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September 2009

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Contents

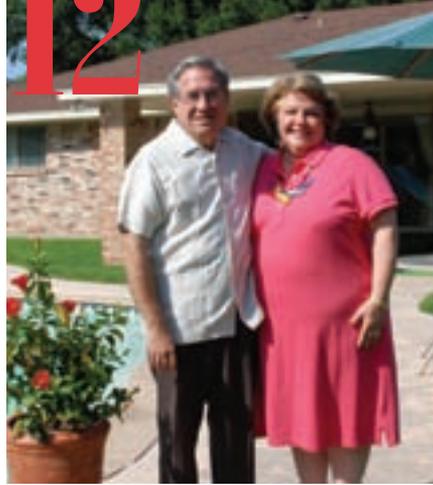
September 2009, Volume 3, Issue 9

8



Teamwork at Its Best

12



From Cuba to DeSoto

16



Walk of Memories

20



Park Avenue — Country Style

At Home With Dalton and Linda Lott

26

ArtsNOW
A Driving Force

28

BusinessNOW
Home Sweet Home



On the Cover:
The Lotts' pool was picked as the most outstanding pool in the nation by *Pool and Spa Living Magazine*.

Photo by Terri Ozymy.

30 Around TownNOW

36 FinanceNOW

34 Who's CookingNOW

38 HealthNOW

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Subscriptions are available at the rate of \$35 per year or \$3.50 per issue. Subscriptions should be sent to: NOW Magazines, P.O. Box 1071, Waxahachie, TX 75168. For advertising rates or editorial correspondence, call (972) 283-1170 or visit www.nowmagazines.com.

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MAGAZINE

Editor's Note

Greetings, Southwest Friends,

Growing up, September meant floating in the tank at the home of my Texas cousins who had already started school, something we did not do in Colorado until the infamous "Day After Labor Day." We may have done more gloating than floating! September also meant new school shoes and school supplies. If we were lucky, it meant three weekends of fall ... golden aspens, a case of hard, crisp, sweet apples from Lyons that may or may not be dusted with the first, fat, sloppy snowflakes of the year. Then again, you might get to discard your sweater for a last, brief flirt with an Indian summer afternoon on the way home from school. Rattlers sunning on the rocks would be as lazy and slow as flies on the windowsill, and so were we.

In Texas, September is merely a flip of the calendar page, a new planner on which to plot and record my life, although the days do grow noticeably shorter. Enjoy those halcyon days laced between the tornadic ones ... oh, and do not forget to read our magazine!

Beverly Shay
SouthwestNOW Editor



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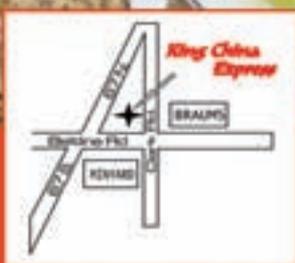
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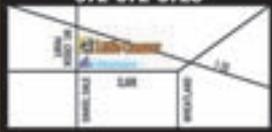
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SUBWAY



TEAMWORK

AT ITS BEST

— By Beverly Shay

Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) teams tend to have a glorified reputation based on TV more than reality. Why are specialized law enforcement teams needed anyway? Cedar Hill's team, designated Emergency Response Team or ERT, is made up of police officers who volunteer both for training and service when crisis situations arise or when the safety of law enforcement officers or the public is at risk.

"The main qualification for the ERT is maturity," stated Lt. John Densmore, who leads, organizes and oversees training and deployment of the Cedar Hill team. "We look for a good record in their primary job responsibility. Our team is considered part time, even though they are on call 24/7. The bulk of our calls involve issuing high-risk warrants, but we also deal with barricade situations or any other high-risk event. We train to respond to mass casualties, natural disaster calls and any other special assignment from Police Chief Steve Rhodes," said Lt. Densmore.

Lt. Densmore was a Marine, from a family of Marines. His primary duties in the Corps included being a marksmanship instructor and artilleryman. He had grown up around guns and was familiar with them. Following his time with the Marine Corps, he tried out various fields of work, but police work seemed like a natural fit. Once out of the academy, his police career in Cedar Hill began as a patrolman.

When the chief wanted to add a response team, Lt.

Densmore was asked to coordinate the development of a manual and training program. "Really, it was a cooperative effort of some 15-20 guys who were interested. We wrote the manual and once it was approved, we formed the team in 2000. The bulk of our team is made up of original members, although we lost and gained some," Lt. Densmore related. Each team member also functions full time in various other police roles. Lt. Densmore is a night shift patrol commander.

"We are blessed to have strong backing from the city manager, mayor, city council, school district, the business force and residents. The predominant view of city leadership is proactive toward police/fire/parks/streets. The priority is safety. For me personally, and my team, it is reassuring that everyone pretty much works together," Lt. Densmore stated.

"I have to say this city is made up of people who, by and large, work together. The citizens and business owners really contribute to our success by allowing us to train in their facilities and use their employees as role players in life-like training situations. Many of the businesses have helped provide equipment for the entire police department," Lt. Densmore remarked. "I could never remember everyone, but I would like to mention Mt. Lebanon Baptist

Camp; they have let us train on numerous occasions, even at the last minute when other arrangements fell through. Northwood University, the Cinemark, CHISD, Texas Trust Bank, La Qunita, Chick-fil-A, Uptown Village [and] Trinity Church all have hosted us in training or helped in some manner. Drama students from the high school have also participated."

Another thing the team does is visit businesses, meet the





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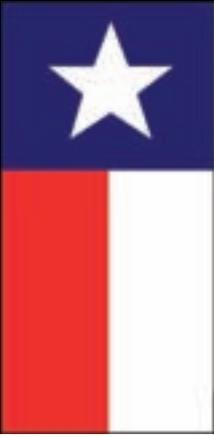
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employees, review the business layout and speak to them about what plans they have in place should something happen. “We familiarize ourselves with the business, building floor plans and employees, as well as letting them get to know us. This instills trust,” Lt. Densmore said, “which is crucial in an emergency. We also work with crime watch groups. They are the ones who, along with patrol officers, do a lot of the footwork and observation for us. They know what is normal and what is not, and they are key in helping to solve crimes. Again, we couldn’t do our training without all of these people.”

Besides training and serving locally, team members attend SWAT training events and train with other agencies and with departments in Ft. Worth, Garland, Irving, as well as the Best Southwest cities. “We can call on other chiefs and agencies to share information and experiences whether we have questions or requests. We have a good networking relationship,” Lt. Densmore commented.

Within the police department itself, this compatibility and cooperation is integral to the unity and efficiency of the force as a whole, as well as supplying tactical support for the ERT. “We have a PACT unit (Police and Community Together). This is not what has become identified as traditional community policing, but more of a link of communication between citizens (who live there and see things we don’t) and the patrol officers. Our victim assistance team walks victims through the process of getting as immediate of help as possible following crimes or accidents, thus freeing the detectives and officers to pursue criminals. In fact, detectives do most of the work, calling us in when a situation necessitates use of ERT to serve a warrant or preserve the safety of police officers, civilians and suspects. Patrol officers block traffic and work

the perimeter so we can be free to work without endangerment to innocent onlookers.

“One of our main goals,” Lt. Densmore emphasized, “is to do the right thing at the right time every time. To accomplish that, we train and then act; training eliminates a lot of difficulties ahead of time. When a situation occurs, we create a written pre-op plan based on our training, brief those involved and follow through with action, somewhat dictated by the suspect or subject, yet based on our plan. After every training and op, we debrief. Each member provides input on the plan, the action, each other and themselves. We also make a detailed critique of both ops and training events. This actually creates confidence, making it easier for each team member to do their job.”

