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ON THE COVER



Megan Zimmerman cares for her 4-H show sheep like pets.

Photo by Jen Thomson.

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Editor's Note

Hello Friends,

Summertime. And the living is easy. So sang many an American icon. We all have images of the perfect, endless summer. For me, it's Granny's house on Lake LBJ. Our family rendezvoused there each July for a two-week-long work party, so her home would not fall down around her. For breaks, we frequently set down our paint brushes to run down the long lawn we had cleared of burrs, straight across the wooden dock to dive or jump headlong into the constant-level water where we could not touch bottom. We'd be joined by the next cousin and the next, then by our parents and finally, by a dog or two. Good times! For July Fourth, everybody found a spot on the bridge at Kingsland, while boats lined up under us for the fireworks show that

followed a concert of patriotic tunes performed by their high school band.

Y'all make wonderful memories during your Old Fashioned 4th of July!

Melissa

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Just a Country Girl

—By Amber D. Browne

Growing up on the wide open spaces of Hood County, Megan Zimmerman learned to love animals. Her family raises lambs, and she has always had some sort of livestock roaming their property. At the young age of 3, Megan showed her first pig as a Clover Kid with the Hood County 4-H Club. Her older sister, Dawn, was involved in 4-H, so Megan got to tag along until she was old enough to join. "I loved animals, too, so it was something I wanted to do," Megan explained. Older brothers and sisters involved in the 4-H Club often bring along their younger siblings, who are called Clover Kids. "They get to work hand-in-hand with their brother or sister, so they get to start learning as they grow," Megan explained.

"I started 4-H in third grade, and I showed all the way through high school." Megan was also involved in Future Farmers of America (FFA). "Lambs and pigs were my main projects." After high school graduation, she wasn't allowed to show animals anymore because of her age. "We still raise sheep for any kids who want to buy an animal and show." Megan and her family take care of the animals' vaccinations and dock their tails (removing a portion of the tail). She really enjoys working with sheep. "I still have a few of the ewes I showed," she said. "You spend so much time with them," Megan explained, "they're like pets."

Although she's no longer in the show ring, Megan volunteers for the Hood County 4-H Club in Tolar. Her parents, Don and Ruth Zimmerman, were the club's previous leaders, and once she graduated from high school, she took over for them. "I wanted to give back to the kids and help out," she said. "I help the kids with whatever projects they need. I'm there to answer any questions I can. If not, I help them find the answer." She helps them with livestock but is also on hand to help run their monthly meetings, including guidance on parliamentary procedure. The 4-H members are also involved in family living events at the Hood County Junior Livestock Show, held each January. They participate in





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including arts and crafts, sewing, canning food and baking. "It's a whole other side of it."

Megan misses showing her own animals, but she enjoys helping the children with their projects. "I love that I'm still able to be involved. You may not be going in the show ring, but you're still getting to help the kids so they can learn. They can go into the show ring, do well and gain that experience and knowledge from the project."

Both 4-H and FFA teach their young students about responsibility. "I feel like kids who are in 4-H and FFA seem to have a lot more respect or a sense of responsibility, because of having something they have to take care of." And, besides the time it takes caring for the animals, the livestock projects can be expensive. "It is an investment that you're making in these projects," she said. For Megan, her backyard was the perfect place to find an animal to show. "I would just go outside and pick a good one," she confessed, so she didn't have that initial expense.

Megan kept her show animals at her home in Tolar. "I could go work my projects every night and take care of them, instead of having to go to the Ag barn." Megan would feed her show animal twice a day, before and after school, and then work it outside. "I would get them used to the halter and get them to lead. Walk the pigs and keep them to where they walk and not run off," she joked, "just kinda messing

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with them to get them used to you.” Her dad always told her the animal was her project, so she was expected to take care of it. “I was still a kid and had fun,” she confessed, “but you can’t just leave it and think it will take care of itself.”

Her parents supported her love for livestock. “My mom and dad were great. They have always been there if I needed them.” They would cheer her on at shows and help out when she needed an extra hand. “It was a family thing, and it kept us all family-oriented and together,” she said.

