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DHS Students Make College Commitments

Five Duncanville High School student-athletes signed letters of intent to play basketball, tennis, and run track in college on Wednesday, November 12. Friends, family and coaches were on hand to cheer on the new recruits.

A complete list of athletes who have made college commitments can be found below. Congratulations and good luck to these outstanding student-athletes!



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Special Needs Student Shows Her Sparkle



Duncanville High School sophomore Lauryn Duncan was featured Friday, November 14, on CW 33 newscasts. The station chose to honor her in their "Class Act" segment for her outstanding participation in Duncanville High School's Sparklers Cheer Team. The program pairs special needs students with mainstream students. Lauryn's "sparkling" personality, dedication to her school work and her passion for singing and dancing with her church's praise team make her a wonderful example of Panther Pride! Congratulations, Lauryn!



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ON THE COVER



Tim and Wintrill Maiden have both a beautiful home and a beautiful family.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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Editor's Note

Merry Christmas, Southwest Friends!

December ... snow, festivities, carolers, parties, family, some friends, food, snuggling with grandchildren, watching grown-child antics (oddly familiar, nearly traditional), worship and birthdays. At my daughter-in-law's instigation, we plan to make a family ski trip to Colorado, land of my birth. Surely, this will be an epic trip,

overriding my less-than-favorite season of commercialism and over-busyness.

For me, the real reason of celebration can be summed up with the words of a childhood hymn: "Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child, make Thee a bed, soft, undefiled, within my heart, that it may be, a quiet chamber kept for Thee." When, in the midst of the bustle I settle myself, my heart finds the peace and joy and wonder that surround the advent of Truth Himself.

May your hearts wander back into that grace, as well.

Beverly

Beverly Shay
SouthwestNOW Editor
beverly.shay@nowmagazines.com

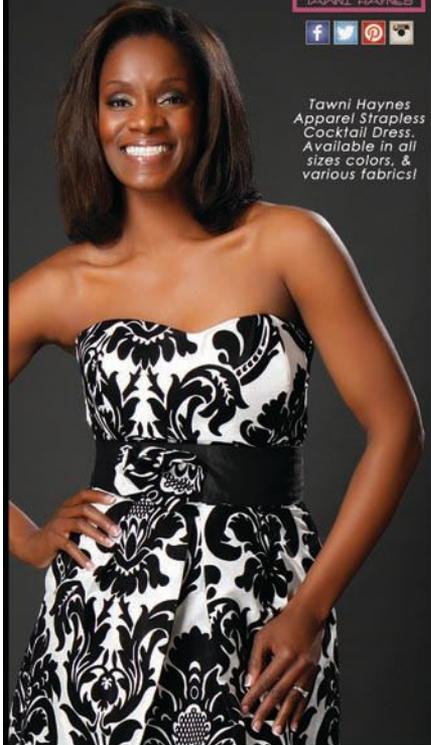
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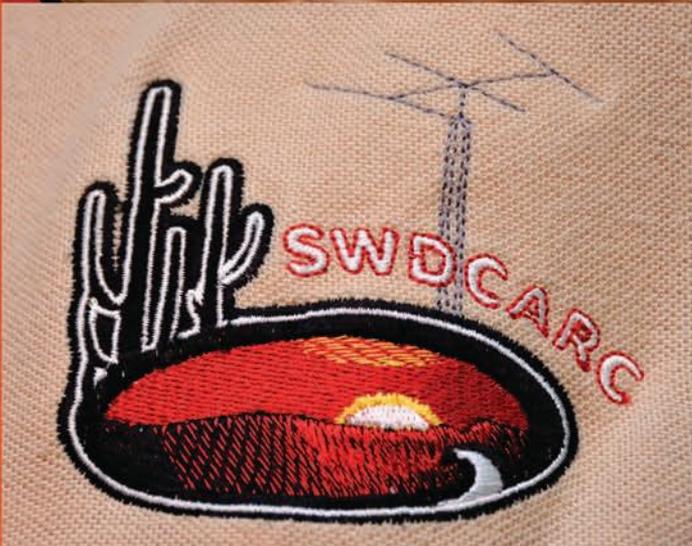
AFICIONADOS

on Air

— By Beverly Shay

Amateur radio operators are pretty much addicts. Once they get started, they can't seem to stop. But then, why would they? Hams, as they are called, really enjoy what they do. Jerry Keltner and Lester Wong have both found their niche in a club called Southwest Dallas County Amateur Radio Club. The club is part of the American Radio Relay League, a national association for amateur radio operators in the U.S., boasting some

150,000 members. ARRL has been around for about 100 years. The worldwide association is made up of people, from teenagers to grandparents, learning to transmit voice, data and pictures via airwaves wherever they can, near or far. This field of communication is full of a language, almost a jargon all its own. Although reasons for initial involvement vary, what's common is continued interest.



“In 1976, my brother decided to go cruising on a sail boat on which he would live and travel the open seas, using only radio communication to keep in touch,” Jerry recalled. So began Jerry’s adventures with ham radios. “What was interesting was he would communicate with a guy in California who would then patch his transmission through the phone to my mom.” Shortly after that, Jerry was in Korea and unable to operate, because he couldn’t get a reciprocal license for his novice license, so his radio life was put on hiatus.

When he was just 11 years old, Lester’s interest was piqued through a neighbor. “My neighbor let me use his radio, and I

“The key to becoming more adept at radio communication is to continually practice.”

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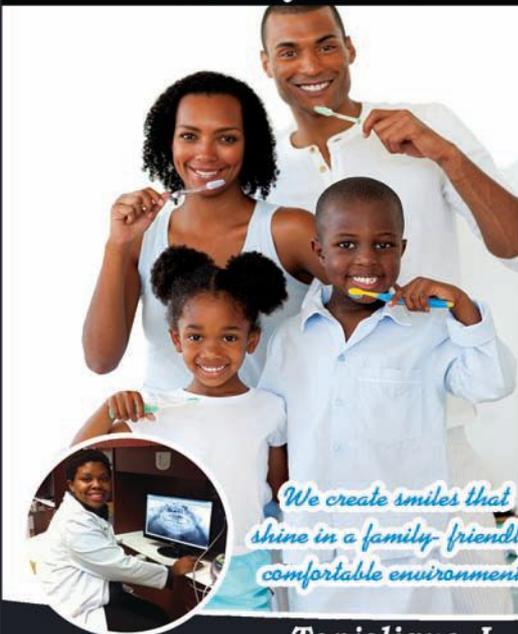
got to where I could do code at about five words a minute. But time passed, life was filled with other activities, and my enthusiasm wasn't really rekindled until 2008, when I took some classes, got my technician license and then a few months later got my general license," Lester said. Now, like most members of their club he is on the radio weekly.

Amateur radio operators make themselves useful in various ways. If you can imagine a situation, such as a tornado, fire, storm, ice or even the occasional cutting through of fiber optics rendering "normal" communication via phones, TV or Internet ineffective, then you can understand how ham radio operators become indispensable. "We set up our radios to provide communication between the situation and human health and services, hospitals or whoever is in charge. Often, that will involve expediting supplies, relaying visual reports or asking for additional personnel or equipment to be sent," Jerry explained.

