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Christmas at Nana and Pawpaw's

At Home With Kenneth
and Sharon Hilton

Advantage Jered

ROHS tennis star Jered
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2019 Holiday
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ON THE COVER

*The Hiltons' home
overflows with holiday fun!*

Photo by
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January - School Board Appreciation Month
Jan. 6-7 - Staff Development (Student Holiday)
Jan. 20 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

Details at RedOakISD.org

EDITOR'S NOTE



Sally

Sally Fuller
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I still believe ...

Christmas Eve won't find me listening for hooves on the rooftop, but trust me, I am a true believer. Having seen firsthand countless "Christmas miracles," I unwaveringly believe in the mystery, the wonder and the sheer power of this season.

The lights, the songs and the sermons make my heart pound in passion, as I watch expectantly not for the arrival of a jolly man in a red suit but for things even more inexplicable. Maybe it's picturing a dark sky exploding in light as the voices of countless angels sing in unison. Maybe it's imagining the hearts of a young mom and dad overflow with both joy and apprehension as the first cries of a promised son slice through months of uncertainty. Maybe it's things less mystical but just as divine: unfathomable family reconciliations, uncharacteristic generosity, baffling kindnesses.

This time of year, more than any other, I wait and I hope and I know I will not be disappointed. No, Santa won't shimmy down my chimney. My family and I may not place a single present underneath our Christmas tree. Still, there will be gifts galore this season: Gifts felt, not held; gifts seen with hearts, not eyes; gifts that can't fade, be misplaced or lose their significance. My Christmas prayer is that I am less and less on the receiving end.

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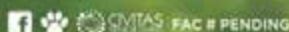


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Christmas AT NANA AND PAWPAW'S

— By Adam Walker

At Home With Kenneth and Sharon Hilton



Christmas is all about family for Kenneth and Sharon Hilton, and that means spreading the celebration out. “We were both married previously and have large families,” Sharon explained, “so my kids and grandkids come on the 23rd. On the 24th, Kenneth’s kids and grandkids come. It’s just too many people to get in the house all at one time.”

Most of the time, it’s just Kenneth and Sharon, their cat, Speckles — and the legions of squirrels in the 100-year-old pecan trees — and whichever grandkids have invited themselves and their friends over for the night. But at Christmas, the house, as big as it is, is overflowing with family.

Sharon is in charge of decorating, and she gets started early. “I love to do crafts. A few years ago, I started making candy decorations, and every year, I add some more. Ken isn’t always sure about my projects — like when I made the candy train.”

Ken laughed. “When she said ‘made’ it, she means *made it*. She was out in the garage, sawing. I couldn’t visualize it, but she did. I get the supplies, but she does the decorating. She takes lids from mayonnaise jars and makes them into wheels on a fire truck.”

“He had this horrible idea of what it would look like,” Sharon laughed. But the results were good, as were the results of the train made of wooden crates.

Santa is not hard to find in the Hilton home. In fact, he’s everywhere. He makes multiple appearances in the living room, as ornaments on the tree or hanging out on the hearth. He



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stands guard, in 6-foot glory, by the 9-foot tree. Enough Santas to populate the North Pole hang out on the wooden staircase winding to the second floor where the master bedroom sprawls out. The Santas even make a stand on Speckles' cat gym on the landing.

But it isn't the Santas that really define the Hiltons' Christmas decorating. It's the candy. The huge water fountain in their front yard transforms into a candy dish fit for the giants of fairytales. Lollipops and candy canes surround the dish and line the driveway.

"I make the candies out of balls and Frisbees and pool noodles wrapped in colored cellophane. I add to it every year," Sharon explained. In between Christmases, the "candy" gets stored throughout the house, in the storeroom between the garage and Ken's slot machine room, on the top shelf of the enormous walk-in closet in the master bedroom and in other nooks and crannies of the washroom and attic.

The recessed arch above the fireplace displays a blue-and-silver Christmas tree quilt. "That was made by my sister," Sharon explained. Clearly, enjoyment of crafts runs in the family. Some of the grandkids even receive punishment for behavior that might earn a lump of coal by being denied craft time at Nana's.

When the families come for their respective Christmas celebrations, the grownups get in on the fun. "Sharon does this thing where she gets all kinds of prizes — candy and lottery tickets and everything you can imagine — and wraps them up in a big ball of cellophane. You get to unwrap until somebody rolls doubles on the dice. Then the next person takes a turn. You know who acts the worst?" Ken asked with a twinkle. "It's not the little kids, I'll tell you that. It's the grown ones!"

Sharon smiled. "His family comes with other games. It's a bunch of hooting and hollering!"

The front yard and the downstairs are not the limit of the decorating. Sharon strings the patio with lights — and we're not talking little-bitty ones. Little trees top the patio tables. "I love lights," Sharon confessed. "I believe in the magic of Christmas."

Ken agreed. "A few years ago, she said, 'Let's don't do it this year.' Ask her if she'll make that mistake again."

Sharon frowned. "It just wasn't the same. We talk about downsizing, but the grandkids won't hear of it. One of them told me, 'But Nana, you can't! The family home! Just get a chairlift for the stairs.' They come over and get on their phones. They text everyone, 'Party at Nana and Pawpaw's!' We have a grandkids' room upstairs that has a tiny room hidden behind the closet. It's only big enough for the really little ones, but the teens still love to crawl in there."



