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Contents

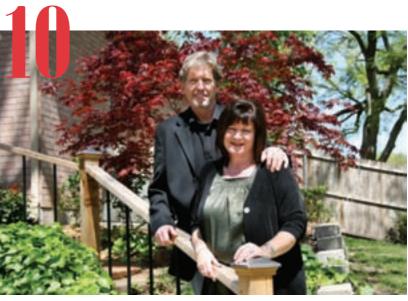
⁻ June 2009 Volume 4, Issue 6



Guilherme Marchi: PBR Shining Star







A Piece of the World At Home With Bruce and Camilla Binkley

18

BusinessNOW One Step at a Time 20 EducationNOW Mathematical Mind



On the Cover: Professional Bull Riders (PBR) World Champion and local shining star, Guilherme Marchi is preparing to defend his title.

Photo by Diana Merrill Claussen. 22 Around TownNOW

24 Who's CookingNOW

26 FinanceNOW

28 Community Calendar

Publisher, Connie Poirier General Manager, Rick Hensley Managing Editor, Becky Walker Editorial Coordinator, Sandra McIntosh Creative Director, Jami Navarro Art Director, Chris McCalla Billing Manager, Lauren DeLosSantos Office Manager, Angela Mixon Red Oak Editor, Diana Merrill Claussen Contributing Writers, Faith Browning Rene e Chase . Kate A. McClendon Jaime Ruark Contributing Editors/Proofreaders, Pat Anthony . Jaime Ruark Beverly Shay Advertising Representatives, Terri Yates . Rick Ausmus Linda Dean . Will Epps Steve Hansen . Carolyn Mixon Linda Moffett . Steve Randle Linda Roberson . Shane Smith Eddie Yates

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Red Oak

Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

Hailing from the Sunshine State has taught me the importance of the summers of yesteryear. Cruising on a bridge over the open water, listening to the Beach Boys, meeting friends at the nearest ocean - those are the things summer always meant to me.

Now that I am in Texas, it is really great to be able to "blaze a new trail" by building new summer memories and life experiences. In this issue, we focus on a few local "trailblazers" who have not only tried something new, but worked hard and achieved successes on their new personal and professional trails.

So, please pour yourself a nice, tall glass of lemonade and consider the new and exciting trails ready to be experienced!

Summer fun, here we come! Diana Merrill Claussen Red OakNOW Editor



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Guilherme Marchi: PBR Shining Star

- By Diana Merrill Claussen

To be the best of the best, it takes a lot of work. It takes even more work to hold onto a first place title once you have earned it. In life, it is an honor to be recognized as the best, but professional bull rider and local resident Guilherme Marchi has remained humble in spite of the success. For him, achieving personal success is secondary to mastering the skill of positivity.

Hailing from Itupeva, São Paulo, Brazil, this 26-year-old, current Professional Bull Riders (PBR) World Champion title holder worked extraordinarily hard while remaining true to himself, his family, friends and fans. "Guilherme is just a down-to-earth guy, and he treats everyone equally," local pastor Jon Coe said. "Even though he is a celebrity, he takes time for everybody." Guilherme makes time to volunteer at pastor Coe's church by riding and roping cattle with some of the church parishioners.

Guilherme credits his upbringing for helping him to be dedicated in all aspects of his life, and his gracious attitude has a lot to do with his instilled beliefs in God and family. Growing up on his family's farm in Brazil taught Guilherme the value of both family and hard work. "My family loves animals," he said. Working on the family's farm provided Guilherme much time to learn about raising animals and treating them with respect and care. At one time, he even considered becoming a veterinarian. According to Guilherme, farming and raising animals is in his family's blood.

Guilherme's big brother, Julliano, also worked on the family farm. Like most younger brothers, Guilherme looked up to his older brother, whom he credits for inspiring him and his dreams. At age 15, Guilherme started riding bulls for fun. Julliano had competed in many major bull riding events. His successes led to Guilherme's dreams. "I had a dream to one day become a bull riding champion," he said. So that is what he set out to do.

Almost as soon as he began riding bulls, Guilherme was winning competitions in Brazil. Once he increased in his rides and wins, he decided to move to the United States to further pursue his dreams. "I came to the U.S. in 2004," Guilherme said. During his first year in the States, he qualified and then competed in the PBR finals, [which is one step away from World Champion status.] Later, Guilherme went on to compete and

"I had a dream to one day become a bull riding champion."



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place second in the world finals for three years in a row: 2005, 2006 and 2007. Then in 2008, Guilherme's dedication to fulfilling his goals paid off in Las Vegas at the PBR World ride. With his wife, Patricia, and daughter, Manuela, cheering him on, Guilherme became a PBR World Champion.

"Right now, I'm very happy to have achieved my dream," Guilherme said. Now he is working toward a new goal. "I want to win the world finals in 2009," he beamed. It's his positive attitude and hopeful spirit that not only encourages him but inspires others as well.

If Guilherme becomes the 2009 World Champion bull rider, he would be "the first person to achieve winning the title back-to-back," he said. It would be a great feat, but Guilherme takes it one step at a time while working hard, staying focused and remaining grounded.

Guilherme travels across the country and sometimes even around the globe for weekend bull riding competitions. Whether he is at home or abroad, Guilherme is glad that, "I have good neighbors here because they look out for me, and they take care of my family." When he is home, Guilherme is just like any other family man. "My wife, Patricia, and I have a restaurant in Dallas called the Rodeo Bar and Grill,"



he said. When not at the restaurant, he spends as much time at home as he can.