Another key element to success as a police officer and as an ERT member is being grounded at home. “Most of our guys are married with families, mature and experienced at life, as well as skilled in police work. They range in age from 24-44, most being older,” Lt. Densmore maintained. To become a team member requires an extensive selection process involving physical fitness and fire arms qualification; oral interviews with members of the team resulting in a recommendation, which will be reviewed by both the chief and assistant chief; psych evaluations; and an interview with the chief.

“Our guys have to be prepared to save lives — that’s the objective. They cannot take things personally. Most criticism and resistance is directed at the badge, the authority — not the individual. We also have to realize whatever decisions we make have to be backed by law, not personal opinions or our own sense of justice,” Lt. Densmore indicated. “We are grateful, not only that no one has ever been hurt, but also to serve a city that backs us up so willingly.” **NOW**

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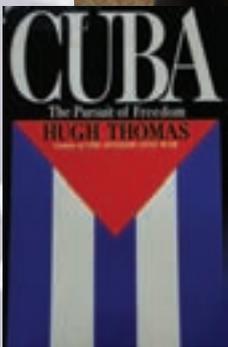
— By Adam Kohut

When Ruben Esquivel was 18 years of age, he boarded a charter flight that would take him from his native Cuba to Jamaica. From there, he would attempt to acquire a visa that would allow him to enter the United States. “It was three years after Castro had taken over,” Ruben said.

“And shortly after the Bay of Pigs [in 1961],” added Alina, Ruben’s wife of 34 years — and childhood sweetheart. Alina had left Cuba three weeks before Ruben, when she was 15. “At the time, there were a lot of rumors ... so you kind of lived in this rumor-filled, you know, what-if, what-if,” she said. “So one of the rumors was that the government was going to take over where children would go to school. During that period of time, a lot of school-age children left. If you had the opportunity, you would.”

Cuban children left the country with two hopes: that they would be able to gain entry into the United States and that they would see their parents again. Ruben and Alina were lucky — they were reunited with their families approximately six months after their departure.

Alina was in Jamaica for just a few days. She had relatives in Miami, which qualified her for a visa waiver. Ruben spent 17 days in Jamaica with his then 11-year-old sister, applying and waiting for their visas to be approved. They then traveled to Miami. “What also adds to the difficulty is that in leaving Cuba, we were only allowed to take a small suitcase with clothing,” Ruben said. “No money, nothing of any value, and that’s how we arrived in Jamaica. There were groups from the U.S. that were helping us — in our case, church



groups — that were there to help the children and young people arriving, and giving us a place to stay. They would give us food and help us go through the process for getting our visas. So, all that was given to us was given from people we didn’t even know.” The same groups covered the cost of Ruben and Alina’s flights from Cuba — an expense the Esquivels are quick to add that they repaid.

Ruben stayed in Miami for a few weeks before he relocated to New Jersey, where he and his sister stayed with family friends. Alina was still in high school, finishing the 10th grade in Miami. After reuniting with her parents that summer, she moved to New York City, where her father’s brother lived. After her mother — a teacher — secured a job teaching high school Spanish, Alina’s family moved to Elizabeth, New Jersey, where she was once again close to Ruben. “I said, ‘We need to move someplace else, because I don’t want to go to high school in New York City,’” she said, referring to the move she made with her parents to New Jersey. “Also, you know, he was on the other side of the Hudson River; I wanted to be close to him, keep

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an eye on him, you know,” she said, laughing and nodding toward Ruben.

In 1965, Ruben and Alina were married. While Alina went to college, Ruben worked full time, attending night classes at the New Jersey Institute of Technology. The plan was for Alina to graduate, find a job and support the newly-wed Esquivels, while Ruben attended school full time. By the time she was finished with school, however, Ruben had moved up the ladder at his job at Multi-Amp Corp — now AVO International — an electrical company. He began on the assembly line and eventually became president and CEO. Instead of quitting his job — and losing a valuable source of income — Ruben continued with evening courses. Nine years later, he graduated with a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering.

Ruben and Alina moved to DeSoto after a relocation of the company, which was later sold. After Ruben “failed” retirement, he went to work for the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas, as the vice president for community and corporate relations — a position he still holds today. Alina currently works as a counselor in her private therapy practice located in Cedar Hill.

Since moving to DeSoto, Ruben has remained active in all areas of community service. He was elected to the board of trustees of the DeSoto Independent School District in 1982. His son, David, and daughter, Ileana, both attended schools within the district. Ruben has served on various other community organizations ranging from the DeSoto Chamber of Commerce, where he served as president, to the YMCA of Metropolitan Dallas to The Dallas Opera. Currently, he serves as the chairman of the State Fair of Texas. Ruben and Alina are both active members of DeSoto's First United Methodist Church. In 1995, Ruben won the Dallas Historical Society

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Award for Excellence in Volunteer Community Leadership for his years of community involvement.

Ruben finds it hard to name the community organization he has enjoyed working for the most. "It's like asking, 'Which of your children do you like the best,'" he answered. Organizations involving education hold a special place in his heart, as do those relating to health and social services. "I believe education is the key that helps solve many of the problems our community faces," Ruben said.

"I'm very supportive in that area because of that. The motivation comes from the sense of gratitude for all of the help and assistance we received, and our families received when we had great need. From that sense of gratitude comes the desire to pay back and be active in whatever area our experience and talents may be useful to the community."

In 2011, it will have been 50 years since the Esquivels left Cuba. They have not returned to the country. "Leaving Cuba was so traumatic, that for a long time the idea of just going back [worried us]. If we go back to visit, will we be able to come back out again?" Ruben said. Seeing friends and other people returning from the country after visiting has allowed that concern to abate, but because the Esquivels no longer have family in Cuba, the need to return is not pressing. "It would be more about visiting where we grew up," Ruben explained, "and less about personal reasons for going back."

The Esquivels have no immediate plans to return to Cuba, but a trip back may lie somewhere on the horizon. "We are anxious now to go back, especially to take our children and our four grandchildren," Alina said. "The idea for us to go and to take them, that's very special. More and more, I think we are inching more toward going back." **NOW**

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Walk of Memories

— By Janice C. Johnson

The City of Duncanville was named a Tree City USA Community by the Arbor Day Foundation in honor of its commitment to community forestry. This is the seventh time Duncanville has received this national recognition.

A tall, colorful playground structure beside a covered picnic pavilion is the first thing you notice. The sign at the landscaped entrance confirms you have arrived at Red Bird Park. This neighborhood park in Duncanville lies among steep hills at the north edge of town, along Red Bird Lane at Hill City

Drive. An eight-foot-wide concrete jogging/walking trail meanders inside the perimeter of the 19-acre park. Young pecan trees, most of them so small they are still staked, dot both sides of the walk. A fitness stop offers joggers an extra challenge at each lap around the half-mile trail. For those who need a break instead, comfortable benches are placed at intervals. A loose row of mature cedar trees visually divides the park into two sections and provides a bit of shade near two baseball backstops standing in the smaller west section.

Shane Gravens, Duncanville's director of Parks and Recreation, remembers the site before it was a park. "It didn't look like much: just a flat stretch of old pasture, vacant except for a sagging barbed-wire fence that ran up the middle and was clogged with cedars and dead scrub trees," he remembered in detail. "Discarded gravel from local playgrounds had been dumped and spread out near the road."

