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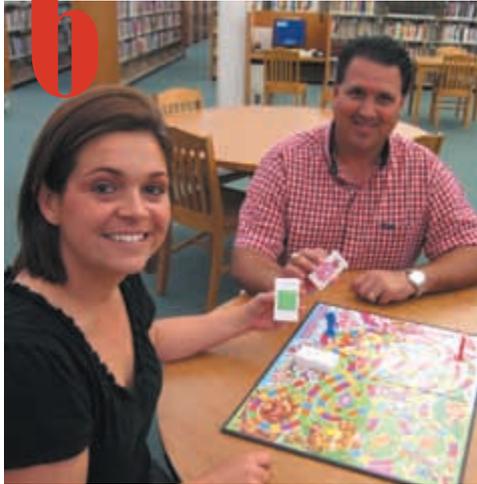
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MAGAZINE

Editor's Note

Hello, Cedar Hill, Duncanville and DeSoto!

December! Winter! Holidays! Our holiday edition not only introduces our new name, *SouthwestNOW*, but also broadens our sphere to include Duncanville and DeSoto, as well as Cedar Hill. From now on, each issue will highlight people's stories from all three cities. Grab a cup of hot chocolate, sit back and enjoy meeting some of our communities' finest.



From Sleepy Hollow we bring you Alan and Gayle Sims — telling how they came to Cedar Hill and their enjoyment at being part of such a warm community. I am also pleased to bring you news from Angela Trevino about her service as parent liaison in the CHISD.

Angie Henley introduces the “wow” factor of a bigger-than-life Candyland Christmas played out on the streets of Duncanville on December 7. Enhance your holiday cooking with some Duncanville recipes from the kitchen of Debbie Hudspeth.

DeSoto's Chris Glover will spark some New Year's resolutions as he shares his commitment to helping people of all ages achieve an active lifestyle of fitness. Discover the delightfully talented artists, a.k.a. DeSoto seniors, busily creating masterpieces.

As you celebrate the holidays ... remember the reason for the season!

Wishing you the merriest Christmas!

Beverly Shay

SouthwestNOW Editor



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A Christmas Tradition

— By Sandra McIntosh

How many times have you played Candy Land with your children, grandchildren or great-grandchildren? How many times have you watched those same children daydream about what it would be like to jump into the board game, to walk around a maze of candy treats with Lolly, Princess Frostine and Mr. Mint? Well, you need not wonder anymore. Thanks to the tireless efforts of Angie Henley, special events coordinator, and a dedicated crew of volunteers, the Duncanville City Hall has once again been transformed for the month of December, with this year's theme being Candyland Christmas, similar in many ways to the age-old board game. "I've got the best job in the city," Angie beamed. "I get to make adults and children happy. It's instant satisfaction."

Angie began the planning process for the annual event, which dates back well over 20 years, in August. In an undertaking of this size, Angie said getting started early is the key to securing the rental decorations needed to compliment her theme. "The larger-than-life-sized decorations are rented on a first-come-first-served basis," she said. Knowing exactly what she wanted, Angie wasted no time in placing her order. Now as she stands back to see what this year's hard work has accomplished, she is filled with

the same excitement she hopes to see in the children as they visit City Hall on Friday, December 7, immediately following the Duncanville Christmas Parade. "It's a very busy time," she said, referring to her one-woman department. "The parade, the city's three decorated trees and the transformation at City Hall would not be possible without so many helpful people."

Shane Gravens, Angie's boss and also the parks and recreation director, is a master at decorating. "He's a perfectionist," Angie explained. "I have these grand ideas, and he just makes them happen." Angie has been the special events coordinator since coming to work for the city four years ago. This

year she is flying solo, so to speak. "In past years, I've been the full-time help," she said, referring to Shane being at the helm. "This year, I had some really big shoes to fill." Needless to say, her willingness to do what many would see as the impossible is now considered just one more mission accomplished.

Not only is she willing, she is able. "She has the energy and passion for the kids, and she works hard to get it all done right," Shane said. "The transformation is simply amazing. It's the 'wow' factor." It truly is all about the children for both Angie and Shane.

Cherry Peel, a close friend and confidante, aides Angie in every special



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event throughout the year. "I get teary-eyed just thinking about all she does as a volunteer," Angie said. "I also have to mention Joe Macias, the city's field specialist. He helps me decorate the lobby at City Hall." With further explanation, Angie said this venture takes at least two full days of nonstop work. "Joe was Shane's right-hand guy," Angie added with a smile. "Now he's mine."

The parade, slated to begin promptly at 7 p.m., will get underway with the Duncanville Fire Department Honor Guard. "It's the first year for them to open the parade," Angie proudly said. "The parade will end when Santa rides along the parade route sitting high atop one of the city's fire engines. This year is quite special because Mrs. Claus will be visiting our fair city, too." Santa will be waving to a crowd



expected to be well over 1,000 in number, while Mrs. Claus will be singing several of her favorite Christmas carols. No fewer than 50 floats will be decked out in the Candyland Christmas theme, all vying for a chance to win one of the trophies up for grabs. Winners will be selected in five categories: best theme, best use of lights, Santa's choice, Grand Marshal's choice and best overall. "The Shriners are hilarious. They come wanting to win every year," Angie said. "They've won the best use of lights award for the last two years. I expect them to come with the winning spirit again this year, so they can continue to have the bragging rights that come with winning a trophy."

The parade will begin in the parking lot at Reed Middle School located on Freeman Street. The 50 or more floats, and just as many individual and group parade participants, will journey down Wheatland Road to North Main Street, only to end up back at their starting

point. At approximately 7:40, the three City Hall trees will be illuminated following a Christmas countdown. Someone flips the switch that lights the trees, marking the start of another Christmas celebration.

During this time, Santa sneaks over to City Hall to take his place within the game. "He's ready and waiting when the children arrive," Angie said, "and he doesn't leave until he's spoken with, and had his picture taken with, the very last child." Angie said they expect no fewer than 200 children that night. "Families love to take advantage of a full evening of Christmas fun," she said. "They look forward to it." Other activities will include: making personal "goodie" bags from choices available from six giant gumball machines, Kiddie Train rides within the City Hall parking lot, horse and carriage rides in Armstrong Park, a drop-off for Letters to Santa and live vocal performances by two local elementary schools. "Everything is free, except the Polaroid pictures taken with Santa," Angie added. "They are taken for a small fee."

Securing new events each year is important to Angie. She does not want those in attendance to become accustomed to the "same old thing." "One year we had an ice carver," Angie said. "He carved a reindeer while the people watched in amazement. Another year, Shane brought in a live Texas longhorn. The kids climbed up on his back for photos. Needless to say, the longhorn was quite popular."

Angie is hoping for cold weather, so she can bundle up her two children, Ally, 3, and Will, 1, for an evening of Candyland fun. She is also looking forward to what Ally has to say. "She is my gauge on how well things go," Angie said, with a laugh. Always trying to outdo herself from year to year, Angie is already daydreaming about what she will come up with next year. "Whatever it is," she said, "it will be geared for the children. If they are having fun, then mom and dad are having fun, too." **NOW**

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Always Coming Home to a Hug

— By Beverly Shay

A gracious sidewalk winds up the hill like a banner welcoming one to the graceful, two-story arched entry overlooking the intersection of two Sleepy Hollow streets. The sloping, verdant lawn demands a second glance from passing drivers to fully capture its lush, uniform, carpet-like perfection. “We’ve spent most of our efforts since moving here on the yard,” Alan Sims confessed. “It needed the most work. I also replaced the six-foot fence with a sturdier eight-foot one.” There is no questioning the pride Alan feels toward the yard he himself cares for every other week.

