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## On The Cover



Teen singing sensation,  
Jade A. Flores, carries  
many different tunes.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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# Editor's Note

Picture this ...

Deep into fall with winter fast approaching, our minds turn to the end-of-year holidays and all they entail. With food, fellowship and family at the forefront, it's a perfect time to break out the camera and capture images of the season.

Each month, we feature candid photos on our Around Town pages — pictures from you, the readers, of people in and around our communities of Red Oak, Glenn Heights, Oak Leaf and Ovilla. This month, I'd like to remind you that you're always welcome to e-mail me photos for consideration that are special to you and yours. From school activities to workplace successes, charitable events or just a day at the park, let us share the digital glimpses of your everyday lives.

Write me, if you need more information, or submit your pictures directly to the e-mail address below. Until then, I'll see you Around Town!

## Angel

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 Red OakNOW Editor  
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# SMALL PACKAGE,

# BIG

# Voices

— By Angel Morris

*Good things come in small packages, and Jade A. Flores proves big voices come from them, as well. The petite 15-year-old belts out songs of unexpected strength during regular performances at the Red Oak Opry and various showplaces around the Metroplex. From Etta to Adele, Reba to Beyoncé, Jade is comfortable with most genres, but calls country music home.*

“I was raised with country music. It’s all my dad listens to, and what I listened to as a child. My mom loves jazzy blues — that style also inspires me,” Jade said. “I perform a variety of music, and I love to listen to different genres, but my comfort zone is country.”

A sophomore at Red Oak High School, Jade moved with her family to Glenn Heights in 2001. Shortly thereafter, her love of music was born. “I’ve enjoyed singing since I was about 5. At that time, I only sang in front of my immediate family. I remember singing a song called ‘Son of a Preacher Man.’ I liked it because it had a lot of rhythm and soul,” Jade recalled.

Her voice wasn’t the only instrument in which Jade was interested. “I wanted to learn to play guitar, but at the time, we couldn’t afford lessons. My grandparents bought my first acoustic guitar, and I taught myself by ear and watching YouTube videos,” Jade said. “It took me about two weeks to learn some basic chords and three weeks to learn to strum and sing while playing guitar all at once.”

With the basics under her belt, Jade knew music was her passion. “I would practice day and night. Before I got dressed for school, I would grab my guitar and play until my mom would gripe at

me about being late to school. Even then, I would take my guitar and sing and play for my classes and teachers,” Jade recalled. “After school, I would get my homework done, eat dinner and spend the rest of the night learning new songs until it was time to go to bed.”

Jade began making YouTube videos and began receiving requests that she learn and post other songs. To help her pursue her dream, Jade’s mom researched potential voice instructors, deciding on Sarah Conley of Mansfield’s Destiny Voice Studios. “Sarah not only critiques her students in a positive way, but really makes you feel like you have no boundaries in any musical endeavors. I couldn’t ask for a better mentor, friend and singing coach,” Jade said. “After a few lessons, Sarah encouraged me to get out and perform. My first time singing in public was at our annual family reunion, where I sang ‘At Last’ by Etta James.”

Her family’s response introduced Jade to what it’s like to reach an audience, and there was no turning back. “The first time I performed in front of people, other than my family, was with Destiny Voice Studios’ Winter Showcase. My mind was racing, I was nervous about messing up, and I felt a knot in my throat when I went on stage,” Jade said. “I took a deep breath, introduced myself and focused on my beautiful niece, who was in the audience. I sang ‘I Miss You Most (At Christmas Time)’ by Mariah Carey and — just like when I sang at my family reunion — I loved the audience’s reaction.”

*re*

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Feeling more prepared to show her stuff on stage, Jade began to notice signs around town advertising Eddie Vaughn's Red Oak Opry. "I auditioned, was accepted and performed for the first time with the Opry on November 30, 2010. Performing with a live band was very different than singing with tracks, and it was a new level for me." Jade's rendition of "Heartaches by the Number" (Martina McBride version) and "Don't Forget to



Remember Me" (Carrie Underwood) can both be seen on YouTube. These renditions led to Jade becoming part of the Red Oak Opry family every second Saturday of the month at Lone Star Cowboy Church.

