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Including Crowley and Joshua

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MARCH 2013

# NOW

## Peaceful Strides

Faith inspires Jessica Prickett to run

## A Full Life

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## ON THE COVER



Jessica Prickett dreams of competing in the Olympics someday.

Photo by Sarah Clawson.

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## Editor's Note

*Hello Burleson, Crowley and Joshua!*

Are you ready for daffodils? Keep your eyes peeled as you drive through neighborhoods — you never know who has a bunch planted to naturalize their lawn. March is known not only for these cheerful harbingers of bluer skies and longer days, but also for green onions, leeks and grapefruits!

I also found out March is Save Your Vision Month and Workplace Eye Wellness Month. With that, let me plug the Lions Club International (in which I proudly serve) because their primary mission is prevention of blindness, helping sight-impaired individuals obtain leader dogs and purchasing eyeglasses for local school children whose parents may not be able to afford them. Burleson Lions Club also sets up collection boxes at businesses throughout town so you can donate your old eyeglasses to our recycling program, which provides eyeglasses to people around the world.


Giving thanks for my sight and yours!

# Melissa

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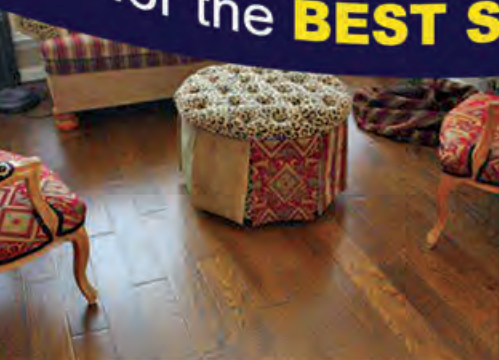
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# PEACEFUL

## Str



*Jessica Prickett began her running career in middle school. "I was not a great runner at the time," she said. "No one knew about me, but I kind of liked running." She stuck with it, and by her freshman year she was coming into her own, running on the varsity team half of the time.*

*The next year changed everything. As a sophomore, she became part of the Dallas Metroplex Striders Club. Members of the track club run year-round and complete extra training above school requirements. Only dedicated runners belong to this club. As a member, Jessica improved her running skills, but more importantly, Coach Terry Jessup taught her to love the sport.*

The hard work paid big dividends. During her freshman year, she had finished with a time of 13:19. Each year she shaved off a full minute. To keep this trend going, she hopes to run 10:19 in the 3200 meter this year.

Admittedly, Jessica seldom thinks, *I don't really want to run today*. But, once she gets into the rhythm, her attitude changes to joy, and when finished, she feels great satisfaction at the achievement. "That's what I love about it. Every day's a new challenge. You're challenging your body to run more and push harder," she said. "It's hard, but I love it."

What about running inspires this young woman? As odd as it seems to someone who doesn't run, the sport has an air of peace to it — a peace that makes Jessica want to run. She also has many friends in the sport.

"Everyone is just so sweet. They all seem to be

# rides

— By Lisa Bell

Christians. That's what I base it on — I run for God," she said. "I want to make an impact in everyone's life."

And she does impact others. Usually a follower, Jessica stepped out of her comfort zone as a senior and became team captain, and quickly grew to like leadership. Before every race, she tells her team, "Be sure you're running for God." Then they pray for a good race and for God to give them strength.

She also influenced her little sister, Arian, a seventh-grader, who ran cross-country this year. Alike, yet different, Jessica hopes Arian will begin to love running as much as she does. Jessica loves to encourage her and helps her by creating a training schedule. "I love having a younger sister. We love each other — even if we fight a lot," she said beaming proudly, and adding hopefully: "My sister's gonna be the next star."

The support of a loving family has pushed Jessica to do her best. Her mom, in particular, keeps her going. "My mom's my hero. I know it sounds cheesy," she said, laughing. "I love my mom. She's the best." Even when she's disappointed over a loss, her family supports her in different ways, challenging her to improve, yet assuring she'll do better the next time.

Her entire family supports Jessica's running, but good friends keep her humble. Many runners she knows share her attitude about running for God. Their humility keeps her grounded. She tries hard not to get caught up in stardom.

Preparing for, and running three events, the 1600 (one mile), 3200 (two miles) and cross-country consumes most of her time. Yet as a high school

**"I want to make  
an impact in  
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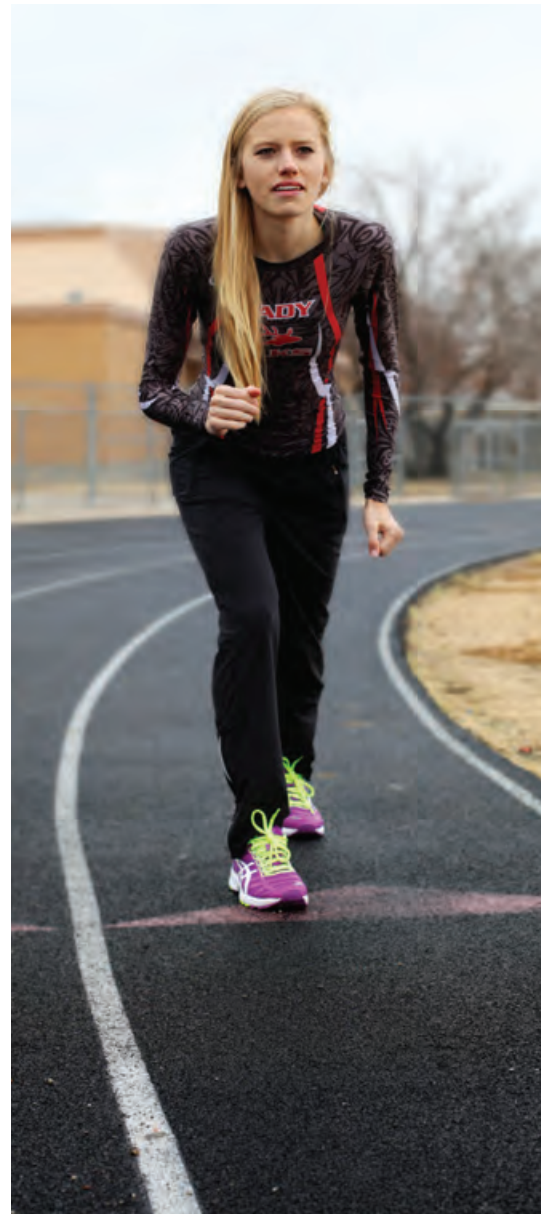


