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Grateful for their heritage, Melvin and Carol Cooper rejoice in the present.

Photo by Joy Elmore.

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Editor's Note

Dear Friends,

Writing about unique homes in Mansfield is a lot of fun. That's not to say our features are not a lot of work, too, since word counts create a tight space to hold the beauty of entire lives. But our writers are outstanding, as are our photographers, so you enjoy the benefit of these creative showcases.

They work partly due to brevity, a virtue requiring much discipline on my part. If I could, I'd ramble in my storytelling.

Similarly, I'd collect and never part with everything from family heirlooms to rainy-day books to broken bottles that once held something I sipped with a good friend. But hoarding interrupts the creative lifestyle by breeding disorganization, which impedes completion of the mundane necessities of professionalism.

So, lately, I've reorganized my home. By purchasing old-looking corner shelving units, I am able to stash my books and regain access to the tops of my antique dressers and desks. Creativity is flowing again!

May *your* home be full of what makes you *the best* you!

Melissa

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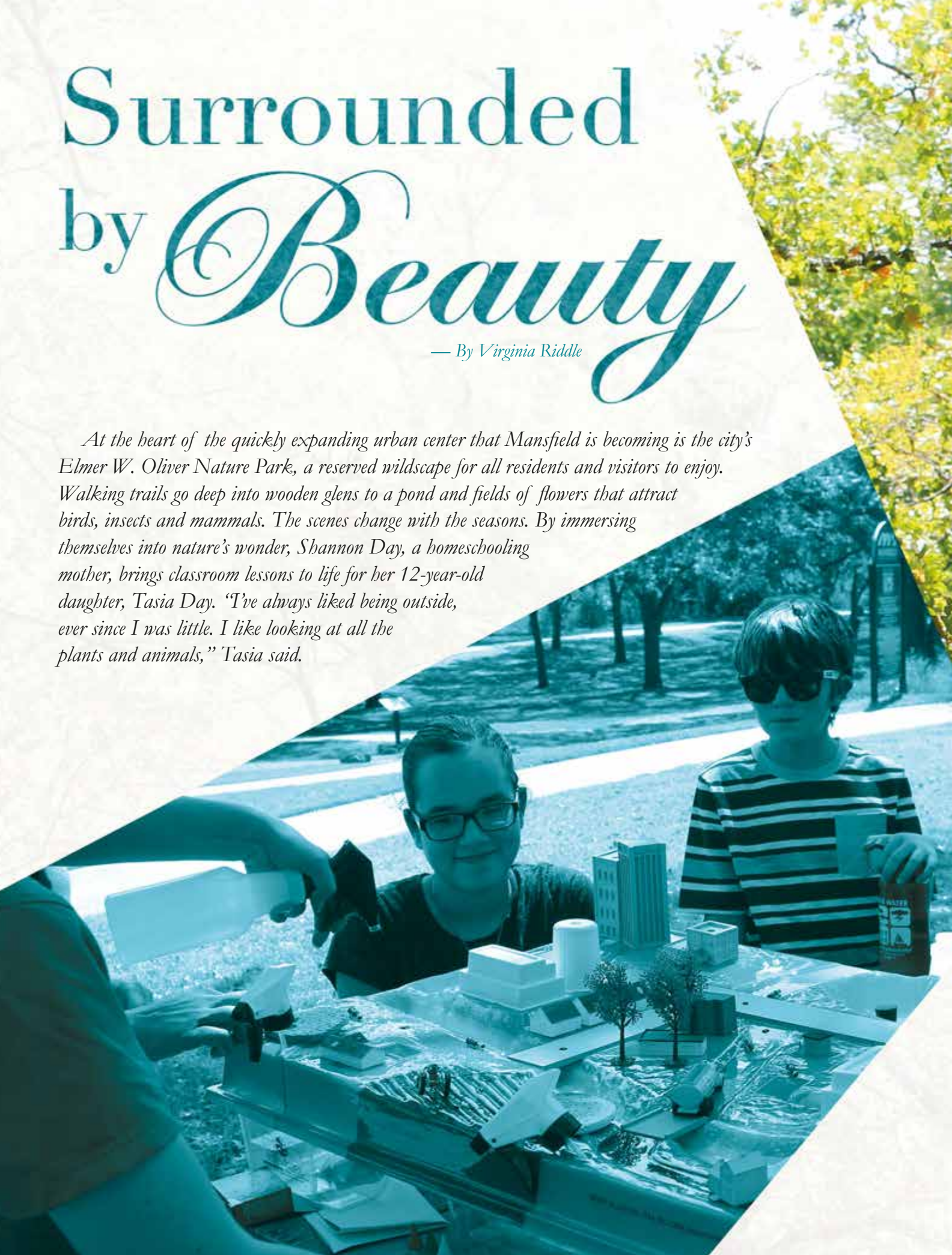
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Surrounded by *Beauty*

— By Virginia Riddle

At the heart of the quickly expanding urban center that Mansfield is becoming is the city's Elmer W. Oliver Nature Park, a reserved wildscape for all residents and visitors to enjoy. Walking trails go deep into wooden glens to a pond and fields of flowers that attract birds, insects and mammals. The scenes change with the seasons. By immersing themselves into nature's wonder, Shannon Day, a homeschooling mother, brings classroom lessons to life for her 12-year-old daughter, Tasia Day. "I've always liked being outside, ever since I was little. I like looking at all the plants and animals," Tasia said.



A woman and a young girl are standing on a wooden boardwalk or bridge, looking at a wooden sign. The woman is pointing at the sign with her right hand. They are surrounded by lush green trees and foliage. The image is framed by a white border with a teal triangle in the top right corner.

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Classes for all ages are offered through the city of Mansfield Parks and Recreation Department. A regular on nature hikes, Tasia attended a summer hike and will go on the night hike this month. "We work in groups. We watch birds from the Treehouse, dissect owl pellets and find animal tracks. It's always fun with some surprises. Last time, we spotted and watched an owl. We hike and then do activities at the tables," Tasia said. The park supplies everything needed, even the animals being studied. After attending a class on turtles, Tasia gained a new friend — a pet turtle Tasia named Clementine. Clementine was given to her by her instructor, Mansfield's nature education supervisor, Tiffany Gorrell.

