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SEPTEMBER 2018

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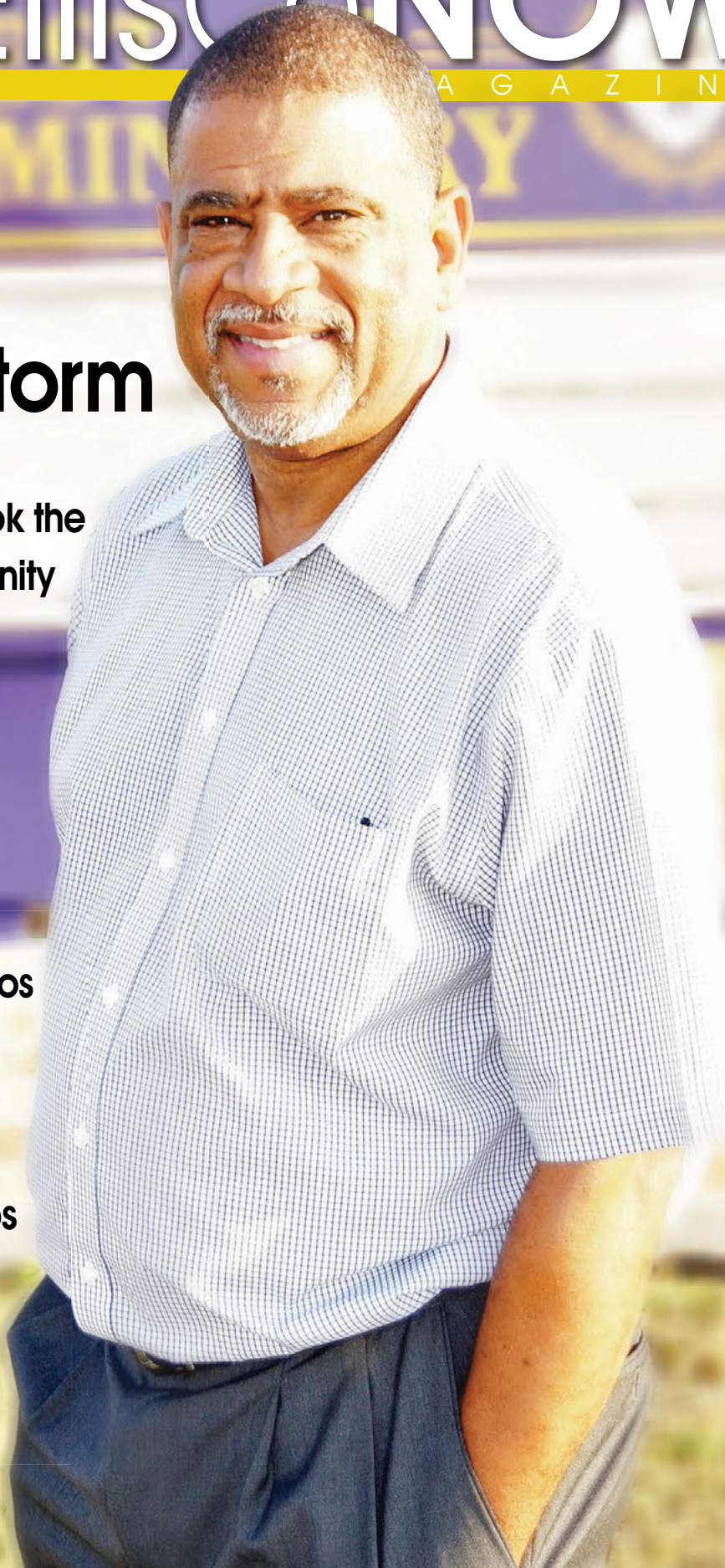
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love of a whole community

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At Home With Juan Carlos
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7:00 am - 8:00 pm - Ellis County Elections Office, 204 E Jefferson St., Waxahachie, 75165
8:00 am - 8:00 pm - A.H. Meadows Library, 922 S 9th St., Midlothian, TX 76065
8:00 am - 5:00 pm - Boze Community Center, 161 W Main St., Italy, TX 76651
9:00 am - 6:00 pm - Ferris Public Library, 301 E 10th St., Ferris, TX 75125
10:00 am - 6:00 pm - Ennis Public Library, 501 W Ennis Ave., Ennis, TX 75119
11:00 am - 7:00 pm - Red Oak Public Library, 200 Lakeview Dr., Red Oak, TX 75154

Check your voting status by calling the Elections Office.

October 9th is the deadline to register to vote in order to be eligible to vote in November.
Get a voter registration application at a local City Hall, Tax Office, Election Office or Election Website.

General and Special Elections Tuesday, November 6, 2018

Early Voting begins October 22nd - November 2nd
Election Day polls will be open from 7:00 am - 7:00 pm

Visit the website for a complete listing of polling locations, sample ballots and more.

Elections Office: 204 E. Jefferson Street, Waxahachie, TX 75165.

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ON THE COVER

Harvest of Praise's new church is a testament to faith and community.

Photo by
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EDITOR'S NOTE



Sally

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There's no time like the present ...

September marks the end of summer, although in North Ellis County, it usually doesn't feel that way. My summer was filled with T-ball games, swimming pools, family cookouts and several rounds of out-of-state guests — a whirlwind of activity! Gazing at the picture of fall leaves on September's calendar, I fight the urge to unpack my favorite sweaters. It's far too early for that in Texas.