Last year, Sharon decided the 9-foot tree was too big to deal with anymore, so she threw it out — and bought a new 9-foot tree! "Anything smaller just wouldn't look right in there," she explained. "That tree last year had just a light bit of flocking on it, and Speckles had to investigate. She never climbs the tree. She's more like a dog in cat clothes. But that cat got the flocking all over her face!"

Ken and Sharon have spent the last 15 years making this house a home. Before then, they were co-workers, and their kids were all friends with each other, so it was a ready-made family when they came together. "They all live within 20 minutes of here," Ken shared. "And two of them still work with me."

"We do have some good kids and good grandkids," Sharon said with a smile of satisfaction. "We're very blessed." **NOW**

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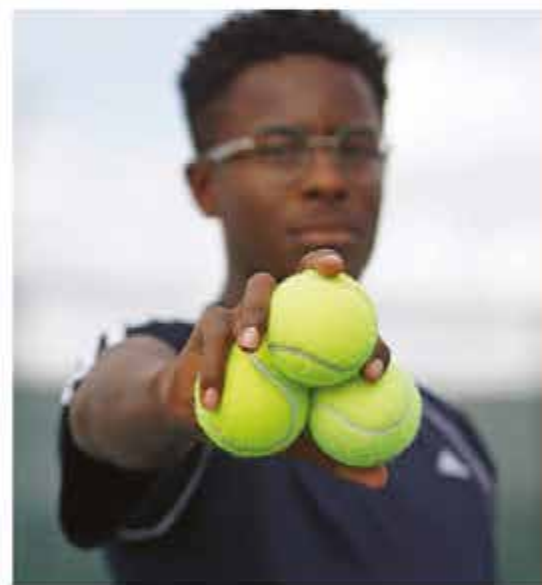
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ADVANTAGE JERRED

— By Sally Fuller

Jered Wilson covered his mouth in alarm as a tennis ball he volleyed during afternoon practice whizzed close to a teammate's head with startling force. "That skimmed through my hair!" his teammate laughingly exclaimed to those nearby, as Jered smiled and good-humoredly took a low-five from another teammate.

The top-ranked player on the ROHS tennis team for three years running, Jered's star quality is impossible to miss, even when he's not in competitor mode. Currently ranked number 25 for 18-year-olds in Texas for the United States Tennis Association, he took second place at the 5A state finals tournament this year and has a universal tennis rating of 10.65. The UTR is a system that grades tennis players, regardless of gender or age, on a scale of 1 to 16. To put Jered's 10.65 in perspective, Serena Williams, the quintessential tennis professional who has won a record 23 Grand Slams (so far), has a UTR of 13. The No. 1 ranked men's player in the world has a 16.32.

But there's more to this young man than exceptional speed, strength and agility — much more. With a father and three older brothers participating in the same sport, Jered said he never felt pressured to play tennis. "I actually enjoyed tennis from the beginning. The only pressure I may have felt was comparing myself to my brothers a little bit," he said. "I'm really competitive, so I saw myself as having to do at least as well as them."

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The beginning for Jered was at 7 years old, playing at Kiest Tennis Center in Oak Cliff. Soon after, he started playing at T Bar M Tennis Academy in North Dallas. He credits these two centers with laying his foundation in tennis and still practices at one or the other facility every day after his ROHS team practice. In total, Jered practices four to five hours every weekday and two hours every Saturday. This is in addition to the two weekends a month he dedicates to tournament play. He takes Sundays off.

Red Oak Head Tennis Coach, Dana Calhoun, who's coached Jered and his three older brothers, summed up Jered's particular strengths on the court as execution and court presence. "He's so smart. He knows exactly where to place the ball. He always knows where he is, and he anticipates well," Coach Calhoun said. These qualities of an accomplished tennis player are traits Jered carries off the court and melds with his self-admitted "really competitive" nature to produce a formula for winning, not just in athletics but also in academics, and just as important in his own eyes, altruistic endeavors.

Academically, Jered is No. 9 in his 2020 graduating class. He's treasurer of the school's National Honor Society, a Hawk Scholar and will graduate from ROHS with an associate degree. While he anticipates playing college





tennis — he's been approached by several universities already — and perhaps dreams a little of a professional tennis career, he is unwavering in his commitment to his education with the goal of becoming a doctor. "Before I even consider going professional, I will go to college, play college tennis and get my education," Jered said with certainty.

Even with his rigorous athletic and academic schedule, Jered finds time to help others. "Ever since I was really young, my father and mother have volunteered with the church group to feed the homeless," he shared. He also performs 60 hours of community service per season with Kiest Tennis Center, often working with children who otherwise may never have the chance to play tennis. "We teach them and give them rackets. ... It's really heartwarming to see the smiles of the kids, seeing them just get to learn and have the opportunity to have the experience of something I get to do every day," he said.

While he doesn't count singing among his talents, Jered sings with his church choir because, "It's something I believe in." He is also a member of Encounter, a school club that meets once a week for Bible study, and is vice president of Jack and Jill of America, a program dedicated to raising future African-American leaders through education and community service.