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senior, she understands the need to balance sports, schoolwork, church and spending time with people she loves. Running, of course, is high on her list of priorities. Sometimes it feels like track takes number one priority in her life, but



she puts God first, followed by family. Sometimes she gets too busy to hang out with her friends, but she never wants them to think she's too good for them. In spite of her high moral standards and involvement in church, she knows she isn't perfect. She's learned not to judge others, careful not to require anyone to feel like she does.

In spite of missed class time during track meets, Jessica maintains above-average grades. She goes to teachers

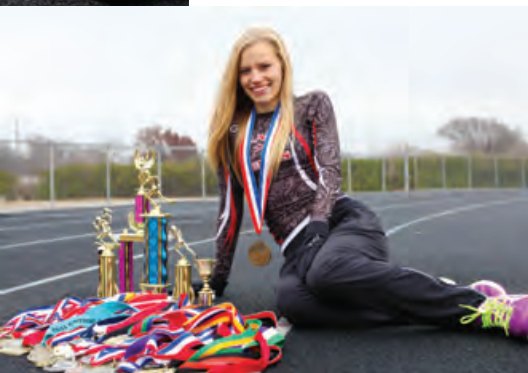
ahead of time to get the assignments from her AP (Advanced Placement) classes she'll miss while racing at meets.

Like most athletes, Jessica dreams of competing in the Olympics someday. The first step includes making it to Nationals.

Although she placed two spots short in 2012, she has college to keep her hopeful for a future spot. "It'll be much harder, so I'll just have to keep improving," she said.

Headed to Texas Tech University in Lubbock, she wants Coach Murray's help to improve speed and work on her kick at the end of the races. Transitioning from pace to a full-out sprint is difficult, especially at the end of a race when fatigue wears her down.

Her grandparents and family, who live in Kansas, had hoped she'd choose Kansas State University. At first she thought Texas Christian University was really where she wanted to go because it was so close. Another place she visited and considered attending was Texas A&M University. But, Jessica still had her eyes on Texas Tech, which is where she went for her first official college visit, and it didn't start so well. "At the beginning, it was not fun, because I



was all alone and wasn't used to the environment," Jessica said. "The next day, everything turned around, and it was like, whoa. God opened up my eyes and said I needed to go there." Jessica realized how much she loved Texas Tech and after

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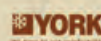
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hanging out with the team she found that she really fit in with the girls and loved the coach.

Then Coach Murray flew down and offered Jessica an almost full scholarship. She and her family were very grateful. Three weeks passed as she prayed and considered the decision. Still sensing



**"Be sure you're running for God."**

a definite yes, she verbally accepted the offer. Perhaps her decision for going to Texas Tech stemmed from her first mission trip, which took place in Lubbock. During that trip, she saw her purpose in life as helping people. Eventually, she plans to serve as a missionary in Africa.

In the meantime, she looks forward to helping the team at Texas Tech next year as they rebuild. Three key runners graduated last year. The coach expects a lot from Jessica, and she will do her best not to disappoint him. She is excited for the opportunity to go to college with a runner from Kenya, who has been awarded the 2012 national champion for cross country. Jessica plans to major in either nutrition or coaching. People often ask Jessica why she's always running. She doesn't hesitate in her response. "God gave me this gift, and I'm gonna use it." **NOW**



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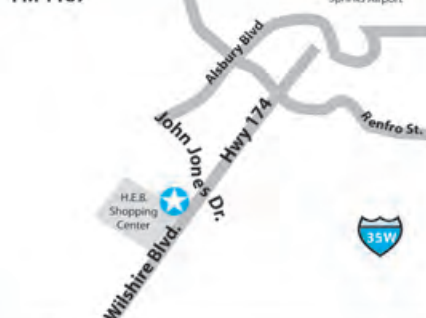
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# Waiting Words

By Erin McEndree

*Everyone has a story. Fred McKinley finds stories that need to be told and puts his heart into telling them. After retiring from the Louisiana Department of Justice, he found inspiration in five stories which has resulted in five published books. That is an amazing feat — any writer will tell you. He learned the craft by trial and error and developed his own style of writing. He also credits his parents for fostering his “work-until-you-finish” attitude. From his first book*



to his fifth, Fred devised some basic writing rules that helped his writing flow and helped him get his stories published. He likes to share his knowledge with other writers and help them on their writing journey.

Fred did not set out to write books, but when he began writing he found getting the story and idea on the page was important. "Don't worry about grammar or punctuation," Fred suggested. "That is why we have editors and spell check. Editing can come later."

He grew up in rural Texas and wrote stories about what he remembered. Several of his stories were published in a magazine, and he received positive feedback. "After I retired, I dug out a skeleton outline for a book about living in Texas," Fred said. He created a story based on his childhood. He wrote about wearing shirts made from flour sacks and how his dad would say they were "poor as snakes." He called the book published

**"When you write about what you know, your passion for writing and your heart shows through."**

in 2003 *Chinqua Where? The Spirit of Rural America*. The book is about humorous escapades and shenanigans of families living in a community where everyone knows everyone and are kin to half of them.