This past summer the Medical Reserve Corps held a live exercise called Operation Best Southwest, which was basically a rehearsal to identify possible glitches in a time of emergency and solve them. The group included numerous

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types of emergency response teams, such as: C.E.R.T. (Community Emergency Response Team), Chaplains Victim Relief, American Red Cross, Salvation Army, North Texas Food Bank, AmeriCorps, Duncanville Police and SWAT team, several doctors, nurses and mental health specialists and FEMA. The scenario simulated an infectious disease situation, so the main issue was checking people's medications and immediate health needs. Since the exercise was open to public involvement, the opportunity was used to encourage people to prepare a 72-hour survival kit.

Another activity both Jerry and Les enjoy being involved in is Field Day, known as the most popular on-the-air event held annually in the U.S. and Canada. "In June each year,



more than 35,000 radio amateurs gather with their clubs, groups or simply with friends to operate from remote locations," reported the American Radio Relay League. "Field Day is a picnic, a campout, practice for emergencies, an informal contest and, most of all, fun!" The event is geared toward informing the public, especially young people such as Scouts, about the relevancy of ham radio operation. Amateur operators gain further radio experience by contacting other hams worldwide, which they

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may need to do when emergency communication is needed. They're effective because radio communications do not rely on the Internet, cell towers or other communication infrastructure.

Over 700,000 amateur radio licenses have been secured in the United States, with more than 2.5 million worldwide. Jerry explained the three classes of license radio operators can receive by passing qualification tests. The first level is a technician class license, which allows operation by voice over a 2-meter frequency and limited communication on the 10-meter band. A general class license allows limited frequencies on most bands. Those operators with an extra class license can communicate on any frequency on any band the FCC allows, which is slightly more than a general class license allows. Jerry and Les both have general class licenses.

Jerry also listed modes of communication used by radio operators: CW (Morse code), digital modes, VHF/UHF radio, HF (high frequency), RTTY (radio teletype), EchoLink (software for over-Internet usage), satellite, EME (earth-moon-earth), meteor

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Both Jerry and Les cite the uncertainties of the world situation as ongoing motivation to keep current on radio communication. "Our club meets every Monday night to check in with the SWDCARC Net," Les explained. "It's sort of like a central control or router for distributing information." While most amateur radio operators have radios that can only operate up to 100 watts, during the field day event, there are a few who operate up to 1,500 watts. A beam antenna, which directs power strongly in basically one direction, reduces interference and aids in reception and transmission. "You need amplifiers to broadcast at 1,500 watts," Les added. "Vertical antennas send a signal 360 degrees, but there's a lot of interference."

"The key to becoming more adept at radio communication is to continually practice," Jerry admitted with a grin. "I spent one-and-a-half to two hours at one contest and spoke with 39 different countries. I have learned — through practice — to filter out the radio noise until I can hear one person clearly. I guess it's because of practice," Jerry remarked.

"Everyone envies him," Les added.

During Field Day, radio operators identify themselves by their call letters; class ID, which gives the number of transmitters; and section identification, which is their location. Communications are "scored" with one point for voice contact and two points for CW, as well as multiple other bonus points. When providing emergency information with Medical Reserve Corps, operators use their call letters, POD (point of dispensing) numbers, and their messaging appears like an email although sent through the radio.

Jerry and Les are also storm watchers. "Our club members report high winds, lightning strikes, rain, hail, cloud conditions, tornado tails or touchdowns and transformer arcing in Southwest Dallas, Ellis and Johnson counties. We talk to our Net control or the battalion chief, and they pass on the information to the weather service. We like watching storms," said Lester, adding, "but we are not storm chasers!" **NOW**

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TREASURED TRASH

— By Callie Revell

Jane LoSoya was not an artistic child. As the only child of two grocers, she had a simple childhood in Floresville, Texas, until her life was dramatically changed, as many young girls' lives are, by a man. "At 16, I left home, got married and came to Dallas," Jane said, fondly remembering her years living in Oak Cliff and DeSoto with her late husband, Ben, and their three children. "My husband was the one who really inspired me."

Unfortunately, Ben passed away six years ago, but the evidence of their 45-year marriage is still visible in Jane's home. Ben's sketches, ink drawings and funny cartoons hang in frames. "My



Jane believes recycling is very important and uses her art as her own personal way to recycle.

husband had his degree in commercial art," Jane said. "I didn't know anything about art, being 16. When we got married, he was always sketching." Soon, Jane felt driven to create art like her husband. "We would go to craft shows, and I would think, *Well, I'd like to do something.*" Jane remembered. "The first thing on my mind was, *I'll never do Christmas ornaments.* I mean, I loved them at the show, but I thought, *Oh, no, not me!* And that's what I've done the most of!"

Jane's Christmas ornaments are certainly a sight to see, but they represent only a portion of the eclectic and interesting pieces she has made. She began by making ornaments from old hammered spoons. Soon, she realized her unique talent: turning things that would normally be discarded — burnt out light bulbs, crushed soda cans, out-of-style shoes — into beautiful keepsakes. A light bulb became a glittery snowman. A soda can became a spotted cow with a blue bow. A high-heeled shoe became a gift basket filled with nail polish and makeup. Nothing is off-limits, even vegetables! "My neighbor was growing okra, and it got really big," Jane said. "He didn't know what to do with it, so I said, 'Give it to me!'" She has made beautiful crosses decorated with pull tabs from soda cans and even started making her own jewelry last year.

She likes to give her art as Christmas or birthday gifts, but she also sells her

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art at craft shows. “I normally do just one or two shows a year,” Jane said. “I remember my first show in San Antonio at the River Walk. I brought 100 spoons, you know, the ornaments. We showed up at the River Walk and there were all these vendors. They had a bunch of stuff. There I was with my little box of 100 spoons, and it was a three-day show. I’d never done one, but, sure enough, on the first day, I sold out — that made me feel so good!” Since then, Jane has attended numerous craft shows with similar success. “People are starting to see what I can do,” Jane said. “I love doing it, I really do.”



One uncommon quality about Jane’s art is the sheer diversity of it. She has made hundreds of pieces, and each is unique. “The things that I do, there’s never really two of a kind,” Jane said. “There’s no way you can get everything exactly the same.” In a world of mass-manufactured trinkets, hers are truly unique. When asked to describe her art for those who have never seen it, she seemed at a loss for words. “I’d have to show them, really,” Jane said. “They’ve got to see it, and then they can judge for themselves.”



Jane loves her art, because it represents her creativity and love for turning the ordinary into extraordinary. "When I paint, I try to put my whole heart in it, the way I think I would like it," Jane explained. "It has to be — well, not perfect, but I can be the world's worst critic." Her meticulous attention



to detail is especially evident in her wall crosses, each of which has dozens of aluminum pull tabs carefully placed to make beautiful designs. "It makes me happy," she said. "It gives me joy to do things I thought I would never do."

