

SouthwestNOW

M A G A Z I N E

NOVEMBER 2023

It All Adds Up

Barimah Amoo-Asante
teaches math to
change lives

In the Kitchen With
Terry Bell

2023 Holiday
Shopping Guide

Also inside:

Scavenger Hunt
Crossword/Sudoku

Featured Business:
Serenity Advanced Dentistry

Postal Customer

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Subscriptions are available at the rate of \$35 per year or \$3.50 per issue. Subscriptions should be sent to: NOW Magazines, P.O. Box 1071, Waxahachie, TX 75168. For advertising rates or editorial correspondence, call (972) 283-1170 or visit www.nowmagazines.com.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

It's Thanksgiving time!

Thanksgiving just doesn't get the kind of attention that other holidays get. Some holidays have whole bookshelves of novels, entire Hallmark channels or slasher movie series dedicated to them. Some holidays have their own art forms, paintings, songs and mascots. Not Thanksgiving. I'm sure there must be more, but I can only think of three pieces of specifically Thanksgiving themed art.

One is the 1973 animated short film, *A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving*. Charlie Brown, his sister, Sally, and their invisible parents are getting ready to go to Grandma's house for the big meal, when Peppermint Patty throws a monkey wrench into the plans, as only she can. She invites herself and everyone she knows over to "Chuck's" house for a meal he isn't even having. But Snoopy comes to the rescue with popcorn, jelly beans and giant stacks of hot buttered toast.

The second is "An Old Fashioned Thanksgiving," a short story from 1882 by Louisa May Alcott, who is most famous for her novel *Little Women*. In this story, the Bassett family's Thanksgiving meal is disrupted when Mrs. Bassett is called away to care for her sick mother. She leaves her oldest daughter in charge of finishing the cooking. Things don't go well. But mother comes back with news that grandma is OK, and with half the extended family in tow!

The third is the famous painting by Norman Rockwell. *Freedom From Want* was painted in response to President Franklin Roosevelt's "Four Freedoms Speech." It was originally accompanied by an essay by Filipino-American novelist Carlos Bulosan about how difficult life was for Asian Americans during the war years.

For what will you give thanks?



Adam

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IT ALL ADDS UP

— By Adam Walker

Barimah Amoo-Asante is a born teacher. He grew up in Kumasi, Ghana, in Africa. “My mom was a principal, and my older brother is a college professor. I got a lot of lectures at home! I always tell my students, ‘You guys have it easy.’ When I was in middle school, math was very challenging. I had A’s in all my subjects except math. Then I met one teacher who was able to break it down and make it easy for me. I finished my first degree in Ghana and then did my two years of national service as a teacher.”

When Barimah finished his service, he moved to America. “I came to continue my education. By God’s grace, I won an immigrant visa in the visa lottery. I moved here in 1999. I finished my M.A. at Texas A&M University-Commerce. My bachelor’s degree in Ghana was in marketing and sociology. My M.A. was in education. It was when I did my Region 10 certification that I focused on math. Now I’ve been a teacher for 20 years, and 18 of that is in Cedar Hill.”

Barimah chose to teach the subject he struggled with in middle school to other middle schoolers. “For most students, math is not their favorite subject. It’s challenging because they have psychological barriers. Other students tell them math is difficult. Their parents tell them math is difficult. In parent-teacher conferences, I’m always asking parents to please stop telling their children that math is difficult, that they hate math. Breaking that psychological barrier is key. I tell them, ‘Hey, you can do this. Math is not difficult. It just takes effort.’ I want to encourage them, like my teacher encouraged me.

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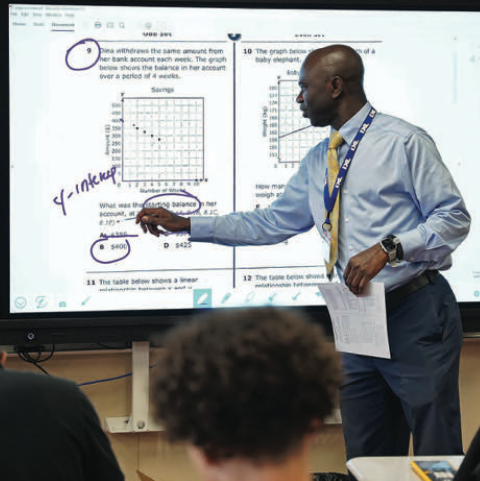
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"I've always taught math. I've taught regular classes and talented and gifted classes. Right now, I'm teaching an honors class of seventh-graders, who are learning eighth grade pre-algebra. My students often ask me to move up with them to high school, so they can have me again the next year. But I tell them, 'No, no! I must stay and help your younger siblings!'"

