

# MidlothianNOW

MAGAZINE

DECEMBER 2024

## Christmas Lessons

At Home With Nathan and Liz Richardson

## A Hot DIY Project

Enhance the coziness of your backyard with a new fire pit

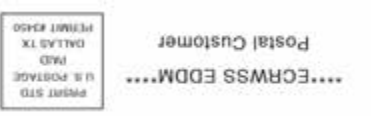
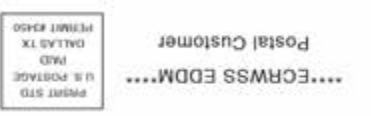
## 2024 Holiday Shopping Guide

In the Kitchen With Jordan Dudley

Also inside:  
Scavenger Hunt

Sudoku

Featured Business:  
The Cottages on Cantrell







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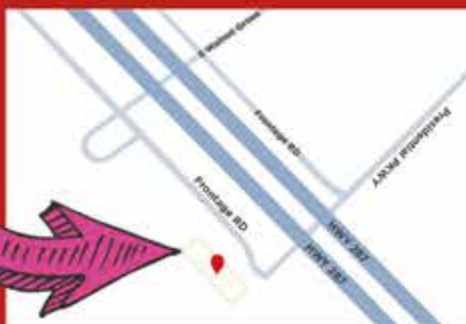
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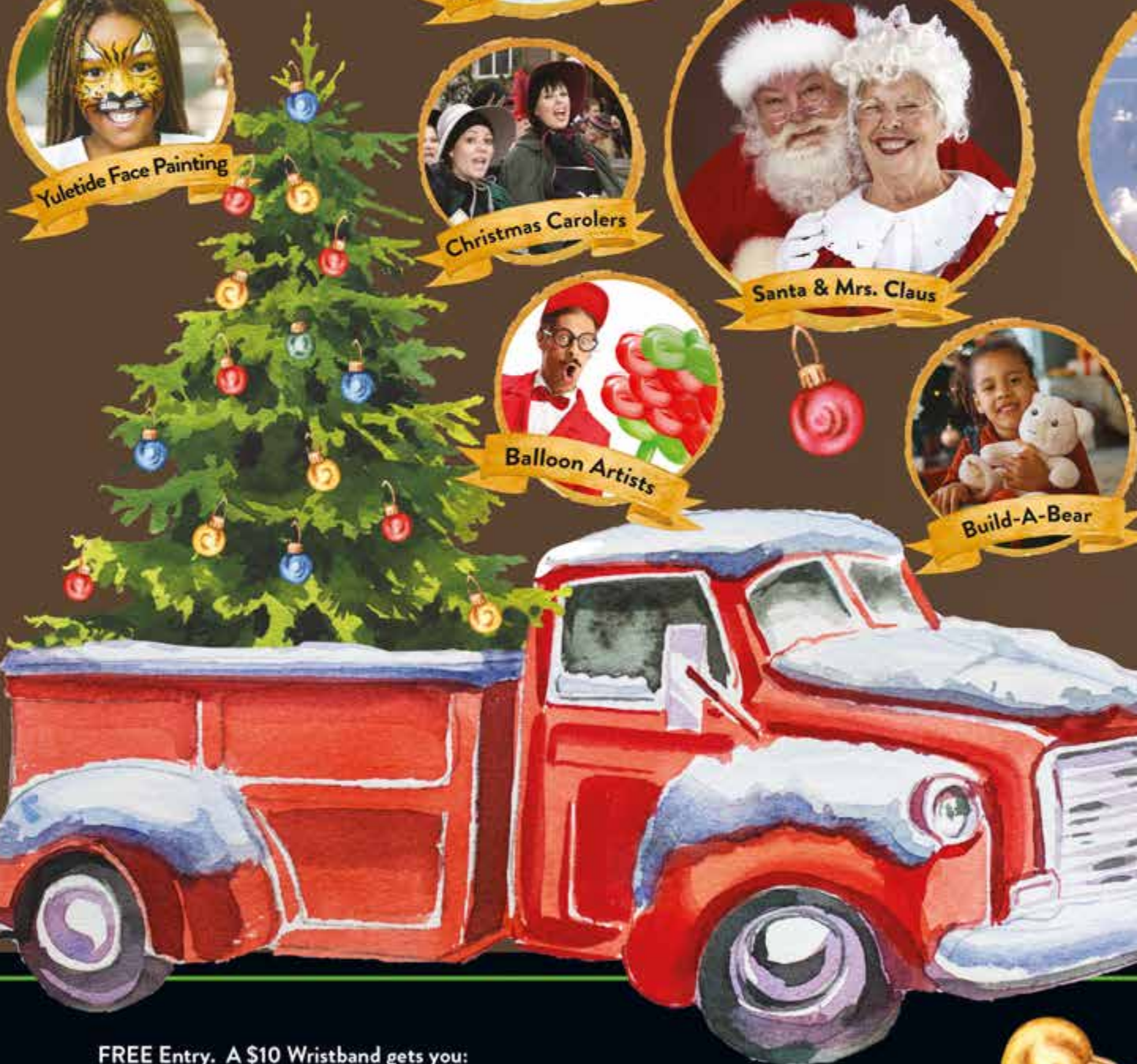
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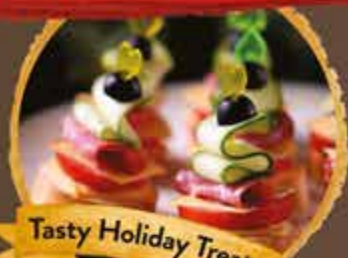
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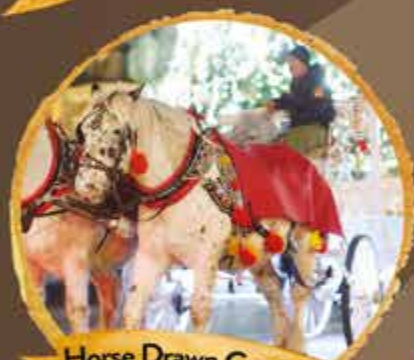
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# EDITOR'S NOTE



