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M Hom∋ With John and Mary Wedel

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### December 2022 Volume 19, Issue 12

### ON THE COVER



Traditional splendor greets guests at the Wedels' home.

**Photo by** Kobbi R. Blair.

Publisher, Connie Poirier General Manager, Rick Hensley

#### EDITORIAL

Managing Editor, Becky Walker Waxahachie Editor, Adam Walker Office Assistant, Kristin Bato Writers, Lisa Bell . Angel Morris . Bill Smith Editors/Proofreaders, Lisa Bell Rachel Rich . Virginia Riddle

#### GRAPHICS AND DESIGN

Creative Director, Chris McCalla Artists, Kristin Bato . Martha Macias Anthony Sarmienta . Jennifer Spence

#### PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography Director, Chris McCalla Photographers, Kobbi R. Blair . Bill Smith

#### ADVERTISING

Advertising Representatives, Cherise Burnett . Jeremy Young Dustin Dauenhauer . Bryan Frye Kelsea Locke . Linda Moffett Lori O'Connell . Linda Roberson Karen Schaefer

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Adam

Adam Walker SouthwestNOW Editor adam.walker@nowmagazines.com (469) 285-2008

# EDITOR'S NOTE

#### Deck the halls ...

Growing up, we never had a designer tree. You know, the ones that look like a page out of *Better Homes and Gardens* — with everything color coordinated and matched to this year's fashionable palette.

Our trees were covered in a riot of handcrafts and heirlooms. There were a few glass ornaments that belonged to my mother's mother, and one that belonged to her grandmother. There were a few silly, kitschy ornaments that mom's aunts gave her and stuff she bought for her first tree, like a mouse lounging on a silver piece of cheese, and some silly elves. There was a set of wooden ornaments that Mom painted the year my sister was born, and package decorations and Christmas corsages that became ornaments.

When we went to school, there were construction paper chains and strings of popcorn, salt dough stars and angels, some with school pictures embedded or crushed hard candy to make "stained glass." I had a classmate in first through third grades whose mother made crafts for every kid in class for the holidays, so there was a felt Snoopy head and a Christmas tree with sequin ornaments.

One year, a cousin introduced us to making "God's eyes" out of yarn and Popsicle sticks. Yarn was cheap, and Popsicle sticks came free with summer, so there were swarms of those. A neighbor taught us finger weaving, so yards of new garland were added year by year.

Many of those items have been lost to time. Others have been added. But some persist on Mom's tree to this day. And the memories return every time the decorations come out.

Fa-la-la-la-la-la-la!

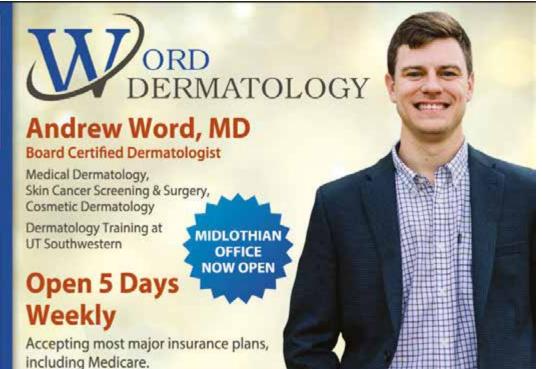
*P.S.* The publisher and staff of NOW Magazines would like to wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas and the happiest of holiday seasons!



Amanda Krawietz, PA-C Nationally Certified Physician Assistant



Michelle Shelton, PA-C Nationally Certified Physician Assistant



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# At Home With John and





The home of John and Mary Wedel welcomes passersby with Victorian Christmas charm, to step down from their carriage on the carriage stone and walk the brick path to the door. The wrought iron fence enclosing the front yard is swagged with evergreen garland that echoes the porch, where the first Christmas tree and the wreath on the door repeat the welcome. There are more wreaths on the upper floor windows, and a candle in every window hints at the warmth within.

When the Wedels moved to Waxahachie, 12 years ago, it was a homecoming for John. "I grew up here and graduated from Waxahachie High School," he said. "Then I went away to college, before I joined the Navy in Rhode Island."

