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JULY 2013

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ON THE COVER



*Naomi Bannwart will participate
in Tennessee's Sewanee Summer
Music Festival.*

Photo by Sarah Alvarez.

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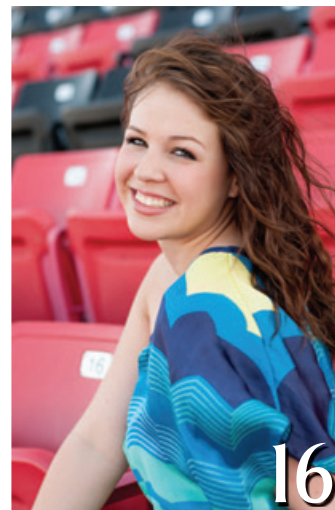
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Editor's Note

Hello Burleson, Crowley and Joshua!

As the patriotic season lifts our spirits and reminds us who we are, I am taken back in time to my early grade school years. As members of the 4-H club in Poquoson, Virginia, my sister and I participated in our club's float in the Fourth of July parade. We were Dalmatian owners, and dressed our dogs like firemen and walked them beside the 4-H float. I recall my dog, Maggie, wore my blue jeans

with the cuffs rolled up, held up by red suspenders over a flannel shirt with the arms rolled up. Somehow, I affixed a red, plastic fireman's helmet atop her smooth head and guess what? It stayed put! My sister's dog was similarly decked out, with an American flag on a wooden dowel stuck into the jean's hip pocket. I'll not tell you we won any awards, but we sure had a good time!

Stay Cool!

Melissa

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— By Erin McEndree

With her sights on a university with a music program, Naomi Bannwart pours her heart into her clarinet. Introduced to music by her family at a young age, Naomi is now immersed in long tones, scales and melodies seven days a week. One individual closely mentoring and supporting Naomi along her musical journey is the band director at Burleson High School, Joe McGee. Together, they touch lives through music all year long.

Naomi is a senior at Burleson high School (BHS). She has been part of the Burleson ISD band program since sixth grade, when her family moved here from California. Her only passion has been for the clarinet. “My grandmother gave me the clarinet she performed on when I started playing a lot,” Naomi said. “That’s my baby.”

Clarinets can be made out of wood, resin, plastic, metal and ivory. Naomi has two. Her beloved instrument from her grandmother is a wooden one, which she plays for concerts. She also has a durable plastic clarinet she uses for marching. “I can play it when it’s raining or when the weather is really hot



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or really cold,” she said. Musical ability accompanied each member of Naomi’s family. Her mother, Tina, played flute and has a master’s degree in voice. Her dad, Rodney, played piano and drums. Rachel, Naomi’s sister, plays the piano, sings and enjoys choir. Tina is always there to take Naomi to practice. “My parents are very supportive,” Naomi added.

During school, Joe helps Naomi sharpen her skills. He has fostered her love of music with encouragement and direction. He also has a love for music and understands his role to help Naomi grow and develop into a first-rate clarinetist. Joe’s dad played piano during the big band era before WWII, and together they watched musicians on television. Joe started taking piano lessons in fourth grade and performed throughout the Southwest with a professional night club band by his sophomore year. He played professionally for about 17 years, until teaching band in public schools took the place of the nightclub scene. He earned a master’s degree at Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls, studying composition and conducting. Joe had taught about 16 years, when he was contacted to apply for the band director position in Burleson.

Joe was asked to handpick his assistant director. “I started praying for God to provide me with someone who could also move to Burleson,” Joe said. “The same day, a friend, Michael Moscoso, called. During the conversation, I asked if he would be interested in the assistant director position here. We have taught here together for about 20 years now.” The pair tries new things, and the kids respond well to them. They can do so much more in a large school. Naomi indicated they make band fun.

Naomi is first chair and section leader in the BHS honors band. She is also the principal clarinetist in the Fort Worth

Youth Orchestra. These two activities and her private lessons keep Naomi busy all week. Every day after school, Naomi can be found practicing in the band hall. On Sundays, Naomi practices with the Youth Orchestra for five hours. "I love getting to know people in the Youth Orchestra," Naomi explained. "The people want to be there, and I'm blessed to be there, too."

The Youth Orchestra is "where the future of orchestral music begins. It is a premiere ensemble dedicated to performing first works in the full symphonic repertoire," according to the Fort Worth Youth Orchestra Web site.



To audition, Naomi prepared scales and a solo. Youth are expected to demonstrate advanced techniques in performance. They are also expected to perform Class 1 solos in UIL competition. Renowned performers, such as Van Cliburn, Sam Adler and Morton Gould, performed in this Youth Orchestra. "Performers from all over the Dallas/Fort Worth area, and as far as Abilene participate," Joe said. "It extends what Naomi is already doing in the BHS band." In the past, the group has traveled to Germany, Switzerland and Australia, among other countries, to perform. Naomi's goal is to go to Italy with the Youth Orchestra in 2014.

Going the extra mile is what it takes to be at the level Naomi presently is. She takes private lessons from the former principal clarinetist of the Fort Worth Symphony, Andy Crisanti. "He is semiretired," Naomi said. "But he still teaches private lessons." Mr. Crisanti is one of the top clarinetists in the world. He participated in the Dallas Symphony, Brooklyn Philharmonic, Cincinnati



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Symphony and was principal clarinet in the Saint Louis Symphony. He studied under Gino Cioffi, the enthusiastic master clarinet performer who emigrated from Italy in 1937. Mr. Crisanti acquired excellent skills and experience from which Naomi draws to further her talent and keep it soaring in the future.

