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September 2010

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Southwest
Cedar Hill - DeSoto - Duncanville
NOW MAGAZINE
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On The Cover

DeSoto's new mayor, Carl Sherman.

Photo by Opaque Visuals.

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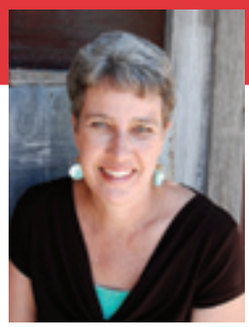
Editor's Note



Hello, Southwest Friends,

September … and we're off, busy with another school year — a time of fruitful, functional routine, purpose and labor. "Cedar HillNOW" reveals some new, strategic initiatives and goals the ISD has developed for the next five years, involving the good citizens in the community.

We are also excited to introduce the newly elected mayor of DeSoto, Carl Sherman, with an inside scoop on this man and his heart for the community. Everyone loves a good, old-fashioned love story; ours is about Jack and Oleta Armstrong, whom many in Duncanville already know. Donna Luce, a woman of valor and talent, gives us a personal tour of her charming, self-decorated hideaway, complete with a *Mamma Mia*! suite — pure delight. And Linda Martin shows off not only her artwork, but her Walden Pond cabin/art studio.

Hopefully, each of you will unleash some of your own creativity and initiative this fall as you tackle goals and dreams.

Beverly Shay
SouthwestNOW Editor

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Midlothian, Texas — July 7, 2010 — Community Health Accreditation Program, Inc., (CHAP) announced today that Approved Home Health Care has been awarded CHAP accreditation under the CHAP Core & Home Health Standards of Excellence. This is the beginning of the fourth year CHAP accreditation has been awarded to Approved Home Health Care.

CHAP accreditation demonstrates that Approved Home Health Care meets the industry's highest nationally recognized standards. Rigorous evaluation by CHAP focuses on structure and function, quality of services and products, human and financial resources and long term viability. Through CHAP accreditation, Approved Home Health Care is also certified as a Medicare provider.

"We are very pleased that Approved Home Health Care chose to continue CHAP accreditation," said Terry A. Duncombe, CHAP President and CEO. "Voluntarily selecting to achieve CHAP accreditation and meeting our high standards of excellence demonstrates Approved Home Health Care's commitment to quality. CHAP is delighted to work with their entire team through the ongoing process of quality improvement."

Approved Home Health Care provides a variety of nursing and therapy services to patients and their families in Ellis, Johnson, Tarrant and Dallas counties, and surrounding areas. They are locally owned and operated by hometown folks with over 50 years combined home health experience.

"We are extremely proud of our entire staff for making this possible. They are, after all, our greatest asset." says Louis Ponder, owner of Approved Home Health Care. "We are excited that we are able to provide high quality, compassionate health care services with a home town feel for our community," chimes in co-owner Kelly Kavanaugh.

CHAP is an independent, not-for-profit, accrediting body for community-based health care organizations. Created in 1965, CHAP was the first to recognize the need and value for accreditation in community-based care. CHAP is the oldest national, community-based accrediting body with more than 5,000 agencies currently accredited nationwide. Through "deeming authority" granted by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), CHAP has the regulatory authority to survey agencies providing home health, hospice and home medical equipment services, to determine if they meet the Medicare Conditions of Participation.

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Getting It Right

— By Janice C. Johnson

If you have ever experienced a job transfer, you know the importance of choosing where your family will live. And the first question many parents ask about a community is, "How are the schools?" In Cedar Hill, a group of educators, students, parents and community leaders want to hear only one answer to that question: "Our schools are world-class."

This exploratory group met last October to take a good, hard look at how the Cedar Hill Independent School District (CHISD) was working, and to consider ways to improve upon it over the next five years. From that meeting, a 25-member Strategic Planning Committee arose with Diane Case, executive director of Instructional Technology and Media Services, as internal facilitator. They have worked throughout the past 11 months to draw up and perfect a Five-Year Strategic Plan, which they presented to the school board in August.

CHISD does not claim perfection, yet the Strategic Plan is not a response to any existing major problems. Rather, as Diane explained, "The time to make a strategic plan is before things go wrong or procedures become outdated. We are actually in an upswing, not in crisis mode. We want to keep the district moving up; we don't want to see it peak and then decline."

To continue in that upward direction, the district must coordinate efforts across every area of education so as not to emphasize any particular one while neglecting others. Cedar Hill's strong athletic program must not preempt academics, for example, while academics should not be stressed to the point of excluding the arts. Meanwhile, students need to develop non-curricular qualities such as leadership and character, all in a safe and supportive environment.

To address this tall order, the Strategic Planning Committee began by identifying eight main strategies to cover all aspects of education, from curriculum and personnel to family and community involvement in the education process. They assigned an "action team" to address each strategy. "We are looking at the whole student," Diane said. "Though the eight strategies target individual areas, we asked each action team to consider the student as a whole — to meet all their needs."

Each action team stepped up to meet the challenge of proposing concrete steps toward its own goal while keeping balance in mind. Members did research and surveyed other districts to find the best ways to achieve those goals. Then they drew up proposed steps, revised and polished them, and sent them to the Strategic Planning Committee for approval. There, members of other teams reviewed the steps and discussed the intended result of each. Lively discussions uncovered any potential unintended ramifications, and the teams reworded their proposed steps to avoid these.

Considering the student as a whole inspired the individual teams to cooperate rather than wrangle against each other. And, as Diane pointed out, "All the strategies are linked and overlapping." In fact, a proposed step sometimes duplicated one that another team had submitted.

Other steps, when reviewed, failed to accomplish their intended function and had to be rejected. Diane said, "One of the hardest things for the committee was to say, 'No,' when they did not want to. If something was rejected, it was never done lightly. They didn't want to cut anything unless they really believed it was not in the best interest

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of the students, the district or the city." She commends the action team volunteers for their hard work, especially team leaders, who attended even more meetings than the others. "The action team leaders have done an awesome job. They sacrificed a lot of their personal time, and I could not have done that four months' worth of meetings without them."

What would lead someone to make that kind of time commitment for months on end, and put out all that effort? Diane sees in the team members "a great passion to make Cedar Hill the best it can be, a community that people will want to come to." Recognizing how much a city and its school district depend upon each other, Cedar Hill's school administration and city government share office facilities and meeting space in a single building. This rare partnership saves taxpayer dollars and fosters open communication between educators and city leaders.

Ruthel Goss, a parent on the Strategic Planning Committee, enjoyed participating despite the sacrifices. She served on the action team tasked with giving Cedar Hill a world-class education system. Among the plans this team considered, were a study-abroad program and more career-awareness activities. "We want to expose our students to more opportunities, and not limit their choice of careers," she explained. Though a busy professional, she describes her committee experience as invigorating and rewarding. "I look forward to watching the district grow; it's a privilege to help put process to that growth," she said.

Others share Ruthel's enthusiasm: since that first meeting in October, about 150 citizens have worked steadily throughout the planning process, each putting in dozens — perhaps hundreds — of hours on the Strategic Planning Committee

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and/or one of its action teams. According to Diane, the committee cut no corners, "even when a meeting ran long, and everyone felt tired and wanted to go home. They hung in there because they were passionate about getting it right. Several people had strong opinions, and they were good about not caving in to the group just so we could move on." Instead, everyone stuck with the discussion until they could reach a consensus.

Perhaps the most valuable resource the committee had was the input from parents and students. Arielle Mills, a Cedar Hill High School senior and student-committee liaison, finds satisfaction in knowing that her contribution has made a difference. "It's been fun, but also very

"We want to expose our students to more opportunities, and not limit their choice of careers."

enriching," she said. Diane commended the committee and the action team leaders for treating the student representatives with great respect. She recalls several times, as a discussion proceeded, hearing a team leader ask — and heed — the students' opinions.

The action teams have proposed a number of far-reaching steps. While the district can implement some of these within the regular budget, others would require financial support from the community through a tax-rate election or bond issue. Since the overall plan is intended to cover five years, part of the committee's job is to run cost/benefit analyses and prioritize the steps into a time line. They will postpone any that are not yet financially feasible.

