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NOW

Goofing Off

From Owl to Sooner, Blake Novacek keeps sight of his goal

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I am a 58-year-old grandma and wife. I have tried most every diet, and after some time the weight came right back on! Over the past four years, I have been trying to get weight off, and nothing worked because I have hypothyroid and fibromyalgia. I also have acid reflux, which made me have to stop eating by 5 PM so I wouldn't reflux at night. I saw on Facebook a DSC ad. After checking them out, I messaged them about my health problems. They said they had had luck with thyroid problems, but hadn't had a patient with fibromyalgia. I told them my main goal was not weight loss as much as I was wanting the pain to get better, and if I lost weight, that would be great! Immediately after I got on the program, the pain in my body got much better and in the first week I lost 7 lbs. *What a surprise!*

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*Two-time Owl, Blake Novacek,
flies to Oklahoma with a
mic in hand.*

Photo by SRC Photography.

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Editor's Note

Hello, Friends!

Crisp, clean air, such as we enjoy during this season, brings smiles to our faces. Whether we simply sit out on our porch in the mild, mosquito-free breeze or push our bodies through extended outdoor workouts, we're breathing in oxygen. The mysterious source of life must flow freely through our blood to every organ of our body if we desire to enjoy abundant health.

My desire this month is to be more active, to promote circulation of blood with oxygen to more parts of my body. My brain needs it most, so I can think clearly and maintain calm. When I'm free mentally, I'm free physically to help others while I help myself. While I exercise my liberties with the great team at NOW Magazines, my goal is that you will benefit from the inspirational stories we prepare for you.

Melissa

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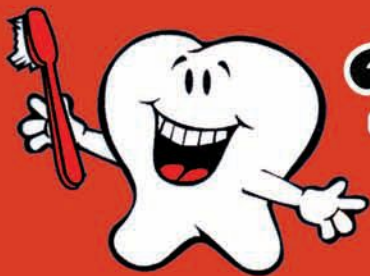


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Goofing Off

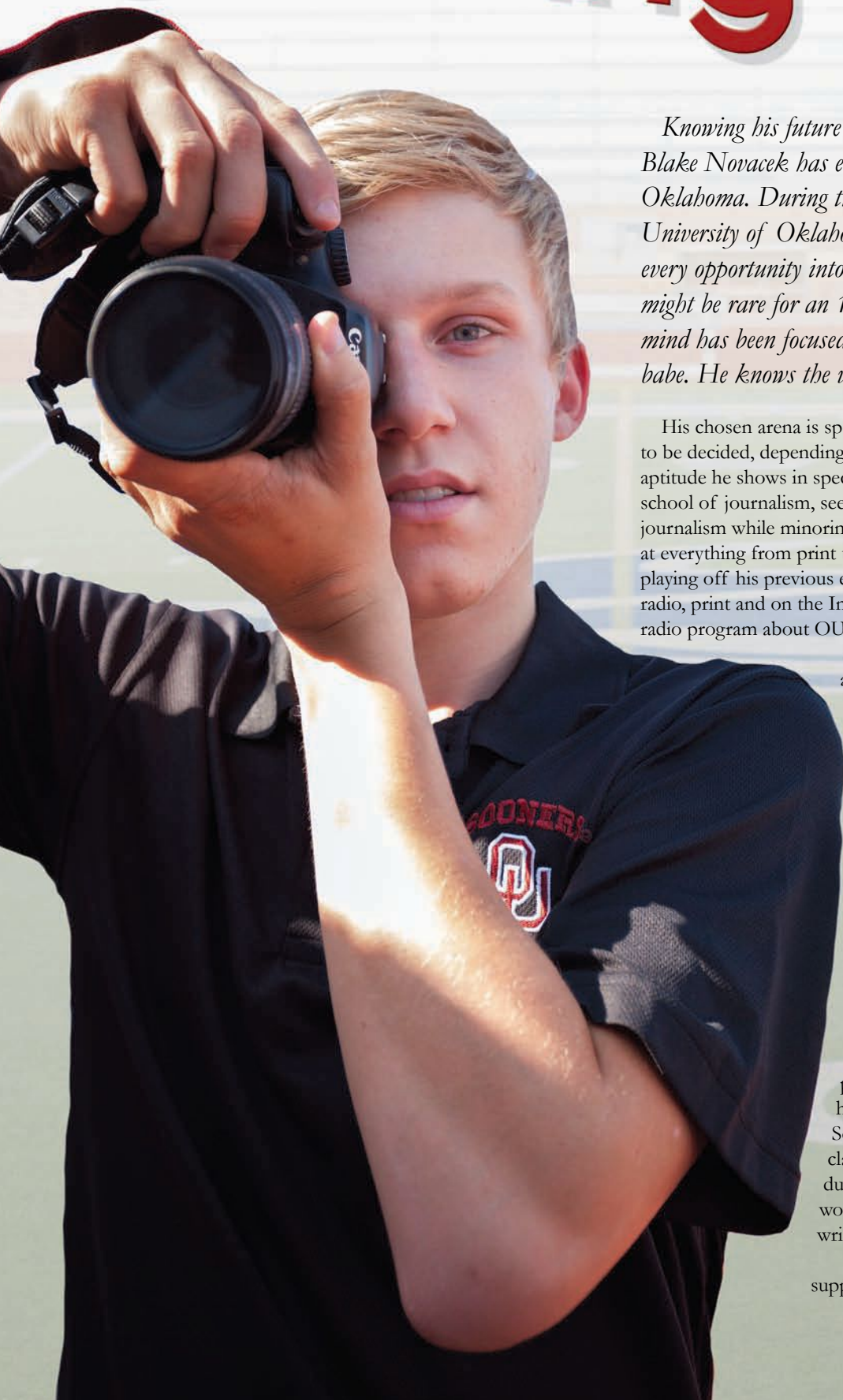
— By Melissa Rawlins

Knowing his future is not entirely in his own hands, Blake Novacek has embraced collegiate life in Norman, Oklahoma. During this time, his freshman year at the University of Oklahoma, Blake's mission is to expand every opportunity into options. Such strategic thinking might be rare for an 18-year-old, but this young man's mind has been focused on the football field since he was a babe. He knows the value of playing the field.