What statistics and academic records can't show, but what others see as his greatest strength, is the humility at the core of Jered's character. He credits his faith, family, coaches and teachers for his success. "I wouldn't be as successful or have accomplished what I have without all of them," he said, proving humility does, indeed, go before honor. **NOW**



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Tree of Life Counseling Center

— By Sally Fuller

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When Cristin Lewis, M.A., L.P.C., decided to take a step of faith and leave the counseling group with which she'd worked for several years to open Tree of Life Counseling Center, she did so with tremendous forethought. "So much thought went into every piece of this," she shared. From the layout and security features of the offices to the furnishings, color scheme,



lighting and even the calming aroma of the center, none of it happened without Cristin's trademark thoughtfulness.

The name especially was something she pondered. "Tree of Life is a name that gives hope," she said. "This is a place where you can grow hope — where you can grow life. It's a place where healing can occur, and life can start again — especially if you feel stuck."

Tree of Life serves a diverse client base with just as many diverse needs. Whether it's coping with depression, anxiety or grief, working through behaviors that are negatively impacting life, marital or parenting issues, divorce recovery, conflict resolution or simply needing a safe place to voice personal concerns, Cristin and her associate, Alyssa Navarro, M.A., L.P.C.-Intern, are trained to help. Both offer genuine compassion, as well as an abundance of knowledge and experience. Cristin has also had extra training in helping those who've experienced trauma.

Having gone through counseling herself before choosing the path to become a licensed professional counselor, Cristin knows firsthand the positive impact of skillful therapy. "I had my own hurts, struggles and issues that I needed to work through. I did a year of counseling, and that process helped me to see my circumstances and myself differently. It changed my perspective, and it gave me hope. I no longer felt like a 'broken person' but a person with a purpose," she shared.

**"This is a place where
you can grow hope —
where you can grow life."**

Counseling at Tree of Life can begin with a short, free phone consultation to determine if counseling with Cristin or Alyssa is the best course of action. Cristin is adamant about ensuring her clients are paired with the proper therapist. "Not every counselor is designed to work with every client. Having a good therapeutic alliance is so important for healing," she said. Once counseling begins, sessions are tailored to fit the individual needs of clients.

Tree of Life Counseling Center is unique in part because of Cristin's personal experiences and how they have shaped her approach to helping others. "Because I went through this process myself, and I have experienced so many different things, I feel like I am better able to relate to each of my clients. I see myself as sort of a fellow traveler who is walking alongside my clients to support them but also to challenge them. Different counselors have different therapies they adhere to. I don't see myself as, 'I'm the expert. I have all the knowledge. I'm here to tell you what to do.' I see myself as more like, 'Hey, I'm going to walk beside you through this.'"

As she walks beside her clients, Cristin's goals are clear. "Ultimately, when people come to Tree of Life, I want them to feel safe. I want them to feel understood and cared for and, ultimately, I want them to leave here having hope." **NOW**



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Zoomed In: Matt Cale

By Sally Fuller

Oak Leaf native, Matt Cale, rescued his furry friend, Tommy, three years ago. “He walked up to me, and when I put my hand down to pet him, he pushed his head into my hand,” Matt said of their first meeting at the animal rescue club. Tommy also pushed his way into Matt’s heart. “I held him on the spot and fell completely in love.”

Living on the streets, Tommy had lost a hind leg when hit by a car, earning him the nickname, “Tommy Tripod.” His three-legged status doesn’t slow him down, and makes him more special to Matt.

“It’s an incredible feeling, knowing the world has a little more love in it because you did something for a little being that couldn’t do something for itself,” Matt shared.



Donna Dixon welcomes Ferris citizens to City Hall, where she works assisting the city manager.



Sisterly love! Annie Kate and Ellie Child of Oak Leaf hug it out at a family reunion at their grandparents’ home in Ovilla.



Joy to the World! Ferris First Baptist Church members, Judy Williams and Leslie Wiechman, spread the spirit of the season with some holiday decor and home-cooked treats!



Community leaders from Red Oak schools, churches, businesses and the city dig in at the groundbreaking for Soulman’s Bar-B-Que.



Jennifer and Josh Smith enjoy an outing at Watkins Park in Red Oak.



From left, Stephanie Dalfrey, Victoria Ybarra, Amber Bowley, Liz Thomas and Natasha Spivey of the ROHS Student Nutrition Department spread the word about eating right.



John McKeever, David Dooley (standing), Delores McKeever and Inez Dooley enjoy a lunch social hosted by Vickie Yarborough (standing) at Arabella Senior Living Community.



Don and Dorothy Werner enjoy dinner, music and a live auction with friends from LINE-X Custom and Accessories at the Red Oak Area Chamber of Commerce Blue Jean Ball.

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CookingNOW In the Kitchen With CLINT WOODWARD

— By Sally Fuller

Clint Woodward's son doesn't call him "Hot Sauce Man" without reason. "I do like to kick things up a little," Clint admitted. Raised in southern New Mexico, "the land of the green chile," Clint believes "food should be exciting to eat."

Geography and an uncle who is a green chile farmer no doubt influenced Clint's fondness for Mexican food and other "foods with bold flavors. When I finished college, I worked as a culinary manager at Olive Garden for five years, so I love to cook Italian. I also love to cook Cajun food and smoke brisket."

Clint currently serves as president/CEO of the Red Oak Area Chamber of Commerce. His background also includes working as student nutrition coordinator for Red Oak ISD. **NOW**

Loaded Mashed Potato Bites

- 3 cups mashed potatoes, homemade or store-bought
- 1 large egg, slightly beaten
- 1 cup cheddar cheese, shredded (divided use)
- 3 Tbsp. cooked bacon, chopped (divided use)

- 1 cup sour cream (optional)
- Fresh, chives, chopped (optional)

1. Preheat oven to 375 F. Spray two mini-muffin pans with cooking spray.
2. Stir together mashed potatoes, egg, 3/4 cup cheese and 2 Tbsp. chopped bacon.
3. Using a spoon, scoop potato mixture into cups, packing potatoes into each cup.

