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ON THE COVER



Karl Bethel has great respect for the United States Marine Corps.

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Editor's Note

Hello, Mansfield!

According to *TIME Magazine*, "Americans began observing the Fourth of July as early as 1777, when the first-ever major celebration in Philadelphia included a parade, a 13-shot cannon salute and fireworks, but Congress didn't make it official until 1870, when it was part of a bill passed to recognize major state holidays at a federal level — like Independence Day, Christmas and New Year's Day." Although our nation looks very different than it did

in 1777, our Fourth of July celebrations have mostly stayed the same!

I hope you will join me and rejoice in our independence with the city of Mansfield for their fireworks celebration on Wednesday, July 3 at Big League Dreams. There's fun for the whole family! And if you pass by someone who has served in the military, thank them for their tremendous sacrifice. We wouldn't be here without them!

Happy Independence Day!

Mikaela

Mikaela Mathews
MansfieldNOW Editor
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EAGLE, GLOBE A

— By Mikaela Mathews

Karl Bethel has been teaching students for nearly 30 years. But, during spring break 2014, he became a student in one of the most grueling training programs of his career: Marine Corps boot camp. Enrolled in the U.S. Marine Corps Educators Workshop, Karl donned his military boots and learned all that it takes to become a Marine.

“Four times per year, the 12th Marine Corps District sends approximately 80 high school and college educators, counselors and administrators to MCRD San Diego. Each visit lasts one week, and participants also experience life on Marine

Corps Base Camp Pendleton and Marine Corps Air Station Miramar,” states the official Marine Corps website. MCRD (Marine Corps Recruit Depot) San Diego and MCRD Parris Island in South Carolina are the two Marine Depots where recruits are trained.

As the associate principal at Ben Barber Career and Technical Academy and Frontier High School, Karl signed up for the opportunity, but wasn't really sure what he had



Karl Bethel, Anthony Pursell, Jeffery Scott Dudley and Ben Cox all participated in the Marine Corps Educators Workshop at Camp Pendleton.

LAND ANCHOR



just volunteered to do. "I had some exhilaration, thinking this was going to be cool," he laughed. "But I didn't really know what fully to expect." After flying into San Diego, Karl got the first taste. "We were picked up in the Gray Dog, which is the same bus recruits get picked up in," he explained. "When recruits are picked up, they have to put their heads down and can't look up until their drill instructor tells them to."

Recruits at both MCRDs are required to pass through three phases in 13 weeks. In the first phase, recruits learn protocol, as well as how to march, take care of their uniform and more. Phase two is "grass week" where recruits are taken to Camp Pendleton to



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learn marksmanship training and earn qualification to shoot a rifle. Phase three is the culmination of their training, where they endure a demanding 54-hour course called The Crucible. Once recruits complete The Crucible, they are no longer called recruits, but Marines.

For workshop participants, however, the experience is condensed to an educational week. Although they aren't put through the full experience, drill instructors put the incoming students through a normal boot camp experience as soon as they arrive. "When we got off the bus, there were yellow footprints we were supposed to follow.



And the drill instructor was yelling at us while we were lining up. Then, they taught us how to march and took us into the contraband room," he remembered. At this point, recruits had to give over any contraband before entering boot camp.

After the contraband room, recruits made one last phone call. "It's a scripted phone call. I had to yell at the top of my lungs and say, "This is Recruit Bethel. I have arrived safely in San Diego. You will

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receive written communication from me in one to two weeks. I love you. Good-bye,” he said.

For the sake of the workshop, a colonel broke the boot camp intensity of the contraband room to welcome the participants. Over the course of the next several days, the participants learned about obstacle courses, military



history and more from their drill instructor, Staff Sgt. Akira Givings.

On that first day, participants were taken to a long obstacle course all recruits must complete, as well as a water survival pool, where recruits endure tests to learn how to stay alive if in a crisis in the water.

Their day finished with a lecture on military education and the Combat Fitness Test, which Karl participated in. For the fitness test, recruits must prove they are physically capable of enduring war-like scenarios. Recruits must run a half mile as fast as they can, lift a 30-pound ammo can above their heads for two minutes, run 25 yards, crawl on their bellies for 15 yards, crawl on their hands and knees for another 15 yards, then run zigzag for another 15 yards. After that, recruits then pick up another

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recruit who is lying on the ground and carry him on their shoulders back to where they started. Two ammo cans are waiting for the recruit. He must pick them up, run 60 yards, then pick up a hand grenade and accurately hit a target. After that, they must do three push-ups, pick up the ammo cans again and race back 60 yards. The goal is to complete all of this in two-and-a-half minutes.

The next day, Karl and the rest of the group traveled to Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, where *Top Gun* was filmed. “We were told if anyone stationed at Miramar mentions the movie or recites a line from it, they’re fined \$5, because they don’t want to be known for the movie,” Karl laughed. While there, the students saw B-22 Osprey and F-18s. “We were on the flight deck, and these planes were taxiing and taking off every which way. It was really cool,” he explained.

Afterward, participants heard from female Marines. “We had a great conversation with them about being a woman in the Marines. They talked about the opportunities they have there. Right now, the Marine Corps is comprised of 9-percent females, so they are wanting to increase that number,” he shared. In addition, the group learned about the vast number of educational opportunities offered to the Marines. “There are over 700 jobs in the Marine Corp. Many Marines get their bachelor and master’s degrees, while on active duty, for free, because the Marines pay for it,” he explained.

Students went to Camp Pendleton the following day to shoot rifles. Recruits learn how to shoot from 100, 200, 300 and 500 yards. The students also experienced a small part of The Crucible. “The Crucible is a 54-hour event, where recruits only get four hours of sleep a

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night. They are only given three meals to last them the whole 54 hours. They participate in hikes and activities to test leadership, strength and teamwork. At the end, there's an insane hill they have to go up with 60-pound packs. Afterward, they come up to this plateau, where the drill instructor talks to them about the Marine Corps and the honor in becoming a Marine. That's when they're called a Marine and are given their eagle, globe and anchor," Karl explained. The students participated in a few of the leadership activities recruits undergo during The Crucible.

