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Logan Dyer and Jeremiah Cuellar
start a new tradition for
Mt. Peak Elementary

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Publisher, Connie Poirier

General Manager, Rick Hensley

EDITORIAL

Managing Editor, Becky Walker

Midlothian Editor, Betty Tryon

Editorial Coordinator, Sandra Strong

Editorial Assistant, Rachel Smith

Writers, Toni Ingram . Virginia Riddle

Tim Tobey . Zachary R. Urquhart

Editors/Proofreaders, Pat Anthony

GRAPHICS AND DESIGN

Creative Director, Chris McCalla

Artists, Kristin Bato . Morgan Christensen

Martha Macias . Brande Morgan

Shannon Pfaff . Michael Richardson

Felipe Ruiz . Anthony Sarmienta

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography Director, Jill Rose

Photographer, Amy Ramirez

ADVERTISING

Advertising Representatives,

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Billing Manager, Angela Mixon

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Darrell and Joanna James take a moment to relax in front of their home.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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Editor's Note

Hello, Midlothian!


My fun and carefree summers tended to end with a big blip on the road to happiness. When my kids were younger, my blip was back-to-school shopping. I would take all three on the tax-free holiday weekend, and every year I'd tell myself, "Never again!" Somehow, I'd always forget that declaration until the morning of school shopping arrived. I would be reminded really early why


I said that every year. Before anyone was even remotely thinking about getting in the car, Lauren yelled, "I call shotgun!" Outraged, the boys mounted a spirited and vigorous protest. That was as good as it got all day. We eventually returned home tired, hot, cranky and hungry. My reward was they all started school properly dressed and prepared, and just like other parents, I hoped and prayed they would have a good school year.

For everyone starting school, I hope this will be your best year ever!

Betty

Betty Tryon
MidlothianNOW Editor
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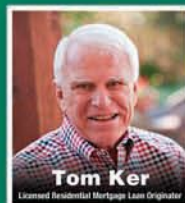
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ONE POLE, MA

— By Betty Tryon

In the early morning hours before school on September 24, 2014, with some of the students still reconciling their bodies to being awake, a small team stood alert, excited and eager for the day to begin. Three nine-year-old Mt. Peak Elementary School students, Brylee Stewart, Sloan Short and Jeremiah Cuellar had decided to make history on their campus and start a new tradition — See You At The Pole.

On the fourth Wednesday in September in every time zone around the world, millions of kids gather around the flagpole at their respective schools at 7:00 a.m. to show unity for each other and unity in Christ during the annual SYATP event. Though SYATP began in 1990, Mt. Peak Elementary had never participated in this global day of student prayer. The event is student-led, but the beginning of the idea for Mt. Peak Elementary came from Donnelle Cuellar, Jeremiah's mom, who is also the nurse at the school. She spoke to her son about it, and he thought it would be a good idea to have a SYATP event at the school. In the beginning stages of planning, "Jeremiah called to set up a meeting and set up an agenda," Brylee informed. Present at the initial meeting were Jeremiah, Brylee, Sloan and their moms, Donnelle, Stephanie Stewart and Laura Short. As a student-led event, the adults only provided assistance with some insight as what to prepare. The kids then brainstormed about which task each would be responsible for.

"Sloan, Jeremiah and Brylee all know how important prayer is," Stephanie shared. "They pray, on a daily basis, with their family and on their own. For them to have the opportunity to organize an event that encouraged all of their friends and fellow classmates to join them in prayer was simply an awesome thing.



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Being able to step up and put their faith and leadership skills into action was a great gift."

One of the items on the agenda included the idea of T-shirts for the occasion. "We sold 60-70 T-shirts," Sloan said, "and we wore them every Wednesday before SYATP." The kids also advertised in the neighborhood to expose more kids to the event and to also alert parents of when the event would take place.

"It was very encouraging to watch Sloan, Jeremiah and Brylee work side by side to put this event together," Stephanie shared. "Because of their age and this being the first time Mt. Peak Elementary participated in SYATP, as their moms, we gave them a few ideas on how to organize it. It didn't take much from us. From ways to advertise the event to organizing the schedule for the event itself, the kids did it all. They were so excited to be able to make this their own and to work together to make SYATP a success. It really wasn't about the numbers but the glory it gives God."

Even though the event was not about the numbers, the first SYATP event for their school produced about 80 participants and spectators. Beginning at 7:00 a.m., Jeremiah, Brylee and Sloan claimed the attention of everyone there



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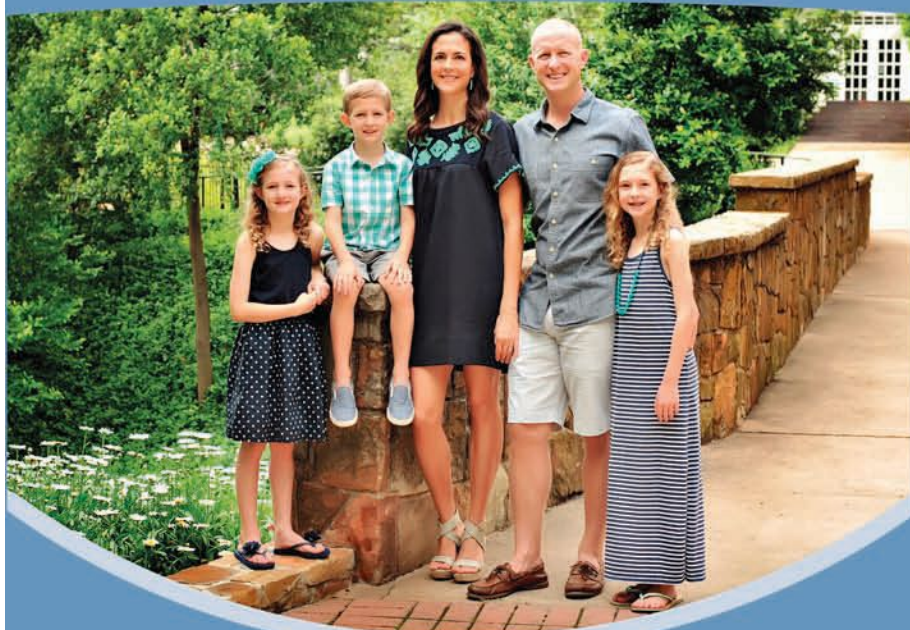


Sloan Short, Brylee Stewart, Logan Dyer and Jeremiah Cuellar began a new tradition for their campus.

with the school's bull horn. Jeremiah opened up the occasion and explained the purpose of SYATP. After informing the crowd of the designated group leaders, the kids divided up, joining the group with the leader of their choice, and voiced their prayer requests. In addition to Brylee, Sloan and Jeremiah, others who joined them as group leaders were



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Logan Dyer, Lindy Gaither, Hannah Hill and Neeley Robertson.

Just because they are children does not mean they are not weighed down by very heavy issues and are not searching for help. "We got prayer requests and prayed in a big group," Sloan said. "One of the girls in my group asked for prayer for her dad because he lost his job. I kept praying for him constantly after she told me."