One of Jane's favorite parts about being an artist is seeing the reactions of others to her art. She is always looking for constructive criticism and feedback. "When I go to the beauty shop or somewhere, I'll take my art and show my friends and see what their opinions are



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of it,” Jane said. “Then, I know where I need to improve. People’s reactions tell you a lot. I’m always trying to see if they like it and if all the work I’m putting into it is making a difference. Do they *really* like it? Is it *good*? If they say yes, that makes me feel really great.”

The thing that excites people most about Jane’s art is her unusual materials. Jane has rescued countless bottles, cans and old pieces of silverware from a life in a landfill. Surprisingly, Jane doesn’t have to search hard for her materials. Most of them come from her household. “I just collect them when everyone drinks their sodas,” Jane said. “I’ll save the cans and smash them up with my hammer. Same thing with the pull tabs. It’s mostly from our house.”

Jane believes recycling is very important and uses her art as her own personal way to recycle. “For instance, the cans, the aluminum — you get to use it over and over to make different

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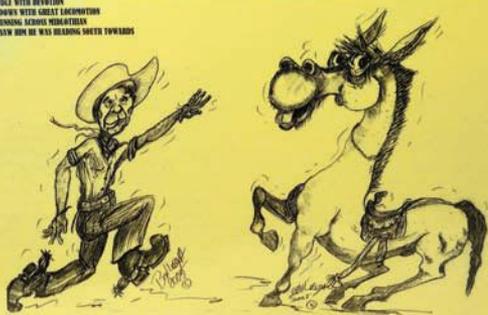
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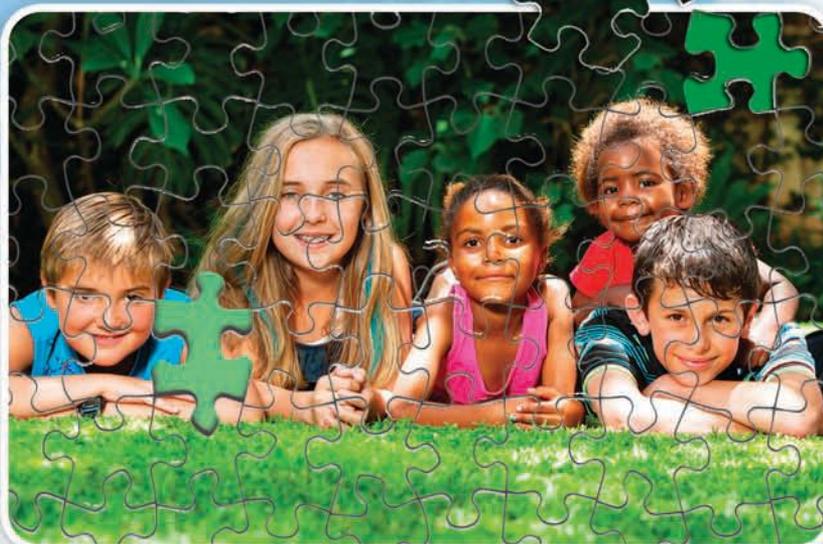
products. You bring stuff people have used before, that's been crushed, and you think of a way for it to be used again." Jane definitely lives by the famous mantra: One person's trash is another person's treasure. She has a unique talent for seeing the potential in everything, even in what some might consider garbage. "Anyone can do art," Jane said. "There's always stuff available with recycling. Use your own imagination."

She still thinks of Ben often as she creates. "When I would see him drawing, he would say, 'Jane, what do you think?' If his heart wasn't in it, I would say, 'I know you can do better than that,'" Jane said. She tries to put her heart into everything she does, just like Ben always did. Now, every Christmas, people place her ornaments on their trees. Her art decorates homes, offices and more, because others recognize and appreciate her vision: Everything has beauty, and it's never too late to let it sparkle. **NOW**



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A Family Christmas

— By Sydni Massey

All is quiet early Christmas morning at Tim and Wintrill Maiden's Duncanville home, but not for long. Bria, Tobias and Kailyn, the Maidens' three children, stir from the three makeshift pallets of blankets and pillows they made the night before in hopes of catching Santa Claus as he delivers gifts. Christmas morning promises a day full of family, gifts and holiday celebrations in the two-story, stone-faced house.

At Home With Tim and





Tim and Wintrill purchased the home six years ago, but are no strangers to the area. They grew up down the road in Oak Cliff, but did not meet each other until they were in college when a fortuitous study break brought Wintrill to the Texas Christian University campus where she met Tim, a football player for the university. Both had been reared as Christians, and Christmas was a very special time to their families.

"Both of our families decorated our houses growing up," Tim said. "Many people would drive through our neighborhood to look at the lights."

"As a kid, I would set up a hot chocolate booth and sell drinks to people who came to look," Wintrill said. "Santa would also be there."

Things are not much different now that Tim and Wintrill are adults with their own family. The Christmas transformation of their four-bedroom

Wintrill Maiden



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home begins in November, just before Thanksgiving. Wintrill, a third-grade teacher, starts decorating as soon as her Thanksgiving break begins. During Tim's holiday break from his banking job, the family gathers outside to help string lights and set up their holiday yard art. "I make a lot of our Christmas decorations," Wintrill said. "Every few years, I will change things out, but I enjoy making



new pieces each year. I get a lot of ideas from Pinterest. When I tell Tim that I'm going to Pier 1, he gets scared."

While the living room, dining room, entryway and upstairs loft are the focal point of the Maiden Christmas wonderland, truly no room is left without a piece of holiday spirit, whether in the form of a wreath or Christmas trinket. Two trees, one in the foyer and one in the dining room, greet guests as they pass through the front door adorned

with a larger-than-life wreath created by Wintrill. The table is set with festive mistletoe china and cloth napkins. Just past the garland-draped staircase awaits the family's cozy living room.

Giant wreaths hang high above the room from the loft banister. A miniature tree and faux gifts perfectly wrapped add to the Christmas spirit in the room. Eyes are drawn to the three-tiered fireplace that holds the family stockings and holiday photographs taken throughout

