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M A G A Z I N E

July 2008

**Dreaming**  
**Her Way**  
**to Success**

**Seizing**  
**Opportunities**

**Bringing Back**  
**the Pride**

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# Burleson

## Editor's Note

*Happy Fourth of July, Burleson!*

As we celebrate our independence, we bring you the stories of people who thrive on freedom of movement. Claudia Humphreys has been instrumental in organizing scholarships for students going from BHS to Hill College, and Ronnie Johnson, one of her partners in coordinating the Burleson Opportunity Fund, is highlighted in EducationNOW. Micah Zavala, a budding artist, tells how he is spending his summer vacation from Stribling Elementary.

Jill Kimball, the current BHS volleyball coach is spending this month conducting volleyball camps and weight training for female teen athletes, some of whom might shop at Western Chic Boutique, which we feature in our business article.

Joyce Rhoades, has taught her caregiver to make some of her own recipes. Finally, be sure to read about the good food and joy shared in the household of Martin, Gloria and Michael Johnson.

Burleson is a fun place to live!

*Melissa Rawlins*

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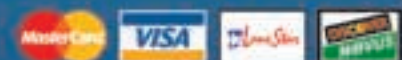
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*Mayor Ken Shetter  
shakes Claudia  
Humphreys' hand as  
they unveil the  
Burleson Opportunity  
Fund to the public.*



# Dreaming Her Way to Success

— By Melissa Rawlins

Over the last eight years, outgoing Place 4 Councilmember, Claudia Humphreys, has lobbied for new recreational facilities for the people of Burleson. During the four years prior to her service on the City Council, Claudia and her husband, Gary, built up their successful tire disposal business. Claudia managed payroll and kept the books, mostly at night, for nine full years. Once Able Tire grew to four locations — and because Gary knew his wife's passion was not only for her own children, but also to participate in public service for youth — he hired others to take care of the business. Claudia has watched her dream come true: revamped parks, improved swimming pools and new fields for softball, baseball and soccer. Now she is exiting her elected office and moving to her family's 200 acre farm in Grandview.

"Our home was hard to sell," Claudia

said, "because we'd lived there for 12 years." That is where she reared their boys, Eric, 18, and Jake, 13. Eric is going to college in the fall. "But you have to come back and visit," Claudia told Eric, "because I still like you!" She continues to help Jake as he needs it. "My 13-year-old has always been an independent spirit. He's more of a person who gives you lists of things to do and then he's on his own — other than for transportation, food and laundry," Claudia laughed.

The cheerful mother spent the spring helping Eric prepare for senior graduation. With several friends and over 100 volunteers, Claudia also feted about 550 high school students at Project Celebration, the after-prom party held in May. "My co-chair, Anne Koonce, and I started raising money a year ago. The community is incredibly supportive, and a lot of the donors

don't have kids in high school! We only charge \$10 to get in. We have several kids who won't go to prom, but they'll go to Project Celebration anyway. About 100 parents volunteer, and parents that are involved have kids who are involved," Claudia said.

"I think that's my favorite part about Burleson. Whenever you get ready to do something for the kids, the community shows up," Claudia smiled. Since cleaning up May's Project Celebration, Claudia's focus has switched to fundraising for the Burleson Opportunity Fund (BOF), which she unveiled on April 17 with School Board President Ronnie Johnson (see our Education Feature) and Mayor Ken Shetter. The fund is now offering financial assistance to Hill College for Burleson Class of 2008 graduates who submitted applications by May 12.

Helping a child down the collegiate path is a priority for Claudia. "I know

a senior in high school last year, one of Eric's friends, who never thought college was an option. I have gone through this application process with him and that's where my passion for the Burleson Opportunity Fund came from," Claudia said. "I grew up with the knowledge that I would go to college. In talking about this with Mayor Shetter, he said something inspiring: 'Can you imagine if everybody knew



*The Mayor's Youth Council poses for a group photo at the unveiling of the BOF.*

from second grade forward that they would be going to college?' What a difference a mind-set like that makes for a child!"

The high school has donated a staff member who is responsible for assisting Burleson High School students complete the financial aid forms. "And counselors at Crossroads and Hill College are also helping. It still takes that kid to make that step to ask the right question and say, 'How do I get this funding?' If the kid does not take that initial step, they could get left out. If a student will show up and make an effort in 20 - 25 percent of the work, we can help," Claudia shared.

Once Claudia gets the word out to business owners about the BOF, she will begin the work required to bring another dream into reality: the Youth Resource Center. Claudia does not know when the Youth Resource Center will become reality. I'm just starting the mechanism and seeing where the ball rolls," the visionary Claudia explained. "I know I need to get the county and the school district involved to provide Burleson's population with

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Claudia's vision for the Youth Resource Center is to help kids stay out of trouble. "This is not necessarily a kid involved with CPS or who has a juvenile record, but if you've got a problem at home and no help, the situation could escalate," she explained. "My goal is to mitigate problems



*Gammon Financial presents a check to the Burleson Opportunity Fund.*



*Richard Crummal, Mayor Ken Shetter, Ronnie Johnson and Dr. Sheryl Kappas, president of Hill College, are enthusiastic about the BOF.*

before the police get involved. It could be something as simple as a daughter having a screaming fight with her mother, and the girl doesn't want to go home that night. The girl starts couch hopping. Then it becomes a cycle of not going home to work things out with the mother. There are inexpensive or free services where counselors can come into the home and help the two talk about their issues, and maybe the kid won't move out of the home. There are a lot of anger issues. I want to help them recognize that the person they're lashing out at is not always where the frustration comes from."

What has Claudia learned to do when she runs across people who do not want help? "It is disappointing emotionally, but I just keep doing it

because there are kids who want help," Claudia said. "This is how God created me. Kids are my 'God mission.' For my kids to see me doing philanthropic things makes my children more philanthropic."

She uses her talents, rather than shelving them. "Perseverance is a gift that God had to give me, and the gift of optimism. You know, if we keep doing this, we're not going to solve all the problems; but one kid is enough. If you can help one kid, you've made



*Jordan Freelin feels like a million after learning about financial assistance for college tuition.*

progress. Kids need personal attention, so you have to work with them one-on-one. Most importantly, to be a successful kid advocate, they have to know you truly care about them so they will trust you."

