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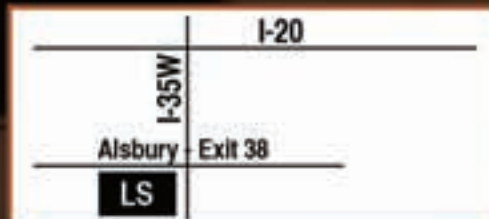
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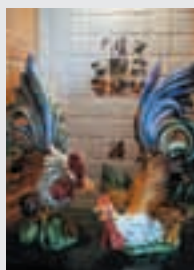
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Photo by Terri Ozymy.

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Editor's Note

Howdy, Burleson!

Spring is in the air, and excitement is inside these pages, where *BurlesonNOW* shares with you stories of movers and shakers who are helping your community bloom. Get some good recipes from Dedi Knox and the culinary arts class at Burleson High. Learn something about love from a highly civic-minded couple, Charles and Beverly Powell, who share a little about their own brand of homemaking. In our sports section, we introduce three generations of softball players — one of whom, Helen Williams, has inspired unity in her girls' team at Kerr Middle School this year. You will be inspired by the story of Victoria Minton, a 12-year-old girl who sings opera in the Burleson Kiwanis Christian Music Talent Show! Another star in your midst is Janet Rasher, the fun-loving Pre-AP science teacher at Hughes Middle School. The security we all enjoy is partly assured by Dale Lewis, the only Burleson member of the Texas State Guard's Texas Maritime Regiment (which was commissioned only 13 months ago on *Battleship Texas* in Galveston).

Thank you, Burleson, for your *joi de vivre*!

Melissa Rawlins, *BurlesonNOW* Editor

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MEGA



Corporal Dale Lewis, owner of Lewis Filtration Services, exudes an unassuming and quiet confidence at first meeting. He is a friendly man with honest eyes and a firm handshake. Ask this Marine about his service in the Texas State Guard, however, and his countenance quickly fills with passion and a spark ignites his eyes.

Dale is a volunteer member in the 3rd Battalion of the Texas Maritime Regiment of the Texas State Guard. Created 13 months ago, this regiment was established to provide “the governor of the state of Texas with mission-ready, volunteer personnel for operations in support of homeland defense and in response to man-made or natural disasters.” Most of the members are veterans from the Navy and Marines who still wish to serve their country. Over 100 men currently volunteer for the three Texas battalions in Houston, San Antonio and Fort Worth, with 19 men serving in the latter. “We’ve grown pretty fast,” Dale said proudly, “for being a volunteer unit. We only get paid when we’re deployed, but

there are a lot of people willing to make that sacrifice.”

Dale’s family is originally from Burleson. “My great-great-great-great-uncle’s last name was Renfro,” he

language. I moved here in ‘94/’95, and [later] joined the Marine Corps.” Dale proudly served as a Marine for a year until a knee injury rendered him unable to continue. “Since I was 8 years old,



Corporal Lewis, center, and his battalion drill monthly in preparation for a mission.

explained, pointing in the direction of Renfro Street. “My parents were missionaries to Mexico, so that’s where I grew up. Spanish was actually my first

I’ve wanted to be a Marine. I watched the Marines marching by me at the State Fair and — I’ve just always wanted to serve,” he recalled. Joining the Texas



State Guard six months ago, Dale has once again been able to officially wear his Marine uniform and serve his community and country with pride.

The men who make up the Fort Worth battalion, many of whom currently serve in police departments, spend their weekends drilling at Carswell Air Force Base and training in safety, fire rescue, FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) shelter management, emergency first aid and swift water rescue. Dale received an American Heart Association certification this past December at the Fire Science Department of Collin County Community College, learning skills such as: how to use a defibrillator and the techniques necessary to rescue and resuscitate victims. "We want to have everything we can in place for a mission, so we're trying to think of every possible thing we may need in a disaster situation. Three of us recently went through a Boy Scouts course to learn rope safety. If we're in a flood situation, which has happened a lot recently, knowing how to secure a knot that won't fail is important," he pointed out.

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Men such as Dale are dedicating their time off from their day jobs to think of every possible minute detail, down to the knots of a rescue rope, to make sure a disaster situation becomes as controllable as humanly possible. "We're training for situations where people are panicking, and everything has to be second nature. We even have what we call 'go bags,' which are bags we keep packed and ready with supplies, so that when the call comes, we are ready," he expressed.

That disaster call did come in August 2007, and the men in uniform were ready for Hurricane Dean, the first Category 5 hurricane to make landfall in the Atlantic basin in 15 years. Our State Guard was part of one of the biggest and fastest mobilizations in U.S. history. "For [Hurricane] Katrina, we just weren't prepared," Dale admitted. "For Dean, we were ready," he added. Even though the magnitude of devastation and the death toll of Hurricane Dean did not equal previous storms such as Hurricanes Rita and Katrina, Dale believes it was "a great practice run. We know, now, that we are prepared," he stated confidently. "We got notice on Thursday, and by Saturday, we were in Bastrop, Texas, going through bus driving school. One of the biggest problems involving Katrina was the evacuation, so we all became certified to drive the buses necessary to get people to safety. And by Sunday, a couple hundred of us were deployed to McAllen and Laredo. Four days, and we were ready."

A man in uniform during a disaster is called upon to do more than just drive a bus or rescue victims. They are there to boost morale, instill confidence and restore sanity and calm when panic threatens to cause an already bad situation to escalate. "We help put people at ease. As a civilian, you don't think the same as you do in the military. People see us and the change that uniform brings; they know we are there to take care of them, and they stop panicking," Dale said. The Guard

works to prevent the assaults, thefts and looting that often occur when order has been broken, chaos has ensued and people's normal rationale fails them.

Currently, Dale is working to set up guidelines and regulations so the 3rd Battalion can accept donations. He revealed, "We buy all our own supplies and pay for any classes we need out of our own pockets. Once we begin growing as a unit, we're going to need more and more supplies." It is important to Dale to make sure no funds are misappropriated or used unwisely.

