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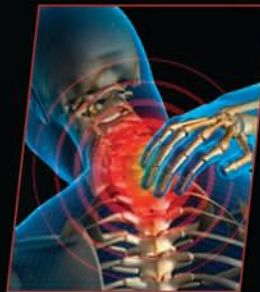
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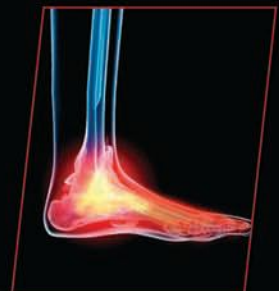
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Red Oak Police Department is gearing up for October's National Night Out crime prevention event.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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Editor's Note

Dear Peter Pan,

I don't know what I want to be when I grow up. Some days I fancy myself a writer. Some days a teacher. In either role I sometimes play counselor — lending an ear or shoulder, depending on if someone needs a confidant or unbiased advice. Every so often, I'm a photographer, and while I don't have much technical skill, I have an eye for what makes a memorable shot.

No matter my day job, I'm always a wife and a mom, and these two roles are ultimately most important. Funny how writing, photography, teaching and counseling can all be in play in my role as wife/mom, as I capture memories of our lives and guide my family through each day. Maybe I am what I'm supposed to be after all ... the heroine of my own confused little fairytale!

Angel

Angel Morris
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STAYING SAFE



— By Callie Revell

Twenty-seven years ago, Nathan Bickerstaff made a drastic career change, leaving his role as a pastor to become a police officer. His interest in law enforcement began during an encounter with a group of officers. “I tried to be involved and touch their lives, but a lot of them responded that I hadn’t walked in their shoes. That inspired me to get into law enforcement,” Nathan explained. “I saw it as an opportunity to reach further out and really be there for people in crisis. There’s such a need for people who care. That was my motivation. I had a desire to help officers and the community.” Since then, he





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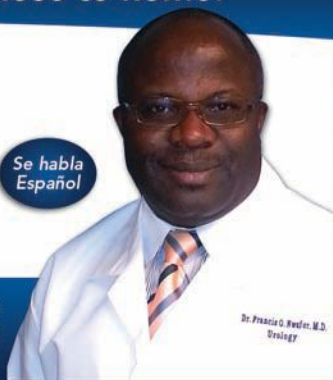
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served with departments throughout Ellis County before accepting a position with the Red Oak Police Department as a detective and crime prevention specialist.

Nathan's work with the police department encompasses many different roles. As a detective, he participates in criminal investigations, but he also acts as an adult protective investigator. Nathan responds to concerns about senior citizens who need assistance and investigates fraud against the elderly. Additionally, he partners with the children's advocacy center to pursue allegations of child abuse or neglect. As a crime prevention specialist, one of his main jobs is to educate the community on preventing crimes like burglaries, kidnappings, assaults and scams. "All officers are crime prevention officers. We don't want to be responders. We want to be preventers," Nathan said. "There are a lot of things people don't think of, like keeping your doors locked on your car or not leaving things in plain view. We try to give them information to make their world a safer place."

According to Nathan, there are many small steps citizens can take to protect themselves and their community. He makes visits to private residences and businesses to survey the property and identify vulnerable points. "Don't put bushes beside entrances and exits," he advised. "Don't create hiding places in landscaping." He also encouraged citizens to invest in proper lighting and locks around their homes and to consider surveillance equipment. He educates business owners about how to prevent internal and external theft. He even addresses worst-case scenarios. "The active shooter is a big issue now," Nathan mentioned. "I've seen a lot of changes in thinking now since we've had active shooters enter places in this country." Overall, Nathan seeks to prevent crime to keep the community safe and help the department run smoothly. "We help citizens help us," Nathan added.

As Red Oak grows, new challenges arise for the police department, and residents need to become more alert. "Crime increases as you grow and more businesses come in. Criminals think a

smaller community that's growing will be full of easy targets," Nathan explained. "Red Oak still has that small-town feel, but we need to move into the mindset of being more aware of our surroundings. It's hard, because most people are used to living in a small community where they know everybody. As the town grows, you won't know everybody, and bigger businesses bring in more people."

