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## ON THE COVER



*Chris James loves coaching more every year.*

*Photo by Sarah Alvarez.*

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## Editor's Note

*Falling into fall, Friends,*

Together we fall down on our knees, getting dirty. Mission accomplished, we move forward to the next row in this garden we're all tending. When I recall the last seven years, I see faces glowing from achievement, mostly unaware their progress has cleared the furrows for so many more to work within.

The good people I've gotten to write about sometimes seem to me like perfect fruit from the garden, sometimes like workers who are preparing the dirt, planting and then tending the vegetables. As younger generations mature in this tri-city area, you can be proud of what you've done to prepare for their successes.

Your stories unfold around me. *BurlesonNOW* has been able to capture only a few in images and words. So many more grow in and around the stories we tell to create the abundant harvest of our community.

Happy October!

*Melissa*

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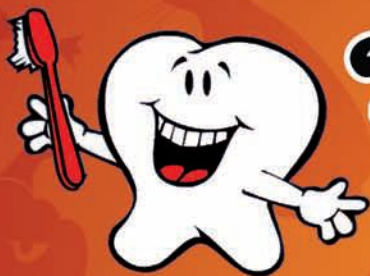
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# Beyond

# FOOTBALL

— By Lisa Bell

*Chris James didn't always want to coach high school football. In 1996, he came home from college for the summer. Well on his way to completing a business degree, he planned to join his father's business. An invitation from his former coach to help with a 7-on-7 team changed his path.*

Helping coach, calling plays, battling together and interacting with the kids gave him a new perspective on the game. "Knowing you had a hand in helping a kid be successful — that did it," he said. "That night I just knew. This was what I wanted to do."

He went to see the guidance counselor as soon as the semester started and said, "This is what I wanna do. What's it gonna take?" Following double 18-hour semesters and an additional 15 hours during the summer, Chris began coaching in 1997. After 17 years, his passion remains, not just about football, but equally about the kids in his program. Any student who wants to participate does. He finds a place for even the nonathlete who wants to be part of the team.

The Crowley High School coach began his career at Arlington High School. Chris spent 13 years working his way up through the ranks. His success as a coach eventually opened the door for the head coach position in Crowley. The first couple of years, his new team didn't do great, but the 2012 and 2013 seasons included district championships. Although they lost to Birdville

in the second round of playoffs both years, he's excited and looking forward to the 2014 season.

The district reclassification doesn't have a big impact on the team. Chris anticipates tremendous growth over the next two to four years, especially with the completion of the Chisholm Trail Parkway. That may change things. For now, the Eagles are essentially in the same district as they have been, playing the same teams, with the addition of Granbury and Aledo.

Chris can quickly tell you how he will prepare to play Aledo. He teaches his players not to focus on the opponent. "It doesn't matter who we're playing," he said. "We prepare by showing an opponent's strategy and practicing against it, of course. But that's not nearly our focus," Chris stated. "Our focus is us — taking what we do and getting better at that."

Admittedly, Chris wants to win, and on Friday nights this fall, they will play hard, intent on winning. At 22, winning meant everything. After years of coaching, he realized the students took priority over the game. "If you take care of the kid first, and



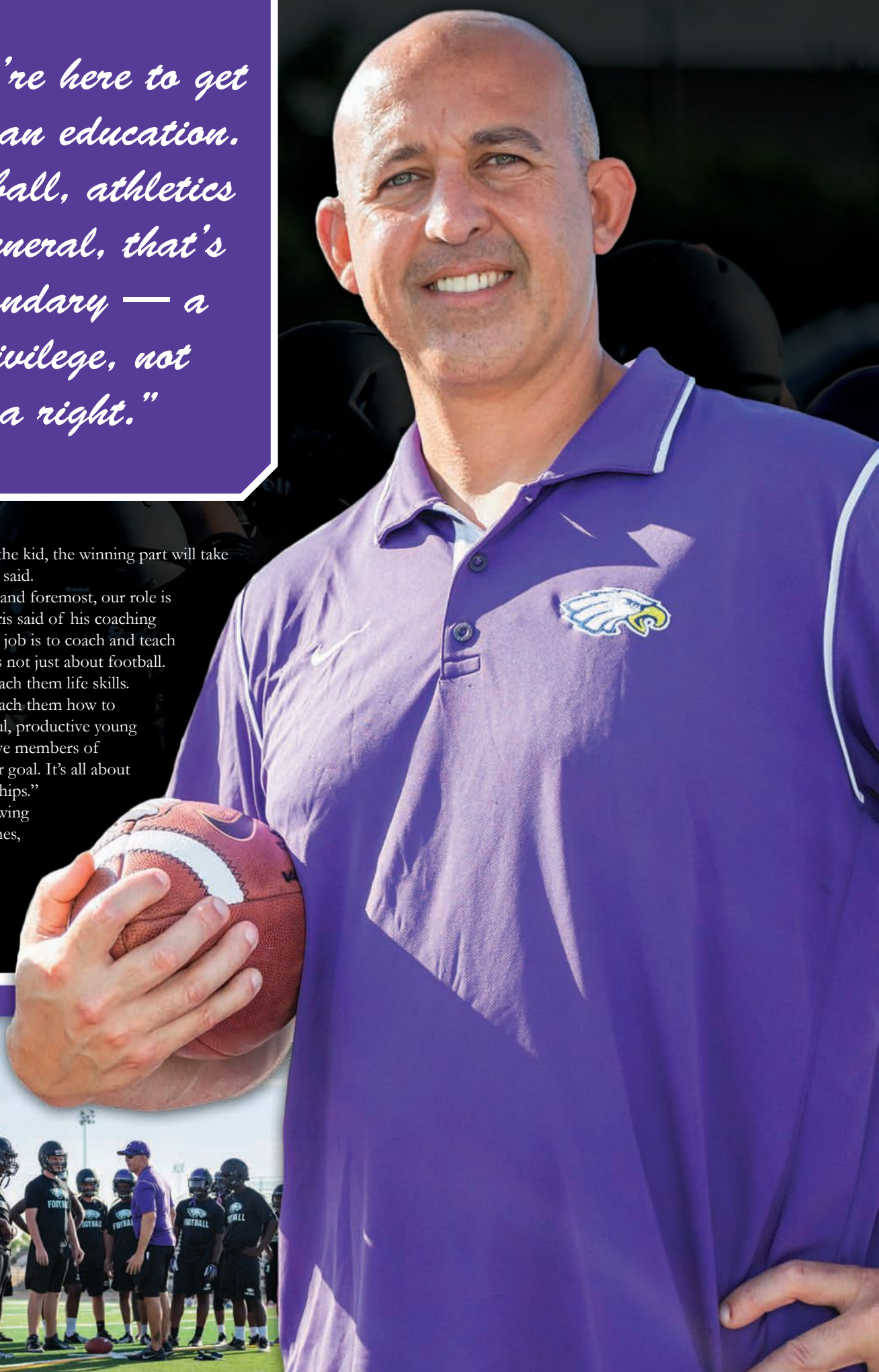


*"We're here to get them an education. Football, athletics in general, that's secondary — a privilege, not a right."*

really care about the kid, the winning part will take care of itself," he said.

