Mansfied The Joy Decorating Brings At Home With Stephanie Vetere 2021 Holiday Also inside: **Shopping Guide** Scavenger Hunt Crossword/Sudoku In the Kitchen With **Featured Business:** Engel & Völkers Dallas Tim and Southlake Lauren Stephens

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THE JOY DECORATING BRINGS

At Home With Stephanie Vetere.

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Southlake

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Editors/Proofreaders, Lisa Bell . Rachel Rich . Virginia Riddle

GRAPHICS AND DESIGN

Creative Director, Chris McCalla | Artists, Kristin Bato . Beth Davis Martha Macias . Anthony Sarmienta

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography Director, Chris McCalla Photographer, Lori Baur

ADVERTISING

Advertising Representatives, Lori O'Connell . Bryan Frye Cherise Burnett . Dustin Dauenhauer . Linda Moffett Constance O'Bryan . William Perron . Linda Roberson Melody Schmidt

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ON THE COVER

Stephanie Vetere shares her gift with others.

Photo by Lori Baur.

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Subscriptions are available at the rate of \$35 per year or \$3.50 per issue. Subscriptions should be sent to: NOW Magazines, P.O. Box 1071, Waxahachie, TX 75168. For advertising rates or editorial correspondence, call (817) 477-0990 or visit www.nowmagazines.com.



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EDITOR'S NOTE

Mansfield Family ...

Many people consider December to be their favorite month of the year. As the lights brighten the homes in the community, the neighborhoods exhibit holiday cheer. Characters from stories like Rudolf the Red-Nosed Reindeer and other well-known tales are used to create scenes on people's front lawns. Wreaths adorn many doors. Holiday music is playing in the stores.

Hearing the lovely sounds of the season provides me a great deal of pleasure. These upbeat tones take me back to my childhood. I remember singing, "All I Want for Christmas Is My Two Front Teeth." When I sang this song to a 6-year-old recently, she modified the lyrics right away. "All I want for Christmas is an iPhone 13," she sang. At first, my pupils dilated. Then, I laughed thinking about how things have changed.

However, one thing remains constant. For the most part, almost everyone looks forward to the holidays. Even adults take part in secret Santa exchanges because they enjoy receiving gifts, giving gifts or the mystery of it all. Cherish these moments, and don't take them for granted.

If you've experienced tragedy during this time in years past, I challenge you to create new enjoyable memories. Take control of your feelings and form new ones for you and those you love. Have a blessed holiday and an amazing new year!

Make it a great one!

P.S. The publisher and staff of NOW Magazines would like to wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas and the happiest of holiday seasons!







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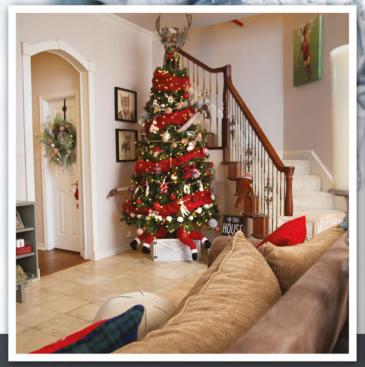


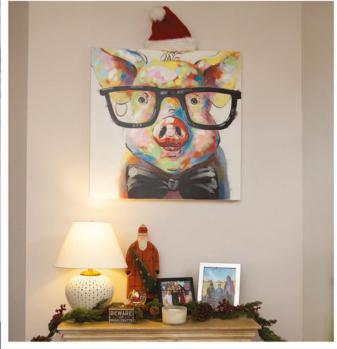
Joy Decorating Brings

At Home With Stephanie Vetere









"I decorate for all of the holidays, but Christmas is my absolute favorite. Initially, all I wanted was for my home to be a cheerful atmosphere for my children. I've had a knack for decorating since I was a little girl. Back in the '70s, my mom gave me the task of raking the shag carpet with a carpet rake. That's where this all started. Do you remember those rakes?" Stephanie inquired with a smile on her face.

"My mother and sister, too, have an innate ability to make things look exquisite. We feed off of each other by transforming something ordinary into something extraordinary," she continued.

Stephanie learned to accessorize her home with fun, creativity, tranquility, faith, planning abilities and her sense of humor. To accentuate the usage of colors and style, she usually chooses one piece from the room. Of course, she enlists the help of her mother and sister at times.

