

MansfieldNOW

M A G A Z I N E

MARCH 2011

Out With the Old Rules

A local flag football league gets aggressive and learns a new set of rules.

Rolling Through Life

Also Inside

Lessons in Listening

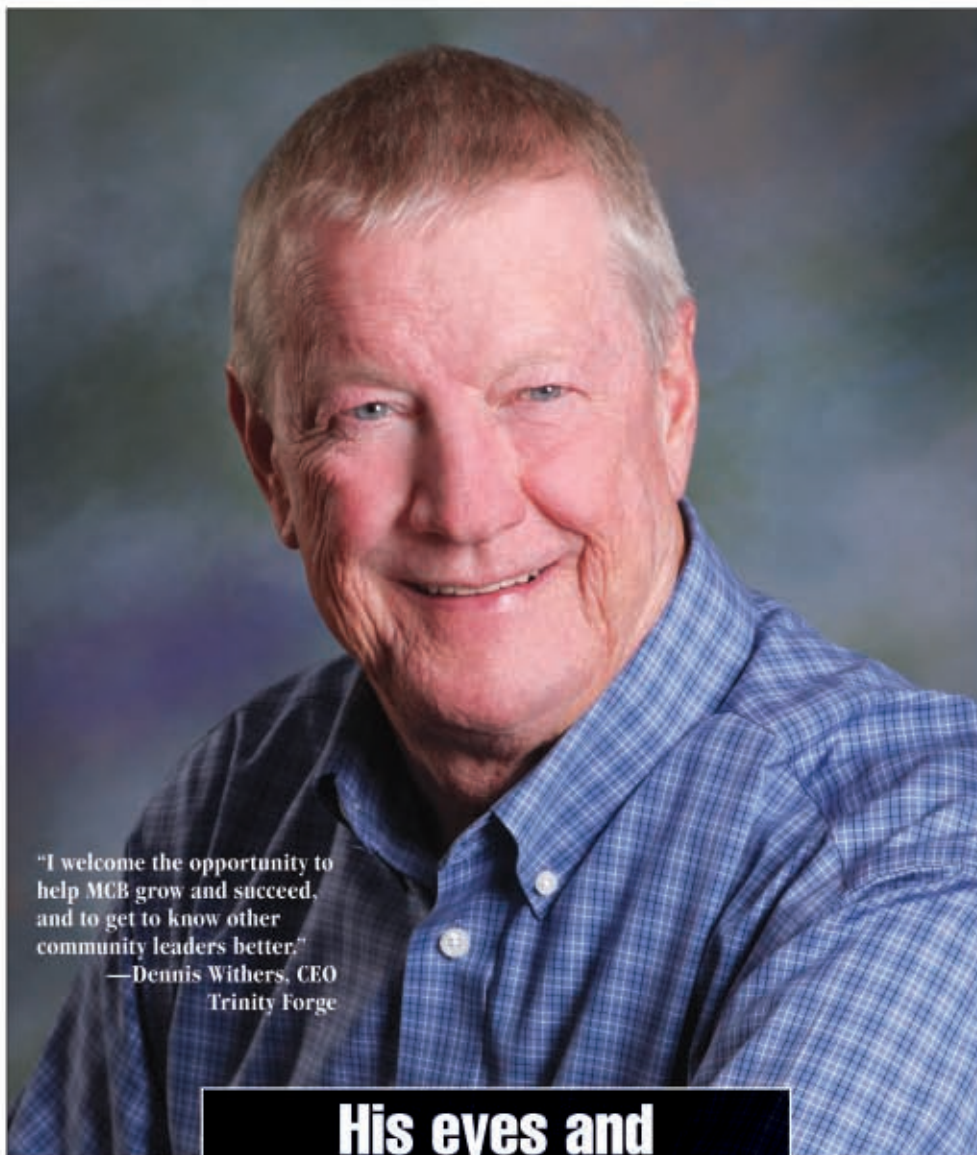
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Stories to Tell
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Mansfield Editor, Melissa Rawlins
Editorial Coordinator, Sandra Strong
Writers, Tim Bordelon . Sydni Thomas
Betty Tryon . Adam Walker
Editors/Proofreaders, Beverly Shay
Pat Anthony . Teresa Maddison
Angel Morris . Pamela Parisi

GRAPHICS AND DESIGN

Creative Director, Chris McCalla
Artists, Julie Carpenter . Martha Macias
Allee Brand . Cherie Chapman
Marshall Hinsley . Arlene Honza
Brande Morgan

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography Director, Jill Odle
Photographers, Opaque Visuals
Amy Ramirez . Shana Woods

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Advertising Representatives,
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On The Cover



The Longhorns' new
8-on-8 flag football
game requires helmets.

Photo by Shana Woods.

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Editor's Note

Howdy, Mansfield!

This spring break marks the 10th anniversary of Mansfield Activities Center's Spring Break Kids Zone, and the third year that Recreation Coordinator Jill Cannoles has been involved. In her opinion, the benefit to parents and children is more than the fact that every hour — 10 hours per day, five days in a row — something new is offered to keep the participants' brains and bodies happy. Elementary age children come together during the break from classes at Mansfield Independent School District to do all sorts of fun stuff. They compete on the Wii, go to the library, learn tae kwon do, go on scavenger hunts, do crafts, go to local parks (when the weather is nice), play games in the gym and also take field trips — such as going to the movies or going bowling. It's a safe, fun way to spend the break!



Have a lovely March, Mansfield!

Melissa

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MansfieldNOW Editor
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Out With



the Old Rules

— By Sydni Thomas

The Mansfield Longhorn football team is stepping up to the challenge of starting a brand new league with new rules, new competition, more players on the field and four extra years added to the age limit. Each fall, the Longhorns play tackle football and in the spring, they change things up by playing flag football. Brad Shuck, a 13-year-old Mansfield native, is the team's center, kicker and a defensive end. This spring's flag football season will be the first under the Independent Youth Sports Organization.

Charles Derrough formed the new league which is allowing 10 teams to sign up this year. They go through an interview process before they are admitted to the league. So far, there are teams from Arlington, Euless and Grand Prairie. The Longhorns are the only Mansfield team. "They've played in at least two other leagues," Greg Shuck, Brad's father, said. "Charles Derrough, the team's president, and his wife are all about providing a great league that furthers the players' abilities in a positive environment. They do all of this just for the kids."

With the formation of the new league, teams like the Longhorns have to play with a new set of rules. The Longhorns were previously with Metroplex Select Youth League, a league run by former Dallas Cowboy Larry Brown, which played 7-on-7. Now they are adopting an 8-on-8 game. "With 8-on-8 we are adding an extra lineman to the line," Brad said. "We are also starting to wear helmets for flag football, to help prevent any injuries with these changes."