The Cedar Hill ISD Web site contains available specifics about the Strategic Plan. Drafts are so designated and are being updated as the school board acts on each. For the most current information, visit www.chisd.com and click on the "Strategic Planning" link. NOW

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Revitalizing a City

— *By Sydni Thomas*

DeSoto entered a new era with the election of Mayor Carl O. Sherman, the first Generation Xer and the first African-American to hold the position. Mayor Sherman, barely in office long enough to decorate his office, has already made progress on many issues addressed during his campaign platform.

By his second week in office, Mayor Sherman had met with the mayors and city managers of Lancaster, Cedar Hill and Duncanville to propose the creation of the Best Southwest Economic Development Initiative. The purpose of this project is to attract major employers to the southwest side of the Metroplex as a joint effort and not as individual cities. By signing a 380 agreement, all of the cities involved would receive 25 percent of the sales and property tax revenue generated from the businesses brought in under this partnership. "I challenged my fellow mayors and said, 'What if we came together and we went after a major employer whose workforce represented thousands of employees?'" Mayor Sherman said. "Together we are stronger and economically, we are more powerful to provide incentives for these businesses."

When Mayor Sherman decided to run for office, he felt as though DeSoto was at a tipping point. The character and look of the city and southern area were being defined by outside developers and not the citizens. Fast-food chains outnumbered restaurants, and land was being converted into unsustainable businesses.

"There has to be balance," Mayor Sherman said. "It is the time to have a bolder vision for our city. Developers told us in the beginning we had to have more rooftops. When we surpassed Duncanville's population six years ago, the excuse changed. Then we were told we just didn't have the traffic. I-35 is the busiest interstate in Texas. I believe that it's all about the vision, and if you can't see it, it will never happen."

DeSoto has attracted big names like Heisman Trophy winner Tim Brown, and other people of notoriety, with its communities of luxury living. In a city with eight gated communities, all with well-manicured lawns and top-of-the-line amenities, a lot of residents are traveling to the surrounding cities for their retail

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needs. "Our residential community does not match our commercial retail, which is stuck in 1970," Mayor Sherman said. "Our residents' ambitions, which are clearly reflected in the residential areas, are not being met. When you leave your porch and step on to Main Street it doesn't look anything like your homes. DeSoto consists of two very different worlds. We want our citizens to live here and not have to travel elsewhere for their entertainment and shopping needs."

Mayor Sherman's vision for the retail side of DeSoto includes taller buildings down the Hampton Road corridor, development on I-35, an upscale bed-and-breakfast downtown, top-tier, boutique-type retail and a few mom-and-pop type businesses to show the city's charm to visitors. Aspiring to be the Addison of the south, more entertainment venues will be added as well as family-friendly venues to cater to DeSoto's large family demographic. "We can't continue to recycle old thinking," Mayor Sherman said. "We have to bring in new ideas and people if we want to move beyond the point we are at."

Project Create Community is another initiative of Mayor Sherman's, conceived to address the concerns of white flight in the Best Southwest. According to the census bureau, whites between the ages of 22 and 45 are one of the smallest demographics in the area. To combat this issue, Mayor Sherman established a long-term group made up of members from that demographic who reside in DeSoto. They meet once a week to brainstorm and develop plans for growth. Members even receive weekly homework assignments. According to Mayor Sherman, six years ago 70 percent of DeSoto residents were accessing the Internet. He now utilizes tools like Twitter and Facebook to appeal to this demographic.

"If someone wants to move, you can't do anything about it," Mayor Sherman said. "I think it's more about comfort than prejudice these days. People don't necessarily feel comfortable when there is more of one ethnicity than another. We have to have balance. I don't want to be mayor of an all black city, an all white city or an all Hispanic city. We are the 'All-America' City.'"

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DeSotoNOW

Being accessible to the public is important to Mayor Sherman; he wants residents to know his goal is to work for them despite their race, age, gender or social status. Being the senior minister of the Hutchins Church of Christ has given him the opportunity to interact with community members on a regular basis. Congregation members have coined him their M&M, their Minister and Mayor.

Through his work as a minister, Mayor Sherman gets the opportunity to be among a diverse group of citizens on a regular basis. He leads a Bible study twice each Wednesday at local nursing homes, where he talks with some of the city's oldest residents, who sometimes become the forgotten citizens. Mayor Sherman also leads a prison ministry that helps rehabilitate former prisoners wrongly accused and those currently serving time in prisons, who are innocent.

"I thought I was living my purpose as the President and CEO of a publicly traded company and Bishop of Mountain View Church of Christ," Mayor Sherman said. "I never wanted to be a pastor, but God had other plans for me. God has been good to me and has blessed the work of our church."

One of the blessings vital to Mayor Sherman's success is the support of his family. During their first date, Mayor Sherman knew he would marry his wife, Michelle, and even went home and told his brother. Twenty-three years later, they now have five children: Carl Jr., 22; Ryan, 21; Ellis, 16; Eryn, 13; and Jordan, 11 and two grandchildren. His family's only concern when he decided to run was that he would never sleep, because they knew he would be committed to seeing things through.

Over 25 years ago, when he was a student at Ferris High School, Mayor Sherman knew that one day he would live in DeSoto. He and his classmates were surprised to learn it was the second wealthiest city in the Metroplex at the time, next to Highland Park. The Sherman family moved to DeSoto 14 years ago and have been active in the community ever since. "My desire to live here wasn't based on DeSoto's wealth," Mayor Sherman said. "DeSoto had this can-do spirit about it, and I knew that I had to be a part of it. You can achieve whatever you desire here." NOW

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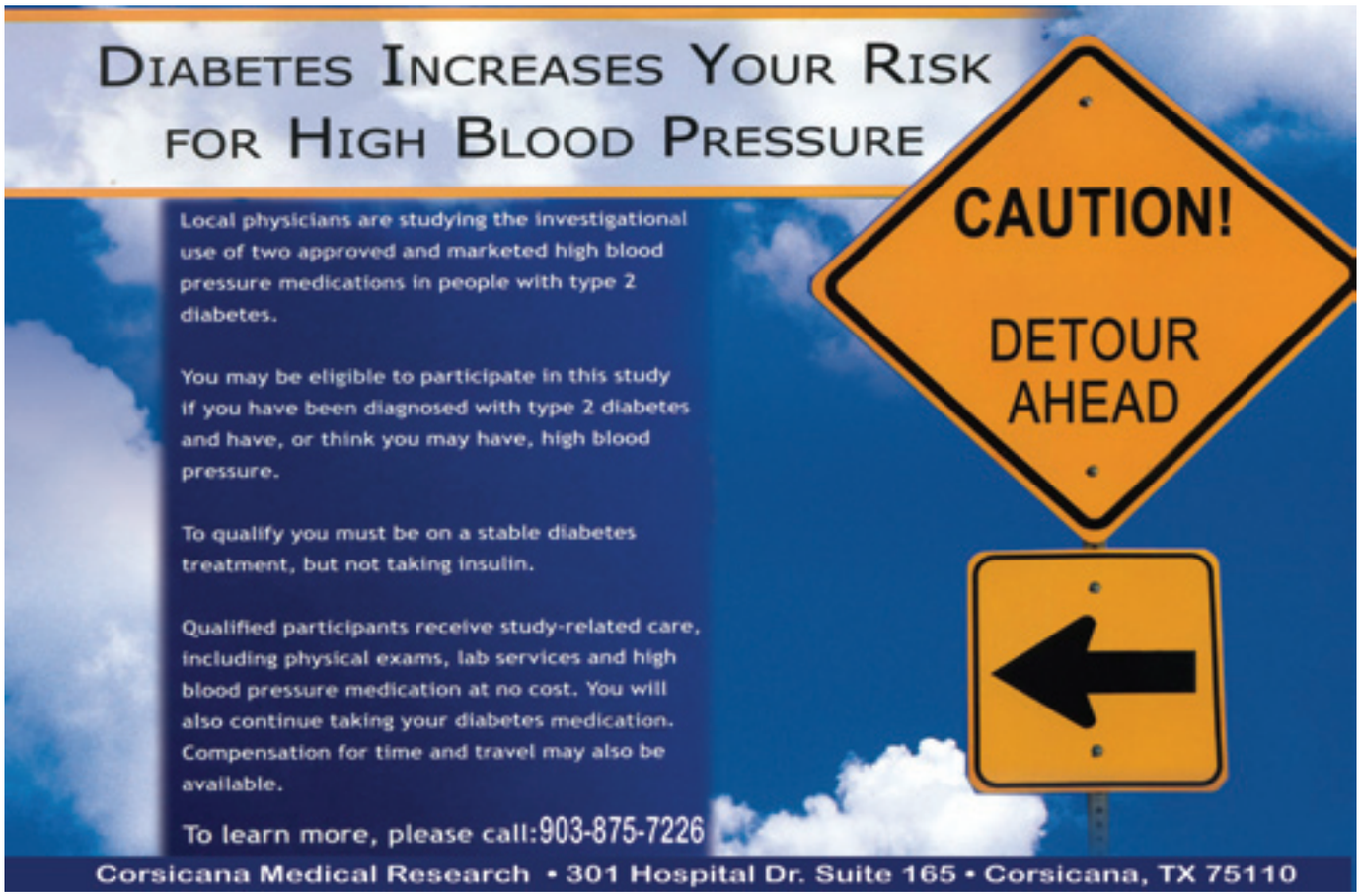