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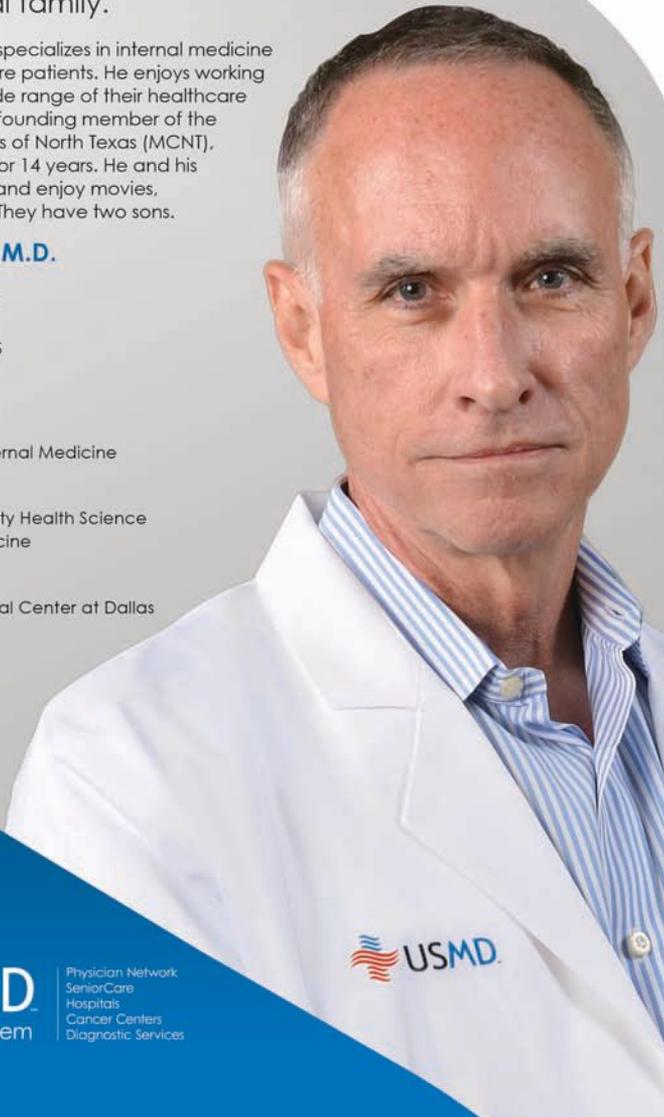
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the years. “The fireplace is one of my favorite things about this house,” Wintrill said. “It was not like this when we moved in.”

The Maidens purchased the home already built, but found ways to make it their own as soon as they moved in, with the fireplace being one of those things. When a contractor came out to modify the mantel, he suggested the three-tiered effect. They trusted his instinct and are happy they did. Tim gets to climb the ladder and change out the decorations with each season. The Maidens also wasted no time when it came to upgrading the floors to hand-scraped wood throughout the house. To make the living area and kitchen seem more open, they cut out half of the wall between the two rooms. “The openness is our favorite thing about this house,” Wintrill admitted. “Before, it was so closed off, but now we can all be together when things are going on in both rooms.”

Wintrill spends a lot of time in the kitchen, because her creativity does not stop at home decorating. Cake decorating is one of the many culinary arts she also delves into. During the Christmas season, she helps the children bake a lot of cookies, because they are Tim’s favorite. When it’s their year to host Christmas at their home for all of the cousins, Wintrill cooks a large, traditional breakfast of eggs, ham, bacon, pancakes, biscuits and waffles. “All of the cousins get together on Christmas morning,” Tim said.

“We eat a big breakfast and everyone goes around the table and says what they are most thankful for,” Wintrill said.

“Then each person gets to open a special present picked out by another family member.”

The Maidens have a lot of guests over the holiday season and have arranged the upstairs of their home for entertaining. The aroma of fresh, hot, buttery popcorn from their vintage-inspired popper permeates the house from the upstairs media room as Christmas movies are projected onto a screen on the wall. Plush recliners, rivaling the best theaters in the Metroplex give their guests that true theater experience. If guests are not in the mood for a movie night, they can sip on hot chocolate and play a round of pool in the game room just outside of the media room.

Also upstairs are the children’s bedrooms. Tobias has his own Dallas Cowboys-themed room filled with LEGOs and trophies from his sports teams. Bria and Kailyn share the ultimate girl room with pink furniture and walls of purple and green, perfect for sleepovers with their friends. Room for guests is plenteous in the Maiden home. Downstairs, tucked away behind the kitchen, is a beautiful mother-in-law suite.

Christmas is easily the family’s favorite and busiest season. Despite having a busy schedule filled with decorating the house, hosting holiday parties and serving at their church, the Maidens find time to give back to their community. Each year, Tim and his twin brother, Terrance, host a toy drive through their nonprofit organization, Two-Wins Foundation. Tim and Terrance founded Two-Wins in 2005 in order to support local kids in need financially and through educational programs. The toy drive gets bigger and bigger each year. “We participate in the toy drive each year as a family,” Tim said. “It’s a great way for us to give back to the kids in our community during the holiday season.”

“The first year they held the drive it was based out of Terrance’s house,” Wintrill said. “It has grown so much that we rent a venue each year to host it.”

The quietness of Christmas morning is quickly gone after the children look across the balcony and see the wonderland of gifts left by Santa Claus the night before. Another year passes without them catching him in the act of delivering the gifts. Maybe next year will be their year! **NOW**

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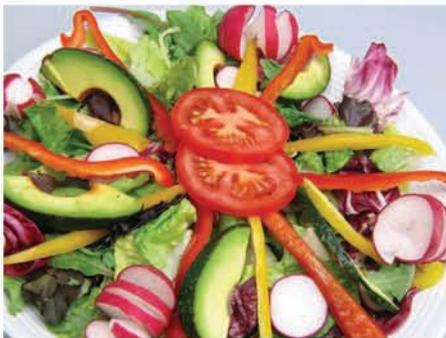
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It Takes a Village

— By Callie Revell



For David Williams, superintendent of Village Tech School in Cedar Hill, a career in education was an unexpected turn of events. “When I graduated from college, I began working as an editorial assistant for a newspaper,” David said. “I decided that wasn’t for me, so I tried teaching. Almost from day one, it was love at first sight.” David went on to earn his master’s degree in teaching, and he has been working toward a collaborative, liberating learning environment ever since.

“We wanted a place where the four walls could be torn down, and kids could experience learning in a variety of places and ways,” David said, referring to the Village Tech campus. “It’s about plugging

“The village becomes a collaboration of family and friends — mostly family.”



students in to who they are now and who they're going to be in the future.” David tries to support his students’ potential by allowing them to experience learning with a variety of tools, giving them access to a hands-on workshop outside of the classroom. “Students are creating things with pencils, pens, chop saws, spray paint — whatever it is, they’re using these tools to express their learning in different ways,” David said.

David and his fellow teachers believe working together creates the most ideal learning environment. “We feel like education really is a village experience. You have mentors and apprentices and people who, regardless of age, can do one thing better than another,” David said. “They can train each other and work

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together.” David believes it takes a village to educate a child. He recognizes how students are connected to each other and a broader community. “You have to work as a team to solve problems and use the resources you have to not only survive, but also thrive in that environment,”



David shared. “The village becomes a collaboration of family and friends — mostly family.”

Lecharia Scales, a first-grade teacher at Village Tech, is going on her 15th year as a teacher and has loved every minute. “I got my first job as a criminologist with the city of Dallas,” she remembered. “I worked one day and quit. A private school called and said they really needed a teacher, so I decided to go try it out.

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I can't imagine doing anything else." Since then, Lecharia has developed a child-centered teaching style. "I move according to how the children move. I try to meet them at their points of interest," Lecharia said. "The most rewarding thing is to see the 'light bulb.' When I listen to

children repeat what I say in their own words, that just does something for my heart."