This time of year, I find myself dreaming of autumn's cooler days and fighting the temptation to leapfrog over September and land in October with its promise of orange foliage and brisk breezes. I'm able to rein myself in by thinking of all North Ellis County has to offer in September.

I never fail to run into old friends and make new ones during Founders Day in Red Oak and Heritage Day in Ovilla. My refrigerator door is dotted with football, soccer and T-ball schedules. Few things compare to the excitement of hometown high school football or a 4-year-old "sliding" into home plate.

In North Ellis County, September is more than friends, fun and games. Opportunities abound for helping others this month. Fundraisers for children's cancer research, Alzheimer's research and the community of young adults with learning disabilities or special needs all happen in September, proving again that this really is the best place full of the best people.

And now really is the best time!



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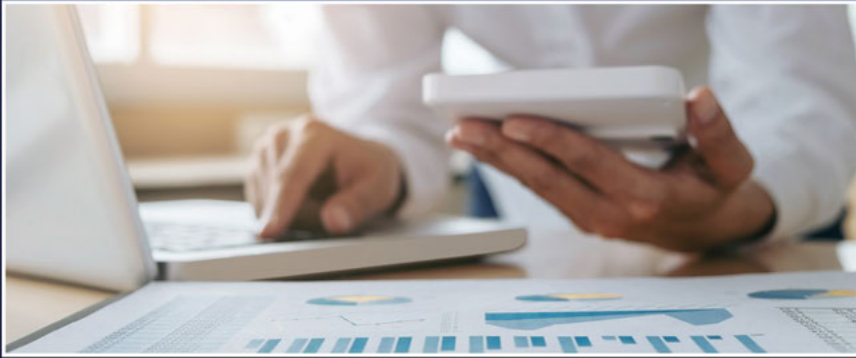
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AF

— By Rick Mauch



Sometimes, it's what happens after the storm passes that matters most. Pastor Kevin Taylor can attest to this. In December 2015, he and his wife, Debra, had just returned from an out-of-town trip to celebrate her birthday. Upon getting back to town, he decided to run by his church, Harvest of Praise in Glenn Heights, to do a favor for a friend. As he was disarming the alarm, he kept hearing a funny sound. Then he saw a message on his phone. It was his brother telling him to get out of the weather — but it was too late.

“The doors and the glass started bending. It was only then that I realized I was in a tornado,” Pastor Kevin said. “All the ceiling tile fell on me. I began to call for my wife, who was still in the truck, and she shouted back that she was all right.

“All the air handlers and everything from upstairs got sucked out instead of caving in. If all that had fallen on me, I probably wouldn't be here.”

The church he and others had built in early 2000 was gone. But just how bad the damage actually was didn't set in until the next morning, which was ironically a Sunday when he would normally be leading worship services. “I had the members meet me, and when I drove up and saw it, it finally hit me. I said, ‘Oh my God, it's all gone.’ I thought, *Where do we go from here?*”

They prayed, cried and got to work. When they were finished, they had replaced their 6,000-square-foot church with one that is 17,000-square-feet.

First Baptist Church of Red Oak offered its old gym as a place for the Harvest of Praise congregation to meet for a year. Pastor Kevin and Harvest's members knew the First Baptist facility was going to be sold, so that the one-year period was the maximum length it was available. The proverbial clock was ticking.

That's when Ambassadors for Christ in Red Oak stepped up. They offered a place to worship for Harvest of Praise until the new church was finished. “It showed that we're not as far apart as some might think we are when it comes to churches,” Pastor Kevin said. “This showed me churches can come together. It forged some relationships with people we're glad to call friends. The Church of the Nazarene also got hit, and people came to their aid.

“It's sad these things happen, but it's great to know that we are there for each other. And, after all, we're all trying to get to the same place after this life anyway, aren't we?”

Many others also came to the aid of Harvest as they worked to get into their new home. Pastor Kevin said among them were Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship in Dallas,

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Friendship West Baptist Church in Dallas and even the Billy Graham Crusade. “Folks really poured in to make sure we had what we needed, from sandwiches to hot coffee,” he said. “And donations came from all over, all the way from California and New York, from people I’ll never meet in my life.

“And our membership here did a wonderful job of making sure we got back up. We lost a few, but we also gained a few, even though we weren’t meeting in our own place. Through it all, we came out and were still OK.”

It helped that Pastor Kevin has contracting experience and was the general contractor on both the original and the new church. With the help of church member Greg Rhodes, a quality control specialist for the federal government, they were able to get a new church nearly three times in size for about half the estimated cost. “Nothing came in under \$2.8 million in bids, but we were able to do it for about \$1.5 million,” Pastor Kevin said. “Greg was an angel. I had so much on my plate, and when I couldn’t call a vendor, for example, I knew he’d pick the right one. I could call him in the middle of the night, and he’d step up.”

Greg said he was simply doing what he does best for a church he loves the most. He said it also makes being in their new home even more special, knowing members played a big role in making it a reality. “It gives you an ownership. You have skin in the game,” Greg said. “We can look at what we accomplished without taking



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the traditional route. It also gives children and grandchildren something to be proud of, and you can tell them that this is proof that you can accomplish anything you set out to do if you have the mind to do it. We're a small body but look what that small body did."

