

Mansfield NOW

M A G A Z I N E

NOVEMBER 2016

Fired Up to Wake Up

David "Doc" Bullock
and Todd Weger stand
in the gap for veterans

A Harvest of Memories

At Home With
Buford and Betty Elliott

2016 Holiday Shopping Guide

Competitive Drive
To the Max

Organizing Your Ornamentation

Dining Deals

Truck Transformation

In the Kitchen With
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ON THE COVER



Front porch flowers hint at the beauty and warmth of Buford and Betty Elliott's household.
Photo by Vanessa Polozola.

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Editor's Note

Dear Friends,

Not having children, nor being athletic, I only bask in the glow of other people's excitement during this crisp month filled with cheers from the sidelines of local fields and courts. Tennis fans are watching high school stars compete in state championships during the first week of this month. Volleyball teams are spiking through regional quarterfinals and tournaments to the state championship during the first three weeks of November. The

state cross-country meet will be held two days after the beginning of a glorious 16-day period when football teams, bands, drill teams and cheering sections engage all their energies in district playoffs.

The aura of enthusiasm everyone in Mansfield shares during this month astounds me. And if you're like me, it lifts you up and makes you happier. Knowing that this is what's happening in and for and between us all just adds to my exhilaration, which gives you a glow to bask in. Is this what community is all about?

May your joy overflow!

Melissa

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Last year, The Oasis at Joe Pool Lake ran out of parking spaces for patrons of America Helping Veterans' First Annual Veterans Day Bash. Everybody who cares about America and supports veterans is invited here this November 11 for the second annual celebration of life hosted by David "Doc" Bullock and Todd Weger. Participants bring to the event their personal form of compassion, fueled by their private memories. Doc and Todd happen to share more than a few, each adding to the fire consuming their hearts and molding their mutual mission.

"After we left the Army," Todd said, "we both still had a love for our fellow soldiers and a need to help them however we could. So we created America Helping Veterans, to fill that void in our lives." Their home-spun nonprofit hosts many events during the year for veterans. They recently presented a \$1,000 check to the Veterans Resource Center in Dallas, where homeless veterans can eat, bathe and do laundry.

Only three years ago, Doc and Todd were unexpectedly reunited at, of all places, The Oasis. While Todd enjoyed lunch with his family, a voice called to him: "Ranger!" Todd looked up to see a familiar face smiling at him.

FIREED UP TOWARD



— By Melissa Ramlins

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“There is one person a soldier will never forget, and that’s their drill sergeant,” Doc explained. “Back in the day, if you had incidents with the law, the choice was either jail or the military. So I got street gang members, skinheads, some of the worst of the worst, and I had 16 weeks to change his life.”

Doc knew change was possible, having grown up on the streets of Chicago, orphaned and homeless. “I never let a negative start to my life become my life,” he said. “God knew I needed that rough start to prepare me for the life He had for me.” Going on to graduate from college and serve 25 years in the United States Army, Doc began revealing to others their own value and now is a motivational speaker for our youth.

While Doc drilled his young soldiers, he also taught them the value of the Golden Rule, respect for respect, and always fighting for the guy to their left and their right. Todd credits Doc with changing his life.

“I was a punk kid. He turned me into a man,” said Todd, who grew up in the Grand Prairie and Arlington area. “He takes people who’ve never been away from their parents and don’t know how to live on their own, and he gives them belief in themselves. I was a little overweight, too, and he got me into shape quick.”

“He became a great American hero,” Doc said. “Airborne. Ranger. Jumpmaster of the Year!”

Doc planted a seed in the heart of Todd, who never saw his drill sergeant again through nearly 20 years of moving on and up in the Army. Everything Todd did in the military, he did well. The Army offered Todd entrance into the Green to



America Helping Veterans supporters give veterans hope for their futures.

Gold Program after serving overseas in Operation Just Cause. He enrolled in The University of Texas at Arlington, and in 1998, he was commander in charge of the largest ROTC organization on campus, married with a child, taking 23 hours and going to the gym three times a day.

Half a semester away from finishing his degree, Todd had a stroke. "Friends at the gym had told me about this product I was taking that contained ephedrine. One day, I stopped but the treadmill didn't, and it threw me to the other side of the gym," Todd said. He died and was revived three times during brain surgery and had to learn to walk again. "God let it happen," he said. "He knew I'd be with America Helping Veterans one day."

Daily, Todd and Doc are amazed at the fact that they're running a charity together nearly 30 years after their first intense four months together. They pride themselves on the fact that every penny their fundraisers earn is spent to help the homeless or those close to falling through the cracks.

Once while having lunch together, their waitress asked if they'd been in the service. "She started crying right

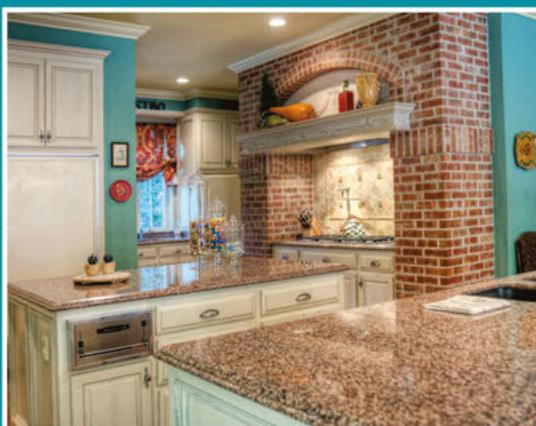


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there and asked if we'd please help her husband," Todd said. Doc and Todd found her former soldier struggling to live with his wife and three kids in a hotel. "We took him down to the Veterans Administration several times to help him get the benefits he was entitled to." One of their stalwart volunteers, Stormy, paid for another week of his hotel fees.

"Sometimes that's all you need, just that stopgap," Doc said. "What happens if we're not there, and he gets put on the street with three kids? That's when you get in trouble, because that is when it becomes, 'By any means necessary to take care of my family.'"

Doc insisted, "I still have brothers in need who need purpose. Our team has been strong because of what we've learned through the armed services. It's about not leaving a brother behind once you're out of the service." No, this dynamic duo answers every call from fellow soldiers.

