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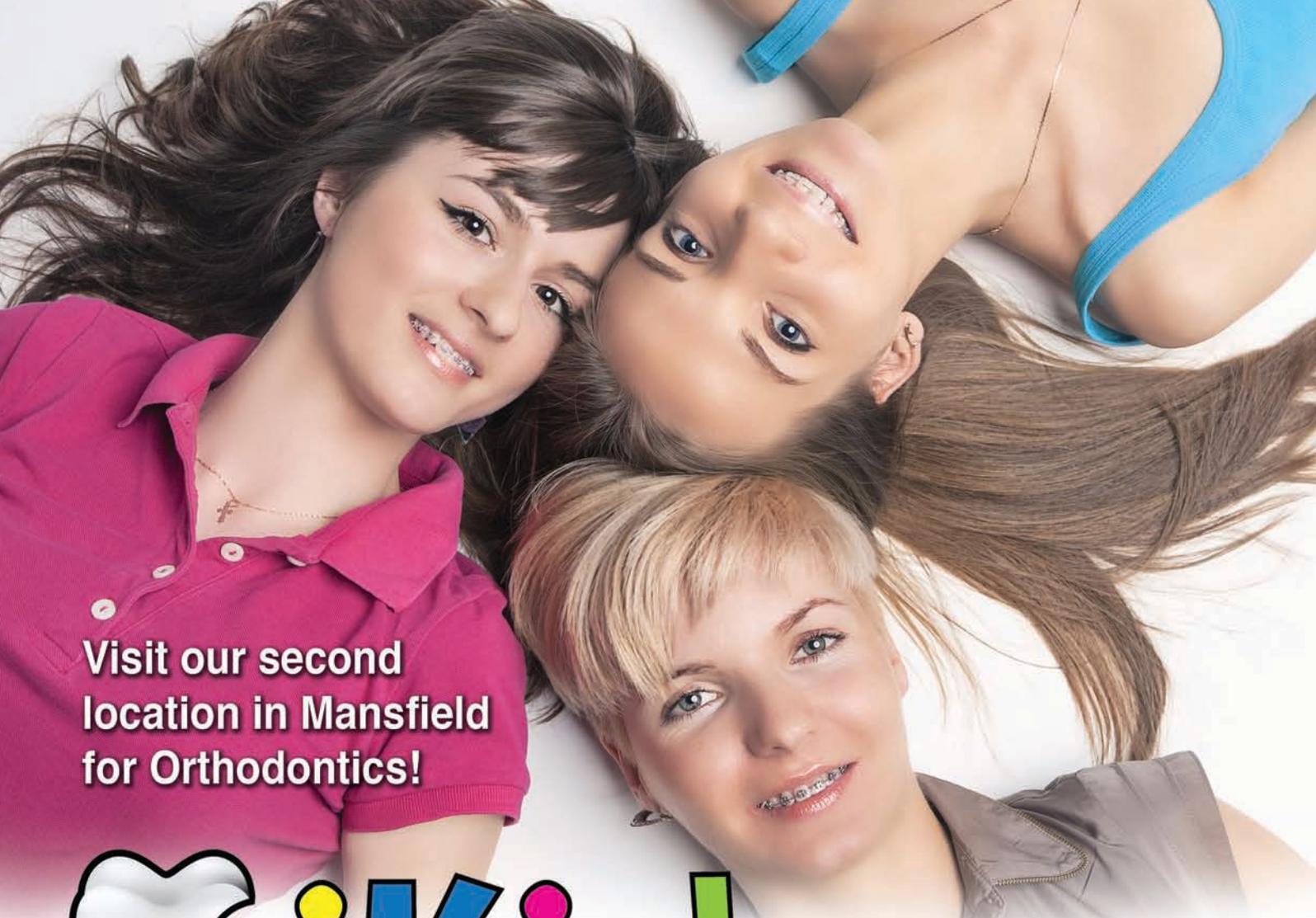
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Editorial Coordinator, Sandra Strong
Editorial Assistant, Beverly Shay
Writers, Shawn M. Malley
Mikaela Mathews . Melissa Rawlins
Betty Tryon . Carolyn Wills
Editors/Proofreaders,
Pat Anthony . Randy Bigham

GRAPHICS AND DESIGN

Creative Director, Chris McCalla
Artists, Kristin Bato . Julie Carpenter
Morgan Christensen . Martha Macias
Brande Morgan . Shannon Pfaff . Felipe Ruiz

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography Director, Jill Rose
Photographers, Vanessa Polozola
Amanda Rooney

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ON THE COVER



Four librarians have created an event to inspire award-winning reading.

Photo by Vanessa Polozola.

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Editor's Note

Happy New Year, Mansfield!

I can hardly believe that 2015 is already here. It seems that with each year, time passes by at a much more hurried pace. Perhaps that's because with each New Year, I look forward to new beginnings: new resolutions, plans, endeavors and goals. There is something magical about the turning of a year. The hope and potential of the next 12 months are immeasurable. All we have to do is realize the opportunities in our path and seize the day.

This year, my new beginning is acting as editor for *MansfieldNOW*. I am thrilled to share this experience with such a diverse, supportive and unique community. Over the next year, I look forward to meeting and working with many of you, as I learn more about and become a part of Mansfield.

Here's to a fabulous 2015!

Sara

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sara.edgell@nowmagazines.com

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W. And the Winner Is

— By Mikaela Mathews



The lights are dimmed and anticipation hangs in the air. The announcer slowly pulls out an envelope and leans into the microphone. "And the winner is ..."

This scene might remind you of a glamorous evening of adults, showing off their dresses and marveling in each other's movies. But, on one evening in April 2014, at the Mansfield ISD Performing Arts Center, instead of announcing an actor, actress or movie, elementary students declared their own classmates' favorite books as winners. "We wanted students to see the written word celebrated in a big, spectacular way," shared Tracy LaHue, librarian at Imogene Gideon Elementary School.

"This event was all about kids teaching other kids, instead of adults, to love to read," explained Lynn Kostel, librarian at Daulton Elementary School. A

Susan Buckles
and Anne
Wallace-James
helped pull together
an evening of fun
and books.





