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ON THE COVER



Ashlee Gibson has played softball since she was 4 years old.

Photo by Sarah Clawson.

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Editor's Note

Hello, Friends!

Texas Department of Public Safety has been kind enough, over the years, to develop a variety of wildflower seeds with which they sow embankments and state-owned strips of grass running parallel with Texas highways. They have a new one, perfected at Texas A&M University, and named after Lady Bird Johnson. Producing more blooms than the original version, it's a royal-blue bluebonnet.

Sweet scenes of similar wildflowers springing forth from country meadows remind me of a line by Shakespeare: "In emerald tufts, flowers purple, blue, and white; like sapphire, pearl, and rich embroidery." Such fine adornment is found in town, too. The handiwork of individuals, as well as groups like Keep Burleson Beautiful or Johnson County Master Gardeners, is on display all over our community this month. Like Shakespeare, we can all be inspired by our lawns and city parks, as well as the wildflowers growing in the grass alongside our highways.

Happy Mother's Day!

Melissa

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ONE THROW *at a Time*

— By Erin McEndree

The crowd is roaring in the stands at Centennial High School, but Ashlee Gibson is in the zone standing on the mound. She can't hear a thing except for the last-second advice from her coach's voice coming from the dugout. Her adrenaline is pumping. Her tunnel vision focuses on the batter ahead and signals from the catcher. She decides which pitch to execute as she digs in her cleats. She winds up and lets the ball fly 65 miles an hour over home plate. Hopefully, the ball clips a corner of the plate as it travels without making contact with her opponent's bat. But if it does, Ashlee must guard the mound while her teammates play defense. "The play starts with me," Ashlee said. "But everyone else on the field finishes it up. The defense helps by being so strong and quick."



When Centennial High School made its debut for the 2010-2011 school year, Ashlee stepped into the softball program with confidence to help build a strong presence in the community. She threw her first perfect game while at Centennial. When she was a sophomore, the Lady Spartans went undefeated in the district. During her junior year, Centennial and Burleson High were co-district champs, and the Lady Spartans went on to be regional qualifiers.

Ashlee, now a senior, has played softball ever since she was 4 years old. She grew up watching her older niece, Courtney, play, and she wanted to play softball, too. "I told Ashlee I would give her 25 cents each time she threw the ball into a basket," her dad said with a smile. "She almost broke me."

When Ashlee was 9, her mom, Peggy, and dad, Phil, signed her up for fast pitch lessons with Jim Davis, and she has been pitching ever since.

Jim teaches lessons at Living Water Church, where Phil is the pastor. The open park has a mound, batting cages and agility courses set up. "I asked Jim if Ashlee had what it took to become a good pitcher," Phil remembered. "He said she would be the next high school pitcher, and she is."

"My dad and Jim are best friends. I have an at-home coach and an on-the-field coach," Ashlee laughed. Jim teaches the mechanics required for producing spot-on pitches. There are many pitching techniques to master. The drop curve arcs down. The screw ball cuts inside. The curve ball cuts outside. The rise slopes upward. The back door



"I try to read the spin of the laces and how the pitcher releases the ball at her hip and predict the pitch. I think about what I would do."

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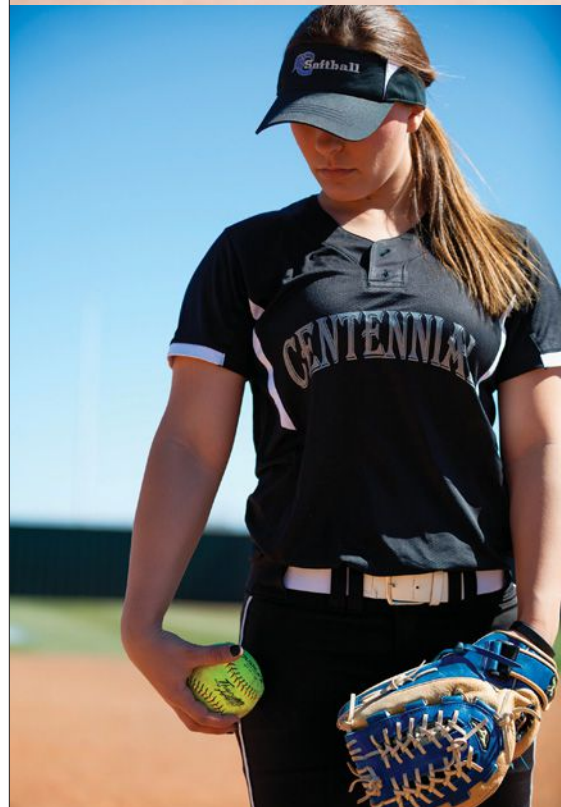
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curve cuts right in front of the batter, often making the batter shrink backward. The change up is slower than all the others. "The trick is to deceive the batters for as long as possible during my windup, and spin the ball so it cuts at just the right time across one of the corners, as a strike," Ashlee said.