Even when her kids are grown, Claudia will continue to follow these passions alongside her husband, who also has a philanthropic mission. "Gary's agricultural-oriented, and at the Johnson County Stock Show he puts a lot of money into the premium sales because it's his passion to pay back the kids that did all the hard work. A lot of the kids can use that money to pay for college. He also helps kids buy livestock animals for the shows." Once ensconced in Grandview, the family will get more involved in FFA. "Jake has really wrapped his arms around agricultural, cattle and showing, and since my husband's done such a great job as a provider, Gary should get to have his dream, too." **NOW**

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## At Home With Martin and Gloria Johnson

# Everything Serves a Purpose

— By Jaime Ruark

Burleson is an ever-growing city. Ask anyone who has lived here for any length of time, and they can list the new shops and stores or talk about how neighborhoods have expanded. However, much of the outskirts of Burleson, like Briar Oaks, have remained unchanged, and the residents will tell you that, while they are proud of the way Burleson has grown, they like their open spaces and nature just the way they are.

Martin and Gloria Johnson along with their outgoing 14-year-old son, Michael, have lived in Briar Oaks for over eight years. Their three-bedroom, two-bath house sits back among numerous trees and greenery and is an oasis for this busy family. These native Texans have made their place a home with the nature they love and almost three acres of sprawling lush grass, gardens, trees and vines.

The Johnsons have done some work to their home which was built in the '70s, adding a barn, a barbeque deck and carport. It is easy to see that this is a family who treasures their time outdoors. They love to go on deer hunting trips to Kerrville where Martin's father resides, and many trophies hang throughout their home from successful hunts, especially in their living area which Gloria aptly calls "The Manly Room" because of its decor. "Gloria keeps telling me if I keep getting more animals to hang on the walls, we're going to need more space," Martin joked, while Gloria laughed and added, "When we built the barn, I was hoping he would use it!"

Above all, Gloria wants her family and friends to feel

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welcome when they walk in the door. Her feminine touches complement the "manly" tone of their living area. The khaki walls set off the brown leather couches with jewel-toned throw pillows, and a shelf displays a miniature town, complete with post office, train station and church. Each building is lit from within by a warm glow. These yearly Christmas gifts from Martin, which she dearly loves, are displayed year-round.

A stuffed bobcat reclines languidly on the mantel, a long and ruggedly beautiful piece of mesquite found in Fredericksburg and refurbished by Martin to replace the "standard, blah-blah mantel" that was previously there. "The bobcat was actually a purchase. I have always wanted to take a bobcat, but have never really had the opportunity," he said. Above the cat is



a stuffed pheasant, its wings spread wide. "That pheasant is actually one of the first pheasants I ever raised," Martin added. The previous fireplace below the mantle was recently replaced with a black, wood-burning stove, which helps to heat the home and serves as a centerpiece for the room, drawing attention to the many family collections artfully arranged there and away from the television on the far wall.

The welcoming tone of the living room spills into the kitchen, where it is easy to see the family has shared many cozy times together. "Gloria cooks a meal every night," Martin shared, "and we sit down together as a family and eat, away from the TV." Gloria's kitchen has a chicken and rooster theme, something she did not purposefully set out for, but as she said, "It just happened." A wooden hutch displays her collection. "I always

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try to find things that are not normal, that not everyone will have. I try to be original," she expressed. Above her sink hangs a row of handmade wooden spoons found at a renaissance fair, one spoon being very special because it was Michael's toy. "He loved wooden spoons when he was a kid. He played with them more than his toys," Gloria fondly recalled. A shelf above their table is home to many antiques from bygone days, most proudly rescued or saved from thrifty, Depression-era family members.

Many people hunt for the thrill, but

the Johnson family truly enjoys living off the land and being as self-sufficient as they can. For Martin, hunting is not just a hobby but a way to put food on the table. "We all love to hunt, and we eat what we hunt," he explained. "We don't just hunt for trophies. We do all of our processing. Pretty much the only meat we eat in this house is venison." If their walls could talk, they would surely tell that the Johnson family indeed eats well.

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rosemary, mint and cilantro. "I'm taking it over from Martin this year. I don't think I do as good a job as him yet, but I'm trying," Gloria smiled. The busy homemaker also makes her own grape, plum, blackberry and dewberry jellies from vines and bushes in their yard. She also makes cheeses and is currently learning to make chocolate.

The backyard is home to two friendly dogs, Niña and Chica, as well as countless chickens and peacocks. The couple works hard to incubate and hatch their own eggs. "This year, we hatched out about 120 chicks," Gloria

said as Martin added, "It's not unusual for us to hatch 300 to 500 a year. I don't think we've had a store-bought egg in our house in eight or nine years." Gloria perfectly summed up the Johnson's state of mind continuing, "Everything always serves a purpose."

Martin is a manager for Chesapeake Energy, a job that keeps him busy, and Gloria is a stay-at-home mom, homeschooling Michael and volunteering for CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates), a rewarding but emotionally challenging job. Proudly prompted by her son and husband, she humbly shared,

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"I was given the Volunteer-of-the-Year award for my first case." In her rare spare moments, Gloria also makes her own jewelry: beautiful silver, turquoise and stone necklaces, bracelets, watches and rings. The front room, labeled the "Whatever Room," is home to her collection. "I have eight sisters," she laughed, making it obvious that they keep her busy and her pieces in demand.

The Johnson home is truly a nature

retreat, one they work hard at maintaining, but it is clear they work just as hard at enjoying it. "I'm glad we're here," Gloria shared. "We love the country life." "We love the quietness and serenity," Martin added. "There's just so much stuff you can do out here that is family oriented and kid-oriented. We can have a pasture full of kids, and they can run and be free. We don't have to worry about them getting out in the streets. It's just a great place to live." **BYOW**



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# Drawing for the Future

— By Melissa Rawlins

Anytime is a good time for Micah Zavala to draw. The 10-year-old artist can work anywhere, too. "Sometimes, I draw at a friend's house or here, in my room," Micah said. "I like to be in a quiet place, because I can concentrate more." Micah sometimes gets headaches while drawing and has learned to take breaks between his 30-minute sessions. Micah considers his drawing work — but fun work. "My hypothesis is that art is where you let your emotions and your imagination and

creativity go to work. You picture something and then you draw something that will come out to be a big help," Micah said. "If you're really interested in something and keep going for it, you might even do something great with it."