Mr. Asante, as his students call him, uses a range of techniques to teach his students. "I use manipulatives and games. I use real-life situations, like understanding the interest on a credit card or compound interest on a savings account. I use Schoology and anything else to make math a little bit more fun and engaging. When they think it's fun, they're more willing to learn. Technology also helps inspire them to learn."

Barimah cares about his students' futures. "I chose teaching because I realized that if I could make a difference in just one life, I would accomplish a lot. When you are a teacher, you are influencing lives. Whatever you say can have such implications for their lives. Because you helped them, they can turn around and help someone else. I don't only teach math. I teach character. Math is just instructions. If you can learn instructions, you will do well in math. But if you can be a positive influence, you can change lives. I always say, 'Look around at all the people influencing other people for the wrong things. But all it takes is one person working for good, and you can change a whole nation, state or community.' Just one person can change a lot. It's like that old story

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about a man walking along the beach, throwing fish back into the ocean. Another person tells him, ‘You can’t save them all.’ And he says, ‘No, but I can save this one.’ Each one you change can change more.”

Sometimes, for a teacher who has been in the trenches as long as Barimah has, that lesson can become very concrete. “I was teaching one day, and these two military officers walked in. They had been students in my first class at Cedar Hill. Those two boys gave me so much trouble, such a hard time. But they came back to thank me for not giving up on them. Every child has a story. As a teacher, I get to be a part of that story. I want them to be able to say, ‘Mr. Asante helped me reach my goals.’ Every day, I get to influence minds. When students come to me, I see doctors and lawyers. I see lives in progress. I want to support them in their goals.”

Culture and family are also important to Barimah. “I have lived here for a long time. I’ve been married for 13 years, and I have two boys, ages 10 and 8. Still, there is no place like home, where your friends and family live. I talk to them often, but it’s not the same as visiting. The last two times I was home were in 2010, and last year, when my sister passed. The culture is different. In Ghana, in school, we drilled our multiplication facts every morning, and if you got one wrong, you were punished. In Ghana, you can’t use your left hand to answer questions or to accept a gift. I appreciate that every culture has different ways to do things and address the needs of their people. I try to respect all the different cultures of my students. Teaching is my passion. I want to see all of my students succeed.” **NOW**

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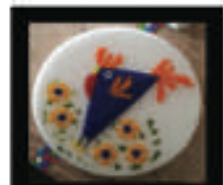
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— By Adam Walker

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Dr. Allala is a graduate of the Texas A&M School of Dentistry. “When I started there, it was still Baylor. My diploma has both names on it,” she recalled. “I specialize in oral surgery, and we’re really good at it. I’m nothing without

my team. We do everything in dentistry. I like being well rounded. I enjoy being an overachiever, so I'm constantly taking continuing education, keeping up with all the newest techniques and technology. I'm also a native Spanish speaker. I grew up speaking both languages. Our YouTube videos explaining procedures are available in both English and Spanish."

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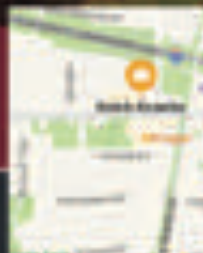
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Zoomed In: Adolphus Hall

By Adam Walker

Adolphus Hall recently spent some time serenading the shoppers at Grow DeSoto Marketplace with the smooth sounds of his sax. "My friend, Jeff Aycok, asked me if I wanted to join him, so I did. I enjoy playing wherever I can. We've played together for years," Adolphus reported.

The saxophone has been Adolphus' instrument of choice for a long time. "I've been playing since I was 11. That's longer than most of you have been alive," Adolphus informed. "I had asthma growing up, so my folks bought me a saxophone for Christmas. I've been playing ever since, and I hardly ever have trouble with asthma anymore. I was in marching band in college, and I still support my Phi Beta Sigma fraternity brothers."



Rosalie St. Andrew and Cinque McKinnon help DeSoto stay active at the rec center.



Duncanville residents celebrate at Hispanic Heritage Festival 2023.



G.E.K.S. Elite provides tutoring and mentoring at the DeSoto Library.



The Meadow Vista neighborhood celebrates National Night Out in Cedar Hill.



Ann Huff celebrates her 95th birthday with a tea party.



The Texas Art Education Association (TAEA) recognizes Cedar Hill ISD for its exceptional visual arts program.



Ivette Rodriguez, Keyiona Cobb and Atrice Lockett help Care fight poverty and hunger.



Dr. Gaskin welcomes patients to The Joint's new location in Duncanville.

