over pickles. Cover jar; refrigerate for 24 to 36 hours. Pickles will turn red and be very crisp.

PORK AND BEAN BREAD

- 1 cup raisins
- 1 cup water, boiling
- 1 15-oz. can pork and beans, mashed
- 2 cups sugar
- 3 eggs, beaten
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 3 cups flour
- 1/2 tsp. baking flour

1/2 tsp. baking soda

1 cup pecans, chopped

Add raisins to boiling water; set aside. Mash beans with fork; add sugar, eggs, oil and vanilla, mixing well. Stir together dry ingredients; fold into bean mixture. Drain raisins; fold raisins and pecans into batter. Pour into 3 greased and floured loaf pans or 6 mini loaf pans. Bake for 60 minutes at 325 F, until knife comes out clean. Very good when warm.

MIXED VEGETABLE CASSEROLE

- 2 16-oz. cans mixed vegetables
- 1 16-oz. can green beans
- 1 12-oz. can water chestnuts
- 1 stick butter, melted
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 1/2 cups cheese, grated
- salt and pepper, to taste

Mix all ingredients well. Place in greased casserole dish; cover with foil. Bake for 1 hour at 350 F

MOM'S MAGIC MUFFINS

- 1 14-oz. box Raisin Bran cereal
- 5 cups all-purpose flour
- 3 cups sugar
- 5 tsp. baking soda
- 2 tsp. salt
- 4 cups buttermilk
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 4 eggs, beaten
- 1 cup pecans, chopped
- 1 1/2 cups dried, sweetened cranberries

In a large bowl, combine cereal, flour, sugar, baking soda and salt; mix well. In a separate bowl, combine buttermilk, oil and eggs; mix well. Add buttermilk mixture to flour mixture; fold in pecans and cranberries. Place in a tightly covered container; refrigerate overnight. The batter will keep up to four weeks. Do not stir anytime after refrigerating. Spoon batter into greased muffin cups. Bake for 18 minutes at 400 F. Makes 4 dozen.



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Life Insurance Should be Part of Your Financial Plan

— By Adam Rope

You may think you have a solid financial plan. The paycheck you bring home on a regular basis may be more than adequate to meet the immediate needs of your family. There may even be some left over for vacation, retirement or even college savings.

But what if you weren't there to provide for your family's needs? Would they continue to live in the home you shared? Would your children be able to attend the college of their choice?

These are important questions that

must be considered. Finding the answers can start with visiting your insurance agent and discussing a life insurance policy that is appropriate for you and your family.

September has been declared Life Insurance Awareness Month, a time for you to take a look at your existing coverage to see if it is adequate. If you don't have coverage, it is a good time to discuss the purchase of a policy.

A primary purpose of a life insurance policy is to provide a dollar amount to

the beneficiaries in the event of the death of the insured person. That death benefit can be used in any number of ways, whether for a mortgage, college education or regular income.

Life is full of many questions. Being sure that your financial plan includes an adequate amount of life insurance can help you answer at least one question, "What will happen to my family if I'm not around to provide for them?" **NOW**

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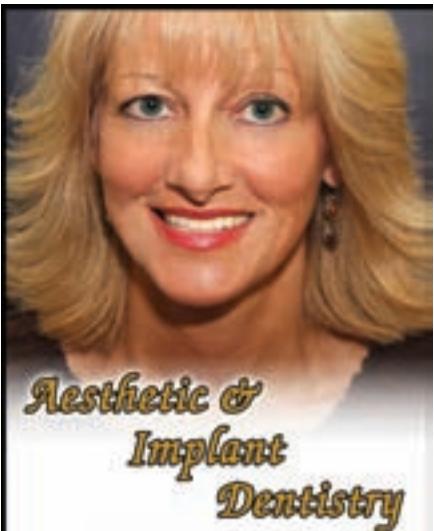
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Kidney Function

— By Betty Tryon, R.N.

Shaped like a kidney bean about the size of your fist, the kidneys have an impressive array of functions. Even though you have two of them, you can live a perfectly normal life with just one. Functioning like a sieve, the kidneys filter hundreds of gallons of blood every day, cleaning and purifying it for your health. If you did not have kidneys or your kidneys were beginning to fail, the waste, which is normally filtered and excreted from your bladder would build up in your body and become toxic to your health. Without functioning kidneys, waste must be removed by dialysis or kidney transplant.

The waste build-up in the blood comes from normal metabolic functions, such as the breakdown of muscular tissue and ingested food products. Everyone knows when you drink too much water it means more trips to the bathroom. If you are not drinking enough fluids, your urinary output is restricted. The kidneys work to keep the proper balance of fluid level in the body.

Also, kidneys play a large role in making sure your blood pressure level remains normal by the secretion of an enzyme named renin. If your blood pressure drops, then the kidneys do not receive enough blood. This triggers the release of renin, which causes the blood vessels to contract and thereby increasing the blood pressure. Another function of your kidneys is the production of erythropoietin, a hormone, which signals the bone marrow to produce more red blood cells.