"There still is a lot of falling and rolling around with flag football even though they aren't tackling," Amy Shuck, Brad's mother, said. "They do not wear full pads yet."

"It truly is a passing game versus tackle, which is more of a mix of running and passing," Greg said.

As they enter middle school, young athletes who play football in youth leagues begin to age out of the system. The Independent Youth Sports Organization wanted to give kids the opportunity to continue playing into high school. This past year, several of Brad's teammates did not return to the Longhorns because of their school's teams. "One of the changes that came with switching to the new league is that they are extending the age limit," Amy said. "Now kids up through 16 years can play. It usually stops at 12, but now they can keep

playing into high school. A lot of kids will still have to make the decision between school and select teams because of the amount of time each consumes."

One of the noticeable changes, which can be seen from the sidelines, is that all of the coaches in the league coach in a positive and educational way. Sam Hernandez coaches Brad and his fellow Longhorns in the fall and spring season. There are roughly 20 players on his team. "I know there are youth leagues out there where their vested interest is in winning," Amy said. "We've played a lot of teams where their coaches are very vocal, but not in a good way. Coach Sam and the other coaches in our league are great role models for the players."

Since Brad plays both select and school football, it has become a group effort to get him to practice each week. Every other week Greg is away on business, leaving Amy in charge of the children's schedules. Brad attends practices and games for an average of 16 hours a week. He has practice with the Longhorns three evenings a week and then plays a game on Saturdays. Practices for his school team are in the mornings,





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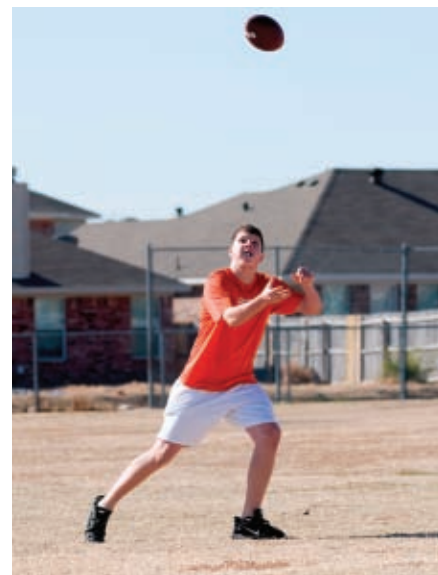
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with games on Monday nights, making it possible for him to manage both teams. Luckily, Brad's older sister, Ashlee, drives now and handles some of the transporting of her siblings. "We have to be very organized to fit everything in," Amy said. "He does not have much free time."

"All the neighbor kids stop by and ask where Brad is," Greg said. "The answer always is, 'He's at practice.'"

Last season, Brad and the undefeated Longhorns played their league's Super Bowl game at the new Cowboys Stadium in Arlington. Despite the challenges they faced with playing on a new field, they went on to win that game making it the first season in the history of all Mansfield Longhorn teams to have an undefeated record. "It was hard to play in the new stadium," Brad said. "It's hard to play on AstroTurf because it is slick."

"They play at junior highs around the area, so it was a little intimidating playing there," Amy said.

"I think the video board may have caused some distractions, too," Greg joked.

Brad began playing football two years ago. Before football, Brad was active in a youth soccer league, which is why he is the kicker for the Longhorns. In the future, Brad hopes to keep playing for both teams through high school. "Football looked exciting to play, so I decided to sign up," Brad said.

"We were tired of parents coming up to him at soccer games asking if he played football," Greg joked. "He's a big kid, and we decided to give it a shot."

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Besides a short break between the fall and spring seasons, the summer is the only break Brad takes from football. However, Brad does not just sit around waiting for the next season to start. He participates in summer track with his Longhorn teammates. "We found the summer conditioning that came with



track helped him in the fall with his school football," Amy said. "He was already conditioned, while most of the other kids had taken the summer off and were out of shape."

Amy competed in track and cross-country growing up. Greg attempted football, but later figured out golf was his sport. He played in high school and college. Both of Brad's sisters are also athletes. Ashlee is a varsity swimmer for Mansfield High School and competes on a club team at the Mansfield Aquatic Center. Their little sister, Kaylee, is also a club swimmer. "I attempted to play football in junior high," Greg said. "The first week of practice, the coach told me I had to get a haircut. I told him I wasn't going to cut my hair. That was my short football career."

The changes with this new league may require some adjustments, but Brad and the Longhorns will be fully prepared to defend their title when their first game arrives. "I've seen Brad not only grow as an athlete," Greg said, "but also as an individual since he started playing football." **NOW**

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Exploring MANSFIELD'S FRONTIER

— By Melissa Rawlins

When Paul Caswell was a little boy in Wales, he could sled and toboggan from November to March, if the snow started early enough. When he and his wife, Angela, and their son, Simon, left Cardiff (the capital city of south Wales) for Mansfield last summer, they never dreamed they would see snow in Texas.



From left to right: Simon Caswell, Angela Caswell and Paul Caswell

The family came to Mansfield, not just for its sunshine, but also for its strong community. Their friends, Joyce and Aslam Malik, hosted them in their home on the shores of Lake Worth in March 2008. At that time, the Caswells had already decided to emigrate away from

their country, in hopes of a better future. While driving around, the Caswells realized the Mansfield area

felt like a place they could call home. “It’s so polite in Mansfield, especially the kids,” Angela said, in a clipped and lilting English folks here find to be such a novelty, they often ask the Caswells to keep talking just so they can hear their accent. Angela does not mind — it just

“THERE COMES A POINT IN YOUR LIFE WHERE IF YOU WANT THINGS TO CHANGE, YOU HAVE TO JUST GO FOR IT.”

makes her feel more welcome. "We left a lot of friends — and my father and sister and brother — back home. That was very hard. There were a lot of times when I wondered whether I was doing the right thing by leaving. It's just such a wrench."

She and Paul looked at the pros and cons of staying. She worked as a nurse,



managing University Hospital of Wales in Cardiff, a large teaching hospital requiring her to work extremely long hours in the acute sector. Simon, their 22-year-old son, is certified in automotive design and engineering but could not find employment. The family decided they needed something better.

The Caswell family's transition into our peaceful environment has been full of surprises. Their first Thanksgiving was celebrated only a few months after moving to Mansfield. The family's employees, Tami and Sherisse, taught Angela the intricacies of preparing the Thanksgiving meal. Our news media's focused anticipation of the day after the holiday-not-celebrated-in-Wales — Black Friday — was something else the Caswells did not understand. In the United Kingdom (UK) — made up of Ireland and the three countries in Britain (Scotland, England and Wales) — Black Friday is a doomsday peculiar to the hospitals. "It would be the last day people got paid before the Christmas break. That Friday," Angela recalled, "we knew the emergency rooms would be hit by people coming in after all the binge drinking."