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THE *Simple* SECRET

— *By Katrina D. McNair*

When you see a couple who are truly, unquestionably and undeniably in love, it is almost tangible. Be it a subtle look, a gentle glance or a reassuring hand squeeze, when it is real, unconsciously, you will be the one with a smile on your face. And when in the company of Jack and Oleta Armstrong, the smile will never fade.

The Armstrongs have managed to combine their lives into one blended and harmonious existence with a history dating back some 65 years. Residing in Duncanville, Jack and Oleta have been married for 15 years. Oleta was married for 45 years, and Jack was married for almost 50 years before losing their first spouses to illness. "We've got almost 110 years of marriage experience," Jack laughed.

And that experience is reflected in their interactions with one another, causing the staff at a local deli and soda counter the two frequently visit to fondly call them the "Love Couple." "We were always holding on to each other and holding hands, grinning at each other," Jack said, when asked how the two got their nickname. Oleta added, "We sit side-by-side. We don't sit across from each other unless that's the only thing they have available."

The couple's story began like many do, with fate and circumstances bringing them together. Oleta, 77, was born and reared in Weatherford and moved to Dallas in 1952. Originally from Waco, Jack, 84, moved to Dallas when he was 10 years old. For many years, Oleta worked in the banking industry, with encouragement from her first husband. After becoming pregnant with her youngest child, she retired in 1967. Her first husband had gone into business for himself, owning a

car lot; she then began to work part time for him taking care of bookkeeping tasks. Later, she became a stay-at-home mom.

Jack also had a very active life prior to his union with Oleta. A former columnist, Jack wrote for *Today Newspapers* and also *The Suburban*. After retiring from

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the Marines with four years of service, he worked as a pressman at *The Dallas Morning News* and owned his own auto repair business in Oak Cliff for more than 30 years. Though he says he is no hero, Jack earned two Purple Hearts during World War II and other medals were presented to him by Congressman Kenny Marchant in a ceremony. Having left school when he joined the Marines, Jack received his honorary high school diploma in 2002. He recently retired from being a school crossing guard and bus monitor, jobs he held so he could still be active, while continuing to feel the joy of working with children.

Jack and Oleta both attended church at West Illinois Church of Christ when they were still in their original marriages. Though the couples were acquaintances, they did not socialize together much. "We were good friends, but we just didn't go around a lot," Jack said. After the deaths of their first spouses, both Jack and Oleta remained very active in the church, where the shared experience of losing a loved one initially brought them together. Later, once they got together, the couple began to attend Jefferson Boulevard Church of Christ, which is the old Sunset Church.

Oleta had not seen Jack in over a year and was told by a friend that Jack's first wife had recently passed away. Having recently lost her husband, Oleta knew what Jack was going through and did what any properly reared Southern girl would do — she baked him a cake. "That was the first time we had really seen each other in over a year," she said. "It was a chocolate sheet cake."

Later on, as Jack remembers it, he was attending a meeting at their church when Oleta walked into the room. "She came over and two good friends of ours were sitting in front of us, when one said, 'Why don't you guys sit together?' — just trying to work something up there," Jack recounted, while Oleta chuckled. "She came over and sat by me, and that night we went out to the lake."

Even though that was their first unofficial date, the couple knew they were on to something. For Christmas, Oleta baked another cake for Jack and asked if she could come by and pick up the dish she had presented the chocolate

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cake on — one Jack had wisely held on to. "While she was there, I swiped me a little ole kiss," he said, smirking.

Once when they were spending time together, Jack voiced that he did not think he would ever get married again, on account of him having been married so long before. Oleta wisely advised him to never say never. And sure enough, he came to eat his words. Getting down on one knee, Jack proposed to Oleta, and they were married in May of 1995.

Although there was a small resistance to the couple's union initially, both families have joined into one happy brood. "Jack had three children, and I had three children. He had two boys and a girl, and I had two girls and a boy. So, it just evened them up," Oleta said, smiling. "I always have the feeling I want to treat them [Jack's children] like Jack treats my children — like they're his own," Oleta admitted. With their combined families, the couple has 20 grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild.

Because of the longevity of their original marriages and the happiness which has followed them into their current marriage, the couple is often asked: "What is your secret?" There is no special book that holds the secret, nor a marriage guru who holds the key. For the Armstrongs, it is all quite simple. "The secret is to respect your mate, love them with all your heart and to have a lot of faith," Jack said matter-of-factly.

The couple also believes a strong spiritual background and foundation are keys to their long unions and can be the key to others' relationships as well. "In our little bitty church," Oleta said, "there's one anniversary after another, all the time, people who've been married for years. You have to go into marriage with a positive attitude," she advised. "A lot of them think, *If this doesn't work out, I can get out of it*. You have to have a lot of faith and love."

Aside from their faith and love, the Armstrongs have one other shared passion, which keeps things fun and interesting in their marriage — they love to go out to eat. "We love to eat out," Jack laughed. "We probably eat out more than anyone else in Duncanville. We are just happy." NOW

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The DeSoto Eagle Football Team is gearing up for another spectacular season! With two games being played during unique situations, the Eagles are ready to strive for excellence and a run into the playoffs!

Tickets for the Arlington Bowie game at Cowboys Stadium on Labor Day - Monday, September 6 at 7:30 p.m. - are on sale now at the Eagle Athletics Office for just $15.00. This game is part of the Kirk Herbstreit Varsity Football Series that also includes Trinity, Cedar Hill and Skyline games.

On September 10-11, the Eagles will be hosting the first ever Florida vs. Texas High School Football Showcase. Over two days, four match-ups will decide which state has the best high school football program. Texas teams include State Champions Abilene, Madison, Denison and DeSoto facing Florida teams Cocoa, Glades Miami Central and Miramar - all powerful programs! A four-game pass is just $35. Individual games are $12 for adults and $10 for students. Buy tickets online at www.texasvsflorida.com.

Season tickets for the regular Eagle home games are also on sale and include the DeSoto vs. Miramar game.

2010-11 EAGLES FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

Fri., Aug. 27	7:30 p.m. @ Leander
Mon., Sept. 6	7:30 p.m. Arl. Bowie @ Cowboys Sta.
Sat., Sept. 11	**7:30 p.m. vs. Miramar, FL**
Fri., Sept. 17	**7:30 p.m. vs. Stony Point**
Fri., Sept. 24	7:30 p.m. @ NOAH (Tulsa, OK)
Th., Oct. 7	7 p.m. @ N. Mesquite
Fri., Oct. 15	**7:30 p.m. vs. Tyler Lee (Homecoming)**
Fri., Oct. 22	7:30 p.m. @ Mesquite Horn
Fri., Oct. 29	7:30 p.m. @ Mesquite
Fri., Nov. 5	**7:30 p.m. vs. Longview (Senior Night)**

TEAMDESOTO *finish strong*

DeSoto ISD has a new campaign for the 2010-11 school year: TEAM DESOTO - *finish strong!* We want every student, educator, parent and the community to join together as the district aims toward the goal of Exemplary!