Summer is no time for Naomi to take a vacation from practicing. She was involved in the summer BHS band mini-camp in June. Students must try out for spots in the marching band show. For four days, Naomi, functioning in a leadership position, helps incoming students with marching fundamentals. She takes the younger kids under her wing to show them the basics. The music for the upcoming year is introduced, and the students are required to practice over the summer. "I've learned how leadership and life are so similar," Naomi said. "It's lots of fun, and I plan to be even more active with it."

Naomi also represents a select group of performers who execute patriotic music in July. The Summer Wind Ensemble was created two years ago to perform for local heroes, veterans and Burleson Lion's Club members who work hard to prepare for the Fourth of July parade. Joe directs the ensemble and arranges patriotic songs, such as "Stars and Stripes Forever" and "God Bless America" for the group. Last year, the ensemble gave the history associated with each song. This year, wind ensemble members from Centennial High School joined the group Summer Wind Ensemble, ensuring all sections of the music will be represented and each part can be heard when they perform in Guadalajara Hall at Yogi Berra's Jellystone Park Camp Resort.

"I love the thrill of the ensemble," said Naomi, whose hard work is paying off. Every year, Naomi has moved up in regional try outs. She has participated since seventh grade and advanced each time. "I have made it to fifth place out of about 130 participants," Naomi said. "Regional is geared to select kids for state band. They take the cream of the crop." She is already looking at universities with music programs. "Austin or Baylor sound really fun, or even Juilliard. I want to major in music education or music performance." Naomi plans to eventually rise to the top, and she has the support system behind her to achieve it. **NOW**



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21 LIMITATIO

— By Lisa Bell

Telling Danielle Hardesty she can't do something simply acts as a catalyst. In seventh grade, she tried out for cheerleader. Amidst concerns over her leg, she didn't make it, but the next year she came back stronger and better. She achieved her goal of making the cheerleading team. She also plays soccer, basketball and volleyball. She ran her first 5K this year in the Cowtown Marathon. The last mile stretched her abilities, but she finished the race — a major achievement even for someone without a disability. Although she drags her leg when playing sports, it doesn't stop Danielle.

When her parents, Vanesa and Robert, brought Danielle home from the hospital as a newborn, she seemed perfect. But as their daughter began walking, they noticed one leg appeared shorter than the other, and she fell frequently. In spite of regular checkups, doctors never suspected any potential problems. As she grew, Danielle's parents knew something wasn't right. Unfortunate for a little girl and frustrating for her parents, the diagnosis finally came after consulting several doctors — hip dysplasia. Danielle was 3 years old.

Hip dysplasia usually appears at birth. If detected in an infant, treatment consists of a soft sling and manipulation of the hip to align the bone into the hip socket. After a child passes the first birthday, treatment becomes more difficult, but can sometimes be successful. A later diagnosis requires surgery, which doesn't always correct the problem, thus leaving the child with a





"She can have a disability with limitations and still come out on top."

permanent physical disability. In spite of surgery when Danielle was almost 4, she still carries the effects of being born with a hipbone slightly above and beside instead of resting in the hip socket.

After diagnosis, the doctors operated and put the small girl into a body cast, with a bar between the legs, which kept them spread wide apart. Her dad grasped the bar with one hand and supported her back with the other to pick her up. Because of the angle of her legs, a child's wheelchair didn't work. They ended up using a Little Tykes wagon. "She'd put her little blankie and stuffed animals in there," Robert said. "Everywhere we went, she'd get in her wagon. She just



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knew, and she'd have her coloring books and be ready to go."

Danielle learned quickly to compensate for the hip dysplasia. She started playing co-ed basketball in first grade. The coach seldom told any of the boys to go after the ball. They were too timid. Instead,



he went to his most aggressive player. "Danielle, get the ball," he often said.

The doctors refer to the affected limb as the nonfunctioning leg. Technically, she shouldn't be able to walk on her right leg, but miraculously, she does. Knowing the possibility that Danielle could lose the ability to walk, her parents don't limit what they allow her to do, rather they encourage her to pursue anything she desires. Nevertheless, the condition leaves her susceptible to injuries of the ankle and knee. Then her parents step in and limit her activities until the injury heals. Keeping her still is difficult.

Most of the time, her hip doesn't hurt much, unless she pushes herself too hard, or at times when others try to make it better. On one occasion, she hurt her knee, and the trainer insisted on attempting to fix the hip along with the knee. Danielle said, "I've had the surgery. I don't think it can be fixed yet."

Danielle doesn't particularly like talking about her disability. By the time she reached high school, most of the kids knew her story. As they see her accomplish anything she wants to do, they've grown to respect her. She lives without using limitations as an excuse or reason not to pursue sports and other

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things. She models and will compete in the National American Miss Texas Junior Teen pageant at the end of this month, with a promise of many friends cheering for her. Refusing to let a disability keep her from goals increases her confidence.

"She wants to break the barrier.

She can have a disability with limitations and still come out on top," Vanesa said. "She's one of the most confident people."

"She's pretty. She knows it, and she's not really conceited about it," said her best friend, Avery. "I'm happy she's so confident, because most girls our age aren't." Is

Avery her friend

because she's confident or pretty?

"Both," he admitted. "My girlfriends



think highly of her, and my guy friends think she's gorgeous."

Danielle inspires Avery and others with the way she views life. She wants to

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encourage other girls to see themselves in a better light. Her beautiful smile and sense of humor make her a great role model.

To minimize a limp, she walks on her right tiptoes. One day a teacher asked, "What's wrong with your heel?"

"Nothing," Danielle replied. "I just walk this way." For her, the disability is simply something she grew up with — no big deal.

