

RENAE'S TEXAS UPDATES

CHATS ABOUT LONE STAR LIFE

BOOK 1



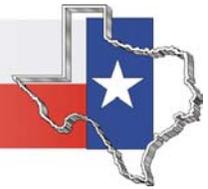
By Renae Tolbert

Chat about life, chat about God, about people, about families, friends, and the world in general. These email updates to friends and family are warm, witty, and easy to get lost in. They bring you right into Renae's life and make you feel like you're one of the family.



Renaë's
TEXAS UPDATES

by Renaë Tolbert



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Author's Foreword

Dear Readers,

While living in Redding, California, I met and married my knight in shining armor. The man who would “Take me away from it all.” And take me away, he did.

Herb's passion for higher education and a desire to expand his horizons meant moving from a town I loved, a church family who'd been my pillar of strength, and the many friends I'd met in the restaurant business.

We found ourselves on a journey to Little Elm, Texas in July, 2000. Have you ever moved away after living somewhere for twenty years? What a life change that was!

As I said my goodbyes to family and friends, they all made me promise to “Keep in touch!” And I did.

These updates began as just that: updates, to “Keep in touch.” I wrote them faithfully. Each Sunday night, I wrote about my week, the bugs, the road debris and our trials of moving.

I decided people had probably been updated enough, so I stopped writing. I received tons of emails asking, “Rena, Did I get dropped off your email list? I didn't get your update last week!” So, I made a commitment to continue the updates indefinitely. Here it is, the year 2004 and I still write weekly updates!

I'm always excited to share them with others. As you read, I pray you are inspired to love deeper, laugh harder and seek God passionately.

Enjoy!
Rena





TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	v
A Note on the Acrobat PDF Format	vi
Chapter 1 Texas Bug Update and Other Funny Things!	1
Chapter 2 Our New Church Home In Texas!	7
Chapter 3 The Texas Carwash	11
Chapter 4 This Week In Texas.....	17
Chapter 5 Texas Heat, You've All Heard	23
A Note From the Publisher	28

NOTE: This is a free preview version of ***Renae's Texas Updates***. It contains the first five of the 89 chapters you will get when you purchase both volumes.

We hope you enjoy this preview, and we hope you'll come to <http://www.snicko.com/books/renae.htm> to purchase both full volumes of this book.

Enjoy this version with our compliments.





INTRODUCTION

It is such an honor to write an introduction for this book, *Renae's Texas Updates*. I have only known Renae a relatively short time (less than a year), yet through these updates, I feel I have known her for decades.

These updates are actually a series of weekly (more-or-less) email newsletters Renae has sent to her circle of friends and to her family. This circle has grown over the years to the point that now (early 2004) she is sending to well over one hundred people!

The newsletters are really just chat. Chat about life, about God, about people, about families, friends, and the world in general. They are warm, witty, and easy to get lost in. They bring you right into her life and make you feel like you're one of the family.

Renae is a bubbly, dynamic, God-centered devoted wife who has been through more than any of us would want to imagine. She shares her experiences in a way that is totally unselfconscious, somehow managing to combine a down-home, earthy, warm, common-sense approach with a sense of innocence we all can learn from.

It's been such a pleasure to edit these updates, to be able to read them and contribute in some small measure to sharing them with you.

I hope you get from these updates the same delight I do.

David P. Miller
Editor

***Editor's Note:** Renae's Updates are reproduced here just as in her original emails, so to give you the sense of a personal letter, just to you. In a sense, it is just that. All of it, in the form we have chosen to leave it here, is from the heart, and all of it is part of the character of the work.*

Renae didn't write these to be graded. She didn't write them for a teacher, or for a boss. She wrote them to her friends. Now, by reading this book, you are by extension a friend as well. Enjoy.

All opinions expressed in this book are those of the author. All references to people and products are made with the utmost of consideration and respect. Any brand names mentioned are trademarked by their respective companies.

If you would like to subscribe to Renae's free periodic updates, please see our website at <http://www.snicker.com/books/renae.htm> -- if the website isn't up yet, try again in a few weeks.



A Note on the Acrobat PDF Format

Links: Whenever you see [bright blue underlined print](#), that's usually a "link" that will jump you to another place in this document. You can tell when something is a link because when you move your mouse cursor over it, the cursor shape changes to a pointing finger.

The [Table of Contents](#), besides being a directory to the rest of the book, also consists of links. If you click on a Chapter Title, you will jump directly to that chapter.