With his parents devoting their lives to the mission field, Dale has an innate servant's heart. Having spent his formative years in Mexico, he appreciates the freedoms and opportunities of the United States and is a patriot to his core. These two traits combine to make one dedicated Marine. "We are blessed to live in a great country, and we need to remember that," he asserted. "Our service men and women are making sacrifices daily, and I am doing what I can to give back to them some peace of mind."

While his military brothers fight overseas for the rights of families, Dale works to keep those soldiers' families safe at home. "The Corps is a brotherhood. We work together to keep our country free. One thing I like about the State Guard is our willingness. We are here to fill a need. We're always looking for volunteers," he added. "Find something you can do here, in your community, because the better our community, the better our state and the better our country!"

Dale's commitment and pride cannot help but inspire those around him. With the Texas Maritime Regiment working for our safety at home, our families and our troops overseas can rest a bit easier. With a smile, Dale said, "We have a saying in the military: We train for war, but pray for peace. In the State Guard, you could say we train for disaster, but pray for calm weather."

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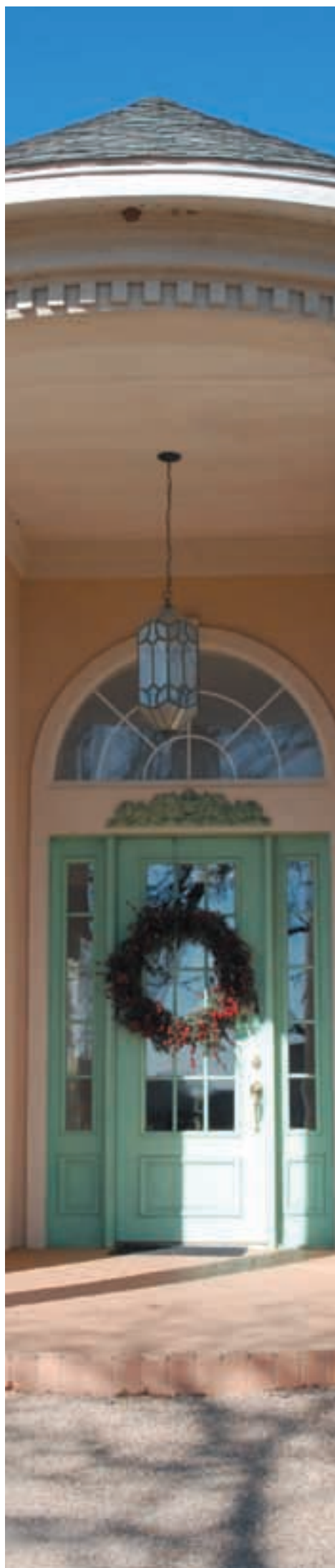
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Finding Center

— By Melissa Rawlins

Charlie Powell, who lives out in the country with his wife of seven years, Beverly Volkman Powell, predicts that were their home to catch fire, they would grab the family portraits — not the chickens. Even though Charlie bought the chickens for Beverly while the two enjoyed sightseeing trips around Texas, she agrees that the two-foot-tall porcelain statues of roosters and hens and regal fighting cocks could stay on the kitchen counter, guarding the kitchen and den — the physical center of the home.

“Our den is where we spend the majority of our time, where we congregate, because it’s near the kitchen,” Beverly said. A former homebuilder, she modeled this house after an inspiring home she built for another entertaining family. “All three of our boys think they’re great

At Home With Charlie and Beverly Powell





cooks. In this house, I put this island in with two cook tops so everybody can cook at the same time."

"We built this place around family," Charlie explained, his gratitude for the place he calls home shining through. "We each have offices outside the home. It's important to get home and have that 'whew' feeling when you come in," Charlie said with a satisfied sigh. "After the traffic, the meetings with the employees at the bank, the business of the day, you want to say, 'Aaaahhhh... we're home.' It's not just the house, not just the physical bricks, sticks, 'n mortar." What the Powells have, in Charlie's view, is just plain comfortable.

"Charlie and I have three boys



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together," Beverly said. "We call them 'our three sons.' The older two, Ken and Charles, are married and each have three children. Our youngest son, James, is going to law school now, and dating a lovely young woman." Beverly, whose grandparents moved to Burleson in the '50s, still enjoys her brother and sister and their families, who have

stayed local, along with her mother. "She is still here, in Heritage Place, so we have a long history in this family. This house works when you're entertaining those large groups," Beverly shared. "We've worked really hard at that. We like the whole family — 35 with kids and all — to be in here with us."

"This house is full with family and

friends a lot. Our house looks very much like a home, because of the way Beverly keeps it and how it's decorated," Charlie smiled. Beverly gives her husband credit for being the art collector. Together, they discovered the two LeRoy Neiman prints that grace the guest bedroom which once belonged to James. "Charlie graduated from University of Texas, and James, too, and this Neiman depicts the U.T. band," Beverly said, remembering that she followed James to The Rose Bowl when he marched in the parade with the Longhorn Marching Band. They added a Neiman serigraph, depicting Derby Day at Churchill Downs, which they purchased from a gallery in San Francisco right after attending the Kentucky Derby, and only a few years after Beverly and her brother developed the subdivision called Churchill Park, where Beverly and Charlie settled.

The Powells look forward to the warmer weather this beautiful March promises. "Our kitchen is open, providing

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our needs,” Charlie said, “but when we have guests, the activity flows out onto the patio.” There, by the pool, the waterfall provides beautiful music for relaxing. “When we truly cook at home it’s more along the lines of grilling,” Beverly said.

Still, the couple eats out more often than not during the week in order to channel their time into community activities. Both serve on multiple boards, including: the Northeast Leadership Council, the Burleson Independent School District and Texas Wesleyan University (Beverly’s alma mater).