For Lecharia, working closely with other teachers has been beneficial to everyone involved. Interacting with students across all grades and subjects allows her to support her students as they grow and doesn't limit her to her own classroom. By working as a team player "you become

invested in not only the academics of the child, but every part of the child," she said. "You get to know the children." She believes learning is accomplished best in a family environment.

Daniela Barbaro, an eighth-grade science teacher at Village Tech, never imagined teaching could be so fulfilling. "I started off undergrad with the idea I wanted to be a doctor," Daniela said. "I love science, and I'm extremely



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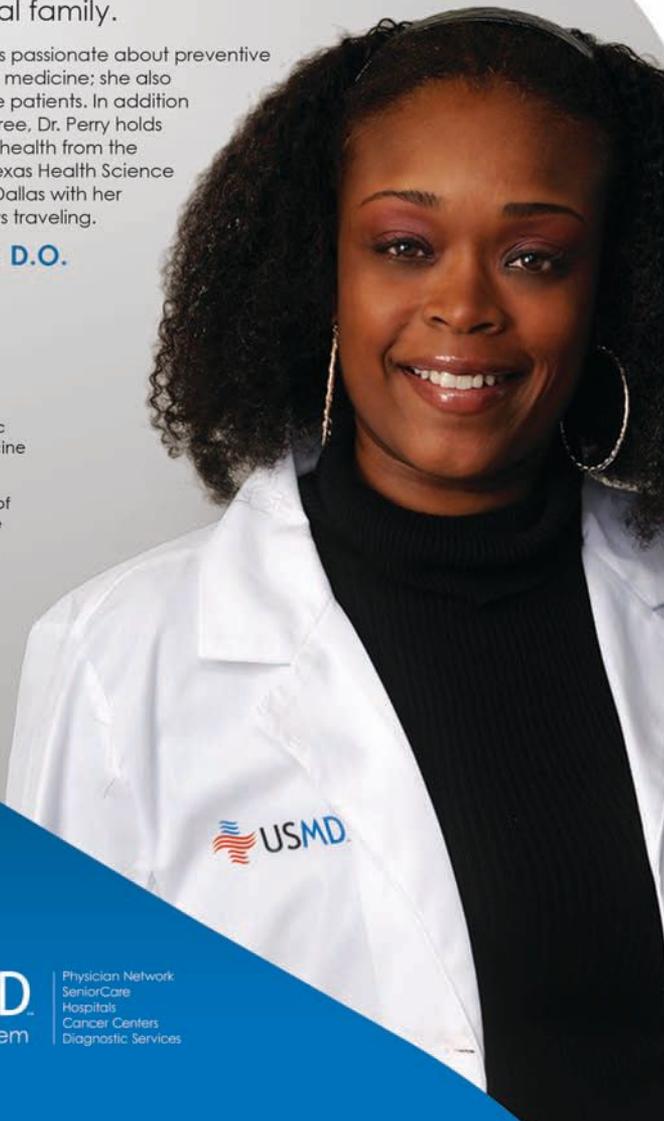
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inquisitive.” Once Daniela decided a life as a doctor wasn’t what she wanted, she went back to square one. “I took a career assessment test, and it said I needed an outlet for my creativity and social needs. Education was blaringly obvious, so I decided to add it to my degree. It’s the best decision I’ve ever made. I’ve loved every moment of it.” Becoming a teacher has allowed Daniela to have the personal interaction with children she has always craved. “It’s ridiculously rewarding,” she said. “Even when I was on the path



to becoming a doctor, I wanted to be a pediatrician, because I love kids’ minds and how they think. They don’t have the walls that adults put up in their minds.”

Daniela has specific goals for her students, and most of them focus on learning to think for themselves. “I just want to establish this love of learning, so even when I’m not there with them, they can want to learn,” Daniela said. “I want that love of learning to come back to them at an older age, giving them the desire to be curious and seek out new information.” Daniela has experienced anxiety about the responsibility that comes with teaching, but she now knows perfection is not the goal. “I started out with fear of a student asking me a question and me not knowing the answer, especially in this age of technology where they can sometimes get information faster than I can,” she said. “I’ve gained an ability to embrace learning *with* them.

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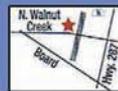


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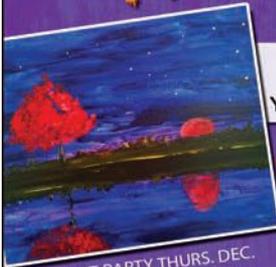


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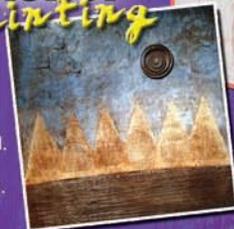
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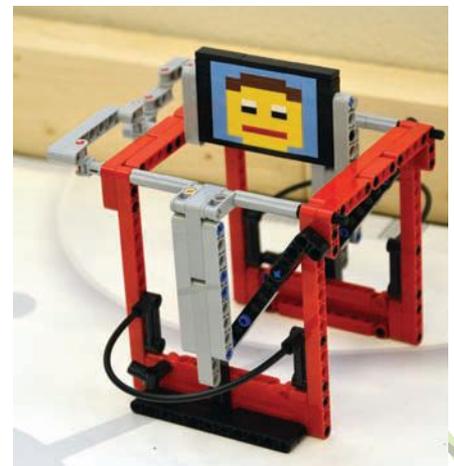
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It's not about having every correct answer to give them. It's about sharing *how* you learn."

One of Daniela's students from last year, Alex Balbuena, has benefited tremendously from her time at Village Tech. Previously homeschooled, Alex is in ninth grade and part of what will become the school's first graduating class. She is on the volleyball team and has volunteered in the main office and the library. She plans to attend college to study marketing. "The teachers here have really supported me by letting me be creative and branch out to try other things," Alex said. "I wasn't very creative when I was younger. I wanted



to stick in one mindset and not branch out. Ms. Barbaro was my teacher last year, and she and the others helped me find more hobbies. I've done a lot of things I wouldn't have tried without their support." Alex enjoys the overall idea of learning. She has the opportunity to mentor younger students, who, in turn, mentor others.

David is proud of his teachers and makes it a priority to support them. "I think great teachers matter," David said. "Just from research and experience, it's that great teacher who makes all the difference and has the possibility to really unlock and capture a kid's imagination and set it free." One of David's favorite quotes comes from Margaret Mead: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." David takes that quote to heart. "I get to work in a place every day where that concept is taking shape and taking form, and that's an amazing thing." **NOW**



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Let the **FUN** **BEGIN**

— By Sandra Strong

Are you finding it difficult to get in the holiday spirit? Fret no more. Getting in the spirit will be much easier as you work on crafts that will brighten your home with seasonal merriment, as well as bring smiles to the faces of family and friends, young and old alike.

Milk Jug Snowmen

Mark the beginning of the holiday season by creating a night light that decorates a room with visual warmth while helping children learn basic shapes.

