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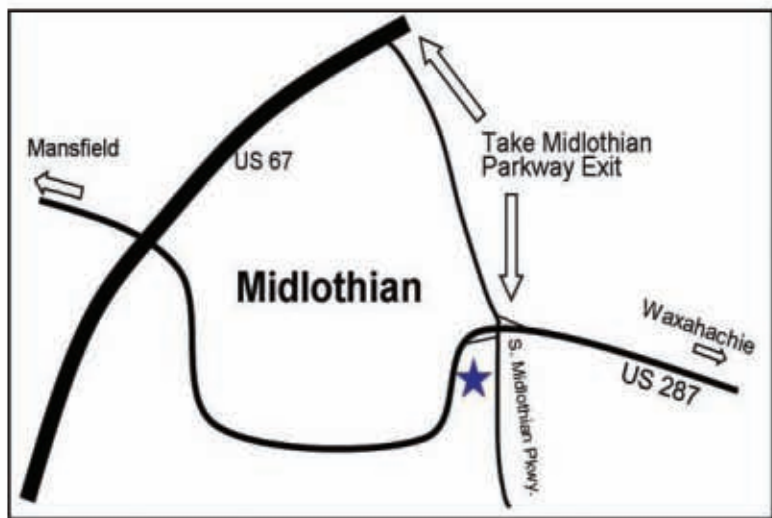


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On The Cover



Homeschooling is a way of life for the Hachat family.

Photo by Natalie Busch.

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Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

On the first day of kindergarten, my brother-in-law was delegated the duty of taking my niece to her very first class. He noticed as they walked closer to the classroom that she became more and more agitated. When he inquired what was wrong, she looked at her dad with panic-stricken eyes and wailed, "I can't read. I can't write. What am I doing here?"

There are many unknowns on that first day, and much hard work is ahead. The most important thought for school, whether it is kindergarten or college level, is to never give up when faced with the inevitable difficulty. Lou Holtz, retired football coach and motivational speaker, gave this famous quote: "Ability is what you're capable of doing. Motivation determines what you do. Attitude determines how well you do it." Now all you have to do is get it done!



Betty

Betty Tryon
MidlothianNOW Editor
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When Mom TEACHES

— By Betty Tryon

Just like most moms, Linda Hatchat maintains a home, loves and cares for her children, prepares meals, completes chauffeur duties and is chief budget maintainer, as well as many other chores. However, unlike most moms, when it is time to send Caleb, 11, Lindsay, 8, Rachel, 7, and Joel, 5, off to school, she does not send them out the door but through the family room to their special classroom. Since the beginning of August, class work is in full mode. "Class starts at 9:00," Linda stated. "We eat breakfast together, do our devotion time, and then we start our subjects. Because Caleb is getting older, he has more subjects and needs a lot more time with me. This coming school year, to his chagrin, he will have to get up earlier. That way we will have the teaching portion done by the time the others get up. He can then focus on his class work, and I can focus on the other children."

Families choose homeschooling for a variety of reasons. For the Hatchet family, it began as a temporary solution because they were not planning to stay in Texas long term. When Caleb was in the





From left to right: Caleb, Lindsay, Linda (mom), Rachel, Joel and Sara (exchange student).

"We just like being together as a family!"

first grade, he was already reading at a third- and fourth-grade level. Leon and Linda wanted to continue that progress. And probably the simplest reason they decided to homeschool was, "We just like being together as a family!" Linda said with a smile.

Having to homeschool four children of different ages and abilities can be a daunting task. It helps to have a support group surround you. Linda explained, "So we met up with our current homeschool co-op, and it has just been..."

Caleb interrupted to add, "Awesome!"

Smiling, Linda continued, "The co-op meets at the Methodist church in town. There are about 25 families. With the Midlothian co-op, we meet at the end of the school year and decide what subjects we are going to cover the next

school year. Homeschooling is something you can do really cheap and buy a lot of used curriculum. Or, you can do it real expensively where you buy a huge curriculum that comes with all the bells and whistles. We do a little bit of both. Some families choose one curriculum that works for the whole family, and that's great. I pick curriculums that are tailored to each individual child."

During the Hachats' school day, many times they work together. Bible, history and science are topics they share as a group. Sometimes, they will work together with the other families in the co-op with the moms rotating to teach the lesson. "We teach the science curriculum with other families, and it's broken down by age, Linda explained. We do every style of learning in there. You can help kids who need that hands-on work. They



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can be cutting, pasting, drawing, gluing and putting it all together in one book about your subject."

One-on-one time with her children is necessary and welcomed by Linda. As Caleb grows older, his subjects become more complex. "With math, Caleb and I work together, and he has a math tutor," Linda shared. "He has reached a point in math where I say, 'OK, I'm done.' I have another homeschool mom, and we trade off. I teach her high school daughter



science, because that's my strength and what I have a degree in, and she teaches Caleb math."

Lindsay and Rachel do much of their schoolwork combined. Technically, Rachel is going into second grade and Lindsay into third grade. They did language arts at the same grade but stopped when Rachel began to struggle. Because of that, Linda said, "Lindsay is moving on, and we are going to camp out where we are with Rachel until she is ready to move on. That is the glory of homeschooling, we move along when we want to."

As the youngest, Joel sometimes feels frustrated if mom does not get to him



fast enough. "Last year, he wanted to do more in school," Linda explained. "Once he brought books to me and, in a stern voice asked, 'Is it my turn?' It's not easy to manage four kids when they all want your attention."



Subjects are taught with the child's comprehension level in mind. When Joel studied science, they made trash. "We watched our trash for a couple of weeks to see how it recycled itself back into soil. We got to see banana peels turn back into dirt and watched pieces of plastic," Linda said. She asked Joel, "Did the plastic turn back into dirt?" Joel shook his head for a definite no. Through their studies, the children learn about respecting the environment and the things that live in it. For example, when studying endangered

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- 1:50 PM WHS Jazz Band
- 2:15 PM Tommy Stringer, Ph.D. Navarro College
A Short History of Oil and Gas in Our Region
- 3:15 PM Old Fashioned Singers
- 3:45 PM Nowell Donovan, Dean of Academic Affairs TCU
Geology of our Region
- 4:30 PM Waxahachie Community Theater
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- 5:15 PM Panel Discussion on the pros and cons of the oil industry
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species, each child had to research his or her own endangered species, make posters and do a report on that species in front of their peers.

