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ON THE COVER



Kaye Jordan and her grandson remember his father, Pfc. Austin Staggs.

Photo by Sarah McVean.

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Editor's Note

Greetings, WeatherfordNOW readers!

With Mother's Day right around the corner on May 11, I am reminded of the special lady in my life who has given me guidance and support over the years. My mother has always been there for me, and I can't thank her enough for being a strong role model in my life. Whether she was cheering from the stands or simply lending an ear, she has always shared confidence with me that helped me pursue

my goals. With my father still by her side, my mother now shares that strength and supportive nature with my little ones.

The month of May also brings to our thoughts Memorial Day. You may celebrate the day grilling with family and friends, but let's not forget who we are honoring. This is a time to remember the military servicemen and servicewomen who have died for our freedoms.

Gratefully,

Amber

Amber D. Browne
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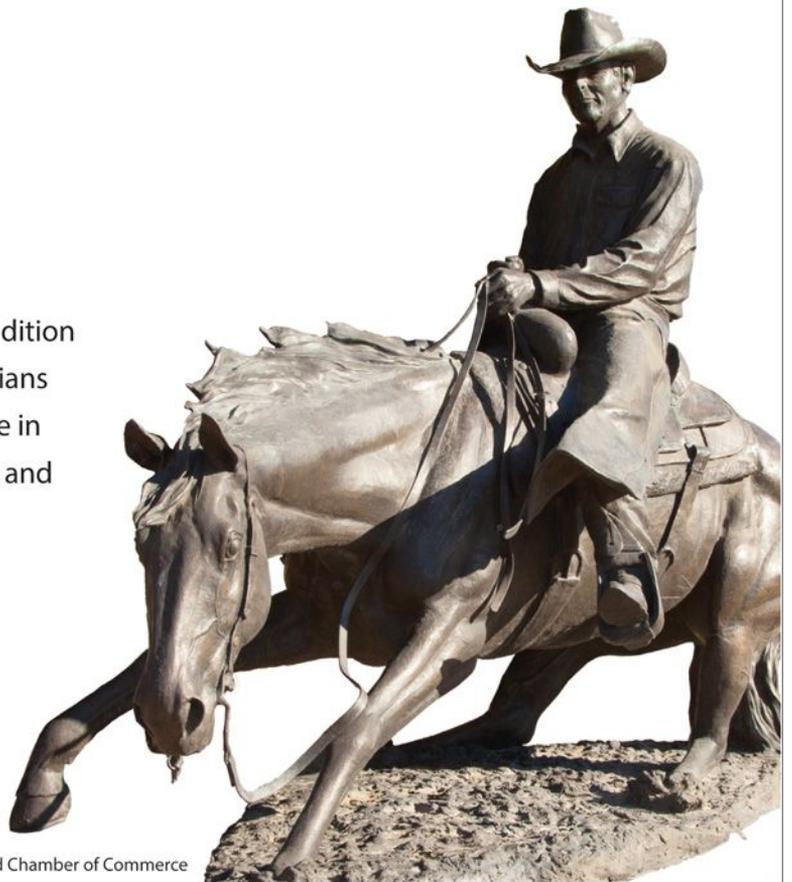
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FOREVER 19

— By Lisa Bell

Austin Staggs loved being outdoors, playing, fishing, hunting and being with his friends, of which he made many growing up in Weatherford. As a teenager, he and his mother had agreements and disagreements, but she loved him, and he loved her.

After high school, Austin joined the Army. In the days before his deployment, Kaye Jordan celebrated with her son, alternating between pride and fear. "I knew there was a 50-50 chance he might not come back from Afghanistan," she said. "So, I prayed hard for protection over my only son." Before long, her emotions collided with reality drenched in deep sorrow.

On the 96th day of deployment, Austin's unit was

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on a training mission with Afghani locals, when he and five of his military brothers tragically lost their lives while taking a short break. There seemed to be no reason or clear purpose. Kaye's normalcy vanished on November 29, 2010 — she was not alone. Other Parker County families knew the same grief intimately.

Losing a child never comes easy. After three years, Kaye still sometimes expects Austin to walk through the door. "You have good days and bad days," she said. "Fortunately for me, I have my grandson, Kallen. There are other Gold Star Families who don't have grandbabies from the child they lost." Looking back, Kaye is so thankful Austin and Brittney didn't mind their parents, because of the blessing Kallen now is. "God knew best for our family," Kaye shared. "He had a different plan. I thank God, Austin didn't listen." Her precious grandson inherited part of Austin and brings her joy, as do a few



personal items and the memories of Austin she holds close to her heart.

Austin deployed after Kallen's second birthday, so the now 5-year-old doesn't remember his daddy. When he asks about him, Kaye tries her best to verbalize a vivid picture of the young man she misses for the little boy who will never know him. "Austin is in my heart," Kallen told her.

At first, Kaye isolated herself. Blanketed in pain, she thought and prayed often. Not wanting to forget her son or others who gave the ultimate sacrifice, she considered creating a memorial in Weatherford. Parker County has a reputation for being extremely patriotic, and many families lost loved ones in wars through the years. Still more fought and came back forever changed. "You can't see the things our military experiences and come back the same," Kaye said. "They deserve to be honored and remembered." She talked with city officials about Soldier Spring Park, but planned to wait until November 2012 to start anything.

Austin influenced people in a positive way. His best friend named his son after the fallen soldier. Several other friends joined the military because of him. In August 2012, Kaye heard one of Austin's friends, Clayton, had been killed in action. "When we lost Clayton, it was time," she said. "We



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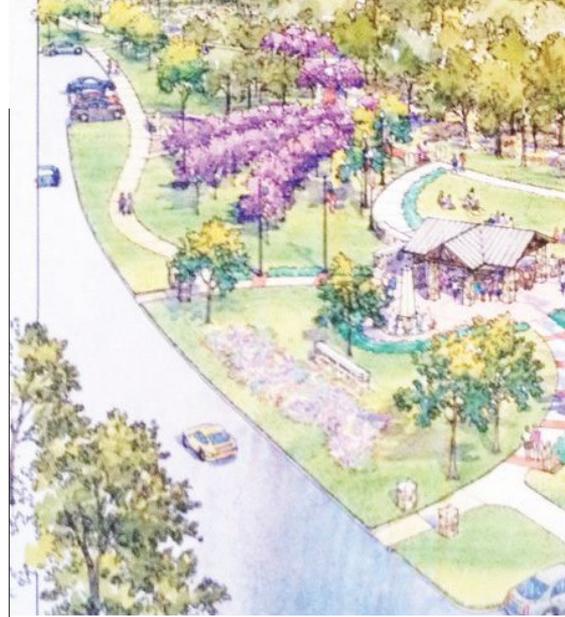


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had to do something. It couldn't end like this. We had to remember our kids. These are boys who walked the halls of the high school and ran around town."