With frequent transfers, John and Mary lived all over. "Our son was born in Maryland, and our daughter in Iowa," Mary reported. They also spent time in Orlando, Florida.

lowa is where John took a job with Electronic Data Systems. "EDS transferred me to Plano, and we spent 33 years there. We lived in the same house for 25 years. It was in a new development. We raised our kids there and lived there all those years, but we only knew two people in that neighborhood, our next-door neighbors." When they decided to move, they were looking for something different. "We didn't intend to move back to Waxahachie. We were looking in the Hill Country, but we found this Victorian here. It was built by Oscar B. Sims, the grand-nephew of Nicholas Sims, whom the library is named for."

"I got a pink house for my birthday!" Mary declared. "One of the advantages of moving to Waxahachie was the









fact that there were several people still living here who remembered John from his time growing up here. We actually hosted his 45th high school reunion in our backyard!"

"Since we moved here, we don't know everybody," John admitted. "But we probably know half the street. We trade vegetables from our gardens, and we have Fourth of July cookouts together. That's something we never had in Plano."

Christmas is a big part of the Wedels' intentional community building. "We invite all the people we know from the street to what we call the Jefferson Street Christmas Party. Everybody brings a dessert. It gives us somebody to decorate for," John explained.

Before the pandemic, they also hosted a party for their church family each year. "It was crowded," Mary remembered. "Everyone had to eat in different rooms, because this is not an open concept house. But it was a lot of fun. I, personally, am a people person. I love to entertain."

"But we've learned that if you don't reach out and do stuff. others won't either," John admitted. "If we hadn't started hosting this party, the street wouldn't know each other as well. The last couple of years, we've focused more on decorating outside. If people aren't coming in, we give them something to enjoy from the street. Each year, we're adding more lighting. We try to make it look the best we can. We always wrapped the poles on the porch with garland, but I got to looking at the way we have the hanging baskets in the middle, between the poles, so last year, I swagged it to make it look more balanced."

Mary leaned in, "He was a physics and math major. He's very precise."



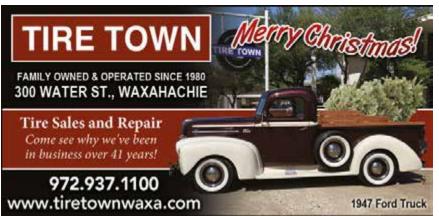
In years past, John and Mary's pink house has been on the Gingerbread Tour of Homes and the Christmas Tour of Homes. "We dress up for the tours," Mary explained. "I have a walking skirt, and John wears red suspenders, a bow tie and a straw hat."

With John and Mary all gussied up, it's no surprise the house gets decked out as well. "We have several trees, because the tour in 2014 required three or four trees," John explained. In addition to the one on the porch, the front sitting room hosts an elegant narrow tree, bedecked in old-fashioned tinsel icicles, tucked into the bay window. The period-correct curtains are precisely trimmed with greenery. So is the banister on the stairs to the second floor.

Of course, the stockings are hung by the chimney with care. But they also show up on the bedroom walls and the curtain ties. "Some of them are vintage stockings from our childhood," Mary revealed. "Some are ones I made for the kids. The fancy ones are ones we bought for the home tour. We like to shop for vintage ornaments. We have some ornaments from when the kids were little."

"There are a few from my mother that must be 70 years old or more," John added. "We decorate all through the house." His grandmother's old sideboard gets dolled up with a snowman table runner and an electric candelabra. Christmas mugs and candy dishes are likely to sit atop it. And the picture hanging above is swagged with poinsettia garland.

John and Mary share the welcome at Christmastime and beyond. They choose to build community and invite neighbors, friends and family into the circle of candle glow and the twinkle of tinsel. NOW



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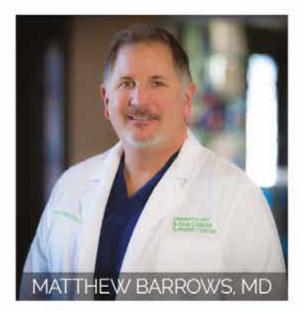
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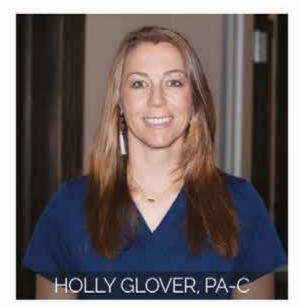
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Christmas is almost here, but it is not too late to decorate your yard for the season with some easy and inexpensive do-it-yourself decorations. You may even have some of the basic parts for these decorative additions from other seasonal decorations that you can repurpose. Another source will be discount stores and hardware stores.