Pastor Kevin said the city of Glenn Heights also did its part to help Harvest of Praise rebuild. He commended Mayor Leon Tate and former City Manager Aretha Ferrell-Benavides, saying they "literally walked the street, making sure everything was done right to help us. The city of Glenn Heights has been nothing but a diamond. The neighbors, the firefighters, police department - everybody wanted to pitch in and help."



The new church has a large sanctuary, along with many other amenities they didn't have before, such as a fellowship hall that seats 150, a fully equipped commercial kitchen and a baptismal area. There's plenty of space for child care, and even a small bookstore. The church has purchased some land next door and plans to build an elementary school. Future plans include buying land on the other side to someday build a retirement community for church members and others.

"I had to do everything I could to hold back the tears when we first met in our new home," Pastor Kevin said. "I had such a feeling of graciousness. It felt so good to see how excited we all were, and so many people came out to celebrate with us." **NOW**

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Over the Rainbow Happens

— By Virginia Riddle



Mexico City natives Juan Carlos and Yessica Gutierrez dreamed big and worked hard to come to the U.S. Now North Ellis County homeowners, their hard work and over-the-rainbow dreams have paid off. “For many years, we had wanted to come here to find something better for our children,” Juan Carlos said. “Our house and neighborhood park are real miracles.”



At Home With Juan Carlos and Yessica Gutierrez



Trained as a civil engineer in Mexico, Juan Carlos felt the call to follow his parents into a career in education. He became a seventh grade math teacher, and when he heard he could earn his Texas teaching alternative certification through an online Region 4 Education Service Center program, life beyond the rainbow became a real possibility for the family.



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Juan Carlos and Yessica met during their church's youth mission trip. "We had known each other through church, but we really started talking on the 16-hour trip on a very old bus," Juan Carlos recalled. "I played the piano, and we served the people during that trip, but we also spent time with each other. One year later, in 1998, we got married." They're now the happy parents of Isaac (16) and Dani (13).

Juan Carlos earned his teaching certification, and by May 2014 had secured a third grade bilingual position with Golden Rule Charter School in Dallas. That summer, the family moved to Texas. A psychologist in Mexico, Yessica was supportive of the move. "We had money saved, and we brought pictures, but everything we were taking had to fit into our car," she recalled. "I felt like a newly married person, because we bought everything new after we arrived."


"It was a 20-hour trip with the dogs, Penny and Drake, the kids and Yessica!"

Juan Carlos added. Since the move, the family has added two cats, Minnie and Toby. "Our cats are American citizens," he quipped.

Juan Carlos and the kids are doing well with English, and Yessica is working to perfect her language skills. Now a stay-at-home-mom, she finds ways to practice her new language through volunteer activities with the Red Oak Public Library and the Ovilla Garden Club. "I want to eventually start working with kids in some way," she said. She and Juan Carlos are members of the Red Oak Book Club, and he recently was accepted as a member of the library board.

This year, Juan Carlos was named Teacher of the Year at Golden Rule School. He and Yessica are just as proud that in 2014, Red Oak ISD voted him Father of the Year. "Dani wrote a note in Spanish on how hard it was to be here and study and how much I had helped her," Juan Carlos said. Both awards have places of honor on their master bedroom walls.





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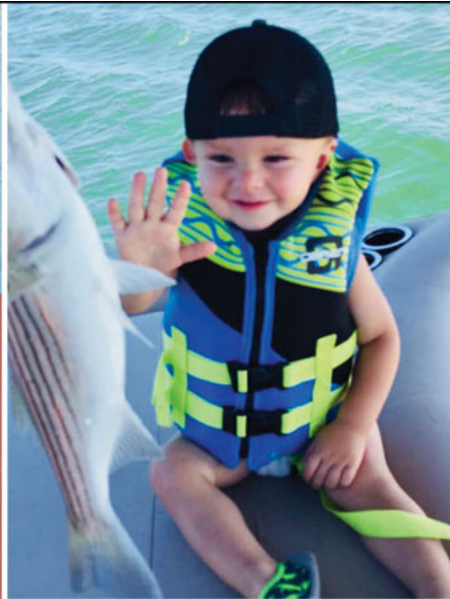
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They purchased their newly built home nearly three years ago. “We like the schools and small-town atmosphere in Red Oak, but we’re near to Dallas,” Yessica said. “It’s the best of both worlds.”

Juan Carlos agreed, “It’s secure and peaceful. The police are very nice. We like attending events, getting out to meet people and saying hello.” Their proximity to Dallas also allows them to attend Dallas Symphony performances, as well as free concerts and other activities in the area. “We love music, riding our bikes and walking,” Yessica said.



A gardener, Yessica landscaped the yard with trees and brightly colored flowers. Yard art, fountains, bird feeders and restful benches — one designed and made by Juan Carlos — dot the gardens that surround their home. “Our yard was nothing but grass when we moved in,” Juan Carlos recalled. “My wife’s gardens are a great place to sit and have dinner and see the American and Texas flags flying at the park. Kids play happily in the park, and we watch the sun while we’re drinking coffee. It all reminds us we’re living the American dream.”

Juan Carlos teaches summer school, but the family still finds time for those garden dinners, watching TV and talking together in the evenings. The open family room, dining and kitchen floor plan allow for sharing their favorite TV programs together. Yessica enjoys cooking, but Juan Carlos often takes over in the kitchen on Saturday mornings and Sundays before church. “We have coffee and

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eat snacks at the breakfast bar, too,” he said.