"It's a mind game between the batter, the catcher and the pitcher," Ashlee explained further. "Then there is the game as a whole. You have to be so focused." Ashlee believes the game is 80-percent mental, 10-percent talent and 10-percent heart. She credits her coach, Shannon Sullivan, for her physical and mental maturity, on and off the field.

Ashlee works hard to maintain her skills and concentration. When she has a bad inning, she goes to the dugout to regroup by practicing what is not



working. "I can't change the past. I can only work on the next pitch," she said. Jim always stresses, "The most important pitch is the next pitch."

"I remember after we lost a hard game, my dad preached a little sermon on Philippians 3:14 to us," Ashlee said. "The verse is about pressing on to the goal to win the prize." Phil encouraged the team to apply the verse to every game and press on even when it's hard. "It was the extra push we needed," she admitted. "The verse stuck with us, and we began yelling, 'Press on,' at all the games. I even have it on the back of my letter jacket," Ashlee continued. "Since my dad is my coach and pastor, he helps me physically and spiritually. He always leads us in a prayer before the games."

Phil and Peggy are huge supporters. Phil jokes he is the chauffer, equipment carrier, lunch and snack provider. "I'm at least 10 to 15 years younger because of Ashlee," Phil laughed. Peggy is known for having a little fun hooraying the umpires, but they have come to expect it and take it in stride. Ashlee also depends on her teammates.

"We are like sisters," Ashlee said. "It will be hard to leave them when we graduate and all go to different colleges, but some of us will be in the same region, so we will play against each other." Thinking about the future is bittersweet for Ashlee.

Ashlee also loves to bat. "I feel like I know what the pitcher thinks, because I am a pitcher," she said. "I try to read the spin of the laces and how the pitcher releases the ball at her hip and predict the



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pitch. I think about what I would do.” Ashlee is a power hitter in the lineup. Her goal is to get as many runs batted in as possible. Ashlee and the team practice every day after school, Saturdays and some mornings. Ashlee also practices with Jim after her school practice once a week. She plays on the high school team and on a select team that travels around the Metroplex, as well as Alabama, California and Florida.

Because Ashlee shows great dedication and skill, she was noticed by Coach Nicole Dickson, Tyler Jr. College’s (TJC) first-ever softball coach. She scouted in many states and found Ashlee Gibson to be a strong presence on the mound. “I did not even know I was being observed.



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I decided to go to TJC in the fall," Ashlee said. "I have met the other girls on the team at the signing party. Now, we keep in touch. We show real unity already." Again, Ashlee will be entering a program in its debut year.

When not on the field, Ashlee jokingly said she likes to sleep. She also likes writing and giving voluntary lessons to girls interested in softball. She helps her coaches in summer camp with agility, pitching and batting drills. She is active in her church with young kids, teaching Sunday school and helping in the nursery. "I love helping with the little kids. I want to study child development and early childhood in college and become a coach," Ashlee said. She combines her two passions by taking children with special needs to football games. "It is very rewarding, and I love to see how excited they become watching sporting events."

Ashlee will continue her softball career with many supporters in her corner helping her press on to the goal. Parents, coaches and teammates alike will be watching every pitch with great anticipation. **NOW**



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Can-do Man

— By Melissa Rawlins

Some people hear a message, yet never practice it. Steve Black hears, does and teaches. A happy health nut, Steve's also a compassionate worship leader and a motivational music teacher at Mountain Valley Studios in Joshua. He cares a lot about wellness and is often asked to teach about staying healthy in community groups. Leading by example, Steve teaches what comes naturally to him. And he'll keep singing, because he keeps moving.

On the 17th of this month, Steve will compete in the Memorial Hermann Texas Ironman Triathlon in the Woodlands. First, he will swim 2.4 miles, bicycle 112 miles and conclude with a 26.2-mile run. To help him recover, Steve finishes the month with a 65-mile bicycle ride through Johnson County on the Burleson Honey Tour.

This man can't help but push himself. Brilliant enough to be a member of Mensa, Steve reads voraciously.

"My brain is really active," he said, "and I remember everything I read. Then I want to try what I read about, and because I can, I do." When he finds something he likes, he sticks with it.

Making use of his degree in graphic design, Steve created his own tattoo memorializing this month's accomplishment. His mark will contain the Texas flag, representing home, with both of his "M dots" — the logos for both Mensa



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and the Ironman. Each is a stylized vision of a head above the shoulders of the capital letter *M*, which he combined to form his own unique tattoo.

Steve's *M* could stand for music, and the fact that he promotes singing as a lifetime health benefit. In a talk he recently gave to the Burleson Kiwanis Club, Steve challenged members to find a professional singer, who walks with poor posture. "Singers have been trained to sing standing tall, bigger than life, and it carries into all their life," he said. Impressing his students with this reality, Steve shows them videos of strong, vital singers in their 70s and 80s who were professionals half a decade ago. Then he requires his students to stand and sing properly. Their workouts leave them just as tired as if they had finished a Pilates class.

Steve models the same posture while singing in church or with his barbershop quartet. Head held high and back, this 46-year-old stays fit by singing. He exercises to strengthen his core, in order to support his vocal expressions. "It's a whole lot more fun to sing than to lift weights," he said, cracking a grin. "It's *fun* to sing a pretty song to entertain your spouse, your family, your church and your friends."