"These programs bring nature in as a classroom for us," Shannon explained. "We've studied owls, birds, decomposers and bats. It's fun, hands-on and educational. The teachers are incredibly knowledgeable." Shannon always introduces the subject to Tasia to lay a background, and then this mom-daughter/teacher-student duo follows up the park event with more study and research on the topic. An array of homeschool classes is offered during the fall and spring semesters, but these classes are open to all kids from ages 5-14. In the summer, there are camps specializing in different subjects. "The homeschool program is expanding significantly. The teachers make the classes enjoyable," Shannon added. Registration for each class or summer camp is made through the Mansfield Activity Center.

Tasia expresses her love of nature through art classes at Oliver Nature Park.



She enjoys acrylic painting and drawing in charcoal and pencil. "I like the teachers. I've learned a lot of new techniques from Miss Pat [Douty]," Tasia said. The art classes are open to any age participant but are mostly attended by young people. In the Plein Air Painting in the Park and other art classes Tasia has attended, Miss Pat brings an example painting of the animal or object for the class to copy on their own canvases.

"Step by step, Miss Pat takes the students through techniques like shading," Shannon observed.



"The teachers are all good at explaining things. They don't just read out of a book. We get to do lots of things during the classes," Tasia said. "Another one of my favorite classes has been the paleontology class. We've studied rocks, minerals and fossils. There's always something new to learn."

"That class was pretty neat," Shannon agreed. "We brought some fossils that Tasia found in South Dakota where we lived before moving here. Miss Sheila, the teacher, was so excited to take them home and do research for three weeks,

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so she could tell us more about them. We were impressed with her knowledge and dedication.”

The family’s move to Mansfield, in August 2012, was prompted by Tasia’s dad’s job. Julius Day and their oldest daughter, 16-year-old Taylen, have other interests, but their 14-year-old son, Tariq, enjoys the hikes and has opted to kayak with Shannon this fall on Joe Pool Lake.

“The bluebonnets and wildflowers in the fields during the spring are beautiful, and the seasonal night hikes allow us to observe nature in a different way. Also, we’ve gone to the stargazing classes at night. They brought telescopes for that one,” Shannon said.

Being homeschooled by her mom is a plus for Tasia. “I like that my mom’s my teacher. We get to do more things like having lunch in the park. Homeschooling allows us this freedom. And with these classes, I get to see nature, touch it and feel it,” she explained. Tasia loves working with Miss Tiffany so much that she volunteers at the Mansfield Parks and Recreation Department two days a week for two hours.

Miss Tiffany has held her position as Mansfield’s nature education supervisor for two years. Her bachelor’s degree in agriculture focused on animal science and education coupled with six years of teaching outdoor education to all ages. This enables her to be one of those great teachers Tasia enjoys. “We participate in the Great Backyard Bird Count and offer the Little Naturalist program. We also offer programs for Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts and family and adult activities, such as the composting class and rain barrel workshop, depending on the season. Weather is our greatest challenge,



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since we don't have a center at the nature park," Miss Tiffany explained.

"We've done a lot of field trips, such as to the Perot Museum and the Dallas Zoo," Shannon said. "Our family likes museums, so we can just decide, 'Let's go here today,'" Shannon said. "We love living here. It's close to the Metroplex, and there's so much to see and do with our kids."



The Parks and Recreation Department also offers field trips, such as the kayak and fishing programs, and can bring their programs into traditional school classrooms. Teachers can bring their classes to the nature park, and the public can book a private event, such as a birthday party or group gathering.

The Texas Recreation and Park Society awarded the Little Naturalist program a 2016 Excellence in Programming Award and awarded Mansfield's Parks and Recreation Department a Gold Medal Award in March 2017. The awards are great, but Tiffany said, "My most memorable moments on this job come from students who are, at first, afraid to go into the forest because they have not had that experience before, but then, by the end of the field trip they are excited about being outside and want to bring their family for a hike in the forest. Seeing children and their families excited about being outside and learning about their environment brings joy to me."

Shannon sees even more value in these programs. "Tasia has developed character, personality, confidence and a relationship with adult teachers through her interest in nature. The programs are amazing." **NOW**