On most mornings, when he is at the family's ranch, Guilherme likes to get up and have a leisurely ride on his bull. "I have a tame bull named White, and I ride him like a horse," Guilherme said. "Sometimes, my daughter will ride on him with me." Riding his bull is not only relaxing for him but, "It also helps me to keep my legs strong and to keep my balance," Guilherme said.

Guilherme loves to rope cattle and participate at barrel racing events with

"I try to concentrate, and then I get on the bull and I pray."



Patricia as well. "I love roping for fun and rope about three times a week," Guilherme said. "I also like to take care of my cows and spend time with my family," which now includes his 11-month-old son, Joao. This reserved champion and his family have lived in the area for over three years. "I have good friends here," he said.

Some of those friends are PBR champions Adriano Morales, Paulo Crimber and Edinei Caminhas. "Those guys came here from Brazil first," Guilherme said. "Many of the Brazilian bull riders live here and travel together." His friends gain encouragement from Guilherme who is known for helping a fellow bull rider.

Guilherme is an athlete with a winning spirit. "I have no injuries, and when I fall off, I come back and try to win again," he smiled. Before a ride, "I try to concentrate, and then I get on the bull and I pray," he said. He credits the importance of being true to oneself. "Bull riding is a tough sport," he said. To be able to compete in bull riding, "It is important to educate yourself about the sport, believe in yourself and believe in God to take care of you and your family, because you are involved in a dangerous competition," he expressed.

Guilherme's humble and heartfelt disposition can be seen both in and out of the arena. From helping other riders in the bull pens to congratulating his opponents with high fives and a smile, Guilherme is a true champion and local shining star.



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At Home With Bruce and Camilla Binkley

- By Jaime Ruark

The backyard view from Bruce and Camilla Binkley's 3,800-square-foot, four-bedroom, three-and-a-half bath home is naturally gorgeous. The numerous trees and winding creek make the deck and pool area their own little oasis in town. The Binkleys moved from their previous lakeside residence on Lake Kiowa in November 2001. When Camilla first saw the vista from the numerous windows of the house, she knew this was the home for them — their way to connect their love of nature with the convenience of town.

After moving into their new house, the Binkleys had the pool redone and added the deck, knowing they would spend much of their time outdoors. "The previous owners really took advantage of the creek view and kind of built the house around the pool, so you can see the pool from every room except the exterior two bedrooms," Camilla pointed out.

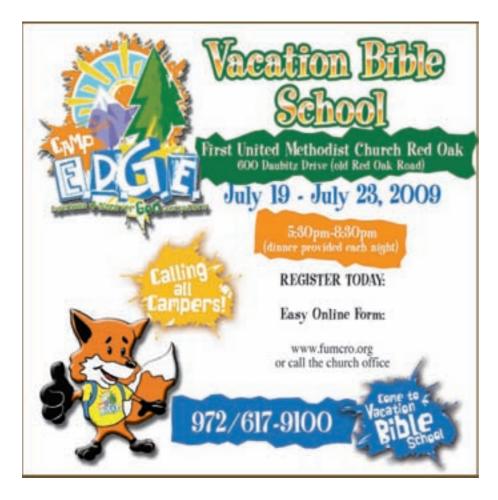
Despite Bruce and Camilla's love of living near the lake, they decided to move to our area because it was closer to their business in Waxahachie. "I was raised in the area, so for me, it was like coming home," Camilla shared. "We moved in quickly, and we redid the whole interior of the house, putting in wood floors and tile and getting rid of the wallpaper. It was a crazy time for a while." While the renovation process took place, their furniture was stacked in rooms and hallways; everything was covered in plastic to keep it from getting dirty. "It looked like some kind of natural disaster had occurred. It was definitely an adventure. We couldn't get to the kitchen for a while, and in the living room we had two lawn chairs and a little 21-inch TV on a box," Camilla laughed.

Feeling led to serve the Lord and those less fortunate, the Binkleys started a nonprofit organization, called New Name Mission Society International, after purchasing their Express



Employment Professionals franchise in 1995. With a shared dream of being able to support themselves and the ministry for which they felt called, the couple's business began to afford them the opportunity to travel the world, supporting orphanages, building homes and distributing much-needed medical and food supplies in Belize, Mexico, Nicaragua, Vietnam and Africa. "We just wanted to help people who couldn't help themselves," Bruce humbly expressed. Their house is now a testament to their many trips and the wonderful work in which they are involved; in every corner, countless pictures and precious souvenirs are blended to bring every aspect of this exotic home together. "One of my favorite collections is my photo albums. I try to make one for every trip," Camilla said.

Camilla favors neutrals, accented by black, in her decorating scheme and calls her style eclectic. "With our international travels, we have a lot of art from other countries, so we've



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definitely merged different styles together," she noted. "Pretty much

anywhere you look in the house, you'll find a piece of Africa or a piece of Vietnam." Separated by a curving bar, the spacious kitchen opens to the sun-lit living area, where mocha-colored leather couches with jungle-print throw pillows are grouped around the fireplace. The room has a water theme. Pictures of sailboats and

marine artist Wyland prints of whales cover the walls, including a framed silk



embroidery of the graceful, aquatic mammal. Flanking the tile fireplace

are two large jade crackle vases from Vietnam, while small tables house family photos and travel pictures. "Each room has a different feel, but I usually stay with the neutrals and throw in some blue shades for color," Camilla shared.