Kaye contacted several families she knew who had lost military sons. She became the agent for 501(c)(3) status and formed Parker County Gold Star Families. The group includes all family members, not just mothers. Kaye purposely included fathers and one uncle on the board of directors realizing men grieve along with their wives and other children or grandchildren.



The group primarily focuses on raising money to build an amazing memorial at Soldier Spring Park. The city supported the plan, donating part of the park for the site and contributing architectural plans. Not having to pay for land gave Kaye hope. "We're grateful for the city's support," she said. "Now we just have to raise the money." So far, the group has raised over \$30,000 through fundraisers and donations. They need \$250,000. "I can't see this not happening, because I know people care," she said. "There are



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over 116,000 people in Parker County. If each person gave just \$1, we'd have more than half the money."

Plans include selling memorial bricks and benches. They want any person who ever had a family member who served in the military to purchase a brick in honor or memory of their loved one. Each person who donates at least \$1,000 will have his or her name on a recognition plaque as a supporter of the military.

Gold Star Families connected with the Veterans of Foreign Wars and American Legion organizations that also believe in the idea. Each group assists with fundraisers. The Gold Star Families will work hard to make the memorial a reality. However, they seek community involvement with donations of money, time, labor and materials. One local businessman already expressed an interest in providing a fountain. Kaye's husband, Judd, will add to the donations through Jordan Construction. She hopes many others will come forward and offer assistance or attend fundraisers.

They plan to have booths at the Weatherford Christian Academy event on May 23 and Parker County Sheriff's Posse Frontier Days in the near future. "We'd like to have a skeet shooting tournament," Kaye said, "but we need a place to hold it."

The memorial will have a prayer garden where families can seek healing. The memory bricks and benches will honor current and past veterans. Eventually they will build a pavilion. Kaye envisions schoolteachers bringing children to the park, teaching them about freedom and the cost associated with it. She sees state representatives holding

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meetings there, and joy entering the atmosphere through military weddings.

Although the memorial consumes meeting times of the Gold Star Families, the group also supports its members. No family chooses or wants eligibility in the organization. Circumstances have thrust it upon them. The mothers form bonds, and the families spend time together, but the wound in Kaye's heart remains fresh and deep. Gold Star Families understand, because they feel the same way. They will continue as a group after completing the memorial. As long as war exists, Parker County families need the camaraderie. "Eventually, I hope we can help those who come back home and need support," Kaye said.

Memories linger throughout Weatherford for this mother — grocery stores, the lake, everywhere she goes. Simple moments resurrected in her mind affect her sometimes with joy, other times with tears. In 2013, reality hit hard. She still struggles to grasp fully what happened. It seems impossible her son isn't coming home. She can't call or text him, and it hurts. A memorial won't change that for anyone, but it will help heal broken hearts. If not for her relationship with God, Kaye readily admits she wouldn't be able to carry on. She finds peace knowing Austin is in heaven with his Maker.

"Austin is my hero, but he was my child first," she said. "He's forever 19. That will never change." **NOW**

Editor's Note: For more information about Parker County Gold Star Families, visit www.facebook.com/pages/Parker-County-Gold-Star-Families/458937897536825.

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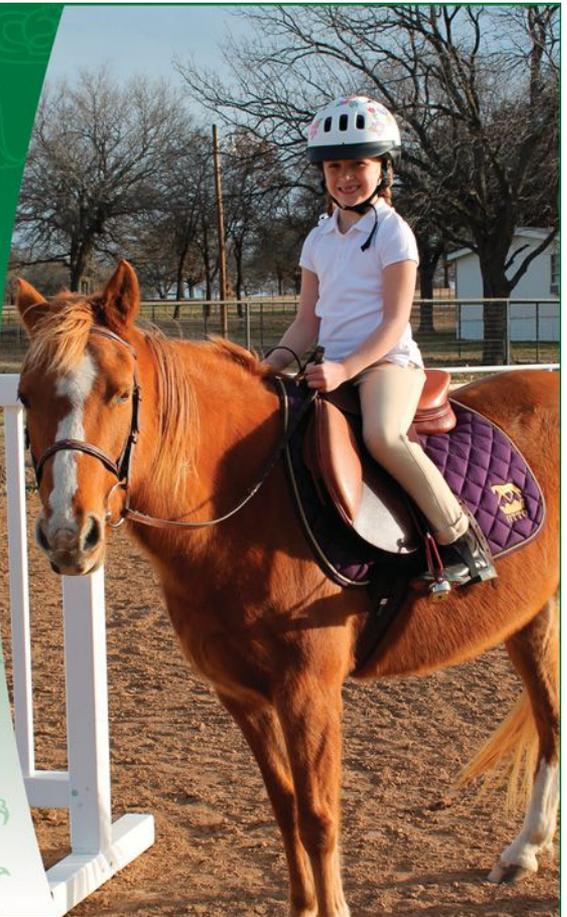
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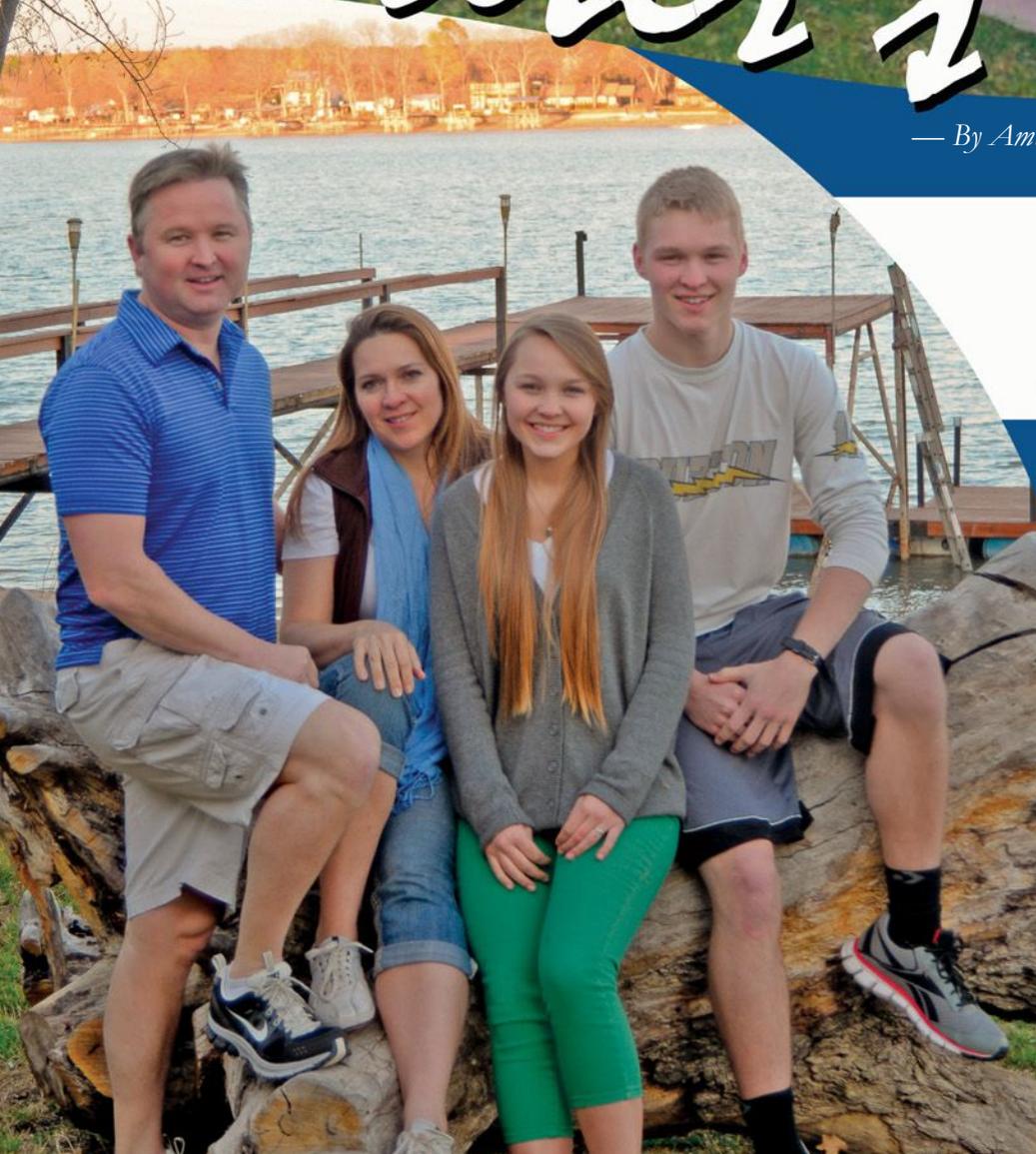
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By
The

