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DECEMBER 2025

Family, Faith and Festivity

At Home With Karl and
Annette Goss

2025 Holiday
Shopping Guide

Also inside:

Scavenger Hunt

Crossword/Sudoku

Deck-oupage the Halls

Upcycle old ornaments
and candles into unique
Christmas decor

In the Kitchen With
Spencer Godard

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Adam

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Tales of long ago ...

We don't have much that belonged to our great-grandmother, but one thing we do have is a glass Christmas ornament. It's yellow and silver with a thin band of white and red, if I'm remembering correctly. It's been years since we actually hung it on the tree. Mom didn't want to risk the dogs breaking it. But every year, we take it out, look at it and rehearse family stories about the woman who bought it. She died the year before Mom was born, so all Mom's stories were memories passed on by her mother and aunts, but it's enough to make her real to me. And she's been part of my Christmases ever since I first asked my mom about that ornament as a little boy.

Her name was Hester Mada Carroll. She married a Samford and had three daughters. She's remembered in family stories as a jokester and lover of pranks, often involving Christmas presents — like that package full of the “southbound ends of

northbound chickens” — her favorite part!

I never met her, but my great-grandmother has always been part of my Christmases. And I'm helping ensure that her great-great- and great-great-great-grandkids know about her, too.

... Still warm hearts.

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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ON THE COVER



Christmas past shines bright as today at the Goss house.

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Meet Tammy:

Tammy is a caring, experienced, and passionate provider who truly believes that great health care starts with *listening* and *empowering patients*.

Her journey in health care began in 2016, after earning her Nursing degree from Gulf Coast State College. Over the next several years, she worked in **Emergency Medicine, Wound Care, and Long-Term Acute Care**, gaining a wealth of hands-on experience caring for patients in critical moments.

In 2022, Tammy earned her Master of Science in Nursing from The University of Texas at Arlington and later completed a fellowship with A&M, where she began her exciting journey into **Functional and**

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Tammy's heart for medicine began in high school, inspired by her family members who worked as ER nurses. That early spark grew into a true calling — helping people understand their health; take charge of their wellness; and live vibrant, fulfilling lives.

When she's not caring for patients, Tammy loves spending time with her wonderful husband and four amazing kids. She brings the same warmth, compassion, and dedication to her patients that she does to her family.

We couldn't be more thrilled to have Tammy on our team — and we know you'll love her too!

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Family, Faith and Festivity

— By Adam Walker

Karl and Annette Goss have been celebrating Christmas in the same house since 1991. They weren't married yet, and both of them were living in Dallas, when a friend's invitation changed their lives. "I had friends down the street here," Karl remembered. "John Baley was a pioneer in buying and fixing up old houses. I was working in Dallas and hadn't been to Waxahachie before John invited us down. He told us the bank had foreclosed on this house, and we should go look at it. We looked in the windows."

"We were going to be married one month later," Annette informed. "I wanted this house, so we bought it."

"I thought we were going to fix it up and sell it," Karl admitted. "There's nothing like a new marriage to test an old fixer-upper. She didn't tell me we were going to live here forever."

"We're still here 34 years later," Annette beamed. "This house had been vacant for two years. And before that, it had been a restaurant. His dad came up from Houston every weekend for the first nine months of our marriage, to help work on this place."

"We lived in one room upstairs, while everything else had to be redone," Karl added. "I turned 30, got married and bought this house all in the same year."

"If we had known how much work it was going to be, we wouldn't have done it, but we're glad we did," Annette confessed. They've celebrated a lot of Christmases in this house, raising two kids. "This was a fun house to raise kids in. Our son, Matthew, and daughter, April, are 13 months apart."

"Remember the year we got them tricycles? They rode around and around," Karl said, indicating the corner of the room where the entry, living room and dining room come together, only separated by pocket doors. "We would close off the doors on Christmas Eve, so Christmas morning would be a big reveal. We'd come downstairs together and video the whole thing as we slid the doors open."