Beverly also regularly hosts her gospel choir’s practice sessions in the formal center of the home which contains a baby grand piano, an eight-seat glass dining table and a cozy

living area graced by a William Slaughter painting of Texas bluebonnets. The turquoise front door opens into the large open space where the 11 members of Soulful Sound gather. “We have fabulous acoustics that are wonderful for practicing with a group like that,” Beverly pointed out, “because you can hear all those mistakes and perfect your sound.”

“When the group’s here, there are people singing and moving around and that’s a perfect example of the fact that it’s what goes on in a house that makes it a home,” Charlie said. “My number one thing in this house is the piano. Not the physical piano, but that Beverly is very talented with her voice. She has sung her entire life. I love how she tests a song or plays music in the night,” he added.

Charlie can hear Beverly loud and clear even when he’s in the master suite, just on the other side of a Stephano landscape which the Powells bought especially for their new home and hung above the piano. As he enters their bedroom, Beverly’s handmade floral arrangement greets him with soft and spiky feathers in browns and greens which match the dusky, cool tone of the room. Relaxation is the main purpose here. The adjoining bathroom, adorned with one zebra-print lounge chair, beckons the weary for revival. This master bath is almost a retreat for Beverly. “If you think about it,” she said, “women spend almost one and one-half hours per day dressing. You want it to be a peaceful and restful room.”

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wall, the Powell's have installed a double bed in what used to be the exercise room. "We donated most of our exercise equipment to the church," Charlie explained, "because our grandkids want to play there. Now they can be right where we are." The grandkids enjoy curtain-less windows, since their room faces the backyard. In their

grandparents' room, close to the bed, are book shelves holding Beverly's treasures on the left, Charlie's on the right, surrounding a curved east window that is shuttered — since Charlie is not yet comfortable with letting the neighbors see into every room of the house. "I'm more of an open-window girl than Charlie," Beverly said. This

personality trait accounts for the gorgeous airy feeling in the main entry and in the den that overlooks a view of trees and sky.

"I've lived in town off and on during my life," Beverly shared, "but I really love the solitude and peacefulness of being in the country." With the energy she and Charlie gain from each other, their true center, the couple is charged up to make an impact in Burleson.

"We stress spending a lot of time involved in community support activities," Charlie said. "It's an extension of us, and our families are also in that give-back type mode." For example, Beverly and her sister, Jana Volkman, renovated the building in which Babe's Chicken is now located, thus helping to revitalize downtown. "Joining this family has been a very rewarding thing," Charlie said. "It's enlarged my world. It's not just going to the office. It's broadened my fun and happiness. It has been a unique joy." **NOW**

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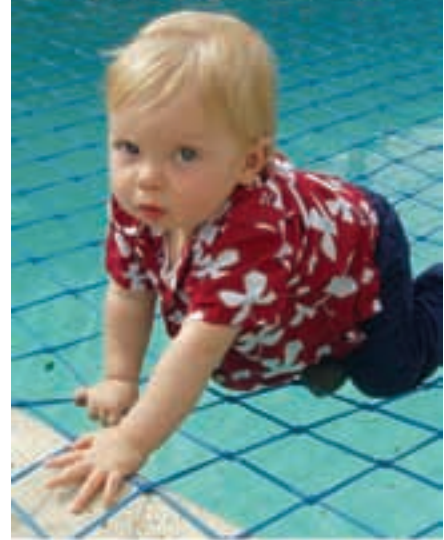


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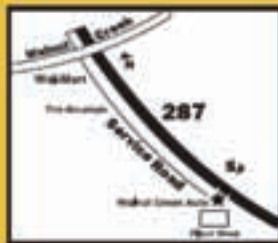
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Home Plate Talent

— By Melissa Rawlins

'Tis the season for music in Burleson, and Victoria Minton — one of the region's finest teenage vocalists — will pop up on a variety of stages this spring, including Honeyfest and Taste of Burleson. The competition season starts with the Burleson Kiwanis' Christian Music Talent Show at the end of this month.

Last year, Victoria won best of show in the Kiwanis' annual event, held in the First Baptist Church of Burleson. "I sang Rossini's '*Son Bella Pastorella*,' which means 'Young Shepherdess of the Alps.' It is opera, about a young shepherdess who lives in the mountains. She doesn't get to see a lot of boys, but has a very spunky personality," said the red-headed 12-year-old, who takes a balanced approach to being center stage. "If you listen to the straight translation, '*Son Bella Pastorella*' is very funny. I have a costume I wear with that song, and I got off stage before I could see how the audience reacted, but I heard lots of cheering."

With the money the Kiwanis awarded Victoria for her winning performance, she pitched in for her family's new pool. "But then we didn't use it for the pool," Victoria laughed. "My original iPod went through the washer, so we replaced the iPod." The singer uses her portable music library to listen to a variety of other singers: "I like Avalon, a Christian contemporary band for teenagers. I really like their club-type remix CD called *Oxygen*. It talks about God. It's a really fun

group," Victoria said, adding, "I also love country music. And then I have some of my classical songs on there. I also have both soundtracks to *High School Musical*."

Victoria, who regularly performs the song "Favorite Things" from *The Sound of Music*, said she also loves reading classical literature. Her favorite book is *Little Women*. Reading is but one of Victoria's interests. She practices ballet, and is in the middle of knitting a scarf. "I draw," Victoria added, "and I write poetry and I try to write my own songs. I've written a few, but some I can't find the right melody for and my mom will come over there and say, 'How about this?' and she'll hum a little tune and I'll play it on the piano and it sounds perfect."

Such connections are one gift she enjoys giving her audiences. "I think singing is a good career for me, because I love to see people smile," said Victoria, who hopes to sing opera internationally in her future career. If every now and then Victoria performs for an audience that is not visibly responsive, she is satisfied with the claps she gets. That admiration is quite a different experience than singing privately behind her bedroom door in harmony with her favorite songs.

Only two years ago, Victoria's parents, Tom and Charm Minton, heard her voice through the door and recognized her talent. They encouraged their 10-year-old to audition for the school for the performing arts in Fort Worth, and she was welcomed. "In my school, I have had the opportunity to take

ARTS NOW

a ballet class," Victoria said. "I've already earned the chance to have point shoes, which is very high rank for me as a beginner. It helps me very much with my stage presence and posture because it helps me with interacting with the crowd, and helps me with moving around so I can be light on my feet."

