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Burleson NOW

M A G A Z I N E

July 2009

Just **Play!**

Mo Knows

Taking
Her Time

Wild and
Crazy **Love**

At Home With

**Mike and
Sandra Reeves**

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NOT just a "crack" of your back NOT just exercising with rubber tubing
NOT just advice about relaxation Definitely NOT a shot or a dangerous pill

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- aching
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- tearing
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- weak



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Contents

July 2009, Volume 3, Issue 7

6



Mo Knows

12



Young at Heart

At Home With Mike and Sandra Reeves

20

ArtsNOW
Wild and Crazy Love

22

SportsNOW
Just Play!

24

BusinessNOW
Just Adorable

26

EducationNOW
Taking Her Time



On the Cover:
Jeff Kunkel share his
love for baseball with
Burleson's youth.

Photo by Terri Ozymy.

28 Around TownNOW

32 FinanceNOW

30 Who's CookingNOW

34 HealthNOW

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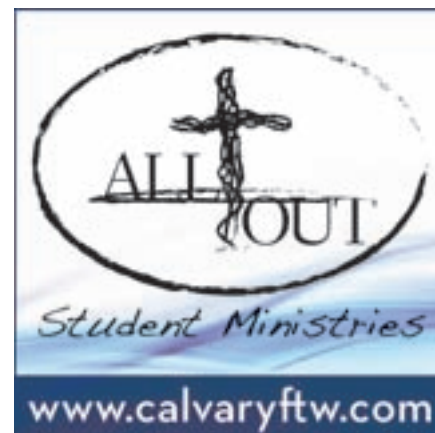
Editor's Note

Happy Independence Day, Burleson!

I have a confession to make: I am a weirdo! I am the only one in my family who has neither served in the military nor married a military man. In fact, ever since my ancestors came over on the Mayflower, the urge to serve has flowed through our veins. My bloodline authorized me to give patriotic speeches as a youth in the Children of the American Revolution! My father's love for his country led him to follow his heart and fly fighter jets over the battle zones where our Air Force generals sent him. Both my sister and her husband have supported our troops in Iraq since this war began. All my life, I have enjoyed the benefits of the freedom my family fought for during the last three centuries.

This month, we have written about others who love this nation and serve its people in many ways. I urge you to take time to give thanks to those in your communities who daily fight the good fight for our many freedoms.

Melissa Collins
BurlesonNOW Editor



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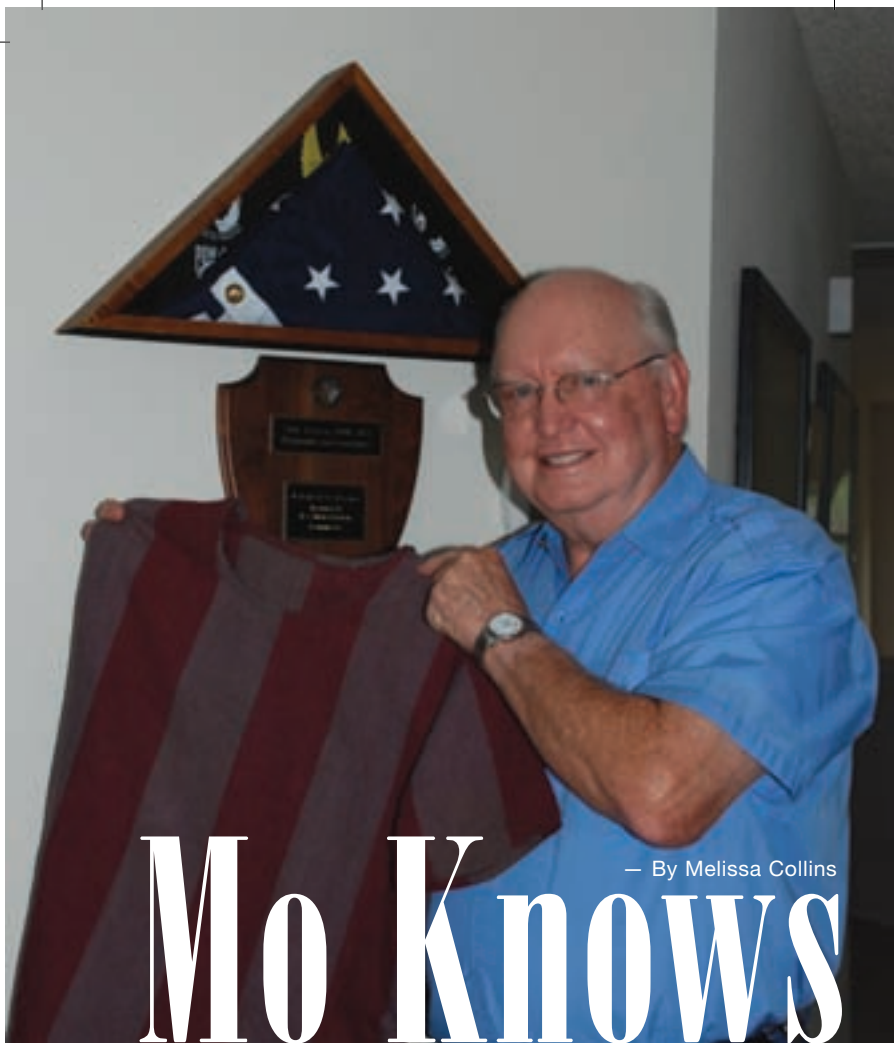
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Mo Knows

— By Melissa Collins

"The sounds we hear at July Fourth don't hold a candle to the intensity of a bomb drop when you're on the ground," said Retired Colonel Elmo "Mo" Baker, who lives with his wife, Honey, on a calm golfing green southwest of Burleson. Mo, who watched WWII newsreels as a preteen in Kennett, Missouri, decided his calling was to fly protective cover over soldiers fighting ground wars. He knows the true meaning of peace.

He endured life during the Vietnam War in a prison camp called "The Plantation" just three blocks away from the Doumer Bridge, in Hanoi, while the U.S. Air Force dropped bombs on the bridge. Ironically, Mo had led bomb strikes on the same bridge two months earlier. "I had a balcony seat to what everybody else was doing. I knew we were there to put the bombs on the target," said Mo, who had earlier told his squadron: "This is a tough old bridge; we got to bring it down!"

Thirty-seven years later, Mo still makes the effort to serve where he can. A strong member of the Burleson Rotary Club, he is often asked to speak about our nation and the sacrifices made by military people. Mo knows the true meaning of sacrifice.