"I utilize my imagination by constructing environments that are both fascinating and engaging. As a mother, I decorate our home for the holidays because you only get one life, and I want my children to have the best life ever. They inspired me to create a caring, happy and peaceful home. There should be no place like home, and that's exactly what I aimed for," she stated.

"I intertwine the daily decor with the holiday decorations. I don't want it to look like I vomited out Christmas. As a result, everything must blend naturally with the current furnishings," Stephanie added.

In 2019, a sweet group of ladies with Mansfield Women's Club interviewed Stephanie and evaluated her home as a potential location to be showcased during the Mansfield Christmas Tour of Homes. Her home was selected.

To prepare for the big event, she purchased trees from everywhere like the Decorator's Warehouse, Kirkland's, Hobby Lobby, Michaels, HomeGoods, Kroger At Home and Tom Thumb. Sometimes, she bought things they weren't even selling. She received a vision of what to do with it and convinced them to sell it to her. While shopping, she met a retired Christmas tree decorator. Thrilled, she could continue her quest and pick her new friend's brain.

"That big day felt like a wedding day. Overwhelmed with excitement, I finished the final touches. Then, the time came. People began arriving. When they walked to my outdoor entrance, the visitors could see several wreaths and red poinsettias lining the driveway and front porch. Before opening the door, the mat read: *We're really into Christmas*. My decorating theme was the 12 Trees of Christmas," she revealed.

As the door opened, a chartreuse green tree was against the entry wall. Sparkly green and gold ornaments with an elf hanging on one of the Elf-Half Tree's branches greeted them. Many tried to discover every element in the tree, but if they glanced over to the right toward the dining area, a beautiful golden light fixture surrounded by crystal objects resembling a necklace gracing the table, would grab their attention.

Next, while wandering through the house, individuals came upon a comical pig sporting a Santa hat with glasses and Surfer Santa. It may have frightened them at first, but they gradually chuckled because they got a glimpse into Stephanie's amusing, playful personality. The Peanut Tree, which was festooned with SpongeBob and Patrick elements and may have also elicited a chuckle or two, was designed for Jack Vetere.

"In the living room, they immediately saw the Family Tree, a traditional tree adorned with ornaments from my children's



past. The memories shared by my kids are priceless. I used pillows, garland, wall fixtures with light and other items embellished with Christmas throughout the room. Even the television displayed the season along with background holiday music," Stephanie said.

"Guess what? I even have a tree in the laundry room. This is the Laundry Tree," she said as she pointed at a miniature, silver, glittery tree on top of the graphite steel washer and dryer set.

Walking into the half bath, she exhibited a beautiful, frosty white tree enhanced with pine cones, gray flowers throughout and a cute little white deer topper. The Deer Tree subtly joins the calm ambience of the bird and snowflake on the wall.

Strolling toward the stairs, Stephanie mentioned, "My friend, Myndee, loaned me that beautiful Glamourous Tree accompanied with white deer and silver and white ornaments to top off the entire tree collection. I appreciate her so much."

In the guest room, she pointed out the Red Tree. This tree is literally red and includes decor from animals and the woods. A snowman, reindeer, bears and birds were found there.

"My daughter, Shelby, asked me to set up the trees before she came home for Thanksgiving. My kids have grown up with a lot of this decor. Shelby actually has a tree named after her, the Shelby Tree, and this is the Princess Tree, which is a modern upscale tree with frost, silver, bronze and pink bling that incorporates the colors in her room and anything girly," Stephanie explained.





The theater room is the location of the Elf and Santa Tree, a traditional green tree with elves and Santa sticking out throughout the tree. It looks like a lot of fun with a snowman hat as a topper. Colors red, green and white embody this piece of artwork.

Continuing down the hall in the master bedroom, the Gold Tree is found. This room is literally dazzling, with light illuminating off of the branches of this tree. An elegant feeling is polished with the other quaint additions of the season in the air. The sparkle is highlighted again in the photo of the reindeer in the background.

"As my guests venture outside, they see the Merry Christmas Y'all sign on the back fence, and the Cowboy Tree is on the porch adorned with burlap ribbon, cowboy hats, signs with country sayings, rope, cows — everything cowboy related with a sprinkle of faith. Underneath the tree sits a pair of gorgeous cowgirl boots and a gun to complete the look of the Lone Star Cowboy Tree.

"At the completion of many of my Home Tour visitors' tours, they waited around to ask questions, and I wanted to greet and answer them all. I had over 500 people visit my home, and I'll never forget the women who showed up in a limousine with champagne. They got out of the black automobile and came inside asking questions to help get ideas on how to decorate their homes," she concluded.