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**Karl and
Annette Goss**





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~ Luke 2:11



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"Our son is married now, and our daughter is engaged to Jonathan," Annette continued. "But they always come home for Christmas. When they were little, we had the tradition of driving to Marshall every year to cut a tree. We always have a live tree. We would eat there, cut the tree and watch their Christmas parade. The whole town lights up. Then we would change into our new Christmas pajamas to drive home. We had to revise that tradition when they went away to college, but we still do the pajamas. I have 30 sets of Christmas pajamas upstairs. Last year, they were Snoopy with real big candy canes. This year, it's pink-and-green for the girls, and blue-and-green for the boys, with Christmas trees. Oh, and our dog, Henry, and our son's Golden, get pajamas, too! Matthew and Caroline bring their dog, Bonnie, so we have two dogs and the two cats, Katniss and Daisy, for Christmas."

That isn't the only Christmas tradition in the Goss house. They always put the tree in the front room, in front of the beveled glass windows, so rainbows of light dance around it as the sun moves through the day. And they always use tinsel icicles on that tree. Another tree graces the music room, where they host a music party for their church, Christ the King Lutheran. "We like to entertain family and friends," Annette said. "That tree is decorated with ornaments that were on a tree we bought at the Festival of Trees, long ago. It was decorated with musical instruments. Trees come and go, but the ornaments remain." Advent has always been an important part of the Goss family celebrations and

a way of keeping Christ at the center of their Christmas.

The house was originally built in 1910 by the Durham family, who owned the dry goods store downtown, where the museum is today. The house passed through different hands until the 1970s. From 1975 to 1989, it was the famous Durham House restaurant. “It was a place for special occasions,” Karl explained. “Most of the clientele was from Dallas. *Esquire Magazine* listed it as one of the top 100 restaurants in the country. President Reagan was invited here by the county Republican Party, but Secret Service nixed that.” One thing the restaurant left behind when they closed was a set of unique chandeliers made of papier-mâché. Over the years, the Gosses have opened their house six times on the tour of homes.



“The first time we were on the Gingerbread tour, in ’95, the paint was still drying,” Annette remembered. “We hardly had furniture in here. I ran to Walmart and bought baskets to place around, to make it look like we really did live here. Mr. Montgomery, whose family had owned the house from 1945 to 1975, came to see his old home. We let him stay as long as he wanted.”

Karl and Annette enjoy the comforts of yesteryear in the house they restored together, where they raised their family through Christmas after Christmas. They make time for welcoming friends and family into their celebrations, and they invite them to step back in time with them. They don’t let the modern world rush their Christmas, starting with Advent and pacing through the season. And maybe you’ll get your Christmas card by Easter. **NOW**



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David is proud of his team's years of experience in the industry. "Together, we

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"Together, we have more than 100 years of experience. My dad and my uncles were all roofers. I worked summers with my dad since I was a teenager, but I got into this full time in 2012."

David looks at his business differently. "We're a small business with Christian values. I set out to always do the right thing. I have given free roofs to people in real need, like an elderly lady who had holes in her roof. She didn't have the money to fix it, so she just wanted us to tarp it. I decided to re-roof her house for free. We're a business, and we're about making money, but we're also here to help. I want to help my family, but also the community."



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DECK-OU PAGE THE HALLS

— By Emma McKay

As the Christmas season draws near, people start dusting off their yuletide decorations — and adding new ones to their collection. While the knickknacks on store shelves can be cute, nothing feels more in-line with the holiday season than homemade trinkets. Decoupage ornaments or candles puts a personal touch on otherwise plain objects, and the memory of making them can be created without spending much money. To create these beautiful statement pieces, you can upcycle items you already have on hand or easily find most of the supplies at a thrift or dollar store.

DECOUPAGE ORNAMENTS

Decorative napkins

Scissors

Glass Christmas ball ornaments (Depending on your napkin/tissue paper pattern, white or clear balls may work best.)

Flat paintbrush or painting sponge

Mod Podge

Ribbon

1. Carefully separate the layers of your napkins, discarding the blank layer.
2. Cut the napkins into 1-inch strips, long enough to wrap around the circumference of your ornament but not more. If your napkin has large images on it that you do not want broken up, you can use the creases in the napkin to help guide you into cutting it into fourths.
3. Remove the hangers from your ornaments.
4. Brush a thin layer of Mod Podge on the ornaments.
5. *For napkin strips:* Place one end of a napkin strip at the top of the ornament, then wrap it around the length of the ornament, making sure it adheres to the curve of the ball.
6. Rotate the ornament 90 degrees, then repeat Step 5. When looking at the bottom of the ornament, the napkins should make an X.
7. For the remaining blank space, either repeat Step 5 until the whole ornament is covered, or cut the strips of napkins to the size of those spaces and adhere them.
8. *For napkin fourths:* Place one corner at the top of the ornament, then carefully wrap the napkin around the rest of the ornament, making small folds to cover the whole thing.
9. Now that the whole ornament is covered, brush a layer of Mod Podge over the napkins. You may need to adjust the material or add a little bit of Mod Podge under any folds to make it lie flat against the ornament's surface.
10. Let the ornament dry for a few hours.
11. Once the Mod Podge has completely dried, trim any excess material around the top of the ornament, so that the hanger will fit as you place it back on the ornament.
12. Tie a piece of ribbon into a bow on the loop of the hanger.

