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DECEMBER 2022

A Christmas Mountain Lodge

At Home With Jerad
and Lindsey Taylor

2022 Holiday
Shopping Guide

In the Kitchen With
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Also inside:
Scavenger Hunt
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Featured Business:
The Vine at 119

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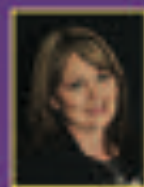


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ON THE COVER



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EDITOR'S NOTE

"And So This is Christmas"...

That's a line from a song by John Lennon written many years ago, but in my lifetime. Without quoting any more of the lyrics, suffice it to say that the song presents some mixed views of the season, without much explanation, of happiness and sadness, fear, a state of melancholy, peace and war and good wishes to all men, whether old or young, regardless of race or economic status.

We have all experienced mixed emotions during the holidays. Some years, Merle Haggard's song, *"If We Make It Through December,"* could have been our theme song. While I had some years as an adult when I thought Christmas might be pretty lean at our house, I have often looked back on my childhood and wondered how my parents pulled it off. There were six of us kids, and I think just keeping us clothed and fed would have been a monumental task. But there was always a huge Christmas tree with presents galore.

As my siblings married and the family grew with the grandkids, Christmas grew also. My in-laws were no less family than if they had been born "Smiths," and it was such great joy when everyone showed up at Mom and Dad's home. We were *required* to spend the night on Christmas Eve in their big, old, two-story house, even if we only lived three blocks away. They didn't want anyone to be late for Christmas morning.

If there was ever an unhappy moment on Christmas morning in my lifetime, God has stricken it from my memory. If there is ever a foreboding thought about Christmas to come, all I need to do is recall my Christmas memories, or better still, look back to the very first Christmas.

Good tidings of great joy!

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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A CHRISTMOU

— By Bill Smith

Jerad and Lindsey Taylor's search for a place to build their new home took them to various locations around the city. "We actually started looking at a place down the road from here that had been on the market for some time," Lindsey recalled. "We looked at this one soon after, then looked at several others, but we kept coming back to this one. We knew we wanted something 'rustic,' like a lodge in the mountains. Ultimately, it was the trees on these 5.5 acres that made the decision for us."

The back of the house has numerous windows to allow the view of the mature trees that dot the landscape. The driveway circles through the trees in the front yard, and the strong cedar accents and stonework add to the cabin feel of



MAS NTAIN LODGE

this country home. Of course, as Christmas approaches each year, warm lights line the gentle angle of the front elevation and all the fascia and rooflines.

Guests are greeted at the front door with flags and wooden signs announcing the season, as well as a flocked, lighted Christmas tree along with Santa and his sleigh. The doorway adds to the rustic feel and is welcoming at the same time. In the foyer, a beautiful wooden nativity is displayed.

"We found floor plan options and facades we liked online, then went to an architect to draw custom plans," Lindsey added. "We knew we wanted the front of the house angled, with the porte cochere and lots of cedar. The heavy beams in the living room add to the rustic feel, and we love the real, hand-scraped wood floors."

Five stockings hang from the cedar mantel over the rock fireplace, one for Jerad, one for Lindsey, and, of course, one for each of the three children, Lillian, Jackson and Rhett.

Santa peers over his glasses in a portrait behind the pine bough and twinkling white lights. The hearth seems to invite a yule log to cozy up the room.

As attractive as the fireplace is, the centerpiece of the room is the beautifully decorated Christmas tree, covered with decorations from top to bottom and crowned with a top hat that looks like Frosty the Snowman tossed it there as his contribution to the ornaments. Jerad said, "The tree gets bigger every year. As our family has grown, so have the decorations." You can't miss the handmade decorations with the kids' pictures and handprints on them. Jackson smiles in a picture from four years ago, and Lillian's handprint was made into a face of Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer in 2018, and into a picture of Santa with her fingers painted white to represent his beard in 2016. And you would not want to miss the maroon and white Aggie ornament that recalls Lindsey's alma mater.