Jade also continues to hone her musical skills at the studio, where she attends writing workshops and singing camps. "You learn to put your experiences and emotions down on paper. My ideas come to me late at night when I can't sleep, so I jot them down," Jade said. Personal struggles have inspired her original songs, "I Love You" and "Runaway."

"Sometimes life is rough, even for a kid, and you start to feel that everything around you is coming down. You think the solution is to avoid your problems, but running away is never a real solution ... this is what 'Runaway' talks about."

In spite of some obstacles, Jade has known success in her budding career and most recently was selected for the Johnnie High's Country Music Review, where she performed September 3. "This is where LeAnn Rimes sang as a child 423 times. I was very happy to make it!" Jade said of joining the ranks of Rimes, as well as Steve Holy, Linda Davis, Lee Ann Womack, Miranda Lambert and Red Oak's own Boxcar Willie.

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Jade entered the 2010 Colgate Country showdown — now called the Lone Star Country Showdown sponsored by 99.5, the Wolf, radio — and was selected as one of eight contestants to sing at Six Flags in Arlington. She has performed at Dallas’ House of Blues; Gilley’s; the Mansfield, Wylie and Ellis County opries; and the Waxahachie Jamboree. As her professional schedule grows, Jade anticipates a future in music based on a performance from the past.

“My aunt was very sick with cancer. She asked me to perform at her ‘going away’ party. Her favorite song was ‘His Eye is on the Sparrow,’” Jade said. “I also sang it at her funeral, along with a traditional Spanish song ‘de Colores,’ which is a celebration of creation with all its many colors.

“With all the emotions that day, I didn’t know if I could do my best for her, but I wanted to make her proud. I knew she



“MUSIC TO ME HEALS THE HEART.”

was in heaven listening to me, so I pulled myself together and did the best I could. That kind of performance is really what it’s all about for me.”

Perhaps this connection to her music means big things for young Jade Flores’ future. If nothing else, it means touching others through song. “My goal is not to be rich or famous. My goal is to be an inspiration and entertainer. I love to make people happy,” Jade said. “Music to me heals the heart. You can express your feelings in music, and I just love to share that with others.” **NOW**

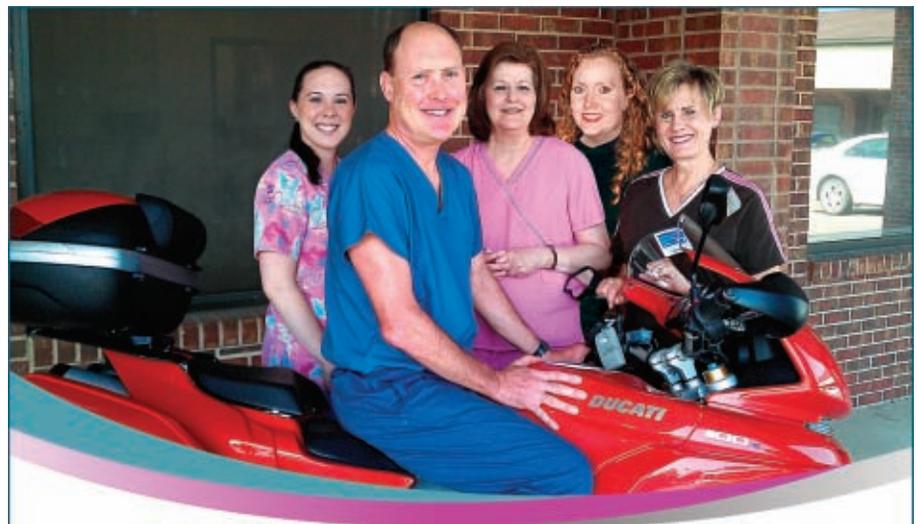
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# Brotherly

# Love

— By Randy Bigham

*Members of a recently reorganized service group are embracing the adage “What’s old is new again,” as they revisit the success of their former charter. Red Oak Masonic Lodge No. 461 A.F. & A.M. may have been dormant for over 70 years, but since 2008, new life has been breathed into the charitable fraternity whose brothers are, as Secretary Jerry Peck said, “Ready and willing to help the community.”*

The local Masons are proud to carry on the devotion of their predecessors who accomplished important work in Red Oak, aiding the city’s commercial and educational growth for over 50 years, before problems forced its closure during the Great Depression. “We don’t know what happened,” admitted the lodge’s current master, Billy Ray Dickey. “But, it was most likely economic issues that caused it.” Despite past hardships, Billy Ray and his members are optimistic about the future of the reconstituted lodge, as they implement programs that are already making a difference in the expanding city of Red Oak.