"Only 568 people were brought back from Vietnam on Operation Homecoming. Over 2,500 had been shot down. The survival rate wasn't good; but if you made it into prison camp, you had a good chance of making it home," said Mo, president of the NAM-POW Organization.

"We wanted to return with the nation's honor and our own. That was pretty hard to uphold," Mo said. "Every time



I felt the overwhelming pressure of the enemy, I said, 'I've got to be able to face myself for the rest of my life, even though they're telling me that I can make this confession and nobody else will know.' I would say, 'No. I'm the one who knows.'

"The people who came out of Vietnam represented our country really well," said Mo, who recently told an audience at TCU: "Think about this. The military are serving you. There have only been six percent of us in the U.S. that have ever been in the military. ... [Those in] active duty right now are less than one percent. Those people are all volunteers. They are protecting the 99 percent. We, the protected, really owe them a great debt."

Mo knows the true meaning of freedom. During 67 months in four different prison camps, he fought a battle quite different from dropping bombs on bridges and railroads out of his single place F-105D fighter. From inside the walls of The Plantation, Son Tay, The Hanoi Hilton and Dog Patch, Mo and his fellows fought the battle for American public support. "It was a different war that required each and every one of us prisoners to use everything within us: heritage, confidence in God and personal integrity.

"The enemy used propaganda to fan the discontent that *Newsweek* was publishing, the civil disobedience. Yet we were not to give them any satisfaction, not make tapes, not badmouth our administration. That was the stand we had to make; that was the battle that went on, for me, for 2,031 days. We resisted that propaganda, sometimes to the point of

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taking some very severe treatment," Mo said. "Our military taught us how far we can go in order to keep the situation under control, so that they don't beat you so harshly that you break down," Mo said. "That was the war we fought — and won."

As the prisoners learned of their soon-coming release, they still had to fight. "A little female interpreter came out to the courtyard with The Plantation camp commander. He had us line up out there. We anticipated he'd try to get some kind of propaganda, and told each other, 'Don't anybody throw your hat in the air like a cadet!' He read the whole proclamation; she interpreted. We sat with blank faces, even when he announced that at end of 60 days we'll exchange prisoners," Mo said. "Cameras were on the second floor of the interrogation building. We didn't move. He told the interpreter, 'Let's do it again.' He read the whole thing over. She interpreted the whole thing over. He asked, 'Do you think they understood it?' She said, 'They understood it.' He slammed his book closed and stalked off. Our commander said, 'Dismissed,' and we walked back into our cells where the camera couldn't see us, and we gave each other hugs."

Mo knows the true meaning of victory. Well before their release, the prisoners in The Hanoi Hilton learned the power of singing hymns. Each cell held 40 men, and Mo's cellmates taught themselves the "Hallelujah Chorus." One day the camp commander stopped their practice session, pulled Mo out and ordered him to make the men stop singing. Mo argued, "But, the men have good behavior because they sing!" Seeing Mo's logic, he said, "OK, but sing softly, so the other rooms can't hear." Of course, the other rooms heard, and soon followed suit. The camp commander called Mo back into his office, telling him to make the prisoners stop singing praises to their Creator. Mo gently argued, "The songs teach men to be content." The camp commander relented, "OK, but go soft."

"Before too long," said Mo, "the



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other rooms were having their own church service. The camp commander realized it was helping him, so he gave up on harassing me. That was in November; the following Christmas, we put on a Christmas cantata, singing all hymns and songs that related to the story of Christ. We finished with 40 men singing full voice the 'Hallelujah Chorus.' We invited the camp. People gave us a cheer when it was over. We won that battle big time."

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After returning to the U.S. and building a new life in Weatherford with Honey, Mo continued fighting wars. He joined what was affectionately called the "Over-the-Hill Gang," which flew as many as 25 missions deep into Nicaragua between April and October 1981. "We were air-dropping weapons and supplies to contra units who were fighting communism," said Mo, who was 50 at that time. "As a matter of fact, there was another one after this. When I was 63, I was asked to go down to Columbia, South America, where rebels were blowing up an American pipeline weekly. I was down there two-and-one-half years. ... With our light airplane, we illuminated their campsites and training camps and drove the militants southward."

After that, Honey asked Mo not to participate in more expeditionary projects. "She accuses me," he laughed, "of getting a rush out of being shot at!" If there is ever a time to surrender, Mo knows. **NOV**

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The beautiful brick-and-stone, four-bedroom, three-bath home of Mike and Sandra Reeves doubles as their home office, as the couple works together for Reeves and Associates, Mike's successful business of 30 years. The 2,900-square-foot residence also has many other important functions: a pool party gathering place for their large blended family that includes nine grandchildren and two great-grandchildren; a gallery for Mike's endless array of artwork; a showplace for his amazing train collection; and, of course, space for the separate 2,000-square-foot garage, where the couple's five gleaming automobiles are parked on the black-and-white checkered floor.

A Corsicana native, Sandra, married Mike, who was born and reared in Burleson, 12 years ago. "We used to live in a beautiful home about five miles from where we live now," she shared, explaining that her husband's burgeoning car collection necessitated a move. "Mike had just bought another car, a

YOUNG *at Heart*

— By Jaime Ruark

**At Home With
Mike and
Sandra Reeves**





'32 Ford Roadster, and we just didn't have any room for it. This house was in the process of being built when I stumbled on it. We bought it right before it was finished."

With the acre of land the new residence offered, the Reeves had plenty of room to build what they call "The Showroom," a garage that now houses the '32 Roadster; a restored '55 and a '57 Chevy; a 1978 Cadillac Seville, the first new car Mike bought when he went into business for himself; and a 1993 convertible red-on-red Corvette. "The silver and red '57 Chevy is mine. Mike bought it for me two years ago for our anniversary," Sandra noted. "Restoring cars has become a stress reliever for Mike. There's a really neat story about his Chevy, the 1955 coral and gray two-door hardtop. He bought that car when he was 16 years old for \$550. He drove it all through high school and college, and even to his first job."

Ownership of the car changed hands and Mike began looking for a similar car to restore. A number of years later, "One of his friends told him to go out to a wrecking yard in Dublin where they kept old cars and there it was!" Sandra said. "There were some things he and his father had put on the car that helped him recognize it as his. He bought the car back and started restoring it," she added. A replica of his '55 Chevy now sits on the mantle above the fireplace in the living room.