For Steve, fun matters as much as honesty, faithfulness and compassion. So, despite his associate degree in drafting and design, he found he did not enjoy being in a cubicle all day, while working as a draftsman. "I have always sung in choirs at school and in church, even during my six years in the U.S. Navy, so



Vocalist Kaylee Martin will have trained with Steve Black for two years by the time she heads off to college.

I looked for an outlet for my voice, in addition to church,” Steve said. “When I found Barbershop Harmony Society, things started to shift.”

Not long after joining BHS in Arlington, Steve was asked to help direct his chorus. Soon, he was encouraged to join a quartet. His ability to teach became apparent. “People wanted me to help them solve a problem, such as getting better at a particular goal with their voice,” he said. To aid these short-term coaching sessions, Steve bought recording equipment, and their technical aspects were easy for his math- and computer-friendly brain to conquer. Soon, people were asking him to give vocal lessons *and* to record their quartet. So, he created Your Sound Studios and got a position directing a chorus in Allen, where he met several students.

One of those ladies still studies with Steve, 10 years later, out of a desire to give her congregation the best voice she can. Every two to three weeks, Steve helps her adjust to physiological changes affecting her vocals. She is also gaining interest in learning music theory, which Steve teaches in his own hands-on style.

“I graduated from elementary school with more music theory than many high school or college graduates, because my music teacher, Mrs. Koen, was amazing! She happened to be the music teacher at my church, too,” said Steve, who teases about having more time with Mrs. Koen than with his mom some weeks.

Steve credits his ability to teach to his student’s ability and desire to learn. His passionate personality motivates

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everyone he meets to seriously consider his message. "The students' responsibility is to practice after they've learned the concept. I explain what you need to *do* to accomplish the next step," said Steve, who takes something he knows a person is aware of and shows them how to think about what he's teaching.



"This is not a pep rally," he added. "After 20 minutes, you have to fall back on what you believe in your heart." During a recent wellness class, for instance, a woman announced that her doctor had just given her a clean bill of health. "Yet by the end of the class, it became apparent she was on several medications," Steve said. "What we eventually got to is, how healthy can you think you are, if you're taking drugs to stay that way? Our goal is to no longer rely on drugs by giving the body adequate nutrition, so it can create the ability to heal." The woman's aha moment translated into her commitment to look a little harder at her diet.

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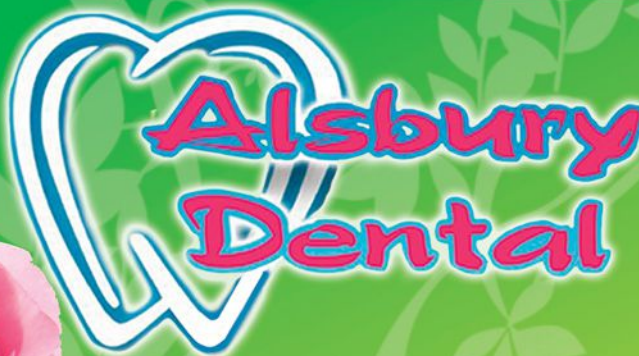
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essential oils, are valid ways for dealing with stress, healing inflammation and strengthening your soul. He had to learn, since he enjoyed strenuous physical exercise yet found his recovery time was declining. Using essential oils and nutritional supplements, Steve found a way to support healing of muscles that cramp in the 80- or 90-mile point of his 100-mile rides.



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Steve plans to live beyond the century point and feel good on the journey. "One hundred twenty years is actually scriptural. So, I figure I'll claim it," Steve said. "I want to be excited about life when I'm 120, too!" **NOW**

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Family

— By Lisa Bell

At Home With Ross and Ginnie Thiebaud

The simplicity of a house built in 1960 set in an older neighborhood establishes the grace of the Thiebaud residence. Crossing the lawn on stepping-stones, a sense of coming home welcomes friends and family. From the street, the house seems rather small, but looks can be deceiving. High school sweethearts Ross and Ginnie Thiebaud married 36 years ago. She spent her childhood in the same neighborhood where they now live. As a little girl, she joined the other kids riding their bicycles. An older man lived there and

often rode his bike, too. He always carried chewing gum for the children, who unofficially adopted him as Papan. Ginnie remembered going with him to see a swing set he built and believes it was at the place she now calls home. "I never dreamed I'd live in any of these houses," she said.

When they had five children, the couple put a down payment on the house and assumed the mortgage. "Times were different back then," Ross said. The Thiebauds gradually changed the interior, enlarging it to accommodate their growing family. At





one time, it provided comfortable space for not only Ginnie and Ross, but also their 12 children. Seven of the children still live at home. Discovering a cousin or a friend of the child sitting at the counter eating lunch isn't uncommon.

Most Sunday afternoons, Ross takes on the role of gourmet cook, serving his wife, children, grandchildren and his parents, Betty and Wayne Thiebaud. Sometimes, Ginnie's parents, Billy and Barbara Ellis, join the family gathering, to savor the meal. "He makes the best chocolate pie in the world," Ginnie said.



