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AUGUST 2018

ACCELERATING EXPECTATIONS 2020

DeSoto ISD BTS 2018 Events Kick off This Month

With school starting August 20, parents need accurate and up-to-date information regarding back-to-school basics.

In-district students can register online at www.DeSotoISD.org/Enrollment.

Out-of-district students can apply for enrollment consideration at www.DeSotoISD.org/SelectiveEnrollment.

All 2018-2019 DeSoto ISD Back-to-School information including dress code, supply lists, event dates and more can be located at www.DeSotoISD.org/BacktoSchool

Reminder: All students are required to have clear backpacks for the upcoming school year. Backpacks cannot be mesh or have a color tint. Athletic bags are permitted for use upon issuance from a coach or sponsor and are subject to search and wand. Purses are permitted but are subject to search and wand.

Back-To-School Events

Back-to-School Fair: Aug. 4 from 9a to noon at DeSoto High School

Meet the Teacher Night: 2-6p, Aug. 17 at all district campuses

Goals Night:
6:30-8p, Aug. 28 for Middle Schools;
6:30-8p, Aug. 29 for Elementary;
6:30-8p, Aug. 30 at DHS

Families Invited to the 2018 DeSoto ISD Back-to-School Fair

Attend the 2018 DeSoto ISD Back-to-School Fair for free backpacks, free school supplies, free or low-cost immunizations and health screenings and more.

Join DeSoto ISD from 9am to noon, Saturday, August 4, at the DeSoto High School Academy Cafeteria and start this year off right!

For more information, contact Student and Administrative Support Services at 972.223.6666.

2018 Football Tickets On Sale

Season tickets are going for \$35 this year. Add a parking pass for an additional \$10. Save time and money and purchase in advance. Call 972.274.8118 for ticket information.

First Day of School: Aug 20

CALENDAR

- Ongoing: Registration & Enrollment
- Aug. 6-24: Residency Verification at Belt Line Conference Center
- Aug. 13: Regular Board Meeting
- Aug. 15: KJTMA Ribbon Cutting
- Aug. 17: Meet the Teacher Night
- Aug. 20: First Day of School
- Aug. 28-30: Goals Night Events

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Publisher, Connie Poirier | General Manager, Rick Hensley

EDITORIAL

*Managing Editor, Becky Walker | Southwest Editor, Adam Walker
Editorial Coordinator, Sandra Strong
Editorial Assistant, Rachel Smith | Writers, Sean Doerre . Rick Mauch
Virginia Riddle . Zachary R. Urquhart
Editor/Proofreader, Angel Morris*

GRAPHICS AND DESIGN

*Creative Director, Chris McCalla | Artists, Kristin Bato . Morgan Christensen
Martha Macias . Brande Morgan . Anthony Sarmienta*

PHOTOGRAPHY

*Photography Directors, Chris McCalla . Brande Morgan
Photographer, Shane Kirkpatrick*

ADVERTISING

*Advertising Representatives, Dustin Dauenhauer . Jennifer Henderson
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ON THE COVER

Students with special needs become valued employees in Cedar Hill.

Photo by
Shane Kirkpatrick.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Some things are bigger on the inside ...



Adam

Adam Walker
SouthwestNOW Editor
adam.walker@nowmagazines.com
(469) 285-2008

Two years ago, I was on Santa Cruz Island in Temotu Province in Solomon Islands. The entire nation only has 300,000 people. Temotu Province has fewer people than Duncanville! The provincial capital, Lata, has about 500 people, and the business district is a double row of shops in a single building.

I lived in a two-room leaf hut on stilts in a village of maybe 10 or 15 families. It was a 90-second walk to the bay on one side and 15 seconds to the vertical wall of rock up to the gardens on the other. A walk to the other side of the island, where they spoke a different language, was only a few hours. A tiny place.

It's the sort of place where a fisherman you haven't even met before stops you on the way to the outhouses in the morning to ask you if you'd like a freshly caught lobster for breakfast. People took me into their homes, gave me a local name and taught me everything from how to shuck a coconut to folktales and stories about their local dance form.

Like the deep blue bay that led to the vast Pacific Ocean, the hospitality was endless. You may not even be able to find it on a map, but it holds a huge place in my heart.

Never judge the inside by the outside!

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“

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HIGHEST QUALITY
OF LIFE THEY CAN.”

”

ON A MISSION

— By Rick Mauch

Tessa is 21 years old. She works at Chick-fil-A, and she volunteers at Lake Ridge Elementary School in Cedar Hill, assisting children with special needs. Tessa is herself a special needs person. She is also a product of the Cedar Hill Community Based Vocational Program through the Cedar Hill ISD. She is one of 11 students aged 18-22 in the class taught by Jennelle Dixson. “The class helped me a lot. Without it, I wouldn’t know what to do,” Tessa said.

“Tessa called me. She was so excited. She got a paycheck,” Jennelle said.

To which Tessa replied, “I told them I wanted more hours.”