All district staff were recently pumped up at Convocation that included five-time Olympic medalist speed skater Chad Hedrick. Watch for more ways to partner with TEAM DESOTO this year and finish strong in academics, athletics and every aspect of the lives of our students!

CONGRATULATIONS DESOTO ISD!

TEA Recognized District!

• 3 Exemplary Schools • 6 Recognized Schools

DeSoto ISD has earned the Texas Education Agency (TEA) rating as a RECOGNIZED District. The district has three Exemplary schools, six Recognized campuses and three Academically Acceptable schools - two of which missed Recognized by one point in one subsection.

DeSoto High School and East Middle School missed Recognized by one point in one subsection! Cockrell Hill Elementary, DHS and EMS are rated Academically Acceptable.

DESOTO ISD – TEA RATINGS

EXEMPLARY SCHOOLS

Ruby Young Elementary
Northside Elementary
Woodridge Elementary

RECOGNIZED SCHOOLS

Freshman Campus
West Middle School
McCowan Middle School
Amber Terrace Elementary
The Meadows Elementary
Frank Moates Elementary

"We are ecstatic about our amazing gains and school ratings. To reach Recognized as a district is a milestone toward our academic excellence across every subject and student subgroup," said Superintendent Lloyd Treadwell.

District gains included tremendous leaps at DeSoto High School. While the district had gains in all grades and subjects from seventh grade through twelfth grade, DHS had gains in grades 10 and 11 math scores of 20 percentage points in each. DHS science scores also increased 14 percentage points in grade 10 and 17 percentage points in grade 11.

All district reading scores at each grade are over 80 percent passing and all district writing scores are over 90 percent passing. District-wide math scores have climbed to over 77 percent passing and district-wide science is at 74 percent.

"We are additionally pleased with our 90 percent passing rate or improvement in 26 of 27 areas while we continue striving to meet increasing standards each year," said Dr. Donna Crenshaw, Chief Academic Officer. "We will continue to provide activities and interventions to ensure that every student and campus excels academically."

calendar

Monday, Sept. 6 - Labor Day Holiday; DeSoto vs. Arlington Bowie at Cowboys Stadium, 7:30 p.m.
Sept. 10-11 - Florida vs. Texas Football Showcase
Monday, Sept. 27 - Student State Fair Day
November 22-26 - Thanksgiving Holiday
Dec. 20-31 - Winter Break
January 14 - Teacher Preparation Day
January 17 - Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday
February 21 - Staff Development Day
March 14-18 - Spring Break
April 22 - Teacher Preparation Day
May 30 - Memorial Day Holiday
June 2 - Last Day of School

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My HOME My CANVAS

— *By Beverly Shay*

Life, with its many unexpected turns and challenges can take us along paths we never dreamed of — paths which often lead us into places of unexpected contentment, providing opportunities to bless others far beyond our dreams. Donna Luce, a Duncanville resident, has experienced what some might consider more than her share of such challenges, but, as her home reflects, she has made peace a significant characteristic of her life.

Walking up the sidewalk to her modest 1963 bungalow, there is no real indication of the oasis she has created inside. "I looked at other homes in this neighborhood, but they just weren't what I wanted. Many times as I drove by this one, I just loved it," Donna began the saga of how she got this home. "Although under contract, the owner got my phone number from one of his neighbors and called me offering to show it to me. I came right over!"

Three days later, the contract fell through, and Donna purchased her dream house at a bargain. "The home was not more nor less than what I needed and could afford," Donna remarked. But what makes her story even more amazing is her aside comment, "I moved in three days after surgery for colon cancer in 2006." Her innocuous understatement is typical of how she has grabbed life by the horns and refused to be waylaid.

Donna loved her new home, describing it as a blank canvas awaiting her artistic touch. The living room, originally two rooms, had been opened into one large area with an added fireplace. The walls throughout the house were painted white or paneled with a deep brown walnut paneling. The kitchen cabinets were dark and the countertops

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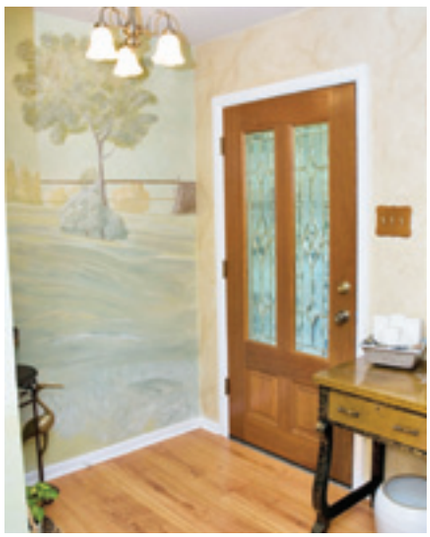
were classic 1960s' turquoise. Donna had learned wallpapering from her mother-in-law, but as that went out of style, she taught herself to faux-finish. She was eager and itching to personalize her new little home. The before photos show the immense amount of work she has lovingly invested in creating a pleasant retreat, despite her newly acquired physical limitations.

"The messy part was taking down the popcorn ceiling. It's not really hard to do; you just spray it with water and then scrape it off," Donna explained. In her entryway she painted a bucolic scene she copied from a magazine in a light mossy green with touches of pale gold to create a tone-on-tone, sepia-like print. "I can paint anything from a picture," Donna confided. The adjoining walls have a parchment-colored, textured finish achieved by hand troweling; veins of slightly darker color were added later. The living room walls are faux-stone finished by combining joint compound with paint and shaping it on the wall into irregular stone shapes. These finished walls feel like sandstone because there was actually sand in the Ralph Lauren paint she used.

Deep brown leather couch, love seat and chair trimmed with brass studding provide the perfect complement to the old trunk she turned into a coffee table. "I had to tear the decrepit leather off to find the lovely pine underneath, which I oiled; then I painted all the metal trim black, topped it with glass and a leather cloth with embroidered circles to blend



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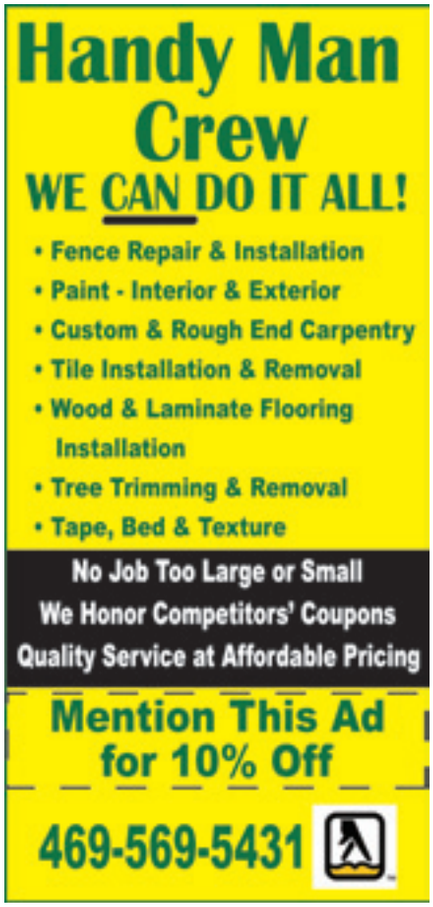
with the couches," Donna detailed. "I love the Southwest look." Behind the couch on a drapery rod hangs a Venice-like river walk scene, which Donna painted with heavy acrylics on canvas. Tucked into the corner of the room by the front window, is an octagonal dining table, dressed in tans and browns, set for entertaining and presided overhead by an adjustable, hanging, green-shaded double lamp.