In addition to presenting scholarships for local youth and public awards for civic leadership, the new lodge sponsors blood drives, an American flag fundraiser, a dental hygiene package geared to Red Oak ISD elementary students and health care for senior Masons and their spouses. “We are dedicated to the support and welfare of the people in our community,” Jerry said, and the positive response from residents, particularly to the lodge’s flag program, indicates the Masons’ efforts are appreciated in return.

The story of Lodge 461’s rebirth is one of teamwork. Chaplain Ken Taylor was in on the initial plans for restructuring the inactive group, but he insists it was a joint effort. “Some Masonic leaders wanted to know how many Masons would like to join if we had a lodge here again,” Ken explained. “So we held several meetings, got all our ducks in a row, and after a long





*“We are dedicated to the support and welfare of the people in our community.”*

process, the Grand Lodge reapproved the old charter, giving us the original name and number.”

According to Jerry, many Masons across North Texas participated in launching the new lodge. “With the assistance and support of several existing Masonic lodges in Cedar Hill, DeSoto, Ferris, Ennis, Lancaster, Midlothian and Waxahachie, and the aspirations of 50 Masonic brothers from those lodges, who were willing to share their experience and talents, a petition for reinstatement of the charter of Red Oak Lodge 461 was sent to the Grand Lodge of Texas.” The charter was approved in May 2008, and since then officers and members have worked with vision and determination to bring aid and recognition to the development of Red Oak and the well-being of its citizens. Billy Ray singled out Past Master Clark Stephenson and Grand Chaplain Jerry Kirby as “being instrumental in getting the lodge back together.”

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Members of the new lodge include a number of distinguished men, long active in business, education, law enforcement and other spheres of public life. Many are themselves former lodge masters, but there are also younger Masons like Marc Maples, who has been with Red Oak 461 for a year and is learning the ropes of the fraternal organization from his elders. "We can't make bad men good, but we do take good men and make them better," Ken said, adding that membership approval is based on recommendations from active Masons, and that basic requirements include belief in a Supreme Being or Higher Power.

Member Brad Morton, a musician for Red Oak 461 and soon to be Grand



Lodge district deputy, pointed out that while the majority of the 90,000 Masons in Texas are Christian, some are Jewish or of other faiths. Jerry specified that the Red Oak branch is Christian-centered and that members pledge themselves to the "Bible as our word and law, and to improving ourselves spiritually and morally." Brad is quick to add that although Masonic lodges are religion-based, they are not keepers of cryptic secrets as is sometimes alleged in the media or in Hollywood films. "That's one of the biggest misconceptions about Masons," he said. "Like a college fraternity, we have passwords and the like, but we guard no great, ominous secrets."

There's nothing mysterious about the good work Red Oak Lodge 461 is achieving in the city and beyond. The group's American flag placement service is perhaps the most visible aspect of its outreach to the community. "We started the flag fundraiser a little over three years ago because we needed a base to work from," Billy Ray said. "What we do is contract with businesses and individuals to put out flags five times a

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“Every time I put out a flag, it reminds me of a soldier that has died for his country,” Ken added with emotion.

The money for the flags helps fund awards and scholarships. One of the best known of these is the Community Builder Award, presented annually by Red Oak 461 to leaders in public life. Last year, the first recipient was former Red Oak ISD athletic director and United Methodist Church trustee, Gaines Wolaver. “Through his efforts,” Jerry said, “he has helped build Red Oak from a small town of about 300 to a city that has over 5,000 students in the school system.” The 2011 Community Builder Award went to Carl Meredith of Carl’s Automotive, a tireless philanthropist who cohosted with Red Oak 461 two well-attended classic car shows, donations from which benefited the Dallas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children.

Another proud gift the lodge bestows on locals is its Lamar Award, which recognizes deserving Red Oak High School graduates. “Education is very important to the Masonic movement,” Jerry said, “and our lodge considers the Lamar Program a high point of the year.”