Such enthusiasm is strong in the program, which is designed to help young adults with special needs acclimate into a life on their own. The program helps them find jobs, with job coaches who help them

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get situated, and it helps build their confidence for other life opportunities, such as volunteering at various places around the community.

For example, Sheddrick, 21, has been in the program all three years of its existence. He volunteers at area nursing homes, and he loves to share his experiences on social media. "It's a good experience, and it's fun," he said. "Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram — I like the followers. I have a whole bunch, so many I can't even count them."

The program teaches students about spending and saving money, including how to open and manage a bank account. They learn about the importance of credit reports and social skills. "A lot of times, they are



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not in a setting where they interact. We want them to like where they are,” Jennelle said. “For example, Tessa has dyslexia and deals with it by looking at words one at a time.”

Alex, 21, works with Tessa at Chick-fil-A. The program helped him learn to better interact with others. “Prior to coming here, I’d been homeschooled. When I came to this class, there were quite a few challenges,” he admitted. “Not that I can’t communicate, but over the past couple of months, I’ve been developing working skills.”

“Alex kept saying, ‘What if I can’t work? What if I can’t get a job?’” Jennelle said. “But he did. It was really about the social aspect.”

Although it was slow at first, more businesses in the community are opening to the idea of hiring employees with special needs. “If they’re just allowed to get in the door and get training, the business owners will see how great our students are,” Jennelle said. She gives businesses a list of the benefits that come with hiring individuals with disabilities. Those benefits include tax credits or other incentives. People with disabilities are reliable employees and have an overall higher job retention rate. Employees with disabilities are less likely to get into work-related accidents. Workers with



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disabilities increase diversity in the workplace, and they are as capable as anyone else.

"I think it's just a matter of educating our community on how our students can help," Jennelle said. "If they are given the chance, they can play their part in making a difference."

Among the businesses that have joined the program and brought students onboard are Chick-fil-A, Buffalo Wild Wings, Kroger, the International Museum of Cultures in Duncanville, Longhorn Central and the Cedar Hill ISD. Among the various places students also volunteer are the food pantry and Duncanville Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center.

This past year was Jennelle's first year to run the vocational program. She previously taught special needs students in the high school. "The students I had graduated and moved up to this," she said.

Jacoby, 19, is one of those students. He works at Buffalo Wild Wings. "She helped us get a job, and she helped make us better," he said. "And she works hard."

"She's a very good teacher," Tessa added. "She's a strong person, and she has a good heart. She's always looking out for us."

The program offers an opportunity for the community to see the students in a whole new light. "Our students are showing they can do it. They have a confidence they might not have had before, and if people will look, there is so much more to see. For example, when people see Jacoby, they see the wheelchair, but he was the Cedar Hill High School pushup champion," Jennelle said.



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Jennelle started teaching special needs students because she has a family member with special needs. She returned to school and got her master's degree. "My first job wasn't as a teacher. And when I graduated high school, that's not what I thought I'd be," she explained.

"I want to see my students have the highest quality of life they can," she said. "In the position I was in before (long-term care ombudsman), I saw adults in nursing homes having a poor quality of life."

Brittany Runnells is a job coach. She praised Jennelle and said the biggest reward is seeing the reactions from students. "I think it's wonderful what she's doing, and it's great for Cedar Hill. When I see the looks on the kids' faces, I feel so good," Brittany said.

Fellow job coach Issac Caston had similar thoughts. "I get the feeling that I helped make a difference, I mean really made a difference, and it's wonderful," he said.

Jennelle often hears from her students outside of class, even well into the evening. She knows she'll get calls and emails during the summer when the Texas Workforce Solutions temporarily takes over — and she welcomes each and every one. "I love knowing they feel like they are special, because they are," she said. "I love hearing from them and sharing their excitement about life. They leave my class at a certain age, but they never leave my heart." **NOW**

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LIVING LIFE WELL

— By Virginia Riddle

AT HOME WITH DUANE AND CHARMAINE SPENCER

Scroll work on the front door and shutters give Duane and Charmaine Spencer's home a hint of the very elegant flair with which they've decorated the house that's been their home since 2007. "We love living in this small neighborhood," Charmaine said. "We have community activities like progressive dinners and block parties. It's like having an extended family."

A native of Flint, Michigan, Duane is the homeowners' association president. "I like that our neighborhood is close to both Metroplex airports, shopping malls and basically everything we need," he added. Duane found Texas, like so many military service people, through his time spent in San Antonio with the Air Force. "I liked the temperature and stayed," he recalled. That was 1974.

Charmaine was born and grew up in San Antonio. "My family actually lived in the same neighborhood as Duane, but he and I never met while we were both living in San Antonio," she recalled. Years later, they met at their church, St. Luke Community United Methodist Church in Dallas. They've been married for 13 years.

Duane received his bachelor's degree in informational technology through San Antonio College and St. Mary's University, and earned





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Stevie Ortiz

Rachel Powers

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a master's degree from West Coast University. He retired from his IT position, which provided him vast travel opportunities, and now is a real estate investor with multiple holdings in the Metroplex.