Jumping: If you click your mouse button when the cursor shape is a pointing finger, your screen will jump to show the text at the new location.

Returning from a Jump: Once you've finished reading at the new location, you can return to where you jumped from by clicking the left-pointing *arrow* button (not the left-pointing triangle) at the top of your Acrobat Reader screen. PC users can use a keyboard shortcut by holding the Alt key and pressing the left arrow button on the keyboard.

Resizing the Text: One of the great things about Adobe PDF files is you can resize them so the text is as big or as small as you want. You do this by clicking the button that has a magnifying glass on it, or click on the **View** menu at the top of the screen.

My favorite magnification is "Fit Width" because it fits the whole page left to right, so the only scrolling you need to do is down (and up, if you like).

The tradeoff with magnification is that if you make it bigger so it's easier to read, then you don't get as much text on the screen, so you have to scroll more.

Fortunately, this isn't a problem in Acrobat reader. You can scroll by clicking and dragging with the mouse, or by pressing the down arrow key or page down key on your keyboard. Of course, the up arrow and page up keys work as well. If you have a scroll wheel on your mouse, that should also scroll the document.

About the Design of This Ebook:

Very wide columns of text are more difficult to read than narrower columns. This is why you find multi-column text in books and magazines. Two or more columns are very easy to read -- in print.

But when you're reading on-screen, multiple columns are a royal pain to handle. Scroll down to the bottom of the first column, then scroll back up to find the top of that same page for the second column, and -- OH WAIT! I scrolled too far! DRAT!

Therefore, we have designed this book with a single column of text, so you only have to scroll in one direction. Down.

We have also tried to keep the width of the column and the "paragraphization" (if you'll pardon the coined word) arranged so you can comfortably read the text.

We hope you agree, and have a wonderful time reading this ebook. If you have comments about the formatting of this book, or suggestions as to how to make future ebooks even better, please send them to weo1@snicko.com

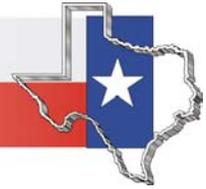
Enjoy





Chapter 1 Texas Bug Update and Other Funny Things!

07/28/2000



Well, here we are, another update. Hope y'all aren't tired of them. I enjoy writing them!

Let's see, where shall I begin?

I told you in a previous update that people tend to lose various things off of their vehicles around here. Well, I have been keepin' a list, just for fun, as I see or hear on the radio, the 'things' that are on the road. Here is my list from just the past week.

1. A squashed turtle. (These are BIG turtles! One day, I saw a whole family of 4 crossing the country road out here.)
2. Herb FINALLY got to see his first dead armadillo on the side of the road. I really wanted to stop and take a digital picture for y'all, but I figured I'd end up laying there with the smelly thing if I did that. So you'll have to use your imagination.

3. Carpet is a biggie out here. I don't know why, but it is not unusual to run across a roll of carpet on the road, this time it was on the Dallas Parkway.
4. I heard on the news the other day that there was a house, an old house on the road, being moved. I have seen that before and I'm sure y'all have too. But during traffic hours?

When my husband Herb and I came out here to look for a home to buy, there were 2 houses parked in the middle of a wide median, where a two-lane splits off. Our realtor wasn't sure if they were abandoned or what, but go figure. That should have clued us in on the road debris problem here!

5. We went for a ride the other day and there was the cutest little baby skunk. He didn't make it across the road of course, not with these drivers. It was sooo tiny!
6. Yesterday—now, this one took the cake—on the side of the Dallas Parkway was a giant stuffed Black and Yellow Penguin!

Anyway, there's my road kill list for the week!

Now Herb and I have discussed at length how to rid ourselves of these grasshoppers. We decided to invest in a live chicken that will eat them. I'll let you know if we do that. But with the four cats next-door, I sort of worry they'll eat the chicken before the chicken eats one grasshopper!

The grasshoppers have calmed down quite a bit.

They're probably thirsting to death. We are on water rationing. We're only allowed to water from 7 to 9 on Tuesdays and Thursday nights. Absolutely no car washing, or anything.

Out here, we're supposed to water our foundations every day to prevent cracking, so it makes it tough to know what to do. The fine for watering outside that time frame is \$250.00. The reason is Little Elm is growing so fast that the water plant can't keep up yet, and to keep our water supply

safe for drinking, we have to ration until the new place is up and running.

Texas Bug Update:

The walking sticks are hiding from the heat, haven't seen one in a while.

We actually haven't had many bugs around the house. I chased one spider out of the house with the broom last night.