Having been where veterans have been, Todd and Doc mean it when they say, "We know why you're hurting. We know what it's like to be shot at and to see our brothers killed." As they empathize, they can talk people down from suicide, bring people money for rent or simply a hair cut, help people find jobs or coach people suffering from post-traumatic stress.

Working with other Americans, Doc and Todd multiply their effectiveness. "We choose to physically go to the farmers market and get the corn, to the butcher to buy the meat, and then bring other friends and neighbors to serve them the food at the Veterans Resource Center," Doc said.

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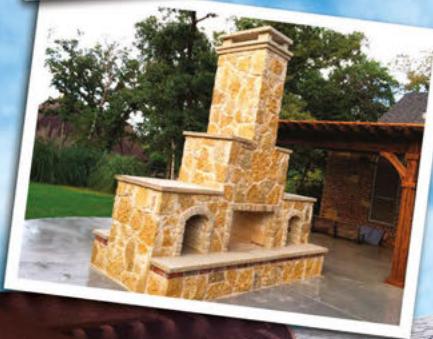


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David and Todd pose with Oasis owner Mildred Walker.

Promoting their services to veterans from Cedar Hill, DeSoto and Duncanville to Grand Prairie, Mansfield and Arlington, America Helping Veterans plugs into businesses and other organizations desiring to support veterans in living healthy lives. A number of sponsoring businesses are committed to hiring veterans. Arlington's Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 6111, commanded by Sid Turner; Mansfield's American Legion Post 624, commanded by Bill Ray; and Duncanville's Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7843, commanded by Ricky Williams, are three other veterans groups who help AHV in any way they can.

"I had a phenomenal career," Doc said. "What I'm doing now gives me so much more pride. I'm uplifting people and changing lives."

Now, these two combat veterans are fired up to wake up. "We've both been dead," Doc said, "and God has blessed us with His grace to bring us back to life." Fulfilling their higher purpose, America Helping Veterans offers a hand to any soldier crossing their path. **NOW**

Editor's note: For more information, visit www.americahelpingveterans.org.

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Competitive Drive

— By Sara Edgell



Breaking records in the swimming pool has always been Khadijah Brown's thing in life. Since the age of 2, she has been making a splash and a name for herself in the world of competitive swimming, and she has absolutely no intention of stopping.

Her first experience with swimming was in the YMCA Mommy and Me classes in Pennsylvania, where the Brown family is originally from. The tiny tot fearlessly jumped into the pool and, quite literally, took to swimming like a fish in water. There was no turning back, after coaches noticed Khadijah's natural aptitude in the water. "I was placed on the YMCA swim team when I was 3 and was swimming against 6- and 7-year-olds," Khadijah beamed. "I had never really been on a team with other people the same age and speed as me, so that really pushed me."

Over the years, Khadijah used that driving force to push herself. She developed a fierce competitive spirit and unwavering dedication to be the best at what she does. The result? A barrage of awards, medals and accolades, each of which she is very proud of. "I won my very first medals when I was 7, right after we moved here," she recalled. In 2008, she brought home 10 gold medals and the High Point Champion for girls aged 7 to 8 title. The feeling of pride Khadijah felt was all it took to keep her swimming. "I love winning," she admitted. "There's no better feeling than to work hard and win."

She values the sport for far more than acknowledgement and accolades, and she understands the significance of competing as more than a battle to



be the best. For Khadijah, these things keep her focused on improving her technique, pushing herself to the limit, motivating her teammates and setting an example for her younger siblings, Ahmad and Aaliyah. "I love being a big sister because I can be a positive role model for them in sports. Our whole family is very competitive," she said.

As a role model, Khadijah has two great examples to look up to herself. Her mom, Theresa, and dad, Greg, offer unwavering support and teach, by way of doing, the importance of hard work. The family's support is crucial to Khadijah's success, considering she swims on several teams including the Lake Ridge High School varsity team, the Mansfield Aquatic Club's USA team and the YMCA's Town North team. This year, she swam at the Amateur Athletic Union Junior Olympics. She also teaches swim lessons during the summer months.

Add school into the mix, and it's easy to see just how busy and demanding her schedule is. One might think that her grades and social life would suffer, but on the contrary, they both thrive. This is something her freshman Lake Ridge coach, Blake Kahla, couldn't help but notice. "Everyone on our team is a student athlete. Training hard but keeping grades up is of the utmost importance,

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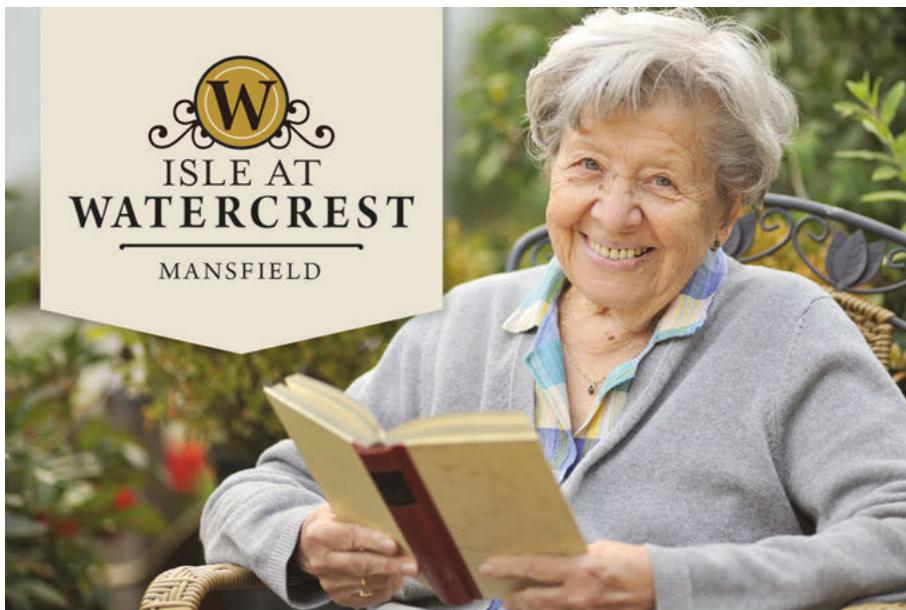