Emerging technology has created more tools for criminals. "We've had to learn a lot about technology," Nathan said, mentioning new crimes, such as online identity theft and cyber harassment. He also warns people of the dangers of oversharing online, especially posting pictures of valuables and using a GPS signal that shows when you're away from home.

There are many other ways to support crime prevention in Red Oak. "I'd like to see the community get more involved," Nathan admitted. "If the community will partner with us, we can really be effective at combating crime." Nathan encourages all residents to be observant if they ever witness a crime, so they can pass good information on to responders, but the best thing they can do is to prevent crime in the first place. "People need to get to know their neighborhood, or at least their block, so they know if something is out of place," Nathan said. "Businesses can have meetings with their employees to teach them how to react to crime or prevent it." Residents should also pay attention to who is with their children, including their coaches and their friends. Nathan encourages parents to be involved with their children and keep them busy to prevent them from falling in with the wrong crowd.

National Night Out is another way the community can actively support crime prevention efforts. This annual event takes place the first Tuesday in October, with the intention of increasing awareness about police programs in communities, such as drug prevention, neighborhood watch and other anti-crime efforts. National Night Out began in 1984 as America's Night Out Against Crime. The event continues to promote citizen involvement in crime prevention activities across the nation. In Red Oak, National Night Out is also a chance for citizens to get to know their police department and officers. Those

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who attend this event will walk away more equipped to prevent crime against themselves and their loved ones.

For those interested in becoming more involved with community crime prevention, the Citizens Police Academy offers in-depth education and exposure to the police department. "The academy gives them more knowledge, and they're able to report to us more effectively, because they know what we want and what we need," Nathan said. Participants in the 12-week program must fill out an application before taking the course and becoming official volunteers with the department. An internship experience, the Explorer Program, is designed for upstanding youth who have a desire to have a law enforcement career. "It's vital to have citizens as our partners," he added. "They can understand us, and we can understand them. We can work together."

Nathan's hard work with crime prevention was rewarded when he was named the 2013 Outstanding Crime Specialist by the Texas Crime Prevention Association, for which he currently serves as treasurer. Nathan received the award for his initiative, volunteerism and education efforts. "I was honored to receive that out of all the departments," Nathan said. "Being recognized by my peers and hearing them say I've done a good job was a very humbling experience."

In the future, Nathan hopes to write a book and provide counsel to other officers, especially those struggling to balance work and family. He and his wife, Sherry, have been married for 37 years, a rare accomplishment for a police officer. "We've walked the road, and we're still married," Nathan said. "I want to help somebody else get through this, too."

In the meantime, Nathan and his fellow officers continue searching for new ways to prevent crime. "We're always trying to think outside of the box," he said. "Stay safe out there." **NOW**



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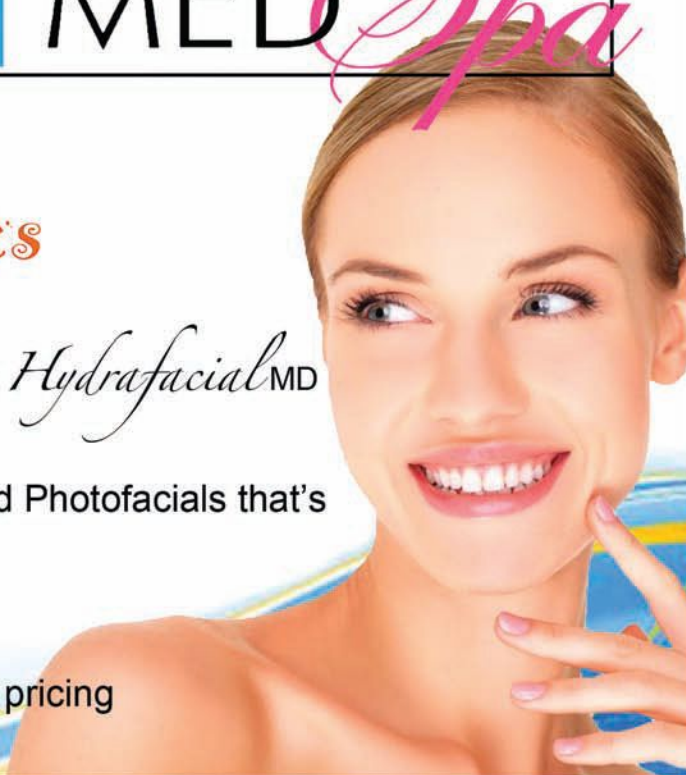
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At Home With Nathan and Courtney Stoutimore