Angel

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## Season's savings ...

Some already remember that the season of giving is about more than gifts. Others struggle not to charge up credit cards to show how much they care. Whether you're frugal or a spendthrift, these ideas may help.

Before making your wish list, create a budget for *everything* the holidays entail — from groceries and gifts to decor. How can you whittle those expenses? Prepare an online sign-up sheet for the family meal, so *everyone* participates and no single person shoulders all the expense. Make gatherings with friends pot-luck style for the same reason. Draw names among the family for trading gifts and set a spending limit, consider a "white elephant" exchange of items you already own, or have presents just for the kids. Agree to help family and friends with a project in the new year instead ... What better gift than your time and talent?

Sort your decor, reusing what you still love and selling or trading with friends the things that are no longer your style. The cost of postage doesn't mean you can't send cards if that's special to you, but a digital version saves time and money. Or opt for a phone call instead of a card — even a voicemail or text reminding folks you're thinking of them is special! Look for free community activities that celebrate the season as a way to enjoy the spirit without the expense. Remember, that first Christmas was pretty simple. It's OK if yours is, too.

## Save the Season!

*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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# CHRISTMAS LESSONS

At Home With Nathan and Liz Richardson

— By Angel Morris







*J.R. Irvin Elementary alumna and teacher Liz Richardson's love of the holidays shows up in her classroom and her home. "I'm a kid at heart and get so excited for Christmas. I'm literally counting the days down until next year," Liz admitted. "After I became a teacher, I wanted to do something special to make children smile, so decided to do colorful decor on the outside and white on the inside."*

A Midlothian native, Liz has known her husband since childhood. "Nathan and my family were longtime friends. Once I graduated high school, we decided to give it a shot, and the rest is history," Liz recounted. "We've been married 10 years this year."

The couple moved into their current home in 2012. "Liz has always loved the neighborhood. She grew up down the street," Nathan noted. "We like how family-oriented our neighborhood is and the friendliness. People are always out walking around, and no one hesitates to wave or start small talk."

The duo considers their style "farmhouse industrial." "We love neutral colors but tie in the black metal finishes. I love everything about plantation-style homes. If I could buy a pier-and-beam home and renovate it from the ground up, I would," Liz said.