“I always placed well. I never won the grand champion, but I won some breed champs.” Many students who show their animals make the sale and can use that money for a future project or add it to a college fund. When Megan was a senior at Tolar High School in 2007, she received a \$1,000 scholarship from the Hood County Livestock Raisers Association. “It goes to any 4-H or FFA member who had been showing or participating in our Hood County Livestock Show.” She attended Weatherford College, while working at First National Bank in Granbury. She has moved up the ranks at the bank and now works full time as a proof operator. She currently uses that financial knowledge in her volunteer position as treasurer for the Hood County Livestock Raisers Association.

Each summer, the association holds its 4th of July Ranch Rodeo at the Hood County Reunion Grounds in Granbury where cowboys and cowgirls from



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working ranches gather to compete. The timed rodeo events include work that is done out on the ranch, including calf branding, wild cow milking, penning and pasture roping. Megan doesn't participate in the events, but she keeps time for the competitions and helps keep the books. The money raised at the event goes back into the community through scholarships, like the one Megan received as a high school senior. "We try to give six scholarships every year."

The 4th of July Ranch Rodeo is for



a good cause, but it also offers plenty of fun and entertainment for families. After the rodeo events, families can sit back and relax while watching a fireworks show over Lake Granbury. "I personally think it's the best place to watch the fireworks in town."

Megan hopes to continue volunteering with the Livestock Raisers Association and the Hood County 4-H Club for many years to come. "I like what 4-H has to offer," she said. "I love dealing with the animals and the livestock." She also likes what 4-H stands for in the community. "It's not just about you. You're helping others," Megan explained. "You put others before yourself and work together as a team." And, with that mentality, Megan will continue to mentor the younger generation, helping them grow into responsible adults.

Besides her volunteer work, Megan enjoys shooting skeet, an occasional movie and spending time with family and friends. "I like barbecuing, bonfires and guns. I'm just a country girl." **NOW**



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PROJECTS GALORE

— By Lisa Bell

At Home With
**David and
Amy Sears**



If loving a job means you never work a day in your life, what does pursuing your job as a hobby mean? David Sears owns a company remodeling, repairing and maintaining homes. Although he loves fast boats, fast cars and customized lawnmowers, remodeling the home he shares with his wife, Amy, is his favorite hobby.

The Sears family worked in Granbury before moving here 10 years after getting married at 18. Coming from the city, Amy didn't like the sleepy little town at first. Before long, she grew to love the quietness and now can't imagine living in a big city again.

Fourteen years ago, the couple moved to Granbury, purchasing a newly constructed home. They still live in the same house. David's initial remodeling projects included a retaining wall and a shop out back where he creates things with wood and iron. Some of his handiwork graces the front door as a wrought iron covering. His shop houses his works-in-progress, tools and a riding lawnmower.

David's dad outfitted his own mower with special rims. Not to be outdone,



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David responded likewise, starting a customized mower-remodeling contest. David later added a wheelie bar. When he installed an exhaust pipe from a Harley, his dad said, "You win." The mower looks fast, but crawls along at the speed of any normal lawn tractor.

In David's business, he often works in expensive homes. While he gleans ideas from those remodeling projects, he doesn't replicate them. Instead, he and Amy take the ideas, tweak them and turn the results into something unique to their taste and rustic style. Their home also features David's love for electronic gadgets.

About six years ago, the couple began remodeling their home. They started with a media room addition, extending the original square footage. A fountain, originally located against the house, was moved to the retaining wall, becoming part of a large rock garden, which features several plants and iron statues. Both iron and stone sculptures decorate many areas of the home, both inside and out.

The media room, favorite room of both Amy and David, features a somewhat traditional, split-level design,



complete with leather theater-style seating, a big screen and projection system. Surround sound speakers spill out of the media room and fill the entire house with music when desired. The walls hold a variety of movie posters. The traditional feel ends there. Pillars flanking the screen appear to be made of marble, but paint accomplished the look. Shelves surrounding the big screen hold film reels and other movie set-type articles, which Amy found at home decor and craft stores.