On their last day, the workshop students and drill instructors celebrated with an awards ceremony. "Everyone was given certificates of completion, but I got the Gung Ho Award," he smiled. "I tried to do everything they offered to us, and since they had made me the 'guide' for the week, I had to keep up with everybody. I wasn't expecting to get it!"

Karl learned a number of valuable lessons during his time at MCRD San Diego. "The Marine Corps has their core beliefs and history, which they instill at every opportunity. And I think that's something that we need to be doing, too," he shared. "It's also encouraged me to offer students the option of going into the military. The military wants our top students because of the sophisticated work they do."

Leaving MCRD San Diego, Karl felt deep admiration for the military personnel whom he had met. "I had a strengthened sense of pride in our country. What they do with these recruits is incredible," he shared. "They take them and make them into a powerful unit. We have quality people in the Marines taking care of business." **NOW**

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The **LIGHTS** are **BRIGHT**

— By Sara Edgell

When it comes to passion in life, people invest their time and interest in things they enjoy and are good at. They pursue hobbies and activities, which not only give them joy, but also give them pride. For Heather Rountree and Brandon Shreve, acting just so happens to be their passion. Their shared interest in acting brought the two together several



“ I do what I do because of my **love** for theater, but also because of my **love** of people and kids. ”



years ago by way of Mainstage Classic Theatre. With a combined 28 years between them, the two have an impressive amount of experience on the community theater stage. When it comes to focus and intention in life, these two have definitely found theirs. “Acting is a blessing,” Heather stated. “I feel God laid this calling on both our lives.”

Mainstage Classic Theatre is a nonprofit acting program that takes pride in their consistent, family-friendly performances. Heather and Brandon

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have both been with MCT since its infancy and plan to stick around for many years to come. "It's such a great community-focused group to be a part of," Heather remarked. The program's primary focus is reaching the community. Each year, they produce seasonal shows that are all open-audition style, as well as operate an educational-based summer camp for kids from grades three to 12. Camp is a two-week period where a group of about 20-30 kids work tirelessly each day learning, perfecting and ultimately performing a production. "The best thing about the camps is the amount of time we all spend together," Brandon said. "We end up being very family-like because of the relationships that are built. It's a really amazing experience to be a part of and to witness."

With titles such as *Grease*, *Aladdin Jr.*, *Cheaper by the Dozen* and *Steel Magnolias*, individuals in the acting program demonstrate a wide range of ability and impressive scope of genre diversity. The beauty of the whole process is sharing the passion for and of acting. This sharing has had an impacting trickle-down effect, too. Some of the kids who were campers have returned to help conduct the camps. "It's exciting to see our kids come back to do things like choreography," Heather shared.

Both Heather and Brandon became involved with acting in relatively the same way via Marty Fredrick at First United Methodist Church and Walnut Ridge Baptist Church in Mansfield. Marty is credited as the one who encouraged

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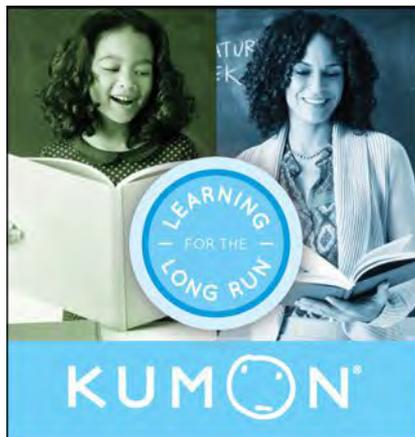
them both to pursue the stage. While Heather did not act in high school, she did in church productions and continued to dabble during college. She also remained in close contact with Marty during this time, helping with current productions and teaching here and there for the Art Institute of Mansfield, where Marty directed. Before long, Heather graduated from college and began her career as a middle school teacher, but she continued to be involved with AIM and Marty. MCT had been

created in the midst of this, and Heather was asked to come on staff to work specifically with children.

Six years later, Heather serves as secretary on the MCT board, as well as the educational coordinator and one



of the co-directors. This requires her to teach and direct, as well as decide and plan productions. Her job also entails heading up the summer camps and acting in the organization's various performances. However, she does not act alone. The other co-director, Chad Nichols, is her professional other half. Together the two have agreed to never take on a children's show alone — ever! In addition to her work behind the scenes, Heather has performed in countless shows and has been acting



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for a total of 17 years. "I do what I do because of my love for theater," she said, "but also because of my love of people and kids."

Brandon was young when he became involved with MCT, and Heather actually worked as his acting coach for many years. She has watched him grow and evolve over the years, while helping him develop and master his craft. "I am moved when I watch him in action," Heather said. When Brandon takes the stage, it's obvious to see he is at home.

To Brandon, acting is more than just an enjoyable hobby. "For me," he said, "acting is my life, my passion." In his lifelong experience, Brandon has been in a total of 14 performances with MCT and over 60 in his career, ranging from comedy to drama to musicals. His favorite of all these, though, was his most recent performance in *Cheaper by the Dozen* in which he played Frank. The role was a perfect opportunity for him to exhibit his ability to be serious and funny at the same time.

"He was simply amazing!" Heather enthused. "For an actor to be able to seamlessly move back and forth from humor to such seriousness is absolutely amazing."

Likewise, Heather views acting as much more than assuming a character role and taking the stage in costume. Instead, acting is a way to interconnect with others. "When I play a role, I am communicating a story," she explained. "I am sharing a message with others." Heather's recent performance as Shelby in *Steel Magnolias* was especially significant. She identified with Shelby's life experiences related to

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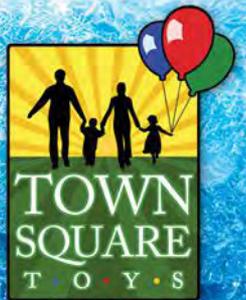
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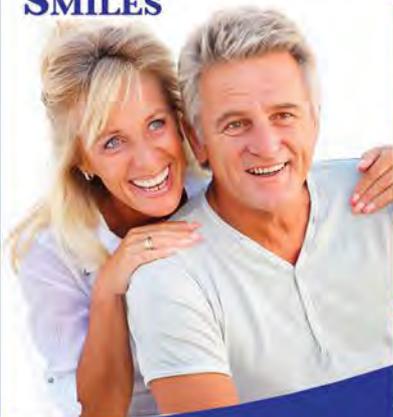
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terminal illness, something Heather had personally dealt with in her own life. "I was able to show such a gratitude for life by playing the role of Shelby even though she dies. I was there to tell a story and portray a beautiful message because of her character."