"It was impressive how seriously the kids took this at their ages. It was pretty neat," Stephanie marveled.

Praying was not the only activity in the groups. Some sang songs and/or read Scripture. Brylee read Scripture in her group. She had consulted with her dad, Bryce Stewart, the night before to come up with an appropriate one for the occasion. After the reading, "I asked for prayer requests going around the circle," she recalled. "It was really beautiful how everyone opened up in prayer, just like a flower."

"That's what we did," Sloan described. "We shared prayer requests and went around the circle. If someone didn't want to pray, they would squeeze the hand of the person next to them as a signal to pass it along so everyone had the chance to pray if they wanted to."

After prayer, the smaller subgroups came together again to form a new, larger whole group for a final closing prayer, after singing another song. And with that, the first SYATP at Mt. Peak was complete. But, if things go as planned, this will only be the beginning for the event at their campus. The kids hope this will be something that will continue at the school and become a yearly tradition.

"We will meet September 9, after school, to plan for the second SYATP

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this year," informed Brylee. "The meeting will be open to any fourth- or fifth-grader who wants to help lead a prayer group. More information will go out the first week of school."

"This year, we are hoping it will be bigger and better, so when we leave Mt. Peak, after sixth grade, our brothers and sisters will continue with this," Sloan said hopefully.

"I think we will be group leaders again, because we now have experience doing this," Brylee added. "It was important to do this because of all the Christians around the world who gathered around the pole."

Sloan felt SYATP is important because some Christians at the school get to connect with other Christians there. "Some students who were not Christians could be involved and get to ask questions, and that could lead to more relationships with Jesus," she smiled.

"This event is not just a chance to share Christ with others," Stephanie mused. "Its main focus is to simply pray. Being an event that is student-led, requires us, as parents, to step back and let the kids show the world what they can do. How awesome it was to see over 80 young people, their parents and Mt. Peak staff joining together to lift up praises and give glory and honor to the One who created us." **NOW**



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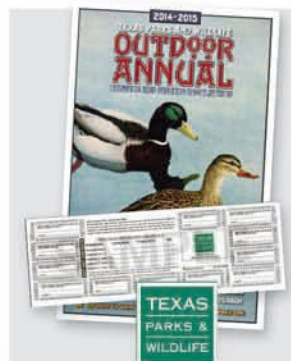
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Attractive Fit

— By Betty Tryon



Not many people know what it is like to be called one of the beautiful people, but Scott and Dawn Slavens do. It is not a title they asked for or cultivated. But because they are so physically fit at the ages of 46 and 43 respectively, they do inspire others. However, it was not always this way.

Mutual friends brought the two together in Kansas City, Kansas, where they were both born and raised on the Kansas side. After dating for five years, they have now been married for 21 years. The couple moved to Midlothian from Kansas City and according to Dawn, they love it here.

"We were looking on the Internet for a place to live and liked the home values and the schools in Midlothian," Scott ventured. "We thought this would be the perfect place with easy access to DFW and Houston because I travel quite a bit as an insurance adjuster."

Scott admits he had been out of shape for a while before becoming serious about his health. Because of his travels with his job, he found it easier to eat fast food and do a minimal amount of exercise. "I would do just a quick lifting of about 25 pounds," he admitted. "When I turned 39, I had a physical and weighed 230 pounds! That woke me up, and I started eating right, running and lifting."

Dawn ran track in college where she studied human development and family life, earning a degree in liberal arts. "It took me 10 years

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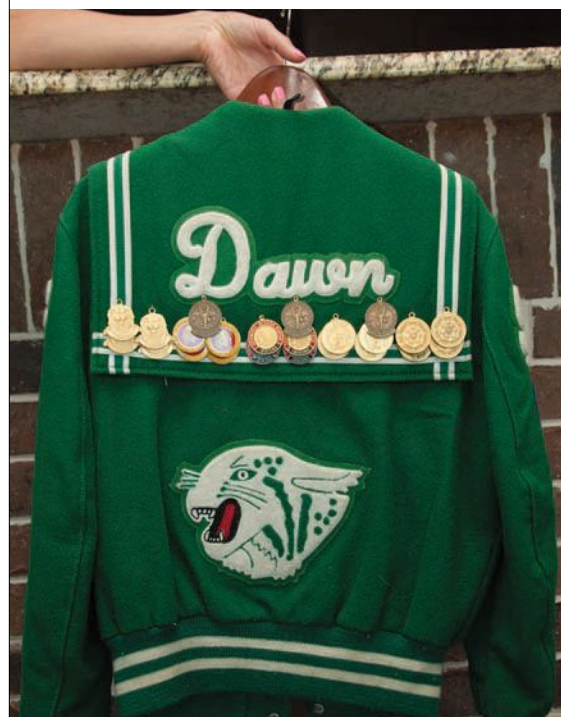
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after college to figure out what I really wanted to do," she shared. "I went back to school and received my certification in doing echocardiograms."

After moving to Midlothian, they joined a gym and began working out. Part of Scott's exercise regime was to run, but he began having complications. "Dawn approached me about a muscle-building contest after the trainer spoke to her. My body was starting to hurt from running, so I was happy to do something else. And I had always wanted to put on more size. The only cardio would be low impact. However, the trainer told me that if I



wanted to build muscle, I had to stop running. I was concerned my belly would come back,” he laughed.

When Scott made the decision to compete in a muscle-building contest, Dawn joined him. “We are both very competitive,” she said. “The trainer actually encouraged us to do this. It helped that we were already into lifting before we started the competition prep. It was a new experience for both of us, and we helped each other out. We would moan and groan about what we had to eat together,” she laughed.

They were on the same diet but with different proportions. Vitamins and protein supplements were added. The diet itself was heavy on protein and carbs. “We were coached in what to eat,” Scott explained. “We had to eat clean to build muscle, not fat. You can lift and lift and never change if you don’t watch your diet. I didn’t gain a lot of size but my body definitely changed. We trained for four months before the competition.”

For Dawn it was hard to get in there and get motivated with the most challenging part of the training. “Diet is the biggest thing. It was hard to stay away from sweets that we liked to eat,” she confessed. “When I was around pizza or something else I couldn’t eat, all I could do was just look at it and smell it because you can’t cheat.”

Anyone on a diet would probably recognize it as a challenge to stick to the specifics of the plan. However, meeting your goals has its own rewards.

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"Once you get in there and start pushing yourself, you'll see results," Dawn stressed. "They say not to look at the scales and that the best way of knowing how your diet is going is how your clothes fit. As far as training, the diet helped me develop more muscle, and I got stronger. I lost body fat and got leaner."

"We had to eat clean to build muscle, not fat. You can lift and lift and never change if you don't watch your diet."