Water's Edge

— By Amber D. Browne



At Home With Joel and Lisa Aldridge

The sound of crashing waves. A continuous breeze. A perfect view of the sunrise each morning. These experiences are found at Joel and Lisa Aldridge's home on Lake Weatherford every day of the year.

The couple and their two children, Braxton and Rachel, discovered the double lot on the lake in 2011. They were living in Weatherford at the time, having moved back to Texas from California. At first, they wondered



if building on the sloped lot would be feasible. “We lived in the mountains in California for a while in a three-story house on stilts. I knew we could figure this out. We could build something really cool and take advantage of this view,” Joel shared.

When it came to house plans, they created a unique floor plan to meet their needs. “We designed our house on an Excel spreadsheet, because we couldn’t find what we liked,” Joel said. They chose an architect and contracted out most of the work. With help from their teenagers’ friends, the family completed most of the interior projects themselves. They painted every room, and Braxton and his friends installed all the doors, hardware and wood flooring throughout the house. Joel and Lisa thought the experience would help their children learn fundamental building skills. “They did a great job,” Joel said. “Everybody came over to work, and then we would barbecue and swim afterwards. We had all the free help we wanted,” he grinned.

Each room in the house has a window, so when they are open, a continuous breeze flows throughout the home. Braxton and Rachel have their own suites upstairs, with a bedroom, bathroom and large walk-in closet. A small office sits upstairs between the teens’ rooms. Each room has a set of French doors opening onto the second-floor covered porch. With help from family members and friends, they welded and painted the



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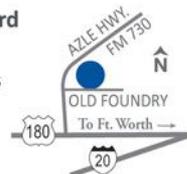
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metal porch railing, which is accented with crosses.

The family often spends time in the downstairs living area, which is full of windows, providing the perfect view of the lake. A taupe sectional offers space for visitors to chat. They don't have cable television, so evenings are often spent visiting with one another. Floating cabinets in a nook in the living room lend space for family photos. Artwork depicting the countryside, painted by



Lisa's mother, Patti Watkins, brightens up walls throughout the lake house. The granite kitchen island offers ample space for the children and their friends to help Lisa cook healthy meals.

Shades of browns and blues in the master bedroom remind them of the water and sand of the lake. "On days when it's windy, the lake sounds like the ocean," she said. "There's such a peace about being here." Lisa often spends time swimming or kayaking the lake, as well

as walking along the beach catching up with their neighbors. The family also enjoys spending afternoons on the catamaran, their mini sailboats or their Sea-Doo watercraft.

With all the fun lake activities, the Aldridges often open their home to visitors. "As a family, we really do a lot of stuff together. The kids just don't take off for the weekend. Usually, all their friends come here," Lisa said.

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at Trinity Bible Church, so their home has an open-door policy. "A lot of the kids will come and hang out, just to get some quiet time," Joel said. And, there is never a shortage of places to find tranquility at their lake house. Whether it's sitting on the dock, swinging on the covered porch or warming up around the fire pit, visitors can find solace or a conversation with friends.

Joel graduated from Weatherford High School in 1988 and attended The University of Texas at Arlington. Just after graduating from high school in Grand Prairie, Lisa met Joel during his freshman year at college, while she was working with his sister at a Bennigan's in Fort Worth. The couple's unofficial first date was at the restaurant on July 4. "We got married two years later to the day," Joel said, grinning. They'll celebrate 23 years of marriage this July. Joel and Lisa own a local business, JDAROOFFING, and plan to live on the lake for quite some time. Their home will provide space for the children when they return home for a visit from college and, one day, with their own families.

Braxton will graduate from Trinity Christian Academy this year and plans to attend the University of North Dakota this fall. "It's very bittersweet. I'm so proud of him," Lisa shared. "It's so exciting to see him have a goal, a dream, a desire and be able to follow it, because he's done the hard work," she boasted. "It will be such a huge hole without him here."