—By Angel Morris



The Glenn Heights home of Nathan and Courtney Stoutimore needed a lot of TLC when they found it, making it the perfect project for the young, artistic couple. Growing up in Red Oak (Nathan) and Waxahachie (Courtney), the couple wanted to remain close to family, so deciding on the fixer-upper wasn't hard. "At the time, I was working in Red Oak, and Nathan was working in North Dallas, but we decided the short commute for me was a nice perk," Courtney said. "Plus, we liked that it was close enough to the city but offered more peace and quiet."

Married in 2008 after meeting through mutual friends, the Stoutimores purchased their home in 2009 and immediately set to work making it their own. "It was a short sale, and the house was in bad shape — so we quickly fixed the basic things so we could move in. Since then, we have been slowly remodeling room-by-room," Courtney explained. "We're always working on something, and the kitchen and upstairs living area are next."

CREATIVE

UPLE

Nathan has done much of the work himself, including the flooring, crown molding, painting, installing whole house audio and more. "I just learned as I went. Installing the floors made me realize I was handier than I previously thought, and the whole house audio was important for working conditions, because we enjoy music. I guess the outside deck was the best improvement of all," Nathan said.

Expanding half the length and almost the full depth of the backyard, the custom wooden deck features a pergola, sitting area and raised stage for the musicians the couple sometimes entertains. "It's great to spend time out there now that the deck is complete. Nathan and I are big music fans and had been to a few house concerts in Dallas and Austin, so we had that in mind when designing the deck," Courtney said.



Singer/songwriters include house shows in their tour schedule for an intimate crowd, usually dinner, and sometimes a place to sleep, after performing for a small group of guests who bring snacks to share in exchange for admission. Organizing such activities is second nature to Courtney, who is the event program manager for Parkland Foundation. "I guess you could say planning parties is my job and my

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hobby. I love organizing events around a theme,” Courtney said. “Even as a child, I remember trying to display our hot dog meals in a creative way, or serving my dad a hors d’oeuvre tray of saltine crackers before he left for work.” That passion plays out in her day job, where Courtney organizes Parkland Foundation’s events for current and prospective donors for Parkland Health & Hospital System. Interestingly, Nathan’s career is also in hospitals, serving as the learning and development consultant for newly hired employees at Baylor Scott & White.

“When we settled in Glenn Heights, I was working at Prosperity Bank in Red Oak, and Nathan was commuting to Irving. Now I’m commuting, and he gets to work from home three days a week,” Courtney said. As a result, one room in the couple’s home is devoted to Nathan’s work — professional and personal. His upstairs man cave/office/music room houses his current projects and pays homage to concerts he and Courtney have attended. “I don’t ask him to clean it, because it’s his one space. It’s crazy in there, but that’s the way it’s supposed to

be!” Courtney said. “Nathan is always exploring different types of art and is always trying something new. He keeps an eye out for interesting things for the house, which I appreciate.”

Outside the man cave is a second living area the couple plans to transform into a media room with theater seats and a projector for family movie nights with daughters, Bailey and Sophia. Bailey’s bedroom of gray and light blue with zigzag accents also joins a guest bedroom upstairs.

The stairwell between floors showcases

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photos of friends and family, along with favorite pieces of art, some made by Nathan and Bailey, and a hallway beside the master bedroom displays family photos taken through the years, well lit by one of Nathan's refurbished chandeliers. Another custom creation is the master bedroom headboard, built by Nathan, with fabric panels and overhead lighting. "I wanted lights for reading and to be able to change out the fabric panels whenever we change our bedroom colors, so this headboard lets us do that," Nathan said.

