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SEPTEMBER 2014

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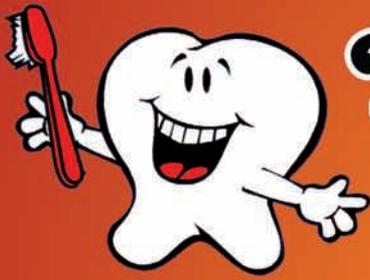
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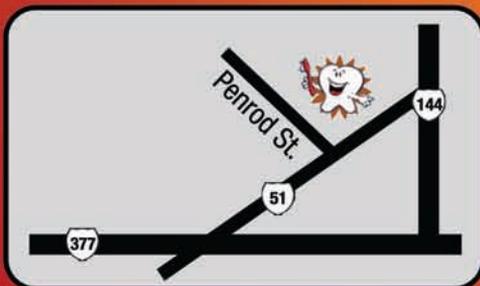
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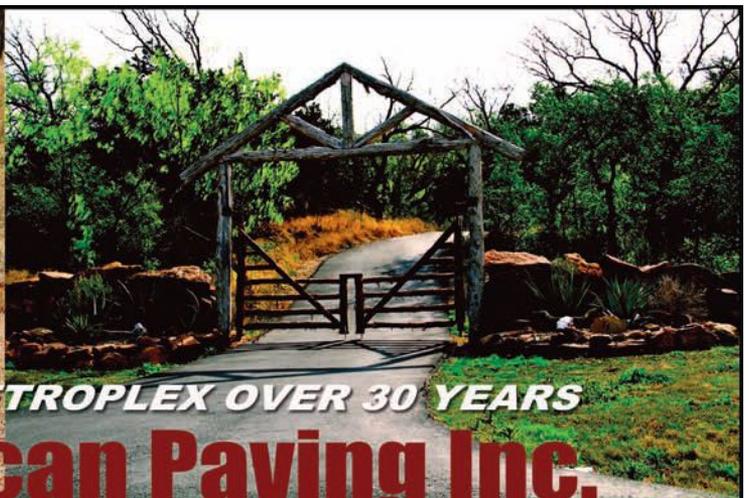
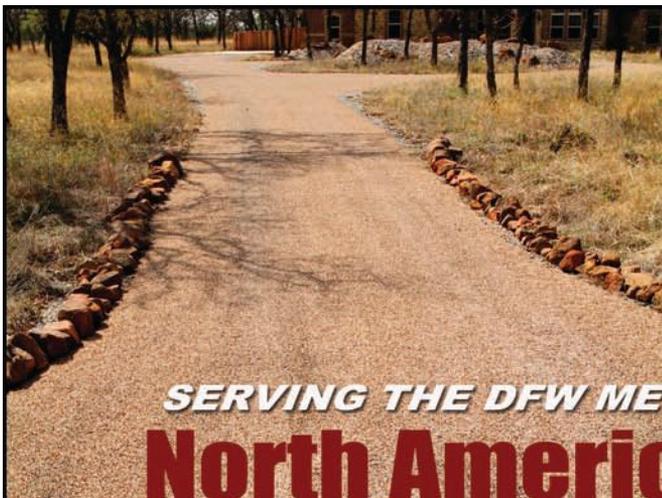
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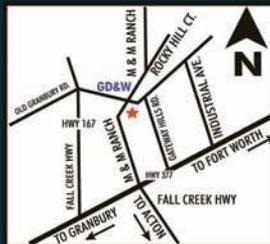
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**ON THE COVER**



Ten years with elementary kids prepared Mark Weeks for teaching theater arts at GHS.

*Photo by Michelle Winters.*

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## Editor's Note

*Hello, Friends!*

It's that time of year! Days have gotten a bit shorter, nights a bit cooler and campfires a lot more inviting. When I think of fun, it involves the welcome sounds of not much except birds, breeze and crackling flames. Well, if there's a guitarist in the group sitting around the burning wood, then I am happy to be still in the presence of one so gifted. And sometimes, said musician is an impresario, and I am also

happy to join the joyful chorus. So, I guess I like the sound of laughter, too.

When you laugh this month, remember our ancestors who had no other entertainment but to sit around campfires every night. Their relaxation was talking and storytelling, singing and making music, laughing without bellyaching. May we all get a strong dose of good medicine this month, as we transition from summer to fall.

Happy September!

### Melissa

Melissa Rawlins  
GranburyNOW Editor  
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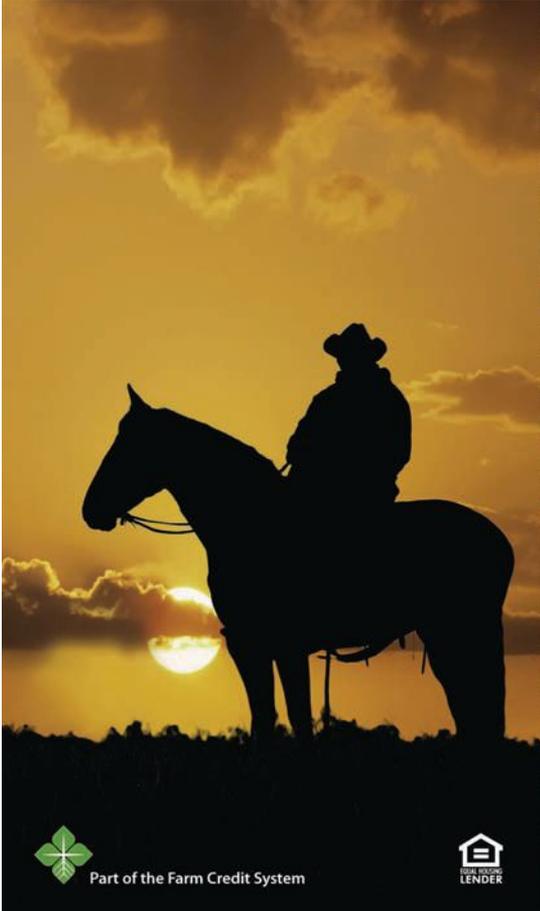
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**12:15 pm:** Elizabeth Engleheart, SOUTHERN FOOD MATTERS: Stories From The Dinner Plate