The land belonged to Duncanville ISD, but the district did not know what to do with it. A petroleum pipeline running underneath made it seem unsuitable for the heavy construction a school would require. Some less-intensive use would be better. The city council and the school district started talking about transferring the property to the city for recreational use. In 2003, Shane got the green light — and the budget — to transform the

idle land into a neighborhood park.

Parks Department crews went out to prepare the former pasture for its new role. First they pulled out the old fence, undergrowth and "trash trees." Shane decided to leave the cedars standing to break up the monotonous flat field. He also left native trees and bushes along the park's west edge as a home for local cardinals and blue jays. Meanwhile, he planned some parking and recreation features. In 2004, he installed the jogging trail, playground and parking lot. The large, open area needed some highly visible structures, so he chose the tallest, most colorful playground equipment he could find. "A regular-size slide and playground would have just disappeared against the background," he said. "I wanted something big and massive that would make a show." He used all the primary colors for the same reason. He added that for safety, the playground offers separate areas marked for preschoolers and those ages 5-12. The picnic pavilion went up last, in 2005.

Then Shane turned his attention to the relentless Texas sun beating down upon the whole trail. "I thought we should put some trees around that thing," he said. His eyes lit up as he spoke about his favorite aspect of the park — its trees.

For 20 years Shane's parents had lived on property, which boasted over 30 pecan trees. He recalled ripe pecans

Shane Gravens, Duncanville's director of Parks and Recreation, remembers the site before it was a park.





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falling while he was at their home each Thanksgiving or Christmas. "Me and my father would sit outdoors talking for hours, picking up pecans from the grass and munching them," he fondly remembered. What if the park could offer a similar experience? He noticed "lots of native walnut and pecan trees" thriving in Duncanville. "So, I decided we should use pecan trees in the park," he said. The choice made good sense. Besides being the state tree, the hardwood pecan lives over 50 years, unlike many faster-growing trees.

Shane had another idea; he involved the public by inviting citizens to sponsor trees in honor or memory of a loved one. He imagined families coming home for the holidays and going to see their "Grandpa John" tree, reminiscing — and perhaps taking some of the pecans for pies. The organization Keep Duncanville Beautiful helped publicize the project. Some families sponsored a tree outright; others invited contributions toward a tree in lieu of funeral flowers. One group dedicated a tree for a member who had died from cancer. Before long, 53 "Phase 1" trees were sponsored.

Shane designated March 4, 2006, as Tree Planting Day, inviting sponsors to participate. Park crews did the heavy work beforehand, digging large planting holes around the trail and setting out the trees. About 40 families came to locate their tree and shovel soil around its roots. The crews finished and cleaned up.

Last January, the Parks Department planted almost 50 more trees, "Phase 2," along the trail. Shane went ahead with the planting because "if we didn't hurry," he explained, "Phase 1 would outgrow Phase 2 and it would always have a sort of 'granddaddy tree' and 'little tree' effect." The trees still wait to be sponsored.

The first trees, three to four inches thick, came with their roots wrapped in burlap bags. Although the new trees are smaller, Shane is not worried about their uneven size. Pecan trees

Duncanville NOW



have one main “tap root,” and bagged trees have that root cut off at the farm. They must recover from shock and develop a new tap root. “After the first ones, we bought only container-grown trees,” he said. Even though they are less than two inches thick, “you get a better-established tree. The smaller trees will catch up with the bigger ones.” He added that the trees are spaced 50 feet apart. “They look sparse now, but once they reach full size they will almost touch,” he said. “They will eventually create a shade canopy, but will never compete against each other.”

At the Arbor Day 2009 celebration in April, Shane unveiled the memorial plaque. Mounted on white stone, the “Walk of Memories” plaque lists the number and name of each Phase 1 tree. As befits a person who plants trees, Shane looks to the future. After all the trees are sponsored he wants to add a second plaque and a map showing the location of each tree. “One thing I’d like to do is go back to the families and get ‘tree histories’ — why they were purchased and so on. We need to do that as soon as possible,” he continued. “Some were dedicated for elderly people, and we want to get the stories down while they can still enjoy it.” To Shane, the Walk of Memories makes Red Bird something beyond a park; it is more of a legacy.

He is eager to see the remaining trees adopted. Sponsorship, which is not limited to the Duncanville community, costs \$200 and covers the cost of the tree and the name on the plaque. People interested in sponsoring a tree may call Parks and Recreation at (972) 780-4972 or Angie Henley with Keep Duncanville Beautiful at (972) 780-5086. **NOW**

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Park Avenue

— *Country Style* —

By Beverly Shay

Dalton and Linda Lott come from modest upbringings in Shreveport, Louisiana, yet they rallied to the task of creating both a sweeping parkland surrounding their manor-type home and finishing out and decorating it with impeccable taste and beautiful furnishings they have collected over the years. “We have been very blessed,” Dalton confessed. Yet both he and his wife put their emphasis on giving to others, especially within the community of Duncanville.

With the same gusto Dalton gives to his business ventures, the two of them took a 7,000-square-foot home, updated, added on, lifted the roof line and created a delightful manor house finished out with craftsmanship and gracious decor. “Bill Hall should truly get the credit for the amazing finish work he designed and produced throughout the house,” Linda commented.

“Some people have actually stopped me to ask if they could become a member of our club,” Dalton commented, while strolling under the canopy of some 120 pecan trees over 60 years old. Everywhere you look, inside and out, are subtle touches to finesse comfort and beauty, creating one lovely setting after another, inviting exploration while at the same time encouraging you to linger and enjoy the ambiance.

Dalton and Linda attended the same

high school, but did not date until they were both students at what was then called Northeast Louisiana State College, now known as the University of Louisiana at Monroe. They married one year and seven months later. Linda became a school teacher, retiring after 29 years in 1999. Twenty-five of those years were given to teaching in Duncanville schools. Dalton’s job with Georgia Pacific had brought them to Dallas in 1973, and an uncle in Duncanville attracted them to this part of town. “We built a house on Lakecrest, where we lived for 22 years,”

Dalton stated.

“This home, originally 1,250 square feet, was built in 1950 by Gus and Louise Alexander; he was a great Duncanville businessman. After his passing, we bought the property from his wife in 2000 and spent two years renovating and remodeling. Only one bathroom and my wife’s office, formerly a bedroom, and some swirled ceilings remain from the original home,” Dalton commented. “We were most attracted to the park-like quality of the property with all the pecans. We leave most of the pecans for the squirrels,

At Home With Dalton and Linda Lott





which in turn attract red tail hawks, who like pecan-fed squirrels.”

Dalton frequently credits the Lord and freely admits they have been blessed by God abundantly. Dalton is well-known throughout Duncanville as an astute businessman, as well as for his work with the Chamber of Commerce and the Rotary Club, where he has served terms as president for both. He is also on the president’s council for Wycliffe Bible Translators, on Parkland Foundation’s board and is an advisory council member for Christ For The Nations Institute. Dalton’s business endeavors include several companies: real estate, a fixed-base operation, two import companies and his main business, Club Marketing Services, which provides full-service marketing to Sam’s and Walmart nationwide and internationally. “I’ve been doing that for 27 years now; we

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DeSoto Ratings and 2009-10 Goals

DeSoto ISD made tremendous gains in TAKS scores, and thus ratings, in the 2008-09 school year! We now have five high performing campuses - four Recognized and one Exemplary - and NO unacceptable schools, but that is just the big picture!

