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ON THE COVER



The Pickle Queens are ready for family-friendly St. Patrick's Day fun.

Photo by Amanda Rooney.

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Publisher's Note

What an amazing decade!

Ten years ago a dream became a reality. On March 1, 2004, NOW Magazines' first publication, *CorsicanaNOW*, made its debut. With a concept not yet attempted outside the larger metro areas, we launched this community magazine with the mission of combining positive, uplifting articles and well-designed, full-color ads into a direct mail advertising product that really works. And really work, it did! With steady growth, our publication group has grown to include 10 community magazines: *CorsicanaNOW* – March 2004; *WaxahachieNOW* – November 2004; *EnnisNOW* – December 2004; *MidlothianNOW* – August 2005; *MansfieldNOW* – March 2006; *North Ellis Co.NOW* – April 2006; *SouthwestNOW* – November 2006; *BurlesonNOW* – August 2007; *WeatherfordNOW* – February 2011; *GranburyNOW* – October 2012.

Today we distribute our magazines to over 260,000 addresses every month free of charge, and have a readership of more than 600,000 across the 10 markets. Our readers are so kind to express their enjoyment in reading about their friends, neighbors and the good things happening in our communities. Thank you all! And to our more than 650 monthly advertisers — many who have been with us from the very beginning — thank you! We couldn't do this without you! I'd also like to thank our wonderful NOW Magazines staff, whose hard work and dedication make this all happen every month!

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The Pickle Parade

— By Mikaela Mathews

The Pickle Queens had no idea what they had just gotten themselves into. They turned the corner on their parade float, clad in floor-length, green dresses and tightly pinned red wigs, not knowing how many people would show up to their quickly-planned parade. What they thought would be a small crowd turned out to be five times the size of the audience they had anticipated. “When we turned that corner on the float, some of us started crying,” shared Amanda Kowalski, co-founder of the Pickle Parade and a Pickle Queen. “There were just thousands of people.”

The world's only St. Paddy's Pickle Parade all started over a few drinks in downtown Mansfield. “I'm Irish, and I was looking at my green margarita, so I thought, *We need to have a parade!*” Amanda explained. To continue with the green theme, Amanda concocted an idea of a St. Patrick's Day parade with green margaritas and, of course, pickles. The next day, she sent a text message to her friend Delilah McMasters with the idea.

“I remember Amanda telling me we should do the parade. I said, ‘OK. This will be fun,’” Delilah described. “And it worked! We put it together in less than three months, and people were all over it.”

The first order of business was to knight the Pickle Queens. The idea for the queens came from a similar parade featuring the Sweet Potato Queens. “There's a bar in Jackson, Mississippi, that decided they would have a parade on St. Patrick's Day. So this lady at the bar decided that she was going to be the queen of

the parade. They asked her what she was going to be the queen of, and she said, 'Sweet potatoes.' She and her friends put on long evening gowns and wigs on their head and they threw sweet potatoes out into the crowd. So, we decided to do something like that, also. Now, we're an official chapter of the Sweet Potato Queens," Amanda shared. The Pickle Queens are just one of 6,000 chapters in the Sweet Potato Queens clan.

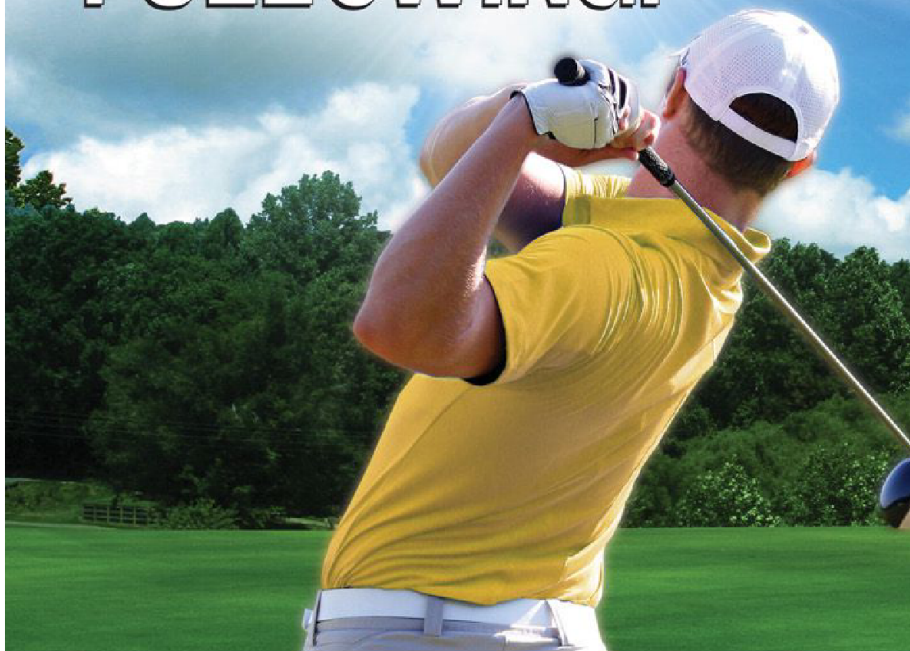
In order to get these Pickle Queens, Amanda and Delilah sent out a mass email. "Some of them thought that it was a joke. But, around 20 women showed up, and they got on the float as the Pickle Queens. And now everybody else says, 'Y'all are having way too much fun. How can I be one?' But we don't let them in, because they had to be brave enough when we didn't know how people were going to react," Amanda recalled. The requirement to become a Pickle Queen was to be a "well-seasoned, over-40-year-old woman," according to Amanda. "You can't be fully seasoned as a Pickle Queen unless you're over 40. You have to have an attitude, too. It takes guts to get on the back of a float."

The dynamic duo also approached Best Maid Pickles and the city for support. "We approached Best Maid for money, and they actually gave it to us. They have been good to us.

"We thought maybe 1,000 people would come, but 5,000 ended up coming! My dream was to recreate the parade scene from Ferris Bueller's Day Off, where he's on the float, and everyone is singing and dancing around him, and that was happening."



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We also asked the city, and they blocked off the streets and sent police. The city has also been so amazing to us," Amanda explained.

