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## ON THE COVER



The Pickenses' casual, open concept living space hosts appreciative guests during the holidays!

Photo by Vanessa Polozola.

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## Editor's Note

*Hello Friends,*

I might just be celebrating my half-life this month! Yes, I'm turning 45 on December 24, and I'm proud of the progress. For the last five years, I've been employed by NOW Magazines, writing articles about good people in Granbury, Burleson, Mansfield and Weatherford. Believe me when I say my growth is directly related to the kindness and ethics passed along to me during each and every interview I've conducted. I appreciate every person I've met — whether in person, via e-mail or over the telephone — and the time they took to impart wisdom to me and to our readers. I plan to make good use of the knowledge I've gained to get me through this lovely life all the way to the 90-year-point — and maybe beyond! Meanwhile, I hope you'll glean more golden nuggets gained through the experiences of all the good people that we feature in the pages of *GranburyNOW Magazine*.

Enjoy your winter!

*Melissa*

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# Angels in BEATHEER

— By Lisa Bell

*The rumble of motorcycles broke the small town quietness of the Granbury square. While surrounded by festive Christmas decorations, shoppers stopped and looked. Six or seven tough-looking bikers roared along the streets. The leader, David Kimbrow, wore a Santa hat with a tail so long it flowed well past his rear wheel. The spokes of a tiny pink bicycle strapped behind the motorcycle of fellow rider, A.L. Warden,*

*twirled in the wind, leaving onlookers wondering what all the holiday excitement was about.*

Mid-December marks the time for the annual Angel Tree delivery run. "There are a lot of hurting kids in Hood County," David said. He refers to children hurting because one or both parents are currently serving time in the Hood or Somervell county jails. And David doesn't want any of those children to miss out on Christmas gifts.

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When asked why he takes on this project each year, David replied, "I once had a big ranch in Hico. Drugs took almost everything. One year, I didn't have any presents for my then 10-year-old son. My son told me it was OK. We had each other." No matter how big and tough he looks, the father's heart in this man ached for his son. Years later, a changed man, a passion for making sure kids don't hurt because of their parents' bad decisions drives him to collect and deliver presents.

A twinkle appeared in his clear blue eyes as David recounted a memory from a year gone by, when not even a mean, protective dog kept him from making sure the kids had a good Christmas. "I go to the dark places, where a lot of people won't go. One year, we went to deliver presents, our bikes all decorated for Christmas and wearing Santa hats. We roared up the gravel drive at one house, and a big pit bull met us," he explained. "He grabbed my pant leg and started shaking me. When the mother appeared I said, 'Hey lady, your dog's biting me.'"

"Yeah," she said. "Who are you?"

"I'm Santa Claus," I answered. "She finally called her dog off and let Santa make his deliveries."

Although larger prison ministries host Angel Trees each year, David uses his ministry to take care of kids close to home. Not affiliated with the larger organizations, David's church, Warriors for Christ, leads the local effort. Each year they go to the Hood and Somervell county jails, where nearly 250 inmates are housed. Many inmates have one or more children. The group gives questionnaires





to the inmates and uses them when choosing gifts. They also provide a card so mom or dad can write a note affirming their love. Sometimes, the bikers take pictures of the kids receiving their gifts, and then return to the jail and share photos. No matter what offense keeps these parents confined, they love their children. David understands, and he wants to see lives changed for the better. By meeting real needs, he opens a door for ministry to the parents. "If God can change me," David said, "He can change anyone."

No stranger to making bad decisions, David spent 10 years in and out of Texas prisons. When he left prison for the fourth time in 1991, he signed a statement acknowledging one more felony conviction meant a sentence of life without parole as a habitual offender. For a while, he stayed clean, but the pull of drugs beat down his resolve. His brokenhearted mother never gave up praying for him, while his wife, Lesa, prayed with the strength of a mighty warrior.

One night, returning home from his parents' house, a hit-and-run driver met David's Harley Davidson motorcycle head on. A second vehicle ran over him, crushing multiple bones. Lying on the two-lane highway, David knew he was losing the fight to survive. One of David's employees drove by that night and stopped to help. He didn't recognize the nonbreathing, mangled mess as his boss.

Miraculously, David survived the crash, but remained in a coma and on life support for 10 days. When he woke

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up, his life changed radically. Free from drugs, he began attending church and ministering to prison inmates, joining well-known organizations like Bill Glass Prison ministries. Eventually, he and Lesa struck out in faith and started visiting prisons all over the country. Covered with tattoos, and riding a Harley, David has an open door to conversations with bikers and inmates who won't listen to anyone else.

In 2006, David started a Bible study targeting bikers. The first Tuesday night amazed them as 76 people showed up. Within two weeks, the Bible study grew to 134 people. As a natural flow of events, the group formed a nondenominational, Bible-based church, Warriors for Christ. People came in everyday clothes, without pretense, and found acceptance.

The ministry reaches out to the homeless and those transitioning out of homelessness, as well as people who were in prison, but want to live differently. His passion thrives from seeing the people's lives transformed. The fellowship plans to take 50 youth to a life-impacting event known as Winterfest during the early months of 2013. "We take our kids every year, and in 2013 we want to take youth who can't afford the cost," he explained. "We trust God to provide the means."

The small fellowship leads the Angel Tree project each year, but David loves community and church involvement. With so many children to help, the small group can't accomplish this effort alone. He invites local bikers to volunteer for delivering gifts, even if they don't attend any church.