Stephanie definitely accomplished the "there's no place like home" feeling in her Christmas decor. And she was kind enough to share it with others! NOW



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By Sandra Walters

Engel & Völkers Dallas Southlake Jennifer D. Holmes, Realtor 1111 E. Southlake Blvd, Ste. 460 Southlake, TX 76092 JenniferD.Holmes@EVRealEstate.com www.lenniferDHolmes.EVRealEstate.com (214) 600-2972

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Jennifer D. Holmes, a native of Long Beach, California, was first intrigued by the real estate industry when she was 8 or 9 years old. She remembers seeing a real estate show come on television after GLOW (Gorgeous Ladies of Wrestling). Following wrestling, Jennifer found herself anticipating this housing show weekly. "I loved hearing the descriptions of the

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homes, which featured enormous rooms, fireplaces, living areas, beautiful landscaping and, of course, the trees," she said. She was mesmerized by these places.

As Jennifer grew into adulthood, the idea of real estate faded. She worked in corporate America along with her husband, but they desired to be closer to home with their children. They yearned to spend more time supporting and nurturing their kids, so they decided to take the plunge and do something different. As Jennifer considered a new venture, her heart journeyed back to her first love of real estate.

"We had been working for others, so this time, we chose to bet on ourselves. Since we worked hard for companies, we could deposit this effort and energy into our legacy."

Jennifer attained her Realtor's license, and her husband became a local barber. They simply took control of their time and money. "Spending time with family is more important than any job," Jennifer said. "This allows us to be present in our kids' lives. Now, one of our sons works with me as a Realtor, and I am thrilled."

Jennifer's team would be honored to work with families looking for a home in Texas. She typically focuses on the Mansfield, Arlington and Grand Prairie areas, but she will assist anyone in the Lone Star State. She said, "I am the best at it. A contract may consist of 80 to 100 pages, and I will read every single word. We spoil our clients by offering a luxury experience. We are a luxury brokerage. We conduct a fluid process from start to finish and pay close attention to every detail."

> "I love our community, and when showing homes, I think about what each family can add to our community. This is a very diverse area, and I enjoy learning about the people who represent our neighborhood."

As a real estate agent, she enjoys searching the market for a home that meets the client's needs. She also helps negotiate the price during the process for those looking for the perfect house or for those selling a home.

For families placing their house on the market, Jennifer — the award-winning content strategist — enjoys creating visuals to assist with marketing properties for sale. She helps with staging, creates 360-degree virtual tour videos and narrates the visuals to showcase the best features of a home, while highlighting the surrounding communities and businesses.

"I love our community, and when showing homes, I think about what each family can add to our community. This is a very diverse area, and I enjoy learning about the people who represent our neighborhood," Jennifer commented.

Jennifer Holmes' passion for the housing industry works in her clients' favor. If you are looking for a Realtor to give you specialized treatment, reach out to Jennifer Holmes. NOW





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Around Town





We appreciate Steven Garza for delivering mail in our area.

Zoomed In:By Sandra Walters Mansfield Women's Club

This year, a vibrant gathering of ladies from the Mansfield Women's Club honors the essential workers at Mansfield Methodist once again. They drove around the hospital, blasting their horns and displaying posters on their vehicles as they passed by. This thoughtful group had gathered snacks and written personal messages to the medical staff to show how much they are valued in the community. "We had a van filled to the top with goodies to give approximately 1,000 employees," said Dynois Lemser, a retired teacher.

Treats were delivered, and when the nurses, physicians and other medical employees took a break, pre-packaged food awaited them as a reminder of the community's appreciation. This nonprofit 501 (c)(3) organization has been dedicated to supporting Mansfield and the surrounding area since 1997.



Kirk Butler, a butcher at Market Street, greets customers with his expertise.



Paulette Jiles, the featured author, plays with her penny whistle at Mansfield Reads.



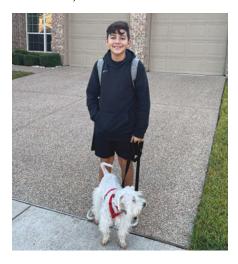
Major Evans and Bobby Quinton attend the Mansfield Reads event.



Lyla and Adalyn Nguyen prepare to take a ride through the neighborhood.