A guideline Fred follows for all his works is to "write about what you know. When you write about what you know, your passion for writing and your heart shows through," he said. Even with

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passion and heart, Fred discovered he needed an agent who was just as passionate about promoting his work. "My advice is to get an agent," Fred said. "Writing is the easy part, but you have to find that one person who wants to see your book succeed." Fred received



his fair share of rejection letters like all writers do, and expresses having a thick skin is important. There are many avenues to publish a book: traditional, print-on-demand, eBooks. Fred decided to self-publish *Chinqua Where?* and it can be found in most libraries in Texas.

"Every book generates another," Fred said. He was approached by Greg Riley to write a book about a Texas oil company in Beaumont. While working on his master's at Lamar University, Fred had already conducted much of the required research. After earning his master's, he had mounds of unused material on the subject. The book took a relatively short time to write. *Black Gold to Bluegrass: From the Oilfields of Texas to Spindletop Farm of Kentucky* was published in 2005.

For this book, Fred and Greg made a marketing plan. Marketing plans let the publishers know the authors are agreeable to speaking engagements, media appearances and promoting their book on social media outlets. "The publisher liked the fact we were willing to spend some of our own money to promote the book," Fred explained. "Writers need to know marketing is a full-time job. Talking

to bookstores and setting up book signings is also a good idea.”

*Black Gold* led to *Devil's Pocket* published in 2007. “This was my only fiction book. It’s about three Southeast Texas families spanning from the 1870s through the 1930s,” Fred said. “My wife helped me with the romantic parts.” Fred admitted the words flowed easily, but he did not know where the book would end. Some writers let it flow and don’t know the ending. Some writers have an outline and know where the story is going. Fred had to decide whether or not to kill the hero near the end. “I didn’t want people to ask me for a sequel, so I killed the hero. Now they ask me to write the prequel,” Fred laughed. He thinks writing fiction is easier,

but cautions that you still have to provide the correct information and time period details to make the story believable.

Almost anything can inspire a story. Fred was touched by an account he saw on the evening news about a Ft. Worth man imprisoned for a crime he did not

**“You have to have a fire in your belly to write, and you have to love writing.”**

commit. “I did some research and found out no one had written a book about him. I contacted the Innocence Project of Texas, and they were cooperative and willing to provide information,” Fred said. “I spent time looking through news stories and documents. I made a list of people to interview. But, don’t research forever. Write and research at the same time.”

Fred retired after 15 years of chasing



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criminals and used his skills while gathering information. He received the cooperation of the Lubbock police department, and the book was complete in a year and a half. *A Plea for Justice: The Timothy Cole Story* was published in 2010. "Promoting the book in the town where it took place was easy," Fred said. "But it became much harder outside Texas."

His last book, co-authored with Dr. Charles Breithaupt, was published in 2012. *King Cotton: Coach Cotton Robinson and the Buna Boys' Basketball Legacy* is a biography of a legendary Texas coach who set a state record for most boys' high-school basketball championships.

"Books have a short shelf life," Fred explained. "You have to continually find a different audience in order to keep a book selling. Local stories are hard to promote nationally. But for a full impact, your story needs to appeal to a



wide range of readers." Even though Fred understands what sells books, his motivation to write is simply that he loves it. "When I write a book, I become obsessive. I tend to write eight to 10 hours a day until the book is done," Fred said. "My wife and I will yell across the house to check on each other." Fred stresses the importance of being able to balance life and writing. He admits it is something he has a hard time doing.

"You have to have a fire in your belly to write, and you have to love writing," Fred said. For now, he has not found that fire for another subject. Fred spends time in the backyard these days. He maintains the vegetable garden, fruit trees and the gravel pathway with his wife, Dottie. He even built a pergola and deck. Maybe he will find inspiration someday for another story that needs to be told, but for now, he's taking it easy while he waits for the words. **NOW**

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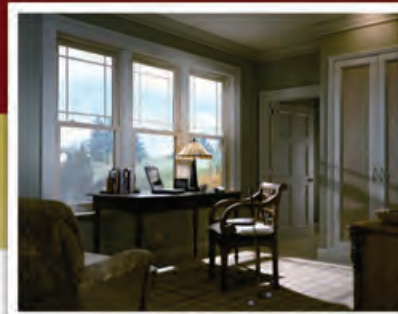
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# A Full Life

— By Melissa Rawlins



*Margaret Perkins loves sharing tricks for getting through life joyfully. For starters, she advised, "Keep a bowl of get well cards on the cabinet, so when visitors see your home they will think you've been too sick to clean." More importantly, find yourself a friend like JJ Prater and hang on for dear life! She and JJ met 18 years ago, and they keep each other laughing,*

*living and loving. Ask where they live, and they'll say, "It's the house with the ostriches!"*

Out having fun one day, they went to a yard sale. "I don't like to do that without buying something," Margaret said. "The woman had mostly farm tools — nothing I was interested in, and against her barn were those tall ostriches. I thought they would entertain the children on their way to school if I put them up against my fence." Yet passers by of every age stop to admire the yard where JJ works daily to create an oasis.

His father's red coal-burning stove, saved from an old steam engine, stands



## At Home With JJ Prater and Margaret Perkins

in a place of honor in the flowerbed near the ostriches. John F. Kennedy roses in reds and pinks, Oklahoma roses in yellows, cactus and yuccas surround the little sitting area JJ made for friends who smoke. By the front door two plaques are strategically positioned. The first reads, An Old Crow and a Cute Chick Live Here. The second says, God Blessed The Broken Road That Led Me Straight To You.