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In 2004, they completed a remodel and paid off the house. Recently, the house underwent a second round of remodeling, and they aren't finished. "We try to pay cash for everything," Ross said. "So it takes a while to complete the work."

The recent replacement of carpet in all the rooms complements the cheery feeling. Each room features simple, yet comfortable decor. Family photos and



signs of their faith take up most of the wall space. However, because they homeschool their children, resources used for teaching decorate other spots. Every bedroom contains desks and computers, which the family purchased from Burleson ISD. Supplementing curriculum with web-based learning and homeschool co-op groups helps Ginnie ensure excellent education for a bright future.

The living room, long and narrow, contains two large leather sectionals. At first, Ginnie wasn't sure she liked the idea, because it left little room for decorative items. The ability to gather

everyone in a single room meant more to her than extravagant decor. Nevertheless, she added special touches of her character. Ross recently replaced windows and installed shutter coverings, giving the room a new look. In an area at the end of the living room, a baby grand piano waits for their daughter's talented fingers to fill the atmosphere with music.

Behind the piano, a large fireplace provides cozy warmth. Above the fireplace, a flat-screen TV displays photos from a Flickr account, featuring all of their family. Like an oversized electronic photo frame, the pictures



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change, capturing moments when they aren't together.

The galley kitchen features granite countertops and many cabinets. "Ross is the real gourmet cook of the family," Ginnie said, although she cooks during the week. Spacious counters transform to extra dining spots for extended family on holidays.

Off the kitchen, a custom-built table with surrounding benches gives them enough room so the entire family can gather at mealtimes. Simple touches add color to the area, although you might spot a chart or two used for classes. Even with specified school times during the day, they seldom pass up an opportunity for teaching and learning.

To include more room in the kitchen/dining area, part of the garage was enclosed and is used for refrigerators. A closed-off laundry room is organized



with baskets labeled for sorting. Two washers and two dryers stand ready to take on loads of clothing. With so many children, multiple appliances aren't an option. They are a must-have.

"I always wanted 12 children," Ginnie said. She has two siblings, and Ross has three. "I grew up around large families and often babysat for some who had eight kids. I'd think, *That's what I want*," she added. When she saw mothers with stair-step children, she dreamed of someday having the same thing, and she does. Her children range in age from 7 to 34, and she has 10 grandchildren. Her youngest is best friends with his nephews, and all of them are into sports and play on the same teams.

"It's the best thing we ever did," Ross said. "Ginnie and the kids are everything

to me. The center part of our life is Jesus Christ. We live by those standards. Our children are a blessing.”

The master bedroom is one of the prettiest areas in the home. With a simple white poster bed and oversized chair and ottoman in the corner, the room makes a perfect place to relax at the end of a busy day. They redecorated a small alcove off the bedroom for Ginnie’s homeschool office. She stores curriculum and plans lessons in this quiet spot where she can go in the morning and prepare for the day. Ross replaced the windows and added shutters in this room as well.

In a converted garage, their oldest daughter living at home finds her own comfortable place of solitude. Eventually, they will remodel the room and make it more inviting. Their younger daughter’s bedroom shows her femininity in a pink atmosphere. She has added her unique

touch by placing jewelry on pushpins and framing them all with colorful wooden frames. The artist of the family, she has amazing pictures in a sketchbook, but chooses not to display them.

The boys’ rooms show their love of sports. Wall clings of different balls dot the soft yellow walls of the younger boys’ room, where bunk beds with a trundle allow three of them to share the space. The older boys

need little in the way of decorations, satisfied to display trophies and a Louisville Slugger bat.

The large backyard has a concrete foundation, the perfect beginning for the two-story addition they have planned. When finished, the new area will house a dining room big enough for an extra large table and an upstairs game room, along with two additional bathrooms. Ross and Ginnie want their family to always feel welcome and have ample room for everyone.

In spite of all the improvements, the house isn’t overly important to this amazing mother with a dozen children, who still enjoy spending time at home. “Our family is what makes our home,” Ginnie said. She and Ross have made it an inviting one, where family comes first. **NOW**



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Child's PLAY

— By Randy Bigham

With summer around the steamy corner, moms and dads everywhere are considering ways to keep their kids cool, entertained and challenged until school activities rev up again. Busy parents, especially, want safe options for amusement and education they can depend on for their children during workday hours.

Summer Camps

For many parents, grandparents and guardians, the tried-and-true youth camp offers an ideal solution to boredom and inactivity for their kids. As schools close their doors for summer break, camps around North Texas open their, drawing children of all ages to the same games, sports and campfire sing-alongs, which have provided fond memories for older generations. But, as the website for Ultimate Camp Resource makes clear, “there’s more to camp than kickball or four-square.” Modern summer camps offer a wide variety of both age-appropriate and inclusive outings, games, art projects and theatrical skits. “We





encourage you to plan all activities using the ‘everybody plays, everybody wins’ philosophy,” the site suggests, adding by changing the rules to give a personal touch and not keeping score helps make competitions upbeat and fun.