Mia Hamm, a trailblazer soccer player, inspires the teen. However, an athletic family and parents who encouraged their children to become active in extracurricular activities gave her an advantage. When she speaks of her siblings, Danielle's love shines. Her brother, Joey, taught her everything — how to walk and tie her shoes. TJ, another brother, was an unlikely power-lifter because of his small size. By watching him, she learned not to listen when others said she couldn't do things. Her sister, Elisabeth, took the road of cheerleader, power lifting and track. All four children share space on shelves displaying a multitude of trophies and medals. Extremely close to her sister, Danielle cherishes every minute of time with Elisabeth when she comes home from college, and they text or talk in between visits.

During summers, Danielle attends several sports camps. This summer, of course, she'll also add the pageant, seeking an opportunity to tell many people a disability can't steal your dreams. She also faces surgery to clear out scar tissue and work on cartilage where bone has rubbed bone. Eventually, she will need a hip replacement. For now, the doctors tell her to keep up whatever she's doing.

Long-term, she hopes to play soccer at the University of North Texas and become a physical therapist. Having undergone so much therapy in her life, she understands how patients feel. She can use that knowledge to make physical therapy easier for others.

Danielle carries a lot of wisdom for someone so young. "Don't limit yourself on life, because it's something given. You just have to make the best of it," she advised. Her philosophy fits living — with or without physical limitations. Her courage and perseverance show in the way she inspires others. **NOW**

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At Home With Brian and Nicole Lockett

— By Melissa Rawlins



Together is a wonderful place to be. *So proclaims one yellow wall in the dining room of Brian and Nicole Lockett's Burleson home, where they have lived for almost three years. They christened their brand-new house with joy and began to make it their own with a kind of Polynesian inspiration with lots of calming, ocean-themed colors and an even greater quantity of faith, hope and love.*

"Three words, *The Living Christ*, are on the wall above the mantel. He supports our family," said Brian, who leaves his peaceful home every five weeks to work in Saudi Arabia with Halliburton, and then returns home for five weeks. He always discovers little changes Nicole has made in the house. Most recently, she decorated the surf-blue walls in their 6-year-old's room, which she accentuated with sturdy bead board walls painted brilliant white.

Nicole is thrilled that Brian is home this Fourth of July holiday with their children, Alexis, Phoenix and Keanu. "That's when everybody in our family gets together," Nicole said. "We have a big ole





barbecue, sit out in the yard and wait for nightfall. Then, we join hundreds of others to watch fireworks.”

Working overseas has opened Brian’s eyes. A proud American and a proud Texan, he keeps two framed posters in the media room where the family exercises, watches television and talks. The American Flag poster reminds his children of their heritage. The patriotic poster from Halliburton Oil Well Cementing Company reminds Brian of his blessings. “Without the company and our Heavenly Father we could not live this life,” Brian said. “If Americans had to go overseas and abide by another country’s rules, they’d understand it is way more strenuous than what we have in



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America. Then they might cherish their freedoms here and come to celebrate it.”

Everything about their home reminds the Locketts of their reasons to celebrate life, love and liberty. “Our Polynesian theme connects us to nature,” Nicole explained. “You realize you’re part of something so much bigger. Like when we went to Hawaii last summer and looked from the plane into the ocean. It took away that big feeling you get as an individual. How tiny we are! We’re just a speck compared to that big, blue ocean.”

The family brought home many souvenirs from their trip to Hawaii, including seashells and starfish, trinkets which they hope impart to friends the feeling of being part of something larger. The tiki on the mantel was made for Brian by a carver who let the whole family watch him work. Brian is especially proud of the photo of his children, taken on the beach in Hawaii by Nicole, a professional who owns Lockett Images. “My wife does an excellent job as a photographer,” he said, pointing out that the colors in the Hawaiian beach photo



all match other nearby photos taken in Utah.

The colors throughout the Lockett home play off each other, from sandy browns to tropical blues to surprising pinks and iridescent glimmers. Nicole loves anything mother-of-pearl-ish. “A pearl becomes a pearl because it was originally an irritant to the oyster it was in, but it begins to be coated and becomes something beautiful. Over

time the pains become lessons learned or beautiful memories and become precious to you,” she explained. “I have picture frames with pearl or shiny shell around the photos to remind me all of us go through adversity, but it can really become something beautiful.”

Nicole placed an iridescent turquoise glass fruit bowl surrounded by palm leaves in the center of the kitchen table, subtly carrying on the island theme.

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Their kitchen is reminiscent of a tiki-hut restaurant. The decor includes hibiscus flowers, hanging bananas, bright green leaves atop the dark cabinets and a large framed photo Nicole took of the children's footprints along the shoreline. "Yet again," Nicole said, "this visual reminder of the poem, 'Footprints In The Sand,' shares the concept that He carries you through life's trials."

The sunlight streaming through the windows in the Lockett home gives her a similar assurance. Likewise, Brian relies on the peaceful atmosphere Nicole creates to inspire him to greatness in the world. "We are Latter-day Saints (LDS) and support the faith. When I leave out for work, I try to be the things the church encourages us to be and to lead by example," Brian said. "I appreciate the beauty of our home when I come home, too, and it's clean the way Nicole keeps it. It helps me relax when I step into a home with high standards."

He is sometimes greeted by kitties, Pele and Zack, and always by his three children. Constantly busy, they play together as much as in their own rooms. Phoenix, who recalls that it was cooler in Utah, where they last lived, pitches for his Burleson Youth Association baseball team. "It's hard work, but fun," he said. He can cool off back home in his room, where the pale blue walls make reading by the window very pleasant. When he looks up his dreams of the future are sparked

by baseball trophies, The University of Texas football memorabilia and a silkscreen of the rear-end of a Mustang GT.