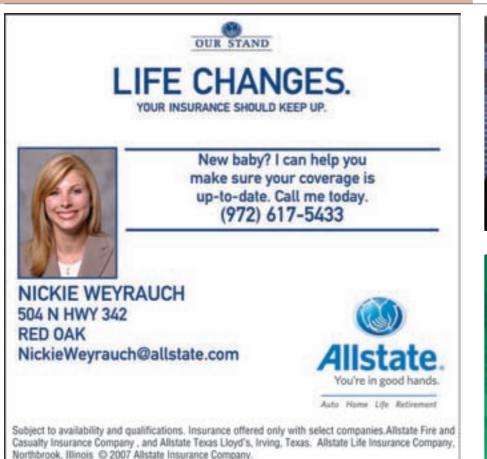
The couple works out of their home, so separate offices were a must. "We work well together ... when we're part!" Bruce laughed, good-naturedly,

admitting that he often talks to himself, his computer or anyone who will listen.

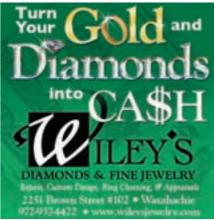
"We work so differently. She likes the quiet, and I don't mind noise. She's also a lot more organized than me. We've worked as a team since 1986 or '87, so we've learned how to work together — apart, and get the job done." The Binkleys are avid sports fans, so Bruce's upstairs office is filled with sports memorabilia. Among many family photographs of their two grown children, Jessica and BJ, colorful pictures and shadow boxes record the special African and Asian children who have touched Bruce's heart and, in turn, have been touched by his helping hands.

The Binkleys are glad they are able to make a difference in the lives of others and through their foundation, and are hoping to provide over 10,000 blankets to children in Zimbabwe for the upcoming winter season. "Winter in Africa starts in June," Camilla said.

To the left of the foyer is Camilla's office; both spaces showcase some western items acquired from her family. "My mom passed away not too long after we







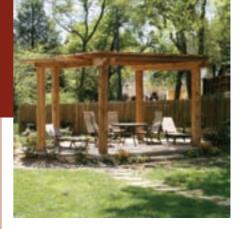


moved here, and she decorated western, so I inherited a lot of her pieces," Camilla said, pointing out a saddle lamp and two cowboy hats, one belonging to her grandfather. Bookshelves behind her desk display small ethnic antiquities as well as a ceramic pink pig that is one of her prized possessions. "Last year when we were in Vietnam, we were able to spend two days with a group of children who had been street kids and were taken into a home. We took them to a little resort area to play in the pool and have fun, [to] do things they had never, ever done before," she recalled. "They got to pick out a little ceramic statue and paint it and take it with them. These are children who



have nothing, so this would be the one thing they owned, and they were giving them to us. So, this is really special."

The Binkleys call one of their spare bedrooms the "Legacy Room," where pictures of their three grandsons, Jackson, Noah and Bradley, line the walls next to stuffed animals, including dinosaurs and a huge lion. "We're so proud of our grandchildren," Bruce shared. "They tell me, 'Pap, we wanna go to Zimbabwe with you. We wanna go help the kids." Four-year-old Jackson is an animal lover, especially animals native to Africa. "He knows animals most people don't know," Camilla, whom the boys call GiGi, added proudly. "For his third birthday,



he just had to have a wildebeest. Finding a wildebeest was not easy, but we found one for him."

A statue of a majestic eagle resting on a partial globe resides in the front office, a piece that truly seems to speak of the life work to which Bruce and Camilla have committed themselves. "I got this years ago, long before I ever made my first trip. We didn't realize this when we first got it, but on the front of this statue, the eagle is sitting on North America. Then, when you turn the statue around, there's Vietnam and Africa," Bruce smiled. "It's amazing how God brings things together."



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A Poetic Dath

- By Diana Merrill Claussen

Usually, when someone has a lifelong love it is regarding a person, or in some cases, a hobby. Linda Howerton is lucky enough to have both. Her 46-year marriage to her high school sweetheart, Jim, ensures a good support system for Linda, especially during hard times. Her other passion, which allows her to sort through emotions, cope and overcome adversity, is her love of reading and writing poetry.

Using poetry as a means of positive expression and reflection has been a part of Linda's life almost as long as Jim. "When I attended Temple Junior College, I took art classes," Linda said. "The classes and my friends inspired and got me interested in writing poetry. Most of my poems during college were not very upbeat because it was very hard to go to school, work and take care of a child." Poetry helped Linda through both good and bad times.

"Usually, I write when my emotions are really up or really down," she said. "Creating poems always makes me feel better and uplifts my spirits. Then when you read poetry, it's what you draw from "Then when you read poetry, it's what you draw from it that helps you to release your emotions."

it that helps you to release your emotions. It always makes me feel better when I read it."

Different situations and people inspire Linda to write. Some of her poems were inspired by her friends and then written for them. One of Linda's poems was written in honor of her neighbor, friend and local musician, Pat DeZeeuw. "The poem I wrote for Pat is called 'Guitar Man," Linda smiled. "Guitar Man" is both clearly and cleverly written about how much she adores the DeZeeuw family and appreciates their friendship. Readers cannot help but smile to the heart-warming and upbeat stanzas present in this personal work.

Many of Linda's poems are conceived through her love of flora and fauna. "I adore nature," she said. "Jim and I love all animals and love to feed the wild rabbits and birds that live on our property. I'd rather be outside in the woods watching animals in their natural habitat than be in the house."