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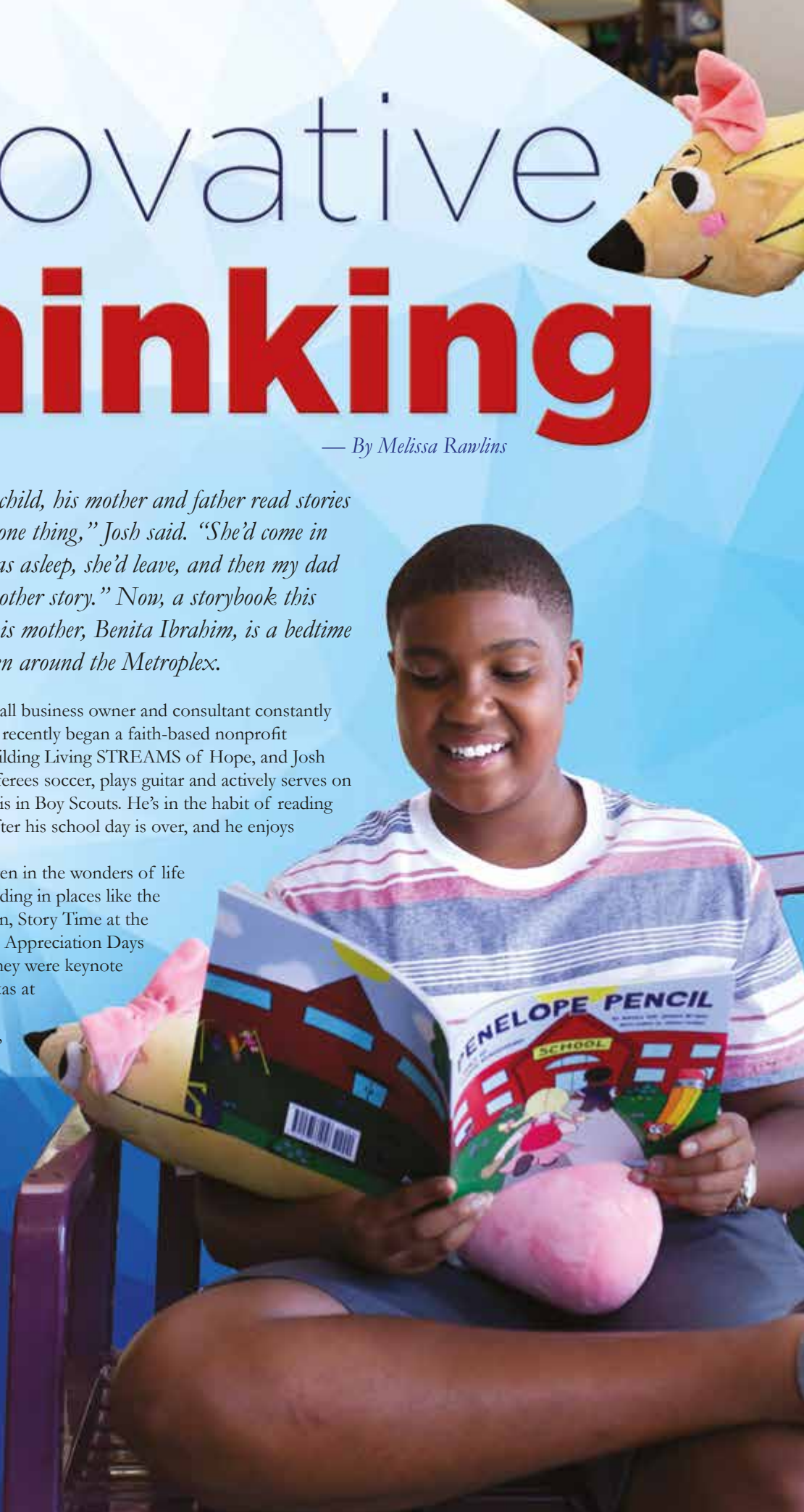
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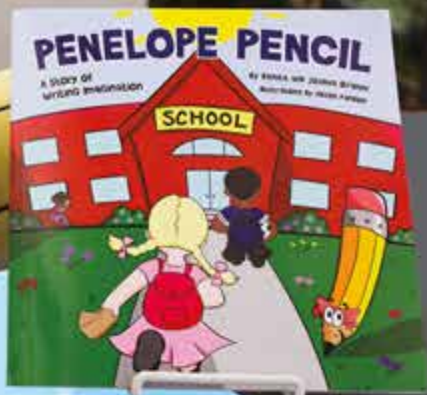
When Josh Ibrahim was a child, his mother and father read stories to him. “It was like a two-for-one thing,” Josh said. “She’d come in and read to me. Thinking I was asleep, she’d leave, and then my dad would come in and read me another story.” Now, a storybook this 13-year-old co-authored with his mother, Benita Ibrahim, is a bedtime and daytime favorite of children around the Metroplex.

Benita is an author, educator, small business owner and consultant constantly engaged in community building. She recently began a faith-based nonprofit organization called Communities Building Living STREAMS of Hope, and Josh volunteers his time there. He also referees soccer, plays guitar and actively serves on the Mayor’s Youth Commission and is in Boy Scouts. He’s in the habit of reading to the children at Benita’s day care after his school day is over, and he enjoys interacting with children.

On Saturdays, they engage children in the wonders of life through creative imagination and reading in places like the North Texas Book Festival in Denton, Story Time at the Mansfield Public Library and Reader Appreciation Days at Half Price Books in Mansfield. They were keynote presenters for The University of Texas at Arlington’s Stories to our Children author event in May. And last March,

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STREAMS of Hope held a special round-table community luncheon for outstanding student and youth leaders from AISD, GPISD and MISD and discussed how teens can contribute and impact youth in their communities by embracing diversity, supporting peers, accepting leadership and volunteering.

The children's book Josh and Benita wrote, *Penelope Pencil*, is yet another aspect of this mother-son duo's community building. Inspiration to encourage kids to put down their electronic devices and go old-school, using handwriting and imagination to communicate, came only two years ago while sitting in the Chili's at Highway

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360 and Camp Wisdom. The Ibrahims noticed a family at a nearby table. None of them were talking. Rather, they were engrossed in their individual electronic devices. "We were saying, amongst ourselves, it's good to have devices, but we need to have relationships with each other and learn about the people we care about," Josh said.



That is, in fact, when Benita learned just how original Josh's thinking is. "You want your children to have their own ideas. I like the fact that when Josh has ideas, he is enthusiastic about it," she said.

As she talked with her son about the sad scenario in the restaurant, Benita recalled the things she liked to look at when she was growing up. "I loved *Nancy Drew*, *The Hardy Boys*, *Little House on the Prairie* and everything by Judy Blume,"

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said Benita, who was one of eight siblings in a very well-organized home. Nowadays, she keeps her energy up by continually seeking inspiration, whether by walking in the park, doing healthy self-care, going to lunch with women who inspire her or spending time with her family. But when she was a youth, a book was her escape when she came home from school.

“It was great to be able to hold it, touch it, turn those pages and even write something in the margin, if I wanted,” she said. “Josh and I wanted to inspire kids to put down those devices and rediscover the joy of reading tangible books.”

The work of writing the book started within the week, at their kitchen dinner table. Before, during and after dinner, whenever they could squeeze in time, they brainstormed. Josh wrote with pen on paper, jotting down ideas about whom they wanted to connect to and what their book would be about.

“I just think of a lot of things, different ideas we can use, and I don’t think whether I’m saying something dumb or not. I just say it,” Josh said. “We discuss it, and if we don’t like it, then the next idea comes out of my mouth.”

Penelope Pencil is designed to teach children 0-5 years old how to properly hold a pencil. Illustrated by Allison Papillion, a 20-year-old woman whom Benita kept in her day care 20 years ago, the ideas are presented in a fun, simple, repetitive way intended to inspire children to crave reading and



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to use markers and crayons to create their own magical adventures. If the Ibrahims' book inspires their readers to write in books, they will both be happy. "I wrote in my books, and it stirred up so much creativity," Benita said. Like mother, like son.

An example of his creativity is a choice he made on a recent school field trip to turn off his phone and save its battery for an emergency. While his peers spent the six-hour bus ride playing games on their devices, Josh stared at the seat in front of him and noted patterns in the fabric. Admitting that his brain does weird things when he's a passenger in a moving vehicle, Josh said, "I'm not that hard to entertain. I could stare at a potted plant and be entertained for my whole life, seeing colors of leaves that are swaying in the wind, noticing the air bubbles in the water stains."