Those are a few of the critical functions performed by this organ, but many other important operations take place in the kidneys. That is one of the reasons your health care provider requests a urine sample for testing. A few areas checked are the BUN (blood urea nitrogen) and creatinine levels. These levels determine how well the kidneys can filter waste from the blood. Another area tested may be electrolytes. Electrolytes are salts found in the cells of the body. They are potassium, calcium, magnesium, chloride, bicarbonate and phosphate. When these salts are imbalanced, your kidneys work to correct it. If you ingest too much potassium, your kidneys will filter out a large amount, too little and the kidneys excrete only a small amount of potassium.

These are only a few of the jobs assigned to this organ. Help your kidneys out by drinking the proper amount of water every day. The proper amount depends on your lifestyle, where you live and even the current state of your health. However, it is imperative that you drink water every day. This is not just a saying; it is the truth. **NOW**

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

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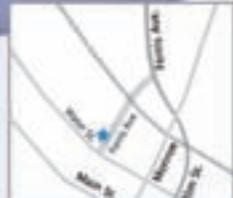


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Blooms Galore

— By Nancy Fenton

Fall will soon be here again and it will be time to separate your irises if you did not get around to it last year. Irises and Shasta daisies are two of my favorite bloomers, and they love to be cut up and given more room. They bloom much better if they have some space to "stretch their roots." Irises are perfect to dig and replant or share in the fall, and Shasta daisies are good to work with in the spring. If you are really organized, you may have labeled the colors of each of your irises last spring when they were blooming — sorry, not me!

One of the keys to having great blooms year after year is



having the rhizome (the brown thing that the roots grow from) on top of the ground. If you plant too deep and cover it up, the plant will not bloom as well. My iris idol, David Smith of Waxahachie, tells me he checks his irises four times a year to make sure no leaves or anything else is on his rhizomes. If his blooms are any example, his technique must work, and I am going out right now to pull all those leaves away! It goes without saying there should be no mulch

anywhere around irises. The mulch will hold the moisture, causing the rhizome to rot — something we sure do not want to happen.

Irises can grow literally in spite of some of us, but they do benefit from a little balanced fertilizer in the fall and early in the spring. I use Halloween and Valentine's Day as my guideposts for iris fertilizing. Irises are great plants to pass along to others; let's all have one or two in our yards! **NOW**

Nancy Fenton is a Master Gardener.

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September 2009

Community Calendar

August 26-November 18

Each Wednesday, FBC Palmer Good News Travelers Center offers GriefShare, a 13-week grief recovery support program: 6:30-8:30 p.m., 203 W. Jefferson. Contact Vivian (214) 802-2256. www.griefshare.com.

September 7

Everyone is invited to enjoy free yoga classes conducted by local yoga teachers. This is a great opportunity to try yoga for the first time, try out a different instructor or experience a different style of yoga. To accommodate all schedules, classes will be held beginning in the morning and continuing into the evening. As a kick-off to the free day of yoga, a giant community class will be held on Sunday, September 6, from 5:00-6:30 p.m. at One Arts Plaza in downtown Dallas. For more information, visit www.elliscountyyoga.webs.com or call Lisa Ware at (214) 532-0776. Free classes will also be held in Midlothian, Red Oak, Ovilla and Waxahachie.

September 8 and 15

Waxahachie's Got Talent Preliminary Competitions. September 8: First preliminary competition: 6:00-8:00 p.m. September 15: Second preliminary competition: 6:00-8:00 p.m. Both events will be held at the Texas Theater, 101 W. Main Street. (972) 937-2390.

September 12

Ellis County Art Association presents the beginning of the 2009-2010 gallery season with "The Child in Me," an art opening featuring new original work created during the

spring and summer of 2009. The event, held in the Anderson Gallery located in the lower level of the Ellis County Fine Arts Museum, is free and open to the public. For more information, call (972) 937-3414 or visit the Web site at www.elliscountyart.net.

September 16

Ellis County Christian Women's Connection, affiliated with Stonecroft Ministries, monthly luncheon: 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Waxahachie Country Club, 1920 W. Highway 287 at I-35 East, Exit 401B. The cost is \$13, inclusive. To make reservations, contact either Kay at (972) 937-2807 or Mary at (972) 937-9984, or e-mail Kay at windchime423@yahoo.com by Friday, September 11.

September 26

The Trail Blazer's Showcase, featuring Joy Parish, Richy BoNutty, Doc Walters, J.D. Wyatt, Melinda Fontenot, Lonna Westerman and Jodi Chaffin: 7:00 p.m., Women's Building, 407 W. Jefferson St. Free admission. Donations welcome. For more information, go to www.brooksideanimalhospital.net/trailblazershowcase.

November 3

WRC Pregnancy Center of Ellis County annual Roundup 2009 benefit dinner: 6:30 p.m., Creekside Church, Highway 287 between Waxahachie and Midlothian. The guest speaker is Jody Dean, a journalist from North Texas and the *KLUV Morning Show* host. Tickets are complimentary, but reservations are required. For more information, call (972) 938-7900 or (972) 878-0784.



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