Braxton stays busy playing sports and is involved in choir and theater at TCA. He is president of the National Honor Society and a member of the praise team at school. Graduation is just weeks away, and he finds himself wondering about



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the new experiences awaiting him in North Dakota, where he will be pursuing a degree in unmanned aircraft systems operations. Braxton would eventually like to operate drones. "I want to be as involved as I can in that industry," Braxton said. For that major, the FAA requires students to acquire their private and commercial pilot licenses. Braxton has always wanted to fly and plans to enlist in the North Dakota Air National Guard.

With Braxton heading off to college this fall, he and Rachel aim to take advantage of their lake time together this summer. "I'm happy for him. I don't want him to leave, but I think it will be a neat opportunity for him," Rachel shared. "I'm excited to see where it leads him in his life. I think it will open up so many roads for him." Rachel will graduate from TCA in 2015. She's excited, but a little nervous about her senior year. She also keeps busy playing sports and as a member of the praise team and choir. Music is a big part of her life, and she would like to put her musical talent to use once out in the real world. She plans to major in music therapy and minor in sign language. The University of North Dakota has a music therapy program, so the Aldridge children may be back together again after she has graduated from high school.

For now, Joel, Lisa and their children will cherish their time together on Lake Weatherford. With summer at their doorstep, they'll spend their days sailing the lake or sitting around the campfire, as Rachel sings to the melodies emanating from Braxton's guitar. "There's not going to be a lot of lake time in North Dakota," Braxton laughed. **NOW**

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A Moment to

Stitch

— By Amber D. Browne

In what is often referred to as the olden days, many women were required to learn to sew. They would use that skill to make clothing for their families, hem skirts or simply sew on a replacement for a missing button. Nowadays, that necessity has turned into a craft, and Lee-Ann Edwards can call sewing her specialty.

Lee-Ann grew up in Indiana, and at an early age, her mother, Lorie Sensow, began teaching her how to sew. At the age of 10, Lee-Ann became involved in 4-H and started sewing projects. At first, those projects



For Lee-Ann, sewing is a creative outlet — one she makes time to enjoy.

were simple crafts, such as a drawstring bag or an apron. "As a child gets older, the skill level gradually increases," she explained about the 4-H program. She made a denim coat, which her mother wore proudly, and a formal dress for a school dance. Her mother packed away some of her creations, and when she and her family go back to Indiana to visit, Lee-Ann often rummages through her mom's fabrics, sparking memories. "It's fun, because a lot of the fabrics are from sewing projects from my childhood."

Although she took some time off from sewing while in college at Purdue University, Lee-Ann jumped right back into the craft when she and her husband, Andy, had children. "I thought it would be more fun to sew things for my kids." She no longer sews as much clothing for her children, but one Halloween, Lee-Ann decided to make her daughter, Lyla, an Ariel costume. "I laugh because it was like \$70 for the fabric. And, I spent probably 10 hours making it. I should have just gotten a store-bought costume," she admitted, chuckling. Despite spending all that time and money on Lyla's costume, Lee-Ann wouldn't trade the experience or the artistic expression she achieved by making it for her daughter.

Lee-Ann enjoys the creativity of sewing. "I love textiles. Vintage fabrics are particularly interesting to me. I love to go to flea markets, thrift stores, antique malls or garage sales and pick up old sheets or tablecloths," she explained. "Many times, I'll pull out tablecloths that have stains on them. I cut around the imperfections and use the fabric. These items most likely would have ended up in the trash, but a lot of it has really intricate embroidery or lacework," she said.

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"Fifty years ago, that was considered a real art form. Now we don't do that. I think it's a shame to see that art form go to waste."

Vintage fabrics and lace often adorn her creations. "Right now, I'm focusing on bold, fun, one-of-a-kind steering wheel covers. A lot of the fabric is funky hippy orange and olive green from the '60s and '70s — the graphic prints." She sells some of her final products on Etsy.com and at local craft shows through her small business, Whoopsie Daisies. Each steering wheel cover is unique, featuring colorful fabrics and often fun, ink-stamped phrases. "Steering wheel covers are just something very different to purchase or to give a friend as a gift."

In the past, Lee-Ann has sewn tooth fairy pillows, often gifting them to her children's friends as birthday presents. Most recently, she began sewing with

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felt. For her son, Gray, she sewed a felt campfire set. And, this past fall, she sewed felt pumpkins, which dotted her home with warm shades of orange.

Hats and headbands are part of her repertoire, along with flower brooches. Pajama pants are always a favorite with her children. She sews them from vintage sheets, which are very soft to the touch. "Pretty much anybody can go online and find an easy tutorial and teach themselves how to sew pajama pants," she explained. "To me, the fun part is to change that around and use fun fabric. Or maybe make each leg two different fabrics or put a pocket in an odd spot."



Lee-Ann likes taking a simple skill and expanding it. "I'm always cutting up T-shirts — making tube tops and swimsuit cover-ups for myself and Lyla." Aprons were once one of Lee-Ann's favorite items to sew. One of her apron patterns was published in *Craft Challenge: Dozens of Ways to Repurpose a Pillowcase* by Lark Books. "It was a tiered ruffle apron. I would cut off the embroidered portion of pillowcases," she explained. "Then, it would have five different ruffles with different motifs on the front of the apron."

Regardless of what creative sewing Lee-Ann is doing, she finds solace behind the sewing machine. She and her family moved into a new home in Aledo about two years ago, and now, she has her very own sewing room. "I walk by and stare longingly," she laughed. "I never get enough time in there."

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Finding time appears to be a nagging hassle many people face when they want to redirect their efforts to something joyful. "It's nice to have a sewing room where I can go work on a project for 10 minutes, then come back out and start dinner, go back in there for 10 minutes," she laughed. "Ideally, I would have my coffee, my music playing and just sew all day."

Sewing a steering wheel cover takes about an hour, but the behind-the-scenes work can be time-consuming. Lee-Ann spends hours looking for the perfect fabric, washing it and making other preparations before sitting down to sew. Lee-Ann bought her Janome sewing machine about 10 years ago, and it has been a great investment. She also owns a serger, which finishes the edge of the fabric with a zig-zag type stitch, giving a professional look. Without an embroidery machine, Lee-Ann must hand-sew any creative wording onto fabric.

A large wooden armoire in her sewing room provides a spot for piles of colorful textiles. Her closet is filled with buttons, vintage lace, thread and stuffing. A table gives Lee-Ann plenty of space to measure and cut the fabric, which is always ironed to make the cut straighter. She often uses a rotary cutter to cut more evenly. If using a pattern, Lee-Ann pins it to the fabric before cutting. When it comes to needles, she will use a thinner, more delicate one for knit fabric, but a thicker, stronger needle is needed for fabrics such as denim. Servicing her sewing machines once a year is also an important rule to follow, keeping them clean and in working condition.