His younger brother, Keanu, plays Burleson Youth Association football and baseball. He got a homerun during the first game of this season, on his first at



bat. After exciting practices and games, he calls time out in his newly decorated room, with its seaside feel.

His sister, Alexis, played basketball and volleyball for Hughes Middle School last year. Her yellow room has the deluxe tropical feel, with large pink hibiscus decals adorning the walls and a photo of the LDS Laie Hawaii Temple, on the Island of O'ahu, where she wants to be married. An independent planner, Alexis made an aquamarine turtle-print bulletin board for the hallway near the kitchen. She helps her mother around the house with cooking and chores. Already, Nicole wonders what she will do when Alexis goes to college.

As they all sit around the kitchen table, the Locketts are very open with each other. Brian and Nicole, both from broken homes, merged two different lives to create their family. "We went through a lot of trials that were similar," Nicole said, "And sharing that knowledge has been beneficial to our children."

"Knowledge is power," Brian added. "The more you know, the better decisions you can make. We're going to make sure we provide our kids truth, so they can make those decisions for themselves." Together, the Locketts will discover life in all its wonderful colors, and celebrate all that they have yet to experience. **NOW**

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Red Hat FREEDOM

— By Lisa Bell

On Wednesdays, you find them. Numerous ladies surround a table at the Senior Citizens Center, a game in the middle. They talk, giggle and sometimes burst into laughter. One woman, a regular at the center, peeks around the corner. "Y'all are laughing so much in here, I just had to come see what you're doing," she said. Pat Benton doesn't mind the intrusion. Encircled by friends, she welcomes the newcomer.

The group started with a few friends about 25 years ago — primarily Pat, Mary, Elaine and Betty. All of them worked as lunchroom managers, and began getting together on a weekly basis to enjoy each other's company. After they retired, the women started meeting at the Senior Citizen Center, and the group gradually grew. They became



part of the Red Hat Society. Eventually, they numbered 42 members. Too large to meet anywhere as part of the Society, they disbanded as an official group.

Nevertheless, many of the ladies continue meeting on a regular basis. Pat always tries to share helpful hints, something inspirational or a useful tidbit when they meet. They eat and then play games. The group officially meets once a week, usually on Wednesdays. They arrive at the center around 1:00 p.m. Since Pat also serves as treasurer for the local AARP group, they switch one meeting each month to Tuesday. They designate that day for playing Bunko.

Many of the women show up for the AARP meeting, stay for lunch and then launch one of their favorite games. The core group of original friends shows up for almost everything, but others come and go, depending on what Pat has planned for the day. They make up a diverse group — some are widows and others, like Pat, simply have supportive husbands.

“Anyone is welcomed to come join us,” Pat said. “Whatever we do, we have fun.” And these friends do plenty. Every time they go out in their red hats, someone stops and talks with them. Often, teenage girls are the biggest fans, gushing over how cute they all look, or sharing about someone they know who is also a Red Hatter.

Pat recalled one event at the Purple Turnip in Cleburne. That particular day, they had a large group of women, enough to fill four tables. A group



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of construction workers came into the restaurant and sat near them. A conversation ensued. Before long, all of the men went out to their vehicles and came back in wearing their hard hats.

Many of the women no longer drive beyond the borders of Burleson, but Pat doesn't mind volunteering as chauffeur. If they go to a nearby town for the day or take overnight trips, they all meet at the center, and she drives wherever they want to go. Some of her favorite trips include Fredericksburg and Salado.

Seven of the women traveled to Salado for a three-day trip, where they stayed at Rose Manor. They had a wonderful cabin, but the owners allowed them to use the dining room to play games in the evenings. They shopped by day and laughed their way through the evenings over Keno, Rummikub and other games.

Of course, a group of women traveling can quickly turn into an unexpected adventure. During an overnight trip to Granbury, the group decided to go out for dinner. Driving along the road, the side doors of her van suddenly flew open. Every woman in the van hollered. They managed to get them closed. Even though she had no clue how the doors opened on their own, Pat thought nothing more about it.

The next day, they all climbed into the van and went over to a little shop. When they finished shopping, the van wouldn't start — a completely dead battery. One woman used her cell phone to call the police, who came and helped them get the car started. Pat promptly headed to replace the battery.

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calling your husband?"

"He's busy in Burleson," Pat responded. "Besides, I can do this myself — buy a battery and have someone put it in."

Her independent spirit kept their trip from becoming an exercise in sitting around waiting for rescue. Scary at the time, they can look back at the memory and laugh while telling the story. They laugh a lot.

Of course, they share moments of sadness, too. Sometimes a friend passes away, and they comfort each other through the grief. When Pat's husband returned from a trip to New York, she took him to the emergency room thinking he had a bad case of bronchitis. He ended up needing a triple bypass the next day, and her friends encouraged her through a tough situation.

The precious friendships carry them through the hard times and refuse anyone the ability to crawl into a shell of depression. "I'd get depressed if I had to stay home for any length of time," Pat admitted, "but then someone always calls me and asks if we can do such and such."

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for long. Besides leading this group of women and planning for their events, she has the position with AARP. She also serves on the board of Johnson County Child Welfare. In addition, she is the hospitality chairman for BARSEA (Burleson Area Retired School Employees Association). She recruited her closest friends to help with the position. At home, Pat makes lap blankets and quilts, as well as other crafts. She accompanies one of her grandsons to Antique Alley — the biannual garage sale event along Highway 4, between Maypearl and Cleburne.

