



**BBQ!** Vision with a Purpose held their annual Bob Wrinkle Memorial Hunters BBQ on Saturday evening, November 5, in Robert Lee. In addition to the meal, raffles were also held.

Dawn cooks - well. And she loves to share her recipes on a social network most septuagenarians are as likely to use as a skateboard.

"I don't have the big head," says a bemused Dawn. "I'm not feeding off it - but I am enjoying it. I never thought people would be so interested in watching a grandma cook."

And yet, here she is, a TikTok star who has posted 173 videos and boasts more than 200,000 followers; her three-minute video on how to make pickles has 1.9 million views. At a follower's request, she filmed a shorter video with her 17-year-old grandson, Caden, and his friend, sampling the pickles, crunching loudly and looking happy. It got 166,800 views. Heck, a TikTok of her riding a tractor got 42,400 hits.

If there's one thing about a grandmother being a TikTok star that makes sense, it's that Dawn loves to talk. A visitor could come with 30 minutes' worth of questions and leave four hours later with a notebook full of scribbling and a belly full of her delicious chocolate zucchini cake. (Yes, her recipe is on TikTok.)

A question about her cooking might lead to a yarn about Willie, the ill-fated family pig. One about how many critters she has on her farm turns into a tale of Squeaky, a sturdy, good-tempered feral cat who likes to kill gophers and drag them above an open door in her garage, much to the dismay of her two dogs - and anyone standing there when the door comes down.

Outside the house, cobbled together from homes and parts of homes from the 1800s and filled with antiques of the same period, is the rest of the L-shaped, 95-acre spread. There's the potting shed, a garden, a log cabin and an older structure

surrounded by an overhanging porch that served as a commercial kitchen when Dawn and her late husband, Doug, gave a go at a business - a result of her fame as the Pimento Cheese Queen of Bellville, a story for another day - but now houses antiques and a refrigerator she stocks with farm eggs that neighbors can stop by and pick up on the honor system. Out back is the barn, a chicken coop, pasture, pond and the home of her daughter, Amy Owens.

Amy sparked Dawn's TikTok adventure because she wanted others to enjoy her mom's prowess in the kitchen.

"Well, I've always wanted to do that," Amy says, "because she's really good at telling people what to do. Anybody will tell you that."

And Dawn could always cook. Anybody will tell you that, too.

In October 2020, Doug passed away. He spent 31 years as an office and then business manager at San Bernard Electric Cooperative before retiring in 2005, and he slowly succumbed to dementia. "It was the worst time of my life," Dawn says.

Looking to lift her mother's spirits, Amy suggested producing videos for YouTube and later Facebook. Dawn admits the videos were long and unfocused, but it was valuable experience.

One evening about a year ago, Amy, Caden and Dawn were eating supper when Caden said, "You should put them on TikTok. That's where the videos go crazy."

So they posted a blackberry custard pie video, and it has since gotten over 54,000 views. "And we're like, whoa," Amy recalls.

Her fame took off from there, with Dawn getting to share her passion with strangers all over

the world.

"I don't care whether you believe it or not, but God puts stuff on your heart," she says. For her, that has almost always been cooking.

As a child, Dawn spent summers on her Aunt Mary's farm. Mary was a superb cook, and Dawn was inspired. Dawn's mom "cooked because she had to," so Dawn became the self-taught family chef-in-residence.

Enter TikTok, where creators can make short videos, ranging from a few seconds to up to 10

minutes, often set to music and modified by filters. It skews young - almost half its users are under 25.

After making its international debut four years ago, TikTok has captured short attention spans among Americans. The platform boasts 3.5 billion mobile app downloads worldwide. It's a popular platform for businesses, marketing and entertainers trying to make it big and people who create memes, attempt unusual challenges and generally try to go viral.

*(Continued on next page)*

## FLOYD C. PETITT INSURANCE

**LIFE • HEALTH • GROUP HEALTH  
LONG TERM CARE • ANNUITIES  
MEDICARE SUPPLEMENTS  
AUTO • HOME • COMMERCIAL**

**WE PUT YOU FIRST!**

**YOU'RE NOT A NUMBER TO US, BUT A MEMBER OF OUR FAMILY!**

**(325) 223-1563**

**5002 KNICKERBOCKER**

**SAN ANGELO, TEXAS 76904**

[floyd@floydpetittinsurance.com](mailto:floyd@floydpetittinsurance.com)



### PROPANE SERVICE

Wheat Energy Services has recently purchased the propane operations of Askins Propane in Robert Lee/Bronte and will continue the Askins tradition of providing quality propane service in Coke, Nolan, and surrounding counties. Please give us a call or come see us for all of your delivered propane, propane cylinder fills, delivered fuels, or other related needs.

**PROPANE • TANKS • DIESEL  
GASOLINE • LUBRICANTS**

**Robert Lee - 202 Commerce - (325) 453-2060**

**Bronte - Highway 277 North**

**Winters - 104 E. Parsonage - (325) 754-4555**

**Abilene - 101 Locust - (325) 673-4613**

[www.wheatenergy.net](http://www.wheatenergy.net)

[dwheat@wheatenergy.net](mailto:dwheat@wheatenergy.net)

Thank you to all who supported me and voted for me in the General Election.

**Russell Johnson**  
Coke County  
Justice of the Peace

Paid Political Advertisement by Russell Johnson