And so, with only a few months of planning and some brave, red-wigged queens, the Pickle Parade kicked off its inaugural celebration in March 2012. The outcome was outstanding. "We thought maybe 1,000 people would come, but 5,000 ended up coming!" Amanda recalled. "My dream was to recreate the parade scene from *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, where he's on the float, and everyone is singing and dancing around him, and that was happening."

"The parade hit at just the right time. People were ready for something fun. Nothing major was going on in the city between New Year's Day and Fourth of July, so this was perfect timing," Delilah explained.

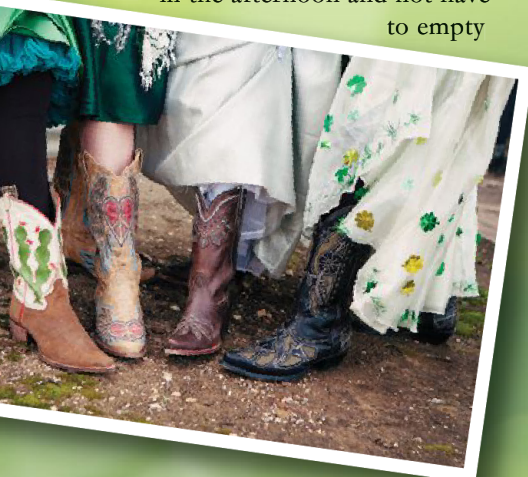
A large part of the parade's success was also attributed to its





"Most women our age do everything for somebody else — for work, for the kids, for the house, for the husband. It's not about you ever. But, when you get on that float, it's not about anybody else. It's about you."

affordability. "Everything but the food is free!" Amanda explained. "You can bring your kids out to the parade in the afternoon and not have to empty



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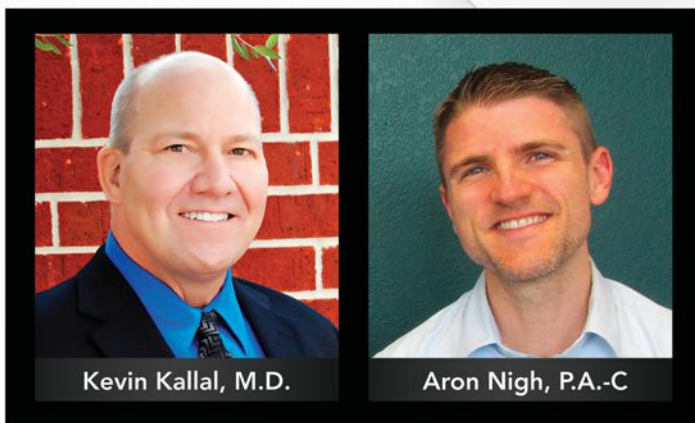
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your wallet. Then, get a babysitter and come back at night for the concerts.”

Parade-goers were enchanted by floats and also challenged to pickle-eating and pickle juice-drinking contests. Winners were, of course, awarded with pickles. Because of its enormous success, the parade has since expanded to include 10K and 5K races, a 6-foot-tall walking pickle, concerts, a kid's area and more.

The Pickle Queens have donated thousands of dollars to Feed



the Kids and Habitat for Humanity since their inception. “Almost all of us Pickle Queens have kids or grandkids. So, the kids are important to us,” Amanda shared.

Unlike stereotypical royalty, the Pickle Queens remain very active on the day of the parade. “No queen is more important than another,” Delilah explained. “Queens work. We’ve had queens walking around with giant toilet paper rolls to refill port-a-potties or hauling things. They’re not afraid to get dirty.”

But for many of the queens, the parade is more than pickles and St. Patrick's Day. They were all very touched by the receptivity of the crowd. “One of the queens said, ‘This is my town.’ And I was thinking, *This is your town — because they love you.* The people in the crowd recognize you and start yelling your name and waving. A lot of those women really need this.

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They need to know that they have an identity," Delilah described.

"Most women our age do everything for somebody else — for work, for the kids, for the house, for the husband," Amanda further explained. "It's not about you ever. But, when you get on that float, it's not about anybody else. It's about you."

This year's event will be three days, March 14-16. On Friday, runners in the 10K and 5K races can pick up their race packets and listen to the Clint Moody band at Steven's Garden & Grill. On Saturday, the Pickle Queens don their gowns, wigs and tiaras to start the 10K and 5K races, parade, contests and live music, including the disco band Le Freak. The weekend comes to a close on Sunday with a special showing of *The Wizard of Oz* at the Farr Best Theater. "We tell people to bring a chair and settle in," Delilah smiled. "We've got plenty of food, plenty to drink. Just plan to stay awhile." **NOW**

Editor's Note: For more information on this year's Pickle Parade, visit www.pickleparade.org or [facebook.com/picklequeens](https://www.facebook.com/picklequeens).

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Tomorrow's leaders are Girl Scouts today: Tara Spridco, Janna and Jacqueline Campbell, Denae Jaksik and Jillian Spridco.

Stepping Up

— By Callie Revell

The Girl Scouts program has had an obvious effect on five local Girl Scouts. Although young, all are well-spoken, mature and full of big ideas. The oldest of the group, Jacqueline Campbell, is a senior in high school and in the process of completing her Gold Award, the highest honor a Girl Scout can achieve. To earn this award, Jacqueline, along with her advisor, Shane Whisler, has chosen to fulfill the required

80 hours of community service with a project about the negative effects of cyberbullying, providing the community with information and a support group as they meet at the East Broad Outreach Center.

Most Girl Scouts don't make it as far as Jacqueline. The program is open to all girls from kindergarten to 12th grade, but statistics show that many begin dropping out once they leave elementary school. This is Jacqueline's seventh year







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in Girl Scouts. Her younger sister, Janna, got involved first, sparking Jacqueline's interest. "My sister was having too much fun," Jacqueline said, explaining how she gathered together her friends and started her own troop in sixth grade. She's been going strong ever since. "I've stayed in the program so long because I just like helping the little kids out," she added.