Linda prefers the outdoors, and has since childhood. Sharing a little piece of Red Oak history and lore, Linda said, "Red Oak was once home to Native Americans, and back then was called Possum Trot," she said. "When I was younger, I hunted for arrowheads. It's called surface hunting, and I have quite a collection." Linda found many of her arrowheads in the creek beds of Central Texas. Being in nature always clears Linda's thoughts and gets her creativity flowing. "Some people go into the woods and will see nothing," she said. "I'll go in the woods and will see all kinds of things and inspirations for living. To be a poet, you just have to be aware of your surroundings."

Inspiration to write usually comes to Linda in a step-by-step process. "I will think of something like an event



that then creates a 'spark' [to write]," she said. "Then, I will create a few rhyming sentences in my mind." After the poem starts to take shape, "I'll write it down, finalize it and then write the final copy into my notebook of poems." Linda's faded, dark blue spiral notebook holds every poem she has written since 1973. That notebook, along with Linda, has experienced the joyous and tumultuous ups and downs of life.

Within the last year, Linda has certainly experienced much adversity. "Last year, I broke my femur bone in six places," she said. In March of this year, she was part of a company-wide lay-off due to the current economic conditions. "I was a legal secretary in Dallas for 36 years. There are so many people out of work ... so many people," Linda reflected.

Following the lay-off, Linda decided to take this major life situation and turn it into a positive new beginning. Recently, she began substitute teaching for Red Oak Independent School District, but is enjoying a little extra free time. "I was planning on retiring later this year anyway," she said. "Now that I have more time, I would like to take a few inexpensive weekend excursions with Jim and our dog, Maggie May."

This recent turn of events inspired Linda to create a few more of her deeply profound and insightful poems. "My poetry is very personal; it's my thing," she said. "Poems are also like art, you have to be inspired to do it." Inspiration can be drawn from any type of life circumstance. "It's an outlet for your emotions and can lift you up or bring you down," she shared.

"I think it would be nice for more people to write poetry when they are interested in doing it," Linda said.

"There are many who are out there who are inspired, so I would encourage them to not hold back!"

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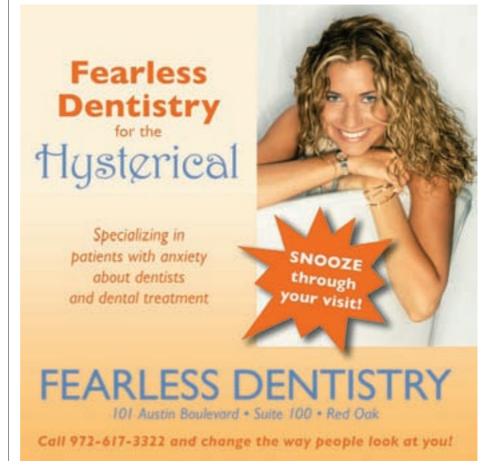


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All Heard

By Diana Merrill Claussen

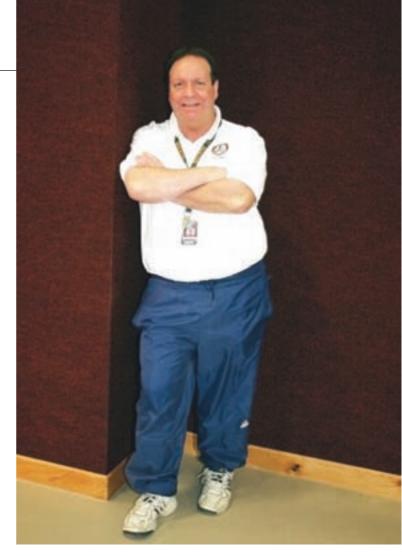
When it comes to doing a job well, local coach Richard Roth, does not just work hard at his job, he gives his all. In his 29th year of coaching at Red Oak Elementary, Richard is known both for encouraging his students to live healthier and for becoming lifelong friends them. Many of his former students remember Richard's easygoing personality and efforts to instill good habits. They also remember how he always went over and above for them.

Richard's reasons for encouraging the youngsters to actively participate in PE (physical education) and sports are personal. "When I was growing up, I always wanted to be involved in sports," he said. Since he was not able to participate as much as he would have liked to, "I figured I would be a sports writer instead." After receiving his first written article back from his professor, "I realized journalism wasn't for me."

Though Richard was not able to play professionally and had decided to get out of sports journalism, he still loved sports. "I still wanted to be involved in an athletic profession, so instead of playing professionally, I would teach [athletics] and try to help somebody else." These events led Richard into a career of encouraging youngsters to be healthy and active.

"I teach physical education, and the kids call me coach," he smiled. "I don't know why they call me coach, because that usually means you are coaching a sport." To fulfill his title though, Richard works as much as he can to ensure his students have some of the best opportunities, materials and equipment as they work to build important habits.





One tool Richard has used to improve the PE program at Red Oak Elementary is writing grants to organizations such as the Red Oak Education Foundation. Richard applied for his program's first grant five years ago. One day while he was teaching, "the Foundation came to the school and gave some really big grant checks to teachers to help them fund curriculum and programs," Richard said. "The PE budget is small, so I needed help," he said. "I started applying for the grants. I have since received six grants total." These grants have greatly assisted Richard in his quest to help his students lead healthy lives and participate in athletic exercises such as Teams of Tomorrow, which teaches the children basketball skills, how to listen and physical coordination.

"I am truly impressed with the way he does things," Coaching Assistant Terri McAdams said.