**1:00pm:** Steven Bailey, URBAN ACRES: Building Community Through Real Food

**2:00pm:** Daniel Vaughn, THE PROPHETS OF SMOKED MEATS: A Journey Through Texas Barbecue

**3:00pm:** Sherrie McLeRoy, GRAPE MAN OF TEXAS: How T.V. Munson Saved The World's Vineyards

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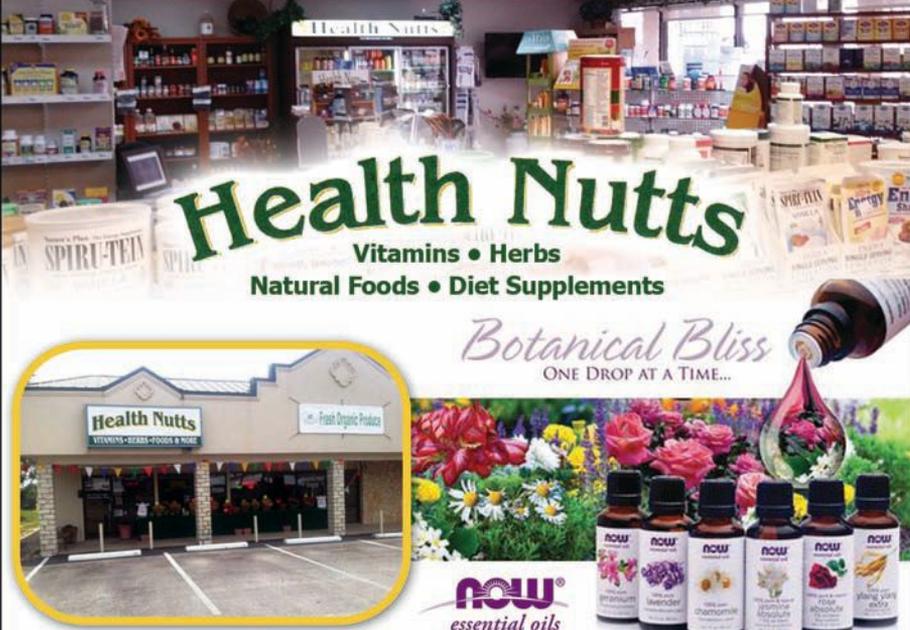
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# The BIG Picture

— By Melissa Rawlins

*East Texas produced quite a few of Granbury's movers and shakers, including Mark Weeks, theater arts teacher at Granbury High School. A nature-loving former Boy Scout, Mark grew up fishing and waterskiing in the alligator-ridden Neches River. He roamed Big Thicket Natural Preserve near Beaumont, digging caves in the sides of Boggy Creek behind his home. "My childhood was as close to Huckleberry Finn's as you can get without being on the Mississippi River," Mark said. He liked to make people laugh, and he talked a lot. He also made plans for himself. "I grew up the most naive person. I was interested in being an on-air personality, just because my mom made me enunciate nicely."*

After graduating high school in 1980, Mark studied mass communications. "I went to Lamar University, at the same time as Superintendent James Largent and Texas Senator Brian Birdwell," he said. "We did not know each other, but we were there at the same time!" Now they're all here. And the impact Mark is making on young minds every day is incredible.

Before moving into his new position codirecting theatrical productions and one act plays at GHS, math and science topped his curriculum at Oak Woods Elementary. He rounded out every teaching moment with improvisation on any number of topics. That habit will never end. His students expect him to be

critical of their spelling, pronunciation and random use of "ain't." Often he will stop and tell the children, "OK, I'm gonna put on my daddy hat, and the daddy hat is going to say, 'Just passing is not OK.'"

"I let my students know how I believe," Mark explained. "I tell them their memory is with them forever, from simple multiplication facts to whatever they saw on an M-rated video game to the words they hear in a song. I encourage them to guard their minds as best they can."

Known for unorthodox lesson plans, he sometimes interjects stories inspired by his Boy Scout days. "I'll tell





my classroom stories about hiking at night through the Big Thicket by the light of the moon that cast shadows on the sandy path, and how we ended up in a graveyard,” he said, throwing his arms wide while yelling, “Boom!” The kids jump, and he loves getting their reaction. For Mark, vital teaching skills include discerning when students are not paying attention and figuring out what will pique the kids’ interest.

Mark’s wheels are always turning. Years ago, he developed two characters for entertaining children. While volunteering in his own child’s kindergarten class at Mambrino School, Mark found himself telling stories he had made up. “I sat down and told a story about a space alien, Ree-Dee-Dee-Bop-Bop, and his misfit antics. The kids were dead quiet for 30 minutes straight, and the teachers would beam and tell me to come back anytime,” Mark said. Even more satisfying is that 10 years later, some of those same kids have told him they remember those stories.

These days, Mark’s “cousin” Mortimer, the mad scientist, is known and loved by people who attended Oak Woods School during the last six years. Some Friday mornings, when Mark had to step away from the classroom, his cousin would visit. “He’s quite a character. The kids like to see him, because he’s got crazy hair and thick glasses,” Mark said. He made appearances on stage during the morning assemblies. After the principal, Mr. Cody, gave announcements, the mad scientist always had something really brilliant to say. “We are so fortunate in Granbury to have many educators and school administrators who are passionate about kids. They recognize it really does take a village to raise a child. It’s a calling.”

Mark looks forward to every day at school and is inspired by his original motto: If we don’t make it fun, it’s a headache. During his nearly 10-minute drive to work, his 4,000-mph neural

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Fri. 5<sup>th</sup> ----- Brett Walker & The Texas Dangers

Sat. 6<sup>th</sup> ----- The Possum Holler Boys

Thur. 11<sup>th</sup> ----- Chip Scott w/ Giovanni Yanez

Sat. 13<sup>th</sup> ----- Truck Stop Gamblers

Thur. 18<sup>th</sup> ----- Chip Scott w/ Erica Perry

Sat. 20<sup>th</sup> ----- See 7 Stars

Thur. 25<sup>th</sup> ----- Chip Scott w/ Mike Calloway Open Mike

Fri. 26<sup>th</sup> ----- Double Jr. Band

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pathways zoom ahead. “I’ll get a cool way to teach a concept, another way for that kid’s mind to absorb it, figure it out.”

He does the same everywhere he goes, whether building sets and running sound for Granbury High School’s choir and drama productions, teaching Sunday school for fifth-grade boys or giving puppet shows for preschool Awana students. On the Wednesday nights when he counsels with third- and fourth-graders during Awana, Mark devises intriguing and fun stories. “My goal is for them to walk away with some truth,” he said, “and to realize they learned something and want to come



back for more.”