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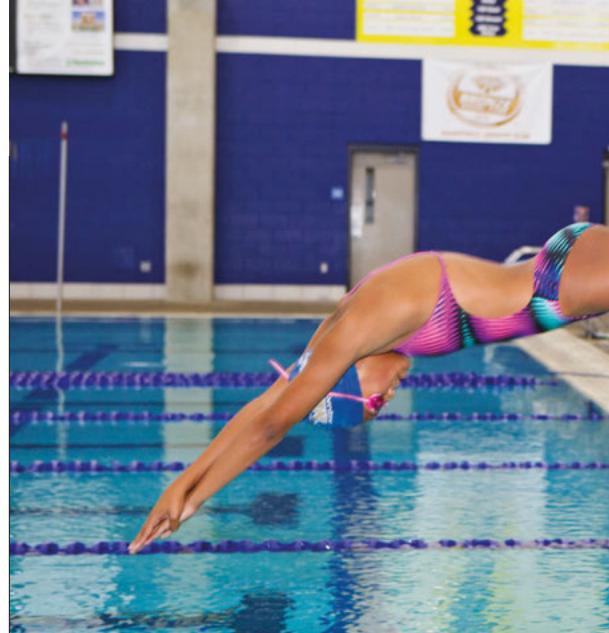
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as well. Khadijah's hard work, dedication and commitment is without question," Coach Kahla said.

"I train two times a day for two hours at a time five days a week," Khadijah explained, but she makes certain to spend time with her family and friends. "When I am not training at the pool, I like to run with my best friend, Jasmine," she added. Jasmine just happens to be a star track-and-field competitor at Lake Ridge. The two feed off one another because of their like-minded interests and focus on their different, yet similar, sports. "Most of my friends are winners," she said. "They compete and train hard at their chosen sport, just like me. We have that competitive drive in common and like to do the things that help us get better together."



Coaches Blake Kahla and Melanie McClure help support Khadijah Brown and other athletes in training.



The Brown family is excited for the steps Khadijah is taking for her future.

During her freshman year at Lake Ridge, Khadijah's competitive drive and determination earned her a spot on the swim team. Her hard work, ultimately, resulted in her most coveted of achievements — qualification for UIL State in the 200 medley, 200 freestyle and the 400 freestyle relays. As the only female freshman on the team, she accomplished quite the feat. "Freshmen don't usually go to state," she smiled. "I was the only freshman to compete in finals from any of the MISC schools."

Additionally, she broke the school's 100 breaststroke record and competed in the District 8-5A Championships, where she won first place in the 100 breaststroke. She was nominated and won the Aspire Athlete of the Week Award in December 2015. These three triumphs, in particular, carried special significance for Khadijah, but also for her mom. "When she was younger, she was terrible at breaststroke — so bad that her coach wouldn't even let her practice it," Theresa explained. "That didn't stop her though. Every chance she got, she was in the pool swimming the breaststroke." Rightfully so, when Khadijah earned her letterman's jacket, she added the quote, "Do what people say you can't," to the back.



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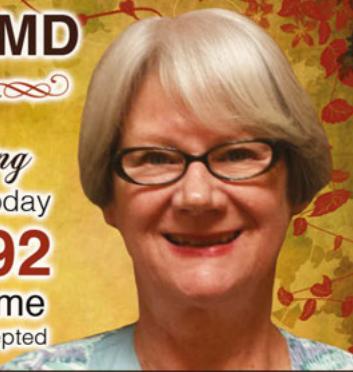
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Her single-minded determination is a characteristic her coaches declare to be one of her most character-defining qualities as an individual, teammate and emerging leader. “From the beginning of the 2016 season, Khadijah motivated her fellow teammates. When another teammate reached a personal goal, Khadijah was one of the first swimmers to congratulate them,” Coach Kahla said. “I cannot wait to see what she does her three remaining years on the team.”





Khadijah competed in the Junior Olympics at the end of July, where she won first place in the 400IM and 200IM. She also competed at the Lone Star YMCA State Championships where she won nine gold medals, the High Point Award for 15-21 girls and broke the 100 free record. To prepare, she trained even more intensely than normal, spending countless hours at the Mansfield Aquatic Center practicing with her teammates from different MISD high schools. One of her role models at the pool is Haley Yelle, who made this past summer's Olympic Trials. "Haley is such a kind and motivational person. She's doing really big things," Khadijah said. "That's exactly what I want to do, too."

Now, as a sophomore, Khadijah is still a member of the varsity swim team and the Mansfield Aquatic Club under the tutelage of Coach Trent Trabona. According to him, her greatest asset is her ability to race. "She does not give her competition anything. They have to earn it against her. Her sheer determination is [usually] enough to outlast her competition. That is an attribute you cannot coach," Coach Trabona explained. "An athlete has it, or they don't. Khadijah has it." With a few years left ahead, Khadijah will, undoubtedly, continue to shatter records and make a splash in the competitive world of swimming. **NOW**

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A Harvest of Memories

— By Rick Mauch

At Home With
Buford & Betty Elliott

Nowhere are the fall colors prettier than in the front yard of Buford and Betty Elliott's home. Plump, orange pumpkins and tan bales of hay highlight the harvest season for passers-by to see, as they drive past their home near downtown Mansfield. "Fall has always been my favorite season," Betty said. "To me, it's the prettiest, with the change of colors."





The front yard displays have led to the couple receiving the House of the Month award several times. The front yard, however, is only the beginning of the beauty and warmth of the household they've created. Both in their mid-80s, they moved into their home two decades back, and though it's a quaint, little place built in 1924, it's a mansion to them. "I said I wanted to go to Mansfield and find an old house," Betty remembered. "I prayed for it, and I got it."

Buford is retired from General Motors, and prior to moving to Mansfield, they lived for 30 years in Arlington and eight years in Lake Fork. In January, they will celebrate 65 years of marriage. They met in 1949 in Oklahoma, where they are both from, and exchanged vows two years afterward. Buford was in the Navy at the time, but they met and immediately

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clicked when he came home for a visit. "My sister wrote and told me there was a new girl in town," he said with a grin. "When I got home, she took me down and introduced us, and the rest was history."

Their home is also filled with history. Upon entry into the living room, visitors are met with a photo above the fireplace that features an old-fashioned country community, a child and a dog, along with a horse and buggy. A look to another wall reveals a charcoal picture that resembles legendary child actress Shirley Temple with

a couple of puppies in her arms. It's one of Betty's favorites. "A friend of mine did that," she said. "I've had it 20 years."