"I believe first and foremost, our role is an educator," Chris said of his coaching philosophy. "Our job is to coach and teach the whole kid. It's not just about football. We're trying to teach them life skills. We're trying to teach them how to become successful, productive young men — productive members of society. That's our goal. It's all about building relationships."

When interviewing prospective coaches, he looks for men who have the same passion about building







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relationships. His staff members must have the ability to connect with students. Expertise means far less than someone's ability to motivate each student. The coaches help athletes set goals on and off the field, and then they assist in mapping out a plan to achieve them.

"If you can build a relationship with a kid, and they will trust and believe in you, they can receive what you give them," Chris added. When he pulls a team member into his office, they aren't discussing football. He asks how they're doing, what's going on at home and if there is anything they need to discuss. Chris welcomes the many challenges of working with high school students. "The biggest challenge is making sure they're being a model student athlete. They're a student first," he said. "We're here to get them an education. Football, athletics in general, that's secondary — a privilege, not a right." And the coach feels overall the students are doing a good job. Like most kids, they sometimes make mistakes. He gives them multiple chances, patience and guidance when they need it.





Chris James is on the field with his father, Coach Chris James.

A position coach spends more time with team members and has more influence than a head coach normally does. Nevertheless, Chris remains in touch with former players. He proudly mentioned one who was the No. 2 draft pick last year. He talked about other students going on to coach, revealing an equal amount of pride over them. "When I see a kid being successful, that is my greatest joy. Winning is fun, but when I see a kid really feel it, knowing he did it on his own, that's it for me," he admitted.



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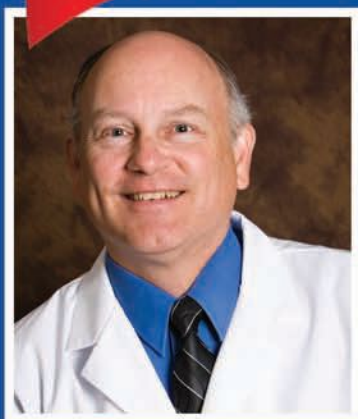




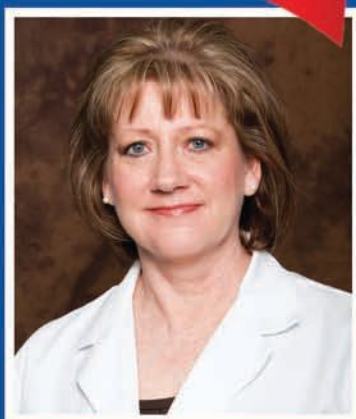
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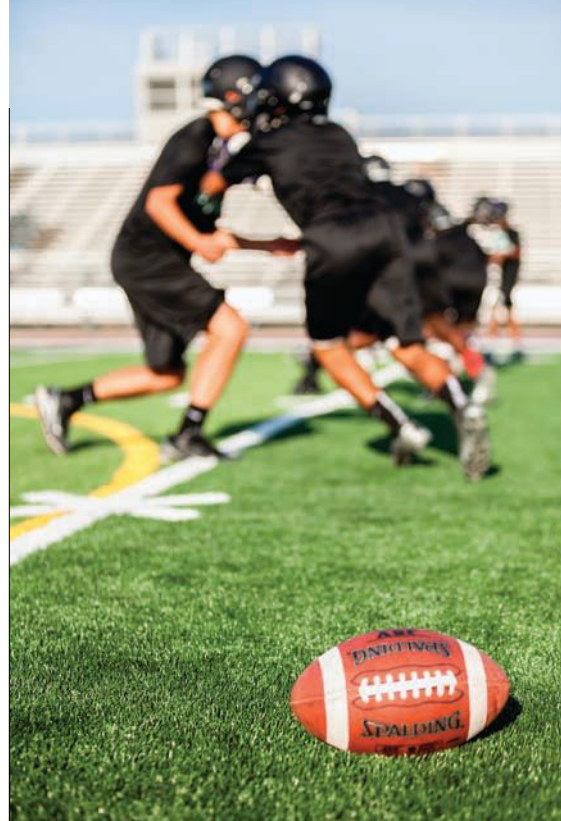
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Chris isn't looking to be a hero for the players. He gladly leaves that to someone else. Some coaches influenced him, but his dad earned the hero spot in his life. His eyes glistened as he talked about both his parents. "No matter what happened to me in my life, no matter what kind of trouble I got into, no matter what kind of success or disappointment I had, I could always count on my parents to help," he said. "They never raised their voices or





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spanked me. It made me not want to do anything to disappoint them, or make them need to raise their voices at me."

The coach tries to model his dad in fathering his three daughters and son. His dad was always there no matter what — even at 2:00 a.m. He does the same for his kids, and tries to do the same for his players. Relationship means everything.

"I never pushed my children to pursue athletics," Chris said. "I just gave them every opportunity and helped them to achieve their goals." His son plays football, excited about his freshman year. He gets encouragement from Coach Dad to give it time and keep trying when overcoming a weakness. It's the way Chris fathers his children, and the way he coaches.

With 75 players, multiple departments and personalities, disagreements happen. At the end of the day, they all come together for a common goal — to win the game. "What better recipe for life in the workforce is there than that?" he said.

Chris has no desire to move from coaching at Crowley. He loves it more with each passing year and is pleased with the administration and school board. "I'm not looking to better my own situation. I have a great situation where I'm at," he said, a broad smile lighting up his face. "I'm enjoying every minute of it." **NOW**



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# A Gal and Her Guitar

— By Erin McEndree

*Walking on stage is blinding. The spotlight hides the crowd screaming out her name. Melissa Brooke still can't believe the lights are so bright and the crowd is so loud — for her. Her hands are shaking, and her body is trembling, but just like that, she pretends to be a character in a play. "When I feel the heat of the lights or hear the crowd scream, I turn into a country music singer, and I perform," Melissa said. "When I'm on stage, I'm Melissa Brooke. But when I'm on the street, I'm just Melissa." Melissa is a bit of a firecracker, one who really shines and keeps the audience going wild time after time, but she also likes meeting her fans and showing them she is a normal, everyday gal.*

Growing up in Crowley, Melissa learned how to barrel race and rope on her grandparents' ranch. She competed in many local and area events. "As a family, we would listen to Merle Haggard, George Jones, Waylon Jennings and Willie Nelson," Melissa said. "In my generation, I listened to Britney Spears, Shania Twain, George Strait and the Dixie Chicks." Melissa's style of music is influenced by country roots and the country music she grew up listening to.