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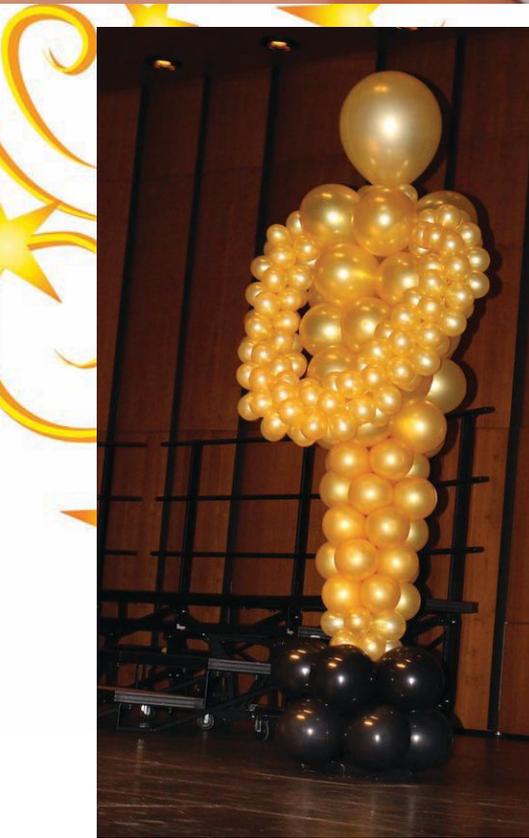


group of four dedicated librarians banded together to create a magical night called And the Winner Is ... The evening was full of awards, fancy dresses and even a red carpet — all so children would cherish books.

The plan for And the Winner Is ... started with Lynn, who had heard about the idea from a friend putting on a similar event in Killeen. She wrangled three other librarians: Anne Wallace-James at Elizabeth Smith Elementary School, Susan Buckles at Tarver-Rendon Elementary School and Tracy LaHue to help her organize and coordinate the event. The results were thrilling. "The children loved it. We had some kids dressed to the nines," Lynn smiled. Many of the children from the four schools who participated dressed as if they were going to The Oscars themselves.

In order for the children to feel included in the event, many of them held a specific job. Children could be announcers, pass out programs, hold the envelope and trophy or be a category representative. Presenters were the older children, in grades two through four, who would announce the winner of each category. The librarians wanted to make sure to include children of all ages, so the younger children, in kindergarten and first grade, would hold the envelopes and trophies. "Being able to walk across the stage holding an envelope made them feel very special," Lynn said.

Each winning category from each school had a category representative. A photo of them holding the nominated book was flashed on the screen while the winner was announced. If they won, the



category representative would walk on stage, accept the trophy and give a thank-you speech. Many of the students took their thank-you speeches very seriously, having planned them beforehand. "We had some very elaborate speeches," Anne smiled.

In addition to their jobs, the children were also given a full Oscars-inspired experience. The category representatives were given VIP passes, so their parents could drive them to the front of the Performing Arts building and drop them off. Waiting for them, there was a red carpet and, of course, paparazzi. "Lake

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Ridge High School students took pictures of the children as they got out of the cars,” Susan explained.

The front of the stage was also decked out for a high-quality night. Two Oscar award structures made entirely from gold and black balloons sat on both sides of the risers on the stage. And, no event is complete without knockout masters of ceremony. Nathan Hale, an award-winning author and children’s illustrator, hosted the event, as well as Michael



Levine, music producer of the first four *The New York Times* best-selling *Pete the Cat* books. “Nathan and Michael did an outstanding job,” Lynn said. “Nathan visited three of our schools before the event, and while he was telling a story, he was also drawing a picture. It was amazing to see the squiggles he drew turn into picture after picture, illustrating the story he was telling.”

Before the event, children had nominated different books for all 11 categories. Some of the categories were favorite picture book, picture book character, illustrator, novel, poetry and others. Each campus voted amongst themselves in different ways to choose which book would be nominated in each category.

The thrust behind the program is to encourage children to celebrate books, a passion all four of these librarians share. “I think libraries are the heart of the

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school. Everybody goes there," Susan shared. "The kids are excited about it and many of them say that it's their favorite part of the week." Susan has been in education for 20 years and a librarian for eight years. The other three librarians share her sentiment. Anne has taught for 21 years, 10 of which have been as a librarian; Lynn has taught for 21 years, 11 of which have been in a library; and Tracy has taught for 19 years, with eight years as a librarian.

As a result of these librarians' hard work, the event will happen again this year as a two-night extravaganza on April 28-29, with Chris Grabenstein as the master of ceremony. Chris is an accomplished author and actor who has written books with James Patterson and performed with Robin Williams. The leadership team of four librarians has more than tripled with 14 librarians who want to join the fun. The success can be credited to the children's enthusiasm for reading. "We saw the children wanted to read more books," Anne shared. "They might have never read a certain book before, but when they saw it had been nominated 30 times, they thought, *Well, maybe I should read it.*"

Tracy shared Anne's excitement. "In the process of nominating favorites, this program allowed my students the opportunity to more fully understand the differences between various genres," she shared. "At the awards ceremony itself, they saw the fruits of reading and writing celebrated."

Not only did the children love the event, but the parents were also thrilled. "I had a parent say to me, 'I thought this program was the most creative way to get kids excited about books I've seen since my children started school. My son was slow to learn to read, and he didn't really enjoy reading at all until last year. Because of that, I was thrilled he wanted to be a presenter and even more excited he wanted to read some of the nominated books. Now that he realizes that books come in all genres and different authors appeal to different people, he really enjoys a good book,'" Susan shared.

Although it was Lynn's idea to start the event, she is quick to give credit where it is due. "Without all of the volunteers and other librarians, this would not have been possible," she shared. "It was a team effort." **NOW**

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MARCHING TOWARD SUCCESS

— By Mikaela Mathews

Legacy High School senior C.C. Waggoner has made some history. He was the first-ever member from Legacy High School and one of the youngest in the Blue Devils Drum & Bugle Corps' history. C.C. found himself marching and playing with one of the most elite drum corps in the country last summer, during the Blue Devils

most successful seasons as the corps pounded its way to a world championship.