Speaking of spiders! The other night, I was looking through the sliding door for Weebles, my cat. I couldn't see her so I was straining to see through the screen, just really intensely looking PAST the screen to see her. I decided to open the it to see better, when I moved the screen, my eyes shifted to the screen, I realized that I was 2 inches face to face with a spider!

Oh my. It's just part of Texas I guess.

One day, I opened the sliding glass door and noticed something sort of squished between the metal frame and the door itself. It was sort of pink, and it had little legs. Eeeeeeeeeeeeeewww. So I got the ole broom and poked at it.

I thought it was a baby mouse. Well, it was this incredibly cute little GECKO! I had never seen a live Gecko. It had little brown spots and little suction feet. He scurried off across the patio, uninjured.

Weebles happened to be right there and she really wanted to catch it, but it got away. Geckos are good. They eat the things we don't want around our yards.

Speaking of mice, however, I saw something go into the neighbor's flowers one evening, so I went over to check it out. I'm so inquisitive. It ended up being a mouse. I felt so bad, I scared it right into the neighbor's garage! I tried to call and tell them, but then found out our phone was dead! That happens occasionally out here in the country.

Weebles is doing well. I haven't talked about our icky tasting water yet. Our water is terrible! I can't drink it at all!! it tastes like I am drinking a swimming pool full of chlorine. I can smell it from the toilets, the chlorine is so strong. So I buy my water in 2 gallon jugs.

Well, Weebles wouldn't drink water anymore. The only water she was drinking was the water she would lick off the bottom of the shower door if there was water there. I felt bad for her, but didn't know why she wouldn't drink her water from her bowl.

Several times I said, "I AM NOT giving the CAT bottled water!"

You guessed it. Weebles gets bottled water now, and she drinks it. That tells you how bad our water is! Herb says he doesn't even notice it, but he's the only one!



Renae helping open Foley's Dept. Store

Okay, the Job update. Foley's Department Store in Frisco finally opened to the Public as of last Wednesday! Our manager is awesome, I enjoy her enthusiasm. She's a great cheerleader, encourager and motivator!

We had \$266,000.00 in sales on our first day. \$3,000.00 of that were MY personal sales! I know, just a drop in the bucket, but wow! I love my job.

But someone PLEASE give me a remedy for sore aching feet! When I waitressed, I wore actual waitress shoes. They are the best, but for the business dress I have to wear, they

would look hideous. So I have to wear nice looking shoes. Unfortunately, they aren't the best for my feet.

I don't wear heels, just flats. Last night, I sat in the recliner with ice packs on my toes, then a hot bath, and then I rubbed them. They hurt SO bad. Someone help!

Herb is doing well. He's loving his job more all the time. We're having to adjust to my getting home at 7:30 PM and 10:30 PM, which I HATE. But the late night is only 2 times a week.

Still, we're having to adjust to eating dinner at 9 PM and going straight to bed. I'm not liking that at all.

I'm struggling with wanting to be home to greet him and have dinner ready on the table for him. That's my heart's desire.

BUT I can get better vision and dental insurance through my job than Herb can with his, plus there are a lot of other perks to my being full time with Foley's.

So it's a tradeoff for now, and we'll adjust.

The other day, both of us got treated to a lunch at work, so for dinner, we sat at the kitchen table with our little lunch sacks and ate our sack lunches for dinner!

The book project update: I knew the Lord would supply all my needs. He always does, He never fails us.

After my last update, I received several emails from people who have published books without spending a dime. They have given me their instructions on how to do this. What a blessing!

God doesn't always send money, but HE does send what we need!

Thanks to you who helped me out with that. I have printed these emails out and put them with my project so when the time comes, I'll have them at my fingertips!



Speaking of the book, I haven't had much time to work on it. But I've definitely started it and am enjoying it very much.



I've gone on long enough. Hope I have not forgotten anything.

I hope y'all have a great day and a great week!

**May the Lord Bless You and Keep you,
May His Face Shine Upon You!**

*Love,
Renaë, Herb and Weebles*



Chapter 2

Our New Church Home In Texas!

08/07/2000



HI ya'll!

I just wanted to do an update tonight because I'm so excited! There are a couple of things that have happened this week I want to share.

First, the mall has finally opened! It's the largest Mall in Northern Texas. It is quite incredible. The business the past few days has been equally incredible. There's so much money in this area.

It's not Redding, that's for sure. Complete opposite. This is a thriving area, growth everywhere, not much depression goin' on at all.