Serving as a nurse practitioner at Parkland Health & Hospital System, Charmaine received her nursing degree at the University of the Incarnate Word. She received her master's degree in nursing from Texas Woman's University and has a master's in theology from Southern Methodist

University. Charmaine uses her professional experience as a speaker on STDs, lung cancer and AIDS at area churches. "This is my passion," she acknowledged. She serves as a grief counselor through their church and is the president of their Sunday school class' Good News Foundation, which gives college students money to buy textbooks.

Cruising has become another passion. "Our most exciting cruise has been through the Panama Canal," Duane remembered. "We're booked for

an upcoming cruise to Cuba." They've enjoyed a timeshare in Maui and have seen most of the United States.

"The last cruise we took, my mom went, and she had a great first-time experience," Charmaine added.

The couple has a son, Kyle, who works for American Airlines in New Jersey and a daughter, Amy, who lives in Glenn Heights and teaches biology at DeSoto High School. Charmaine's sister, another teacher, lives in Mesquite.

Their home's hub is the eat-in kitchen, which the couple completely



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remodeled recently, along with installing new downstairs flooring and a back-up generator. "I love to cook," Charmaine explained, "so I wanted a big gas stove and oven. We had to install a gas line. I collect cookbooks and read them like they were novels." The kitchen features three pantries, one of which holds her pots and pans. The backsplash, cabinets, island and lighting are all new. Charmaine stained the wood partition that divides the kitchen from the formal dining room, where a pineapple glass bowl, a gift from her mother, graces the table. "My sister has the same bowl," Charmaine said.

Times are spent together in the family room. "At Christmas, we set up our train set and snowmen village here," Charmaine said. "Visiting family and friends enjoy it." A sitting area with a fireplace adjoins the family room. "Duane was a widower before we met," Charmaine explained. "This beautiful mirror is from those days." She's furnished the sitting area in front of the fireplace with comfortable red chairs set around a cabinet that holds an antique village tea set. "I like antiques and furniture with wood carvings," she added. Elegant white pillars stand tall, supporting this open living space.

The library is filled with professional awards presented to the couple and photos of family members' college graduations. Duane's collection of chess boards is indicative of his passion for the game. A door leads to the backyard and the dogs. Razor and Mesa are theirs, and Zeus is one that they're "co-parenting" with their daughter.



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The master suite and office complete the downstairs of this home with its five bedrooms and four-and-a-half baths. "We wanted a home where the kids could use the upstairs with privacy," Charmaine explained. Duane's office is home to his magnet collection and antique chess pieces.

Charmaine's sewing machine occupies the upstairs landing, along with a sitting area. "Since my mom was a teacher and didn't have a lot of money, I started sewing my own clothes by age 11," she explained. Family photos grace these walls and the hallway.

Two of the upstairs bedrooms are named. Her Private Family Room allows Charmaine a quiet place from which she can write her church devotionals. With its daybed, it doubles as a guest bedroom. The Delta Girls Bedroom is decorated in the red and white colors and elephants of Charmaine's sorority Delta Sigma Theta. "My collection of elephants is a sign of good will from friends and family," she explained.

With all the space their home offers, friends and family love the kitchen best. "Our kitchen was a big selling point in our purchase. My wife cooks very well," Duane stated proudly.

Best memories in their home have been of kitchen-centered gatherings. "We've hosted a Sunday school class Christmas party annually since 2008," Charmaine recalled. "One year, we couldn't have it because of the kitchen remodel, and people were so disappointed. It now just gets bigger and bigger every year. Everyone looks forward to it." Here's wishing for many more good memories to be created in Duane and Charmaine's beautiful home. **NOW**



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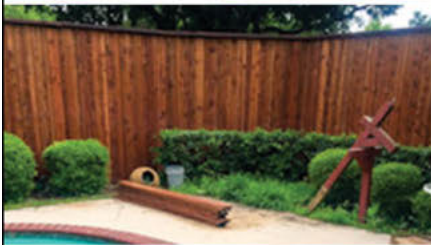
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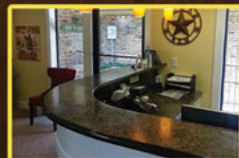
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Where Are They NOW?

Misty Harper Pearson

— By Adam Walker

When Misty Harper Pearson was a girl growing up in Duncanville and going to church in Midlothian, she dreamed of being an astronaut. “I was 12 years old, in seventh grade, I think, learning about space. John Glenn went up on the Space Shuttle. It was a big deal because he was in his 70s and a former senator. We watched it on the news in science class. I thought, *That’s cool. Maybe I could be an astronaut.* And at that moment God seemed to say, ‘Good plan!’”