Each year, groups of six or seven bikers take gifts all over the neighboring counties. Between December 15 and December 22, when traveling through these areas, you might see a big Harley with elk horns, twinkling lights or some other holiday decoration. A big burly man or petite woman donning red hats and leather may tote a bicycle or any number of gifts strapped to their motorcycles. Bringing smiles to many children, these angels in leather will hear familiar words. "If it wasn't for you, our kids wouldn't have any Christmas presents at all." **NOW**

*Editor's Note: For more information, contact David at (817) 964-5491 or Lesa at (817) 964-5492 or e-mail [nfcbikers@gmail.com](mailto:nfcbikers@gmail.com).*





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# A STYLE *All Their Own*

At Home With Lee & Peggy Pickens

— By Erin McEndree





*If the walls of the Lee and Peggy Pickens' home could talk, they would have many adventures to tell. Their decorating habits combine a variety of styles and periods to create an uncommon mixture of furnishings. They experiment with different countries and different eras, combining them in an interesting way to create a comfortable yet unique home. Neutral colors tie all the styles together, making their home pleasing to the eye. "I have an eclectic style," Peggy said.*

The Pickens designed their house six years ago. They moved from Nassau Bay near Houston after Hurricane Rita. "I was tired of preparing for hurricanes and living in a three-story home," Peggy said. "And we are closer to the grandkids."

When they started their new home search, Lee and Peggy knew they wanted to continue living on the water. They found Granbury on their way to Fredericksburg. They drove around and liked the community, so they decided to stay. The location was close to Fort Worth, as well as their children. "It's also close to Walmart," Lee said, admitting that he goes there a lot. "I think he goes so much just to get away from me," Peggy said as they laughed. The couple appreciates Granbury's small-town feel with its added bonus of all the big box stores. "We rarely have to go to the big city," Peggy said.

At Christmastime, a 10-foot-tall tree sits in front of the window of the Pickens' home, fully dressed in red, shiny ornaments. A stately Nutcracker dressed in red stands regally by the front door, greeting visitors as they come through the ornate, large iron doors.

The Pickenses chose a lot that looks over the canal, and they created a wall of seamless glass so they could enjoy the view. Outside is a pondless waterfall visible from the large window. The calming sound from the waterfall can be heard on the patio.







"I like to sit outside and listen to the water," Peggy said. Lee is the yard man who likes to maintain the rose bushes that are planted all around the house.

Two seating areas are under the porch and another overlooks the water on the boathouse deck. Iron lanterns are dispersed throughout the outdoor space. Canadian geese live in the area year-around. "We love to watch the geese when we eat breakfast," Lee said. "They swoop down and gracefully skim the



water." Lee and Peggy have guests over in July to enjoy the fireworks and make use of the outdoor kitchen. They also set up tables under the covered porch for their bridge parties.

The open-concept living space has a casual feel with large sofas, art on every wall and a big screen TV. The dark wood bookcases that flank the fireplace double as a mini-museum, displaying several antique locks that came from their ranch in East Texas. Peggy pointed out a vintage

flip top cigarette lighter. "This is the only thing I have from my dad," she said.

A rug with similar colors grounds the family room and complements the color scheme. The rug came from Turkey. It was not, however, the one they originally purchased. "We got it home and didn't like it. Fortunately, representatives from Turkey visit their customers once a year to check up on them," Lee explained. "They let us swap the rug we disliked for this one."

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**The eclectic style may not be for everyone, but it fits Lee & Peggy to a tee.**

The dining room has an impressive ceiling “bump up” and large chandelier. The table in the dining room is decorated for the holidays and is surrounded by eight chairs with red upholstery. Niches in the walls are home to several art pieces picked up on vacations and at antique stores. One piece they acquired from the Cowboy Artists of America Museum in Kerrville is called *Grandmother's Joy*. Another piece by the hall stands 5 feet tall. Peggy calls it *Extension Man*. It is an abstract, stainless steel art deco statue with circles, lines and rectangles. “We found it at a restaurant where we often ate brunch, but the artist did not want to sell it,” Lee said. “Then, two years later, the artist called and accepted our offer. Always be a patient buyer.”

Perhaps *Extension Man* is pointing visitors down the hall to the African room. “This is the fun room,” Peggy said, “except for the work-out equipment by the door.” Elephants, masks and African-inspired decor cover the walls and migrate into the bathroom. The theme is brought together because the furnishings all share the same color palette. Animal print fabrics make up the pillows and rugs.

The garage at the end of the hall looks like a gallery as well. The walls are a neutral khaki color. Khaki is the backdrop for the many paintings, which portray their love for boats. Light streams in from the porthole-shaped windows. The light shines on a 1929 Mercedes Gazelle. It is a replica kit car they found in perfect condition. Peggy plans to drive it in a parade someday.

The office has top to bottom, dark wood cabinets and doors and two built-in





desks. The only freestanding furniture — two large leather office chairs — suggests a time for work. Peggy is not fond of the office except for a painting above her husband's desk. Hues of purple, orange and yellow mingle together to create a stunning picture of a boat sailing on the water and some planets in the sky. "We watched a man create it with cans of spray paint on the beach at Puerto Vallarta," she said.

Peggy admits there isn't room in the house for any more furnishings, but she continues to feed her love for jewelry everywhere they go. Her nickname is "Pegboard Peggy." Her closets are lined with white pegboard walls. Hooks display turquoise necklaces, bracelets, belts, purses, scarves and anything that can be hung up. Everything has a place. Peggy is very organized and prefers clean lines and no clutter. "I like everything behind doors so you can't see it," she said.