After working these past couple days, and being so very busy, my body literally aches head to toe. Mostly my toes!

Since my feet are giving me so much trouble, I compensate and walk wrong, so my hips are beginning to hurt real bad.

Even today, after being off work the all day, my hips ache and feel out of joint. This has led me to reconsider where I am occupationally and where I'm headed.

Even though we were busier than usual, the physical aspect of my job isn't going to be much less. There is a lot of walking on hard tile floors.

Herb reminded me that the front desk receptionist position is still open at LeTourneau University. This position was open when he interviewed for the job.

They can't fill it with a permanent person because it doesn't pay very well. Twenty grand a year. For Dallas, that's low for such a job.

They have had temporaries working for months.

It's a desk job, but has the people aspect that is perfect for me! I would talk to people that come in to inquire about the college. I'd answer the phone and talk to people, and there'd be very little admin work.

Best of all, not a lot of walking!

The perks are numerous, including being home at night, weekends off, holidays off, two weeks paid, paid medical insurance and retirement! Not to mention I'd get to ride to work with the man of my dreams.

As you know, I've been struggling with working nights and getting home after 10:30 PM. I hate not being home when Herb gets home from work. I want to be here for him, my marriage is my priority. I never ever want a job to come first.

Anyway, I'm waiting for Herb to find out if they will allow husbands and wives to work in the same office. If the answer is yes, I'm applying immediately.

Please pray!



Now, for the REAL exciting part of the week.



I've been a Nazarene since 1992. I loved my church in Redding and I have missed the church a lot.

We've been going to Chuck Swindoll's church, which is excellent teaching. But I really like music worship and more fellowship.

At Chuck's church, there's a lot of announcements and short worship time. They never sing after the service is over. It seems as though something is missing. Also, there were so many people there that even if you talk to someone, chances are, you won't see them again. There's probably 1000 or more each service.

Herb looked up the Church of the Nazarene this morning on the Internet to find one close to us. It just so happens, there IS one in the same office building as Chuck Swindoll's temporary offices.

Too funny.

We went there for the first time this morning. When we walked in, we were welcomed with the biggest most loving open arms. They had coffee, fruit, cookies, name tags, and everyone greeted us as if we'd been friends forever!

Then during the service, there was not one announcement, we went straight into worship time. The songs were easy and familiar.

It was a breath of fresh air.

The sermon was excellent. Then we had another time of singing and worship to close the service. We felt the presence of the Lord in that place.

There were only about twenty people in attendance. The church is only fifteen months old. It is growing and we are excited to become a part of it!



I'll skip the road kill and road debris section this time. Not much to report. No bug report either. We are under control!



I've done some thinking about the book idea. Actually, my thinking was spurred on by Diane Tutterow. I may turn it into a funny book about "The Anxiety Society." What do you think?

I don't seem to be able to write very serious stuff. I'd rather be funny.

I may get it done faster if I just do a funny book about anxiety and the situations we anxious people have in our daily lives and how silly they are!

Love you all,

May you be blessed daily and may the Lord be gracious unto you!

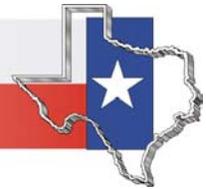
Love,

Renae, Herb and Weebles



Chapter 3 The Texas Carwash

08/20/2000



Well, Herb just left for Longview until tomorrow night. I miss him already.

This past weekend, had we not moved, we would have been at our Sacramento District Family Camp Meeting in Grass Valley, California. It was always a highlight of our year.

This year was a reunion year at Family Camp. There has always been a beautiful spirit at Family Camp, wonderful worship and preaching and fellowship. Sleeping in our big tent and praising God out in the open amphitheater under the beautiful trees and sky. We truly missed it. I am anxious to see how it went. If anyone reading this attended, please give me an update on how it went. Please?

We love our little church we are attending. It is called New Start Nazarene. We couldn't have found a more loving and accepting group of people. We are there to stay.

Funny how small this world is, though.

A couple years ago, in Redding, we had Scott and Julie Anderson as our music ministers. Well, now they are here in Texas, not far from us, and ironically, several of our church members at New Start came from Scott and Julie's church and we know them!

It's such a small world.

We are able to water again. Praise God. The poor little plants in front of our house are twigs. Dried up and eaten up by grasshoppers. The earth surrounding them is cracked up, looks like a mini desert.

We are thinking seriously that we should replace those plants with cactus.