In learning about other countries, they take a unique approach. "We do Voice of the Martyrs. It is a curriculum designed for anyone. We can do a study on different countries throughout the world. We make crafts, read about the kids and learn about the religion in the different countries. Caleb has learned about Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism. It's great for geography purposes but also for social studies. They also learned how the Christians are persecuted in other countries. They realized that America is a great place and that freedom in other countries is very limited," Linda said.

This past summer, the family hosted an exchange student named Sara. Coming from Spain, she brought an entirely new culture into the home. "Our kids are getting to learn about her culture, and she is learning about ours. Sara is teaching us Spanish, and we are teaching her English! It has been a fantastic experience," Linda said. Taking Sara to Costco was a great revelation for her. She wanted to know if all supermarkets in America were like that. She had stated that there was nothing like that in Spain.

When you homeschool, the education of your children is completely in your hands, and they will succeed or fail by your efforts. "It takes a lot of motivation and prayer to homeschool," Linda stated. "There are days when you get up and you think, *Oh, I have to go face this again.* Other days you get up and you are just thrilled to do it — days like when reading clicks and the lights go on in their eyes, or when they look at you, and they are reading a book by themselves! You think, *This is why I do it.*" **NOW**

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ANTICIPA



CREATING

— By Betty Tryon



Who's afraid of the big bad wolf? If the wolf is the 5A classification in high school football, then it is not the Midlothian Panthers football players. They are pumped and ready to face whatever comes in this football season. Jesse Rios, Myron Hanson, Tony Kirk and Jeff Reynolds, all seniors, shared their thoughts on being moved from 4A to 5A last year. "Coach Wiginton said we want to be 5A because to be the best you have to play and beat the best," said Myron. "He said 5A and 4A are just numbers and letters. Coach Wiginton is doing an excellent job of building in us to believe in each other." He considers 5A more of a positive thing than a negative thing because, "If we hadn't gone through it [the transition], I don't think we would be the team we are today."

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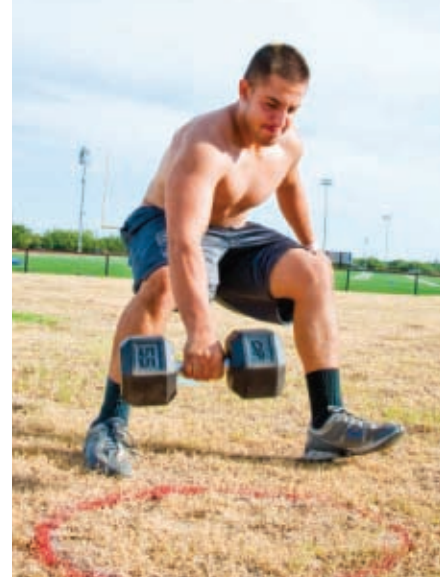


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There was much speculation before the beginning of the first 5A game. Much of it was that the Midlothian football team would be in over its head for the season. “Everyone had been saying we would move up to 5A since middle school, and that we wouldn’t be able to compete against the big teams,” Jeff stated. “We stepped it up. If you don’t have confidence in yourself, there is no way you can win. I think we had a good season, but that is nothing compared to what we can achieve. It’s OK to be good, but it’s really good to be great, and that’s what we want to be.”

Coach Wiginton demystified the level of 5A for the team. “Coach made it very important that 5A you take with a grain of salt,” Tony offered. “It’s not about who is in 5A but about how is Midlothian going to act when they step on the field? How are we going to work together? I definitely think we will do things better this year, because we always keep improving.”


Jeff looked at the change philosophically, “Yes, 5A is a stepping stone to getting your name out there, but to me, it’s just another team.” Regardless of the district in which the team plays, there are still plenty of life lessons to be learned while playing. “No matter what the limits are, you can push past it,” Jeff shared. “That is what football teaches you. There are some times when you just need to step it up, and that will push you higher in life. It’s a good stress reliever. It’s not about the field but about your commitment, and I think football teaches you to be more committed in whatever you do.”

Jesse also noted the stress-relieving qualities of football. “I like the aggressive




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nature of the game,” he stated. “It’s a stress-free environment. You let it all out on the field. I enjoy being out there with my friends — the different characters you see on the football field. You grow a unique bond with everyone else.

“Coach teaches us so much that will carry us on through life,” Jesse recounted. Brotherhood, discipline, toughness and determination are among the core values that Coach Wiginton instills in his players and are lessons all players seem to value. “Those core values are the most important things in football, and that’s why I’m still in it today. We want to be the best, and I want to help the team all I can.”

Myron stated, “Discipline, honor, sacrifice, caring and compassion — stuff like that has to develop inside a football team to be an effective football team.” Those core values helped him in the game of football and in the seriousness of life. “It’s about breaking down the barriers and expanding your boundaries. It’s a skill that helps you later on in life.”



Another element that is crucial to football is the bond the players establish with each other. Tony concurred with, “When Jesse was talking about the core values of brotherhood, to me that is the most important one, because that’s the one that’s affected my life the most. I like knowing that the guys around me are pushing for the same goal. We are all working for a playoff spot for state championship.”

Tony’s relationship with his teammates is extra special because of his personal circumstances. “I haven’t always lived in the same spot for very long,” he explained. “So football for me is a brotherhood; it’s camaraderie. Football has always been there for me. When I go to a new place and I don’t have any friends, football is always there. Football is a rough sport and not for everyone. Just knowing you are going through

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something rough and you feel terrible, but you have guys next to you that are going through the same thing and are pushing just as hard to achieve the same goal, it helps you relate a lot to the people around you in the same situation.”