Directly below the picture is something else they've had for 20 years — a hand-carved Nativity scene on a wooden table top, a reminder of one of their greatest adventures together. "We saw the Holy Land. It was a great trip," Buford said, as Betty nodded her head in agreement.

The living room is also home to some of their own handiwork. Near the fireplace are several 3-foot-tall porcelain

dolls created by Betty. On the other side of the room in a corner, is a 7-foot-tall grandfather clock crafted by Buford. The detail on each of the dolls is exquisite and evidence of patience and determination. On one side are two mischievous little boys. The other side has two little girls in elegant dresses reminiscent of a simpler time when a stroll through a garden was a highlight of any day. "I made those at the senior center," Betty recalled. "We started from scratch with molds. It takes a couple of months to do one."

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Betty said she made plenty of the dolls back in the mid-1990s, though she hasn't made any in years. She noted they were popular back then, and she loved making them for her own pleasure and that of others. "Our kids have two or three," she said. "They really enjoy them, and I enjoyed making them."

Buford's grandfather clock is also a work of art, taking over 600 hours to make. The beautifully crafted wood features shaved-down pegs to hold the clock together. The glass front and sides allow viewing of the intricate works inside, which include gold-plated chimes. "I've made a bunch of them. I also made a rolltop desk my son has," Buford said. "I built a workshop myself when we lived in Arlington. That's when I started building my clocks. Our kids love them."

Buford and Betty have four children. Twin daughters, Sandra and Susan, 64, live in Arlington; their sister Shawn, 59, lives in Alabama; and 61-year-old son, Steve, lives in Florida. They also have a plethora of grandchildren and great-grandchildren. The house is filled with photos of them and many family members, some who have moved on from this world.

Upon crossing over into the dining room, which features a quaint but elegant, wooden table and chairs, is an old black-and-white picture of Betty's father. He was a school superintendent, and the picture was drawn by one of his students. "It's kind of nice to have your family around," Betty said, picking up another black-and-white photo. "My great-grandmother was Cherokee Indian. I love this picture."

An antique wooden chifferobe sits against the wall just inside the dining room. It perfectly complements the aforementioned table, which has its own special history, having belonged to Betty's mother. In the kitchen cabinet is Betty's prized Blue Willow china, with a tiny Shirley Temple pitcher in front that is about a fourth the size of a regular pitcher. "I love Blue Willow. I was raised with it," she said. Grabbing the pitcher,





she added, “We drank out of this, my sister and I.”

Buford took down an old, wooden dough board. Mentally salivating, he remembered eating the very bread his great-grandmother made on it. “It was good bread, too,” he said. “We always enjoyed that.”

A knickknack shelf is filled with tiny thimbles, a miniature unicorn and a variety of other interesting whatnots. Next to it is a window seat, the perfect place for their small dog, Sassy, to look out. Previously, it was their late dog, Prissy, who enjoyed window time — the same Prissy whose picture is on a front porch chair cushion.

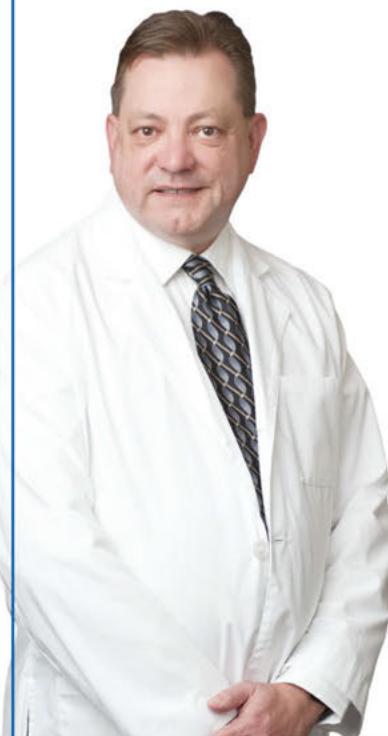
Like a child in a toy store, Buford dug out one treasure after another. An antique coin purse contains quarters from 1853 and 1854. He sprawled some old Half and Half brand tobacco tins on the table. “My dad used them to keep his matches dry when he’d go hunting,” he said. “I can see why they’d work so well.”

While they love being home as much as possible, Buford and Betty still find plenty of time to be outdoors. Betty still volunteers, after two decades, at the Wesley Mission Center thrift store. She also takes regular walks. Buford loves to “piddle” in the yard, as he self-describes.

When they moved here, they moved for the final time in their lives. After all, as Betty said, they’re a mile from church and close to the local Wal-Mart. They’ve lived in a brick home, a log home, a frame home and the home of their dreams. “I prayed for it, and I got it,” she said again, gleefully. Now this month, they’ve got fall, family and fun. **NOW**

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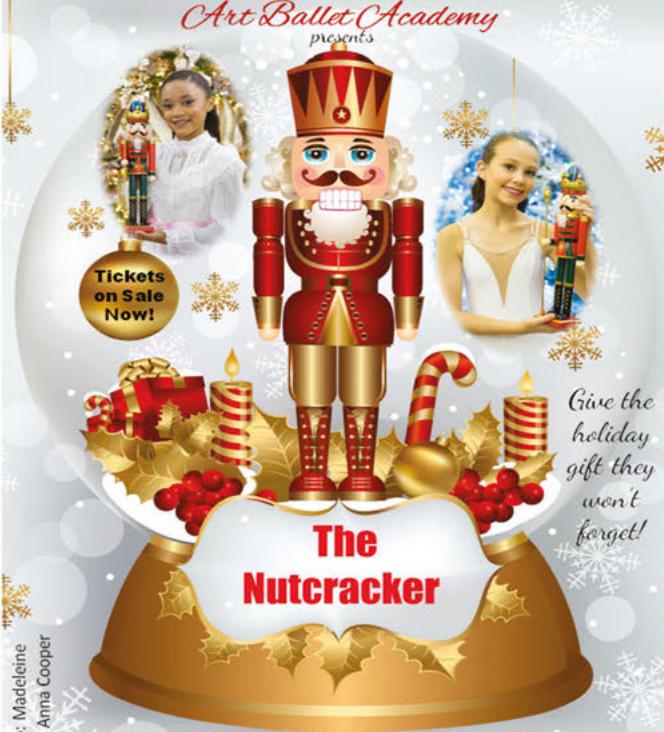


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To the Max

— By Sara Edgell

Dogs, commonly referred to as man's best friend, bring along companionship, but also require lots of attention and care. From walks and feedings to grooming and playtime, canines can be rather demanding. However, if a person puts in the work to care for and train a furry friend, they are rewarded with the invaluable compensation of loyalty, love and "forever" friendship. This is exactly what Steve Burn experienced when he and his family adopted Max, an unabashedly handsome and curiously exuberant Chow Chow mix.