While Brandon enjoys drama, he also appreciates those works with a nice blending of comedy and drama, because "life is both." Without a mixture of both tragedy and comedic relief, life wouldn't be much fun, and that's the beauty of drama. This genre gives Brandon the perfect opportunities to exercise his acting dexterity and employ his instinctive ability to read a role and pull together the character. On the other hand, Heather prefers musicals, because they offer society a type of hope since they are uplifting and usually fun. "The society in which we live needs to be given hope and encouragement," she said, "and I want to give that back. I can do that through acting and directing."

When it comes to meaning in life, people seek out those things that help them grow as an individual, provide them with pleasurable experiences and result in a sense of both gratitude and pride. For Heather and Brandon, acting is all of these things and more. When it comes to purposeful enjoyment in life for these two, acting is all they need. In the end, they are who they are because of acting. **NOW**

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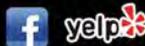
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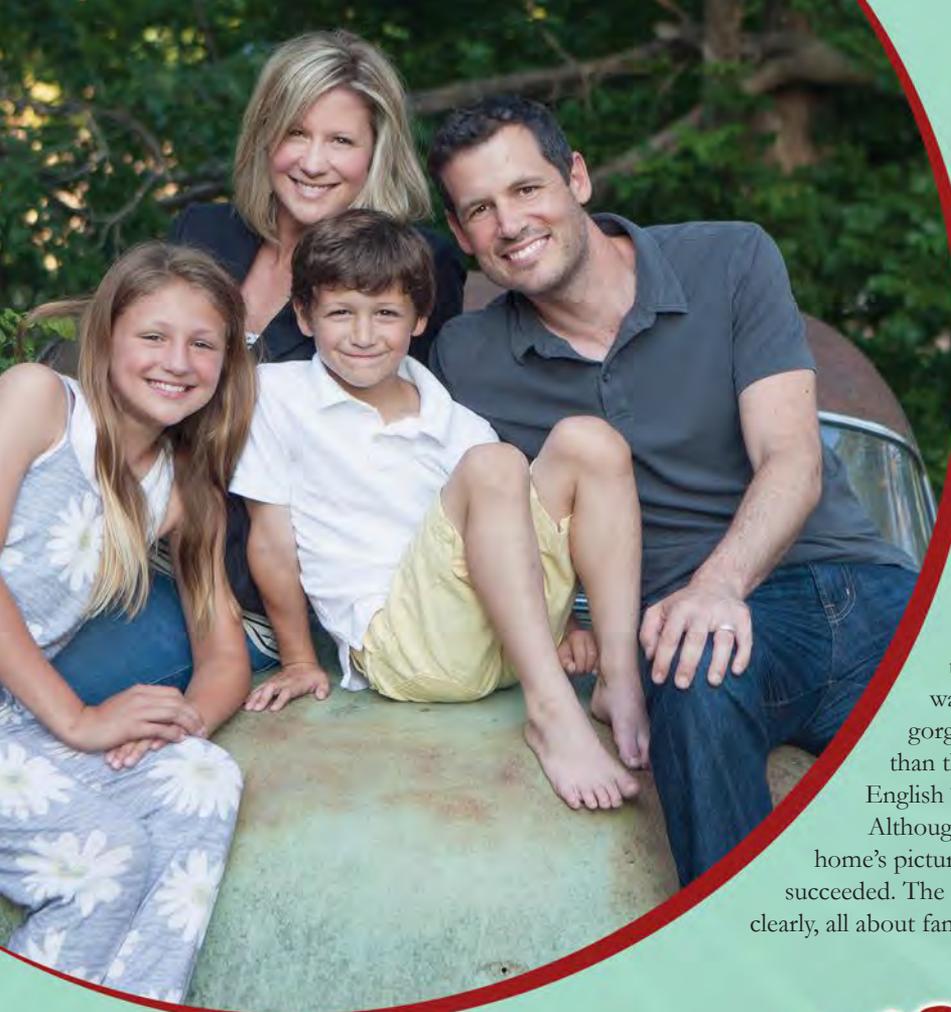
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Josh and Andrea Roberts, with daughter, Ava, and son, Sawyer, moved into their elegant 3,700-square-foot home three years ago. Previously, their home had been much smaller. Even though they loved their home, their kids were getting bigger. “We were kind of falling out of it,” Josh said.

“After we moved in, the former owner stopped by to say he had hoped a young family would buy the home,” Andrea explained. “He asked if he could pray for us. We all stood in the living room, and I cried,” she smiled. “I feel like this house is a blessing.” Their new older home was built in 1977, and in addition to its circular drive, gorgeous landscaping and backyard pool with no less than three cascading waterfalls, the stunning, two-story English Tudor borders a manicured golf course.

Although it’s tough to imagine an interior equal to the home’s picture-perfect curb appeal, the Roberts have more than succeeded. The inside is stunning, cheerful, open and charming, and clearly, all about family. “Perfect, for us, is a house that can be lived in,”

Collecting Moments

— By Carolyn Wills



At Home With Josh and Andrea Roberts



Andrea smiled. "As much as we love it, our house is really about family and all the people around it."

The first floor is largely dedicated to an open kitchen flanked by a breakfast nook on one side and a slightly formal dining area on the other, all facing an enormous great room. Custom floors are tiled in large squares of heavy porcelain, and the kitchen is essentially one long wall of cream-colored, chocolate-glazed custom cabinetry with granite countertops, stainless steel appliances, travertine backsplash and a built-in desk. Separating the kitchen from the great room is a huge granite-topped island extended with a long table-height peninsula.

"The kitchen is my favorite room," Andrea said. "I love that it's so open. When friends and family are here, a group usually gathers in the kitchen, while others watch television in the great room," she smiled. "It's wonderful to cook and still be together. For me, the greatest compliment about our house is that it feels like a lived-in home. Our family is who we are, which is never perfect, and we're always a fun mess!"