4. Bake 30-35 minutes, or until golden brown and crisp around the edges.
5. Remove from oven. Top with remaining cheese; return to oven for 3 minutes.
6. Remove from oven; cool on rack for 5 minutes.
7. Using a knife or mini spatula, transfer potato bites to serving dish. Top with a dollop of sour cream and remaining bacon.
8. Sprinkle with chives; serve immediately.

Carne Asada

Marinade:

- 1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/4 cup soy sauce
- Juice of 2 limes, about 2 Tbsp.
- 2 Tbsp. cider vinegar
- 2 Tbsp. sugar
- 1 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tsp. ground cumin seed, or toast and grind whole cumin seeds
- 4 garlic cloves, about 4 tsp., minced
- 1 jalapeño, seeded and minced
- 1/2 bunch fresh cilantro, leaves and stems, about 1/2 cup, finely chopped

Steak:

1 1/2 to 2 lbs. flank or skirt steak

1. *For marinade:* Whisk olive oil, soy sauce, lime juice, vinegar, sugar, black pepper and cumin in a large, nonreactive bowl or baking dish. Stir in minced garlic, jalapeño and cilantro.
2. Place steak in the marinade; turn a couple of times to coat thoroughly. Cover in plastic wrap; refrigerate 1-4 hours or overnight. (If using flank steak, marinate at least 3 hours.)
3. Preheat grill for high, direct heat, with part of the grill reserved with fewer coals or lower gas flame for low, indirect heat. (The grill is hot enough when you can hold your hand above the grates for no more than one second. A cast-iron grilling pan on high heat can be used if cooking on the stovetop.)
4. *For steak:* Remove steak from marinade. Lightly brush off most of the cilantro and garlic. Do not brush off oil. Place steak on the hot side of grill; sear for only a few minutes. Turn; sear other side.
5. Once both sides are well seared, move steak to the cool side of the grill, with any thicker portions near the hot side.
6. Test with a meat thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the steak. Remove from grill when temperature reaches 115 F for rare, 125 F for medium-rare and 140 F for medium.
7. Place steak on a cutting board. Tent with foil; let rest 10 minutes.
8. With a sharp, long-bladed knife, slice meat into wide, thin slices, being sure to cut perpendicular to the grain of the meat.

Buffalo Chicken Dip

- 1 pkg. cream cheese, softened for easy mixing
- 1/2 cup Frank's RedHot Sauce
- 1/2 cup ranch dressing
- 1/2 cup cheese, shredded (your choice of flavor)
- 2 cups chicken, shredded
- 2-3 green onions, chopped (optional for garnishing)
- French bread, for dipping

1. Preheat oven to 350 F
2. Mix first 5 ingredients in a one-quart baking dish. Bake for 20 minutes. Add green onions.
3. Serve warm with French bread that has been toasted in the oven.

Beef Stroganoff

- 1 1/2 lbs. beef sirloin steak, 1/2-inch thick
- 8 oz. fresh mushrooms, about 2 1/2 cups, sliced
- 2 medium onions, thinly sliced
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped

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1/4 cup butter
1 1/2 cups beef-flavored broth
1/2 tsp. salt
1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
1 1/2 cups sour cream
3 cups egg noodles, prepared per pkg. directions

1. Cut beef across the grain into about 1 1/2-inch-by-1 1/2-inch strips.
2. Cook mushrooms, onions and garlic in butter in a 10-inch skillet over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until onions are tender; remove from skillet.
3. Cook beef in the same skillet, until brown. Stir in 1 cup of broth, salt and Worcestershire sauce; heat to boiling. Reduce heat; cover and simmer 15 minutes.
4. Stir remaining 1/2 cup broth into flour; stir flour mixture into beef and broth mixture.
5. Add mushroom-onion mixture; heat to boiling, stirring constantly. Allow to boil 1 minute, while continuing to stir.
6. Stir in sour cream; heat until hot. Do not boil. Serve over hot noodles.

Chimichurri Sauce

1/4 cup parsley, coarsely chopped
3 Tbsp. red wine vinegar



Buffalo Chicken Dip

4 large garlic cloves, about 2 1/2 Tbsp., minced
2 Tbsp. oregano leaves
2 tsp. crushed red pepper
1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
Salt, to taste
Freshly ground pepper, to taste

1. Combine first six ingredients in a food processor; blend until smooth. Add salt and pepper to taste.

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TravelNOW Historic Delight

— By Lisa Bell

Voted as *USA Today's* Best Historic Small Town in America, Granbury, Texas, lies a short distance southwest of Fort Worth. Although December brings one of the best times to visit this community, throughout the year, Granbury is a noteworthy destination. But *historic* doesn't mean *boring*.

Undoubtedly, the famous town square and Lake Granbury draw many visitors. The square features shops and restaurants, many of which reside in buildings recognized as historic landmarks. The square, itself, was the first courthouse square in Texas listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The bustling town square also contains the Granbury Opera House, recently restored to its 1886 grandeur. The venue provides award-winning live theater every weekend. Granbury Live also brings in remarkable entertainers for a variety of concerts and events weekly.