Since the players are all seniors, they are focused on their future and life after football. Myron, with his big booming voice and caring nature, seems to have chosen a field well-suited for his gifts. “I want to go to Baylor and major in Christian Theology. I plan on going into the ministry. It is something I feel called to do. I see so many terrible things everywhere in this world. Other people have it so much worse than we do, but we rarely stop to acknowledge how good we have it. I want to spread the message that the answer to misery and pain is Jesus.”

Jesse also has altruistic plans for his future and stated, “It would be nice to play college football, but after high school I want to join the fire department or police department. I feel like I can help make the world a little better.”

Jeff could see that one of the financial benefits of high school football was a possible scholarship. “I figure my best way to get to college is with a scholarship. So I’m going to work my hardest in the classroom and on the field to see if that is a possibility. I want to be a meteorologist and learn more about storms.”

Tony has long known that higher education will definitely be a part of his future. “If anyone has met my mom, they know that education is always first,” he explained. “So my thing is not football but education. If football gets me to college, then I’ll gladly take it.”

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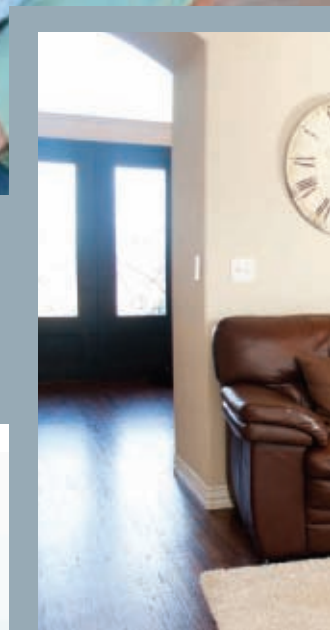




LITTLE *Miracles*

— By Alex Allred

In the upstairs hallway, between Tyler and the boys' bedrooms is an inscription on the wall that reads, "Everyday holds a possibility of a miracle." For any other home, this lovely sentiment might be intended to encourage or inspire, but in the home of Nathan and Celina Romney, this is their battle cry. Little miracles are what they aspire for each day.



AT HOME WITH
*Nathan and Celina
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Statistically speaking, Nathan and Celina are already a miracle. Pregnant at the age of 15, Celina and Nathan were then married a year later. Both from large, very spiritual families, the news of Celina's pregnancy was difficult, but today, they remain married and happily so, at that. But it wasn't always easy. "When we moved into our first home



in Midlothian, I didn't let people know my age," Celina said. A homeowner and mother at age 18, "I just wanted the other moms to like me. I was worried about what they would all think of me, but today, I own it!"

As well she should. Now in her mid-20s, Celina is a beautiful mother of three boys, a competitive marathon runner and champion of her son, Tyler's, medical condition. But before all of this came into play, Celina was busily keeping house and watching over her son, Ethan. She worked at Pier 1 Imports, decorating their floors and helping people match



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swatches and paints to create their own home decor. But when she became pregnant with Tyler, she knew something was not right. Even after Tyler was born, both Celina and Nathan continued to be told that everything was OK. At 2 months of age, however, Tyler was diagnosed with infantile spasms. After many more tests, a general diagnosis of cerebral palsy was given. Though they still don't know the cause of this type of cerebral palsy, they know this: "Tyler is never going to be a football star. He's never going to be able to walk," Nathan

said. Today, at age 6, Tyler is cognitively equal to a 3-month-old. "But to see him reach for something," Celina smiled, "to see him work his hand, to hold a spoon, those are the little miracles we love to see!"

Nathan and a partner created their company, performing emergency repairs on corporate jets, while Nathan and Celina discovered a gorgeous builder foreclosure just miles from their first home. "We knew we wanted more land, to be a little further out," Nathan said of their new home. And they wanted the neighborhood atmosphere, but to



be more secluded and have a pool for Tyler's therapy. Sitting on 1.2 acres, their sprawling 4,300-square-foot, five-bedroom home with vaulted ceilings and hardwood floors is a dream. Using the less-is-more motif, Celina quickly put her decorating talents to work, using dark woods with modern lines in contrast with cream- and taupe-colored walls. Every room and hallway showcases portraits of family. Shot by professional photographer, Jenny Rossi, (now relocated to Salt Lake City), dark-framed 20-inch by 24-inch (or larger) pictures of Celina, Nathan and the boys beautifully portray their love and devotion to one another.

For Celina, this sentiment is signified in one particular piece that now hangs over the garden tub in her master bathroom. "A long time ago, I told Nathan that I just had this idea that a rustic candle holder over the tub would

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be nice. It was just an idea I had.” As a housewarming gift for his new bride, Nathan found one online and had it installed in their first home. “So, it had to come with us here! I’ll always keep it. It means a lot to me.”

The master bedroom, like most of the house, is open with modern furniture, leaving plenty of floor space for Tyler’s wheelchair. But there are no visible signs this is the home of a special needs child or that at any time the Romneys have struggled with Tyler’s condition.

“Actually,” Celina laughed, “we joke all the time that Tyler is our easiest one. He never talks back or complains. He’s so happy.”

Upstairs, Tyler has his own bedroom where he spends much of his time “rolling around” with his brothers. Ethan and Noah share a room next to Tyler’s room and all the boys have their own entertainment room, next to the guest bedroom. Dubbed “the boys’ area,” the entertainment room is raised by three additional steps, giving it the feel of a loft, and it’s a great place for sleepovers.

Ethan, 10, who plays football and hockey, is into airplanes and science. “Actually, it’s all about seeing how things are made and how he can take them apart,” Celina sighed. “I need to talk to him about that.”

Noah, 5, will follow his older brother’s footsteps, or fingertips, to play the piano as well as hockey, but as he zigzags with certain ferocity through the house, his greatest passion is to become a ninja. Despite their busy schedules, sports and/or super powers, the boys are most proud of Tyler. Tyler has been a miracle



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since the beginning, defying early and often negative prognoses. Every year is a milestone filled with little miracles. "And he's so stinking smart," Celina laughed. "He knows what is going on. When he doesn't want to do therapy, he pretends to be asleep."