The Blue Devils Drum & Bugle Corps is a nonprofit youth marching band that's been in existence since 1957, under the umbrella of Drum Corps International (DCI). According to the Blue Devils' website, their mission is "to permanently enrich the lives of young people through a commitment to youth development and performance excellence, while providing

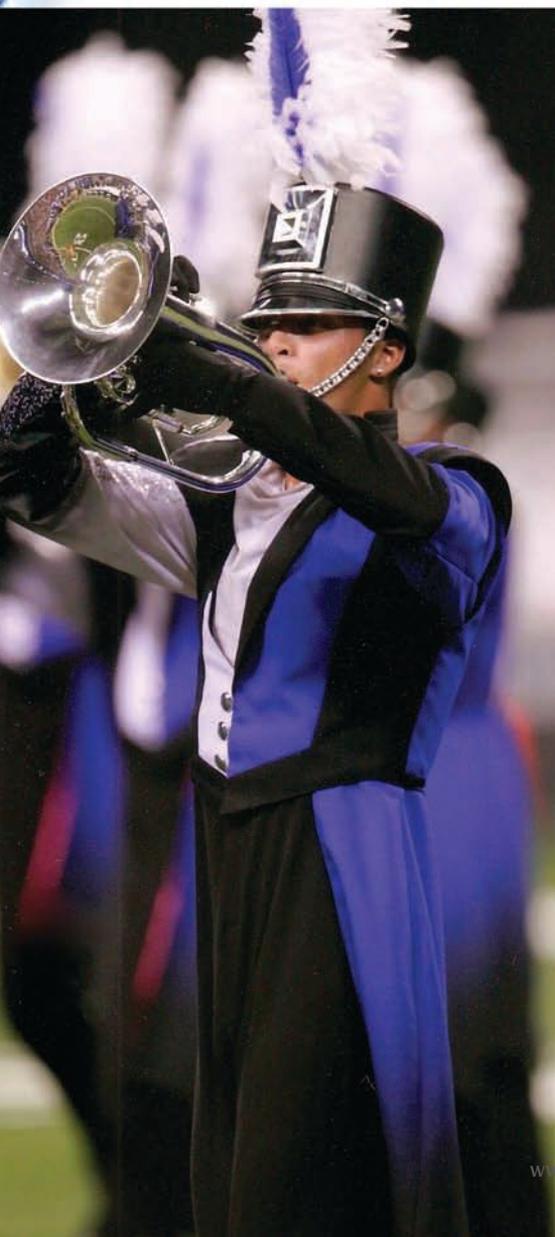
enjoyment for our local community and audiences worldwide." The A Corps group consists of over 100 people who travel and compete around the world. The Blue Devils are also 16-time DCI World Champions, the most recent of which occurred in August 2014 with a record-shattering performance.

Although C.C. had been playing the French horn since middle school, his passion for band skyrocketed during his sophomore year. "During my second year of marching band, things started to click for me," he shared. He watched as

some of his fellow and older band mates made plans to join teams in DCI and felt inspired to later join them. That year, he also switched to playing the mellophone.

Auditioning for a corps in DCI, however, is no easy task, and C.C. didn't start with the Blue Devils. Auditions typically happen in cities away from one's hometown and require much traveling and learning. "They only hold four auditions in the country and have

"It was a blast to take what I had learned and apply it to our marching band here."



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to weed through 150 people at each of those camps to fill only 80 spots,” C.C. shared. Nonetheless, C.C.’s talent for the mellophone shone through, and in



January 2013, he was given a spot on the Bluecoats Drum & Bugle Corps.

The several months after he was accepted were filled with camps every few months — in Ohio. Scheduling school commitments with his Bluecoats practices was tricky for C.C., but he pushed through and eventually spent the summer with his DCI team, traveling and competing around the country. The team eventually won fifth place in the DCI World Championships.

The Legacy marching band experienced a tremendous fall season during C.C.’s junior year, only stirring his passion for band even more. “It was a blast to take what I had learned and apply



it to our marching band here,” he shared. “I love getting to do that — teaching and spreading knowledge.” With a growing affection for band and competition,



C.C. decided to explore more options with DCI for the summer. He auditioned for the Blue Devils, a high-ranked corps from California, and was given a spot immediately.

For the remainder of his junior year, C.C. repeated a similar cycle of band camps and school, but this time, he traveled to California. “C.C. was one of the

youngest members of the Blue Devils,” Glenn shared. “Most of the kids are 20 or 21 and try out for the Blue Devils to finish out their drum corps career.”

Even though C.C. had traveled with the Bluecoats the previous summer, he still felt the weight of another summer of traveling and practicing nearly every day. “I was more prepared the second summer, but it was still intense,” he shared. A normal practice day consisted of three blocks of three to four hours each. Mornings, afternoons and evenings were consumed with learning the music and the marching routine. Practices were both physically and mentally challenging. “You’re basically running a 5K race while



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also metering your breath,” he said.

One day a week, corps members were given a day of rest, and C.C. used that time to explore California. “I went to the Golden Gate Bridge and to a Giants game. That was fun, but once we started the tour, there weren’t any free days.”

And, once the tour begins, the students don’t relax in luxury. “These kids sleep on gym floors,” explained Glenn Fugett, Legacy High School band director. “They



pull up after a competition at 3:00 a.m., take a nap, then they’re up again for another day.”

Their hard work paid off in the end, however, when they won the DCI World Championships. Their winning performance was a nod at Federico Fellini, an Italian film director and scriptwriter. The music from his films formed the backbone of their groundbreaking show. Props on the field included clothing racks, scaffolding and stage lights, as well as images of film rolls on the drums, meant to imitate a movie set. “I loved getting to take the theme of the show and bringing it to life on a football field with music, costumes and equipment,” C.C. shared. “It lives and breathes on its own when you become a part of that.” One hundred fifty hornline members, percussionists and color guard populated the field to create the scene.

As a DCI judge, Glenn was blown away by their routine. “C.C. joined the Blue Devils in an exceptional year. I believe their performance was so good that it’s going to shift the activity in a



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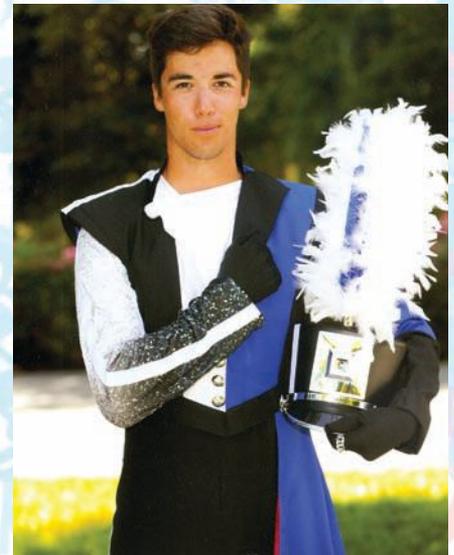
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new direction,” he shared. “Six of the judges gave the Blue Devils a perfect score of 20. I’ve never seen that before.” In addition to his role as band director, Glenn has a rich history with DCI. He has served as a judge for DCI since 1993,



and also recruits judges, monitors their performance and mediates, if a conflict arises between instructors and judges. He performed with DCI, too, in his band-playing years.