They did tell us we could use soaker hoses for watering our foundations. So Herb and I went and bought a couple soaker hoses. We got home, he hooked them up. It was early day when he did that. We were getting ready to retire for the evening, pretty late, actually, and Herb says, "Do you think I should shut those off for the night?"

I said, "Shut what off?"

He said "the soaker hoses."

I laughed and laughed. My honey, he thought that perhaps we were supposed to just leave the soaker hoses on 24 hours a day! Boy, at that rate, they may as well let us water huh? It was pretty funny.

I never cease to be amused as I observe my surroundings here in Texas.

I was in the restroom at Borders Bookstore last night. As I washed my hands, I noticed this huge sign on the mirror that read. "ALL EMPLOYEES MUST WASH HANDS!"

Right below it was the same thing, IN BRAILLE!

Now wait. It's a book store, they don't carry Braille books, the sign is ON the mirror, why would the blind person touch the mirror? And would a blind person be working in a book store that doesn't sell Braille books?

Anyway, I got a kick out of it, sort of like seeing the Braille writing on the DRIVE UP ATM machines.

Scary, isn't it?

The **Road Debris** update:

Pillow on Dallas Parkway

Metal debris on the freeway

Leopard Skin Pants in the middle of Preston Road, which is high traffic.

The Road Kill this week entailed:

Two opossum

One armadillo

A Porcupine!

The funniest things can happen when we are alone. I laugh at myself at least several times a day, but you should have been at the car wash with me Wednesday!

We have this carwash at Texaco that is sooooo cool. It's like a driving through a giant toy! It's got the cool bright colored signs and looks like a toy a child would have.

Well, you get your gas, you select that you want your car washed, you drive around to the entry of the wash. There is always a line. Then you put your code in the machine and when it's your turn, you drive inside the giant toy!

When it wants you to stop, a loud buzzer goes off and a BIG red sign to the left with the word STOP lights up. Then you stop, hopefully.

The machine starts spitting out soap and it moves over the top of your car covering you with suds. Then, as the thing comes back over, it starts spraying water. There are so many gadgets on the thing, it's so fun to watch. There are big colored square signs on it that tell what it's doing, when it's in that mode, that particular sign flashes. Well, I was just really getting involved in watching the whole contraption and enthralled with it.

Next thing I know, my left elbow starts to feel wet.

I looked down and oh my gosh! You know those little window shade thingies you hang over your window to keep the sunlight out? Well, you have to take those OFF the window BEFORE you go through a car wash! I just had to laugh and laugh. The bad part was I had to roll the window DOWN an inch before I could get the shade off the window! It was so funny.

As for my job, well, it's getting tougher and tougher. I need to drop to part time or leave it behind. I would prefer the latter of the two and am working on it.

I don't know if it's an age thing or what, but even though I have found good shoes and my feet don't bother me much anymore, my hips kill me. Yesterday, I started having some tingling down my left leg, by the time I got off work, I had no feeling in my left foot.

I have applied for yet a different position at LeTourneau, where my husband, Herb is working. The position I talked about before was the receptionist position.

The verdict on Herb and I working together in the same office was 'no'.

Herb would have been too close to being my supervisor so I couldn't have gotten that position. But there is another position that is open that has nothing to do with Herb's department, and the supervisor of that position asked Herb if I would be interested in applying for that one! So I didn't waste any time. I have given them my app, my references, my resume, and hopefully by next update I will have some good news!

Herb said it could move slow though, so I have to be patient. I'll have to interview in Longview. They'll have to talk about it. Then probably another interview. Then meet the president, and hopefully get the job.

Please pray!

I would be a Financial Aid Counselor, helping people fill out their financial aid paperwork and helping them with questions they may have.



Weebles is doing well. However, she has been like an alarm clock for 4 mornings in a row waking us up. Since she doesn't go outside much, I



Renae's Best Friend

have been growing grass in the house for her to eat. (I know, she is spoiled!) But the funny thing is she is VERY possessive over her grass! If I go over to it and touch the grass, she runs over making this funny sound and pushing my hand away from her grass.

It's a hoot.

I know you will not believe this, but this morning, she was laying on her back on the floor and I was laying in bed talking to her. I said, "Wave hi kitty." And I waved my hand. SHE WAVED BACK! Just to make sure it was for real, I did it about a half dozen more times!

Herb even thinks she was copying me waving my hand! Only cat lovers will believe that, I know. But really, Herb does not give Weebles too much credit, and he could tell she was copying me wave.



I can't think of another thing to tell y'all about so I better close.