His chosen arena is sports journalism. His exact niche is yet to be decided, depending upon the connections he makes and aptitude he shows in specific areas of media. Enrolled in the school of journalism, seeking a bachelor's degree in broadcast journalism while minoring in business, Blake will try his hand at everything from print to television, as well as radio. In fact, playing off his previous experiences reporting sports news in radio, print and on the Internet, Blake is busy this fall hosting a radio program about OU sports for SoonerVision.

Preparing radio scripts and announcing games takes a lot of preparatory research, as well as a nimble mind. Blake knows, having hosted an ESPN-sponsored program that aired on KCLE 1490 AM throughout the 2014 professional football season. This kept him busy enough that he switched from studying at Joshua High School to a homeschool situation, freeing his time to practice sports journalism. A graduate of iUniversity Prep homeschool, whose mascot happens to be The Owl, Blake earned the privilege to gain credits toward high school graduation through pursuing journalism. He had begun his high school career at Joshua High School, where he offered the journalism class knowledge and expertise gained during his ninth grade year, when he worked for www.proplayerinsiders.com, writing news about professional athletes.

Each of these experiences was supported and encouraged by his parents,





Blake interviewing Travis Fredrick at Training Camp in Oxnard, California.

Jay and Amy Novacek. When the couple moved here in Blake's eighth grade year, Amy learned of the website by and for professional athletes and introduced Blake to its producer, Melissa Stedler. She mentored Blake, giving him the invitation to prepare articles about athletes and their families.

He dove in head first, and recalls his first interview was a great lesson in self-assurance. "I conducted an interview with Eric Dickerson, someone I've grown up knowing and idolizing," Blake recalled. "Of course, at first I was nervous, but as the interview went on and we continued to talk, I realized the need to become more composed. That experience alone really helped me moving forward, allowing me to be more natural with myself."

Access to the athletes was made easier by the fact that Blake was the son of a professional football player whose colleagues welcome Blake's presence and hope to see him succeed. Still, Blake understood that the athlete doesn't always feel comfortable when approached by journalists, especially if the interview takes place unannounced. Blake learned by watching his own father deal with other journalists. He decided to use a tactic that increased his likeability and promoted transparency from his subjects. "I try to goof off with them before I interview them," he said. "By tossing the ball back and forth with them on the



Blake interviewing Michael Irvin at the 2015 Super Bowl in Arizona.

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Blake tosses the pigskin around with his dad.

sidelines, they are more likely to give me their thoughts when I finally conduct the interview.”

Blake also found success by taking his own photos and recording his interviews. His iPhone camera is sufficient for the job, though he sometimes uses a Canon. “I am grateful for my family, who has supported me through thick and thin. Ever since wanting to embrace sports journalism I have always had them to lean on, and that, more than anything, has driven me to be more successful,” Blake said.



Blake with Coach Mike Burt.



Dez Bryant and Blake in San Diego, California.

A hand-held audio recorder is plugged into the USB port of Blake's MacBook Pro immediately after the interview, which downloads directly into a software program called Adobe Audition. The audio clips can then be easily edited and attached to the stories he writes for Internet publication.

Using those cameras and the audio recorder throughout his sophomore and junior years at Joshua High School, Blake interviewed coaches and athletes for The Owls. The stories he wrote were published in *The Owl Flight* newspaper, a project of the journalism class taught by Mrs. Zachary. "I appreciate Mrs. Zachary, because she challenged me to write about more than sports. While in her class, I had to write a political piece, a piece about something controversial, an opinion piece, amongst other things. Here, I gained my voice," Blake said.

He also gave of himself, inspiring good interviewing techniques in other

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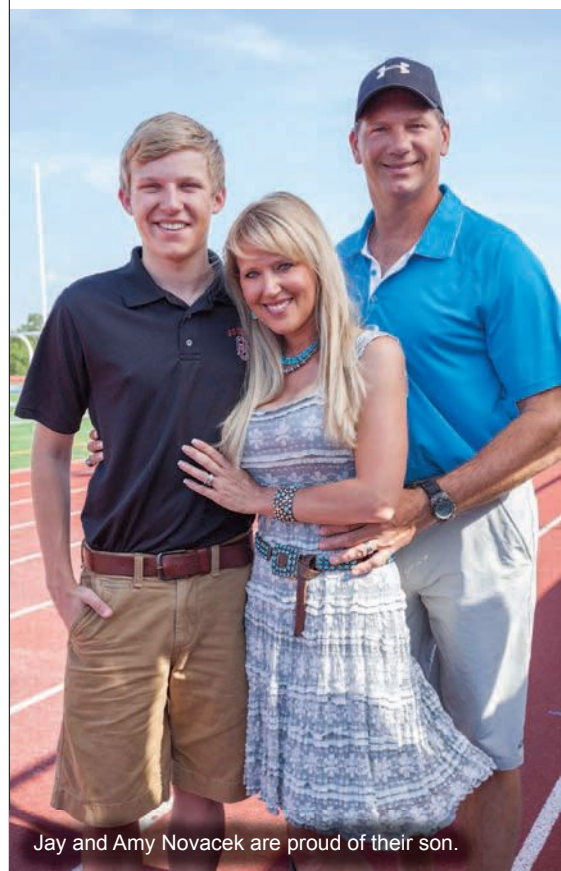
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- Dr. Susan Andrews, Chief of Staff,
Burleson Animal Emergency Hospital



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Jay and Amy Novacek are proud of their son.

students, who observed the practices Blake had learned while writing for www.proplayerinsiders.com. Blake began writing about the football program. He got to know the new athletic director and coach, Mike Burt, during his sophomore year. "He gave a solid interview," Blake said.

Another man who has inspired Blake is a former coach of the Dallas Cowboys, Barry Switzer, who advised Blake to live in the dorm where most of the freshman athletes live at OU. To boost his proximity to the athletes Blake intends to focus on, he and three other students moved into a suite that happens to be right across the street from the school of journalism.



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In the classrooms where Blake spends most of his waking hours, the focus is communication. Not only is Blake gaining experience writing television scripts, editing radio clips and researching stories, he is also fulfilling the basics of a bachelor's degree. English may be his best language, but he's challenging himself to learn to speak Spanish, too. "My chances of being offered a job are multiplied if I am bilingual," Blake said. "Plus, in today's world of sports, it's obvious that more than half my subjects are probably going to be easier to talk to if I can speak Spanish."