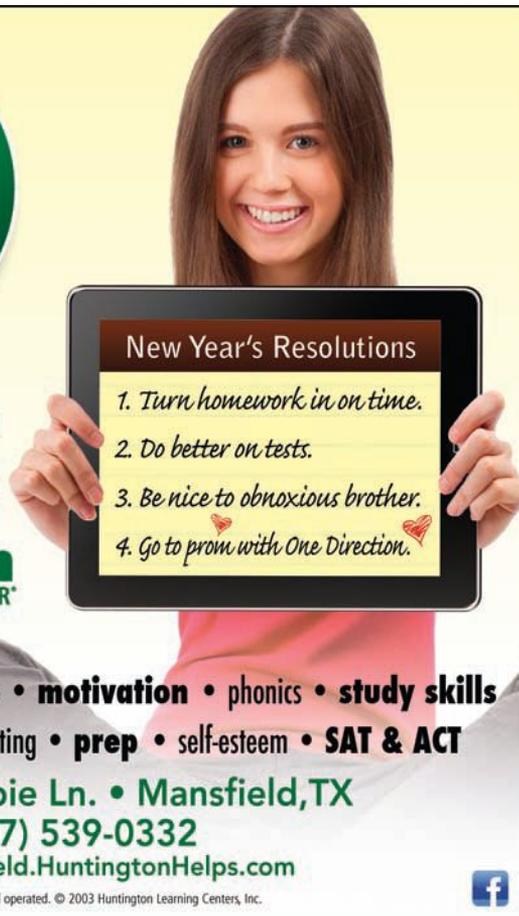
After C.C. returned from his second tour of the country with the Blue Devils, he was able to bring his experience to the field. “When C.C. came back, it was like having an instructor. He’s brought some ideas about methods used with the Blue Devils, which we’ve since incorporated into our instruction,” Glenn shared.

C.C.’s supportive and also talented family have encouraged and inspired him along the way. Although both of his parents are now journalists, his mom played the flute in high school. His older brother also played percussion all throughout high school. “My brother was probably the biggest influence on me, musically,” he shared. “I gravitated toward percussion, like him, until I was in the fifth grade. But, then I tried a different route.” Since two of his family members were also in band, he jokes it was predetermined for him to be, too.

But, C.C.’s passion for music expands beyond his talent for his instrument. “I love to do it because it’s fun, but also because I make some really good friends,” he shared. “I was with those people all of the time for an entire summer. We have a close-knit group.” **NOW**

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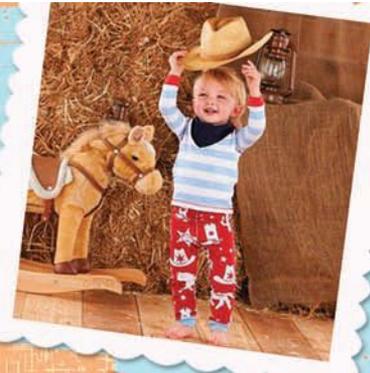
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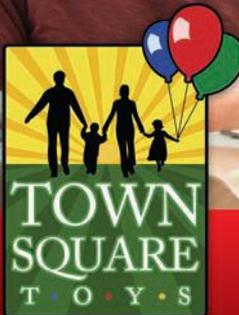
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Faith in the Footprint

— By Carolyn Wills



Last May, Joe and Donna Driscoll put their faith in the footprint of a two-story, 4,000-plus-square-foot home, bravely ignoring its orange doors, concrete floors, black counters, gray-green walls and industrial-contemporary style. “We bought the footprint,” Donna smiled. “If a floor plan and location work, everything else can be changed.” Remarkably, in less than three months, she and Joe were celebrating the perfect homecoming.



“We had lived in Mansfield since 1989,” she explained. “In 2013, with our children grown, Joe and I decided to try urban life, so we sold our house and rented a condominium in downtown Fort Worth.”

“At times, being downtown was a blast,” Joe said. “We enjoyed the pace, but it was also a little like living in a hotel.” For their son, Cody, and daughter, Lauren, a downtown condominium did not really feel like a home to come home to, nor, as Joe and Donna agreed, was it accommodating for large family gatherings. “I’m the eighth child of 10 children,” Joe explained. “Six of us live in the area, and our families regularly get together.”

Their new home turned out to be close to where the family lived before. “We moved to this neighborhood in 1993,” Donna said. “It’s where Lauren grew up, and now she’s a senior at Texas Christian University.” While returning to the neighborhood may have sweetened their homecoming, the process was a huge challenge with every inch of the house calling for renovation.



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Today, the orange front door with side panels is gone, replaced with custom-designed heavy glass doors artfully embellished with wrought iron. By changing the entrance and adding luscious seasonal landscaping, the soft-colored stone home at last shed its industrial look for a much-preferred Tuscan-Texan appeal.

“There are so many positives about this house,” Donna smiled. “Joe is an avid golfer, and we love its location on a golf course. We also enjoy the pool, waterfall and privacy of the east-facing backyard.” Importantly, too, the home is big enough to handle Joe’s family. “We especially like how the floor plan can be easily divided into two zones,”



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she added. "There's so much room for us to live downstairs and reserve the loft for guests."

The front foyer, bordered by stone columns, opens to a great room, kitchen and dining area. A glass wall facing the pool and waterfall appears, by day, like a wall-sized painting flooded in natural light. Once-cold concrete floors are now covered in wide planks of dark hand-scraped, cross-grained wood. The walls



are the color of soft cream, and each originally stained orange-tinted beam, door and trim now matches the coffee-stained hardwood floors.

The great room is flanked on one side by a stone-faced fireplace, and on the other by a stunning kitchen featuring a huge island for eat-in dining plus another free-standing, food-prep island housing a large, hammered-copper sink. Against the galley wall is a long counter with lots of storage. Amazingly, the enormous granite counters, handpicked by Joe and

Donna, originated from two matching slabs. Maple cabinetry, now painted a soft white, is accented with rubbed bronze hardware, and the backsplash tile is made of Ankara tumbled stone. "We've changed all of the lighting and added crown molding," Donna said. Three elegant chandeliers hang above the eat-in island, and a single large chandelier is over the dining table.

Joe credits Donna for creating their beautiful home, while Donna says his vote often determines the options.

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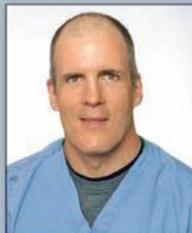


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"Basically, our home is about family," he said. What better way to accommodate large gatherings than with a kitchen large enough to hold 35 people? "Did I say my family is big?" he smiled.