Kelly and Steve Burn with Max, the therapy dog.

One Saturday in 2009, Steve and his wife, Kelly, made a trip to the Arlington Animal Shelter. Steve had finally decided to take the plunge and get a dog, something he had always wanted but never really had the lifestyle for. The couple ventured around the shelter separately, Steve gravitating to the cats and Kelly wandering the dog kennels. Almost immediately, she saw a small, black, furry pup and protectively stood guard at his cage telling people to move along because he had been rescued. For 30 long minutes, Kelly waited patiently for Steve to find her and their new boy. "Within a minute of finding her and seeing the dog, I agreed. I waited 40 years for him, and it was well worth the wait," Steve grinned.

The Burns named him Max, a name Steve borrowed from his older brother's first dog — a Golden Retriever he spent a lot of time with as a boy. Just like his brother's dog, Steve and Kelly knew 9-month-old Max was a special one. "When we got him, we knew we had to share him. He's not like other dogs. He won't go near the pool, and he won't chase a ball or a Frisbee, but when he sees a kid or a person, he *has* to say hello," Steve explained.

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couple was blown away one afternoon when they took Max to Walnut Creek Linear Park Trail for a regular walk. It just so happened to be the same day as an event for special needs children served by All Star Equestrian. Within minutes, he was surrounded by kids, and those kids were petting, pulling, patting and loving all over Max, who sat patiently taking it all in with a happily wagging tail.

Steve remembered feeling a little nervous about how Max would react to such a large crowd and to individuals with different physical, emotional and social needs, but he was also equally curious. At one point, two young boys with Down syndrome asked if they could take Max for a walk. "I told Kelly, 'Let's just see how this plays out,'" he recalled, and he was glad they did because as Steve put it, "A star was born!"

Steve, in his cheeky English accent, gave the boys permission along with a few simple rules and tips, then stepped back with Kelly to watch. With huge, beaming smiles, the boys returned Max and went



on about their day. However, when one of their mothers approached Steve to thank him, he was taken aback. "She told me that letting those boys walk Max may seem small, but it was so huge for the boys," Steve said. "Her tearful and appreciative response was all it took. I knew then that even though Max was rescued as a family pet, he was perfect for doing therapy work."

So Steve set about finding a way to get Max to work. He quickly found Pet Partners, the largest national nonprofit organization registering therapy dogs and other animals. His interest was piqued. This organization was unique in that it focused on the training of the handlers, not the animals. In addition to training the handlers, therapy dogs undergo aptitude testing in a simulated nursing home environment to see how they will react and respond to people in wheelchairs, with labored physical movement and other physical and cognitive needs. This testing also shows how handlers react and respond, but more importantly, how the handler guides the dog.



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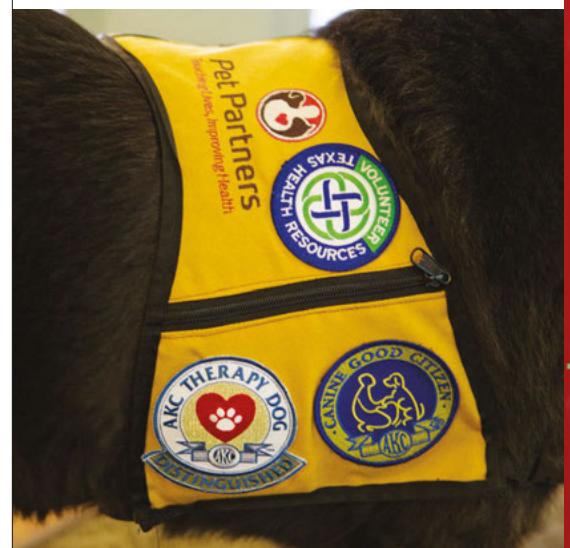
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Max and Steve pay a visit to Laverne Lewis, one of the residents at Brookdale.

Therefore, there is specific focus on three key factors: Handlers must know that their dog is reliable, predictable and controllable. "All mistakes that are made are made by the handlers, not the dogs," Steve explained. "Mistakes are OK to make as long as you correct them and move on. It's the handler's responsibility to do that."

Not only did Max pass with flying colors, he passed on his very first attempt, an accomplishment that is practically unheard of. And now, as a registered American Red Cross therapy dog and an AKC therapy dog, Max's weekly schedule is jam packed with a variety of visits and events all over town. His job, no matter where he goes, is to keep people company, bring people comfort and make people smile, and that's exactly what he does. "Once he sees



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his vest, he gets excited and starts circling around. He knows it's time to go, and he's always ready," Steve said.

On Mondays, Max has a standing 10:00 a.m. appointment at Brookdale Mansfield Assisted Living Community visiting his regulars and getting his favorite "rump scratching." On Tuesdays, he heads to Methodist Mansfield Medical Center to help patients and medical staff alike experience a bit of joy. He's back at The Pavilion at Creekwood enjoying the company and attention of the residents on Wednesdays, but on Thursdays, he can be found at DFW airport bringing comfort to anxiety-plagued travelers. Fridays are Max's day to visit the kids at Anna May Daulton Elementary School. And like anyone dedicated to their work, Max even works on Saturdays, visiting The Stayton at Museum Way in Fort Worth.

Max also keeps busy by visiting the UTA campus during finals week. He is such a hit there that he has his very own fan club. "Everybody loves Max. No one knows my name anywhere we go. I'm just Max's dad, and I love that," Steve smiled.