"But then if you ask if he wants to go out on the swing, he looks up," Nathan added with another laugh.

Even as the Romneys are learning what Tyler can do, they are educating and inspiring others. They created www.run4tyler.org with the logo, "Run for those who can't!" They created T-shirts and raised money for Scottish Rite Children's Hospital to raise awareness and offer support to other families with special needs children. In particular, Celina has been instrumental in getting people off their couches and pounding the pavement for a good cause, making everyone around her healthier and



happier. While Nathan has supported every mile of Celina's training, "I'm not a runner," he smiled. He created a home gym for Celina, so she can train at home when there is no child care or the weather is bad. But he prefers cycling.

Together, however, they enjoy the backyard the most. Designed to entertain large parties, the pool is the central focus of their attention. "We extended the tanning ledge of the pool so that Tyler could be there," Nathan said.

"Oh, when you put him there, he is a different child!" Celina said, describing how Tyler splashes in the water. "He feels free!" Truly, every day at the Romney home has the possibility of another miracle. **NOW**



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Going *With the* Grain

— By Randy Bigham

For a local craftsman, woodworking is more than a hobby. It's a way to relieve stress, focus his energy and enjoy the fruits of his labor by donating the items he makes to local charities. Larry Murphy is modest about his gift for the saw and pick, believing there are others more skilled than he. "I'm no expert," he said, "but I like the process of making pieces that I can then give to family members or to a fundraiser. I'm certainly no artist." Larry's work begs to differ. Designing in oak, walnut, cherry and other woods, he has created polished, elegant examples of almost every decorative accent imaginable, from plate rails and paper weights to clocks and furniture. He uses templates for all his designs, but his interpretation is smooth and precisely finished.





A former electrician, Larry grew up in Irving and moved to Midlothian with his wife, Rosemary, in 2001. Now retired, he has found his niche — carving select pieces for friends and relatives in the workshop he's installed in his backyard. But Larry isn't new to the craft he loves. "I've been doing this for a long time, just not regularly until recent years," he said. "Really, I guess, I started in woodshop in junior high school." Although he admits he was not that interested in the work as a teenager and didn't make good grades in the class, he can still remember the first item he made. "Believe it or not, my mother still has the little magazine rack I made when I was a kid in junior high," he laughed, "and it looks like it was made by a kid in junior high. But she likes it."

Admirers of Larry's work have increased tenfold since then. His four kids, all grown up now with families of their own, and his wife are natural fans and frequent beneficiaries of



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his gifts in wood. But so are a growing number of Ellis County residents, who have bought his designs at charitable auctions hosted by Midlothian's First United Methodist Church — especially its annual autumn fundraiser. These events keep the craftsman busy in his shop. “I try to think of different things for the fundraisers,” he said. “And the ladies at the church suggest things they think will sell well.”

Larry is best known for his clocks. “I have made a lot of clocks, wall clocks mostly,” he clarified. “The reason I like making them is they are something that’s useful.” He prefers intricate designs, which may be time consuming, but he likes the challenge. Larry enjoys giving the clocks away even more. “I make them as presents, for Christmas maybe, or for



a housewarming gift.” A recent instance of the latter is a granddaughter who just moved into a new home.

Despite the positive public reception his work has won through local auctions, Larry hasn’t considered selling his pieces in any large quantity. “I have sold a few items, and people are always telling me I should market them,” he explained. “But



really if I were to sell my things according to the time that went into making them, they would cost too much.” He also observes, in his self-deprecating way, that there’s no reason to sell since, “I’m no artist anyway.” But art is in the eye of the beholder, and to judge by the broadening interest in his work, Larry more than fits the criteria. He’s flattered that some regard his brand of woodcraft as art. “I’ve always admired artists who can take a blank canvas and create something from scratch,” he said, although he rejects any comparison of his work to painting or sculpting.

Rosemary isn’t exactly an objective defender, but her admiration for her husband’s pastime is sincere and her assessment of his abilities matches the compliments he’s received publicly. “I do think his work is very good, whatever he takes on,” she said.



Praise or no praise, Larry is more concerned about the process of carving and assembling his pieces. “I work at my own pace,” Larry confessed. “I don’t work on anything all day. I work a few hours and come back to it. A paper weight might take 35-40 hours, another piece another 30 hours. It’s slow work, cutting and drilling, but it’s not tedious to

me. It’s enjoyable, a kind of release. I really like focusing on what I’m doing.” The more elaborate the item is he’s working on, the better. “That’s what I like,” he added. “The intricate work on a challenging pattern is the most fulfilling.”

Inspiration for Larry’s woodcraft comes from all mediums: a portrait by a great master, a Navajo vase, a picture in



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a magazine. But he's mainly influenced by the wood itself. "Walnut is one of my favorite woods to work in, and cherry is another favorite," he pointed out. "Some woods are more elegant than others and fit a decorative style better. Oak isn't elegant, for instance, but it's sturdy and inexpensive, which is why so much furniture is made of it." In his own home, Larry's favorite pieces are a pair of oak side tables and a cedar chest that stands in for a coffee table, both Christmas gifts to Rosemary. Another favorite item, which he recently

He prefers intricate designs, which may be time consuming, but he likes the challenge.

finished for his son and daughter-in-law, was a cherry wood wall clock. He has experimented with various wood types over the years, and a surprising success resulted from a series of crosses made of bloodwood. These crosses, carved in the deep red exotic wood from South America, were sold at a First United Methodist Church auction. "I was very proud of them," Larry said. "Of course, it was the wood and its really red color that made them impressive, not so much what I did."