The great room, featuring oversized furniture, an entertainment wall of wood-stained custom cabinetry in the same style as the kitchen plus the convenience of a small guest bathroom, is arranged for easy viewing of the big flat-screen television or as a spacious social area. "Andrea hosted her Bible study group here with 26 women, and there was still room for more," Josh said. "This house has everything we looked for and more. We wanted trees, two stories and a pool."

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composed, professionally captured family photos. “We like to decorate with candid photos,” Josh said. “Rather than collecting antiques or memorabilia, we collect moments.”

A spacious living room centers the main floor with a large open fireplace accessible to a small office toward the front of the house. The family office has hand-scraped wood floors, custom

wall and ceiling moldings and a grouping of family photos printed on three large canvases.

A beautiful master suite completes the downstairs floor plan. “When we first saw this house, we fell in love with its charm and character,” Andrea smiled. “I grew up in Missouri surrounded by older homes and lots of trees, so it reminded me of home.” Other than decorating, adding

a wood floor to the office and installing a stone walkway in the backyard, they haven’t needed to change much.

“Ava especially wanted a two-story house,” Josh said. Upstairs are three bedrooms and a media room. The media room is painted black and is complete with a huge screen and theater seating. “It’s where sleepovers happen,” he added.

One of the three upstairs bedrooms



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was initially a large playroom until it magically transformed into Ava's room. "Sawyer, Josh and I surprised Ava. She came home from visiting her grandparents to find her new bedroom," Andrea grinned. They had painted the former playroom turquoise and tangerine and transformed it into a 10-year-old's dream with places for her American Girl doll collection and her own corner office. Ava's previous bedroom is now the upstairs guest/playroom.

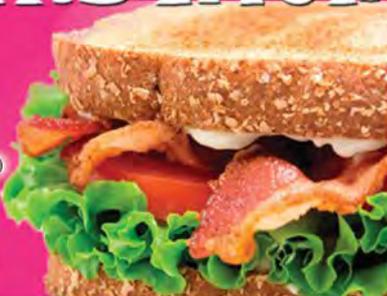
From the basketball hoop, soccer trophies and sign saying *Thank heaven for little boys*, it's easy to see the third bedroom belongs to 7-year-old Sawyer. The second story also includes two bathrooms.

Above a collection of family photos in the Roberts' breakfast room is the saying:



Live well, laugh often, love much. A better theme for this family would be hard to find. By day, Josh is vice principal at Donna Shepard Intermediate School. By night, he's a member of the long-running Four Day Weekend comedy troupe in Fort Worth, and on Sundays, he helps lead worship at First Methodist Mansfield. Andrea is an English language learner teacher at Mary Jo Sheppard Elementary School. Ava is a talented fourth-grader

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with a love for sports and music and with aspirations toward teaching, songwriting, performing or all three. Sawyer is an active second-grader, devoted athlete and is also pretty fond of his older sister. "They're partners-in-crime," Andrea grinned. "They stick together."

Two more family members and partners-in-crime in their own right include their 1-year-old Terrier/Dachshund/Chihuahua mix, Nigel, and 6-year-old Labrador/Rhodesian Ridgeback/Greyhound mix, Ridgeley. Nigel was a lost puppy from the golf course, who came to spend the night and stayed.

Josh and Andrea have been married for 12 years now. Josh was finishing his student teaching and Andrea had just started her first teaching job when they met. "On our first date, we went to the Four Day Weekend comedy show," Andrea said, mentioning that this was before Josh was in the cast. "We quickly made the surprise discovery that we were both born in the tiny town of Farmington, had never met and didn't know any of the same people. How was that possible?" Ten minutes into confusion, the answer was finally revealed. Andrea hailed from Farmington, Missouri, and Josh from Farmington, New Mexico.

"I remember when Andrea would say, 'You're so funny,'" Josh smiled. "Now she says 'You *think* you're so funny.'"

This family knows the meaning of living well, laughing often and loving much. "We joke a lot, spend time watching old movies, traveling together to the woods and the beach and doing a lot of nothing," Josh said.

"Our home is all about family," Andrea added, "and is truly a blessing." **NOW**



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This Girl is a *Home Run*



— By Mikaela Mathews



Born a natural athlete, in large part due to her collegiate football-playing dad, Baylea Higgs has an exciting future, not only on the field, but off of it, too. For as long as Baylea can remember, softball has been her life. She started with a small bat and glove in the first grade and loved going to practice. At the age of 10, a select coach saw her skills on the field and asked for her to join his team. During that time, Baylea honed her skills and learned about the game. And her hard work paid off. This fall, Baylea will join the ranks on the first-ever softball team at Texas A&M University-Commerce, not only as a stellar athlete, but also as a mature and hard-working young adult.

For Baylea, softball meant more than hitting a ball and running bases. “Softball built up my confidence, because I was a shy kid,” she shared. “I had a lot of good coaches who were really encouraging, and they liked my athletic ability. I always looked forward to going to practice or a game.”

Sherrie Higgs, Baylea’s mother, agrees with the transformation softball brought to her daughter’s life.



“She wouldn’t go meet people, but put her on the softball field, and she would shine,” she smiled.

At Timberview High School, Baylea joined the varsity team her freshman year and quickly became one of the leaders. “During the games, I always try to help anybody out if they need it. I know sometimes I get down on myself if I mess up or strike out, so I want to help out anybody else who is down,” she explained.

As a center field player, Baylea likened her position to being captain of the outfield. “We have to talk to the left fielder and the right fielder beside us and back each of them up, so there’s a lot of running involved,” she explained. “From my spot on the field, I can see everyone from a good angle. So I have to talk to my short stop, second baseman and pitcher, too, if she needs it.” But Baylea didn’t always maintain this position. Early in her softball career, she played short stop and felt comfortable there. After getting to her high school team, however, her coach saw an unused talent and put her in the outfield. “I had never played center field before, so I didn’t know if I was going to like it,” she said. “But I picked it up easily, and now I love it.”

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Throughout her high school career, Baylea could always count on her mom to be sitting in the stands, cheering her on. “I have sat through every game, but one,” Sherrie shared. “Every weekend, we were gone. Since softball plays through the summer, the games were hot. But, I enjoyed it. I came home, drenched in sweat, but I loved it. I just love the game.”