Victoria can list a slew of other helpers, who have made it possible for her to grace our local stages. Charm Minton: "My mother is encouraging and motivating, and she helps me a bunch with my choreography and with the melody of songs that frustrate me." Tom Minton: "My father created my Web site, www.victoriaminton.com. Before shows, he makes me smile and laugh when the pressure's really high and I get worried. It helps a lot with the butterflies." Danny Minton: "My 5-year-old brother is always happy. It helps me concentrate on being happy a lot." R.T. LeDoux: "My 20-year-old brother has taught me that there is more enjoyment of life than just sitting around watching television. I used to watch stuff like KERA, the travel shows and stuff. R.T. taught me how to play softball, and then immediately I loved the game. We wanted to play now, but since I started singing I couldn't play, sing and do performances with my ballet all at once. It would be chaotic." John and Wanda Minton: "My great-grandparents come to as many performances as they can. They're my number one fans, granddaddy says." Johnnie High: "My director in the Country Music Revue has taught me that the show must go on, no matter what," explained Victoria.

From her performance in last year's Burleson Kiwanis Christian Music Talent Show, Victoria said she learned something else that has made her a better performer. "I learned there is a lot of talent around here," Victoria explained. "It taught me that I need to step up to the home plate every single time and hit that ball as far as I can." **NOW**



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Fun, Form and Family Values

— By Melissa Rawlins



“Grandpa” Fred Hinkelman has hung up his coach’s hat and picked up his glove so he can pitch to his granddaughter, Abbi, in his backyard. Only 30 years ago, Fred first coached his daughter, Helen Williams. She had already played three years of tee ball in the Burleson Youth Association (BYA) when Fred got involved in shaping and molding her pitching skills. Over the years, Fred sacrificed so his favorite pitcher could have two surgeries: Lasik (so she could play without glasses) and a root canal (to repair front teeth broken by a softball during a tournament). These days, Fred is Helen’s booster at all the games she coaches at Kerr Middle School, where she also teaches physical education.

At home, Helen passes on her love for sports, along with her skill. Her daughter, Abbigail, defends second base for her own BYA machine pitch team. Abbi’s brother promises to excel in baseball as well. “Four-year-old Paxton has an overhand throw equivalent to any six-year-old boy because he was taught to throw the ball correctly,” Fred said.

Fred fondly remembers how his daughter got “hooked” on



Three generations in Burleson softball: Fred Hinkelman coached his daughter, Helen's, team in 1978 and 1979; last year, Helen coached her daughter, Abbi's, team. They all practice together in Fred's backyard.

Sports NOW

the sport in the early '70s, when a bunch of boys on their block were throwing the softball up and down Amy Street with her. However, they would not let her play with their gloves. In little-girl determination, she ran inside the house and found an old coin purse her grandmother had given her. "It looked like a mitt to me," Helen said, "and that was my 'glove.'"

Fred added, "My wife, Bobbie, said, 'If she wants to play ball that bad, let her play ball.' So while I was at work, she enrolled Helen in BYA." Fred and Helen began to practice in the backyard. "She threw a hundred balls per day, for at least five years," Fred recalled. "Day or night, cold, wet, rain, we threw. Sometimes I worked midnight shifts [as an officer in the Westover Hills Police Department]. At 3:00 p.m., I'd get up, and she'd already have the balls ready to throw."

Helen's personal coach, who happened to be her dad, had played baseball through high school and into the service. "I married Bobbie when I was living in Fort Worth," Fred said. "Major city softball was a big thing then. I was playing for a church league,



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and learned what fast-pitch men's softball was all about. I could hit from the left side because I could bunt the ball down baseline and beat it to first base."

Creative softball playing resulted in



an injured back for Fred. "Then Bobbie took my cleats and threw them in the garbage," Fred chuckled. "When Helen came along, I started back into softball, but never played anymore. I played through her."

"He wasn't my coach automatically," Helen recalled. "He started coaching with girls much older than me, like Jan Nicholson and Sandra Mitchell. Dad coached the upper leagues, while for three years I was with Sandy Babb's Tiny Tigers. After we'd made the All-Star teams, we were the Supersonics with my dad."

Fred eventually stopped coaching. "Once we got Helen groomed to be a pitcher, I didn't have time to go with her," Fred said. "I consumed all my time making sure she had money to go to tournaments in Tennessee and Oklahoma. Those teams cost a lot of money in uniforms and travel."

Helen's pitching talent took her to college; her degree took her back into coaching. She now has her dream job, 15 years after Coach Keith Gilbert encouraged her to become a coach. "Instead, for a while I became a flight attendant, and then I had my kids and, eventually, I knew I was ready to

Sports NOW

go back to work." With encouragement from her husband, Blaine, Helen got her alternative certification, and was accepted at Kerr.

The proper balance between school and sports is a vital family value. "It's come down from my dad to me to Abbi

"It's just a fun sport to play."

that academics is more important than sports," Helen stated. At the same time, Helen hopes Abbi will join tournament teams, as she did during her teen years. "Back then, softball was so brand new that you fought and fought and fought just to keep playing. Those were good times. There are



some mornings now when I wake up and walk outside, and I can smell in the air that this would be a good day for a tournament," she grinned. "I want Abbi to experience that, where the whole team has a collective win.

It was so much fun when we had that team unity."

Abbi continues to practice 30 minutes each day with her mom, or her grandpa, or both. She looks forward to her years after tee ball. "Once I finish machine pitch, I'll go into kid pitch, pitching by hand," Abbi said. "I've been practicing with my grandpa. He's been teaching me how to play tricks on the hitter, and do it correctly. My mom has been giving me great ideas to inspire me with softball. It's just a fun sport to play."

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A Gravy Kind of Love

— By Dia Catalani

Rich Arslanovski, center, owns the family-style Our Place restaurant that is becoming one of Burleson's favorites.