Above the screen, a stuffed bobcat crouches, looking ready to pounce. "It was a gift," David said. "We're not hunters." They purchased a stuffed deer head and fox to enhance a unique feel in the room. The ceiling contains fiber optic lights, which twinkle like stars, creating the ambiance of a drive-in theater located in the country where animals might venture up to watch a movie. They've hosted super bowl parties and sometimes invite guests for a movie night. Their teenage daughter, Megan,



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sometimes enjoys the room with friends. However, more often she and her friends spend time in the backyard sitting on the retaining wall, cell phones in hand.

David installed wood floors and crown molding throughout the house, including the garage. Adding a distinctive orange-speckled paint to the floor creates a bright touch where most houses have nothing more than gray concrete.

Golden sophistication is the best way to describe the master bedroom. The walls and bedding create a rich ambiance, while maintaining the rustic feel of the house. The master bathroom features soft lighting beneath the counter, a perfect addition for guiding the way during middle-of-the-night trips.

The office contains a dual setup. From this room they manage their business. The unique feature of this room comes from a slight shelf dropped about a foot from the ceiling. An electric train, complete with trestles, trees and signs, circles the room. Behind it, the blue wall contains dots of fluffy, white clouds.

Megan's room shows the feminine sign of the clarinet player. Pink walls are contrasted with black and white accents, creating a comfortable room for a young lady to hang out in doing homework, sharing time with friends or simply being alone with her thoughts.

When they worked on the kitchen, the couple refinished cabinets with a rustic look matching the bar with its granite top and stone around the bottom. The open concept between the kitchen, dining area and living room add charm to the house. The remodel of the living room included opening up the back wall with large windows, providing a view into the backyard.

Surprisingly, the backyard gardens gave David and Amy the most challenge. They soon discovered keeping plants alive isn't easy. Nevertheless, they maintain a lovely place for spending time. The fountain lights up at night, providing a wonderful backdrop of stars while they enjoy sitting on the patio or in the hot tub.

Their home, situated in a country neighborhood, invites guests they sometimes prefer not having in their yard. Above the retaining wall, a barbed-wire fence provides a small entrance, an open invitation to animals. One day a big dog came through. David attempted to scare

him away, but the dog didn't immediately back down, so he conceded, retreating indoors. The animal escorted himself out of the yard a short time later.

One evening, while the couple relaxed in the hot tub, a lovely black and white kitty ventured into the yard wanting to join the party. Unfortunately, this kitty's white area streaked down his back, and his bushy raised tail contained the power to drive away anyone with one short spurt. Amy screamed at the sight. David quickly calmed her to avoid a potential



spray. On at least two other occasions, skunks approached the couple as they spent time outside in the evening.

The most recent addition to the backyard is an outdoor kitchen. Although the design is typical, again the unique character of the couple comes through in the countertops and cabinets. Commissioning an artist, David had the covered area accented with grapevines and wine bottles to bring art into their backyard.

David also built a large fire pit in the yard, more for burning leftover wood than anything else. Nevertheless, the six-foot square pit could easily accommodate a group of people wanting to roast hot dogs or marshmallows.

Back indoors, Amy looks around her home. She points out the rather small dining area. "That's the next project," she said. "So much for my summer off from remodeling my own home," David responded. The glimmer in his eye indicated he doesn't really mind. He loves his job and his hobby. **NOW**

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Costs

— By Melissa Rawlins

Retired Army Colonel V.B. Corn has lived in Pecan Plantation since 2001. As an avid golfer, V.B. plays four days a week as the weather permits. This year, he joined forces with Bobby White, the golf pro at Pecan Plantation Country Club, to organize and conduct the first annual golf tournament hosted by the Greater Granbury Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America. The tournament is being conducted to raise funds to support the Marine Corps Junior ROTC program at Granbury High School. V.B. and his fellow officers in MOAA are focused on encouraging our nation's youth to believe in themselves, their nation and their future. "The military is a great way of breaking molds and exceeding personal goals," V.B. said.