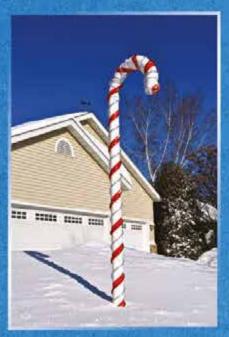
Everyone likes to see Christmas lights as part of decorations, and they can be added rather inexpensively to most of these projects. Long strings of large bulbs that need a 110-volt receptacle can be used, but with the availability of LED string lights powered by either replaceable or rechargeable batteries, extension cords and outdoor receptacles may not be necessary for these ideas.

Old wooden pallets can be a crafter's delight. A wooden-pallet Christmas tree is easy to make, and the only tools required are a claw hammer, nails and a saw. Carefully take the pallet apart using a claw hammer and/or a pry-bar, cut the one-by-four boards into a large triangle (Christmas-tree shape) and reattach them to one of the two-byfour boards, then either paint your decorations on, add string lights or both. To provide additional support for the tree, you can sharpen one of the two-by-fours into a stake and drive it into the ground with a mallet, or use the two-by-fours as supports behind the tree for it to lean on.

Do you already have trees in your yard to decorate? Make these simple stars and snowflakes using craft sticks (Popsicle stickstongue depressors). Just stack several of the sticks, glue them in the middle, and arrange them to look like stars and snowflakes. Decorate them with paint and glitter. Maybe add some binder's twine in the middle to hang them from your tree branches. Giant round ornaments are a popular addition to outdoor decorations, and an easy and inexpensive do-it-yourself project can be made with large, inflated plastic balls that you can find in bins at big-box stores. Just spray paint the balls in holiday colors, add a wooden dowel with a spot of glue in the hole where the ball is aired up, and they should be relatively easy to stick into the ground. Add ribbon to the dowels for an additional touch.

> Repurpose your plastic Halloween pumpkins into a snowman! If the plastic jack-o-lanterns have a handle on them, remove them, then just use a glue gun to hold three of them stacked together. (If there is a jack-olantern face on them, just turn it to the back.) Spray paint them white, glue on some large black buttons and paint a face on or use other craft items for the nose, mouth and eyes. A couple of sticks from your yard form the arms, and of course you can add a scarf and a hat. Look at Frosty go!

# PERSONALIZED - By Bill Smith CHRISTMAS DISPLAYS



Paper-plate lollipops may be the least expensive decoration that you can imagine, but they may also be the most decorative and unique. Simply glue or tape a half-inch wooden dowel, (you might want to use differing lengths for variety, one foot to three feet long) to the inside of a paper plate. Glue another paper plate, upside down, to the edges of the first plate, covering the dowel. Paint both sides of the lollipop solid, with stripes or other shapes. Cover the lollipops with cellophane joined to the dowel with a ribbon, then place the lollipops in groups around your yard with the dowel driven into the ground.

Finally, make large candy-cane decorations with three- or four-inch PVC pipe. Use a long, straight piece to make the candy cane as tall as you desire, probably three or four feet, then glue elbows and small sections to the top to make the hook shape. Paint the candy cane with white spray paint. Allow it to dry, then use painter's tape to circle the candy cane at an angle from top to bottom. Spray the area between the tape with red paint to complete the decoration. Slide the bottom of the candy cane over a twoby-four stake driven into the ground to make the candy cane stand up.

Outdoor decorations are done! Now, let's trim the tree! Now

### Sources:

I. www.prudentpennypincher.com.

2. www.smartschoolhouse.com.



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# Metal Mart

— By Adam Walker

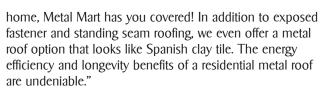
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C. J. Sparger has been with Metal Mart for 22 years. "Twenty of those years have been here at the Waxahachie location. Duke Ostrander, my assistant manager, is a Waxahachie native, and he's been with the company for 32 years." Duke is sometimes referred to as the company's "good will ambassador." John Baker, from Wichita Falls, is the area manager, and Waxahachie native Clif Loveless, the first manager of the Waxahachie location, is now general manager over all 45 Metal Mart locations.