The use of color can bring a room together. Color is the unifying theme in Lee and Peggy's home. Neutral colors make the various pieces from different countries and eras work together. Abstract and modern, old and new are paired together. These styles work because the spectrum of colors in each piece is similar, so it complements the pieces around it. The eclectic style may not be for everyone, but it fits Lee and Peggy to a tee. **NOW**



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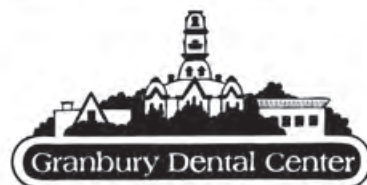
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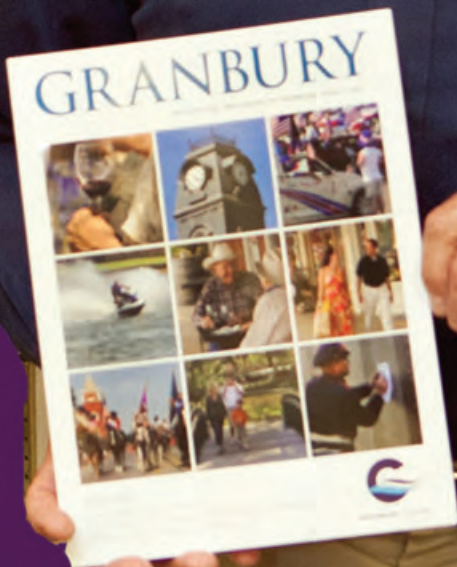
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# ng, Not Playing

— By Melissa Rawlins

*per month, responding to folks looking for help of any kind — from medical facilities for children to lodging and restaurants to charitable organizations. Those cheerful, proactive ladies are kind of the help desk for Granbury!”*

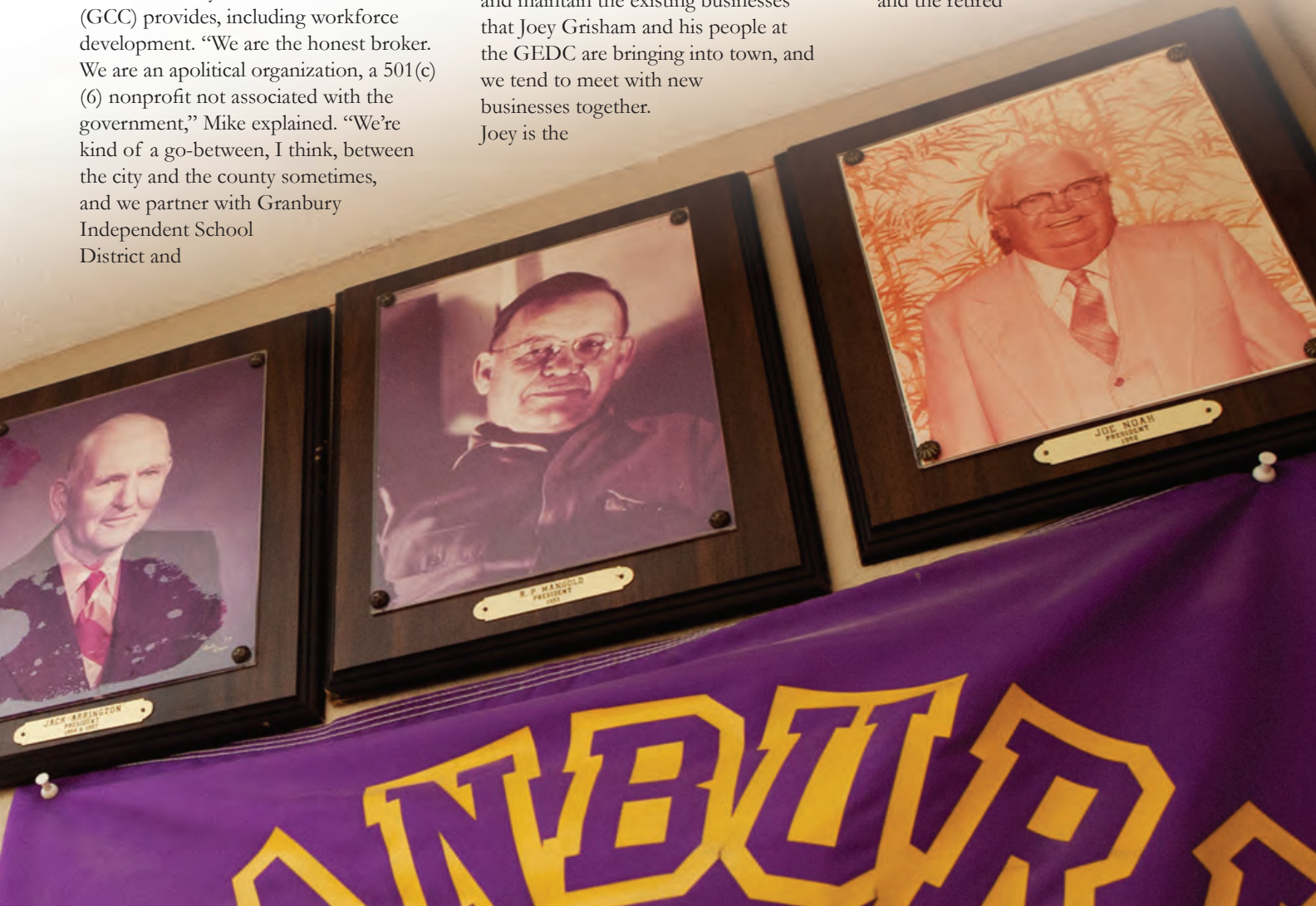
Their attitude of service extends to the community leadership that everyone at the Granbury Chamber of Commerce (GCC) provides, including workforce development. “We are the honest broker. We are an apolitical organization, a 501(c)(6) nonprofit not associated with the government,” Mike explained. “We’re kind of a go-between, I think, between the city and the county sometimes, and we partner with Granbury Independent School District and

The Granbury Economic Development Corporation [GEDC].”