Nathan, on the other hand, likes the semi-newer type of homes. "This was our way of coming to a compromise, and we would not have it any other way. It turned out better than we could have imagined," he said.

When it comes to holiday decorating, however, there is no room for compromise at the Richardson home, where decor begins showing up just after Halloween. "I start putting up my Christmas decorations on November 1, because I have so much, and I want to enjoy it the entire month of December," Liz explained.

Every space in the Richardson home has its own holiday theme. "In our living room, we go for red-and-white mixed with plaid. All our tree lights are white, but we can change them to multicolored for the kids," Liz described. "We even decorate our patio so that when we are sitting out there watching Christmas movies, we still are in the spirit."



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Merry Christmas



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The Richardsons' holiday decor is not only for their own children. "Since I'm a teacher and most of the kids in our neighborhood go to J.R. Irvin, I love to go all out with colored lights outside," Liz shared. "I remember, back when I was a kid, that colored lights were always the ones to grab my attention and give me that Christmas feeling."

Because Nathan and his son, Beckham, enjoy fishing, the family decided to add a bass fishing Santa to their lawn, which features a series of inflatables.

Liz's holiday collection continues to grow in her classroom, too. "In my first year teaching, I bought a 6-foot tree — I'm going to need a bigger one here before long," she explained. "Every year, the second-graders at Irvin do 'Market Day' to help with our 'producers and consumers' unit. It has always been an absolute blast, and the kids get to make anything they want to sell to the rest of the school.

"I always make it a priority to buy an ornament for my students, and I will write their names and the year and hang it on my classroom tree," Liz continued. "I love seeing the kids' reactions when they come back to visit me the next year and see their ornaments on my tree. I also get the biggest kick when our family's Elf on the Shelf comes and visits my class. That little thing keeps the kids and me on our toes!"

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In addition to the shelf elf tradition, the Richardsons have a number of special holiday routines. “We always watch the *Christmas Cookie Challenge* on TV. Then the week before Christmas, we have Liz’s parents over and do our own cookie decoration contest and will have other family members vote on which cookie is the best,” Nathan stated. “They win a trophy to hold onto until the next year.”

The family always makes a point to tour Christmas lights. Then, on Christmas Eve, they have a house full of family. “Nathan cooks a brisket. We have a huge meal, and everyone stays the night,” Liz described. “We do Christmas presents with my family that night, and then everyone wakes up, and Nathan’s family will come over to join us on Christmas morning.”

The fact that three family birthdays are in December makes the holidays that much more special. “Liz’s birthday is December 28, Ryleigh’s is the 14th and Beckham’s is the 20th,” Nathan listed.

Liz also remembers another special family member each December. “I got my love for Christmas from my late Nana, Joyce Spratlen, who passed in 2008 from breast cancer,” she noted.

For these reasons, the holidays are extra special to the Richardsons. “I love every little thing about Christmas. When I was younger, it killed me to wait until the day after Thanksgiving to decorate,” Liz remembered. “Even if we were not celebrating three birthdays in December, I still would find a reason to put my decorations up early.

“Nathan would give me a hard time about putting decorations up so soon, but now that we have been married 10 years, he is such a trooper,” Liz continued. “I believe he really does enjoy it, regardless of what he says!” **NOW**

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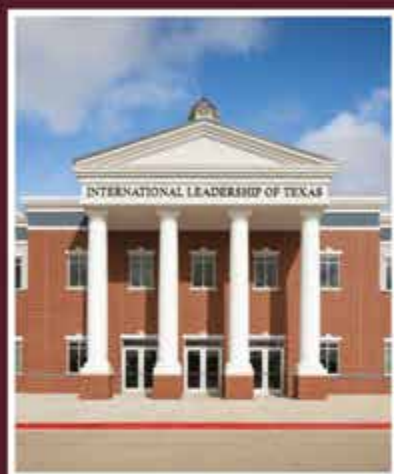
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# A HOT DIY PROJECT

— By Bill Smith



*What could be more pleasant on a cool, late-fall-through-early-spring evening than being seated around your own backyard fire pit? As a do-it-yourself project, the task is not only relatively simple, but it's also inexpensive and can be completed in just a day.*

You'll need some common tools for this project. Both a straight and a pointed shovel will come in handy. A level — ideally a two-foot level and a four-foot level. Have a two-by-four about three feet long to use as a screed. A rubber mallet will help align your stones, and something with which to tamp the base down is also needed.