This approach is inspired by his parents, Claudio and Gilda, who are both creative in their own way. With Claudio's help, Micah turns his drawings into comic strips which tell stories. "I do lots of things while drawing; I think about things of my own, and I'm like doing little mini comics with [the] ideas I get. It's really fun doing my own comics," Micah said. "I have this little thing called Comic Life on my dad's computer. Whenever I finish



put it in the boxes, then shrink them inside the boxes, then add the captions and word bubbles." His current work-in-progress focuses on a couple of Goomba characters. "It's a mystery," Micah explained. "At the end you get to try to figure out what happened. It's about how technology changes over time."

Micah intends to use his talents to influence, entertain, persuade and inform people. "I call this PIE," Micah said, "because Persuade Inform/Influence Entertain is a good thing. An artist might help society by doing a lot of things with art. They could do graphics for animations or stuff like that." Micah has a lot of drawings he has made since the age of four. "It's a lot of fun, because your drawing starts out like a dream,



**"Pen I like, because if somebody just doesn't like the drawing and/or wants to play a prank on me, and tries to erase it, they can't erase it!"**

or a seed, and whatever your interest is, that tiny seed could grow to a big maple tree because you are really into it."

Two years ago, Micah began studying art with his fourth grade teacher at Stribling Elementary School. "I really liked her classes," Micah said, "because she helped me feel confident in myself and my drawing. We talked about different kinds of utensils you could use for drawing. You could use markers, stencils, pencils, colored pencils, colored pastels, those little chalk things." He recently completed a year of drawing classes with Claire Ellis, a jewelry maker, who teaches drawing within a focused curriculum offered by Young Rembrandts. "She teaches me about different kinds of art, like cartoons, designs and shapes, highlights," Micah shared, pulling out his favorite drawings to illustrate what he has learned. "This drawing of a road is a horizon line, and

# ARTS NOW


as things are closer to you they are bigger. It's a little bit similar to the swan I drew on the lake, because the front trees are lighter than the rear trees."

When Micah returns home, he leaves the structured instruction behind, yet certainly maintains his discipline. "Sometimes, I just let an idea come to me. I watch a little bit of TV, play some video games, I look at things, and then it's like monkey see, monkey do. I get an idea of what I can draw. It helps me use my imagination and creativity to draw whatever's on my mind. I like to draw robots, and also fish because I really like fish."

Micah's family took him fishing once on a stormy day. "We were fishing for stripers," Micah recalled. "We caught a lot. We used fish bait, not worms because that would be harming the environment, taking away the worms that provide nutrients to the dirt. Bigger fish like smaller fish for bait. It's like the food chain. I've drawn the food chain. I drew an electric eel and then a giant crab and then sharks and then a giant squid. I like putting the algae first, in front of the food chain because it's a producer."

"I draw the sun because it's really important. It gives off energy to all the plants. It's one big ball of light. I don't draw its rays; I put one big circle with sun spots or solar flares, since it erupts," Micah added, sharing knowledge from his third-, fourth- and fifth-grade science classes. "When I get up to college," he continued, "I might study both science and art. Art could help me draw out blueprints for people in need of a home. For science, when I'm older, I might even help find a cure for cancer by chemicals and plants and stuff."

To prepare for his future, Micah plans to draw all summer long. "It's like a lesson in knowing your gifts. Like, you are doing something and then you think about what an amazing person you'll be in the future with your gift." **ARTS NOW**



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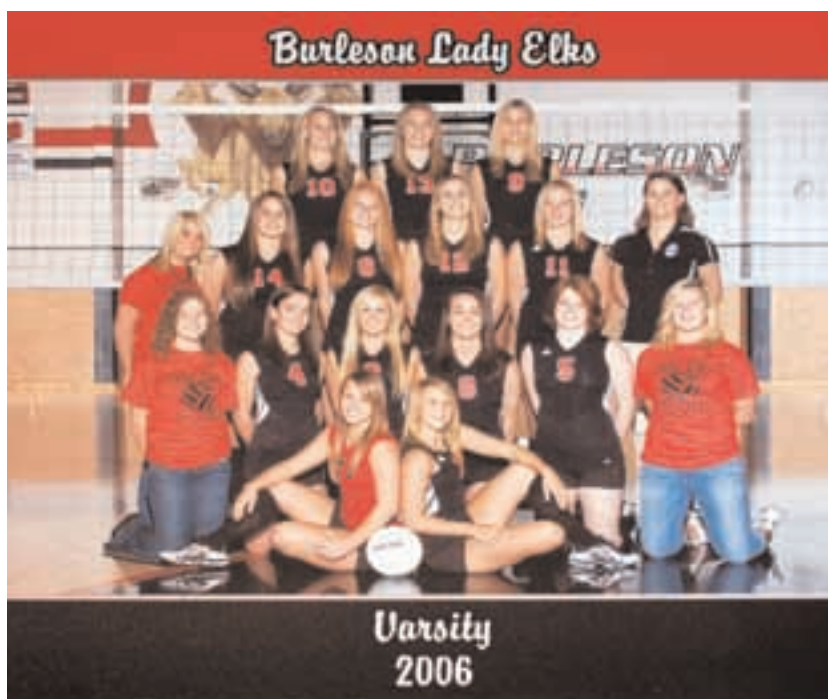
# Bringing Back *The* Pride

— By Jaime Ruark

Burleson High School (BHS) has an awesome volleyball legacy. Many of the girls who played on past teams have gone on to play volleyball at the college level. Parents and fans recall the Olympian Stacy Sykora and those exciting matches during the early '90s. Burleson indeed has impressive and talented athletes, and Jill Kimball, part of the team that included Stacy and went 32 and 2 her freshman year, is working hard to keep that legacy alive.