Life here is awesome, we love it. We DO miss our Redding friends and family though.



Joyce Kayser, I cried one day when I thought about you!

Gale Montgomery, I wish I were there to get counsel about my resume.

Alpha and JB (Herb's mom and dad), I truly miss Clam Chowder at Perko's on Friday nights.

Redding Naz Family, I REALLY miss you all. Your hugs, your smiles, the choir, prayer time and fellowship.

Lottie Lute, you are an incredible lady!

Ann Jordan, miss your silliness.

Rosemarie, miss our coffee, but glad we have IM! Hope yer enjoying my old job!

Robin Bankson, you are AOL! Praise LOD!

Love you all wish I could say something about each one.

Bye-bye, and I pray that God will be with you throughout your week.

**Finally, be Strong in the Lord,
and in the Strength of His might.
Put on the Full Armor of God,
that you may be able to
Stand Firm
Against the Schemes
of the Devil!**

Ephesians 5:10-11

Until next week!!

Love,

Renae, Herb and Weebles!



Chapter 4 This Week In Texas

08/27/2000



Hello all my friends, family and loved ones, even some of you I've never met in person. Isn't email an incredible way to keep in touch? I love it.

Speaking of email and its conveniences in our modern day, can you believe I applied for 5 jobs this week in my pajamas?

I can't say it was guilt free as I still have some 'old school' in me that says I need to GO look for a job. Pound the Pavement. Show my Interest Face to Face. Give the First Impression.

But nowadays, they don't want that, they want your resume 'on line.'

So I sat here and applied for jobs with the city of Lewisville, Flower Mound, Southwest Airlines, the Plano Newspaper, and an Optical office – in my 'run around the house' clothes!

Please be praying that none of them had the device to see me! I'll NEVER land a job!



This week in Texas has been rather uneventful. No road debris other than the normal trash.

They don't have the 'adopt a freeway' program here in Little Elm, so our roads are pretty trashy. Course, it would be pretty scary to walk along these farm roads picking up trash. You'd either be killed by a passing car or get bit by some kind of snake, scorpion, or something or 'nother in the gutter.

We haven't had rain in 57 days.

It's been about 100° to 102° daily. Which for us, isn't that big of a deal, we still feel like Redding heat is hotter. We do need rain though, the fields are looking pretty dry around here.

My kitty, oh my. She has discovered the mice in the field behind our house. I have received 2 sweet gifts from her this week. Last night, she woke me up 4 times, to eat, to go out, to come in, to go out.

Finally, I told Herb, next time she meows, it's YOUR turn! He mumbles from the depth of his sleepy head, "She's just like a kid!"

Yes, she really is. And it doesn't look like we are willing to change that.

We love her to death.

I mentioned before that we got an exterminator to exterminate our bugs. Well, he came last week. Funny thing about when the exterminator comes, the bugs come out even more for a day or two.

I noticed something very peculiar about the grasshoppers the day after he's been here. Whatever it is he uses must have "Grasshopper Leg Remover" in it.

Yes, true story. The LEGS of the grasshoppers fall off.

I am not exaggerating at all. After he comes, for several days, I'm sweeping grasshopper legs off the porch.

I did find what I thought was a millipede in the kitchen the other day, but the researcher that I am, looked it up on the internet, and from the pictures I saw there I am convinced that mine was NOT a millipede.

Whatever it was, it was creepy and long and skinny and had tons of legs and it acted like a cobra snake when I got close to it, rearing its head up with its feelers flailing around. I did gather it up in a paper towel and threw it away.

It was not a good thing, I'm sure.

If y'all remember a while back, I told you I submitted a story to Guideposts. Well, I got my letter back the other day.

Unfortunately, they are not going to publish my "Walk Home From School." If any of you truly want to read it, I can send it via email to you. But you will have to request it.

Warning. It is not a funny story like my updates.

Of course I felt rejected and dejected and worthless, but I picked myself, dusted myself off and decided to keep on living anyway.

This past week has been very tough for me emotionally.

I am not quite sure what's happening with me. I think I just haven't found 'my niche' yet and feel sort of like I don't belong anywhere yet, except for my new church.

I think I'm experiencing a huge letdown from my job at Foley's. It was actually a lot more fun when we were preparing to open!

Now that we are open and the dust has settled, it's slow and I dust and fold clothes and clean fitting rooms more than anything. Ugh!

It's not challenging or meaningful.

It's like I loved it one week and all of a sudden was bored and hated it the next. I don't get it.

