

SEPTEMBER 2026 | ISSUE NO. 1

At HOME in North Texas

with Jennifer Holland

Don't start with the house.
Start with your LIFE.





A note from Jennifer

North Texas is more than a collection of neighborhoods and listings. It is the way a commute shapes your day, the Main Street you return to, the people you trust when a storm rolls through, and the table where everyone gathers.

This first issue brings those pieces together: relocation guidance rooted in real life, a September visit to Grapevine, an honest chapter from my own roof inspection, Todd's favorite chili, and a grounded look at today's market.

My hope is simple: that every issue helps you feel a little more at home here - whether you have lived in North Texas for years or are only beginning to imagine the move.



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It's more than a house, it's your HOME.

Moving to North Texas? Don't Start With the House. Start With Your LIFE.



When people find out they are moving to North Texas, one of the first things they often do is start looking at houses online. I understand the temptation. But when I work with relocation clients, the house is not where I start. I start with their life.

The first thing I want to know is what is bringing you here. Is it a new job? A corporate relocation? A military move? Family? A lifestyle change? Those conversations give me a much better starting point than a list of houses ever could.

*The house is not
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LET'S TALK ABOUT THE REALITY OF LIVING HERE

Texas has no individual state income tax, which gets attention. But property taxes can be significant and vary considerably depending on where you buy. I want clients to understand that before they narrow the search - not after they fall in love with a house.

YOUR COMMUTE MATTERS. A LOT.

DFW is enormous. Where will you work, and what is the maximum commute you are willing to make on an ordinary Tuesday morning? A house may check every box, but if getting to and from work makes you miserable five days a week, we have not found the right home.

WHAT DOES LIFE LOOK LIKE WHEN YOU AREN'T WORKING?

Restaurants and activity? Golf? Parks and trails? Sports? Shopping? A quieter neighborhood? More space? Easy airport access? Those answers help us move from somewhere in DFW to communities that may fit the life you actually want.

I'VE BEEN THE PERSON MAKING THE MOVE

I have moved 17 times in 21 years, many of those as a military spouse. I have packed the boxes, learned new communities, found new services and tried to make an unfamiliar place feel like home. That experience shapes how I guide relocation clients today.

Finding the right house matters. Finding the right place for your life matters first.



PLANNING A MOVE TO NORTH TEXAS?

Let's create a relocation plan personalized around your work, priorities and life.



Grapevine: More Than a Festival Town



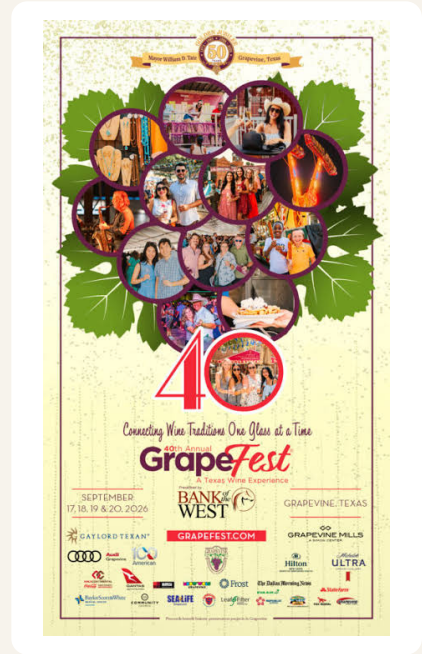
THE GRAPEVINE LIFESTYLE

Historic Main Street

If you are considering a move to North Texas, Grapevine is difficult to understand by looking at houses online. You need to experience it. Historic Main Street is filled with restaurants, locally owned shops and family activities, and there always seems to be something happening. September's GrapeFest is the perfect example.

Jennifer's favorites make the stop personal: Kiss It Good Buy for quality home furnishings, decor, artwork, lighting and accessories; Grapevine Olive Oil Company on Main Street; and Piaf Kitchen + Wine + Bar for Mediterranean-inspired food, drinks and a rooftop view. Easy DFW Airport access adds an everyday advantage.