One of Mansfield ISD Rockstar Teachers, Janekka Colbert, prepares for parent/ teacher conferences.



Santiago Sandoval walks to his bus stop with his furry friend.





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"Tim is a home chef, and I love to bake," Lauren Stephens explained. She started baking when she was 20, while Tim got his first cookbook when he was in first grade. "Tim is a streamer, so he prepares meals for his viewers. He cooks live for the audience, and I periodically jump in to make a dessert," Lauren continued. Lauren is from Texas, and Tim is from Pennsylvania. "There's a lot of Southern cooking here with a Northern twist."

The Stephenses create a monthly menu by placing probable meals in a random generator and spinning a wheel to organize their schedule. Lauren said, "Both of our mothers had a home-cooked meal on the table every night, which we try our hardest to do for our children." Family and neighbors enjoy their delicacies. NOW

Berry Cheesecake Trifle

Angel Food Cake:

I box angel food cake mix Water (follow instructions on the box)

Pudding:

- 2 small boxes cheesecake flavored pudding
- 4 cups milk
- 2 cartons fresh strawberries, sliced
- 2 cartons fresh blueberries

Whipped Cream:

2 cups heavy whipping cream

- I Tbsp. granulated sugarI Tbsp. confectioners' sugarI tsp. vanilla extractRed or blue sprinkles for decoration (optional)
- **1.** For cake: Prepare the cake according to the directions on the box.
- **2.** Pour and spread the batter into an ungreased 9- to 10-inch tube pan or into a Bundt cake pan.
- **3.** Bake the cake for 45 minutes or until baked through.
- **4.** Remove from the oven; cool the cake completely upside-down set on a wire rack.

- **5.** Once cooled, run a thin knife around the edges; gently tap the pan on the counter until the cake releases.
- **6.** Once the cake is completely cooled, cut the cake into 1/2- to 1-inch cubes.
- **7.** For pudding: Mix the cheesecake pudding mix and the milk. Refrigerate until ready to assemble your trifle.
- **8.** For whipped cream: Add whipping cream, granulated sugar, confectioners' sugar and vanilla extract to a large bowl or a stand mixer with the whisk attached; combine the ingredients together until it becomes frothy and thick peaks form. Keep refrigerated until you assemble.
- **9.** To assemble: Using a trifle dish, start by placing the bottom layer into the dish. Creating each layer about 2 inches high in the order of cake, then pudding, then strawberry slices and blueberries and then whipped cream.
- **10.** Remember to make clean lines of each layer around the edge for the visual aesthetics.
- **11.** Repeat these layers up to the top of your trifle dish.
- **12.** The last layer should be your whipped cream. On top of the whipped cream, place more of the strawberries and blueberries around as decoration; add the sprinkles, if using.

Grandma's Biscuits and Mom's Sausage Gravy

Biscuits:

1 pkg. dry yeast

1/2 cup lukewarm water

2 cups buttermilk

4 1/2 cups flour

1/2 cup sugar

1/4 tsp. baking soda

4 tsp. baking powder

1 tsp. salt

Mom's Sausage Gravy:

1 lb. ground breakfast sausage Ground black pepper, to taste 1/3 cup flour 3 cups milk

- 1. For biscuits: In a large bowl, dissolve the yeast in the lukewarm water.
- 2. Add the buttermilk; stir. Add all the dry ingredients.
- **3.** Knead the dough thoroughly; cover the bowl. You do not need to let the dough rise.
- **4.** Form the dough into round 3-inch circles.
- 5. Bake your biscuits at 425 F for 15 to 20 minutes or until medium brown.
- **6.** For sausage gravy: Brown the breakfast sausage until cooked all the way through. Season the meat with lots of ground black pepper.
- **7.** Turn off the heat; add the flour to the sausage; blend until the grease and meat are coated.
- 8. Turn the heat back on; slowly add the milk while whisking into the sausage. Keep stirring, slowly adding more milk.
- **9.** Add more pepper to taste. The milk will thicken over time into a delicious gravy.

Skillet Honey Garlic Chicken Thighs With Potatoes

4 medium chicken thighs

Salt, to taste

Pepper, to taste

2 Tbsp. butter (divided use)

1 Tbsp. olive oil

I medium onion, chopped

I lb. russet potatoes, cut into 1-inch cubes

4 cloves garlic

1/4 cup honey

1/4 cup soy sauce

1 Tbsp. white vinegar

2 Tbsp. minced parsley

- **I.** Preheat the oven to 400 F.
- 2. Season the chicken on both sides with salt and pepper.