While Max's schedule is crazy busy, this is not an unusual weekly routine for the other therapy dogs in the Pet Partners Mansfield group, called Paws With Partners. "We have a fantastic group, and each dog has their own fantastic story. Every one of them is just as busy as Max, too. We are in desperate need of new teams," Steve explained. Ideal handlers are retired persons who love their pets and helping others, and who aren't afraid of committing to consistency and regular presence in the facilities the therapy pets visit. That's what makes Steve and Max such a success. "I have never done anything more rewarding in my life," Steve smiled. "It's just so awesome, and I'm pretty sure Max feels the same way." **NOW**



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— By Zachary R. Urquhart

ORGANIZING YOUR ORNAMENTATION

Though there is no place like home for the holidays, everyone knows it takes countless hours of work to get your home ready for the season. Whether you are the host for dozens in your extended family, or you just like to tidy up as you put out your fall decor and Christmas trimmings, here are some tips to help you organize your space and prepare for your festively adorned holiday fun.



ORGANIZATION

HAVE A PLAN

• Before you head up to the attic, make sure you have your non-Thanksgiving stuff organized and put away. You do not want to make extra trips up and down your attic staircase because you accidentally buried your seasonal towels under your summer wreath. One great and simple option is to use a few different colors of plastic tubs. It will cost you a few dollars, but the tubs will last a lifetime, and if you color code based on the seasons, it will be easier to get ready with each changing season.



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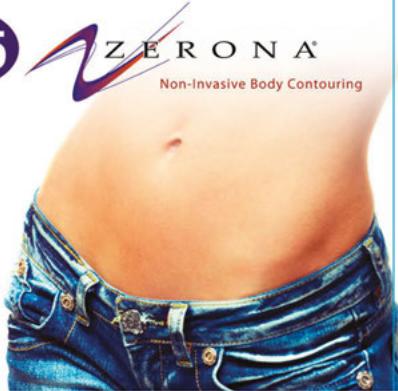
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- Organize your storage space. One of the most common mistakes people make is to pile boxes thoughtlessly in their attic, meaning every decorating season includes an exercise in moving boxes for other seasons before finding the ones currently needed. Take some time and spread out your tubs around the space. If need be, add a few more sheets of plywood decking to give yourself ample room to store your bins.



- If you decorate with more than just a different scent of candle and hand soap, take photos of your completely decorated house to use as a reference in years to come. There is nothing worse in decorating than knowing you had it just right before but being unable to duplicate it this year.

SPRING CLEANING, PART TWO

- Give the house a decent cleaning between seasons. Decorating can take a while on its own, so adding house cleaning might turn this into an entire weekend job. If you have kids, try making the cleaning a family event. Give each kid a duster or dry Swiffer and see who can collect the most dirt and dust.



- When you are putting your decorations away, be sure you give them a wipe, a rinse or a dry towel, whatever applies to each piece. The biggest thing is that you make sure any water or liquid is completely dry

before storing your decorations in a box that will see two months of triple-digit heat before you open it again.

- Pack smartly. Give breakables plenty of padding and packaging, and do not overfill your tubs. It may mean buying an extra bin or two, but the few dollars spent upfront will easily outweigh the monetary and sentimental cost of replacing your decorations.

- When it comes to your Christmas lights, take extra care to keep from breaking bulbs in the cleanup process. If you find that you have broken bulbs or strands during the holiday season, check local stores at the end of the season for two reasons: You might find big savings with after-Christmas sales, and you want to make sure to match the style you are replacing, which is no guarantee from one year to the next.

GETTING READY FOR GUESTS



- If you have a houseful coming to celebrate, it can be overwhelming. Unless your house is equipped to hold a few dozen cousins and in-laws, you're probably trying to figure out where to have everyone sit. One option is to borrow tables and chairs from friends, family or even your church or business. If you plan on hosting regularly, it may be worth the cost to buy some simple foldable seating that you can tuck away in the garage or attic. But if you

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- Add to your guests' experience by using name cards for the seating. Placing a simple white card on top of three or four leaves will enhance your table decorations, too. Or, let making the cards be a fun project for the kids, so they can be involved in getting ready for the festivities. You will want to do the placing yourself, though, since you are probably aware of any family dynamics that come into play when you get together with your whole clan.

Happy Thanksgiving



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BUYING AND PURGING

• There is nothing wrong with starting a new holiday collection, or adding new pieces to what you already have. But, if you find yourself leaving certain accoutrement in the attic year after year, consider getting rid of some pieces before you buy anything new. For you empty-nesters, offer decorations and even whole collections to your children for their homes. You might be surprised what family mementos your son or daughter wants to hold on to from his or her childhood.

• When you take your next trip to the craft store, you might be tempted to load your cart with new items for your home. Take your decoration photos with you. Similar to going to the grocery store on an empty stomach, if you head out while your house is devoid of decor, you might end up with decorations you cannot fit. But, with pictures of your home in hand, you will have a good chance to consider whether or not you really need one more fall spread.

As you prepare this holiday season, remember that time with your family is supposed to be fun, not full of stress. With these simple organizational and decorating tips, you can focus on being thankful for all that you have. **NOW**

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www.truckaomansfield.com

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Installer Austin Landry backs up Chance Waller, right, who helps owner Jerry Rocha, left, keep Truck Accessory Outlet running smoothly.

Truck Transformation

Consider Truck Accessory Outlet the one-stop shop for all your accessories. — By Melissa Rawlins

When you stop by Truck Accessory Outlet, you'll quickly learn what Jerry Rocha's clients already know. He treats people like he wants to be treated, and he strives to ensure his knowledge, pricing and customer service are excellent.

When you're ready to spend a reasonable amount to update your truck, Truck Accessory Outlet is the place to shop. Instead of scanning multiple websites for hours on end, visit Jerry's store where you can see and touch the step bars, tool boxes, back racks and more. Before you leave, you might have TAO install a window tint or alarm.

At 750 square feet, the showroom can hardly contain the products Jerry displays. Heavy duty truck accessories by

Cattleman HD include: running boards, bull nose bumpers, grille guards, headache racks, fuel tanks, tool boxes, rear pipe bumpers and jeep bumpers. They also carry: cargo containment systems by companies like Roll-N-Lock, air springs by Firestone, car steps by Luverne, window visors, LED lighting, bug shields, leveling kits, lift systems, seat protectors, custom towing mirrors and mufflers. He displays 15 bed covers with options from colors to materials to security — and that's just the tip of the iceberg.