This eye for detail enables him to draw quite well. "Lately, I've been drawing basically lines, and then I'll kind of connect them and try to make as few parallel lines as I can, and for some reason, in the middle of it, I'll shape an animal. And I don't know how that happens," Josh said.

"He's very good at it," said his mother, who framed and hung his drawing of Hansel and Gretel's house, with its caved-in roof and popped-up tiles, on their refrigerator. Josh's ability to draw freehand impresses Benita. "And that gift comes to him so freely. You can't get any better than that! Whatever



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it is that you are good at naturally is usually what you're called to do, whether that is baking cupcakes, painting rocks or engineering."



Benita finds that teaching children to release anxiety through creativity and reading prepares them for other areas in their lives. "When you have the freedom to create whatever you desire, you have the freedom to be who you are," she said. When she and Josh read at Children's Spot, off Debbie Lane, the children are able to play with a 3-D, plush version of Penelope. Afterward, they use their imagination to color characters on construction paper. For Benita, it's all about encouraging readers to be creators. "Readers are thinkers, and thinkers are innovators, and our innovators are our future leaders. And innovation comes from creativity. You really can't have one without the other." **NOW**

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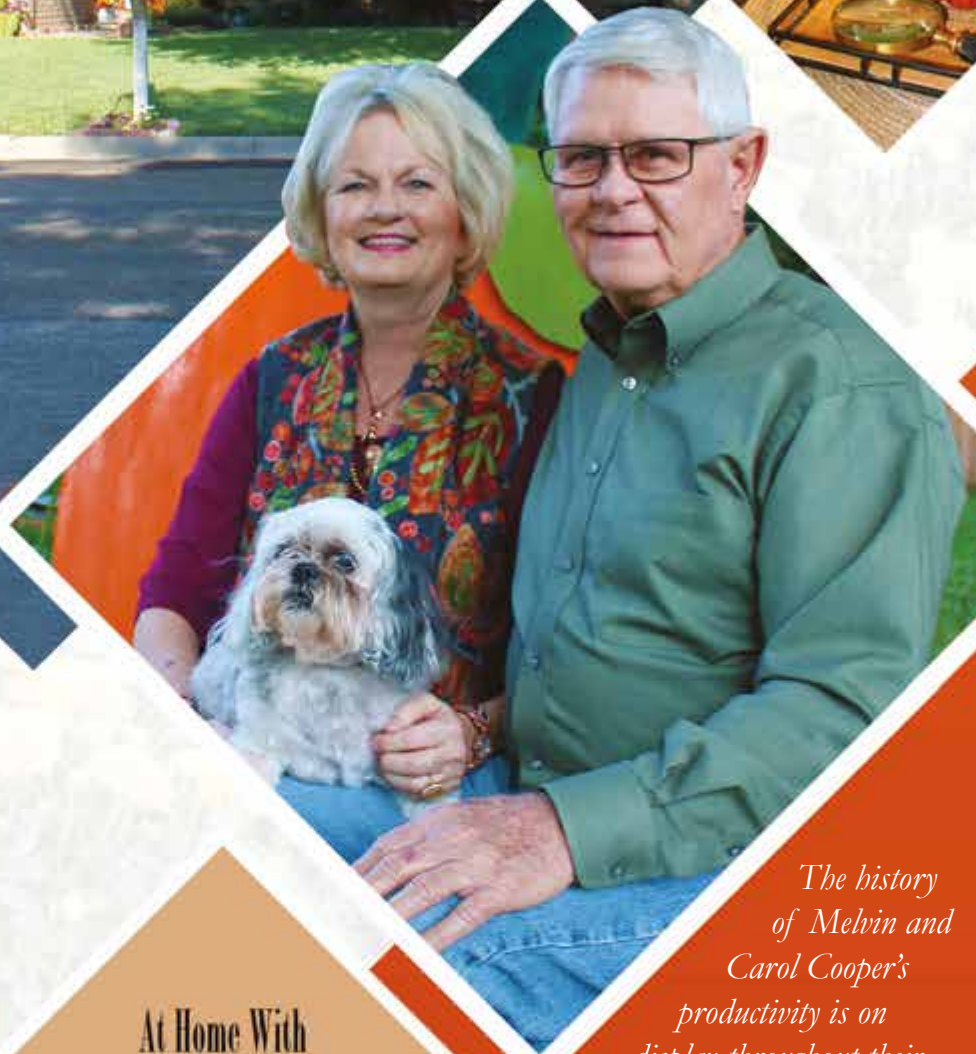
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Love, Work, Play

— By Melissa Rawlins

At Home With Melvin & Carol Cooper



The history of Melvin and Carol Cooper's productivity is on display throughout their one-story brick home in Mansfield's Tree Street Neighborhood — not far from Red Bluff, where Carol spent many childhood days playing with friends. In 1992, when moving into the third house the Coopers have had built, Carol found herself returning to the very area where she was born and reared.

Her father, Dr. Percy Cook, came to this city in 1953 to start a practice as a physician. He greatly influenced the look and feel of Mansfield before retiring in 1987. Carol attended schools here, from Erma Nash Elementary through Mansfield High School, and was proud to be a Tiger. Her family went to First Baptist Church on Graves Street, where Carol began playing the organ.



In 1973, the beginning of her senior year, she was invited to be the pianist at First Baptist Church Kennedale. That's where she met Melvin, a Vietnam veteran and graduate of The University of Texas at Arlington. The perfect pair married in January 1975 and set up their first home in apartments Carol's parents owned on Broad Street, where the sub-county courthouse is today.

Melvin had grown up in Kennedale and started working at age 12 selling popcorn at the Kowbell Rodeo, making 3 cents a bag. They were both taught a strong work ethic. In the first year of their marriage, Melvin went to East Texas State University (now Texas A&M University-Commerce) to study for his master's of education. While living in married housing, the couple learned to square dance and began their journey in buying antiques.





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“We never did want to spend a lot of money,” Melvin said. They paid \$15 for their first piece of furniture, a table currently settled behind the loveseat in their spacious living room. Against the far wall of this dark-floored, high-ceilinged gathering space is the Coopers’ second purchase, a \$47 buffet, which was lovingly refurbished after its delivery went awry. Its 1/2-inch beveled glass mirror stayed whole, but all the posts and some of the top banner were broken when it hit the concrete. “Carol’s daddy and I put it

back together,” Melvin said. Beautifully displayed are their collection of Lefton China and a violin dating back to the 1800s that Carol bought at a garage sale for \$4.