The couple's hard work paid off because in their first competition in Oklahoma City they both placed. Dawn competed in the bikini division and took sixth place. "I had a posing instructor. It was very awkward because I don't usually stand that way or walk in 4-inch heels. I was nervous! I was fine back stage, but once I was on stage I thought, *What am I doing?*" she said. "I have a few memorable parts of the show. One was the transformation of my body, hair and makeup. I felt beautiful. I loved that all of our family came to OKC to watch us perform, even though they did not exactly understand or know what we were doing. I plan on doing another one at some point."

Scott placed third and received a sword on his first attempt. He confessed to feeling nervous, too. "When I was on stage, I was shaking. I didn't like to put myself in front of people like that. I was very shocked when I took third, and to me, that made all the hard work worth it!"

In order to qualify for third place, he had to be in the top three in height division. That placement qualified him for nationals, and that level's categories are divided by height. He qualified in the men's physique category for nationals, which will be held in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania. It's titled National Physique Committee, or NPC. Participating at that level is a goal many aspire to because if you compete there and get first place, you are able to go professional and make

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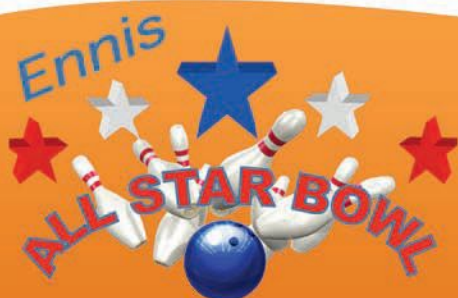
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Scott and Dawn ready for a contest.



money. "That is my goal, but I know it will take time and effort," Scott admitted.

Scott and Dawn recognize that for those who wish to improve their physical health and shape, it won't be easy. "If you are up for a challenge with diet and exercise this is for you, but it is very addicting," she acknowledged. "You have to follow a very strict diet, and exercise six days a week twice a day — cardio in the morning and weights in the evening. Your prep is about three to four months before the show. However, if I can do it, you can do it. You will not be disappointed."

"The advice I would give to people who want to compete is that although you have to work very hard in the gym," Scott said, "the diet is the biggest and hardest part of it. If competing is something you want to do, there are no excuses. No matter your age or shape, anyone can meet their goals." **NOW**

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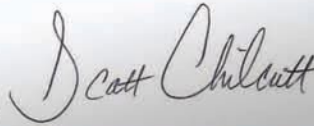
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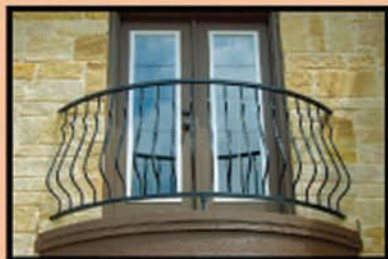
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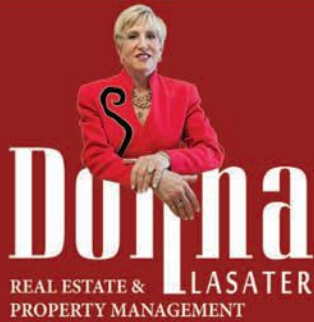
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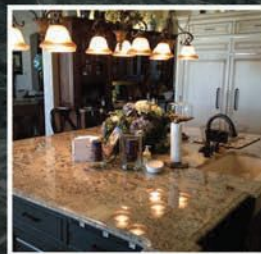
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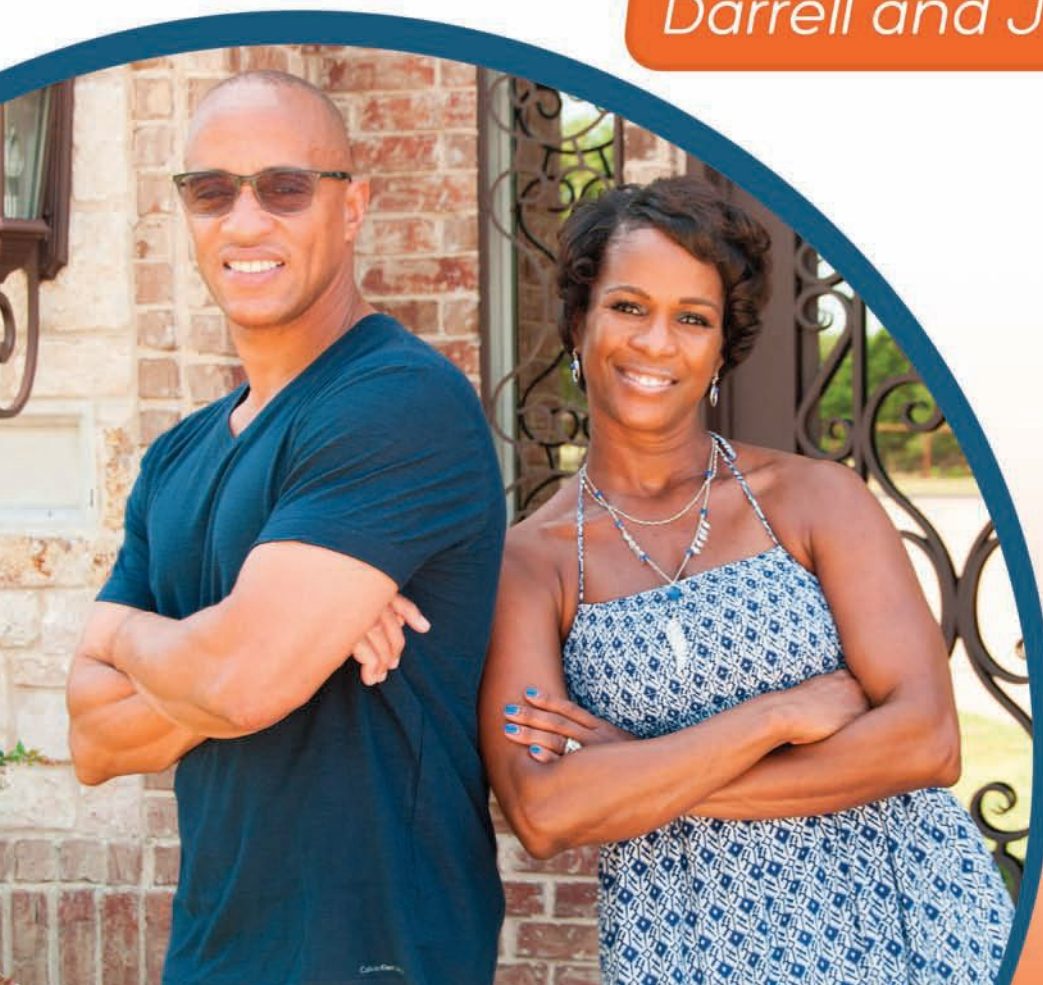




Seeing the Vision

— By Zachary R. Urquhart

AT HOME WITH
Darrell and Joanna James



Twenty years ago, the northern part of Midlothian just south of Cedar Hill consisted primarily of 100-acre farms owned by holdovers from the city's ranching heyday. But in the last two decades, many of these landowners have started parceling their huge lots to developers and families moving into the area. Those early new residents were coming to open fields and pastures, and it took vision to see what Midlothian would one day become. Darrell and Joanna James have plenty



of vision, and they are sure that moving into those flatlands was one of the best decisions they have ever made.