His inspiration for encouraging the children stems from a few more personal experiences. "When growing up, I played sports and always wanted to be involved in sports," he said. "I was not encouraged to be physically active, and that is what I really missed out on," he said. Eating the right foods and staying active are integral parts of maintaining good health and weight.

"I fight being overweight every day," Richard said. "I don't want any of these students to go through what I am going



through. The health of the kids is my biggest concern." Since elementary school is where good habits start, Richard encourages the children and their parents to implement a few healthy habits into their daily lives. "Get the whole family involved," he said. There are many aspects to living a healthy lifestyle. "The groceries they eat, how much TV they watch and even what time they go to bed" all have a lot to do with a child's physical and educational growth.

Richard suggests a few simple exercises his students can add to their daily schedule. "They can do many of these exercises while they are watching TV. Sit-ups, push-ups and even jogging in place are all good," he said. "Bringing more health and fitness into people's homes is my next mission."

Richard not only encourages his students to stay active and healthy, he also encourages them to help others achieve good health. He coordinates many outreach events with his little athletes. "We have had canned food drives and a Jump Rope for Heart event where we raised over \$3,000 for the American Heart Association," he explained.

Richard is also known for implementing fun and even math into his PE classes. "We concentrate on fun, not competition," he said. Having fun while exercising is essential to creating positive and memorable life lessons for the children. "The fittest students are usually the smartest students," Richard said. Everything Richard does is in an effort to "build character, sportsmanship and to learn to interact with each other the right way."

Sometimes while the students are exercising, Richard plays music. "On occasion I will put on a Frank Sinatra CD and see how they react to that," he chuckled. "The kids adore him, he is so funny," Terri added. Richard's efforts are appreciated by all. "These are his kids," Terri said. "I have a lot of respect for him and have learned a lot from him.

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Business ONE STEP AI A TIME

- By Diana Merrill Claussen

Teaching children is not only a necessity, but a privilege. Studies have shown that a child's developmental learning can take place even before their birth. Early learning at a child's own pace is especially important to local childcare provider, Tammy Watson, who owns Miss Tammy's House Daycare in Red Oak.

Being a childcare provider stemmed from Tammy's desire to be a stay-at-home mom. "So, when my son turned 2 1/2, I realized I needed to quit my office job in Dallas and start watching kids," Tammy said. On November 15, 1993, Tammy opened her daycare's doors and officially became known as "Miss Tammy."

Miss Tammy's House accepts all children from newborns to age 5. "I will continue to care for those kids and provide them after-school care up until 12 years old," she said. Tammy believes it is highly important to already have a relationship established when working with an older child, therefore she does not accept new clients after age 5.

Tammy believes it is important for each child to learn skills in their own perfect time. She said the children usually ask her to teach them when they are ready to learn to count, read or even write. "When the child expresses the desire to learn, I will introduce them to phonics sounds and numbers," Tammy said. With the preschoolers, "I use a mixture of hands-on curricula [such as A Beka and Bob Jones University Press materials]. Everything we teach is Christian based," Tammy explained.



Tammy's effective ways of teaching encourage and inspire the daycare's youngsters. She starts each day by telling all of the children at Miss Tammy's that God loves them. "I tell them that all day long. We cannot let our kids live in this world not knowing how much they are loved," she added.

A day at Missy Tammy's usually starts at 6:30 a.m. Miss Tammy's House is "a registered childcare home facility which allows us to participate in the state's food program." Once the children start to arrive, "I make them breakfast and give the babies their bottles." After their bellies have settled, Tammy and the youngsters head outside to play as much as they can.

Since the establishment is actually located right in the Watson home, the children have a fully gated backyard in which to romp. After playtime, "We go inside, and I will sit on the floor and play with and read to them." Spending good, quality time with each child is extremely important to this



big-hearted caretaker, as is making sure they are properly cared for in every way.

Being part of the state food program ensures that the children are receiving plenty of fruits and vegetables with every meal. Lunchtime includes food from every food group, and is then followed by a one-and-a-half hour nap. During that time, Tammy is able to prepare for the arrival of her after-school children. After naptime, "We go pick up the older kids from school, come back to the daycare for snacks and then the parents start arriving to take their children home."

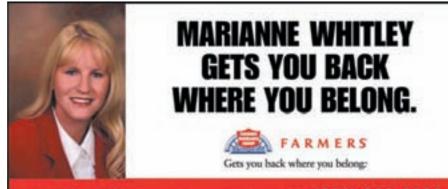
For the children, being at Miss Tammy's House, with the constant care and attention, is almost like being at their own home. Tammy realizes the importance of keeping a homey and warm atmosphere for her little clients.



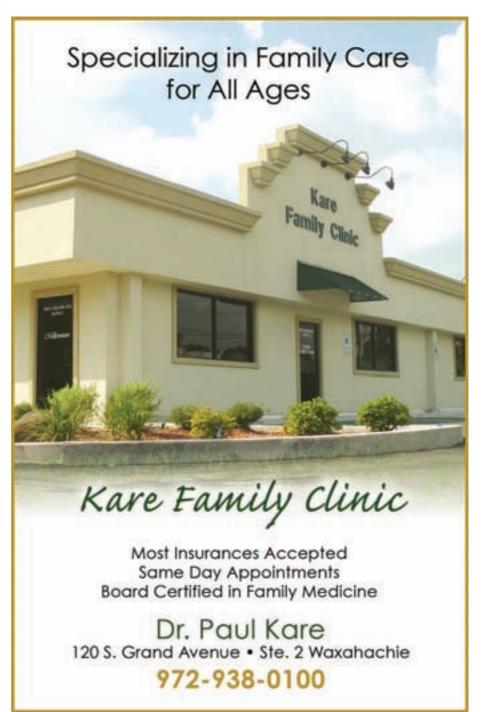
"The relationship with our children is a huge priority and becoming [like] a parent is not an easy thing to do," she admitted. That is why Tammy believes in open communication with the parents, and taking care of their children as if they were her own.