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Lillian's favorite part of Christmas is shopping for gifts to give, and also shopping for ornaments for the tree in her room. Her tree is pink and a perfect complement to the sweet decor of her room, while Jackson's tree is blue and topped with a blue star, as if it might have come from the helmet of a Dallas Cowboys player. His room continues the decor of the home with pictures of a moose and a bear hanging above his bed, along with pine trees and snow-capped mountains. One of Jackson's favorite Christmas gifts was his hoverboard. "I also like to bake Christmas cookies with my mommy," he said.

Christmas trees and other decorations grace every room in the house, including the upstairs game room and the dining room. The dining table, set for the Christmas meals to come, is dressed with a white tablecloth, a runner covered with poinsettias, red chargers and silver plates.

"Before we go to bed on Christmas Eve, we put out cookies for Santa Claus and read *The Night Before Christmas*. We celebrate Christmas here with just the five of us on Christmas morning, and after the morning gifts are opened, we have a big breakfast, usually pancakes," Jerad shared.

Jerad and Lindsey both have extended family in Ennis, and some of their Christmas decorations came from the trees of their grandparents. "I have a really old Santa cookie jar that was Nanny's, and in spite of it having a lot of wear and tear, including some chipped paint, I like to display it every year," Lindsey said. "I also have a lot of quilts that my great-grandmother Collins made that are very special to me. I pull out different quilts for each

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season for display, but the Christmas quilts are my favorites.

“My parents always celebrate Christmas on Christmas Eve morning, and we all go over there in our pajamas,” Lindsey added. “Last year, everyone had matching pajamas. We open gifts, play games and have a big breakfast there. Also, Mom and Dad still fill stockings for their adult kids and the grandkids.”

Jerad offered, “My mom creates Christmas-themed games each year for the whole family. It gets very competitive between my sister and me, but it is all in good fun. We also like to participate in an event that we can all attend. In the past couple of years, we have gone to see ICE! and Dallas Zoo Lights.



“Christmas is very important to us,” he continued. “We start off December with decorating and making ornaments and crafts. We want the kids to understand the real meaning of Christmas. We attend a Christmas Eve service every year. We also adopt several angels from the angel trees during the season and stuff shoe boxes for Samaritan’s Purse Operation Christmas Child.”

Lindsey mentioned one more tradition in the Taylor home, which is making gingerbread houses. “We don’t buy kits,” she said. “We use graham crackers, icing and toppings, so the kids think they are making them ‘from scratch.’ Sometimes, they may not look like a house, but it’s making memories that matters.”

It sure sounds like fun. Merry Christmas! **NOW**

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— By Bill Smith

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As downtown Ennis continues to evolve as a destination for tourists and a place for local residents to gather and enjoy their community, The Vine at 119 has been a welcome addition. Jeff and Julia Browning moved here just over two years ago, and while they immediately fell in love with their new home, they realized the city needed a nice place to enjoy a glass of wine and visit with friends in a social setting. They felt the beautiful, historic downtown area would be the perfect location. Business partners Brian and Julie Pierce and Bramlet and Michelle Beard had a similar vision.



Brian said, "I pictured a quiet place where people could come and have a nice conversation with their friends with a glass of wine." Julie could see a relaxing atmosphere, where the patrons could be comfortable and stay for hours.

The partners' diverse interests and talents have complemented each other from the beginning. "We literally built the bar based on our own design," Bramlet interjected. He added, "I don't mean we came up with an idea and hired a carpenter. We actually cut the boards and drove the nails and screws."

Michelle mentioned that the business prides itself on the atmosphere and service. Brian said they have let the community lead, and Jeff added, "We started with a simple whiskey menu and have added some things, such as craft cocktails. We had a special Halloween cocktail." Julie said Brian would surely come up with something special at Christmas.

"We expect people to come in and say, 'What's new?'" Jeff continued. "We want our customers to come here and find something different and unique."

The food menu has continued to expand also. The

group of owners emphasized that everyone has brought something “to the table.” Michelle recently created a new dessert that everyone thought was a hit, unanimously agreeing it had to be added to the menu. Originally, the plan was just a light menu — the thought being that the wine bar would be a place people came before or after dinner, or perhaps before or after the theater, but the food has become so popular, they had to expand the kitchen. “Everything we serve is made from scratch,” Julia emphasized. “We just added bacon-wrapped shrimp to our menu. We are keeping the menu simple, so when we add an item, we may have to remove something else. It is just another indication of how The Vine is evolving.”