DECOUPAGE CANDLES

- Decorative napkins
- Scissors
- Electric or real cylinder candle
- Flat paintbrush or painting sponge
- Mod Podge
- Craft glue (optional)
- Ribbon, rhinestones or other decorative things (optional)

1. Carefully separate the layers of your napkins, discarding the blank layer.
2. Cut the napkins to the height and circumference (plus 1/4 inch) of your candle, or just cut out any large images that you want from the napkins to stick them on individually.
3. *For full coverage:* Brush a thin layer of Mod Podge over the candle.
4. Line up the edge of the napkin with the bottom of the candle, then carefully wrap it around the rest of the candle. Have the 1/4 inch extra length of napkin overlap the start of your napkin, so the candle is completely covered.
5. *For just the images:* Brush Mod Podge on the candle where you wish to place the image, then apply it to the candle. You can even treat this as a collage, using images from different napkins and overlapping images to create your own unique scene. When overlapping the napkins, be sure to give the first one that's Mod Podged down time to dry. Otherwise, the excess glue could tear the napkins.
6. Brush a layer of Mod Podge over the napkins, smoothing out the wrinkles as you go.
7. Let the candle dry for a few hours.
8. Once dried, you can glue ribbons, rhinestones or whatever crafting supplies you'd like to fill in any gaps or cover the rough edges of your napkins.
9. If you don't want to use Mod Podge on the candle, you can also apply the napkins using an iron or another handheld heat source. Just place the napkins where you want them, wrap the candle tightly in parchment paper, then on low heat, slowly work your iron around the candle. This melts the wax enough to bind to the napkin. Once the candle has cooled, you can remove the parchment paper and enjoy your new decoration! **NOW**

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Zoomed In: Brittany and Carlos Trochez

By Adam Walker

Brittany and Carlos Trochez dove into an evening of mystery and mayhem at the Sims Library's murder mystery dinner theater. "Brittany is the mystery fan. I came for the cosplay," Carlos confessed.

"I love reading mysteries, especially Dean Koontz," Brittany divulged. "We heard about this on Facebook and thought it sounded like fun. Coming in costume makes it more fun. I bought mine at a Halloween store."

"I only bought the hat. The rest of my costume was already in my closet," Carlos, who frequents Ren Faires, revealed.

Carlos was roped into playing the role of the bitter son of the murder victim, whose father had destroyed his dreams of playing professional soccer ... only to learn, as the plot thickened, that his father was actually his uncle!



Cristal Hernandez and Daniel Bush get in a game of pickleball after work.



The Friends of the Sims Library hold their annual book sale.



David Weekley Homes celebrates the grand opening of their model home in Myrtle Creek.



Alisha Sanchez, Dee Gonzales and Josh Langley of Waxahachie Animal Services help Scooby and Toulouse find homes.



Steve Miller gives a demonstration for the Ellis County Art Association.



Kingdom Explorers Homeschool Group visits the Ellis County Rural Heritage Farm.



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Elaine Riddle, winner of the \$50 cash prize from NOW Magazines, said, "I love the magazines and the way it covers all the local things."

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Pan-Seared Steak

CookingNOW

IN THE KITCHEN WITH SPENCER GODARD

— By Adam Walker



Spencer Godard enjoys cooking because it gives him a way to care for his wife. “Sitting down to a meal I’ve made for us feels like more than just food. It’s time together. And as our family grows one day, I want to keep getting better, so cooking can always be something that brings us together and puts a smile on my wife’s face. I want the meals I make now to one day become the meals our kids grow up remembering,” he said.