Tammy learned the importance of teaching children by homeschooling her own two boys. She has learned many creative tricks to help children in every aspect of their development. "Children aren't perfect; we're raising and teaching them," she reminded with a smile.

Miss Tammy's house is located by the Red Oak Municipal Building and is open Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. For further information, please contact Tammy at (972) 617-3809.



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Nathematical Mind – By Kate A. McClendon

Do you think math is an important subject to learn? Just ask Jaron Arismendez, an eighth-grade student at Red Oak Junior High, and he will tell you that math counts. Jaron and the rest of the Mathletes from Red Oak Junior High recently participated in Mathcounts, a region-wide math competition held at Southern Methodist University. Red Oak was the only public school out of 37 schools participating in the competition. The Red Oak Mathletes worked hard to get there — many other schools offered Mathcounts as an elective, but the Red Oak team only had an hour-long practice each Friday.

Education

The competition consisted of three rounds: a sprint round, a target round and a team round. In the sprint round, competitors have 40 minutes to answer 30 questions without using a calculator. "That round is designed so that you're not supposed to be able to answer all the questions," Jaron said.

In the target round, contestants are given eight problems, two at a time,

with six minutes to solve each pair. Then, competitors move on to the team round. Four people from each school can confer with each other and use calculators before answering the given problems on the team captain's paper. "Then they pick the top 16, and those 16 go to a lightning round where it's two on two," Jaron said. "It was hard but it was fun."

Jaron placed 15th out of more than 150 students. He was the highest ranked from his team and placed the highest in Red Oak's history. Because of his accomplishment, Jaron was recognized for his outstanding work at Mathcounts at a recent school board meeting. He credited his success to the coaches who helped his team prepare — Linda Peterson and Barb Vogler.

This was not Jaron's first taste of victory, however. In seventh grade, he placed twice in the local University Interscholastic League (UIL) competition; second place in math and third place in science. He also won first place in the fifth-grade science fair with his project based on the comparison of different glue brands.

Science is actually Jaron's favorite subject, with math coming in at a close second. "I like nature in general and science covers that. I like to learn new things and how stuff works," Jaron said. "I like math because it's a challenge; it's not always so simple."

Jaron has been dedicated to learning from a young age, with the help of his mother and father, Robin and Luis, who are very proud of him and how far he has come. "Whenever he had any problems, we did our best to figure them out," Robin said. "He's just always been really quick to catch on to things. Up until last year, he's made 100s on all his Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) tests. Last year, he just missed one question. This year he made a 100 again."

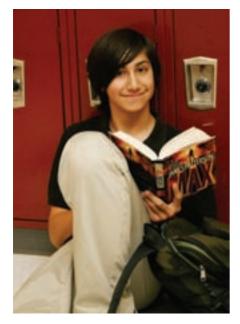
Jaron has other strengths in addition to his math and science skills, according to his mother. "He's artistic, too. He's pretty well-balanced," she said. "He's also got a good sense of humor. You'd think he'd be in the drama club, the way he's always goofing around. He's always been well-behaved in school; he saves all the goofing off for home," Robin said with a laugh.

Outside of school, Jaron stays busy with a variety of activities, many he has just recently started. "I just started playing tennis this year. It's been fun," he said. "It's not as complicated as I thought it would be. I used to play baseball, but it started conflicting with our schedules." He also plays the trombone in the jazz band, an instrument he has played since the sixth grade and continues to enjoy. This year, he worked as a reporter for the *Hawkeye News* junior high branch, something he has really liked.

Jaron has also been involved with Boy Scouts since the first grade. He is currently working his way up to Eagle Scout. "I've learned a lot. I've given a

Education

good portion of my time to scouting." Jaron is looking forward to the week-long Boy Scout camp this summer in Colorado. In the little bit of free time he has outside of school, band, sports and Boy Scouts, he likes to hang out with his friends, play video games and read. His favorite books are *Redwall*, *the Harry Potter* series and *The Lightning Thief*, among others.



Jaron is not the only one in his family with a lot going on. The Arismendez household is frequently busy. Jaron's brother and sister, 11-year-old Hayden and 8-year-old Isabeau are also heavily involved in school, baseball, softball, band or cheerleading, so one child is usually at practice for something at all times.

The family moved to Red Oak from DeSoto when Jaron was 5 years old. "It's calm and a lot of people around here are really nice," Jaron said, about life in Red Oak. "We also like the small-town feel," Robin added. Jaron's plans for the future may take him outside of the Red Oak area. "I want to finish school and go to college. I want a job where I can go out in the world and find and learn new things," Jaron said, "but Sea World would be cool, too."



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Around Town







Second grade students from Red Oak Elementary, top left, proudly showed off their "family culture" projects during Texas Public Schools Week. • Mrs. Keane's GT class from Eastridge Elementary, top right, learned about Ancient Egypt by dressing as pharaohs. • ROHS varsity cheerleaders, bottom left, celebrated a great year during their 2009 Cheer Banquet. • Robert Ford, bottom row center, celebrated his birthday with his nephew, Riley Horn, at a local eatery. • Anytime Fitness in Red Oak, second row right, gave away several door prizes during their grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony. • The Wild About Cheer Youth Team, bottom right, won the trophy for the 2009 Redline Cheer and Dance Company Finals Youth Division.