Juan Carlos’ handcrafted wall of photos and the family’s piano at which Isaac plays are family room focal points. “We do a lot with our kids,” Juan Carlos explained. “They’re teenagers and will be gone from us soon.”

In the “kids’ wing,” Isaac and Dani can decorate their bedrooms to their tastes, dreams and accomplishments. Twelfth-grader Isaac loves music, and his keyboard allows him to practice and compose. He also is learning about audiovisual technology. He video-records the school’s football practices and games and works with the school’s news station, Talon TV. Isaac also enjoys reading. In the summer, he volunteers at a Lancaster horse rescue facility. Although he hasn’t yet decided on a major, Isaac would like to attend the University of Oklahoma.

Dani’s room has a French Parisian flair with its City of Light and Eiffel Tower decor. An eighth-grader at Red Oak Middle School who enjoys writing, Dani hopes to visit Paris one day. A tree Isaac drew and a “You Are My Sunshine” plaque from her mom decorate her walls. Dani enjoys spending time with friends and volunteering at her church where she sings soprano in the choir.

Responding to the need for bilingual teachers, this family continues giving back to their adopted community and discovering beyond-rainbow miracles along the way. “Everyone needs to know what a great opportunity America offers,” Juan Carlos concluded. “I teach about 95 percent in English because students need to learn that language. ... I don’t want to be just another teacher for them (his students). I want to create a big impact in their lives. I want to leave a legacy. ... Sometimes I use my own story ... to tell them that even when you are older, you can make your dreams come true.” **NOW**

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Call to Action

— By Alexandra Allred

Michael and Melissa Boler are throwing a party with WFAA's Dale Hansen acting as the master of ceremonies. There will be a professional judge provided by the International Barbeque Cookers Association for the barbecue, celebrity chef and former Food Network star Michele Ragussis judging the ever-popular Cupcake War, as well as a few other surprise guests. That's right! This year's party on September 29 marks the 3rd Annual Bridges' Bands and BBQ Bash to raise funds for its nonprofit organization and to spotlight the underserved community of young adults with intellectual learning disabilities or special needs. But how they got to this point, and the love and commitment they have given back to this community is truly a story worth telling.

As impressive as this year's event appears to be, it all began very humbly. Melissa, the founder and CEO of Bridges Training Foundation, had no visions of high-profile parties or

extravagant affairs. "I just want people to see how capable my guys [clients] are," Melissa said.

When Melissa saw how negatively the special needs population is impacted following graduation, she had to wonder, *What are their choices? What are their options?* "Graduation for everyone else is the beginning of their life," she said. "For the special needs students, however, it was the end of daily routines and friendships. I knew I needed to start a nonprofit, but it had to be different from the other programs."

After extensive research, the Bolers drew a line between *want* and *need*. What did her former students *need* to continue to grow? The answer was easy — opportunities. But it was only half the battle. "Educating our society and local community's awareness are equally as important," Melissa said.

"Our guys don't have a problem with their disability, but most everyone else does," Michael added.

For the last five years, Melissa's foundation has helped to teach life skills and offer job coaching to her clients, while networking in the community. Bridges actively works to get their clients out in the public to be seen and appreciated. So much so, in fact, that Melissa has fielded phone calls from

around the country from families asking what their options are for a loved one. "We want to be a resource for everyone. The need is so diverse that we must have diverse solutions."

When the Ellis County Women in Business learned about the Bridges BBQ Bash, they were all in. Created to empower, mentor and provide scholarships to young women in Ellis County, ECWB sought a way to partner with Bridges. "We knew we wanted to be a part of this," said Dionne Zschiesche, vice president of mentoring. ECWB partnered with Melissa to run a goat yoga event with all proceeds going to the Bridges Training Foundation.

"Hey," Michael laughed, "this is Texas. We have a long, proud history of producing some of the best barbecue in the country. People are really passionate about barbecue. It's become synonymous with a get-together."

Add cupcakes, cars, live music, silent auctions, bounce houses, a professional cornhole competition and more and, "It's a party all day long," Michael said. "We're celebrating differences. We're celebrating inclusion!"

"This is our call to action. We want everyone to know who we are and what we're about," Melissa said.

No matter how the day goes, Melissa's wish is as simple as the day she first opened her doors to the special needs population. "I would really hope at some point people could walk through our doors and see how amazing our individuals are instead of focusing on what they can't do. We [Bridges Training Foundation] are one of the best kept secrets in Ellis County. We want people to know that we're here and ready to help — that there are solutions." Just maybe, over that bridge, there are options and choices that every graduate deserves. **NOW**

Editor's Note: For more information about Bridges Training Foundation, visit www.bridgestf.org.



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CookingNOW

In the Kitchen With

LAUREN TAYLOR

— By Lindsay L. Allen



Lauren Taylor, mom, Realtor and blogger, has changed her lifestyle, food included, to reflect an active, healthy balance, and the result is a healthier weight. “When you lead a healthy lifestyle, you teach your children lifelong habits. Once I committed to a healthy lifestyle and working out, I found a new love in cooking, trying to re-create some favorite recipes into healthier versions. When you’re putting in blood, sweat and tears at the gym, you don’t want to cancel out your hard work by one thing you put in your mouth,” she said.