They taught themselves how to refurbish the treasures they found at antique stores, garage sales and on curbs. Sometimes, just watching a Minwax how-to video at the hardware store was tutorial enough. Now, every piece of furniture in their home has been massaged back to life by patient hands.

Their classically decorated bedroom holds a sewing table Carol rescued from the trash and a side table Melvin refinished. The lawyer’s bookshelves hold Carol’s *I Love Lucy* collection and Melvin’s Swanky Swigs, which look like little juice glasses. “Back in the Depression days, Kraft was having a hard time selling cheese because the government was giving it away. Kraft came up with an idea to put the cheese in these little hand-painted glasses,” said Melvin, who enjoys hunting for the hard-to-find reminders

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of days gone by. He also collects Texaco memorabilia, Radio Fliers and stock show rodeo pins. Excess parts of his collection are stashed in his office — a recent add-on to the home.

When the Coopers renovated, they also enlarged their master bath and built a walk-in closet. All-new light fixtures, engineered hardwood floors, fine-quality wainscoting and granite countertops helped modernize the house. With the help of their sister-in-law, Barbara, they remodeled the bathroom and bedrooms in what was formerly the children's wing.

Jeannie and Douglas were both born after Melvin began his coaching and teaching career at Kennedale High School. The Coopers built their first house in 1978 in Turner Acres, in Kennedale. By that time, Carol had earned a medical transcription certification and worked in physicians' offices. By the time Melvin was hired to teach world history at Mansfield High School, Jeannie was ready to follow in her mom's footsteps as a member of the Gold Dusters drill team (formerly the Dixie Dolls). Douglas, like his dad, was active in FFA, raising and showing Black Angus.

Now, Jeannie lives with her husband, Brian Harper, in Keller, where she raises goats and chickens while teaching school. Her former bedroom now hosts guests. Barbara and Carol accentuated the cast-iron bed Carol slept on as a child with family heirlooms. The Wag-on-the-Wall Westminster Gustav Becker German Clock reminds Melvin of Mr. Robinson, who once owned an antique store downtown called Junk and Jewels. Below the clock, Carol draped her wedding veil over a pink-satin upholstered princess chair. Another set of pink Lefton china complements the tall, refurbished oak secretary and brings out the pink crystals shimmering in the chandelier.

Douglas' former bedroom has become an office and sewing room for Carol. She and Melvin devoted this space to souvenirs of family, as well as the Western lifestyle they have grown to appreciate. A poster of the 50th anniversary of the XIT Rodeo reminds Melvin of the delicious free barbecue and rodeo the family enjoyed when they attended that event. An adorable turquoise duster and black cowboy hat are reminders of 10-year-

old Douglas, who wore them to the rodeos. Douglas now lives with his wife, Katie, in Fort Worth, where he works as a project manager for Mycoskie McInnis Associates. Katie continues her career as an assistant registrar at the Dallas Museum of Art.

Beautiful prints, paintings and photographs decorate the turquoise-and-black hallway bathroom. "We change out the art as we travel," Melvin said, pointing to framed images of St. Marks Cathedral in Venice, city streets in Jerusalem and mountains in Utah.




The nearby kitchen, painted in soothing cream with tan, feels very farm-to-table. Carol collects Fiestaware, nicely organized behind cabinet doors and atop the refrigerator. Through the picture windows above the window seat is a beautiful garden patio furnished with repainted cast-iron furniture she found on the side of the street.

More metal lawn furniture, repainted by Melvin in bright, glossy purple, pink, turquoise and yellow, gives color-loving Carol a beautiful outdoor place to entertain family and friends. Melvin's granddad's plow resides here, next to their tomatoes. They love working in their yard and consider it an ongoing pleasure. When they're not grilling burgers for guests, they're feeding sunflower seeds to the birds and the squirrels.

Their 16-year-old dog, Oscar, has been the Coopers' closest companion for nearly a third of their years together. "We are blessed with so many friends and wonderful children," agreed the couple, who are very active at Pleasant View Baptist Church. "How good the Lord has been to us. He has been the cornerstone of our marriage." Loving, working and playing with caring cooperation, the Coopers are grateful for their life in Mansfield. **NOW**

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A mom was struggling to set aside enough money for a simple pair of shoes she could purchase from a neighborhood discount store for her growing toddler. The now walking baby needed shoes, but those few dollars weren't in the budget. Through the grapevine, this mom heard of a local organization that gave away donated new and gently used Nike and Converse athletic shoes. That toddler became the proud owner of a pair of shoes, thanks to the work Michael Sheppard and his family and friends do through the Not So Basic Movement, which Michael initiated just over a year ago. "This is something my friends and I like to do, rather than get into trouble," Michael quipped.

SOLE PURPOSE

— By Virginia Riddle



"We work to get the whole district and teenagers involved."



Trouble isn't what Michael is all about. Instead, he's all about basketball and tennis shoes. His nonprofit combines those loves. The Brotherhood, a group of Mansfield athletes who are close friends, and Michael's family help him in all that he does. An 18-year-old senior at Mansfield High School, Michael has been playing basketball since age 5, when he started learning the game at the Cooper Street YMCA Family Center. He's played basketball for all four years of high school, first on the junior varsity team and now on the varsity team at MHS. "Basketball's a way for me to clear my mind. I'm very competitive," Michael said. "Playing keeps me in shape, and I like the closeness with my teammates. We made the playoffs last year, so we're a pretty close team. I like playing defense."

"Michael's MHS team is so close, they have a group chat going throughout summers," Nicole Sheppard, Michael's mom, said. "Basketball keeps him accountable and gives him structure."

Michael has loved the game so much that he's also played AAU (Amateur Athletic Union) Basketball. He has garnered honors in the sport and wants to continue to play next year, if the opportunity arises, while majoring in biology as a pre-dental college student.

Michael and his friends were already enterprising entrepreneurs prior to his idea to found Not So Basic Movement. "We were making and selling ripped jeans and tie-dyed shirts," Michael recalled. But Michael really likes shoes, and Michael Jordan has been one of his inspirations. "Since I was about 10 years old, I've followed Michael Jordan and loved his shoes. They never go out of style," he said. Having always known



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that wonderful feeling of having new shoes at the beginning of school, for special occasions and, most importantly, for basketball, Michael came up with the idea of founding a nonprofit that would collect shoes and raise funds that would ensure other kids would have that "new shoe feeling," even when money is tight for their families.