Materials include retaining wall blocks (36 is a good number for an average fire pit), square concrete pavers might be used for the floor of the pit, but some people also use

gravel or lava rock. If you choose the pavers, get some pea gravel to fill in the gaps. One bag of sand or paver base should be adequate. Get a metal fire pit ring.

Site selection is the first consideration, even before driving to the local home improvement store to choose the materials. Find a spot that is relatively level, with a water source nearby and far enough from any structures that an unfriendly fire can be easily extinguished. It appears that 15 feet from other structures is a common distance, but it is always a good idea to check local building codes before you make your final decision.

Your fire pit may be round or square, with the round structure perhaps the most popular. Paving stones or retaining wall blocks are available with sides cut at an angle so that 10 stones joined tightly together will produce a pit about 25 inches in diameter, whereas 12 stones might yield 30 to 35 inches. The thickness of the stones will determine the final height of the pit, and a common design of a backyard pit is three stones high.

Some large home improvement stores may sell a kit



that includes the stones and a metal fire ring, including instructions and a diagram of the completed size of the pit. One might want to just get an idea of what size pit the kit will produce and make a few changes, or just purchase the kit and create a “stock version.” Creating your custom kit might prove to be a little less expensive, but you will probably want to include a metal fire ring with this project, so that should be the first thing to consider, since that will give you an idea of the size of your pit and how many retaining wall blocks you will need.

After you determine the location and purchase the stones and fire ring, you will need to dig a hole. Place the metal fire ring on the ground in your selected location, and surround it with the first layer of stones. Push the shovel into the ground at regular intervals around the stones to mark the circle. Then remove the blocks and dig the hole about seven inches deep inside the area you marked.

To make sure you have a firm, level base, put sand or paver base in the hole. If you are on clay soil, drainage could be an issue, so you might want to dig another, deeper hole in the middle and fill it with gravel to provide a place for excess water to go. Use a level and a screed (a two-by-four works fine) to make sure the base is level and tamp the base down firmly.

Place your first row of stones around the inside of the first hole and make sure the top is level. You can always add a little sand or paver base under part of the individual stones or take a little away to get the first row as level as possible. If the first row is level, the next rows should be also.

If you haven't already put the metal fire ring in place, do it now, then add your next two rows of stones. The project could be considered complete at this point, but some builders like to add either heat-resistant adhesive or mortar to hold the stones in place.

Well done! Now it's time to bring out the marshmallows and make some s'mores! **NOW**

- Sources:
1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pWffhXndXr4>.
  2. <https://www.hgtv.com/outdoors/landscaping-and-hardscaping/how-to-build-a-fire-pit-for-less-than-100>.

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## BusinessNOW

# The Cottages on Cantrell

— By Adam Walker

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**Hours:** Monday-Friday: 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.  
Contact for an appointment.

The Cottages on Cantrell are a community of brand-new homes tucked away, within walking distance of historic downtown Waxahachie. Phase I of the neighborhood consists of 17 residences, 13 of which are already occupied. The next phase will be eight residences closer to the main road. “They’ll be the same concept as our current units,



eight units and a carriage house,” explained Marketing and Business Manager Kylee Pendery.

“We’re a smaller floor plan community,” added Project Manager Donnie Lord. “While this idea is new to Waxahachie, it’s been around a while. The idea started in Seattle and spread to other dense urban areas. We’re planned as a collection of homes — eight residences and a carriage house with meeting areas and extra space for celebrating with friends and community.”

Their floor plans range from a 1,200-square-foot, two-bedroom, one-bath, up to a 1,500-square-foot, three-bedroom, two-bath. “Some of our residents are young singles, starting out with their first homes, while others are retirees who are downsizing,” Donnie revealed. One big pro of our community is that the HOA fees pay for all landscaping and yard maintenance. This is a great place if you want to enjoy a lock-and-leave lifestyle. You get all the enjoyment of home ownership without all the hassles. These are lovely homes that are easy to maintain. We wanted to build beautiful homes that the community can



be proud of. Canyon Creek and Bradbury Construction are the two builders who are helping us do that.”