Vacation Bible School students at Lakeside Baptist Church also benefit from Mark’s storytelling abilities. He scripts extravagant productions for their main assemblies. Sometimes he veers off-script, keeping all the other VBS teachers and technical crew on their toes. His wife, Dawn, preschool minister and children’s choir director at Lakeside, frequently encourages Mark to stay on task for the VBS program. Even three weeks before this year’s VBS, Mark was unsure what he’d write to meet everyone’s expectations. He set the bar high last



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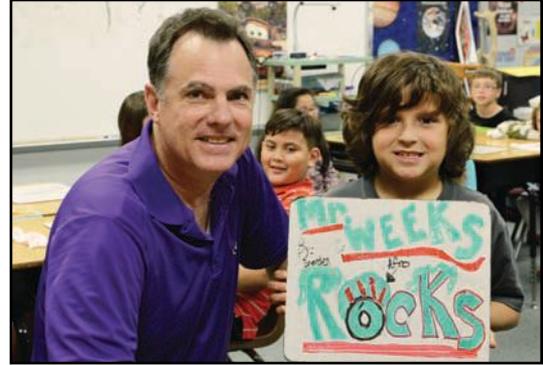
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year, when he created an over-the-top, Cinderella-themed production. But this June, Dawn told him, “Everybody’s waiting on you, Mark. It’s up in your head. You gotta get it out!” He did. And the Lakeside team successfully produced a week of fun and ministry for over 600 children, who were thrilled when his cousin Mortimer paid a visit.

“Very much the quintessential guy, I cannot multitask,” Mark said. He finds ways to teach using the extraordinary thoughts floating through his mind. “Like in Sunday school, I’m always encouraging the kids while we’re reading Scripture to think about how the guys were probably interacting. I tell them, “They put their robe on one arm at a time and were regular guys, probably yukking it up here and there.” I like to bring it off the page for them.” Mark can tell when it works, because the children maintain eye contact and laugh.

Twenty-one years ago, when his eldest child, Hayden, was born, Mark started telling bedtime stories and singing homegrown lullabies. “That’s when I knew kids were just magical,” Mark said. He and Dawn have five children between them, and to this day, Hayden, Marley, Corbin, Coltin and McKenna know it’s inevitable that Mark will embarrass them with his “insightful” humor.

On a recent trip to New York City with Marley in celebration of her high school graduation, they enjoyed a live performance while underground. “The guy on the subway was interesting, partly because he did what I do,” Mark said. “He performed, but also talked about how he was doing everything! It was live, with a lot of interaction.” Mark engages students much the same way: teaching, talking and bringing into focus whatever’s on his mind. Purposefully becoming a storyteller in the classroom and a character on stage, Mark knows his audience well and uses what intrigues them to pique their interest in the big picture. **NOW**

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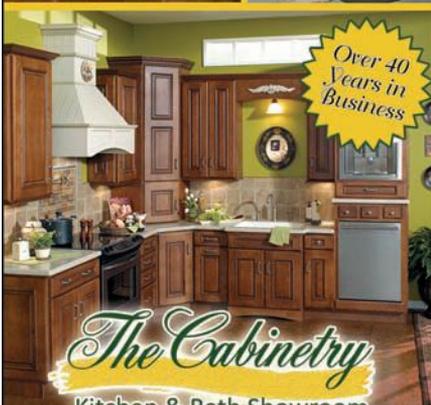


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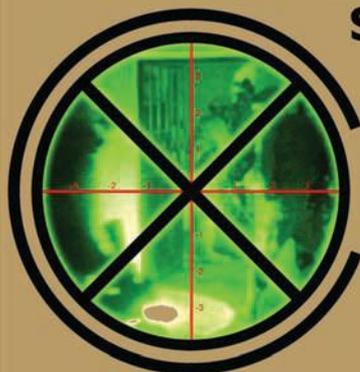
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# Extreme & Sisterhood

—By Lisa Bell

*In the world of sisterhood, some don't like being anywhere in the same vicinity of her sibling. Fortunately, Mary Jane Wyatt and Martha Beld do not fall in this category. But liking a sister enough to share a home with her as adults requires extreme love.*



*At Home With*

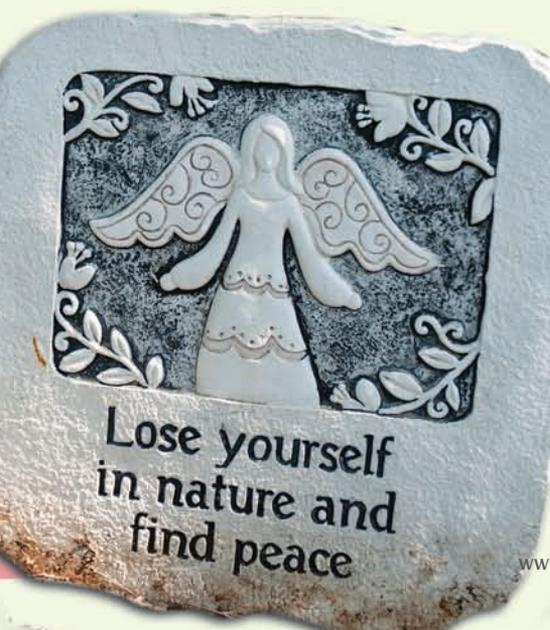
Mary Jane Wyatt and Martha Beld

Around 11 years ago, Mary Jane and her husband looked for a place to retire. After much traveling, the principal of the school where she worked suggested Granbury. From the minute they drove in the front gate of Pecan Plantation, she knew. This was the place. They wanted property near a park, with perhaps a view of the river, but not on it, and with great soil. As they looked in one specific area, two cute little deer came onto the property. "We wanted that lot. Now, we spend all our time trying to keep the deer away," Mary Jane said, chuckling.

"They eat everything," Martha added. "You see a lot of greenery out here, but very little blooming. Flowers are like candy to deer." The sisters have learned from gardening clubs to choose deer-resistant plants or find a way to protect those neither side can resist.

Mary Jane's husband passed away. One of her children lives in Frisco, the other works all over the world. Martha, living in California, neared retirement age. Their very active 94-year-old mother didn't need taking care of, but the three women thought sharing the home would be great fun. Unfortunately, their mother passed away before the plans became reality. Nevertheless, since Martha's two children both live in Chicago, she had no reason to stay in California alone following retirement. Four years ago, she moved in with Mary Jane.

