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COOKING IN THE FAST LANE



Brandon Scawthorn Winner of Food Network’s “Rachael vs. Guy: Kids Cook-Off” | Host of “Cooking In The Fast Lane”

FOOD NETWORK CHEF ON THE RISE

The day before a Los Angeles-based Food Network producer was scheduled to meet with 11-year-old Kyle resident about his future on the network’s new series “Rachael vs. Guy: Kids Cook-Off” Scawthorn broke his right thumb.

After about a year of correspondence with Food Network representatives, it was now time for Scawthorn to cook his staple dish, Macho Tacos, for the producer, who would inevitably decide whether he became a contestant on the show.

“First thing (Scawthorn) did was grab a tomato and knife, and he started to chop,” said Yelena Scawthorn,

Brandon’s mom. “He says, ‘Momma, I can do it.’ It’s not gonna stop him.” And it didn’t stop Brandon Scawthorn.

A few months later, thumb healed, Scawthorn became the youngest of eight kid chef contestants on the four part miniseries, “Rachael vs. Guy: Kids Cook-Off,” which aired in September.

“I did it, I did it, I did it; I’m gonna be on TV,” Scawthorn said of his reaction to being selected. He had a similar reaction to winning the contest and hosting his own Food Network Web series in New York City.

Scawthorn and his mom, who had entered him into

the contest after finding an ambiguous posting on a modeling website, flew to L.A. for two weeks last summer for the show's production.

"Guy and Rachael are, like, really great people; fun to be with, very encouraging about kids cooking," said Scawthorn, adding that he's still in contact with Food Network representatives and fellow contestant Jack Witherspoon. "I'm glad they were our mentors."

Cooking has been a mom-son bonding activity since Scawthorn was three years old. It began with stirring the bowl, then adding and measuring ingredients. Yelena Scawthorn, from Ukraine, said she was raised in a society where it was normal for children to cook.

Even before Brandon Scawthorn began helping Yelena in the kitchen he was inventing dishes with fake fruits and vegetables, clad in an apron and chef's hat, in a child's size plastic replica, she said. "It was all natural; it wasn't something I was pushing him to do," Yelena Scawthorn said.

Although Brandon Scawthorn said he can't remember what dish he made first, he enjoys cooking Kobe beef, Korean ribs with fried rice and recently kimchee, which he made on the show.

The experience on the show and his prize Web series provided Scawthorn with opportunities to make and eat new kinds of foods, like \$15 chocolate truffles from New York City's Chelsea Market. "It was really exciting, a great experience," Scawthorn said.

Chelsea Market was the setting for Scawthorn's first Web series episode, shot about two weeks after the contest, where he got to cook for "Chopped" judge Scott Conant.

Scawthorn also got to cook 20-minute meals for people attending Food Network's New York City Wine & Food Festival and those walking the city's streets.

Food Network may have picked the Web series' locations, but Scawthorn said he chose the food, like salmon and fried rice.

"A bunch of people all over Twitter were saying 'It looks like Rachael Ray has a new competitor with quick meals,'" Scawthorn said.



BURRITOS, LOVE & TRAGEDY

According to the arrest warrant, in the early hours of October 17, Daniel Brewster Stillwell heaved a brick through the sliding glass door of his ex-girlfriend Hailey Nicholls' apartment. But his course of actions were more destructive than any maintenance crew were prepared to fix. After finding her and Jesse Robledo in the townhouse apartment, Stillwell shot and killed both of his former Chipotle co-workers with a gun he had stolen from his roommate. From there, Stillwell phoned that same roommate in one last hope of owning up to the gruesome decision, who immediately alerted the police. But by the time authorities reached the young man behind the double homicide, he had already driven his car off a cliff—the Devil's Backbone.

RIVER DOCUMENTARY


Yakona, which means "rising water" in the native Tonkawa language, is a documentary about the San Marcos River by Paul Collins and his collaborators at Texas State. The film walks us through the visceral experience of the river, inspiring the historical aspects we may not have realized in the past. Yakona's concept began when Collins originally came to school in 2000 and has been in the process of shooting since September 2010. After a screening earlier this year and an online contribution fund to help with making the film festively suiting, the people behind this locally made documentary hope to see success from the Sundance Film Festival come January.



CLEAN AIR ORDINANCE

As of June 2014, you'll have to put those cigarettes out for good. In a 6-1 vote a few months ago, the San Marcos City Council decided to move forward when regulating a stricter smoking ordinance. The ordinance will ban smoking in bars, restaurants, park space and on grounds operated by the City. This is the first time the city council has revisited the clean air ordinance since its establishment in 1995. The revisions will be similar to those of Austin and San Antonio—and will allow for businesses that don't have outdoor seating to move forward with building a patio and be smoke-free inside by January 2015.



 **GROWTH** A dirty word to some, but like it or not, the latest U.S. Census Bureau report named San Marcos the nation's fastest growing city, citing a 4.9 percent population increase between July 2011 and July 2012. Many question the validity of the numbers but the increase in population growth in Central Texas is definitely genuine. The real trend most city council members would love to get a handle on is how to grow the city's middle class.

 **GHOST PUB** Once upon a time there sat an old pub nestled alongside a dashing river. Alright, it really wasn't that long ago, but the River Pub closed its doors to their San Marcos faithful and has yet to reopen them since their promised reopening in September. It's now December and locals are still waiting. In the spirit of *The Little Engine That Could*, we predict they reopen their doors by this time next year. I think I can, I think I can!



LADIES LOVE THEM SOME TEXAS STATE

The Texas State female freshman population saw a slight increase this year, having surpassed their male counterparts for the third consecutive year. It seems males just can't commit. Male retention rates at Texas State have steadily dropped, reflecting a statewide trend, although numbers from universities across the state have lower female percentages than Texas State. Academic programs at the university have been created to combat this problem like Student Affairs' "First Friday" meetings that allow male students to meet and have discussions.