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departure from Wales, Paul had been working in sales. His background had been electrical engineering in heavy industry, but in the early '90s, he moved into sales for industries as varied as financial services to media and advertising to information technology. "That helps with being able to second-guess how to put things over to people," said Paul, who was chosen by Angela and Simon to research and carry out a plan for the transition from Wales to Mansfield.

That plan took two years to work out, and hinged upon opening Mansfield's newest cleaning company, Regal Maid Service. "We threw every penny into it," Angela said, adding with a laugh, "We thought we'd always been safe, sensible people, always erring on the cautious side. But we thought if you don't take the risk



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and make the gamble you won't know if it's going to work. We took a vote, and it was unanimous to do it."

The American Embassy in London allowed the Caswells to live in the United States while remaining UK citizens. As long as their company employs two to six employees and pays its taxes, the family will likely be judged as succeeding in their business investment into our economy, and will likely have their E2 Investor Treaty Visa — for which they initially invested nearly \$8,000 — renewed every five years. "The plan we have will work, because we want to make it work," Angela said. She has fun while she works, not just at the office, but also with the Mansfield Chamber of Commerce Women's Division. She also plans to volunteer for the animal shelter.

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Now 24, Simon is in heaven every morning. "I was trained to build race cars. Fortunately, we work opposite to a hot rod shop," said Simon, who used to help run a fairly large local car club in Wales. That is where he developed his friends. Since he is of the age that technology is his friend, he keeps in touch daily with e-mails and the like. While he and his family are still unpacking their goods into their new home, Simon has not had much time to meet new friends here. But he and his family have had fun. They have been to the Texas State Fair. They have driven in search of barbecue. And as the Caswells explore our culture, they might one day find their way to Amarillo!

While many in Mansfield will sport green this month on St. Patrick's Day, the Caswell family will wear either daffodils or leeks in their lapels in celebration of



St. David, the patron saint of Wales. They will also celebrate the anniversary of the month they decided to make Mansfield home. They will eat a hearty warm soup called Cawl, with all manner of vegetables, barley and lamb. For dessert, Angela mixes up a wholesome dough out of flour, sugar, egg and raisins, rolls it out quite thinly, then flips each cake over on an old-fashioned cast iron bake stone to cook both sides. When cooled, she will dust the Welsh Cakes with sugar and remember the day when she came home from a hard week at the hospital and said to Simon, "I've had as much as I can take. I'm a middle-aged woman. Shall we go to Texas?"

"There comes a point in your life where if you want things to change, you have to just go for it," said Paul, whose gamble is paying off for his son.

"For me," Simon said, "Mansfield was a ray of hope: the chance to actually do something with my life instead of sit on the way side and watch things get worse. For me, it's a fresh new world." **NOW**

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Stories TO Tell

— By Sydni Thomas

Liz Brown turned to eBay when department store artwork was not telling the story of her family's life and interests. Her hunt began with collecting items for one home, but ended up with enough treasures for two. Along the way Liz and her family started making their own art and discovered a way of telling stories through music, paintings and family time. "I collect collections, as my husband, Jon, would say," Liz said. "I don't go small. If I'm interested in something, I go all out."

At Home With JON AND LIZ BROWN



One of the first jobs Jon took after college was in Amarillo, Texas. The couple saw it as an opportunity to make money for a couple of years before returning to North Texas. A couple of years turned into four, and they also had their first child there. "We had our son, Zach, out there," Liz said. "It was the first grandbaby out of all of the siblings, and the eight-hour drive was too much. We got home as soon as we could."

Jon took a job with Chaparral Steel and began his career as a steel industry guy, as Liz likes to refer to him. They had to pick a new city to move to and find a new



house quickly. Arlington was the central location between both of their families. "The Realtor kept trying to get us to go to Mansfield, but I was eight-and-a-half months pregnant with our daughter, Maddie, and stubborn," Liz admitted. "I only had five days to pick a house, and that poor Realtor kept trying to tell me how great Mansfield was, but I wasn't having any of it. Luckily, some friends convinced us a few years later to come out here."

As the children were approaching kindergarten, the Browns started looking for a home again. They wanted their children to attend the same schools from kindergarten through high school. Jon was from Aledo and liked the small town feel



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Mansfield had to offer. "We couldn't be happier that our kids have had a chance to grow up in one place," Jon said. "Some neighbors of ours had moved down here and talked us into coming and looking. The house was about halfway done when we saw it."

"We walked in and thought it was perfect," Liz said. "Our home in Arlington had crazy, high ceilings, but this one felt like a cottage. I fell in love."

The Browns also own a home in Glen Rose on the Paluxy River. This home was the origin of Liz's affair with eBay. Before she knew it, she had more pieces than would fit in their river house, and they began spilling over into their Mansfield home. "I joke whenever I buy something

on eBay that I've won it," Liz said. "My husband just shakes his head and says I didn't win it because I'm paying for it. When you are collecting something, and somebody else on eBay is too, the price is going to skyrocket. Every once in a while you get lucky, and no one else will be interested in it."

Liz began purchasing paint-by-numbers and then paintings of cows, horses and pastures. More recently she has been collecting paintings of women. She has a mix of originals and duplicates. Most of her works were purchased on eBay, but she has turned to Kirkland's for a few pieces that she could not resist. "Jon and I love to entertain," Liz said. "When we have people over, I love it when someone

picks out something that is weird, funky or ugly as can be, and asks me what it is. That is fun to me."

Another one of Liz's great finds is an early 1900's Gibson guitar that she purchased for Jon's birthday. Jon took up the guitar shortly after Zach traded in his baseball bats for the guitar. The family sitting room is lined with different guitars. "Zach was serious about baseball up until





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“Along the way Liz and her family started making their own art and discovered a way of telling stories through music, paintings and family time.”



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he got mono during his freshman year and was unable to complete the season,” Jon said. “Now he’s a musician who also teaches guitar lessons.”

“There are guitars everywhere,” Liz added. “We bought the piano because Zach wanted to learn how to play. I wanted Maddie to learn, but she is into tennis and pottery right now. She plays for her school and at the club on weekends.”

Whether they are taking vacations together or sitting in the family room making music, the Brown family loves spending time with each other. Whenever Zach, 17, and Maddie, 14, want to try a new sport, hobby or activity, Jon and Liz do everything they can to see that they have that opportunity. Her favorite time is when the pot is on the stove and the



family is hanging out. “Nothing makes me happier than something on the stove, and the kids come home hungry,” Liz said. “I won’t say that I’m a great cook, but I love to cook. In the evenings when Jon comes home, he is happy to play sous chef for me. It gives us time to catch up with each other.”