Difficulty Level: Easy

- 1 gallon jug
- 1 1/2-gallon jug
- Scissors
- 2 sheets black foam, felt or construction paper (your choice)
- 1 sheet orange foam, felt or construction paper (your choice)
- 5 sheets tissue paper (divided use)
- 2 strands 20-count indoor/outdoor white lights with white cording

- Cool melt hot glue
- 3 black pipe cleaners (or color of your choice)
- 2 large black pompoms (or color of your choice)
- 1 medium-size Santa hat (design and color of your choice)

- ① Rinse jugs out thoroughly. Set aside, allowing them to dry completely inside and out.
- ② Cut 4 ovals from black material to serve as eyes. Cut 5 circles from black material to serve as the mouth for the gallon snowman. Cut five small squares from black material to serve as the mouth for the half-gallon snowman.
- ③ Cut 2 skinny triangles from orange material to serve as the noses for both snowmen.
- ④ Cut 3 small slits in each jug under the handle toward the bottom of the jug to



Step 4

create a hinged opening large enough to insert the tissue paper and lights. Carefully stuff the tissue paper (3 sheets for gallon and 2 sheets for half-gallon) and lights through these holes, making sure to mingle the lights with the tissue paper. Push the opening closed. Be sure the cord portion of the lights remains outside the jug openings.

- ⑤ Glue eyes, mouths and noses on jugs. Bend noses accordion-style to give them a 3-D effect. Braid and bend pipe cleaners in an arc. Glue to the sides of the half-gallon jug. Glue pompoms over the ends of the pipe cleaners to complete the ear muffs. Pull Santa hat over the top of the gallon jug. Dot with glue to hold the hat in place. (You can also use a cap your child has outgrown.)
- ⑥ Plug in and enjoy what you and your little ones have created.

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**Frosty the
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Difficulty Level: Easy to Medium
Three variations pictured.

- 1 large clay pot
- 1 medium clay pot
- Small paintbrush
- White acrylic paint
- Black acrylic paint
- Scissors
- 1 piece orange felt
- Needle
- Orange embroidery floss
- 1 cotton ball
- Cheek color (rouge)
- Kleenex
- Cool melt hot glue
- 2 large black buttons
- 7 small black buttons
- Holiday ribbon
- 1 sprig from holly berry artificial flower pick

- 1 Paint large pot white. Paint small pot black. Allow to dry completely.
- 2 Cut two carrot shapes from orange felt. Hand-stitch the two pieces together to make nose. Stuff nose with cotton ball to give the carrot a 3-D appearance.
- 3 For rosy cheeks, smudge cheek color on the cheek areas using a Kleenex or your index finger.
- 4 Glue large buttons in place for eyes. Glue small buttons in place for smile. Glue nose in place, allowing it to stick out.
- 5 Tie holiday ribbon around the base of



the small pot. Glue holly berry sprig to the ribbon to complete Frosty's holiday top hat.

6 Glue around the inside edge of the small pot. Stack the smaller pot on top of the larger pot. Allow glue to dry completely before moving.

7 You can also "top Frosty off" with ear muffs made from pompoms and pipe cleaners or a stocking cap of your choice. Eyes and mouths can be painted on or cut from black foam. Let your imagination be your guide.

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Difficulty Level: Medium to Hard

- 4 Santa hats
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- 1 To create the swag, hand stitch the Santa hats together along the white trim only, one hat at a time until you have the desired width. Hand stitch the tops closed to complete the front of the swag.
- 2 To create the rod pocket, cut the



Step 2

white felt in a strip the same width, from left to right, as the sewn hats. Make sure to cut it long enough, from top to bottom, to accommodate the rod being used. (If the rod is 1-inch, be sure to cut the rod pocket at least 1 1/2-inches in length.) Hand stitch rod pocket to the backside of hat curtain making sure not to sew all the way through to the front side.

- 3 Cut green felt in the shape of holly leaves, cutting 10 to duplicate the example shown.



Step 3

4 Attach each leaf by sewing one green sequin and one bead to the swag. Sew in place red sequins and remaining beads in clumps of 3 to represent holly berries.

5 You can complete the holiday swag by decorating the white portion with embellishments of your choice. This swag was personalized using embroidery floss, sequins and felt, but feel free to let your holiday imagination take over. **NOW**



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Dr. Deacon feels greatly blessed to be a part of the team at Pediatrics Southwest offering quality care. He enjoys interacting with his patients and their families.



Welcome to My Practice

Dr. Deacon finds great satisfaction in providing quality professional pediatric care.

— By Beverly Shay

Dr. Thomas Deacon approaches his pediatric practice by treating patients the way he wants his family to be treated. “My goal is to provide quality health care and meet the medical needs of those entrusted to my care, because I consider it privilege to serve children and their families,” stated Dr. Deacon, who has three daughters.

Dr. Deacon was born in Galveston and grew up in the Houston area, graduating from Clear Creek High School in 1977. “My mother was a nurse, so it seemed natural to pursue a career in medicine,” Dr. Deacon remarked. He earned his bachelor’s in chemistry with a minor in biology from Southwestern University in Georgetown. His doctorate in

medicine was earned from The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio in 1983. “I knew I wanted to become a primary care physician, and I really enjoyed the pediatric rotation during medical school. Following medical school, I completed my pediatric specialty training with The Children’s Hospital of Oklahoma (connected with the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine), which I finished in 1990.” Dr. Deacon was interested in moving to the area to be near family, and the practice, started by Drs. Mark Towns and Louis Hunke in 1986, came highly recommended.

Upon his arrival at Pediatrics Southwest, Dr. Deacon found both the doctors and the practice had already established an

Business **NOW**

excellent reputation in the community. “God clearly gave me a great opportunity to work with highly skilled Christian pediatricians, serving families with dedication and integrity,” Dr. Deacon remarked. With the growth of the practice, Dr. Jacquelynn A. G. Lonshaw joined them. “We are blessed and fortunate to have her on the team,” he added.

Dr. Deacon is not the only one who appreciates the working environment of Pediatrics Southwest. “The practice has a high retention rate with its employees. Several who have moved away, have come back to work for them when they return to the area.

“At Pediatric Southwest, we work at creating a medical home and providing continuity of care,” Dr. Deacon said. “We want to pass the blessing of our work environment and ethic on to our patients — in our atmosphere and our quality of care.”

With each doctor having a staff nurse and a medical assistant, they are able to provide general pediatric care including wellness checkups, sports physicals, vaccinations, as well as sick visits and minor injuries for children birth through 18. “Our office strives to provide excellent medical care for the children in our community, and I believe our dedicated staff is our greatest asset,” Dr. Deacon affirmed.

“I enjoy interacting with my patients and include nutritional counseling as part of wellness checkups. I endeavor to motivate my patients toward healthy lifestyle and dietary choices and decisions, especially as they move into their teen years,” Dr. Deacon said. Wellness checkups include vision and hearing testing, measurement of blood pressure and growth, age-appropriate safety counseling, review of chronic health problems, as well as addressing any issues the child or parent may want to discuss.