Where you live determines a lot about how you live.



WHY GRAPEVINE WORKS

Historic Main Street | Year-round events | DFW Airport access



After the Storm

You do not have to know who to call. You need to know who to TRUST to ask.



JENNIFER, CARMON + KRISTI

Trusted vendor partners



After the recent North Texas storm, the sheer amount of hail, how long it lasted and the wind that came with it were enough reason to have my own roof inspected. I called Results Roofing, one of my trusted vendor partners.

My roof is only about six years old, but the damage led to a recommendation for replacement. They also warned that leaving it as-is could mean leaks when we get another significant ice storm.

So I am doing exactly what I would tell a client to do: gather good information, work with professionals I trust and take the process one step at a time. I will be filing my insurance claim Tuesday. Having handled claims in the past, I am intentional about when I begin that conversation.

Owning a home eventually means needing a roofer, plumber, electrician, HVAC company, inspector or another professional you have never needed before. You do not have to have all those people in your phone. Because I for SURE do. Part of my job does not end when we close.

Updates to follow.

JENNIFER'S TAKE

Trust the person who knows who to ask.

NEXT ISSUE: What happened after I filed the claim.

The Great Chili Debate: Beans or No Beans?



Todd's Favorite Chili

A smoky, Merlot-rich game-day pot

I realize I am taking a position here that could get me run out of Texas, but yes - there are beans in this chili. The die-hards can take it up with Todd because this is his favorite.

I grind my own hamburger, use both beef and pork sausage, and add a juicy red wine - usually Merlot. And you will notice a theme in the seasonings: smoked whenever possible.

Yes, there are beans. The die-hards can take it up with Todd.



Todd's Favorite Chili

INGREDIENTS

- 2 lb ground beef - I grind my own
- 1 lb pork sausage
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2-4 garlic cloves, minced
- 1-2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 cup Merlot
- 2 cans Goya kidney beans, drained + rinsed
- 1 can Goya pinto beans, drained + rinsed
- 2 cans Mexican-style stewed tomatoes, with juices
- 1 can Rotel, with juices
- 1/3 cup chili powder - at least half smoked
- 1 tsp cayenne
- 3-4 tsp ground cumin
- 2 tsp oregano
- 2 tsp smoked paprika
- Salt to taste

HOW I MAKE IT

- 1 Heat the olive oil in a large Dutch oven over medium heat.
- 2 Add the onion with a little salt. Cook until softened; the salt helps the onions sweat.
- 3 Add all spices to the onions. Bloom 30 seconds to 1 minute, stirring constantly, until fragrant.
- 4 Add beef and sausage. Break apart and cook until nicely browned.
- 5 Pour in the Merlot and cook about one minute.
- 6 Add tomatoes and Rotel with their juices, then the drained and rinsed beans.
- 7 Bring just to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer at least one hour.

TO SERVE

Todd likes rice and cornbread or tortilla chips. Add shredded cheese if you like. I add a dollop of sour cream to mine.



A Market That Rewards a Good Strategy

Know the market. Understand the client. Build the strategy around both.

If you have been watching North Texas real estate, you have probably noticed we are not operating in the frenzy of a few years ago. Homes can take longer to sell, buyers generally have more choices, and both sides have a little more time to make thoughtful decisions.

More options and a less frantic pace can give relocating buyers time to compare communities, understand commute and lifestyle differences, evaluate the actual cost of homeownership and make a decision based on what works for their life.

But that does not mean every house is a bargain or every seller is ready to negotiate. The opportunity is in understanding the individual property and the individual market. For sellers, preparation, condition and pricing matter more when buyers have choices.

Jennifer Holland

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(817) 542-7146 | jenniferholland.realtor@gmail.com

jenniferhollandrealtor.com

Brokerage profile: three23realty.com/jennifer-holland