Susan Merrill, director of programs for Camp Fire Camp El Tesoro in Granbury, believes in the importance of reaching children through activities for all tastes and skills. In her 25 years in the camp industry, Susan has observed the positive effect the interactive enjoyment of work, play and team building has had on young campers. “Going to camp should be a part of every child’s life,” she said. “The experience develops their independence and confidence, and it provides the opportunity for children to learn decision making.”

At large camps, some extraordinary features include: horseback riding, canoeing and kayaking, hiking,



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basketball, tennis and soccer. Whatever children's interests might be, Misty Luttrell, director of overnight and family camps at Camp Fire, recognizes a common denominator: togetherness. "With all the electronics out there, kids spend more time plugged in and less time interacting face to face," she pointed out. "But camp fosters an atmosphere that allows kids to build relationships with peers and their counselors."

Vacation Bible Schools

Another staple, yet ever diversifying, alternative for meaningful summer activity for children is Vacation Bible School. Nearly every church sponsors a program blending faith-based instruction with challenging amusement, covering a range of ages.

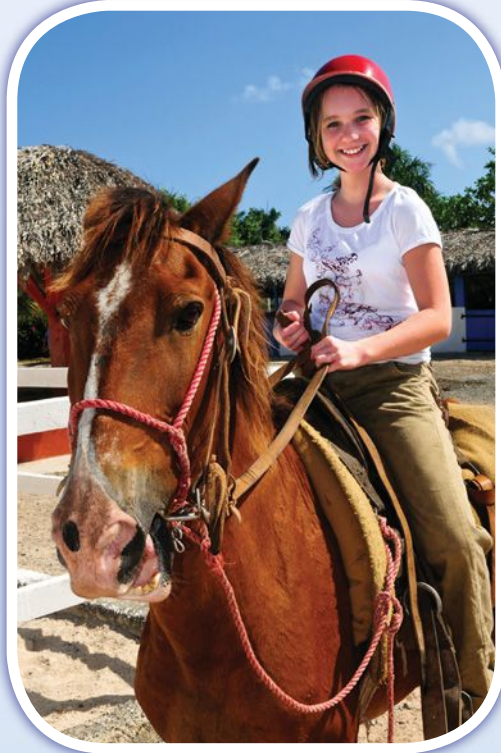
Nora Beane, a contributor to the online clearinghouse Yahoo Voices, cites five good reasons for parents to consider VBS as a viable outlet for kids' entertainment and education:

1. Scheduling: "The majority of VBS programs run for a single week and many only operate for a half day during that week. Almost every family can plan around that."

2. Content: "There are a million sites where kids can go to learn how to play baseball, but considerably fewer places where kids can learn to respect others and have faith in God."

3. Quality companionship: "Parents can guess that their child will be





attending VBS with other kids who come from families where values are important and faith is central.”

4. Engaging entertainment: “Kids at VBS don’t just spend time reading the Bible. VBS programs have curriculums built for and around kids that are full of adventure.”

5. Economic value: “Because they are church based, most VBS programs are not set up to make a profit. They are set up to share a message.”

Library Programs

An increasingly varied venue for parents seeking relief from the heat for their kids this summer is the local



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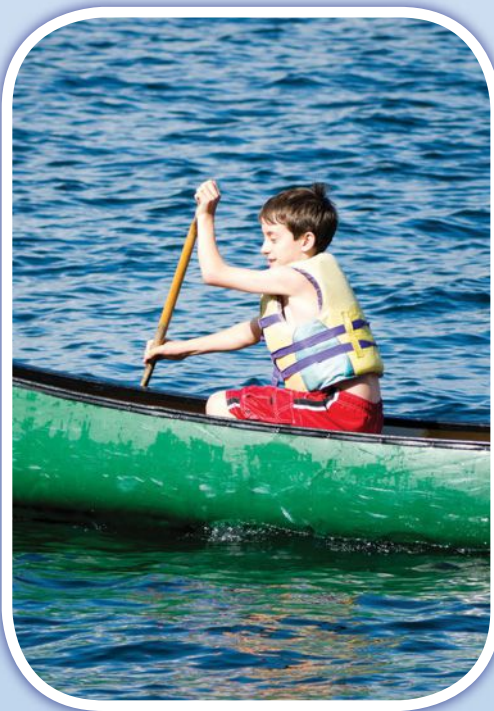
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library. Not only can the little ones (and the older ones, too) hone their reading skills, but they also acquire valuable social sensibilities and teamwork through contests and other interactive programs. From talks by authors to magic shows and clown acts, children learn to associate books with fresh new experiences and exposure that will aid their future reading development and desire for knowledge.

According to the American Library Association, 95 percent of public libraries offer summer reading initiatives for children, so there's no shortage of programs for which parents can sign their kids up. Many



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libraries select themes each summer for their programming, which involves not only literature but special events. Local themes for summer reading programs in the recent past have included tie-ins to popular family movies, cartoons and comic books.