Neutral colors, architectural detail, wood-beamed ceilings, wood floors and exquisite albeit comfortable furnishings have transformed this once hard-surfaced masculine interior into a softly balanced, beautiful home. "This is our forever home, so we want people to feel like they can put their feet on the coffee table and be comfortable," Donna said. A lovely handmade Italian bookcase tucked neatly into a niche in the living room is one of a few carefully selected pieces and part of the elegance that defines the Tuscan touch.

A small display case stands in the hallway. "I started collecting bells when I was just 6 years old," Donna said. "Neither Joe nor I are big collectors, but it was my mom's tradition to pick one thing to collect, so I picked bells."

The main floor includes the master suite, office and workout room. Uniquely, the master suite features polished travertine flooring, wide louver-shuttered windows and a wood-planked cathedral ceiling centered by a gorgeous fan. In the master bath, a bright white, free-standing tub sits on wood beams, and the entire space has been softened with mirrors, glass lamps, vases and draped window treatments.

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“The walk-in closet is next to the laundry room,” Donna added. “It’s so functional. I love when things are organized and clutter-free.”

Married now for almost 25 years, Joe and Donna met while working as sales representatives for a steel mill in Midlothian. “We dated discreetly for three years and then married,” she smiled. In 1992, Joe started his own steel-related business, with Donna serving as company treasurer. Like the rest of the house, her home office is beautifully appointed.

Completing the main floor, or Zone 1 as it is known, is a bath with access to the backyard, plus the much-used workout room next to a side entrance to the garage. Joe and Donna are avid fitness-conscious cyclists. “We spend a lot of time road cycling,” Joe said. For them, a workout room is essential.

Zone 2 begins with the stairs which have been stained to match the wood floors. The upstairs living area, spacious enough to accommodate a multi-sectional sofa plus a second seating area, is flanked by two luxurious bedrooms. “One bedroom is furnished with our 15-year-old master suite,” Donna said. “We call it the King Suite. The other bedroom has Lauren’s old furniture with a queen-size bed, so it’s the Queen Suite.” With the exception of a kitchen, the loft is a home itself. In addition to a full bath, it features a carpeted storage room and a balcony overlooking the backyard and golf course.

Recently, Joe and Donna added two cats to the family, Coco Butter and Déjà vu. “We’ve always been cat people,” she smiled.

When they’re not with family, working out, golfing, scuba diving or cycling, Joe and Donna are probably traveling. They hope to go to Italy for their anniversary, and it’s safe to say when these two envision something, it will likely happen. **NOW**

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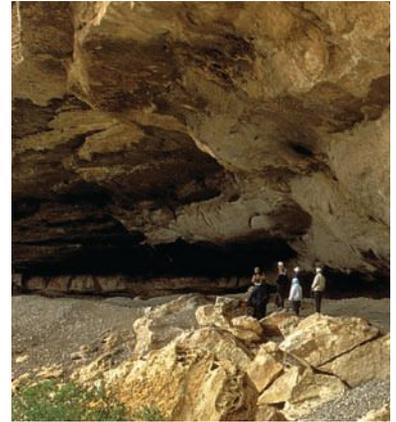
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Ancient Southern Rock Seminole Canyon State Park — Worth the Trip

Literally thousands of years before it was designated a state park and historic site by the citizenry of Texas, the rugged limestone hills, flowing waters of the Rio Grande and Pecos Rivers and wildlife-laden thorn scrub outside of present day Del Rio were a popular gathering place. In fact, this region remains one of the few places where factual documentation of prehistoric settlement is preserved, providing evidence testifying to their lives. Ancient peoples created mural-like paintings on the arching rock walls of this near desert-like canyon country, producing some of North America's most renowned examples of Native American pictographs and preserving one of the continent's oldest cave dwellings.

The first human settlers here date back at least 12,000 years to the Pleistocene ice age, when prehistoric mankind hunted large game with stone-tipped spears across a lush landscape. But rapid climate change made for a new environment and a culture that likely struggled to scratch out survival. By approximately 5,000 B.C., the landscape resembled much of what can be seen today.

These inhabitants settled in the dry, lofty caverns, and despite their subsistence-level struggles, managed to paint remarkable pictographs that can be found in the park's Fate Bell Shelter, as well as other rock shelters throughout the Lower Pecos River region. These paintings have a distinct style that can only be found in portions of the Rio Grande, Pecos and Devils River areas, all located in Southwest Texas. More than 200 pictograph sites are known to exist and range from smaller, single

paintings to caves with panels of art hundreds of feet long. Although numerous figures or motifs are repeated in various locations, the exact meaning of these paintings is unknown.

Seminole Canyon first opened to the public as a state park in 1980, and is named in honor of the U.S. Army's Seminole-Negro Indian Scouts, garrisoned at Fort Clark, who protected the West Texas frontier from marauding Apache and Comanche bands between 1872 and 1914. These scouts were known for exceptional cunning and toughness, and it was deemed a befitting tribute to have a park bearing their namesake.

Seminole Canyon State Park is 2,172 acres with miles of hike and bike trails and 46 campsites, including 23 sites with water and electricity hookups compatible for RVs. The park also has restrooms with showers, a visitor center and state park store. Because of the sensitive nature of the park's rock art history, hikes into areas with rock art are only accessible through guided interpretive hikes with park staff and volunteers. Seminole Canyon State Park is worth the trip when you and your family need a respite from modern life. **NOW**

Editor's Note: For more information, contact Seminole Canyon State Park and Historic Site staff at (432) 292-4464 or visit www.texasstateparks.org.

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HEALTH FOR FITNESS

— By Melissa Rawlins

We all know the Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. The flip side is: The manner in which we treat others depends upon how we treat ourselves. Are we compassionate to our own selves? Do we understand our fitness to do the work at hand depends on our level of health? Being fit requires you strive for great health.

In this world we live in, there are too many outside sources of stress and contamination to think we can stay healthy without exerting proactive effort to prevent health issues. The choices we make turn us into the person we are. From food and entertainment to work and romance, we should be mindful to promote purity. Just as a vehicle needs a clean engine to prevent heavy exhaust fumes, our bodies need good food, regular exercise and peaceful relationships to prevent future breakdowns. Maintaining a well-functioning mind and body are not two separate agendas. Start this year off with a trip to your family doctor or chiropractor. Ask for an annual physical and



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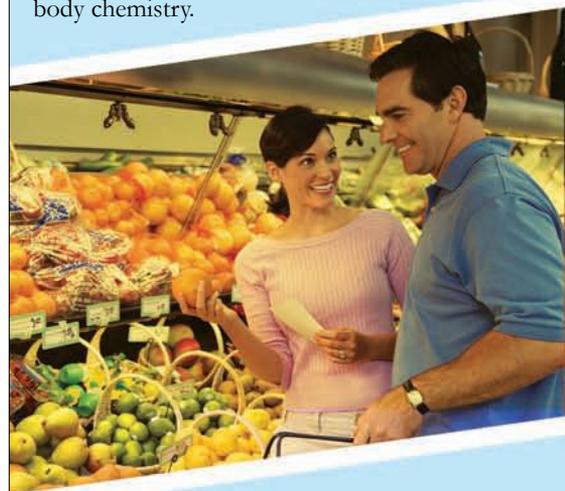
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confer with them on areas where you can improve. Then, whether you find yourself in your home or out on the town, you can balance mental and physical goals for great health.