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- **3.** Heat 1 Tbsp. butter and the olive oil in a cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat until melted and hot.
- **4.** Place the chicken skin side down; sear for 2-3 minutes on both sides until golden brown. Remove from the skillet; set aside.
- **5.** Add the onions and potatoes to the same skillet; sauté for several minutes until golden brown. Season with more salt and pepper to taste.
- **6.** Remove from the skillet; set aside.
- **7.** Melt the remaining 1 Tbsp. of butter over medium heat in the same skillet. Add the garlic to the pan; sauté for 1 minute. Garlic should be fragrant.
- **8.** Add the honey, soy sauce and vinegar to the pan; bring to a simmer. Reduce the heat to low; let simmer for 5 minutes until slightly thickened.
- **9.** Nestle the chicken thighs and potato

mixture into the pan. Use a spoon to drizzle some of the sauce over the chicken. Bake at 400 F for 25-30 minutes until the potatoes are tender. Garnish with parsley before serving.

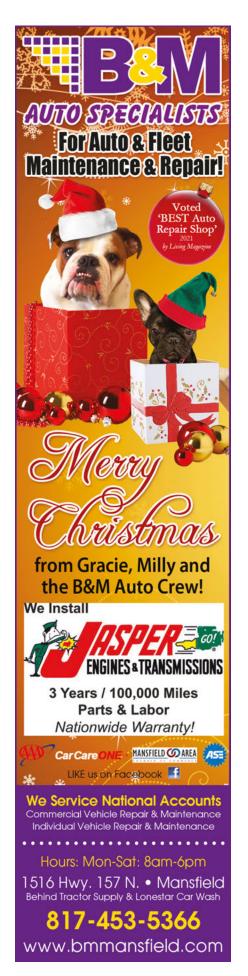
MeMa's Fudge-Mallow Candy *Makes approximately 2 dozen pieces.*

- 1 12-oz. pkg. semi-sweet chocolate pieces
- I cup chunky peanut butter
- 4 cups miniature marshmallows
- **I.** Melt the chocolate pieces with the peanut butter in a saucepan on low heat. Stir until smooth.
- **2.** Fold in the marshmallows. Pour the mixture into a greased or buttered 9x9-inch square pan. Chill until firm.
- 3. Cut into 2-inch cubes before serving.

To search for more great recipes from any of the 9 NOW Magazines publications, visit

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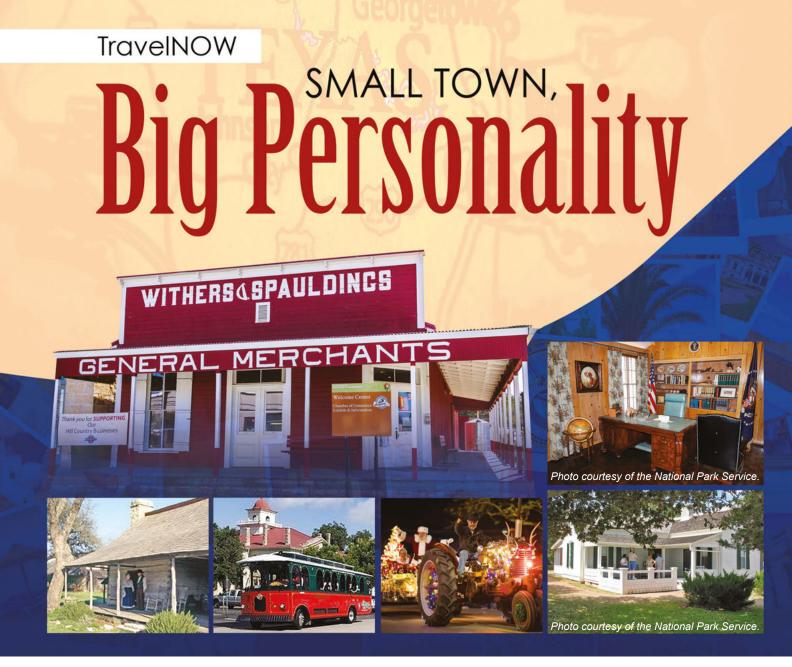




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This Hill Country town may be small, but it boasts some of the biggest personalities in Texas. While not named after him, the community was the home of Lyndon B. Johnson, the 36th president of the United States of America. The Lyndon B. Johnson National Historic Park, located in both Johnson City and neighboring Stonewall, is only one interesting part of this town.