When Melissa was 15, she and her parents moved to Port Aransas. "I didn't know anyone. The first two things I got into were surfing and acting," Melissa said. During a performance at Port Aransas Community Theatre of *Shoot-Out at Darby Wells*, Melissa began picking "Sweet Home Alabama." "I play by ear and began teaching myself. I never had lessons," Melissa explained. "As a sophomore, I would sit by the pool at the hotel where my parents worked and learn songs like "Chicken Fried" by Zac Brown from the radio. People would start clapping for me and shout out songs." Melissa would take a break, look up the songs and come back and play it for







them. She began playing for her family and singing the sweet music in her heart. At a gig on the beach hosted by Badlands 94.7 FM, Bad Girl Kate noticed Melissa. She took Melissa under her wing and spurred her on as she developed her newfound talent.

A huge impact in shaping Melissa's sound came from her grandfather, the man she calls Pee Paw. "He told me if I was serious about learning to play, I should learn "Folsom Prison Blues" by Johnny Cash. Then we would talk," Melissa said. "So I learned it, and he started teaching me something new every time I saw him." When Pee Paw comes to a show, Melissa brings him up on stage, and they play together. "He says he hates it, but secretly, I think he loves it," Melissa smiled.

**"Melissa Brooke would not exist without my talent, my guitar and my fans. I thank God every night for giving me this opportunity and giving me this gift."**

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As a junior, Melissa had her first opener. "I opened for Mark McKinney, but I only knew three songs," Melissa laughed. She had dreams of becoming an equine vet, but Mark encouraged her to keep singing. "With my mom and dad's support, I decided singing was what I wanted to do," Melissa said. "I'm blessed to have such a supportive family. They get up early and stay up late for me." During her junior and senior years, Melissa recorded her first album, which landed her first single, "Sticky Situation," on the Texas Regional Radio charts, at No. 35. Melissa is presently working on her second album, which should be out this fall.

Like anyone who has a passion for something they love, Melissa works at it constantly. She finds inspiration day and night. "I'll have a thought at 3:00 in the morning and have to get up and write down the lyrics or pick the melody so I can remember it," Melissa said. It







is not unusual for Melissa to sing herself to sleep, literally. When Melissa is in the studio, she admits she is a perfectionist. "The producers do their magic and put all the parts of the songs together," Melissa explained. "I tweak the songs so much, they finally have to tell me to stop." Melissa loves making her family, friends and fans wait for the final product. She teases them with lyrics or unfinished melodies. She loves to build suspense



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and the element of surprise for the finished version.

The first time Melissa heard her song on the radio, she was with her friend Judy in Port Aransas. "We were in the car, and I thought the song sounded familiar," Melissa beamed. "When I realized it was my song, we started screaming and singing along." That's Melissa's favorite memory.

She recalls many firsts in her five-year career as a singer/songwriter, and she will have many more to come. A close second favorite memory is the concert she preformed in Las Vegas for the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo. It was the biggest performance, for this country girl from Crowley, and her first time to leave Texas. Melissa also recalls the first time she preformed an opener for Thompson Square in Corpus Christi to a crowd of about 3,000 fans. "The lights were bright,





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and I froze. The world stood still,” Melissa recalled. “The people were so close, and they were singing my songs with me.”

During the concert, Melissa noticed two kids, Dallas and June, in the crowd. “They attended all my concerts in Corpus Christi, so I brought them up front,” Melissa said. “I consider them my first pair of fans.”

Fans are important to Melissa. “I don’t want to take my fans for granted. I would not be here if it weren’t for them,” Melissa said. “I like hanging out with people and keeping in touch with them through social media.” Melissa admits it is still a strange feeling when someone recognizes her.

“When a lady in the bathroom knocked on my stall and asked if I was Melissa Brooke, I froze then asked her if I could finish, please,” Melissa chuckled. “We had some laughs and even took a bathroom selfie.” Admirers always want this charismatic girl’s autograph. “I’ve signed all types of things fans put in front of me — from koozies to T-shirts and even a man’s chest,” Melissa recalled.

The Melissa Brooke Band keeps the road hot between Crowley and Port Aransas. Her passion is to keep writing and playing in the hopes it will touch people’s hearts. “Melissa Brooke would not exist without my talent, my guitar and my fans,” Melissa confessed. “I thank God every night for giving me this opportunity and giving me this gift.” **NOW**





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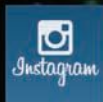
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# The Best Surprises

— By Melissa Rawlins

*Embracing change, Tim and Taunja Fisher hold tight to each other, their extended family and their memories. Since marrying two years ago, creative home improvement projects color the Fishers' life and, happily, never seem to end. They spend a lot of time flea marketing. They enjoy Canton, where they found a set of lockers to grace their uniquely diagonal hall wall. Originally in a Sears Company daycare center, Tim refurbished them, and they now serve as storage for Taunja's cameras, Tim's coat and hat, and guests' purses. The couple also frequents Antique Alley, where they bought their barn-wood kitchen table.*

For Taunja's recent birthday, they went antiquing in Jefferson for the weekend. "He woke me up that morning and said to pack a bag," Taunja said, recalling that she had no idea where they were going. This history-loving couple, who chose to marry in the Rose Chapel in Fort Worth because of the vintage romance in its chapel and ballroom, found Jefferson a most amazing place. They also found the light fixtures they'd been dreaming of. "Tim has the best surprises!"

Taunja was not surprised Tim could take two rusty, tin wind turbines purchased from a kindred spirit named Charlie Daniels, retrofit them with a pendant lighting kit from Home Depot and install them in less than a day, spending no more than \$100. "The bonus is how the light reflects off the walls," Tim said. "That guy, Charlie, gave those turbine lights a term I'd never heard. He said they had flavor."

So do the Fishers, who are constantly surprising each other — as well as friends — with great ideas. In their master bedroom, which is a work-in-process, Taunja began playing with 50 shades of grey paint to accentuate the king-sized bed frame Tim had decorated using black-painted shutters turned on their sides. After eight months of intensive searching, the couple found a sturdy, well-crafted, all-wood antique dresser, and then she decided to paint it yellow. Tim likes her choice. He's also happy with the yellow vases she recently brought home from His & Hers Antiques in Crowley. They perfectly match the yellow dresser and yellow door in the adjoining bathroom.