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Because the Reeves were traveling when the inside of the house was being finished, Sandra had to trust they would like the end product. "I told them I liked beige, but that's really all the say I had," she smiled. With the decorating expertise of Kay Blankenship of Home Design Gallery and the beige tones Sandra favors throughout the home, the residence gives off a warm and welcoming feel, accentuated by the many contemporary paintings created by Mike, a talented artist.

The living room, formal dining and kitchen area create one continuous

open space, perfect for family and friend get-togethers. A glass display case in the living room holds Sandra's collection of Giuseppe Armani figurines, signed collectable statuettes of elegant ladies, each a gift from Mike. Of the flower arrangement gracing the dining room table and greenery skimming across the tops of the cabinets in the kitchen that provide a splash of color, Sandra admitted modestly, "I just kind of throw those things together. Mike is the artist."

The master bedroom showcases the couple's Bernhardt bed with gorgeous woodwork detail. "That was one of our first big purchases together when we got married," Sandra recalled. New drapes set off the warm, neutral tones of the room, and those same neutral tones continue into the spacious master bathroom that Sandra always keeps sparkling. "I clean every morning. I'm kind of a perfectionist," she admitted with a grin. The sunken tub and walk-in shower gleam next to a myriad of





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Egyptian-style vases that decorate the space, a style Sandra favors.

A hallway, which serves as a family photo gallery, leads to an exercise room, complete with bike and treadmill. Sandra laughingly said the equipment does not see as much use as it should. The room is currently home to some very special family heirlooms. "I have a cedar hope chest that was my mother's that I'm having redone. It had memorabilia of my sister and I growing up — costumes we wore from school plays, report cards — and old family things like pictures, my mother's



wedding dress, my father's World War II uniform, all of his medals and the flag that draped the casket when he passed away," she said. Next door is "the Corvette room," with a unique bed that was designed by Mike, complete with television, phone, lights and mirror. Sandra proudly said, "It's pretty cool. My husband has a great imagination."

When Mike is away on business, Sandra spends much of her time in the upstairs office, complete with TV, couches and two large cherry wood desks. Large windows open onto a view of the well-landscaped backyard, done



by Lawn Tech, with a pool, outdoor kitchen and dining area where the family spends many happy summertime hours together. Mike's metal sculptures are displayed here and there in the yard,



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along with two small statuettes of a girl with a hula hoop and a boy on a bike that represent Sandra and Mike when they were young. "When I get too serious, I just look outside," she smiled. "We usually have the family out on the Fourth of July. We go to the parade and then we all come back home and cook hamburgers and hotdogs and make



homemade ice cream. Everybody swims and then when it starts to get dark, we move to the cul-de-sac and start the fireworks." After the display, everyone gathers around the fire pit to tell ghost stories — a fun, family tradition the grandchildren love. The house's original garage holds Mike's impressive Katy Railroad display. Trees, mountains, bridges, cars and



people dot the landscape, all hand painted by Mike, while trains run here and there. "Mike grew up next to the railroad tracks in Burleson, and he just loved it," Sandra said. "He painted this in about four weeks. When the grandkids come over, they just love this. They want to run the trains with their PaPa."

A wall mural in the car showroom is a perfect example of the couple's outlook on life. "That's us in our Corvette, racing a Ford Mustang," she pointed out. "We love to have fun. We're just young at heart." **NOW**

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**ARTS
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Wild and Crazy Love

— By Jaime Ruark

Rachel Hart has her hands full these days. She and her husband of 10 years, Jeff, are busy with their beautiful 8-year-old daughter, Katherine, and three sons, 6-year-old Jake, 2-year-old Nikolas, and Sam, who is 1. A stay-at-home mother, Rachel is in constant motion keeping up with her children, yet she still manages to find enough hours in the day for her creative outlet — sewing.

Rachel has a history in creative design, an innate ability passed down from her grandmother. “My whole life, I’ve always designed and embellished. I love wild and crazy things,” she said. “When I would see something, I was always thinking of how I could make it better, put my own little spin on it. My grandmother was a very crafty, creative person. When I would stay with her, that’s where a lot of my inspiration would come from. She’s really the one who taught me how to sew.”

As she headed to college, Rachel could not put aside her artistic leanings. Although pursuing a career in dentistry, she also took architecture, interior and fashion design classes. “I couldn’t decide what I wanted to do, but I



finally went the dental route. I did that for about eight years, until I had Katherine, but even when I was in the dental field, I always had a studio, a room in our house where I could be creative,” she explained. “I always needed that outlet, a space that was my own where I could sew.”

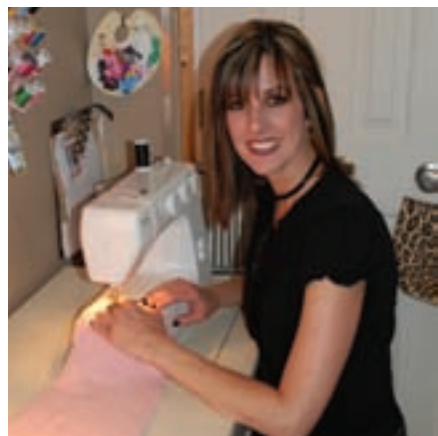
With the birth of her daughter, Rachel began realizing her fun and funky style and her flair for sewing were original. “I couldn’t find the stuff I wanted for her. I wanted her to look like a cute little girl, but also be different and spunky and unique, so I just kind of started doing my own thing and sewing her clothes myself,” Rachel recalled. “My husband called Katherine ‘Sugar Pops,’ so that’s where the name for the business [Miss Sugar Pops] came from, and she’s my inspiration for everything. A lot of my designs actually come from Katherine’s visions and what she likes.” Because Katherine wears the plaid uniform of her private school on weekdays her visions for her weekend and party wear are always bright and fun.

Inspired by her daughter, Rachel began taking the ordinary and making it extraordinary. Simple white tank tops became



ARTS NOW

tie-dyed statement-makers, with huge detachable silk flower pins in every color and hue. Skirts became neon-colored tutus, with layer upon layer of flirty tulle ruffles. Even a plain white baby "onesie" became a vibrant palette



for her funky designs. "Everything has to be different, even my stitching. I can't just have plain stitching, so I make it zigzagged," she smiled. "I try to use all recycled materials, so I'll take some old jeans and cut the tops and use them for my tutu skirts." Rachel loves to use animal prints in her designs, especially leopard and zebra prints, and adds lace accents to many of her pieces.