Misty worked as a carhop at Sonic in high school and went to Space Camp one summer. Then she majored in engineering at college. “I love to learn how things work. While I was doing an internship with a space company, not NASA, I met a family friend who did work at NASA and found out about a job opening in Operations. I knew I didn’t want to do CAD models, so I listened. I applied for a job as an inventory and stowage officer. It was a perfect fit for me.” It was also the only position she applied for, and she got it.

“I love my job,” Misty said. “It’s not super technical, and it has lots of gray areas that require creative problem solving. It’s about looking for solutions and efficiency for

the astronauts on the International Space Station. Life on the ISS is like spending six months living in a five-bedroom house, but you don’t know where anything is, because someone else put everything away!”

Different members of the ground team rotate who is the team lead for each six-month mission. During one mission Misty was lead, which meant she was responsible for weekly conference calls with the crew to plan what activities needed to be done next. One night, she got an unexpected call. “I was cooking dinner at home when the crew called me on my cell phone! A cargo ship from Russia had just docked, and the cosmonauts had unloaded and dumped all this stuff in the living area! It was midnight on the station. The astronauts were tired and didn’t know what to do with all the stuff, so they IP called me to ask what to do with all the new stuff. I was standing there in my kitchen talking to the International Space Station!”

Another of Misty’s duties is managing the astronauts’ environment. In a closed environment, trash piles up fast! “There are no trash trucks in space!” Misty joked. “When cargo vehicles go up with supplies, some of them are return vehicles. Those are packed with completed



experiments and data for their return trip. But the one-way cargo vehicles are loaded up with all the trash on the station, and then sent back into the atmosphere to burn up on re-entry. When the astronauts have an overflow of garbage, I may be at Mission Control talking trash with them!”

“It’s not easy being female in a male-dominated field. But the team really benefits from having women. We think differently. We have a different way of solving problems. And that diversity makes the team stronger.”

It may seem like a big jump from carhop to console, but Misty credits her early years in Duncanville and Midlothian. “It was really important having a family, friends and community that believed in me, who supported me and said, ‘Go for it.’ I think if girls are interested in STEM careers, they should go for it. It’s the best decision I ever made. It’s not fun every day, but I can count on one hand the days that I left work saying, ‘I don’t want to do this.’ I love my work. It’s not easy being female in a male-dominated field. But the team really benefits from having women. We think differently. We have a different way of solving problems. And that diversity makes the team stronger.”

Misty really enjoys working on the ISS missions, but there are other missions she’d like to be a part of. “It would be really cool to work on a moon or Mars mission. I would love to take what I’ve learned working on the ISS and apply that to the next generation of space exploration!” **NOW**



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CookingNOW

In the Kitchen With

GALE SLIGER

— By Virginia Riddle



Cooking was to become both a joy and avocation for Gale Sliger, beginning when she was old enough to stand on a chair and stir oatmeal. “My mother taught me the basics of cooking before I was in my teens. After that, I was exposed to many good chefs, both at home and abroad, at country and city clubs and hotels, first as a club manager and then as a special events business owner.”

Gale enjoys cooking down-home and gourmet, as well as baking for birthdays, anniversaries, holidays or “just because it’s a Monday or maybe Tuesday.” She added, “I love everything that sits on or surrounds a table — beautiful linens, silver, china, crystal, flowers, food, wine, family and friends. Is there really anything else?” **NOW**

Salmon in Foil

Serves 4.

- 1/4 cup honey
- 3 garlic cloves
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. white wine vinegar
- 1 Tbsp. thyme leaves
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 2-lb. salmon filet, room temperature

1. Preheat oven to 375 F; line a baking sheet with foil.
2. Whisk together all ingredients, except the salmon; place the filet in the prepared pan.

3. Fold up all 4 sides of the foil; spoon the honey mixture over the salmon.

4. Cover it completely. Seal the foil closed; bake for 15-20 minutes.

Drunk Carrots

As children, Gale’s sons named this recipe.

- 1 12-oz. pkg. frozen crinkle cut carrots
- 2 Tbsp. butter
- 4 Tbsp. sugar
- 2 Tbsp. apricot flavored brandy

1. Cook the carrots in salted water until fork tender; do not overcook. Drain well.

2. Add butter, sugar and brandy; stir well. Cook until the sugar is dissolved and the carrots are glazed.

Cold Cucumber Soup

Yields 2 1/2 to 3 cups.

- 1 1/2 cups sour cream (Low fat can be used, if desired.)
- 1 tsp. dill weed
- 1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1/2 tsp. celery salt
- 1 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 1/4 tsp. black or white pepper
- 3/4 tsp. salt
- 2 green onions, coarsely chopped
- 3 medium cucumbers, peeled, seeded, coarsely chopped

1. Combine all ingredients in an electric blender; process until smooth.
2. Chill thoroughly before serving.

Cherry (or other fruit) Cobbler

- 2 cups canned red sour cherries, or preferred fruit
- 3/4 cup sugar (divided use)

5/8 tsp. salt (divided use)
 1 cup flour
 1 1/2 tsp. baking powder
 1/4 cup shortening
 1/2 cup nuts
 1/3 cup milk
 Hard sauce, ice cream or whipped cream
 (optional)