It rarely happens that a town helps develop a truly successful eatery, but then again, it rarely happens that an eatery as great as Our Place happens upon a town. Originally opened in 1985 by former Chicago chef Otto "Poppy" Arslanovski, Burleson folks were forced to take a hiatus from his fantastic meals for several years until his son, Rich, reopened their doors in 2006. "Yeah, these days he works for me, but somehow, he's still the boss. I don't know how that worked out, but that's how it is," Rich laughed. "Everyone knows my dad, and everyone loves his food. It all seems to be working out pretty good."

Pretty good, indeed. On any given day, cars line up along their downtown corner, cars that are driven there by everyday people who just want some fresh, lean, well-sourced cuisine at a decent price. When you come, be prepared to toss that tie over your

shoulder before you dig into hearty dishes like their Texas beef dip, loaded with roast beef and Provolone and served *au jus*, or Poppy's famous homemade meat loaf with mashed potatoes and gravy. Rich knows the Our Place regulars especially love Poppy's blackened tuna steaks and his grilled chicken, and everyone raves that they serve up the best catfish in all of Burleson. "They also really, really love his soups, like cream of broccoli and beef noodle, and our desserts. All the time, people order whole pies to take home, and they usually ask for the banana split pie, coconut pie or the oatmeal cake, which is also really popular," Rich said. "At Thanksgiving, we filled orders for 130 pies. It was incredible."

Friday and Saturday nights have become the staff's busiest since Our Place opened their doors for these evenings. Once diners got a taste of Poppy's specialties, like his choice Angus New York strip and sirloin

"It's called 'Our Place,' but it's really kind of everyone's place."

steaks, seafood, grilled chicken and salmon steaks, everyone was hooked — and nowadays, when looking for great food, you can find it right here at

home saving those big city commutes for the weekday grind.

If all of the aforementioned delicacies have your calorie counter ringing, keep in mind that there are also hearty healthful salads available here, too. One favorite is the Baton Rouge, an innovative blend of greens tossed with bell pepper, red onion, tomato and feta

Business NOW

cheese, then topped with grilled blackened catfish and a spicy garlic cream dressing. Or, try their chef salad, which features marinated grilled chicken breast and your choice of dressing served on the side. Our Place loves to feed the children, too, and their own menu features smaller versions of the grownups' favorites.

Come Sunday mornings, Our Place is anything but lazy. Servers busily keep up with orders for their substantial omelets, and plates piled high with chicken fried steak, sirloin steak or pork chops, all served with fresh eggs cooked just the way you like them. "We also have a great crew here and they really do a good job. They enjoy what they do, and it shows in their service. My brothers, Benji and Otto, also help us run the place, and they're a big help," Rich said. "I think it's neat that so many people who come



here know other people here, so there's always people talking to each other. It's called 'Our Place,' but it's really kind of everyone's place."

The restaurant also welcomes large group events, so keep Our Place in mind for your next company party or birthday dinner. An outdoor patio lends a hand to ambience, where diners can enjoy full service right under the sun or stars. Our Place is in the historic downtown district at 140 South Wilson, and is open daily from 6:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m., and for dinner on Fridays and Saturdays. For more information, call (817) 426-9900. **NOW**

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The Perennial Student

— By Melissa Rawlins

Janet Rasher is known amongst Burleson seventh-graders as “The Strawberry Teacher.” During 16 years of teaching science at Hughes Middle School, Mrs. Rasher has made learning fun for middle schoolers. Many of them have extracted DNA from strawberries with nothing more than dish soap, salt and ice-cold 90 proof alcohol. “You swirl it, and this glob of DNA comes out,” Janet laughed. “The reason we use strawberries is because they’ve got 16 times as much DNA as other things.”

Janet is already looking forward to the fun she will have at next year’s science convention, when she makes use of one of the perks of teaching science to seventh-graders in Texas. “Most of my best ideas — like the strawberries — come from conventions, where they give you guest speakers who are astronauts and Nobel prize winners,” Janet beamed. “And NASA does the most wonderful teacher workshops!”

“That’s where I learned to create a ten billionth scale solar system with my students. We make it with candy,” Janet said, “and we walk it off on the campus. Little planets, like the Earth, are sprinkles and the sun is the size of a grapefruit. Somebody stands there on the corner of the Hughes campus with a grapefruit and you start walking and you find the earth which is a sprinkle, and you’re on the earth, and you’re that far away from the light source. And you can’t get to Uranus or Neptune with the sun being on that same scale!”

Janet gives her students credit if they will take the scale-concept home and use chalk to draw the solar system on the sidewalk in their neighborhood. Her goal is for the students to have fun learning. “I feel so sorry for people who are bored. If you’re bored, that’s sad. Because that’s on you,” Janet explained.

Burleson’s perennial student never wanted to be a teacher. “I wanted to work for the EPA and save the world,” Janet



Science teacher Janet Rasher inherited the gene for teaching.

remembered back to her young adulthood in Georgia during the '70s, when stories about pollution were so strong. Her ninth grade biology teacher, Jackie Marshall, influenced a lot of people to go into science, so Janet earned a degree in zoology at the University of Georgia, where she also worked as a research technician studying chickens.

“I knew my husband, Michael, would work in rural areas, because he works for soil conservation. And I didn’t know what I’d do with a degree in zoology,” Janet said, “so I went back and got my master’s in education.” Janet taught high school in Georgia while rearing her two boys, Carson and Grant. During their youth, the family moved to Texas, where Janet strategically switched to teaching middle school. “The burnout rate is so high for middle school teachers, it’s easier to get a job.”

Janet has not burned out, and still enthusiastically teaches science inside the room she inherited from Jerry Yowl. “I have enjoyed Hughes’ great staff, and the administrators are real supportive,” Janet said. “And I’ve met the most wonderful students; some are just amazing.”