Before she had children, Liz was an elementary school teacher. When Maddie started first grade, Liz was home alone for the first time. She took a job at one of Mansfield’s elementary schools, but health reasons prompted her to resign and once again become a stay-at-home mom. “I was bored and needed a creative outlet,” Liz said. “I took a pottery class in high school and loved it. All of my friends were into scrapbooking at the time, but I wanted something different. I signed up with Janet Glass at Clay Turtle Pottery

and took classes once a week. I've been throwing since 2001."

Soon, Liz wanted to throw pottery more than just a couple of times a week. The Browns added a washroom onto



the master bedroom, which also serves as a pottery studio. With more time and

resources to create, Liz began offering her pottery at Creekside Collections in Mansfield. "In February, I, along with other local potters, got together for a charity event called Empty Bowls," Liz said. "The public comes in and can purchase a meal from a local chef. In return they come home with a homemade bowl. The money goes to the Tarrant County Food Bank."

Whether it is her pottery, a piece of artwork found on eBay or a trinket found at a real estate sale, Liz can pick

up each piece and tell its story. The stories almost always lead to a Brown family



memory or adventure. "There is a place for Kirkland's and Hemispheres in your home," Liz said. "If something interests you, that's what should be in your house. It should tell a story of who you are, what you like and what your interests are." **NOW**

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Lessons in Listening

— By Adam Walker

Music is important to most of us, but for Heather Long music is more than just background noise or a way to chill out after a stressful day. “Music influences everything else,” Heather explained. “It’s an essential part of education that often gets left out, but it influences the mind and emotions like other things can’t. Just listening to music can change your mood, but playing music is even more powerful.”

Remember your piano teacher? You know, back in fourth grade when you took lessons for six months and learned to play “Chopsticks.” Well, Heather Long is not that teacher, and her classes at Heather’s Harmonies are nothing like you remember. For one thing, her students range from infants to senior citizens. For another, she starts teaching with playing by ear. “I use a program called Musikgarten, which says you should learn music



the way you learned your first language. For most people reading music first is not the natural way to start."

Heather learned to play piano the traditional way when her mother taught her to play as a child while her family was serving as missionaries in Portugal. "I was 5 years old when I heard that Beethoven was giving concerts at age 4," Heather remembered. "I decided if he could do it, so could I." At first, her mother was not so sure about teaching Heather, but she persisted and thus started a lifelong relationship with music. After a few years of piano, Heather was ready for another instrument, so when she was 9, she got her first guitar for Christmas. Since then she has also learned to play the recorder and tried the clarinet, but "got distracted." She now plans to take up the harp as her next instrument.



Doreen Brass and children Madeline and Daisy with Heather Long.

With all the music in her life, it only seems natural Heather would become a music teacher. While taking more lessons during high school, she decided that it might be fun to teach music lessons. Then, during college she had a summer job teaching piano. However, it was not until her last semester in college that Heather was introduced to Musikgarten and decided on a career as a music teacher.

Heather loves a variety of music. "For listening, I like songs with lots of harmony. I like 2nd Chapter of Acts and Abba," she explained. "But when I play,

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I like classical. I like to pick out a piece at random and just try to play it, to see if I like the sound of it. Music ties into the creative, emotional part of you. It's just fun playing a song I've never heard before and playing with the piece."

Heather has learned a lot from teaching. "I've learned way more about music and done a lot of ear training," Heather confessed. "I've also increased my knowledge of popular songs because I let some of my guitar students choose the songs they learn."

The goal of Musikgarten is true music literacy. "Students should be able to both sight read music and to write down what they hear," Heather explained. She believes music is much more than just fun. "Psychological studies have shown that music helps with children's behavior and self-control. It helps the brain develop for math and science. I've had students whose doctors have



recommended music classes to help their grades in math and science." This program has its roots in Montessori education, Carl Orff's ideas about music instruction and Edwin Gordon's music learning theory.

Her youngest students are only 6 months old. So how does an infant who cannot walk or speak take music lessons? Good question. But Heather has an answer. "There's something about music that touches the emotions and helps children find ways to express themselves. In my baby classes we sing rocking songs, and the parents bounce their babies to the beat. We learn body parts and use rattles and have times when the mothers dance with their babies. When you learn music young, it becomes a part of who you are. Then, when they are ready to start playing an instrument,



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they have no trouble keeping a beat and already understand music. When they're really young is the time to give kids something like this."

Heather teaches toddlers songs that incorporate movement and use rhythm instruments. Her students learn other important skills like putting their instruments away after playing them, self-control and social interaction. "Listening is an important part of learning about music. It's also an important part of language learning, social and emotional development and family life," Heather explained. This emphasis on listening skills continues through older levels. With her 4- and 5-year-olds she has "concert time," when her students sit quietly and listen to music, bird calls or other sounds. "We live in such a visual world that it is rare to just sit and listen."

Her students learn to pick the voices of particular instruments out of an orchestra, and they begin participating in choosing the direction of the classes. "I'm not performance oriented. I want my students to explore and have fun. My students do have recitals, but I don't want them to just focus on one difficult piece to perform. When we have our recitals, I always hold them at nursing homes. I used to go there to play." She may not focus on recitals, but she does want her students to learn as much as possible. "We learn about transposing and other things. I present a lot of material and a lot of complex ideas," Heather said. "Some students get it the first time. Others just get exposure to new ideas and understand the second or third time we come back to the idea."

Music can influence both children and parents. When a parent sings to a fussy toddler, it helps the child deal with life. "There are a lot of frazzled adults and hyper, frazzled kids," Heather added. "Life just gets busier, but music can be really soothing for that."

As much a part of her life as music is and has been, it is not Heather's only passion. "I want to make a difference in the world. I hope what I'm doing is not just limited to my music classes. I do respite foster care for children, and someday I'd like to work with orphans. I don't know if music is my whole life, but it will always be a part of my life. I'll probably always teach music on some level." **NOW**



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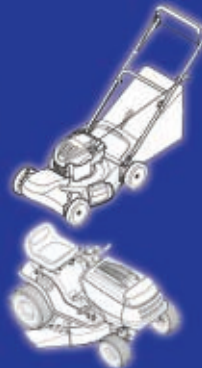
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Rolling Through Life

— By Adam Walker

Lisa Pickens is an overcomer. Her life has not always been fun, but she lets nothing stand in her way. You see, Lisa has juvenile rheumatoid arthritis (JRA) and has spent a lot of time in and out of hospitals, but that is not stopping her from pursuing everything she wants out of life. “When you have a disability,” Lisa explained, “you have to not think about yourself in order to do everything you want to do. You can’t let your disability slow you down.” Lisa’s attitude toward life could be summed up in the Latin phrase carpe diem — seize the day.

She was only 2 years old when she was diagnosed with JRA. “I did well for myself, but I had a limp,” Lisa remembered. “My mother taught me to be independent and to deal with it. I had my first surgery at 14 and a hip replacement at 17. None of that ever stopped me. I was in pain, but I just got up and kept going.”