Impressive as this young man seems, his prospects are even brighter. Now that he's accepted challenges and excelled in each opportunity that has come his way, he knows himself better than ever. He knows he is not yet settled on radio or Internet journalism. He desires to try his hand at other techniques of sports journalism so he can make the best decision about which direction to take. In the meantime, Blake's staying calm and focused, working hard and, fairly frequently, goofing off. **NOW**

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The Best of Both V

— By Lisa Bell

In the home of Lucas and Emily Shaw, the opening of every school day looks slightly different than it does for children attending public schools. Early in the morning, Lawson, Peyton and Lily gather at the table for a special breakfast. By 8:30 sharp, they pass through French doors and take their places in old-fashioned school desks, personalized with their names. Books and papers await, tucked beneath them. Containers for each child hold binders with detailed plans — everything they need for a successful school year. A bright yellow piano, white board and various classroom decorations greet them, as Mom begins a personalized day of instruction.



Worlds

Emily grew up in Fort Worth and experienced being homeschooled, but also attended public and private schools. In ninth grade, her parents learned about a university model school. Emily loved the homeschool environment, but her sister loved sports. The university model gave them the best of both worlds.

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Coming from that background, Emily wanted to homeschool before she ever had kids. It wasn't only her strong Christian faith, but she didn't like the idea of missing so many firsts with her children. She wanted to experience their early learning moments. Although Lucas grew up in Crowley and attended public schools, he supported the idea. From the beginning, he said, "I want to make it to where, when we have kids, you get to stay home with them."

The couple made sacrifices. "The first year with Lawson was financially strenuous. We didn't have a lot or do a lot, but I was home with my baby," Emily remembered.

When it was time for Lawson to start school, they lived in Fort Worth. Emily and Lucas opted to teach their firstborn at home. As they began considering a move, Emily never imagined living in Burleson. "I don't know why. It just didn't seem like where we wanted to live," she said. They looked in Fort Worth and Benbrook but didn't find anything.



Their Realtor brought them to Burleson. "Where has this been?" they asked. Neither of them had any idea about the Burleson/Joshua area and its growth. "We've just loved it," she said.

They sold their house and moved to Burleson three years ago, finding themselves in the Joshua ISD. Emily had mixed emotions. She knew about Joshua's reputation for exemplary schools, and she didn't want to keep the kids from going to school with neighborhood friends. So they asked Lawson what he wanted to do. After thinking about it, he said, "Mommy, I love homeschool. I want to do homeschool."

Now 9 and in fourth grade, Lawson doesn't regret his decision. Peyton is 7 and in second grade. He learns differently from his big brother, but homeschool

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works well for him, too. Lily started kindergarten this year, a big 5-year-old who got a head start in learning by participating in the family school days during her preschool years.

In spite of great schools, Burleson also has a strong homeschool community, where the students can come together in co-ops and other activities. When a neighbor told Emily about Pathway Christian Academy, she was excited. The fully accredited university model school was like her high school years. The flexibility of taking all classes or a few appealed to the Shaw family. More importantly, the school provided curriculum and detailed plans for her to cover on at-home days. "It took the burden of 'everything on my own' away. These guys know what they're doing," Emily said. "It's the best of both worlds — perfect blend of home plus classroom environment. Looking back, this is why we moved here." Emily also works as the director of development for the school now.



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She points out that every homeschool family has unique views and methods. For her and the kids, she needs structure and lots of self-discipline on both sides. They choose mornings because it works best for their personalities. If they finish early, then they can take a nature walk or pick an experiment from the science box. Two days each week, the kids go to school away from home, but the other three days, Mom is their teacher. She makes school fun by tapping into their interests and gifts as much as possible.

***"You shall teach them
[God's truths] diligently
to your children, and
shall talk of them when
you sit in your house,
when you walk by the
way, when you lie down,
and when you rise up."***

— Deuteronomy 6:7

Homeschool presents challenges, regardless of whether a parent teaches strictly at home or incorporates teaching with co-op classes or a school environment. Many resources exist to assist in providing quality at-home education. Emily uses a variety. Lawson is taking a robotics class this year, and because of his love for art, they enrolled him in an extra art class. They use online resources such as Teaching Textbooks Online or Reading A to Z. As the kids advance in grades, online tools boost the quality beyond a parent's capabilities. Emily knows her limitations and shudders at the thought of trying to teach physics in a few years. She loves getting to relearn and discover new things with her children.

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Lucas works at Lockheed Martin as a videographer. He spends time teaching Lawson about graphic arts in the evenings. Peyton sometimes asks Emily if he can do reading after his daddy gets home. "Lucas thinks it's neat that Peyton wants to wait for him," Emily said. The homeschool choice allows her to shift their schedule, as needed.

The family will add Daddy School Day this year. Lucas has every other Friday off, so he can use that day to teach the kids carpentry skills, how to change a flat tire or the oil, and other life lessons. During the process, he can reinforce core studies and show the kids how those lessons apply in real situations.

Different age levels and small children not quite ready for school make educating at home tough on some days. The stress of choosing curriculum can test any parent. Different styles of learning demand creativity from the parents. In the struggles, Emily remembers why she does it. "I get to have my babies at home and watch them learn right before my eyes," she said. She watched her children read for the first time, conquering words and celebrating the moment.

Ironically, some of the challenges can be the biggest advantages of homeschooling. Emily gets to embrace the ways her kids learn and customize lessons to fit them. Although they follow the Burleson ISD schedule for holidays, an off-season trip morphs into a learning adventure. Rates plummet and less people intrude on lessons.