The ALA lists the three main benefits for youth-geared summer reading programs as:

1. Maintaining reading skills between grades.
2. Attracting reluctant readers by activity-oriented events.
3. Encouraging reading as a lifelong habit.

YMCA and Community Recreation Centers

More fun in the sun opportunities for kids this summer at local YMCA centers or other community recreation facilities include: basketball and football, swimming, outdoor art installations, tie-dyeing T-shirts and numerous other craft projects.

One North Texas area YMCA craft idea proved especially popular last summer with young children returning from a field trip to a popular water park, and it promises to entertain many again this year. Boys and girls created a souvenir of their outing by gluing sand and shells onto a wooden or particle board backing in the shape of a starfish or dolphin. These were then affixed to a painted stick or straw, which girls in particular enjoyed waving around, calling the toy their “mermaid wand.”

Whether camping out or taking a dip, curling up with a new book or displaying artistic creations, the summer sky's the limit. There are plenty of choices available for exciting recreational and educational opportunities for your kids this year! **NOW**

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FEEL THE JOY

Interior Decorator Vonna Pool brings out your style, in the most beautiful way.

— By Melissa Rawlins

Whether starting fresh or remodeling, Vonna Pool is the fashionable consultant to call when you need an artist to design, coordinate and install your new room. With confidence about which colors and textures are best, she provides relevant choices to her clients, who then pick their preference. “That way the remodeling or rebuilding goes perfectly,” Vonna said, “and every element flows together.”

Her clients are happy with their project’s cost, because Vonna is able to offer great value. She joined forces with Decorating Den Interiors three years ago. Creating beautiful rooms since 1969, each Decorating Den Interiors franchise is independently owned and operated. Vonna is pleased to take advantage of the franchise’s buying power

with suppliers nationwide while maintaining her creative freedom. “I am to the eye what a chef is to the palate,” she explained.

Vonna’s hassle-free process begins with her visit to the home or room to be decorated. “I’ll see what my client already has and get a feel for their personality and style. Then I blend everything together in a beautiful way,” she said. Not every new business owner or homeowner knows how to bring out the beauty of a space. Vonna obeys the basic rules of design to make a room pleasing and beautiful, keeping her eye on symmetry, balance and color. Colors need to flow with each other. “You don’t ever want to do anything in a room where one color or aspect of the

room clashes with another,” she stated.

Another important step Vonna takes in each space is to accent exceptional architecture. “I find ways to highlight it so that nothing else takes higher stage,” said Vonna, who has all sorts of options for accentuating details like windows, columns, archways, vaulted ceilings or sunken floors. Preferring American-made products, she often finds unique items locally. “I have top-notch suppliers for fabric, lighting, furniture, art — basically everything ever needed for interior decorating,” she said. “I use local seamstresses, workrooms and upholsterers.”

Vonna can help her clients with adding one new item to their space or completely remodeling from floor to ceiling and everything in-between. “I love revealing the newly remodeled room to my clients. I know all my hard work was worth it, when I see the joy and excitement on their faces,” Vonna said. “I’ve had some clients start crying, which chokes me up too.”

Visit her website, where lots of pictures of finished rooms and samples of her work are posted. But be prepared to find a variety of concepts and feelings. “I’m not out to make the world look like one specific design or style,” Vonna said. Her goal is to help her clients create their own special design.

She’s instinctively skilled at helping you choose fabrics, colors, textures, furniture and accessories — resulting in a reflection of your inherent flair. “Just as every individual is unique,” Vonna said, “every individual’s style is also unique.” Under her experienced eye, your dreamed-of designs can be created — whether you want a room that makes you feel cozy, relaxed, energized, intimate or simply happy.

“Surroundings are important to me,” Vonna said. “Your space is not just a space but an atmosphere that can create an emotion or feeling.” Vonna helps you create the environment you dream of in a beautiful way. Her greatest joy is the happiness of her clients. **NOW**

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Once you’ve determined your needs and wants, it’s time to begin! And with Mother Nature as our backdrop, why not be a bit bolder in your color selections? Creating a bright and dramatic outdoor color scheme is sure to take your new space from dull to dazzling!

Furniture styles? There are a myriad to choose from — all shapes and sizes — as well as countless all-weather fabrics in gorgeous designs. Wicker and rattan continue to be the most popular and comfortable seating selections.

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Max Irwin and his dad, Sid, have fun on leather chairs at Office Depot.



Ladies at Alsbury Baptist Church show off their painting talents.



Don Malone of Crowley checks his fence line on his John Deere.



Alisha and Kyle Davis prepare for the mallwide sale at His & Hers Antiques.



Burlson Police Officer of the Year, Chaz Garrett, receives his commendation from Acting Police Chief Dong Sandifer.



John Paul Reeves drives his classic 1935 Graham Paige Model 73 to lunch at Dickey's Bar-B-Que.



Senior Girl Scout Miranda Maceyra prepares for her community service project, a scavenger hunt at Russell Farm to raise awareness for Burlson's Animal Shelter and Library.