The Cottages on Cantrell are half a mile from historic downtown Waxahachie, and connected, by a new pedestrian bridge, to the old Bullard Heights Neighborhood Park, providing easy walking access to downtown shopping and restaurants, Railyard Park, the Farmers Market and the city dog park. “You can see the courthouse from here,” Donnie enthused. “We also have our own dog park here in The Cottages at Cantrell community. We’re happy to share we just opened our recently completed pocket park, including covered seating, for quiet enjoyment. We have a fitness center, and some of the space inside has been converted to a flex yoga studio with a local instructor.” As far as accessing the wider world, I-35 is just a quarter of a mile away.

“WE WANTED TO BUILD BEAUTIFUL HOMES THAT THE COMMUNITY CAN BE PROUD OF.”

“We’re here, and people are forging neighborly friendships,” Donnie pointed out. “These people value both the sense of community and their independence. We’re making a shift away from wanting acreage, toward close community. People understand the appeal of this lifestyle — ownership with no maintenance.”

“We understand the challenges of the post-COVID real estate market, but we’ve seen a massive uptick in interest this summer,” Kylee emphasized. “We only have four units left in Phase I. Selling those will trigger the building of Phase II. If you’re interested in learning more, come see our model home at the address in our contact information. And speak to Missy Phillips at Remington Team Realty if you’re ready to buy!” **NOW**

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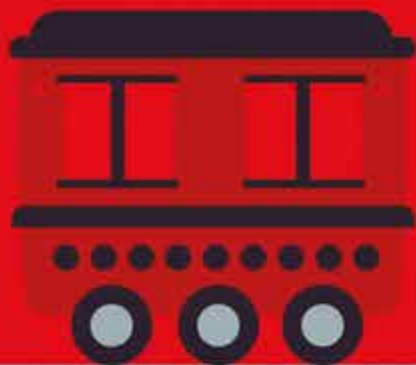
The Common Sage Boutique, 126 N. 8th St., B



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Zoomed In:  
Leilani Soto

By Angel Morris

Waiting at a local oil change shop, Leilani Soto and her father discussed her enjoyment of volleyball when another patron shared that his granddaughter was a volleyball player at Midlothian High School. “Avery Shanahan’s grandfather reminded Leilani of how her own granddad — who passed away a couple years before — had been her biggest fan,” Leilani’s mom, Paty, said.

The Sotos decided to go watch Avery play, and Leilani was inspired. Ultimately, she tried out for and made the Dieterich Middle School volleyball team, and she continues to watch Avery play when she can. “At one game, Avery tossed a small volleyball she’d decorated for me. At another, I made a poster for Avery and cheered her on with some of my teammates,” Leilani shared. “My grandfather never got to see me play, but I hope he would be as proud of me as Avery’s granddad is of her!”



Elizabeth Valle and Zachary Cardenas perform in Midlothian High School Theatre’s production of Aladdin Jr.



Unite Ellis hosts a Cost of Poverty Experience explaining the challenges faced by those trying to overcome the cycle of poverty.



Paws for Reflection Ranch receives a \$10,000 donation from H-E-B to support its therapeutic services in the community.



MISD Board President Gary Vineyard does the coin toss at a recent MHS Panthers game.





Volunteer Tracy Gonzalez puts finishing touches on a tree made of tree stands for the Habitat for Humanity-Ellis County Festival of Trees.



Nidia Barajas, AKA Ninabee, and Juan and Henry Ybarra enjoy National Night Out in the Rosebud neighborhood.



Steve VanGeem, Rilee Mathews and Anthony Absetz volunteer for FBC Midlothian's Beast Feast.

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# CookingNOW In the Kitchen With JORDAN DUDLEY

— By Angel Morris

The holidays are Jordan Dudley's favorite time because, "It's the perfect time to bake with family and friends, share great food and make memories!" she said. "Baking also brings me close to my children, and I always look forward to this time of year."

Baking as a child with her grandmother is a special memory. "We once tried a new cake recipe, and it turned out so hard we couldn't cut it with a knife," Jordan recalled. "Gran threw it out and said, 'We never speak of this to anyone!'"