Homeschooling isn't for everyone, but for Emily and Lucas, it works. They live by Deuteronomy 6:7: "You shall teach them [God's truths] diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up." They can't imagine any other way. **NOW**

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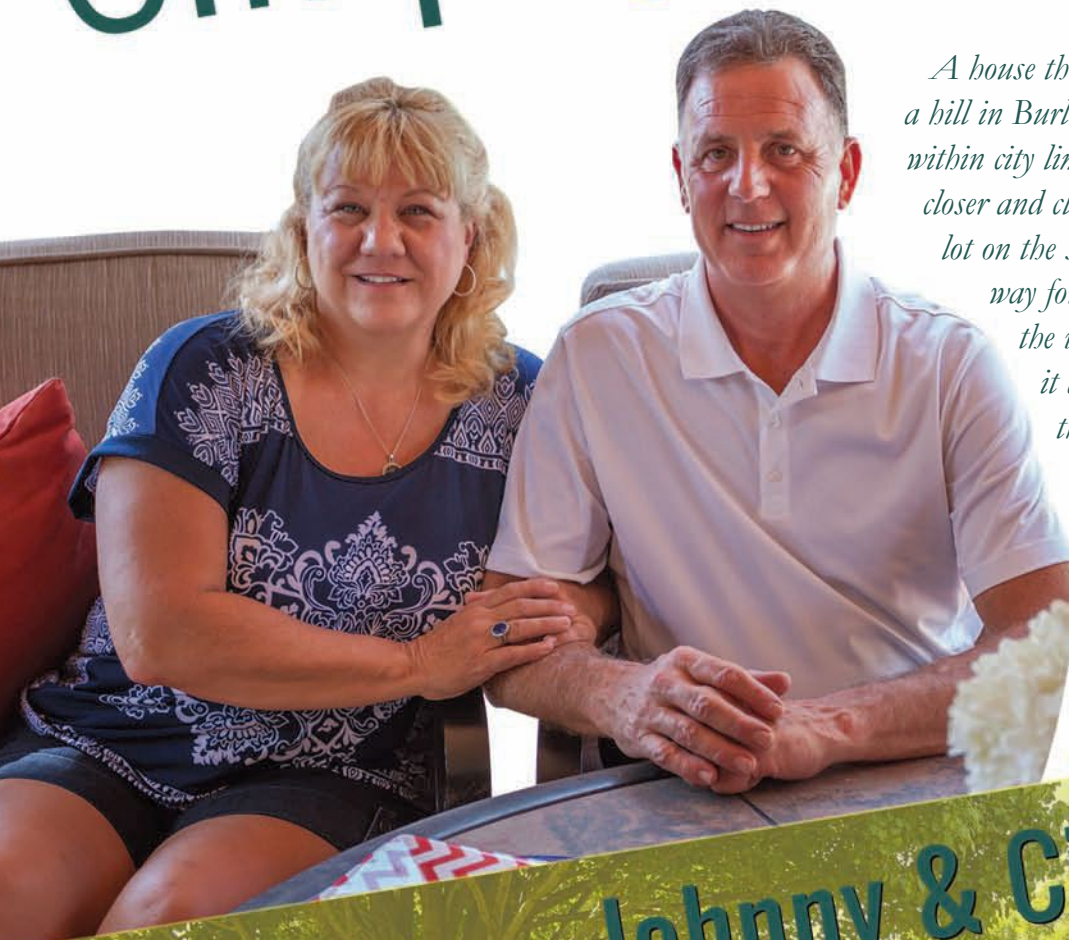
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Simple Treasures

— By Erin McEndree



A house that used to be in the country on a hill in Burleson with a great view is now within city limits. Housing additions crept closer and closer until there wasn't a vacant lot on the street. Trees came down to make way for erecting homes, which blocked the view of the city. As the city grew, it added to the twinkling lights of the skyline, and it also brought amenities and conveniences that were a welcome sight.

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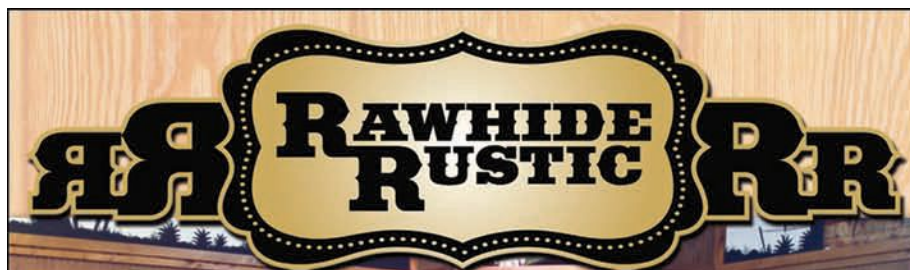
Johnny & Cindy Parks





Johnny and Cindy Parks experienced the growth of their surroundings firsthand. "My friends used to come to my childhood home on horseback," Johnny said. "I could literally jump the fence with a shotgun in one hand, and no one thought anything about it."

Johnny's family moved into the 2-year-old house built by Ted Magnon in 1976. The side street was named for Ted's wife, Francine, which also happens to be Cindy's middle name. Johnny has worked in the supermarket business for over 40 years, and that is where he met Cindy. They both worked at Skaggs Grocery store in 1980. "As I passed the meat market, I saw a tall, dark-haired, good-looking young man working there," Cindy beamed. "I smiled at him all the way to the front and almost knocked over a display." They began to talk and discovered they had the same birthday. Nine months later, they were married in the backyard of his parents' house by the pool. Johnny and Cindy bought their own home and had three kids — Jerrod, Justin and Jordan. In 1999, Johnny's parents needed a smaller space, and Johnny, Cindy and the children needed a bigger space, so they swapped houses.



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Their home, on a half-acre, has been updated from the '70s appearance. The flat roofline, mimicking Frank Lloyd Wright architecture, incorporates the garage and makes the house look longer on the outside. The cream-colored, rugged stonework that surrounds each exterior window contrasts the dark brown brick and adds a natural modern style. Tiles in a star shape meet visitors at the front door and are mimicked again on the back patio.



Johnny drinks coffee outside every morning. His view consists of lush, green grass, blue water and patriotic decor under the patio area. Games like pool, volleyball, bean bag toss and lawn golf are played in the backyard. The front yard is big enough for tackle football. "My kids learned how to swim here," Cindy said. "I can't wait for grandkids to learn to swim here someday, too." Crape myrtles and other shrubs line the back fence. Something is blooming

during every season. Johnny prefers a well-maintained yard. He loves to cook out for friends and family. He added a deck onto the storage building, so his grill would be covered from the sun and elements. He enjoys grilling a variety of meals.