Darrell grew up in Corpus Christi. After high school, he joined the Navy, which is how he ended up in the Metroplex in 1986. "I spent the first several years in Norfolk, Virginia, then they stationed me in Dallas as a recruiter at the Naval Recruiting District," he explained.

Joanna grew up in Marshall, Texas, but moved to Grand Prairie at a young age and attended Grand Prairie schools. "I graduated from South Grand Prairie, and right after high school, I met Darrell," she detailed. When she met Darrell, they started a life together and became business partners after he finished his

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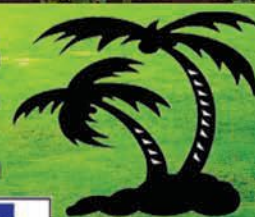
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service with the Navy. They have run a few successful companies for almost three decades, and currently own James Enterprises and Darmar Investment LLC.

Darrell and Joanna were married in February 1991. They first lived in Grand Prairie before moving to the southwest area of Dallas County. They have three adult children and five grandchildren. Tasha lives in Kansas City, Damien lives in Cedar Hill and Brittini lives in DeSoto.

Because they live so close, Damien and Brittini's families visit often. "After church we have family fun day Sundays, and the kids and grandkids come over most weekends," Joanna detailed.


Thirteen years ago, they decided they were ready for one more move. "I was driving around in the country between Cedar Hill and Midlothian before there was much of anything developed," Darrell remembered. "I saw this land and knew it would be the perfect spot. I made a handshake deal, and we built this place in 2003." Though the area was lacking development, Darrell knew what it could one day become. "I liked the openness and the land. It's perfect. It is the best place we could be."

Joanna was slower to come around, however. "Honestly, when we first moved, I didn't see the vision, but I'm glad he did," she admitted. Now, having lived in their 5,300-square-foot home on 2.8 acres for over a decade, she has more than come around. "I like that we are away, but not too far away," she said. "I love the area, the space. I love everything about it."

The house is set off of the road a bit, and an ornate gate displaying a large letter J offers the first touch of personalization seen throughout the home. "We did everything ourselves," Darrell said. "We picked every color and every design throughout the house." A long driveway winds up to the home after passing several kids' play structures and a beautiful gazebo just inside the property's entrance.

From the foyer, there are available views of a quaint sitting area, a leather-







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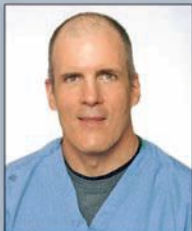
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furnished TV room, windows to the land
in back and a home gym. "That used to
be our home office," Joanna laughed.
"But we are big gym rats, so we made
it a workout space." Darrell and Joanna
have a small den ideal for hosting a few
guests. Next to that sits a dining room
somewhere between casual and formal.
In lieu of overelaborate furnishings, a
simple, warm, circular table is centered
between four padded, comfortable chairs.

The dining area blends into a large
kitchen, resplendent with granite
counters, multiple sinks and cozy views
of a second dining area and the large
living room. "We like to go out on the
weekends, but during the week we use
our kitchen almost every night," Joanna
said. Their kitchen nook has a long,
sophisticated table that is ideally suited
with seating for their ever-growing
family. The living room is well-appointed
with plush leather couches directed at a
fireplace and large screen television.

To the side of the living room, a
splendid staircase leads to the upstairs
rooms. "Each of the bedrooms has its
own bathroom, which was good when
the kids were here," Joanna continued.
"And we let them choose their own
paint, so there are a lot of colors up
here." Along with what used to be
kids' bedrooms, a guest room and a
billiards room, the upstairs includes
a tasteful theater room. "When the
grandkids are here, this is a perfect spot
for watching movies or playing video
games," Joanna remarked.

Back downstairs, the uniqueness of
their design is most obvious in Darrell
and Joanna's master suite. The bedroom
is decked out in shades of brown that
offer an elegance and coziness. The large
size of the sleigh bed and furnishings
contrast the generally casual style of the

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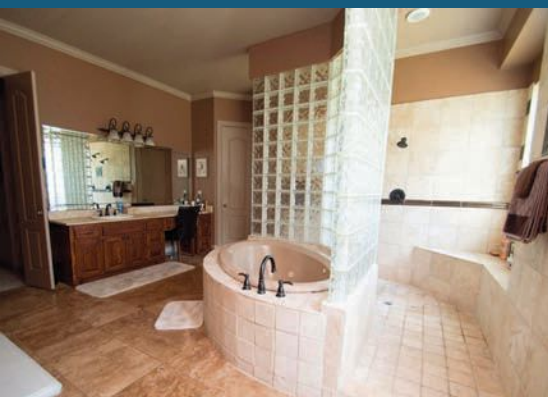
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furniture itself. Windows offer more views of the open backyard. And the visual center of the room is a fireplace with double access to the bedroom and master bath. The bathroom is almost separate from the bedroom, and has several features of note. Split sinks and closets are in opposite corners of the room, and the bathtub sits in front of



a wall of opaque glass partially hiding a huge, wall-wrapping shower.

As remarkable as the house is, Darrell and Joanna's favorite aspect is probably the outside. "We have space. I love having to walk a little to get to our neighbor's house," he said. They made sure to build in plenty of seating in the back, with a full-length back patio including multiple seating options. As for the land itself, the first part of the back is flat and open. "We had our plumbing redone so we can add a pool at some point," Joanna shared. They added a simple blacktop road that winds past the field, through a section of trees, culminating in a small creek bed.

A decade ago, it took vision to see what small-town Midlothian was becoming. Many people may have shied away from building a colossal home in the midst of empty scenery. But Darrell and Joanna had the ability to see just how perfect their new home could be. **NOW**

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— By Sandra Strong



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Shelley Huskins soon learned of Vicki's desire, and she too felt the need to do something to help others. Soon thereafter, the two ladies got together to discuss the endless possibilities. "We really didn't know what we were getting into," Vicki said, referring to the first few months. "The need was so much greater than we imagined."

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Isabella Day with trophies for the Golf Tournament fundraiser.

Brooke Foster. Penny was diagnosed with leukemia as a kindergarten student. Brooke, at age 16, was diagnosed with Stage IV Osteosarcoma. Both of these recipients lived in Waxahachie.

As the second year of the organization got underway, a third member came on board, completing the heart and soul of Our Sunflower Friends. Sharon Hawthorne also realized there was a need, and she had a yearning to do something more than sit on the sidelines. "I had an unrelated connection with one of the first-year recipients, and I also knew of another little girl who needed help," Sharon explained. "I fully believe God brought our different talents together to form this group of caring women."