The 15-person board of directors of the GCC decides what projects the Chamber will support in the community. “We believe workforce, career and technology training is vital, and was a prime mover in bringing Weatherford College into Granbury,” Mike said. “When businesses look at relocating to places like Granbury one of the first questions they ask is, ‘Do you have a college?’ Our primary mission is to grow and maintain the existing businesses that Joey Grisham and his people at the GEDC are bringing into town, and we tend to meet with new businesses together. Joey is the

point man, but new prospects know that the chamber works in a support role for them.”

If the GCC leaders think an event or program is good for the community, they look into how they can support it. The seventh largest chamber in the Metroplex, Granbury Chamber of Commerce serves about 40 nonprofit organizations, many individual members, as well as over 900 businesses. They constantly funnel valuable information between the business community and the retired







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community, using a myriad of communication techniques, including flash e-mail and a Web site that receives 25,000 visits monthly.

The GCC is a member of four different national and state chamber associations. Mike serves on the board of the North Texas Chamber of Commerce



Executives Association representing 100 area chambers. He believes in networking and learning from others around the nation and throughout Texas. He sends his staff to every organizational training opportunity that presents itself. He also positioned the GCC to provide support for other chambers, giving how-to guidance whenever asked. "There is no competition between chambers — we





are all in the business of building our community,” Mike said. He has worked closely with the Stephenville, Benbrook, Weatherford and East Parker County chambers to share “best practices” and other valuable information.

The GCC’s entire budget is made up of member dues and non-dues income. Accountant Sue White, the London-born and very efficient QuickBooks expert contracted by the GCC, tracks all income and expenses for the nonprofit organization. The non-dues income is brought in from their annual magazine, *Granbury: The Official Area Guide of Granbury, Texas*, the GCC’s annual banquet and the Chamber Golf Tournament. At last month’s tournament, Mike did not play. He served, rolling up his sleeves with his enthusiastic staff to further the mission of the GCC. “I just drove around and talked to folks to see how they were doing,” Mike said. “The whole thing was making sure our guests were happy.”

Surprisingly, Mike does not play golf. After playing the links a little during his prior military career, he found he prefers more exercise than he can get from golf. Now he enjoys hunting, tennis, racquetball, as well as bike riding. His athletic endeavors have always veered toward the wild side, actually. Years ago, he raced motorcycles and Corvettes. Now he enjoys trick and barefoot waterskiing on Lake Granbury. Mostly, he trail rides with his wife, Susan. They also travel to horse shows, both in- and out-of-state. “The two of us just don’t sit still very

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much,” Mike said. “We’ve got grandkids, and we get over to Florida to see them probably three to four times per year.” At the end of the day, when he steps back from the table, Mike drives his old white Ford truck back to the property where he and his wife live north of town. Fences need fixing. Barns need painting. Fortunately, Mike enjoys being outdoors.

Since 1996, he has been in the chamber and event-planning business, actually running a chamber of commerce in Florida for four years. Before that, Mike spent 28 years flying from carriers in the U.S. Navy. He performed strategic military planning and commanded two installations where patriotic celebrations were frequent occurrences. Once he came to the GCC, it was a no-brainer for Mike to get on Granbury’s Fourth of July bandwagon.

Over the past six years, Granbury’s annual Fourth of July Celebration has evolved into a regional extravaganza. “Our fireworks show two years ago was ranked in the top 10 in the Southwest,” Mike said. “It brought about 100,000 people into Granbury and had a direct economic impact of \$5-6 million dollars. We find that approaching the Fourth of July, most if not all of Granbury’s hotel rooms are sold out.”

Last January, the GCC hired a sophisticated marketing expert, Sondra Walton, to produce and promote the events. This year, Sondra began attending Chamber Institute at the University of Arizona in Tucson. At the end of the four-year program, Sondra will receive an organizational certification as a chamber executive. She will be joining ranks with Mike as well as Mary Booth. Mary moved through the ranks from volunteer to part time and now is the Chamber’s well-liked general manager and membership director. She works closely with Pam Fine, GCC’s administrative membership coordinator.

For Mike, it is important to have open communication with his staff, where everyone has freedom to say what they want to say. “I prefer to operate when everybody can sit down at the table — including city, county, business community — and I really think it’s important that we work together for the common good,” Mike said. “You don’t always win, but everybody gets to give their input.” **NOW**

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# Little FIRE CRACK

— By Sarah Anderson

*There is no question 13-year-old Daishia Pratt knows what she wants in life, and she is not afraid to go after it. Her genuine confidence and quiet determination leave little room for doubt. So much so, by sixth grade she was researching the top universities in the country. She knew she wanted to be an architect, so she searched online for schools with the highest-rated architecture programs. After careful consideration, she decided on Cornell University and found an e-mail address to request more information. Soon, much to her parents' surprise, a packet from the university arrived on their doorstep.*

An avid reader, Daishia quickly devoured the material like she has nearly every book in the school's library. She pored over it in great detail assessing what the Ivy League school had to offer. After a thorough examination, she was convinced Cornell was the school for her. Wherever she goes for her bachelor's degree, Daishia said it must be strong in sports. "I have loved sports since I was old enough to understand what they were," she said.