Rachel also designs rag dolls she has called Lushy Plushies, again inspired by her grandmother. "She used to make Jesus Loves Me dolls for my sisters, my cousins and me," Rachel shared. "They were rag dolls, soft so you could squeeze and love on them, but they were very old-fashioned-looking." Lushy Plushies are Rachel's modern-day twist on her grandmother's dolls. The dolls are 18-inches tall, each hand-crafted, numbered and signed, making them another unique Rachel creation. "They're just quirky and goofy and fun," she smiled. Stella, a Lushy Plushy who has been loved for years by Katherine, has yarn hair, a blue and white polka dot dress, a pink tulle skirt and hair bow, orange and white striped leggings



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and a bright lipstick smile. "Katherine sleeps with her every night, so she's a little bit worn," Rachel added.

In what little spare time she can find, Rachel enjoys making something she and a child will love. "It makes me feel good to make something and have a little girl be so excited about it," she said. "I think my favorite things to make



are probably my dolls, because they're so different. They mean a lot to me because of my grandmother. I hand-make them, down to the pattern, and just to see the transformation, how they evolve — I just love the process of watching something go from plain fabric to this bright and funky doll."

Just as Rachel learned her techniques from her grandmother, Katherine is now learning to sew just like her mom. "She has her own sewing machine and her own little section in my studio. She has a lot of my creativity in her as well," Rachel proudly said. "Katherine loves to be near me, sewing pillows for her dolls."

Everything Rachel does is because of, and inspired by, her family. "My family comes first. I started everything for my daughter," she expressed. "I love that I can use my creativeness this way. When you've created something original, it's such a good feeling." **NOW**



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Sports NOW



Athlete, coach, philosopher — Jeff Kunkel performs all three roles in his beautiful Burleson life. A former professional player with the Texas Rangers and Chicago Cubs, Jeff continues to pass on lessons of the game today. A slew of injuries put a stop to his playing days, but not his competitive spirit. “A sport like baseball teaches you a lot about dealing with adversity, about continuing to strive on for the team, and at times it’s an individual effort,” Jeff said.

While baseball is a game, Jeff said every successful player takes it seriously. “In the game of baseball, you have a job to do. When you are the shortstop, you do not try to play first base because your talents and abilities are designed to play short stop,” said Jeff, who spent 11 years as a shortstop in both the minor leagues and the majors. Now, as a father, husband and business owner, Jeff uses his baseball-inspired philosophies to coach his family on to success. None of his three children have chosen to play baseball, but that’s OK. “I just ask them that in whatever they do, they do their best.

“Overall, sports provide people a grasp of life, where life is community and you have a role. You have an opportunity for

Just Play!

— By Melissa Collins

those who are philanthropic, those that are analytical, those that are business minded, to help in society, where it becomes very much like a team. They all have a common goal of what success is meant to be. And this team of people — your family, your church, your schoolteacher, a youth minister, as well as any sport coach helping out in the Burleson area — they help mold people,” Jeff commented.

Jeff grew up in the '60s, and remembers fondly those who influenced him. “I had the opportunity with my dad, who was an umpire in the major leagues, to travel to cities local to New Jersey. I could sit on the bench during batting practice with some of the greatest ball players of all time and talk to them as a young boy. My idols were Mark Belanger, a short

stop with [the] Baltimore Orioles — very humble, slight and thin like I was when I was young — and Fred Lynn, a center fielder, [who] wrote me a personal handwritten letter when I was injured to encourage me that he made it back from an injury to play professional ball.

“My high school and

college coaches were role models to me. You have bad days, bad weeks, but their constant encouragement helped mold me and shape me,” said Jeff, who now motivates youth and adults to enjoy baseball to the fullest through his coaching business, Jeff Kunkel’s Baseball Fundamentals. At The Burleson Dugout batting cages, Jeff teaches the basics of the game, proper throwing and protection of the body, as well as the joy of baseball. “I make the practice fun and always speak



Sports NOW

positive. I accentuate the positive about what each player is practicing, and the other portions are just little changes we can make to help improve," Jeff said.

Jeff grew up playing with a \$1.25 wiffle ball and bat, deriving great pleasure from competing against his friends, hitting a ball, running around, exercising. "A glove was not that expensive. We didn't know about elite teams or travel teams; those are concepts that came about much after I grew up," Jeff said. "It was simple as having a ball, a glove and a bat. We played in tennis shoes, jeans and looked at the foundation of what the game is: baseball. We didn't take into consideration all of the extra bags, bats, helmets. The love of baseball has nothing to do with those purchased items. The love is simply to sit in the stands and enjoy watching the success, the smile on the face of the child who made contact with the ball, and he's looking back for affirmation from either the coach or the parent."

Jeff feels at home in Burleson. In his childhood, he recalls leaving his house in the morning on a bicycle and calling from a friend's house to say, "Mom, I'm having lunch here." Jeff said, "The only rule was to be home by dinner. If you didn't have enough kids for the pick-up game, you only played to left field. It was truly childish play with friends, not organized. I didn't have instructors, just went out and played the game and had fun doing it.

"I was fortunate to grow up one block away from the elementary and the junior high school, and their fields were always accessible to us. I think a similar opportunity for Burleson kids is coming, from what I see our mayor doing," Jeff said. "The excitement of fields and sports is a tremendous vision that will bring back all those pick-up games, and all the fun of being out and being able to join your friends on the field and just play." **NOW**



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Just Adorable

— By Melissa Collins

Thirty-eight years ago, Diane Regian started helping her friend, Becky Brandenberger, bathe dogs out of her garage. Now, they are keeping Burleson's dogs and cats clean and cute at Happy Tails Too Complete Pet Care and Boutique. This month, artistic Diane is pleased to offer special red, white and blue collars for the Fourth of July and bikinis for little dogs. But every dog's comfort can be accommodated at Happy Tails Too.

Shoes were first put on dogs in the North, where paw protection is a necessity. "Here," Diane said, "it's just adorable. The shoes we sell look like little Converse sneakers in pink and blue!" She also sells dresses, T-shirts, jewelry, bling, collars, leashes, charms you can hang from their collars, all kinds of toys, squeaky toys, toys for aggressive chewers, harnesses, car seats, beds, strollers, miscellaneous gift items, customized feeding dishes and even armoires — handmade and hand-painted by Diane. Later in the fall, adoring owners can buy Halloween costumes for their dogs. When the rainy season starts, people can even buy raincoats for their pups.