While in high school, teaching became more than a thought. “Honestly, I only joined Future Teachers of America because my best friend joined. But then we had an opportunity to go to an elementary school and teach for 30 minutes, and I fell in love,” Lisa said. “Teaching became a part of me.” In spite of that first brush with destiny, when Lisa finished high school and had to choose between art and teaching for a career



to pursue, she chose art. "I studied graphic design. In our classes we worked both with computers and with our hands, with paper. When I graduated and got a job, I ended up sitting in front of a computer. That isn't what I had signed on for." So Lisa went back to college to study education. "I earned my MA and my teaching certificate. Then I moved here from Houston."

In college, Lisa had some questions. She was not sure how students would react to her. "I was a little nervous, but the kids have been wonderful. I have to explain more with the adults. The kids just understand. They may ask me, 'Why do you have that big shoe?' But I just tell them it helps me walk better, and they're ready to move on," Lisa said.

By this time Lisa's condition had required a number of further surgeries, one of which had gone wrong and resulted in a two-year hospital stay followed by one year in a nursing home relearning daily skills. "I walked into the hospital, but came out in a wheelchair at age 32. I had to relearn how to brush my teeth. One guy at the nursing home told me, 'This is your life now. You have to learn to accept it.' That just made me mad," Lisa stated. "They said I would never walk again. That just made me more determined to do it. They didn't know me."

Lisa did relearn all her life skills, and though she uses a chair much of the





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time, she does walk. And she makes jewelry. And she knits. And she paints. And she quilts. And she gardens. "I did a lot of soul searching those three years," Lisa remembered. "I had to re-evaluate, because my life as I knew it was gone. But I knew I would handle this just the same as I handled JRA. I don't think of myself as disabled."

Creativity is part of the fabric of Lisa's life. "You have to think outside the box. When I bought my house two years ago, it needed some modifications — wider doors, lower cabinets and a different shower. This is my first house," Lisa explained. "I never knew I loved gardening until I moved here. Digging and planting is fun. I like the outdoors." Her walls display a number of her paintings. "When I was in the hospital for two Christmases, I painted my own Christmas cards." She took a six-week course on quilting and turned out a beautiful piece that graces her sofa. "I'm very creative. I need to have something artistic going on at all times."

So when this energetic go-getter finished her degree and certification and started her job hunt, she was not quite prepared for what happened. "After my 25th interview, my parents asked me, 'Do you think it's the wheelchair?'" Of course Lisa found it frustrating, but she did not let it get her down. "I had to put myself in their shoes. I understand they were nervous about hiring me, but I didn't think it would be so hard to find a job." She spent five years searching and went to 40 interviews. A few times she was even shown the classroom where she would teach if hired, only to see the job go to someone else.

Then she interviewed with Sondra Thomas, the principal at Mansfield's Annette Perry Elementary, for a fourth



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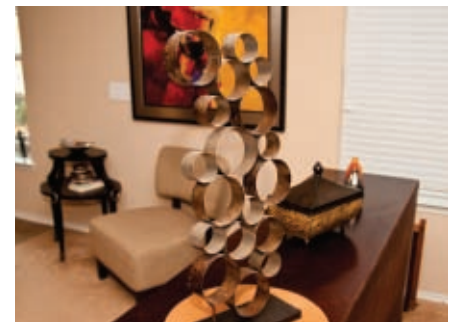
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grade position. "I didn't get the fourth grade job, but Ms. Thomas liked me so much she offered me a new position as a paraprofessional in academic support. I provide tutoring for students who don't qualify for English as a Second Language (ESL) or Special Education, but still need help. She opened doors for further knowledge. It shows who Ms. Thomas is as a principal. Everyone works together at Annette Perry and looks out for one another."

Lisa works with students at all levels, offering them help in whatever subject they struggle with. Her students show up whenever their classroom teachers send them for help, so planning ahead is not really in the cards. Fortunately thinking on her feet is one of Lisa's strong suits. "My philosophy is to create an environment that is safe and conducive to the best learning my students can get," Lisa explained. "I want to be open-minded and see each student as an individual, not to clump them or



label them. I want my students to be comfortable, so I use games and activities to help them with math and other problem areas."

Humor is also important to Lisa. "I believe in always keeping laughter as a staple in life. I can be funny and goofy at times," Lisa is not kidding. "I'm getting a new wheelchair soon. It will be hot pink and have ground effect lights. I want to put spinner wheels on it and headlights, too." Her students should love that when she gives them rides through the halls. "I'm happy being a teacher," Lisa smiled. "To sum it up, yes, I'm Lisa Pickens and I have a disability, but it doesn't define me as a person. I hope others see the positive aspects I bring into the classroom, so one day I may have the opportunity to obtain my own classroom at Annette Perry or on another campus within the district." **NOW**



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Dignity, Respect and the Law

Lauren Gaydos Duffer runs a law firm that focuses on families.

— By Melissa Rawlins

Family-inspired Lauren Gaydos Duffer, attorney, reaches out to help those whose families are undergoing change. Since 2003, couples and singles — and those about to become single — have sought Lauren's help for adoptions, assisted reproductive technology and divorces. "My dad's a lawyer, and my mom is one of those people who would give anybody the shirt off her back. I had to have a job in the legal field that allowed me to feel what I do is worth something," said Lauren, a graduate of Martin High School. After graduating *cum laude* from Baylor University in Waco, Lauren returned to Dallas/Fort Worth and received her law degree from Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas. She practiced law in Fort Worth, then in Dallas, before opening her own practice in Arlington in 2008 with encouragement from her husband.

Handling private and foreign adoptions, Lauren has learned to embrace the emotion in her practice. "We have adoptions

that fall through, and we have birth parents that do place [their children for adoption], but you can see the pain in their eyes," said Lauren. In addition to adoption, Lauren handles the legal contracts for surrogacy and egg donation situations, as well as offering a family planning service for people considering adoption and surrogacy. "My surrogacy service is the most rewarding thing in the world. In Texas, gestational surrogacy arrangements are 100-percent protected by the law, so there is very little legal risk in those type situations. It's really great! I get pictures every year of everybody's babies!"

Another of Lauren's passions is collaborative law, which has existed in Texas for nine years. As a divorce attorney who found that the courthouse was not a good place for families, Lauren decided to open her own office back home in Arlington, so she could promote collaborative law in Tarrant County. "I do litigate divorce cases and present the best case that I can, but the judge

is ultimately in control over the outcome. In the collaborative case, we can help the two clients restructure their family, while the clients control the outcome and work toward achieving each of their goals," Lauren explained. "It's nice in collaborative law because both clients are having input into the outcome. The clients have the ability to utilize neutral professionals, such as a communication facilitator and financial professional, which streamlines the process and makes it a lot more efficient and cost-effective." In collaborative law, the clients are able to devise creative solutions to post divorce concerns that are not addressed in a litigated case, such as religion and discipline. They create detailed parenting plans, which give them a roadmap for how to co-parent when the divorce is final. She always tells her clients, "If you never need me again at the end of this, then I did my job."