Now in eighth grade at Granbury Middle

School (GMS), she represents the Lady Pirates in all three of the girls' sports — volleyball, basketball and track. All of her coaches agree Daishia is a dedicated and driven athlete who will stop at nothing to be the best she can be. Last year, she was awarded the Heart-n-Hustle award for her hard work and commitment to improving. "Daishia encompasses everything an eighth grade girl should," said GMS coach, Malarie Gill. "Her spark and her passion for always doing the right thing shine."

The GMS girls' athletic coordinator, Gary Childs, said there is no question about how hard Daishia works. "She always gives it her best and represents our school well," Gary said.

Daishia credits her parents' support and encouragement for her determination and drive. She strives to go above and beyond in everything she does, because both her mom and dad have instilled that in her. Her dad, Kenneth Pratt, helps her focus on sports and how she can grow and improve as an athlete, while her mom, Alison Pratt, imparts the importance of academics and working hard in the classroom. "My mom is always telling me if you get good grades, you can do anything, and my dad always says if you give something 110 percent, there is no way you can fail," Daishia said. "Now it's just a natural instinct to push myself in everything I do." In fact, her advice to her peers is, "Push harder than you think you can. You can always push past whatever limits you think you have."

Every year Daishia sets goals for herself, and she is not satisfied until she achieves them. This year, her goals include





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making A-team in both volleyball and basketball and completing the 300-meter hurdles on the track team, which is one of the most difficult track and field events. She has already achieved volleyball A-team, but that is just the beginning. "I won't stop until I have met all three of my goals," she said. "My parents have drilled in my head that if you don't work hard, then you cannot achieve the goals you set for yourself. Yeah, sometimes it is really hard or it hurts, but it is making you stronger."

Looking forward to high school next year, Daishia can't wait to play soccer again. It is her favorite sport by far. She started playing when she was 8 years old and was hooked immediately. Long before she ever touched a soccer ball, she was fascinated by it. As a small child, she loved to watch any soccer game she





could find, especially during the Olympics. Watching the 2012 U.S. Women's Olympic Soccer Team take the gold this summer left her excited and determined to compete in the Olympics herself one day. "When the 2008 Olympics were on, my dad put on the women's soccer game, and it just popped in my head that I want to be there one day," she said. "And this year, to see them represent their country and bring home the gold medal just made me want that even more."

Sports, however, can only be a part of a person's overall success. "You can't go through school thinking, *Oh, I can do sports well, so that means I can blow off school.* You obviously have to work hard at both of them," she said. "Why not just achieve both at the same time instead of slacking in one? My parents always tell me if you make good grades, the sky is the limit."



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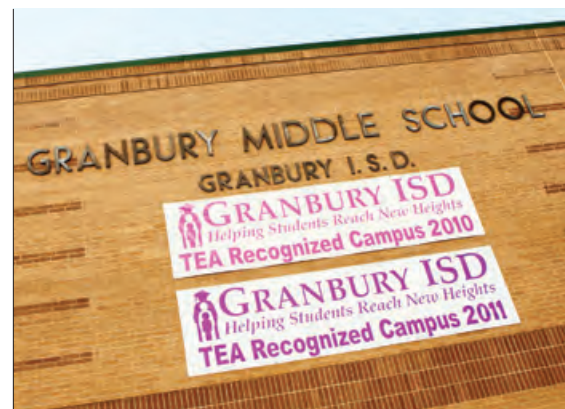
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Alison is not surprised in the slightest by her daughter's dreams and fortitude. "Daishia is a natural leader, motivator and self-starter," she said. "I have no doubt with her drive and character, she will accomplish great things." Alison became Daishia's full-time mother five years ago when Daishia was 8, and she and her younger sister, Savannah, now a sixth-grader at GMS, came to live with their dad in Granbury. "These girls are like my own," Alison said. "I am so proud of both of them. It warms my heart to see Daishia blossom like this. She is an incredible girl."

Seven months ago, Alison and Kenneth brought home another addition to the family, Addison Pratt. "Addison is our miracle baby," Alison said. "Both Daishia and Savannah have been wonderful big sisters. They are so helpful and patient." Addison is a miracle because Alison lost one baby before her. "But both girls were always so strong, and I have never detected a jealous bone in their bodies," Alison said. "They have been tremendous throughout everything."

Alison attributes Daishia's character and resolve to their values and commitment to keeping God at the center of their home and family. "My family means the world to me. Without them, I wouldn't have this huge support system, and I wouldn't have all of these dreams," Daishia said. "My family pushes me to do my best every day in everything I do, and I love them for it."

According to Daishia's coaches, she does the same thing for her friends at school and her teammates. She is a constant encouragement. "Daishia pushes the girls to work just as hard as she does," Coach Gill said. "She is a little firecracker and such a joy to have on my team." **NOW**





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When you are trying to choose just the right gift for your grandchildren, you can have a tough time sifting through the newest trends and fads. Last week it was this pop star, next week it may be a new cartoon character. On top of that, you don't want to get something that won't last 10 minutes out of the package. One gift that will last for many years is a life insurance policy. There are many reasons why it can be an excellent gift for your grandchild.