Siblings Stephen, Mackenzie, Rainey and Michael Southall pose with their Aunt Cher.



Queen for a day, Jessica Shook, celebrates her birthday with her children, Lucas (left), Camaan (center) and Rhema.

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Flood insurance 101

- Flood insurance is offered through the Federal Government's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). You can obtain flood insurance through local insurance companies.

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- After fires, floods are the most common natural disaster in the U.S.
- Consumers should be aware that most homeowners, condominium, manufactured home, renters and business insurance policies do not cover flood damage. Property owners may need separate flood insurance coverage to protect against losses from floods during hurricanes, thunderstorms or any time of the year.

Getting coverage

- Consumers can request flood insurance through their insurance agent.
- Depending on where you live, the average cost of a \$50,000 flood insurance policy is slightly more than \$200 annually, about 56 cents per day, while a \$100,000 policy is about \$500 annually, or \$1.37 per day.
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- Flooding is the most costly natural disaster in the U.S., causing more than \$2 billion of property damage each year.
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Don't let spring rains leave you soaked. You should consider your need for flood insurance now. **NOW**

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



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What's the Right Age to See an Orthodontist?

One of the most common questions dentists are asked is: "What is the right age for my child to see an orthodontist?" The American Association of Orthodontists recommends that your child get a checkup with an orthodontist at the first recognition of an orthodontic problem, but no later than age 7. By then, your child has enough permanent teeth for an orthodontist to determine whether an orthodontic problem exists or is developing. Putting off a checkup with an orthodontist until a child has lost all baby teeth could be a disservice. Some orthodontic problems may be easier to correct if they are found early. A checkup no later than age 7 gives your orthodontist the opportunity to recommend the appropriate treatment at the appropriate time. If early treatment is in order, the orthodontist may be able to achieve results that may not be possible once the face and jaws have finished growing.

Most orthodontic problems (malocclusions) are inherited. Examples of these genetic problems are crowding, spacing, protrusion, extra or missing teeth and some jaw growth problems. Other malocclusions are acquired as a result of thumb- or finger-sucking, dental disease, accidents, the early or late loss of baby (primary) teeth or other causes. While your child's teeth might appear to be straight, there may actually be a problem that needs to be evaluated by an orthodontist. If you recognize any of the following

issues with your child, consider scheduling a checkup with your local orthodontist:

- Early or late loss of baby teeth
- Difficulty in chewing or biting
- Mouth breathing
- Jaws that shift or make sounds
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May 2

Cinco de Mayo de Burleson: 6:00-11:00 p.m., Bartlett Park, 550 N.W. Summercrest Blvd. The City of Burleson and La Buena Vida de Burleson present entertainment on two stages as well as fajitas and tacos, hot dogs and turkey legs and funnel cakes. Call Ike Vera, (817) 426-9291.

May 3

Kiwanis Club of Burleson Pancake Day: 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. at Russell Farm Art Center, 405 W.C.R. 714. \$6 adults; 8 and under free. Contact (817) 713-2739, (817) 614-7627 or (682) 220-8641.

May 8

Quarter Auction: 6:30-8:30 p.m., Crowley Recreation Center, 405 S. Oak St., Crowley. Charity event benefitting Wings of Hope Equithrapy, providing quality equine assisted activities to children and adults with disabilities. Visit www.wingsofhopehorses.org.

May 17

Bootin' Out Cerebral Palsy Barrel Race: 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. M7 Arena, Alvarado. Open Buckles sponsored by Cowboy Way Church; Youth Buckles sponsored by R/T

Construction. Benefiting Scottish Rite Hospital for Children. For more information, call Candy Schulz, (817) 704-8529.

May 21

Joshua Area Chamber of Commerce Quarterly luncheon: 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Mountain Valley Country Club. Tickets are \$15 each in advance, or \$18 each at the door. RSVP (817) 556-2480.

May 23

Splash into Summer: 6:30 p.m., Joshua City Park Splash Pad. Inaugurating the 2014 summer season for Joshua's Splash Pad with a movie and concessions provided by the Joshua Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary. Bring lawn chairs, blankets, etc! Call (817) 556-2480.

May 24

Honey Tour Bike Ride: 8:00 a.m., Centennial High School. \$35 entry fee. Register online, <http://honeytour.athlete360.com>, or on-site (opens at 6:30 a.m.) 100K riders go out first, followed by the 46-mile riders at 8:15 a.m. and 28- and 7- mile riders at 8:30 a.m. To help, contact (817) 295-6121.

May 30

Shattering the Glass Ceiling: 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Texas Health Huguley Amphitheater. Participate in networking and glean from this challenging panel discussion during the Power of Heels luncheon, sponsored by H.E.B. and Burleson Pregnancy Aid Center. RSVP to (817) 295-6121.

Hot Sounds of Summer: 7:30-9:00 p.m., Old Town Burleson, at the corner of Ellison and Wilson. Featuring Buddy Whittington (Clapton-style blues), this is the first of five free Friday night concerts hosted by the City of Burleson. Bring lawn chairs and blankets! Visit www.burlesontx.com.