Helping others is a common goal for all Girl Scouts, as evidenced by the organization's extensive mentoring program. Juniors (grades four through five) can become Junior Aides, and Cadettes (grades six through eight) can become Program Aides. Senior and Ambassador girls (grades nine through 12) can join the Volunteer-In-Training program to become official Girl Scout volunteers after they age out of the program, if they choose. Each girl must complete the required classroom training,

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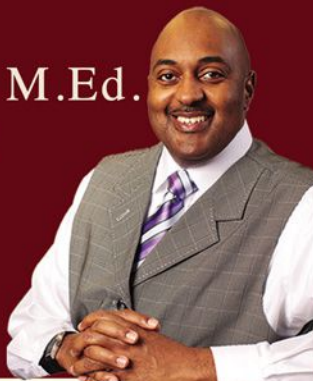
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enabling them to assist at troop meetings, camp and throughout the community. By becoming Program Aides, the girls have a chance to develop a close relationship with younger girls and help guide them in fun and exciting ways. Along the way, Program Aides become strong, confident leaders among their peers.

Jacqueline has been a Program Aide for six years, and believes it is one of the fundamental aspects of the Girl Scout program. "Girl Scouts is about a community joining together to help out other Girl Scouts. We call each other 'sisters,'" Jacqueline explained. "I'm working on my Volunteer-In-Training pin, because I like working with the

"I've been in Girl Scouts for eight years now, and each year I've learned something new. It's really broadened my horizons."

little ones, and I'm good with kids." As an older Girl Scout, Jacqueline has the unique opportunity to be a role model for many younger girls who look up to her. "I love being a part of the Girl Scouts to represent the little ones, to be able to say, even though I'm in high school, I can still be a Girl Scout. It gives them something to look forward to when they're older."

Janna, along with fellow Girl Scouts Denae Jaksik and Tara Spridco, has been a Program Aide for over a year. Tara's younger sister, Jillian, completed her Junior Aide training in November 2013. As Program Aides, Janna, Denae and Tara help at camp, coordinate events and teach the five important Girl Scout skills — decision making, people skills, goal setting, money management and business ethics.

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joined to know their cookies,” Tara said. “It definitely taught us responsibility and leadership.” Training elementary-aged girls to use entrepreneurial skills is no easy task. “Asking people to buy cookies takes a lot of courage, especially for shyer people,” Tara said.

“Especially if you’re with Daisies (kindergarten through first grade) or Brownies (second through third grade), and they haven’t really done any cookie sales yet,” Jillian added. “You help them speak up and share your confidence with them.”

Some might think the Girl Scouts program is all about selling cookies, but the girls use money from cookie sales to participate in a variety of wholesome activities. “We earn 60 cents for every box we sell, so we use it for trips or parties,” Denae said. “There’s also a thing called Troop-to-Troop where people donate money, and we send cookies to troops overseas.” Other activities include Red Cross first aid training, cake decorating courses and floral arrangement classes. Girl Scouts also equips girls with wilderness-survival skills through camps. They recently went on trips to Sea World and NASA. The troop often focuses on giving back to the community of Mansfield through service projects and volunteer events.

Through all of these activities, the Girl Scouts develop a close bond and achieve goals together, all while developing important skills to use in the future. “I’ve been in Girl Scouts for eight years now, and each year I’ve learned something new. It’s really broadened my horizons,” Tara said.

The girls in the troop share an undeniable sense of camaraderie. “That’s



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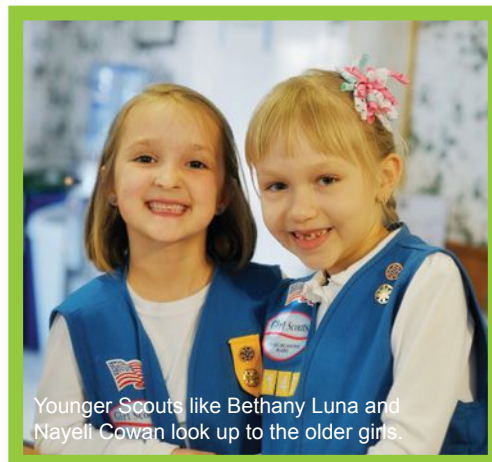


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the main thing that made me want to stay in the program,” Janna said. “My whole troop and I are getting to the point where we’re all best friends. Personally, it’s more fun when I get to learn stuff with my friends than when I learn by myself.”

Jillian, a fourth-grader, has already started training for her future career. “I want to be a teacher, and Girl Scouts will help me grow,” Jillian said. “It helps me work with little kids and develop the



Younger Scouts like Bethany Luna and Nayeli Cowan look up to the older girls.

leadership skills I need.” For Jillian, the mentoring program has proved invaluable so far. “Because I started so young, having the older girls help me when I was a Daisy and a Brownie made me want to stay in there to get the chance to do what they did for my troop.”

That’s why Jacqueline wants everyone to know that Girl Scouts isn’t just for little girls. “Just because you’re in high school doesn’t mean you have to give up being a Girl Scout. A few of my friends got to high school and quit, but when I tell them about what we do, they tell me they should’ve stayed in,” Jacqueline said.

Jacqueline has big plans for her future, but Girl Scouts will always be a part of her life. “I was a shy girl in ninth grade. My friends saw a real change in me after I was in Girl Scouts the second semester of my freshman year.” The Girl Scout program has helped shape her future in more ways than one. The mentoring program, in particular, gave her the chance to get hands-on experience working with young children. “I’m going to go to Tarrant County College for two years and then transfer to The University of Texas at Arlington for their child care program,” she shared. “I want to be a kindergarten teacher and a role model for children.” **NOW**

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Finding Mr. Right

— By Carolyn Wills



On a street in an older, picturesque area of Mansfield stands a home so grand that it is nearly impossible to imagine it any other way. Built in 1996 and sparing no expense, quality or workmanship, the results were stunning.

This distinctive home had just one owner until it was put on the market five years ago. When it did not sell within two years, it was sadly returned to the bank to remain empty. For two years, beyond enduring abandonment, the once regal home became a popular, albeit secret, party place for local teens. Reportedly, in one night it attracted as many as a hundred “uninvited” guests.