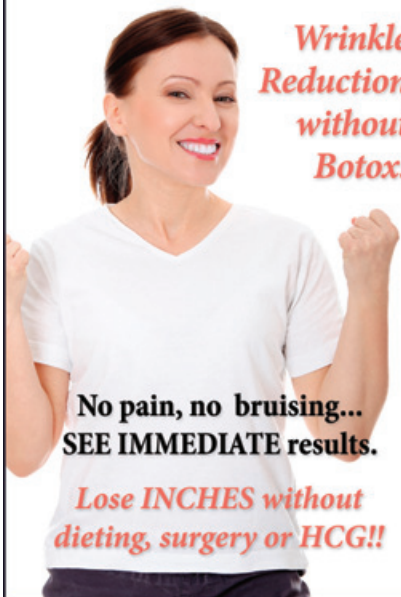
In addition, Pat and her husband of 55 years travel, taking cruises, visiting other states and spending time with family. An extremely busy woman, Pat keeps track of events by creating calendars, which she shares with her group of friends. Her husband helps by asking whether she has something she's supposed to do. "He is a good man," she said. Junior high school sweethearts, they married just after finishing 11th grade, when she was 16. They talked and worked through problems to preserve their marriage. "He talks. I listen," she said. In reality, they remain committed and do what they need to do. He supports Pat in her activities, but draws the line at joining her for the one thing on her bucket list she really wants to achieve — going up in a hot air balloon. "I'm gonna do it this year," she claimed.

Something about donning their shirts with the red hat stuff on the front and topping it off with a hat transforms these women. "You'd be surprised what goes on," Pat said. "We're free." In that freedom, they embrace life with laughter and their hats in place. **NOW**

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Did your lawn suffer last winter as mine did? The construction we did on our drive didn't help, but my lawn is still struggling. Several things can be done to help it along. If you have to replant, choose the correct type of grass. St. Augustine and Zoysia both do well in our alkaline clay, if they are placed in a sunny and partly shady spot. Both of these types of grass require a bit more water than Bermuda grass. Bermuda and Buffalo grasses both do very well in full sun, alkaline clay and dry areas, taking 20 inches and 10 inches of water respectively as compared to 30 inches and 25 inches per year for St. Augustine and Zoysia.

If you are working with an existing lawn like I am, then it is time to look carefully at what can be done. First, get a rain gauge! If your gauge registers 1 inch or over from rainfall, turn off your sprinklers for at least a week to 10 days! If you see footprints in your grass, it is probably lacking water. Put out small flat cans, and check your watering schedule. A weekly application of 1/2 to 1 inch should work well if it soaks in. Water twice a week: 1/2 inch each night in two or three settings (1:00 a.m., 3:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m.) for a total of 1 inch during the week. This should assure sufficient soaking. Check to make sure you are not watering the street or the sidewalk.

Cracks in the ground are nature's way of helping get moisture and air down to gasping roots. Aeration is a good way to give your lawn an added boost. You can rent an aerator or take a turning fork and put a bunch of holes in your lawn. They don't have to be deep. Stick the fork in the lawn, jiggle it a little and pull it out. If you are using an aerator, don't worry about the little divots that come up. Leave them to compost right where they are, just as you do your lawn clippings. (You do not catch grass clippings, do you?) Let them make good stuff right on the lawn. They will help your lawn hold the water also.

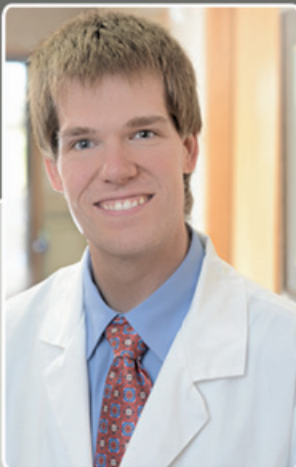
One last thing you can do is to fertilize wisely. In my established lawn with 11 years of clippings, I add nitrogen early in the spring, and that's all. I mow the early weeds very short in the spring (no scalping for St. Augustine!) and then watch the nitrogen make them "grow themselves to death." Once the temperatures hit the 90s, I move my mower up a notch and up another notch when we start to hit the 100s. Time and patience are hard to come by, but they do result in a great lawn. **NOW**

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Beggerly's Bats

— By Rick Hope



Some are just born for the game of baseball. Others just fall into it, while still some others just like hearing about it in poems or reading the stories of Jackie Robinson or Babe Ruth. Many of us catch a game, but most of us don't imagine it becoming more than a passing interest. When it comes to the story of Jon Beggerly, he was definitely not looking for a new career or even a new pastime. In fact, he had little more than a passing interest in baseball. But today, he has a hobby he loves and a craft he pursues.





Jon was an aspiring young architectural student at The University of Texas at Arlington in 2006 when he got the opportunity to do a one-month internship in Albuquerque, New Mexico. One of the engineers there was also a coach for his son's Little League team. "He also played for a Mexican league," Jon said. Jon was invited to play and enjoyed it so much that when he came back to Arlington, he began looking for a place to play.

For a brief period of time, Jon played for a local mid-cities league that happened to use aluminum bats, but then decided he needed to step away for a while and work on his graduate school degree. "With all of my studies, there was just no time to play," he admitted. But in 2007, he moved to Burleson and was happy to find there was a local team — the Burleson Bulls — coached by local resident Jerry Cantu. "This was a team that had it together," Jon said. "They've been together for nearly 20 years. They break up every year, and then they start up again the next season."

Later, Jon would try out for a different league. "There were about 10 of us waiting to try out, and one of the officials suggested we form our own team. So we did. We were pretty unorganized," Jon explained. The team, known as the Free Agents, disbanded after the first year. "We played the same team about four or five times. Each time, we got beat.