The result is never-ending fun for two sisters who thoroughly enjoy each other's company. In a world meant for couples, there are advantages to having a



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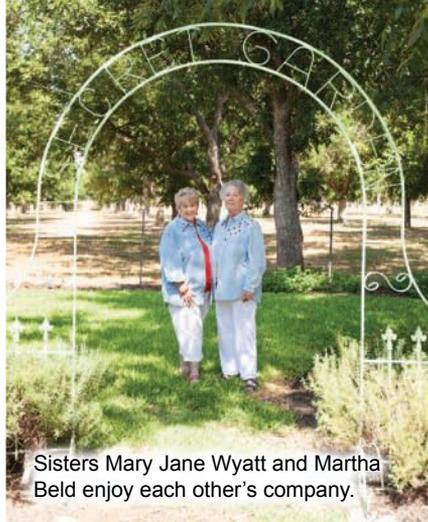
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Sisters Mary Jane Wyatt and Martha Beld enjoy each other's company.



sister living one room over. The pair does most everything together. "People always say, 'Tell me the truth. Do you really get along?' Mary Jane said. "We really do." Both sisters agree they have plenty of space and could go to opposite ends of the house if necessary. Most days, they don't have time to argue. They are too busy joining friends for lunch, attending club meetings, playing bridge, pursuing interests or gardening.

Through Newcomers Club — which this month starts its 37th year of promoting fun and friendships in Hood County — the sisters became members

of its Lady Bug Garden Club. Mary Jane is the president, and Martha owns responsibility for planning field trips. They also belong to the Green Thumb Garden Club of Pecan Plantation. Although both love gardening, Martha admits Mary Jane does most of the work. Mary Jane claims Martha is the baker of the family.

The house fits the sisters perfectly, decorated with a strong Southwestern theme and an open concept. When they entertain guests, they can join forces in the roomy kitchen and still talk with those sitting in the living room or the

adjoining breakfast nook. The ceramic tile counters and large island make great workspaces, close for companionship, yet separate enough to never feel crowded. Mary Jane didn't expect the design to mirror her retirement years perfectly.

The nook itself has angles, like an oversized bay window, but with panes big enough to cover most of the wall space. Designed for the property, the windows provide a view not only to the front garden, but also to the natural beauty surrounding the property, including the river, park area and hills.

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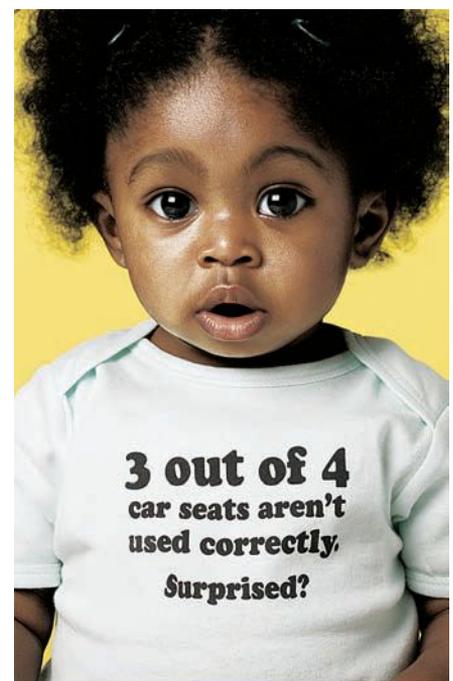
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back of the home, rendering a grand view of the backyard gardens and beyond into an orchard. The living room opens onto a patio, a perfect space to experience nature.

Both ladies enjoy a bedroom with connected bathrooms, simply decorated, and painted a unique shade of green. "Peaceful green," they said.

Mary Jane's room features a sitting area with two comfortable chairs and a table between them. "Every morning, we sit here enjoying our coffee and watching the world wake up," she said. Both sisters are early risers. Because they also share a love of reading, they each retire in the evening to their own rooms where they may spend 10 minutes to three hours with a book.

Mary Jane's bathroom, the larger of the two, has a built-in dressing table, but more importantly a very special closet. "My husband insisted on having a safe room," she said. "We sat it in during the tornado (May 2013) for about four minutes. Then decided surely it was past us." The storm only damaged trees on their property, but hit a home nearby with major damage. They gained a new respect for the safe room.

In another part of the house, the sisters have a small office with a sofa, which folds out making it usable as a third bedroom. A unique picture above the sofa decorates the room. Wedding photos of both sisters hang side-by-side. In spite of a six-year difference in age, Martha wore Mary Jane's wedding gown. They didn't grow up as close friends during childhood, but the two girls never disliked each other. The bond they shared as young adult women carries over to the present.



The gardens represent the parts of the house the sisters love most. In the front beside a long porch filled with rocking chairs and stone ducks, the butterfly garden waits for the arrival of its coveted guests. "Martha is the hummingbird expert," Mary Jane admitted. "She had them year-round in California." Each plant in the garden draws butterflies and hummingbirds. The hibiscus will grow tall and produce salad plate-sized blooms, which apparently top the deer candy list as most desirable. Wire fencing discourages the animals from eating them.

In the backyard, hummingbird feeders and a variety of plants mingle with benches and trees. The orchard provides a glorious backdrop behind the fence bordering their yard. One area holds an unusual display. "Every time we plant something in that area, it dies," Mary Jane confessed. "So we planted multi-colored chickens." The metal birds brighten the yard beautifully. "We have moles. It's really tough living on the frontier," she added with light laughter. "We have all kinds of wildlife."

Martha backed up the statement. "After it rained last week, I came outside. Standing on the porch, I saw two sets of eyes looking up at me. Snakes — all entwined. Big ones. They weren't poisonous, but they scared me to death."

"They were anacondas," Mary Jane said.

"I nearly had a heart attack," Martha said, with a fearful grin.

In the peaceful, quiet neighborhood, the two sisters offer a welcoming atmosphere complete with humor and love. "Everything we do, we do for fun," Mary Jane said. What could be more fun than an extreme sisterhood? **NOW**

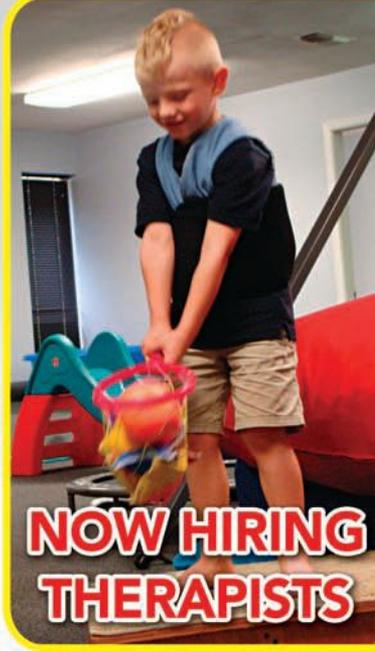
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# DESTINATION:

# I Do

— By Shannon Pfaff

*Planning a wedding can be a hectic experience. The preparation can take months, yet the actual wedding day passes so quickly. With all the details that go into planning the wedding, it seems like the honeymoon is the time to recover. Why not get the vacation started early with a destination wedding? A destination wedding can be a unique and exciting way to get married and have a honeymoon all in one shot!*

When considering a destination wedding, it may seem like it would be more expensive than having a traditional wedding at home. Depending on the type of wedding and the location, having a destination wedding may actually save money. Many resorts will include the ceremony for free when you stay and have the reception at their location. This will save you from having to find two locations for the ceremony and the reception. Several resorts also offer credits toward the ceremony package to include: flowers, linens, chairs and the officiant, as well as room upgrades for the bride and groom. Some packages even include table settings and the wedding cake. The cost to the couple is the food, drinks and any additional guests not covered by the package.