This month, they're watching for daffodils. Margaret's birthday is the last day of March, the day the daffodils usually bloomed on the farm in Ohio, where she grew up. For her sake, JJ has planted 300 daffodils in his front yard, plus irises artistically arranged in an old iron wheel with monkey grass surrounding it. "Eighteen years ago, there was one daffodil, right where that monkey grass is. I saw the bud and knew it would bloom the next day. I came out here to see it, and the flower and bloom were gone," said Margaret. Turns out, JJ had picked that fresh bloom and taken

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it to the school secretary, who needed cheering. "I was so disappointed, but he was doing it to make someone happy, and he had not known I was watching for it. So, I've made him plant more daffodils since then!"

That's all been a joy for JJ. "I like to work in the garden," he said. "If you love something, you take care of it." He has owned this home since 1971, and originally the garden took intense labor. "Hedges had grown up all around the place. You couldn't even see the house." Little by little, between long hours working for companies like General Dynamics and the Santa Fe Railway, JJ renovated the interior and exterior and created a livable and beautiful home.

Adding to the one-bedroom home, JJ built on three bedrooms, a utility room,



dining room, back porch and another bathroom. He salvaged the shower from a railroad car and added the long tall mirror above the marble lavatory. "I did all that while married to my first wife, and as my children were born I kept building on," JJ said. "It's made out of true 2x4s and true 2x6s. I tore down houses and then built it with those materials." JJ's intent was to create a place to live and be happy. "Really, home is what you make of it. As long as you have the Lord in your heart, you can be cheerful," said this part



Cherokee, part Irish gentleman.

When JJ's wife died of cancer, and Margaret's husband died of cancer, somehow the two found each other. "My first wife was a Yankee, so I had to get me another Yankee," joked JJ.

"I don't like to do housework, but he does," replied Margaret, who is part German, part Welsh and purely practical. Together they buy and sell antiques just so they can reinvest in more antiques and enjoy their hobby. JJ deals in Western

stuff, and Margaret in collectibles. Several cabinets in the living room display her favorite figurines, The Royal Daltons.

The collection started with a romantic foot-tall bronze Margaret and JJ found

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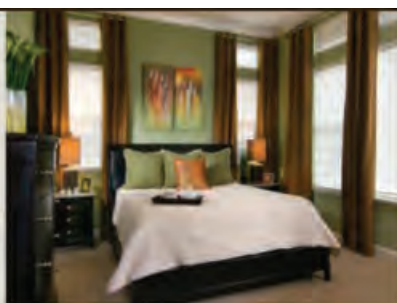
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in a Goodwill store. “He took it over to the lady behind the counter, and her face turned red. We got tickled it would embarrass someone,” said Margaret, admitting even JJ’s daughter expressed amazement that they would display such a sculpture. “So I started collecting every nude I could find!” Now they are proud owners of copies of many famous sculptures, including *David* by Michelangelo and *The Thinker* by Rodin. “I’m 81, so I don’t remember the names of all of them.”

She does remember the names of all seven of their children, however, and is constantly working on ways to help them.

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Using the dining room as her craft room, Margaret stays busy making quilts. Her mother’s heirloom settee, carved and decorated with a proud lion’s head, holds quilts, throws and puff pillows. Margaret has made quilts for 10 grandchildren and

15 great-grandchildren, and keeps on hand cabinets full of material. The guest bedroom stores no less than 18 tops ready to be quilted, not to mention all the finished quilts packaged in protective plastic.

Margaret's kitchen, built by JJ over 40 years ago, is one of her favorite places to be. She displays a collection of timers, measuring spoons and measuring cups near the stove. Earlier, her decorating theme was Italian. Then she switched to mushrooms and turtles. Now she mixes things up on her buffet, setting two cookie jars, one German and one English, alongside an Italian dish.

Her kitchen is actually used more as a staging area between garage sales and



their booths at the Burleson Antique Mall. "It keeps me young to price things and carry them to the antique mall," joked Margaret, who still likes to cook. JJ is a cancer survivor, and appreciates the goodies she makes for him, including armadillo eggs, porcupine balls, four-layer dessert and the seasonal fruitcake containing no butter or citron.

After working in an office and a bank until turning 21, Margaret worked in a restaurant and eventually owned one, having determined office work did not suit her. "I tell my kids, 'You get an education, but don't feel bad if you don't do well. Not everyone was born to be a president.' The important thing is to be happy." With JJ by her side, that's not too hard to do. **NOW**

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# KINDNESS Matters

By Sarah Anderson

*Hughes Middle School students agree Mr. Tim Brooks is one of their favorite teachers. A sixth-grade social studies teacher, Mr. Brooks is known at Hughes for his fun-loving and entertaining methods. "He always makes my day when I come help him during seventh period," said Haley Hostetler, a seventh-grader who works as his teacher's assistant. "When I had him in social studies last year, I could be having a bad day, and he would joke around with me. It would get me feeling better every time."*

Haley enjoys spending time in Mr. Brooks' class so much, she happily agreed to help him and her classmate, Camille Rasor, lead the school's efforts to accept Rachel's Challenge. The two



girls work closely with Mr. Brooks to organize and facilitate regular activities that work to exemplify the program's mission of starting a chain reaction of kindness. "Rachel's Challenge is all about spreading happiness while being a positive influence," Haley said, which made Mr. Brooks an obvious candidate to head up the program at Hughes.

"He makes it more fun to be at school," Camille said. "If there was a day last year when I was dragging and just

"I hope to shape our kids into effective leaders, so they can take what they've learned both about being a person and the subject and use it to become successful."

did not want to be at school, I would be smiling by the time I left his class." That's how Haley and Camille want students to feel when they come across someone involved in Rachel's Challenge. "Seeing people have a better day because someone said something nice to them or did something nice for them is great," Haley said. "It just makes me feel good to see that and to know we are making a difference through Rachel's Challenge."