Sherrie is also grateful for the positive influence softball has had on her daughter. “She shines out there on the field,” she beamed. “She’s just like a lightning bolt out there, running in outfield, and she’s so fun to watch. It’s been my pleasure to watch her. She’s a good kid and has been a blessing.”

Baylea’s athletic ability and love for sports can largely be attributed to her dad who played for Texas Christian University. “We’re a sports family. We all like it,” Baylea explained. “My dad and I definitely have a bond over sports. I loved going to TCU games with him, because he’s an alumni and would tell stories of when he was on the field.”



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Baylea continued her dad's tradition of collegiate athletics when she signed to play at Texas A&M University-Commerce. "I always wanted to play in college. I wouldn't have paid money or traveled every weekend in high school if I didn't want to play in college," she explained. Initially, Baylea was approached by Coach Richie Bruister at Texas Woman's University and agreed verbally for her to join his team.

However, a few months after their agreement, Coach Bruister called Baylea with some news. "He said, 'Let me tell you before you hear about it in the news. I switched colleges, but my offer still stands with you if you want to come with me,'" Sherrie said. "So, we went and visited Coach Bruister's new college, A&M-Commerce, and Baylea fell in love with it. It's more of a college experience there. She's really in love with sports, and she wanted the experience of going to different



"Softball built up my confidence, because I was a shy kid. I had a lot of good coaches who were really encouraging, and they liked my athletic ability. I always looked forward to going to practice or a game."



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college games.” Because Baylea only had a verbal agreement with TWU, moving over to A&M-Commerce was no problem.

Although Baylea is excited to be playing on a college team, she’s also looking forward to making some records as a player on the first softball team at A&M-Commerce. “They have built a really nice facility for the team that will be ready by the time Baylea gets there,” Sherrie explained.

Baylea is quick to acknowledge the outstanding coaches who have made her who she is today. “I had a lot of good coaches throughout my years. They built a good foundation in me, besides what my parents instilled in me. I had a lot of moments where I would get frustrated with the sport, but they would always encourage me,” she shared. Coach Tim Taylor was her first select coach, and Baylea considers him almost a second dad.

Coach Tony Fitzgerald also contributed to her success by teaching her a new technique called “slapping,” where batters take a few steps before swinging with their left arm. The technique was very new for Baylea, since she hit with her right, but Coach Fitzgerald morphed her into a slapper. “I knew how to play the game, but

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he taught me the next level and how to get college coaches' attentions," she shared.

After college, Baylea hopes to still incorporate sports in her life as a coach and teacher. "I love kids and sports, so I want to be around both," she shared. "I've been helping teach elementary kids with Ready, Set, Teach, and I just love my kids." She plans on majoring in education.

Ultimately, Baylea's favorite part of the game is the character it has developed in her during stressful situations. "During a suspenseful moment, when all the pressure is on you — I like those moments best, because I shut everything off and focus," she explained. "I like being in that moment, because it brings out a lot of myself and tells me who I am. I like to be in those critical situations, because I know that I can do it, and I believe in myself?" **NOW**

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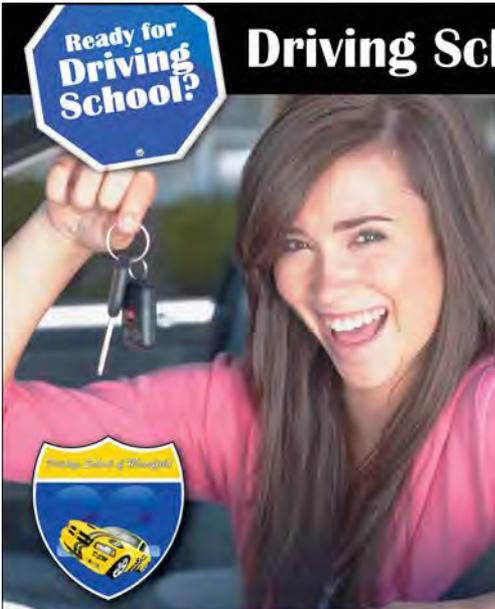
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The Versatile Stripe

— By Amy Walton

It's no secret that trends between home design and fashion are closely related. They not only coordinate in color scheme, but also in pattern. For example, I'm sure we've all noticed the pastel trend over this past year — coral and mint to be exact. We've also noticed the chevron trend, first in home design, and then quickly transitioning into the fashion realm. As much as I love recent trends, I want to focus on a more classic style that also has the ability to remain trendy — stripes.

Stripes have been thought of as rather traditional, and in a lot of cases, I have to agree. I love the look of a classic stripe, no matter what the color or application. In the classic form, a stripe can be displayed in a horizontal or vertical manner. In home decor, you might consider a vertically hung stripe on a set of drapes to be more formal; whereas, a horizontal, bulky stripe might feel a bit more casual. Another big trend has been placing thick horizontal stripes on the interior walls of your home. I love this trend, because rather than using wallpaper to create interest on your wall, you are simply using paint. For this application, a smoother finish on your walls is ideal, as a textured surface might interfere with achieving clean paint lines.

Color also plays a big part in the look of a classic stripe. A lighter fabric or color choice may come off as more approachable and

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welcoming compared to a bolder black and white print. If you are looking for a more intense look, a high contrast stripe might be the choice for you. To achieve a calm, relaxed feel, lean toward lighter tones with less contrast between the hues of your stripes. The same theory applies to fashion. A softer color scheme will represent a lighthearted and relaxed look as opposed to a bold print, which will signify a larger, more obvious fashion statement. These bold prints have been seen anywhere from maxi dresses to handbags. They are especially popular during the summer months in both high contrast hues and tone-on-tone applications.

But stripes don't have to take on a traditional appearance. They can have a very trendy, casual feel, as well. For example, when applied to a nautical or beach theme, stripes undergo



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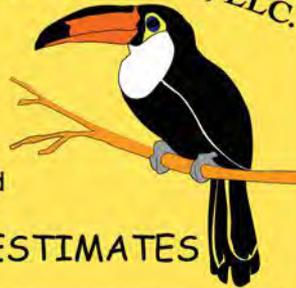


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The nautical theme doesn't stop with home design either. We have been seeing this trend transition into fashion for quite



some time. Beginning with gold jewelry making its comeback a few years ago, it then became more obvious. Anchors became prevalent in jewelry, and stripes, while they have always been popular in fashion, began pairing up with the



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Stripes have been thought of as rather traditional, and in a lot of cases, I have to agree. I love the look of a classic stripe, no matter what the color or application.