The expense of the event will also vary depending on the number of guests and any additional activities paid for by the bride and groom. Since you are requesting for people to travel for your wedding, it makes sense to plan some fun for you and your guests. Destination weddings tend to be more intimate affairs with a smaller guest list, which helps keep costs down. While the couple is responsible for the ceremony and reception expenses, wedding guests should expect to cover their own travel expenses. To help their traveling guests, the bride and groom can arrange a flight and room block to help guests with making arrangements. Some hotels offer group discounts when booking several rooms, which will help your guests save money. This is a great incentive to start the planning process early.

Because the party generally pays for their own accommodations, the bride and groom should choose their attendants as soon as possible. Once the attendants are chosen, the couple should inform them of their plans to have a destination



wedding. This gives each person in the wedding party time to set aside funds for their trip. Encourage your guests to book early as well, which will help them save money. Be prepared to make necessary changes if someone you ask cannot afford the trip. If you can afford it, you can always help someone who is in financial need, but this is not a requirement. Consider having a reception



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later on to include those who could not attend your wedding.

If you are planning to travel out of the country, make sure your passport is up-to-date and that you meet all the necessary requirements to get married in that location. Some countries have residency restrictions, so it's important to plan ample travel time to meet the required number of days, if necessary. A wedding planner at your destination is a great tool to help you understand the country's requirements, communicate with vendors, set up travel arrangements and make your dream a reality. A wedding planner close to home is also a great source to help you coordinate your wedding. Whether they help you plan the entire event or just assist you in some of

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the details, they can help save time and money in the planning process.

Another wedding professional you should consider hiring is a travel agent. A travel agent can help simplify your travel arrangements. They can research destinations, compare prices, negotiate with hotels, as well as help plan excursions. It's best to select a local travel agent that you can meet personally. When selecting a travel agent, make sure you check their certifications. This will ensure they are certified with credible agencies. You will also want to interview the agent before selecting one. Ask them about their experience and their fees.

Selecting a destination is important in determining the wedding type, travel time and budget for the event. Some popular

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choices are Hawaii, Canada and Europe. If your budget is limited, consider traveling a little closer to home. There are several beautiful locations that are just a drive away.

Whichever location you choose, make sure you research the weather patterns when setting a date. Keep in mind that optimal weather conditions usually coincide with high tourist season, which will mean higher prices. Shoulder season is the best time to travel for good prices and great weather. This is the time that falls between high season and low season when tourists are few and the weather is on the edge of ideal. During this time, resorts are lowering their rates due to receding tourism. The Internet is a great source for understanding the best times to travel to various locations.

Once you have chosen your destination, selected a date, advised your attendants and family, the fun truly begins in the planning process. With all of the major and more difficult decisions out of the way, you are free to think about planning your trip. There will be other wedding details to consider, but you should also think about some fun with your friends and family. Consider planning a welcome dinner when everyone arrives. A destination wedding is a great way for you to celebrate a significant moment in your life. You will be able to spend time with close friends and family and make memories that will be part of the foundation of your future together. **NOW**



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Customers like Peyton Malone, who finds her balance on the beam in the preschool gym, enjoy friendships, fun and fitness promoted by Michael and Kassie Hooser.



# FIT FAMILIES

*Gym-Kat Sports Center hopes to become your family's one-stop fitness shop. — By Melissa Rawlins*

As sports evolve, so do professional gymnasiums. Responding to customer demand, Granbury's Gym-Kat Sports Center accommodates all types. Whether you seek simple fitness or training for high performance, owner Kassie Hooser designed Gym-Kat's brand new building with two separate gyms, a pro shop and a party room doubling as a fitness studio. Her husband, Michael, built the center during the first quarter of this year.

A floating wood floor in the fitness studio protects students' joints. Five certified teachers offer adult fitness classes ranging from Mommy & Me, YogaFit, Zumba and Cardio to all-out committed training coached by Kelley & Krista's Fitness Camp. That's always a fun class to take in the summer, in conjunction with specialized day camps where your children learn to cook, paint, weave, play soccer or simply be super heroes.

All year long, children find safe haven here when 10 staffers give kids lots of love during the three-hour Friday Fun Night. If they're really small, they may enjoy the preschool gym, where a half-inch foam floor protects little tumblers learning basics for gymnastics — from balance beam to trampoline. Certified coaches supervise little ones once they start walking. Creative mother, Mia Ruiz, painted colorful murals on every wall and energetic graffiti in the main gym.

Students at least 5 years of age are welcome to train in the main gym, so big it could house the entire building Gym-Kat Sports Center formerly operated. Containing a 20x20-foot foam pit to develop dexterity in young and old alike, this gym also has four in-ground trampolines and a fifth, Olympic-sized and above-ground trampoline, all surrounded by padded floors. Ceilings are

high enough and floors long enough to train athletes up to level 10.

Ten pros coach tumbling, trampoline and preschool gym. Four coach for the recreational and competitive cheer program. This is Gym-Kat's fifth season operating a smooth-running cheer program. "I take my staff members with me to training workshops," Kassie said. "We freshen up on our skills, and

**"WE'RE GOING TO LOVE ON THEM ALL AND TREAT THEM WITH THE RESPECT THEY EARN."**

we judge for USA Gymnastics and for cheer." Kassie cheered from sixth through ninth grade, and traveled for competitions in cheer, tumbling and trampoline with her mother, Kathie Walley, who opened Gym-Kat Texas Tumbling Academy in 1979.