As much as Courtney likes the headboard, perhaps her favorite piece of art is a painting by Nathan that greets guests near the home's entryway. Using their old coffee table as a canvas, the picture is of Courtney vacuuming. "I don't know what she likes about it more — that it's of her or that it's hinged in a way that lets us hide our air conditioner control or easily lift it to change the temperature," Nathan said.

Another point of pride is a dining room cabinet that was Nathan's grandmother's, in which her china is displayed, along with crystal purchased over time from estate sales coordinated by Courtney's mother. The hutch also houses Nathan's great-grandmother's silver flatware, engraved with the monogram *S* and her wedding date exactly 100 years prior to Nathan and — Courtney's nuptials. "The silver went to my dad and his brother, but my dad bought his brother's half when he learned he was planning on melting it down for the value of the silver," Nathan explained.

Across from the dining room is young Sophia's nursery, painstakingly painted with pale rose and brown striped walls and featuring white furniture. "This room may have required the most planning



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and the most work!” Courtney said, but its concept is in line with the rest of Courtney’s thematic endeavors. “I enjoy things like that — coordinating the girls’ birthday parties, entertaining friends, dinner parties and planning weekend getaways,” she admitted.

Courtney also has a passion for pets and has been involved with a Great Pyrenees dog rescue group in the past. The couple’s own dog, Gracie, is a Pyrenees, and they have one Himalayan cat named Louie.

Courtney, Nathan, the girls and their pets fill the five-bedroom, three-bath, cul-de-sac home they describe as comfortable and open, with a mixture of their personalities.



“We are so busy with our jobs and constant work on the house, and we still have a lot of work left to do, but we enjoy finding unique things and unique ways to make it our own,” Courtney said. Best of all, it has been perfect for entertaining family and friends, which is what we love to do, and I think that has made it a great home for us. **NOW**

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DESTINATION:

I Do

— By Shannon Pfaff

Planning a wedding can be a hectic experience. The preparation can take months, yet the actual wedding day passes so quickly. With all the details that go into planning the wedding, it seems like the honeymoon is the time to recover. Why not get the vacation started early with a destination wedding? A destination wedding can be a unique and exciting way to get married and have a honeymoon all in one shot!

When considering a destination wedding, it may seem like it would be more expensive than having a traditional wedding at home. Depending on the type of wedding and the location, having a destination wedding may actually save money. Many resorts will include the ceremony for free when you stay and have the reception at their location. This will save you from having to find two locations for the ceremony and the reception. Several resorts also offer credits toward the ceremony package to include: flowers, linens, chairs and the officiant, as well as room upgrades for the bride and groom. Some packages even include table settings and the wedding cake. The cost to the couple is the food, drinks and any additional guests not covered by the package.



The expense of the event will also vary depending on the number of guests and any additional activities paid for by the bride and groom. Since you are requesting for people to travel for your wedding, it makes sense to plan some fun for you and your guests. Destination weddings tend to be more intimate affairs with a smaller guest list, which helps keep costs down. While the couple is responsible for the ceremony and reception expenses, wedding guests should expect to cover their own travel expenses. To help their traveling guests, the bride and groom can arrange a flight and room block to help guests with making arrangements. Some hotels offer group discounts when booking several rooms, which will help your guests save money. This is a great incentive to start the planning process early.

Because the party generally pays for their own accommodations, the bride and groom should choose their attendants as soon as possible. Once the attendants are chosen, the couple should inform them of their plans to have a destination



wedding. This gives each person in the wedding party time to set aside funds for their trip. Encourage your guests to book early as well, which will help them save money. Be prepared to make necessary changes if someone you ask cannot afford the trip. If you can afford it, you can always help someone who is in financial need, but this is not a requirement. Consider having a reception



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later on to include those who could not attend your wedding.