According to its Web site, Rachel's Challenge is a "series of student empowering programs and strategies that equip students and adults to combat bullying and allay feelings of isolation and despair by creating a culture of kindness and compassion." The program is based on the writings and life of 17-year old Rachel Scott who was the first student

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killed at Columbine High School in 1999. Her dad founded the organization shortly after she died when he discovered a number of drawings and journal entries describing her vision for such a program. Over the last 14 years, Rachel's Challenge has grown into a remarkable phenomenon across the country.

Mr. Brooks, Camille and Haley firmly believe there was something special about Rachel and want to do everything they can to carry on her vision. Burleson Independent School District (BISD) first tried the program last year at one elementary and two middle school campuses, but it really took off this year when Hughes Middle School principal, Makesha Brown, and Mr. Brooks took the initiative to fully develop it. "After 15 years of teaching, I have seen the worst examples of what kids can resort to. However, on the flip side of that, I have also seen a lot of good in every kid I've taught. Take the worst kid that we have, whoever that may be, and there is some good in that child. They just don't know how to show it, or they are afraid to show it," Mr. Brooks said.

"This program to me is all about its motto, which is to start a chain reaction. We feel if we can instill a few good things in our students, it will then have a domino effect and start reaching kids who otherwise may have led pretty negative lives," Mr. Brooks said. "It's just common sense to be a part of something that is instilling positive values in our

kids. Why wouldn't you want to be a part of that as an educator?"

Now every BISD campus has accepted Rachel's Challenge. Speakers came out to each school in November to show them the program and help them get started. "It's a powerful presentation," Mr. Brooks said. "I've seen it three times now, and it moves these kids. It captivates them, and they take it seriously, but it's up to us to keep that impact going."

At Hughes, Camille and Haley are determined to help Mr. Brooks do just that. They are thrilled to see participation thrive. Their monthly meetings grew from 20 students last year to nearly 200 this year. They work with students on a number of kindness projects. They hosted a morning kindness walk in which students greeted everyone arriving with friendly words of encouragement. They



created a chain of kindness for students to write down kind deeds they do and add them as links to a long paper chain. They created notes on which students can write kind words to slip in students' lockers. They've even dedicated weeks to showing kindness to teachers, cafeteria workers, bus drivers and custodians. "The adults need this, too," Mr. Brooks said.

Even the city of Burleson and community businesses have accepted the challenge. Kindness Matters signs can be seen all over town. "It's amazing. We have businesses saying Kindness Matters that have nothing to do with the school district," Camille said. "I am so

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glad Mr. Brooks asked me to be a part of this. He set an incredible example and has given the two of us all the support we could need."

Mr. Brooks selected Camille and Haley because they are both exceptional leaders and have positive reputations with both students and teachers. Yet even as well-known and well-respected as they are, they have experienced bullying first hand. "It's terrible," Camille said. "There was a time where I was crying everyday after school. No one should have to go through that."

Mr. Brooks couldn't agree more. "That's why this program is so significant. If it's happening to someone like Camille, then we know for a fact that it's happening to those kids we never hear from," he said.

Mr. Brooks chose to become a teacher after a Crowley High School coach left an impression. When he and his high school sweetheart, Leslie, went off to Tarleton State University, he wanted to do something to pay forward the guidance he received. "My goal as a teacher has been to reach as many kids as I can in a positive way. If you don't reach the child first, you are not going to teach him anything," he said. "I hope to shape our kids into effective leaders, so they can take what they've learned both about being a person and the subject and use it to become successful."

He and Leslie have been married for 13 years and now have two sons, ages 10 and almost 2. Before he taught sixth grade, Mr. Brooks taught high school, but sixth grade is by far his favorite. He plans to finish his career as an educator right where he is. **NOW**

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# To Protect And Serve

— By Erin McEndree



*A husband and wife team at Station 2 of the Briaroaks Volunteer Fire Department enjoys protecting citizens. Bobby and Angela Goolsby have helped make the new station that opened in February 2012 an astounding asset to the community they serve. Bobby and Angela like doing things together, so they have committed their time to helping the unincorporated areas of Burleson.*

Bobby grew up around Alvarado and is a full-time paramedic and firefighter for the city of Keller. On his days off, he willingly gives his time in his own community. "I wasn't always a firefighter. I was a brick layer for 12 years," Bobby said. He met a fireman in Grapevine, through the baseball league his children were affiliated with, who precipitated Bobby's interest in fire service. He has volunteered for Briaroaks since March 2008 and full-time at Keller since January 2011.

Angela also grew up in Alvarado. She has volunteered with the fire department for about two years. "I joined because I was always here with Bobby doing whatever was needed," Angela said. "We do everything together, so I decided



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to join." Angela was working dispatch, but those duties changed. Now she works behind the scenes taking pictures at the scene for training and documentation, while also helping with fundraisers and administration.

"People do not have to have any special training to become a volunteer firefighter," Angela stressed. "You learn on the job as you go." After being accepted, the volunteers take 40 hours of classes in first response and rescue.

While working at Briaroaks Volunteer Fire Department (VFD), Bobby attained the rank of captain and was awarded Firefighter of the Year for 2011. One of Bobby's peers, veteran firefighter, Mike Hill, said, "To be firefighter of the year, you have to show overall commitment and dedication that stands out from the rest. You have to go above and beyond by taking more calls and more training [than what is expected]." The members of Briaroaks VFD are committed to providing a superior level of emergency service that improves the quality of life, health and safety of the communities they serve, as shown through their level of performance and impressive response times.