Larry's modesty is unshakeable. Thankfully, so is his devotion to woodworking, and he has no plans to rest on his laurels. He enjoys the time he spends in his shop with the scroll saws and other machinery — some new, some vintage — that produce the beautiful and diverse pieces so much in demand now. The Midlothian woodworker is touched by the response to the designs he's donated to charity and looks forward to continuing to serve his community. "Midlothian is a great town. It manages its growth well and there are a lot of activities." As for being an artist, Larry still shies away from the tag, but admits it's a God-given ability. "I feel like everyone has a talent," he said, "and you're responsible for developing it as best you can." **NOW**

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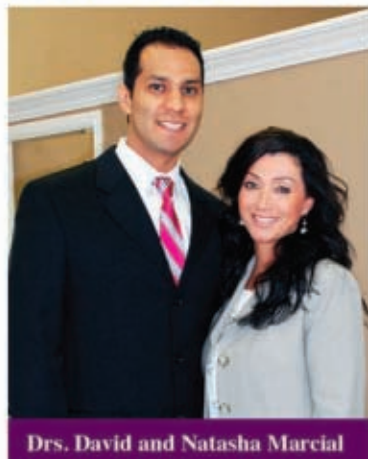
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Blind AMBITION

— By Alex Allred

To see Brandon Overbay in action, one would never know he is blind. But, then, he has never been one to let anything hold him back. He has his own business, works full time, enjoys running and even cycles, much to the surprise of many. “That’s nothing. I used to ride a skateboard and crashed so many times,” Brandon laughed. “I made up my mind a long time ago that I wasn’t going to sit around and do nothing. I’m not going to let this stop me.”



In truth, Brandon is not completely blind. He can see images, but they are extremely blurry and distorted. His condition is known as optic nerve atrophy, a condition that was diagnosed when he was just a baby. Still, he went to public school and, just as he does today, he determined that he would and could be just like everyone else. "I had a pretty normal childhood," he admitted, "except for knowing the other kids could get their driver's licenses."

After graduation, Brandon worked a variety of jobs, "but I realized that I didn't want to work like that for the rest of my life." It was important to him to find something where he knew he



could make a difference. With few other ideas, he went to the Texas Workforce Commission to take employment assessment tests and learned that he had a great aptitude to work with animals, specifically, dogs. But this was no surprise to Brandon.

"I've always had a way with animals," Brandon said. What was a nice surprise,



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however, was how easily his new career came to him. He found Triple Crown Dog Training Academy outside Austin, Texas, and through the help of Texas Workforce, was able to live and train there for five months where he earned his diploma. Almost immediately, he began training full time. Still, there were challenges most trainers did not have.

In dog training, there are very subtle movements of an animal, eye contact or the fold of an ear that serve as cues to a trainer. "I feel through the leash," Brandon said. For him, it is more intuition and feel. The best of dog trainers understand that communication, a give-and-take relationship built on trust and devotion, is the very best way to train. That Brandon cannot see is a minor obstacle.

For Brandon, a natural with animals, there are far greater challenges that lay ahead. "Like driving or reading. I don't get to read the newspaper or read books. I don't get to gain knowledge that way," he explained. Even more important is the very simple act of making eye contact with other people. "I can't see my neighbors or wave at them. I never want people to think I'm being rude if I don't wave back."

While his vision impairment has, in many ways, made him a better dog trainer, Brandon still dreams of one day being able to see clearly. It was just a dream, until one day a dog training client inspired Brandon to research about a procedure being done in China with stem cell injections. "With the atrophy," he explained about his eyes, "it is a lack of, or never fully developed, optic nerve that causes the lack of vision. But they [scientists] are doing things for people



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that will blow your mind.”

The first and most major stumbling block, however, was the cost of the procedure. “It’s about \$35,000 to cover all the procedures. It took a couple of weeks just to let all that soak in,” Brandon said. “But I happen to have a lot of good people around me. My family said, ‘Let’s raise the money,’ and my aunt did the first huge benefit.”

It was a move to Midlothian, Texas, in 2009 that brought everything — dog training, family and lifelong dream — together for this ambitious young man. As Brandon stepped into the world of dog training, he was humbled by how much the dogs gave back to him. While he was able to make both owners and dogs happier and healthier, the dogs also brought Brandon an indescribable joy, a sentiment that is very much shared by his aunt, Laurie Reynolds.

In 2007, Laurie was diagnosed with cancer and had a total hysterectomy and double mastectomy followed by aggressive rounds of chemotherapy. During that time, her two Labradors, Ranger and Rosie, were lifesavers. “They were the light at the end of the tunnel for me,” Laurie said. “They were my therapy.”

When her nephew, Brandon, moved to Midlothian, Laurie launched into action with two goals in mind. First, she wanted to help raise money for Brandon for a life-altering procedure, and second, one day open a dog training facility, All About Dogs, in Midlothian. Creating the Brandon Overbay Medical Fund at Bank of America, she was instrumental in raising over \$13,000. Several more fundraisers ensued, including a charity golf tournament hosted by friend James

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Fofhea. In total, the Brandon Overbay Medical Fund swelled to \$27,000 with the promise of a second golf tournament fundraiser in 2012. With that kind of support, "We're now in the process to finish all the paperwork with a clinic in Beijing." While they work through such details as travel arrangements and getting a passport, Brandon is one step closer to a dream come true.



"It just blows my mind to think this could happen," Brandon laughed. "Believe me!" But if all things go as planned, Brandon and a companion will travel to China next summer to live there for a month while he undergoes treatment.

It is funny that all of this came through dogs. "No matter what happens," Brandon said, "I can't imagine doing anything besides training." Through the dogs, Brandon is driven to succeed. While many would be frightened by the prospect of traveling so far away for a relatively unknown procedure, many more would be afraid of Brandon's current job — training an aggressive Akita. To this, Brandon simply laughs. "The worst that could happen is that I get bit." For Brandon, training an aggressive dog is much like flying to China for eyesight. "Don't stop. Don't be scared."

It is a never-say-never attitude and undying devotion to dogs that certainly runs in the family, as both Brandon and Laurie are determined to beat the odds and give back. Both hope to one day offer therapy dogs to the community. "And after all this," Brandon said, "it would be my personal dream to have a nonprofit business where I could raise money for others who need help." Intuitively, Brandon understands the importance of giving back. With or without sight, he is a true visionary. **NOW**
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Tio Tony's Mexican Restaurant serves authentic Mexican food.