Several times each year, Granbury hosts festivals on the square. With General Granbury's Birthday Bash in March, April's Wine Walk, Fourth of July festivities, Harvest Moon and more, you can time your visit for one of these celebrated events.

In December, Santa makes the converted gazebo his second home. From the night after Thanksgiving until December 23, lines form with young and old waiting to visit the benevolent character and his adorable wife. Check out the hand-painted walls on the exterior and interior of the house. Several photo-op backdrops are also available for families to capture memories. Santa and Mrs. Claus love posing for pictures and encourage visitors to snap all they want. Be sure and check times, so you don't miss what is quickly becoming a free annual tradition for thousands.

During the first week or two of December, catch a free display containing a private collection of more than 1,000 nativities. A space with touchable nativities entertains children during visits.

In Shanley Park, the city creates a wonderland of lights for the season. Drive down Bridge St. and Dove Hollow Rd. for dazzling displays timed to music. Year-round,

Granbury's parks give families plenty of opportunities to get outside. With about 10 parks, including City Beach Park, kids have ample room to play. A bike-and-hike trail connects some parks, and a skate park provides hours of entertainment for all ages. Nearby, Acton Nature Center, Fossil Rim Wildlife and Dinosaur Valley State Park afford more opportunities for the truly adventurous.

Granbury embraces artists and continues focusing on public art displays. Museums abound in Granbury. From the Doll House Museum, Bridge Street History Center and the Jail Museum to the Historic Railroad Depot and Granbury Light Plant, visitors can learn much. On the first weekend in December, many private and public buildings open for walk-through tours, allowing locals and out-of-town guests to see beautiful architecture and learn local history.

One pride of Granbury, Memorial Lane, embraces a unique setting that honors firefighters, all military branches and all first responders in the same location. Sculptures created by renowned local artists make this memorial park spectacular — a place you don't want to miss.

Another Granbury experience takes some back to childhood. Still in operation, the historic Brazos Drive-In stays open most of the year. Showing current movies, they charge by the carload. While the concession stand creates yummy treats, they allow families to bring in food and beverages. Be sure to pack your lawn chairs or sit in the old-fashioned metal variety under a covered area. In colder weather, you might want a blanket or two.

Every last Saturday night of the month, art galleries stay open late. The second Saturday, designated as Ladies Night Out, also keeps things hopping later in the evening. Every weekend, multiple places in town offer live music, including those on the square and all over town.

While you're in Granbury, be sure to visit the multiple wineries, breweries and distilleries. Most provide entertainment, and some offer tours. Whether you come for a week or a weekend, you'll find plenty to do. Chances are, you might want to return often. **NOW**

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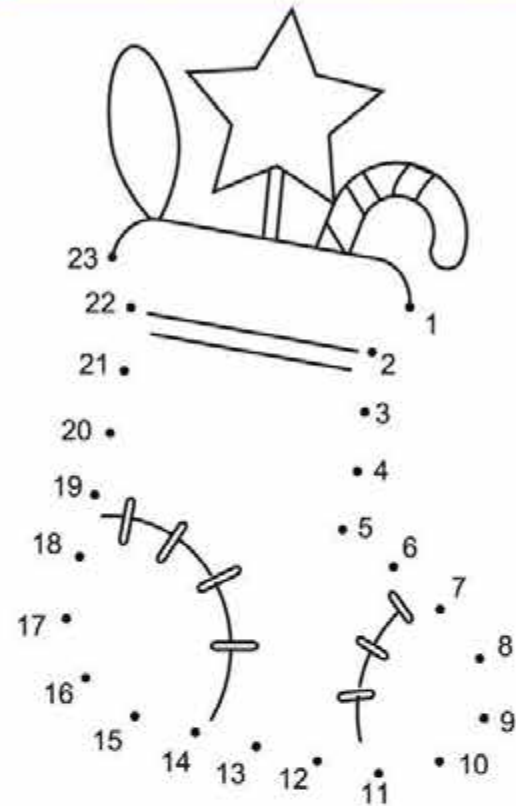
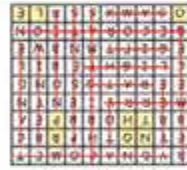
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Kids' Fun Page

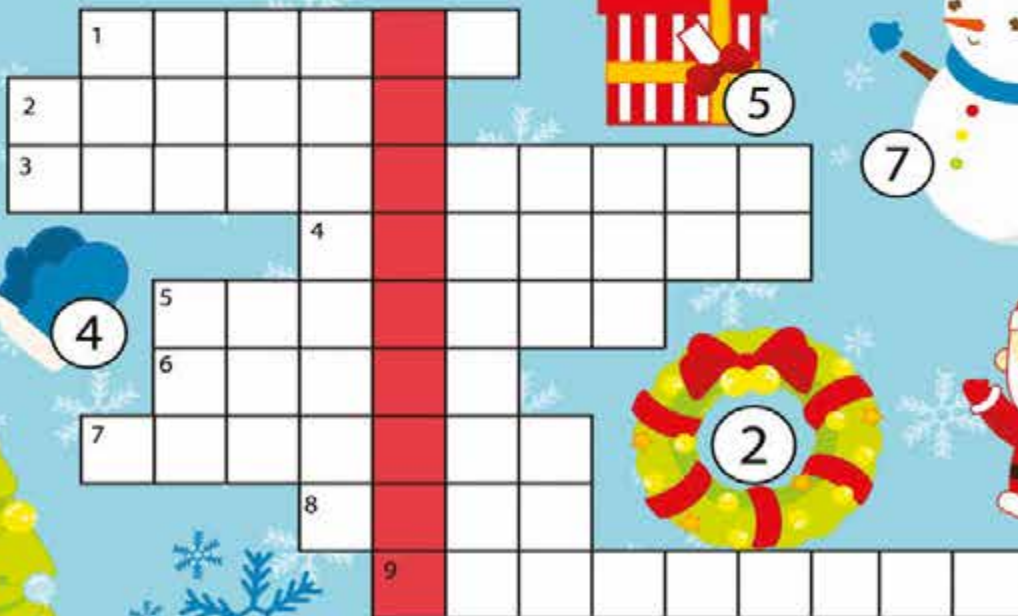
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Connect the dots