"Shoes are something that brings joy to all of us," Nicole said. "My husband, Dr. Michael Sheppard Sr., and our twin daughters love tennis shoes. I love heels and the joy of getting a new pair. It was the teacher in me. I wanted Michael to think outside the box and give back to the community."

"And I have lots of friends that love shoes, too," Michael added.



The mission of the resulting Not So Basic Movement extends further than just collecting and distributing shoes. It's also a movement designed to involve MISD students of all ages in helping other kids of all ages. Flyers, cards, a Facebook page and Instagram help get the word out. "We work to get the whole district and teenagers involved," Michael explained.

That's not much of a challenge, since he's at MHS and his twin sisters, Anyae and Aniya, are sophomore cheerleaders at Summit High School where Nicole is a counselor. The Brotherhood, comprised of football, basketball and track athletes from Legacy, Timberview and Mansfield high schools, and many other students assist Michael with fundraising and collecting the new and/or gently used tennis shoes. By partnering with other area nonprofits and agencies, such as S.T.A.N.D., an organization that helps women who have suffered from domestic violence, and Safe Haven of Tarrant County, the students find out what shoes in various sizes are needed. They supply the need through those partners, so recipients' identities are kept confidential, if needed. "We have bags and bags of shoes sometimes," he shared. Michael and his friends and family also sponsored a Christmas party last year for kids whose mothers were victims of domestic violence.

Nicole is in her 19th year of service in education, and Michael Sr. is a local oral and maxillofacial surgeon. "Both of our dads were in the U.S. Air Force, so we were raised in a life of service. We're blessed in our professions," Nicole

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explained. "We want to give back." Their children and their friends were volunteering time picking up trash and visiting nursing homes before Michael was inspired to start his nonprofit work. "Our kids are learning the importance of giving back and will, hopefully, get into a helping profession."

With split allegiances to Mansfield and Summit high schools during basketball season, Nicole wears Summit colors but cheers Michael's efforts on the court. "We're big rivals," Michael said of the two schools. However, it will be his twin sisters and mom that carry on his work in the Not So Basic Movement once he graduates. Also helping with financial donations are Michael's grandparents, who live in nearby Arlington and Oklahoma.

With aspirations to follow his dad into a career as an oral surgeon, Michael has worked, since age 15, as a tech sterilizing instruments and helping patients after surgery. "I want to attend Texas A&M University College of Dentistry in Dallas," Michael stated. In the meantime, he and the Brotherhood are spending their spare time shopping in thrift stores. "We like to buy and flip things," he explained.

Last August, Michael and The Brotherhood donated new and gently used athletic shoes to the Mansfield ISD Clothing Closet before school started. Their goal was to make sure all students were able to go back to school with a new pair of shoes.



Except for time spent in California for Michael Sr.'s dental residency, the family has lived in this area. "Mansfield's a safe community where we know everybody," Nicole said. The family attends Word of Truth Family Church in Arlington, where Michael is active in the youth program.

As Michael Jordan once said, "Some people want it to happen, some wish it would happen, others make it happen." Michael and his family, friends and fellow MUSD classmates are making their dreams happen for themselves, without forgetting those in need of a hand up, so they can walk forward toward a better future. **NOW**

Editor's Note: For more information, visit the Not So Basic Movement Facebook page.

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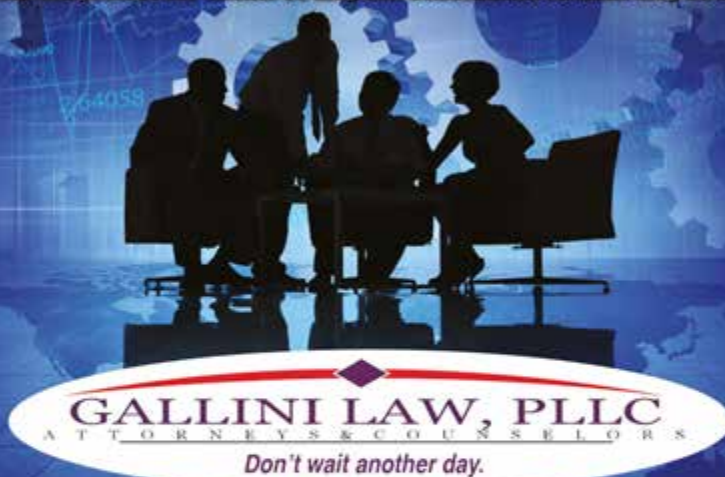
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Keeping customers full and happy is the mission of Jose Carreon, Julio Cervantes and Juan Cardozo, the three managers of Mansfield's Los Molcajetes.

Serving Satisfaction

For hearty refreshment, count on the staff at Los Molcajetes Mexican Restaurant. — By Melissa Rawlins

Antonio Chavez teaches the wait staff at Los Molcajetes Mexican Restaurant to let the customer take the lead. Those in a hurry will be served in 10 minutes or less. Those desiring a relaxing meal feel no pressure, although their server will clear untouched plates. Most people find themselves asking for takeout containers, since the portions of Los Molcajetes' traditional Mexican meals are Texas-sized.

This month, the extended patio brings families together for live music, with vocalists singing in Spanish and English, some salsa and some country. "People like to drink and dance around, to have fun," Antonio said, "and to leave the stress behind. They can have a margarita and listen to music, and then go home and relax."

Los Molcajetes' bar operates with families in mind. "They come in and wait. The dad sits at the bar and the kids stand by him,

while everyone is waiting for the table," Antonio explained, noting that the kids he used to see come in with their parents to the Fort Worth Los Molcajetes are now mature and sitting at their own bar chair.

With his six brothers, Antonio owns other successful restaurants: two Mi Pueblo Cocina de Mexico in North Richland Hills, as well as one Don Taco Fresh-Mex Grill in Fort Worth. They opened their first Los Molcajetes in Fort Worth in 1998, and another in Roanoke, before opening this family restaurant in Mansfield.

Over the years, they've proven the public's preference for fresh, minimally processed food. Naming Los Molcajetes after the mortar-and-pestle style stone bowl used for making salsa, the Chavez family chooses to hire excellent cooks. They not only put

roasted or boiled peppers into molcajete stones to prepare their three special salsas, but they make fresh guacamole, rice and beans every day, as well as corn and flour tortillas — by hand and on demand.