"If they make it, we have it," said Jerry, whose relationships with suppliers translate into speedy custom ordering and low prices. "I know the tricks of this trade, the warehouses and

Business **NOW**

their contents. I can help you with just a couple of phone calls.” Jerry knows his customers just as well, and remembers their vehicles and the parts they bought.

Having worked in this industry since 1992, Jerry is soon to celebrate his 12th anniversary as a business owner. Originally from Laredo, he served in the Marine Corps Reserves from 1987-1996. He went on to graduate from DeVry Institute in 1991 with a bachelor’s degree in business operations. Before owning a business, he got the inside view while working at an auto parts store in Dallas, selling parts over the phone and then gaining face-to-face experience with customers. In 1997, he and his family transferred to San Antonio for work.

“Those years were the time of transition from performance to accessories,” Jerry recalled. “People had wanted muscle cars, and by the mid-’90s they wanted trucks and accessories.”

After 12 years, Jerry’s wife, Valinda, got homesick for Arlington. She researched school districts, and the couple chose Mansfield for their children’s sake. Now, their daughter, Natalie, is student body president of Mansfield High School, and their son, Nicholas, spends some time outside of school helping his dad in the three-year-old showroom of Truck Accessory Outlet.

Although Jerry has outgrown the lifting and big tires for his own truck, he still enjoys helping customers who want that. “I’ve never had anyone walk out mad because we couldn’t help them,” he said.

He takes care of customers who want very specific items installed quickly. All installs are by appointment, and you can drop your car off. When necessary, Jerry takes customers to and from work, and offers free pickup and delivery.

The hot sellers this month and next are going to be Christmas gifts like bed covers, step bars, stereos and level kits. Every truck is different, and the installers at Truck Accessory Outlet take their time to do the job right. With a goal of repeat service, most of their customers bring five more over time. Give Jerry and his team just a little time, and you’ll experience the truck transformation you’ve always dreamed of. **NOW**

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From behind the counter at Sprout's Springroll & Pho, Rachael Wood makes a fresh order of vegetarian spring rolls.



Kera Jennings has fun teasing Aaron Michalski with her measuring tape before their meal at Panda Express.



Ella Powells and friends enjoy Mansfield's 4th Annual Senior Citizens' Day at the Mansfield Activity Center.



Kim Malone, Teresa Trefgar and Treasea Obermiller-Arnold get to know each other at the multi-chamber mixer hosted by Walnut Creek Country Club.



During the global See You At The Pole event, families gather for prayer before their children's school day begins.



James Coble Middle School student Andrew Smith and his dad, Trevor, an athletic trainer for Timberview, head to Vernon Newsome Stadium for football practice.



The O'Connells, Haven, Geoff, Lori and London, smile for the camera before walking at the 5th Annual Ennis Pink Power 5K Walk.



Linda Searcy honors her father, founder and namesake of Ben Barber Career & Technology Academy, during the school's grand re-opening.



Employees gather for the massive group portrait at the grand re-opening of 94-year-old Texas Refinery Corp., now operating on the western edge of Mansfield.



Rachel Calvert and teacher Rosalinda Valdez from First Faith Preschool and Kindergarten stop to enjoy the pumpkin patch at First Methodist Mansfield.



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Don't Keep Family in the Dark About Your Plans

You might work diligently at building a financial roadmap for your retirement years and a comprehensive estate plan. But you can't just create these strategies — you also have to communicate them. Specifically, you need to inform your spouse and your grown children what you have in mind for the future — because the more they know, the fewer the surprises that await them down the road.

Let's start with your spouse. Ideally, of course, you and your spouse should have already communicated about your respective ideas for retirement and have come to an agreement on the big issues, such as when you both plan to retire, where you'll live during retirement and what you want to do as retirees (volunteer, travel, work part time and so on).

But what you both might have let slip through the cracks are the important specifics related to financing your retirement. You'll need to answer several questions, including these:

- When will you each start taking Social Security?
- Are there strategies for maximizing both of your Social Security payments?
- When will you need to start tapping into your respective retirement accounts, such as your IRA and 401(k)? And, once you do start withdrawing from these accounts, how much should you take out each year?

You may want to work with a financial professional to address these issues, but however you proceed, you and your spouse need to be "on the same page" regarding the key financial components of your retirement.

Now, consider your grown children. You need to clearly communicate your estate plans to them, not only for the sake of openness and honesty, but also because they may well play active roles within those plans. So when talking to your children, make sure you cover these areas:

- *Durable power of attorney.* You may well decide to give one of your grown

children the durable power of attorney to pay bills and make financial choices on your behalf if you are unable to do so.

- *Estate executor.* An executor is the person or entity you name in your will to carry out your wishes. An executor has a variety of responsibilities, so you'll want to choose someone who is honest and capable of dealing with legal and financial matters. Again, you could ask a grown child to serve as your executor, but, to avoid potential conflict of interests among your children, you might want to go outside the family. Talk with an attorney about how best to name your executor.
- *Status of will and living trust.* Assuming you have already drawn up a will, share it with your grown children. The same is true with a living trust, a popular estate-planning tool that may allow your survivors to avoid going through the time-consuming, public and expensive process of probate. A will and a living trust will obviously contain a great deal of information your children should know about, so take the time to explain your thinking when you created these documents.

You want to enjoy a comfortable retirement, and you want to leave a meaningful legacy through your estate plans. To help accomplish both these goals, you need to include your loved ones in your arrangements — so open those lines of communication. **NOW**

Edward Jones, its employees and financial advisors are not estate planners and cannot provide tax or legal advice. You should consult your estate-planning attorney or qualified tax advisor regarding your situation.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Jeff Trentham is an Edward Jones representative based in Arlington.

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Saturdays through November 19

Mansfield Farmer's Market: 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., 206 Smith St. at Oak St. For more information, contact Rex Wenger, (817) 501-6027.

November 5

Community Care Celebration: 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., 2384 Hwy. 287 N. Healthy Body Chiropractic hosts the family fun, all to benefit The Wesley Mission Center. Call for information: (817) 539-0044.