“WE WANT OUR CUSTOMERS TO COME HERE AND FIND SOMETHING DIFFERENT AND UNIQUE.”

The Vine at 119 has also developed a following for their special events, such as live music and ladies’ night. Jeff added, “The city festival organizers have asked us to open early during the festivals. We can’t say enough about how much the city has done to improve the downtown area with the Main Street program.”

Julie added that they like the location on the southern edge of downtown. “We are removed just enough from the festival fencing, but not so far that the festival goers can’t find us when it is time to unwind. This building is perfect for The Vine. The exposed brick on one wall contrasts with the modern finish that includes comfortable table and bar seating in an elegantly lit atmosphere.”

Some of the owners of The Vine at 119 are present whenever the business is open. “We want customers to see we are vested in it,” Julia said. The Vine has become everything the partners thought it would be, and more! **NOW**

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A quick look at the gift items and discounts available locally.

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Zoomed In: Raymond and Barbara Jurica

By Bill Smith

Raymond and Barbara Jurica recently decided to retire after owning and managing Tom's Food Market in Ennis for almost 50 years. "It has been a family business since Raymond's father, Tom Jurica, started it in 1963," Barbara said. "We took over in 1975 when Tom retired."

Barbara said she is looking forward to traveling now, and she has a "bucket list" of places she would like to go. "We have a son in San Francisco to visit, and I have never been to Branson."

Apparently, Raymond is pretty handy around the house and enjoys carpentry projects. "I've got plenty to keep me busy." When asked about his retirement plans, Barbara and Raymond both laughed when he answered, "Whatever she tells me to do!"



Courtney Rayburn, Walk Manager for ALZ, encourages the walkers.



Sandra and Ronnie Greer visit downtown with their friend, Nancy Prewitt.



The EHS choir performs downtown.



Reverend Julian Borda blesses the Smith family's dog, Scout.



Alzheimer's walkers are ready to start.



Scott and Steele Lindsay enjoy football at Minne McDowal Park.



Roger and Verda Heard celebrate their 60th anniversary with their family.



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CookingNOW In the Kitchen With NOW COMMUNITY EDITORS

— By Lisa Bell

A special thanks to The Lighthouse Church in Midlothian for the use of their kitchen for the photo shoot.

At NOW Magazines, community editors enjoy creating monthly cooking features — a favorite of readers. Here we share some of our own special holiday recipes.

Angel Morris covers *MidlothianNOW* and *NorthEllisCo.NOW*. She enjoys baking because she said all her teeth are sweet. She most enjoys breakfast for dinner with her family. Virginia Riddle, editor for *CorsicanaNOW*, enjoys traveling. Her Grandmother Bates always brought ingredients for ambrosia. “The smell of the oranges was so rich and heavenly.”

EnnisNOW editor, Bill Smith, said, “While my wife, siblings and in-laws helped with holiday meals, everyone knew Mom was in charge, and she set a high bar for all the food.”

Editing *MansfieldNOW*, Sandra Walters shared, “My husband’s grandmother (Nebber), mother-in-law (Gail), Mrs. Scales and Mama Gee always created exquisite meals during the holidays.”

Adam Walker, the *SouthwestNOW* and *WaxahachieNOW* editor, loves exploring the world of food. “But I’ll stop anywhere that has good chocolate,” he admitted.

Covering *BurlesonNOW* and *WeatherfordNOW*, Lisa Bell grew up as Mom’s baker and said, “I come from a long line of fantastic cooks.” **NOW**

Pretzel M&M Hugs

Angel Morris — a fun way to involve kids in the kitchen.

Servings: One bag of Hugs contains about 75 pieces (one batch). The bags of M&Ms and pretzels yield 4-5 batches total.

I 16-oz. bag Snyder’s Snaps Pretzels, square shaped (not butter flavored)

I 11-oz. bag HERSHEY’s Hugs chocolates (or your favorite flavor)
I 11.4-oz. bag red and green M&Ms

I. Preheat the oven to 200 F. Line a cookie sheet with a baking mat or parchment paper. Place the pretzels on the cookie sheet in a single layer; top each pretzel with 1 HERSHEY’S chocolate.