Four years ago, Johnny and Cindy remodeled the kitchen. They opened up the utility room to create a larger space and removed the wall between the dining



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Dr. Ryan K. Pham



area and kitchen. "Now, visitors do not have to walk through the utility room. They come into the extra living space," Johnny said. Beige and brown tile in a unique pattern looks like a rug in the middle of the kitchen floor. The cabinets are beige with cream-colored walls. Black appliances pop, as well as the old-fashioned fork and spoon hanging on the wall. "The long countertop lines one side of the kitchen," Johnny said. "It's good for buffets when family is here."

Many family gatherings take place at their home. Johnny remembers Christmases where the whole front room was full of gifts. "Besides our wedding and graduation parties, we had my mom and dad's 50th wedding anniversary here," Johnny said, "Friends ask us if they can have their parties here, too." These are all treasured memories that the family enjoys. A second eating and living area beyond the kitchen is where Cindy likes to spend her time. She hosts Keno every year for a group of ladies who have been playing together for more than 20 years. Family photos line a large dresser.

The same beige color from the kitchen is painted on the built-in cabinets in the dining area. Cindy decorates the space according to seasons and holidays. Presently, harvest decor is displayed. A pumpkin tea set, a white pumpkin soup tureen with brown and green acorns and pumpkin candle holders are nicely arranged. Johnny and Cindy have discussed opening up the wall between the formal living room and the kitchen and adding a large table that would seat the whole family. It would create an open concept floor plan.

The sunken living room is in the same



color scheme as the kitchen and dining area. Cindy was inspired by the calming colors of the sand and ocean of Mexico after two of her children were married on the beach, so she brought the blue, teal and tan into her living room.

The master bedroom has dark laminate flooring. A blue and white bedspread dons the bed. Two arched doorways lead into his and hers sides of the bathroom. All the bathrooms in the house still have the original mirrors. One has an ornate, chunky frame that Cindy painted brown. Traditional furnishings are in the room, with no extra items to clutter the space. "We want to remodel the bathroom area for a more updated look," she said. "I've cleaned homes for a long time, and I realize less is more. I want my friends and family to feel comfortable and welcome when they come into my home."

The extra bedroom waits for visits from the kids and boasts a bed with a turquoise bedspread and an armoire. A huge sports roster board sign that says *PARKS*, in red, hangs over the closet door. It's a reminder of all the sports their three kids played. "I played golf, but when the kids got into sports, my focus was on them," Johnny said. "I coached all three of them in sports. We have some good memories and made some great friends." Now, Johnny plays an occasional golf game with his boys.

A plaque in the living room says, *It is not about the breaths you take, but about the moments that take your breath away!* Johnny and Cindy live a simple lifestyle that focuses on family. They treasure every moment shared together. They can't wait to see what the future has in store, as their family continues to grow. **NOW**

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Model Madison Cassens



CABINET REFRESH 101

— By Jill Rose

Looking for an inexpensive way to dramatically change the look of your kitchen? Painting cabinets is a great way to get the look of a new kitchen without the price tag of a complete remodel.

FIND THE PERFECT COLOR

For most people, one of the hardest parts of painting kitchen cabinets is finding the right color. With all the paint options available, even opting for white cabinets can result in having to sift through hundreds of variations to find the “right” white.



One of the biggest obstacles to choosing a color is lighting. The number of windows in your space (natural lighting), as well as the type of bulbs you use (soft white, bright white, daylight, etc.), can drastically change the way a color will look. Buying your paint from a paint specialty store can alleviate a great deal of indecision, as the employees in these stores are able to provide you with the best options, depending on your lighting. Keep in mind, homes with a lot of natural light tend to cast a blue hue on white paints, whereas homes with artificial lighting can cast colors ranging from blue to orange, depending on the bulb used.

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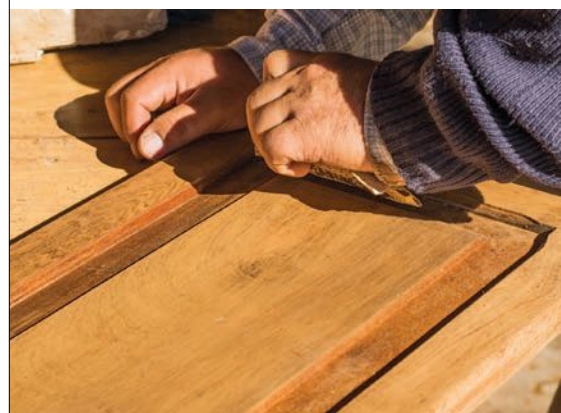
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After selecting a few sample colors, purchase scrap pieces of wood strips that are the same species as your cabinets and paint them using the sample colors. Leave the samples in your kitchen for a few days to see how the color changes throughout the day. Once you've decided on a color, select your sheen. Choose a high-gloss sheen for a more modern look or an eggshell for a more classic feel.

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Begin by taking the cabinet doors off and removing the hinges. Be sure to label each cabinet door and hinge for reassembly. Next, tape off the wall area around the cabinet frames.



GIVE EVERYTHING A GOOD SANDING

Whether your cabinet doors, drawers and frames are painted or covered in stain, you will need to sand them. Begin by using a 100-grit sandpaper, and then move on to 120-grit sandpaper. Note: Most of the cabinet can be sanded with an orbital sander, but the smaller areas will need to be sanded by hand.

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After sanding everything, remove the dust created. The frames are easy to clean, but doors and drawers can be tricky. Dust will ruin your paint job, and you will find yourself having to sand out specks and reapply paint. To ensure maximum dust removal, start by simply turning the cabinet door or drawer over and patting the back so most of the dust falls out. Follow this with a quick pass over with a vacuum wand. Finally, use a duster and get into the crevices. If you find you still have dust specs, use mineral spirits and a rag to remove any remaining dust.

FIX ANY GOUGES OR DENTS

If you have deep scratches or dents, fill them in with wood filler. Let it dry, and then sand it down using a 180- or 220-grit sandpaper. Be sure to clean away any excess dust.

PRIME THE CABINETS DRAWERS/FRAMES

Using a 2-inch paint brush, apply a light coat of primer to the cabinets, drawers and frames. Tinting your primer to match the color of the new cabinet paint is excellent insurance against future nicks and scratches showing.