The lodge is equally committed to a dental hygiene program called the Fantastic Tooth Fan Club. Each year the club provides over 300 Red Oak ISD first-graders a kit containing a toothbrush, toothpaste, floss and information on tooth care. This kit is provided as a courtesy of the Masonic Children and Family Service of Texas. Lodge members also believe in aiding the elderly and infirmed among their fellow Masons, and through an annual fair and other methods, Red Oak 461 helps raise money for the Texas Masonic Retirement Center in Arlington.

These and other worthy causes continue to be the focus for Red Oak 461 in its second incarnation as one of the city’s leading service and charitable organizations. Billy Ray is proud of the growth he has seen in the town he loves and the fraternity he leads. “But we can always use a new member,” he laughed. “We’re like the Marines. We can always use a few good guys.” **NOW**

For more information on the American Flag Program call (214) 587-9610 or visit [www.redoak461.org](http://www.redoak461.org).



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# Raising Little

# Women

— By Sydni Thomas



At Home With  
Gina Burba

*Single mom, Gina Burba, set out to establish a home where her two daughters, Bailey and Channing, would be able to express their creativity while growing up. As the girls grew, Gina took on more artistic projects around their Red Oak house that both girls would enjoy while finding the artist within. For the past 21 years, Gina has been finding the creative balance between her career as a hairstylist and her passion of mural painting. “Doing hair helps me to be creative,” Gina said. “I love my job! It’s in a creative environment and there is no limit on our creativity. I get inspired during the day and am able to come home and still do creative projects.”*



Some projects were as simple as painting a pair of cowboy boots. Others took the entire weekend, like the time the family took the standard-issue kitchen cabinets that came with the house and gave them the eclectic vibe the rest of the house had. “One weekend, we decided to tile the entryway around the front door,” Gina said. “We had no set plan or design. Each of us just placed the tiles around the door in the way we thought would look best. It was neat to see how it all came together. Then we grouted it. It was just us girls doing this project. I’m proud of what we accomplished.”

Before entering the house, it’s easy to see that the Burba home is different than most. At Halloween, trick-or-treaters are always curious once they peek in and see some of the artwork on Gina’s walls. There have been times when a few request a tour. Gina, a DeSoto native, discovered her artistic talents in high school. She began by taking an art class and was introduced to painting. Walls soon became her canvas and none in the home are left

untouched. Ever since she bought the house, Gina has used the walls to tell the story of what's happening in her family's life. "When I'm not busy painting our walls, I like to help friends paint theirs," Gina said. "I love helping them and have done some fun rooms for them."

Most projects Gina takes on in the home are completed in a maximum of three days. Any longer and she would lose steam. There is never a time when she and the girls aren't working on something. The Burbas have a continuous list of projects to do around and outside of the house. As soon as one is finished, they begin another. "Our next project is the garage," Gina said. "We plan on making it a fun and girly place to work out. I've already started by putting



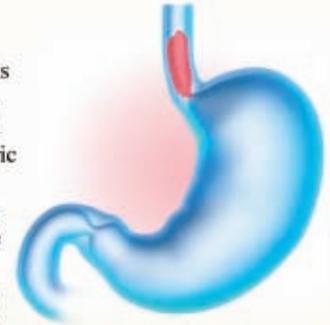
cheetah print up on the wall."

Both girls got Gina's creative genes. With her help they designed their dream rooms complete with chandeliers over their beds. Every few years each bedroom undergoes a makeover to fit the changes the girls have gone through in their personality. Bailey, the diva sister, chose an animal print and *fleur de lis*-themed room. The faux stonework on the pink walls gives this high school freshman a sophisticated, yet girly room.

Channing, an avid cheerleader, stuck with an animal-print room. Gina painted the zebra striped walls and the cheerleading mural on the opposite side of the room. Down the hall in the teen

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room, Gina used the largest wall for a big graphic print. It serves as the meeting place for the girls and their friends, a dressing room stocked with the best jewelry and a karaoke room for Friday-night slumber parties. “The girls are each other’s best friend,” Gina said. “They are similar, but so different. They each have their own style and that is fun to bring out in each of the rooms.”