— By Betty Tryon

Rosa Barajas, owner of Tio Tony's Mexican Restaurant, is a model for the American dream. She and her husband, Antonio, came to America 30-35 years ago and made a wonderful life for their family. Their friend and worker, J.W. Mayfield, stated, "When they came here, they came with absolutely nothing, and the progress they've made is because she's a worker — she and him both. She started working any kind of odd job she could get."

One of those jobs was as a waitress in a restaurant in Dallas. It was in that same restaurant where she started as a server and, eventually, worked her way up to buying it." Because of Rosa's experience in the restaurant business, J.W. declared, "She knows the restaurant business and knows what good customer service

is. With the help of all three of her daughters and her husband, she has done well." Working in the restaurant business is a family affair in the Barajas household, with all three daughters working in some capacity in the business and Antonio as the chef. According to J.W., "Antonio knows what real Mexican food is. A lot of it is in the seasoning, and he has it down."

Rosa also goes by the name Carmen, so she named the restaurant in Dallas, Carmen's Mexican Cafe. Tio Tony's Mexican Restaurant in Midlothian is named after her husband, Antonio. Rosa owns both restaurants, and they both serve the same type of authentic Mexican food. Rosa dreamed of opening a restaurant here in Midlothian because this is her hometown. That dream

was fulfilled when Tio Tony's Mexican Restaurant opened on December 17 last year. The restaurant serves breakfast, lunch and dinner.

"The food we serve here is freshly prepared on the spot. For example, our chili relleno special on Thursday is served until we run out. We make it for that day, and that's it. We don't want any leftovers because we want all of our food to be fresh. Everything is prepared daily. Most of our tortillas are homemade, and they are delicious. Homemade tortillas are a taste many people get used to," J.W. said smiling.

Tio Tony's is so new in town that many are not aware of its existence. Its location is off the beaten path, although it is easy to find. Located in the general area of 13th Street and Main, it can be found next to Tim Tobey Insurance and behind the Shell station convenience store. The business sports a bar separate from the restaurant and has happy hour every day from 4:00-7:00 p.m. The entrées are reasonably priced at under \$10. Their daily specials, Monday through Friday, are a treat for the wallet as well as the palate.



On Mondays, you can enjoy your choice of a beef or cheese enchilada dinner for only \$3.99. Tuesday's meal is the fajita dinner at \$6.99. For a middle-of-the-week treat, taco al carbon is served on Wednesdays for \$7.99. On Thursdays it is chili relleno for \$7.99 and end your week with a delicious helping of fried catfish and shrimp for \$6.99.

The decor of Tio Tony's Mexican Restaurant displays bright colors and cheerful accents. There is definitely an authentic, Mexican flavor to the ambience throughout the restaurant. The festive atmosphere encourages patrons to enjoy themselves while dining. Laughing, J.W. said, "If you are not happy when you come in here, we are going to try and make you happy before you leave. We want everyone to have fun." **NOW**

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One way to feel like you are still on those early wagons is a trip to Palo Duro Canyon State Park. This 30,000-acre park about 25 miles south of Amarillo is one of Texas' natural crown jewels and appears to the visitor much as it did when the first Anglo settlers came to the area. Hike, bike, camp, ride horses, view the canyon's wildlife or cool your feet in a stream, it's all easy to do in the canyon.

In the summer, you won't want to miss the outdoor musical drama *TEXAS*, an epic stage play about the settling of the Texas panhandle performed in the Pioneer Amphitheater with Palo Duro Canyon's walls as the backdrop. Or stay in town to enjoy our newly revamped downtown entertainment district and catch a show or sporting event at the Globe-News Center for the Performing Arts or the Amarillo Civic Center. Choose from a wide array of restaurants along or near Polk St. One of Amarillo's newest hotel properties, the Courtyard by Marriott Downtown in the historic Fisk Building along Polk St., is open and ready.

People always get a kick out of Historic Route 66 along Sixth Avenue between Georgia and Western. Lots of restaurants, shops and boutiques line this stretch of the highway that passed

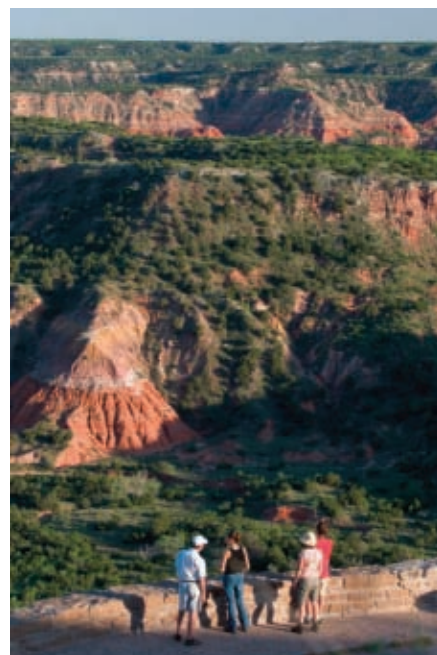
through Amarillo. Shopping for new cowboy boots and a hat? Check out all the Western items at outlets throughout the city.

Amarillo has a great assortment of family-friendly museums. The Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum is like the Smithsonian, but with a Texas accent. The American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame & Museum tells the story of the horse that won the West. The Kwahadi Museum of the American Indian has a collection of Native American art and artifacts and offers performances by the Kwahadi Indian Dancers. Looking for hands-on science and a great education experience for the whole family? Visit the Don Harrington Discovery Center. Finally, the Amarillo Museum of Art hosts eclectic exhibits from throughout the art world.

New this summer were a \$52 million passenger terminal at Rick Husband Amarillo International Airport and a new full service hotel, the Holiday Inn West.

And we've barely mentioned the world-famous Big Texan Steak Ranch (now with a microbrewery), Splash Amarillo (the area's only water park), the World Championship Ranch Rodeo (held each November), the quirky and popular Cadillac Ranch, minor league baseball, hockey and indoor football and motor sports at Route 66 Motor Speedway and Amarillo Dragway. **NOW**

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My Stomach Hurts!