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nautical aesthetic, as well. The nautical stripe has been applied to many things such as nail art, handbags, shoes, shorts — you name it. Even pairing a classic striped sundress with an anchor charm bracelet or ring has become trendy. Pair that outfit with a neutral canvas wedge and red clutch and you've got yourself your next barbecue ensemble.

Aside from the nautical theme, stripes have many other ways of taking on a casual look. I call this the rustic stripe. You might see this in the French country design style, along with the shabby chic and cottage look. I've also seen this rustic stripe in the industrial style. You can find them printed on a kitchen towel, a grain sack pillow or even roughly painted

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on a table or dresser as a charming accent. You won't find clean lines when observing this type of style, but the imperfect elements of the rustic stripe are where you find its true charm.

The rustic stripe can also be seen in the fashion world when applied to items such as the boyfriend jean, or even when printed on a summer scarf or canvas tote. I love pairing a bright and simple summer dress with a more rugged "rough around the edges" striped scarf. The contrast of those two elements creates interest and meaning behind an otherwise simple look.

It's hard to imagine that such a simple aesthetic can be applied to so many different design styles, but it's true. Whether you are going for the latest trendy look or the traditional classic look, stripes have the ability to take on many roles. What I find most appealing about stripes is their ability to never go out of style. They are timeless in so many ways and will always find a way to make a statement in both interior design and fashion. **NOW**

Editor's note: For more information, please visit www.theblissfulbee.com.

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— By *Mikaela Mathews*

At Honda of Burleson, potential car buyers can rest easy when shopping for a vehicle. “We want our customers to know they will be taken care of here,” explained Victor Bernal, general manager at Honda of Burleson.

With Honda of Burleson, it’s not all just talk. The dealership has the award to back it up. They were awarded the 2013 Honda President’s Award, an award only given to the top Honda dealerships in the country. “This accolade represents achievements in overall excellence in customer service and being a top sales leader in the Metroplex,” according to their website. Honda of Burleson was one of the few Honda dealerships in the Metroplex to win this award.

Walking into Honda of Burleson, customers are quickly

greeted by a salesman willing to help them through the process of purchasing a vehicle. Their inventory includes Honda, Acura, Lexus, Nissan, Dodge, Ford and other makes. Customers can also expect helpful financing options to aid in making a vehicle affordable.

Clients who purchase a new Honda from the dealership are given a Lifetime Powertrain Warranty at no cost that covers most major components for as long as they own the vehicle. Full service is also provided for Honda owners who might need an oil change, battery replacement or a more serious fix, such as brake or engine repair. Express service is available, as well, to perform quick services with no appointment necessary.

The dealership offers a savings card membership that gives car

owners 10-percent off service, parts and accessories until the savings reach \$1,000. For activating the card, a complimentary car wash and vacuum and \$24.95 oil and filter change are offered. Cards are available on their website.

To make their customers as comfortable as possible, even while their car is being serviced, Honda of Burleson offers a large and comfortable waiting room, equipped with TVs and made-fresh-daily pastries. Magazines line the coffee tables, and customers can recline on plush couches.

“We want our customers to know they will be taken care of here.”

Protecting the environment is also important to Honda of Burleson. Recently, the dealership was one of only three Honda dealerships in the country and the only one in Texas to win the Platinum Award for Environmental Leadership. Earth-saving practices such as technologies that reduce energy consumption, LEED-approved ground surfaces, energy-saving compact fluorescent light bulbs and more earned the dealership this prestigious award.

By combining award-winning service with an award-winning product, customers can feel confident in their buying experience. The 2013 Honda Accord has won numerous awards for its safety and eco-friendliness, including the *Green Car Journal's* 2014 Green Car of the Year Award, *Car and Driver's* 10 Best List and *Kelley Blue Book's* 2014 Best Resale Value Award. Honda of Burleson has several Honda Accords in stock, ready for young and old alike.

Even though Honda of Burleson is only three years old, the dealership has had resounding success. “My staff of automotive professionals, our excellent facility and superior product work together to create the catalyst for our success,” Victor explained. “Our marketing is friendly and honest, with a focus on Honda’s distinct qualities and value.” **NOW**

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Best friends, Mariyann and Butter, enjoy a night out at Crossroads Christian Church.



Diane Frye with son, Bryan, share smiles at granddaughter, Piper's, dance performance.



Kristen sells her beautiful candles and soaps at the Mansfield Farmer's Market.



Mansfield residents Dax Pemperton, Heather Guzman and Carol McKenna serve tastes of Pemperton Cellars voigner at the Granbury Wine Walk.



Supporters and members of the Wesley Mission Center celebrate with a ribbon cutting.



Susan Lutrell, Taca Thornton and Jerry Ritchie take a break from building a Habitat for Humanity home.



Volunteers from Walnut Ridge Baptist donate bags of food to Feed the Kids.



The Vaughn family is ready for church on Sunday morning.



Jenny Conrad and Dina Elliot enjoy the Ultimate Healing Kit Breast Cancer Fundraiser at an Air Hog game at Quik Trip Stadium.



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Advantages of Being Over 50?

It is of some consolation to now be eligible for discounts for movies, travel and hotel expenses, as well as being able to order off the senior menu at the local café. There are some additional significant financial incentives for the over 50 set.

Beginning at age 50, you are permitted to make “catch up contributions” to your 401(k) and individual retirement accounts. In 2014, we’re allowed to contribute an extra \$5,500 for a total of \$23,000 to our 401(k) or 403(b). IRA contributions can be \$6,500 or \$1,000 more than permitted for our junior workers. Estimates are that only about half of those eligible take advantage of the provision.

At age 55, if you retire, quit or are laid off, you may make withdrawals from your 401(k) without the 10 percent penalty (age 50 for public safety personnel). Prior to rolling your 401(k) into an IRA, you need to decide whether you will need access to these funds. Some 401(k)s allow for in-service withdrawals after a certain age. Your particular case will be detailed in your plan document or check with your plan administrator.