Refurbishing old doors is one of Taunja's pleasures. She relies on her husband to hang them. In the case of the kitchen pantry door, he had to rebuild the doorframe. All these projects have tried Tim and proven him patient. "I can envision something and really want it now, and he's very good at allowing me to have my vision come true," Taunja said.







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Hard work gives Tim joy. "I grew up with a single mother and sister, both creative, and I figured out guy things for myself," Tim said. "I learned construction from uncles, grandfathers and my stepdad. They taught me that it's not worth doing if you don't do it right." Now he jumps in to projects, and his bride joins the fun, often sitting in the



garage with him, so they experience the pleasure of working together.

A great example of their synergistic handiwork is the living room's tri-colored credenza, which holds the TV, hides wires and stores electronic media. The idea of having it floating, with no legs, came while Tim was building it out of pallet slats. Taunja thought of creating cupboards on either end out of a shutter, cut in half and painted turquoise. The 10x3x3-foot credenza solved the problem of spacing their two grey couches while maintaining balance. Taunja required symmetry in this home's wide-open spaces. And because Tim is very precise, everything is centered.

The living room's arrangement draws attention to the square, two-toned coffee table. Only a little taller than the grey doggie bed used by Lady Bug, a 12-year-old Boston Terrier Taunja brought to the union, the table's brown slats are straight pallet wood that Tim simply sanded and clear-coated. Its cream-colored slats were taken from an ordinary pallet Taunja had painted white. Tim then stripped their paint, sanded and clear-coated them. Even the light fixture in the kitchen is made of gathered pallets Tim had stacked in the garage, waiting for a rainy day. "A couple weeks came along when I had some time off from my railroad job," he said, "and the wheels started turning."

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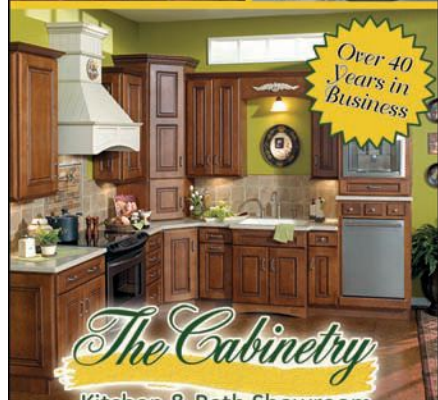


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The Fishers' decorating style manifested when they purchased a set of three 1970s Herman Miller drafting stools from a flea market. Surprisingly, their feet do not scratch the new hardwood floors when family and friends shift them into position. Just as importantly, their orange and gold upholstery matches the only painting in the house, an almost impressionistic and decidedly magnified image of a myriad of turquoise, gold, yellow, grey, black and silver globes suspended in the midst of a sea of creamy white. Taunja's color scheme throughout the home is just as bold.

Their newborn, Jaxon, enjoys his nursery almost as much as Taunja, who decorated in turquoise and white, with surprisingly complementary olive accents. "Jaxon's middle name is Grey, hence the grey on the walls," she said. They hired a muralist from Granbury to paint the birch tree in the corner, and installed a retro, white plastic light fixture from Home Depot. Then they added a turquoise chandelier to twinkle over the second-hand crib, which Tim cut to fit into the closet.

When the couple moved into their 1,587-square-foot home in northeast Burleson, Taunja's father was sick. Only after he died were they ready to do projects here. But he had helped with many projects at their last house, and so they keep his photograph in Tim's lair, the garage where he and Taunja do





much of their creative work. Not only can her dad oversee their projects, he can watch over the two motorcycles he gave Tim. "He was a second father to me," Tim said. "I did not get to spend a lot of time with him, only about six years, but we grew very close in that time."



Family is foremost for Taunja and Tim. Their first home was his stepdad's property, a 1970s singlewide trailer on four acres. "I took care of the property, trading work for rent, so we could save up for this house," Tim said. During that year, he and Taunja created furniture, as well as a deck on the front and off the back.

"We hung out on the porch a lot, with bonfires," Taunja said. Down the road, they will invest in a similar piece of property with privacy, peace and quiet.

"I'm sure right after we get this one exactly where we want it, that'll happen," Tim quipped. But despite Taunja's fondness for transformation, she won't be leaving their light fixtures behind. **NOW**

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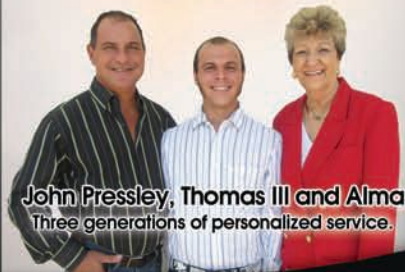


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A collection of colorful autumn leaves in shades of red, orange, yellow, and green, scattered across the upper left and top of the page.

# TO PRUNE OR NOT TO PRUNE



— By Randy Bigham

*The onset of harvest time brings more than the turning of the leaves. For most of us, it means raking them up after their inevitable descent, transforming lawns and driveways everywhere into a crunchy nuisance. Autumn's inception also inspires well-meaning homeowners to prune branches and hedges while the weather is still nice. But increasingly, the word from lawn care specialists and gardeners is to hold off on pruning until winter. Resisting the urge to prune in the fall is the advice of*





famous green thumb Paul James, host of HGTV's Gardening by the Yard. "The tender new growth that would result may not have a chance to harden sufficiently before cold weather arrives," Paul explained, "and that can lead to damage."

Horticulturalist Deborah Brown agreed. "Pruning in late winter, just before spring growth starts," she said, "leaves fresh wounds exposed for only a short time before new growth begins the wound-sealing process."

Gardening author Mike McGrath is more adamant in his advice. "The rules of fall pruning are simple," he maintained. "Prune nothing in the fall! Nada! Zilch! Ladies, hide the pruners from helpful husbands!"

But we yard lovers needn't fret. There's plenty of lawn and garden maintenance for us to accomplish long before winter wields its icy claws.



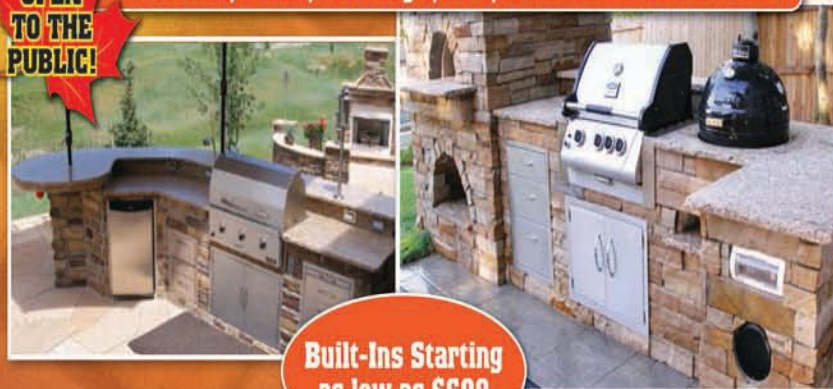
## Lawn cleanup and maintenance

Keeping lawns free of leaves is the main objective in the fall, so let the raking begin. And we may as well do it the right way. Yes, there's a method to leaf-free madness, as Barbara Pleasant outlines in her book *Compost Gardening*. She recommends raking with the wind (and downhill when possible). Matching your rake to the kind of leaves in your yard and to your body type is also suggested. Your favorite mom-and-pop garden

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centers, as well as your local big box stores, offer a range of sizes and weights.