“For my wife, Greece isn’t just a place on a map. It’s the rhythm of family gatherings, laughter echoing through the kitchen and the smell of warm butter and cheese drifting from the oven. One of her favorite dishes, and one of the first she ever made for me, is Tiropita — Greek phyllo cheese triangles. She grew up helping her family make these little parcels. To her, Tiropita is comfort and connection, and now it’s become part of our story, too.”

When it came time to plan their wedding, they both knew those little pastries had to be part of the celebration. “They’re more than just food,” he said. “They’re a tribute to my wife’s Greek roots and to the home we’re building together.” **NOW**

Tiropita

- 2 cups feta cheese, crumbled
- 2 cups Monterey Jack cheese, grated
- 3 large eggs
- 1/2 tsp. black pepper
- 1 lb. phyllo pastry (fresh or thawed)
- 1 lb. melted butter, clarified

1. Preheat the oven to 300 F
2. In a bowl, combine the cheeses, eggs and pepper; blend well.
3. Cover the phyllo with foil to prevent

- drying. Take 3 sheets at a time, brushing each sheet with melted butter. Stack the 3 sheets, and cut the stacked sheets into 6 strips, about 2x13 inches.
4. Place 1 tsp. of the cheese mixture at the base of a strip, and fold into triangles, as you would a flag.
 5. Repeat with the remaining sheets of phyllo and cheese mixture until you have 40-45 pieces.
 6. Brush the triangles with butter; prick them with a toothpick, if desired.
 7. Place on a cookie sheet seam side down;

bake for 10 minutes. Raise the temperature to 350 F. Bake another 10 minutes or until golden brown. *Note: To freeze: Do not bake. Pack in freezer containers or bags. Keeps for several weeks.*

Pan-Seared Steak

- 1 steak, any quality cut
- Salt, to taste
- Pepper, to taste
- 2 Tbsp. butter
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 1 tsp. onion powder

1. Season the steak with salt and pepper.
2. In a hot skillet, pan-sear the steak, about 3 minutes on each side for medium rare, or until it smells right. When the aroma turns savory and rich, that’s when I know it’s right. Limit how often you turn the steak. Let it develop a crust before flipping.
3. Add butter, garlic and onion powder to the pan; stir until the butter is melted. Spoon the sauce gently over the steak, a little at a time, basting it so the flavors seep in without overpowering.

Roasted Asparagus

- 1 bunch fresh asparagus
- Olive oil, to taste
- Salt, to taste
- Pepper, to taste

1. In a pan lined with aluminum foil, drizzle the asparagus with olive oil. Add salt and pepper.
2. Bake in the oven at 350 F, until the tips are lightly crisp and nutty, about 15 minutes.

Buttered Sweet Potatoes

- Butter, to taste
- 2 sweet potatoes

1. Smear butter on your hands, and slather each sweet potato until it is well-coated.
2. Wrap the sweet potatoes in foil, and roast them in the oven, at 350 F for 45 minutes to 1 hour, until fork-tender, allowing the butter to soak through for natural sweetness.





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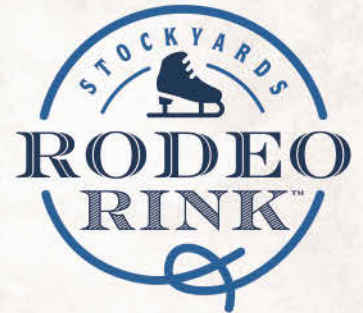
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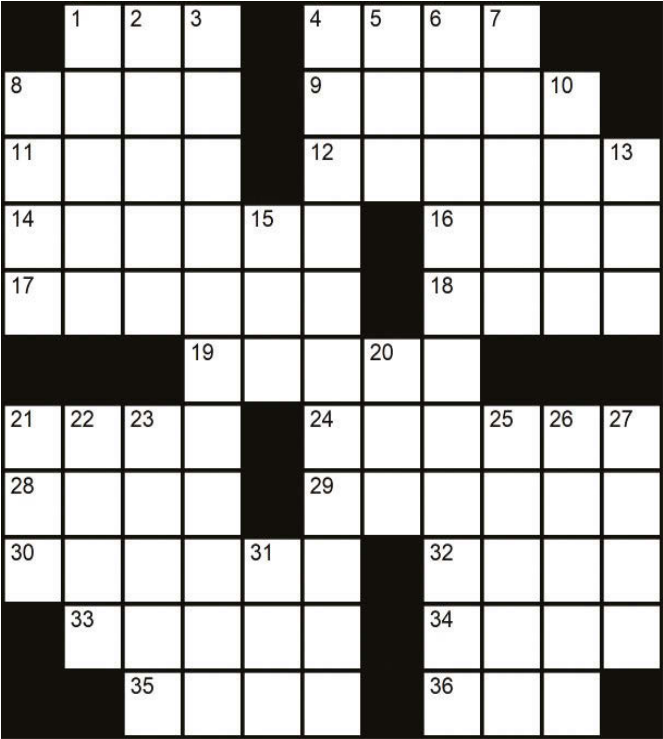