Each of the three brings something different to the table, that when added together, makes for a mighty strong team. Vicki, who grew up in Waxahachie, graduated from Midlothian High School and now resides in Italy, is the PR person, and she has a spirit that doesn't give up or take "no" for an answer. She is also the face of the organization. "I'm a good talker," she admitted. "I have a passion for the cause for several reasons."

Shelley, from Italy, comes with an extensive background in education. In her day job, she is an oncology nurse. She comes with the knowledge of the diseases the group will face as they continue to grow their organization. "I have a personal base of friends and colleagues I can call upon," Shelley said. "This organization means so much to me. I can't close my eyes to the needs around me."

And last but definitely not least, Sharon, from Red Oak, comes with the experience to complete the necessary paperwork. She arrived with 30 years' experience in a legal environment. "I know how to organize and prepare



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papers for filing,” Sharon confided. “I had the resources at my fingertips to get the nonprofit status we needed early on.” The group incorporated as a nonprofit under the name Our Sunflower Friends and obtained tax exempt status from the IRS. A ribbon cutting was held for Our Sunflower Friends on March 26, 2014, at the Waxahachie Chamber of Commerce offices.

What they do as a group is a true labor of love. They have seen the families they have served go without so many personal things to care for their loved ones — those battling an illness as well as those who have remained healthy. Each of the women feels called to do what they are doing, and honestly, they wouldn’t have it any other way. “Until now, I think I must have been living under a rock,” Sharon confessed. “There are so many people with needs, who are living right under our noses.”

“What we do is so time-consuming and intensive,” Vicki said, “but it’s necessary. It’s definitely a calling.”

“It’s all about stomping the pavement,” Shelley stated. “It is a lot of work with very little glory, but it’s all worth it when you see the faces of the families you help.”

The second-year recipients who are currently benefiting from Our Sunflower



An advertisement for Southern Star Foot & Ankle. The top half features a large, detailed image of a human foot. To the right of the foot is a blue outline of the state of Texas with a white star in the upper right corner. Inside the star, the text 'Southern Star Foot & Ankle' is written in white. Below the foot, the text 'Now accepting NEW PATIENTS in Midlothian!' is displayed in a mix of blue and black fonts. To the right of this text is a photo of Christopher D. Schmitt, DPM, a man in a blue shirt and striped tie, holding a model of a foot. Below his photo is a text box with his name and title: 'Christopher D. Schmitt, DPM Associate, American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons'. At the bottom, the address '1441 S. Midlothian Pkwy, Ste 120 Midlothian, TX 76065' is listed, along with the location 'located behind Vintage Bank in Baylor complex' and phone/fax numbers '972-755-4620'. The website 'southernstarfootandankle.com' is at the bottom, and a Facebook icon is in the bottom right corner.

An advertisement for Pistols & Pearls Fine Western Wares. The top half features a rustic interior scene with wooden shelves displaying various western items like hats, boots, and bags. The text 'PISTOLS & PEARLS FINE WESTERN WARES' is written in a large, ornate, white font across the top. Below this, the text 'LADIES, MEN'S AND CHILDREN'S APPAREL' is written in a bold, white font. A large, black and white coupon with a dashed border contains the text '10% OFF Regular Priced Items' and 'With ad. Exp. 9/30/15'. At the bottom, the address '2210 PLAINVIEW RD • MIDLOTHIAN' is listed, followed by the website 'WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/PISTOLSANDPEARLSTX' and the phone number '469.612.5044'.

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Friends are Isabella Day, from Red Oak, and once again, Brooke. Isabella and her twin sister were born on July 25, 2011. At her regular 9-month checkup, the pediatrician found a mass in Isabella's stomach. Test results showed she had Stage IV Neuroblastoma. She is still courageously battling the disease.

After a year of extensive chemotherapy and treatments, Brooke's doctors discovered that a large, softball-sized lump had redeveloped above her right knee. The tumor she'd been fighting had not only returned, but it was four times its original size. Because of this recurrence, the group chose to benefit her family for a second year.

Many events are held throughout the year for the recipients and their families. In May, the group held a community garage sale, a charity golf tournament and the Painting With a Purpose event. In September, they are planning to host a huge bake sale. The largest fundraiser each year is a family festival held in October. This year, it will fall on Saturday, October 3. The benefit concert and show will also include silent and live auctions, a 5K run/walk, classic car show, chili cook-off, children's events and much more. "There are so many opportunities to get involved," Vicki said. "There really is something for everyone."

As they reminisce about the events that have taken place thus far, they are still in awe of the giving spirits found in Ellis County. In early December 2014,

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the group conducted a "Fill the Boot for Brooke" campaign where they stood on a busy street corner in Waxahachie. "We had collected over \$7,000 dollars in just four hours," Vicki said. "It was crazy good!" At last year's bake sale, a man wanted to give all the money he had in his wallet as a donation.

All the money received at each of these fundraising events goes back to the families —100 percent! The money is given to the two families to pay expenses as they see fit.

"There are so many sad, yet wonderful stories," Sharon said. "Every story brings hope, and God is found in each one."

Vicki, Shelley and Sharon found their purpose, their true destiny and so much more in Our Sunflower Friends. The future goal is to grow to a size that will allow them to meet the needs of more than two individuals a year. Vicki and Sharon, both closer to retirement than Shelley, are looking to make this a full-time mission.

"Love is the purpose and the main goal," Vicki stated.

"God equips the called," Sharon said. "Paying it forward does make a huge difference."

"We are setting examples for our children and grandchildren," Vicki added. "There's no better lesson than giving back to those in need. One person really can make a big difference in the life of another." **NOW**

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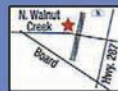


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A woman with red hair tied back, wearing a light blue patterned tunic over a grey long-sleeved shirt and blue jeans, stands in a lush green garden. She is holding a large, shallow wicker basket filled with fresh vegetables, including leafy greens and root vegetables. The background is filled with various green plants and trees, creating a vibrant garden scene.

 GROWING A 

Winter Garden

— By Virginia Riddle

As September nights start to take on that “fall’s coming soon” feeling, gardeners might consider their hard work to be over for the year, except for harvesting the last of the summer’s bounty. While letting the soil rest after the first frost and throughout the winter months is a choice, gardeners this far south can enjoy planting cold-weather vegetables and herbs, which can’t be grown during the hot, late springtime and even hotter summers. September is decision-making time.

Should you start closing down gardening for the year or start thinking green for winter and enjoy growing food for the table well into the coming year?

Take a Break, But First ...

Fall and winter crops have a better flavor, since they are not under the stress of the summer sun. Fewer insects and diseases also help their growth. Those second plantings of tomatoes in August are going to taste great in November. Keep on a regular watering and feeding schedule and enjoy the bounty of

vegetables that results from cooler fall days and nights.

With the approach of the first predicted frost, protect container-grown plants by covering them or storing them temporarily in a protected place. Veggies from your last harvest can ripen when set on paper towels in window sills or, in the case of green tomatoes, enjoy using them in chow-chow (relish) or fried green tomato recipes.