Local MOAA veterans and active duty officers from the seven military uniformed services, who are members of the Greater Granbury Chapter of Military Officers of Association of America (MOAA), feel extremely honored to share the military lifestyle, camaraderie and fellowship they still enjoy with aspiring young ROTC men and women. After conducting next month's golf tournament, MOAA plans to have available funds to give scholarships to graduating seniors who are going on to college. They also plan to help fund JROTC's



four-day leadership course, held in San Antonio every February. "There are always additional costs involved for the cadets and their parents for these events, a major one being the cost of transportation, and we want to be in a position to help defray these costs for cadets attending these very important events," V.B. said. MOAA may also help with other JROTC programs, such as updating the rifle team's equipment, depending on funds available.

During the four-person scramble tournament next month, cadets will be very active in helping MOAA conduct the

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event. "There will be American flags on the eighth and 14th holes, which are par threes and a closest-to-the-pin contest will be held on each hole. Cadets in uniform will be running these holes," V.B. said. "If our players wish to compete, they donate \$5 to a cadet. At the end of



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the day, the player who came closest to the pin gets half the pot while the other half will go to the cadet support fund.”

MOAA's JROTC support fund has been building for the past year during the organization's monthly social. Tickets are sold for \$1 each, and then four tickets are drawn from the pot. Those with a drawn ticket get to draw from a deck of cards, and whoever draws the ace of spades gets half the pot. To date, no one has won.

V.B. never interacted with JROTC until the Greater Granbury Chapter of MOAA was established in August, 2012. He grew up on a small farm outside of Asheville, North Carolina, set his sights on college and was lucky enough to earn a scholarship to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Several people served as early mentors in his development — his Boy Scout leader, his high school English teacher, a graduate of UNC, and his father. He attended the university for two years, dropped out for a year and got drafted.

V.B. was offered an opportunity to attend Officer's Candidate School at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the artillery in July, 1966. He volunteered to fight in Vietnam, which cemented his desire to serve his country in the Army's Officer Corps. The Army sent him back to UNC to complete his degree, and he subsequently achieved his master's in public administration from Central Michigan University. His final command was as division artillery commander of the 1st Armored Division in Desert Storm. His final assignment was

director of the Command and Leadership Department, Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

Upon retirement, V.B. worked for Ross Perot's organization, United We Stand for America. Later, he served as a consultant for a government contractor, Military Personal Resources, Inc. Traveling to countries as varied as Bosnia, Afghanistan, Korea and Japan, V.B. had grand adventures while serving his country. Yet another opportunity for leadership came when MOAA started their Granbury chapter last summer. V.B. is currently the MOAA liaison to the JROTC program at Granbury High School.

MOAA's mission is to support both veterans and retired military families by being a powerful force speaking for a strong national defense and representing military officers at every stage of their careers. This mission dovetails perfectly with the mission of JROTC, which is to develop informed and responsible citizens, develop future military leaders, strengthen character and form excellent habits of self-discipline. "I volunteered to be Junior ROTC liaison because one tenth of one percent of American population puts on an officer's uniform. Those of us who have served need to do our dead level best to support those desiring to serve our nation," V.B. said.

Every month, Commander Scott Casey brings five cadets to MOAA's gathering. "They enjoy socializing with the officers from all the different branches and listening to our guest speakers. Letting

those in JROTC associate with and rub arms with us, hopefully will assist them in developing a better understanding of what military life is like and will inspire some of these young men and women to become a commissioned officer in one of our services," said V.B.

The JROTC commander seeks guest speakers and mentors from MOAA to work with his cadets. Nationwide, MOAA represents seven of the uniformed services: Air Force, Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Public Health Service and the National Oceanic and Atmosphere Administration. In Granbury, the majority of MOAA men and women are Air Force. V.B. is using the skills he honed in his 28-year career



to lead a sharp group of retired military officers. Together, they are coordinating this first annual golf tournament V.B. to assist Granbury High School's JROTC cadets in achieving their goals.