Most importantly, use your shredded leaves as mulch. "Leaves contain some of the nutrients that trees and shrubs have taken out of the soil," Barbara wrote, "and it's in keeping with nature's plan that you should give back some of those purloined nutrients by mowing over part of your annual leaf fall, thus returning organic matter to the soil." Ellis County Master Gardeners are in favor of this form of organic recycling, advising a 3- to 6-inch layer of leaves as mulch in vegetable and flower beds and around trees and bushes.

Writer and avid gardener Lisa Kaplan Gordon suggests patching bare or thin spots of grass during the fall. Remove dead grass and replace with an inch of compost and an appropriate grass seed suited to shade or sun. "You'll want to keep the patch moist," Lisa said, "so lightly water once a day until the seed germinates, and the new grass gets about 1-inch tall."

## Planting and transplanting

Fall is a good time for planting vines and ground covers from containers. Cool-season annuals like pansies, daffodils, dianthus and ornamental kale or cabbage are ripe for autumnal planting,






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as are leeks, garlic and onions, especially those “from bulbs in soil enriched with organic matter.”

Paul James believes container plants deserve more attention from fall gardeners than they receive. “You can take cuttings of various annuals and root them in either water or a potting medium such as vermiculite, perlite or soil-less potting mix,” he instructed. Paul also recommends transplanting potted perennials into the garden.

## Fertilizing

Roger Cook of *This Old House* magazine reminds his readers fall is the optimum time for fertilizing their lawns. “Taking the time to fertilize in the fall will strengthen your plants’ and lawn’s roots, giving them a strong base on which to thrive next spring,” he pointed out. He recommends a formula of 20-8-8

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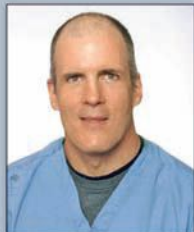


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(nitrogen-phosphorus-potassium) for the best blade, foliage and root growth and trace element absorption. Check with your local Master Gardeners for the ideal time for lawn fertilization. Roger also suggests fertilizing shrubs and trees in the fall. "I recommend applying one to three pounds of slow-release nitrogen per 1,000 square feet of bed and cultivating lightly," he shared.

## Pruning

While fall pruning isn't advocated by most professionals, there are some basics to remember and apply to the task when trimming is safer for the plants.



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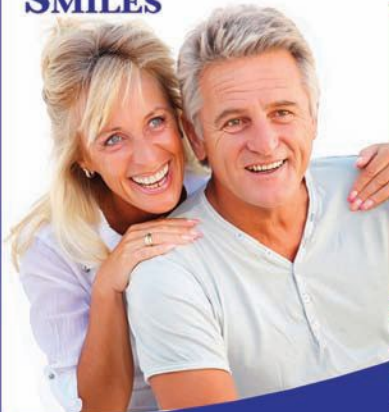
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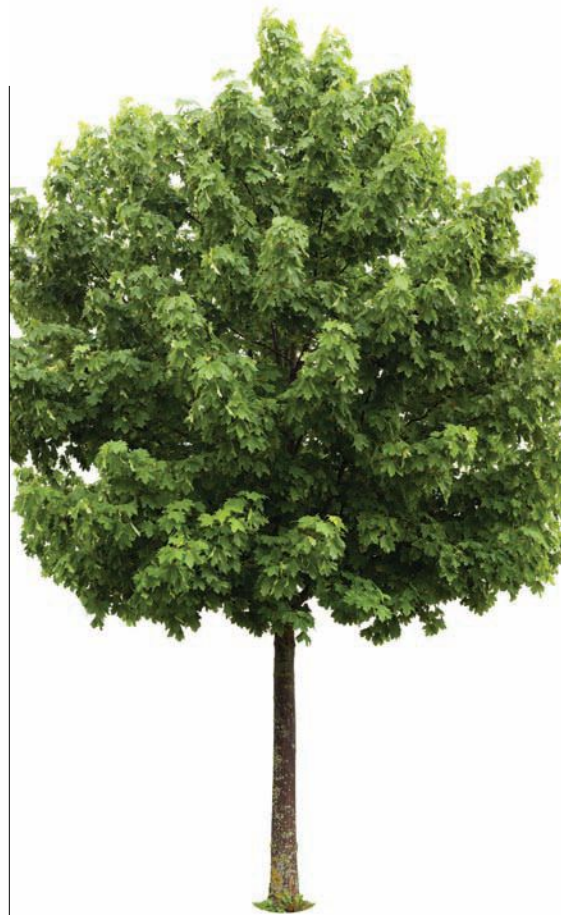
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Mike McGrath expounded on why it's advisable not to prune until winter. "As I try to stress every year at this time, pruning now stimulates new growth just when the plants are trying to go dormant, and this severely weakens the plants."

Once winter has arrived, pruning is recommended to promote overall plant health, encourage flower and fruit development, control size and eliminate broken, hazardous branches. For large, established trees, pruning is best left to qualified professionals. A number of knowledgeable, reputable tree trimming services provide care programs and fertilization. Some employ certified arborists to assist clients and offer tree trimming along with traditional lawn and garden packages.

Among shrubs to prune in winter are hydrangeas and camellias. Trees to be pruned at the same time include: juniper, spruce, Bradford pear, honey locust and poplar. Trees *not* to prune in winter are maple, birch, dogwood, walnut and elm.

Whether raking and mulching or planting and fertilizing, remember to pace yourself. As Barbara Pleasant wrote in *Compost Gardening*, "Leaf season will last for several weeks, so you have plenty of time to let yourself enjoy the weather and the work!" **NOW**

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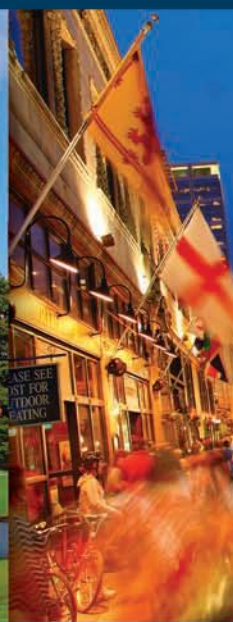
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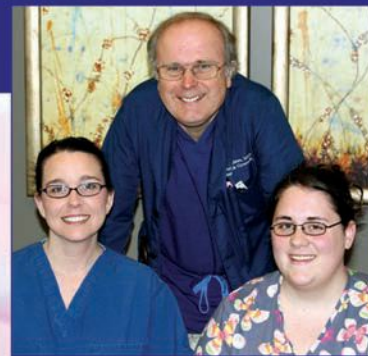
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Twins and Target Field played host to the MLB All-Star Game in July 2014. Fans also attended the MLB Fan Fest at the Minneapolis Convention Center during this year's Midsummer Classic.