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Actually, drilled is more the word!"

Not long after that, Efren Castro, from the Texas Amateur Baseball Federation, encouraged Jon to join his all wood bat league. This turned out to be a great fit for Jon, who not only enjoyed the game and the friendships, but also gained an unofficial title. Frequently, while at home plate, Jon would end up breaking his bat due to his unbalanced swing. "I became known as a 'professional bat destroyer,'" Jon grinned.

Jon's penchant for destroying bats led him to think about making them. "I decided if I could find a lathe, I would see about making my own bats," he



stated. Soon after, his neighbor, Delbert Odom, called him. He had found a tabletop lathe valued at \$75, but it was offered at a reduced price due to the fact it was broken. However, Delbert had a lathe that was in great condition — a lathe he wasn't using, so he offered to trade with Jon for the broken one.



Jon looked around and found a local gentleman who made bats for a living in Fort Worth. Jon bought several “bat blanks,” unfinished baseball bats, from him. “These were unfinished, raw baseball bats with the tailings that hold them to the lathe still on them,” Jon explained further. “I began working on them until I got the hang of making them.”

Jon continues to buy lumber from this gentleman or special orders it from a lumberyard in Pennsylvania. What is usually ordered is known as a “billet,” which is a three-inch round dowel. Jon feels this is by far the best wood to use, as well as ash and/or maple. The wood

is then placed on a lathe where a step down process is started on the fattest end of the dowel until the bat has taken on the correct shape.

The bat-making journey was rough going for Jon when he first started the craft. “Many of my bats were big and heavy,” he confessed. “Slow-pitch softball teams

would use them. I was just getting the hang of it.”

After running the bat through the lathe, Jon then takes the bat and begins to work it more into shape using hand tools and sandpaper. “I have to use two or three different grades to get just the right look and thickness,” Jon remarked. Jon uses



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three more different grades of sandpaper to give the bat its finish. Finally, he adds his own little trademark by flaming it to give it a slightly charred look. "It gives it that special look," Jon smiled.

Jon is not out to launch a new career, but he enjoys what he's doing. He has donated a bat to be used in a fundraiser for the Burleson High School baseball team. As far as he is concerned, Jon wants it to be a "self-sustaining hobby." He makes it very clear he will always be an architect, but will also continue to coach and play the game.

Jon and his wife, Adrien, have been married since 2011. Adrien is an accomplished pianist and a special education teacher for the Burleson Independent School District 18+ program. For the most part, she says she doesn't mind her husband's hobby. "Except for the sawdust," she laughed.

"I have a lathe to make bats in the garage. She has a piano in the living room," Jon added. "We consider it an even trade."

Ernest Thayer captured the game of baseball in his famous poem, "Casey at the Bat." The poem talks about the "force of Casey's blow" and paints excellent imagery of this particular American preoccupation. The team in the poem is known as The Mudville Nine. In ballparks all over the country, different versions of the Mudville Nine gather. They have their stars, their high moments and their low moments. They even have their local legends. And Burleson has Jon, who hopes one day when another someone like Casey steps up to bat he'll be holding a Beggerly original. **NOW**

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— By Melissa Rawlins

Karan Wethington was the first Realtor at the Keller Williams office in Burleson, which is now affiliated with 68 agents. “I think it’s important to success to be in an office environment,” Karan said, “because the networking is so effective! You can really feed off each other.”

After 16 years of learning how to listen to colleagues and customers, Karan has earned all the enviable real estate industry awards, from Top Producer to Miss Congeniality. She has served as chairman of the Burleson Chamber of Commerce. She has even been named an Athena, because she mentors and promotes women in business. All of her helpfulness to others has grown her business throughout the community.

“We go all out,” Karan said, “doing residential, land and

commercial transactions.” Her Wethington Team has helped people in Burleson and all surrounding areas.

To better serve her customers, she has created the Wethington Team of professionals. “I could not do all this all alone,” said Karan, who grew up in Joshua and got her start in the banking industry. After 14 years dealing with many area builders, she began her real estate career in 1998. Within her first two months, she closed her first deal for a friend buying investment property. “Even now I get a great feeling in my heart when we help somebody get one step closer to their dream.”

By 2007, Karan had launched her Wethington Team. In order to continue giving the attentive customer service for which she is known, Karan recently added a listing coordinator, Tamara

Kilgore, and another buyer's agent, Scott McNabb, who specializes in short sales. "There will be six of us now," Karan said. "Along with our long-time buyer's agent, Connie Shields, and our administrative assistant, Laura Collins, we are also pleased to have Danielle Kirk for all-around administrative support. She's been a great asset."

"I have two Web sites, the Wethington Team Web site and the short sale Web site that Scott works," Karan said. "Everyone is shopping on the Internet for homes now. Everything is Internet-driven, and we promote our listings using all forms of technology. With all the new social media, from Facebook to Twitter to texting, this is where my team really helps."

Karan is always just a phone call away for her customers. "My main job is helping people achieve their dreams," Karan said. "We put the client first, and everything works well." This is one of the reasons more than half of her Wethington Team's new business comes from referrals by former customers.

"Communication is the key," Karan said. "We inform the client at all

**"We specialize
in *knowing* what
our client wants."**

times, keeping them up-to-date on the status of their transaction." Buyers get listings from Karen daily. Sellers are updated on each showing. "There are no surprises. They know what to expect. When we get to the closing table, it's just the way we told them it would be."