As a girl, Kathie competed in gymnastics with bars and vaults. Inspired by five cousins and an aunt who each had their own gymnastics and tumbling programs scattered from Oklahoma to Amarillo to Lubbock to Houston, Kathie decided to open a business training youth in power tumbling. Her father gave her the name Gym-Kat, for gymnastics and Kathie. During the week, she taught all the towns in a 50-mile radius of both Weatherford and Granbury. While traveling from town to town to reach talent in families who couldn't afford to bring their children to a central location, Kathie trained her daughter in the on-the-go lifestyle that prepared her for today.

In 2005, Kassie and Michael took over Gym-Kat, renaming it to indicate that the center serves moms, dads and kids. They even have grandparents coming for Yoga or other classes. Their clientele are lifelong followers of Gym-Kat because of their philosophy: "We're going to love on them all," Kassie said, "and treat them with the respect they earn." Kathie coaches families for fitness alongside her daughter at Gym-Kat Sports Center, and looks forward to working with the grandchildren of her first students. **NOW**

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*Trinity Shaum, freshman clarinet player, practices with other GHS marching band students for the ensemble's full marching show, Asylum.*



*Helping those who can't help themselves, Acton United Methodist Church sponsor Junior High students to repair the roof, demolish and rebuild the porches and repaint the exterior of a house near Granbury's square.*



*Christine Rhodes, with Case and Jasper, join their friend Whitney Richardson to watch their men rodeo.*



*Michael Padgett croons great country and western tunes at Doc Possum's.*



*Kay Newman, Norma Hubbard and Kathy Hanlon collect evening gowns for the ongoing project sponsored by Granbury's Elizabeth Crockett Chapter of the D.A.R., on behalf of women attending military balls.*



*The crew at N Design & Decor get ready for the grand opening of Granbury's newest furniture store.*



*Jaime and Claudia Sanchez, new residents of Granbury, explore the friendly marketplace surrounding the Hood County courthouse.*



*The Ramirez family enjoys the cool, dusky evening as they await a double feature at Brazos Drive In.*



Winners of Affinity F1's 5K Glow Run were Emma Thomas, Granbury High School junior, and Michael Fuentes, visiting from Waco Robinson High School.



Bianca loves on Fuzzy, the company cat at Acton Animal Hospital.



While waiting for Acton Nature Center's Star Party to begin, Charlie Melancon photographs her sister, Jesse, with their grandmother Beth Amos, visiting from Virginia.



Three veterans, Jim Hanlon, left, Shannon Teal and Gary Hubbard, right, delivering Treats for Troops to the USO at D-FW Airport.



Accompanied by family members Sarah, Junior, and Sammie, Julie Belfrey, center, registers for dual-credit classes from Weatherford College.



Darlene Marciniak takes a walk through the park behind City Hall during a break from working at the Granbury Fire Department.



Daisy, the company mascot for Daffan Mechanical, is giving a pep talk.



Steve Martino gives the peace sign while having fun with Jennifer Anderson and Buster Willey during The Crowman's Jam at Doc Possum's.



Cynthia James plays with displays in her new Carriage House Studio, open to the public for the party celebrating all the great business on Granbury's square.



## The Roth Conversion Strategy

You have a small problem. You love the idea of a Roth IRA — all those potential tax-free withdrawals and no required minimum withdrawals during your lifetime. There's a hitch, however: You and/or your spouse's income is too high to meet eligibility requirements. A Roth conversion strategy could be an option.

Eligibility for 2014 Roth contributions starts to phase out at a modified adjusted gross income of \$114,000 and is completely eliminated at \$129,000 for singles and between \$181,000 and \$191,000 for married couples filing jointly. If you make too much to contribute to a Roth, a Roth conversion strategy may provide an option to enjoy the long-term tax benefits of a Roth IRA. Here's one possibility:

### **Step 1: Contribute to a nondeductible traditional IRA.**

You don't get a tax deduction for doing so, but there's no income limit either.

**Step 2: Convert to a Roth.** There's no income ceiling for a Roth conversion, but you do have to pay taxes on any gains for the year you make the conversion. If there are no gains, there are no taxes owed since contributions are made with after-tax dollars. So, if you are going to convert, it's best to do it as soon as possible.

**Step 3: Enjoy your new Roth.** Your money will now be growing tax-free and you'll pay no income tax when you make qualified withdrawals.

**Warning:** If you have made any nondeductible IRA contributions, the Pro-Rata Rule requires all IRAs to be treated as one, including traditional, SEP and SIMPLE IRAs. Under these circumstances, it is not possible to convert after-tax (nondeductible) contributions without income tax consequences. You should always consult with your tax, legal and investment professionals before making investment decisions. This is especially true if you would like to consider using the Roth conversion technique described in this article. **NOW**

*State Farm agents do not provide tax, legal or investment advice. A 10-percent tax penalty generally applies for withdrawals from tax-qualified products and/or non tax-qualified annuities before age 59 1/2.*

*Jace Foreman is a State Farm agent based in Granbury.*



## Coastal Getaway

— By Becky Walker

There is just something about the smell of salt in the air and the sound of waves crashing against the shore. The beauty of the ocean is like none other, and for landlocked North Texans, the Gulf Coast is a favorite vacation destination. This is true any time of year, but the frigid temperatures we experienced this winter might really make a trip south sound like a great idea for many. Corpus Christi is definitely one destination to consider when thinking about a coastal getaway.

Corpus Christi offers fun of all varieties. Completed in 1941, the seawall was constructed to offer the city protection from hurricanes, but it also provided the city with one of its most striking and beautiful attractions. The seawall is 1.75 miles long and graced by multiple *Miradores del Mar* — gazebos that overlook Corpus Christi Bay. The wall itself is made like stairs leading into the bay. Joggers, cyclists and inline skaters all find the wall an excellent place to get in a good workout. For Tejano music lovers, the Selena memorial, located along the seawall, pays tribute to the hometown girl whose life ended far too soon.

The Port of Corpus Christi is the fifth deepest in the United States, and the marina, known as the T-heads, is a bustling place, with restaurants, private yachts, sailboats and rentals available. Sailboat races take place here on a regular basis. It is also home to the *Niña*, part of a replica fleet constructed in Spain and sailed

to the United States in commemoration of the 500th anniversary of Christopher Columbus' voyage to the New World.

On the east side of downtown is Harbor Bridge, the second tallest bridge in Texas. Spanning 620 feet, it opened to traffic in 1959. Crossing the ship channel via the bridge, you will find the *U.S.S. Lexington*, a World War II-era aircraft carrier, which has been retired to the bay. The ship is now a museum, which displays the many models of aircraft flown from its flight deck during its many decades of service. Pretend you are a flying ace as you pose for a photo in front of a Blue Angels fighter jet, F-14A Tomcat or climb into a flight simulator. Walk the narrow corridors and learn about the young men who fought for our freedom.