As we further evaluate the data, improvement was made in all 25 academic cells across the district! Twenty-one (21) of 25 cells exceed the Recognized level of 75% passing rate making the district just four cells short of being a Recognized district. Sixteen of those 25 cells exceed the Exemplary level of 90% passing rate. District subject subgroups Reading/ELA, Writing and Social Studies are all Exemplary levels - above the 90% passing rate - for the 2008-09 state accountability levels.

Individual campuses each made substantial gains as well. Four campuses saw improvement in 100% of sub-cells including The Meadows Elementary, Recognized Moates Elementary and Freshman Campus, and the Exemplary Ruby Young Elementary. Four other campuses improved in 90% or more of sub-cells.

The three elementaries rated acceptable this year missed Recognized by only one cell each including The Meadows which jumped from unacceptable last year to just shy of Recognized. The Freshman Campus did just that and is very close to Exemplary after an unacceptable rating last year.

The district's dropout and completion rates continue to be favorably better than the state. The state completion rate of 88.0% compared to DeSoto ISD's 90.3%, and a .1% district dropout rate is below the state's .3%.

Goals for the 2009-10 School Year

DeSoto ISD is turning up the heat in 2009-10 to 212 degrees - the point at which water boils and produces steam, steam that can power a locomotive! We are going that extra degree to achieve our goals!

ACADEMICS - The primary academic goal is for the district to achieve the TEA rating of Recognized! In addition, all campuses will achieve the Federal Rating of Meets AYP, the number of commended scores on TAKS will increase and there will be increases in SAT/ACT participation and performance.

DISCIPLINE - Implement and follow the Positive Behavior Support Initiative developed at each campus. The PBSI guides each campus to develop a positive behavior program specifically to reward those who follow the rules and correct the small percentage of disruptive students. Goals include a decrease in disruptions and referrals and consistently enforced guidelines, as well as increased relationships with students, parents, teachers and staff.

SAFETY/SECURITY - Continue partnership with DeSoto Police to have School Resource Officers assigned at campuses and enhance training of district security guards. Provide training for all students, staff and the community to increase safety at every campus and to prevent and reduce incidents of bullying and violence at schools and in the community.

QUALITY AND CAPACITY OF STAFF - Improve the effectiveness of all district personnel including ways to identify, improve or eliminate unacceptable or inadequate performance. All staff requirements, expectations and goals for achievement will be clearly communicated, measured and remediated if needed. Training for improved customer service / relations will be provided.

BUDGET - Continue to provide fiscal stability and responsible financial stewardship of district monies. Evaluating district and community resources, trimming funding for non-essentials and generally doing more with less, will provide necessary funds for the goals above and ensure fund balance for emergency and future needs.

DESOTO ISD RATINGS

DESOTO ISD	TEA - Academically Acceptable Improvement in 100% of cells	
	9% pts gain in math	8% pts gain in science
	Federal Rating - Meets AYP	
ACCEPTABLE	Improve %	Notes
Amber Terrace ES	93%	1 cell from Recognized
The Meadows ES	100%	1 cell from Recognized 31% pts gain in science
Woodridge ES	71%	1 cell from Recognized
East Middle	82%	14% pts gain in math
McCowan Middle	75%	6% pts gain in math
West Middle	94%	8% pts gain in math
DeSoto High	95%	8% pts gain in science
RECOGNIZED		
Cockrell Hill ES	50%	12% pts gain in science
Frank D. Moates ES	100%	10% pts gain in science
Northside ES	92%	3 cells to Exemplary
Freshman Campus	100%	21% pts gain in math
EXEMPLARY		
Ruby Young ES	100%	13% pts gain in science

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Fri., Sept. 11	@ Richardson Berkner
Fri., Sept. 18	@ Duncanville
Fri., Sept. 25	@ Flower Mound
Fri., Oct. 9	N. Mesquite (Cheer Extravaganza)
Fri., Oct. 16	@ Tyler Lee
Fri., Oct. 23	Mesquite (Homecoming)
Fri., Oct. 30	Mesquite Horn (Senior Night)
Fri., Nov. 6	@ Tyler John Tyler

21st Century Grant

This summer DeSoto ISD was awarded the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant for the 2009-10 school year. It is expected that the district will receive extended funding for five years for a total of approximately \$6 million.

Funds will be used to provide Monday through Saturday programming for DeSoto ISD students at ten Afterschool Centers on Education (ACE) across the district – The Meadows and Northside will share a center at Northside and Freshman Campus students will join high school students at DHS.

Elementary and middle schools will provide 18 hours of programming per week and DHS will offer 12 hours. Almost 1,500 students will be served in the first year of programming alone! Family programming will also be offered through the grant including computer classes, resume development, language classes, GED courses and nutrition information programs.

The grant will be administered by a project supervisor and 10 site supervisors. The program will utilize district staff and community members with expertise in various areas to teach the courses and will partner with the Boys and Girls Club to provide other courses.

We are excited about this wonderful opportunity to further serve our students, families and the community!

For more information and/or to enroll your child in ACE classes, please contact the site supervisor by calling your school. Classes will vary by campus.

calendar

Monday, Sept. 7 - Labor Day Holiday
Monday, Sept. 28 - Student State Fair Day
November 23-27 - Thanksgiving Holiday
Dec. 21-Jan. 1 - Winter Break
January 15 - Teacher Preparation Day
January 18 - Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday
February 15 - Staff Development Day
March 15-19 - Spring Break
April 2 - Teacher Preparation Day
May 31 - Memorial Day Holiday
June 3 - Last Day of School

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provide merchandise from as small as Bayer Aspirin and Sweet’N Low to tires.” Besides teaching, Linda has also been involved in service clubs within the community over the years, as well as Delta Kappa Gamma, an honor society for over 150,000 women educators in 14 countries. Both Linda and Dalton are very pro-community.

Their home reflects the same commitment to excellence, style and craftsmanship as their lifestyle and work ethic. “We never dreamed we would have what we have,” Dalton remarked. Their 12,000-square-foot home includes such amenities as a home theater area, a library, a lovely

kitchen, baths in each bedroom and the second floor features a game room and a guest suite complete with a playroom just for children. Two balconies offer sweeping views of the parkland surrounding the house.

The Lotts have a great love for people and a sincere desire to bless others whether through their community service or by entertaining them. The house and grounds are ideally suited for entertaining friends and family. In fact, their daughter’s bridal photos were taken on the front steps. With great pride and love, both Linda and Dalton noted photos displayed throughout the home; the newest ones feature their

granddaughters. “We have nice things we have collected on various travels,” Linda commented, “but what we like most are our two granddaughters.”

Outdoors, there is plenty of room to entertain. Their pool, featuring a lazy river and rock-walled waterfall and slide, was picked as the most outstanding pool in the nation by *Pool and Spa Living* magazine. A wooden playground area and chalk drawing in the driveway are indicative of their grandchildren’s frequent presence. Front and back patios provide ample area for outdoor cookouts amidst lawn chairs, beautiful potted plants and gardens.

Inside, color is abundant. Almost

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every set of rooms features different color schemes from brown leather, wood paneling and built-in shelves in the library to the cheery finished yellow pine of the guest room. The library displays a fossil of a nautilus found in the limestone when the pool was dug. Paintings of their beautiful daughters, Jennifer and Amy, depict their childhood along with portraits of various milestones throughout their lives. Family is obviously important and celebrated.