SURVIVING A FINANCIAL CRISIS: A CHECKLIST

During the past few months, the news has been almost incomprehensible. It's hard to make sense of the failure of major Wall Street firms and large banks. And all of this makes it hard for investors to remain calm.

Consider the following checklist for surviving a financial crisis:

- Close your ears but open your eyes. Look for opportunities. Stock prices are down, but they won't always be.
- Focus on things you can control. You can control your emotions so don't panic.
- Review and rebalance your portfolio. Meet with your financial advisor.
- Look for quality investments. When you buy stocks, look for those companies with strong balance sheets.
- Be patient.



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IN THE KITCHEN WITH ANN JONES

SUMMER SQUASH CASSEROLE

3 lbs. yellow summer squash, sliced

- 1/2 cup onion, chopped
- 2 eggs
- 1 Tbsp. sugar
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. pepper
- 1 stick butter, melted
- 1/2 cup cracker meal

Boil squash until tender; drain, then mash. Add remaining ingredients except half of the butter and a small bit of cracker meal for topping. Pour into baking dish; spread the rest of the melted butter on top. Sprinkle with cracker crumbs. Bake at 350 F for 1 hour or until brown.

COUNTRY-FRIED CHICKEN

- 2 lbs. chicken (cuts of your choice)
- 2 Tbsp. shortening
- 1 10-oz. can cream of mushroom soup
- 1/4 tsp. poultry seasoning
- 1 cup carrots, sliced

In skillet brown chicken in shortening; pour off fat. Stir in soup, seasoning and carrots. Cover; cook over low heat 45 minutes or until tender. Garnish with fresh parsley.

GRITS SOUFFLE

2 cups milk 1/2 cup instant grits 1 tsp. salt 1/2 tsp. baking powder 2 Tbsp. butter 1/2 tsp. sugar 3 eggs, separated 1/2 cup sharp cheese, grated dash of Tabasco Scald milk, add grits; cook until thick, stirring constantly. Add salt, baking powder, melted butter and sugar; mix well. Beat egg yolks; add to grits. Add cheese and a dash of Tabasco. Whip egg whites until they hold soft peaks; fold in. Pour into prepared dish. Bake at 375 F for 30 minutes. Best served hot.

VERA GADD'S THREE-LAYER CAKE

- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup nuts, chopped 1 stick butter
- 8 oz. cream cheese
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 2 cups Cool Whip
- 1 small box chocolate instant pudding
- 1 small box vanilla instant pudding
- 2 3/4 cups milk

Hershey chocolate bar, slivered Mix first 3 ingredients well. Pat into 8 x 8-inch baking dish. Bake at 350 F for 30 minutes. For the first layer, mix cream cheese, powdered sugar and 1 cup Cool Whip together. For second layer, mix the 2 instant puddings and milk together. For the third layer, top with Cool Whip,

little over five years ago, Ann Jones moved to Red Oak to be close to her daughter, Beth, and her grandchildren, Emily and Stephen. She loves to cook when it is cold. "I like casseroles and soups, and I like to bake," she said. "My favorite recipes are chicken and dumplings and squash casserole. The squash casserole recipe is everyone's favorite."

Ann has a great love for Appaloosa horses. "We made champions out of several of our horses - World Champion cutting horses," she stated. Now she stays busy caring for two Appaloosas and is very active in Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD). Since losing her son in 1999 to a drunk driver, Ann has made it her mission to help get the word out. "I write letters to our elected officials," she said, "but it takes more than just me." NOW

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> > sprinkle chopped nuts and chocolate on top.

PORK CHOPS WITH AMBER RICE

- 6 pork chops, ¾-inch thick
- salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 1/3 cups parboiling long grain rice
- 1 cup orange juice
- 1 can condensed chicken and rice soup

Brown pork chops in heavy skillet; season with salt and pepper. Place rice in 12 x 10 x 2-inch baking dish; pour orange juice over rice. Arrange browned chops on rice. Pour chicken soup over all. Cover, bake in 350 F oven for 45 minutes. Uncover; continue baking for 10 minutes.

BETTER-THAN-SEX CAKE

- 1 pkg. yellow cake mix
- 1 20-oz. can crushed pineapple, undrained
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 small box instant vanilla pudding
- 3 bananas
- 1 8-oz. container Cool Whip
- grated coconut. to taste
- pecan pieces, to taste

Bake cake in a 9 x 13-inch pan as directed on box. Put pineapple with sugar in saucepan; boil for 5 minutes. Pour over cooled cake. Mix pudding per directions on box; pour over cake. Slice bananas over cake; cover with Cool Whip. Top with grated coconut and pecan pieces.







Finance Now Investment Ideas for Newlyweds

By Reneé Chase

June is a popular month for weddings. If you're getting married this month, you have a lot to think about, but after the wedding — well, you'll have even more to think about. And one of those topics should be your investment strategy. In these days of economic uncertainty, it's important that you and your spouse make investment decisions today that will help you reach your long-term goals.