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DECORATION
GIFT
LIGHT
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PRESENTS
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Crossword



Answer: 1- spruce; 2-wreath; 3-gingerbread; 4-mittens; 5-present; 6-santa; 7-snowman; 8-cane; 9-snowflake



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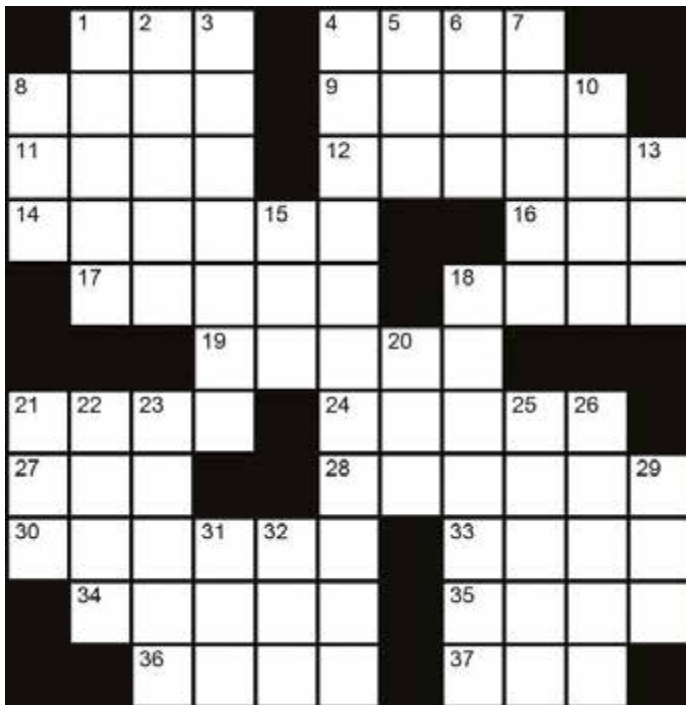
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Across

- 1 Fortify
- 4 Turnpike fee
- 8 Entreaty
- 9 Creative flashes
- 11 Claim on a property
- 12 Where Muhammad went after Mecca
- 14 Legally blind
- 16 Floor covering
- 17 Son of Abraham
- 18 Verge
- 19 Shows approval
- 21 Apple pie makers
- 24 Mexican moolah
- 27 Org. with a flowery seal
- 28 IKEA's homeland
- 30 Eerie sense of recurrence
- 33 Short letter
- 34 Dynamite inventor
- 35 Yucky buildup
- 36 Charge per unit
- 37 Psychic "gift"

Down

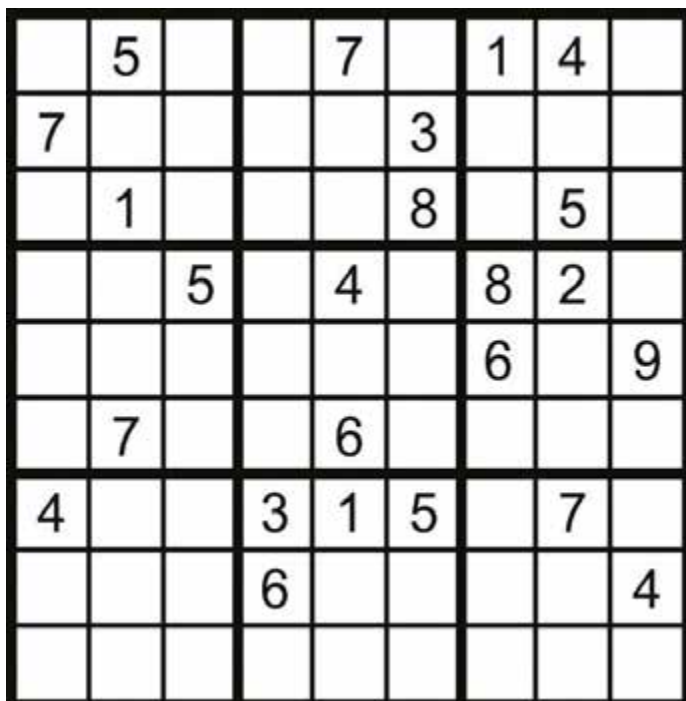
- 1 Proof of being elsewhere
- 2 Staggers
- 3 Nuts
- 4 Item exhumed years after burial
- 5 Lyric poem
- 6 Took control
- 7 Scottish landowner
- 8 Org. once led by Arafat
- 10 Cozy
- 13 Period of human life
- 15 Hoedown female
- 18 Spirit
- 20 Cathedral fixture
- 21 School leader's degree
- 22 Golf tourney
- 23 Kind of suit
- 25 They're known to noses
- 26 Organization
- 29 "Game of Thrones" patriarch --- Stark
- 31 Lawyers' gp.
- 32 Old soldier