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22nd Annual

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**"Minneapolis offers *endless opportunities* for *fun* and *exploration* year-round."**

dance troupe at Cowles Center for Dance and Performing Arts or their favorite band at First Avenue, the Fine Line Music Cafe and Mill City Nights.

World-renowned museums like Walker Art Center and Minneapolis Institute of Arts are among the 55 museums in the Minneapolis area. The city boasts the most theater seats per capita after New York City, with Broadway tours, local productions and the Minnesota Fringe Festival each August to entertain and delight visitors. Festivals like Northern Spark and the Uptown Art Fair take over the city during the summer months with art from every discipline and price point.

With no sales tax on apparel and shoes, it's hard to deny Minnesota's shopping appeal. On top of that, the country's largest shopping center, Mall of America, is nestled in the Minneapolis suburb, Bloomington, which is a short Metro Transit ride away from downtown. Packed inside its 4.8 million square feet are more than 520 stores, an indoor theme park, Nickelodeon Universe, an aquarium housing more than 10,000 sea creatures, a 14-screen movie theater and countless restaurant options. Downtown, take in the flagship Target store on



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Nicollet Mall, then stroll to Saks OFF 5th and many other shops lining the city's pedestrian mall.

In an effort to keep Minneapolis safe, clean and green, the Minneapolis Downtown Improvement District (DID) was implemented in early 2009. Through its many initiatives, visitors and natives can explore the city worry-free while DID Ambassadors patrol the sidewalks, aiding those in need of directions, those who have lost property and even those with medical emergencies. As one of the top-ranked cleanest cities in the world, Minneapolis is kept clean through DID's diligent help with pressure washing, litter and graffiti removal and an outdoor recycling program that stretches throughout downtown. With the goal in mind to have every block green in 20 years, the Minneapolis DID fills the 120-plus block district with more than 15,500 colorful plants to amplify the city's already beautiful downtown.

Minneapolis offers endless opportunities for fun and exploration year-round. Visit Minneapolis and relish in its changing seasons, endless bike paths, multifaceted arts scene and guilt-free shopping while indulging in the city's delectable culinary offerings. For more information about Minneapolis or to plan a trip to the City by Nature, visit [www.minneapolis.org](http://www.minneapolis.org). **NOW**

*By Annie Michaelson. Photos courtesy of Meet Minneapolis.*





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Wednesday & Friday: 10:00 a.m.-noon  
Saturday: 9:00 a.m.-noon  
By Appointment



*Angela McCord McGarity has danced since age 3 and pours her passion into bringing out the best in every young dancer.*

## Learning Passion

*Artistic Motion Dance Academy creates art by teaching dance from the heart. — By Melissa Rawlins*

Artistic Motion Dance Academy challenges every student. Fun is certainly par for the course in the colorful, 4,000-square-foot studios where a variety of dance, from hip-hop to ballet, is taught to all ages. Long-term students develop into confident young women and men here, while short-term enrollments are also welcome. Owner Angela McCord McGarity is helping children grow into well-rounded individuals, full of passion and capable of pushing themselves later in life.

While parents are nurturing young ones, they can feel comfortable at AMDA. People don't feel they need to drop their child off and leave for the hour. The plush lobby, painted in Angela's favorite teals, reds and blacks, encourages parents to stay and watch their children through mirrored glass. Angela provides a playroom, too, for younger family members.

She encourages students to focus on technicalities, high standards and strength-building. Angela and all six experienced teachers insist students learn terminology. For instance, *plié* means "to bend," and ballerinas who understand that perform beautiful *pliés*. With Angela, students learn to put pressure on themselves in this individualized sport. "It's cool to see it finally click in a child," she said. "Their brain tells them: 'I need to work harder.'"

Four years in a row, AMDA's competition dance teams have earned trophies that line the lobby windows. They won the Kids Artistic Revue dance competition award for Top Elite Studio last year, and they're going to nationals this year. Even her 7-year-olds trained last summer, running and doing lunges. "It's cardio. They have to be strong," Angela said. "You never



know what Miss Angela's going to make them do. They may be picking up the student beside them! Ballet is a sport that's harder than others."

Angela's muscles are partly genetic, partly built. She prefers to see strong dancers and works with her students to help their bodies support all she asks of them. She has a gift for inspiring students to listen and learn, and does not give a lot of time for "goofing off."

She has danced since age 3, and the walls of the lobby display evidence of her 34-year history as a ballerina. A framed newspaper article pictures Angela McCord as one of three Clara's in *The Nutcracker Ballet*, performed in 1990 in her hometown, Victoria, Texas. Since then, her drive for ballet has allowed her to do really fun things, from studying ballet at Texas Christian University to dancing, singing and acting with the Radio City Rockettes. "Without ballet as my foundation, the acting and singing would have been harder," said Angela, who taught ballet throughout the Metroplex before opening Artistic Motion Dance Academy in Crowley four years ago.

Some of AMDA's staff members have a master's or bachelor's in dance or have danced professionally. They teach ballet, pointe, jazz, tap, hip-hop, contemporary, clogging and Pilates and are trained to be as caring and technical as Angela. Tumbling classes involve acrobatics, so students learn tricks like back walkovers and aerials for incorporating into dances. Lyrical ballet classes teach dance that speaks a story with movement. Musical theater classes teach singing, acting and dancing all together.