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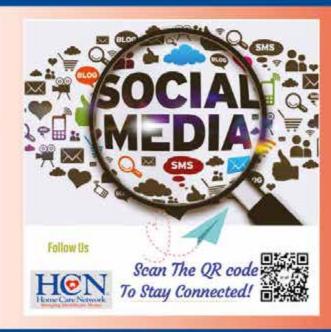
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### **Zoomed In:** Leeann Martin

By Adam Walker

Leeann Martin is a member of the Lone Star Chapter of the National Charity League. In that capacity, she was at the Friends of Sims Library annual book sale, manning the tote-bag table. "Our chapter has about 60 mothers and daughters who work together to support local charities and nonprofit organizations," she explained. "We come to help out in different ways whenever volunteer help is needed." Habitat for Humanity and Legend Oaks were among other organizations she mentioned that she and her daughter volunteer with.

Leeann kept busy helping visitors to the library fundraiser select the right tote and pointing them in the direction of the kinds of books they were looking to add to their own collections. Meanwhile, her daughter helped with keeping the tables orderly.

# Around Town



The Kiwanis Club of Waxahachie installs new officers.



Judy and Becky Walker perform their civic duty.



Tiffany and Freddie Stanmore learn a new dance.



Tri-Pointe Homes cuts the ribbon for their new development, The Oaks of North Grove.



Trinity Salem Family Health Clinc holds its ribbon cutting.

# NOW



Real estate professionals from CENTURY 21 Judge Fite judge the Waxahachie High School Homecoming Parade.



Boy Scouts provide a color guard for the Texas Country Reporter Festival.



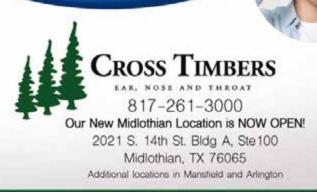
Ralph Nelson, NARFE program coordinator, welcomes guest speaker and security specialist, Spencer Thompson, to their meeting at Asian King Buffet.



Workmen continue construction on the City Hall Annex.

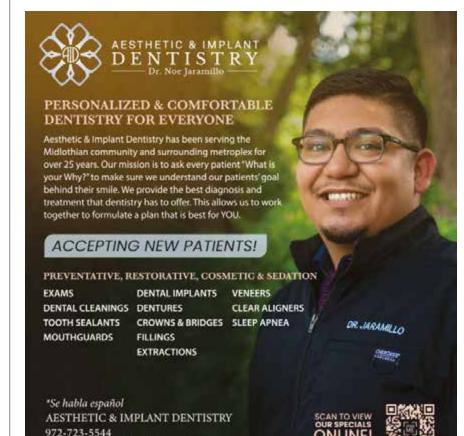
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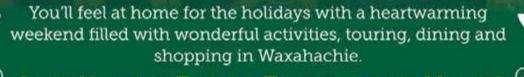


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Friday, December 2 | Preview Party from 6-9 p.m. Saturday, December 3 | 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Waxahachie Civic Center – 2000 Civic Center Lane Sponsored by the Waxahachie Junior Service League For tickets and information. www.waxahachiejsl.org

#### Sounds of the Season

with The Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra Friday, December 2 | 7 p.m. Waxahachie ISD Performing Arts Center For tickets and information: www.waxahachiesymphony.org

Elf Movie Night Saturday, December 3 | 6 p.m. Railyard Park – 455 S. College St. | FREE Admission A Charlie Brown Christmas Presented by Waxahachie Community Theatre Friday-Sunday | December 9-11 University Church – 221 Solon Rd. Tickets Available online at: www.waxahachiecommunitytheatre.com

#### YMCA Santa Run

Saturday, December 10 | 9 a.m. Railyard Park – 455 S. College Registration information: www.waxahachieymca.org

#### **Christmas Tour of Homes**

One weekend only! Saturday & Sunday, Dec. 10 - 11 | 2 - 8 p.m. Ticket information: historicwaxahachie.com \$20 Advance Ticket | \$25 Tour Weekend

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





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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.

1 16-oz. bag Snyder's Snaps Pretzels, square shaped (not butter flavored)

### II-oz. bag HERSHEY's Hugs chocolates (or your favorite flavor) II.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.

 Bake 4-6 minutes, or until the chocolate is shiny and soft, not totally melted!
 Remove from the oven; carefully place I
 M&M in the center of each soft Hug. Press down on the M&M to spread the chocolate.
 Place in the freezer or refrigerator for I0-15 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)

Combine all the ingredients; stir well.
 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

 Lightly spray a 9x12-inch baking pan with the cooking oil. Drain the green beans; place them in 1/3 of the pan area.
 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.
 Sprinkle the dressing mix over everything. Add black pepper to taste.
 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

cup shortening
 1/4 cups water (divided use)
 1/2 cups sugar
 1/2 tsp. salt
 pkgs. instant dry yeast
 eggs
 cups flour
 sticks butter, melted

**I.** 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

**I.** In a bowl, beat together the cream cheese, sugar and I 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)

 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.
 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.
 Serve in individual bowls with sour cream and cheese, if desired.