Jill will soon begin her fourth year as a coach at Burleson High School. Elk pride is in her blood, having graduated from BHS in 1997. She went on to receive her college degree at the University of Texas at Arlington and has been teaching and coaching for seven years. Jill made her way back to her alma mater in 2004, and along with her husband, Ryan, the helicopter camera man for Channel 11 news, and her new 4-month-old daughter, Kylie, she spends her days and nights guiding the high school girls' team back to greatness.

Jill's first year as a volleyball coach was a bit of a challenge for her. It was spent coaching the freshman team. "I was so excited to get to come back to my old high school, but it was



## Sports NOW

pretty strange at first — now being a peer to some of the teachers and coaches that had taught me. It was interesting the first few months,” she smiled. “It was fun to go back to the pep rallies. A lot of things are still done the same, and it’s almost like being in a time warp. When I came back, though, some of the traditions and some of the pride from my days had fallen off. I want to give that back to the girls, so I work hard to bring back the attitude, commitment level and excitement.”

The many fond memories of her days playing for the team, help drive Jill today. “When I was playing, our team had made it to the playoffs many, many years in a row. When I came back, we hadn’t made it to the playoffs in six years. The goal my second year (but the first year as head coach) was to make it to the playoffs, and we did,” she said proudly. “The fans came back and really started supporting us. When I played, we always had packed houses, and it’s starting to be that way again, which is really neat for the girls.”

Jill poured her heart and soul into that team, and because of her hard work and dedication, she was quickly bumped up to the head coach position. “The varsity coach, when I came back, knew that I was committed and driven and that I wanted to see our team be successful. So, he wanted me to take the lead. He actually became my assistant and let me be the head coach,” she shared.

At the beginning of each season, Jill takes her team to camps where the girls participate in activities, such as obstacle courses and “trust falls” to build team spirit, trust and unity. She has come up with creative ways to keep the girls involved, taking them out to eat or coming up with talent shows and skits before a game to get them excited and ready to play. “The girls really like the team-building things we do. It builds friendships and gives them some fond memories,” she said.

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This month, July 28 - 31, Jill will be working with the future Lady Elks volleyball girls, who are looking forward to joining the Burleson legacy. "We work on skills and fundamentals. The older girls will work on getting the younger ones ready for their tryouts. We teach them our system and what we expect out of them."

**"The girls really like the team-building things we do."**

"The most exciting game, since I've been head coach, was the Mansfield game in 2006. We were underdogs and not expected to win. It was the second time we faced Mansfield that season, and the first time they just blew us out. But this time, we fought and took it to a fifth game. It was point for point and they were ahead," Jill recalled. With a score of 13-11, one of her girls served a ball that she remembers hit the net and fell over onto the other team's side. "It seemed like slow motion. From there we carried on and won the game. I just fell on my knees. It was a crazy game. All the fans rushed down onto the floor. It was really exciting."

Jill is truly a proud and committed Lady Elk, but she and her husband are learning that sometimes life's priorities change, thanks to their recent little bundle of joy. "There's definitely been a shift in my priorities. I'm a little more balanced now. Before, I was very career driven; volleyball was the only word you ever heard come out of my mouth. Now, I have Kylie, so time is a factor," she admitted. "I'm still going to do all the tournaments and all the practices. She'll just be there from the stands, cheering us on. But now, when I walk off that court, it's family time." **NOW**

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Burleson is where the Christianity related event, "See You at the Pole," originated in 1990.

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Business  
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# Pinking the Town

— By Melissa Rawlins



*Western Chic Boutique's Personal Shoppers: Roxann, Yvonne, Brittany, Candace and Laura.*

This month, the long plate glass windows at Western Chic Boutique are encased with red, white and blue in honor of our nation's independence and our soldiers at war. Inside the store, customers will be enveloped with less sedate colors — most emphatically, the owner's signature pink. The first things they may notice are the unique smell of berries and the rustle of hot pink tissue paper being used to pack another customer's bag of funky fashion.

Such classy touches punctuate the shopping experience at Western Chic, the boutique which Candace opened last October with her mother, Roxann. "Me and my daughter have talked about opening a retail store for many years," said Roxann, who has over 20 years experience in retail management.

"And Candace has always been involved in retail. I remember when she was growing up, she was always volunteering to sell in booths at fundraisers — the kind of work that required retail talents. Plus, she's a professional shopper, which makes her a good buyer."

"I'm putting the shopping talents to good use," Candace agreed. "My goal is to offer affordable clothes to my customers. They expect it to be priced high, because the clothes are on wooden hangars. Then they see my price and go, 'O my gosh! I can buy three!' My customers are very happy about coming to a boutique over a mall, especially because these days — with the gas prices going up — a five minute trip sounds better than a 30-minute ride to the nearest mall." For this reason, they just opened a second location in Hamilton.

At Western Chic, customers find all sorts of furnishings for the home and accessories for the body. "Our store brings fashion into the smaller towns," Candace said. "I carry size 0 up to size 24. I get mommies and daughters coming in, and the mother finds a top while the pre-teen can find something, too. To find stylish clothes for plus-sizes is hard."

The clothing on the racks is spangly, shiny and downright fun. Studded cowboy boots, spiky stilettos and custom-made cowboy hats are displayed along with fine local art. "To give you more of a boutique feel, we provide personal shoppers," Candace shared, "and give you water if you'd like."

The owner's goal is to serve lady customers, yet her personal



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## Business NOW

shoppers (Laura, Brittany and Yvonne) are also trained to help the husbands and fathers who come shopping for gifts. "We have one of the largest collections of Gary Crouch prints," Candace said, "because he represents Texas heritage so well." The shelves at Western Chic also contain hand-carved wine corks from Texas artist Matt Hey. Handmade, nail-less rustic furniture

**"Then they see  
my price and go,  
'O my gosh! I can  
buy three!'"**

from Mexico is displayed along with leather pillows and feather boa chandeliers, providing a romantic ambience for a fun shopping day.