The listing price likely prevented offers at first. Then, as the price adjusted, vandalism made buyers wary. Interesting people often live in interesting houses, though, so when John and Sharon Banta took a look, they knew what they must do.

They first viewed the house through the side door, seeing a huge kitchen with tall glass-paned upper cabinets, an elaborate drawer-system for lower cabinets, vintage-style stove and two ovens, granite counters and a big center island. “I immediately fell in love,” Sharon smiled. “Then, I walked toward one of many

At Home With John and Sharon Banta

pocket doors, saw its stained glass insert and knew this was our house."

"The vandalism kind of worked in our favor," John said. "I could see the damage was superficial. Windows and doors were broken, walls had holes, and the kitchen floor and refrigerator were covered in spray paint, but the foundation was good, materials and workmanship were high-quality, and the three-and-a-half acre lot was beautiful."

Today, thanks to John and Sharon, the 6,900-square-foot beauty stands as proudly as it did when it was constructed



in 1996. "We bought it in December 2012," he smiled. "Until the day we closed, the vandalism continued. In fact, we had to rethink our plan to work on the house while staying in our downtown Fort Worth apartment. Instead, we bought an air mattress, camped out in the house and kept the vandals away until our furniture arrived."

In addition to the enormous kitchen, the three-story house, including a partially finished bedroom and bath in the attic, features five bedrooms, three-and-a-half baths, den, formal living and dining room, stunning foyer and a three-car garage. The home showcases wraparound porches, prominent columns and a high, steeply pitched roof. The front right

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corner of the house is a turret extending to the second floor. The exterior is clad in light-colored Austin stone with raw cedar trim. "I call it Hill Country Victorian," Sharon said.

Sharon designs and makes jewelry, sews, paints, decorates and soon expects to master the art of making stained glass windows. Her talents and labor have clearly made their mark. "Before we moved in, the interior had been painted in 15 shades of beige, and now we've repainted everything. I like primary



colors," she explained. Now, in place of monotone tans, each room reflects a jewel-toned personality. The den is a deep indigo blue. "John wanted a red dining room, and I wanted a red living room," she said. Her solution was to paint both in a beautiful shade of red called vermillion. The room serving as an office/art room and library is a rich evergreen, and the laundry/workroom is the shade of daffodils.

Architectural elements and artistic touches in this home are so abundant and

finely done that they easily warrant their own coffee table book. Ten-foot ceilings are bordered with deep wood moldings, and 2-foot-thick walls are edged with 12-inch baseboards. Millwork on the window frames and sills in the turret magically curve with the shape of the turret.

Solid oak floors throughout the home are highlighted by patterns of inlaid mahogany. Each interior door is a solid wood pocket door, most of which have a stunning stained glass insert on the upper half. "I plan to make stained

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glass inserts for the doors that still need them,” Sharon said. “Attention to detail in this home is amazing. Vintage-style reproduction light fixtures are

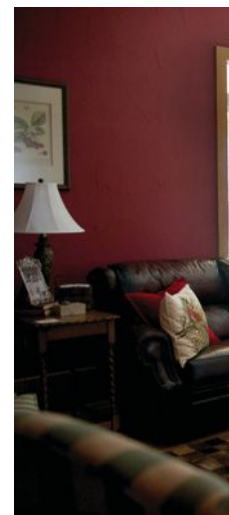


exquisite and every piece of hardware throughout is vintage brass. All of the latches on the pocket doors match, as do all of the handles and knobs on the kitchen cabinetry.”

The formal living room features a large inviting gas fireplace with steer horns mounted above to lend a touch of Texas. John’s and Sharon’s extensive mineral collections are brilliantly displayed in three massive cases. “Some of the pieces we found on our own, some are from our travels, and most were bought at rock and mineral shows,” John explained.

John is a senior geophysicist at BOPCO, L.P. in downtown Fort Worth. He was born in Wyoming, and as the son of a geologist, he comes by his love for minerals naturally. Sharon, from Virginia, credits her fascination for rocks and minerals to finding treasures on a gravel road near her childhood home.

In addition to their passion for minerals, they collect vintage oak furniture and glassware. They appreciate quality and charm, entertaining in their home. For the past 14 years, they have enjoyed the art and exercise of ballroom dancing. “We have designated one room as the ballroom,” Sharon smiled. With




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little furniture and a wide expanse of beautiful hardwood flooring, they enjoy the perfect space for practicing what they learn in dance class.

As for entertaining, they host several parties each year. "We recently had a Murder Mystery night," Sharon grinned. "The mystery started in the living room and was solved in the dining room."

Upstairs, the spacious master suite with its own interior hallway leading to a large bath is exquisite. The walls are painted a dark blue called Starry Night, and the turret makes an ideal sitting area. Pepper, the Banta cat, has a special connection to the turret.



"She will sit for hours staring from the windows," John said. "This property has the fattest squirrels on the planet."

Before moving to Mansfield, John and Sharon lived in Arlington for about 17 years, in a home that John describes as "not the Mr. Right" home, but the "Mr. Right Now" home. After their children finished school, they set out to find the Mr. Right home. "We love Mansfield and are fortunate to live in a home with character and quality," John said. "We still have a lot to do, but we expected that. Landscaping is the next big project, and one day, a pool."

So it goes that interesting people often live in interesting houses. When John and Sharon at last found their Mr. Right house, they knew what they must do. **NOW**



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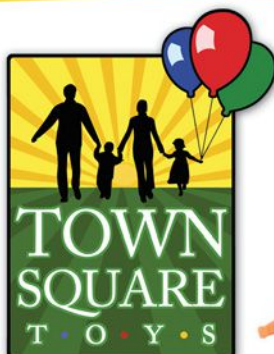
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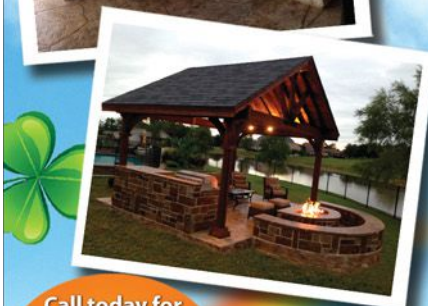
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FAMILY FITNESS

— By Mikaela Mathews

Without bribery, encouragement or arguments, Dr. Joe Silva's children tie up their running shoes or buckle on their bike helmets. For them, fitness is a family affair. "My kids have always been interested in fitness," Dr. Silva shared. "When I get home, they are always asking if we can ride bikes, go to the track, go swimming or go to the gym for activities."