Of course, V.B. will take a break on July 4th for a quiet family barbecue to celebrate the freedom our forefathers gave us. "Having been in 40 different countries around the world either while stationed, visiting or fighting," V. B. said, "the one true hallmark of America is the personal freedom we have that many people do not. Obviously, these freedoms are a direct result of our War of Independence, which all Americans should remember on the Fourth of July." An amateur guitar player, V.B. may even play a song he wrote while driving back and forth to his deer lease in San Saba County: *Freedom has Never Been Free.* **NOW**

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Luxury and simplicity merge in the Mission-era home lovingly restored, preserved and opened as a bed and breakfast inn by Diana McBride and her husband, Don (not pictured).



Honored to Share

Don and Diana McBride unveil the Iron Horse Inn, where history meets hospitality.

— By Melissa Rawlins

Where Cogdell Street and Thorp Spring Road meet just north of City Hall a cool front porch at least 10 feet deep invites visitors to enjoy the peace of Granbury. The Iron Horse Inn has opened its doors again, thanks to encouragement by the new owners' family, Mayor Pro Tem Nin Hulett. "We had visited often because my brother is here," Diana McBride said. "He called and told me about the property."

Surely, this was the right location for the retirement business Diana and her husband, Don, were looking for. The U.S. Veterans Museum is right next door and just south is access to the hike 'n' bike walking trail. Iron Horse guests can stroll under all-period lighting to get to the

Square for dining and shopping, returning by starlight for a relaxing evening — whether near the fire pit or surrounded by interior finery.

Every room has a vanity and a desk, new mattresses and private, tiled showers with benches for safety and comfort. Upstairs, the Treehouse Room's luxurious bathroom is even lit by a skylight. Throughout the Arts and Crafts, Mission or Craftsman house, shiny, dark woodwork of loblolly pine, floors of maple and interior walls of cedar were all hand-selected by Daniel C. Cogdell when this, his second house, was completed in 1907 on the concrete foundation of his first home, a 22-bedroom Victorian that burned down. Mr. Cogdell was one of the founders of the

Business **NOW**

First National Bank of Granbury and had interests in the railroad. For this reason, the first bed and breakfast operating here was dubbed Iron Horse Inn, and the McBrides chose to carry its reputation full steam ahead.

Preservationists at heart, the McBrides have worked with outstanding contractors to restore the Iron Horse Inn to its Mission-era glory. A shining example of Arts and Crafts architecture and design, the bed and breakfast is painted in the signature earth tones. In Phase II, the dining room will be decorated above the picture rail with geometric stencils of shadows from nature, like trees or leaves or flowers with leaves. As it stands now, the deep mahogany wainscoting that extends five feet up from the ground and natural fiber linen curtains bring that plain, simplistic feeling.

In this dining room, which seats 16, Don and Diana serve gourmet breakfasts they prepare together. Diana's pastries were a big hit at Victorian Reflections, which was at the northern end of the Chisholm Trail in Abilene, Kansas. Now they have moved to the southern end of the trail.

Employing their extensive experience operating bed and breakfast inns, the McBrides' cater to private parties, weddings and events of all kinds. The 7,000-square-foot Iron Horse Inn main house boasts seven rooms. Also on the estate are three guest houses. After adding a stone work patio with fire pit and an outdoor kitchen under the 400-year-old live oak, there are a variety of meeting spaces for small groups on-site. Each renovated cottage will have backdoors leading to paths meandering toward the patio.

Antiques from the mission era fill the home, and Diana knows quite a bit about each piece, as well as all the great stories related to the Cogdells. She offers afternoon tours with tea for locals and tourists. The McBrides feel honored to share this majestic piece of Granbury's history with the public. **NOW**



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Ruthie Rappe, from Wisconsin, and Aliona Milhed, from New York, work with Americorp to conserve Camp El Tesoro.



Tressa Crank and Dianne Allen meet with other Master Gardeners on regular Monday morning maintenance at the demonstration gardens.



James Stephenson and his family cool off at the sno cone stand.



LeAnne, Jordan, Jessica and Jaydan Smithee attend an open house hosted by New 2 U.



Donna Thorstenson (L.) and Kathy Hanlon (R), two of the volunteers from the Salvation Army Women's Service League, provide food and water to the first responders working in the tornado devastated Rancho Brazos neighborhood.