Candace and her staff know their customers on a first-name basis, and offer goodies discovered through Candace's tireless online research. Western Chic buys close-out lots and offers the discount to their customers. "Our customers know we only carry six or eight of any item; once it's sold, it's gone. It's always consistent rotation." The boutique gets its "Chic" by offering such uniqueness. "We don't carry a lot of Western," Roxann explained. "We've got the belts, hats and boots, but not the studded out Western shirts. We're more about fashion, fun and custom."

Western Chic Boutique, located at 244 S.W. Wilshire Blvd., Ste. E, is open 10:00 a.m. — 8:00 p.m. Monday — Saturday, closed on Sundays. Customers may contact the Western Chic ladies at (817) 333-7900 or visit their Web site, [www.westernchicboutique.com](http://www.westernchicboutique.com). **NOW**

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## Education **NOW**

# Seizing Opportunities

— By Melissa Rawlins

Even though he has not taught in a classroom in 23 years, Ronnie Johnson has never stopped being a teacher. A leader on the school board for the last 17 years and the owner and operator of Dairy Twin for the last 23 years, Ronnie may have an opportunity in a classroom again, teaching a few classes at Hill College if called upon. Thanks to scholarships paid for by the new Burleson Opportunity Fund (BOF), over 40 Burleson high school graduates have the potential to begin their studies at Hill College.

Ronnie Johnson's support of the BOF goes back to his family. "My mother and dad did not have a high school education, but there was no question [concerning whether or not] I was going to college," he remembered. "That stayed with me my whole life. I knew I was going, and I went. I didn't know exactly what I'd do, but I had a pretty clear direction."

Ronnie met his wife, Peggy, while they were getting their bachelor's degrees at Midwestern University in Wichita Falls. "I was an administrator at a small school at Throckmorton while she finished her degree in business. Two years later, she became a CPA and finished her degree, eventually. I questioned her sanity. It was seven days a week, just like this store, and it was not easy for her," Ronnie recalled. As he and Peggy reared their children, Ronnie insisted that his daughters focus on going to college. His eldest, Angela, went to court reporting school before deciding to join her father at Dairy Twin, which



she has helped manage for 20 years. "I consider her a success, because it's very difficult to run this kind of organization," Ronnie said. "My youngest daughter, Rhonda, went to Texas A&M, and she's a very successful teacher and coach."

"I detest when someone tells me, 'I'm not college material.' If that is the case, then I would not have been considered college material," Ronnie exclaimed. "I was your average B/C student. I had to work to get through high school!" Hill College has embraced people like Ronnie. "Sheryl Denson, who worked for me, managing nights at Dairy Twin for 20 years, received her associate degree from Hill College this past May, and will go on to get her teaching certificate and be a school teacher," Ronnie said with pride in his eyes. "Any person with a will can go to school. They'll be accepted at Hill College, and they'll have study groups and remediation anytime they need it. The price is right, and they can work during the day or at night and go to school."

"If you're fortunate enough to get one of these BOF scholarships, you're going to pay for your books," Ronnie said. "Even if you just get those two years, you will have two years of college. And in the technological world we live in, it'll be very difficult to do very well without any college. I really don't care if a student doesn't make it beyond one semester. They ought to go there and at least try it. But look, if you go to school and you are successful in that first semester,

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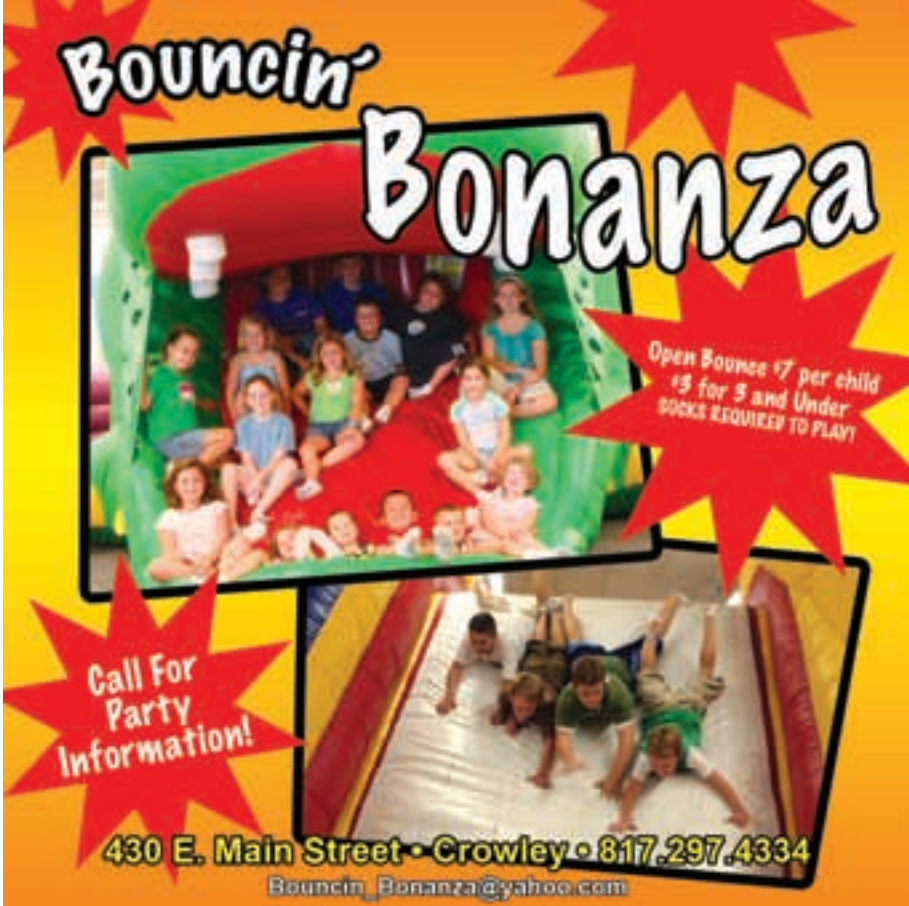
then you're coming back. The kids that don't give it a try are really wasting an opportunity."

These opinions come from the man who heads the Burleson Independent School District's volunteer school board, and seizes every opportunity he can. "We've been on the cutting edge of many things. We helped set the state policy for how to replace board members. We've been lucky enough to help make these kinds of decisions," Ronnie said. "Our school board is reasonably well thought of in the area, because generally you don't see someone come on and go off after one term."