Burleson dog and cat owners are in good company. According to Michael Shaffer, author of *One Nation Under Dog*, Americans are spending \$40 billion per year on their pets. Diane believes people's animals are their second families. Becky agrees, "My mother said I got along with dogs better than people!"

Becky started grooming dogs at the age of 15, and showed her first dog during eighth grade. She married a veterinarian, Dr. Frank Brandenberger, and opened a kennel next door to his veterinary practice on Rendon Road. The original Happy Tails has been open for 14 years. After her husband died, Becky noticed that Burleson was growing and ready for a one-stop shop, where people could get help grooming and training their dogs while shopping for things their pet needs. "Diane has done a great job supplying our boutique, decorating and making the sales," said Becky, who has also hired a professional trainer, Arcadio Gonzalez, to teach her clients basic obedience, as well as how to protect and to attack.

For the grooming shop, Becky hired master groomer, Theresa Harlen, who



Business NOW

gently handles geriatric dogs and specializes in hand-scissoring Bichons, Pomeranians and Poodles. Becky's staff keeps the bathtubs, floors, blow-dry stations, cutting platforms in the grooming area, as well as the kennels clean and welcoming for their furry clients. Persian cats are often brought in for a "lion cut" to keep down the shedding. Chows are also pampered at Happy Tails Too, where the particular people caring for these heavy-coated dogs take pleasure knowing they are preventing them from suffering during the Texas summers.

"Grooming is a way to track the pet's health," Becky said. "When we groom a dog, we know the signs of skin, eye and ear problems. We try to point things out to the owners as we notice, so they can take their dog to the vet and have them looked at."

Happy Tails Too is open for people who want to bathe their own dogs from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. on the last Wednesday of each month. "They don't

"Diane will set up an easel during the Dog Wash, and paint portraits of people's dogs."

have to clean up their bathroom, ruin their towels," Becky said. "They can use our facility to bathe and dry their dog and then leave." Diane will set up an easel during the Dog Wash, and paint portraits of people's dogs. What a partnership!

You can bring your pet into Happy Tails Too, 113 Northeast Johnson Ave., Suite 300, between 7:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, or from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Wednesdays and Saturdays. It is best to call ahead for an appointment at (817) 529-9993, but the groomers will take walk-ins. **NOW**



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Education NOW



Taking Her Time

— By Melissa Collins

Paula Gray takes time between students to watch birds flying from tree to tree, listening to their songs through the windows of the sweet country home where she tutors her “kiddos,” as she lovingly calls them. Patience is one of the many gifts Paula tries to give her students, whom she teaches to take their time as they practice the sounds, letters and words that make up the books she hopes her students will embrace. Dyslexic people, Paula stresses, can learn to read and to love it.

“Ever since I was little, I loved children’s books and the pictures in them. I collect old children’s books, and I’ve got ‘em all over the house,” said Paula, who admits that she disliked reading before going through the Barton Reading and Spelling System, and overcoming her own dyslexia. Now, Paula teaches students using the same program, and she recommends to her students a few highly effective habits: repeat the words, or sounds, aloud and practice writing them in an atmosphere of peace and calm; work in a quiet area where you have freedom to talk out loud; give yourself alone time to be able to process and work out the learning; play classical music to block out some sounds.

“TV is a total distraction from learning,” Paula said, explaining that the dyslexic person’s brain is wired differently. “It takes a lot to process information; a lot of energy is spent just to concentrate.” Before Paula’s diagnosis as a dyslexic, she had a love-hate relationship with the phone book. “The phone book, just like the dictionary, can drive a person crazy who’s dyslexic,” Paula said. “You might know the first letter of the word or name you’re looking up, but you cannot



guess its second or third letter. You can spend so much time, and waste it, and feel terrible trying to find something. What I would do, is I would just stop using the phone book! It was so frustrating that I didn’t want to bother with it. But after a while, I’d go back and try again.”

Throughout her youth in Burleson, Paula struggled silently with the learning disability. Yet no one mentioned it, even during her time at Joshua High School. Paula said people often do not know the warning signs, which include: terrible spelling; trouble memorizing multiplication tables; slow or inaccurate reading; unusual pencil grip and letter formation; difficulty in learning to tie shoes; and writing some letters or numbers backwards. In the ‘90s, Paula began taking remedial classes at Tarrant County Junior College, working toward tackling regular college courses. “My English teacher said, ‘One of our counselors on campus is dyslexic, you might want to go talk to him.’ That’s the first time I’d heard that word,” Paula said. “I talked to him, but they didn’t suggest testing.” She looked it up in the dreaded phone book, found someone to test her, and after testing confirmed she was dyslexic sought help from a Barton tutor.

“Dyslexia is inherited; it’s not something that goes away. My dad had it,” Paula said. She recommends a book called *Overcoming Dyslexia* by Sally Shaywitz, M.D. to anyone, because one out of five is dyslexic and struggles with the learning disability. There are four different degrees of dyslexia:

Education NOW

mild, moderate, severe and profound. Paula sends parents to two different Web sites, www.brightsolutions.us and www.bartonreading.com, to research dyslexia and prepare to support their child's progress.

In order to accommodate her students, whose learning styles are different than non-dyslexic children, Paula supplements the Barton curriculum with her original techniques for learning what 80 percent of students so easily pick up. "For instance, one of the warning signs that a person is dyslexic is trouble telling time on a clock with hands. The second hand on a clock is constantly moving, and that's where the child's eyes go. But that's not where they're supposed to be looking. One of my students started immediately picking it up! That was very rewarding for me," Paula said, "because I helped somebody that's 9 years old figure out something that I struggled with for a very long time.

"I love to help others, and actually having dyslexia has ended up being a gift. I understand myself better and can help other people with it." In her classroom, Paula takes her time tutoring students who range from 5 years of age to adult. She uses colored tiles on a white table top to teach the children to hear the sounds of the words that they are speaking aloud. This audio-tactile-visual exercise imprints in their brains the words which they are learning to read. She helps her students focus on the words by using contrasting colors to make the page more calming and soothing to look at. "All the papers we use for tutoring are on a light blue paper," Paula said.