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Crossword Puzzle



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Across

- 1 Chucklehead
- 4 Rover's reward
- 8 --- Battlefield Historic State Park
- 9 Blue ribbon, for example
- 11 --- Bradley, five-star General
- 12 "Pride and Prejudice" heroine Elizabeth ---
- 14 Acquire
- 16 Hi or 'bye in Italy
- 17 Where Dorothy was blown away
- 18 Quick sharp bark
- 19 Monica Lewinsky's former friend Linda ---
- 21 Former Russian ruler
- 24 Seismic event
- 28 "Before I forget ..."
- 29 "I Want ---!" (1958 Susan Hayward movie)
- 30 How trains run if they're on schedule
- 32 "Olly Olly --- free"
- 33 It has a World Series, like baseball
- 34 Kind of wave
- 35 Torn clothing
- 36 "--- a Heartache" (Bonnie Tyler song)

Down

- 1 Girl Scout cookie
- 2 "He's --- fool!"
- 3 1980s Soviet policy of reconstruction
- 4 Distributing tasty bribes gets home helps
- 5 "You --- it to yourself"
- 6 Nosy pelican flapped about in the House
- 7 Orange Sesame Street room-mate
- 8 Charging station
- 10 Distribute cards
- 13 Beat
- 15 Ingot
- 20 Sports money-maker
- 21 Make lace
- 22 Farm fare
- 23 Mary --- of "The Maltese Falcon"
- 25 Start fighting
- 26 They take the cake
- 27 "Pandora's Box" painter --- Magritte
- 31 Eldest of the "Little Women"

Online versions and solutions available at www.nowmagazines.com. From our Homepage, click on the Features tab. Click on the Crossword-Sudoku tab. Click on a puzzle to view solutions.


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Easy

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

Medium

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

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47TH ANNIVERSARY

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.

12/5

Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra Christmas Concert:
Tickets: \$15-\$30.
3001 US 287 Tickets at www.waxahachiesymphony.org/.

12/5-12/6

A Christmas Carol:
Friday: 6:00 p.m.; Saturday: 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m., Nelson University Theatre, 1200 Sycamore St. Get tickets at brushfire.com/nelson.

12/5-12/7 and
12/12-12/14

Bethlehem Revisited:
Step back in time to the night

of Christ's birth. 6:00-9:00 p.m., 402 N. College St. (behind Central Presbyterian Church).

12/6

Pancake Breakfast With Santa and Red Oak Hawks:

\$5 per person. 7:00-10:00 a.m., Red Oak Lions Senior Citizens Center, 207 W. Red Oak Rd., Red Oak.

12/12

Downtown Christmas Carriage Rides:

Benefits CASA of Ellis County. 6:00-9:00 p.m., Railyard Park, 455 S. College St.

12/12-12/14

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever:

\$15. Friday and Saturday: 7:30 p.m.; Sunday: 2:30 p.m., University Church, 221 Solon Rd. Purchase tickets at www.waxahachiecommunitytheatre.com. (972) 646-1050.

12/13

Waxahachie Family YMCA Santa Run 5K:
8:00 a.m.-noon, Railyard Park, 455 S. College St. Register at ymcadallas.org/locations/waxahachie-family-ymca.

Nutcracker Tea:

Tickets start at \$20. Show times: 10:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m., Chautauqua Auditorium, 400 S. Grand Ave.

12/13-12/14

Historic Waxahachie Christmas Tour of Homes:
Advance ticket: \$25; tour weekend: \$30. 1:00-7:00 p.m. For details and tickets, www.historicwaxahachie.com/2025christmastourofhomes/.

12/25

Dinner at the VFW:
The VFW opens: 11:30 a.m.; meal served: 3:00 p.m., VFW Post 3894, 1405 N. Interstate Highway 35 E.

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

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