I'm sure none of you do either. But that's what's happened.

I finally went to the doc for my back. She just gave me a bunch of drugs, which I didn't take, and now I think I ought to just seek out a good chiropractor. She gave me the week off work and that allowed me to job search, so that was good.

Speaking of jobs, it's a "no go" on the Financial Aid position at LeTourneau. The lady in charge said that Herb's position and the position that I applied for were both too prominent for both of us to be in the same office.

Yesterday, Herb and I were in a photo shoot for a brochure for LeTourneau. It was quite a neat thing to be involved in. It took us from 9 AM to 4:30 to shoot 5 different photos for a brochure! There is sooooo much involved in lighting and angles and positioning. It was an education all in itself.

How fun.

I think I'll be in 3 of the photos of the brochure. A classroom setting, a study group, and Herb and I are in one together as teacher and student falling in love. Just kidding!

The director did tell us we needed to try harder to NOT look at each other so amorously! I told her I didn't think it was possible, so we decided to start talking about our budget. That helped!

Let's see, the **Road Kill Update** this week is:

- 1 HUMONGOUS Raccoon
- 2 baby skunks (they don't seem to make it across the road too well)
- A bird.

Thanks to all who sent me a Family Camp update.

When Marilyn Hoke sent me hers, I started crying and didn't stop until Herb came home from work!

He called on the phone first and said, "Hi Honey, how are you today?"

I replied with, "I can't stop crying. waaaaaaaahhhh." He said, "Ok, I'm coming home as soon as I can," and he did.

I think I am just feeling a little homesick, and missing Family Camp was a huge, huge hard thing for me.

I think filling out all these resumes takes me down memory lane too much. I start remembering my days at Perko's, then the Dining Hall at Simpson where our ministry to the students began, and then the memories start flooding my mind and I start missing everyone so much.

Well, this update is getting a little too long and I don't want anyone to get tired of them. But I do want to add one little thing before I go.

We are so blessed by all your friendships. We love you and miss you.

Here's something that I began thinking about deeply this week.

In Revelation 4, the scriptures tell us about the Throne in Heaven. In verse 8 it says:

**Each of the four living creatures had six wings
and was covered with eyes all around
even under his wings.**

**Day and night they never stop saying:
"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty,
who was, and is, and is to come."**

They NEVER cease to praise him!

I can hardly wait to be worshipping at His feet,
crying Holy, Holy, Holy God. How awesome is Your name!
Have a wonderful week y'all, till next time!

Love,

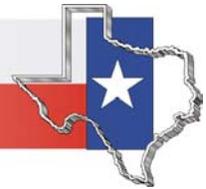
Renaë, Herb and Weebles





Chapter 5 Texas Heat, You've All Heard

09/05/2000



Hello Y'all!

Yeppers! It's hot here! 111° yesterday!

But since we moved here from Redding, we are quite used to it. And thankfully, the humidity has been 20% and below! So it's JUST about like Redding. However, it does seem as though we have gone many more consecutive days without a break from the 100's. I think it's going on the 4th week now above 100.

Well, first things first. I am no longer employed at Foley's. I exFOLEYated on Thursday last week. I felt like a thousand pounds were lifted from my shoulders.

My back is a bit better, but I am still having the numbness down my left leg. I have an appointment next Monday to see an orthopedic doctor.

My update last week must have revealed more than I thought in the way of how I'm doing. I have always been told that people can 'read' my facial expressions really well and can see if I have concerns or things going on. But now I find my EMAILs are just as easy to 'read' also!

I have received some wonderful counsel from some of those discerning individuals and I even received a phone call from a friend in Germany! Hey, I even got some Chinese Medicated Plaster Patches from a friend in Singapore for my sore back and shoulder!

I do want to thank all of those who picked up on some homesickness and loneliness in my last update and sent me so much love. It truly helped.

I spent an afternoon at a temp agency last week. WOW! I left pretty excited!

I was evaluated on many areas of my skills. I took lots of clerical tests, math, Windows 98, grammar, language, filing, error detection, etc. I scored over 90% on all of them! I even got 56 WPM on my typing, which really surprised me.

Of course, it shouldn't, since I am an email addict.

There's a company I am particularly interested in working for called eLoyalty. Some of you may have heard of it if you work for any of the companies they service. They act as a bridge between client and business, helping to solve customer service issues. It sounds just like the kind of company I would love to work for. The company has a wonderful web site for anyone who has time to just check it out.