In 2008, Lauren, along with several other attorneys, founded Collaborative Lawyers of Arlington and Mansfield,

"My surrogacy service is the most rewarding thing in the world."

which is a practice group of unaffiliated attorneys dedicated to promoting collaborative law and sharpening their skills. Lauren advises educating yourself if you are going through a divorce or looking into surrogacy or adoption. "A lot of people trust that the other lawyer is going to do the right thing by them, and that's not always the case," Lauren said. "Finding a lawyer is kind of like dating. You have to find the person you'll be comfortable with."

To help you get to know her, Lauren offers a discounted rate for the first 30 minutes of anyone's consultation. After that, she takes time getting to know each and every one of her clients and ensures that they have direct contact with her. The Law Office of Lauren Gaydos Duffer, PC focuses on families, helping people create and restructure their lives in a way that is respectful and dignified. **NOW**



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March is the Month of Expectation!
 ~ Emily Dickinson

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OK, Here We Come!

— By Becky Walker



Fresh air, room to breathe, optimism, the smell of the earth after a rain — these are a few of the things Oscar Hammerstein II immortalized in song for the musical *Oklahoma!* These characteristics really seem to capture the heart and spirit of our neighbors to the north. Theirs is a spirit similar to our own — and in spite of our Texas/OU rivalry, we have a lot in common.

Both states were settled by tough-as-nails pioneers with a never-give-up attitude. They needed such “grit” to tame a new land and make it their home. Like Texans, Oklahomans love their land, their history and like to have just a little “elbow room.” You can get a sense of all three aspects with a trip to Oklahoma City.

As the largest city in the state, Oklahoma City is full of diversity, blending its old-fashioned, Western roots with a hip, urban scene. The Bricktown Entertainment District is a must-see. Originally the city’s warehouse district and the site where four railroad companies focused their freight operations, Bricktown is rich in history and was the key to Oklahoma City’s early economic growth. Following the Great Depression and World War II, the area fell into decline until investors with a vision revitalized the area in the early 1980s.

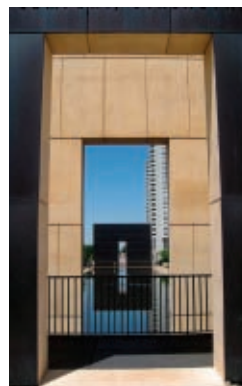
Today, Bricktown is a thriving retail and entertainment district, filled with restaurants and nightclubs, like Mickey Mantle’s Steakhouse and Toby Keith’s; shops; a ball park; a movie theater;

and an awesome canal. At one end of the canal is the beautiful Devon Energy Centennial Mosaic Mural. The mural, which took more than a year to complete, was constructed by Oklahoma City Community College students, volunteers and artists in honor of the city’s 100th birthday and features official state symbols.

Also located along the Bricktown Canal, is the Oklahoma Land Run Monument. While already impressive, this sculpture is not yet complete. Honoring those who participated in the Oklahoma Land Run when the Indian Territory was opened to settlers, it will take about 12 years to get all 45 pieces made and installed. When it is finished, it will be one of the largest sculptures of its kind in the world.

Of course, a trip to Oklahoma City would not be complete without paying respect at the Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum. The Outdoor Symbolic Memorial spans the downtown city block where the Oklahoma City Bombing took place on April 19, 1995. With a field of lighted chairs, a beautiful reflecting pool and the sturdy Survivor Tree, the memorial reflects Oklahomans’ spirit of hope, love of the land and wide open places, respect for their history and their love of peace.

Oklahoma City is located approximately three-and-a-half hours north of Dallas off I-35. If you are ready to take a trip, you will find this is one city that is OK! **NOW**



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Glynda Kendall, Jo Elder, Sherri Friedberg and Amy Evans at Cha Cha's Restaurant and Cantina.



Brian and Darla Swiggert, owners of Be Connected, enjoy the awards banquet thrown by the Mansfield Chamber of Commerce.



Carter and Catrina Whitley enjoy the wonderful snow in their backyard, knowing it will be gone before the weekend is over.



Ladies arrived early to take advantage of bargains at the Rhea Lana's Children's Consignment Event at Aristide on February 16th, the opening day of the four-day event.

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Carrie Ingram (right) celebrates Sandra Kallhoff's happiness over the new puppy that Sandra bid for — and won — during the Mansfield Chamber of Commerce awards banquet.



Therana Brunson gets excited about a children's book her aunt, Joe Ann, reads to her while waiting to see the eye doctor.



Jeanne Adkison, district governor, presents Mansfield Lions Club President Cyndee Shields with a special award for 100 percent club participation.



Mansfield Chamber of Commerce President Lucretia Mills stands proudly with Mike Frazier as he receives the Shirley Karzunia Service Award for his community service efforts.



John Boguski, leader of the Mansfield Network Group, and Russ Hill of Clear Choice Windows, are energized with the networking opportunities and growth of the group that now meets at Aristide Event Center.

Nurturing Nutrients — By Betty Tryon, BSN

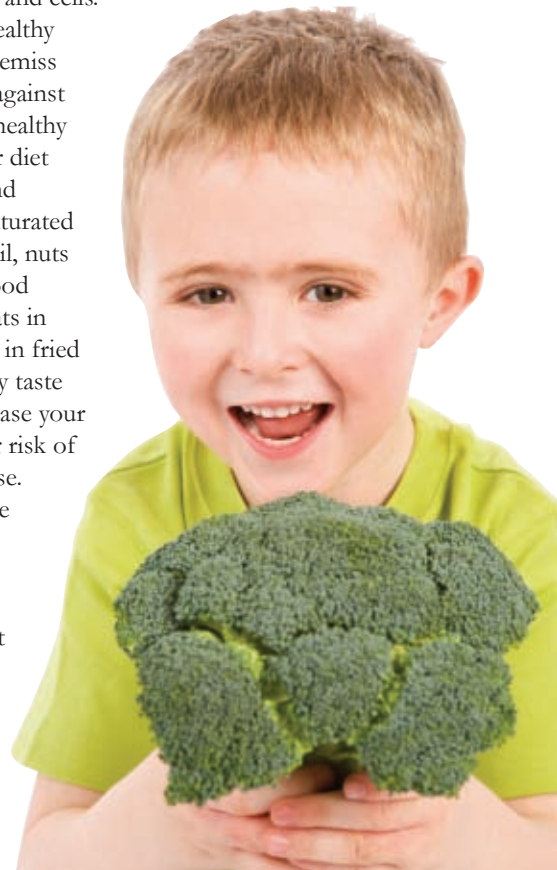
“Eat your vegetables!” Is there a mother on this earth who has not directed her reluctant child to do this? The reason for this universal plea is obvious. Vegetables are full of healthy nutrients our bodies need. Nutrients are nourishing substances in our bodies. They are the foundation for life, growth and health. They strengthen and support by providing necessary essentials for muscle and bones. Nutrients feed our cells and provide energy. Nutrients help regulate bodily functions such as digestion. They also repair and replace tissues to allow our bodies to be a powerful self-regenerating organism.