Her kitchen and eating area showcase a dramatic, yet inexpensive, makeover. Unable to afford replacing the turquoise countertops, she instead took turquoise as the main color. The dark cabinets were painted turquoise then lightened with a Navajo white crackle finish through which the turquoise shows as thin veins. An oak laminate floor and Navajo white walls (previously dark paneling) add light and space. Above a round glass kitchen table hangs a leafy chandelier with down-turned tulip globes strewn with strings of teardrop crystals, a house-warming gift from a lighting company for whom she has worked trade shows at the World Trade Center over the years. A refinished sewing machine desk, wash table, glass-faced dish cabinet, straight-backed chairs, wood valances made from antique headboards, as well as an assortment of antique toys and tools give the kitchen a country-farm feel. Donna's copied Western-scene painting of a cowboy on a horse lassoing a longhorn was taken from a W. T. Cox print on a calendar.

Off the kitchen is a lovely, covered back patio with a small fountain, green rag rugs and table and chairs. The backyard also houses Donna's workshop, with its own covered patio. "I found a 7 1/2 by 3 1/2-foot drafting table thrown out in Grapevine, which is now

my worktable," Donna said. Canvases, shelves of all colors of paint, bits of wood and molding, chairs, table tops, an old watchmaker's cabinet and desk line the walls of the shop where she refinishes furniture.

Of course, one of her most delightful refinishing/remodeling projects is her "Mamma Mia" room. "I fell in love with *Mamma Mia!* and wanted my own room to become that Grecian hideaway," Donna exclaimed. The walls are pale turquoise aged with spots of deeper turquoise texturing. Shutters made from rough, old fencing were painted in three shades of faded turquoise with bits faux- and crackle-finished to add depth and



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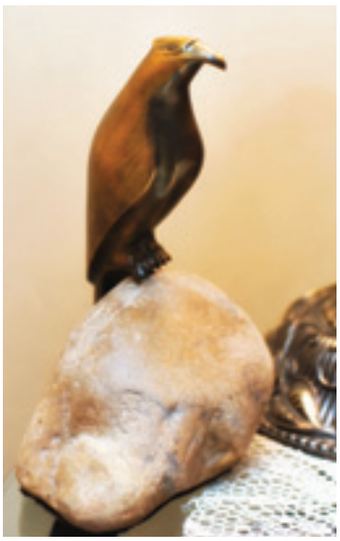

Above a round glass kitchen table hangs a leafy chandelier with down-turned tulip globes strewn with strings of teardrop crystals, a house-warming gift from a lighting company for whom she has worked trade shows at the World Trade Center over the years.

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A beach-themed bathroom, complete with an "awning" shower curtain of chocolate brown and turquoise stripes, downplays the 60s' turquoise wall tiles.

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age. The wall to the right of the window is quite realistically painted as a balcony with a sea view; the "balcony" being sand-colored, faux-stone finish. Another window is hung with bamboo curtains. This room (as all the rooms throughout the house) has white crown molding, but in here, Donna sanded random spots to again imply age. Her bedspread and throw pillows continue the entire Greek Island/*Mamma Mia!* theme.

A beach-themed bathroom, complete with an "awning" shower curtain of chocolate brown and turquoise stripes, downplays the 60s' turquoise wall tiles. A painted Galveston beach scene will soon be finished when Donna adds in her children and continues the seagull's flight across the ceiling.

When Donna had to have further, more complex colon surgery with the return of cancer late last year, she found her refurbished home the perfect place to recuperate. Recovering from surgery, Donna, who simply does not feel sorry for herself, is back at work full time in her business, Second Mile Interiors. She is determined to find a way to help others with her condition find the courage, grace and confidence to fearlessly return to the life they once led. Her artistic creativity is working on a solution that may soon be revealed. NOW

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A Northwood University student shows off a classic car at this year's auto show.

Channel 8's Daybreak program drew 75 participants, the best crowd they have ever had at the 5:30 a.m. event. Various groups were represented including: CHISD band, cheerleaders, police officers, firefighters, residents, city, Chamber and Rotary Club.

Northwood University's baseball team prays for 6-year-old brain cancer patient Benjamin Landrey.

Ronald McDonald reads during Story Time at Zula B. Wylie Library.

Flick'n'Float movie series at Cedar Hill's Crawford park offers a chance to beat the heat during the final dog days of summer.

Randy Moon is another winner in the Cedar Hill Parks & Recreation contest honoring National Parks & Recreation month.

SWNSeptAT.indd 34 8/25/10 12:06:58 AM

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The Canterbury Girls Varsity Volleyball Team poses after winning gold at the San Antonio Bracken Invitational Tournament.

The Ruby Young Elementary staff, led by Deidre Hannible, celebrates their repeat earning of the Texas Education Agency Exemplary rating.

Former DeSoto librarian, Mary Musgrave (seated), is surrounded by her new exercise buddies and instructors at the Methodist Charlton Fit Zone.

Mayor Carl Sherman welcomes new teachers and employees to the DeSoto ISD family.

The DeSoto Chamber of Commerce holds ribbon cuttings to welcome businesses to the community. From left: Sonic; Perry's Old Fashioned Hamburgers.

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The Special Olympics swim team at the Duncanville Natatorium, proudly shows their swim fins that were donated by D&J Sports.

The drama class poses with instructors at the Duncanville Theater workshop.

Attendees enjoy a meal during the Patrizio Networkers lunch.

Teens who completed summer reading requirements enjoy dinner at the 2010 Duncanville Teen Overnight at Duncanville library.

The Duncanville Chamber of Commerce holds ribbon cuttings to welcome businesses to the community. From left: Serenity Dental Spa; The Cake Guys.

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The Essential Facts of Life

— By Beverly Shay

Success in life is often as simple as finding what you love to do, excelling at it and, when possible, making money from your passion. Sometimes, just pursuing it can be success enough, especially if you inspire others to pursue their passion. In a nutshell, that is the kind of art teacher Linda Martin has been. About 60 of her former students are working artists now, in part due to her passion for art and her influence in their lives.

"Art has always been a part of me. Drawing is my way of talking to people," Linda mentioned, reviewing her years as an artist and art teacher. "I always liked to design. Initially a fashion design major at North Texas State University [now University of North Texas], when my instructors recognized and encouraged my art, I changed my major to art and finished my degree in visual art with a teaching certification at The University of Texas at Arlington.

"I taught painting, drawing and sculpture, but I love drawing best," Linda remarked. Her teaching career at Cedar Hill High School began in 1976 as a part-time community education director. With the arrival of bond money, she developed the visual arts program in the high school and later in other Cedar Hill schools. In 1980, she became yearbook advisor. By 1990, Linda chaired the fine arts program and began teaching AP art and art history, after earning her master's in art history from Texas Woman's University. "The best thing about the AP classes has been going to New Jersey for a week each year to grade tests with other art history teachers, from whom I learned different methods that have made me a better teacher," Linda related.

"I use a pencil best," Linda remarked. "It's easier to sketch what I see than to tell. Once, at the end of two weeks of jury duty, the whole jury wanted to see my drawings." Painting, though, was a different matter. Although Linda purchased excellent brushes, she struggled learning to use them, so her instructor asked for her brushes and told her to paint with her hands!

"I love it. Being able to touch the canvas and feel the paint releases my creativity. The brushes inhibited me, but painting with my hands really allows me to express myself," Linda explained.

Her tactile expression of art is not limited to painting. Linda is fascinated with indigenous people and their art — like the Navajo rugs. "The whole process fascinates me: raising sheep, shearing them, cleaning and spinning the yarn, dyeing it and weaving. I have a Navajo loom and yarn I purchased from them, after taking classes. I love those people and their culture, their lives and traditions. I ended up doing my thesis on the life philosophy of Navajos and their weaving."