Not only is Angela frequently at the station, but their three children also come to hang out. Denton is 12 and wants to be a meteorologist. Jayci is 9. "She changes her mind all the time. Right now, she wants to own a ranch and barrel race," Angela said. "Brady is 5 and will probably be the fireman in the family." Bobby took the fire truck to the kid's school for career day.

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Much training is required, and Bobby teaches several courses, including Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) and Emergency Medical Services (EMS). "We get hands-on practice," Bobby said. "Some training is done at the fire training center in Cleburne, and some as far away as Texas A&M University." Brayton Fire Training Field in College Station provides a variety of classes, such as rope rescue, water rescue, Hazmat training and a structural collapse class, to name just a few.

However, sometimes the department trains right in their community. "Some people out in the country needed a big house moved, and they asked us if we wanted to practice with it and burn it down," Bobby explained. "We finally got approval to practice, so we used it for hands-on training. It was different and fun." The firemen cut holes in the roof to practice ventilation. They started it on fire to practice a real-life simulation.

All this practice helps them when they are called in on an emergency. "A lot of calls are on FM 917, which is a dangerous road with lots of curves. The sun shines in people's face going and coming to work," Bobby said. They have been called to get snakes out of houses and horses out of swimming pools. And, yes, they have been called to get cats out of trees. "Have you ever seen a dead cat in a tree?" Bobby laughed. "They will come down on their own." Bobby remembered one winter when the team was fighting a fire in the snow. The water they sprayed froze, and the truck got stuck. "We had to chop ice

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off the road to get the truck out of the driveway. It was exhausting,”

Bobby explained.

Some of the calls are really hard. “Some of them get to you. One of my instructors told me to remember I did not put them in that situation, and I am there trying to help,” Bobby said. Remembering that helps, but some images stay in the mind forever.

“When kids are involved,” Angela said, “those are the worst ones.” Bobby and Angela find ways to release the tension. Bobby plays golf and plays with his kids. He also plays on the department softball team. “The department plays in a public league, but we would love to get a VFD league started,” Angela said.

Other fun events include the countywide Hose Off in the summer, a family-friendly get together. Various teams throughout the county have competitions spraying water at barrels on a pulley to see who can move theirs to the end of the course first. Their big fundraiser for the year is a fish fry held in April or May.

Multiple duties must be performed at the station. Once a week, the trucks are checked. Medical equipment is restocked. Hardware is refueled and tested to be in good working order. All the lights are assessed. Once a month, expiration dates are observed. Bobby orders any maintenance needed, as well as keeping track of all the volunteers' hours. Each has to acquire a minimum number of hours on the job.

Four trucks sit in the bay waiting — but not wanting — to be called up for service. The rescue truck is the first on the scene and carries most of the medical equipment and the basic hardware for rescue. A new brush truck was recently purchased with grants, donations and monies from the fundraisers. “We do pride ourselves in the new equipment,” Angela said. “Not many VFD have this.” The big engine called Old Faithful is next on the list to be replaced. Their goal is to upgrade every 15 years.

Bobby has an associate degree in emergency medicine. His goal is to continue his education in fire science, so he can be promoted in fire service. He and Angela are committed to helping the community for years to come. They are building many memories they can pass down. They're proud of protecting and serving the citizens around them. **NOW**

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Technicians Stephen Steinhilber and Christopher Williams, Kevin Sampler, Audi Stevens and Will Steinhilber help protect local homes and business.



## Small Game Hunters

*Reliant Termite & Pest Control keeps all that you own clean, comfortable and free of pests!*

— By Melissa Rawlins

Have mice or rats been pestering you? Pick up your phone and call the guys who actually get a thrill out of hunting rodents. In our area, that would be Reliant Termite & Pest Control. Owner Stephen Steinhilber and his battalion of seven technicians regularly share success stories to help each other hunt and kill all invaders of homes and businesses, whether four-legged or eight.

Stephen cares about the people in this area, having graduated from Burleson High School in 1990, establishing his business in Crowley and his home in Joshua. His 16 years of experience make him the perfect leader of his team of small game hunters, which he developed for one reason: “We protect people, pets and property — bottom line.”

Using odorless products, Stephen’s customers include nursing homes and day cares, as well as single-family residences. “After we apply the product, it dries in 10 to 15 minutes, and people don’t even know it’s there,” Stephen explained, “but the insects walk across it and die when they pick up those time-released microencapsulated pesticide balls. They deteriorate over time, and that’s why the residual lasts so long.”

Stephen’s intimate knowledge of his arsenal matches his understanding of the enemy. A poster in his brand new office, a recent expansion from the 600-square-foot building he worked from since 1998, warns that bed bugs are on the rise. Stephen takes pride in what Reliant Termite & Pest Control

does, and educates his employees on what to look for and how to kill whatever bug they find when inspecting homes and businesses.

For the month of March, Stephen offers customers \$50 off a carpenter ant treatment and \$200 off a full termite treatment. This time of year, Stephen's mission is to proactively apply pesticides to protect people, pets and property. "You can only go so green. You gotta be able to protect people's biggest investment," Stephen said. "You gotta be able to stop termites from destroying your home. They're active year round, but they swarm throughout March, April, May and into June. That's when people see the swarms go crazy by the hundreds of thousands."

And that's when Stephen and his staff are ready to take the calls. Catering to people who work hard all day, Stephen relies on his helpful staff. Kathy Knight, general manager, along with Paulina Paz, Ann Reynolds and Sherry Pruitt handle all the calls, including an evening shift.

In the battle against year-round pests, Stephen encourages his customers to do their part. "This is a partnership. When my customers and I work hand-in-hand, we have the highest level of success controlling bugs and rodents," Stephen said.