Lauren loves taking a dish that isn’t the “best for you” and lightening it up, so you’re fueling your body but not lacking flavor. “If something doesn’t taste good,” she said, “I’m not going to eat it.” **NOW**

Lauren’s Famous Chocolate Chip Fudge Brownies

- 3/4 cup salted butter**
- 3/4 cup all-purpose flour**
- 3/4 cup Hershey’s cocoa powder**
- 1 1/2 cups sugar**
- 3 eggs**
- 1 cup (or more) Ghirardelli milk chocolate chips**

1. Preheat oven to 325 F; line a 9x13-inch pan with parchment paper. Melt butter; set aside.
2. Spoon flour into the measuring cup; level with a knife. (Do not scoop it out of the bag. It packs more and can harm the consistency when baking.) Mix dry ingredients while butter is cooling.
3. With whisk, mix in butter and eggs until just combined. Do not overmix. (It’s OK for brownies to be lumpy.)
4. Gently fold in chocolate chips; spread mixture into pan.

5. Bake for 25 minutes. Insert a toothpick in a couple of spots. When it comes out clean, they’re done. Let cool completely overnight.

Chicken Fajita Tostadas

- 1/2 sweet yellow onion**
- 1 red bell pepper**
- 1 pat butter, salted or unsalted**
- Salt, to taste**
- 6 Mission Baked Tostadas**
- 16 oz. John Soules Chicken Fajita Meat**
- 1 8-oz. bag Mexican blend shredded cheese**
- Guacamole (optional)**

1. Place oven on broil. Cut onion into thin slices and bell pepper into strips.
2. In a small skillet over medium-low heat, add butter, onion and bell pepper. Season with salt; cook until tender.
3. Heat a large skillet over medium heat. Add chicken fajita meat; cook until heated through.

4. Add bell pepper and onion to pan with fajita meat; mix.
5. Line a cookie sheet with foil; spread tostadas on cookie sheet. Top with fajita mixture and cheese.
6. Broil briefly (until cheese melts). Top with guacamole, if desired.

Lauren’s Chicken Pot Pie

- 2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts**
- 1 tub Knorr Homestyle Stock Chicken jelly (sold in packs of 4 tubs per pack)**
- 1 15-oz. can Le Sueur tender baby whole carrots**
- 1 8.5-oz. can Le Sueur very young small sweet peas**
- 1 15-oz. can whole kernel corn**
- Morton Nature’s Seasons Seasoning Blend, to taste**
- 1 10.5-oz. can cream of celery soup**
- 1 deep-dish piecrust**
- 1 rolled out piecrust**

1. Preheat oven to 375 F. Boil chicken over medium-high heat 20–25 minutes in water and Knorr Stock.
2. While chicken cooks, drain canned vegetables. When chicken is cooked, skim foam off the top of the stock, remove chicken and shred.
3. Drain stock, leaving about one inch in pan. Return chicken to pan; season with Nature’s Seasons Seasoning.
4. Heat chicken and stock over medium-high heat; when stock comes to a fast boil,

add celery soup and vegetables. Mix until incorporated.

5. Pour into deep-dish piecrust; top with rolled out piecrust. Using a fork, gently press around edges to seal crust. Trim remaining crust around pan. Cut four 1 1/2-inch holes in the top of piecrust.

6. Place pot pie on baking sheet; bake 45 minutes.

Chili's-inspired Southwest Egg Roll Quesadillas

3 bell peppers (red, yellow and orange), sliced into strips

1 Tbsp. butter

Garlic salt, to taste

1 16-oz. bag baby spinach

1/2 Tbsp. Central Market cold-pressed garlic canola oil

1/2 cup frozen corn

4.25 oz. black beans (approximately 1/2 can)

2 16-oz. bags John Soules chicken fajita meat

Salt and pepper, to taste

Spreadable butter, to taste

6 burrito-size flour tortillas

1 8-oz. bag Mexican blend shredded cheese

Ranch dip (optional)

1. Sauté bell peppers in butter and garlic salt over medium-low heat for about 20 minutes, or until tender.

2. Sauté baby spinach, garlic canola oil, salt and pepper over medium heat until wilted; set aside.

3. In the same pan, add corn. Cook until heated; set aside.

4. Rinse black beans in a strainer.

5. In a pan over medium heat, reheat chicken fajita meat to brown a bit. Add bell peppers, spinach, black beans, corn; season with salt and pepper, to taste.

6. Spread a thin layer of butter on tortilla (or use cooking spray in pan); fill with chicken mixture and shredded cheese. Fold tortilla in half and place in skillet over medium heat; let cook two minutes, checking halfway through. When browned, flip and cook the other side 1 to 2 minutes.

7. Cut into quarters and serve with ranch dip (optional).

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— By Virginia Riddle

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In this world of increasingly fast transit, limited mobility is frustrating for those dealing with it, as well as for their caregivers. A sincere desire to help people overcome mobility limitations and live more independently is the heart of CSE Mobility and Scrubs' business philosophy.

Extensive knowledge of the industry and compassionate, personalized service sets CSE and its staff apart. "Our staff knows and understands our products and fits the right

product to the needs of each customer," said Cole Spradlin, CSE founder and owner. This means spending time to get to know their customers. "We ask questions to find out what our customers' needs are," Cole explained.

CSE Mobility is really two businesses in one: scrubs to outfit all segments of the medical community and mobility aids to enhance the lives of individuals. Veterinarians, dentists, nurses, doctors, medical technicians and even individuals not working in the medical industry can find the latest in scrubs. Customers can purchase scrubs in bulk or individually. Fourteen popular brands are available, making it easy for anyone to find a style and color that works for them or their company.