[eLoyalty -- Solutions for Unbreakable Lifetime Relationships](#)

click the above link, or just type www.loyaltyco.com into your browser.

Even though it was a temp agency, she told me they are indeed looking for a permanent employee, and she FAXed my resume to them. We'll see.

It's not much farther from home than the mall was. So that would be good.

Sunday church was great! I truly think we have found the best church we could have found. It's just what we needed!

A lady came up to me who has seen us there about 3 times, she looked me square in the eye, put her hand on my shoulder and with the most sincere loving tone asked me, "Is that a new wig?"

I know I must have looked stunned, as if she asked when my baby is due! I didn't know what to say. Then Emmy, the pastor's wife, came to the rescue and told her I was a different person than who she thought I was! Evidently, she thought I was someone that is going through chemo for breast cancer.

It was a hoot. So to make her feel better, I laughed and said, "No, I've had this ole wig for about 43 years now!"

Poor little lady, she almost crawled under a chair to hide her red face!

Our pastor and his wife are true Australians, accent and all, you know. Australia had their "Superbowl" 2 Sundays ago. Our pastor's mom sent him the video so he could watch it, and we all stayed after church and watched the FINAL RUGBY game of the season! Not without a good ole Nazarene Pot luck though!

The cool thing was the team we were shouting for were...

THE BRONCOS!

Let me tell you, if you have NOT seen Rugby, it is fun, brutal, and makes our American men look a bit wimpy. They have no timeouts except when they 'scrum.' There are no pads, no helmets, no rests, no penalties for rough play, no COMMERCIALS! The entire game was over in 90 minutes!

And they run the whole time. They not only run, but they get kicked in the head, they get thrown, tossed, pulled, pushed, stomped on, you name it, it is BRUTAL!

The Broncos won! And it was so fun to watch.

We went to Oklahoma the other day, just for a drive. There was entirely too much road kill to keep track of, but I did capture a picture for all of you! I'm including it right here.

I thought I'd lost my mind when I told Herb to turn around so I could get in the middle of the road to take photos of this thing! But I had so much fun doing it!



The road debris hasn't been very interesting either. I do think, however, we had a lot of Firestone tire drivers out here! Big black tire treads are common to see all along our roads and freeways.

Our son, Leon and his wife, Crystal have a computer now! I'm so glad we can communicate by email now. It's hard living so far away from my baby. I miss him tons.

Well, I don't have any more to update you on.

**The fear of the Lord
is the beginning of wisdom,
and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.
For through me your days will be many,
and years will be added to your life.**

Proverbs 9:10

What an incredible promise huh?

Love, Renae, Herb and Weebles

Here's a bug blurb from our silent one—Herb!

I went out to the garage the other day to put on my old sneakers and felt something lumpy in my shoe. I promptly took my shoe off--you never know what kind of Texas critter might be in a shoe.

Well, there staring at me was a great big grasshopper. I proceeded to smack my shoe until it came out--then took the shoe and smashed that bad boy.

Unlike Renae, I'm not overly bothered by the bugs, but I do get tired of these cotton-pickin' grasshoppers everywhere, even in my shoe, for cryin' out loud.

Love y'all!

Herb

A Note From the Publisher

We hope you have immensely enjoyed this free preview of the first five chapters of ***Renae's Texas Updates***.

You're probably hooked by now.

As you have found, ***Renae's Texas Updates*** is better than any reality show. It truly is life. It is life as we all live it, with all the trials, all the hopes, all the anguish, all the joy.

When you buy both volumes of the full version of the book, you will be right there with Renae as she brings her own unique outlook of joy to the rest of her time in Texas.

You will hear her testimony of how she came to know God and Jesus Christ in a way that will touch your heart, but no way is it "preaching." You will hear of her alienation from and reconciliation with her Mom. You will experience with her the fear and grit of inner-city downtown Dallas in the middle of the night as you search for a towed-away vehicle. You will battle the Texas critters, the roadside trash, and the anguish of a job search.

But most of all, you will be amazed at the bright outlook, the way Renae keeps a cheery disposition in situations where you or I would scream in frustration. You will love the way she sees God's hand in even the most mundane events.

You will be a changed person when you read these volumes. And you'll love Renae for bringing out this change in you.

You can purchase the entire ***Renae's Texas Updates***, Volume 1 or Volume 2 for \$9.97 per volume, or \$17.95 for both at once. Simply go to <http://www.snicko.com/books/renae.htm> and follow the instructions.

Thanks for reading this preview. We look forward to hearing how much you liked the entire series.