That said, most people do not want to hang around as long as Ronnie, the newly re-elected board president, has. "I'm of an age now that I have to make a decision each year this comes up," he shared. "My two daughters and my wife are glad I did it. But it does wear on you after awhile. You have to explain why you do it."

This summer, Ronnie and the school board will review curriculum, set the new school budget and prepare for growth in the city. "In 1990, my first year, we had around 4,000 students," Ronnie explained. "Now we have 9,000. *Texas Monthly* said we were the 57th fastest growing city in the state. My biggest time consumption now is with architects, and we're still trying to find property to buy, because we're going to have to have another middle school, and within 10 years, we'll probably have to have a third high school. We're in the situation where we're losing opportunities because one of these days the properties aren't going to be there to use."

Losing opportunities does not sit well with Ronnie. "I don't blame my wife for questioning my sanity for spending a lot of hours and getting a lot of phone calls," Ronnie said. "Well, we're in the midst of a growth pattern, and I just want to see it through. I know I can help." **NOW**

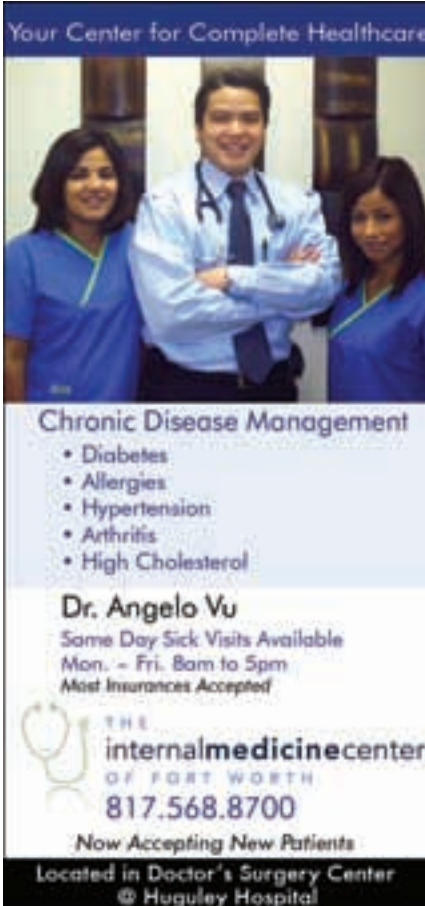


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## Around Town NOW



The City Stage Dancing Group, top left, performed during the Cinco de Mayo celebration. The Athena Society of Burleson, top right, have made several donations to worthy organizations within the community. Jourdynn Berna, a barista at JJ Mocha's, second row right, served Billy Ray and Chuck Anderson. Joe Vincent and Dave Hawkins, bottom left, took a long look at a 1950 Ford 4-door Sedan at the Antique Car Show held during Honeyfest. Roger Turner, owner of First Choice Exterior Management, bottom right, trimmed the grass at Waffle House.



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# Around Town NOW



Karate Kids, top left, performed what they have been learning during Honeyfest. Steve Standefer, library director for the Mansfield Public Library and Kerry McGeath, library director for the Southlake Public Library, second row left, presented the Burleson Library with the 2007 Achievement of Excellence in Libraries Award. Cathy Wall, airbrush tattoo artist for Chill Out Tats, second row center, registered for Honeyfest with Alex Ferguson of the Chamber of Commerce. Mayor Ken Shetter, bottom left, read *Memoirs of a Veteran* during the Memorial Day Wreath Laying Ceremony in Renfro Square. Maimuna Bah, volunteer and mom, helped teacher Karen Camp, top right, organize the end of TAKS testing party held for students from Hughes Middle School at Warren Park. Thirty Burleson children, bottom right, won environmental education awards before school released for summer vacation. Not all winners were present for the photograph.



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# Look Who's Cooking

— By Faith Browning

## IN THE KITCHEN WITH JOYCE RHOADES

Living several years in Guam and Azores has made a colorful life for Joyce during her tour of duty as an Air Force wife. She enjoyed learning to prepare the local dishes, and she continues to make certain of these dishes to this day.

For 14 years, Joyce has prepared meals on Wednesday nights for her church, Crestmont Baptist. Even though she has now handed over her Wednesday night apron to the next generation, Joyce's good cooking is still remembered. "Some of the senior citizens at the church still ask me if I would cook just one more meal for them," she fondly recalled. Like many churches, Crestmont Baptist has produced three cookbooks to raise funds for various projects; in those cookbooks you can definitely find more of Joyce's home-style recipes. **NOV**

To view more of your neighbors' recipes, visit our archives at [www.nowmagazines.com](http://www.nowmagazines.com).

### LEMON PEPPER CHICKEN

4 chicken breasts  
Butter Pam cooking spray  
lemon pepper seasoning, to taste

Place chicken breasts in a baking dish. Bake at 350 F for 15 minutes. Spray chicken with Pam; sprinkle with lemon pepper seasoning. Bake another 20 minutes. Serve with steamed broccoli and baked or mashed potatoes.

1 1/2 Tbsp. fat from chicken broth

Place cleaned chicken in pot; cover with water. Add salt and pepper; boil until chicken is done. Remove chicken from broth; remove bones and skin. Tear or chop chicken into bite-sized pieces and set aside. Mix together dumpling ingredients. Roll dough out on a floured board; cut into squares with a table knife. Drop dumplings into boiling broth; boil until dumplings float to top, about 10 minutes. Add chicken to broth and dumplings; boil 5 more minutes.

3 tsp. mustard  
1/3 cup Worcestershire sauce  
1 1/2 cup catsup  
1/4 cup vinegar  
3 Tbsp. Liquid Smoke

Melt butter in pan. Add onion; cook onion until clear. Add other ingredients; stir. Cook for 15 minutes. Great for steak, hamburgers, chicken and especially ribs.