Alan moved to Cedar Hill in February 2000 after he was hired as city manager in January. His wife, Gayle, stayed in Overland Park, Kansas, that spring while their son, A.J., who was senior class president, football captain and track athlete, completed high school.

At the insistence of Gayle’s sister, Alan and Gayle were in Dallas for Thanksgiving, 1999. Alan’s brother is

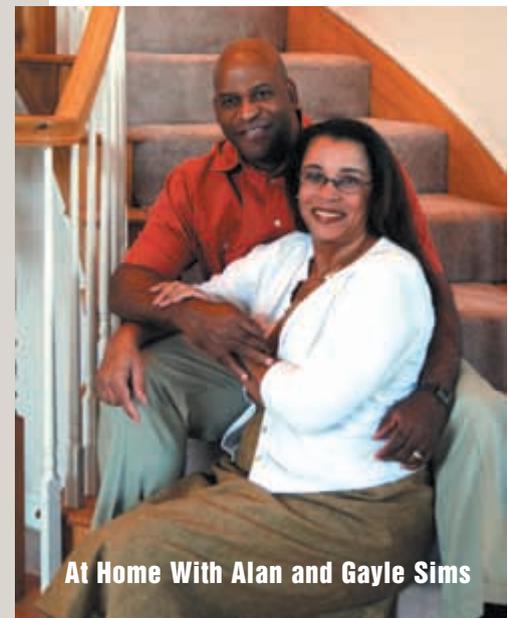
married to Gayle’s sister, so any way you look at it, they are in-laws. While there, they also visited a niece and her family in Cedar Hill. “We had such a great time, such a relaxing visit,” Alan recalled.

The Monday after Thanksgiving, Alan, then the deputy city manager of Overland Park, opened an ICMA (International City Management Association) newsletter — the city manager position in Cedar Hill, Texas, was open, but for only four more days. “I remember looking at that and thinking, ‘We were just there a few days ago. We were just in Cedar Hill, Texas!’ We believe our lives are led and guided by what God directs. I was able to update and send my résumé by that Friday,” Alan said.

“I knew it would be okay to leave our family in Kansas; I felt God was sending us here,” Gayle recalled. Ten applicants were presented; five were interviewed; Alan was one of two considered. Prayerfully walking through his

home in Overland Park, Alan tried to discern if the eagerness he felt was his competitive nature, or if he was sensing God’s will. Willing to work in either place, he left the matter in God’s hands. Within an hour, Mayor Franke called Alan; the city council had unanimously voted him in.

Alan and Gayle, both Kansas



At Home With Alan and Gayle Sims



natives, had met and married while at the University of Kansas. "It was seven years before we had a chance to take a real honeymoon," Gayle said, their story tumbling out in their beautiful living room. Across the mantel are six figurine sets crafted by Thomas Blackshear. "Each one represents a stage of our relationship," Alan explained, handling them with obvious familiarity and pleasure. "The first one is called 'Cherished' — it represents how we fell in love. The second one is 'Proposal'



and the third is called 'Commitment.' We bought each one as we experienced the event in our lives. This wedding one is called 'Love for a Lifetime.' This one is 'Bundle of Joy' — we have three of those, and the last one is 'Devoted Love.'" Gayle commented, "I had to buy that one early, because they weren't going to make it any more. We aren't at old age quite yet."

Looking toward the front door, Alan expressed what he feels is one of the best parts of their marriage. "We have a house rule that I think is really great: whoever is home has to greet the one arriving with a hug. No matter what kind of day you have had, one of us is



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always coming home to a hug.”

Gayle quickly added, “And the other one is always glad to give it.” That’s one secret of happiness the couple has shared for 35 years (in January). Like Alan, Gayle is a city employee, working as the director of human resources in Waxahachie. The demands are constant and it really helps to have that hug waiting.

Looking inward from the front door, the sweeping curve of the stairway

with its light oak railings entices exploration of the second floor, where two bedrooms and a bath are tucked behind an open sitting area overlooking the formal living room. The house is decorated in creamy white with accents of gold and deep brown leather.

The living room flows into the dining room, where Gayle’s most treasured piece of furniture graces the back wall. “This was my grandmother’s buffet,” she proudly stated, running

her hand along the beautiful finish. “Alan had it refinished and we were pleased to see how well it goes with the dining room table and chairs we already had. My mother just loves seeing it here when she comes over, having grown up with it as a child,” Gayle fondly shared.

The back half of the main floor is “where we really live,” Gayle stated, as Alan watched the football game between Tennessee and New Orleans on the huge big-screen TV in the built-in recess across from their comfy leather couch.