#### **Cherry Pecan Bread**

Becky Walker, Managing Editor

I 6-oz. jar maraschino cherries
 cups flour
 tsp. baking soda
 tsp. cinnamon
 I/2 tsp. salt
 I 1/2 cups sugar

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

 Remove the cherries from the jar. Reserve the juice. Slice each cherry in half; set aside.
 In a large bowl, sift together the flour, baking soda, cinnamon, salt and sugar.
 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.

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

publications, visit www.nowmagazines.com

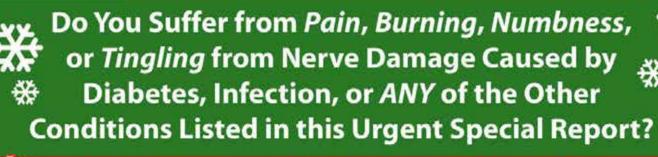






Paula Coulston won the \$50 Cash Prize from NOW Magazines.

### Urgent Health Warning: Men and Women Age 55 or Older!



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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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- ✓ Liver disease
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- ✓ Bone marrow disorders
- Certain prescription medications
- ✓ Falls, sports injuries, and other trauma
- ✓ Wearing a cast or using crutches

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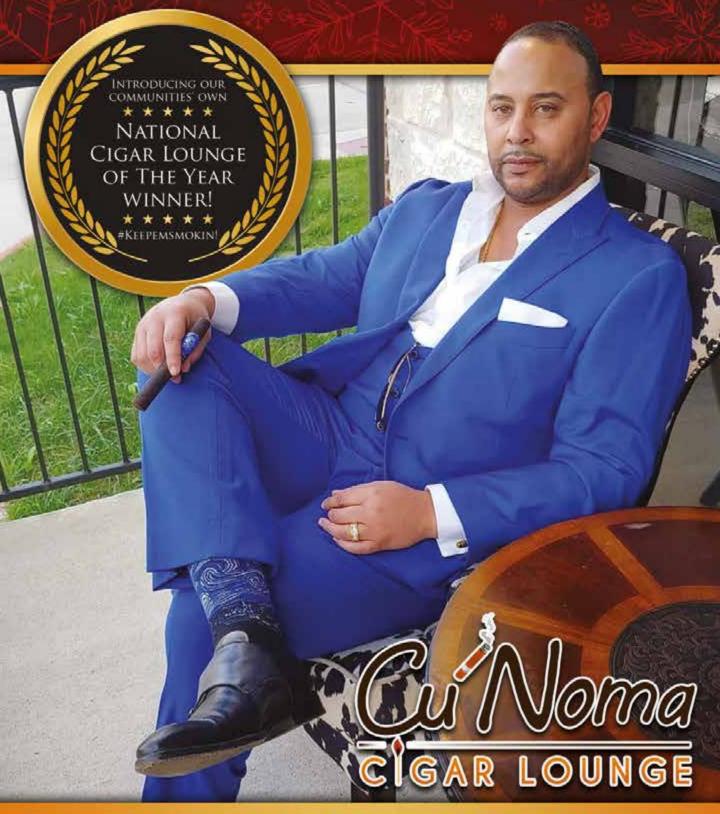