If you are planning to travel out of the country, make sure your passport is up-to-date and that you meet all the necessary requirements to get married in that location. Some countries have residency restrictions, so it's important to plan ample travel time to meet the required number of days, if necessary. A wedding planner at your destination is a great tool to help you understand the country's requirements, communicate with vendors, set up travel arrangements and make your dream a reality. A wedding planner close to home is also a great source to help you coordinate your wedding. Whether they help you plan the entire event or just assist you in some of



the details, they can help save time and money in the planning process.

Another wedding professional you should consider hiring is a travel agent. A travel agent can help simplify your travel arrangements. They can research destinations, compare prices, negotiate with hotels, as well as help plan excursions. It's best to select a local travel agent that you can meet personally. When selecting a travel agent, make sure you check their certifications. This will ensure they are certified with credible agencies. You will also want to interview the agent before selecting one. Ask them about their experience and their fees.

Selecting a destination is important in determining the wedding type, travel time and budget for the event. Some popular

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choices are Hawaii, Canada and Europe. If your budget is limited, consider traveling a little closer to home. There are several beautiful locations that are just a drive away.

Whichever location you choose, make sure you research the weather patterns when setting a date. Keep in mind that optimal weather conditions usually coincide with high tourist season, which will mean higher prices. Shoulder season is the best time to travel for good prices and great weather. This is the time that falls between high season and low season when tourists are few and the weather is on the edge of ideal. During this time, resorts are lowering their rates due to receding tourism. The Internet is a great source for understanding the best times to travel to various locations.

Once you have chosen your destination, selected a date, advised your attendants and family, the fun truly begins in the planning process. With all of the major and more difficult decisions out of the way, you are free to think about planning your trip. There will be other wedding details to consider, but you should also think about some fun with your friends and family. Consider planning a welcome dinner when everyone arrives. A destination wedding is a great way for you to celebrate a significant moment in your life. You will be able to spend time with close friends and family and make memories that will be part of the foundation of your future together. **NOW**

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3:00pm: Sherrie McLeRoy, GRAPE MAN OF TEXAS: How T.V. Munson Saved The World's Vineyards

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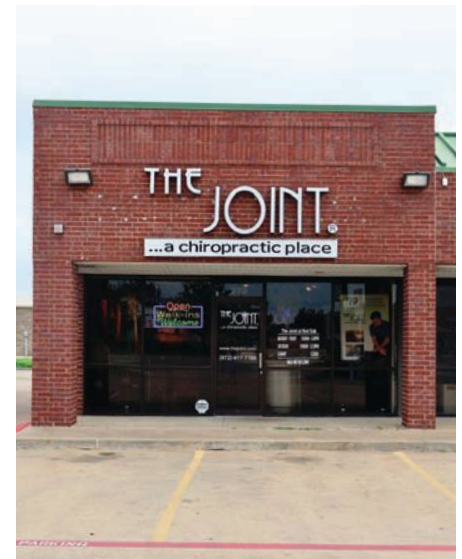


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— By Angel Morris

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"In our bodies, motion is life. A lack of motion in the spinal column or other joints leads to aging less gracefully," he said. "Our goal is to slow down that aging process with the purpose

of improving joint motion in that part of the body with routine chiropractic adjustments."

Dr. Jack encourages people not to wait until they are hurting to consider chiropractic care. "You don't have to be in pain to benefit from chiropractic treatments. Many clients come in to maintain a sense of well-being in their bodies," he noted.

At The Joint, first-time patients can come in without an appointment for the \$19 introductory single visit. Single visits after the first one are \$29 each. Packages of five, 10, 15 or 20 treatments can also be purchased for further savings. Patients can also enroll at any time in one of two membership plans. For example, the Wellness Plan costs \$59 per month for up to four adjustments a month and is a revolving plan that allows patients

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to opt out any time. The Premium Wellness Plan is a six-month revolving plan for only \$49 per month with up to four adjustments each month. Family versions of these plans are also available for even greater savings.

"The biggest difference our office offers is the price you pay for quality health care and that appointments are never required," Dr. Jack said. "This makes it very convenient for our existing and future patients to get the care they need anytime."