A city twinkling with small-town personality, come visit and explore all the hidden treasures the charming community has to offer. From wildflowers in the spring to historic sites, wine trails to Christmas lights, Johnson City has something for the entire family. Johnson City's convenient proximity to the state capital keeps you connected while still affording the benefits of small-town living. In the words of Lyndon B. Johnson, "All the world is welcome here."

Full of history and family adventure, everyone will want to visit President Johnson's boyhood home and ranch. The home of Texas legends, take in the Sauer-Beckmann Living History Farm or the Behrens Cabin.

Learn while having fun at the Science Mill. A family destination, they offer a fun, interactive learning environment for all ages. Through cutting-edge, technology-based exhibits, games and programs, the Science Mill expands students' understanding and appreciation of science in their everyday lives. By igniting their curiosity and inspiring them to pursue post-secondary education, the Science Mill experience starts students on the path to a lifelong career in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

While in Johnson City, explore the great outdoors at Pedernales Falls State Park. You can camp, hike, mountain bike, picnic, geocache, bird-watch and ride horses. On the river, you can swim, wade, tube or fish. Look for local wildlife and plants at the bird blind and butterfly garden. It's the perfect way to spend time outdoors with your family or friends.

Local shops offer an array of items, including specialty items unique to Johnson City. Our art galleries are unrivaled in the area. We have several wineries, breweries and distilleries. Your journey across the 290 Texas Wine Trail starts here and works west to Fredericksburg, Texas.

The Exotic Resort Zoo & Safari Cabins is a wildlife park where you can go on a guided safari. Things are always wild and fun for all ages. With art, science, history, farms, outdoor activities and plenty of shopping, everyone in the family can enjoy the trip. Iconic restaurants wait to serve your new favorite dish, featuring a memorable experience different from the ordinary chain restaurant. Stay with us at a cozy hotel or one of our hospitable bedand-breakfasts for that "not in the big city" feel.

During Christmastime, Johnson City features Light Spectacular. The community transforms itself from a slow-paced, presidential hometown nestled on the banks of the Pedernales River, into a bright beacon of light like a guiding star, welcoming visitors with good old-fashioned Christmas cheer. Included on multiple top Christmas towns in Texas lists, consider making this a memory of a lifetime or a regular tradition for your family.

Whether you decide to stay for a weekend, a week or a lifetime, come see why Johnson City is the Crossroads to Texas Hill Country. It's a trip you may want to repeat often. NOW

By Mayor Rhonda Stell and Frances Giron, executive director, Johnson City Visitors Center/Chamber of Commerce. Photos, unless otherwise noted, courtesy of Johnson City Chamber and Visitors Center.

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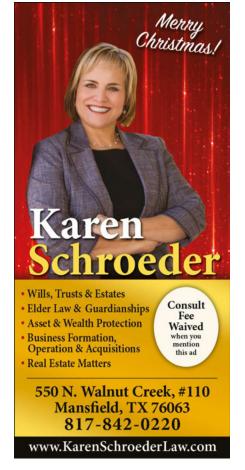




















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Crossword Puzzle

3			6	9			4	
	9			4				1
					3			7
			7				6	
5			4					
	6						7	3
		9		6				8
	8	5				7		
		1						9

Crosswordsite.com Ltd

Across

- 1 Rotten
- 4 Wanted an answer
- 9 Art movement intended to shock
- 10 Official Texas state dish
- 11 Wiping out
- 14 Thick mane
- 15 Youngster
- 16 Found in the middle of Arizona
- 17 We're all --- together
- 19 Heat up
- 20 9/11's mastermind
- 22 Polar shipping hazard
- 25 Donned for dinner
- 29 Abu Dhabi is its capital
- 30 Artificial locks
- 31 What a captured soldier becomes
- 32 Confused pooches test vet's instrument
- 35 Jakarta-based inter-governmental organization
- 36 Finishes off a cake
- 37 Written phone messages
- 38 Withdrawn