Assuring mobility is readily available for their customers means stocking devices ranging from scooters to wheelchairs, lift chairs, walkers, rollators, canes, crutches, compression socks, orthopedic products, knee and other braces, eating

utensils and aides in dressing and grooming. Cushions and mobility accessories help scooters and wheelchairs work comfortably and efficiently for customers' needs. CSE carries more than 15 brands of popular mobility items in-house.

CSE has been in business since 2009. After outgrowing its original location, the business opened in Red Oak in 2015. The move meant more room and the addition of high-end medical scrubs for customers in the medical industry. "Our product selection has only grown since then," Cole added.

CSE's caring employees are always ready to help customers find exactly what they need. "All of my employees are trained in-house and receive training by most vendors/manufacturers about our products. We service equipment, so all the service technicians are required to attend a training class for major manufacturers once a year to hold current certification and work on that company's products," Cole said.

Providing quality products is only one part of CSE's business. "We support our sales, and service is a huge part of our business. Most of our customers can't bring the product to us, so we have a mobile service van that will come to their homes to service the product there. We service equipment even if it wasn't purchased from CSE," Cole stated.

The company can also provide paperwork for customers to file for insurance reimbursement on recliners. Cash, check and most major credit cards are accepted as payment.

CSE's staff members find joy in enabling customers to lead lives that are more independent. "At CSE Mobility, we understand the vital role this equipment plays in customers' everyday lives," Cole remarked. Mobility means independence, and independence means a more satisfying and fulfilling life. Through commitment to its customers and continuing to offer quality products and professional service, CSE continues to grow. **NOW**

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TravelNOW A Canadian Adventure

— By Alf Blanchard

From the stunning red cliffs, the miles of red and champagne beaches and the vibrant small-city scenes, there is only one way to describe Prince Edward Island — magical. If driving, you will be pleasantly surprised at the beauty of the highway. It takes you through towns and villages, scenic landscapes and coastal views. Every journey on the island is as special as the destination. Driving along the highway or one of the designated coastal drives, you will see a small glimpse of life on Prince Edward Island, and it will make you feel the need to explore.

Prince Edward Island is also known as Canada's Food Island. Once you take a bite of what the island has to offer, you will undoubtedly understand why. Not

only is the island abundant with fresh ingredients such as mussels, oysters and potatoes, artisanal cheeses, breweries, wineries and distilleries, its views will also take your breath away. Every September, you can attend Fall Flavours Festival, which includes the International Shellfish Festival. Visitors from all over the world come to enjoy these festivals.

The size of Prince Edward Island is one of its greatest assets. You can taste fresh seafood in a small fishing town and still only be a short drive to the capital city of Charlottetown for experiencing live music, theater and bars.

Visitors can spend their time basking in the sun on one of the 90 beaches, listening to the waves crash and

digging their toes in the sand. Prince Edward Island isn't just for relaxation though. Get your heart racing with paddleboarding, kiteboarding, hiking or cycling. The Confederation Trail is built on an abandoned railway that goes across the entire Island. It's 269 miles of rolled stone-dust surface — an incredibly unique way to experience Prince Edward Island.

If all that adventure isn't enough, Tourism Prince Edward Island offers hands-on activities led by local community leaders. Jigs & Reels, where you join Captain and multi-instrumentalist J.J. Chaisson onboard his boat, *Chaisson A Dream*, is one such activity. Learn about traditional music, step dancing and how to play a musical instrument.

At the Table Culinary Studio in New London, one can take classes or have an experiential meal. For instance, Marilla's Table — A Taste of the Past, begins with a visit to the birthplace of L.M. Montgomery, author of *Anne of Green Gables*, to see what life was like in Anne and Marilla's time, and ends with an authentic meal made from locally grown organic vegetables, while listening to stories from a historian who specializes in Montgomery history.

Speaking of Anne, if the book holds a special place in your heart, you will enjoy visiting the island. Head over to Green Gables Heritage Place and feel like you are part of the story, or visit the Anne of Green Gables Museum (operated by relatives of Lucy Maud Montgomery and part of the inspiration for the world-famous novel). In Charlottetown, see Anne on stage at the Confederation Centre of the Arts in *Anne of Green Gables — The Musical™*, or watch love bloom at the Guild in *Anne & Gilbert*.

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A New Way to Landscape

— By Zachary R. Urquhart

Landscaping can be one of the most time-consuming tasks for homeowners. Pulling weeds and trimming bushes are jobs that are seemingly never really finished. Instead of planting flowers, consider adding hardscapes, decorative structures or materials that add a different kind of beauty to your yard.

Patios and Walkways

- *Create a Walkway.* One of the simplest ways to enhance part of your property is with a patio or walkway. The most permanent route is to pour concrete, possibly even covering your new space with an awning or gazebo. For a simpler DIY project, you can lay stones to make your new walkway or patio.

- *Do It Yourself the Right Way.* If you decide to lay your own stone, there are some important choices to make.

You can buy square or rectangle stones and lay them end to end, leaving no space between. Or, you might want a more irregular stone, which necessitates putting a material like pebbles or crushed granite in the gaps. Whatever your finished product is, your first step should be laying down weed blocker. And the key to a solid, level walking surface is getting a good foundation of sand before you put your stones down.