The spacious family room is open to the breakfast nook and kitchen, where

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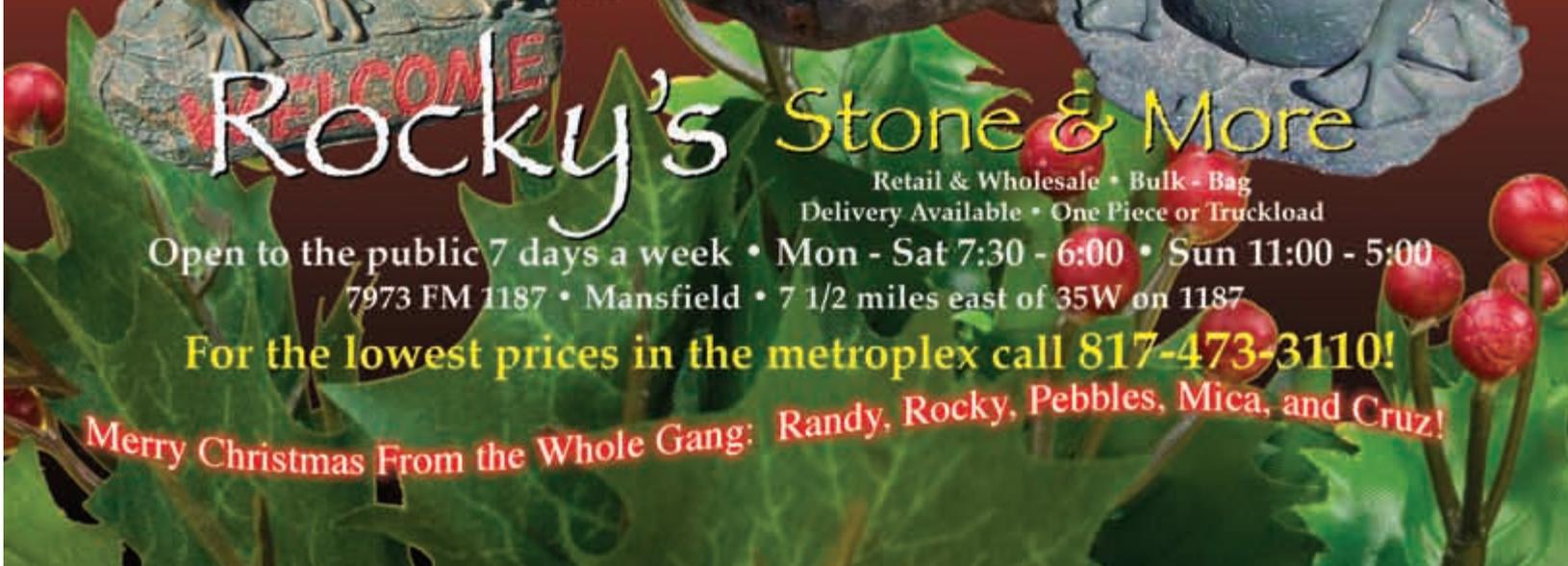
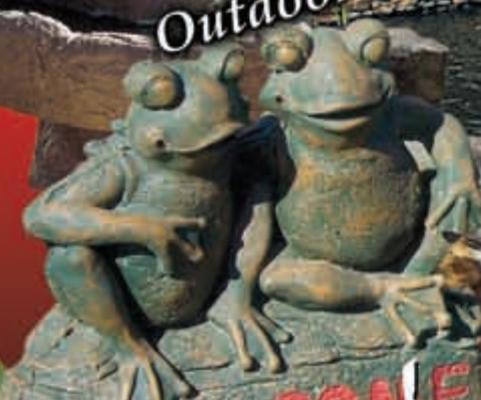
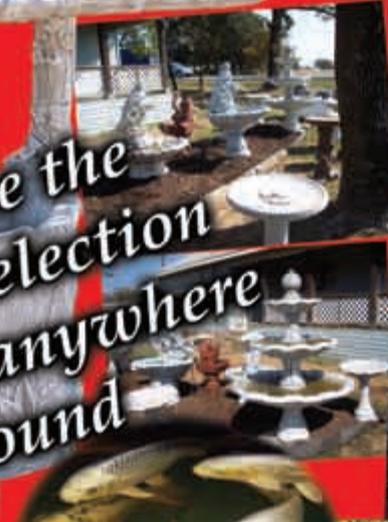
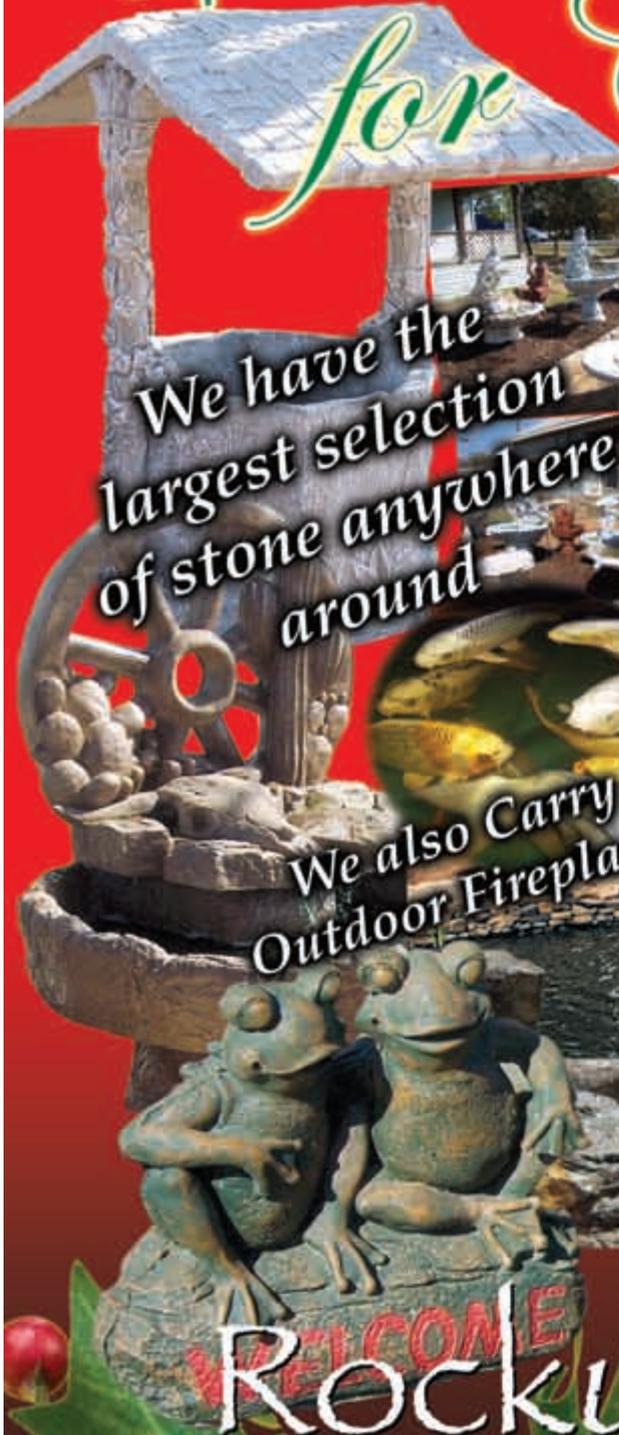
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light oak cabinets soar to the ceiling, providing more than ample storage space. "That was our dining room table in the Overland Park house, but it fits better in this space. Everything is so much more spacious in this house," Alan said of their 3,300-square-foot home. Four barstools are snuggled up to the granite countertop bar, their backs to the windowed nook overlooking the backyard pool. "Alan loves to cook out, so he was thrilled to find you can

grill year-round in Texas!" Gayle commented of their grill on the patio next to the pool both enjoy after a hard day of work.

Beyond the family room is the master suite, furnished in cherry wood with a tall, four-poster bed in the bay window alcove. "Our major renovation inside the house is this bathroom," Alan pointed out, eagerly demonstrating the four jets on the wall of the newly tumble-stone tiled shower. "That is



the best feature," he enthused.

"We also took the carpet out and put down ceramic floor tiles," Gayle reported. The spacious bathroom has a garden tub with jets, a vanity with two sinks and a large walk-in closet. The other downstairs bedroom is their office, equipped with plenty of bookshelves and a leather couch. "I call it my quiet space," she said. "I come here to read and get away from the phone. I really treasure my quiet space."

"We both love Cedar Hill — the place, the people — we have been so accepted here. It is a special place and we couldn't imagine being anywhere else," Gayle concluded. **NOW**

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Priceless Pieces of Art



By Alex Allred

The senior citizens' center in DeSoto is a hub of activity, servicing over 560 registered members. Each week, more than 300 seniors go through the center's doors, meeting friends, working out and taking classes. The newly designed center has a large entertainment area with its own library, pool table, plasma TV and eat-in area. A computer room, well-equipped gym and cafeteria offer a wide variety of activities for the members, but perhaps the most popular room is the art studio and craft room.

Since coming to the center three years ago, manager Betty Minshew developed an applied arts program that blended beautifully with a fine arts program already in place for her members. While there have always been the popular bingo, domino and bridge matches, including a hugely successful monthly Texas Hold'em tournament, Betty wanted to introduce more art programs.

"You're never too old to learn," Betty said, noting how receptive the members have been to the new programs. With the ability to create something beautiful comes a real sense of pride and self-worth. "That's what our center is all about," she said. "As people get older, they tend to move away from where they grew up to be closer to their children. The senior center helps establish roots and a new network of friends." In fact, it is often through the art programs that this sense of belonging occurs and new friendships are formed. "Art,"

Betty explained, "keeps you going."

The applied arts include: quilting, ceramics, crafts and crochet classes, while the fine arts program is a one-woman show, instructed by professional painter Verda Wright. Beyond having taught painting for over 55 years, Verda holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Texas at Arlington with a special interest in art therapy.