2. Bake 4-6 minutes, or until the chocolate is shiny and soft, not totally melted! Remove from the oven; carefully place 1 M&M in the center of each soft Hug. Press down on the M&M to spread the chocolate.
3. Place in the freezer or refrigerator for 10-15 minutes, allowing the chocolate to set. Store in an airtight container. *Note: If using multiple flavors of HERSHEY’S Kisses, make each flavor in its own batch as melting times will differ from flavor to flavor.*

Ambrosia

Virginia Riddle — 4 servings (can double or triple)

2 cups fresh oranges, cut into bite-size pieces
1/4 cup coconut, shredded
1 20-oz. can pineapple tidbits
19 maraschino stemless cherries, halved (Reserve 4 whole cherries with stems for topping.)
2 tsp. sugar
1 8-oz. tub Cool Whip (optional)
3/4 cup pecans, chopped (optional)

I. Combine all the ingredients; stir well.
2. Serve as an appetizer or dessert in compote dishes; use whole cherries with stems to top each dish.

One Dish Chicken, Potatoes and Green Beans

Bill Smith

Spray cooking oil

2 14.5-oz. cans green beans

2-3 chicken breasts; cubed

3-5 small to medium potatoes

1 pkg. dry Italian dressing mix

Black pepper, to taste

1 stick butter, melted

1. Lightly spray a 9x12-inch baking pan with the cooking oil. Drain the green beans; place them in 1/3 of the pan area.

2. Add the chicken next to the green beans; then add the potatoes. The chicken, green beans and potatoes should each cover about 1/3 of the pan.

3. Sprinkle the dressing mix over everything. Add black pepper to taste.

4. Drizzle the butter over the top. Cover with foil; bake at 350 F for 1 hour and 10 minutes.

Nebber's Rolls With Modern Twist

Sandra Walters

1 cup shortening

2 1/4 cups water (divided use)

1 1/2 cups sugar

1 1/2 tsp. salt

3 pkgs. instant dry yeast

3 eggs

8 cups flour

2 sticks butter, melted

1. Place the shortening, 1 1/4 cups water, sugar and salt in a bowl; heat the ingredients in the microwave for about 30 seconds. Stir until the shortening is melted; cool to lukewarm.

2. In a large bowl, dissolve the instant dry yeast in 1 cup lukewarm water.

3. Add the shortening mixture and eggs; gradually add the flour, beating well with a spoon.

4. Once combined, knead until soft, circular and elastic. Place the dough in a greased bowl, turning once to grease the top of the dough.

5. Cover with a cloth; let rise in a warm place for 10-15 minutes.

6. Roll out flat; cut using a small, circular cup on a flat surface. Dip the cut out dough into the melted butter. Fold in half; place the dough close together in greased baking pans.

7. Bake at 350 F for 15-20 minutes. Brush with butter and serve.

Chocolate Ribbon Pie

Adam Walker

4 oz. cream cheese

2 Tbsp. sugar



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2 Tbsp. condensed milk (divided use)
 1 8-oz. tub Cool Whip, thawed
 (divided use)
 1 9-inch Oreo Crumb Crust
 2 cups cold milk
 2 4-oz. pkgs. chocolate fudge
 instant pudding
 Cocoa powder or chocolate shavings

1. In a bowl, beat together the cream cheese, sugar and 1 Tbsp. of the condensed milk until smooth. Gently fold in half of the Cool Whip. Spread on the bottom of the crust.
2. In another bowl, combine the milk and remaining condensed milk. Add pudding; whisk for 2 minutes. Pour over the cream cheese layer.
3. Refrigerate for 4 hours, until well set and chilled. Top with the remaining Cool Whip; spread evenly. Garnish with cocoa powder or chocolate shavings.

Lazy Day Soup

Lisa Bell — perfect for large gatherings when people want to eat at various times.