Journey to India: 2:00-5:00 p.m., Springcreek Barbeque, 1724 Hwy. 287 N. Michelle Willis discusses her mission trips while signing copies of *Journey to India*. willismew@hotmail.com.

Open Arms Health Clinic Gala: 6:00-11:00 p.m., Cacharel Grand Ballroom, 2221 E. Lamar Blvd., Arlington. \$85 per person. RSVP galaopenarms@gmail.com.

One City One Voice One Hope One Name: 7:00-10:00 p.m., The LOT Downtown, 108 S. Main St. \$7; children under 3 free. Food trucks on-site. Visit www.thelotdowntown.com for more information.

November 10

Business After Hours: 5:30-7:30 p.m., Eterna Health Food Store, 120 N. Walnut Creek Dr., Suite #150. Free. info@mansfieldchamber.org.

November 11

Mansfield Chiropractic Foundation Clay Shoot: 8:00 a.m.-noon, Alpine Shooting Range, 5482 Shelby Rd., Ft. Worth. Shooting starts sharply at 9:00 a.m. Wayne Simmons at Marketing@mansfieldchiropractic.com.

Veteran's Day Bash: 3:00-10:00 p.m., The Oasis at Joe Pool Lake, 5700 Lake Ridge Pkwy., Grand Prairie. For more information, visit www.AmericaHelpingVeterans.org.

November 12

Household Hazardous Waste Drop-off: 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Mansfield Environmental Collection Center, 616 S. Wisteria. Free. Contact David Macias, (817) 276-4239.

November 17

Women's Professional Group: 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Wesley Mission Center. This is an

action day, so come volunteer. Call (817) 473-0507.

November 18

Kirk Franklin Concert: 7:00-10:00 p.m., MISD Center for the Performing Arts, 1110 W. Debbie Ln. Tickets cost \$25, \$35, \$45 or \$55 and can be purchased in person at The Center **between 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Monday-Friday**. Call (817) 299-1252.

November 18, 19

Festival of Trees: 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m., Cedar Bluff Assisted Living & Memory Care, 354 Matlock Rd. Free to the public. For more information, go to www.mansfieldwomensclub.com.

December 4

Holiday Home Tour: 1:00-6:00 p.m., selected locations. www.mansfieldwomensclub.com.

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your event details to melissa.rawlins@nowmagazines.com.



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In the Kitchen With Gayle Bradburn

— By *Melissa Rawlins*

In 2015, *The Grandmas' Cookbook* was hot off the press. Its author and publisher, Gayle Bradburn, shared it with only immediate family members. Inspired by the gourmet efforts of her mother-in-law and the farm-fresh specialties of her own mother, Gayle combined family genealogy with each recipe so readers could know a little something about the ancestor whose dish they prepared.

With a school-teacher mom who studied nutrition, avoided sugar and, in fact, wasn't an accomplished cook, Gayle began cooking dinner for the family at about the age of 14. Subscribing to the *Better Homes and Gardens* magazine, she loved to prepare recipes from its pages. Those she shares in *this* magazine have become Bradburn family traditions. "Other than the corn and sweet potato recipes," she said, "you probably have not seen any recipes like these." **NOW**

Pork and Bean Salad

Serves 4.

- 1 15-oz. can Campbell's Pork & Beans**
- 1 dill pickle, chopped or 3 Tbsp. dill pickle relish**
- 1 medium tomato, chopped**

- 1.** In a bowl, combine all ingredients and mix together.
- 2.** Chill and serve cold.

Pineapple Pie

- 3 eggs**
- 3/4 cup white sugar**
- 1 8-oz. can crushed pineapple, packed in syrup**
- Pinch salt**
- 1 8-inch pie shell, unbaked**
- 2 Tbsp. butter**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350 F

2. Beat eggs with an electric mixer in a large mixing bowl. Add sugar, pineapple and salt. If you cannot find pineapple packed in syrup, you may want to add a little more sugar. Mix until blended.

3. Pour mixture into pie shell. Dot with butter. Bake for 1 hour on center rack of oven. (You may triple this recipe and bake it in two 9-inch, deep-dish pie shells, adjusting baking time slightly.)

Date Nut Cake

- Crisco, enough to grease pan**
- 1 cup flour**
- 2 tsp. baking powder**
- 1/2 tsp. salt**
- 3 8-oz. pkgs. chopped dates**
- 5 cups pecans**
- 4 eggs**

- 1 cup sugar**
- 1 tsp. vanilla**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 275 F, placing a pan of water on the bottom rack.
- 2.** Generously grease a 10- to 12-inch cast-iron skillet with Crisco. Cut a large circle about 2 to 3 inches larger than the bottom of the skillet out of brown paper. Line the bottom, sides and edges of the skillet with the brown paper circle. This is important; otherwise the cake will stick like glue to the pan.
- 3.** Combine flour, baking powder and salt to produce a dredging mixture. Dredge dates. Mix pecans with dredged dates. Place dates and nuts into lined skillet.
- 4.** Mix the last 3 ingredients together with leftover dredging mixture. Pour over the dates and nuts.
- 5.** Place the skillet on the rack above the steaming pan. The cake will stay moist while it bakes for 1 hour and 45 minutes.

Georgia Sweet Potato Soufflé

- 5 large sweet potatoes**
- 2 large eggs**
- 1/2 cup evaporated milk**
- 1/4 cup brown sugar**
- 1/4 cup white sugar**
- 1/4 tsp. salt**
- 1/2 stick butter**
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract**
- 1 tsp. cinnamon**

Optional Toppings:

- 1 cup mini marshmallows**
- 1 cup pecan pieces**
- 1/4 cup brown sugar**
- 4 tsp. butter**

- 1.** Peel and cut potatoes into chunks. Boil until tender, drain off water and reserve potatoes in a large mixing bowl.
- 2.** Beat eggs in a small bowl; add the rest of the ingredients except toppings. Pour into potatoes and mix for about 2 minutes with an electric beater set on medium speed. Pour potato mixture into a greased 13x9-inch baking dish.
- 3.** If desired, top with mini marshmallows or pecan pieces mixed with brown sugar and butter.
- 4.** Bake 40 minutes at 350 F.

To view recipes from current and previous issues, visit www.nowmagazines.com.

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