### CHICKEN AND DUMPLINGS

1-2 lbs. whole chicken  
salt and pepper, to taste

#### DUMPLINGS:

3 cups flour  
1 1/2 tsp. salt  
1 1/2 cup milk

### JOYCE'S BARBEQUE SAUCE

3 Tbsp. butter  
1 1/2 cup onions, chopped  
3 tsp. paprika  
3/4 Tbsp. pepper  
1/3 cup sugar

### KING RANCH CHICKEN

6 corn tortillas  
1 cup chicken broth  
1 13-oz. can chicken  
1 bell pepper, chopped  
1/2 onion, chopped  
1 14-oz. can cream of mushroom soup  
1 14-oz. can cream of celery soup

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1 10-oz. can Ro-Tel tomatoes  
1 cup cheddar cheese, grated

Dip tortillas in chicken broth; line the bottom of 9x13-inch baking dish with tortillas. Top with chicken, onion and bell pepper. Mix chicken broth, soups and Ro-Tel tomatoes; pour mixture on top. Top with cheese. Bake at 350 F for 1 hour.

### LEMONADE PIE

1 14-oz. can Eagle Brand Milk  
1 6-oz. can frozen lemonade  
8 oz. Cool Whip  
graham cracker crust

Mix milk and lemonade with spoon. Fold in Cool Whip with a spoon, do not beat. Pour into crust; place in freezer. Stays good until all is eaten.

### PECAN PIE

3 eggs  
2/3 cup sugar  
1 cup white corn syrup  
1/4 cup butter or margarine, melted  
1/4 tsp. salt  
1 tsp. vanilla  
1 1/4 cup pecans, chopped  
9-inch unbaked pie crust

In bowl, beat eggs slightly. Add sugar, corn syrup, butter, salt and vanilla; blend well. Add pecans; pour into pie crust. Bake at 400 F for 10 minutes. Decrease temperature to 350 F and bake for another 30 - 35 minutes.

### BLUEBERRY COFFEE CAKE

2 cups flour  
1/2 cup sugar  
2/3 cup butter  
2 tsp. baking powder  
1 tsp. salt  
2 eggs, separated  
1 cup milk  
1 cup blueberries, fresh or frozen

Cream flour, sugar and butter until pea-sized; reserve 3/4 cup for the top. To the rest, add baking powder, salt, egg yolks and milk; beat 3 minutes. In separate bowl, beat egg whites until stiff; fold 1/4 into other mixture to lighten it. Add remaining egg whites; fold again. Pour into a 9x13-inch pan; sprinkle blueberries and reserved crumbs over top. Bake at 350 F for 40 minutes.



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## Finance **NOW**

# Declare Your Financial Independence Day

— By Lynn H. Bates Jr.

As we get close to the Fourth of July, you may be thinking of where you'll be going to attend a picnic, watch fireworks or engage in any of the other activities that accompany the holiday. And while it's always meaningful to commemorate our nation's many freedoms, you may want to take this opportunity to think about another celebration of liberty — your own "Financial Independence Day."

However, unlike the Fourth of July, Financial Independence Day won't just show up on the calendar; you have to work to make it happen. Here are a few suggestions for doing just that:

- **Liberate yourself from debt.**

You don't have to be a free spender to rack up a lot of debt. The cost of living is high, and sometimes you need to use

loans and credit. But the more money you owe, the harder it is to achieve financial independence, so try to reduce, consolidate or eliminate as many debts as possible. You may have to drive that old car one year longer or postpone that vacation until you can pay for it up front, but these and similar moves may pay off down the road.

- **Emancipate your investments.**

To achieve your long-term financial goals, you need your investments to provide you with the combination of growth potential and income that's appropriate for your individual needs. To accomplish this, though, these investments need to be "free" from being raided constantly to pay for the costs of everyday life. That's why you should establish an emergency fund containing six to 12 months' worth of living expenses. By keeping this fund in a liquid account, you won't have to tap into your investments the next

time you have a major car repair, need a new appliance or face an unexpected medical bill.

- **Unchain the potential of your retirement accounts.**

Every time you get a raise, boost your contributions to your retirement plan at work — i.e., your 401(k), 403(b) or 457(b). Your money has the potential to grow on a tax-deferred basis, and you typically contribute pre-tax dollars, so the more you put in, the lower your annual adjusted gross income will be. But if you're not contributing the maximum allowed, or at least as much as you can afford, you're putting "shackles" on the ability of these plans to help you attain the retirement lifestyle you've envisioned.

- **Free your family from threats to your income.**

Without your income, would your family be able to pay off the mortgage, send your children to college or meet any of the financial goals you've set?



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Financial independence will always be elusive unless you protect your family from the potential loss of your income, and that's why you need adequate life insurance, especially in the years when your children are young and you're still paying on your house. At the same time, you may need disability insurance to replace your income if you can't work due to illness or injury. Your employer may offer a disability policy, but it might be insufficient to meet your needs, so you may need to add extra coverage.

By taking these and other steps, you can go a long way toward turning Financial Independence Day from a goal into a reality — so take action soon. **NOW**

*Lynn H. Bates Jr. is an Edward Jones representative based in Burleson.*

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## Health NOW

# Suffering With Arthritis

— By Betty Tryon

Do you have joint pain, stiffness and swelling for no apparent reason? You may have arthritis. An estimated one in three adults in America suffers from this affliction. The crowded field of sufferers lets you know you are not alone with this painful condition. Because so many people suffer from chronic joint pain of some type, much attention in the area of research focuses on treating this ailment.

Many think of arthritis (joint inflammation) as one disorder; however, the term covers over 100 medical conditions with symptoms including swelling, inflammation and joint pain. The spectrum for this disorder



can include mild discomfort to irreversible physical damage to any organ or system in the body. There are two common forms of arthritis: osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis.

Osteoarthritis, also called degenerative joint disease, results in the breakdown and loss of cartilage in the affected area. The symptoms are related to the degenerative effects of the cartilage tissue loss: decreased function of the affected joint, swelling, tenderness to touch, pain and sometimes a grating sensation caused by bone rubbing against bone. Osteoarthritis is more likely to occur as we age; the repetitive use of our joints causes the cartilage to deteriorate. Obesity increases the risk factor of developing the disease and can worsen the symptoms. Heredity can be a factor in its development. Joint injury can also cause the beginning of osteoarthritis.