“By God’s grace, I am able to work as a pediatrician. I find it rewarding building relationships with my patients and their families,” Dr. Deacon remarked. Kids are fun. They are always surprising me. I get to see them grow from infants to high school students.” **NOW**

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Congratulations to Allen and Tina Conley who just opened their third Subway restaurant in Duncanville!



Remi Swan of DeSoto, fourth-grader at Canterbury Episcopal School, wins first and second place ribbons and three honorable mentions at the State Fair of Texas for original pottery pieces she created.



Women from various DeSoto city departments raise their Tackle Cancer cups following a breast cancer awareness presentation by Sydney Elliott at a Team Wellness Lunch and Learn.



Elvis enjoyed meeting Michelle Rodriguez, Linda Dean and Agapito Chavez at a recent joint Chamber Area Networkers gathering.



Alumni, students, coaches, school and church staff of Trinity Christian School in Cedar Hill joyfully break ground for a baseball/softball complex.



SWRCC 911 Center employees dress up to bring candy for who could have it at the DeSoto and Cedar Hill nursing homes.



Greg Porter bids a fond farewell to Betty Minschen, who has faithfully served for the past six years as special events/marketing director with the Cedar Hill Parks and Recreation Department.



First Methodist School students enjoy learning about fire safety from the Duncanville Fire Department.



DeSoto ISD was the only K-12 Texas district to receive the prestigious GEAR UP grant from the U.S. Dept. of Education.



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Year-end Charitable Giving

As the holiday season approaches, with the end of one year and the start of another, we pause to give thanks for our blessings and the people in our lives. It is also a time when charitable giving often comes to mind. Charitable giving can be enhanced using income tax deductions, and so it can be much more effective when it is included as part of year-end tax planning.

Example(s): Assume you are considering making a charitable gift equal to the sum of \$1,000 plus the income taxes you save with the charitable deduction. With a 28-percent tax rate, you might be able to give \$1,389 to charity ($\$1,389 \times 28\% = \389 taxes saved). On the other hand, with a 35-percent tax rate, you might be able to give \$1,538 to charity ($\$1,538 \times 35\% = \538 taxes saved).

• A word of caution

Be sure to deal with recognized charities, and be wary of charities with similar sounding names. It is common for scam artists to impersonate charities using bogus websites, and through contact involving emails, telephone, social media and in-person solicitations. Check out the charity on the IRS website, www.irs.gov, using the Exempt Organizations Select Check search tool. And don't give or send cash. Contribute by check or credit card.

• Tax deduction for charitable gifts

If you itemize deductions on your income tax return, you can generally deduct your gifts to qualified charities. However, the amount of your deduction may be limited to certain percentages of your adjusted gross income (AGI). For example, your deduction for gifts of cash to public charities is generally limited to 50 percent of your AGI for the year, and other gifts to charity may be limited to 30 percent or 20 percent of your AGI. Disallowed charitable deductions may generally be carried over and deducted over the next five years, subject to the income percentage limits in those years. And be sure to retain proper substantiation of your deduction for a charitable contribution.

• Year-end tax planning

When considering making charitable gifts at the end of a year, it is generally useful to include them as part of your year-end tax planning. In general, taxpayers have a certain amount of control over the timing of income and expenses. You generally want to time your recognition of income so that it will be taxed at a lower rate, and time your deductible expenses so they can be claimed in years when you are in a higher tax bracket. For example, if you expect that you will be in a higher tax bracket next year, it may make sense to wait and make the charitable contribution in January, so you can take the deduction in the next year when the deduction produces a greater tax benefit. Or you might push the charitable contribution, along with other deductions, into a year when your itemized deductions would be greater than the standard deduction. And, if the income percentage limits above are a concern in one year, you might move income into that year or move deductions out of that year, so that a larger charitable deduction is available for that year. A financial or tax professional can help you evaluate how to make charitable gifts in a way that is beneficial to you. **NOW**

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Donald Pope is a Raymond James Financial Advisor in Duncanville.

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December 1 — 5

DeSoto library sock drive: Bring fun, warm socks for DeSoto Nursing/Rehab Ctr.

December 1 — January 2

Clear overdo DeSoto library fees with food, household, personal, pet food items.

December 4

Old Town Holiday on the Hill: 6:00-8:00 p.m., Pioneer Park, CH.

December 5

WFAA Santa's Helpers Toy Drive: 5:00-10:00 p.m., Uptown Village, CH.

December 6

Kids ADVENTure Fair: 10:00 a.m., FUMC, 403 S. Main St., DV. (972) 298-6121.

DeSoto Hometown Holiday Parade: 5:30 p.m. followed by *Charlie Brown's Christmas*. For route: (972) 230-9651.

December 7

First Christian Church Christmas Cantata: 8:15/10:45 a.m., 203 S. Main St., DV. (972) 298-2166.

What a Glorious Night: 3:00/ 6:00 p.m., Hillcrest Baptist Church, 265 W. Pleasant Run Rd., CH. (972) 291-3521.

Old, New, Borrowed, Blue Christmas Concert: 6:00 p.m., FUMC, 403 South Main St., DV. (972) 298-6121.

December 7 — January 25

CH Historical Society exhibit, Dallas County Courthouse, 100 Houston St.

December 14

Brazilian Christmas Worship: 6:00 p.m., Church on the Hill, 128 N. Roberts Rd. CH. (972) 283-6212.

December 19

Senior Dance: Pete & Patti: 7:00 p.m., Hopkins Sr. Ctr., DV. Cost: \$5.

December 19, 20, 21

Hillcrest Baptist Church's Living Christmas Tree: **Dec. 19:** 7:30 p.m.; **Dec. 20, 21:** 6:00 and 7:30 p.m., Uptown Village, 305 W. FM 1382, CH. (972) 291-3521.

December 21

Forever Changed: 6:00 p.m., Church on the Hill 128 N. Roberts Rd. CH.

December 24

FUMC candlelight/communion: **4:00:** children; **6:00:** traditional; **8:00:** modern; **11:00:** traditional, 403 South Main St., DV (972) 298-6121.

Hillcrest Baptist Church: 5:00 p.m., 265 W. Pleasant Run Rd., CH.

First Baptist Church: 6:00 p.m., 323 Wheatland, DV. Samuel Wilson/Prestonwood Baptist string quartet. (972) 298-1435.

First Christian Church: 7:00 p.m., 203 S. Main St., DV (972) 298-2166.

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

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Sparkle this season!



In the Kitchen With Johnny and Amanda Thomas

— By Beverly Shay

“I guess you could say our cooking style is exemplified by our marriage,” Amanda Jean Thomas remarked. “I’m from Lake Charles, Louisiana, and grew up on Creole cooking. African and French influences were passed down to me.” As a result, Amanda Jean enjoys making various seafood dishes, including stuffed shrimp, crawfish étouffée and homemade boudin.