Along with chiropractic care, Dr. Jack offers healthy lifestyle recommendations that relate to diet, exercise and nutritional supplements. One of the simplest pieces

"I would suggest that anyone who wants to feel better and improve spinal and joint motion experience a chiropractic treatment."

of advice he offers all customers is to be mindful of posture. "Poor posture leads to spinal column restriction, which affects the nervous system in a negative way causing the body to not function at its optimal level," he said. "Anterior Head Syndrome, in which your head juts forward rather than aligning with your back, leads to long-term muscle strain, disc herniation, arthritis and pinched nerves. That's why the biggest recommendation from this office is to stand tall and sit tall!"

A chiropractor since 1985, Dr. Jack has been at his current location since September 2008 and is proud to be The Joint's only Ellis County location. He encourages everyone to consider the change five minutes a week in his office could make in their overall health. "I would suggest that anyone who wants to feel better and improve spinal and joint motion experience a chiropractic treatment," he said. "Chiropractic care frees up the nerve flow in your body, which causes your body to function better. That's our mission — to improve quality of life through routine and affordable chiropractic care." **NOW**



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James Surtee prepares to serve up the day's special at Norm's Grill in the Main Street Plaza.



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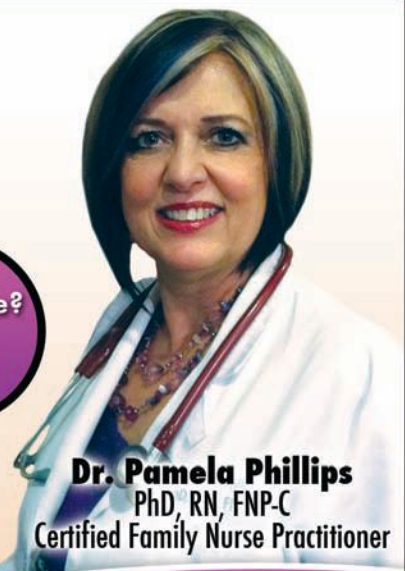
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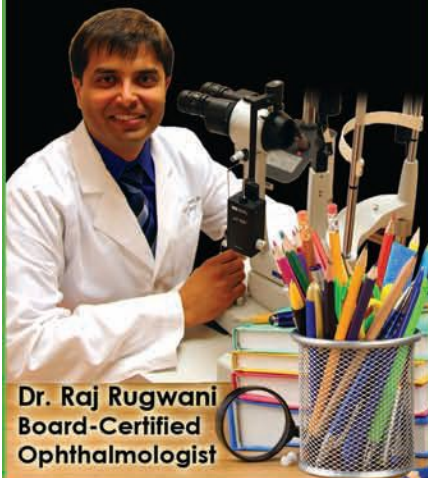
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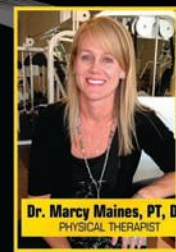
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In the Grip of a Cramp

— By Betty Tryon, BSN

Muscles that contract are doing what they were made to do. A problem occurs when the muscle does not return to a relaxed state. A muscle or muscles can create incredible pain when the contraction continues and becomes a cramp. Involuntary muscle cramps can last a few seconds to almost an hour. Regrettably, on occasion, they can last longer.

We have three types of muscles: smooth, cardiac and skeletal. Smooth muscles line the inner organs in the body. For example, they are what propel food through the digestive system or cause you to regurgitate something unpleasant. Cardiac muscles power the functions of the heart. Smooth and cardiac muscles are involuntary, meaning you can't control their action. Skeletal muscles are voluntary and can be controlled by you. They are what allow you to move your arms and legs at will. The majority of muscle cramps occur in the skeletal muscles. You can see the muscle bunch up and become hard while in the grip of the cramp.

Muscle cramps can be alarming, but they are not uncommon. They occur most often in older adults. Cramps can be caused by a variety of conditions. Injury to a muscle or nerve can cause cramping. Dehydration, cold weather, pregnancy, depletion of certain minerals and deficiencies of some vitamins can be the source of muscle cramps. Overusing a certain group of muscles or even being in one position an extensively long time might trigger cramping. Cramping can be the side

effect of some medications. Medical problems, such as peripheral artery disease, can also be the cause of cramps because of inadequate blood flow to an area.