The family room is done in gray leather contrasting with the plush emerald green carpet. Their bar is an ice cream bar, a smaller rendition of an

ice cream parlor with canisters for sundae toppings. Each room features some meaningful collectible that recounts their life together. Whatever chemistry Linda and Dalton had going when they met is still there and flourishing at a deeper and more mature level than ever. Their fondness for one another seeps into their tales of the life they have spent together for 42 years.

Sunshine yellow livens up the rooms one daughter lived in before college. Dalton made a token fuss about the closet full of clothes left behind, but his fussing was not anywhere near the affectionate pride he expressed when speaking of both daughters'

accomplishments. Amy is a lawyer and Jennifer works as the sales manager of their business.

Overall both the couple and their home convey a zest for life, an honor of God, devotion to family and the capacity to live life and share their blessings with those around them. Their sense of family spills over into the community, as does their appreciation for life and hard work. From the winding driveway amid the pecans on throughout each room of their home, the gracious dignity, respect and desire to consider others emanates from their hearts. Their inner peace and contentment is obviously their true wealth. **NOW**

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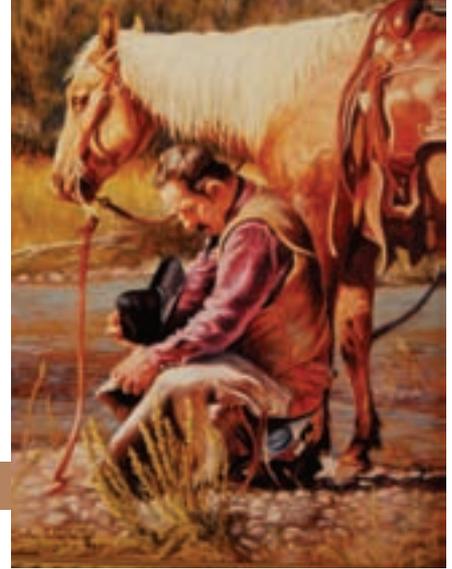
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ARTS
NOW



A Driving Force

— By Beverly Shay

“My art is a driving force — pushing me to create. At first, I painted just to be artistic, but with experience and time, I find I now want my paintings to tell a story through pose and emotion. I want my paintings to show emotion or power, to draw the viewer in, so they can see and experience the emotion. My paintings look at you and draw you in,” explained Linda Wacaster, whose studio is on the edge of the historic area of Cedar Hill.

“This is my mother’s home; we lived here for part of my childhood. Turning this into an art studio is my tribute to my mother, who was a big fan of my art and encouraged me so much,” Linda remarked. “I haven’t painted much in the last few years, as I cared for her and after her passing, began to renovate her home. This will be a combination studio/guest house for missionaries and visiting preachers. I won’t always work here, but will always be able to.”

Linda, who has been painting for about 30 years, sketched and drew as a child, but it was her husband who bought her her first paint set. “I tried to paint on my own, but wanted to learn technique,” she remarked. She has had several teachers and even considered getting a degree. “I was told a degree would get me a position as an art teacher. What I really wanted was to study under wild life artists, so I did,” she explained. Some of the artists under whom she has studied include: Larry Dyke, Carl Brenders, Terry Isaac and Nancy Glazier.

She often works from source material

(photos) taken at invitation-only photo shoots, where locals and/or models are also invited to pose in authentic western garb with actual relics and guns; they pose with the attitude of the time period they portray. Linda takes photos of “Indians, cowboys, settlers and children” against backdrops of teepees, old towns, rivers and mountains, with horses, other wildlife and “everything you can imagine of the Old West.” She has attended these photo shoots in Montana, South Dakota, Colorado and Nemo, Texas.

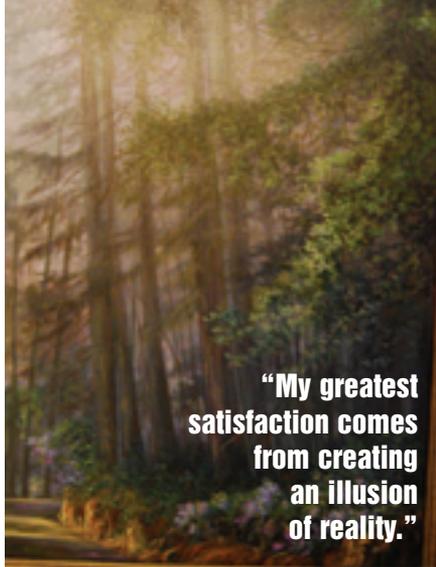
“My greatest satisfaction comes from creating an illusion of reality, turning something that was just white canvas into an illusion of a person, wildlife, pet or landscape,” Linda states on a brochure advertising her artwork. “Up close you know it’s a painting, but from a distance there is the effect of reality.”

Linda mixes colors to recreate a reality

that exceeds the photograph. She works in acrylic, oils and pastels. “I like to use pastels for portraits and oils for landscapes. I tell people I probably won’t live long enough to paint everything I want to paint,” she confessed with a smile. “I am currently working on a cowgirl and thinking about starting a series on western women,” Linda revealed.

Linda entered two of her paintings, *Shall We Gather at the River*, a cowboy kneeling at a stream beside his horse, and *Navajo Shepherdess*, a young Indian woman looking down at a lamb in her lap, in the Bosque Conservatory juried art show, where she has been juried in several times. She was surprised and pleased to find both paintings had sold immediately and the Indian girl had won first place. *Navajo Shepherdess* is also part of a book entitled, *100 ways to paint People & Figures (Vol. 2)* in a





“My greatest satisfaction comes from creating an illusion of reality.”

full-page feature, which includes commentary on description, inspiration, design, strategy, work process, materials used, advice for artists and why she loves pastels.

“I have also had some of my paintings made up as prints or giclée prints. And when I am not painting for myself, I paint for church camp,” Linda remarked. “This year the camp theme was ‘convicted.’ So I made a 6-foot-by-8-foot painting with an abstract background to which I added black while the campers watched. At the end, the image of the ‘convicted’ Jesus being crucified by a Roman soldier is revealed. This took about 12 minutes to do while music played in the background.” Linda also designs and paints sets for the Cedar Hill Church of Christ vacation Bible school. Several of her paintings are hanging in the church.

“I really enjoy teaching children and coordinating a youth art show for all the Ellis County schools each spring at a studio in the Ellis County Museum. I have done this in conjunction with the art league for 15 years. Last spring, there were over 1,000 entries from children K-12,” Linda said. “It is so rewarding to hear a child proudly say, ‘This is my first art show.’ I want to develop a desire in them while they are young and teach them technique, so when they come back to it as they grow older, it will be a positive memory,” Linda confided. The art league gives out three \$500 scholarships to graduating seniors. **NOW**

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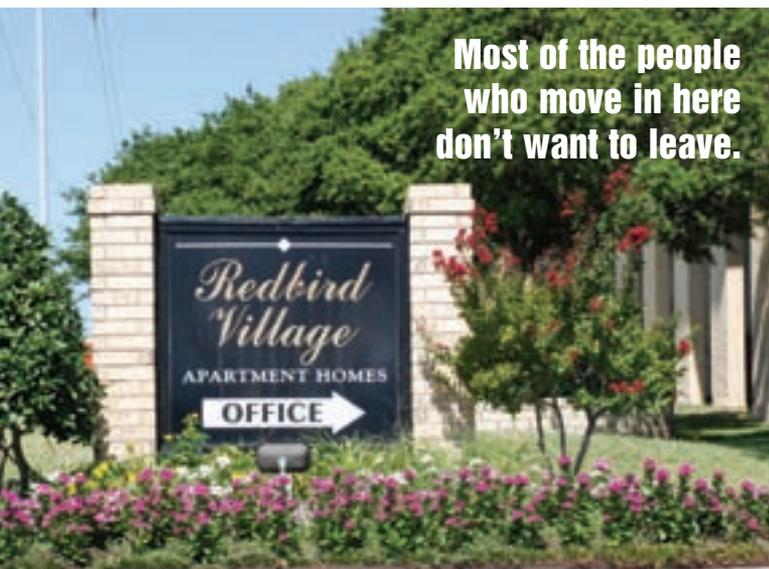
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Business **NOW**