1 medium onion
 1-2 Tbsp. olive oil
 2 lbs. lean hamburger meat
 Garlic powder, to taste

Salt, to taste
 Pepper, to taste
 1/2 to 1 tsp. cumin
 2 Tbsp. cornstarch
 1 2- to 3-lb. bag frozen mixed vegetables
 1 46-oz. bottle V-8 Juice
 Sour cream, for garnish (optional)
 Cheese, for garnish (optional)

1. In a large skillet, sauté the onions in the olive oil until softened. Add the hamburger; brown, stirring in the seasonings. (I usually add other favorite spices.) When the meat finishes cooking, stir in the cornstarch.
2. Transfer the meat to a 6- or 8-qt. Crock-Pot. Add the frozen vegetables and V-8 Juice. Stir everything well; cook on low for at least 4 hours. Add water or broth if extra liquid is needed.
3. Serve in individual bowls with sour cream and cheese, if desired.

Cherry Pecan Bread

Becky Walker, Managing Editor

1 16-oz. jar maraschino cherries
 2 cups flour
 2 tsp. baking soda
 2 tsp. cinnamon
 1/2 tsp. salt
 1 1/2 cups sugar

1 cup vegetable oil
 1 tsp. vanilla extract
 3 large eggs
 1 cup pecan pieces
 1 Tbsp. cherry juice

1. Remove the cherries from the jar. Reserve the juice. Slice each cherry in half; set aside.
2. In a large bowl, sift together the flour, baking soda, cinnamon, salt and sugar.
3. Add the oil, vanilla, eggs, cherries and pecans; mix together. Add the cherry juice; mix well.
4. Evenly divide the batter between 2 well-greased loaf pans. Bake at 350 F for 50-55 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

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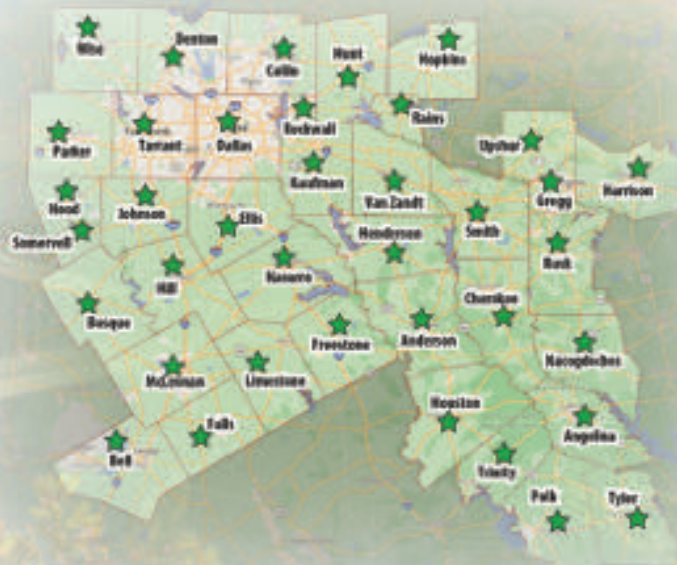
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- 3 Preliminary races
- 4 Set to go off
- 5 One kind of jacket
- 6 Composure
- 7 Embody
- 8 "A Visit from the Goon Squad" writer
- 9 Rather and Duryea
- 12 Serving in the navy, perhaps
- 13 Invest with authority
- 19 "To strive, ---, to find, and not to yield." (Tennyson, "Ulysses")
- 21 Large wine holder
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COLA Is Sweet for Social Security Recipients

If you receive Social Security, you've probably already heard that your checks in 2023 will be bigger — considerably bigger, in fact. How can you make the best use of this extra money?

Here's what's happening: For 2023, there's an 8.7 percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for Social Security benefits — the largest increase in 40 years. Also, the monthly Medicare Part B premiums are declining next year, to \$164.90/month from \$170.10/month, which will also modestly boost Social Security checks for those enrolled in Part B, as these premiums are automatically deducted.

Of course, the sizable COLA is due to the high inflation of 2022, as the Social Security Administration uses a formula based on increases in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W). So, it's certainly possible that you will need some, or perhaps all, of your larger checks to pay for the increased cost of goods and services. But if your cash flow is already relatively strong, you might want to consider these suggestions for using your bigger checks:

· *Reduce withdrawals from your investment portfolio.* When you're retired, you will likely need to withdraw a certain amount from your portfolio each year to meet your expenses. A boost in your Social Security may enable you to withdraw less, at least for a year. This can be particularly advantageous when the markets are down, as you'd like to avoid, as much as possible, selling investments and withdrawing the money when investment prices are low. And the fewer investments you need to sell,

the longer your portfolio may last during your retirement years.