Nutrients are everything in nutrition. They come from a myriad of food sources regarded as proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals. The more variety in your food selection, the more different types of nutrients you can ingest to benefit your body. Because of this, it pays to understand and manage your nutrition to its optimum level by eating healthy. Today, nutrition labels on food products can give you valuable information about its contents. Checking with your health care provider is always a good idea before making a significant change in your diet. They may have some suggestions about your daily intake of sodium (salt) and sugar. Here is a hint: most of us eat too much of both every day!

A healthy eating plan with enough nutrients for you to function at your optimum level is relatively easy to make. With fruits and vegetables, look for the brightest and deepest color. Those foods will contain the greatest concentration of essential nutrients such as vitamins A, C, E and K, with minerals such as calcium, magnesium and zinc to name a few. Make an effort to

eat a greater variety of fruits and vegetables. Aim for at least five portions a day. Look for different sources of protein other than red meats. Beans, seeds, nuts, tofu and fish are good examples. Protein provides structure for muscle growth and helps to maintain our tissues and cells.

Remarks about healthy nutrition would be remiss without cautioning against eating too much unhealthy fat. Some fat in your diet is actually healthy and required. Monounsaturated fats found in olive oil, nuts and avocados are good for you. Saturated fats in red meats, trans fats in fried and snack foods may taste good, but they increase your cholesterol and your risk of cardiovascular disease. Eating foods that are good for you is the only way to ingest proper nutrients for your health, and that is good enough reason to eat your vegetables! **NOW**



This article is for general information only and does not constitute medical advice. Consult with your physician if you have questions regarding this topic.



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Fun in the Shade

— By *Nancy Fenton*

This month, our theme is how to get something to grow in the shade. There are lots of shade-loving plants, but they need to be especially hardy to take our heat and erratic rains. Prepare the soil with compost and expanded shale if needed, and you will be ready to start. Sometimes it is hard to find blooming plants that do well in the shade. Columbine is one of the best, and if it likes it where you put it, it will reseed itself and make lots to share! Blue and yellow (gold) varieties are available. Lily of the valley usually blooms early in the year also. Hosta will tolerate alkaline soils and comes in many interesting leaf colors ranging from wavy silver and green to very light green with dark edges. They bloom, too, with lavender or white flowers on a long stem.

It is difficult to get really bright blooms in the darkest shade, but bright bulbs provide lively color before all the leaves come out to shade your area. Pansies in the cooler months and

impatiens in the warmer ones can do well in the lighter shade areas. In the darkest areas, go for caladiums in white, red or yellow hues. Against a background of hardy ferns like the Wood Fern, Japanese Fern or Royal Fern, the contrast can be wonderful. My favorite background “filler” is the Inland Sea Oat plant. It looks a lot like a regular oat plant as it grows, but takes very little water and loves deep shade. But be aware that it spreads rapidly, once you get it going.

Next month we will look at a fern garden that will not require a giant water bill. For other questions, please call the Ellis County Master Gardeners at Texas AgriLife Extension, (972) 825-5175 or visit with us at the 2011 GARDEN EXPO to be held at the Waxahachie Civic Center, Saturday, March 26. **NOW**

Nancy Fenton is a Master Gardener.

Is a Rollover in Your Future? — By Tim Bordelon

Have you recently left one employer to begin working for another? Were you covered by an employer-sponsored retirement plan, such as a 401(k)? If so, you may be wondering about the future of your account. In the event of a job change, there are many options available to you regarding your employer-sponsored retirement account assets. The options you have will depend on the provisions of your former employer's plan. Sometimes, your money can stay in the plan with your previous employer until you reach a specific age, and you can then begin taking withdrawals without a tax penalty.

Remaining with your old plan may have drawbacks. Sometimes, fees are charged to former employees to offset managing the account. A minimum asset balance may also be required. Other times you must take your money out when you terminate employment. You should contact the Human Resources department or benefits counselor of your former employer to determine your options. If you withdraw plan assets, you may need to find another funding vehicle.

Transferring the balance of the assets in your previous employer's tax-qualified account to a plan sponsored by your new employer may be an option. This can be done without paying taxes if the money goes directly to the new account (known as a "direct rollover"). However, your new employer may not allow a rollover, thus you will need to look at further options. One choice to consider is rolling the balance of your account to a Traditional Individual Retirement Account (IRA). With this choice, you are able to control the investment options within the IRA.

You can also avoid the need to make a further rollover if you change jobs again.

Rolling your 401(k) assets into a Traditional IRA can be costly if not done correctly. If you take a withdrawal, the trustee of your old plan must withhold 20 percent of the money for federal income tax purpose. You have 60 days to roll the distribution to a new qualified retirement vehicle if you do take a withdrawal. The 20-percent holding will count as a distribution if you do not roll over that amount to an IRA or other qualified plan. A 10-percent tax penalty will usually apply if you are under age 59 1/2 and you don't roll the entire amount into an IRA or other qualified plan.

In order to avoid the 20-percent federal income tax withholding, a direct rollover should be considered. The assets of your employer-sponsored plan are transferred directly from your former employer's plan to a Traditional IRA or other qualified plan. You don't touch the money, and neither does the government. Your assets can grow tax-deferred until you begin withdrawals.

To complete a direct rollover, contact a financial professional to discuss your options. Once you determine where you want the money to go, the IRA custodian can request the money from your employer-sponsored plan in the form of a check or wire transfer. Your current IRA contributions are not affected by rollover. You may contribute the allowable limit to an IRA even after rolling a substantial amount from your previous plan.

With so many choices available, it may be in your best interest to discuss a Traditional IRA rollover with a financial professional. You have some options. Take advantage of one with which you are comfortable. **NOW**

Tim Bordelon is a State Farm agent based in Mansfield.

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March 3

Miss Mansfield Contest: 3:00-9:00 p.m., Aristide, 570 North Walnut Creek Drive, Mansfield. Winners will go on to compete in the Miss Texas Pageant. Send questions via e-mail to info@aristideevents.com.

March 5

Men's Breakfast: 7:00-9:00 a.m. in the gym at Mansfield Bible Church, 2351 Country Club Drive, Mansfield. Bring your best hunting mount or picture of it! Check out the display of hunting trophies, eat a hearty breakfast and hear a message to men that will help you grow spiritually. There is no charge for this event. To learn more about the ministries of MBC or to watch the 11:00 a.m. service live on Sunday, go to www.mbcchurch.com or call (817) 473-8980.