Home Sweet Home

— By Beverly Shay

Tara Miles Bart loves her job. For four years now she has been the community director of the Redbird Village Apartments located on 803 Link, just off Camp Wisdom Road in Duncanville. “I love working here,” Tara explained, describing her job and her satisfaction as, “wanting to make sure everyone here has a home they can be proud of. Your home is one of, if not the most important thing, for people after family.” Tara obviously takes her job very seriously, in part because it is something she really enjoys.

When someone calls looking for a place to live, they are encouraged to come view the model apartment and the grounds, which have won landscaping awards. “Every year since 1996, we have also won the reader’s choice award for best apartment community in the *Today Newspaper*,” Tara said with evident pride. Following her graduation from The University of Texas at Austin, Tara, who had grown up in Duncanville and always thought these apartments looked like a nice place to live, tried to rent here, but they were full. She worked with the Duncanville Chamber of Commerce for eight years. “I got such good feedback about this place while working there,” Tara commented. When the chance to work here opened up, she jumped at it.

“One of the main differences that is special about us is the same people have owned the apartments since they were opened in the '70s. We even have some people who have lived here the entire time, as well as other long-term residents. Most of the people who move in here don't want to leave. They make friends with their neighbors, and they appreciate how we strive to exceed their expectations,” Tara remarked.

One hundred sixty-four units cover nearly two blocks. The bulk of the apartments are two-bedroom with one-and-a-half baths. They have a handful of three-bedrooms (with two baths) and one-bedrooms (with one bath). Apartments range from 875 square feet to about 1,250 square feet. The layouts and large windows overlooking the beautifully landscaped yards make the apartments seem more like a home. Residents often add their own potted plants and outdoor furniture to patios and balconies, adding to the homey atmosphere. Covered

Business NOW

parking is available for an additional fee and there are some garages and storage units as well.

"We offer a senior discount for those 50 or over and an additional discount at the age of 62. We also have furnished corporate apartments available on a month-to-month lease. Many people who return to Dallas on short-term work assignments also repeatedly return to rent from us," Tara stated. Two laundry rooms with six washers and six dryers in each and keyed entrances are available for residents only, as are the two pools on the grounds. Several outdoor patio nooks found along the meandering paths contribute to the garden feel of the grounds.

"Our five full-time and two part-time employees guarantee the maintenance and refurbishing of apartments before re-leasing is handled quickly and efficiently. We also have a 24/7, 365-day emergency number where residents



actually speak with somebody about any needs they have. Another nice aspect is we allow pets: cats or dogs (non-aggressive breeds) that will not exceed 30 pounds when full grown. Our pet deposit is 100-percent refundable if there is no damage," Tara stated.

Office hours are Monday through Friday: 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; Saturdays: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sundays by appointment. Call (972) 298-5311 with any questions you may have. Leasing Consultant Heather Ripley will be happy to help you out with leasing information in either English or Spanish. **NOW**

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- Dr. Kevin Fagan, top left, received the Quality of Texas Award during the Quality of Texas Recognition Luncheon.
- Dial One Johnson-Heritage Plumbing, top center, hosted the Cedar Hill Chamber Night Out at David's Seafood Grill.
- A ribbon cutting, top right, was held at Trinity Church.
- Northwood baseball players, bottom left, donated their time to build a Habitat for Humanity home.
- A welcome basket, bottom right, was presented to Cornell and Gia Towns.



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- The Canterbury Episcopal School Cougar Class of 2009, top left, modeled their college shirts.
- One of over 125 students, top center, received immunizations in preparation for the coming school year.
- The DeSoto Longhorns girls' softball team, top right, proudly posed for a group picture.
- A ribbon cutting, bottom left, was held at Cliff Productions.
- Madelene Beck, bottom right, was all smiles.

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• Little campers, top left, were all smiles as they helped clean up Penn Springs Park. • The Duncanville Parks and Recreation "Dirty Jobs Camp," top center, spent free time on the ice. Steve Martin, new Chamber president, and Jay Burciaga of Special Occasions by V, top right, posed for the camera. • Old Chisholm Trail NSDAR, bottom left, won the best theme award for their fully decorated truck. • Timmy W., bottom right, enjoyed cutting a tree down at Granna's house.



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Look Who's Cooking

— By Faith Browning

IN THE KITCHEN WITH KAREN GUAL

Karen Gual has the pleasure of working out of her home as a real estate broker. She enjoys remodeling old houses, landscaping and gardening. Her own home is included as one of her projects. “Our current home has been a work in progress for the past five years,” she explained, “and still has a long way to go, as does the acre lot.”

Most of the meals Karen and her husband, Jimmy, prepare are cooked outdoors year-round on their grill. “Cooking was never one of my favorite things to do; however, when you own a home that’s designed for entertaining, you cook all the time,” she said. “My favorite time is when the last dish is in the dishwasher, everyone moves outside for a cocktail, and I announce, ‘Kitchen closed!’” 

To view more of your neighbors’ recipes, visit our archives at www.nowmagazines.com.

ARTICHOKE DIP

- 1 cup Hellman’s mayonnaise
- 1 cup Parmesan cheese
- 1 can artichokes

Chop artichokes, mix in mayonnaise and cheese. Cook at 350 F until brown on top.

SALAD DRESSING

Tastes a lot like Benihana’s!

- 1/4 cup onion, minced
- 1/4 cup peanut oil
- 2 Tbsp. rice wine vinegar
- 2 Tbsp. water
- 1 Tbsp. fresh ginger, minced
- 1 Tbsp. celery, minced
- 1 Tbsp. soy sauce
- 1 tsp. tomato paste
- 1 1/2 tsp. sugar
- 1 tsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. pepper

Combine all ingredients in a blender. On medium speed, blend three to five seconds, or until well incorporated. Great as a dressing or a dipping sauce.

RED BEANS

This is a Sunday standard.

- 1 lb. pinto beans
- 1 onion, sliced
- salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 14-oz. can stewed tomatoes
- 1 8-oz. can green chilies
- chopped cilantro, to taste

Soak one pound of pinto beans overnight. Fill a large pot with cold water; add beans, onion, salt and pepper. Cook until beans are soft. Add tomatoes, chilies and cilantro; cook

another 10 or 15 minutes, serve alone or over rice.

GRILLED LEG QUARTERS FOR A CROWD

This is a regular Sunday favorite.

- 10-lb. bag leg quarters
- salt, pepper and garlic powder, to taste
- olive oil

Wash chicken leg quarters; dry. Trim fat and remove skin from thigh only. Coat with salt, pepper, garlic powder and olive oil. Refrigerate at least one hour. Heat grill to 250-275 F. Place chicken on grill, close lid and cook for about 45 minutes to one hour (turning once). Chicken is done when juices run clear.