Think about your dining experiences. At home, you have absolute control over what's in your refrigerator and what ends up on your plate or in your glass. Installing water filters will help ensure you are drinking fresh, pure water. Shopping for groceries certainly takes time, but every moment spent reading labels is well worth it to ensure you're purchasing nutritional additions to your body chemistry.



Wine bars, draught houses and coffeehouses are great places to meet a friend while sipping stimulating drinks that are beneficial, in moderation, as sources of vitamins and anti-oxidants. Enjoying mutually beneficial friendships



is just as vital to our health as well-balanced meals. A variety of restaurants promote whole-food menus along with more traditional selections. Many of these meeting places also present a calm environment, and studies show quiet music soothes the nerves. This is the best way to digest a good meal.

Certainly, there are times you need to prompt your adrenal glands to pump up the volume, and that occurs during workouts. If you need



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If you join a local gym or fitness center, you'll feel like a kid in a candy store with all the exercise choices offered. If you are not into high-energy kick-boxing or Zumba, nor meditative yoga or tai chi, consider combining your exercise session with fun. The YMCA, many senior centers and even nightclubs offer dancing to tunes that are less jarring to the system, like ballroom, swing or country western.



Hobbies best enjoyed in the daytime, like boating, fishing, raising livestock or gardening, can keep the mind and body fresh. By tending a garden, you'll bond with your family while providing affordable, healthy vegetable side dishes for your table. Local feed stores and gardening supply centers have all the supplies necessary, and your county's agricultural extension agent can provide guidance on how to get started.

Sounds like work? You're blessed if you have work that makes you really happy. Keep in mind, any hobby giving you joy still requires work — but think of it as soul-feeding work. When you feel satisfied, to the point of brimming over, then sharing your knowledge with others is a great way to maintain your mental health. Throughout your communities are charitable organizations in need of your volunteer services.

When your work is over, patting yourself on the back is not optional. For many people, healthy social networks fulfill this need. For others, an ideal method is a weekly massage. Research proves touch therapy generates highly



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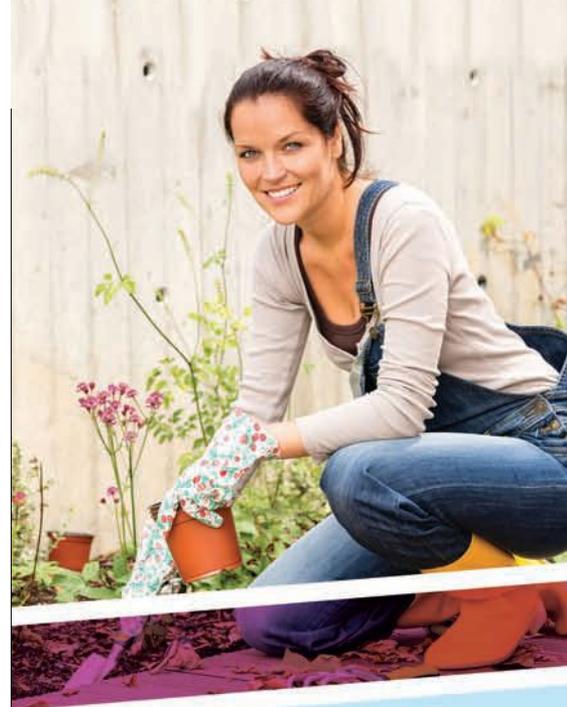
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Doctors are available to guide you in discovering what is necessary to stop the stress on your mind and body and begin the healing. Seek advice from experts in nutrition. Diabetes, for example, is not necessarily always a permanent condition. A focused, disciplined, balanced diet supports your body's ability to heal itself. With courage, determination and continued direction from your health care practitioner, help is available.

This month, make a list of ways you would like to increase in strength, joy, energy, compassion, flexibility and availability. Throughout the year, rate your progress on a simple poor-to-excellent scale. Twelve months from now, review your success with trusted coaches, counselors and friends. You can keep up your good work. You can enjoy total health and be fit for bringing even your wildest dreams to life. Loving your neighbor starts with loving yourself. You can do it! **NOW**

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James Slater and his team help their clients find the right solution for their needs.



Living Smoke-free

Personalized attention is offered to help wean smokers off analog cigarettes.

— By Mikaela Mathews

Due to the nearly 4,000 harmful chemicals in an analog cigarette, Vicious Vapors provides a solution for a more healthy approach to smoking: e-cigarettes. James Slater, owner of Vicious Vapors, has personally experienced the success of switching to this new popular product and is now on a mission to share the benefits with others.

Unlike analog cigarettes, Vicious Vapors' e-cigarettes contain only four ingredients, all of which are FDA-approved. "Our e-cigarettes have only vegetable glycerin, propylene glycol (which is used in inhalers), pharmaceutical grade nicotine and different flavorings," James shared. Users need not worry about smoke either. "With the vapors, you're not getting the tar, the carbon

monoxide, formaldehyde or ammonia, which are in cigarette smoke. The vapor produced is the equivalent of breathing on a foggy day. It's just water vapor," he explained.

Vapors come in a variety of styles, sizes and even flavors. Users can insert different juice flavors into the cigarette. Vicious Vapors has over 180 flavors, ranging from menthol and cigar to Skittles and cocktail drinks. They are battery-operated, so customers can simply replace the battery or recharge them with a USB cord.

Because there is a common misunderstanding about personal vapor devices, James and his employees ensure customers and the public understand the benefits of e-cigarettes, instead of analog cigarettes. "We have always required our customers be 18 years or

older, so we don't push underage users. We also don't promote illegal activity and encourage our customers to be respectful of smoking ordinances," James described.

Education is important to Vicious Vapors' clients, too. When a new client walks in, James or one of his employees will sit down with them to determine the best course of action. Clients aren't sold a kit that might contain items they don't want or need. Vicious Vapors instead offers products à la carte in order to accommodate each person's needs.