For Lee-Ann, sewing is a creative outlet — one she makes time to enjoy. "You would be surprised. A lot of people don't know how to do basic sewing and repairs," she said. One day, she hopes to pass down the craft to her own daughter. "It's nice to know that I can do it." **NOW**

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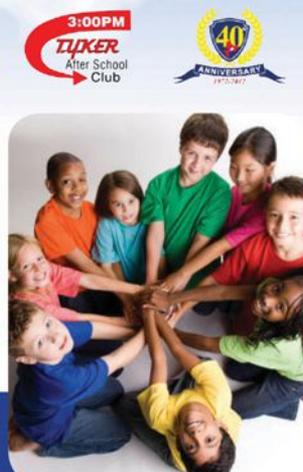
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Child's PLAY

— By Randy Bigham

With summer around the steamy corner, moms and dads everywhere are considering ways to keep their kids cool, entertained and challenged until school activities rev up again. Busy parents, especially, want safe options for amusement and education they can depend on for their children during workday hours.

Summer Camps

For many parents, grandparents and guardians, the tried-and-true youth camp offers an ideal solution to boredom and inactivity for their kids. As schools close their doors for summer break, camps around North Texas open their, drawing children of all ages to the same games, sports and campfire sing-alongs, which have provided fond memories for older generations. But, as the website for Ultimate Camp Resource makes clear, “there’s more to camp than kickball or four-square.” Modern summer camps offer a wide variety of both age-appropriate and inclusive outings, games, art projects and theatrical skits. “We





encourage you to plan all activities using the ‘everybody plays, everybody wins’ philosophy,” the site suggests, adding by changing the rules to give a personal touch and not keeping score helps make competitions upbeat and fun.

Susan Merrill, director of programs for Camp Fire Camp El Tesoro in Granbury, believes in the importance of reaching children through activities for all tastes and skills. In her 25 years in the camp industry, Susan has observed the positive effect the interactive enjoyment of work, play and team building has had on young campers. “Going to camp should be a part of every child’s life,” she said. “The experience develops their independence and confidence, and it provides the opportunity for children to learn decision making.”

At large camps, some extraordinary features include: horseback riding, canoeing and kayaking, hiking,



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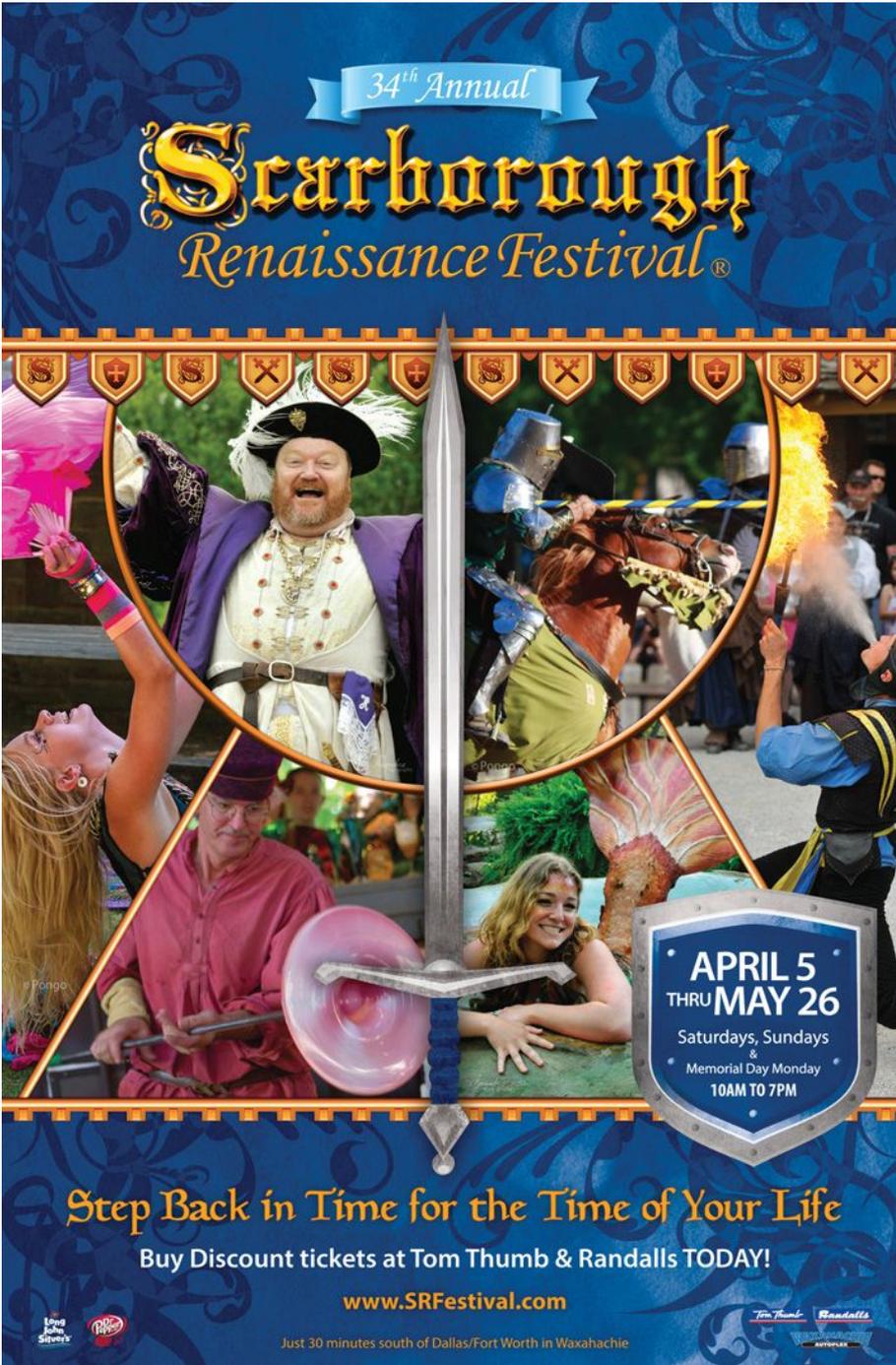
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basketball, tennis and soccer. Whatever children's interests might be, Misty Luttrell, director of overnight and family camps at Camp Fire, recognizes a common denominator: togetherness. "With all the electronics out there, kids spend more time plugged in and less time interacting face to face," she pointed out. "But camp fosters an atmosphere that allows kids to build relationships with peers and their counselors."