One of Janet’s pleasures over the years has been keeping up with the changes in technology. “We used to have mimeograph machines and film reels. But having the Internet and student computers is the most amazing thing. There’s no lag time at all between asking and finding out information. It’s multimedia every day,” Janet exclaimed. “I

Education **NOW**

still love my chalkboard. Yet, the kids have no perspective on how different it is since 20 years ago."

Her students have changed, too. "Now their attention span is shorter, and they expect a lot more. If you're going to keep up, you've got to do multimedia," Janet said. "And the more hands-on the better."

Janet sparks her students' curiosity about the world they live in by taking them on field trips to the Fort Worth Botanical Gardens. Thanks to her membership in the Botanical Research Institute of Texas, Janet's students can attend lectures on topics such as the newly discovered link between blue-green algae, plant roots, bats and Alzheimer's. "This gives them a chance to meet people who are doing amazing work that is a career option," she said.

Janet believes students can learn anything if they are in the right situation. "You can watch their faces and see that if you're saying something new, they'll tune in. If you teach something like gravity, they'll tell you, 'We've had this before,' even though their grades don't show it," Janet said. "But I know my students need to be entertained."

"Every teacher has to find a way to make their classroom work, just like every couple has to find a way," Janet explained. "It's a relationship between you and the kids. I value them, try not to pass judgment and try not to close lines of communication. I feel like they're my clients and they deserve the best I can give them every day. It's my responsibility to come to each day not tired, healthy and with a good attitude."

Most importantly, Janet keeps her classroom current. "Boredom is the enemy," said Janet, who plans to study forestry this summer through the teachers experience offered at Texas Christian University, "and if students get bored, they misbehave. To stay current, I have to keep learning my entire life." **NOW**

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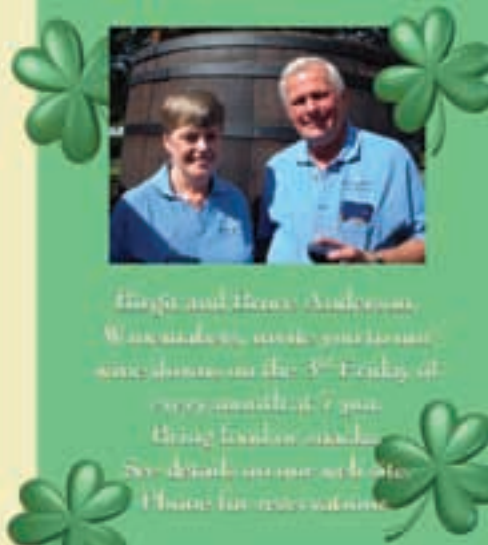


Fritz, a miniature Schnauzer from Poland, top left, waited with his owner, Tony Wallace, as Tony picks up his godson from school. The Burleson Public Works Department, bottom left, removed unsightly trees on Hidden Creek. Several ribbon cuttings were held, at right from top to bottom: Ackley Financial Group, Woodbury Financial Services, Sheridan Homes and Lighthouse Plumbing.



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Around Town NOW



A ribbon cutting was held, top right, at Verizon Wireless. More ribbon cuttings were held, far left from second row to bottom; State Farm Nicole Simmons, Melendy Custom Installations and Jucie Plus. Hugo De LaMora-Marin, second row center, took a break from his hotdog stand with his friend, Jesus Lopez. Di Ann Secoy, second row right to the left, worked a Monet puzzle with Fara Reding at the Huguley Nursing and Rehabilitation Center.

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Look Who's Cooking

— By Stephanie Brewer

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By Sarah Pyles

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FAUX PESTO AND PASTA: Sauté onions and garlic in butter until golden brown. Add pesto sauce and diced tomatoes. Stir constantly until hot. Toss with favorite pasta and top with tomato topping. Before adding the pesto sauce and tomatoes, you can add any type of vegetables,

i.e. spinach, mushrooms, bell peppers, etc.

TOMATO TOPPING: Combine garlic, olive oil and tomatoes. Stir constantly until tomatoes are soft, hot and golden around the edges.

OREO TRUFFLES

By Megan Walley

- 1 lb. 2 oz. Oreo chocolate sandwich cookies
 - 1 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese
 - 2 pkgs. (8 squares each) Baker's Semisweet Baking Chocolate (Can substitute 1 24-oz. pkg. almond bark – chocolate or vanilla.)
- Finely crush cookies by hand or use food processor. Mix crushed cookies and cream cheese until blended. Shape mixture into 1-inch balls. Melt chocolate or bark (according to package directions). Dip balls into melted chocolate and place on waxed paper covered baking sheet to cool. Store truffles in tightly

covered container in refrigerator.

CINNAMON CREAM CHEESE ROLL-UPS

By Gina Chianese

- 1 loaf white bread
 - 1 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese
 - 3 Tbsp. cinnamon
 - 2 cups sugar
 - 1 1/2 to 2 sticks butter
- Preheat oven to 400 F. Cut crusts off of the bread. Roll bread slices flat with a rolling pin. Spread a thin layer of cream cheese on top of the flat bread. Mix cinnamon and sugar in a bowl. Sprinkle approximately 1/4 tsp. cinnamon and sugar mixture on top of cream cheese. Melt butter in microwave. Pour butter into a wide-surfaced bowl or pie dish. Roll up the bread slices firmly, making sure the cream cheese stays inside. Dip the roll-ups in the

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melted butter, covering the entire roll. Next, dip roll in the remaining cinnamon and sugar mixture to coat. Place rolls on a greased baking pan approximately 1/2 inch apart. Bake at 400 F for 10 - 12 minutes or until the cinnamon and sugar forms a dark syrup-like texture on the pan. Let cool for 10 - 20 minutes before eating. Enjoy!

SOPAPILLA CHEESECAKE

By April Palacios

2 cans refrigerated crescent rolls
2 8-oz. pkgs. cream cheese, softened
1 1/2 cups sugar
1 tsp. vanilla
1 stick butter
1 tsp. cinnamon
Preheat oven to 350 F. Press one can of crescent rolls into bottom of a 9 x 13-inch pan. Mix cream cheese, 1 cup sugar and vanilla until creamy. Spread over rolls in pan. Cover with other can of rolls. Melt butter and stir in remaining sugar and cinnamon. Pour over top. Bake for 30 minutes. Can be served warm or at room temperature.