For Verda, art is a lifeline and it would be impossible for her to imagine her life without it. While using her crayons at just 4 years of age, she realized that when mixed together, yellow and blue create the color green. "I made green! I thought I made the greatest discovery," she said, still excited about the concept. Learning colors, she said with unabashed pride, is the first step to truly appreciating art.

In 1957, Verda began teaching at Southwood United Methodist Church at the urging of the pastor's wife. She has been teaching ever since, painting beautiful, sweeping landscapes and architectural treasures. A member of several different art clubs in the area, Verda participates in seasonal art shows, entering contests whenever she can. She is also a member of the oldest art club in Dallas. Founded in 1922, there are still a few original members of the Frank Reaugh Art Club who, for Verda, serve as dear friends and contemporaries.

She is a self-described realist painter, painting what moves her. While traveling overseas, Verda was struck by the image of a distant castle in Wales. Rather than snap a picture or rely on a postcard to share the image with friends and family, she recreated the haunting image and put it on a canvas which hangs today in the senior center.

When she received a request to teach at the DeSoto senior center, Verda joked, "I said I didn't want to teach anymore. I just wanted to run around." Teaching is as much in her blood as the desire to create, so she eventually agreed and had 18

students on her very first day. "It really is about self-satisfaction," Betty said. "It's about creating something with your own hands and getting lost in the art." This is the very thing Verda instills in her students, teaching them to

find their own creative outlet to express themselves. "Verda doesn't teach paint-by-numbers," Betty laughed. In fact, she demands that her students think for themselves.

"My students will ask me to think of something for them



ARTS NOW

to paint," Verda said. She refuses, telling them they must see art for themselves. "I can't tell them what to paint," she explained. "It's all about creative thinking. It's all you've got!"

Around the nation, there are a number of programs that put paintbrushes in the hands of senior citizens with



resounding success. The artists have proven to be happier, healthier, more productive, as well as more social with better memory skills and independent lifestyles. In fact, researchers have found the artists began to bond during art classes and developed relationships extending outside the classroom.

Betty and Verda have seen these extraordinary results firsthand, never guessing just how talented the members of the DeSoto senior center would be. On display are incredible pieces of art, which include the portrait of an American Indian mother and child, breathtaking landscapes, intricately detailed woodcarvings, painted jewelry and hatboxes, and hand-stitched quilts.

Recently, Betty won a piece of art from a world-renowned artist. When she decided to investigate its worth, she was shocked, not so much at the estimated value of the artwork, but at how it compared to the art that surrounds her every day in the center. "This," Betty said, indicating all the paintings and creations that adorn the walls and shelves of the center, "is priceless!" **ARTS NOW**

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Do the Best While You Can

— By Beverly Shay

Fitness and staying active are recurring themes with Chris Glover. Perhaps that is why he holds the position of recreation manager for DeSoto Parks and Leisure Services. In reality, it is more than just a theme or merely the focus of his job.

“When my grandmother died about 14 months ago at the age of 80, it caused me to reconsider lifestyle — mine and people’s in general,” Chris commented. “Our parents, largely, became inactive once they had children, because that is what their parents had done. As they aged, like my grandmother, they continued to be inactive and lost strength.” Chris’ grandmother lost part of her leg to diabetes; in order to be fitted with a prosthetic, she had to regain strength and agility through implementing an active lifestyle. She attempted this, but found it unfamiliar and overwhelming.

“You often see how poor health impacts a person’s psyche; injuries or conditions can occur when someone has not maintained a regime of consistent, preventative, proactive fitness activities. For those who have lived independently the bulk of their life, sudden dependence due to an inability to care for themselves can result in the loss of their will to live.

“All of this caused me to realize the importance of making lifestyle choices that included fitness and activity. I always tell people, ‘Do the best you can while you can.’ It’s not merely for the

purpose of reaping the benefits for yourself alone; real success is when your lifestyle and example impact the next generation. You will be influential if you have done your job right,” Chris shared.

You can see this philosophy implemented in the programs he oversees at the DeSoto Rec. Center. As part of their youth programs, the center features two youth football associations, baseball, soccer, basketball, two track programs, girls’ fast-pitch softball and BMX track events. They have a youth advisory council made up of 13 students from ninth to 12th grade. This group meets a couple of times a month for youth initiatives; their job is to give input on what they want to see offered. This group also hosts a Valentine’s Day dance, an Easter egg hunt, a daddy-daughter dance and kid fish. Their signature event is an annual hip-hop summit in June.

The rec. center also participates in a youth civic academy; city responsibilities are presented by many community departments to give children an awareness of municipal functions. In December 2006, DeSoto won the coveted All-American City Award, an award that encompassed three areas: youth

initiatives; dining and dialogue, where ethnically mixed small groups look at city issues from different perspectives; and neighborhood associations’ interaction with government entities. There is also an adult civic academy.

“What I try to do is genuine,” Chris explained. “I’m not looking for the spotlight. Nothing thrills me more than to drive by one of our parks — athletic or playground — and see families pursuing an active lifestyle together. I believe we are the pulse of the city — the place where people can keep active,” he further postulated.

The rec. center offers special programs for seniors, as well as youth and adults. Men’s flag football, co-ed basketball, soccer and fast-pitch softball are among the adult offerings. Soon there will be a women’s flag football team as well.

“From a city and community standpoint, I would like to do away with some of the misconceptions associated with parks and fitness centers. Some people think money invested in such facilities and programs is unnecessary. Actually, it is a very wise and valuable business investment,” Chris explained. “Money spent to create a lifestyle of activity will be money



Sports NOW

saved through the reduction of medical expenses. It is truly beneficial for the next generation to see mom and dad and seniors being active — especially if families can be active together.

“One of my goals is to get the whole community thinking that way, because then the whole community will benefit. A good rec. center facility providing event rental space, fitness memberships, day care and effective classes will generate revenue, which not only does not require city funding, but also provides an alternative to health costs.



That is a very valuable investment,” Chris said.

Many business organizations offer a discount in health insurance rates to employees involved in either a fitness program or a consistently active lifestyle. Two local doctors are beginning to work with the rec. center by referring rehab patients to the facility and by planning a health fair. The idea is to promote fitness and an active lifestyle as a means of caring for yourself for as long as you can — the reward being less chance of becoming a burden to others. This is a message both the doctors and the rec. center would like to get out there.

“Fitness is more than a cosmetic approach to life; it is a quality-of-life choice that can and will counteract family medical history,” Chris stated. “I want to be a part of providing an opportunity for this community to do all they can to achieve a culture or climate of self-care.” **NOW**

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Business
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We Like People

— By Beverly Shay



Cedar Hill Rec. Center staff: B.J. Stevenson, Carolyn Skeels, Jeremy Allen and Laci McKinney.

Cedar Hill Recreation Center is a premier center for fitness, fun and friendship. Those three concepts are not only in place for members, guests or visitors, but also for the center staff, who enjoy having fun, making friends and staying fit as well. “We really like people; we like working with them and getting to know them and helping them,” the center director, Carolyn Skeels said. “We have three main goals,” she continued. “We want to establish and maintain good customer relations and customer service; we want to present and maintain a clean, inviting, homey atmosphere where people feel welcome, safe and cared for; and we value people as individuals, so we want to get to know them and provide a personal touch.”

The 54,000-square-foot facility lends itself to their philosophy. Jeremy Allen, recreation center coordinator, handles facility reservations for churches, businesses, city meetings, weddings/receptions, bridal shows, anniversaries, conferences and more. “When I came out here from California, the state-of-the-art facility sold me right off,” Jeremy stated.