Build What You Need

- *Add Form to Function.* Sometimes, hardscapes can be as much about necessity as beauty. If you need to build a retaining wall, you will want to carefully plan your project. Including pipe for drainage is essential, as is tamping down the soil while you backfill to cut down on the land's settling making your wall uneven. And to improve the aesthetic value, spread out any stones that are slightly discolored to give the wall a more artistic look.

- *Check for Codes and Cables.* If you decided to build stairs, retaining walls over a few feet or are pouring a new driveway, do not start the work on a whim. For some larger projects, city codes may dictate size restrictions and what materials you can use. For projects that require significant digging or trenching, you should always call 8-1-1 first, so you can ensure there are no pipes or cables underneath your project area.

Accent Pieces

- *Create Some Counterspace.* If you admire your friend's outdoor kitchen, but building something that large is not an option, consider building an outdoor island. Find a space, get your measurements and use simple right angles to design a counter for food prep. Large hardware stores and lumber suppliers will generally make cuts for you, so you will only have to put the wood together yourself. And if you want to add a small refrigerator underneath, it is easy enough to install an exterior outlet by tapping into an existing outlet inside.

- *Create a Buzz With a Blaze.* If you want to add something fun that can be a conversation piece, fire pits are a great and relatively simple project idea. Unless your pit is going on top of existing hardscape, you should dig about a foot into the ground, then add sand as a foundation for the stones. Be sure your stones are at least 12 inches above ground level to ensure a safe barrier between your fire and your yard.

If you need design help for whatever hardscape ideas you have, sites like Pinterest are flush with pictures and plans perfect for builders of all levels. With all the options available, hardscaping your lawn is a great way to put your personality into your property. **NOW**



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Zoomed In: Lucy Gibson

By Sally Fuller

Not even Father Time can steal Lucy Gibson's sense of humor. When asked recently what she thought about celebrating her 102nd birthday, she elicited laughter from everyone in the room with her response. "It's for the birds!"

Currently a resident of Red Oak Health and Rehabilitation Center, Lucy devoted her life to a calling she takes seriously to this day — working as church secretary at Oklahoma City First Baptist Church. When asked the most important thing she accomplished in 102 years of living, she replied, "Trying to do what the Lord wanted me to do every day."

Despite her commitment to service, Lucy found time to travel the world. Her passport boasts destinations that include China, Japan, Australia, many European countries, Tahiti and Israel.



Veronica Chasten, city of Glenn Heights court administrator, steps out of her office to greet a local resident.



Kathy Harrington, library director, fills cups at the Ferris Library's end of summer reading program celebration. The program provided reading fun to several hundred children this year.



Mallory Brown and Miranda Herron appreciate the shade of a gazebo on a sunny afternoon in Bristol.



The Ferris 9U football teams raise funds selling brisket and sides served up by supporters. From left: Maria Ortiz, Jennifer Garza, Brenda Gonzalez, Lauren Davila and Shandra Jones.



ROHS Hazmat Hawks pose behind some of their awards from recent robotics competitions.



Aiden and Noah Sawyer of Red Oak take a break from a friendly game of soccer in downtown Ovilla.



Samantha, David and baby, Henry Hyche, who recently moved to Red Oak from Indianapolis, enjoy a morning in downtown Waxahachie.



Red Oak teacher Shirley Jones smiles from behind a table full of fresh foods at the Waxahachie Farmers Market.

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Calendar September 2018

8

Red Oak 40th Founders Day Celebration, "The Beat Goes On": 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Watkins Park, 101 Live Oak St. Parade, games, food, entertainment, live music and more. For more information, contact the Red Oak Chamber of Commerce, (972) 617-0906 or admin@redoakchamber.org.

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Ovilla Heritage Day Celebration: 8:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m., in the park behind City Hall, 105 S. Cockrell Hill Rd. Parade, petting zoo, climbing wall, bands, food, arts and crafts and more. For more information, contact the city at (972) 617-7262 or athompson@cityofovilla.org.

Southern Region Walk to End Alzheimer's: downtown Ennis. For more information, email gary.freeman@homeinstead.com.



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Bridges BBQ Bash: 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m., Ellis County Expo Center, 2300 W. Hwy. 287 Bypass, Waxahachie. Barbecue contest, cupcake wars, live music, car show and Kids' Zone. Proceeds benefit young adults with intellectual learning disabilities or special needs. Admission is free.

Cooking For A Cure: 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Chick-fil-A, 996 W. Hwy. 287 Bypass, Waxahachie. The proceeds from this bake sale go to fund pediatric cancer research.

Hawktoberfest: 4:00-7:00 p.m., Red Oak High School, 220 S. State Hwy. 342. Family-fun carnival complete with games, food trucks, a chili cook-off and more.



Ongoing:

Second Mondays
Ellis County Veterans Networking Group meeting: 6:00 p.m., Ryan's Steakhouse, Waxahachie. Join the group for dinner and listen to the guest speaker. To RSVP or for more information, call Jim McKeever at (469) 258-7424 or email at ellisveterans@gmail.com.

Third Mondays
Red Oak Book Club: 6:30-8:00 p.m., Red Oak Public Library. Open to all adults 21+ living in the Red Oak area. For more information, call (469) 218-1230 or email redoakbookclub@gmail.com.