While she has always thrived on encouraging her art students, now Linda, recently retired from teaching, is eager to unleash her own creativity. "I have so many plans and projects lined up," she shared enthusiastically. "And I have the perfect place to work!" Tucked in a corner of her yard is her studio, a close-to-scale replica of Thoreau's cabin at Walden Pond. "My husband purchased the plans and with the help of two friends, built this for me, everything but the fireplace," Linda explained. Inside are three chairs, "just as in his cabin," her grandmother's old table, the Navajo

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loom, with sticks she gathered from the Navajo reservation to use as weaving shuttles. Canvases, finished paintings, art in process and supplies line the walls between windows overlooking the woods on one side and her own version of the pond (the pool) on the other side.

In her studio, Linda's works reveal the vastness of her skill and imagination. A truly unique sketch of bubbles is one she created from a photograph of underwater "shale shaking" at an oil rig. "The bubbles are formed by gasses escaping through the oil, trailing tentacles. I didn't know if I could capture and replicate the 3-D depth of that amazing little world," Linda remembered. But she did, with startling clarity. A shaded pencil sketch of a student on the basketball court is a masterpiece of proportion, depth and expression. A very touching drawing of Coach David Milson of Cedar Hill High School, not only portrays his personality

and passion, but conveys the high regard Linda and many others have for him.

Artwork in her home is largely from photos: pencil drawings of Don Henley (from the Eagles) and one of Willie Nelson, which she was able to show him and have him autograph. One painting, created from her memories, is of her great-grandmother in East Texas, barefoot and shelling peas. Several hand oil paintings depict a window and rocks in shades of earth tones. In her bedroom hangs a floral "glue drawing" made of a collage of torn magazine pages with flowers drawn in glue, which remains colorful and glossy after a chemical removes the color around the glue.

To rephrase a quote by Robert Frost, Linda has miles of artwork to create before she sleeps, miles of artwork to create before she sleeps. NOW

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A Class Act

With furniture of a quality and style that will sell itself, customer satisfaction is Blucci's No. 1 priority. — By Beverly Shay

"My furniture business was inspired by my late grandparents, Joe and Ruth Burks, who opened an antiques and second-hand shop in 1968, where I helped out as a child," Terrance Burks, owner of Blucci Contemporary Furniture related. "I would go to garage sales and clean up the purchased furniture. My uncle and cousin carried on with the business, and in 1999, my cousin brought me into the furniture business."

Terrance indeed managed Bailey's Furniture Store, which offered more traditional furniture, for seven years, before opening Blucci Contemporary Furniture in Cedar Hill in 2006. "I noticed a lot of people were inquiring about contemporary styles, and we were referring them to stores up north of 635 and the tollway. With no such store in the Best Southwest, I thought, *Why not open up a furniture store with a great showroom and offer an extended line through special order catalogs?* It has been a great success," Terrance remarked.

If you are looking for quality and beauty of a more contemporary style, you must come in and see the many bedroom suites, living room sets, dining room furniture and variety of accessories on display. The richly burled woods, leather, suede and glass vie with truly unique vases, lamps, candle holders, mirrors, clocks, pillows and even some

From left:
Terrance Burks, owner of Blucci Contemporary Furniture, relaxes on one of his many fine leather couches.

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sculptures will surely captivate you. "Everything you see is for sale," Terrance stated, "mattresses, linens, flat-screen TVs, rugs accessories — all of it!" Table linens and place settings, attractive bowls and bookshelves are quite different than chain-store styles.

In case you do not see exactly what you are looking for in the 2,400-square-foot showroom, or are not quite sure just what you want, catalogs from furniture manufacturers from all over the U.S., Canada, Italy, China and other countries are available for perusal at a leisurely pace right in the store. A large round dining table, comfy leather couch or theater recliner provide just the place to search for your new look.

Wondering about customer service and delivery? "He [Terrance] has taken such good care of me that I keep coming back," said Wanda Kirven, a customer, who has purchased dining room and bedroom furniture and is now choosing office furniture. With zero-percent, no credit-check financing, 90-days-same-as-cash or six-month layaway (with 10-percent down) and a 30-day lowest price guarantee, shopping at Blucci may be the easiest and most pleasant way to furnish your home. Delivery and set up can be arranged. "We had no wait, a good delivery experience for the quality furniture, which we purchased at a good price, and no run-around. They even supplied same-day replacement of a piece that came damaged from the factory. We are very satisfied and recommend Blucci to everyone," Wanda confidently reported. "We will soon be furnishing two more bedrooms from Blucci."

Terrance, who really knows his merchandise both on the floor and in the catalogs, further stated, "I can get whatever you see elsewhere and usually beat the price." While he offers lots of imports, he also promotes American products, stating that American leather is usually softer, longer wearing and of a better grain.

Terrance and his four employees want to build a personal rapport with customers because "customer service is our No. 1 priority. Our furniture is of such good quality, it will sell itself." NOW

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In The Kitchen With Claudia Franklin

— By Faith Browning

Claudia Franklin had a unique childhood growing up in the restaurant business. Her parents owned their own Mexican restaurant where she and her siblings spent many hours. "My mom was my biggest inspiration for cooking," she said. "I had the privilege of cooking by her side on many occasions, learning her tips and tricks. I continue to call her for cooking advice all the time."

Claudia enjoys teaching at Dallas Baptist University and spending time with her husband, Sam, and their daughter, Sydni. "I enjoy cooking with my daughter. It is so rewarding to see her make salsa or whip up some enchiladas in a matter of minutes," she expressed. "For me, the best tradition of all is being able to pass down the secrets of cooking to my family and friends." NOW

SALSA MEXICANA (MEXICAN HOT SAUCE)

2 jalapeño peppers
1 onion, halved
1 small can tomato sauce
2 lg. cans whole peeled tomatoes
1/2 bunch cilantro
1/2 tsp. salt

1. Puree the jalapeño peppers, 1/2 onion and tomato sauce; pour into a medium-size bowl.
2. One at a time, take each can of tomatoes and pulsate in the blender 1-2 times. The less you pulsate the chunkier your salsa will be. Combine the tomatoes in the bowl with puree.
3. Finely chop the other half of the onion; combine with the tomato mixture.
4. Take the top portion of the cilantro, mostly the leaves, and chop slightly; combine with the rest of ingredients.
5. Add the salt and mix all the ingredients together with a large spoon. Serve with your favorite tortilla chips.

GUACAMOLE

6 medium-size avocados
1/4 cup onion, finely chopped
1 lg. Roma tomato, chopped
1/2 tsp. garlic salt
1/4 slice lime

1. Slice and remove all avocado pulp; place in medium-size bowl. Mash avocado until a creamy consistency.
2. Add onion, tomato and garlic salt. Squeeze lime into mixture.
3. Mix slightly as not to mash the tomatoes. Serve with your favorite tortilla chips or bagel chips.

ARROZ MEXICANO (MEXICAN-STYLE RICE)

1/4 cup vegetable oil
2 cups Mahatma® rice
1 10-oz. can tomato sauce
4 cups water
2 Tbsp. onions, finely chopped
2 Tbsp. Knorr® chicken flavor bouillon seasoning
1 small Roma tomato, finely chopped
Salt, to taste

1. In a medium-size pot, heat 1/4 cup vegetable oil on medium heat. Once the oil is hot, add rice; stir rice to mix until browned.
2. Add tomato sauce, water, onion and bouillon; mix until tomato sauce is distributed throughout.
3. Bring to a quick boil mixing frequently.
4. Add finely chopped tomato and salt to taste. Turn to low heat and cover; cook for 20 minutes.

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1 pkg. taco seasoning
1 can Wolf Brand Chili®
1 pkg. flour tortillas
2 pkgs. finely shredded Fiesta blend cheese (usually consists of 3-4 of the following: Cheddar, Monterrey Jack, Colby, Mozzarella)

1. Preheat oven to 475 F. Cook ground beef with taco seasoning.
2. Warm chili.
3. Take the tortillas and warm 6-8 at a time in the microwave for 30 seconds. Tortillas should be slightly soft.
4. Take 2 Tbsp. of the meat and place down the center of the tortilla; roll. Place in a large baking dish. Continue until completing the entire package of tortillas placing each rolled enchilada side-by-side.
5. Pour chili evenly over all the enchiladas.
6. Take finely shredded cheese and place over chili until all enchiladas are completely covered.
7. Place in the oven for 8-10 minutes. Cheese will be completely melted when it is time to remove from oven.