Vacation Bible Schools

Another staple, yet ever diversifying, alternative for meaningful summer activity for children is Vacation Bible School. Nearly every church sponsors a program blending faith-based instruction with challenging amusement, covering a range of ages.

Nora Beane, a contributor to the online clearinghouse Yahoo Voices, cites five good reasons for parents to consider VBS as a viable outlet for kids' entertainment and education:

1. Scheduling: "The majority of VBS programs run for a single week and many only operate for a half day during that week. Almost every family can plan around that."
2. Content: "There are a million sites where kids can go to learn how to play baseball, but considerably fewer places where kids can learn to respect others and have faith in God."
3. Quality companionship: "Parents can guess that their child will be



attending VBS with other kids who come from families where values are important and faith is central.”

4. Engaging entertainment: “Kids at VBS don’t just spend time reading the Bible. VBS programs have curriculums built for and around kids that are full of adventure.”

5. Economic value: “Because they are church based, most VBS programs are not set up to make a profit. They are set up to share a message.”

Library Programs

An increasingly varied venue for parents seeking relief from the heat for their kids this summer is the local library. Not only can the little ones (and the older ones, too) hone their reading skills, but they also acquire valuable social sensibilities and teamwork through contests and other interactive programs. From talks by authors to magic shows and clown acts, children learn to associate books with fresh new experiences and exposure that will aid their future reading development and desire for knowledge.

According to the American Library Association, 95 percent of public libraries offer summer reading initiatives for children, so there’s no shortage of programs for which parents can sign their kids up. Many libraries select themes each summer for their programming, which involves not only literature but special events. Local themes for summer reading programs in the recent past have included tie-ins



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The ALA lists the three main benefits for youth-oriented summer reading programs as:

1. Maintaining reading skills between grades.
2. Attracting reluctant readers by activity-oriented events.
3. Encouraging reading as a lifelong habit.

YMCA and Community Recreation Centers

More fun in the sun opportunities for kids this summer at local YMCA centers or other community recreation facilities include: basketball and football, swimming, outdoor art installations, tie-dyeing T-shirts and numerous other craft projects.

One North Texas area YMCA craft idea proved especially popular last summer with young children returning from a field trip to a popular water park, and it promises to entertain many again this year. Boys and girls created a souvenir of their outing by gluing sand and shells onto a wooden or particle board backing in the shape of a starfish or dolphin. These were then affixed to a painted stick or straw, which girls in particular enjoyed waving around, calling the toy their "mermaid wand."

Whether camping out or taking a dip, curling up with a new book or displaying artistic creations, the summer sky's the limit. There are plenty of choices available for exciting recreational and educational opportunities for your kids this year! **NOW**

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— By Amber D. Bronne

At Scott, McNeill & Burney, PLLC, clients can receive legal advice for personal injury, family law, criminal law and civil cases. The full-service law firm provides services for cases ranging from disorderly conduct and traffic tickets to misdemeanor marijuana cases and capital murder cases. “We try to provide efficient law services for a fair, reasonable price. We are very goal-oriented and result-oriented for our clients,” said Mark Scott, founding partner of the firm.

Mark opened the first office in Fort Worth in 2005. He took on two partners, Anthony McNeill and Adam Burney, and opened a second location in Aledo in 2011. The attorneys

focus on cases primarily in Parker and Tarrant counties. They combine their expertise to get the best possible outcome for every case. “The benefit of having the partnership is the three of us will work closely with you, depending on the case and your location,” Mark said.

Mark knew he wanted to be an attorney from an early age. After graduating from Aledo High School in 1995, he received his undergraduate degree from Midwestern State University and then graduated from Texas Tech University School of Law. He gravitated toward criminal law. “People who are accused in crimes are typically overwhelmed either

by the system, the prosecution or by the judges. I think it's important to have somebody who fights zealously for their client. I've always been able to convey my clients' desires and their side of things," Mark said. "There is no better feeling than a not guilty verdict or a good outcome for your client. That's why I do it."

Scott, McNeill & Burney offers free consultations, giving potential clients an opportunity to sit down with an attorney and discuss the issue at hand. "This allows us to diagnose the problem and provide a general overview of what kind of work we feel needs to be done and how we can help," Mark explained. "When you leave here, you have a sense of what can be accomplished in your case. We give you an idea of what type of results to expect."

The attorneys with Scott, McNeill & Burney pride themselves on being upfront and honest with their clients. "If you don't need us, we're going to tell you that you can do this on your own, what you will need to do or if you don't need to do anything," Mark explained.

Rates vary depending on the case. An hourly rate is charged for family law cases, and a flat fee is determined for criminal cases. A contingency fee is accepted in personal injury cases. Bail bond services are available for clients of Scott, McNeill & Burney, and the firm provides a 24-hour phone number for legal advice.

"We try to make ourselves available to deal with problems immediately," Mark said. "We can't always fix the problem right then, but frequently, we can make our clients feel better about what we can do and what their first step should be. I think it's comforting to them to be able to get their attorney on the phone," Mark shared.

"If you have a question as to whether or not you need a lawyer, you need a lawyer," Mark recommended. "In such situations, it is always better to consult an attorney. If nothing else, you get a free consultation with us." **NOW**

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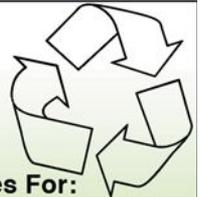
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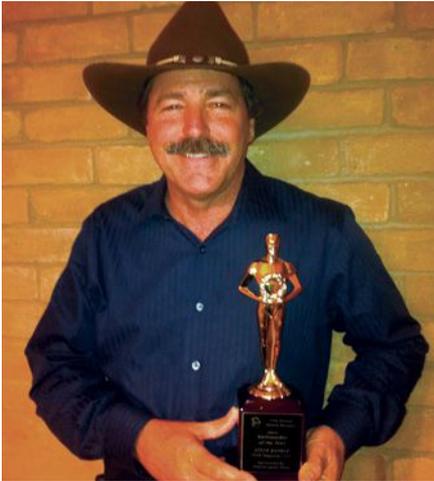
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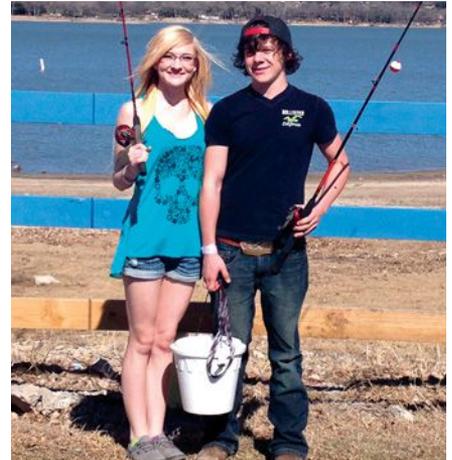
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WeatherfordNOW's ad representative Steve Randle takes home the trophy for 2014 Ambassador of the Year at the East Parker County Chamber Awards Banquet.