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CookingNOW *In the Kitchen With*

— By Adam Walker



What Terry Bell, a certified nutritionist, loves about cooking is the fellowship. “When everyone is sitting, eating and talking at the table, that is pure pleasure to me and warms my heart. I grew up having family dinners every day, so that still sticks with me.” She looks forward to holiday meals with her children and their families. “My house is that meetup home where we gather for all the holidays. I enjoy the memories that we are creating and look forward to making more memories.”

As an experienced cook, she knows what she likes. “My husband will send me Facebook messages with recipes. African-Americans are used to seasoning. Therefore, you tend to modify recipes to give it that, ‘Uh,’ that we look for.” **NOW**

Overnight Omega Oats

1/2 cup steel cut oats (or old fashioned rolled oats)
1 to 1 1/4 cups non-dairy milk
1 tsp. chia seeds
1 tsp. flax seeds
1 tsp. hemp hearts
1/2 banana, chopped
1/4 cup fruit, chopped (apple, pear, etc.)

1 handful blueberries
2 Tbsp. walnuts, chopped
2 Tbsp. dried cranberries

1. Add the ingredients to a pint-size mason jar in the order listed. Cover; soak overnight (or at least 4 hours) in the refrigerator.
2. Pour into a bowl and serve for breakfast.
Note: You can make 5 jars and have breakfast for the week.

Mexican Black Bean Salad With Avocado

1 1/2 cups black beans, cooked
1 cup corn
1 cup cherry tomatoes, diced
1/2 tsp. oregano
1/2 tsp. chili powder
1/2 tsp. cumin
1/2 small yellow onion, diced
1 yellow bell pepper, diced
1 poblano pepper, chopped
Lime juice, to taste
1 avocado

1. In a large bowl, mix all the ingredients, except the lime juice and avocado.
2. Squeeze the lime juice into the salad; stir.
3. Add the avocado and mash.

Quinoa Salad With Kale

1 cup tricolor quinoa, cooked
1 bunch lacinato kale, de-stemmed and cut in ribbons

1 English cucumber, diced
1/2 10-oz. container cherry tomatoes, halved
1/2 cup Kalamata olives, halved
Newman's Own Light Italian Dressing, to taste

1. Pour the cooled quinoa into a large bowl.
2. Add the kale, cucumber, cherry tomatoes and olives; mix all together.
3. Add the dressing and stir.

Okra and Tomatoes

1 onion, diced
1 bell pepper, diced
4-5 cloves garlic, chopped
Sea salt, to taste
Lawry's Seasoned Pepper, to taste
1 pkg. andouille sausage, sliced, (optional)
24 oz. frozen okra
1 14.5-oz. can diced tomatoes
2 8-oz. cans tomato sauce
1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. pepper
1 lb. shrimp
Tony Chachere's Original Cerole Seasoning, to taste (optional)
1 cup rice, cooked

1. Season the onion, bell pepper and garlic with a little sea salt and Lawry's Seasoned Pepper. Add the andouille, if using; sauté.
2. Add the okra; stir about 1 minute.
3. In a saucepan, add the diced tomatoes and tomato sauce; stir. Turn to medium heat. Cover; heat for 2-3 minutes. Add salt and pepper. Reduce the heat to low; cook for 5-7 minutes.
4. Add the shrimp; simmer 2-3 minutes or until pink. Add a little Tony Chachere's if you like a little kick.
5. Serve over the rice.

Salmon Pesto

1 16-oz. bag fresh spinach
1 onion, diced
4 salmon fillets
1 8-oz. jar basil pesto
1/2 10-oz. container cherry tomatoes, halved
1 bunch asparagus

1. In a large skillet, add the spinach and onions. Lay the salmon over the spinach; cover with pesto. Add the tomatoes. Cover; cook over medium heat for 15 minutes.
2. Add the asparagus. Turn the heat to low; cook for 20 minutes.

Spaghetti Squash

1 spaghetti squash
1 zucchini, diced



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Salmon Pesto

1 yellow squash, diced
1 onion, diced
2 tomatoes, diced
1 clove garlic
Sea salt, to taste
Pepper, to taste
Olive oil, to taste
24 oz. marinara sauce
Feta cheese, to taste

Black olives, sliced, to taste
Fresh basil, chopped, to taste

1. Preheat the oven to 350 F.
2. Cut the spaghetti squash lengthwise and core it. Place the cut-sides down on a lightly greased baking sheet. Bake 45 minutes to 1 1/2 hours, depending on the size of the squash, until the skin is soft and

easy to stick with a knife or fork.
3. Season the veggies and garlic with sea salt and pepper. Sauté in a small amount of olive oil.
4. Add the marinara sauce; cover and simmer 2-3 minutes.
5. When the spaghetti squash is done, scrape each half with a fork to get spaghetti. Add to the tomato sauce mixture. Stir and simmer another 2-3 minutes.
6. Plate and top with feta cheese, black olives and basil.