Standing on the flight deck, you can look out over the bay or back toward the shore, where you will see the Texas State Aquarium, which features a variety of presentations and exhibits, including dive shows and animal feedings. Several restaurants offering fresh seafood are also nearby. If the beach is more to your liking, North Padre Island, the world's longest barrier island, is located just south of Corpus Christi.

Corpus Christi is located six hours south of the Metroplex. If you are thinking about taking a trip this summer, this might be the relaxing destination for you! **NOW**



## In the Grip of a Cramp

— By Betty Tryon, BSN

Muscles that contract are doing what they were made to do. A problem occurs when the muscle does not return to a relaxed state. A muscle or muscles can create incredible pain when the contraction continues and becomes a cramp. Involuntary muscle cramps can last a few seconds to almost an hour. Regrettably, on occasion, they can last longer.

We have three types of muscles: smooth, cardiac and skeletal. Smooth muscles line the inner organs in the body. For example, they are what propel food through the digestive system or cause you to regurgitate something unpleasant. Cardiac muscles power the functions of the heart. Smooth and cardiac muscles are involuntary, meaning you can't control their action. Skeletal muscles are voluntary and can be controlled by you. They are what allow you to move your arms and legs at will. The majority of muscle cramps occur in the skeletal muscles. You can see the muscle bunch up and become hard while in the grip of the cramp.

Muscle cramps can be alarming, but they are not uncommon. They occur most often in older adults. Cramps can be caused by a variety of conditions. Injury to a muscle or nerve can cause cramping. Dehydration, cold weather, pregnancy, depletion of certain minerals and deficiencies of some vitamins can be the source of muscle cramps. Overusing a certain group of muscles or even being in one position an extensively long time might trigger cramping. Cramping can be the side

effect of some medications. Medical problems, such as peripheral artery disease, can also be the cause of cramps because of inadequate blood flow to an area.

The treatment for muscle cramps is relatively simple. If it occurs from injuries, then medications such as muscle relaxants and/or anti-inflammatory drugs, may be prescribed. Usually, stretching alleviates the cramped muscle. Relief can also be found with the use of heating pads or soaking in a tub of warm water. Massage can bring a reprieve from the pain. If the disorder is occurring from a medical or physical condition, then that needs to be addressed. If you develop cramps from dehydration, rehydration should solve the problem.

Prevention of muscle cramps should focus on the reason the cramp is taking place. If cramps occur in a calf muscle from running, then stretching adequately before exercise will help. Make sure you are well-hydrated before exercising. For nighttime cramping, stretching before bedtime may help. If you think a medication is causing your cramping, consult your doctor. Do not discontinue medication before seeking the advice of your physician. With a little investigation and preparation, you may be able to keep muscle cramps at bay. **NOW**

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

## September 4

Granbury Newcomers Ladies Luncheon: 9:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Pecan Plantation Country Club. Start the year with a Newcomers birthday celebration. RSVP at [www.granburynewcomers.org](http://www.granburynewcomers.org).

## September 5

Life Saver Gala: 5:00-9:30 p.m., Granbury Resort Conference Center. 21st celebration of free services Brazos Pregnancy Center offers to Hood County parents and children. Cara and Dena Dyer speak. Live auction raises funds for BPC. RSVP to Julia Pannell, (817) 308-7427 or [ms.julia@charter.net](mailto:ms.julia@charter.net).

## September 6

Granbury Gunslingers: 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., historic downtown Square. Reenactors, entertainers and living educators dedicated to presenting the American Old West, circa 1860-1885. Call Doc Moore, (817) 371-4979.

Local Author Meet and Greet: 2:00-4:00 p.m., Jeanell Morris Meeting Room, Hood County Library. Authors Dr. James L. Jones, Lee Jordan, Lori Wilde, Peggy Freeman and Carol Cook will introduce their books, which range in genres from children's fiction to adult mystery, fiction and romance. Hosted by Friends of the Library. Call (817) 4058-2570.

## September 9

Salvation Army Women's Service League meeting: 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., DeCordova Bend Country Club. Ladies looking to serve our community are welcome as SAWSL Launches the new year with a membership coffee and presentation by a consultant describing present needs in Granbury. Luncheon at noon. RSVP to [diroessler@windstream.net](mailto:diroessler@windstream.net).

## September 13

Girls Night Out: 5:30-8:00 p.m., historic downtown square. Drawing for \$100 downtown dollars, drinks and food for ladies who come to shop in the boutiques and galleries surrounding the courthouse. Call Brenda Hyde, Historic Granbury Merchants Association, (817) 573-5299.

## September 16

Healthy Woman luncheon: Noon-1:00 p.m., Granbury Resort Conference Center. Lake Granbury Medical Center presents Dr. Aimee L. Flournoy, Family Medicine, and Dr. Peter O'Carroll, Neurology, and John Knox, local pastor and Granbury Police Department Chaplain who discuss with you "Healthy Aging — Body, Mind and Spirit." \$2 for members, \$5 for non-members. RSVP by September 12 to (817) 579-2979.

## September 17

10th Annual Economic Outlook Conference: 7:45 a.m.-noon., Granbury Resort Conference Center. Hosted by the Lake Granbury Area Economic Development Council, with continental breakfast and beverage service provided by Luminant. \$40 advance; \$45 at the door. (817) 279-9991.

## September 20

Sounds on the Square: 7:00-9:00 p.m., Courthouse Lawn. Live music, performed by 2 Tons of Steel, and wine by D'Vine Wine on the Square. Contact Pat Andris, Granbury Visitor's Center, (817) 573-1114.

50 Fellas Foodfest: 6:00-8:30 p.m., Reunion Grounds. Help raise funds for GISD Education Foundation to be able to provide innovative teaching grants. At the Foodfest, adults will enjoy music, entertainment, beverages and food prepared by 50 two-man teams. For more information and to reserve \$45 tickets, go to [www.granburysid.org/50fellasfoodfest](http://www.granburysid.org/50fellasfoodfest).

## September 27

6th Annual Party on the Peak: 5:00 p.m. Preserve Granbury hosts a most amazing gathering — and gives ticket-buying guests historic tours, panoramic views, cowboy chuck wagon dinner and dancing! Call (817) 291-0382 for more information.