Down

- 1 Beef cut for a nobleman?
- 2 Adjust to fit
- 3 The old man
- 4 Charges
- 5 Food fish
- 6 Baby ferret
- 7 Higgins's prodigy
- 8 Casual eatery
- 9 Bruce's ex
- 12 Sacred Egyptian bird
- 13 Sparkler
- 18 Harley
- 19 Grow
- 21 Faces
- 22 Type of conductor
- 23 --- Joe's (classic gustatory exhortation)
- 24 Della ---, jazz and Gospel singer
- 26 Bit of a period
- 27 One of a famous septet
- 28 Has yet to settle
- 30 "Huh?"
- 33 Man from Dallas or Amarillo, perhaps
- 34 Successor to the USSR

For online versions, visit nowmagazines.com

Solutions on page 44







Sudoku Puzzle

Easy	EUSY /											Medium								
4	8									3			6	9			4			
								3			9			4				1		
	2			1			6								3			7		
		4	2		3			6					7				6			
5	3			4			9			5			4							
6					9						6				8		7	3		
	5		6				8					9		6				8		
9					2			7			8	5				7				
1	4						5					1						9		

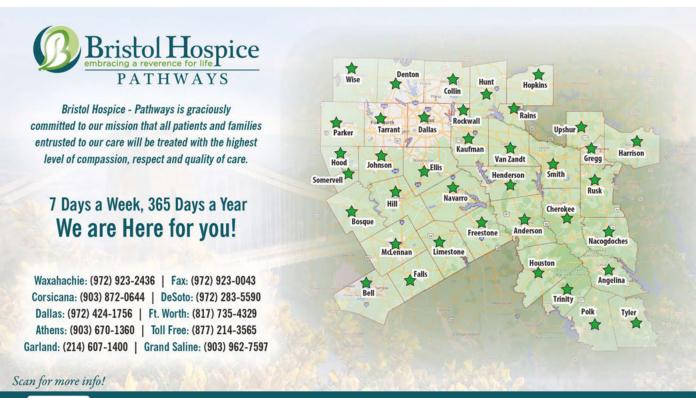
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Solutions on page 44





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12/1

Toys 4 Tots:

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12/3-12/4

Hometown Holidays: Tree lighting, live entertainment,

food and fun for the entire family! Get a photo with Santa and Mrs. Claus. On Saturday evening, Graceland Ninjaz will be performing at The LOT. Free. **Friday:** 5:00-9:00 p.m.; **Saturday:** 10:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m., Historic Downtown.

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever:

Enjoy this excellent production about a church Christmas pageant. Many local actors, actresses and singers will be featured. \$8-\$12. Friday: 7:00 p.m.; Saturday: 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m., First Methodist Church Mansfield, 777 N. Walnut Creek Dr. http:// mainstageclassictheatre.com.

12/5

Holiday Home Tour:

The Mansfield Women's Club will be hosting the Holiday Home Tour as their major 2021-22 fundraising event. Tickets may be purchased at Tom Thumb, Poured and Merle Norman in Mansfield

for \$25 each. 1:00-5:00 p.m., themansfieldwomensclub.com.

12/12

Christmas Orchestra Concert Series 2021:

The orchestra will perform Christmas tunes. Free. **Sunday:** 7:30 p.m. and 9:00 p.m., First Methodist Mansfield.

12/18

The Nutcracker:

Join Mansfield ISD and the Art Ballet Academy for a magical evening of the iconic holiday story. \$25. 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m., Mansfield ISD Center for the Performing Arts. (817) 299-1230, https://center.mansfieldisd.org/ events/upcoming-events.

12/31

The Sneaker Ball:

Participants ages 21 and up are invited to share in cocktails, wearing formal attire completed with their favorite sneakers as they bring in the New Year. Cost: \$90 and up. 9:00 p.m.-2:30 a.m., Fieldhouse USA Mansfield, 650 U.S. 287 Frontage Rd. https://www.thesneakerballtx.com/.

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





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Crossword Sudoku Solutions



Easy

4	8	6	3	2	5	9	7	1
7								
3	2	9	7	1	4	8	6	5
8								
5								
6	7	1	5	8	9	3	2	4
2	5	7	6	3	1	4	8	9
9	6	8	4	5	2	1	3	7
1	4	3	8	9	7	6	5	2

Medium

		*.00.22.5						
3	7	2	6	9	1	8	4	5
8	9	6	5	4	7	3	2	1
1	5	4	2	8	3	6	9	7
9	2	3	7	5	8	1	6	4
5	1	7	4	3	6	9	8	2
4	6	8	1		9	5	7	3
7	4	9	3	6	5	2	1	8
2	8	5	9	1	4	7	3	6
6	3	1	8	7	2	4	5	9

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