May 31

City On A Hill: 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. B.I.S.D. Stadium, 100 Elk Drive. This day of free fun spotlights a collaboration of services and opportunities for working together as the body of Christ in order to transform the community. Visit www.crazy8ministries.com/city-on-a-hill/.

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your event details to melissa.rawlins@nowmagazines.com.

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In the Kitchen With Mary Longbotham

— By *Melissa Rawlins*

Painting teaches Mary Longbotham patience. Her second hobby, cooking, also caters to her creative side. Learning to cook during college in Austin, Mary would walk to do her shopping when experimenting in the kitchen. She cooks mainly for her family or customers at The Terrace, where her success pleasing palates garnered her the 2013 Hidden Creek Golf Course Employee of the Year award. At work, she indulges in variety. At home, her family enjoys Mexican food, so she tends to try a lot of spicy items. In both places, she gets creative with desserts, taking pleasure in creating delicious foods to round out meals and help people treat themselves. And still, her favorite cook is her mom, who continually surprises Mary with yummy new recipes. **NOW**

Brown Sugar Pecan Coffee Cake

Cake:

- 3 cups flour**
- 4 tsp. baking powder**
- 1 tsp. salt**
- 2 cups sugar**
- 1 1/4 cups whole milk**
- 1 1/2 sticks butter, softened**
- 3 egg whites, beaten until stiff**

Topping:

- 1 1/2 sticks butter, softened**
- 3/4 cup flour**
- 1 1/2 cups brown sugar**
- 2 Tbsp. cinnamon**
- 1 1/2 cups pecans, chopped**

- 1. For cake:** Preheat oven to 350 F. Sift flour, baking powder and salt together.
- 2.** In a separate bowl cream sugar and butter with a whisk.
- 3.** Mix flour mixture and milk, alternating

until combined. Add in butter mixture; do not overbeat. Fold in egg whites with spatula.

- 4.** Spread in a well-greased 9x13-inch baking pan.
- 5.** For topping: Combine all ingredients in a bowl. Sprinkle over top of cake. Bake 40 to 45 minutes.

Spicy Pepper Chili

- 1 1/4 lbs. ground beef**
- 1 yellow onion**
- 1 jalapeño pepper, chopped**
- 1 serrano pepper, chopped**
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped**
- 2 15-oz. cans tomato sauce**
- 2 15-oz. cans beef broth**
- 1 10-oz. can Ro-Tel tomatoes with green chilies**
- 2 Tbsp. chili powder**
- 1 Tbsp. ground cumin**
- 1 Tbsp. cayenne pepper**
- 1/2 tsp. each salt and pepper**
- 1/8 cup Worcestershire sauce**

- 1.** Brown ground beef in a large pot with the onion, jalapeño, serrano and garlic. Drain.
- 2.** Turn heat to medium; add remaining ingredients. Bring to a boil; reduce heat and simmer for 2 hours, stirring occasionally.

Buttercream Sugar Cookies

Cookies:

- 1/2 cup butter, softened**
- 2 eggs, beaten**
- 1/2 cup sugar**
- 1 tsp. vanilla**
- 2 2/3 cups flour**
- 2 tsp. baking powder**

Frosting:

- 1/2 cup butter, softened**
- 1/2 cup solid vegetable shortening**
- 1 tsp. vanilla**
- 1 box powdered sugar**
- Food coloring (optional)**
- 2-3 Tbsp. milk (as needed)**

- 1. For cookies:** Beat butter, eggs, sugar and vanilla. Add flour, one cup at a time, along with the baking powder.
- 2.** Roll out dough to desired thickness. Dip cookie cutters in flour; cut out cookies. Bake at 375 F for 6-7 minutes.
- 3. For frosting:** Mix butter with shortening. Add the vanilla. Add powdered sugar one cup at a time; mix well. Add a few drops of food coloring, if desired. Add enough milk to give frosting a good spreading consistency.

Zesty Pork Chops

- 6 Tbsp. Italian dressing**
- 3 Tbsp. soy sauce**
- 1 white onion, sliced**
- 1 cup baby carrots**
- 1 bell pepper, sliced**
- Salt and pepper, to taste**
- 3 pork chops**

- 1.** Combine first 5 ingredients in a bowl. Salt and pepper pork chops.
- 2.** With heavy-duty foil, make a pouch for each pork chop and evenly disperse the vegetable mixture between chops.
- 3.** Bake at 350 F for 45-60 minutes.

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



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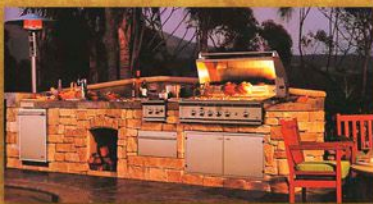
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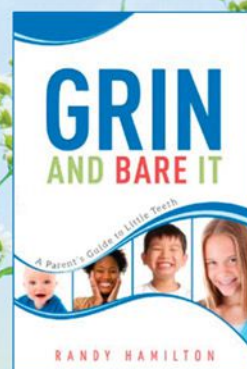
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