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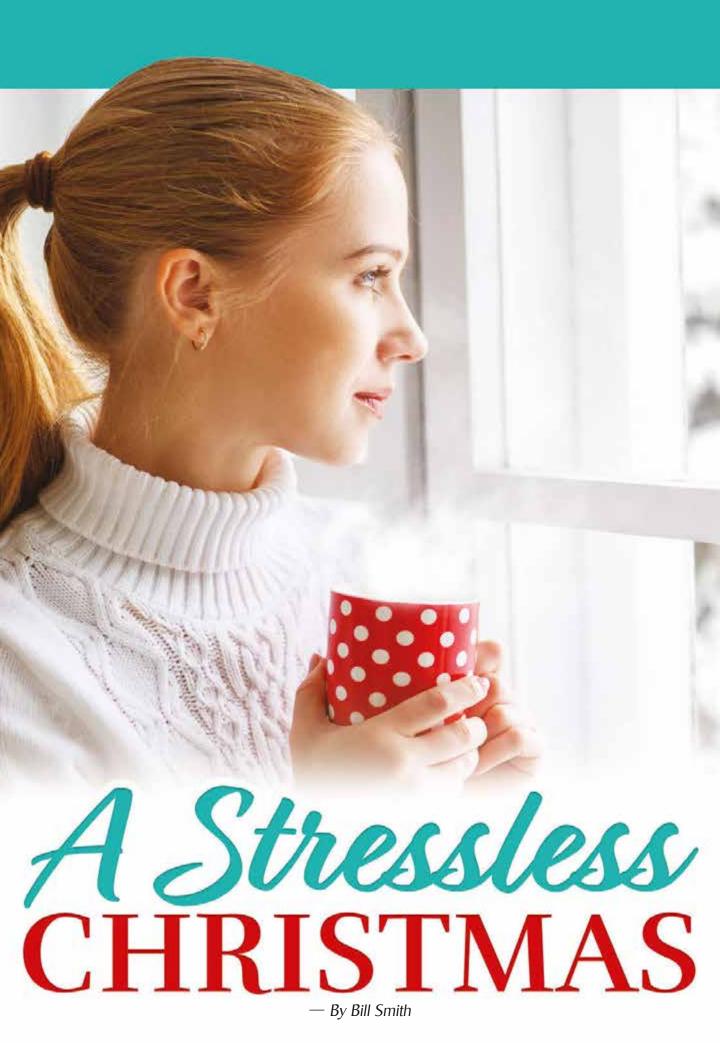
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Thinking about the very first Christmas, the one we celebrate from so long ago, we reflect on a calm scene of visitors coming to see a newborn child in a manger. But we often stress as the holiday approaches. Perhaps there are a few things we can do well before Christmas, so it is just a season of joy!

Can you commit to having a plan? Just get a few calendar pages and put the scheduled events down where you can see them, and keep it in plain sight. Electronic calendars are great, but having a wall calendar where the whole family can see it might prevent conflicting schedule surprises!

Do you set a budget? Change is hard, and if overspending has been your tradition, then changing to a budget might seem to add stress rather than reduce it. However, if you are able to get the family and friends on-board with the idea, it can be a great win-win for everyone. Perhaps this could be the year you exchange handmade crafts rather than expensive gifts, or perhaps you join together to adopt a family that could use your help.

Time may be your greatest gift, whether given or received. An outing together with those you love may be the gift you remember the most. Shared time at a holiday movie or the theater may be just the stress reliever you have been looking for. A destination Christmas does not have to be a trip across the ocean. Sharing the expense of a bed-and-breakfast or even a cabin in a state park during the holidays could create memories for many Christmases to come, and it could become a new family tradition.

Schedule some time just for yourself. Go so far as to put it on the wall calendar and allow everyone else to do the same. Take a break for a while and have some "me time," whether that is just a trip to the coffee shop, or an evening curled up



with a good book. And don't neglect your exercise time. Put your trips to the gym on the calendar, or just go for a walk.

Could adding something to the schedule reduce your stress? Perhaps if it is something that just makes you happy. Maybe this is the year you sing in the Christmas program at your church, or you join the group that goes caroling around the neighborhood. If you enjoy baking, another idea is baking gifts for friends and co-workers. A simple pound cake, baked in mini-foil pans or muffin cups, wrapped in just clear cellophane and a ribbon makes a thoughtful and delicious gift.

Let someone else do the gift wrapping. Some stores do it for free or for a nominal price if you ask. If you can come home from shopping with the gifts ready to put under the tree, that's one less task for you.

Do you shop online or in the store? A lot is done online these days, and some find that less stressful than shopping in person, but there is still a lot to be said for shopping with local vendors who can make suggestions for those on your list. And most of us have experienced the stress of an online item being out of stock or having shipping delays.

If a children's toy says, "some assembly required," avoid it at all costs! Not really! Just don't wait until midnight on Christmas Eve to find out what "some assembly" means. After putting together two bicycles and a big wheel scooter, you don't want to open the Barbie Doll House and find it requires more assembly than a 5,000-piece jig-saw puzzle. It could keep you up until 4:00 a.m., and there won't be enough coffee on Christmas morning to open your weary eyes!

The bottom line for a stress-free Christmas is having a plan. Some people can be happy rolling along with "whatever happens is OK with me," but what they are really saying is "my plan is to not have a plan." Actually, that may be a pretty good plan, too!