· *Help build your cash reserves.* When you're retired, it's a good idea to maintain about a year's worth of the amount you'll spend from your portfolio in cash, while also keeping three months' of your spending needs in an emergency fund, with the money kept in a liquid, low-risk account. Your higher Social Security checks could help you build these cash reserves. (Also, it's helpful to keep another three to five years' worth of spending from your portfolio in short-term, fixed-income investments, which now, due to higher interest rates, offer better income opportunities.)

· *Contribute to a 529 plan.* You could use some of your extra Social Security money to contribute to a tax-advantaged 529 education savings plan for your grandchildren or other family members.

· *Contribute to charitable organizations.* You might want to use some of your Social Security money to expand your charitable giving. Your generosity will help worthy groups and possibly bring you some tax benefits, too.

While it's nice to have these possible options in 2023, you can't count on future COLA increases being as large. The jump in inflation in 2022 was due to several unusual factors, including pandemic-related government spending, supply shortages and the Russian invasion of Ukraine. It's quite possible, perhaps even likely, that inflation will subside in 2023, which, in turn, would mean a smaller COLA bump in 2024.

Nonetheless, while you might not want to include large annual COLA increases as part of your long-term financial strategy, you may well choose to take advantage, in some of the ways described above, of the bigger Social Security checks you'll receive in 2023. When opportunity knocks, you may want to open the door. **NOW**

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Edward Jones, Member SIPC. Jeff Irish is an Edward Jones representative based in Ennis.



Merry Christmas

During this holiday season,
we wish you all the best.



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But many OTHER people with these symptoms — pain, burning, and tingling — are NOT diabetic, yet also suffer from nerve damage.

According to the Mayo Clinic, the many diseases and conditions that can destroy the nerves in your extremities and limbs include:

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12/3

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Health
Warning:**

An Important HEALTH WARNING for Men and Women Age 55 or Older!

**Do You Suffer from Pain, Burning, Numbness,
or Tingling from Nerve Damage Caused by
Diabetes, Infection, or ANY of the Other
Conditions Listed in this Urgent Special Report?**

*If so, now you can virtually end your discomfort,
protect your health, and help you live a more active life.*

Dear Suffering Friend:


Tens of millions Americans have nerve damage — a condition known as "neuropathy."

The most common symptoms of nerve damage are pain, burning, tingling, and loss of feeling in your feet, legs, and fingers — with the pain ranging from mild to almost unbearable.

If you are diabetic, and especially if you are also age 60 or older, odds are that your nerve damage has been caused directly by your diabetes — although many younger diabetics also have nerve damage from this potentially deadly disease.

But many OTHER people with these symptoms — pain, burning, and tingling — are NOT diabetic, yet also suffer from nerve damage.

According to the Mayo Clinic, the many diseases and conditions that can destroy the nerves in your extremities and limbs include:

- | | | | |
|------------------------|--|--|------------------|
| ✓ Alcoholism | ✓ Repetitive motions such as typing |  | ✓ Chemotherapy |
| ✓ Autoimmune diseases | ✓ Bone marrow disorders | | ✓ Tumors |
| ✓ Vitamin deficiencies | ✓ Certain prescription medications | | ✓ Infections |
| ✓ Liver disease | ✓ Falls, sports injuries, and other trauma | | ✓ Kidney disease |
| ✓ Underactive thyroid | ✓ Wearing a cast or using crutches | | |



*New hope — and better health —
for men and women with nerve damage ...*

 **MERRY
Christmas**

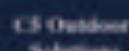
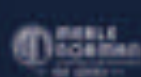
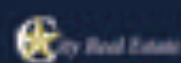
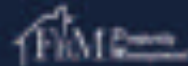
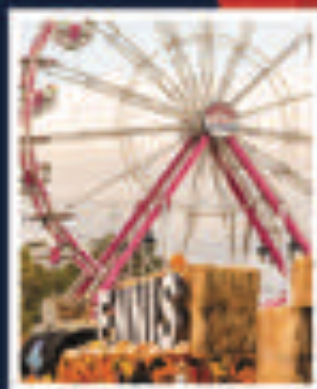
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