Solutions on page 36

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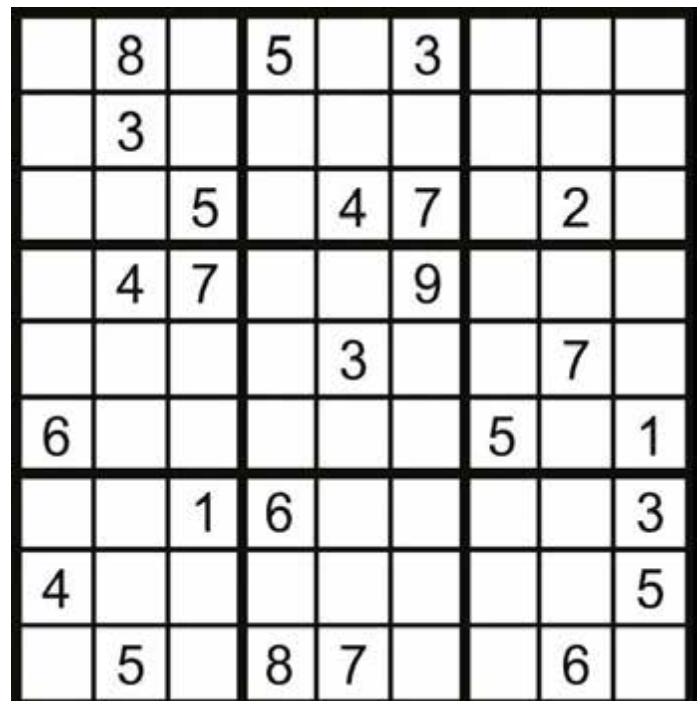
Sudoku Puzzle

Easy



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Medium



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Solutions on page 36

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North Ellis Co. NOW Scavenger Hunt



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MERRY Christmas

DECEMBER

12/1

Christmas Advent Event:

Make and take Christmas crafts, a soup supper and Christmas music make this free event great for the whole community. 4:00-6:00 p.m., First United Methodist Church Red Oak, 600 Daubitz Dr. (972) 617-9100.

12/1-12/12

Ferris Toy Drive:

New, unwrapped toys for Ferris ISD students to age 16 can be dropped off at several locations. To apply to be a recipient family or to find drop box locations, contact Nita Bustamante at (214) 784-2924.

12/4

Christmas in Ovilla:

This free family-friendly event offers pictures with Santa, an ice slide, free food, bounce houses and more. 5:30-8:00 p.m., Ovilla Road Baptist Church, 3251 Ovilla Rd. (972) 617-8544 or office@orb.org.

12/6-12/8 & 12/13-12/15

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12/8

Let the Children Come:

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12/10

Christmas Tree Lighting:

Come one, come all to the Glenn Heights Community Christmas Tree Lighting! Refreshments will be served. Free. 6:00 p.m., Heritage Community Park, 304 E. Bear Creek Rd. www.glennheightstx.gov.

12/13-12/15

Miracle on 34th Street:

Waxahachie Community Theatre presents this holiday classic. \$10. **Friday** and **Saturday:** 7:30 p.m.; **Sunday:** 2:30 p.m., University Church, 221 Solon Rd., Waxahachie. Waxahachiecommunitytheatre.com for tickets.

12/14

Christmas in Red Oak:

A Christmas parade kicks off this

year's festivities. After the parade, enjoy hayrides, inflatables, vendors and more. Bring your camera to snap a picture with Santa. No pets or unattended children. 4:00-7:00 p.m., Watkins Park, 101 Live Oak St. (469) 218-1202 or lmcglathlin@redoaktx.org.

Christmas Market:

Benefiting the Red Oak High School Special Needs Prom. Purchase gifts from one of many vendors or at the silent auction. For a donation, you can have a photo with Santa, make and take a Christmas craft or get your face painted. Food vendors will be on-site. Free admission. 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., ROHS Cafeteria, 220 Hwy. 342. (972) 617-3535, ext. 6111.

Santa's Kids Party:

Santa arrives in Ferris a little early this year. Parents, bring your cameras to snap a photo of your child(ren) with Santa from 4:00-6:00 p.m. as he hands out toys, then stay for refreshments from 6:00-7:30 p.m., 801 S. Church St. For information, contact Nita Bustamante at (214) 784-2924.

12/15

Hope!:

Joel Raney's Gospel Christmas Celebration performed at First United Methodist Church Red Oak. Free. 8:30 a.m., 600 Daubitz Dr. (972) 617-9100.

Caroling 'Round Red Oak:

Groups spread cheer as they stroll neighborhoods singing familiar Christmas carols. Free. 4:00-5:30 p.m., meet at First United Methodist Church Red Oak, 600 Daubitz Dr. (972) 617-9100.

12/16

Christmas Party:

Red Oak Book Club and Red Oak Friends of the Library host a Christmas party for members and anyone interested in finding out more about the organizations while having some holiday fun. Members should bring refreshments and wrapped books for a book exchange. Free. 6:30-8:00 p.m., Red Oak Public Library, 200 Lakeview Pkwy. (469) 218-1230.