But first, Karan tunes in to her customer and her team. "We specialize in knowing what our client wants," she said, recounting a day-in-the-life occurrence within her Wethington Team. As her buyer's agent prepared to show houses, Karan suggested a house she had seen just the night before. "It was perfect for them! They bought it the very next day." **NOW**

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Braeden Benson, grandson of Kenny and Tana Howell, presides over Burleson Lions Club with Jerry Payne.



Allie gives sweet kisses to Sandy Mansfield, supervisor at Crowley Animal Control.



BACC ribbon cutting for Quisenberry Construction.



Erin Russell of First National Bank of Burleson chats with Sharon Gresham at a recent Power of Heels gathering.



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Teen Driving Education Can Save Lives

Studies show texting while driving is extremely dangerous

A recent survey showed one-third of U.S. teens with cell phones text 100 times a day. While texting seems like a harmless way for teens to keep in touch, where and when it's done can have grave consequences. A recent study found one in four girls frequently read or write texts while driving and another study found texting while driving can increase the risk of crashing by 23 times.

Unfortunately, an alarming number of teens — roughly 4,000 — die each year in teen-related auto accidents. That's an average of 11 each day. These are teens whose lives could have been saved and whose families could have been spared heartbreak if stronger



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emphasis on discouraging the practice of texting while driving were followed.

Learn the Laws

Make sure your family understands the current graduated driver license law in Texas that stipulates drivers under 18 can't use a wireless communication device except in case of an emergency. The law also states during the first year following a teen under 18 getting a driver license, they cannot drive:

- After midnight and before 5:00 a.m. unless for employment, school or because of a medical emergency.
- With more than one passenger under 21 in the vehicle who is not a family member.



X the TXT

Pledge not to text and drive, and help reduce teen deaths and other distracted driving injuries. Join the X the TXT Facebook page at facebook.com/XtheTEXT.

Parent Teen Driver Contract

Parents can start the conversation with teens about the importance of safe driving by setting guidelines and enforcing a parent-teen driver contract. **NOW**

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

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Car crashes are the #1 killer of teens in America today. That's why I want every parent to have a copy of the Allstate Foundation Parent-Teen Driving Agreement. It gives important tips on how to talk to teens about driving safe. And lets parents and teens agree on the ground rules and consequences together. Call me or come in today for your free copy.

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(817) 447 1139

558 SW Wilshire Blvd
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mark.jameson@allstate.com

Call or come in today for your Parent-Teen Driving Agreement.



Source: Insurance Institute for Highway Safety Fatality Facts 2007-2009. © 2013 Allstate Insurance Company

Safety Measures for Mowing the Grass

In the summertime, mowing the lawn becomes as ubiquitous as iced tea and sunscreen. We're right in the middle of mowing season, which means it's probably become ingrained into your weekly routine. But beware! This mundane chore can pose many safety hazards, so lawn mower operators should stay alert.

Lawn mower accidents are quite common during this time of year. They account for many accidental partial or complete amputations. From 2010 through 2012, an average of 38,000 people were treated in hospital emergency rooms for walk-behind power mower injuries, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. Data from the commission shows that when visits to doctors' offices and clinics are included, more than 17,000 children and teens are treated for such injuries each year.

Common injuries include cuts, burns and foreign bodies from projectile objects. Deep lacerations can occur anywhere on the body, but most often they occur on the hands and feet, which are the body parts that most easily get past the blade protectors. Burns can occur from touching the hot engine. Remember, a hot engine looks just like a cold engine! Broken bones and amputations can happen from sharp, rotating blades.

Most lawn mower injuries can be prevented. Consider these safety guidelines so you and your loved ones can stay injury-free this summer:

- Always wear safety goggles, long pants, long sleeves, sneakers (no flip-flops or bare feet) when mowing the lawn to prevent injuries from flying projectiles.

- Keep your hands away from the blades at all times, even if the motor is off. Use a stick to remove any debris.

- Check the lawn for twigs, rocks, toys and other objects before mowing. It's possible for objects to be struck by the mower blade and thrown out from under the mower, resulting in severe injuries and even death.

- Drive up and down slopes, not across, to prevent mower rollover.

- Keep lawn mowers in good working order. When using a lawn mower for the first time in a season, have it serviced to ensure that it is working correctly.

- Do not let children or pets near a lawn mower that is on, even if an adult is present. Do not let them ride on a riding lawnmower — injuries and amputations of hands and feet are common in this situation as a result of falls.

- Children should be at least 12 years old before operating a push lawn mower and age 16 in order to operate a riding lawn mower.

- Make sure you always know where your kids and pets are when mowing the lawn. You can't assume that children will stay where you put them! Use extra caution when backing up, going around corners, shrubbery and other obstacles. **NOW**

Dr. Christina Tran is an emergency physician on the medical staff at Texas Health Harris Methodist Outpatient Center Burleson.

Wishing you a safe & happy 4th of July!



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The Splash Pad: 10:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m., Bicentennial Park, 201 E. Main St., Crowley. This unique water park is a great place to relax and keep cool during the hot days of summer! For more information, contact the City of Crowley, (817) 297-2201.

July 3

4th of July Celebration: 7:00-10:00 p.m., Joshua Owl Stadium. Free fireworks start approximately 9:15 p.m., after a lovely evening that includes a children's parade and then a concert by Jole Holliday! Concessions will be available. Contact Joshua Area Chamber of Commerce, (817) 556-2480.

July 4

Ninth Annual Burleson Lions Club 4th of July Parade: 9:00 a.m., along Johnson Street and Ellison between Kerr Middle School and City Hall. Citizens from miles around meet in Old Town Burleson with floats, horses, fire trucks, antique military vehicles and music to celebrate our independence by honoring our heroes and veterans. Contact Tana Howell, (817) 228-6334, or visit www.burlesonlions.org.