Wall murals and textured paint aren’t limited to the bedrooms. The kitchen’s

wood cabinets were not Gina’s style, and she painted each of them green and came back in with a red and yellow trim to finish them out. The backsplash was also a project she undertook. She shattered tiles of slate and placed them like a puzzle in various ways across the back paneling under the cabinets. A friend came in and grouted the project for her. On the opposite side of the kitchen, the layout created an odd corner. Gina fixed this by installing a faux wall around the



refrigerator and gained more cabinet space in the process. “The kitchen was one of my favorite projects,” Gina said. “I’m proud of this wall and how it transformed the kitchen into a different place.”

Gina purchased the house right before Bailey was born 15 years ago. Red Oak had the small community vibe she wanted her family to live and grow in. The house was just what she was looking for, but she still wanted to make a few modifications

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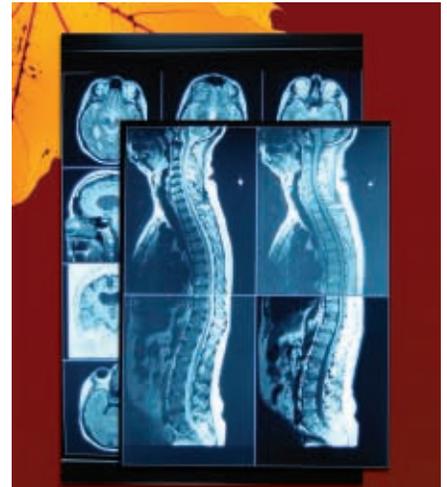


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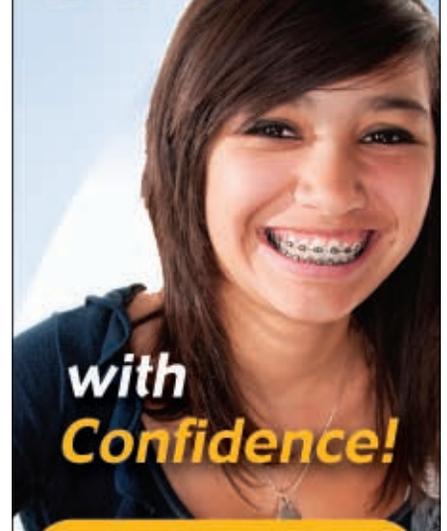
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right away. Having an adequate dining space and kitchen were important, and the layout of the house combined both into a tiny space. Gina had the back wall pushed out further into the backyard and added a larger dining and living space at the back of the house. “The dining table was practically in the kitchen,” Gina said. “I was able to make these changes when I bought the house and our yard was big enough to where we still have one, even after the changes.”

Although Gina and the girls spend a great deal of time working on indoor projects, they also enjoy creating together outside. Just outside the back door is a pond filled with koi. The trickling water and beauty from the fish make this one of the most relaxing spots on the property. On the other side of the yard is the swimming pool. Gina created a mural of mermaids, each modeled after one of the girls, on the fence around the pool. “We enjoy being outside together,” Gina said. “The girls will sit out here and entertain me under the canopy while I cook.”

If the Burba women aren't out shopping or traveling to one of Channing's cheerleading events, they are most likely found at home envisioning a new project to work on. Gina has put countless hours into their home to turn

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it into a creative haven of inspiration for her two daughters. "We joke that if we ever sell the house, the new owners will have a lot of layers to peel away," Gina said. "Our house has so many different stories. It's nice to come in and have the house feel different from time to time. It's our escape." **NOW**

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**From left:**

Stephanie Walters, Amber Beye, Robyn Beye Lentz and Randy Lentz provide solutions to keep customers reliably connected.

# The World of Wireless

*Your Wireless Solutions isn't selling cells. It's selling signals. — By Angel Morris*

Once in the business of selling cellular accessories – including Bluetooth, chargers and faceplates – Your Wireless Solutions has come to specialize in products designed to improve cellular signals. “Cellular amplifiers and repeaters boost wireless signals to cell phones and PCs, providing significantly better reception at home, in the office or in a vehicle. If you live, work or travel in a poor reception area, you can understand the frustration of dropped calls. We can help you stay better connected,” co-owner, Gilbert Rangel explained.