SHRIMP REMOULADE

- 2 hard-boiled eggs, grated
- 2 pods garlic, crushed
- 1 1/2 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 1/2 cups mayonnaise
- 1 or 2 Tbsp. paprika
- 1 1/2 Tbsp. horseradish
- 1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
- dash of Tabasco
- 2 Tbsp. vinegar
- 2 Tbsp. parsley, chopped
- Lawry’s Season Salt, to taste
- 1/2 cup celery, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup green onions, chopped fine
- dash of chili powder

Mix all well. Chill 12 hours or longer. Enough for 5 pounds shrimp.

PARTY FAVORITE: BEEF TENDERLOIN

- 3-4 lbs. beef tenderloin, well trimmed
- salt, pepper and garlic powder, to taste
- olive oil

citrus juice (optional)

Season and marinate meat with above ingredients or any other desired seasonings. (We generally let the meat speak for itself.) Refrigerate at least four hours, overnight if possible. Let meat resume room temperature before cooking. Heat grill to high temperature on one side only for browning. Place tenderloin on grill directly over high heat to brown on all sides. After browning, lower temperature; remove meat from direct heat. Cook for approximately 45 minutes or until done to your preference. Check regularly, as you do not want to overcook. This cut of prime beef is best cooked rare, as the juice will drain from the meat after cooking. Remove from grill; let sit for 10-15 minutes before serving. Slice and serve on small rolls with horseradish. (If using charcoal, watch your time and temperature, as overcooked tenderloin is very disappointing.)

MEXICAN MARTINI

- 2 lbs. fresh or frozen shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1/2 cup catsup
- 1/2 cup lime juice (fresh)
- 2-4 tsp. bottled hot pepper sauce (to taste)
- 1 cup tomato, chopped
- 1/2 cup onion, chopped
- 1/2 cup fresh cilantro, snipped
- 2 avocados, seeded, peeled and chopped (garnish)

Thaw shrimp, if frozen. Cook shrimp in 2 quarts of boiling water for one to two minutes, or until shrimp turns pink, stirring occasionally. Drain, rinse under cold running water. Combine catsup, lime juice and hot pepper sauce in large bowl. Add tomato, onion and cilantro. Cover and chill for two-four hours or overnight. An hour or two before serving, add shrimp. Just before serving, stir in the avocados; toss to coat.

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Your Family Tradition of Financial Education

— By Debi Choate

Remember the first time your parents said, “No, we can’t afford it?” Or the excitement you felt when you earned your own money? Or when you found out how much “they” took out of your first paycheck?

As parents, we help guide our children’s understanding of the ups and downs of the “real life” money matters. Taking the time to teach them, at any age, about the value of money and importance of their own financial responsibility, can benefit them throughout their life. This too, can become a family tradition.

Many teens say they feel ill-prepared about their own money matters. According to a 2007 survey from the Hartford Financial Services Group, Inc:

- Nearly two-thirds (63 percent) of parents surveyed say they definitely see personal finance education as their responsibility and consistently make the effort to teach their children about it, compared to the only 41 percent of students who say their parents did.
- Seventy-six percent of students wish they had more help preparing for their financial future.

Here are five simple ideas that you can easily add into your family time:

1. Plan a dinner menu, build your grocery list from it and have a spending budget. Have your child help you do this.
2. Plan your monthly expenditures, including savings, giving, grocery budget and bills. As you sketch it all out, show your child what you are doing.
3. Plan a major purchase for the family (like new furniture or a new car) with your child and set money aside for it each week.
4. Help a child plan for something they want. Create a goal chart together, and designate a credit union or bank where they can save their money.

Free online resources are also available:

1. www.familyeducation.com/home/
2. www.myrewardboard.com/index.html and www.payjr.com.

These two sites are interactive tools to help your child to track allowance and chores.

3. www.bizkids.com/. The Web site for the public TV series where kids teach kids about money and business.

4. www.smartaboutmoney.org/. You will find practical articles, worksheets, tips and valuable resources from across the Web to help you understand and manage your money.

5. Your credit union or bank’s Web site can also provide helpful hints, interactive games and general consumer information.

Whether intentional or not, you are teaching your child about money matters every day. Helping them understand the importance of financial responsibility can truly become one of life’s greatest lessons. That is a family tradition any parent can be proud of. **NOW**

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Is It Really Carpal Tunnel Syndrome?

— By Leah Pittmon, B.S., D.C.

Many people have heard about carpal tunnel syndrome. In fact, many readers may think they have it, have had carpal tunnel surgery or know someone who has. What exactly is carpal tunnel syndrome and how is it treated?

Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) is a condition caused by the compression of the median nerve at the wrist. Symptoms can include pain, numbness and tingling in the thumb, forefinger, middle finger and part of the ring finger and also weakness in the muscles leading into the thumb on the palm side of the hand. The symptoms are usually worse at night. If no treatment is performed, it often gets worse with time.

The carpal tunnel is located at the base of the wrist on the palm side. It is a ligament which holds nine tendons to the fingers and the median nerve. When there are repetitive stresses or other pathology causing swelling of the tendons or tissues, there is less space for the items in the tunnel. What results is compression of the median nerve. There is resulting pain, tingling and numbness. It can also cause



problems with the thenar (thumb) muscles and could result in difficulty grasping objects, making a fist or result in the wasting away of the muscles.

In recent years, however, CTS has become a catch-all diagnosis for almost any pain in the forearm, wrist or hand. Pain low on the palm just above the wrist, on the fifth digit (pinkie), on the part of the palm below the fifth digit, or pain above the wrist, is not true CTS. The nerves that cause those problems are not located within the carpal tunnel and therefore would not benefit from treatments specifically designed to release the carpal tunnel — including carpal tunnel release surgery. The nerves in the arm and hand originate in the axilla (armpit) and are formed from nerves that come from the neck. So the problem could be coming from the elbow, the axilla or even from the neck.

Resting the wrist and hand is often the first step in treating CTS. If that is not helpful, traditional medicine will generally suggest bracing the wrist, anti-inflammatory drugs, cortisone injections and finally surgery. According to a recent article in the *Journal of Hand Surgery*, this type of surgery has a 57 percent failure rate within six years. Chiropractic, acupuncture and massage are effective conservative therapies for

treating CTS and other causes of hand pain and weakness.

Chiropractic focuses on correcting the alignment of the involved joints, reducing muscle tension and scarring, and educating patients on good wrist and body positioning during tasks. The key to proper treatment is proper diagnosis. **NOW**

*Leah Pittmon, B.S., D.C.
Pittmon Family Chiropractic Center*

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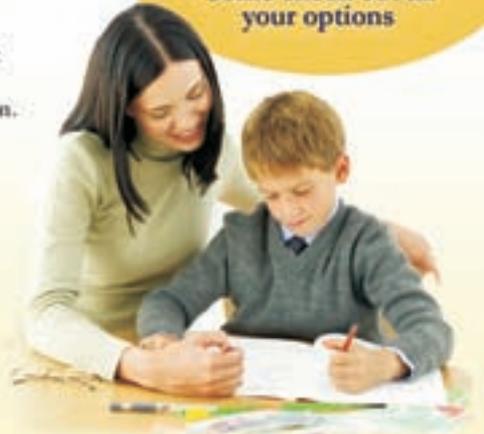
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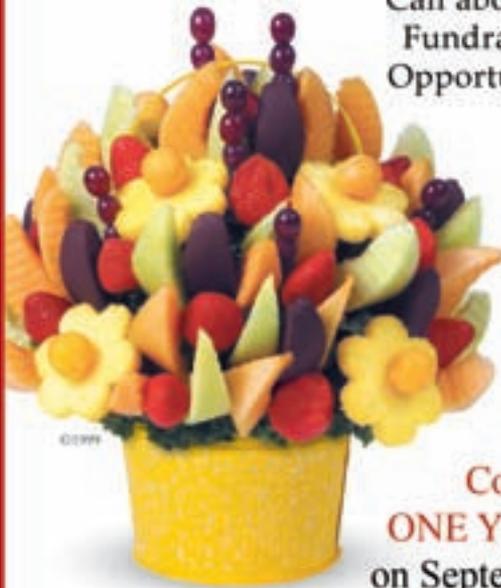
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Mondays

Pool tournaments: 6:30 and 8:30 p.m. at the Ranch Steakhouse, 1435 N. Hwy. 67, Suite 200, Cedar Hill. \$20 buy in, 3-8 people. (972) 291-4530. www.the-ranch.biz.