City of Burleson Independence Day

Concert & Fireworks: 7:30-10:00 p.m., Chisenhall Fields Sports Complex. Gather your friends and family for fun as the sun sets and the stars come out! The Spazmatics provide the music (high-energy '80s pop), the City of Burleson provides the beautiful green grass, trees and after-dark fireworks, and the local residents who love our nation provide the ambiance. Contact David McDowell, (817) 426-9104.

July 5

Lunch & Learn: 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Dalton's Corner. Hot Plate lunch and SCORE Module 5: Growing Your Sales, sponsored by Couch and Russell Financial Group. \$10 for Chamber members; \$15 for non-members. RSVP to (817) 295-2236.

July 8

Metro Beekeepers Meeting: 6:30-8:30 p.m., Cana Baptist Church, 2309 E. Renfro St. Novice and expert beekeepers in Texas will enjoy learning from each other at Metro Beekeepers meetings. Contact Stan Key, (817) 888-0470, or visit www.metrobeekeepers.net.

July 13

Crowley Celebration of Freedom: 10:00 a.m.-dark, Bicentennial Park, 900 E.

Glendale. Parade leaves Crowley High School parking lot at 10:00 a.m., travels up Main Street to the park, where the City of Crowley shoots off fireworks at dusk and provides lots of fun in-between. Call (817) 297-2201, ext. 4300.

July 19

Power of Heels: 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. First United Methodist Church. Includes boxed lunch, networking and inspirational presentation by Mayor Betsy Price, City of Fort Worth. \$20 Burleson Area Chamber of Commerce members; \$25 non-members. RSVP: (817) 295-6121.

August 5 — 7

It's a Blue Ribbon Life: 9:00-11:30 a.m., Joshua Church of Christ, 110 N. Main St. Free Vacation Bible School for children Kindergarten through 10th grade. All participants who complete the three days get school supplies, including a backpack, free! For more information, call (817) 229-4828.

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your event details to melissa.nowmag@sbcglobal.net.

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In The Kitchen With Bob & Nathalie Sumien

— By *Melissa Rawlins*

When Bob and Nathalie Sumien had their first daughter, Bob became a stay-at-home dad and started cooking. “I was simply cooking for me and my baby, who was then about 4 months,” Bob recalled, “Just trying to get dinner ready and take care of everything else at home. Fun and challenging, that’s for sure.” His talent was appreciated. Nathalie asked him to make the meal a second time, and a third, and later joined him in the kitchen. Soon, friends were complimenting their presentations — inspired by French cuisine. “It is always fun when my wife and I cook together, usually on Sundays accompanied with a glass of wine.” Bob grills meat while Nathalie prepares veggies, and the girls are laughing and playing in the background. **NOW**

Normandy Chicken

5 apples, cut in wedges
1/4 cup water
1/8 cup Calvados apple liquor
 (optional)
2 Tbsp. butter
5 Tbsp. sour cream
2 chicken breasts

1. Put apples in a saucepan with water, a shot of calvados and butter. Cover and cook on medium heat.
2. When the apples are soft, add 2 Tbsp. sour cream. Mix and cook until the sour cream is hot.
3. Cut the chicken into strips; cook in pan with butter until the chicken is brown, add a shot of calvados and remaining sour cream. Mix and cook a little longer.
4. Serve the chicken and apples together.

Stuffed Avocado

2 cups rice
2 avocados
2 Tbsp. mayonnaise
Hot sauce, to taste

1. Cook the rice in advance and chill. It will be used cold.
2. Scrape out avocados; cut into small cubes. Save the shell.
3. Add mayonnaise to the rice with a dash of hot sauce. Mix well. Incorporate the cubed avocado.
4. Put the mixture back in the shells, cover and chill until ready to serve.

Beans à la Bob

3-4 garlic cloves
1 12-oz. pkg. bacon

2 jalapeños
2 16-oz. cans ranch style beans

1. Crush the garlic gloves.
2. Cut the bacon slices into small pieces.
3. Remove stalks and seeds from jalapeños and cut to desired size.
4. Empty the can of beans into a Crock Pot; add other ingredients. Cook 4-6 hours on low.

Farmer’s Market Grilled Filet Mignon

2 filet mignons, cut 1 to 1 1/4-inch thick
Garlic powder, to taste
Cajun spices, to taste
2 Tbsp. butter
Salt and pepper, to taste

1. Grill filet mignon 10 minutes per side at 300 F on grill.
2. Season with garlic and Cajun spices.
3. Serve with a sliver of butter on top. Season with salt and pepper, to taste.

Farmer’s Market Green Beans and Potatoes

4 cups water
2 cups ice
2-3 cups fresh green beans
2-4 garlic cloves (divided use)
2 Tbsp. butter
Salt and pepper, to taste
4 red or white potatoes
1/2 white onion
4-5 Tbsp. olive oil

1. Pour 2 cups water over ice in a deep bowl. Set aside.
2. Boil 2 cups water; add cleaned green beans. Boil 10 minutes; transfer to iced water for 10 minutes.
3. Crush garlic cloves; separate into two portions.
4. Cook green beans in saucepan with butter over medium heat for 10-15 minutes. Add one portion garlic; salt and pepper to taste.
5. Cut potatoes into small cubes. Chop the onion. Place potatoes and onion in another pan with oil. First cook at high heat to give color (for about 5 minutes); reduce heat and cover. Cook until potatoes are tender. Add remaining crushed garlic toward the end.
6. Serve green beans and potatoes together. They go well with any meats, especially with filet mignon.

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