Of course, the investment process can seem confusing to just one person, so you might think it will be twice as difficult for the two of you. But that's not necessarily so. You can launch an investment strategy that can serve you well throughout your lives together by following these few basic steps:

- Identify your goals. When you start out, you may have short-term goals, such as saving enough for a down payment on a house. As you move through the years, your goals will become longer-term in nature. For example, if you have children, you might set a goal of helping them pay for college. And you will need to establish a goal of saving for retirement. Your first step toward achieving all these goals is identifying them.
- Commit to regular investing. When you begin your careers, you and your spouse may not have a lot of disposable income, but you still need to commit yourselves to putting aside some money each month even if it's only a small amount for investment purposes. If you each have an employer-sponsored retirement plan, such as a 401(k) plan, contribute as much as you can afford.

- Reconcile your investment styles. You and your spouse may have different orientations toward investing. By nature, you might be an aggressive investor, while your spouse could be more conservative, or vice versa. This divergence does not have to be a problem, but you should communicate your preferences clearly to each other when choosing investments together. If you and your spouse each compromise a bit, you can come up with a joint portfolio that works for both of you. At the same time, when you each have an account, such as a 401(k), you may not want them to look alike by containing duplicate investments. Instead, consider building portfolios that complement each other and that can help fill in any gaps that exist in your joint investment strategy.
- Be co-managers. You probably know many married couples in which one spouse handles all the finances and investments. This isn't necessarily a good model to follow. You and your spouse will benefit if you both are familiar with your investment situation and capable of making decisions. Nobody knows what the future will hold, and if one spouse suddenly finds himself or herself in charge of the family finances, with no preparation, it can lead to troubles.

By following these suggestions, you can make long-term investing a rewarding part of your marriage. And the sooner you get started, the greater those rewards can be. **WINN** *Reneé Chase is an Edward Jones representative based in Red Oak.*





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June 2009 community Calendar

Every Monday

Celebrate Recovery meeting: First Baptist Church, 103 West Red Oak Rd. (972) 617-3591. www.redoakcelebraterecovery.com.

Summer Reading Club: 6:00 p.m., Red Oak Library, 200 Lakeview Pkwy. (469) 218-1230.

First Tuesday

PrimeTimers Senior group meeting: 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., 0aks Fellowship, 777 S. I-35 East. Fun, food and fellowship. (214) 376-8208.

Tuesdays and Thursdays

Alcoholics Anonymous meeting: 7:00 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 600 Red Oak Rd. (972) 617-9100.

Every Wednesday

Family Story Time: 10:30-11:30 a.m., Red Oak Public Library, 200 Lakeview Pkwy. (469) 218-1230. www.redoakpubliclibrary.org.

Wednesdays and Thursdays

Senior Citizens Club meeting: 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., 207 West Red Oak Rd. Games, exercise and activities. (972) 576-2777.

Third Thursday

American Business Women's Association meeting. www.abwa-empoweringwomen.org.

First Friday

Worship Jam: 6:30 p.m., Bubba Que BBQ's front porch.

Second Saturday

Lonestar Cowboy Church Motorcycle group ride: 1011 E. Ovilla Rd. (972) 576-0900.

June 6

Mid-Way Regional Airport Annual Pancake Breakfast Fly-In: 8:00-11:00 a.m. Breakfast tickets \$6; one child under 8 eats free with a paid adult. Air show event and parking are free. Classic airplanes and fighters, plane rides, remote control, swing band and more. Call Tammy at (972) 923-0080.

Learjet 550 Indy Race: Texas Motor Speedway. www.texasmotorspeedway.com.

June 6 and 7

Gingerbread Trails Historic Home Tours and Craft Fair: 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m., Getzendaner Park, Waxahachie. (972) 937-0681.

June 15-19

Eastridge Baptist Church Vacation Bible School: 6:30 p.m.-9:00 p.m., 732 E. Ovilla Road. Ages 4 years through completed 6th grade. (972) 617-2338.

June 19 and 20

DFW Summer Balloon Classic, an Aviation

Extravaganza, will be held at Mid-Way Regional Airport in Midlothian. Admission is free. Parking is \$10. The event will feature 40 magnificent hot air balloons. Five mass ascensions will be followed by top-ranked competitors flying their balloons in a challenging competition. "Lite the Nite" balloon glow will be held at sunset on Saturday evening. Aviation Extravaganza during the day features airplanes, helicopters, military aircraft, gliders, skydivers, powered parachutes, RC aircraft and more in-flight and static displays. Some flights available to the public. Attractions include exhibits, food, arts and crafts and areas for the children. For more information, visit www.summerballoonclassic.com.

June 20

Car "Cruise-In:" 4:00-8:00 p.m., Uptown Village at Cedar Hill (main parking lot next to Dick's Sporting Goods). Free admission, door prizes and more.

June 27

Red Oak White and Blue: 5:00-10:00 p.m., Red Oak City Park. Hot air balloon rides and fireworks show. (469) 218-1202.

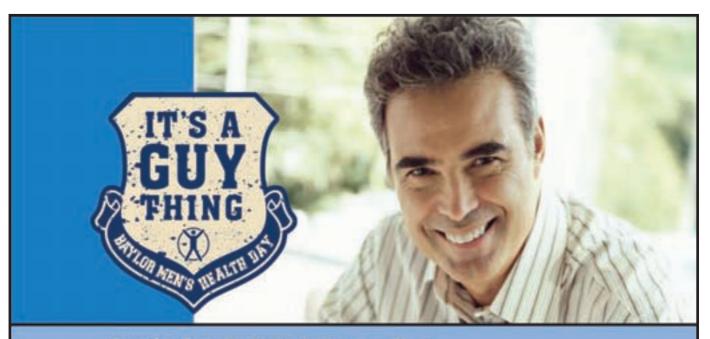
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