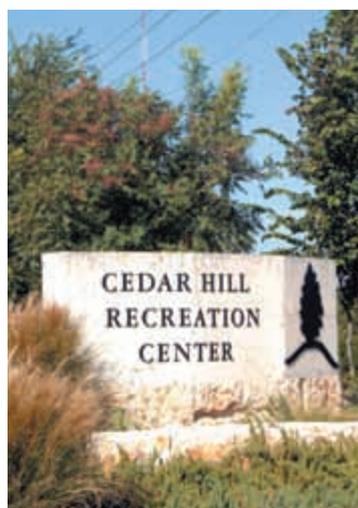
“This is not your typical rec. center; it is much larger and able to offer diverse services,” B.J. Stevenson of membership services commented. The staff and the facility offer something for everyone, from personal trainers and fitness advisors to

body sculpting and massages, nutrition, karate, yoga, ballet, gymnastics, cooking, first aid, basketball camps, volleyball and full use of work-out equipment, double gym and indoor track. That is not even a comprehensive list of all the services available.

Children ages 6 months to 6 years can join the barnyard crowd (drop-in child care) while their parent(s) are using the facility. The brightly decorated play area is warm and inviting, complete with friendly staff who interact with the children in a variety of activities involving games, learning and exercise, both indoors and outside, weather permitting.

With over 30 staff members who seem to not only like the people, but also really enjoy coming to work, there is always someone available to

answer questions, demonstrate proper equipment usage and assist you in developing a workable workout. Every instructor and staff member is certified in first aid, CPR and AED, and the instructors who have contracted with the center to teach specialized classes in various forms of fitness are all certified in their field.



Business NOW

This is definitely a place where you get the best of the best. "We like to believe that is because we focus on listening and knowing our members. We like to hear about their lives," stated Laci, the rec. center fitness coordinator. "We are still working on getting the word out, even though we have already



been here for three years. There are many different membership programs and packages to meet our various members' needs. Currently, we are offering a holiday membership special of \$10 off any three-month membership level; this offer is valid December 17 - January 12, 2008." As an added bonus, those with annual membership receive free drop-in child care.

Stop in anytime for a tour of the facilities and a chance to meet the staff or instructors. Hours are: Monday - Friday, 6 a.m. - 10 p.m.; Saturday, 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.; and Sunday, 1 p.m. - 7 p.m. The rec. center is located at 310 E. Parkerville Rd. near Hwy. 67 and Tidwell. To find out more call (972) 293-5288 or visit www.cchrec.com.

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Education NOW

Meet the Connector

— By Beverly Shay



When you have been away from school for years, trying to figure out how to go about addressing a difficulty concerning your child's education can be rather intimidating. To address this situation, Cedar Hill Independent School District (CHISD) Superintendent Horace Williams created the parent liaison program. He hired Angela Trevino, confident she was the one who could "help create a trust level with the parents because she is a parent. She helps them navigate the system, since she is able to go to the source on behalf of parents who don't know where to go. We want a parent-friendly district, where parents can feel welcome on any school campus. We're not a bureaucracy, even though it may seem we are. Angela can cut through [that] and explain policies. Her work with the parents, teachers and administration enables us to provide what is best for the student," Horace explained.

Angela is quick to acknowledge that principals, teachers and administrators are eager to work with parents. In addition, Angela can provide input from a parent's perspective for the administration. "It's really easy for me to do this job, because I already had relationships with many of the principals and the CHISD administration due to my work with the various PTAs in the district," Angela related.

Just what does a parent liaison do?

CHISD is committed to serving students and parents; the district wants to respond promptly and professionally to concerns or grievances that may arise by arranging for parents to meet and talk with the teachers or counselors who interact most often with their child or children on a daily basis.

Sometimes parents do not know how to go about this or with whom they should speak. The school district urges parents to address their concerns as quickly as possible by contacting the person most directly involved — usually the teacher. Parents can call the school to leave a message or e-mail the teacher and request a return call or a conference. Most concerns can be resolved at the classroom level.

If that is not satisfactory, a meeting can be requested with the principal. The next step involves the parent liaison. "My job is to work toward a positive partnership between the school and parents. Sometimes, parents don't want to talk with school personnel; they may be intimidated or they may not want to be viewed as 'complainers,'" Angela commented.

"I am here to provide whatever parents need me to do to find a solution. I can stay late or come in Saturdays to

meet with parents whose work schedule prevents them from coming during working hours. Often, when they leave my office they give me a hug or display relief they were able to express their concerns and find resolution," Angela said. "Sometimes they need help to fill out forms, like the dual-residency form, which allows students living in the community with someone other than their parent to attend Cedar Hill schools.

"I like to listen. I can be sensitive to their needs. If I can't help them myself, I can get them in communication with those who can. It's sort of a mission for me," Angela remarked. "I want to empower Cedar Hill parents to be active in their kids' education." By being a parent volunteer, they not only tell their children they want to be involved in their education, they also see the system at work and gain first-hand understanding of how teachers implement the school district's goals and values.

Angela has helped families with uniforms, lunch assistance, school supplies and inter-district school transfers. She pointed out that not every parent has the opportunity or knows how to access the CHISD Web site with its parent resources. The parent resource/family access subheading contains all

Education **NOW**

manner of school-pertinent information concerning athletics, school programs, dress code and teacher contact information, as well as the ability to track your students' assignments, discipline record, grades and missing papers or projects. When a parent is unable to access this wealth of information, Angela can help. She summed up her desire and her



Dr. Homer Carter, Angela Trevino, Mr. Horace Williams and Mr. Kim Lewis work together for the good of the students.

functionality briefly: "I love my job!"

Angela works closely with Mr. Kim Lewis, associate superintendent in the CHISD. "Angela Trevino is such an asset, because we, like any other school district, have a lot of employment turnover, and therefore have a lot of new people come in. This makes it even harder for parents to know whom they should contact," Kim commented. "Angela's naturally warm, conciliatory care comes through her voice and on her countenance as she helps parents with their concerns. As well, she is familiar with most of our school campuses, teachers and principals because of her involvement throughout the years of her children's education in Cedar Hill. Angela probably knows as much about school goings on as anyone else in the CHISD.

"Angela's accessibility, her kindred spirit with other parents, is especially valuable as our community and our school district continue to grow. It would be very easy to become detached or impersonal, but that in no way at all describes Angela," he concluded. **NOW**

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Around Town

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A ribbon cutting, top left, was held at It's a Girl Thang. The Aikia Just For Kids Karate is led by Master Lloyd Ploeger. Master Ploeger, top right, is shown with some of his students. Entertainer Bo Gerard, middle left, auctioned off Cedar Hill fireman Jeff Richardson during a recent Chamber event. Trick or treaters, middle center, stopped by Phillips Lumber for some candy during Scare on the Square. Superman, middle right, gave some of his candy to his "bug" of a sister. A Chamber ribbon cutting, bottom left, was also held at Olive's Lil' Angels Learning Center. Mayor Rob Franke, bottom right, addressed over 100 members of the Cedar Hill Chamber of Commerce at a recent luncheon held at Northwood University.



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Around Town **NOW**



Members of the DeSoto Senior Citizens Center, top left, got their cholesterol levels checked. The 94 DeSoto Longhorns select softball team, top right, took 10th place out of 37 teams at the 12B Girls Fastpitch Southern Nationals tournament. Veterans were honored at DeSoto High School. T/SGT John Wetherall, retired USAF, above left, poses with C/MAJ Sydnee Hampton. The DeSoto HS ROTC, above right, posted the colors to begin the Veteran's Day program. The DeSoto Recreation Center, middle right, is a busy place. Principal Sissy Lowe, bottom right, poses as the Eagle with the flag runners at a Friday night football game.