— By Betty Tryon, BSN

High stress levels used to be considered one of the culprits in the formation of gastric ulcers. While stress does have a role to play in the development of ulcers, there are other factors in their formation such as, smoking, diet and drinks containing caffeine. Research, however, shows that the most common cause of gastric ulcers is a bacterium called *Helicobacter pylori* (H. pylori).

H. pylori is a bacterium that inhabits the stomach and causes inflammation. Many people with the bacteria do not know they have it until they experience symptoms and their doctor specifically tests for it. Some of the symptoms of a peptic ulcer indicative of an H. pylori infection are a burning or dull pain in the abdomen, nausea, vomiting, burping and weight loss. The pain in the abdomen is more pronounced on an empty stomach and can be temporarily eased by eating. Although, H. pylori is the No. 1 cause of stomach ulcers, eating spicy foods, smoking, alcohol consumption and stress can make the symptoms worse.

Blood, breath tests and stool are used for diagnosis purposes. The most accurate test for diagnostic is an endoscopy or upper gastrointestinal (GI) series. Because the endoscopy and GI series are invasive procedures, the physician will use discretion before

ordering them since the diagnosis can be made with less invasive procedures.

Treatment goals focus on eradicating the bacteria, reducing gastric acid and protecting the lining of the stomach. One to two different types of antibiotics are used. In certain parts of the world, there exist H. pylori bacteria that are resistant to certain antibiotics. Because these bacteria can be difficult to eradicate and because of the possibility of becoming antibiotic resistant, it is crucial that when prescribed medication for this disease, all of the medication is taken as prescribed. Sometimes several courses of antibiotics are necessary to kill the bacteria.

In reducing gastric acids, medications such as proton pump inhibitors like Nexium or Prilosec and histamine receptor blockers (H2 blockers) are often prescribed. Examples of H2 blocker drugs are cimetidine and ranitidine. By helping to reduce stomach acid and its pain, they help to promote healing. Bismuth subsalicylate (Pepto-Bismol) used in conjunction with antibiotics helps protect the lining of the stomach by coating the ulcers and protecting them from acid. This speeds up the healing process.

If you have been suffering with the symptoms of H. pylori, contact your health care provider. There is no need for endless suffering if the problem can be alleviated in a few weeks' time. **NOW**

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



September is National Osteopathic Physician Month and Adult Immunization Month

DOs and MDs together take the same tests and practice in accredited facilities. Dos, however, belong to a different branch of American medical care and place "wellness" as a priority in care for their patients. They help their patients take more responsibility to make changes in their unhealthy patterns and can perform manipulation of the body. More than 60 % of practicing osteopathic physicians are in family practice, internal medicine, pediatrics and obstetrics and gynecology. Hey adults, you need to look at **your** immunization records to see when last Tetanus was (1 every 10 yrs) and keep annual flu and 5 yr pneumonia vaccines up to date.



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Safe at Home

— By Nancy Fenton

Most of the time, we don't worry about the plants in our yards and homes as long as they look the way we hope. Unfortunately with pets and children around, our choices need a bit more thought. A number of the plants we commonly use are deadly to smaller pets and children. Animal Poison Control Center has a list of plants that are poisonous if ingested, but are common in North Central Texas. They include: aloe, amaryllis, Asian lily, asparagus, azalea, bamboo, caladium, calla lily, cyclamen, daffodil, daylily, Easter lily, elephant ear, English ivy, honeysuckle, hyacinth, hydrangea, iris, lantana, lupine, morning glory, narcissus, poinsettia, oleander, peace lily, privet, tulip, wisteria and yucca.

Animals will often snack on grass and plants if they have a digestive upset, and then throw it up if it is one of the more toxic ones. When in doubt, call the Animal Poison Control Center at 1-888-426-4435 for emergency information.

Toddlers are prone to put anything and everything in their mouths so careful watching is appropriate. The Poison Control number for bipeds is 1-800-222-1222. There is even an app for



your smartphones that will connect you straight to the poison center. Look for it on your phone under poison control.

Don't let this make you throw your plants out, but do be aware of potential hazards for visiting grandchildren and pets! For more information, contact the Ellis County Master Gardeners at (972) 825-5175. **NOW**

Nancy Fenton is a Master Gardener.

**"A 20-minute
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gave me a
lifetime with
my family."**

At age 37, Angie Viscuso got her first mammogram – and a breast cancer diagnosis. "The cancer was so small that I wouldn't have found it by myself," she says. Treated at Baylor, and now cancer-free, Angie's a big believer in early detection. "The mammogram really did save my life."



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Calendar

SEPTEMBER 2011

September 5

Labor Day Holiday
MISD closed

Free Day of Yoga! Contact Dawn Harris at Crescent Yoga Studio at (469) 285-3559 or www.crescentyogastudio.com and/or Lisa Ware at Yoga 4 Love at (469) 437-1334 or www.yoga4love.net.

September 10

Midlothian Chamber of Commerce 2011 Annual Auction and Dinner: 5:30-10:30 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center, 1 Community Circle. Admission: \$40 per person in advance by **Friday, September 2, 2011**; \$50 at the door. Call (972) 723-8600 or e-mail info@midlothianchamber.org.

September 16

The 7th Annual Golf Tournament benefiting the Midlothian ISD Education Foundation: Registration: 10:30 a.m.; lunch: 11:00 a.m.; shotgun start: 12:30 p.m., Mansfield National Golf Course. Food, friends, golf and prizes. Proceeds support Midlothian ISD students and staff. To register or for more information, visit www.misdefgolf.org or call (972) 775-8296.

September 16-18

Antique Alley Texas and 25 Miles of Sales: 9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m., downtown Grandview. There will be an antique tractor show and parade, antiques,

collectibles, art, crafts and much more! Family fun and great food. Call (817) 240-4948 or e-mail info@antiquealleytexas.com.

September 17

Girl Scout and Adult Volunteer Round Up, GSNETX Service Unit #253: 2:00-4:00 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 800 South 9th Street. Contact Johnnie Lipsius, troop coordinator at (972) 754-1320 or johnniekay@sbcglobal.net.