Dedicated to bringing fine art to Burleson, Angela and her students decided to produce *The Nutcracker Ballet* on the Burleson High School stage last December. They'll do it again this year, and auditions are open to the community. Angela is writing a grant to fund other productions, like *Swan Lake* and *Coppélia*, in coming years. Inspired by the talented staff at AMDA, dance students throughout the community are learning to appreciate passion, not just movement. **NOW**



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*Rep. Roger Williams honors the family of Sergeant William Moody during the redesignation of Burleson's U. S. Post Office building.*



*Lisa Rodgers and Rylan McCoy enjoy some pool time.*



*Lindsey Douglas, Bailey Douglas and Katelyn Depoy enjoy some cookies after a good session of talk at Burleson's Mayor's Youth Council meeting.*



*Tyler Stephens keeps the books as Chris Chappotin announces the game at the Pony State Tournament at Chisenhall Fields.*



*Exemplifying service above self, First Financial Bank vice president Rhyen Anderson serves tea to his colleague, Kevin Shipman.*



*Grandmother Elizabeth Carpenter with her daughter, Katy Iry, supporting Trinity Iry who is practicing with her Sparta Futbol Club teammates.*



*Retirees from Crowley ISD took the first day of school as their opportunity for a day-long shopping excursion to historic downtown Granbury.*



*Michael Dicke, son of Araceli Chavez and Josh Dicke, is excited about his first day of second grade at Nola Dunn.*



*David Heinsen gets silly with his granddaughter, Charity, while they pet Hankadeenie's rabbit, which he brought out of nowhere during his magic show at Burleson Public Library.*



*For an afternoon pick-me-up, Summer Miller measures out a drop of lemon oil into her water.*



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## What's Smarter – Paying Off Debts or Investing?

It probably doesn't happen as much as you'd like, but from time to time, you have some extra disposable income. When this happens, how should you use the funds? Assuming you have adequate emergency savings — typically, three to six months' worth of living expenses — should you pay off debts or fund your IRA or another investment account?

There's no one correct answer, and the priority of these options may change, depending on your financial goals. However, your first step may be to consider what type of debt you're thinking of paying down with your extra money. For example, if you have a consumer loan that charges a high rate of interest — and you can't deduct the interest payments from your taxes — you might conclude that it's a good idea to get rid of this loan as quickly as possible.

Still, if the loan is relatively small, and the payments aren't really impinging on your monthly cash flow that much, you might want to consider putting any extra money you have into an investment that has the potential to offer longer-term benefits. For instance, you might decide to fully fund your IRA for the year before tackling minor debts. (In 2014, you can contribute up



### Having More Retirement Accounts is Not the Same as Having More Money.

When it comes to the number of retirement accounts you have, the saying "more is better" is not necessarily true. In fact, if you hold multiple accounts with various brokers, it can be difficult to keep track of your investments and to see if you're properly diversified.\* At the very least, multiple accounts usually mean multiple fees.

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\*Diversification does not guarantee a profit or protect against loss.

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to \$5,500 to a traditional or Roth IRA, or \$6,500 if you're 50 or older.)

When it comes to making extra mortgage payments, however, the picture is more complicated. In the first place, mortgage interest is typically tax deductible, which makes your loan less expensive. Even beyond the issue of deductibility, you may instinctively feel that it's best to whittle away your mortgage and build as much equity as possible in your home. But is that always a smart move?

Increasing your home equity is a goal of many homeowners — after all, the more equity you have in your home, the more cash you'll get when you sell it. Yet, if your home's value rises — which, admittedly, doesn't always happen — you will still, in effect, be building equity without having to divert funds that could be placed elsewhere, such as in an investment. In this situation, it's important to weigh your options. Do you want to lower your mortgage debts and possibly save on cumulative interest expenses? Or would you be better served to invest that money for potential growth or interest payments?

Here's an additional consideration: If you tied up most of your money in home equity, you may well lose some flexibility and liquidity. If you were to fall ill or lose your job, could you get money out of your home if your emergency savings fund fell short? Possibly, in the form of a home equity line of credit or a second mortgage, but if you were not bringing in any income, a bank might not even approve such a loan — no matter how much equity you have in your house. You may more easily be able to sell stocks, bonds or other investment vehicles to gain access to needed cash.

Getting some extra money once in a while is a nice problem to have. Still, you won't want to waste the opportunity, so when choosing to pay down debts or put the money into investments, think carefully. **NOW**

*This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Lynn H. Bates is an Edward Jones representative based in Burleson.*



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### October 4

Feed The Need: 8:00 a.m., 590 NE McAlister. 5K & 1-mile walk to raise funds benefiting Meals on Wheels of Johnson and Ellis Counties and PacMin. \$15 for people; \$3 for leashed pets. [www.funmburleson.org](http://www.funmburleson.org).

### October 9

Burleson Opportunity Fund breakfast: 7:30-9:00 a.m., First United Methodist Church, 590 NE McAlister Rd. Fundraiser Breakfast. RSVP to Jesse Elizondo, (817) 426-9682 or [jelizondo@burlesontx.com](mailto:jelizondo@burlesontx.com)

### October 11

22nd Annual Founders Day: 9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m., Old Town Burleson, 124 W. Ellison St. Festival begins with a parade featuring Burleson Heritage Foundation members in period dress. Enjoy western gunfighters, antique appraisals, arts and crafts, great food, games and children's activities (including bounce houses) plus two stages featuring entertainment. Call Burleson Visitors Center and Museum, (817) 447-1575.

### October 16

BACC Quarterly Luncheon: 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., NorthPointe First Baptist Church of Joshua, 2450 Southwest Wilshire Blvd.

Enjoy this Roast and Toast honoring State Representative Rob Orr. \$20 for members of Burleson Area Chamber of Commerce. \$25 non-members. RSVP to (817) 295-6121.

### October 17

The Moonlit Social: 7:00-10:00 p.m., Crowley Recreation Center. Dress to dance to Country/Western, Big Band and Jazz music by Heartsong Entertainment. Bring your friends, favorite beverage and snacks. \$10 tickets sold until **October 10**. (817) 297-2201, ext. 7000.

### October 18

Joshua Fall Festival: 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Joshua High School. Entertainment including elementary school choirs, school dance teams and performers from Lucas Gymnastics, plus pony rides, food, vendors, games, entertainment and kids costume contests! Contact (817) 556-2480.

### October 24

BACC Annual Golf Tournament: 11:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Hidden Creek Golf Course. \$500 Foursome & Hole Sponsor; \$100 Individual Golfers. Shotgun start at 1:00 p.m. after luncheon. Register at (817) 295-6121.

### October 25

Old Town Boo Bash: 6:00-8:00 p.m., 124 W. Ellison St. Free! Trick-or-treating, bounce houses, a pumpkin patch full of free pumpkins to decorate and a costume parade for children up to 12 years old. Call (817) 426-9104.

Haunted Hayride: 7:00-9:30 p.m., Bicentennial Park, Crowley. Entry fee: one canned good per person for House of Hope. Contact (817) 297-2201.

### October 30

Come Grow With Us: 6:00-10:00 p.m., Omni Fort Worth Hotel, Texas Ballroom. Enjoy comedy and fine dining at this gala opportunity to support the free services offered through Burleson Pregnancy Aid Center. Visit [www.pregnancyaid.org](http://www.pregnancyaid.org), or contact Kelly Qualls, (817) 295-4101.