Dr. Silva and his wife, Dr. Cheryl Silva, have long instilled healthy habits into their two children, ages 5 and 9. "We don't have video games. Our children prefer to go outside and play," he explained. At an early age, both his son and daughter started participating in triathlons





and other fitness activities. They each ran their first 1K at the age of 3.

But from where did this love for fitness come? "They saw us doing it and wanted to do it too," Dr. Silva explained. Since 2007, Dr. Silva has participated in over 14 triathlons and duathlons, which are similar to triathlons, but without the swimming. "You run two miles, bike 12 miles, then run two miles again," Dr. Silva described. Dr. Cheryl has also competed in a triathlon, but now sticks to running, strength training and yoga.

Dr. Silva's experience paid off when he competed in the Fast and Furious Duathlon at Joe Pool Lake in April 2013. He placed first in his age category and received an offer from USA Triathlon (USAT) to compete in The National Championship race in Arizona in October 2013. "My favorite race was in Arizona, because it was a change of





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scenery," he shared. "But, it was also the most challenging because they have so many hills that I'm not used to."

Despite the difficulty in Arizona, Dr. Silva still ranked as a top contender in his age category. A few weeks after the race, USAT invited Dr. Silva to join Team USA to compete in the International Triathlon Union's 2014 Sprint Course Duathlon World Championships in Spain. According to USAT's website, the championships are for amateur racers who will compete against 50 other countries in May 2014. The distance will remain the same as the qualifying race.

Although Dr. Silva has competed in several triathlons, he's chosen to participate more in duathlons because there's no swimming. "Swimming isn't really my forte," he laughed. "I do like it, but I'm not very efficient." His favorite fitness activity is biking, which just so happens to be a big part of duathlons. "Biking comes easier to me. I've enjoyed it ever since I was a kid."

Nonetheless, transitioning between biking and running in duathlons is one

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Although Dr. Silva has competed in several triathlons, he's chosen to participate more in dualthlons

of the biggest challenges. "Your muscles are conditioned for just one thing, not for doing both," he shared. Eight to 12 weeks before a race, he trains his body to transition between running and biking. "I'll run and then bike to get my body acclimated to that kind of movement," he explained. "People may be able to run five miles or bike 40 miles, but it's a lot different to put it all together."

Dr. Silva has long been athletic. "I played football in college at Baylor University, and I've always liked athletic things," he shared. But participating in duathlons is much different than playing football. Dr. Silva enjoys the individuality of running and biking. "If you train well, you're doing it for yourself. You don't have to motivate somebody else to do what they need to do. For the



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person who is self-motivated, this is perfect," he explained.

For several years, Dr. Silva also helped others feed a love for fitness as the coach for the Mansfield Special Olympics powerlifting team. "My wife became friends with a student's mom, and she asked if I wanted to be the coach," he recalled. He accepted and met with the students for a few hours in the week to practice.

Special Olympians would also be paired with other high school students to prepare for competitions. "These two guys would compete together as a team and then compete against another team like them. It was fun to see them be able to encourage each other to do well," Dr. Silva remarked.

Dr. Silva's children started participating in triathlons early in life, when his son was 4 and his daughter was 7. They both, however, have done this very willingly. "I've never told them to do the races or said, 'OK, we're doing this.' They just always want to do them," he shared. "We live close to a school with a track. My son learned how to ride his bike without training wheels this spring. He wanted to go to the track every day this summer, even when it was 105 F outside. He rode six miles the day we took off the training wheels. He was having fun."

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The children's triathlons range in difficulty. "For my son's age group, they do a 25-meter swim, a 1-mile bike ride and then a half-mile run," he explained. "For my daughter's age group, it's a 100-meter swim, a 2- to 3-mile bike ride and a 1-mile run — but the distances vary with different races." Dr. Silva and his wife are able to help their children in the transition areas at some of the triathlons. "For my son's first triathlon, I helped him in the transitions and ran next to him during the biking and running portions of the race."

His daughter completed her first 5K race in November 2013. But her favorite triathlon is the North Texas Kids Triathlon in Arlington. "She has completed that race twice and has done pretty well," he recalled. "It's at The University of Texas at Arlington. That one is fun for them because the Dallas Cowboy cheerleaders are there, and they all get a medal." She also likes the Mansfield Kids Triathlon, where she's finished in second place for the past two years. She has her eyes on first for next year.

In the triathlons, her specialty is swimming. "She's a part of the Mansfield Aquatics Club swim team. She's also interested in sports nutrition and is always asking about which foods will give her more energy to swim faster."

Fitness and nutrition are certainly important for Dr. Silva and his family. As a chiropractor, he encourages his patients to take care of themselves by exercising and eating well. He certainly walks the walk by instilling this in his family, as well. "It's a way to stay in shape," he said, "and it's important to me to be a good role model for our children." **NOW**

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So How Does Your Garden Grow?

— By Randy Bigham

Unlike contrary Mary of the classic nursery rhyme, you probably don't have silver bells or cockleshells in your garden. But as spring escapes winter's gloom, you're no doubt as ready as she for the bounty the season brings to your little patch of Mother Earth.

Robin Smith, an Ellis County Master Gardener, is poised to start her routine

fired with the enthusiasm brought on by warm, blue skies and green leaves sprouting. "At this time of year, I find it hard to contain my excitement," Robin admitted, "and I tend to get ahead of myself a bit. If you're like me, a bit of restraint is in order."

Robin insists a checklist is a good method for prioritizing time and effort in the garden, even for experts. "It will allow you to have fun but still get great results," she explained. Items on Robin's list include pruning evergreens, summer flowering trees and shrubs early in March. "For trees and shrubs that bloom

in the spring," she cautioned, "wait until they have finished blooming, and prune fruit trees before bud break." She also advocates cutting back all groundcover early in the month, so it "looks nice and tidy when it sends out new shoots later."