So, essentially, anyone could visit Your Wireless Solutions for better cell phone reception and fewer dropped calls, whether he or she is phoning from a car or RV, a home or even a boat. “If you’ve got a reception problem, we’ve got a low-cost solution,” said Randy Lentz, who co-owns the business with his

brother-in-law, Gilbert, and sister, Stephanie Rangel.

Randy came to Texas, at the urging of Gilbert and Stephanie, bringing 15 years of wireless industry experience from Utah, Kansas and Michigan cellular markets. Gilbert, a retired sergeant major with the U.S. military, and Stephanie, a pharmacist, convinced Randy to join them in opening Your Wireless Solutions in Red Oak almost two years ago.

Randy has the skill and knowledge to solve every cellular need, and Gilbert has insight into a market Your Wireless Solutions has increasingly come to serve — the government.

“I used to work for an amplifier manufacturer, and I have also sold cellular service. But, designing cellular signal systems has become my favorite part of the business,” Randy said.

With 30 years of military experience and leading the ROTC

program at an area high school to his credit, Gilbert has unique expertise in government contracting. He, Randy and the Your Wireless Solutions staff have come to focus on the design and installation of repeater systems and amplifiers for hotels, large manufacturing companies and government industry.

“Dependable wireless coverage is essential in today’s business environment. Our customers rely on wireless collaboration to get their jobs done,” Gilbert said. “Our sales team helps customers determine their coverage requirements and develops the most cost-effective wireless system for their facility.”

Your Wireless Solutions is actually expert in evaluating the structural and wireless environment of business customers in order to design and install entire wireless systems in a workplace. Once the most advantageous system is determined, Your Wireless Solutions’ hard-hat wearing crew can be found building and installing antennas and amplifiers.

“Our goal is to make your cellular experience more convenient and enjoyable by way of a more reliable connection,” Randy said. “The greatest satisfaction is when a customer, who had communication problems before, calls us after we’ve designed a system for them and says, ‘Wow! I have five bars of signal everywhere in my building!’”

Randy’s wife, Robyn; office staffers, Amber Beye and Stephanie Walters; and installation crew, Bryan Smith and Josh Christensen, round out the Your Wireless Solutions team. Whether in the office or in the field of current jobs around the U.S. and Canada, staffers constantly study cellular technology and research ways to service a market saturated with cellular devices. In the near future, the team will complete fiber optic training.

“A mega resort in Dallas or a 50-floor office building would need us to install a fiber optic system for the best possible cellular reception. And, now we know the best way to do that,” Randy said. “Anything that has to do with improving your cellular communications — that’s what we’re here for.” **NOW**

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Descendents of James and Cora Prince host a reunion at Red Oak Municipal Center.



A 2011 Citizens Police Academy participant gets firearm instruction from a local officer. ROPD is now accepting 2012 CPA applications.

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## When Investing, “Face to Face” Beats Fingers on a Keyboard

— By *Michael Ewing*

These days, you can purchase just about anything you want on the Internet. However, you can still benefit from a human, face-to-face experience for some purchases — such as your investments. And that’s why you may want to work with a financial professional.

Unlike a computer interface, a financial professional will take the time to truly know your situation today — and then help you make adjustments tomorrow.

Let’s first look at two key areas a financial professional will consider today:

- **Your risk tolerance** — By asking the right questions, a financial professional can help you determine if you’re a moderate, conservative or aggressive investor and then recommend those investments that are suitable for your risk tolerance.

- **Your time horizon** — If you’re saving for a down payment on a new home you expect to purchase within two or three years, you may want an investment that offers significant preservation of principal. But if you’re saving for retirement, and you’re three decades away from it, you’ll likely need investments that offer the potential for growth. Your financial advisor can help you choose the mix of short- and long-term investments that can help you make progress toward all your goals.

Now, let’s look at the types of milestones that a financial professional can help you with as your life progresses:

- **New child** — When you bring a new child into your life, you also add new responsibilities. Do you have sufficient life insurance? Do you plan on helping the child pay for college? If so, what college funding vehicles should you consider? A financial professional can help you answer these questions.

- **New spouse** — Whether you’re getting married for the first time, or you’re remarrying, you’ll have to reconcile your financial picture with that of your new spouse. A financial professional can review both your situations and possibly recommend ways for you to reduce debt, eliminate redundancies in your investment portfolios and consolidate insurance coverage.