Source: www.womensday.com







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Ry Angel Morris

## ADVENT CALENDAR COUNTDOWN

Advent calendars are a way to help children count down to Christmas Day, with daily treats and reminders of the season's origin. But how did the Advent calendar itself originate?

Advent begins on the Sunday nearest the Feast Day of Christ's first disciple, St. Andrew the Apostle, which is marked November 30. That Sunday, and the next three, make up the four-week period of Advent celebrations. It is estimated these celebrations have taken place since the fourth century, initially considered the period of time during which those converting to Christianity would prepare for baptism.

Today, Advent is commonly associated with the weeks leading up to Christ's birth, celebrated December 25. Derived from the Latin word for "coming," Advent is often marked by calendars through which daily reminders tell us Christmas is drawing near. As a result, Advent calendars are typically dated December 1-24, rather than beginning November 30.

In the early 1900s, Gerhard Lang printed what is widely

considered the first Advent calendar, inspired by one his mother made featuring 24 colored pictures attached to cardboard. Gerhard added doors in front of each image, and this design is still popular today.

Around the time Gerhard produced his calendar commercially, a German newspaper also shared an Advent calendar insert as a gift for readers. The idea caught on, and a trend was born. U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower, shown in national newspaper photographs opening an Advent calendar with his grandchildren, helped spark the tradition in the states.

Now, pre-made Advent calendars can be found from gift shops to dollar stores. Their doors typically open to reveal small pieces of chocolate or candy, sometimes having printed quotes or Bible verses within. These time markers are also a simple and meaningful craft for families to DIY.

One easy version involves very basic supplies: brown paper bags (smaller is better), clothes pins, crayons or markers and twine — plus the treats you want each bag to hold. Consider your family's favorite snacks and/or small ageappropriate trinkets. These can be faith-based or follow the theme of your choosing.

For those who plan to take turns opening days on the calendar, consider gifts that relate to who will be opening each day: For Mom, lip balm, an ornament, earrings or jewelry; for Dad, knock-knock jokes written by the kids, a keychain or a small-framed family photo; for the children, small books or mini versions of their favorite games or characters. Any age enjoys a coupon for special time together or notes about what they mean to the family. Of course, the traditional candy or snack is inexpensive and fun.

To prepare the calendar, family members divide up the bags and add their own artwork to the containers for which they are responsible, including the number of the day on which the bag should be opened and the person who should open that bag. Decorating need not be limited to drawing. Stickers or other craft supplies can be utilized to customize bags, as well.

Once bags are decorated, a shopping trip for filler is in order, when everyone can choose what goes in the bags they designed, keeping in mind the aforementioned gifts or whatever they feel suits the designated opener. Back home, bags are filled and attached to twine with the clothespins for prominent display somewhere in the home. Securing your Advent calendar to a fireplace mantel is a great way to decorate for the season, too! Just don't light the fireplace while it's hanging there!

Mini stockings, mittens, small boxes — the container of your choosing — can be substituted for paper bags, and the filler can follow any theme you wish. Perhaps handwritten notes are more meaningful than trinkets as the children get older, and especially so for parents when written by their kids.

Items need not be hung from twine and can simply sit across a hearth or table or inside a basket or box. Families may prefer the same style each year, or like the idea of something new every Christmas. Perhaps Mom and Dad fill each day for the kids, or maybe the whole family takes part. When it comes to Advent calendars, the way you count down to the biggest holiday of the year is up to you!

Sources:

*I. https://www.mentalfloss.com/article/26522/brief-history-advent-calendars. 2. https://www.archons.org/-/nov-30-saint-andrew.* 

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31	+	+	+			32	+		1	
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#### Across

- 1 Workplace watchdog
- 5 Saw
- 10 Half of a boilermaker
- 11 Two-wheeled Delhi carriage
- 12 Like the best of U S?
- 14 "But, --- I what light ...." (Romeo and Juliet)
- 15 Bricklayers
- 16 Purposes
- 17 Bridge support
- 18 It precedes beauty?
- 19 Shot
- 20 Top private
- 23 Going with it is usually the easy option
- 25 Barry Manilow's faded showgirl
- 26 Relaxing order
- 28 Nest eggs, briefly
- 29 Most prominent position
- 31 Discrimination
- 32 By its own action
- 33 Silky
- 34 Competition for all comers

Crosswordsite.com Ltd

#### Down

- 1 Rectangle
- 2 Martial arts
- 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
- 22 Legal proceeding
- 24 Frothy milky espresso
- 25 Became cheerful
- 26 N T book
- 27 Small dabbling duck
- 30 Brazilian saint

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## Bradley, Mansfield, TX

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## Bradley lost **43.8 lbs.**\*

\*Individual results may vary.