A tattoo artist for a decade, Jordan became known as The Tattooed Baker when she committed to her real passion. "I enjoy any form of art, and I find cakes so diverse," she described. "All the things you can do with flavors and buttercream ... They are definitely my favorite to bake, and they are so beautiful." **NOW**

## Super Moist Yellow Cake

Jordan's 2024 State Fair Honorable Mention Recipe.

*Cake:*

**Baker's Joy nonstick baking spray**  
**4 large eggs, room temperature**  
**3 tsp. vanilla extract**  
**3 tsp. vegetable oil**  
**1 1/2 cups granulated sugar**

**1 cup full-fat milk**  
**1/2 cup unsalted butter**  
**2 cups plain all-purpose flour**  
**2 1/2 tsp. baking powder**  
**1/4 tsp. salt**

*Buttercream Frosting:*

**8 sticks salted butter, room temperature**  
**1 2-lb. bag powdered sugar**  
**3 tsp. vanilla extract**

**1 cup milk chocolate chips**  
**1/2 cup heavy whipping cream**

- 1. For cake:** Preheat the oven to 350 F. Spray 2 8-inch cake tins with Baker's Joy nonstick baking spray. In a large bowl, beat the eggs for 30 seconds. Add the vanilla and oil. Slowly add in the sugar. Beat until the mixture triples in volume, about 7 minutes; set aside.
- 2.** Heat the milk and butter in the microwave until melted, about 2 minutes. Slowly add the flour, baking powder and salt to the milk/butter mixture.
- 3.** In a separate bowl, add about 1 1/2 cups of the egg mixture to the milk mixture, beating vigorously. Once incorporated, add this mixture with the remaining egg mixture, beating slowly for about 15 seconds. The batter should be smooth and pourable.
- 4.** Pour the batter evenly into the cake tins; bang the tins three times on the countertop to remove any bubbles. Bake until golden, about 30 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the cake's center comes out clean.
- 5. For frosting:** Beat the butter on medium speed until it turns fluffy and white. Slowly



add the powdered sugar and vanilla, beating an additional 4-5 minutes until smooth. Separate the mixture into two bowls.

**6.** Melt the chocolate chips and whipping cream together in the microwave, about 1 1/2 minutes. Whisk together until smooth.

**7.** Once smooth, add the chocolate mix to one bowl of butter cream frosting, mixing until incorporated. Now you have two flavors of frosting to apply to the cake as you desire. (Of course, you can make one bowl of just buttercream or one bowl of just chocolate buttercream, if you prefer only one flavor of frosting for your cake.)

**Mini Christmas Pecan Pies**

- 1 1/2 cups pecan halves**
- 1 cup white sugar**
- 3 large eggs, beaten**
- 1/2 cup light corn syrup**
- 1/2 cup dark corn syrup**
- 1/4 tsp. salt**
- 2 Tbsp. butter, melted**
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract**
- 18 3-inch ready-to-bake mini pie shells**

- 1.** Preheat the oven to 350 F Place the pecan halves in a food processor; pulse until they are coarsely chopped.
- 2.** Mix the sugar, eggs, corn syrups, salt, melted butter and vanilla in a bowl. Fold in the pecans. Spoon 1/4 cup of the pecan mixture into each pie shell; transfer the pies onto a baking sheet.
- 3.** Bake until slightly browned, about 25-30 minutes. Serve warm or cool. May be stored in an airtight container for up to a week.

**Sugar Cookies**

- Cookies:*
- 2 sticks butter, room temperature**
  - 1 tsp. vanilla**
  - 2 large eggs**
  - 1 cup granulated white sugar**
  - 3 cups all-purpose flour**

- Icing:*
- 3 Tbsp. Wilton Meringue Powder**
  - 6 Tbsp. water**
  - 1 16-oz. bag powdered sugar (divided use)**
- Food coloring**

- 1.** For cookies: Combine the butter, vanilla, eggs and sugar, beating until incorporated. Slowly add the flour. (I recommend using a mixer paddle attachment because this type of cookie gets very stiff.)
- 2.** Roll out the cookie dough 3/8-inch thick; cut into desired shapes. Bake at 350 F for 13 minutes.
- 3.** For icing: Mix the meringue powder, water and half the bag of powdered sugar. You can add more powdered sugar or more

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Sugar Cookies

water to make the texture you desire. Separate the icing into multiple bowls and add food coloring, if desired, for several colors with which to ice the cookies.