Raising vegetables in small city gardens is increasingly common, and Robin has useful tips for those just starting out. "Don't be in a hurry to put out young pepper or tomato plants," she cautioned. "Wait until close to the end of the month to be sure all chance of frost is gone. And be prepared to cover them if temperatures dip low one night."





Joseph Masabni, assistant professor and extension horticulturist for the Texas A&M University System, also has words of advice for new urban gardeners. "Home gardening continues to grow in popularity," he wrote in the *Texas Home Vegetable Gardening Guide*. "One of every three families does some type of home



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gardening.” He ensures great results for vegetable and herb gardeners who observe basic, practical considerations. Joseph believes the following rules can make all the difference between a merely functioning veggie patch and one producing high-quality, delicious specimens year-round:

Choosing a Garden Site

The city offers limited space for growing herbs and vegetables, but a well-placed and tended garden can be a productive one. “The ideal garden area gets full or nearly full sunlight,” Joseph specified, “and has deep, well-drained, fertile soil. The garden should be near a water outlet but not close to competing shrubs or trees.”

Selecting Crops

Choosing vegetables suited to the size of the garden space is an important consideration. Vine crops like watermelon or squash require more room unless situated near a fence or trellis. For the small garden, beets, broccoli, onions, spinach, carrots and eggplant are ideal. For larger spaces, cantaloupe, cauliflower, pumpkin, okra and cucumber work well.

Garden Planning

The placement of long-term crops like Brussels sprouts or sweet potatoes, which mature in 80 days or more, shouldn't interfere with caring for and harvesting short-termers like leaf lettuce or turnips. “When you plant a new crop, it should be totally unrelated to the crop

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it is replacing,” Joseph cautioned. “This is called crop rotation. Crop rotation helps prevent the buildup of diseases and insects. For example, follow early beans with beets, squash or bell peppers.”

Preparing the Soil

For top production, make sure the garden soil is aerated and drains well. Adding organic matter can improve soil that has a heavy clay or sand component. “Never work wet garden soil,” Joseph advised. “And seeds germinate better in well-prepared soil than in coarse, lumpy soil.”



Fertilizing

“Heavy clay soils can be fertilized much more heavily at planting than can sandy soils,” Joseph pointed out. “Heavy clay soils and those with lots of organic matter can safely absorb and store fertilizer at three to four times the rate of sandy soils. For most soils, two to three pounds of 21-0-0 (ammonium sulfate) per 100 linear feet of row, applied in the furrow and watered in, is adequate.”

Planting

For successful production, plant vegetables in early spring or early fall.

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"Using transplants rather than seeds, when possible, allows crops to mature earlier and extends the productive period of many vegetable crops," Joseph shared. Beets, lettuce and cabbage are among easily transplanted crops. Carrots and pepper plants require more care while sweet corn and peas are hard to transplant without the use of containers.

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As home vegetable gardens continue to multiply, the influence of organic gardening methods has spread as well. That's a good thing, according to Robin. "The awareness of the environment," she concluded, "has opened up this earth-friendly approach, and it's another great way to enjoy gardening." **NOW**

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Family lawyer Lindsay D. DeVos helps people struggling through difficult times.

— By Mikaela Mathews

Nominated as a Top Attorney in Family Law by *Fort Worth Magazine* for four years and a Super Lawyer – Rising Star by *Texas Lawyer* magazine for four years, Lindsay D. DeVos has made a name for herself as a family lawyer. She's been practicing for 11 years and wants clients to know they can trust her during their difficult times.

"My goal for my clients is to be compassionate, to let them know I understand," Lindsay explained. "I also help them maintain focus and not allow their emotions take over." An important part of her job is to help retain stability for the children in the middle of a divorce or those being

placed in foster care. "I also advocate for foster children. When the state comes in and relieves them from neglect or abuse, I often represent those children and look out for their best interest."

Lindsay also does collaborative family law, which allows for private divorces that don't go to court. "We have a series of meetings where we negotiate. It's very goal-oriented around the children and family structure," Lindsay explained.

Although a majority of Lindsay's cases are divorces, she also gets to play a part in a family's happier times, such as adoptions. "When I get to see children reunited with their

Business **NOW**

family after they've been in the foster system, or when we do an adoption and that child has their 'forever family,' those are the most satisfying parts of my job," she smiled.

Family law wasn't on Lindsay's radar when she first entered law school at Texas Wesleyan University School of Law (now called Texas A&M University School of Law). But when she graduated, she started working as an associate doing estate planning, probate law, bankruptcy and family law. She started her own firm focusing on family law in 2005, and later, moved to Mansfield in 2008.

Lindsay believes her path has worked out for the best since she can easily relate with many of her clients. "I was adopted by a stepparent," she shared. "So I have a stepparent in my life and half-siblings. Now that I'm married, we have three boys, and one of them is my stepson. So, now I'm a stepparent, too. I can relate to a lot of people who come into my office. That part of my personal life is very important, because it helps my clients feel more comfortable or entrust their lives in my hands."

When interacting with children going through a divorce, Lindsay has also used her personal experience to help them. "When kids come to my office, or I see them at their schools, they're very shy. But, when I tell them I'm a mom, or I was adopted, or I was in the middle of a divorce as a child, they open up more."

Lindsay's office consists of a paralegal, Kayla Sonderby, and her receptionist, Amy Tinsley. Lindsay wanted to keep her practice small so she could still spend time with her family. She is also very involved in the Mansfield and Fort Worth lawyer community. She's a member of the Women's Division of the Mansfield Chamber of Commerce, president of the Tarrant County Family Law Bar Association, mentors law students and young lawyers and volunteers on several other committees. She believes it's important to be a part of the community and to help others. **NOW**

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Elizabeth Rosenauer and Shelly Kellam stand by to hand out information and greet guests at the Oliver Nature Park's Grand Opening.



Lana Foreman, of Gone to the Dogs dog training, teaches her students how to handle their dogs.