"I love learning, like I love teaching, and I always tried hard. I knew I wasn't dumb or stupid," said Paula, "even though those thoughts run through your head when you're dyslexic. I certainly don't feel that way anymore! To think that Einstein himself was dyslexic. Oh my!" **NOW**



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Around Town NOW



• Vickie Vernon, top left, introduced Careity Foundation which helps with the care of cancer patients. • Angie Cox and Barry Schlech, top right, checked out some of the equipment used by the local police department. • Winie Vitosh and Susan Maynard, second row left, showed off resale items from Rachel's Hope. • Burleson proclaimed itself "a city of character," second row right, as evidenced by Patsy Dumas, Gloria Gillaspie, Mark Jackson, John Matthews, Sue Sistrunk and Ken Shetter. • A ribbon cutting, bottom left, was held at Angmar Commercial Real Estate. • Bob and Beverly Edmondson, bottom right, recently attended the Lone Oak Winery Sunday Music Festival.



Around Town NOW



• Cesar Lopez, top left, looked in a Burleson Police Department squad car during their open house event. • Ribbon cuttings were held at: A+ Realty Solutions, top right; Prospera Financial, bottom left; and Wine Down Festive Bistro Fare, bottom right. • Burleson Lions, second row left, served hot dogs to Virginia Fisher and Kristina Johnson during the Police Department's open house celebration. • Taiwo Olajide, Maudie Tarver and Neal Jones, second row right, celebrated their winning speeches at Toastmasters.

Look Who's Cooking

— By Faith Browning

IN THE KITCHEN WITH SCOTT BROWN

Several years ago, Scott Brown attended a health and wellness class and from there his interest in cooking took off. The class showed him simple ways to improve taste and nutritional value with minor adjustments in ingredients. "People have grown so accustomed to fast and prepared foods," he stated. "It's kind of fun to share with them what the 'real thing' tastes like."

Scott loves spending time with his wife, Rebecca, and their daughters, Angie, Ashley and Alexandra. "We try to eat together almost every night. We also spend a few minutes each night to read and discuss some Scriptures and pray together," he said. "Those few minutes a day are more special to me and have probably made more of a difference in my life than anything else I've ever done!" **NOW**

To view more of your neighbors' recipes, visit our archives at www.nowmagazines.com.

TEXAS CHILI

1 16-oz. can chili beans, undrained
1 12-oz. can Ro-Tel tomatoes with green chili
1 16-oz. can kidney beans, drained
chili powder, to taste
salt, to taste
cumin powder, to taste
garlic powder or fresh garlic, to taste
1 red bell pepper, roasted, sliced
1/2 to 3/4 cup corn
1 adobo (chipotle) jalapeño, diced
1 lb. ground beef, browned, large chunks, drained (or small steak chunks)

Mix all together; simmer for about 30 minutes and enjoy!

OATMEAL WHEAT COOKIES

3/4 cup brown sugar
1/4 cup white sugar
1/2 cup soft butter
1 egg

1 tsp. vanilla
1 cup whole wheat flour
1/4 tsp. baking powder
1/2 tsp. baking soda
1/4 tsp. salt
1 cup rolled oats
1 cup Raisin Bran cereal
1/2 cup raisins
1/2 cup Grape Nuts cereal
1/2 cup shredded coconut
3/4 cup whole pecans

Heat oven to 375 F. Mix sugars, butter, egg and vanilla. Stir in remaining ingredients; dough will be stiff. Drop dough by rounded teaspoonfuls a couple inches apart on ungreased cookie sheet. Bake 9 minutes (do not overbake) and cool for 2-3 minutes before removing from cookie sheet. Makes about 4 dozen cookies.

COLORADO-STYLE GREEN CHILI WITH PORK

cooking oil (I use olive.)
1-lb. pork roast or boneless pork chops, cut into

roughly 3/4-inch cubes
3/4 cup flour (I use whole wheat.)
1 12-oz. can Ro-Tel tomatoes with green chilies
5-6 fresh fire roasted Anaheim or hatch green chilies, peeled, chopped
1 tsp. garlic, minced
1 tsp. salt
2 Tbsp. chili powder
1 tsp. cumin powder

Add enough oil to skillet to cover bottom of pan 1/4-inch. Heat oil; brown pork for a few minutes, taking care not to burn it. Add flour to pork to absorb excess oil in pan; coat pork. Place contents of your skillet in a Crock-Pot or large pan. Add Ro-Tel tomatoes, roasted green chilies, garlic, salt, chili powder and cumin to pan or Crock-Pot. Add 2-3 cans of water and simmer on medium-low heat for several hours, stirring occasionally. Adjust seasonings to taste and adjust flour amount to desired thickness of your chili. Eat it straight out of a bowl with a tortilla or smother your favorite Mexican food dish with it. Great for huevos rancheros or as a smother for burritos or tamales.

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Who's Cooking **NOW**

CARROT CAKE MUFFINS

1/3 cup very hot water
2 cups carrots, shredded (about 4-5 medium to large carrots, wash but do not peel)
2 1/4 cups whole-wheat flour
1 1/4 cups packed brown sugar
1 1/4 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. ground cinnamon
1 tsp. ground nutmeg
1 tsp. ground cloves
1/2 cup cooking oil (I use part olive, part vegetable.)
3 eggs
2 tsp. vanilla
1 cup walnuts or pecans, coarsely chopped

TOPPING (My choice):

1-2 Tbsp. sugar
1 cup heavy cream
1 tsp. vanilla

TOPPING (My family's choice):

8 oz. cream cheese
1/4 cup butter
1 cup brown sugar
1 cup powdered sugar
1 1/2 tsp. vanilla

Add all ingredients together; mix well. Heat oven to 400 F. Grease and flour muffin pan, or place paper cupcake liners in muffin pan and pour into pan. Bake on center oven rack for 20 minutes. Pick one or both toppings; combine all ingredients. Top muffins.

LOW-SUGAR, TASTY KOOL-AID

1 pack unsweetened Kool-Aid drink mix of your choice
1 1/2 heaping tsp. NuStevia brand Stevia powder
1 tsp. sugar
1 tsp. agave nectar
1 3/4 quarts water
ice

Mix and serve.

TASTY LOW-SUGAR HIGH-PROTEIN SHAKE

No need for ice cream to make these shakes.

1 cup milk
1 cup ice
1/2 cup heavy cream
1 ounce whey powder (I prefer Jay Robb's Stevia sweetened vanilla flavor.)
1/4 cup coconut flakes
1 tsp. agave nectar
1/2 tsp. NuStevia powder
1-2 tsp. vanilla

Blend on high speed for a minute or 2, and serve immediately.