Tuesdays
Red Oak Library Toddler Story Time: 10:00-11:00 a.m., Free Crafts, story time and learning games for children 18 mo.-5 yrs. and their parents. Call the library at (469) 218-1230 for more information on all library events.

Tuesdays and Thursdays
North Ellis Co. Outreach assistance: 9:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m., 205 S. Main St., Ferris. Assistance is for Red Oak and Ferris residents. For more information, call Denise Butler at (972) 617-7261.

Ferris Public Library Story Time: 11:00 a.m., 301 E. 10th St., Ferris. Pre-school children and their caregivers are invited for stories. For more information, call (972) 544-3699.

Wednesdays and Thursdays
The Red Oak Senior Citizens Group: 8:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., 207 W. Red Oak Rd., Red Oak. Join for games and activities. Light breakfast provided both days. Lunch provided on **Thursdays**. \$2 per week membership fee. Call (972) 571-0632 for more information.

Second Saturdays
Red Oak Opry: 7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m., Lone Star Cowboy Church, 1011 E. Ovilla Rd., Red Oak. Tickets sold at the door. \$12 for adults; \$5 for children. For more information, visit www.redoakopry.com.



Third Saturdays
Ferris Trades Day: 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., 101 S. Main St., Ferris. For more information, call Tina Miller at (817) 992-9204.

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



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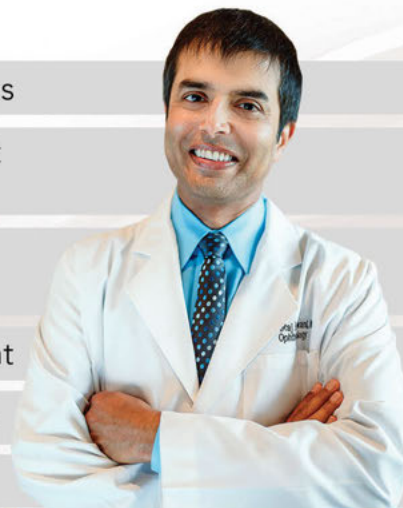
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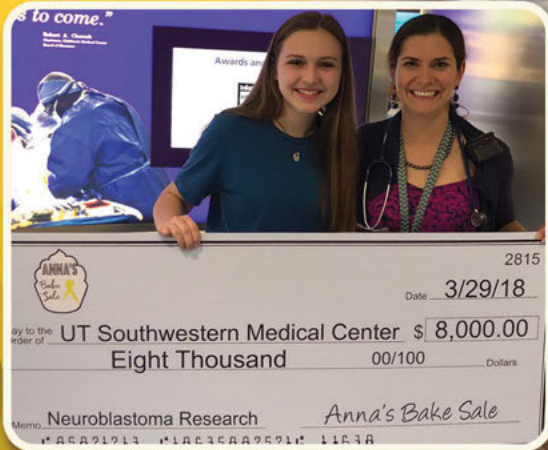


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Cooking for a Cure

— By Virginia Riddle

Wheelchair rides with an IV pole as a side attachment, hospital rooms, seemingly endless medical tests and surgery — this is the scene often played out in pediatric cancer treatment centers. After her younger sister, Isabella's, stage 4 neuroblastoma cancer diagnosis during a routine 9-month-old checkup, Anna Day's childhood also changed.

Parents Tim and Leslie Day have guided their family of three — fraternal twins, Isabella and Jaclyn, now 7, and Anna, 16 — through this six-year journey. Making hospital life a little more fun for her siblings was big sister's goal, but by 13, Anna had become aware of how limited research funds are for pediatric cancers, especially rare types like Isabella's. "Only about 4 percent of National Cancer Institute research funds go to pediatric cancers," Anna explained. "Only three drugs have been designed for specific childhood cancers, so many children are being treated with adult drugs. I wanted to do something to change that."

Her "something" started three years ago with a Saturday bake sale at Waxahachie's Chick-fil-A. "Our first sale netted \$2,000, so the next year our goal was to double it. We brought in \$8,000. Last year, we raised more than \$12,000," Anna said proudly. "This year's goal was to create a nonprofit organization, Anna's Bake

Sale Foundation. We received our 501(c)(3) designation last May."

Though the paperwork process was lengthy, it took only one month from submission to approval. "So many businesses wanted to help, some with matching funds, but they needed to be able to deduct their donations," Leslie said. Proceeds raised have been donated to pediatric cancer studies being conducted at UT Southwestern Medical Center.

September is Childhood Cancer Awareness Month and Anna's annual bake sale will take place at Waxahachie's Chick-fil-A, September 29 from 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Family, friends, church members and a bakery have been on board from the beginning. "People come to our home the night before with baked or bought donations. Then we stay up late at our packing party, where everything is sorted and packed for sale," Anna explained.

"We've wanted everything sold to be fresh, and we've learned more each year," Leslie remarked. There's something for everyone — many kinds of cookies, brownies, pies, cakes, cake pops, chocolate-covered pretzels and muffins.

Wearing the foundation's aprons, Anna's friends help during the big sale day. "Last year, we had more than 150 dozen donated items, and we ran out of everything by 2:00 p.m.," Anna recalled.

Isabella's prognosis improved last year when the family found a New York City surgeon who could remove most of her cancer. "Anna's the reason the foundation exists. This 16-year-old is changing the world," Leslie concluded proudly. **NOW**

Editor's Note: Visit www.annabakesalefoundationsale.org for more information, or find them on Facebook.



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