Begin by priming the back of the cabinet door. Start in the center panel section. If you get primer on the stiles or rails, make sure you brush them out, so they don't leave a blotchy finish.

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Next, prime the rails, and then the stiles. Do not prime the edges of the cabinets at this stage. After priming the cabinet doors, move on to priming the drawers. Since drawers only have a front, prime the entire drawer (edges included). The next step is to prime the cabinet frames. If desired, prime the inside of the cabinets, also.

Once all items have been primed, allow them to cure for at least 24 hours before lightly sanding (by hand) all the primed surfaces with a 300-grit sandpaper. Sand them just enough to remove any imperfections or random pieces of dust that may have fallen on them while they were still wet.

Turn the cabinet doors over to the front, and repeat the entire process above. Be sure to prime the edges of the cabinets, and allow them to cure for 24 hours.

PAINT THE CABINETS/ DRAWERS/FRAMES

After the primed pieces have been allowed to cure for 24 hours, begin painting. Painting is really no different than priming, and you should follow the same process as priming. Begin by painting the back of the cabinet door, and

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then lightly sand out any imperfections before moving on to the drawers and cabinet frames. Allow them to cure for 24 hours, and then repeat the entire process for a total of two coats of paint.


After the second coat has been allowed to cure for 24 hours, move on to painting the front of the cabinet doors. Again, follow the same process as above (panel, rails, stiles but now also the edges). Allow them to cure for 24 hours, and then repeat the entire process.

ADD THE POLYURETHANE

Before actually adding the polyurethane, lightly smooth out the door's finish using a 300-grit sandpaper. Apply the polyurethane with a foam brush for a suggested total of three coats on each side. Allow the polyurethane to cure per label, reassemble the cabinets and enjoy the beautiful new look of your kitchen for years to come!



TROUBLESHOOTING

The biggest concern most people have with painting their cabinets are brush marks. Inferior products are one of the biggest reasons for brush marks. If you use high-quality primer, paint and brushes, and apply the paint in thin coats, you should not have this problem. **NOW**



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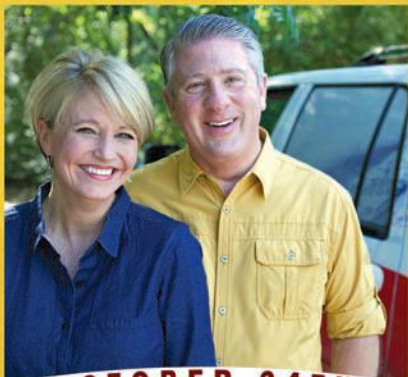
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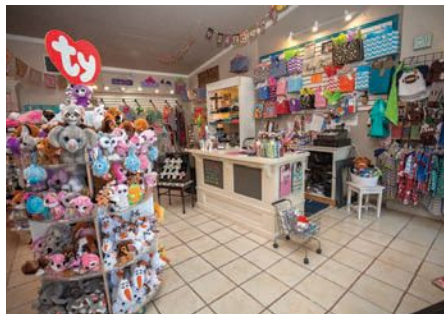


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No matter the activity or occasion, your kids will look great in SassyFrass fashions.

Worth Every Penny

SassyFrass boutique brings Texas' best fashions to children of all ages. — By Melissa Rawlins

It's easy to feel happy once you walk into SassyFrass. This children's boutique was started by Alexa Boedeker, a bubbly blonde with a boy and a girl who grew up being dressed in only the finest fashions. Claire and Greyson loved standing out in the crowd, and their mom made it simple.

Alexa can do the same for you. If you're a young person with a little cash to spend — or a parent or a grandparent — you'll love shopping at SassyFrass. Alexa has arranged her store so that sizes for particular age groups are together. Colors pop this way, and so do the unique designs available in this 1,000-square-foot space.

Preferring to offer American-made clothing that is not likely to be found in other stores, Alexa gets excited about the fancy dresses, tops and pant sets made by a Houston clothier,

Haute Baby. These are perfect for family portrait sessions when customers desire each child in the family to match.

SassyFrass also offers the easy-on-the-pocketbook Mudpie line. Of all the brands made out of the country, Alexa finds this one to offer the most versatility, reasonable price point and highest quality. When you shop the Mudpie racks, you can outfit your entire family in trendy, wash-and-wear clothes.

For the rodeo queens and cowboys whose babies are growing up to ride and rope, Alexa helped design a bull rider's shirt made by XOXO. The words "One Thousand One, One Thousand Two..." nearly bounce off the background graphic depicting the thoughts going through the mind of a bull rider's mother during her child's ride. Little boys and girls look cute in these cotton

T-shirts, while watching their loved ones from outside the arena.

Alexa grew up in Mesquite and married a Cleburne boy, Darrell Boedeker. After they moved to Burleson, she taught at Hughes Middle School for five years. Three years ago, she switched gears and opened SassyFrass, so she could help families dress their children for school, church and play. All this effort to find and display fashionably stylish, small children's clothing is making Alexa grin even bigger.

People of every age and gender can find something for themselves here.


The children smile big, too, when they visit SassyFrass. Alexa has several young customers who save their chore money for special purchases like Ty Beanie Boos, purses or hair bows.

The variety of accessories available at SassyFrass is astounding. Alexa selected cheerful, yet understated picture frames and Country Block sayings for decorating baby rooms. She also thought to offer jewelry, socks, hairbrushes and barrettes for completing the perfect outfits people put together at SassyFrass. People of every age and gender can find something for themselves here. SassyFrass also hosts a website where it's easy to order clothing for almost every age and occasion.

When you want to find colorful, soft and glamorous tutus for your baby girl, Alexa displays several choices front and center. When customers walked into SassyFrass asking for the pretty fashions, Alexa responded in the affirmative.

In fact, her can-do attitude is the key to her success. If you fall in love with a certain Haute Baby design, for instance, but can't find it in your grandchild's size, speak to Alexa. The relationship she has built with this high-end, one-of-a-kind designer allows Alexa to request specific items made-to-order.