TORTA VEGETARIANO (VEGGIE-STYLE MEXICAN SANDWICH)

1 Tbsp. olive oil
1 pkg. sliced mushrooms
1/2 onion, thinly sliced
Salt and pepper, to taste
1 16-oz. can refried beans
2 bolillo bread rolls
Mayonnaise
1/4 cup goat cheese or Feta cheese
1/2 cup spinach leaves
1 Roma tomato, sliced
1 avocado

1. Preheat oven on low broil.
2. In a small pan, heat the olive oil. Once heated, add mushrooms and onion to the pan and sauté, adding a pinch of salt and pepper.
3. Warm refried beans.
4. Slice bread like a sub sandwich.
5. Brush mayonnaise on both cut sides of bread; place on baking sheet. Broil for 2-3 minutes until bread is slightly browned.
6. Take bread and spread refried beans on the bottom portion; top with cheese. Add sautéed onions and mushrooms. Top with spinach leaves, sliced tomatoes and avocado.

FRIJOLES CHARROS (MEXICAN BEANS)

16-oz. bag pinto beans
8 cups water
4 strips bacon
1/2 med. onion, chopped
4 Roma tomatoes, chopped
2 jalapeño peppers, thinly sliced
2 Tbsp. salt
1/2 bunch cilantro, finely chopped

1. Place beans and water in a small Crock-Pot on low heat.
2. Cook bacon on medium heat until lightly browned. Bacon should have a soft consistency. Take bacon and place whole slices into Crock-Pot.
3. Slowly cook beans for 4 hours.
4. At the fourth hour, add onions, tomatoes, jalapeño peppers and salt; mix slowly.
5. Cover and continue cooking for one hour. Beans should be soft and brown when done.
6. Add cilantro and mix; let stand for 10 minutes. Beans are ready to serve.

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THINK TWICE BEFORE JOINING THE "GOLD RUSH"

In recent months, you may have heard a lot about investing in gold. But is gold the right choice for you? Actually, many factors are involved in this investment decision — and you'll want to consider these factors before you invest.

Of course, the lure of gold is undeniable. Throughout history, gold has been perceived as having great intrinsic value. And this year, as you may know, gold prices have hit record highs, at well over $1,200 an ounce, as people have sought "shelter" from the stormy financial markets.

But as an investment possibility, gold has some "scratches" to it. First of all, contrary to what you may believe, gold prices do not always go up; instead, they will fluctuate, sometimes greatly.

Furthermore, there are specific risks with the different ways of investing in gold. If you bought a gold futures contract (an obligation to buy gold at a predetermined future date and price), you could lose money if gold falls, because you'll still be obligated to complete your contract at the higher, agreed-upon price. If you purchased gold in the form of coins, bullion or bars, you'd face storage, security, insurance and liquidity issues. You need to do a lot of research before investing in gold mining companies, because some of these companies may still be in the gold-exploring stage — and there's no guarantee their explorations will lead to profitable discoveries.

Also, even when its price is considerably lower than it is today, gold is still a fairly expensive investment compared to other choices. It can be costly to go into the gold futures market. And you'll likely have to spend thousands of dollars if you want to buy a bar of gold or even a bunch of coins.

Given these drawbacks to investing in gold, what can you do to fight back against market volatility? One of the best ways is to diversify your holdings among a variety of investments suitable for your financial objectives. Market downturns often affect one type of asset class more than another, so if you can spread your dollars among a variety of asset classes, you can help blunt the effects of volatility. Keep in mind, though, that diversification, by itself, cannot guarantee a profit or protect against loss.

In coping with volatility, you'll also help yourself by taking a long-term view of your investments' performance. If you look at your investment statement for a given month, you might not like what you see. But holding your investments for the long term may help your portfolio better weather the ups and downs you'll encounter in the investment world.

So try to avoid the allure of gold as a "quick fix" to whatever seems to be ailing the financial markets at a particular time. Other investments may be less glitzy and glamorous than gold, but they can have their own sparkle. NOW

Contributed by the Edward Jones representatives in Cedar Hill.

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September is National Cholesterol Education Month:

Reasons to Lower Your Cholesterol Naturally

— By Leah Pittmon, B.S., D.C.

From a natural health standpoint, the conversation about lowering cholesterol will likely sound very different than from the common medical standpoint. The Western medical stand has been, for many years, to prescribe cholesterol-lowering medications to those with high cholesterol, regardless of whether there is additional underlying heart disease or if the patient is otherwise healthy. More discussion regarding the side effects of medications and natural approaches to reducing cholesterol levels is needed. A patient who is committed to lowering their cholesterol naturally can usually do so in about a month. It isn't as easy as a simple "low-fat" diet, but it can be a much better alternative to the side effects of statins.

On June 29, 2010, ABC news reported that a study called the JUPITER trial was biased in favor of statin drugs, those used to reduce cholesterol levels. Quoting from the news report, "... major discrepancies exist between the significant reductions in nonfatal stroke and heart attacks reported in the JUPITER trial and what has been found in other research. ... 'The JUPITER data set appears biased,' [the researchers] wrote in conclusion."

When the JUPITER report was released in 2008, the medical community was buzzing with the idea that this trial suggested statin drugs could be used to prevent heart-related deaths among many more than just those with high cholesterol. It turns out that not only is this idea flawed, but it also questions the involvement of drug companies in such trials.

A patient who is committed to lowering their cholesterol naturally can usually do so in about a month.

First, there are over 900 studies showing that statin drugs are dangerous. Side effects include sexual dysfunction, pancreas and liver problems, anemia, cataracts, acidosis, muscle problems, polyneuropathy (nerve damage in hands and feet), immune suppression, memory loss, increased risk of diabetes and more. In the CARE trial, breast cancer was seen significantly more often in the group taking statins.

But what if a patient can't (or won't) take natural measures to reduce cholesterol? Doesn't the benefit still outweigh the risks? According to Christine Northrup M.D., the answer is no. Dr. Northrup is the author of *Women's Bodies, Women's Wisdom* and other holistic health books. In the CARE trial, people who had heart disease reduced their risk of death due to a heart attack by only 1.1 percent. In the WOSCOPS trial, healthy people with high cholesterol reduced their risk of death from a heart attack by only 0.4 percent. In a 15-year study of men on Pravachol, the drug did reduce death, but increased prostate cancer by even more.

So should you work harder at your health instead of taking that little pill? You have options, and it is your decision to make. NOW

Leah Pittmon, D.C.
Pittmon Family Chiropractic Center

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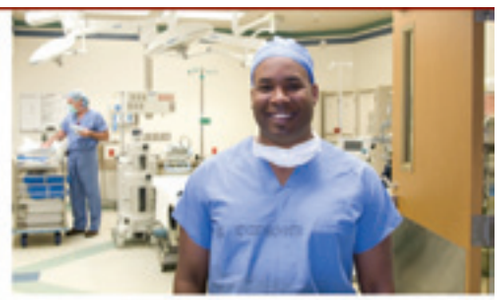

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THE TIME IS NEAR!

— By Nancy Fenton

Watering the lawn is the icing on the cake because it activates the fertilizer.

September is here, and it is time to think about fall fertilizers for lawns. Sometime around the end of September, the evening temperatures cool down to 50 degrees or below. That is the time to get out the spreader! Another great indicator that it is time to fertilize your lawn is when you do not need to mow for two weeks or so. It is important to fertilize the lawn in the fall to prolong fall color and increase winter hardiness. Also proper fertilizer helps maintain a dense turf that resists winter weeds.

Our alkaline soils have lots of their own phosphorous, so Texas A&M suggests fall fertilizers should be high in nitrogen (the first number) and very low in phosphorous (the last or third number). Usually the amount to be applied is one pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet of lawn. Most bags of fertilizer will tell you how much the bag will cover. Organic or chemical makes no difference as long as the numbers are the same.