New Ballroom Dance: 7:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m. at Cedar Hill Rec. Center, 310 E. Parkerville Rd. Learn the Fox Trot, Waltz, East Coast Swing and Cha Cha. Cost: \$80/couple for four sessions/month. (972) 293-5288.

Tuesdays

Senior Access Tai Chi classes: 8:00-8:45 a.m. at Methodist Charlton Medical Center. Cost is \$6 to learn ancient art of combining exercise, stretching and balance. Light refreshments included. (214) 947-4628.

Wii games, chess, Cranium, dominoes and other games available for teenagers: 4:30-6:00 p.m. at the Zula B. Wylie Library meeting room in Cedar Hill. www.zulabwylie.org.

Tuesdays and Thursdays

Essence Dance: Tuesdays: 5:30-8:30 p.m., Thursdays: 5:00-6:15 p.m. at Cedar Hill Rec. Center, 310 E. Parkerville Rd. Learn ballet, modern, contemporary, jazz, lyrical, liturgical and hip-hop. Beginner, intermediate and advanced levels offered to all teenagers and adults. Cost: \$65/month. Private coaching is available. (972) 293-5288.

Wednesdays

Rotary Club of Cedar Hill: 7:00-8:00 a.m. at CH Recreation Center, 310 E. Parkerville Rd.

Wednesdays and Fridays

Preschool story time at CH Library: 10:30-11:45 a.m. (972) 291-7323.

Fridays

Walking program: 9:00-10:00 a.m. at Methodist Charlton Medical Center, Conference Room 6. (214) 947-4628.

Karaoke at the Ranch Steakhouse, 1435 N. Hwy. 67, Suite 200, Cedar Hill. Sign up: 7:30 p.m. Sing: 8:00-midnight. (972) 291-4530. www.the-ranch.biz.

Saturdays

Cedar Hill Recreation Center presents Star Force One, a dance program including tap, ballet, jazz, hip-hop, lyrical, song and dance and competition dance teams. Beginner to advanced classes: 8:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. for ages 2-adult. Also ballet and tap for special needs children. Register at Rec. Center.

First Mondays

Readers on the Hill Book Club: 7:00 p.m. at CH Library. (972) 291-7323.

First and Third Wednesdays

Duncanville Business Interchange: 7:30 a.m. at Chamber offices.

First and Second Fridays

Line dancing in the Methodist Charlton Medical Center auditorium: 11:00 a.m.-noon. Reservation required. (214) 947-4628.

Second Mondays

Diabetes Management Support Group: 6:00-7:30 p.m. at Methodist Charlton Medical Center auditorium. (214) 947-7262.

Second Tuesdays

Dallas Area Writers Group: 7:00 p.m. at CH Library. www.dallaswriters.org.

Second and Fourth Tuesdays

Cedar Hill Lions: noon-1:00 p.m. at Good Shepherd

Church, 915 Old Straus Rd. (972) 291-0651.

Second Wednesdays

Cedar Hill/Duncanville Early Childhood PTA: 10:00 a.m. at Cedar Hill Hope Lutheran Church, 917 N. Straus Rd.

Second Saturdays — November

Monthly Classic Car Show, benefiting Bridges Safe House in Cedar Hill: 4:00-8:00 p.m. at Sabor A La Mexicana Restaurant and Tortilla Factory in Duncanville, one block south of I-20 at Cockrell Hill and Skyline, directly behind the Red Lobster. Membership not required to enter. No age limits on the cars. Trucks and motorcycles welcome. Contact Bobby Knight at (972) 742-9233 or Toni Knight at (972) 742-3377.

Third Saturdays

Cedar Hill Star Party: sunset-11:00 p.m. at J. W. Williams Park, 1605 High Pointe Ln., beside West Intermediate School. Free. Bring own telescope or use ours. (972) 291-1505.

September 4

Enjoy *Sister Cantaloupe* - Comedy, Poetry, Music and Mime: 7:00 p.m. at DeSoto Corner Theater. Cost is \$10.

September 6

Kick off to Free Day of Yoga community class: 5:00-6:30 p.m. at One Arts Plaza in downtown Dallas.

September 7

3rd Annual Free Day of Yoga daylong events. For free classes in Midlothian, Red Oak, Waxahachie and Ovilla, call Lisa Ware at (214) 532-0076 or visit www.elliscountyoga.webs.com. For DFW classes, visit www.freewebs.com/dallasfreedayofyoga.

September 12

Cedar Hill Education Foundation "High Heels and Harleys" Gala: 6:00 p.m. at 610 Uptown Blvd., 4th floor executive suite. Casual dress to theme. Evening includes reception, dinner, dancing, casino tables, Texas Hold 'Em tournament, live and silent auctions. Cost: \$75. (214) 291-1581. www.cedarhillef.org.

DeSoto Star Search talent competition: 7:30 p.m. at The Corner Theater. This annual just for fun talent competition is hosted by the DeSoto Arts Commission. First, second and third place cash prizes will be awarded to the best talent (must have already auditioned) in these age categories: kids (8-10), tweens (11-13), teens (13-18), adults (over 18) and seniors (over 55). Cost is \$10.

September 13

The Friends of Tri-City Animal Shelter and Tri-City Advisory Board's first annual fundraising gala at Enchanted Memories, 1331 S. Cockrell Hill Rd. Cost is \$55. Doors open at 2:00 p.m. (972) 291-1198.

September 17-19 and 24-26

Dial "M" for Murder: 8:00 p.m., Duncanville Community Theatre, 106 S. Main Street, Duncanville. Tickets \$10 Thursday; \$12 Friday and Saturday. Call (972) 780-5707 for reservations or e-mail boxoffice@dctheatre.org.

September 18

Saxophonist Tom Braxton in concert: 8:00 p.m. at DeSoto Corner Theatre. Come enjoy this versatile instrumentalist, charismatic performer and gifted composer whose distinct, melodic sound thrills audiences of all ages. Cost is \$10.

For more community events, visit our online calendar at www.nowmagazines.com.

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Dr. Cecily Jones

Please welcome our newest physician

Dr. Jones is our newest physician here at Trinity Women's Center and will begin in September 2009. After obtaining her medical degree from Tulane School of Medicine, she completed her OB/GYN residency at University of Florida at Jacksonville in July 2009.

She has received numerous academic awards and acknowledgements for her scholarship and service throughout her collegiate and medical career. Dr. Jones has participated and served in a number of community health activities, especially related to youth, HIV, education and student health career mentoring.

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