The second most common form of arthritis is rheumatoid arthritis. Unlike osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis presents itself as an autoimmune disease that attacks healthy joints, instigating the development of inflammation and resultant joint damage. Rheumatoid arthritis will usually exhibit itself bilaterally. The symmetrical pattern of the affliction helps to distinguish this disease from other types of arthritis. This disease possesses the potential to limit everyday activities such as buttoning a shirt or holding objects.

The encouraging news is that not everyone responds the same way with the same degree of severity. In addition, there can be periods where the symptoms may diminish or disappear.



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## Health NOW

At this time, the cause of rheumatoid arthritis is unknown. Something triggers the immune system to attack the body's organs or joints. There are many theories as to what precipitates the attack, including: the role of genetics, the environment, hormones and possibly an attack by a virus or bacteria.

Unfortunately, there is no cure for arthritis. Treatment consists of a combination of drugs and physical therapy. Some have found relief with holistic methods. Your physician can assist you in tailoring a treatment plan that is best for your needs. If you have joint pain, swelling or stiffness for more than two weeks, consult your doctor. **NOW**

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

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# Great Outdoors

**NOW**

## Heat-tolerant Bloomers

— By Nancy Fenton

Looking for blooming, heat-tolerant plants to brighten up your scorched landscape? Try a few more crepe myrtles. You can find them in almost every size and color.


Varieties in assorted colors start at about two feet and range to tree-sized ones over 12 feet tall. Smaller ones like Baton Rouge-red, Cordon Bleu-lavender and New Orleans-purple tend to weep or cascade and make great plants around patios, pools or even foundations. Dwarfs reaching only to about six feet, come in almost every color, including: White Snow Baby, Red Petite Plum and Dwarf Purple. Intermediates grow to between six and 12 feet with Red Cherokee, Pink Pecos and Purple Catawba being some of the favorites of this area. The tall, white weeping ones you see up and down the streets of Waxahachie are called

Natchez. The tall varieties are the ones you see growing past the roof lines of homes and along the roads and byways towering over the fences. As these “trees” mature, they make a show of pink, red or white blooms.

All crepe myrtles need bright sun and good air circulation. Aphids are about the only bugs drawn to them, and they can be thwarted with good air circulation or a regular stiff spray with a hose. If a crepe gets black sooty stuff or mildew on it, it is a sign of poor air circulation. I use a stiff spray from my hose end sprayer of soap and water (use one tablespoon soap to 5 gallons of water) to battle the bugs and mildew. The spray disrupts the bugs enough that they move on. Regular spraying once every 10 days or so will help to keep the bugs moving!

Try some of these beauties in your sunny spots. Remember to water weekly the first year, mulch heavily and choose the right size for your space. Do not plant tree-sized crepe myrtles under the electric lines! Enjoy blooms even in the heat of the summer. **NOW**

*Nancy Fenton is a Master Gardener in Ellis County.*



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# July 2008

## Community Calendar

### Every Tuesday

Family Films, 2:00 p.m., Burleson Public Library. For titles of the movies to be shown each week, call (817) 295-6131.

### Every Wednesday

Breakfast Club networking group meeting, 8:30 - 10:00 a.m., Cracker Barrel. (817) 295-6121.

### Second and Fourth Wednesdays

Burleson Lions Club meeting, noon - 1:00 p.m., First United Methodist Church. (817) 980-9436.

### Every Thursday

Prime Time Connections networking group meeting, 9:00 - 10:30 a.m., Burleson Area Chamber of Commerce. Contact Kay Ray at (817) 703-8141.

Burleson Network Connection meeting, 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., Sammy's Italian Restaurant. (817) 295-6121.

### Every Friday

Burleson Business Builders networking group meeting, 8:30 - 10:00 a.m., JJ Mocha's. (817) 295-6121.

Planning and Zoning Commission meeting, 6:00 p.m., City Hall. (817) 447-5400.

### July 3

Pet Show and Parade, 2:00 - 4:00 p.m., Burleson Public Library. Children are invited to bring their

favorite pet. All pets must be licensed and either leashed or in a pet carrier. (817) 295-6131.

### July 4

Independence Day Celebration hosted by the city of Burleson at Hidden Creek Sports Complex and golf course. Gates open at 5:00 p.m. with entertainment by two bands. The 20-minute fireworks extravaganza choreographed to patriotic music will start at dusk. For more information, call the city of Burleson Parks and Recreation department at (817) 295-8168.

Independence Day Event at the Texas Motorplex in Ennis. Drag racing, fireworks. Grand Funk Railroad will be performing. Call 1 (800) motorplex or visit [www.texasmotorplex.com](http://www.texasmotorplex.com).

### July 8

Burleson Heritage Foundation meeting, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m., Heritage Visitors Center, 124 W. Ellison (the old Interurban Building in Old Town). (817) 447-1575.

### July 10

Hip Pocket Theatre's Stone Soup presents *Piggie Pie*, 2:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m., Burleson Public Library. (817) 295-6131.

Burleson City Council meeting, 7:00 p.m., City Hall. (817) 447-5400.

### July 10 - 13

The musical *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* will be performed by Burleson Community Theater for ticket holders (\$10 adult; \$6 students K - 12) at Burleson High School Auditorium. Thursday - Saturday: 7:30 p.m. Sunday: 2:00 p.m. [www.burlesoncommunitytheater.com](http://www.burlesoncommunitytheater.com).

### July 12 - 13

Waxahachie Trade days, located at the Ellis County Expo Center. Saturday, 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. and Sunday, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. For more information, call Dean Worley at (903) 286-0183, e-mail [waxtradedays@yahoo.com](mailto:waxtradedays@yahoo.com) or visit [www.waxtradedays.com](http://www.waxtradedays.com).

### July 17

Dan Gibson, storyteller and banjo player, 2:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m., Burleson Public Library. (817) 295-6131.

### July 24

Burleson City Council meeting, 7:00 p.m., City Hall. (817) 447-5400.

*For more community events, visit our online calendar at [www.nowmagazines.com](http://www.nowmagazines.com).*

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