Watering the lawn is the icing on the cake because it activates the fertilizer. Spray and soak will give you the best results, with the fertilizer going to the roots rather than running into our streams and lakes. This consists of several short periods of watering (the lawn, of course, not the street or drive) relatively close together, so the water soaks into the ground, rather than one long period when it runs off.

If you have more questions about lawns, call the Texas AgriLife Extension at (972) 825-5175. NOW

Nancy Fenton is a Master Gardener.

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HappeningNOW

Mondays
Rhyme Time: 10:15 a.m. at Duncanville Library.

Parkinson's Group: exercise class: 6:30-7:30 p.m. first three Mondays; last Monday: support group: 6:30-8:00 p.m. at Trinity UMC, 1302 S. Clark Rd., Duncanville. (972) 298-4556.

Second Mondays
Diabetes Support Group: 6:00 p.m. at Methodist Charlton Medical Center. (214) 947-7262.

Tuesdays
Senior Access Tai Chai classes: 8:00-8:45 a.m. at Methodist Charlton Medical Center. Cost: $6. (214) 947-4628.

Homeschool Videos: 2:00 p.m. at Duncanville Library.

Sound Options Pregnancy Center parenting class: 6:00-8:00 p.m. RSVP (972) 230-8101.

Second Tuesdays
The Dallas Area Writers Group: 7:00 p.m. at CH Library. Visit dallaswriters.org.

Wednesdays
Preschool stories: 10:30 a.m. at Cedar Hill Library.

Thursdays
Parkinson's Group: exercise class: 1:00-2:00 p.m., Trinity UMC, 1302 S. Clark Rd., Duncanville. (972) 298-4556.

Sound Options Pregnancy Center parenting class: 4:00-6:00 p.m. RSVP (972) 230-8101.

Spanish story time: 5:30 p.m. at Duncanville Library.

Third Thursdays
Free Immunization Clinic for ages 2 months to 18 years, sponsored by CareVan: 5:00-7:00 p.m. (no appointment necessary) at Trinity United Methodist Church, 1302 S. Clark Rd., Duncanville. (972) 689-8285. (Clinic runs through Nov. 16.)

Visual Artist of Cedar Hill (VACH): 7:00-9:00 p.m. at the Creative Arts School for ages 18-plus, 1435 N. US-67 S. (at The Ranch).

Fridays
Walking program: 9:00-10:00 a.m. at Methodist Charlton Medical Center, in conference room 6. (214) 947-4628.

Toddler stories: 10:30 a.m. at Cedar Hill Library.

First and Second Fridays
Line dancing in the Methodist Charlton auditorium: 11:00 a.m. – noon. Reservation required: (214) 947-4628.

Second Saturdays
Baby Boutique Resale: 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. at Sound Options Pregnancy Services (972) 230-8101.

Third Saturdays
Cedar Hill Star Party: sunset-11:00 p.m. at J. W. Williams Park, 1605 High Pointe Ln. (972) 291-1505.

Ongoing
DS library is offering free adult literacy classes in partnership with Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship (OCBF). One-on-one classes taught by trained volunteers at the library. Stop in or call (972) 230-9661. More volunteer instructors needed; call OCBF (972) 228-0872, ext.1600.

September 2
Flamenco Guitar Concert with Ronald Radford: 7:30-10:00 p.m. at DeSoto Corner Theatre 211 E. Pleasant Run Road, DeSoto, TX 75115 (972) 230-9648. Cost: $10/adults; $5/students.

Join the Cedar Hill Action Team as they link information of all the after-school activities available for the kids: 6:30 p.m. in the 3rd-floor Training Room of the Government Center. (972) 742-1971.

September 9-11
The Cry for Rachel Today presented by God's Spotlight: 7:00 p.m. (September 11 also at 2:00 p.m.) at DeSoto Corner Theater, 211 E. Pleasant Run Rd. Cost: $10. 1-800-491-2864.

September 11
Cedar Hill Schools Class Reunion (1931-1981): 1:00-5:00 p.m. at Old Bray Gym. Group photo will be taken at 2:00 p.m. Please help us by contacting all your friends. Bring any school photos (with name and phone number on the back) to display. Call Eva Mae Roberts (972) 217-0201 or Jettie Vincent (972) 291-4902.

Lancaster Chamber of Commerce presents 2nd Saturday on the Square: Best Southwest Idol. Call (214) 912-6573 or (214) 774-7503. www.2ndsaturday.yolasite.com.

September 12
Tri-City Animal Shelter's 2nd Annual Gala: 2:00-6:00 p.m. at Enchanted Memories on the Hill. Cost: $55. Tickets may be purchased at the shelter, Pet Medical Center, Camp Bow Wow, DeSoto Animal Hospital. No tickets will be available at door.

September 13-19
Fall Membership Special, Cedar Hill Recreation Center, $10 off 3-month membership (corporate memberships excluded). Also: various fall classes opening: itty-bitty basketball, belly dancing, Zumba® toning, Cedar Hill Jazz Club forming. Call Juan Bragg for details: (972) 293-5288.

September 16
Free Outdoor Concert Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month: 7:00-9:00 p.m. at the Outdoor Amphitheater at DeSoto Town Center, 211 E. Pleasant Run Road. (972) 230-9651.

September 16-18 and 23-25
Duncanville Community Theatre presents *Murder by the Book*, written by Duncan Greenwood and Robert King and directed by Genevieve Croft at 106 S. Main St. (972) 780-5707.

September 18
E-Waste Recycling and Paper Shredding: 8:00 a.m.-noon at Cedar Hill High School parking lot, 1 Longhorn Blvd. Cedar Hill, TX. (972) 291-5100, ext. 1094 or stacey.graves@cedarhilltx.com Cost: free to Cedar Hill residents. Proof of residency required.

3rd Annual Lake Ridge Charity Golf Tournament: 8:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m. at Tangle Ridge Golf Course, 818 Tangle Ridge Dr., Grand Prairie, 75052. Cost: $95/person; benefits Happy Hill Farm & Academy, Zula B. Wylie Library, Cedar Hill Recreation Center and local food pantry.

7th Annual High Heels & Harleys Education Foundation Gala: 6:00 p.m. at 610 Uptown Blvd., 4th floor. (972) 291-1581, ext. 4047 or educationfoundation@chisd.net.

Festival in Duncanville: 4:00-8:00 p.m. at Armstrong Park sponsored by Escalona Entertainment. Fun includes: Payosos Clowns and Balancing Act, 2 Cold Syndicate band, Folklorico dancing, Zumba®, North Texas Express band, inflatables, facing painting, arts and crafts, food and merchandise.

September 25
Arlingtonanswers.com Job Fair: 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., hosted by The Church on Rush Creek at 2350 S.W. Green Oaks Blvd. in Arlington. This event is produced in conjunction with Work Force Solutions for Tarrant County, offering 50-plus employers that are currently hiring for all job levels. Download the Pre-registration Form off www.Arlingtonanswers.com or call (817) 224-2247 or e-mail jobfair@arlingtonanswers.com.

October 1
Warrior & Family Support Center Charity Golf Tournament: 9:00 a.m. at Stevens Parks Golf Course, 1005 N. Montclair Ave., Dallas. Event supports wounded soldiers and their families while they undergo rehabilitation at Brook Medical Center in San Antonio and at Fort Sam Houston. Contact Mel Rapp (972) 757-6852 or melrapp@sbcglobal.net to register or sponsor a hole for $100.

October 2
9th Celebrating Life Foundation Sister to Sister Festival and 5K Run/Walk: 6:00 a.m.-noon at Cedar Hill Recreation Center, 310 E. Parkerville Rd. Sister to Sister Fitness Festival is a day of breast cancer education activities and raises money for breast cancer awareness. Contact (972) 501-9981, ext. 110 or visit www.celebratinglife.org.

October 8
Old Settlers' Dinner: 3:00-6:00 p.m. in the main tent on Cedar between Broad and Houston, Cedar Hill.

October 9
Cedar Hill's 73rd Annual Country Day on the Hill with a parade, 5K fun run, over 100 craft vendors, tons of food, activities, contests, live entertainment on three stages. (972) 291-7582.

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