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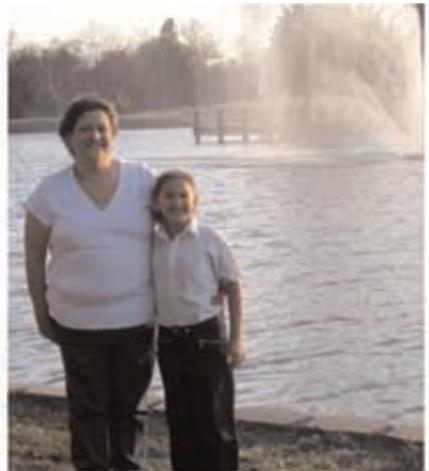
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Around Town **NOW**



Timmy Walker, top left, enjoyed a beautiful autumn day exploring the fall decorations. Izabella McCalla, top middle, poses with her soft little basketball. Tayde Gutierrez, top right, spends the afternoon with her granddaughter Yasmane Piedre at Lakeside Park. Lavetta Kennedy and her children, Mitchell and Cheyenne, above left, walk Blitz, the family dog. Davis Gillian, above right, drives from his home in Dallas to fish at Lakeside Park. Librarian Cheryl Strickland, the clerk behind the desk at right middle, discusses procedures with reference librarian Elaine Patrick and city librarian Carla Bryan. Postman Mark Moore, bottom right, delivers mail on a warm November day.



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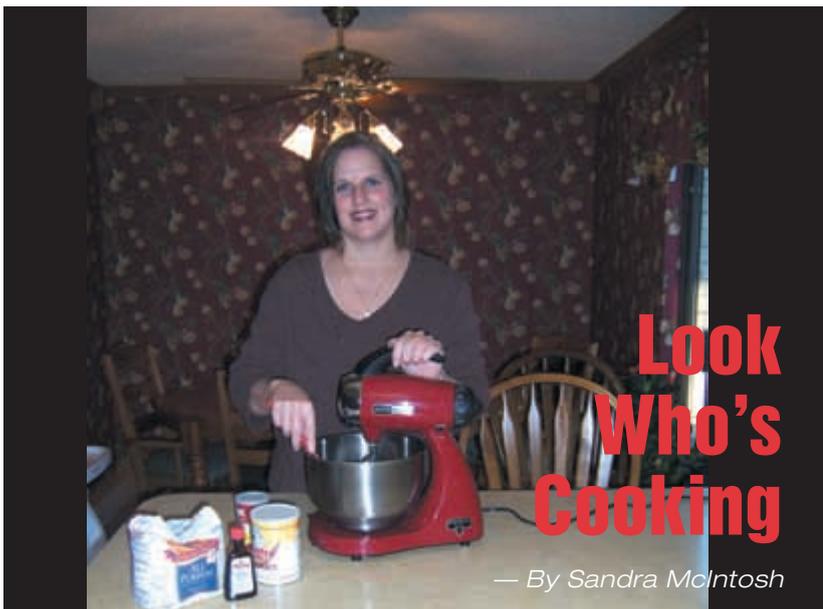


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Look Who's Cooking

— By Sandra McIntosh

IN THE KITCHEN WITH DEBBIE HUDSPETH

Debbie has been cooking since the age of 3. She used to make mud pies in the garden, putting berries on top and allowing them to “bake” in the dryer outlet. “That was our oven,” she said. “Then my mother bought my first Easy Bake Oven when I was 5. I loved watching as the light bulb baked my creations.”

Her mom may have taught her to cook, but it is the Christmas tradition of “treat-filled” coffee cans started by her grandmother that Debbie carries on today. “My grandmother made cathedral windows, millionaires, pralines, butter balls, fudge and meringue cookies,” Debbie explained. “She’d put them in a coffee can and give them to all the grandchildren for Christmas. I loved that gift and decided to pass it on.” **NOW**

CATHEDRAL WINDOWS

- 1 8-oz. bag chocolate chips
- 1/2 stick butter
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup pecans
- 1 8-oz. pkg. colored marshmallows

Melt the bag of chocolate chips with the butter. Slightly beat eggs and add to mixture. Heat almost to boiling. Cool and then add pecans. Pour mixture over colored marshmallows. Spoon onto wax paper and roll in the shape of a log. Chill and slice.

MILLIONAIRES

- 1 12-oz. pkg. caramels
- 2 Tbsp. water
- 2 cups coarsely chopped pecans
- 1/4 block paraffin
- 1 6-oz. pkg. chocolate chips

Melt caramels with water in top of double boiler. Stir in pecans. Drop by teaspoonful onto waxed paper. Refrigerate until firm enough to remove from the wax paper. Melt paraffin and chocolate chips in top of double boiler. Dip caramels into chocolate mixture with fork and place

on waxed paper. Do not refrigerate.

DEEP SOUTH PRALINES

- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1/8 tsp. salt
- 2 Tbsp. butter or margarine
- 2 1/2 cups pecan halves

In 3 1/2-quart heavy saucepan, combine sugar, soda, buttermilk and salt. Cook over high heat about 5 minutes or to 210 F on a candy thermometer, stirring often and scraping the bottom of the pan. Mixture will foam up. Add butter and pecan halves. Over medium heat, continue cooking and stirring constantly and scraping the bottom and sides of saucepan until candy reaches 234 F on a candy thermometer. Remove from heat and cool slightly; about 2 minutes. Beat with spoon until mixture thickens. Drop onto wax paper.

BUTTER BALLS

- 2 sticks butter
- 1/2 cup confectioner's sugar
- 1/2 tsp. vanilla

- 1 3/4 cups flour
- 1/2 cup pecans

Cream butter and sugar until fluffy. Blend in vanilla and flour, stir in chopped pecans. Chill for several hours. Shape into 1-inch balls. Place on a baking sheet. Bake for 20 minutes in preheated 350 F oven. Roll balls while warm in confectioner's sugar.

HOLIDAY CUT-OUT DOUGH

COOKIES:

- 1 1/2 cups sifted confectioner's sugar
- 1 cup margarine
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1/2 tsp. almond flavoring
- 2 1/2 cups flour
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. cream of tartar

ICING:

- 1 cup sifted confectioner's sugar
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. vanilla

COOKIES: Cream sugar and margarine. Mix in egg and flavorings. Stir dry ingredients together and then blend into sugar mixture. Refrigerate for

Who's Cooking **NOW**

2 - 3 hours. Using 1/2 dough at a time, roll out the dough to 3/16 of an inch. Make cutouts. Bake 7 - 8 minutes or until delicately golden brown in a 350 F oven. Decorate with icing.

ICING: Blend all ingredients with just enough water to make icing easy to squeeze through a decorating tube.

FUDGE

- 1 cup butter
- 3/4 cup cocoa
- 1 cup Pet evaporated milk
- 7 1/2 cups powdered sugar
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 2 tsp. vanilla
- 1 cup pecans

In a 4-quart saucepan, melt the butter. Add cocoa and blend well. Stir in evaporated milk. Gradually mix in powdered sugar and salt until smooth and creamy. Add vanilla and pecans. Stir until well-blended. Pour into a 13 x 9 x 2-inch pan sprayed with cooking spray. Cut when ready to serve.