You know your child is worth it, and so does Alexa. Make SassyFrass your go-to store for dressing your young ones, and rest assured they'll crawl, walk and run with a twinkle in their eye! **NOW**



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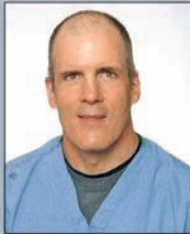


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Sherry Roberts has fun watching her son, Connor, play Need for Speed at Buffalo Nickel Arcade & Mini Golf.



Kihyn Salazar and her mom, Kathe Reis, show off some of The Glitz Boutique fashions during Serendipity Salon's pampering event.



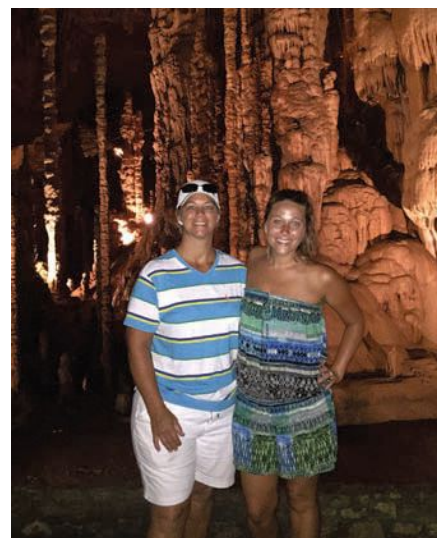
Members of the Burleson Area Retired Educators Association serve drinks at the luncheon honoring all the new teachers in BISD.



Staff of the Crowley Public Library enjoy the last day of Summer Reading Program as much as the kids.



The gals at WestStar Mortgage celebrated their grand reopening with a festive group of supporters.



Lisa Rodgers and Melissa McCoy visit the Natural Bridge Caverns in San Antonio.



Crowley Lions and Burleson Lions team up to provide free vision screenings.



D'Andrea Woods and her mom, Phillis Alexander, arrange a fabulous fruit tray for a recent Burleson Area Chamber of Commerce gathering.

Dining DEALS



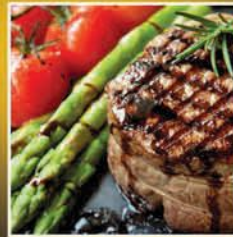
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Forty-four percent of U.S. households feel they don't have enough life insurance. U.S. households believe they have enough life insurance to sustain their current lifestyle for up to six years in the event the primary bread winner passes away. In reality most households only have enough life insurance for 3.6 years.

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children. As such, life insurance can help provide peace of mind that children will be cared for in the event of the parent's untimely death. The amount of coverage a single parent needs is dependant, among other things, on the number and ages of children, amount of debt, income and value of assets. Make sure to set up the beneficiary designation wisely, as it's often difficult for minors to receive direct settlements.

A common misconception is that stay-at-home parents don't need life insurance coverage. Although many families cover only main breadwinners, a recent study conducted by salary.com estimated the services of the stay-at-home parent typically exceed \$138,000 a year. The salary.com survey accounts for the tasks that would need to be replaced in the event that the stay-at-home parent dies. These tasks include child care, housekeeper, cook, bookkeeper, chauffeur and health care provider.

Determining How Much and How Often

While there is no set answer, a good rule of thumb is your life insurance should be seven times that of your annual salary, although individual circumstances should be taken into account when estimating actual coverage needs. In addition to your income, consider your expenses, assets and liabilities. Also, think about whether or not your home is paid for, or if you plan to send children to college.

Since variable factors help determine the amount of coverage that is right for you, it is also a good idea to review your coverage each year. If you changed jobs, you will want to check your coverage, as employer-paid life insurance isn't always portable. Many people also like to increase their coverage with the addition of a new family member.

Life insurance can help provide peace of mind to you and your loved ones that regardless of what happens to you, they'll be cared for. Make an effort to take a good look at your life insurance needs and current coverage. **NOW**

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October 6

Flamingo Fun Run: 6:00-8:00 p.m., Crowley Recreation Center, 405 S. Oak St., Crowley. Benefiting the Leonard Morfeld Scholarship Fund, this 5K Glow Run during National Night Out costs \$15 each. Call (817) 297-4211.

October 10

Burleson Founders Day: 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Old Town Burleson, 124 W. Ellison St. History is revived by fun children's activities (including bounce houses), games, great food, arts and crafts and dueling western gunfighters!

October 12

Burleson Area Retired School Employees Association meeting: 1:30-3:00 p.m., Burleson Senior Citizen Center, 210 S.W. Johnson Ave. Program by Billy Cate, "Singing Cowboy and Story Teller," after a meet 'n' greet with light refreshments for all retired school personnel. (817) 996-5261.

October 13

Business After Hours: 5:30-7:00 p.m., Northstar Bank, 201 W. Ellison St. Fun networking with Burleson Area Chamber of Commerce members.

October 15

BACC Fall Quarterly meeting: 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Pathway Church. Hear a panel discussion with local CEOs on business in Burleson, North Texas and beyond, sponsored by Star Bank. RSVP (817) 295-6121.

October 17

Crowley Area Chamber Expo: 3:00-7:00 p.m., Bill R. Johnson CTE Center, 1033 McCart Ave., Crowley. RSVP (817) 297-4211.

October 23

BACC Golf Tournament: 6:45 a.m. or 11:30 a.m.-6:00 p.m.; Hidden Creek Golf Course. Lunch catered by Fresco's Cocina Mexicana. RSVP (817) 295-6121.

October 24

20th Annual Texas Country Reporter Festival: 9:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m., historic downtown Waxahachie. Join Bob Phillips for a day of arts and music. Free. Call the Waxahachie Convention & Visitors Bureau at (469) 309-4040.

City of Crowley Haunted Hayride: 7:00-9:30 p.m., Bicentennial Park. Hayrides, food vendors, face painting and more. Admission is one canned good to be donated to the House of Hope. (817) 297-2201, ext. 4300.

Boo Bash: 6:00-8:00 p.m., Old Town Burleson, 124 W. Ellison St. Trick or treaters from birth to 12 years old play while parents visit booths representing civic groups and churches. Contact (817) 426-9104.

November 1

Wings and Wine Art Fair: 2:00-5:00 p.m., Lost Oak Winery, 2116 FM 731. \$15 advance ticket price includes entertainment by Luna Royale and a complimentary glass of sangria while supporting the therapy horses at Hosted by Wings of Hope Equitherapy. www.WingsofHopeHorses.org.