As plants die during the summer and into the fall, gardens have space to fill. Before retiring a garden space until spring, plant a winter cover crop — rye, wheat, oats, ryegrass, hairy vetch or legumes. Sow between August and mid-October, so the roots will become established before the first freeze. These plants hold in soil and will add organic matter back to the soil when tilled under in the spring.



Clean, oil, sharpen and repair garden tools before storing. Follow manufacturers' instructions for storage of all power equipment.

Planning Your Cold-weather Harvest

As the fall nights cool, it's the perfect time to get winter crop seedlings started. Cool winter plant choices center on roots and leafy veggies and herbs: kale, spinach, Brussels sprouts, Swiss chard,

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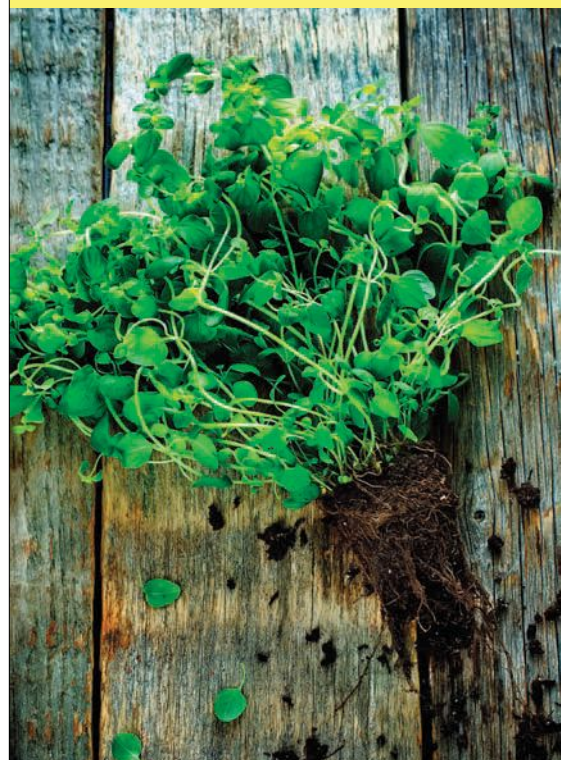
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While rain might be plentiful in the winter, keep a water source handy for occasional dry periods. Plant roots will not freeze as easily if the surrounding ground is watered prior to a freeze. Remember to feed the winter crops every two to four weeks with a well-balanced fertilizer.

If a severe winter is predicted, spend some time this fall by building and/or collecting some season extenders. Repurposed old shower doors and glass window frames along with hay bales for insulation become cold frames. Hotcaps or *cloches* (the French word for bell) are mini greenhouses, which retain the warmth from the sun and protect the plant from being covered in frost. Plastic milk jugs with cut-away bottoms or garage sale plastic

punch bowls make great *cloches* to protect low-growing greens. Another, but more expensive protective solution is to build hooped row tunnels and covers. Detailed instructions, photos and videos for all of these suggestions can be found on the Internet.

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Culinary herbs can be grown in pots that can be easily moved inside when temperatures dip below 40 F, or they can become a true kitchen garden by setting pots on the kitchen counter or in a sunny window sill. Keep the plants watered and use a mister on the leaves to keep them from drying out in the heated house. Turn each plant every day for even growth. Once plants reach 4-5 inches

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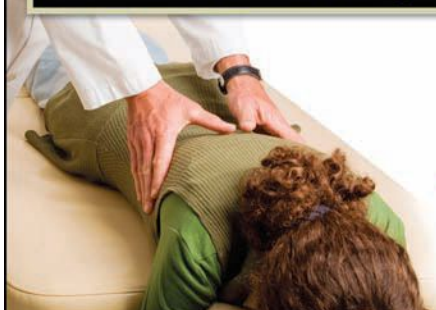
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Planning the Spring Garden

As days get shorter, it's time to think of next spring's garden. What worked well this past season, and what new crop will be included for next year? Did the family enjoy eating fresh veggies? If so, think of adding fruit and nut plant varieties to the garden between December and February, the dormant time span for most fruit and nut plants in Texas. These months are also the time to prune fruit trees that are already a part of your garden plan and to build frames for berries. The most popular fruit and nut varieties — blackberries, blueberries, figs, grapes, pears, plums, strawberries,



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The Waxahachie Autoplex team goes out of their way to make their customers happy.

Dealer Friendly

Waxahachie Autoplex tries to give everyone a reason not to look elsewhere for a car.

— By Betty Tryon

Waxahachie Autoplex won the highest honor for Ford dealerships for the first time in 2014. That honor came after much effort for the customers who benefited from the dealership. “We sell over 350 cars a month,” Wes Spence, general manager informed. “The reason for our success is we aren’t on TV or do high-pressure sales. We don’t do hard negotiating back and forth. That is not allowed. Our Google ratings and our reputation ratings are extremely strong.”

Matching their skill and salesmanship to what customers prefer is something the dealership actively cultivates. “We understand that not everyone enjoys visiting a car dealership,” Wes shared, “so, we try to make it easier. We even deliver to their homes!” He estimates that about 25 percent of their customers

sign for their cars on their kitchen tables. The price doesn’t change and the payment doesn’t change because of this service. This amenity generates a lot of referral business with many of the automobiles being delivered to far away cities such as Houston, Austin and San Antonio.

“If you know you want a new, white Mustang, instead of shopping all around Houston, we will make a deal to sell it to you on a Ford invoice,” Wes explained. “We don’t do any game playing because if you come out here, you will pass up about 20 dealers, and we want to sell to you.”

Waxahachie Autoplex houses a Dodge-Chrysler Jeep store and a Ford store. They have over 300 selections of pre-owned cars. “We sell a lot of high-end cars such as BMWs and Mercedes,”

Wes stated. "Our pre-owned cars have over a hundred point inspection, clean CARFAX and are certified. We have a philosophy that we will not sell you a bad pre-owned car. However if it happens and we can't fix it or take care of it, we try to help customers by finding something different."

"We are very people friendly."

They realize that the consumer can buy anywhere they choose. The dealership has 22 lenders to shop for the best interest rates possible, and the savings are passed along to the customer. Another bonus for purchasing a vehicle from Waxahachie Autoplex is the maintenance the dealership offers free of charge. "Any car you buy from us whether new or pre-owned gets a two-year maintenance program," Wes stated. "All you have to do is put in gas or diesel and we do the rest for two years. We do this for customer retention. We do everything in our power to get your referral and get you back in our store doing business with us."

His efforts are paying off as the business grows. A great location helps also. "The growth of Waxahachie and this county is unbelievable," Wes exclaimed. Recently, they had a ground breaking ceremony for the new addition, which will house all new Ford sales and service and the accounting office. The current building will become a used car super center, which will create 30-40 more jobs with plans to have additional jobs in the future.