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Giving a gift of life insurance to your grandchild can be one of the most significant things you do during your lifetime. He or she may not understand at the time how important the gift is, but should grow to appreciate it in the future. Take the guesswork out of your gift shopping. Life insurance is a gift that will last a lifetime. **NOW**

*Jace Foreman is a State Farm agent based in Granbury.*





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Heath, Glenda and James Ramsey spice up Granbury homes, season after season, with their focus on comfort and service.

## A Family Affair

*The Ramseys specialize in stuff, so décor & more offers Granbury all kinds of stuff!*

— By Melissa Rawlins

Unsuspecting drivers looking for insurance or bookkeeping companies might drive right on by décor & more, the totally unique shop frequented by Granbury's discerning decorators — both amateur and pro. Fascinating objects inside the glass door on the southern frontage road of Highway 377 run the gamut, from vases large and small to gift cards sweet and funny.

James, Glenda and Heath Ramsey strive to offer decorators' delights, as well as gift-givers' goodies. This industrious family frequently rearranges their displays of items such as: silk flower arrangements, LED string lighting, seasonal wreaths, swags and garlands, and scrunch in every color imaginable mixed in with the rhinestone-studded jewelry, crosses, picture frames, Bible

covers, Cindy Burden sculptures of spiritual women and candles.

In fact, people from miles around drive to décor & more for the ultrarealistic, flameless candle that is not only battery-operated but also contains a timer allowing it to light up when you need it to glow — and to turn off five hours later. For those who desire variety of scent, the Ramseys offer Swan Creek Candles. "The scent lasts longer than any other candles we've ever had," Glenda said. "They are made of soy wax, so they create no smoke and burn all the way to the bottom."

This season, the Ramseys put out a wide selection of holiday candies and every customer gets a sample. They always offer free water and sodas to make their customers comfortable while



shopping for that perfect, tasteful gift. And when a client wants to experiment with an item in their home, the Ramseys offer refunds or exchanges if it does not work out. "We want to do business with you in a way that you're satisfied and will come back," James said. "We want you to know that we will do what we say!"

James and Glenda opened décor & more three years ago. The couple has owned several retail businesses, beginning with a florist and catering business on the east side of Dallas. Glenda started during her 20s and operated for 12 years. "Over time, I've learned to buy anything I like, and I don't buy anything that I don't like. It's an addiction with me," Glenda grinned. "I love buying what people like and helping them with their homes."

During the holiday season, décor & more offers less clothing than they normally stock to make room for more holiday decor. Serving a wide range of people, from the more mature to younger homemakers, the store has built up a strong gift business. "People know they can stop, get a gift on their way to Bunko or Kino or a Christmas party, and we will, at no charge, put their gift in a bag for them," James said.

His creative son, Heath, works with décor & more as social marketing expert. He also corresponds with customers on special orders, including gift baskets for individuals or companies wanting to give holiday gifts to their clients. The longest fulfillment time is six weeks, but last month Glenda set a record. "A girl came in and ordered a wreath, and I had it ready in an hour," said Glenda, who creates custom floral arrangements in the back room.

When working with a client on something special like an area rug, Glenda will go into people's home to consult before ordering such a specialty item. "If they come in and like things we have, Glenda goes out and helps them set it up at no extra charge," James said. Such customer service is proof the Ramseys really like their customers and will go the extra mile to help them be happy. **NOW**

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Kyle and Chelsea Lewis teach their daughter, Karsyn, to play tennis.



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Dylan Smith inspects his favorite Corvette at the BRCC car show.





*Nancy Seilheimer, Barbara Herrington, Char Hitz and Linda Somervill work at the book sale on behalf of Friends of the Library.*



*Scott Fixsen enjoys a beautiful day fishing at Lakeshore Apartments.*



*Scott Kelly adopted his boxer, Ginger, through HALO some time ago. They drop by the square for Bow Wow Trick or Treat.*



*Cross country runners from Granbury High School go to regional competition at Mae Simmons Park in Lubbock.*



*A Lake Granbury Newcomer Bunco group gathers for their annual Halloween Bunco Bash.*



*Bonnie, a volunteer for Rio Brazos Chapter Texas Master Naturalists, shows Judy Rawlins the variety of projects at Acton Nature Center.*



*Gord Deck, from Calgary (in the province of Alberta, Canada), gets a tour of Granbury from his friend, Dennis Nelson.*



*Bowling Buds (l to r): Bill Hill, Cleta D. Mims, F.M. Daniels and Ron Partlow.*



## Special Gifts for Special Gardeners

— By Nancy Fenton

It's time to think about those special gifts for your favorite gardener friends. Generally, it's always easy to find gloves and tarps, but special things take some planning ahead! Tools for special tasks must be found and often require ordering. Let's face facts: most large stores put away their gardening things to make room for Christmas items. I use the Internet and garden catalogues for very special gifts. Some of my favorite gifts are hand gardening tools with cushioned, large handles. An easy place to find them is: [www.radiusgarden.com](http://www.radiusgarden.com), where you can also find long-handled, sharp spades with lots of soft handles. Those little benches on which you can kneel or sit would look good under my tree, since I am still recovering from my back surgery. These can be found on [www.gardeners.com](http://www.gardeners.com), as well as the very light weight, collapsible bags that will hold up to three gallons of leaves or other items. Nearly every gardener I know would love to have some plant stakes of their very own. Kids can personalize plastic knives on a cold dreary day, or you can go the extra mile and snip some metal ones from tin or aluminum. A decent selection can be viewed at [www.gardeners.com](http://www.gardeners.com), and sometimes they can be found at the garden stores.