At the Friends of the Library big book sale, Barbara Damario is helped by the Library Book Store Sales chairwoman, Marita Crowder.



Wanda Page and Donald Wakeman support services for victims of crime while enjoying refreshments from the Lions Club.



Groundbreaking for Lake Granbury Medical Center with Robert Burns, Board Member; Salim Bhaloo, D.O.; and Derrick Cuenca, CEO.



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Buttons, a well-trained 8-year-old American Eskimo, takes his daily walk with Lyn Goodgeon.



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- Insist on a detailed, written estimate clearly stating the quantity of materials needed; labor charges; work specifications, which include approximate starting and completion dates; payment procedures; and that any necessary building permits are secured.
- Carefully review and understand any warranty and watch

for conditions that would void it. Use caution (ask questions) before accepting a bid substantially lower than other bids covering the same repair work.

- Contact your local Better Business Bureau to check for complaints filed against the contractor.
- You may also contact your National Roofing Contractors Association for assistance in locating a professional contractor in a specific geographic area at 1-800-USA-ROOF or 1-800-872-7663 or go to www.nrca.net.
- In Canada, you may contact the Canadian Roofing Contractors Association for assistance in locating a professional contractor in a specific geographic area at 1-800-461-2722 or go to www.roofingcanada.com. **NOW**

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July 2

Acton Celebrates America: 7:00 p.m., Acton United Methodist Church. Annual musical program includes the Paluxy River Band and 50-voice community choir. After the show, cobbler and ice cream will be served. Visit www.actonumc.org or call (817) 326-4242.

July 4 — 6

Old-Fashioned 4th of July: **Thursday**, 10:00 a.m., square, Hometown Parade; 6:00 p.m., Reunion Grounds, Ranch Rodeo; Dusk, Fabulous Fireworks over Lake Granbury. **Friday**, 7:00 p.m. Mike Brown Hyundai, D&D Rockin' Rod Car Show; 9:30 p.m., square, live country music. **Saturday**: 8:00 p.m., Granbury Resort Conference Center, Shall We Dance...Come Dance Like the Stars! Call the Granbury Chamber of Commerce for tickets, (817) 573-1622.

July 7

Church on the Beach: 9:00 a.m., City Beach on Pearl St. Stonewater Church hosts worship on the beach of Lake Granbury. Contact the Granbury Chamber of Commerce, (817) 573-1622, or visit www.new.stonewaterchurch.com/

granbury-campus/.

July 9

Safe Sitter classes: 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., LGMC, 1321 Water's Edge Dr., Ste 1001. Babysitting skills give you confidence to handle situations that may happen while babysitting. Free lunch and snacks provided, along with manual, pencils and other supplies. \$35 enrollment fee. RSVP to (817) 579-2969. Visit www.granburybabies.com.

July 13

Girls Night Out: 5:30-8:00 p.m., downtown square. Event includes drawing for \$100 downtown dollars, drinks and food for the ladies who come to shop in the boutiques and galleries surrounding the courthouse. Call (817) 573-5299 or visit www.facebook.com/GNOgranburytx.

July 27

Last Saturday Gallery Night: 6:00-9:00 p.m., 100 W. Pearl St. Artists will be on hand, some giving demonstrations, while you enjoy hors d'oeuvres, wine and music. Contact (817) 579-7733.

July 29 — August 1

Mad for Drama: 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Acton

United Methodist Church, 3433 Fall Creek Hwy. Kids summer camp focusing on theater. Visit www.actonumc.org or call (817) 326-4242.

July 27

Birthday Bash: Noon-11:00 p.m., V.F.W. Lake Granbury Memorial Post No. 7835, 3670 W. Hwy. 377. The Post turns 40 years old, and they are celebrating their remodeled building. Kids activities start the day, followed by a ribbon cutting at 6:00 p.m., the BBQ dinner at 7:00 p.m., and the dance band performing from 8:00-11:00 p.m. Contact Jim Trimble: vfw.chaplain@yahoo.com or (817) 579-1922.