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A Well-being Transformation Begins With Y.O.U.

Despite Americans living longer, people are dealing with more illness and disability as well. That's according to a recent study completed by the University of Washington's Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation. So, how does that relate to you? It all boils down to your overall health and well-being, and that transformation begins with Y.O.U. (Youthful, Optimistic attitude and your Uniqueness).

As we continue to live longer, it's important to live a healthy lifestyle and avoid preventable diseases, such as heart disease, cancer, stroke, lung disease and diabetes. It's never too late to make a change for the better, but why keep putting off life-saving changes that you can do right now? Studies show that optimism can affect areas of your health and well-being. Some possible health benefits include:

- Increased life span
- Greater resistance to the common cold
- Better psychological and physical well-being
- Reduced risk of death from cardiovascular disease

No matter your age, when it comes to a well-being transformation, putting Y.O.U. into practice can be achieved in a few simple steps:

1. *Maintain a Youthful Attitude.* Simply put, don't act your age — enjoy life and stay active. After speaking with your physician, make plans to exercise at least three times a week to enhance your mood and reduce stress. Adhering to a healthy diet will help fuel your mind and body. Keep in mind the importance of keeping your body hydrated.

We've always heard that people should drink eight glasses of water daily (or about 1.9 liters). The Institute of Medicine determined that an adequate intake of fluids for men is about 13 cups (3 liters) and around nine cups (2.2 liters) for women. So, as long as you drink at least eight, 8-ounce glasses of fluid daily, you're on the right track.

2. *Maintain an Optimistic Attitude.* When you're optimistic, it tends to reduce those harmful health effects on your body. Many health experts think a positive attitude falls in line with a healthier lifestyle, which usually equates to more physical activity, a healthier diet and refraining from smoking.

3. *Enhance your Uniqueness.* As we mature over the years, it's not uncommon to fall into a mundane routine where family members and friends come before our own health and well-being. You should take time for yourself — painting, creative writing, music lessons, sculpting. Take time to reflect on something that makes you happy and unique.

Don't be afraid to begin your transformation today. Before starting any exercise program, however, please speak to your health care provider. And remember, it all begins with Y.O.U. **NOW**

Sonja Aker, R.N., B.S.N.

Emergency Department Nurse Manager

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In the Kitchen With Melinda Wolff

— By *Melissa Rawlins*

Missionary parents led Melinda Wolff into an international life. Her first memory of cooking was outside at her family's comal (outdoor griddle) in Mexico, where she grew up. "I would go fishing with my father, clean the fish, and then, once back at home, we would prepare the fish to cook on the comal," she said. She settled on family land in this area. Owning The Pines Pet Pampering keeps Melinda busy, yet she enjoys time spent in her indoor kitchen, cooking Mexican, Spanish and Mediterranean foods for her family and her staff on a frequent basis. An experimenter, Melinda bakes a lot and always considers the needs and desires of her audience. She even makes Cranberry Bacon Cookies that are edible and healthy for both humans and their dogs. **NOW**

Cranberry Bacon Cookies

Makes approximately 30 cookies.

1/2 cup softened butter
1/2 cup peanut butter
1/2 cup sweetened condensed milk
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1 cup brown rice flour
1/2 cup tapioca flour
1/2 cup potato starch
2 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. baking soda
1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 cup bacon, cooked and crumbled
1/2 cup cranberries, dried and chopped

1. Preheat oven to 350 F.
2. Mix and cream first 4 ingredients together in a large bowl.
3. Mix and sift together next 6 ingredients in a smaller bowl.
4. Add dry mixture to wet mixture slowly and integrate by kneading dough.
5. Add crumbled bacon and chopped cranberries and knead mixture together.

6. Dust fingers with tapioca flour and roll dough into 1-inch balls. Space 2 inches apart on parchment-lined baking sheet. Bake for 10 minutes.

Melinda's Immune Booster Tonic

Useful to ward off nasty colds.

1 ginger tea bag (or 1 tsp. ginger root, freshly shaved)
1 tsp. fresh lemon juice
1/2 tsp. organic honey
2-4 black peppercorns
1 pinch cayenne pepper
8 oz. water, boiling

1. Place all ingredients in a mug and fill with boiling water.
2. Stir well and sip gently.
3. *Tip:* place fresh ginger shavings or ginger tea bag and peppercorns in a fine mesh tea ball strainer for easier drinking/sipping!

Crock-Pot Cochinita Pibils

1 4-lb. pork loin
2/3 cup juice from 2 fresh oranges
1/3 cup juice from 2 fresh limes
1/4 cup citrus vinegar
3/4 100-gram block Achiote paste
1/2 tsp. cumin
1/2 tsp. coriander
6 garlic cloves, minced
2 Tbsp. Lizano Sauce
24 fresh tortillas
8 oz. pickled onions
1 bunch fresh cilantro
1/2 lb. Cotija cheese

1. Cut or poke holes throughout pork loin.
2. Blend/pulse the next 8 ingredients in a blender until they become a smooth juice.
3. Place pork loin into a Crock-Pot. Pour juice mixture over the meat; cover and put in the refrigerator overnight.
4. After overnight marinating, cook on low in the Crock-Pot for 8 hours. Serve with fresh tortillas, pickled onions, cilantro and Cotija cheese.

Melinda's Green Beans

1 large white onion, chopped
2 Tbsp. butter or olive oil
4-6 cloves garlic, chopped
1 10-oz. can fire-roasted tomatoes
1 10-oz. can Ro-Tel Diced Tomatoes and Green Chilies
2 cups chicken broth
1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. pepper
2 lbs. fresh green beans

1. In a skillet, sauté chopped onion in butter or olive oil for 3-4 minutes, until soft. Add garlic and continue sautéing another 1-2 minutes.
2. In a large pot, add fire-roasted tomatoes, Ro-Tel and chicken broth. Bring to a boil.
3. Add sautéed onions and garlic, salt, pepper and green beans, with ends trimmed. If green beans are not covered by juice, add water until covered. Once at a rolling boil again, place lid on pot and reduce to a simmer.
4. Simmer for 45-60 minutes until green beans are tender. Season to taste.

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

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by Dr. Randy Hamilton III

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