AFTER



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## MERRY CHRISTMAS

Some events may have been cancelled or rescheduled while we were at press. Check with Individual organizations or your city or Chamber websites to verify dates and times

### 12/2

#### Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra in Concert:

Presented by the Waxahachie Symphony Association. Seasonal selections. 7:00 p.m., WISD Fine Arts Center, 3001 Hwy. 287 See www.waxahachiesymphony.org for tickets.

### 12/2-12/4 and 12/9-12/11

### **Bethlehem Revisited:**

See how it might have been on that night long ago. Free, but donations accepted. 6:00-9:00 p.m., 402 N. College St.

> 12/3 Elf:

Enjoy the holiday film. Free. 5:00-8:00 p.m., Railyard Park, 455 S. College St.

### 12/9-12/11

A Charlie Brown Christmas: Waxahachie Community Theatre presents the well-loved story. Friday and Saturday: 7:30 p.m.; Sunday: 2:30 p.m. University Church, 221 Solon Rd. See www.waxahachiecommunitytheatre.com for tickets.

### 12/10

YMCA Santa Run: Run as Santa or The Grinch, at multiple distances, to raise money for Cindy Hess Memorial Park. \$15-\$40. 9:00 a.m., Railyard Park, 455 S. College St.

Santa-Winter Wonderland Event: 10:30 a.m.-noon, Sims Library, 515 W. Main St.

### 12/10-12/11

Christmas Tour of Homes: See some beautiful decorating. \$10-\$25. 2:00-8:00 p.m. For ticket information, visit historicwaxahachie.com.

### 12/17

Zimmerman King's Brass: See Tim Zimmerman and his brass band in this Christmas concert. 7:00 p.m., Waxahachie Bible Church, 621 N. Grand Ave.

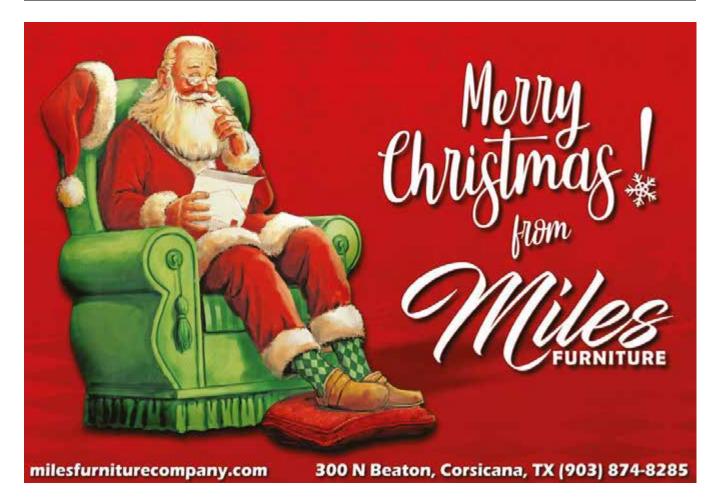
### 12/24

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service: Prepare your heart for the big day. 6:30-8:30 p.m., The Cowboy Church of Ellis County, 2374, W. 287-Byp.

### 12/25

Midnight Mass: Join the St. Joseph community to begin Christmas Day. Midnight-1:00 a.m., St. Joseph Catholic Church, 600 E. Marvin Ave.

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









WaxahachieNOW Scavenger Hunt



Find 5 hidden Smiling Ornaments in 5 different ads in this issue (not counting the one above).

Email the page numbers and specific ads where they are found, plus your phone number, by December 15th. To ensure your Scavenger Hunt answers go in the drawing, you must use the

Scavenger Hunt Email

scavenger.wax@nowmagazines.com One entry per person.



\$50 Cash Prize Courtesy of: NOW Magazines scavenger.wax@nowmagazines.com

Winner must pick up their prize within 30 days of drawing.

Turkeys were found on pages 13, 16, 25, 33 & 53

November winner is: Chuck Tennant - \$50 Cash from NOW Magazines scavenger.wax@nowmagazines.com





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