Justin Marcus, with Sam's Club, holds the New Member Award given by the Mansfield Chamber.



Scott and Melody Meigs and Mark and Michelle Canton, with Texas Trust, dress up for the Mansfield Chamber Dinner.



Pilot Michael Westbrook flies up high in his motorless glider.



Rick Brooks shows off the ball that he made the hole-in-one with at Mansfield National on hole number eight in mid-January.



Julia serves up hot drinks at Starbucks on a cold day.



Simmie Myers, Tiffany Neelley and Sarah Ewart finalize plans for the upcoming Celebrate Children 5K event in Rose Park.



Visitors to the new Oliver Nature Park's Grand Opening are greeted by owls and other exotic birds.

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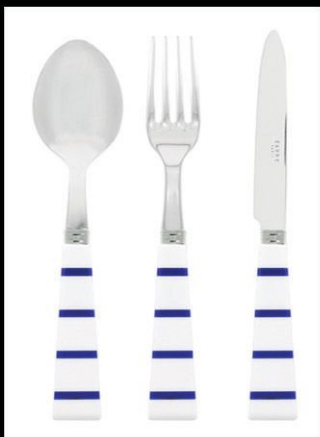
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Short-term vs. Long-term Investments: What's the Difference?

At various times, many people may feel frustrated by the performance of their investments. For example, they expect growth, and they don't get it — or they think the value of their investment won't fluctuate much, but it does. However, some of this frustration might be alleviated if investors were more familiar with the nature of their investment vehicles. Specifically, it's important to keep in mind the difference between long-term and short-term investments.

What defines long-term and short-term investments? Long-term investments are those vehicles that you intend to hold for more than one year — in fact, you generally intend to hold them for several years. On the other hand, you usually hold short-term investments for one year or less.

You can find several key distinctions between short-term and long-term vehicles. Here are a few to consider:

- *They carry different expectations.* When you purchase an investment that you intend to keep for many years, you may be expecting the investment to increase in value, so that you can eventually sell it for a profit. In addition, you may be looking for the investment to provide income. When you purchase a short-term vehicle, you are generally not expecting much in the way of a return or an increase in value. Typically, you purchase short-term investments for the relatively greater degree of principal protection they are designed to provide.
- *They meet different needs at different times of life.* You will have different investment needs at different times of your life. When you're young, and just starting out in your career, you may require a mix of long- and short-term investments. You might need the short-term ones to help pay for a down

payment on a home, while the long-term ones could be used to help build resources for your retirement. But later in life, when you're either closing in on retirement, or you're already retired, you may have much less need for long-term vehicles, with a corresponding increase in your need for short-term investments.

- *They can satisfy different goals.* If you purchase investments that you intend to hold for the long term, you probably have a long-term goal in mind — such as building resources to help pay for a comfortable retirement or leaving a legacy. On the other hand, a short-term investment would be more appropriate if you know that you will need a certain amount of money at a certain time — perhaps to purchase a car or to fund a vacation.

- *They carry different risks.* All investments carry some type of risk. One of the biggest risks associated with long-term investments is volatility, the fluctuations in the financial markets that can cause investments to lose value. On the other hand, short-term investment vehicles may be subject to purchasing power risk — the risk that your investment's return will not keep up with inflation.

As an investor, you'll probably need a mix of long-term and short-term vehicles. By knowing the differences between these two categories, you should have a good idea of what to expect from your investments — and this knowledge can help you make those choices that are right for you. **NOW**

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Kyle Shelton is an Edward Jones representative based in Mansfield.

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Urinary Tract Infections

— By Betty Tryon, BSN

“Just drink some cranberry juice, and you’ll feel better soon.” This little piece of advice has weaved its way between family members and friends for many years for urinary tract infections (UTI). But, does it work? The answer is a resounding — maybe. Research shows that cranberry juice inhibits bacteria from sticking to the walls of the bladder. This is most helpful for frequent sufferers of UTI. However, for infrequent sufferers, the findings are not so hopeful. In addition, not enough research has been done to determine how much to drink, how frequently and at what strength to get relief or even if cranberry pills would work just as well.

A UTI is an infection, usually bacterial, of the urinary tract system. The urinary tract system consists of two kidneys, two ureters, one bladder and a urethra. This system is the body’s way of producing, storing and eliminating urine. A UTI usually begins with bacteria entering the body through the urethra and traveling into the bladder. Normally when bacteria or other harmful organisms enter the urinary system, the body quickly takes care of it by flushing it from the system. However, the invasion can take hold and overwhelm the body’s defenses. Most of these infections occur in the bladder and are called bladder infections. If it is not resolved, the infection can travel up the ureters to the kidneys and cause a kidney infection.

Since cranberry juice is not a cure-all for a UTI, most patients must rely upon antibiotics, which are the best course of treatment for the infection. The type of antibiotic will depend upon the specific organism causing the problem. It is important to take all of your medication as prescribed. Increasing your fluid intake will help to flush out your urinary tract system. UTI can be painful, so your physician may prescribe an analgesic for comfort. Often a warm heating pad over the area can bring some relief.

One preventive measure that can help females avoid a UTI is to empty their bladder immediately after sexual intercourse. Females should also wipe themselves from the front to the back to avoid dragging germs from the rectal area to the urethra. Empty your bladder frequently throughout the day. In males, an enlarged prostate will limit the ability to empty the bladder, and surgery may become necessary.

UTI can be stubborn to treat. Due diligence in following medical protocol is important to limit the infection and also to prevent one. If you think cranberry juice can help you then by all means, drink up. **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.

Through March 4

Rhea Lana's Children's Consignment
Event: **Friday**, 10:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.;
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www.southwestdfw.rhealana.com.