“When we serve our fajitas, we prefer to give you enough beef,” Antonio said, “and you pay a small amount extra for extra corn tortillas. And for your salsa, we can do as many peppers as you want. We’ll do whatever it takes to please our customers.”

Health-conscious people choose Los Molcajetes Mexican Restaurant for their pure, never frozen beef and chicken — thick cut, spiced and marinated twice weekly in their kitchen — and their lard-free refried beans. “The only item in our restaurant with lard is tamales, because we make them here,” said Antonio, who grew up cooking and brought family recipes to his restaurants. Food was always his passion.

“People like to drink and dance around, to have fun and to leave the stress behind. They can have a margarita and listen to music, and then go home and relax.”

“My dream was to be a farmer: buy my tractor, plant corn and have cows,” Antonio said. “I ended up selling enchiladas and tacos instead.” When he was 15 years old, in the ’80s, Antonio started to work for Bennigan’s in Houston. “We made everything from scratch in that kitchen, and I worked there for 12 years. If they needed me, I was always there.” His eldest brother suggested they open a restaurant together, and in 1994, they launched their first one in Florida. Twenty-three years later, he realizes how much he likes the work. “I think I’m addicted to the restaurants now.”

Once you try Los Molcajetes, you’ll appreciate his sentiment. And you’ll want to return with friends and family whenever you’re ready for a cold drink and a mouth-watering Mexican meal that won’t leave you hungry. **NOW**

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Ashlyn and Caitlyn O'Banion join Aaron and Levi Kay to congratulate their friend from Northwest Church of Christ, Alma Martinez, on having a new MISD school named in her honor.



LeeAundra Childress is one of the MansfieldNOW winner of a family pack of State Fair tickets.



Two MISD teachers of the year, Laurie Skaggs and Douglas Arnold, are blessed with keys to a Mercedes-for-a-year by Park Place Motorcars' Kara Connor, Chris Rodriguez and Femi Osinowo.



Jordan Jackson Doty happily receives her State Fair tickets from Keri Roberson.



Abdul and Parveen Rasul get in the spirit of the Moroccan-themed Senior Citizens Day held recently at the Mansfield Activities Center.



Danny Bradley, Terry Bennett, Russell Laird and Brent Aldridge celebrate First National Bank Mortgage's membership in the Mansfield Area Chamber of Commerce.



Ellen Kennedy poses while Robin Lestina snaps her photo at the FUMC Pumpkin Patch.



Jillian Hall and Reondra Johnson, teachers at Kenneth Davis Elementary, get into the spirit at MISD's convocation.



Students and instructors with Busbo Kai Summer Camp enjoy their excursion to Katherine Rose Park.



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- 2. What is your risk tolerance for this investment?** Investors looking for less risk might want to avoid equities. From a historical view, stock markets can provide better returns over time, but might also take more risk than investors are willing to accept. Make sure you understand the risk of the investment matches the risk you are willing to take. Past performance is no guarantee of future results.
- 3. How is my current portfolio built?** Investors that are already heavy in stocks or bonds may want to add a different investment as they seek to improve balance and asset allocation. By owning different classes of assets, investors can spread the risk. Asset allocation and diversification does not eliminate risk, but it can reduce overall portfolio risk.
- 4. What is the cost of the investment?** There are many ways to invest in

financial products. Some have upfront commissions, others have deferred sales charges, while others have penalties for early withdrawal. Some have commissions when you buy and sell the investment. Even the account you use can have different fees and costs. Annual expenses of the chosen investment should also be considered. Your financial advisor should be willing and able to explain all investment costs, account fees, commissions and expenses for any investment that is presented.

As with any decision you make, investing in financial products requires research and full disclosure. Consider all aspects of an investment before making a purchase. Financial advisors and tax professionals can help, but the ultimate decision lies with the investor. There is a wealth of information available to anyone willing to take the time to research. Because of the various investments that exist and the different types of accounts that may be used, investors need to be well informed when purchasing any investment. **NOW**

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The navigation function plays a tremendous role in the patient experience. A care team's goal is to ensure that patients and their family members understand their treatment options, know what to expect and help them connect to and take advantage of helpful resources. Managing symptoms, providing emotional support and providing transition into survivorship are also ways a care team helps patients. Patients can take steps to make the most of their partnership with the care team, so the team can better help them navigate the journey.

Don't shy away from questions. One of the most important things a patient can do is answer questions honestly and ask questions openly.

- Answering questions fully and honestly will help the care team better understand how the patient is feeling, how they're responding to treatment and what support they may need. While a sign or symptom may not seem like a big deal to a patient, it can be important for the care team to know.

- It's also important for patients to ask questions without fear. What you

don't know can cause fear and stress, so asking questions and addressing concerns directly can improve the patient experience and potentially head off complications.

Pay attention to how you feel. Cancer can bring side effects and new symptoms. It's important for patients to pay attention to how they feel and tell their care team.

Share the journey. Cancer can impact one's life in countless ways. Emotional pressures, financial challenges and lifestyle changes can be stressful and feel overwhelming. Other times, patients may feel strength and hope, or be inspired to help others or try new things. Through the good times and the difficult times, sharing the journey with family, friends and the care team can be therapeutic and allows patients to feel supported.

When it comes to cancer care, your care team knows they have seen it all, but you haven't. Each patient experiences cancer differently — it's not a one-size-fits-all situation. By providing a patient navigation model that ensures patients have a system of support from trusted experts, your care team is able to create a roadmap to cancer care holistically designed to meet the needs of each person entrusted to their care. **NOW**

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November 3

Guys Night Out: 6:00-8:00 p.m., 777 N. Walnut Creek Dr. \$20 buys dinner and enters your name for two great giveaways courtesy of Saddleback and Big Hat BBQ. For ticket information, please call (817) 477-2287.

November 6, 13, 20, 27

Sunrise Toastmasters Club: 7:00-8:00 a.m., Methodist Mansfield Hospital, Canedy Community Room, 2700 E. Broad St. kevinorsak@mhd.com.

November 7

Veteran's Day concert: 7:00 pm., Mansfield ISD Center for the Performing Arts. Free and open to the public. For information, contact Reginal Wright, Mansfield High School Choir Director reginalwright@misdmail.org.