Vicious Vapors also prides themselves on quality products. "We make all of our juice flavors in-house in a separate clean room. All of our supplies for mixing juices are also made in the U.S.A.," James said. Employees regularly stay up-to-date with the newest products in order to better educate their customers.

As a Mansfield resident, James wanted to spread the word about e-cigarettes, after experiencing the powerful benefits himself. "The whole reason why I got into this was because it worked for me," he shared. "This was the first product that worked. I smoked for 15 years but wanted to be there for my children. I thought I would give e-cigarettes a shot. So, I finished off my pack of cigarettes, picked up an e-cigarette, and I haven't turned back since."

But, James isn't the only one who has experienced a positive effect from vapes usage. Doctors of several of Vicious Vapors' clients recommended they visit the store to wean themselves off of analog cigarettes. After deciding on a plan together, with flavors they will enjoy, many clients have noticed a tremendous increase in their health. Patients with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) have seen an increase in their blood-oxygen levels and faster healing after surgery.

James and his team at Vicious Vapors are intent on helping their customers to live better lives through e-cigarettes. "People are living longer and making better decisions. There also aren't cigarette butts everywhere. We're helping to keep Mansfield clean on the ground and in the air," he explained. "If people want to be around for their kids and be more healthy, we would love to help them out." **NOW**

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Some of the Now Magazines staff spend time together at the annual holiday party.



The community keeps these guys busy making snow for the Hometown Holiday Festival.



The Green family are out and about at the Hometown Holiday Festival.



Threads Dry Cleaning staff poses for a picture during their one-year anniversary celebration.



Tuna chops up brisket for the lunch rush.



These three cuties are enjoying a girl's night out on the town.



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Automatic Investing Can Pay Off for You

To achieve investment success, you don't have to start out with a huge sum or get lucky by picking hot stocks. In fact, very few people actually travel those two routes. But in working toward your investment goals, you need to be persistent — and one of the best ways to demonstrate that persistence is to invest automatically.

How do you become an automatic investor? You simply need to have your bank automatically move money each month from a checking or savings account into the investments of your choice. When you're first starting out in the working world, you may not be able to afford much, but any amount — even if it's just \$50 or \$100 a month — will be valuable. Then, as your career progresses and your income rises, you can gradually increase your monthly contributions.

By becoming an automatic investor, you can gain some key benefits, including these:

- **Discipline** — Many people think about investing but decide to wait until they have a little extra cash. Before they realize it, they've used the money for other purposes. When you invest automatically, you're essentially taking a spending decision out of your hands. And as you see your accounts grow over time, your investment discipline will be self-reinforcing.
- **Long-term focus** — There's never any shortage of events — political crises, economic downturns, natural disasters — that cause investors to take a timeout from investing. Yet if you head to the investment sidelines, even for a short while, you might miss out on some good opportunities. By investing automatically each month, you'll maintain a long-term focus.
- **Potential for reduced investment costs** — If you invest the same amount of money each month into the same investments, you'll automatically be a smart

shopper. When prices drop, your monthly investment will buy more shares, and when prices rise, you'll buy fewer shares — just as you'd probably buy less of anything when prices are high. Over time, this type of systematic investment typically results in lower costs per share. Furthermore, when you invest systematically, you're less likely to constantly buy and sell investments in an effort to boost your returns. This type of frequent trading is often ineffective — and it can raise your overall investment costs with potential fees, commissions and taxes. (Keep in mind, though, that systematic investing does not guarantee a profit or protect against loss. Also, you'll need the financial resources available to keep investing through up and down markets.)

Clearly, automatic investing offers some major advantages to you as you seek to build wealth. Of course, if you're contributing to a 401(k) or other employer-sponsored retirement plan, you're already automatically investing, because money is taken out of your paycheck at regular intervals to go toward the investments you've chosen in your plan. But by employing automatic investing techniques to other vehicles, such as an Individual Retirement Account (IRA), you can continue your progress toward your long-term goals, including retirement.

So, do what it takes to become an automatic investor. It's easy, it's smart — and it can help you work toward the type of future you've envisioned. **NOW**

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Shawn M. Malley is an Edward Jones representative based in Mansfield.

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Deciding when to take your Social Security benefits is one of the most important retirement-related decisions you'll ever make. It will likely be an essential component of your retirement income strategy, so it's important to understand what factors will determine your benefit amount. Your informed decisions on timing, spousal benefits and other factors can make a significant difference on the lifetime benefits you receive.

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Red Hot Shingles

— By Betty Tryon, BSN

Many of us have seen the commercials of people sharing their stories of pain from screaming blisters on their body caused by shingles. If you have ever had chickenpox, the varicella-zoster virus that causes chickenpox, remains in you and may later cause shingles. After the infection of chickenpox goes away, the virus goes dormant or asleep in your body. Later in life, it can reawaken and manifest itself as shingles.

Approximately 1 million cases of shingles occur in America every year. The majority of people affected are elderly. However, if a child has had chickenpox, it is possible for him or her to get shingles. The reason the virus reactivates in some people is not clear. Some conditions causing this are a weakened immune system from cancer or HIV. Chemotherapy, steroids and/or radiation can all increase the risk of reactivating the virus and producing shingles.

While it isn't a life-threatening condition, shingles can be very painful. The usual pattern is a band or strip of inflamed skin covered with fluid-filled blisters that usually appears on one side of the body. Several days before the blisters appear, you may experience itching, burning, numbness and tingling. Pain is frequently listed as the first symptom felt. Other symptoms of fever, headache, chills and an upset stomach may be present also. Shingles may persist for weeks.

Shingles cannot be spread from person to person. However, the varicella-zoster virus from a person with an active case of shingles can be

transmitted by direct contact to a person who has never had chickenpox or been vaccinated for chickenpox. The resulting infection would be chickenpox, not shingles.

If you have an active case of shingles, try to keep the rash covered. Avoid touching the area and stay away from people with weakened immune systems and pregnant women until you are no longer contagious.

Diagnosis is made by patient history and visual examination. Your physician may choose to take a sample of the fluid for laboratory examination. While there is no cure for shingles, antiviral medications can decrease the severity of the symptoms and help avoid complications. It is important to take the antiviral drugs as soon as symptoms manifest themselves. Numbing topical agents to the rash may provide temporary symptomatic relief. In some cases prescription medication may be necessary for the pain.