Caden Ramsey and McKinley Snell create colorful frisbees at the Spin Art booth at Clark Gardens' Spring Festival.



Tyra Goen and Jacob Hansen spend the afternoon fishing at Lake Weatherford.



Aledo Mayor Kit Marshall speaks to attendees at the Rise and Dine event.



Just for Kix dancers pose with Aledo High School's Orange Crush following a performance.



The Dunn and Fivecobe families are ready for the Aledo Children's AdvoCats' Run, Walk or Crawl.



The Angels and their coaches spend the morning at the opening day ceremony for Aledo Athletics baseball.



Irene Sullivan, Kaci Salmons and Misty Gammill prepare for the crowd at Just Between Friends' Children's Consignment Sale at North Side Baptist Church.



Boy Scouts of America Troop 76 helps Chandler Jackson complete his Eagle Scout landscaping project for Habitat for Humanity.

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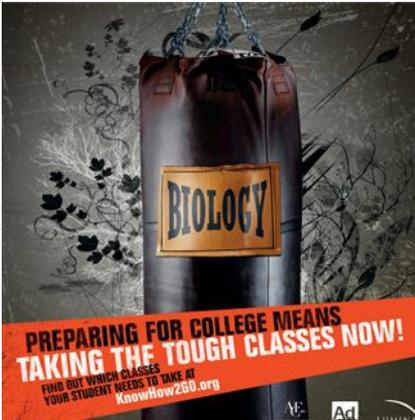
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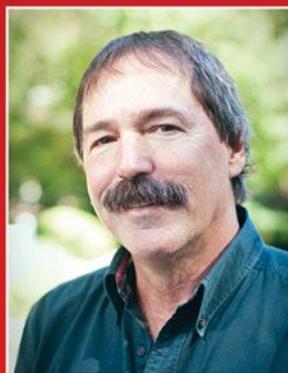
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Prepare for Health Care Costs During Retirement

As you save and invest for retirement, what are your ultimate goals? Do you plan on traveling the world? Purchasing a vacation home? Pursuing your hobbies? People often think about and plan for these costs. Yet, too often, many of us overlook what potentially could be a major expense during our retirement years — health care. By preparing for these costs, you can help yourself enjoy the retirement lifestyle you've envisioned.

Many of us may ignore the impact of health care costs, because we just assume Medicare will pay for everything. But that's not the case. In estimating health care costs during retirement, you may find that \$4,000 to \$6,000 per year per person for traditional medical expenses is a good starting point, although the amount varies by individual. Furthermore, this figure does not include the costs of long-term care, which can be considerable. To illustrate: The national average for home health aide services is nearly \$45,000 per year, and a private room in a nursing home is nearly \$84,000 per year, according to a recent survey by Genworth, a financial security company.

So what can you do to help cope with these costs? Here are a few suggestions:

Estimate your costs. Try to estimate what your out-of-pocket health care costs might be, based on your health, your age at retirement, whatever supplemental insurance you may carry and other factors.

Know the key dates. Things can change in your life, but try to identify, as closely as possible, the age at which you plan to retire. This will help you spot any coverage gaps before you become eligible for Medicare at age 65. Also, be aware of the seven-month window for enrolling in Medicare, beginning three months before your 65th birthday.

Review your insurance options. Medicare-approved insurance

companies offer some other parts to Medicare, including Part D, which covers prescription drugs; Medigap, which covers gaps in Parts A and B (in-hospital expenses, doctor services, outpatient care and some preventive services); and Part C (also known as Medicare Advantage, which is designed to replace Parts A, B, Medigap and, potentially, part D). You have several options for Part D, Medigap and Medicare Advantage, each with varying coverage and costs, so choose the plans that best fit your needs. (To learn more about Medicare and supplemental insurance, go to www.medicare.gov.)

Develop a long-term care strategy. To meet long-term care costs, you could self-insure or purchase insurance coverage. To learn about long-term care insurance solutions, contact your financial advisor.

Invest for growth and rising income. Health care costs typically rise as you move further into retirement, so make sure that a reasonable portion of your assets is allocated to investments with the potential for both growth and rising income.

Think about health care directives. If you were to become incapacitated, you might be unable to make health care decisions — and these decisions may affect not only your quality of life but also your financial situation, and that of your family. Talk to your legal advisor about establishing a health care directive, which allows you to name someone to make choices on your behalf.

Health care costs during your retirement may be unavoidable. But by anticipating these costs, you can put yourself in a position to deal with them — and that's a healthy place to be. **NOW**

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Gregg Davis is an Edward Jones representative based in Willow Park.

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Silence in Loss

— By Betty Tryon, BSN

“What did you say?” In a louder voice you ask again, “What? I can’t hear you.” It may not be the speaker’s fault you did not hear something as well as you used to. Maybe your hearing needs your attention. Your hearing is a valuable sensory commodity you have used since before you were born. How well you continue to hear will affect the quality of life you enjoy. So it’s important to have any problems with your ears investigated by a physician to prevent hearing loss.

Everyone has difficulty hearing or understanding another person at some time or another. Here is a list from the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders to help objectively determine if there is reason for concern. If you answer yes on three or more, consult with your physician for further guidance.

1. Do you have trouble hearing people on the phone?
2. Do you have a problem following a conversation when two or more people are talking?
3. Do people complain that the volume is too high when you watch TV?
4. Do you have to strain/try hard to understand conversation?
5. Do you have trouble hearing in a noisy background?
6. Do you find yourself asking people to repeat themselves?
7. Do many people you talk to seem to mumble or not speak clearly?
8. Do you misunderstand what others are saying and respond inappropriately?

9. Do you have trouble understanding the speech of women and children?
10. Do people get annoyed, because you misunderstand what they say?

Even if you score the requisite three points, do not panic. Your hearing may be affected by something treatable. An excess amount of ear wax will dull your hearing. An ear infection, certain diseases and/or medications can interfere with the normal operation of your ear. Your first course of action should be to consult with your primary care physician, who may refer you to a specialist such as an otolaryngologist, sometimes called an ENT (ear, nose and throat) doctor — a medical doctor who specializes in those areas. You may be referred to an otologist, who is a highly specialized otolaryngologist focusing mainly on matters of the ear and balance.