### November 6

Character Luncheon: 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., First United Methodist Church. Contact Pat Worrell, [worrellpat@aol.com](mailto:worrellpat@aol.com).

*Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your event details to [melissa.rawlins@nowmagazines.com](mailto:melissa.rawlins@nowmagazines.com).*



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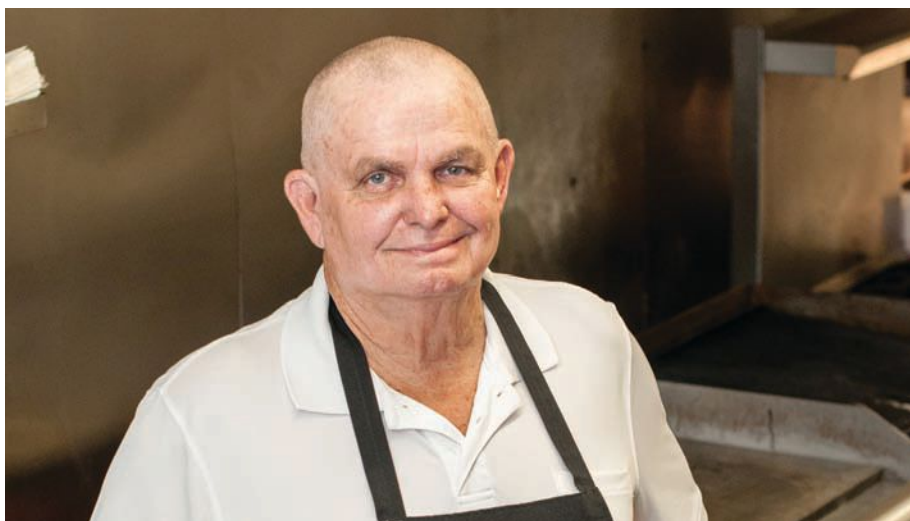
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## In the Kitchen With Joe Hicks

— *By Melissa Rawlins*

Living at Rustic Creek Ranch and working in their two kitchens, Joe Hicks is known as the grill guy. He loves cooking for family and friends. Born and reared on a farm in Dublin, Texas, Joe learned to cook by watching his mother fix home-style, Southern meals. The first time he cooked on his own, he was around 16. “Mom and Dad were gone. A couple of my buddies came to the house,” Joe recalled. “I decided to fix them chicken fried steak, fried okra and fried squash. I tried making biscuits, but they didn’t turn out well.”

After that, Joe was hooked on cooking. He especially enjoys preparing steaks, ribs and barbecue on the grill. His family’s favorites are his deviled eggs, and sweet potato bread pudding for dessert. **NOW**

### Sweet Potato Bread Pudding

#### **Bread Pudding:**

- 3 large eggs**
- 1/2 cup sugar**
- 1 cup brown sugar, lightly packed**
- 1 1/2 cups half-and-half**
- 1 1/2 cups milk**
- 1/2 stick butter, melted**
- 1 Tbsp. vanilla extract**
- 1/4 tsp. ground nutmeg**
- 2 medium sweet potatoes, peeled and grated**
- 5 cups day-old bread, cubed**

#### **Whiskey Sauce:**

- 1 1/2 cups powdered sugar**
- 1 large egg, well-beaten**
- 1 stick butter**
- 1/3 cup whiskey**

**1.** For Bread Pudding: Combine eggs, sugar and brown sugar in a large bowl; beat until smooth with a whisk.

- 2.** Add half-and-half, milk, butter, vanilla extract, nutmeg and sweet potatoes. Stir well.
- 3.** Add bread to egg mixture; stir until bread is well-moistened.
- 4.** Cover and chill for 30 minutes, stirring once.
- 5.** Preheat oven to 325 F. Spoon pudding into well-greased, 10-inch cast-iron skillet. Bake until done, or until a wooden toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Serve warm with Whiskey Sauce.
- 6.** For Whiskey Sauce: Combine all ingredients in a heavy saucepan and cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until thickened, about 3 minutes.

### Deviled Eggs Texas-style

- 12 eggs, hardboiled**
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise**
- 1 Tbsp. mustard**
- 6 slices bacon, cooked crisp and crumbled**
- 2 Tbsp. finely-shredded cheddar cheese**

- 1 jalapeño, seeded and finely chopped**
- 4 Tbsp. sweet pickle relish**
- Salt and pepper, to taste**
- 3-4 pimento-stuffed olives, sliced**
- 1 tsp. paprika**

- 1.** Peel eggs and cut lengthwise.
- 2.** Remove yolks to a bowl and mash well. Add next 6 ingredients. Keep mixture a little dry. Add salt and pepper.
- 3.** Spoon yolk mixture into egg white halves; top with olive slices and sprinkle with paprika.

### BBQ Brisket

- 1/2 cup Italian dressing**
- 1 8- to 12-lb. brisket, untrimmed**
- 3 Tbsp. black pepper**
- 3 Tbsp. garlic powder**
- 3 Tbsp. Tony Chachere’s Creole Seasoning**
- Worcestershire sauce, to taste**

- 1.** Smear dressing all over brisket. Season with pepper and garlic powder. Wrap with plastic wrap. Chill for 8 hours or overnight.
- 2.** Sprinkle Tony Chachere’s on 2 small, seasoned live oak logs and 1 mesquite log in pit. Light logs, heat to about 200 F (or hotter) and cook brisket for 1 hour per pound, spraying with Worcestershire sauce about every hour, until done. Slice brisket across the grain.

### Mexican Cornbread Supper

- 1 lb. ground beef**
- 1 10.5-oz. can Ro-Tel tomatoes or regular diced tomatoes**
- 1 15-oz. can ranch-style beans**
- 1 14.75-oz. can cream-style corn**
- 1 cup Mexican cheddar cheese, grated**
- 1 8.5-oz. box Jiffy Cornbread Mix**
- 1 egg**
- 1 cup water**

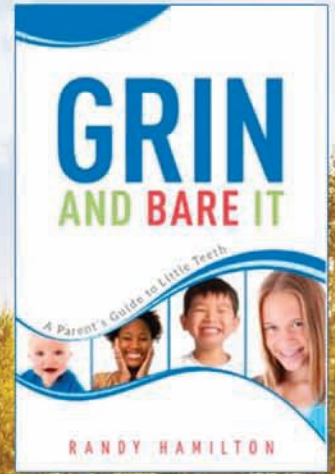
- 1.** In a deep, ovenproof pot, brown ground beef; drain. Top with next 4 ingredients.
- 2.** Combine last 3 ingredients; spoon over meat mixture. Bake at 400 F until cornbread is browned, about 20 minutes.

To view recipes from current and previous issues, visit [www.nowmagazines.com](http://www.nowmagazines.com).




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-by Dr. Randy  
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