- **Career change** — When you change jobs, you may have to make many investment-related decisions: Should you move the assets from your old employer’s 401(k) to an IRA? Or should you roll over your old 401(k) to your new employer’s plan if a rollover is allowed? Knowing your options when you leave your job can help you make the right choice for your retirement savings. A qualified financial professional can help you review and understand your rollover options.

- **Retirement** — Once you retire, you’ll have several issues to consider: How much can you withdraw from your investments each year? From which accounts? Should you rebalance your portfolio to provide more potential sources of income? What about the transfer of your wealth? A financial professional who is familiar with your situation can help you make the right moves to enjoy the retirement lifestyle you’ve envisioned.

So, when you really want to invest, leave the “virtual” world behind and connect with a financial professional — someone who has gained insight into your individual needs and who has the experience and expertise to help you build, maintain and adjust a portfolio that can help you move toward your goals. **NOW**

*Michael Ewing is an Edward Jones representative based in Red Oak.*

# Calendar

NOVEMBER 2011

## Throughout November

Red Oak Citizens Police Academy registration: Those ages 20 and older who live or work in the city may apply through December 31, 2011, for the 11-week course that begins February 10, 2012. The free, educational program familiarizes participants with the responsibilities of local police. Call (469) 218-7710 or e-mail: nbickerstaff@redoaktx.org.

## November 4-6

Lord's Acre: **Nov. 4**, 5:30-10:00 p.m., dinner and dancing. **Nov. 5**, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., bake sale, children's area, country store and vendors, as well as a live auction (1:00 p.m.) and a silent auction throughout the day. **Nov. 6**, 11:00 a.m. worship service. All events held on the future site of Ovilla United Methodist Church, at Ovilla Road (FM 664) and Westmoreland Road. Free and open to the public.

## November 5

Ladies Day of Worship: 8:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Ovilla Church of Christ, 3420 Ovilla Road. Crafts, games, lunch and worship for all community women. Free babysitting offered. Call (972) 617-7447.

## November 11

Veterans Day. Glenn Heights and Red Oak city offices closed.

## November 11-12

Glenn Heights Citywide Clean Up: 8:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m., 2118 S. Uhl Rd. Containers will be available for city residents to dispose of household trash and debris at no charge. A brush chipper and secure, sensitive document paper shredder will be onsite from 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., November 12. Visit [http://www.glennheights.com/documents/notices/Fall%20Cleanup\\_092711.pdf](http://www.glennheights.com/documents/notices/Fall%20Cleanup_092711.pdf) for information on all disposable items and electronic waste guidelines.

## November 12

Ellis County SPCA Volunteer Training: Noon-1:00 p.m., 2570 FM 878, Waxahachie. Meeting for new volunteers or current volunteers who would like to be more involved with the organization. E-mail: [coordinator@elliscountyspca.org](mailto:coordinator@elliscountyspca.org).

Red Oak Opry: 7:00 p.m., Lone Star Cowboy Church, 1011 E. Ovilla Rd., Red Oak. Opry plays lively country music with 12 to 13 different singers backed up by a six-piece band. Visit <http://redoakopry.com>.

## November 16

Chamber Luncheon: Noon-1:00 p.m., Red Oak Municipal Center, 200 Lakeview Pkwy. Cost: \$12 with reservation; \$15 at door; \$20 for

nonmembers. Contact Shelley Oglesby at (972) 617-0906 or you can e-mail: [admin@redoakareachamber.org](mailto:admin@redoakareachamber.org).

## November 21-25

Red Oak ISD Thanksgiving vacation. Classes resume November 28.

## November 24

Thanksgiving Day. Glenn Heights, Oak Leaf, Ovilla and Red Oak city offices closed November 24-25.

## December 3

Annual Model Railroad Open House: Noon-5:00 p.m. at the home of Bob and Freda Brand, 2509 Lake Ridge Road, near the corner of Ovilla and Hampton roads, Glenn Heights. Bring the kids and grandkids for a free tour of this extensive model train collection in a 15 x 20 building. Call (972) 230-8101.

*Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your event details to [angel.morris@nowmagazines.com](mailto:angel.morris@nowmagazines.com).*

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## In The Kitchen With Kenneth Zacharias

— *By Angel Morris*

Kenneth Zacharias prepares traditional Thanksgiving dinners, but unique Christmas meals. “We alternate year to year between grilling or boiling lobster, then ‘pig out’ with all the trimmings around a fire pit,” he said.

Kenneth’s late father was always part of the lobster preparation ... another reason cooking reminds Kenneth of family and friends. “I cook for my wife and son, friends on the weekends, whoever can stand to eat what I make,” Kenneth joked. “The smell of home cooking means a lot of love went into the making.”

Twenty years as a police officer — 13 with SWAT — trained Kenneth to guard sensitive information, including family recipes. “I was careful not to include my grandmother’s fried chicken and a few others that are only to be shared with family!” **NOW**

### Fried Shrimp With Ruffles Potato Chips

*A family favorite that tastes great with new potatoes roasted in olive oil and fresh green beans with bacon.*

- 1 egg**
- 2 cups milk**
- 1 lb. large or extra-large shrimp**
- 2 family bags Ruffles potato chips**
- Cooking oil**
- Salt, to taste**
- Pepper, to taste**

- 1.** In a medium bowl, beat egg and milk; pour into gallon-size freezer bag.
- 2.** Place shrimp in bag with milk-egg mixture; marinate about one hour in refrigerator.
- 3.** Place potato chips in a separate gallon-size freezer bag; crush finely with a rolling pin.
- 4.** Preheat cooking oil in iron skillet on

medium-high heat.

- 5.** Drain shrimp, place in bag of crushed chips, gently pressing chips into shrimp without crushing them.
- 6.** Place coated shrimp in skillet and cook until golden brown. Salt and pepper to taste. Makes 3 servings.

### 7 Steak and Gravy

*A family recipe of German/Bavarian origin that goes really well with homemade mashed potatoes and carrots candied with cinnamon and honey.*

#### Cooking oil

- 1 Tbsp. garlic salt**
- 1 Tbsp. onion salt**
- 1 Tbsp. pepper**
- 1 7 steak (bone in) (You can find this cut at H-E-B or Brookshire’s. Ask the butcher, if it’s not at the meat counter.)**
- Flour**
- Water**
- 2 capfuls Kitchen Bouquet**

- 1 medium onion**
- 1 medium bell pepper**

- 1.** Cover bottom of a large skillet with cooking oil and preheat on medium-high heat. Oil is correct temperature when pinch of flour dropped in pan sizzles.
- 2.** Rub garlic salt, onion salt and pepper on both sides of 7 steak; dredge steak in flour.
- 3.** Place steak in skillet and brown both sides, but do not cook through.
- 4.** Remove steak and add 1 to 2 Tbsp. flour to the cooking oil left in the skillet to make gravy base. Return meat to skillet.
- 5.** Cover with water and add Kitchen Bouquet.
- 6.** Add chopped onion and bell pepper. Cover and simmer for about 4 to 5 hours, or until tender and falling off the bone.
- 7.** To thicken gravy, add Kitchen Bouquet, as needed.

### Guacamole

- 1 small onion**
- 1 medium tomato**
- 1 medium bundle fresh cilantro**
- 2 Tbsp. lemon juice**
- 2 Tbsp. lime juice**
- 2 large avocados**
- Seasoned salt (to taste)**
- Tortilla chips**

- 1.** Chop onion, dice tomato and cut cilantro; add to bowl.
- 2.** Add lemon and lime juice; stir.
- 3.** Peel and dice avocado into mix; add 1 Tbsp. seasoned salt (or to taste) and mash. Serve with chips.

### Stuffed Mushrooms

- 2 regular containers white mushrooms**
- 1 1-lb. pkg. ground sausage**
- 1 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350 F.
- 2.** Wash mushrooms and remove stems; set aside on a paper towel to dry.
- 3.** Mix and knead sausage and cream cheese.
- 4.** Roll sausage/cream cheese mixture into balls, stuff balls into the cut side of mushrooms.
- 5.** Place stuffed mushrooms on cookie sheet and bake for 30 minutes.

To view recipes visit [www.nowmagazines.com](http://www.nowmagazines.com).



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