The treatment for muscle cramps is relatively simple. If it occurs from injuries, then medications such as muscle relaxants and/or anti-inflammatory drugs, may be prescribed. Usually, stretching alleviates the cramped muscle. Relief can also be found with the use of heating pads or soaking in a tub of warm water. Massage can bring a reprieve from the pain. If the disorder is occurring from a medical or physical condition, then that needs to be addressed. If you develop cramps from dehydration, rehydration should solve the problem.

Prevention of muscle cramps should focus on the reason the cramp is taking place. If cramps occur in a calf muscle from running, then stretching adequately before exercise will help. Make sure you are well-hydrated before exercising. For nighttime cramping, stretching before bedtime may help. If you think a medication is causing your cramping, consult your doctor. Do not discontinue medication before seeking the advice of your physician. With a little investigation and preparation, you may be able to keep muscle cramps at bay. **NOW**

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

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Calendar

SEPTEMBER 2014

September 1

Ferris Block Party: 3:00-8:00 p.m., Mutz Park, 201 E 10th, Ferris. Shaw Creek Towne Center's SummerFest ends with a block party! Games, food, music and drawing for a car and prizes. E-mail Meredith@L2-Marketing.com about prize registration.

September 2

342 Morning Networker: 7:30 a.m., Denny's Restaurant, 408 N. I35 Service Road, Red Oak. Breakfast and business owner networking. RSVP to (214) 244-2329.

September 4

Local Author Group: 6:00-7:30 p.m., Museum Room, Red Oak Library, 200 Lakeview Pkwy. A discussion/critique group run by local author Donald Horne.

September 12

Alumni Night: 7:00-7:30 p.m., Goodloe Stadium, 154 Louise Ritter Rd. Current and former Red Oak students are invited to homecoming activities, followed by the Red Oak High School football game.

Movies on the Square: 8:30-11:30 p.m., downtown Ferris. Bring your chairs and blankets for this community show.

September 13

Homecoming and Founder's Day: 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Goodloe Stadium, 154 Louise Ritter Rd. City, School District and Chamber of Commerce host parade, concessions and entertainment celebrating the city's founders. Call (972) 617-0906 for more details.

Red Oak Opry: 7:00 p.m., Lone Star Cowboy Church, 1011 E. Ovilla Rd. Live country and Gospel music featuring several different singers backed up by the six-piece Opry Band. Adult tickets \$10 at door. Visit redoakopry.com for more details.

September 15

Book Club: 7:00-8:30 p.m., Red Oak Library, 200 Lakeview Pkwy. Email sandyg@aircanopy.net for this month's book selection.

September 20

Self-Defense Class: 9:00-10:00 a.m., City Hall, 301 Locust Dr., Oak Leaf. Visit www.oakleaftexas.org to learn more.

September 24

Chamber Luncheon: 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., 200 Lakeview Pkwy. Networking opportunity for businesses. Members with reservations

\$12; members without reservations \$15; non-members \$20. Contact chamberassist@redoakareachamber.org to learn more.

September 27

Ovilla Heritage Day: 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., behind Ovilla City Hall, 105 S. Cockrell Hill Rd. Live performances, food, information and craft booths. For a booth application call (972) 617-7262 or e-mail thompson@cityofovilla.org.

Bristol Opry: 7:00 p.m., Old Bristol Schoolhouse, Union Hill Road at Church Street. Call (972) 846-2211 for more details.

October 4, 5

Annual Fall Festival: St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, 1537 Rogers Ave., Lancaster. **Saturday, 10:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m., Sunday 2:00-5:00 p.m.** Pet Blessing Saturday at 10:30 a.m. followed by food, games, entertainment and silent auction. Sunday includes entertainment, food, raffle drawing and live auction. For more information, e-mail stfran@swbell.net or call (972) 227-4124.