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Finance **NOW**

Women Must Focus on Retirement Income

— By Sharon Robinson

Whether they are the breadwinner in their household or not, preparing for retirement should be extremely important to women. One item of planning that must be considered is the financial situation of the surviving spouse and what can be done to prepare for a potential shortfall.

Women survive their spouses more often than men. The Administration on Aging estimates that seven of 10 women will outlive their husbands,¹ highlighting the need for retirement planning even more.

Unfortunately, women are often at a disadvantage when it comes to resources available for retirement. The average woman spends nearly 15 years away from the workforce, while the average man will be away for 1.6 years. This translates into lower benefits from company pensions, 401(k) plans and Social Security.

Various estimates indicate expenses after the death of a husband will be 80 percent of what they had been when he was alive. Unfortunately, a widow's income may likely be much less than that. Of all elderly persons with income below the poverty level, over 70 percent are women.² More than half were much better off financially before their husbands died.

Less time in the workforce may also mean fewer women qualify for health benefits. This can put an even greater burden on their retirement income. It is imperative for women to start saving now for their retirement, which can be accomplished through several savings vehicles. It is equally important to protect your nest egg through adequate life

insurance coverage and insurance options should your health care needs change. Adequate planning for retirement and surviving a spouse can be a deciding factor in living comfortably.

Taking the time to examine household finances and planning carefully will help to ensure there are adequate



means of support for either spouse during the golden years. Talk to a qualified individual about your retirement needs to prepare for and enjoy a comfortable retirement. **NOW**

Sources:

1. "Older Women," Administration on Aging, 2000, p.
2. Ibid. p. 1

Sharon Robinson is a State Farm agent based in Burleson.



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Health NOW

Psoriasis

— By Betty Tryon, R.N.

The scenario is painfully familiar. You stretch your hand in greeting but notice the recipient of the handshake cringes and tries to distract you from the handshake. You look down and notice that your shirtsleeve has risen up on your arm more than you thought, and there it is — that red, scaly rash with all of the flaking and cracked skin. Embarrassed, you quickly cover yourself; score one for psoriasis.

Psoriasis has become the bane for an estimated five to seven million Americans. Psoriasis presents itself as thick or raised skin areas with a reddish appearance covered with scales that are silvery in color. The more troublesome symptoms of this condition are the skin becomes itchy, burning, cracked and bleeding.

Psoriasis occurs when there is a malfunction in the production of skin cells, which results in an overproduction of cells. Normally, new skin cells develop underneath the skin; over time, they move to the surface and the dead skin sloughs off or sheds. For someone with psoriasis, the cycle becomes dysfunctional, and what would normally take about 30 days, occurs 10 times as fast. The resulting

cells that reach the surface gather in abundance. The body is not able to shed the cells quickly enough, so they pile on top of each other and create thick, irritating lesions.

The condition varies from person to person. For some, it can only be a nuisance; for others, the symptoms are debilitating and can interfere with daily tasks and necessary functions such as sleep because of the discomfort. The quality of life can be greatly affected depending upon the severity of the symptoms. Cosmetically, this disease can be very distressing, particularly if the lesions show in areas apparent to the public. The disfiguring look of psoriasis can make some individuals feel isolated and lead to depression.

The picture of psoriasis can appear to be bleak; however, it does not have to be. Treatment is available from over the counter medication (OTC) to light therapy to prescription drugs. Many options are available. No doubt, your first action may be experimenting with OTC medications. Salicylic acid may prove helpful in removing scales and or hydrocortisone to help with inflammation. Some find relief in using coal tar, which slows the production of the cycle of skin cell production and can provide some relief from inflammation and other symptoms such as itching. There is hope. Your physician will be invaluable in helping you decide which path to take. Persistence and a willingness to keep trying may give you the results you seek.

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

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July 2009

Community Calendar

First and Third Mondays

Johnson County Camera Club meeting: 7:00 p.m., Senior Center, Cleburne. (254) 854-2558.

Every Tuesday

Professional Power Team networking group meeting: 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Blue Mesa, University Drive, Fort Worth. (817) 295-2161.

Second Tuesday

After Hours networking mixer: 5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m., Hampton Inn. Contact Shirley Franklin at (682) 552-6750.

Every Wednesday

Breakfast Club networking group meeting: 7:30-9:00 a.m., Cracker Barrel. (817) 295-2161.

Burleson/Crowley Network Connection meeting: 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Spring Creek Barbeque, Burleson. (817) 295-2161.

Second and Fourth Wednesdays

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

Every Thursday

Toastmasters International meeting: 7:00-8:00 a.m., Burleson Chamber of Commerce. Contact Neal Jones at (817) 343-2589.

Burleson Making It Happen Network Connection networking group meeting: 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Sammy's Italian Restaurant. (817) 295-2161.

Job Fair: 10:00 a.m.-noon, Burleson Senior Center. Contact Pat Cunningham of Experience Works at (817) 558-7020.

First Thursdays

American Business Women's Association Empowering Women Express Network meeting: 5:45 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center. To RSVP for a seat and dinner, contact (972) 723-6551. www.abwa-empoweringwomen.org.

Fourth Thursdays

American Business Women's Burleson Charter Chapter meeting: 6:30 p.m. RSVP to Linda Houst at (817) 295-7060 or ljh67@sbcglobal.net or Sue McKnight at (817) 295-3220.

Every Friday

Burleson Business Builders networking group meeting: 8:30-9:30 a.m., JJ Mocha's. (817) 295-2161.

Every Saturday

Burleson Farmers Market: 7:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., parking lot of City Market in Old Town. Fresh produce, food, crafts, gifts and more. Vendors and customers may call (817) 295-6121 for more information or

e-mail marys@burleson.org.

Second Saturday

Iris Club meeting: 10:00 a.m., Electric Coop on Hwy. 174, north of the courthouse in Cleburne. (254) 854-2558.

Second Sunday

Joshua Organic Garden Club meeting: 3:00-5:00 p.m., in and around Joshua at individual members' homes. (817) 295-2161.

July 2

Burleson Community Theatre's Independence Celebration and Concert. Tickets: \$17 for BBQ dinner and show. Seating is limited. (817) 447-8812.

July 4

Star Spangled Banner Independence Day Parade: 9:00-10:30 a.m. Starts behind Kerr Middle School, proceeds down Johnson St., right on Ellison St., proceeds to Babe's Chicken, another right to proceed back to Kerr Middle School. For more information, contact Keith Kelly of the Burleson Lion's Club at (817) 295-5350.

Burleson Tea Party: 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Burleson City Hall, 141 W. Renfro. pipercox@live.com.