You are also eligible at age 55 to make an additional contribution to a Health Savings Account (HSA), if applicable. That is an extra \$1,000 for 2014. These funds may be used for

health-related expenses, now or later in life. Funds in an HSA have more advantages later, if they are not needed or used for health purposes now.

At age 59 1/2, you may start making withdrawals, penalty free, from most retirement accounts. If you are still working, max out contributions to your 401(k), since you can withdrawal funds tomorrow, if circumstances change. You are also exempt from the rule that requires funds converted to a Roth IRA to remain in place for five years.

You are permitted to withdrawal funds from your Health Savings Account (HSA) for nonmedical reasons without the 20 percent penalty, once you reach age 65. Of course, you will pay your ordinary tax rate on such withdrawals.

At Age 70 1/2, mandatory withdrawals begin to be an annual requirement. It has been allowed in the past to transfer funds from an IRA directly to a charity, but so far this provision has not been renewed for 2014.

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Caught in the Food Crosshairs

— By Betty Tryon, BSN

The evening ended as a memorable affair — just not the way the hostess envisioned. Within a few hours after eating, one by one, the guests began to feel ill with nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Only those who ate the salad became sick. In looking for what might have caused this, it was discovered that the salad ingredients were chopped on the same cutting board on which the raw chicken had been prepared. In cleaning the cutting board after using it for the chicken, the cook thought a quick rinse was good enough, but it was not.

Cross-contamination of food is a public health concern. Food cross-contamination is the act of transferring germs from one object to another. Using the same cutting board in the kitchen for raw meats, bread, fruit and salads is an accident waiting to happen. To be safe, save one board for raw meats and another one for vegetables and fruits. Considering the distressing consequences, it is a relatively easy thing to do to help protect your health. Even under the strictest cleaning practices, juices from raw meat can be harbored in cracks and tiny crevices on the board. Toss a board that has too many scars on the surface. When cleaning your meat board, use hot soapy water, follow up with a disinfectant and rinse thoroughly.

The quest to avoid cross-contamination of food begins even before the food ends up in your kitchen. If you use re-usable grocery tote bags, keep them clean. In tote bags and plastic bags, try not to

carry your fresh produce in the same bag you carry raw meat. In other words, don't package your hamburger meat with your tomatoes.

After rinsing your fresh produce, store it in a clean container rather than returning it to its original container. As always, wash hands thoroughly before preparing food. Another precaution is to wear gloves if you have a wound on your hand. The gloves protect you by providing a barrier to keep your wound from becoming contaminated, and they prevent germs from getting on your food. Storing eggs can be risky business. They should be kept in the original container and placed on refrigerator shelves, rather than in the egg containers on the fridge door. The constant opening and closing of the door jostles them and exposes them to fluctuating temperatures which reduces their quality.

When grilling this summer, employ the same rules you use in your kitchen. Never put cooked meat on the same plate or pan that held uncooked meat. Keep grilling utensils separate between raw food and cooked food. And remember, always wash your hands after handling raw meat. **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.

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July 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

Nurture Nature Summer Mini Camp: 9:30-11:30 a.m., Oliver Nature Park, 1650 Matlock Rd. \$40/child or \$38/child with current MAC Card. For more information, visit www.olivernaturepark.com.

July 3

Mansfield's Rockin' 4th of July: 7:00-10:00 p.m., Big League Dreams, 500 Heritage Pkwy. Free. Enjoy family activities like a game truck, bounce houses, ice slide and smash car. Also featuring All Funk Radio Show. For more information, visit www.mansfieldsgotgame.com.

July 5

Water and Aquatic Life: 10:00-11:00 a.m., Oliver Nature Park, 1650 Matlock Rd. \$5/child or \$3/child with current MAC card. Learn about water and aquatic life. For more information, visit www.olivernaturepark.com.

July 5, 12, 19, 26

Mansfield Farmer's Market: 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., 206 Smith St. For more information, visit

www.mansfieldfarmersmarket.net or contact Rex Wenger at rwenger@prodigy.net

July 7 — 10

WRKidz Basketball Camp: 8:30-11:30 a.m. for kindergarten through third grade; 12:30-3:30 p.m. for fourth through sixth grade, Walnut Ridge Baptist Church, 1201 SH 360. \$60. For more information or to register, visit www.wrkidz.com.

July 11

Nature Craft Friday: 9:00-10:00 a.m., McClendon Park, 799 W. Broad St. \$5/child or \$3/child with current MAC Card. For more information, visit www.olivernaturepark.com.

July 14 — 17

Jungle Safari VBS: 6:30-8:30 p.m., Mansfield Bible Church, 2351 Country Club Dr. For children age three to completed fifth grade. For more information or to register, visit www.mbcchurch.com.

July 18

Nature Craft Friday: 9:00-10:00 a.m., Oliver Nature Park, 1650 Matlock Rd. \$5/child or

\$3/child with current MAC Card. For more information, visit www.olivernaturepark.com.

July 21 — 24

WRKidz Volleyball Camp: 8:30-11:30 a.m. for kindergarten through third grade; 12:30-3:30 p.m. for fourth through sixth grade, Walnut Ridge Baptist Church, 1201 SH 360. \$60. For more information or to register, visit www.wrkidz.com.

July 25

Nature Craft Friday: 9:00-10:00 a.m., Oliver Nature Park, 1650 Matlock Rd. \$5/child or \$3/child with current MAC Card. For more information, visit www.olivernaturepark.com.

July 26

Night Hike with a Naturalist: 8:30-9:30 p.m., Oliver Nature Park, 1650 Matlock Rd. \$7/attendent or \$5/attendent with current MAC card. For more information or to register, visit www.olivernaturepark.com.

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your current event details to mikaela.mathews@nonmagazines.com.