March 1, 2

Cheaper By the Dozen: **Saturday**: 3:00 p.m.
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Lutheran Church, 1018 E. Debbie Ln. \$12
for adults. \$10 for seniors age 62 and older.
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March 8

2nd Annual Ridge Run: 9:00 a.m., Walnut
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for 1K before **March 3**. \$20 for day of. 95
percent of the trail is on grass. Proceeds will
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March 11 — 14

Animal Extravaganza Week: **Tuesday**: Movie
Day: 12:00-3:00 p.m., \$1 with MAC card. \$2
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and older. **Wednesday**: Fed the Fish with
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Celebrate Children 5K/1 Mile Fun Run:
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Paws with Partners meeting:

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In The Kitchen With Jennifer Fabian Alt

— By *Mikaela Mathews*

With a rich family history in Mansfield, Jennifer Fabian Alt believes family is important. “My grandparents owned my parent’s house before they did, so I have spent most holidays and family gatherings cooking in the same house!” she shared.

Learning how to cook from her mom and granny, Jennifer has taken those lessons to her own family’s table. “I love teaching my daughter to cook. She is 7 and has been cooking with me since she was a toddler. My husband and I also enjoy cooking together,” she said.

For Jennifer, cooking is all about taking care of her family. “I make a menu every Saturday and go to the grocery store with an organized list. I have a family of three, but I always make enough food for more!” **NOW**

Chicken Asparagus Quesadillas

4-5 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
Fiesta fajita seasoning, to taste
1 Tbsp. oil
1 Tbsp. cilantro, chopped
1 green bell pepper, chopped
1 yellow onion, chopped
1 bunch fresh asparagus, chopped into 1-inch lengths
2 Tbsp. butter (divided use)
Salt and pepper, to taste
5 large flour tortillas
1/4 cup cheese, shredded

1. Cube chicken; sprinkle with Fiesta seasoning. Cook chicken in a skillet with oil.
2. In a separate pan, sauté cilantro, bell pepper, onion and asparagus in 1 Tbsp. butter. Add salt and pepper to taste.
3. Use remaining butter on one side of a tortilla; place tortillas buttered-side down in the pan. Add the chicken and vegetable

mixture on one side of the tortilla and cover with cheese. Fold the top over. Brown both sides. Repeat until all tortillas are used.

Zucchini Stir Fry

1 lb. thick bacon, chopped
1 onion
3 cloves of garlic
1 7-oz. can green chiles
1 tsp. oregano
1 1/2 tsp. cumin
2 lbs. frozen corn
3 zucchini, sliced 1/4-inch thick
2 cups shredded Monterey Jack cheese

1. Fry bacon; set aside.
2. In a separate pan, cook onion, garlic, green chiles, oregano and cumin until onion is tender. Add frozen corn; cook for 10 minutes. Add zucchini. Stir well; top with cheese and cooked bacon. Simmer, covered, until the cheese melts. Serve.

Zesty Corned Beef Dinner

4 lbs. corned beef brisket
6 potatoes, peeled and cut
6 carrots, sliced to desired length
8 cabbage wedges
1 envelope chicken gravy mix
2 Tbsp. horseradish
1/8 cup oil
1 1/4 cups corned beef broth

1. Cover brisket with water in a large kettle and bring to a boil. Simmer for four hours (one hour per pound). Add potatoes and carrots during the last 30 minutes of simmering time. Add the cabbage during the last 20 minutes. Place on a serving platter.
2. Mix gravy mix, horseradish, cooking oil and broth in a small pan and bring to a boil, stirring occasionally. Simmer for 5 minutes. Serve over meat and veggies.

Artichoke Dip

1 14-oz. can of artichoke hearts, drained, chopped
1 cup mayonnaise
8 oz. Parmesan cheese, shredded
1/2 tsp. garlic powder
1 4.5-oz. can chopped green chiles
1 13-oz. bag bite-size Tostitos

1. Preheat oven to 350 F.
2. Mix first 5 ingredients. Bake uncovered until bubbly and slightly brown on top. Serve with Tostitos.

Baked Honey Chicken

1/4 cup honey
1/4 cup lite soy sauce
1/3 cup onion, minced
2 Tbsp. fresh ginger, grated
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 whole chicken
Cooking spray
2 Tbsp. paprika

1. Preheat oven to 375 F.
2. Combine first five ingredients in a large Ziploc bag. Add chicken, seal and chill for 1 hour.
3. Coat a rack with cooking spray and place in a roasting pan. Place chicken, breast side up on the rack. Bake, covered, for 45 minutes. Remove foil. Spray the top of the chicken with cooking spray and sprinkle paprika. Continue cooking uncovered for another 45 minutes.

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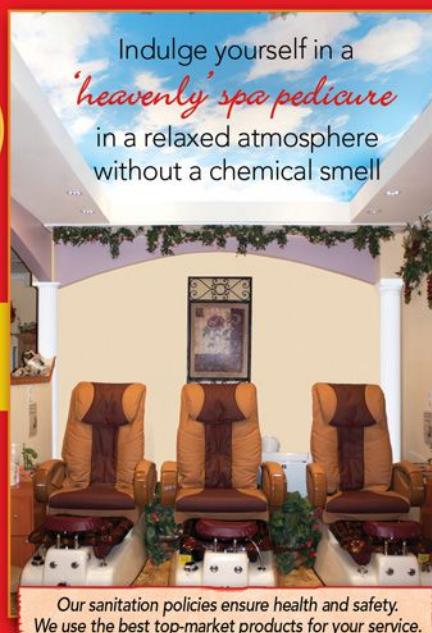
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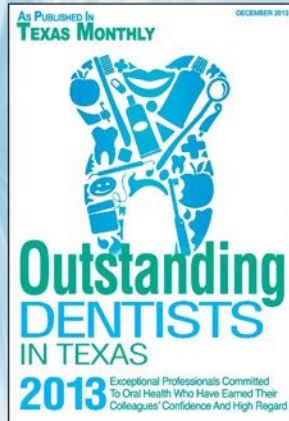
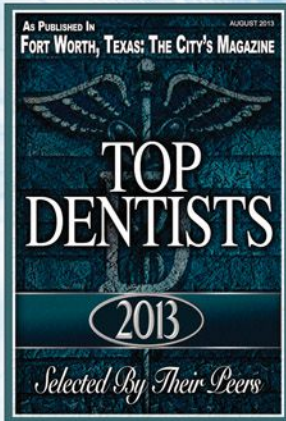


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