## Robert's Cherry Dump Cake

*A family favorite recipe.*

- 1 20-oz. can crushed pineapple in juice
- 1 21-oz. can cherry pie filling
- 1 box yellow cake mix
- 12 Tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
- 1 cup pecans, chopped

**1.** Preheat the oven to 350 F. Spray a 2.8-L casserole dish or a 9×13-inch baking pan with nonstick cooking spray. Pour the crushed pineapple (with its juice) and cherry pie filling into the bottom of the dish or baking pan. Open the cake mix; sprinkle the powder evenly over the top.

**2.** Pour the melted butter evenly over the top of the cake mix. Make sure it is evenly distributed so that it all cooks into the cake mix. Sprinkle the chopped pecans over the top.

**3.** Bake for 35–45 minutes until the fruit starts to bubble up around the edges and

the edges start to turn golden. Different pans will have different baking times, so start checking after 30 minutes. Serve hot with a scoop of vanilla ice cream!

To search for more great recipes from any of the 9 NOW Magazines publications, visit [www.nowmagazines.com](http://www.nowmagazines.com).

## ENDING THE YEAR WELL: A GUIDE TO FINISHING STRONG



**Ufon Ahime, Ph.D.**  
Mental Health Coach  
[ufonahime@higherlivingtoday.org](mailto:ufonahime@higherlivingtoday.org)



SCAN THE QR CODE TO SIGN UP FOR MY BIWEEKLY NEWSLETTER.

As the year draws to a close, many of us find ourselves reflecting on what we've achieved, the challenges we've faced, and what still lies ahead. Here's how to approach ending the year on a high note.

- 1. Reflect and Celebrate Your Wins** - Take time to look back over the year, both the big achievements and the small victories.
  - 2. Learn from Your Challenges** - Not every goal is accomplished in a year, and that's okay. Acknowledging what didn't go as planned is an important part of growth.
  - 3. Practice Gratitude** - As the year closes, reflect on the people, experiences, and opportunities that brought you joy, peace, or growth and be thankful for them.
  - 4. Tie Up Loose Ends** - Consider any unfinished business or projects that you want to address before the year ends. Doing so can help you feel more in control and ready to start the new year with a clean slate.
  - 5. Set Intentions for the New Year** - Rather than making rigid resolutions, consider setting intentions or general themes for the year ahead.
  - 6. Rest and Recharge** - After a year of hard work, taking time to rest is crucial. Allow yourself to recharge physically, mentally, and emotionally.
- Ending the year well isn't about finishing perfectly but rather finishing with intention, peace, and gratitude. Here's to finishing strong and beginning anew!

## SCAVENGER HUNT WINNER!



Kim Soto and her daughter Brenley enjoy searching together for the hidden images every month. Congratulations on being our October winners!





# Come, let us Worship the King!

Merry  
Christmas  
AND  
Happy New  
Year

*She will bear a son, and you  
shall call his name Jesus,  
for he will save his people  
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MATTHEW 1:21

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# A Leisurely Ride THROUGH HISTORY

— By Bill Smith

*The No. 1 attraction for driving along the Natchez Trace Parkway is probably just being able to slow down and enjoy the relaxation that is inherent in the trip. This is a place where “the destination might truly be the journey.” Meandering over 400 miles across Mississippi, a brief pass through just a corner of Alabama and concluding in Tennessee, there may be no better way to experience the natural beauty of these Southern states than a drive along the parkway.*

Automobile travel is not the only way to traverse the Natchez Trace Parkway, as each year thousands of cyclists ride part or all of the route. In addition, there are numerous hiking and equestrian trails along the way. As part of the National Park Service, there are camping and picnic sites to enjoy. NPS Interactive Park Ranger Kristen Maxfield said in an introductory video, “The Natchez Trace Parkway is really made for recreation. You can enjoy the natural beauty at a slower pace.”