September 23

MISD Homecoming Parade: 3:15 p.m.
(972) 775-8296, ext. 1037.

September 23, 24

Johnson County Antique Tractor and Car Show, Alvarado Old Settlers Reunion Grounds, Alvarado. Featuring a performance by Sonny Burgess. \$5 per carload; everyone in car gets ticket for door prize drawing. Drawing every 30 minutes. Must be present to win.

Ongoing:

Tuesdays

Midlothian Rotary Club meeting: Noon, Midlothian Civic Center, 224 South 11th St. Call (972) 775-7118.

First Tuesdays

The Midlothian Area Historical Society meeting: 7:00

p.m., Community Room, Citizens National Bank, 310 N. 9th St. midlothianhistory@hotmail.com.

Second Tuesdays

American Business Women's Association Midlothian Chapter (ABWA) meeting: 6:30 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center. Guest Speaker Brandi Harrison, Workforce Business Services Solution. (972) 775-1039 or e-mail abwainfo@ymail.com.

Wednesdays

Movie afternoons at Meadows Library: 2:00 p.m. No reservations necessary.

Third Wednesdays

The Ellis County Christian Women's Connection, affiliated with Stonecroft Ministries, monthly luncheon: 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Waxahachie Country Club, located at 1920 W. Hwy. 287 and I-35 East (Exit 401B). Cost: \$13, inclusive. Reservations are preferred. Contact Kay at (972) 937-2807 or windchime423@yahoo.com, or Margaret at (972) 937-1016 or pmestep@yahoo.com.

Third Fridays

Veterans Networking Group For Ellis County: 6:00 p.m., 1804 W. Hwy. 287 Business, Waxahachie. RSVP to Mike Lamb at (214) 763-0378 or vetsnetgrp@att.net.

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your event details to btryon.nowmag@sbcglobal.net.

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In The Kitchen With Paige Diaz

— By Betty Tryon

Paige Diaz's first attempt at baking ended in disaster. After purchasing nearly \$20 of chocolate for a dark chocolate lava cake, she went through a lot of trouble to end up with a cake missing its sugar. "It tasted terrible!" she lamented.

Although baking is her specialty now, Paige likes cooking with the wok. "You turn up the heat really high then throw in veggies, meat, noodles and some soy sauce and stir fry them for a few minutes. I can always make delicious dinners in a very short time." She looks for whatever is in season when shopping. "If I go to the grocery store and I see ripe, juicy tomatoes, I am more than likely to make a dish with those tomatoes, like bruschetta." **NOW**

Ooey Goopy Chocolate Cookies

1 8-oz. pkg. brick cream cheese, room temperature
1 stick butter, room temperature
1 egg
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1 18-oz. box Pillsbury Devil's food cake mix (Do not substitute.)
Confectioners' sugar, for dusting

1. Preheat oven to 350 F.
2. In a large bowl with an electric mixer, cream the cheese and butter, until smooth.
3. Beat in egg and vanilla extract.
4. Beat in the cake mix.
5. Cover and refrigerate for 2 hours to firm up so that you can roll the batter into balls. Roll the chilled batter into tablespoon-sized balls, and then roll them in confectioners' sugar.
6. Place on an ungreased cookie sheet, 2 inches apart.
7. Bake 12 minutes. The cookies will remain soft and "gooey."

9. Cool completely and sprinkle with more confectioners' sugar.

Easy, Delicious Blender Quiche

1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
1/2 cup cooked, cubed chicken
3 eggs
1/2 cup Bisquick
1/2 tsp. adobo
1 dash garlic or garlic powder
1 Tbsp. dried minced onion
2 Tbsp. fresh parsley, chopped
3 cups milk
1/3 cup olive oil
1/2 tsp. paprika

1. Preheat oven to 350 F.
2. Generously grease a 9-inch pie pan.
3. Spread shredded cheese across bottom of pan. Cover cheese with chicken.
4. In a blender, combine eggs, Bisquick, adobo, garlic powder, onion, parsley and milk; blend until smooth.
5. Add olive oil; blend until combined.

6. Pour mixture over cheese and meat layer.
7. Sprinkle with paprika.
8. Bake in preheated oven for 40 minutes. Cool 10 minutes before serving.

Slow Cooker Orange Chicken

1 lb. boneless skinless chicken cut into bite-size pieces
3 Tbsp. flour
1/3 cup orange marmalade
1/3 cup any barbeque sauce
2 Tbsp. soy sauce
1 Tbsp. grated ginger root (fresh if available)

1. Toss chicken with flour in slow cooker.
2. Stir in all remaining ingredients; cover.
3. Cook on low for 3-4 hours or high for 2-3 hours.

Glaze Stuffed Pork Chops

1 6-oz. pkg. Stove Top chicken stuffing mix
1 1/2 cups apple juice
2 Granny Smith apples, divided
6 3-lb. bone-in pork chops, with pocket cut for stuffing
2/3 cup olive oil
1/2 tsp. black pepper
2 Tbsp. brown sugar
1 Tbsp. Dijon mustard or honey mustard

1. Preheat oven to 375 F.
2. Prepare stuffing as directed on package, substituting apple juice for water.
3. Cut 1 of the apples into 1/2 inch chunks.
4. Stir into prepared stuffing.
5. Remove 1/4 of the stuffing mixture and use equal amounts of it to stuff into the pocket of each chop.
6. Sprinkle chops with pepper; set aside.
7. Spoon remaining stuffing into a 13 x 9-inch baking dish.
8. Place chops over stuffing in baking dish.
9. Core remaining apple and cut into slices or rings. Place rings over the chops.
10. Drizzle the chops evenly with 1/3 cup olive oil.
11. Bake 25 minutes or until chops are cooked through.
12. Meanwhile, mix remaining 1/3 cup olive oil, black pepper, brown sugar and mustard in a bowl and microwave for about 1 minute, or until thickened and bubbly. Serve spooned over the apples and chops.



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For a physician referral or for more information about orthopaedic services, call **1.800.4BAYLOR** or visit us online at BaylorHealth.com/WaxOrtho.

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