Wes attributes Bobby Malatia, the operations manager, and many of the managers with the success of the business. "We are very people friendly. Our philosophy is to make every customer happy. We go out of our way to do that." **NOW**



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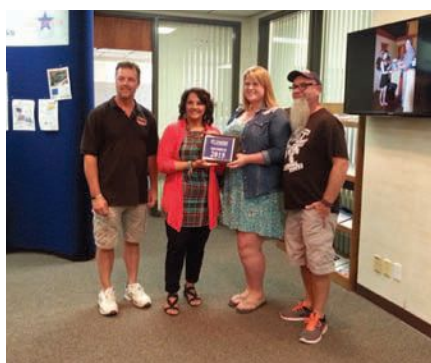
Midlothian Chiropractic & Therapy hold a ribbon cutting ceremony.



Channel 8 features Midlothian cheerleaders at Victory Park for an Independence Day celebration.



Savvy Bobeme hosts an after hours skin seminar for customers.



C.E.R.T. trainers Sharon Wrobel and Gordy VanSteenberg participate in a recent training.

106.9 The Ranch accepts their Chamber plaque from Cammy Jackson.



Texas Search & Rescue team members greet people at the Mid-Way Airport Fly-In Pancake Breakfast.



Jeff Honeycutt accepts a Savvy Bobeme gift from Keri Lehmann at the Midlothian Chiropractic & Therapy grand opening.



Seniors enjoy a day of fellowship and games at Midlothian Senior Citizens Center.



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Protect Your Home-based Business

More than half of America's businesses are home-based, according to the U.S. Small Business Administration. But setting up headquarters in your home doesn't mean your homeowners insurance will adequately protect your operation. "A typical homeowners policy provides about \$2,500 of coverage," says Loretta Worters, vice president of communications for the Insurance Information Institute. That usually will cover equipment, but it won't offer liability protection or cover you for lost data or income.

Do your research to protect yourself and your home business. "An important thing for any business owner to do when starting out is to create a business plan," says Worters. "That includes having the right type and amount of insurance coverage."

Coverage Options

In general, home-based business owners have three basic options:

- **Homeowners policy endorsement:** This is added to a homeowners policy to increase coverage on business equipment. There also may be the option to buy a homeowners liability endorsement for protection in the event someone — say, a delivery person — is injured on your property.
- **In-home business policy:** An in-home business policy provides more comprehensive coverage for business equipment

and liability than a homeowners policy endorsement. These policies, which may also be called in-home business endorsements, vary significantly depending on the insurer.

- **Business owners policy:** Also called a BOP, this plan offers the most comprehensive coverage for small- and mid-size businesses. It protects against many of the same things that in-home business policies do, but offers even more coverage.

Other Considerations

Being a savvy home-business owner is about more than having the right insurance. Other factors to consider include:

- **Additional insurance:** Re-evaluate your coverage as your business grows and your needs change.
- **Zoning laws:** Visit your local planning office to review restrictions that could affect your business.
- **Licenses and permits:** Find out which licenses and permits you need to run your business legally.
- **Taxes:** Talk to a tax professional about tax laws for home-based businesses. Also research money-saving deductions, such as the home office deduction.

Not sure if you're adequately protected? Meet with your agent to discuss the insurance needs of your home-based business. **NOW**

Tim Tobey is a State Farm agent based in Midlothian.

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An Unexpected Reason to Take a Closer Look at Your Child's Tonsils

Approximately 500,000 tonsillectomies are performed in the U.S. each year. And while the number of these procedures has dropped significantly in the last 30 years, it still remains the second most common childhood surgery — but not for the same reasons you, or perhaps your parents, had the procedure. Rather, 80 percent of tonsillectomies are now performed to open a child's airway, while chronic tonsillitis only makes up 20 percent.

What do tonsils have to do with a child's airway, and why do we need to open them up? When a child has chronically enlarged tonsils, they can partially (or completely) obstruct a child's airway when the child is asleep. Just as excess weight or a very large tongue can cause obstructive sleep apnea in an adult, large tonsils can cause sleep apnea in a child. Sleep apnea can cause a host of medical complications in a child's developing body, including ADD/ADHD, poor performance in school and bedwetting well past potty training.

Whether or not a child with enlarged tonsils has true sleep apnea, they will very likely develop into mouth-breathers at night, and sometimes during the day as well. Mouth-breathers are likely to still not be getting adequate oxygen to their brains, preventing them from performing their best at school. Also, because their air

is not properly filtered through their noses, they are more likely to have seasonal allergies and frequent colds.

In addition, when a child's mouth is chronically open, it can drastically affect the development of their mouth, face and jaw. The most visible changes could be dark circles under the eyes, as well as a recessive chin and an elongated lower face, as the jaw will grow downward more than outward. The roof of their mouth will develop more narrowly, furthering their likelihood of sleep apnea. It may become difficult for them to close their lips when their teeth are together.

When their mouths are open at night, saliva flow will decrease, and bacteria have longer to flourish. These children will often build up heavy plaque on their front teeth, and they are more likely to develop cavities. If you see some of these signs and symptoms in your child, or notice that they have very large tonsils for a long period of time, talk to your child's dentist or pediatrician to determine if they should see an otolaryngologist. **NOW**

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Calendar

SEPTEMBER 2015

September throughout October 3

The Midlothian Market (formerly Midlothian Farmers Market): **Saturdays**, 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., or until everything is sold, Larkin Newton Cabin.

September 7, 14, 21, 28

Celebrate Recovery meeting: 7:00-9:00 p.m., Lighthouse Coffee Bar, 1404 N. 9th St. A Christ-centered recovery program designed to help those struggling with hurts, habits and hang-ups.

September 7, 19, 30

9th Annual DFW Free Day of Yoga: **9:30 a.m.**, Gentle Yoga; **10:45 a.m.**, Beginner/Intro to Yoga 101; **Noon-1:00 p.m.**, Open House Potluck Party with sales, healthy snacks, demos, and music; **4:45 p.m.**, Mix Level Yoga Class; **September 19**: 9:00 a.m.-1:00 a.m. for 108 Sun Salutations. **September 30**: 7:00-8:15 p.m. global yoga and meditation practice concluding National Yoga Month. Crescent Yoga Studio & Boutique, 812 Alex Ln. Bring a friend. Sign up online to hold your spot in classes at CrescentYogaStudio.com

September 12

Kimmel Park Centennial Celebration: 10:00

a.m.-2:00 p.m. Kimmel family honored. Food, music entertainment and activities will be available to celebrate the 100th birthday of the historical park.

September 19

2015 Annual Auction: 4:30 p.m., The U.S.S. Southern Legend will set sail at **5:30 p.m.** Highlights of the cruise include: Casino (for entertainment purposes only), photo booth, delicious buffet provided by Mo & Hari's Italian Bistro, silent and live auctions, raffle and loads of fun. For information, contact the Chamber at (972) 723-8600 or info@midlothianchamber.org.