SPINACH AND STRAWBERRY SALAD

By Austin Everitt

2 bunches spinach, rinsed and torn into bite-size pieces
4 cups sliced strawberries
1/2 cup vegetable oil
1/4 cup white wine vinegar
1/2 cup white sugar
1/4 tsp. paprika
2 Tbsp. sesame seeds
1 Tbsp. poppy seeds
In a large bowl, toss together the spinach and strawberries. In a medium bowl, whisk together the oil, vinegar, sugar, paprika, sesame seeds and poppy seeds. Pour mixture over spinach and strawberries. Toss to coat.

MEXICAN CORN DIP

By Ron Guion

2 14 1/2-oz. cans Mexican style corn
1 4-oz. can diced green chili peppers, drained
5 green onions, chopped
1 8-oz. container sour cream
3/4 cup mayonnaise
1 10-oz. pkg. cheddar cheese, shredded
1 jalapeño pepper, chopped
(or hot sauce to desired flavor)
In a medium size mixing bowl, combine all ingredients and mix well. Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve.

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Are You Taking Advantage of a Roth IRA?

— By Sharon Robinson

Simply put, contributing to a Roth Individual Retirement Account (IRA) may be a smart money move. The question then is, are you taking full advantage?

The benefit of contributing to a Roth IRA is that money you put into one of these accounts grows tax free and distributions may be tax free¹.

If you have not yet opened a Roth IRA, do it now. You have until your tax return deadline (typically April 15) to set up and make contributions for the previous tax year. Annual contributions are limited — currently \$4,000 annually². That means you can invest \$4,000 for 2007, giving you a solid start to your savings. The contribution limit rises to \$5,000 in 2008².

If you are just getting started investing, the Roth should be one of your first stops — even before you open a regular, taxable account, or contribute to a workplace retirement savings plan. The only exception is if your employer offers a match on your 401(k) contributions. That is free money you do not want to pass up. Yes, you can invest in both a Roth as well as a workplace retirement plan.

Not sure where to find the money to fund your account? Consider investing your tax refund. About 70 percent of

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Americans will get a refund this year, and last year the average check totaled more than \$2,000. That cash would make a great start to your Roth.

Contributions are limited based on a taxpayer's filing status and Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI) as indicated below.

The MAGI ranges, for 2007, are:

Single filers: Up to \$99,000 (to qualify for a full contribution); \$99,000-\$114,000 (to be eligible for a partial contribution); above \$114,000, no contribution allowed.

Joint filers: Up to \$156,000 (to qualify for a full contribution); \$156,000-\$166,000 (to be eligible for a partial contribution); above \$166,000, no contribution allowed.

Married filing separately: \$0 (to qualify for a full contribution); \$0-\$10,000 (to be eligible for a partial contribution); above \$10,000, no contribution allowed.

Your exact contribution amount can be calculated using the worksheets found in Publication 590 on the IRS Web site at www.irs.gov. **NOTE**

Notes:

1. Withdrawals are tax-free if you are over age 59 1/2 and at least five years have expired since you established a Roth IRA. Otherwise withdrawals of gain may be taxable (unless the withdrawal is "qualified") and may be subject to a 10 percent tax penalty.

2. An individual can contribute up to \$4,000 (or 100 percent of earned income, whichever is less) for tax year 2007 and \$5,000 for tax year 2008. If you are over age 50, you are allowed to make additional "catch-up" contributions of \$1,000 for tax years 2007 and 2008. Your adjusted gross income may limit your contribution amount.

Sharon Robinson is a State Farm agent based in Burleson.

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*Distributions of earnings from a Roth IRA could be subject to taxes and a 10% penalty if the account is less than five years old and the owner is under age 59 1/2.



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Walking Toward the Cure

— By Sandra McIntosh

One person can make a difference in the fight to eradicate cancer. Dr. Gordy Klatt, a colorectal surgeon, had a strong desire to grow the income of his local American Cancer Society office. He decided to personally raise the money by running marathons, something he had enjoyed doing all his life. Thus, the first American Cancer Society Relay For Life event was born in Tacoma, Washington, and has grown into an annual event that lit the fire within an entire nation.

While circling the track at Baker Stadium at the University of Puget Sound, Dr. Klatt had plenty of time to think about how others could get involved in similar events in their own communities. His vision included a 24-hour team relay event that could raise money to fight cancer. Today, people from neighborhoods, both large and small, are making an impact in the fight against all cancers as they put one foot in front of the other.

Relay For Life is a fun-filled, overnight gathering designed to celebrate survivorship and to also raise money for continued research and programs for the American Cancer Society. Teams of people congregate at area schools, fairgrounds and parks to take turns walking, running or skipping laps throughout the night and early morning. The overall goal





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is to keep at least one team member on the track at all times.

Angie Fanning has gone from captain of a team in her hometown of Burleson to currently serving as the co-chairperson of the Mansfield Relay For Life event. "It's such a meaningful

"His vision included a 24-hour team relay event that could raise money to fight cancer."

time," Angie said. "It touches you in such a way you want to participate year after year." Her main motivation was her grandmother, who lost her battle with brain cancer 22 years ago. Today, the survivors keep her coming back for more. "Survivors give everyone hope," she said, further explaining that she participates because she believes she is helping others.

Angie feels the best way to bring awareness to Relay For Life is to remain actively involved. This year, she is happy to report that more young people than ever are stepping up to carry the torch. "A student at Pantego Christian Academy has a personal goal of \$30,000," Angie said. "All she wanted for her 8th birthday was for people to make donations to the local Relay For Life event. She's well on her way to her goal with the \$600 she's received so far."