One of the things on my list is a pair of gloves with extra-long cuffs or gauntlets to protect my arms as I dig and prune. Various pieces of clothing are also available with built-in mosquito repellent. For a quick, easier-to-find gift consider repellent wipes. If the stores no longer carry the summer sprays, try the sporting goods or the hunting sections for the wipes.

Plants and gift certificates are always great, as are books. Books should probably be specific to the area, since each area has things that grow better in them than others. For suggestions and list of books for Texas, try the Texas A&M bookstore online or your local bookstore. Have a great holiday and tune in next month for more plant discussions. **NOW**

*Nancy Fenton is a Master Gardener.*

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### Through December 22

Friends of the Library Holiday Book Shopping: **Mondays** and **Wednesdays**, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.; **Tuesdays**, 4:00-8:00 p.m.; **Saturdays**, Noon-4:00 p.m., Friends of the Library Book Store, 222 N. Travis St.

*Plaid Tidings*: **Thursday, Friday** and **Saturday** 7:30-9:00 p.m.; **Saturday** matinees at 3:00-5:30 p.m., Granbury Live, 110 N. Crockett St. *Forever Plaid: Plaid Tidings* is a brand new show that offers the best of *Forever Plaid* tied-up in a nifty package with a big Christmas bow on top! Ticket prices: \$20 adults; \$17 students & seniors; \$15 children. For more information, contact the box office (817) 579-0952 or visit [www.granburytheatrecompany.org](http://www.granburytheatrecompany.org).

### December 6

Lake Granbury Newcomers Club luncheon: 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Pecan Plantation. Members have lots of fun and contribute unselfishly to Hood County needs, raising money for charity through sales of \$1 door-prize tickets and raffles. Last year alone, Newcomers gave \$12,000 to local charities. RSVP to (817) 243-9831.

### December 7

Granbury Chamber Luncheon: 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Granbury Resort Conference Center, \$15. Community members interested in becoming a member of the chamber are welcome. For more information, call Mary Booth at (817) 573-1622.

### December 8

Girls Night Out: 5:30-8:00 p.m., historic downtown square. For more information, call (817) 573-5299 or visit [facebook.com/GNOgranburytx](http://facebook.com/GNOgranburytx).

### December 10

Metro Beekeepers Meeting: 6:30-8:30 p.m., United Cooperative Services Building, 3309 I-35 West, Burleson. Novice and expert beekeepers in Texas will enjoy learning from each other at Metro Beekeepers meetings. This month, members enjoy a potluck supper and white elephant gift exchange. Contact Stan Key, (817) 888-0470, or visit [www.metrobeekeepers.net](http://www.metrobeekeepers.net).

### December 13-15

Christmas at Russell Farm: **Thursday** and **Friday**, 5:00-9 p.m.; **Saturday**, Noon-9:00

p.m., Russell Farm, 405 W. County Road 714, Burleson. Free festivities include a donkey wearing antlers, hay rides, shopping for handmade crafts, tours of the historic Russell-Boren house as well as the Russell Farm Art Center gallery, and treats like hot chocolate, cookies and coffee. Call (817) 447-3316.

### December 29

Last Saturday Gallery Night: 6:00-9:00 p.m.; historic square, 100 W. Pearl St. Art Gallery throughout downtown Granbury, including Your Private Collection, Langdon Center Art Gallery, Artefactz, Shanley House Art Gallery and Sculpted Steel host this free art walk. Artists will be on hand, some giving demonstrations, while you enjoy hors d'oeuvres, wine and music. Contact (817) 579-7733.

### Weekends

Hood County Museum: 1:00-4:00 p.m., Old Hood County Jail, 208 N. Crockett. Admission is \$2 for adults, \$1 for children 6-12. (817) 573-5135.

Granbury Trolley: **Fridays** and **Saturdays**, 10:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m.; **Sundays**, 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. The Trolley starts on the historic courthouse square, at the intersection of Crockett and Pearl streets, and runs every hour on the hour. For more information, call Granbury Convention & Visitors Bureau, (817) 573-5548.

### Second Sundays

Low-Cost Vaccination Clinic: 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Arrow Feed & Ranch, 2031 E. Hwy 377. Call (817) 573-8808.

### Second Mondays

Granbury Showcase meeting: 6:30 p.m., Big Cup in Acton. Volunteers keep our community healthy by helping museums, festivals and events. Call Donna at (817) 219-3246.

### Tuesdays

Optimist Club meetings: 6:30-7:30 a.m., Granbury Church of Christ (across from high school). Call Darrell Morgan, (817) 579-2655, or Kathy Davis, (817) 894-4452.

Granbury Lions Club meetings: 12:00-1:00 p.m., Spring Creek Barbecue. For information, contact e-mail [webmaster@granburylions.org](mailto:webmaster@granburylions.org).

### Second Tuesdays

Salvation Army Women's Service League meetings: 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.,

DeCordova Bend Country Club. Join with other women interested in helping with the many projects undertaken by the Salvation Army Women's Service League of Hood County. Projects include new shoes, new clothing, hygiene kits, summer camp programs for children, assistance for those in most need in Hood County, and more! For further information, please contact Donna Noyes, (817) 736-2999.

### Wednesdays

Church on the Rock: 6:00 p.m., 322 S. Morgan St. Dinner and Bible Study. Learn more: [www.cotrgranbury.com](http://www.cotrgranbury.com).