MERINGUE COOKIES

- 2 egg whites
- 1 dash salt
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 3-oz. pkg. chocolate chips
- pecans, as desired

Beat egg whites and salt. Gradually add sugar while beating until mixture stiffens. Fold in vanilla, chocolate chips and pecans. Drop by teaspoonfuls onto cookie sheet. Preheat oven to 350 F. Put cookies in and turn oven off. Leave cookies in oven for a couple of hours.

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Finance NOW

Are You Financially Exposed?

— By Southwest State Farm Agents, Tom Castleberry, Judy Howell and Gary Rope

Many people realize the need for life insurance but keep putting it off until it is too late. You may think that life insurance is confusing, expensive and complicated. You may think you do not know enough to make the right decisions for you and your loved ones. Postponing this decision leaves you and your family exposed financially.

Assumption #1: I will always be able to buy life insurance. You could develop a health condition that makes you uninsurable or could make life insurance too costly for you.

Assumption #2: I will get life insurance later when I am older or have a family. Life insurance may be needed at all stages of life. Whether

married or single, male or female, with children or without, you may have financial obligations that need to be met. Life insurance provides financial security for you and your loved ones.

Assumption #3: My family and I are covered by the group insurance at work. To meet the future needs of your family, you need to have seven to 10 times your annual income. Most group term insurance amounts offered by employers will not meet this need. When you do not work for that employer any longer, you usually lose that coverage.

Assumption #4: My husband has life insurance so I do not need it. Women often live longer than men,

but not always. There are countless stories of men who had to shoulder the family financial burden along with the emotional burden after their wife passed away.

Assumption #5: My family can cover funeral and burial expenses. Burying a spouse or loved one is the most stressful time in a family's life. Having life insurance can reduce financial concerns for the family. Take the time now to review your needs and provide adequately for yourself and your family. ❖❖❖❖

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Health NOW

Stress: The Holiday Killer and What to do About It!

— By Dr. Lesa Ansell

Most people think of stress as an external force acting upon them. Internal sources go unrecognized. Far fewer are aware of the three main categories of stress, and fewer still that the holidays are a major source for increased stress and can silently be killing you.

The three main categories of stress are physical, chemical and emotional/mental stress. The latter involves the feelings we experience surrounding a situation, and as such, it is the most commonly recognized form of stress. Chemical stress can be from allergens, illness or missing chemicals in our bodies. Physical stress can be from an injury or chronic overuse of our bodies.

The most important thing is to recognize the signs of stress so you can minimize its effects. There are six key signs of stress:

1. HEADACHE

How many times have you said to yourself, "This is just my normal headache"? When you do that, you are ignoring your body's "warning light" because, in fact, headaches are never normal. They are your body's signal that something is wrong.

2. PAIN

Pain anywhere in the body is another warning sign. Pain is only possible because of an unfavorable response of the nervous system.

3. FATIGUE

This sign is easy to ignore, or to falsely cover up with substances that "boost" your energy. People frequently dismiss this sign by saying to themselves, "I just didn't sleep well." This leads us to our next sign.

4. SLEEP DISTURBANCE

The body needs seven to eight hours of sleep in a 24-hour period to function optimally. Sleep is the time during which our bodies heal, growth hormone is released and our brains are allowed to "defragment." Just like computers, our brains begin to process slower when overloaded. Therefore, sleep is essential to allow our minds to "download" and compartmentalize the day's events.

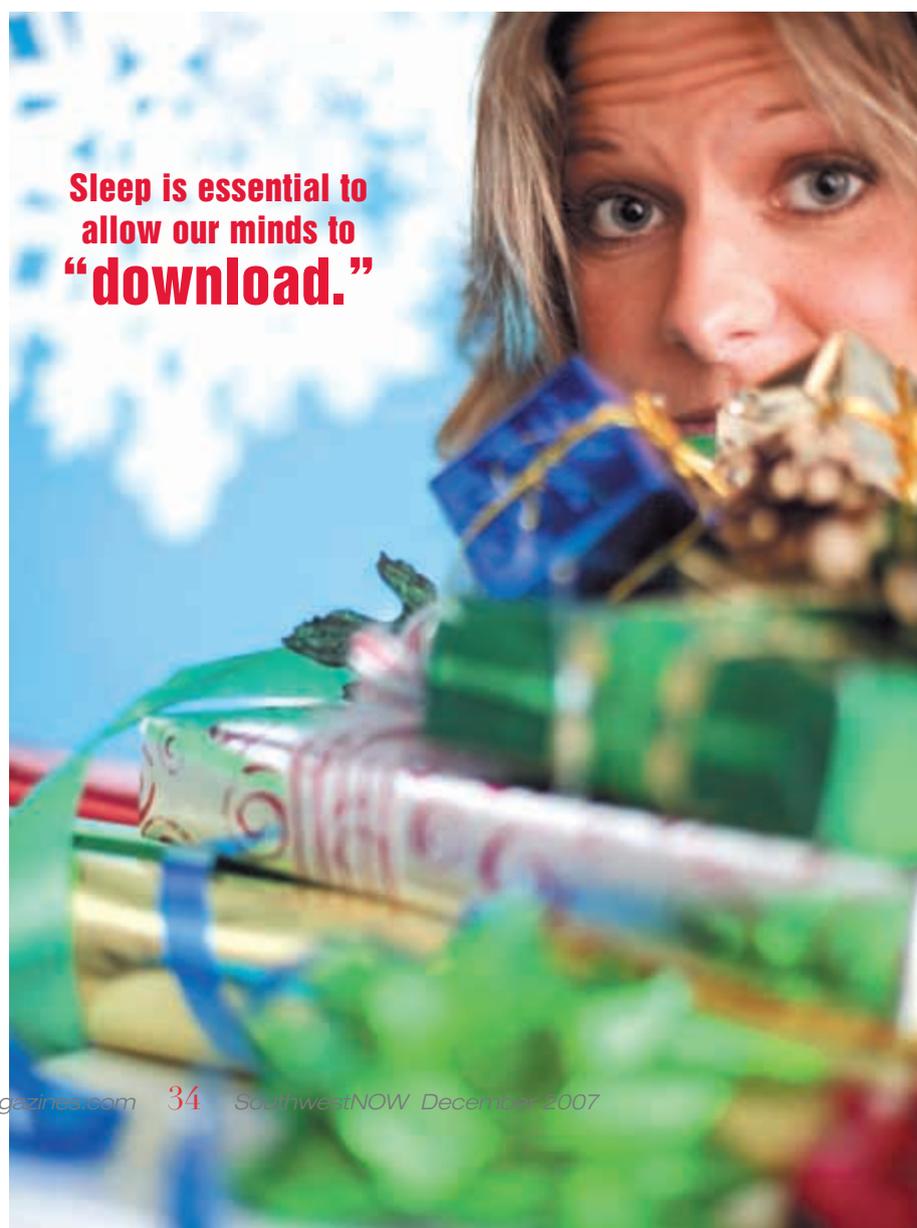
5. MOOD SWINGS

When the brain is fatigued, it causes

alteration in mood, or "mood swings." These may present themselves as heightened emotions (anger, elation) or lowered emotions (depression, sadness). Mood swings are closely related to sleep disturbance and fatigue.

6. ALLERGIES

When the body is under chronic stress of any type, it causes a suppression of the immune system. This is why people frequently experience an increase in colds, flu or sinus problems when in the midst of big life changes such as job changes, giving birth,



Health NOW

deaths, marriages or divorces.