The Relay For Life event will be held in Burleson on April 25, beginning at 6:00 p.m. and culminating at 6:00 a.m. April 26. This year's event will be held at Kerr Middle School. For more information, please call Brenda Gammon at (817) 447-4480 or (817) 480-6050 or contact on-line chair Jane Owen by e-mail at jane.owen@dot11net.net or at (817) 235-2853. **NOW**



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When is a Rose Not a Rose?

— By Nancy Fenton

One of the best long-blooming plants for our area is a “rose” that is not really a rose! The common name is Rose of Sharon or Althea and it blooms continuously from spring through fall. This six to 15 foot, small shrub can be trimmed up into an attractive small tree with a festive topknot of blooms or left to its upright, but sprawling, natural shape. One of its best attributes is that it can take the extremes of our finicky

weather in stride and do quite well with little water. Of course, a wide choice of colors does not hurt either!

The single lavender and single white are the most common, but the doubles are more than twice as pretty. As a relative of the hibiscus family, it has large circular, ruffled blooms in striking colors, but with none of the temperamental need for “hothouse treatment.” Rose of Sharon goes into the ground and happily stays there to thrive through our hot summers and cold winters!

With a long European heritage starting in the 16th century, Rose of Sharon was brought to American soil by the colonists as a favorite plant, and has come into the national interest once more. The originals probably were “pass a long” plants given to family as they set out across the world on their quest for new horizons.

Hybridization in the 1960s and '70s expanded the size and the color choices. Some of the newer varieties such as Lavender Chiffon, Blue Satin and Olana, may be available in the nurseries. The standard double white and pink as well as the single purple will be available at the coming Ellis County Master Gardener Spring Expo scheduled for Saturday, March 29 in the Waxahachie Civic Center.

All of these hardy plants tolerate our alkaline soils and prefer compost rather than heavy doses of fertilizer. They bloom on new wood so should be pruned lightly in late winter, while still leafless, to stimulate that topknot of bright blooms. Find a place with full to partial sun and give these beautiful, hardy “roses” a try! **NOW**

Nancy Fenton is a Master Gardener in Ellis County.

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March 2008

Community Calendar

Mondays

The Table Tennis Club, free and open to all ages, Burleson Community Center, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. (817) 295-8168.

Tuesdays

Young Professionals networking group lunch meeting, Blue Mesa Grill on University in Fort Worth, 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (817) 295-6121.

Wednesdays

Making It Happen networking group breakfast meeting, Cracker Barrel on Alsbury, 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. (817) 295-6121.

Thursdays

Toastmasters meeting, Burleson Chamber of Commerce, 1044 S.W. Wilshire Ave., 7:00 – 8:00 a.m. (817) 295-6121.

Making It Happen networking group lunch meeting, Ryan's Grill on Hwy. 174, Wilshire Ave., 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (817) 295-6121.

Fridays

Making It Happen networking group lunch meeting, Ryan's Grill on Hwy. 174, Wilshire Ave., 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (817) 295-6121.

March 2

Texas Independence Day!

March 3 - 7

Special Yard Waste Collection Week. (817) 447-5410, ext. 271.

March 4

Huguley Arthritis Class, Senior Activity Center, 1:00 p.m. (817) 295-6611.

Burleson Heritage Foundation meeting, Heritage Visitors Center, 124 W. Ellison (the old Interurban Building in Old Town), 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. (817) 447-1575.

March 8

Bunny Daze, hosted by the city of Burleson Parks and Recreation Department, Burleson Community Center, Hidden Creek Parkway and Chisenhall Park Lane, 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Bounce houses, dance troupes, face painting and booths. Easter Egg Hunt: 2:00 p.m. For booth information, call (817) 295-8168 after 2:00 p.m., Monday – Friday.

Mayor's Book Club, Burleson Public Library, 2:00 p.m. The mayor will hand out 100 copies of this year's selection, the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, by Harper Lee. Refreshments will be provided. (817) 295-6131, ext. 265.

March 11

To Kill a Mockingbird showing, Burleson City Hall Council Chambers, 6:30 p.m. Pizza and refreshments will be provided. (817) 295-6131, ext. 265.

March 12

Borders in Burleson will host the first of four weekly discussions of the novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and the biography of the author, *Mockingbird: A Portrait of Harper Lee* by Charles Shields. Bring a brown bag lunch and enjoy coffee and snacks. 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. For information, contact the Burleson Public Library at (817) 295-6131, ext. 265.

March 13 and 27

Burleson City Council Meeting, 7:00 p.m., City Hall. (817) 447-5400.

March 17 - 21

Burleson ISD Spring Break. (817) 245-1000.

March 17

St. Patrick's Day Party / Lunch, Senior Activity Center, 11:30 a.m. (817) 295-6611.

March 19

Pot Luck Easter Lunch, Senior Activity Center, 11:30 a.m. (817) 295-6611.

March 18

Burleson Chamber of Commerce presents the Taste of Burleson, 5:30 – 8:00 p.m., SPJST Lodge. The Stephen Pointer Band will entertain. (817) 295-6121.

March 18 and 19

The Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird* discussion continues on each of these dates. (817) 295-6131, ext. 265.

March 21

Good Friday. City Hall and all city services will be closed. No garbage collection. (817) 447-5400.

March 25

Elder care seminar, 6:30 p.m., Burleson Public Library, 248 S.W. Johnson Ave. For information, call the library at (817) 295-6131, ext. 264, or Amy LeBus Jackson at (817) 558-2840.

Monthly parenting workshop, "Empowering Girls," hosted by the Burleson Public Library in collaboration with The Parenting Center in Fort Worth, 6:30 – 7:30 p.m., 248 S.W. Johnson Ave. Light refreshments provided. This workshop is free, but does require pre-registration. (817) 332-6348.

March 28

Spring Swing Golf Tournament, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m., Hidden Creek Golf Club, 1044 S.W. Wilshire Ave. Sponsored by the Burleson Chamber of Commerce. (817) 295-6121.

To have your events posted on the community calendar, e-mail us at: melissa.nowmag@sbcglobal.net.

For more community events, visit our online calendar at www.nowmagazines.com.

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