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

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In the Kitchen With David Merton

— *By Angel Morris*

David Merton most enjoys witnessing people's reaction to the dishes he prepares. "I am a self-taught chef with no formal training, and recipes just pop into my head when I see the ingredients I have available," David said. "I previously had the opportunity to cook in a five-star French restaurant at an all-inclusive resort and was really motivated by customers' positive responses."

With encouragement from friends, David once entered a cooking contest and earned first and third place with two of his original recipes. "That inspired me to put together a cookbook of my own recipes, which I've been organizing for the last two years!" **NOW**

Penne Pasta

- 2 cups penne pasta
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 2 Tbsp. butter
- 1/2 medium onion, thinly sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 6 stalks asparagus
- 3 slices cooked bacon, diced
- 2 slices prosciutto, shredded
- 1/4 tsp. tomato paste (from tube)
- 1/3 tsp. black olive paste (from tube)
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1/2 cup tomatoes, diced and seeded
- 1/2 cup fresh Parmesan, grated
- 2 cups fresh spinach chiffonade

1. Cook pasta in boiling water.
2. Heat oil and butter in a skillet. Sauté onion, garlic and asparagus. When slightly softened, add next 4 ingredients. Mix well and season with salt and pepper.
3. Add tomatoes to drained, cooked penne; reserve pasta water. Mix together and add Parmesan; add some pasta water to help make sauce, and stir in spinach chiffonade. Drizzle additional olive oil, to taste, over top.

Chicken With Cucumber Salsa

- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 3-4 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves

Salsa:

- 1 cucumber, diced
- 1 tomato, diced
- 1/2 large onion, diced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/4 cup cilantro
- 1/4 cup lemon juice, freshly squeezed
- 3/4 cup V8 juice
- 1/2 serrano pepper, diced (more if you prefer spicy)

1. Preheat oven to 400 F.
2. Heat oil on stove to very hot in an oven-safe dish with lid.
3. Quickly brown salted and peppered chicken to seal in juices.
4. Mix together all salsa ingredients.
5. Add salsa to browned chicken; cover and place in oven until chicken is done, about 10-15 minutes, until internal temperature reaches 165 F with thermometer.

Crab Cakes

- 4 Tbsp. red onion, diced
- 4 Tbsp. red bell pepper, diced
- 1/2 tsp. jalapeño, minced
- 1 tsp. whole or coarse grain mustard
- 1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1/2 tsp. Tabasco sauce
- 2 Tbsp. mayonnaise
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1 egg
- 2 slices white bread, crust removed, finely diced
- 1 lb. jumbo lump crabmeat
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil (enough to cover bottom of skillet about 1/8-inch deep)
- 1/2 stick butter, melted

1. In a large mixing bowl, combine first 10 ingredients, mixing well.
2. Fold in crabmeat, being careful not to break it up too much.
3. Form into 8-10 cakes.
4. Heat oil and butter in skillet and brown cakes for about 3 minutes per side.
5. Finish in 300 F oven for about 8 minutes, brushing with melted butter, twice.
6. Serve atop favorite leafy greens.

Easy Crème Brûlée

- 1 quart heavy cream
- 1 vanilla bean, split and scraped
- 1 cup sugar (divided use)
- 6 large egg yolks
- Hot water
- Fresh berries, your choice

1. Preheat oven to 325 F.
2. Place cream, vanilla bean and pulp into a saucepan over medium heat and bring to boil being careful not to boil over. Remove from heat. Take out vanilla bean; cover and let stand 15 minutes.
3. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together half of sugar and egg yolks until it starts to lighten in color. Add cream a little at a time as to not scramble eggs. Pour liquid into individual ramekins. Place ramekins into roasting pan and pour hot water around until halfway up ramekins.
4. Bake about 45 minutes until crème brûlée is set but still trembles in center.
5. Remove ramekins from roasting pan; refrigerate at least 2 hours.
6. Remove from refrigerator at least 20 minutes prior to serving. Place even coating of sugar on top, using a torch to brown sugar to crispy cover. Serve with your favorite fresh berries on top.

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