Treatment for hearing loss depends upon its cause. If loss of hearing is permanent, then hearing aids or hearing transplants may be necessary. The goal is to improve hearing and communication. Protect your hearing and seek professional help when warranted. **NOW**

Source:

Excerpt from NIH Publication No. 01-4913, www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/hearing/pages/10ways.aspx.

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

May 3

13th Annual Ms. Senior Parker County Pageant: 7:00-9:00 p.m., Alkek Auditorium, Weatherford College, 225 College Park Dr. Proceeds benefit the local Meals-on-Wheels program. Call (817) 598-0160 for more information.

May 5

Cinco de Mayo Yappy Hour: 4:00-7:00 p.m., Fish Creek Restaurant, 4899 Interstate 20 Service Rd. Parker Paws will hold its third annual fundraiser. For more information, visit www.parkerpaws.org.

May 9

Parker County Women's and Newcomers' Club meeting: 9:30 a.m., Alkek Fine Arts Center, Weatherford College, 225 College Park Ave. The meeting includes the annual fashion show to benefit a Weatherford College scholarship fund. Cost is \$20 per person. Visit www.pcwnc.org or call (817) 594-5174 to RSVP.

May 10

Blooming Car Show: 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., First Monday Grounds at Heritage Park, 200 Santa Fe Dr. Hundreds of classic cars will be on

display. Call (817) 597-1572 to find out more.

Relay for Life Fundraiser /Parker County Family Expo: 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., North Side Baptist Church Gym, 910 N. Main St. More than 50 vendors will offer products for sale. Call (817) 565-2980 to find out more.

May 15

Taste of Parker County: 5:00-8:00 p.m., Canyon West Golf Club, 160 Club House Dr. Enjoy food from across Parker County while raising funds for the Weatherford College Foundation. Contact (817) 598-6275 or bbaker@wc.edu for more.

May 16, 17

Weatherford Antique Fair: 9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m., Pythian Home Grounds, 1825 Bankhead Hwy. Find more information at www.weatherfordantiquefair.com.

Friends of the Library Book Sale: 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m., Weatherford Public Library, 1014 Charles St. The book sale includes hardbacks, paperbacks, DVDs and more. Call (817) 613-0673 for more information.

May 18

Weatherford Pee Wee Football Association Fundraiser Car Wash: Noon-4:00 p.m., Mesquite Pit, 1201 Fort Worth Hwy. Visit www.weatherfordoutlawfootball.com.

May 20

Careity Foundation Hats Off to Heroes: 6:00-9:00 p.m., Parker County Sheriff's Posse Building, 2251 Mineral Wells Hwy. Funds raised will benefit Careity Breast Care Center services. For more information about sponsorships, visit www.careity.org or call (817) 882-4100.

May 23

The Greg Welch Summer Classic Concert and Car Show: 4:00-10:30 p.m., Weatherford Christian School Secondary Campus, 2300 Ranger Hwy. The event features classic cars and a performance by musician Aaron Watson. For more, visit www.gregwelchclassic.com.

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

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Kim Mader-Bagley & Craig Bagley



In the Kitchen With Pat Gordon

— By Amber D. Browne

Originally from New York City, Pat Gordon transplanted to Texas at the age of 18 and has been here ever since. Pat spent a while getting accustomed to Southern foods. “I had my husband buy me some cereal, because I couldn’t get used to the corn bread or biscuits. But, it didn’t take long to love Southern cooking,” Pat admitted.

Pat enjoys cooking for others and often shares meals with her friends from church. Every Independence Day holiday, her family gets together for a reunion in Gordon, Texas. They have contests for the best dishes, and Pat and her daughters often take home the prizes.

“I love to cook, because the end result is satisfying,” Pat shared. And, she never forgets to thank God before sharing a tasty meal. **NOW**

Roasted Shrimp Cocktail

- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 2 lbs. shrimp, cleaned, deveined and dried, tails intact
- 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tsp. lemon zest

Sauce:

- 1/2 cup Heinz Chili Sauce
- 1/2 cup Heinz Tomato Ketchup
- 3 Tbsp. horseradish
- 2 tsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1/4 tsp. Tabasco

1. Preheat oven to 400 F. Oil baking sheet; spread shrimp evenly on pan; season with salt and pepper. Roast 8-10 minutes; set aside to cool. When cooled top with

lemon zest.

2. For sauce: Mix together all ingredients. Serve shrimp with sauce for dipping.

Potato Pancakes

- 2 large potatoes, peeled and finely grated
- 1 Tbsp. onion, grated
- 2 eggs
- 2 Tbsp. flour
- 1 1/2 tsp. salt
- Dash of pepper
- Vegetable oil

1. Mix first 6 ingredients in a bowl.
2. Place about 1/4-inch of oil in a skillet on medium heat. Drop 1 Tbsp. of batter into the skillet; spread each pancake with the back of a spoon until thin. Cook each side about

3-5 minutes or until browned. Serve with butter and applesauce or sugar.

Green Enchiladas

Sauce:

- 1 10 3/4-oz. can cream of chicken soup
- 1/2 lb. Velveeta cheese
- 1 5-oz. can evaporated milk
- 1 4-oz. can green chilies
- 1 4-oz. jar chopped pimento

Enchiladas:

- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1/2 lb. longhorn cheese, grated
- 12 corn tortillas

1. For sauce: Mix together all ingredients in a pot on medium heat until cheese has melted. Set aside.

2. For enchiladas: Preheat oven to 350 F. Brown beef in a skillet. Add onions and cheese.

3. Wrap tortillas in a moist paper towel and heat in microwave for 30 seconds. Fill tortillas with meat mixture, roll and place in a 13x9-inch baking dish. Pour sauce over enchiladas; cover dish with foil. Bake for 30 minutes.

Avocado Bombay

- 2 Tbsp. butter
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 small apple, peeled and chopped
- 1 10.75-oz. can cream of chicken soup
- Salt, to taste
- 2 tsp. curry powder
- 3 cups cooked rice
- 3 ripe avocados peeled, seeded and halved
- Bacon, toasted nuts, sliced green onions for garnish (optional)

1. Melt butter in a skillet on medium heat. Add onion and apple; sauté for about 3-5 minutes. Stir in soup and seasonings.

2. Spoon rice into serving dish. Top rice with avocado halves; spoon heated mixture onto avocados. Top with bacon pieces, toasted nuts or green onions, if desired, before serving.

To view recipes from current and previous issues, visit www.nowmagazines.com.

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