Reliant Termite & Pest Control offers many services to win the battle, the quarterly general spray against general pests like spiders, crickets, cockroaches and scorpions being Stephen's best deal. At \$49.95, customers receive an interior spray, attic inspection, garage spray, exterior spray and termite inspection. This does not include fleas.

For people who want to keep fleas off their animals year-round, Stephen recommends bathing pets in Dawn soap every month, while also treating the lawn with Top Choice that Reliant Termite & Pest Control broadcasts. It has an added bonus of wiping out fire ants. "You can lie down on the lawn," Stephen said, with a gleeful grin, "and I can pour honey on you, and no fire ant will surface." Now that is reliant pest control! **NOW**



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*Megan Moutner with Logan and aunts, Shyrel Linthicum and Jackie Towler, enjoy a warm winter afternoon at Warren Park.*



*Dr. Bill Seabert and wife, LeAmy, share info about eyecare at the City of Crowley Health Fair at the Crowley Rec Center.*



*Jessica Wilkinson with Cammi Eason, who is enjoying her ice cream cone from City Market.*



*Honest Abe (Hank Hoaldrige) prepares to speak at the President's Day Convention in the Cleburne Convention Center.*



*Ambassadors for the BACC attend a ribbon cutting for Artistic Savvy.*



*Paighton McNeely and Morgan Engle with Burleson Varsity Soccer stop for an afternoon snack at Pinnocchio's.*



*Ted Nelson, 9, with his mother, Kim, spend time at Burleson Public Library gathering language arts materials for their home school sessions.*



*Kelly Harris, W. Scott Gilbreth, Jim Hirth, David Bowers and Ken Henry participate in the ground breaking for the new City of Crowley Veterans Plaza.*



*Wanda and Harry James came all the way from Crowley for burgers at Burleson's new Triple B's.*



*Levi Garrett enjoys an afternoon of fishing at his grandma's.*

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# Get More Return on Your Tax Return

## *Seven Ways to Avoid Shopping Spree-itis*

You've got a couple thousand bucks back from the IRS, and it's burning a hole in your pocket. Before you splurge on a new wardrobe that will be outdated in a year, a summer vacation where you'll be fighting mosquitoes or a new piece of electronic equipment that will get dusty on the shelves — stop, drop that credit card and roll out a few alternatives for consideration. So, here are four steps to kick Tax Refund Shopping Spree-itis:

**1.** Before you buy that new car — *stop!* Gaze into the big, innocent eyes of your children. According to the National Institute for Consumer Education, the cost of a college education has more than doubled in the last 10 years. The *2004 Trends in College Pricing* survey from



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The College Board shows that total student expenses average \$20,082 per year at private institutions, and \$5,132 per year at public institutions. Have you thought about a 529 College Savings Plan or a Coverdell Education Savings Account?

2. You're about to hand over your credit card to the cashier to buy a fancy, do-it-all gadget that mows the lawn, cleans the pool and cooks a mean barbecued steak — *stop!* Look at your credit card balance. Think about the interest rate. If your credit card interest rates go up, that means you'll be forking over more cash to pay off your debt.

3. A Hawaiian vacation is a click away — *stop!* Now imagine your teeth sitting in a cup next to your bed at the nursing home. According to the Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program Web site, approximately 60 percent of people who reach age 65 will need long-term care at some time in their lives. The cost is enormous if you don't have long-term care insurance. The average annual cost of a semi-private room in a care facility is \$52,000. In less than 30 years, it is estimated the cost will be more than \$190,000.

4. You've decided to splurge on the skydiving trip you've been dreaming about — *stop!* Have you considered life insurance? A 2004 life insurance survey showed that 47 percent of Americans surveyed do not have an individual life insurance policy, which means some may not be covered by a life insurance policy should they quit or leave their job.

When that tax refund shows up, it can be a great reminder to review your finances and make sure you're on the way to meeting your financial goals. Consider consulting with a financial professional to review your current insurance and financial needs, and see if you have what you need to protect what you have today and prepare you for tomorrow. **NOW**

*Mark Jameson is a licensed Allstate sales associate based in Burleson.*



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Source: Insurance Institute for Highway Safety Fatality Facts 2007-2009. © 2013 Allstate Insurance Company



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 July 22 - 26 : We Do Junior Robotics\*\*  
 July 29 - Aug. 2 : Movie Making 101\*  
 August 5 - 9 : Mining & Crafting  
 August 12 - 16 : Super Hero  
 August 19 - 23 : Space Adventures

**Afternoon**

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### March 7

Dining for Therapy Horses: 5:30-8:30 p.m., Café 1187, 8780 Hwy. 1187, Benbrook. For \$50 per person, Café 1187 will donate to Wings of Hope Equine Therapy \$25 of each plate served. Patrons may bring a wine or other alcoholic beverage to enjoy with their meal. For reservations, call (817) 443-1473.

### March 9

2nd Annual "Heart Heroes" 5K Fun Run: 8:00 a.m. registration; 9:00 a.m. start, Mountain Valley Subdivision. Benefiting the American Heart Association, Melissa and Wesley McHugh organized this fundraiser in honor of Wesley's grandfather, Darrell Powell, who survived a heart attack because of proper diet and regular exercise. Learn more when you register online at <http://heartheroes5k.webs.com>.

### March 19

Capitol Day in Austin: Group seating and recognition in the Texas House. Meet State Representative Rob Orr

and Senator Brian Birdwell. Enjoy lunch at the Austin Club and a private tour of the Texas Capitol (limited availability) or behind-the-scenes action in a Congressional Committee Meeting. \$30. Call the Burleson Area Chamber of Commerce, (817) 295-6121, for information or to RSVP.