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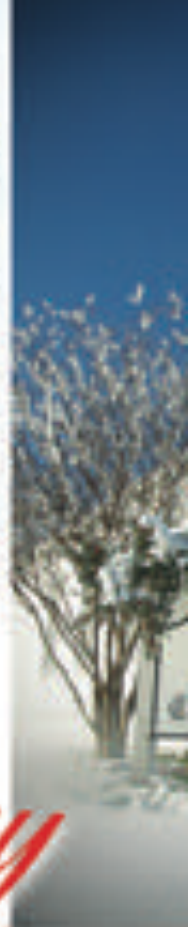
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EXPERIENCE THE MAGIC OF *Christmas in McKinney*

As the holiday season approaches, McKinney, Texas, transforms into a winter wonderland that captivates visitors and locals alike. Known for its small-town charm and festive spirit, McKinney offers a plethora of holiday activities, events and decorations that create an enchanting atmosphere to delight all ages.

Home for the Holidays Festival — November 24-26

McKinney's Home for the Holidays festival, held every Thanksgiving weekend, is a beloved tradition that kicks off the Christmas season. The event features an array of activities, including live music and dance performances, arts and crafts vendors and food trucks offering delicious holiday treats. Children can delight in visits with Santa Claus in his workshop. And families will not want to miss the spectacular community tree-lighting ceremony on Friday evening followed by a concert on the square. Admission to the weekend-long event is free.

Throughout the holiday season, families can enjoy the Christmas Carousel, kids workshop craft area, visits with Santa and taking family photos by the community Christmas tree on the downtown square. Of course, you will want to take some time to stroll around Historic Downtown McKinney to be enchanted by the festive storefront displays.

Christmas shopping in McKinney is a delight, as the city boasts an eclectic array of boutiques, specialty stores and

art galleries. Browse through the shops to find one-of-a-kind gifts for your loved ones, such as handmade jewelry, clothing, home decor, Christmas decorations, toys and artisanal chocolates.

After a day of shopping and exploring, enjoy the delightful dining options McKinney has to offer. From cozy cafes serving hot soups and sandwiches to upscale restaurants with seasonal menus, the city's dining scene caters to all tastes. Don't miss the chance to try some Texas-style barbecue, a local favorite, or indulge in a festive feast at one of the many restaurants offering special holiday menus.

50th Annual Holiday Tour of Homes — December 2-3 & 9-10

This year, Chestnut Square and the Heritage Guild of Collin County celebrate 50 years of this favored event that showcases several homes in McKinney's residential historic district. For this year's tour, there will be two sets of decorated homes, one set each weekend, and bonus stops and activities at Chestnut Square Heritage Village. In addition to the home tours, guests can enjoy tea served along with a full breakfast buffet in the recently renovated Bevel House. (Additional ticket required for this activity)

Holidays at the Heard — December 8-9

This annual event at the Heard Natural Science Museum & Wildlife Sanctuary brings the beauty of the holiday season to nature. Children can take part in activities and snacks in the museum while visiting with Father Christmas, then head out to the nature trails adorned with thousands of twinkling lights. Make sure to look for the animatronic dinosaurs that visit The



Heard each fall and winter, all decked out for the season. Bundle up the kids, and enjoy this one-of-a-kind family holiday experience.

Christmas Parade of Lights — December 9

Each year, thousands of locals and visitors fill the downtown square for the Christmas Parade of Lights that includes decorated floats, marching bands and, of course, Santa Claus himself. Admission is free.

If you are seeking a magical and heartwarming Christmas experience for your family, look no further than McKinney with its rich traditions and strong sense of community. Plan your visit to McKinney to experience the magic that makes this North Texas town a must-see holiday destination. **NOW**

Beth Shumate
Communications Manager — Visit McKinney

Editor's Note: For more information, go to visitmckinney.com.