Ways to minimize holiday stress include: Organizing household chores and trips into groups that can be performed together; setting a budget to prevent financial stressors in the future months; maintaining proper diet, exercise and sleep patterns; shopping and decorating early; scheduling quiet time for yourself and being aware of the signs so you may act quickly to reduce their effects.

If you find any of these signs are unmanageable on your own, contact your physician, wellness coordinator or lifestyle coach. They can assist you on the road to decreased stress and improved health. **NOW**

Dr. Lesa Ansell is the CEO of Pro-Adjuster Chiropractic Clinic and is a member of the Texas 4 Disaster Medical Team under the direction of the Department of Homeland Security.



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December 2007

Community Calendar

Every Monday

Nursery Rhyme Time from 10:15 - 10:45 a.m. at Duncanville Public Library. Bodies dealing with: **Dec. 3** - dirt; **Dec. 10** - dancing; **Dec. 17** - noses.

Every Tuesday

Homeschool Movies from 2 - 2:23 p.m. at Duncanville Public Library. *Human Body in Action*: **Dec. 4** - eyeball; **Dec. 11** - sound; **Dec. 18** - skin.

Every Wednesday

Rotary Club of Cedar Hill: 7 - 8 a.m. at Cedar Hill Recreation Center, 310 East Parkerville Road.

Every Wednesday and Friday

Preschool story time at Cedar Hill Library: 10:30 - 11:45 a.m. (972) 291-7323.

Every Thursday

Story Time from 10:15 - 10:45 a.m. at Duncanville Public Library. Bodies dealing with: **Dec. 6** - dirt; **Dec. 13** - dancing; **Dec. 20** - noses.

Lectura en Español by Tamara Knapp from 5:30 - 6 p.m. at Duncanville Public Library.

First Tuesdays

Readers On The Hill Book Club: 7 p.m. at Cedar Hill Library (972) 291-7323.

Dad's Night Out With the Family, 7 - 7:40 p.m. at Duncanville Public Library. **Dec. 4** - Brett Roberts presents *Traditions of Christmas* magic show. Call Urla Morgan (972) 780-5044.

First and Third Tuesdays

Good Morning DeSoto! Networking breakfast, 7:30 a.m. at the Chamber, 205 E. Pleasant Run Road. Call (972) 224-3565.

Second Tuesday

The Dallas Area Writers Group at Cedar Hill Library. Visit dallaswriters.org.

Second and Fourth Tuesdays

Cedar Hill Lions: Noon - 1 p.m. at Good Shepherd Church, 915 Old Straus Road; (972) 291-0651.

Second Wednesday

Cedar Hill/Duncanville Early Childhood PTA: 10

a.m. at Cedar Hill Hope Lutheran Church, 917 N. Straus Road.

Through December 7

Rudi the Recycling Reindeer will assist Keep Duncanville Beautiful in collecting gently used toys and books (no stuffed animals please). Items may be placed in Rudi's collection boxes at all Duncanville ISD elementary/intermediate schools.

Through December 14

Drop off your letter to Santa at Santa's mailbox in Duncanville City Hall.

December 1

Breakfast with Santa sponsored by DHS Eaglette Booster Club from 8 - 11 a.m. at DeSoto Civic Center. Cost is \$5. Pictures with Santa: \$5.

Holiday Craft and Gift Bazaar, from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. at the DeSoto Civic Center. Featuring entertainment, shopping and food.

Annual Holiday Open House, 1 - 3 p.m. at the Zula B. Wylie Library, Cedar Hill. Activities include: refreshments for all, crafts for the children and pictures with Santa.

DeSoto's 35th Annual Holiday Parade of Lights, 6 p.m. - travel south on Hampton Road from Seahawk to Pleasant Run. Call the Chamber at (972) 224-3565.

Tree Lighting and Community Choir concert, 7:45 p.m. at the DeSoto Town Center.

December 2 - 8

Vouchers available at the Cedar Hill Library for use at the Cedar Hill Barnes & Noble - percentage of receipts goes to support the Library Friends of Cedar Hill.

December 6

Old Town Holiday on the Hill from 7 - 9 p.m. in historic downtown Cedar Hill, Pioneer Park (Cedar at Houston Street). Event includes: tree lighting, caroling with the music group, Vocal Magic, and pictures with Santa.

December 7

Christmas Parade (7 p.m.) and Tree Lighting (7:40 p.m.) at Duncanville City Hall; pictures may be taken with Santa Claus. Visit www.duncanville.com.

December 8

The Library Friends of Cedar Hill will be wrapping gifts at the Cedar Hill Barnes & Noble, 3 - 7 p.m. for donations.

December 10

Zula B. Wylie Library of Cedar Hill proudly presents Storytime Theater's production of *Harvey Slumfenburger's Christmas Present* at 7 p.m. Call (972) 291-7323 for details.

December 12

Business on the Hill at the Cedar Hill Chamber, 7:30 a.m.

December 13

Cedar Hill Chamber Night Out, 5:30 - 7 p.m. at CNB of Texas, 106 W. FM 1382 - catered by Chicken Express.

December 14

DeSoto Chamber offices will be closed as we move to temporary location at the MCM Grand Hotel/Fundome. Call (972) 224-3565 for details.

Snack with Santa for ages 3 - 8 from 3:30 - 5 p.m. at D.L. Hopkins Senior Center, Duncanville. Activities include: cake decorating, snacks, ornament making, photos with Santa. Register at Duncanville Recreation Center front desk; cost is \$5 per child. Call (972) 780-4971.

Duncanville Recreation Center is hosting the movie *Elf* along with pizza from 6:30 - 9 p.m. Please register at the front desk of the rec. center; cost is \$5. Call (972) 780-4971.

December 15

Cedar Hill Star Party: sunset to midnight at J. W. Williams Park, 1605 High Pointe Lane. Call (972) 840-6684.

December 20

Cedar Hill Rise & Shine - TBA at 7 a.m.

Cedar Hill Monthly Chamber Luncheon at Northwood University, 11:30 a.m.

December 21

Holiday Open House at Cedar Hill Chamber office, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

December 22

Cinema on the Square, 2 p.m. and 5 p.m. at Cedar Hill City Hall Council Chamber, 502 Cedar Street.



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Pepperoni or One-Topping Pizza	7.99	8.99	9.99
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The Hawaiian	8.99	9.99	10.99
Canadian Bacon & Pineapple			
The Rancher	9.99	10.99	11.99
Canadian Bacon, Pepperoni, Ground Beef, Mixed Onions			
The Vegetarian	9.99	10.99	11.99
Mushrooms, Black Olives, Mixed Onions, Green Peppers, Tomatoes			
The Cowboy	10.99	11.99	12.99
Pepperoni, Italian Sausage, Mushrooms, Black Olives, Herbs & Cheese			
Papa's All Meat	10.99	11.99	12.99
Salami, Pepperoni, Canadian Bacon, Italian Sausage, Ground Beef			
Papa's Favorite	10.99	11.99	12.99
Pepperoni, Italian Sausage, Ground Beef, Mushrooms, Black Olives, Green Peppers, Mixed Onions			
Murphy's Combo	10.99	11.99	12.99
Salami, Pepperoni, Italian Sausage, Mushrooms, Mixed Onions, Black Olives			

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Gourmet Vegetarian	10.99	11.99	12.99
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