### March 20

March For Meals: 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Burleson, Crowley and Joshua. During the national campaign to end senior hunger, mayors and elected officials throughout Johnson and Ellis Counties will deliver meals with Meals-on-Wheels. Individuals and businesses are invited to sponsor a senior, a community or even all of the non-profit's clients for an entire day. Contact Whitney Patterson, (817) 558-2840, or visit [www.servingthechildrenofyesterday.org](http://www.servingthechildrenofyesterday.org).

### March 23

Family Field Day at Bunny Daze: 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., BRiCK, 550 NW Summercrest Blvd. Huguley Hospital hosts great family fun, with help from the

Burleson Lions Club. At noon, children up to age 12 are welcome to join Peter Cottontail for an Easter Egg Hunt hosted by the City of Burleson's Parks and Recreation Department. Contact Victoria Sykes, (817) 568-5497.

Easter Egg Hunt at Russell Farm: 3:00 p.m. Russell Farm Art Center, 405 W. CR 714. Joey the Easter Donkey will be ready to pose for pictures (bring your own camera) in a petting zoo. This event is for children from birth to 4 years old. Call (817) 447-3316.

### March 30 and 31

Beyond The Manger Stood The Cross: Saturday, 3:00 and 6:00 p.m.; Sunday, 10:45 a.m. Cana Baptist Church, 2309 E. Renfro St. Easter pageant with live animals accentuating the passionate story line. Call (817) 295-3891 for more information.

*Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your event details to [melissa.nowmag@sbcglobal.net](mailto:melissa.nowmag@sbcglobal.net).*



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## In The Kitchen With Leva Lee

— By *Melissa Rawlins*

Born in Dallas, Leva Lee has lived in Ft. Worth, Burleson, Alvarado and, way back when, Glen Rose. That's where the family lived in the summer of 1963. They kept a huge garden. "Mama and I would can stuff," recalled Leva. "Wasn't fun then, but now wish I had that time back."

For the last 23 years, Leva has worked in Burleson as a manicurist. Acquiring wonderful friends and taking care of family, Leva has nurtured the joy of cooking. Her hands-down favorite cook is her brother, Rex Sullivan. "He likes to cook western-style: biscuits in the iron skillet, a big pot of beans." Leva cooks some of everything for her husband, their girls and their families, and she especially loves preparing Mexican food. **NOW**

### Beer Bread

- 3 cups self-rising flour**
- 3 Tbsp. sugar**
- 1 can beer (any kind)**
- 1 cup dry instant mashed potatoes (optional)**
- 3 Tbsp. butter, melted**

- 1.** Mix first 3 or 4 ingredients. (You can add instant mashed potatoes for a slightly different texture.) Put in a greased and floured loaf pan.
- 2.** Pour melted butter over top.
- 3.** Bake at 350 F for 45 minutes.

### Tortilla Soup

- 1 Tbsp. garlic, minced**
- 1/2 onion, chopped**
- 1/2 green pepper, chopped**
- 1 Tbsp. butter**
- 2 cooked chicken breasts**

- 2 14-oz. cans chicken broth**
- 2 6-oz. cans tomato paste**
- 1 package taco seasoning**
- 1 15-oz. can hominy, drained**
- 1 15-oz. can corn, drained**
- 1 15-oz. can Ranch Style beans**
- 1 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese**
- 1 bag tortilla chips**
- 1 cup Monterrey Jack cheese, shredded**
- 1 cup Cheddar cheese, shredded**

- 1.** Sauté first 4 ingredients in a large stock pot.
- 2.** Add next 7 ingredients. Bring to a boil and simmer for 20 minutes.
- 3.** Remove about 2 cups of the juice and place in a bowl with cream cheese. Stir until the cream cheese is melted, then return all back to the soup. Simmer an additional 10 minutes.
- 4.** Serve over crushed tortilla chips with cheeses and other condiments as you choose.

### Okra-bacon Salad

- 24 oz. breaded okra**
- 6-8 slices bacon**
- 1 bunch green onions**
- 2 medium tomatoes**
- Dressing:**
- 1/2 cup sugar**
- 1/2 cup apple cider vinegar**
- 1/4 cup olive oil**

- 1.** Fry okra. Drain on paper towel.
- 2.** Fry bacon until crispy; crumble.
- 3.** Mix okra and bacon with chopped onions and tomatoes.
- 4.** Shake dressing ingredients in jar. Pour over salad just before serving. Toss.

### Cilantro Rice

- 1/2 cup onion, chopped**
- 1 cup rice**
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil**
- 2 cups water**
- 3/4 cup cilantro, chopped**
- 2 Tbsp. lime juice**

- 1.** Brown onion and rice in olive oil.
- 2.** Add 2 cups water; bring to a boil. Cover pot; continue to simmer for 25 minutes.
- 3.** Stir in cilantro and lime juice. Serve.

### Pulled Pork

- 1 1-2 lb. pork roast**
- 1 onion, diced**
- 2 Tbsp. brown sugar**
- 1/2 7-oz. can Chipotle peppers in Adobo sauce**
- 2 12-oz. cans Dr Pepper**

- 1.** Put all ingredients in Crock-Pot. Cook on high for 6 hours. Pull apart with fork. Good served on flour tortillas with Cilantro Rice (recipe above) and pinto beans for a full meal!

### Brown Rice

- 1 cup uncooked white rice**
- 1 stick butter, melted**
- 1 14-oz. can beef broth**
- 1 14-oz. can French onion soup**
- 1 6-oz. chopped mushrooms (optional)**

- 1.** Mix first 4 ingredients together. Put in greased baking dish.
- 2.** Top with mushrooms. Cover and bake at 400 F for 45 minutes.



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