November 9

Business After Hours: 5:30-7:30 p.m., Eterna Health Food Store. RSVP to (817) 473-0507 or membership@mansfieldchamber.org.

November 11

Mansfield Veterans Day Parade: 10:00 a.m., RL Anderson Stadium, 1016 Magnolia St. Honorary Salute is at 11:30 at RL Anderson

directly following the parade. At 2:00 p.m., watch the movie *Top Gun* at Farr Best Theater. For more information, contact (817) 299-6369.

Pumpkin Bash: 11:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., 3001 E. Broad St. Support this fundraiser for MHS seniors, providing tons of family fun. Visit them on Facebook at @mhspumpkinbash or email Linsy June at constancejune@misdmail.org.

Veterans Celebration: 3:00-11:00 p.m., The Oasis at Joe Pool Lake, 5700 Lake Ridge Pkwy., Grand Prairie. \$10 charge for two amazing bands, plus free food, an auction and a raffle supporting americahelpingveterans.org.

November 12

Veteran's Day Service: 6:00-7:00 p.m., The Sanctuary of First Methodist Mansfield, 777 N. Walnut Creek Dr. bethl@fmc.org.

November 14

Empty Bowls: 6:00-8:00 p.m., Mansfield ISD Center for the Performing Arts, 1110 W. Debbie Ln. Enjoy soups and other bites for \$5, and buy handcrafted bowls made by MISD students. Visit www.mansfieldcares.org or call

Dr. Chuck Roe at (817) 299-1244.

November 16

Thirsty Thursdays 5K: 6:15-9:00 p.m., Steven's Garden and Grill, 223 Depot St. Live music by Scott & Steve during this free, fun run. All runners over 21 receive two free beers at the finish line. (817) 475-7210.

November 16 — 18

Household Hazardous Waste Collection: **Thursday and Friday**, 3:00-7:00 p.m.; **Saturday**, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Mansfield Environmental Collection Center, 616 S. Wisteria. Visit www.mansfieldtexas.gov/ecc. (817) 276-4239.

December 1, 2, 3, 9

Annie Jr.: **Sunday**, 2:00 p.m.; **Friday and Saturday**, 8:00 p.m., Farr Best Theater, Downtown Mansfield. Appropriate for all audiences. Purchase tickets at musicplacemansfield.com. (817) 473-2822.

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your event details to melissa.rawlins@nowmagazines.com.

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In the Kitchen With Steve Randle and Rick Hensley

— *By Melissa Rawlins*

Avid hunters and longtime NOW Magazines employees, Steve Randle and Rick Hensley, cook a lot in their homes and at their respective camps. At 5 years old, Rick began helping his mom in her kitchen, and then he was happy to man the grill or fire pit once he started hunting in his early 20s in Nacogdoches, Texas. Steve and his three sons have hunted turkey and deer in Comanche and Mills counties for over 30 years. Starting a brisket and a campfire Friday night, their pit and the camp fire smokes all weekend.

The recipes he and Rick share here are so simple, but they earn compliments from their friends and families. “And they’re great,” Rick said, “for sitting around a camp fire on a cool fall evening after you’ve been out hunting.” **NOW**

Rick’s Cajun Rib Eyes

Best prepared before you go out for the evening hunt.

2 1.25-inch-thick prime or choice rib eyes, bone-in or boneless

1 Tbsp. Tony Chachere’s Original Creole Seasoning

1 tsp. Lawry’s Seasoned Pepper

1/2 tsp. onion powder

1/2 tsp. garlic powder

1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce

1 tsp. soy sauce

1. Place the steaks in a 1-gallon Ziploc bag. Sprinkle both sides with dry seasonings; add the sauces.

2. Squeeze the air out, and zip the bag closed. Place it in your ice chest for at least 2 hours.

3. Let steaks get to room temperature before putting them on the fire.

4. For medium rare, and depending on the size of your fire, most steaks will need to cook about 5 or 6 minutes per side

Rick’s Venison Stew

2 Tbsp. bacon grease

1 Tbsp. olive oil

2.5 lbs. venison, cubed

1 tsp. Lawry’s Seasoned Salt

1 tsp. Lawry’s Seasoned Pepper

1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce

8 cups beef broth

12 medium golden potatoes

1 tsp. Tony Chachere’s Original Creole Seasoning

1/2 tsp. garlic powder

1/2 tsp. onion powder

1 large, sweet 1015 onion

4 celery stalks, diced bite-size

1 8-oz. bag petite carrots, sliced bite-size

1 10-oz. can Ro-Tel tomatoes, regular or mild

1 14.5-oz. can green beans

1/2 15.2-oz. can corn (optional)

Salt and pepper, to taste

1. In a large stock pot, combine grease and olive oil.

2. While it heats, season the cubed venison with salt, pepper and Worcestershire sauce.

3. Cook over medium-high heat until done. Add the beef broth; cook at a low boil for about 30 minutes, to start tenderizing meat.

4. Meanwhile, wash potatoes. Leaving the skin on, cut into medium bite-size pieces. Add to the boiling meat mixture; simmer for another 15 minutes.

5. Add remaining seasonings, vegetables and canned goods and fast simmer 20 minutes.

6. If desired, use flour or corn starch to thicken it a little.

7. Salt and pepper to taste, and enjoy!

Steve’s Nanner Pud

5 3/4 cups cold milk

2 large boxes instant vanilla pudding mix

1 1/2 14-oz. cans Eagle Brand condensed milk

1/2 stick butter

1/2 box graham cracker crumbs

1 1/2 boxes vanilla wafers, reduced fat variety

3-4 ripe bananas

1 large tub Cool Whip

1. Combine milk with pudding mix. Stir in condensed milk, a little at a time, to avoid clumps; refrigerate.

2. Melt butter and mix with graham cracker crumbs. Spread crumbs on bottom of bowl or aluminum pan, saving some for decorations, if desired.

3. Put down a layer of wafers and sliced bananas.

4. When pudding is firm, fold in the Cool Whip, so the pudding has white streaks all through it. Save some Cool Whip for decoration.

5. Pour a little less than half of the pudding mix over the wafers and bananas.

6. Repeat the layers and end with all bananas covered, or they will turn brown.

7. Stand wafers up all the way around the edge of the bowl.

8. Sprinkle with crumbs, and add dollops of Cool Whip.

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



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