“Johnny is a Dallas native, so he is a master barbecue griller and a self-taught chocolatier, as well as a pastry maker,” Amanda Jean added. “We love getting fruits and vegetables from our garden. We use them for everything from pizza toppings to fig preserves to stuffed chicken wings.” **NOW**

Stuffed Shrimp

- 3 Tbsp. butter
- 1 cup onion, chopped
- 1 cup green bell pepper, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 30-35 Ritz crackers, crumbled
- 3 tsp. Tony Chachere’s Creole Seasoning
- 1 tsp. cayenne pepper
- 2 eggs (divided use)
- 1 cup lump crab meat
- 1/2 cup water
- 20 large shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 cup milk
- 1 1/2 cups flour
- 2 cups vegetable oil

1. Melt butter in a large pan; sauté onion, bell pepper and garlic.
2. In a large mixing bowl, combine cracker crumbs, vegetables and seasonings; mix well.
3. Beat 1 egg; add crab meat. Add to cracker mixture, adding water a little at a time until mixture is moist. Stuff shrimp with mixture; place on a baking sheet.

4. Beat remaining egg; combine with milk. Pour over each shrimp. Dust shrimp with flour. Place shrimp in freezer for 30 minutes.
5. Heat oil in a deep fryer; fry shrimp until golden brown, about 6-8 minutes.

Chocolate Picture Frame

- 2.5-oz. Ghirardelli milk chocolate candy making bar
- 1 8x10-inch picture frame
- 1 8x10-inch edible picture (available at grocery stores)

1. To temper chocolate, bring 2 inches of water in a pan to a boil; lower heat to simmer water. Place double boiler in water and slowly add 3/4 of chocolate. Temperature of chocolate should be 110 F.
2. Remove from heat; slowly add remaining chocolate. Keep over low heat until temperature of chocolate is only 90 F.
3. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Place picture frame on baking sheet and pour chocolate into frame. Cool. (This won’t take long.) Remove backing

from edible picture after frame has cooled. Wearing rubber gloves, turn frame over; place edible picture in center of frame.

Okra (Gumbo)

- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 5 chicken thighs
- 2 cups fresh okra, sliced
- 1 cup onion, chopped
- 1 cup green bell pepper, chopped
- 1/3 cup parsley
- 1 lb. smoked sausage
- 1 8-oz. can tomato paste
- 1 cup water
- 1 8-oz. can whole tomatoes
- Salt, black pepper and cayenne pepper, to taste
- 1 lb. large shrimp, cleaned

1. In a large Dutch oven, heat oil. Brown chicken; set aside. Add okra, onions, bell pepper and parsley; sauté for about 30 minutes while stirring continuously, until okra begins to brown. Add sausage; continue to sauté.
2. Add tomato paste, water and tomatoes. Season chicken; add to mixture. Cook over medium heat for 30 minutes, until okra becomes tender and sauce begins to thicken. Add shrimp during last 10 minutes of cooking. Serve over rice.

Lemon Pound Cake

Cake:

- 3 sticks butter, room temperature
- 3 cups sugar
- 8 oz. cream cheese, room temperature
- 6 eggs, room temperature
- 2 Tbsp. lemon juice
- Zest of 1 lemon
- 1 Tbsp. vanilla
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. salt

Lemon Glaze:

- 1 1/2 cups powdered sugar
- 3 Tbsp. lemon juice
- Zest of 1 lemon

1. Preheat oven to 325 F. Butter and flour a Bundt pan.
2. For cake: Cream butter, sugar and cream cheese until light and fluffy. Add eggs one at a time, mixing in each one. Add lemon juice, zest and vanilla.
3. Mix flour and salt. Add to creamed mixture, combining thoroughly.
4. Pour into Bundt pan. Bake until golden brown, about 30 minutes or until toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool for 15 minutes before topping with glaze.
5. For glaze: Mix all ingredients. Glaze cooled cake.

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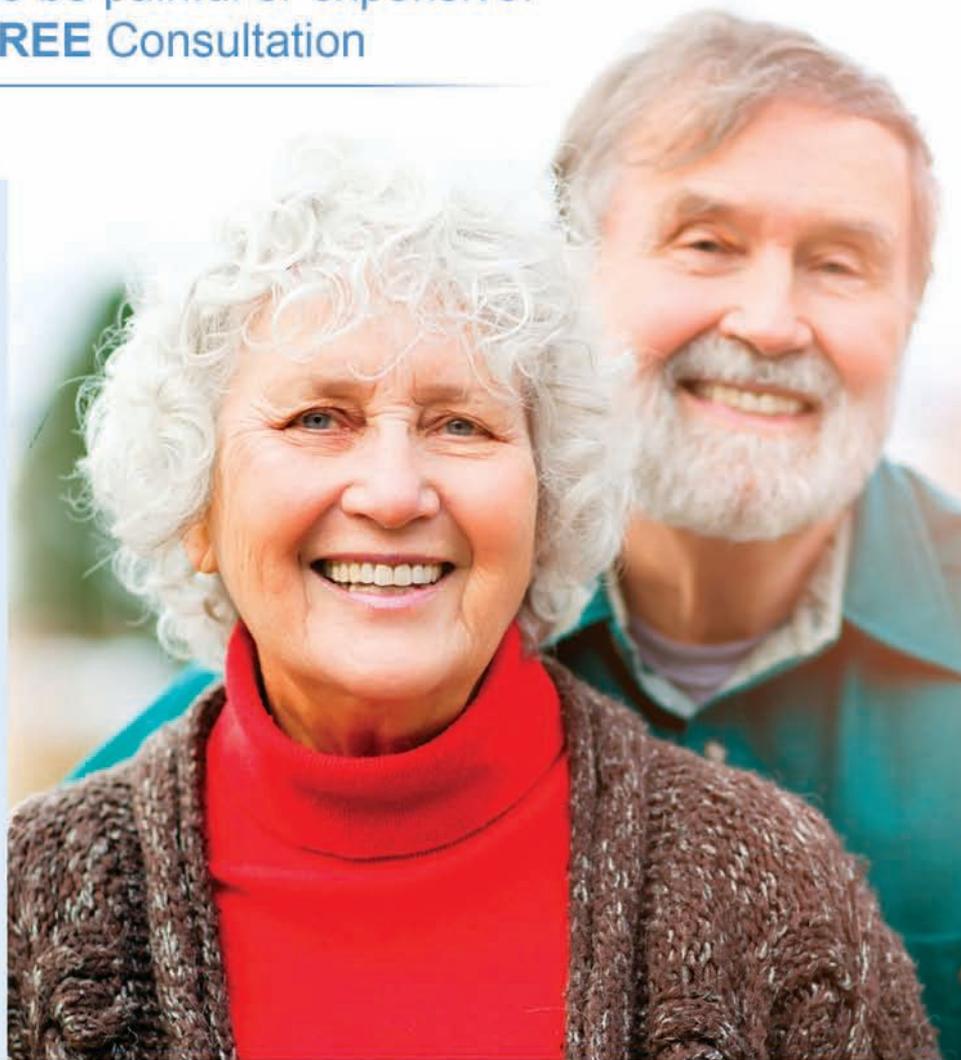


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