There are a number of historically significant attractions along the parkway. About halfway through Mississippi

is the Colonel James Drane House. Constructed about 1847, it was once the home of one of the earliest settlers of Choctaw County, Mississippi. The home has been considered a treasure of early antebellum architecture, featuring a dog run on the lower floor. The home was moved near the Natchez Trace Parkway in 1981 and now serves as a museum overseen by the French Camp Academy. The restoration of the house was overseen by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

There are several Indian mounds along the parkway, and the Bear Creek Mound and Village Site is farther northeast about 45 miles from Tupelo, Mississippi, near the Alabama state line. Dating back about 1,000 years, the mound was used for either Indian ceremonies or was perhaps the site of the home of one of the prominent leaders of the Indians who were settled in the area. Prior to its acquisition by the National Park Service, landowners and farmers had lowered the height of the mound as a result of their plowing. After it was excavated by archeologists in 1965, the mound was built back to its estimated original width and height of 85 feet across and 8 feet high. Additional Mounds are located along the Natchez Trace Parkway, including the Emerald, Pharr, Bynum and Boyd Mounds.

Cave Spring is another site worthy of a stop along the beautiful parkway, and it is not far from Bear Creek Mound. Considered a sacred American Indian site, Cave Spring is likely a place where the Indians who built Bear Creek Mound drew water. It is a limestone cave with a wide and impressive opening, but entry is prohibited by the National Park Service,





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and the water is no longer considered potable. However, a visit to the cave is a must when one is in the area, as it is a beautiful place, and caves in Mississippi are certainly rare. A nature trail leads to the entrance of the cave, and it is nicely paved for a pleasant hike.

Natchez Trace Parkway is a road trip worth taking, whether you plan to stop along the way to take an in-depth look at the history of the area, or your plan is just a leisurely drive in the country. Follow the links below for more information about these sites, as well as links to the many additional sites along the way. It is a trip through time you are sure to enjoy! **NOW**

Sources:

1. <https://www.nps.gov/natr/index.htm>.
2. <https://www.apps.mdah.ms.gov/public/prop.aspx?id=3568&view=facts&y=1176>U.S. Department of the Interior, National Register of Historic Places.
3. <https://www.natcheztracetravel.com/natchez-trace-mississippi/tishomingo-belmont-ms/130-cave-spring.html>.

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

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

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# Merry CHRISTMAS DECEMBER

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

**Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony:**

Usher in the holiday season with an evening of community fellowship, Christmas spirit and the lighting of the city tree. 6:00-7:00 p.m., Heritage Park, 234 N. 8th Street. Rainout date is 12/3.

12/7

**Jingle Belles 5K and Rubies Fun Run:**

Heritage Belles Booster Club hosts this third annual race including donuts, coffee, hot chocolate and School of Rock playing live Christmas

music. Take pictures with the Heritage Belles and maybe even the Grinch. 8:00 a.m., Midlothian Community Park, 3601 S. 14th St. Register at <https://runsignup.com/.../JingleBelles5KandRubiesFunRun>.

**New City Hall & Library Grand Opening Celebration:**

Ceremony: 10:00 a.m.; tours until noon, 215 N. 8th St. Check out the library's website for a schedule of December events: [www.midlothian.tx.us/library](http://www.midlothian.tx.us/library).

**City Christmas Celebration:**

Festivities include take-and-make crafts, holiday market, selfies with Santa, entertainment

and more. 1:00-5:00 p.m., downtown 8th Street. Movie Magic Light-up Parade: 6:00 p.m., downtown 8th Street to West Avenue F to Overlook Drive.

12/12

**Jingle Mingle Crawl:**

This holiday crawl through local Chamber businesses features special deals, extended hours and seasonal cheer, offering a chance to connect with the community, support local businesses and get into the holiday spirit. All day.

**Shop, Sip & Roll Merry & Bright:**

11 boutiques and stores in downtown Midlothian, Founders Row and beyond share refreshments and specials. Ride a red trolley around town to shop while supporting local businesses. 5:00-8:30 p.m.

12/13

**Merry Movie Night:**

Bring the family to watch *Elf* and enjoy free refreshments while supplies last. Bring blankets and chairs for lawn seating. 6:30 p.m., Midlothian Community Park, 3601 S. 14th St.


*Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your current event details to [angel.morris@nowmagazines.com](mailto:angel.morris@nowmagazines.com).*

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