Movie In The Park: *Dolphin Tale 2*: 7:30 p.m., Hawkins Spring Park, 1498 FM 1387. Bring lawn chairs or blankets and coolers for snacks/drinks. The concession stand will be open.

Pet Adoption Event: 9:00-11:00 a.m., Wal-Mart Garden Center Entrance, 400 N. Hwy 67. Monthly adoption event. Animal Shelter pets available for adoption will be in attendance. Contact (972) 775-7614 for more information.

Imperial Brass In Concert organized by Waxahachie Symphony Association:

7:00 p.m., 1200 Sycamore, Waxahachie. Southwestern Assemblies of God University (SAGU) Hagee Center SAGU can be found just south of the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex in Waxahachie. For event and ticket information, please visit www.waxahachiesymphony.org.

October 3

Paws for Reflection Ranch Round Up Fundraiser Event: 6:30 p.m., 5431 Montgomery Rd. Dinner, drinks, dancing, silent auction and live music from The Pontiax Band. Adult only event. Tickets available at the Ranch. Contact information: PawsForReflectionRanch.org, PawsForReflection@att.net or call (972) 775-8966

October 17

Midlothian Annual Fall Festival and 5K Run: run begins **8:00 a.m.**; festival opens **9:00 a.m.**

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



Ovilla Heritage Day

September 26 • 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

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- Do you take medications for knee pain?
- Are you considering surgery to alleviate knee pain?
- Have you suffered a knee injury during a sporting event?
- Does your knee ever feel like it is "giving way" or unstable?
- Has a recent car accident caused you a knee injury?
- Have you had a direct blow to the knee from a fall?

Consider these facts before surgery.

People who suffer from knee pain typically try supplements or pain medications before seeking help from a doctor. When all else fails, and the pain is too much, some feel that surgery is the only option. Before you put yourself through months of immobility, pain, rehab and hefty medical bills, consider something else.

How do I know that this is right for me?

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Looking for the country feel but wanting a spacious custom-built home with all the upgrades? Well this is it! This beautiful 4-bedroom, 3-bath home features a split-bedroom design and open floor plan throughout the living areas. The living room has hand-scraped wood floors and features windows looking into the backyard. The master has its own fireplace and the master bath is a must see! All of this on a 2-acre treed lot with a creek!



Often sought out, but hardly found! This beautiful 4-bedroom, 2-bath home features a great, flexible floor plan. Fourth bedroom is oversized and would make a great office! Beautiful hardwood floors and crown molding! The kitchen features granite counter tops, SS appliances and tiled back splash. The lot is private and features a wood privacy fence with room for the kids to play or to add a shop! Outside City Limits!



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In the Kitchen With Ashley Phimm

— By Betty Tryon

Ashley Phimm's inspiration for cooking stemmed from a very simple and primal need. She was hungry! "I enjoy cooking because I personally love eating, but who doesn't?" she shared. Ashley has only been cooking for a year but has already found great success in helping the Practicum team she cooked with at school attend state competition. She credits Lauren Fraga, her instructor, for the achievement.

Ashley likes to use ingredients in her recipes that may be foreign to most American cooks. "My parents are from Laos, so the ingredients I use sometimes affect my cooking." However, she willingly shares her culinary experience. "I'll cook for anyone if I'm sure they would like my cooking!" **NOW**

Chocolate Pecan Pie

Dough:

10 oz. all-purpose flour
1.25 oz. sugar
1.25 oz. salt
4 oz. butter
2 oz. ice water

Filling:

4 oz. light corn syrup
4 oz. dark corn syrup
8 oz. granulated sugar
3 eggs
1 tsp. vanilla bean paste
6 oz. pecans, chopped
6 oz. semi-sweet chocolate chips
6 oz. pecan halves

Topping:

12 oz. heavy cream
3 oz. confectioners' sugar
1 tsp. vanilla bean paste

1. Dough: In a food processor, combine flour, sugar and salt; pulse to combine. Add butter; pulse until mixture resembles coarse meal, with just a few pea-size pieces of butter remaining. Sprinkle with ice water. Pulse until dough is crumbly but holds together when squeezed with fingers. To help ensure a flaky crust, do not over process.

2. Transfer dough (still crumbly) onto a piece of plastic wrap. Form dough into a disk 3/4-inch thick; wrap tightly in plastic. Refrigerate until firm, at least 1 hour. Roll out crust and place in the bottom of a pie plate.

3. For filling: Combine the first five ingredients in the bowl of a stand mixer and blend, using the paddle attachment until combined.

4. Gently fold in chopped pecans and chocolate chips. Pour mixture into prepared pie shell and top with remaining pecan halves in a circular pattern.

5. Topping: Place all ingredients into the bowl of a stand mixer. Use the whisk

attachment to whip cream mixture until very thick and creamy; top pie.

6. Bake at 350 F for 1 hour or until it is set. Let cool before cutting.

Vietnamese Meatball Soup

Meatballs:

1 lb. or less ground turkey
1 Tbsp. shallot or onion, chopped
1 Tbsp. fish sauce
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 Tbsp. ginger paste
1 lime, zest only
1 small bunch cilantro leaves, chopped
Salt and pepper, to taste

Broth:

1 qt. beef stock
1 qt. chicken stock
2 tsp. chili paste
2 tsp. ginger paste
2 Tbsp. soy sauce
1 Tbsp. honey
Salt and pepper, to taste
Fish sauce, to taste

Noodles:

8-oz. to 12-oz. rice noodles, soak or boil according to package directions and set aside.

Bean sprouts, to taste

Carrots, julienned, to taste

Cilantro, chopped, to taste

Green onions, chopped, to taste

1. For meatballs: Mix all ingredients; form into meatballs and set aside.

2. For broth: Combine all ingredients and bring to a boil. Add meatballs and simmer about 10 minutes until cooked through. Remove meatballs.

3. For noodles: Soak or boil noodles according to package directions. Set aside until meatballs are done.

4. When ready to serve, place noodles in bowls along with bean sprouts, carrots, cilantro and green onions. Cover with broth and add meatballs. Garnish with additional cilantro.

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

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518 Valerie

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109 Traveller St., Waxahachie

Beautiful pre-owned Megatell home in Saddle Brook. Energy-efficient 4/2.5 with bonus room. Open floor plan with tons of upgrades, granite countertops, stainless steel appliances, butler's pantry and more. \$267,000



215 Willow Creek Ln., Ovilla

This attractive home offers great space for any size family. Big backyard with pool to beat the summer heat and sun room for the year round gardener. Spacious living room with wood burning fireplace. Lots of cabinets in the kitchen and wet bar in den. Oversized master bedroom with private covered porch. There is even a storm shelter to stay safe during our crazy Texas weather! This home has so much to offer and it all sits on over an acre.

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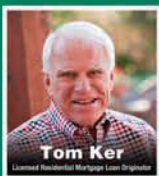
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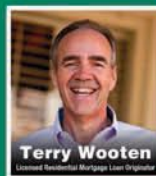
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