### Third Wednesdays

Master Gardeners meetings: 1:00-2:00 p.m., City Hall Annex 1 Meeting Room, 1410 W. Pearl St. For information, contact (817) 579-3280.

### Thursdays

Kiwanis Club of Lake Granbury meetings: 12:00-1:00 p.m., Hilton Garden Inn. For information, contact (817) 579-3280.

Rotary Club meetings: 12:00-1:00 p.m., Harbor Lakes Golf Club, 2100 Clubhouse Dr.

### Saturdays

Breakfast With Veterans: 8:00-10:00 a.m., American Legion Post 491, 3409 Davis Rd. For \$5, the Post offers not only a breakfast buffet, but also eggs cooked to order, pancakes and a variety of breakfast meats. Volunteers are also welcomed to help with preparation, serving and cleanup. The American Legion is the nation's largest wartime veterans service organization, committed to mentoring youth, advocating patriotism, and continued devotion to our fellow service members and veterans. Visit [www.alpost491.com](http://www.alpost491.com) or e-mail [contact@alpost491.com](mailto:contact@alpost491.com).

### 2nd and 4th Saturdays

HALO Pet Adoption Days: **2nd Saturday**, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Tractor Supply; **4th Saturday**, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Arrow Feed & Ranch, 2031 E. Hwy 377. For more information, contact Pam Fine, Executive Director of HALO (Hood County Animal Lovers Organization), (817) 559-7309.

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





## In The Kitchen With Marie Ferguson

— By *Melissa Rawlins*

During her high school days in East Texas, Marie Ferguson's parents owned their own business and often came home for lunch. Marie had their lunch waiting for them. "Most of the time it turned out all right," she laughed, "but there I learned some good lessons at my parents expense!" Marie learned well from her mother's early guidance, so much so that her old-fashioned chicken and dumplings won her husband's heart. Forty years later, the two are empty nesters, yet happy. Marie still cooks most nights of the week and often brings desserts to work. She enjoys kitchen time with her grandchildren — preparing holiday goodies, including Dog Bones cut in shapes of cats, Christmas ornaments or Longhorns — for Longhorn friends with four-legged children! **NOW**

### Holiday Percolator Punch

- 2 cups cranberry juice
- 2 1/2 cups pineapple juice
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/3 cup brown sugar, firmly packed
- 3 2-inch sticks cinnamon (plus additional sticks for garnish)
- 1 1/2 tsp. whole cloves
- 1/2 tsp. whole allspice

1. Combine juices, water and brown sugar in a percolator reserved for just this purpose.
2. Place spices into percolator basket and perk.
3. Serve with a cinnamon stick placed in each cup (optional).

### Pecan Pie

- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup light corn syrup
- 1/3 cup butter
- 4 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 tsp. vanilla

- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1 9-inch pie shell, unbaked
- 1 1/4 cups pecan halves

1. Combine first 3 ingredients in a medium saucepan. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until sugar dissolves and butter melts.
2. Remove from heat. Let cool slightly.
3. Stir in eggs, vanilla and salt. Pour filling into pie shell and top with pecan halves.
4. Protect the pie crust with aluminum foil while baking. Bake at 325 F for 50-55 minutes or until set.

### Cloverleaf Rolls

- 1 envelope active dry yeast
- 1/4 cup warm water
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1/4 cup evaporated milk
- 3 egg yolks, slightly beaten
- 3 1/3 cups flour
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. salt

**1/2 cup butter (plus additional for spreading), at room temperature**

1. Stir yeast into warm water to dissolve.
2. In small bowl, thoroughly mix dissolved yeast, cream, evaporated milk and egg yolks; set aside.
3. In large bowl, stir together flour, sugar and salt. Cut in 1/2 cup butter with pastry blender until mixture resembles coarse crumbs.
4. Stir yeast mixture into flour mixture just to moisten.
5. Spread dough with light film of butter to prevent drying. Cover bowl with plastic wrap. Refrigerate overnight or up to 4 days.
6. Turn dough out on lightly floured board. Dust lightly with flour. Knead a few turns until dough is no longer sticky.
7. Divide dough into four portions. Work with one portion at a time; refrigerate others until needed.
8. Roll dough between floured hands to make an 18-inch strand. Cut into 1-inch pieces; shape into 18 smooth balls.
9. Grease muffin tins; place three balls into each muffin cup.
10. Cover dough; let rise in warm place, free from draft, until double in bulk (about 50 minutes).
11. Bake in preheated 350 F oven for 15-20 minutes, until golden brown.

### Dog Bones

- 1 1/2 cups water
- 1/2 cup safflower oil (no substitutes)
- 2 eggs
- 3 Tbsp. creamy peanut butter
- 2 tsp. vanilla
- 1 1/2 cups whole wheat flour
- 1 1/4 cups unbleached white flour
- 1/2 cup cornmeal
- 1/2 cup regular oatmeal

1. Mix water, oil, eggs, peanut butter and vanilla with wire whisk.
2. Add flours and cornmeal.
3. Pulse oatmeal in food processor; then blend into dough with a mixer.
4. Using 1/3 of the dough at a time, lightly flour the top of the dough and gently knead to form pliable dough, adding flour as necessary.
5. On a floured surface, roll dough out to 1/2- to 3/4-inch thickness and cut with your favorite cookie cutters. Place on an ungreased baking sheet.
6. Bake at 400 F for 20-25 minutes. Once all batches are complete, turn oven off; place all the bones back in the oven to completely dry them out.
7. Store in decorative, airtight containers.



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