12/24

Candlelight and Communion:

All are invited to a family service at 6:00 p.m. or a traditional service at 8:00 p.m. Communion offered at both services. Free. First United Methodist Church Red Oak, 600 Daubitz Dr. (972) 617-9100.

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

*Merry Christmas from Our
Family to You and Yours!*

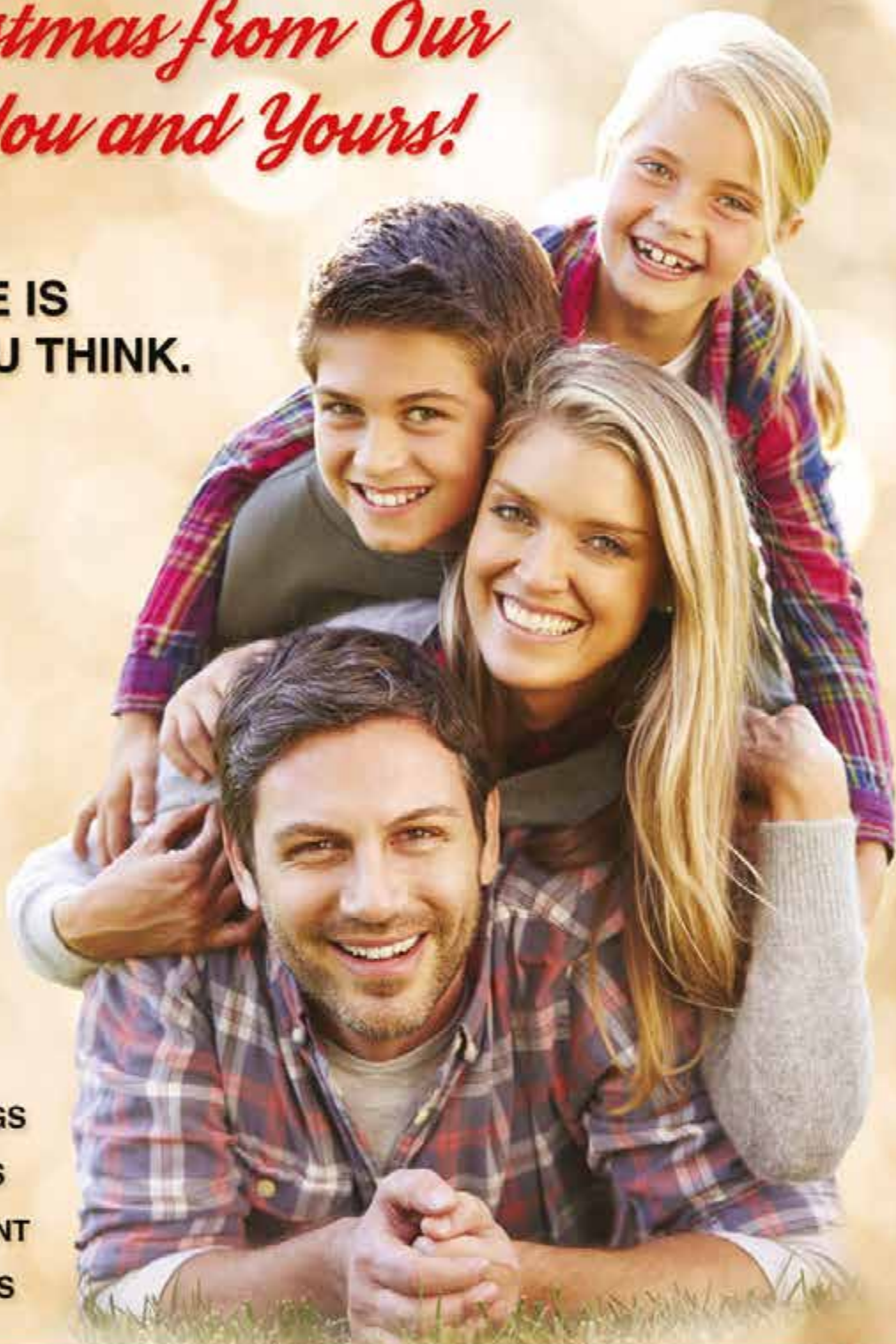
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SCAVENGER HUNT WINNERS!



Lynn Wesolek (center) is so happy to receive her Aveda hair products gift set from Rebecca Friday & Alex Ross Artistry of Impressions Salon Etc. and can't wait to share that she was a Scavenger Hunt prize winner with her friends at work.



Karen Stanfil, Rhonda Milano & Whitney Watkins of Animal Hospital of Ovilla are pleased to present Brandi Gutierrez (not pictured) premium-specialty pet food for her dog. She will have one very pleased and healthy little friend.



Patricia Pisana is all smiles and thrilled to be the winner of the \$100 Visa Gift Card from NOW Magazines. It pays to play the North Ellis Co. NOW Magazine Scavenger Hunt!

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Crossword - Sudoku Solutions

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| 14 | O | B | L | I | G | E | | | | 16 | R | U | G |
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| 9 | 7 | 1 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 5 |
| 4 | 9 | 8 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 7 | 6 |
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| 5 | 1 | 8 | 4 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 7 | 9 |
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| 8 | 7 | 1 | 6 | 2 | 5 | 4 | 9 | 3 |
| 4 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 9 | 1 | 7 | 8 | 5 |
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