Texas Independence Day and Texas Veterans Land Board Benefits Briefing Parade: 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Parade starts at 11:00 a.m. at Kennedale Jr. High and ends at Town Center Park; awards ceremony will follow end of parade; vendor booths, food, entertainment and carnival at Delaney Elementary.

March 10

Four workshops offered at The Wesley Mission Center, 777 North Walnut Creek Drive. Employment 101, Computer Class, Budgeting Classes, Legal Clinic. For details call (817) 473-6650 or e-mail teresas@firstmethodistmansfield.org.

March 14-18

Spring break for Mansfield Independent School District. Classes will resume March 21.

Spring Break Kids Zone: 8:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m., Mansfield Activities Center, 106 South Wisteria Street, Mansfield. This is a week of activities for children ages 6-12. Cost is \$110/week per child. (Every additional child who lives in the same household receives a ten-percent discount.) Registration is for the whole week, and payment is required up front. For more information, visit www.mansfieldparks.com or call Jill Cannoles, recreation coordinator (817) 453-5420, ext. 2224.

March 15

Animal Extravaganza: 1:00-3:00 p.m., Mansfield Activities Center, 106 South Wisteria Street, Mansfield. Children 2-12 years

of age are invited to join the Fort Worth Zoo at the MAC for fun with animals. Cost: \$2/child. Call Jill Cannoles (817) 453-5420, ext. 2224.

March 26

Fabulous Forties Fling: 7:00-11:00 p.m., Texas Motorplex, located between Waxahachie and Ennis. Supports Meals On Wheels of Johnson and Ellis Counties (MOWJEC), a community benefit organization that has been serving the homebound elderly and disabled residents throughout Johnson and Ellis counties for 33 years. For sponsorship information or reservations, contact the Meals On Wheels office at (817) 558-2840 or (972) 351-9943, or visit www.servingthechildrenofyesterday.org.

March 29

Board Meeting for Mansfield Independent School District: 7:00-9:00 p.m., 605 E. Broad Street, Mansfield. Call Julie Moye at (817) 299-6382.

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your event details to melissa.nowmag@sbglobal.net.

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In The Kitchen With Julie Garro

— By *Melissa Rawlins*

Julie Garro grew up in Denver, Colorado, watching her mom cook and having fun squeezing buttery dough just so, so that a perfectly round ball could go in the pan to rise for dinner rolls or cinnamon rolls. The U.S. Navy took Julie through nine countries (Japan, South Korea, Ireland, England, Germany, Austria, France, Canada and Mexico), where her love of food and cooking developed. Working in fine dining establishments, she became friends with chefs to learn their techniques. She and her husband, Gerry, who also loves to cook, have settled in Mansfield with their two great kids and a collection of five bookshelves of cookbooks. Julie has had fun preparing an international menu for people trying to get their bodies together for the spring and summer. **NOW**

Irish Beer Bread

- 3 cups self-rising flour**
- 1/2 cup sugar**
- 1/2 cup finely shredded cheddar cheese**
- 1 12-oz. beer (Light beer gives a lighter texture and flavor, dark beer will create a heavier texture with full beer flavor.)**
- 4 Tbsp. butter, melted**

- 1.** Spray a loaf pan with Pam cooking spray, set aside.
- 2.** Combine dry ingredients and cheese in a large bowl.
- 3.** Add beer. Mix dough until all dry ingredients are incorporated; dough will be sticky.
- 4.** Transfer the dough into prepared loaf pan.
- 5.** Bake at 375 F for 45 minutes or until lightly browned.
- 6.** At 35 minutes of baking, brush the loaf with 2 Tbsp. melted butter. Brush it again when the loaf first comes out of the oven.

Asian Green Beans

- 1 cup water**
- 1/4 cup brown sugar**
- 1/4 cup soy sauce**
- 1/4 cup butter (1/2 stick)**
- 1/2 tsp. garlic powder**
- 1 12-oz. pkg. French-cut green beans**
- 1 2-oz. pkg. slivered almonds**

- 1.** Combine first 5 ingredients in a 2-quart saucepan; bring to a boil, let butter melt.
- 2.** Add green beans, simmer 5 minutes.
- 3.** Sprinkle with almonds before serving.

Spanish Seafood Paella

- 1 cup white wine**
- About 40 strands saffron**
- 6 Tbsp. olive oil**
- 1 onion, chopped**
- 3 cloves garlic, minced**
- 6 chicken pieces**

- 1 12-oz. pkg. Arborio rice**
- 5 cups chicken broth**
- Kosher salt, to taste**
- Ground black pepper, to taste**
- 1 tsp. thyme leaves**
- 1/2 cup frozen green peas**
- 1/2 cup frozen carrots**
- 12 large shrimp, peeled and deveined**
- 1 lb. mussels, cleaned and deveined**
- 1/4 cup Italian flat leaf parsley, chopped**
- 1 lemon, cut into wedges**

- 1.** Warm the wine and add the saffron.
- 2.** Heat olive oil in paella pan over medium heat. Add in onion, garlic and ground black pepper; cook until onion is soft and translucent. Add chicken, and rice; cook for 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in 2 cups broth, wine, thyme and saffron. Season with salt and additional pepper as desired. Bring to a boil, and simmer until liquid is absorbed.
- 3.** Add another 1/2 to 1 cup broth at a time, until liquid is absorbed. Continue cooking, stirring occasionally until rice is done. Stir in additional stock if necessary. Cook until rice is done.
- 4.** Stir in peas and carrots. Cook for 2 minutes.
- 5.** Arrange shrimp and mussels on top. Cover with foil, and leave for 8 to 10 minutes, until mussels open.
- 6.** Remove the foil, and scatter parsley over paella. Squeeze lemon over all; serve with lemon wedges.

Easy French Fruit Tarts

Makes 8-10 tarts

- 1 8-oz. brick cream cheese, softened**
- 1 8-oz. container Cool Whip (or use whipped cream)**
- 1/2 cup powdered sugar**
- 1/3 cup orange marmalade, melted and cooled slightly**
- Assorted, fruits cut into small pieces (berries, kiwi, peaches, etc.)**
- 2 pkgs. Keebler Ready Crust Mini Graham Cracker Pie Crust, 6-pack**

- 1.** Mix cream cheese and sugar until light. Fold in 1/2 cup Cool Whip, then spoon into mini graham cracker tart shells. Refrigerate at least 2 hours.
- 2.** Meanwhile, toss fruit in marmalade and refrigerate.
- 3.** Spoon fruit over cream cheese mixture in tarts. Top each with a dollop of remaining Cool Whip.

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

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