1. Combine the cherries, including the juice, with 1/2 cup sugar and 1/8 tsp. salt; place mixture in a well-greased 8x8-inch baking dish.
2. Sift flour with baking powder, 1/2 tsp. salt and 1/4 cup sugar; cut in the shortening. Add nuts; mix well.
3. Add the milk. Beat with a fork; drop the dough by small spoonfuls onto the cherry mixture. Sprinkle with sugar, to taste.
4. Bake for 25 minutes at 425 F; serve with hard sauce, ice cream or whipped cream.
5. *Variation:* When substituting peaches for cherries, add a little more flour and 1/2 tsp. cinnamon. A little bit of butter added to the fruit will make a richer cobbler.

Butternut Squash Soup

2 slices Applewood smoked bacon,
 diced
 1 medium onion, diced
 2 butternut squash, cut in half, seeded
 10 cups chicken broth
 Salt and white pepper, to taste
 Pinch cayenne pepper
 1 Tbsp. brown sugar, or to taste

1. Sauté the bacon and onion until softened. Roast squash for 45 minutes at 350 F; cool. Skin squash; chop into bite-size cubes.
2. Add squash to bacon and onion; mix well. Add chicken broth; stir.
3. Let soup simmer on high for 45 minutes; cool, puree and strain.
4. Add the salt, pepper, cayenne pepper and brown sugar; stir well.

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BusinessNOW

Allergy and Asthma Center of Duncanville

— By Adam Walker

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If you suffer from allergies, Dr. DelasAlas and his staff want to help you. “We’re the only allergy center in Duncanville, but we’ve been here for 30 years, and some of our staff has been with us that entire time,” Dr. DelasAlas reported. “A lot of people don’t realize that there is a specialty for allergies. They just coast by using over-the-counter drugs, and their family doctors don’t refer

them. When they discover that there is help, they ask, ‘Why didn’t I know?’ But we can improve the quality of life for so many people.

“We enjoy taking care of patients and their families,” Dr. DelasAlas said. “Often a parent will bring in one of their children who is really suffering. Once we educate the parent about what we can do, they say, ‘Well, I have four other kids who need this, too!’ Allergies are genetic and tend to run in families. If one person has them, it’s likely other people in the family will, too. We accommodate the community and have a loyal patient base. Our patients get to know each other in the waiting room and become friends because of their shared conditions!

“I am both a physician and a pharmacist, so I work hard with pharmaceutical companies to get generic options for our patients, to help them afford their medications,” Dr. DelasAlas informed. “We can design medication lists for

patients on Medicare or Medicaid to be sure they are covered. We study to stay on top of patient concerns.

"We stay up to date on the latest cutting-edge advancements in the field of allergy treatment by attending conferences on new techniques and discoveries. We are able to take care of most issues right here in the office, so we don't have to do referrals for everything. People sometimes blame other health issues on allergies. I have to stay informed about everything so I can tell them, 'This is not an allergy. It looks like X. Let's get you to this doctor over here and see if they can help.'"

Dr. DelasAlas has a simple philosophy about how to treat his patients. "The key to being a good doctor is being a good human being. We partner with a lot of primary care physicians, because many of them aren't set up to provide advanced allergy care, such as immunotherapy. We have patients who come from Arlington and beyond." Because they serve a diverse group of patients, Dr. DelasAlas has a diverse staff. Since over a third of their patients may speak Spanish only, 95 percent of their staff members are native Spanish speakers, so they can communicate effectively and meet their patients' health-care needs.

"Many people don't realize it, but Medicaid actually offers more help for allergy sufferers than many private insurance providers do, so help is not out of reach. There is so much more available to ease your suffering than just over-the-counter drugs. You don't have to miss work because of an allergy attack," Dr. DelasAlas explained. "And in the future, we'll be able to offer even more options." They are also one of the few allergy clinics that sees a significant number of Medicaid, Medicare and Tricare-insured patients. "We believe that allergy care should be accessible to everyone." **NOW**




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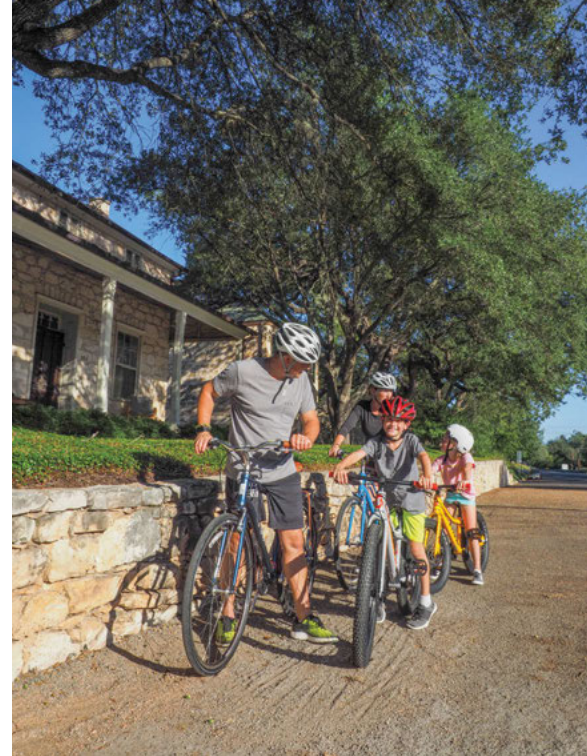
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TravelNOW Peach Perfect