## Ongoing:

### Second Mondays

Lake Granbury Art Association meeting: 7:00 p.m., Shanley House. Program followed by Q&A time. Refreshments served. Free for citizens seeking artistic education. Jeanette Alexander at (817) 578-3090.

### First Tuesdays

Hood County Clean Air Coalition meetings: 10:00 a.m., American Town Hall. Visit [www.granburyedc.com/cleanair](http://www.granburyedc.com/cleanair). Call (817) 279-9991.

### Third Tuesdays

Greater Granbury Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America meetings: 6:00-9:00 p.m., Pecan Plantation Country Club. Contact Colonel Gary Proctor, USAF (Ret), (817) 894-0901, or [garyproctor5455@msn.com](mailto:garyproctor5455@msn.com).

### Third Wednesdays

Master Gardeners meeting: 1:00-2:00 p.m., Hood County Annex 1 Meeting Room, 1410 W. Pearl St. For information, contact (817) 579-3280.

### Thursdays

Yoga: 11:00 a.m., Senior Circle, 1321 Waters

Edge Dr., Suite 1001. Gather with a group of adults age 50 and over for video-led exercise. Visit [GranburySeniorCircle.com](http://GranburySeniorCircle.com). Call (817) 579-2979 for details and to RSVP.

### First Thursdays

Granbury Extension Education Club luncheon: 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Hood County Annex 1 Meeting Room, 1410 W. Pearl St. Monthly programs cover family and consumer science topics, and community service projects are planned. For information, contact Brianne Langdon, (817) 408-0746.

### Second Thursdays

Special Needs Parent Support and Networking Group: 6:15-8:00 p.m., Lake Pointe Resource Center, 1921 Acton Hwy. Free. Facilitated by Susan Miller and Madalyn Cano for parents and professionals to learn, connect and share in a caring, responsive and socially supportive setting. Call (682) 936-4112.

### Third Thursdays

Diabetes Support Group: 6:00-7:00 p.m., Third Floor Bingo Room, Lakestone Terrace Retirement Community, 916 E. Hwy 377. Free facilitated meetings for those seeking information, inspiration and support for successfully living with diabetes. Call (817) 573-1214.

### Saturdays and Sundays

Granbury Founders and Legends: 1:30-4:00 p.m., Nutt House Hotel. Put on your walking shoes for this escorted tour of historic downtown. For more information, contact City of Granbury Visitor's Bureau, (817) 573-1114.

### Saturdays

Breakfast With Veterans: 8:00-10:00 a.m., American Legion Post 491, 3409 Davis Road. For \$5.00, the Post offers buffet or eggs cooked to order, pancakes and a variety of breakfast meats to raise funds for mentoring youth, advocating patriotism, and continued devotion to our fellow service members and veterans. Visit [www.alpost491.com](http://www.alpost491.com).

### Second and Fourth Saturdays

HALO Pet Adoption Days: **2nd Saturday**, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Tractor Supply; **4th Saturday**, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Arrow Feed & Ranch, 2031 E. Hwy 377. 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](mailto:melissa.rawlins@nowmagazines.com).*



## In the Kitchen With Nell Finney

— By *Melissa Rawlins*

Nell Finney grew up on a farm in the Texas Panhandle, with a large garden, chickens and milk cows. She stood in a chair next to her mother, who taught her to cook and to can. She met her husband, Richard, while working in a cafe. He was a big eater, Nell recalled, adding, “I knew I had the skills to fill him up.” Through 58 years of marriage, they farmed and ranched, always keeping a large garden. They moved to Granbury in January 2009 to be close to their three children and some of their married grandchildren. Whether sharing her cooking skills with family, neighbors or members of Granbury Church of Christ, Nell stays busy in her creative kitchen. **NOW**

### Pancakes

- 6 cups flour
- 1 tsp. salt
- 2 Tbsp. baking powder
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 3 eggs, beaten
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 3 cups milk
- 1 1/2 sticks margarine, melted

1. Mix dry ingredients. Add eggs, vanilla and milk, and then the margarine. Beat with mixer until runny.
2. Cook on hot griddle. Serve with hot maple syrup (recipe below).
3. Refrigerate leftover batter. Can keep and use for a week.

### Hot Maple Syrup

- 1 cup water
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup white Karo syrup

- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1/2 tsp. maple flavoring

1. Heat water, sugar and Karo in a saucepan. Stir until sugar is dissolved. Bring to a boil. Cover pan. Turn heat to simmer. Simmer 10 minutes.
2. Remove from heat. Add vanilla and maple flavoring. Serve hot on pancakes.

### Pepper Steak

- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 2 lbs. round steak
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1/2 cup flour
- Garlic salt, to taste
- 1 4-oz. can chopped green chilies
- 1 10.75-oz. can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 10.75-oz. can cream of celery soup

1. Heat oil in a frying pan.
2. Cut steak into serving-size pieces. (Can

use arm steak, seven steak, venison or any tough cut of meat. If it still has the bone that will only give it better flavor.)

3. Season meat with salt and pepper, roll in flour and brown quickly in hot grease. Don't cook, just brown.
4. Place in baking dish. Sprinkle with garlic salt.
5. Cover with green chilies and soups. Cover with foil and bake at 325 F for 3 hours. This will make the meat very tender.

### Borracho Beans

Prep time: 1 hour.

- 8 strips bacon, chopped
- 1 1-gal. can pinto beans, undrained
- 1 14.5-oz. can diced tomatoes and green chilies
- 1 10-oz. can Ro-Tel original tomatoes
- 3 cloves garlic, minced or 3 tsp. minced, prepared garlic
- 1 tsp. each: salt, pepper, cumin powder and Tabasco sauce
- 1 lg. onion, chopped
- 2 jalapeño peppers, seeded and finely chopped
- 1 bunch (about 3/4 to 1 cup) cilantro leaves, chopped

1. In a large pot, fry the bacon until crisp. Do not drain. Pour in beans.
2. Add remaining ingredients. Cook until onions are still a little crunchy.

### Fried Okra Salad

- 1 lg. pkg. frozen Stillwell Breaded Okra
- 1 cup cooking oil
- 3 avocados
- 2 sweet onions
- 3 tomatoes
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 16-oz. bottle Catalina dressing

1. Fry okra in vegetable oil and drain.
2. Chop all vegetables. Add salt and pepper. Drizzle on dressing to taste.
3. Toss lightly with fried okra and serve.

To view recipes from current and previous issues, visit [www.nowmagazines.com](http://www.nowmagazines.com).



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