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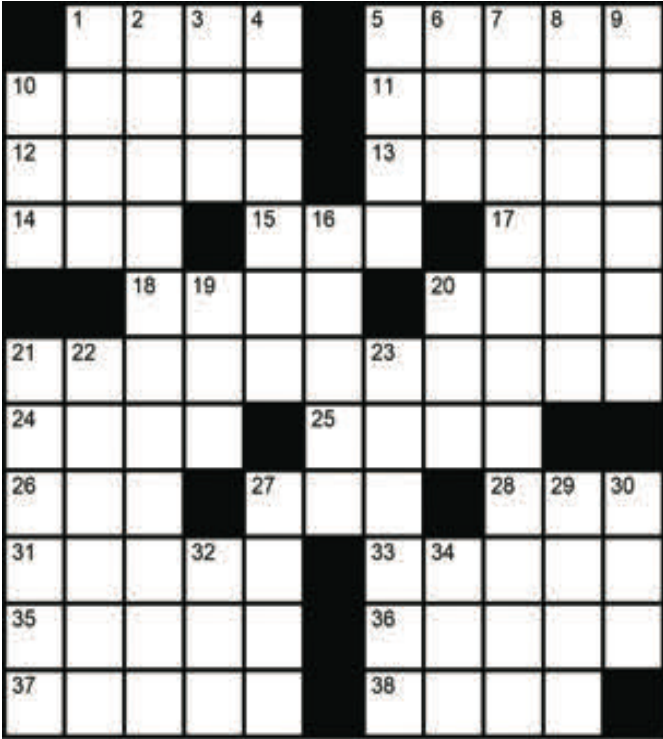
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- Across**

 - 1 "House" and "Shooter" actor Omar ---
 - 5 Frat-party wraps
 - 10 Skateboarding jump
 - 11 "Lummox" writer Fannie --
 - 12 Icon
 - 13 Efface
 - 14 Military go-betweens
 - 15 Devoted follower
 - 17 Anonymous Jane
 - 18 Follow closely
 - 20 Sound of a finely tuned engine
- Down**

 - 21 Swells
 - 24 It stopped with HST
 - 25 Wise one's call?
 - 26 Kind of PC port
 - 27 Creditor's statement
 - 28 Online connector
 - 31 Barrel bit
 - 33 In unison
 - 35 Old watchmaker
 - 36 Kind of eclipse
 - 37 Start over
 - 38 1/2 fl. oz.
- 1 Patron saint of sailors
 - 2 Some forms of packaging
 - 3 Iron block
 - 4 Believe it proper
 - 5 At that time
 - 6 Belonging to us
 - 7 Marks on a measuring device
 - 8 Arrange by type
 - 9 Takes the tiller
 - 10 Painting medium
 - 16 Welcome to Hawaii!
- 19 Seek clarification
 - 20 Paid sportsperson
 - 21 Vituperative one
 - 22 Steal stock
 - 23 Kind of blue
 - 27 Home on the range?
 - 29 Easy task
 - 30 For each
 - 32 Contend
 - 34 Pinch-hitter

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	8	6			7			
3								4
		4	9		5			
			2	6		8		
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Medium

4				2				
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11/16-11/18

Radium Girls:

Follow a woman's fight for justice against the U.S. Radium Corporation. **Thursday-Saturday:** 8:00 p.m.; **Sunday:** 3:00 p.m., Duncanville Community Theatre, 106 S. Main Street, Duncanville.

www.dctheatre.org/tickets.

11/10

Wine & Words:

The Zula B. Public Library Friends kick off the fundraising efforts benefiting the new Traphene Hickman Library. Cocktail casual. \$65. 6:30-9:00 p.m., Cedar Hill Government Center, 285 Uptown Blvd. Tickets on Eventbrite.

11/11

3rd Annual Breakfast of Champions:

Celebrating veterans in the Best Southwest area. Free. 8:00-11:00 a.m., Methodist Charlton Medical Center Outpatient Auditorium,

3500 W. Wheatland Rd., Dallas. Reserve on Eventbrite.

11/14

DARSE Meeting:

Topic will be "Travelogue of the Baltic Countries & Krakow." 9:30 a.m., PACE High School, 502 E. Freeman, Duncanville.

11/15

Cedar Hill Senior Activity Thanksgiving Luncheon:

11:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Alan E. Sims Cedar Hill Recreation Center, 310 E. Parkerville Rd. Register at <https://bit.ly/CHThanksgiving2023>.

11/18

5K Fun Run/Walk

Turkey Trot:

\$10. 8:00 a.m.-noon, Ernie Roberts Park, 515 E. Pleasant Run Rd., DeSoto.

Village Lights:

Tree lighting, Santa's arrival, 10-foot snow slide, crafts. 5:30-7:30 p.m., The Village Green at Hillside Village, 305 W. FM 1382, Cedar Hill.

12/1

Christmas Parade and Tree Lighting Ceremony:

6:00-8:00 p.m., Armstrong Park, 100 James Collins Blvd., Duncanville.

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

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To ensure your Scavenger
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