— By Sean Doerre

It's impossible to visit Gillespie County, Texas, without getting directly to the heart of the Texas Hill Country. Its focal point is Fredericksburg, a place founded in 1846 by German settlers. This small-town Texas community continues to provide a unique blend of Texan hospitality and German tradition.

Fredericksburg is well-known for award-winning wine. In fact, the Texas Hill Country was designated one of the 10 Best Wine Travel Destinations in 2014 by *Wine Enthusiast Magazine*. With more than 40 wineries and tasting rooms in the Fredericksburg area, numerous wine tour companies and special wine events like the Fredericksburg Food & Wine Festival, Fredericksburg is at the center of Texas Wine Country.

With more than 150 shops, boutiques and art galleries lining historic Main Street, Fredericksburg is also a premier shopping

destination, offering the best of home decor, Western wear, fine art, kitchen wares, linens, antiques and more. On the weekend of the third Saturday of every month, Fredericksburg Trade Days features more than 400 vendors in seven barns and acres of shopping opportunities, along with great eats and live music in the Biergarten. Great food and wonderful dining is a fixture in Fredericksburg with more than 80 restaurants that feature everything from regional Texas Hill Country cuisine to German and Bavarian, to Tex-Mex and Italian, as well as numerous fine dining restaurants.

Gillespie County is one of the top peach-producing counties in Texas, and from mid-May through early August the town is filled with roadside stands selling peaches and other seasonal produce. Fredericksburg is also home to Wildseed Farms, the largest working

wildflower farm in the United States and a destination for any nature enthusiast.

Enchanted Rock, the second largest granite dome in the United States and a designated International Dark Sky Park, is located just outside of Fredericksburg and offers miles of hiking trails, rock climbing and a 360-degree view of the Texas Hill Country from the top of the Summit Trail.

With more than 700 historically significant structures preserved in the Fredericksburg historic district, history surrounds the city. The Pioneer Museum Complex provides a glimpse of early life in Fredericksburg through historic homes, a log cabin, an authentic Sunday House, a one-room schoolhouse and more.

The National Museum of the Pacific War, dedicated to all who served in the Pacific during World War II, also honors hometown favorite Navy Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz. The 6-acre museum complex includes the George H.W. Bush Gallery, the Japanese Garden of Peace, the Memorial Courtyard and the Plaza of Presidents. Just down the street, is the Pacific Combat Zone, which recently underwent an \$8 million renovation and hosts living history demonstrations eight times each year.

In addition to historic attractions, Fredericksburg is always brimming with activity from more than 400 special events, concerts and festivals held annually. Typical Fredericksburg events and activities include Oktoberfest, live music at Luckenbach Texas, Fredericksburg's Fourth of July Parade, summer horse racing, the Hill Country Food Truck Festival, the Stonewall Peach JAMboree, First Friday Art Walk, the Gillespie County Fair and more. Fredericksburg has more than 1,100 hotel and motel rooms, more than 1,200 bed-and-breakfasts/guesthouses, and several RV parks and campsites ready to welcome travelers with plenty of warm, Texan hospitality. **NOW**

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Dustin Dauenhauer

Jennifer Henderson



Where Comes the Bride?

— By Zachary R. Urquhart

In a time gone by, most weddings tended to be at one of a few locations: churches, the courthouse or the family's backyard. Today, though, almost anywhere could be a wedding venue. If you are getting ready to plan a wedding, there are some new and unique locales to consider.

Something Old

- *Barns are back in style.* Trending with the popularity of house remodeling shows over the last decade or so, weddings in rustic farmhouses and barns are becoming more and more common. You can look for places online or reach out to friends who live in rural areas. You might be surprised how easy it is to find a barn you can use. With some old-world style lighting, a simple large shed can become an idyllic wedding sight.

- *Church is in session.* A unique spin on the tradition of a religious setting is to have your ceremony in an old church building. There are churches that are no longer functioning for local congregations, but that are available for special events. And if you are willing to host a destination wedding, you can find such buildings across the country.



Something New

- *Trendy restaurants make great wedding sites.* If you live close enough to a big town with cool restaurants that are only busy in the evening, you might be able to reserve the place for an early wedding time. What is even better, you will have a place for a ceremony and reception all-in-one.


- *Find a venue near you.* People are sometimes surprised to learn how many beautiful venues are hidden just around the corner. With anything from simple buildings that have the necessary amenities to locations providing outdoor wedding scenes, there are often myriad options within a short drive. Many wedding venues offer an all-inclusive package, with much of the planning provided with this option.