Needless suffering can be avoided through vaccinations. Children should be vaccinated against chickenpox. If you are older and have had chickenpox, a vaccine is available to lessen your chances of getting shingles. Check with your doctor for information regarding vaccinations. **NOW**

This article is for general information only and does not constitute medical advice. Consult with your physician if you have questions regarding this topic.



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January 1

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January 3

Elvis Birthday Celebration with David Allen and The Fever Band: 8:00-11:00 p.m., Farr Best Theater, 109 N Main St. \$21-\$28 per ticket. David Allen, the award-winning Elvis tribute artist, will be playing with The Fever Band to celebrate Elvis' birthday. For more information about this event, visit www.farrbest.com.

January 14

Parenting with Love and Logic Class: 6:30 p.m., 777 N. Walnut Creek Dr. Free. This class helps parents learn how to establish and maintain control while empowering their child to do more of the thinking. For more information, visit www.firstmethodistmansfield.org.

January 16, 17

Girl Scouts "Cookies NOW": 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Fort Worth Zoom 1989 Colonial Parkway, Fort Worth. Tickets are \$15 per person. Join the Girl Scouts for lots of fun as they kick off their 2015 GS Cookie Program. For more information, contact Kriste Ryan at (682) 422-9211 or visit girlscoutsMISD@gmail.com.

January 24

Winter Walk: 9:00-11:00 a.m., Katherine Rose Memorial Park, 310 N. Walnut Creek. Free. This annual family and dog friendly event is intended to get the community up and moving! The walk will follow the entire Linear Trail beginning at Katherine Rose Memorial Park and ending at Town Park. For more information, visit www.mansfieldtexas.gov.

Jason Elmore and Hoodoo Witch: 8:00-11:00 p.m., Farr Best Theater, 109 N Main St. \$16-\$22 per ticket. Returning to the Theater by popular demand, Jason Elmore & Hoodoo Witch brings back their trademark sound and energy to heat up your cold January weekend. For more information about this event, visit www.farrbest.com.

January 30

Mansfield Area Chamber of Commerce 43rd Annual Awards Dinner: 6:30 p.m., Artside Event Center, 570 N. Walnut Creek. For more information about this event, email info@mansfieldchamber.org or call (817) 473-0507.

January 31

Men's Breakfast: 7:00-8:30 a.m., 2351 Country Club Dr. \$5 suggested donation. Join us for a hearty breakfast and a powerful message for men on "How to Be a Kingdom Man." Go to www.MBCchurch.com or call (817) 473-8980 for more information.

Shake, Rattle & Roll for P.E.O. by Drake Milligan: 8:00-11:00 p.m., Farr Best Theater, 109 N Main St. \$20 per ticket. Starring award winning Elvis Tribute Artist, Drake Milligan, in a special musical performance and "NOBODY," a short film about Elvis before he became Elvis Presley. For more information about this event, visit www.farrbest.com.

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

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In the Kitchen With Linda Olson

— By *Mikaela Mathews*

With a rich family love for food, Linda Olson has been cooking since she was a little girl. “I grew up in a family of great cooks and just fell in love with baking,” she shared. “My siblings and I all have our specialties in the kitchen.”

The Carne Guisada recipe is a traditional one that was passed down verbally for 30 years. One day, her husband asked her to substitute fry bread for the tortillas. It was a hit, and they’ve never gone back.

Helping others with food is also near and dear to Linda’s heart. She once donated four of her homemade cheesecakes for a charity auction that garnered \$1,600 in donations! “Another very special cause where I donate my talents is feeding the homeless in Dallas,” she said. “We meet such wonderful people and hear such inspiring stories from those who have overcome challenges in their lives. And, we get high praise for the food.” **NOW**

Carne Guisada With Fry Bread

For meat:

- 3 lbs. sirloin, top round, or London broil, cut into 1- to 2-inch cubes**
- 1 1/2 cups unbleached flour**
- 1/2 cup butter, unsalted**
- 1 large sweet yellow onion, chopped**
- 2 cloves fresh garlic, minced**
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil**
- Salt and pepper, to taste**
- 3 Tbsp. ground cumin**
- 2 tsp. Knorr Chicken Bouillon With Tomato**
- 1 12-oz. bottle beer**

For fry bread:

- 4 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1 Tbsp. baking powder**
- 2 tsp. salt**

- 1/4 cup shortening**
- 1 1/3 cups milk or water**

- 1. For meat:** In a large bowl, toss meat in the flour to coat.
- 2.** Melt butter in a large Dutch oven or heavy bottomed 8-quart pot over medium-high heat. Add onion to butter. After 2 minutes, add garlic; cook about 1 minute more. Remove onion and garlic from pan and reserve.
- 3.** Add vegetable oil to the butter in the pan, and allow oil to heat, about 1 minute. Add meat in batches, browning meat on all sides. As each batch browns, remove and reserve. Continue until all meat is browned.
- 4.** Return meat, onions and garlic to the hot pan. Lightly salt and pepper meat, stirring and cooking about 1 minute. Add cumin and bouillon, stir to coat the meat. Add beer to

the pot, stirring up the browned bits from the bottom of the pan. At this point, the mixture will be thick. Stir well. Bring to a low simmer and reduce heat. Cook on low at least 2 hours, stirring every 15-20 minutes to keep from scorching. Add a little water if mixture is too thick. Carne Guisada is done when beef is falling apart and sauce looks like gravy.

5. For bread: Mix flour, baking powder and salt in a mixing bowl. Cut in shortening with pastry blender or fork. Add milk or water and mix to form soft dough. Knead dough until smooth for about 5 minutes. Cover and let dough rest for 30 minutes.

6. Divide dough into 12 equal portions. Roll each portion into a ball; roll each ball into a 6-inch circle.

7. Heat a griddle or skillet to medium-high heat. Cook fry bread on each side until puffed and lightly toasted. Serve hot with Carne Guisada.

San Antonio Buttermilk Pralines

- 2 1/2 cups sugar**
- 1 cup buttermilk**
- 1 tsp. baking soda**
- 1/4 tsp. salt**
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract**
- 1/4 cup butter**
- 1 1/2 cups pecan halves**

1. In a buttered, heavy 8-quart saucepan, stir together sugar, buttermilk, soda and salt over medium heat. Bring to a boil and reduce heat. Cook and stir occasionally until mixture turns golden brown and reaches 235 F on candy thermometer.

2. Remove from heat; add vanilla and butter. Do not stir. Allow mixture to sit for 5 minutes. After 5 minutes, begin beating the candy with a wooden spoon. Beat until the candy is very smooth and loses most of the shine.

3. Immediately add the pecans and stir to coat. Drop with large spoon onto parchment paper to cool.

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

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