Fourth of July celebration: Hidden Creek Sports Complex. Free Men in Black concert, fireworks after dark. Bring a picnic as well as a chair or blanket to sit on. For more information, call Ike Vera at (817) 447-5312, ext. 250.

July 5-August 16

Chisenhall Park swimming pool hours: 1:00-6:00 p.m., 500 Chisenhall Lane. (Hours subject to change; closed Mondays.)

July 6

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

July 7

Face-to-face registration for Hill College at the Hillsboro and Cleburne campuses. Time card needed. If cleared, register online anytime at www.hillcollege.edu. Class schedules can be found at www.hillcollege.edu/student/schedules. For more information or to request a time card, please call the Burleson campus at (817) 295-7392 or the Cleburne campus at (817) 760-5500.

Family films at Burleson Public Library: *The Lion King*, 2:00 p.m. For more information, contact (817) 295-6131, ext. 296 or e-mail cpennington@burlesonlibrary.com.

July 10

Summer Reading Club at Burleson Public Library takes registration through today. All participants will

receive a reading club certificate, logs to record their reading and a bookmark. Each Summer Reading Club participant, 18 and under, who has read at least 25 hours or listened to at least 100 books and turned in a reading/listening log will receive one free ticket to the July 19, 2009, Texas Rangers game versus the Twins. Each Summer Reading Club participant will have the opportunity to parade around the field at The Ballpark in Arlington before the game. Family members and friends may buy additional tickets at a discounted price. Voucher requests must be made before Friday, July 17. For more information, contact Carolyn Smith Pennington at (817) 295-6131, ext. 296.

July 11

Celebration of Freedom 2009. It is time again for Crowley's Annual Celebration of Freedom! Join us along Main Street at 10:00 a.m. for our "Support Our Troops" parade, then head to Bicentennial Park for a day of family fun and entertainment, ending with a fireworks show at dusk!

July 14

Burleson Heritage Foundation meeting: 7:00-8:30 p.m., Heritage Visitors Center, 124 W. Ellison. (817) 447-1575.

Family films at Burleson Public Library: *Cinderella II*, 2:00 p.m. For more information, contact (817) 295-6131, ext. 296 or e-mail cpennington@burlesonlibrary.com.

July 15

Burleson Community Day at the Fort Worth Cats baseball game against the St. Paul Saints. Tickets specially priced for Burleson businesses. Contact Angela Dickerson at (817) 226-2287 or (972) 639-4483.

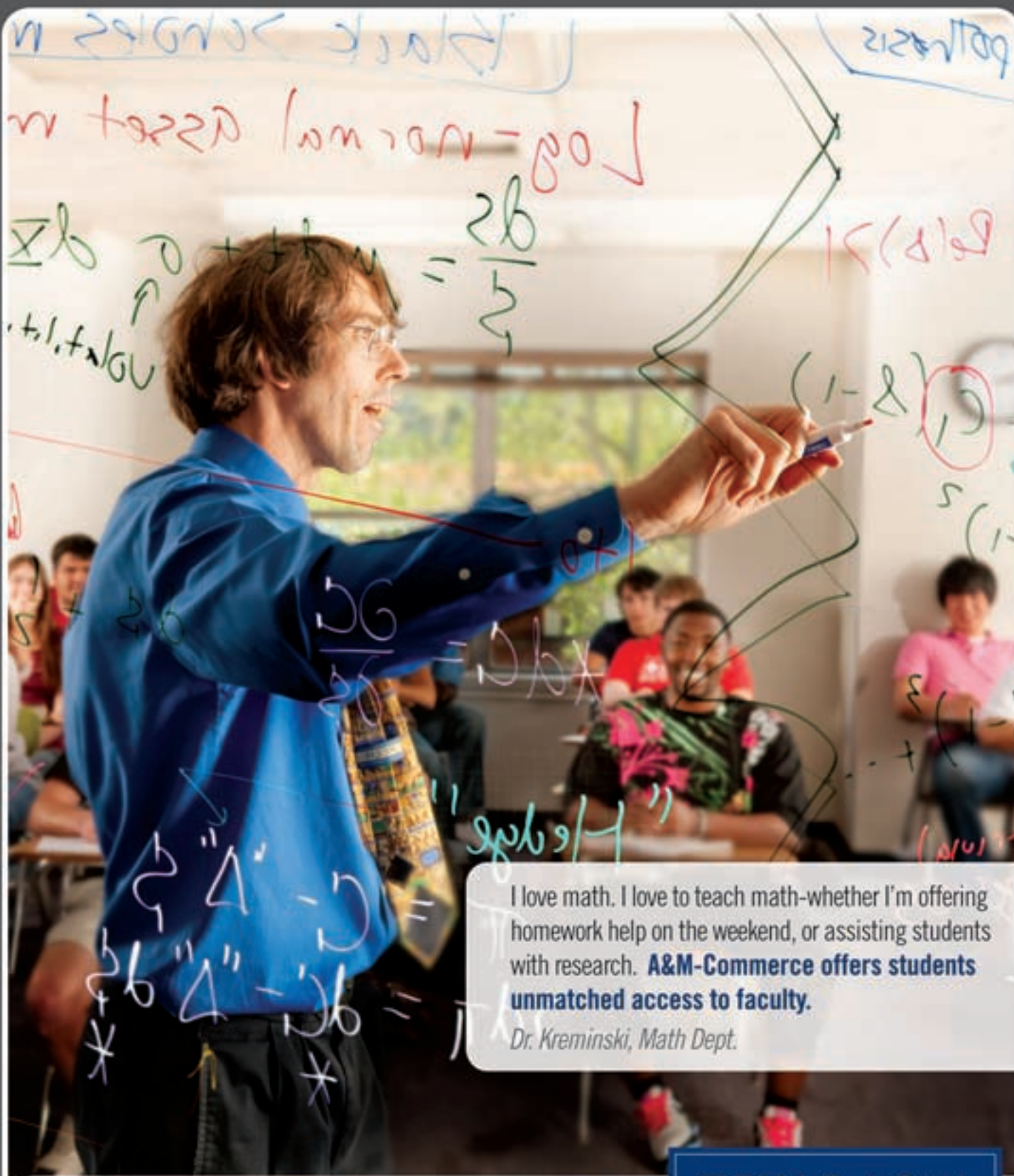
July 20

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

July 27

Burleson ISD Board meeting: 6:30 p.m. (817) 245-1000.





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