Something Borrowed

- *Public spaces can be great for private events.* Local parks have gazebos or pavilions available to rent for private events. If you are expecting a smaller wedding party, this can be a cute, quaint way to have an inexpensive wedding. Some more recently built parks even have spaces built with events in mind, so a wedding at a park does not have to feel like a wedding at a park.




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- *If you book it, they will come.* If you want the beauty of an outdoor setting, but need a bigger venue, you can sometimes reserve the sports fields in your area during their off-season. With a little decorating work, a large field can turn into the perfect wedding site.

Something You

- *Somewhere that defines the couple.* Anything from a golf course to the outdoor chapel at a church camp from your childhood is perfect if you both think it is perfect. If you and your spouse-to-be are the adventurous types, maybe a bridge spanning the gap between two mountain peaks is the location for you. People may question your choice, but it is just that, your choice, so have fun deciding where to host the big day.

Whatever you decide, remember that the day of your nuptials should be one of the happiest days of your life. As long as you are marrying the person you love, surrounded by the friends and family you want supporting you, no place is the wrong choice to ring your wedding bells. **NOW**

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Zoomed In: Kasey Cheshier

By Adam Walker

Kasey Cheshier defended his title for the third time in the Duncanville Chamber of Commerce's Pizza Eating Competition during the recent DuncanSwitch anniversary celebration. "The first year the Chamber was looking for someone to represent, so I joined in," he said. "When I did, I discovered that I have a special knack for shoving pizza down my mouth!"

The championship comes with an unexpected prize. More pizza! "I won three more pizzas at Roma's! My kids got those. I didn't want any more!" After three years of undefeated pizza scarfing, you might think Kasey would be ready to rest on his laurels, but when asked if he plans to compete again next year, he replied, "Oh, heck yes!"



Duncanville High School's Girls Track 4x200 meter relay team win the State Championship and set the best time in the nation.



City Manager Greg Porter awards library director Toni Simmons at her retirement.



Dogwood Canyon Audubon Center's Camp Cedar Hill summer campers cool off at Crawford Park Pool.



Grand Marshall David Green presides over Duncanville's Independence Day parade.



Chanel 8's Sonia Azad hangs out at the Cedar Hill Senior Center for bingo and yoga.



Local author Dedra Colston reads from her new book at her release party.



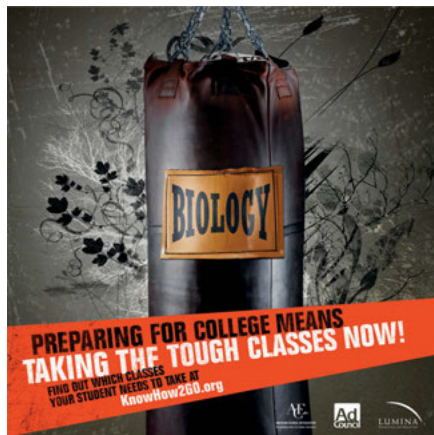
Several Cedar Hill nonprofits are participating in the annual North Texas Giving Day on September 20.



Fire Chief Jerry Duffield speaks at the groundbreaking for DeSoto's new fire station.



Naphtali Orellana and Javier Banda stand ready to help at LA Fitness.



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Calendar

1

Secret Agent Magic Show with James Wand: 1:00 p.m., DeSoto Public Library 211 E. Pleasant Run Rd., DeSoto. All are welcome.

2

Mayor's Prayer Breakfast: 7:30-8:30 a.m., Alan E. Sims Recreation Center, 310 E. Parkerville Rd., Cedar Hill. Free to all those attending

4

DeSoto ISD Back to School Fair: 9:00 a.m., DeSoto High School, 600 Eagle Dr., DeSoto.

TSUNAA Dallas Chapter Presents Tiger Send Off 2018: 12:30-3:30 p.m., Armstrong Park, 100 James Collins Blvd., Duncanville. Free.

6

Cedar Hill Chamber Topgolf Outing: 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Topgolf Dallas, 8787 Park Ln., Dallas. \$99.



7

National Night Out: 7:00-9:00 p.m., DeSoto city-wide event.

10-11, 17-18

Giant Parish-wide Rummage Sale: 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Holy Spirit Catholic Church, 1111 W. Daniieldale Rd., Duncanville.

11

CHISD Back to School Rally: 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Ninth Grade Center, 1515 W. Belt Line Rd., Cedar Hill. Free backpacks and school supplies.



Paws in the Pool-ooza: 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Crawford Park Pool, 401 Straus Rd., Cedar Hill. \$5 per dog.

11-12

Cedar Hill Open Disc Golf Tournament: 8:00 a.m., Lester Lorch Park, 1823 Texas Plume Rd., Cedar Hill. Check-in, Noon-7:00 p.m., **Friday, August 10.**

15

Cedar Hill ISD and Duncanville ISD first day of school.