Second and Fourth Saturdays

HALO Pet Adoption Days: **second Saturday**, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Tractor Supply; **fourth Saturday**, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Arrow Feed & Ranch. For more information, contact Pam Fine, Executive Director of HALO (Hood County Animal Lovers Organization), (817) 559-7309.

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



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In The Kitchen With Matthew Hatfield

— By *Melissa Rawlins*

Growing up in Pasadena, Hood County Pct. 4, Constable Deputy Matthew Hatfield found his way to Granbury five years ago and enjoys the people and the landscape. Hunting and cooking for his family are skills he learned from both parents. He was about 4 when he killed an animal. “I had been in the back yard, with my Red Ride, when I wounded a starling. I ran into the house crying. Dad took me outside, made me finish what I had started and then bury it,” Matthew said. “That day, Dad explained life, death, the responsibility that comes with guns and to only harvest what you are going to eat.” His dad later taught Matthew how to clean and cook squirrel, frying it like chicken. **NOW**

Roasted Vegetables

1 small butternut squash, cubed
2 red bell peppers, seeded and diced
1 sweet potato, peeled and cubed
3 Yukon Gold potatoes, cubed
1 red onion, quartered
1 Tbsp. fresh thyme, chopped
2 Tbsp. fresh rosemary, chopped
1/4 cup olive oil
2 Tbsp. balsamic vinegar
Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

1. Preheat oven to 475 F. In a large bowl, combine squash, red bell peppers, sweet potato and potatoes.
2. Separate the red onion quarters into pieces, and add them to mixture.
3. In a small bowl, stir together remaining ingredients. Toss with vegetables until they are coated.

4. Spread evenly in a large roasting pan. Roast vegetables for 35-40 minutes, stirring every 10 minutes or until vegetables are cooked through and browned.

Bacon-wrapped Squirrel

Squirrel legs, front or rear
Beer, enough to cover
Garlic powder, salt, pepper and minced onions to taste
Hickory smoked bacon, enough for one or two slices per leg

1. Soak the legs in beer for 2-3 hours. Remove and drain.
2. Sprinkle with seasonings (or if you have a favorite dry rub for grilled squirrel you can use that instead).
3. Wrap each leg with bacon. Secure with toothpicks if necessary. Place on hot charcoal grill for a nice smoky flavor. A gas or electric grill may also be used.

4. Cook over medium heat until cooked through. Tend to the meat during cooking (do not overcook).

Venison Bacon Burgers

2 slices bacon
2 Tbsp. olive oil
2 tsp. garlic, minced
2 shallots, minced
1 lb. ground venison
1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
1 Tbsp. freshly parsley, chopped
Salt and pepper, to taste
1 egg, beaten
6 hamburger buns

1. Chop bacon into small pieces; cook in a skillet on medium heat until browned and crispy. Pour bacon and grease into a heatproof bowl; cool.
2. Heat olive oil in skillet; add garlic and shallots. Cook and stir until softened, about 3 minutes; then add to bacon.
3. Once cooled, mix in venison, Worcestershire sauce, parsley, salt, pepper and egg until evenly combined. Refrigerate for 20 minutes.
4. Preheat an outdoor grill to medium-high heat. Shape the mixture into 6 patties; grill to desired doneness.
5. Serve on toasted hamburger buns with your favorite toppings.

Baked Wild Rabbit

1 or 2 wild rabbits
Salt and pepper, to taste
6 slices bacon
2 large potatoes, cubed
2 large carrots, cubed
1 medium onion, cut into rings
2 Tbsp. sage

1. Dress rabbits; place them in a large bowl of salt water. Let stand 1 hour. Pat dry, salt and pepper to taste.
2. Place 3 slices bacon on the bottom of your pan. Make sure rabbits will fit. Lay rabbits on top of bacon.
3. Place potatoes, carrots and onions inside the rabbits and around them. Sprinkle the sage over all. Add the last 3 strips of bacon on top.
4. Cover with foil; cook at 350 F for 45 minutes. Remove foil; cook for about 15-20 more minutes.

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