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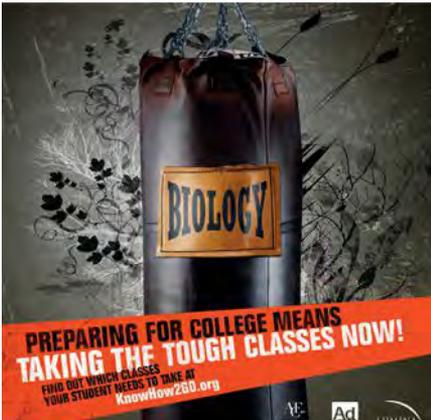
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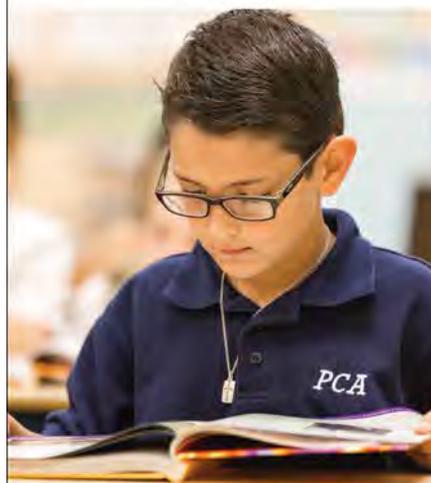


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In the Kitchen With Micheal Cupples

— *By Mikaela Mathews*

A librarian, mother, wife and down-home cook, Micheal Cupples knows the importance of cooking. “I’m a good Southern girl, so cooking plays into almost every aspect of my life. Happy, sad, good or bad times, food is always a huge part,” she shared. “Cooking is one of the ways I express myself, and it’s definitely one of the ways I express love for my family.”

When she got married, her father-in-law even put together a cookbook of family recipes through several generations. “He interviewed all the grandmas, aunts and cousins and gathered all kinds of great family recipes from both sides of the family. Lots of those people are gone now, but their treasured recipes remain with me.” **NOW**

Chicken Bacon Ranch Salad

- 1 head romaine lettuce
- 1 cucumber, peeled, sliced and quartered
- 1 container grape tomatoes, sliced in halves
- 1 1/2 cups sharp cheddar cheese, shredded
- 1/2 to 3/4 cup bacon bits
- 2 rotisserie chicken breasts, chopped
- 1 cup Hidden Valley Light Ranch Dressing
- 1/2 cup Paula Deen’s Sugar Free BBQ Sauce

1. Wash, dry and chop lettuce. Add to salad bowl or platter. Top with cucumber and tomatoes. Layer cheese, bacon bits and chicken on top of salad.
2. In a separate bowl, mix ranch dressing with BBQ sauce. Add to salad and serve.

Not-so-plain BBQ Chicken

- 6 6-oz. chicken breasts
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 bell pepper, sliced
- 1 onion, sliced
- 1 tsp. coconut oil
- 6 Tbsp. Paula Deen’s Sugar Free BBQ Sauce (divided use)
- 6 Tbsp. bacon bits (divided use)
- 1 1/2 cups cheddar cheese, shredded (divided use)

1. Preheat oven to 350 F
2. Season chicken with salt and pepper. Place chicken in skillet and grill for 10-15 minutes. Place skillet in oven for 15-20 minutes to ensure that they are fully cooked.
3. While chicken is grilling, sauté bell pepper and onion in coconut oil until both are tender. Divide into 6 servings.

4. Place grilled chicken on a lined baking sheet. Top each breast with BBQ sauce, 1 tsp. bacon bits, 1/4 cup cheese and 1 serving of bell pepper/onion mix. Bake 15-20 minutes.

Chicken Alfredo Lasagna

- 1 15-oz. tub ricotta cheese
- 2 tsp. Italian seasoning
- 1 tsp. basil
- 2 tsp. garlic salt
- 2 cups Italian-blend cheese, shredded (divided use)
- 2 rotisserie chicken breasts, cooked and chopped
- 1 15-oz. jar light Alfredo sauce
- 3 zucchinis

1. In a bowl, mix first 4 ingredients with 1 cup Italian blend cheese; mix well.
2. In another bowl, mix chicken and Alfredo sauce. Mix well.
3. Cut both ends off the zucchinis, cut through the middle, then slice thinly long ways. Spray a 9x9-inch baking dish with cooking spray; layer some of zucchini on the bottom. Top with a layer of chicken and sauce mixture. Place another layer of zucchini on top. Top with a layer of ricotta mixture. Continue layering until ingredients are gone. Top with remaining cheese and bake for 45 minutes; uncover last 15 minutes. Serve.

Cheese “Crackers”

- 2 slices Kraft Deli Deluxe 2% cheese slices
- 1 Tbsp. favorite seasoning

1. Divide each cheese slice into 9 pieces and place on parchment paper. This is very important because the cheese will stick if not on parchment. Top with seasoning of choice.
2. Microwave for 65 seconds. Great with favorite salsa or guacamole!

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

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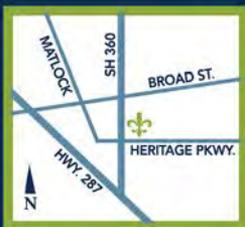
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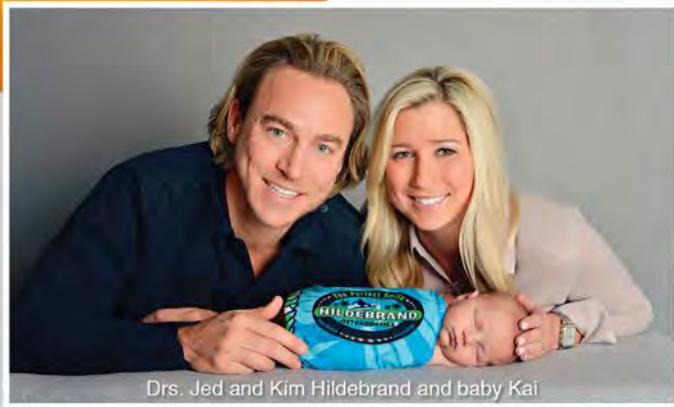


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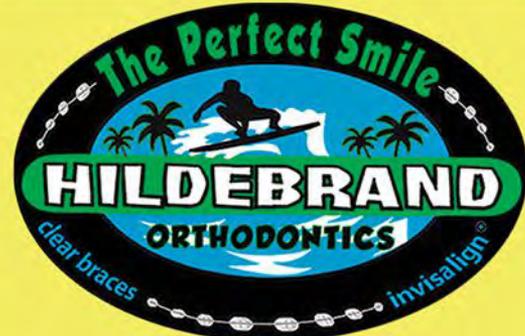
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