17

Jimmy Gomez: 7:00 p.m., Hopkins Senior Center, 206 James Collins Blvd., Duncanville. \$5.

18

Caring for Caregivers Event: 9:00 a.m.-noon., DeSoto Civic Center, 211 E. Pleasant Run Rd., DeSoto. \$25.

Be's Empower H.E.R. Inc. Conference: 11:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.,

Holiday Inn Express, 1007 Hwy. 67, Cedar Hill. \$40.

19

Block Party Open House: Noon-4:00 p.m., Manderley Event Center, 2010 N. Hampton Rd., Ste. 700, DeSoto. Free, but must register for give-a-ways.

20

DeSoto ISD first day of school.

24

Rob Holbert Group: 8:00 p.m., Outdoor Amphitheater, 211 E. Pleasant Run Rd., DeSoto. Free.

25

Date Night: Potluck dinner and short program celebrating South Korea: 7:00 p.m., International Museum of Cultures 411 US Hwy. 67, Duncanville. Free.

26

"How to Wash Your Face" Back to School Event: 5:30-8:00 p.m., Redbird Skateland, 1206 N. Duncanville Rd., Duncanville. Free.

30

Antiques Road Show of Cedar Hill: 6:00 p.m., Zula B. Wylie, 225 Cedar St., Cedar Hill. Bring your treasures to be appraised.



Ongoing:

Mondays

Line Dance Class: 10:00 a.m., Alan E. Sims Recreation Center, 310 E. Parkerville Rd., Cedar Hill. \$3/class or \$10/mo.



Baby Story Time: 10:30 a.m., Zula B. Wylie Library, 225 Cedar St., Cedar Hill. Free. Babies ages 0-2, plus a caregiver.

Tuesdays

DeSoto Senior Center Golden Voices Choir: 9:00 a.m., Senior Citizen Center, 204 Lion St., DeSoto. For more information, call (972) 230-5825.

Baby Storytime: 10:30 a.m., DeSoto Public Library. For newborns to 2-year-old children.

Second Tuesdays

DAWG-Dallas Area Writers Group: 7:00-8:30 p.m., Zula B. Wylie Public Library, 225 Cedar St., Cedar Hill. Free.

Thursdays

Hats and Hugs: 10:00 a.m.-noon, DeSoto Public Library. Knit, crochet and loom hats to donate to various causes. Call Precious Davis (972) 898-7919.

Tiempo de Historias en Espanol: 5:30 p.m., Duncanville Public Library,

201 James Collins Blvd. For more information, call (972) 780-5050.

Young Buck's Skillz Class: 5:30-6:30 p.m., Alan E. Sims Recreation Center, 310 E. Parkerville Rd., Cedar Hill. \$40/mo. or \$15 drop-in. Contact Coach Tracy Lewis (214) 682-9649.

First and Third Sundays

Jay's Camp Swing Dance Workshop: 2:00-4:00 p.m., Alan E. Sims Recreation Center, 310 E. Parkerville Rd, Cedar Hill. \$20 drop in or \$35/mo.

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your current event details to adam.walker@nowmagazines.com.

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Healthy Sleep Habits

Sleep apnea is one of the most common sleep disorders affecting approximately 22 million people in the U.S. with an estimated 80 percent of cases going undiagnosed. It is a common disorder that causes the airways to collapse or become blocked while you are asleep. Many people may be unaware that a sleep disorder is the underlying cause of their health problems, and others may be aware of their sleep disorder but uninformed of the severe consequences of untreated sleep apnea. By knowing the signs and symptoms, you can get the sleep that you deserve.

Signs and symptoms of sleep apnea

While sleeping:

- Loud snoring • Abrupt awakenings due to shortness of breath • Not breathing for a period of time while sleeping.

When awake:

- Excessive sleepiness • An inability to stay focused • Poor memory and motor skills during any given day.

Underlying medical symptoms may include:

- Irregular heartbeat • High blood sugar • High blood pressure • Irritability • Depression • Mood swings.

If you have experienced any of these symptoms, it may be time to

schedule a sleep study. Left untreated, sleep apnea can cause a whole slew of medical problems and can put you at an increased risk for many health issues.

Along with medical attention, you can facilitate a healthier lifestyle to deter further sleeping problems. Both when you're getting ready for bed and while you're awake, these practices may augment your quality of sleep on a nightly basis.

Healthy Sleep Tips

Good bedtime practices might include:

- Going to sleep and waking up at consistent times • Setting a bedtime that allows you to get at least seven hours of sleep • Only going to bed when you're sleepy • Turning off all electronics 30 minutes before you go to bed • Not eating or drinking a large amount before bedtime.

During the day:

- Try to avoid or limit naps • Exercise regularly • Maintain a healthy diet • Avoid consuming caffeine in the late afternoon or evening.

There's no reason to have to live with sleep apnea or any of its debilitating symptoms. Getting medical care can help you get back the sleep you deserve. **NOW**

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