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On The Cover



Cedar Hill Police Chief Steve Rhodes finds reeling in fish a relaxing change from his policing duties.

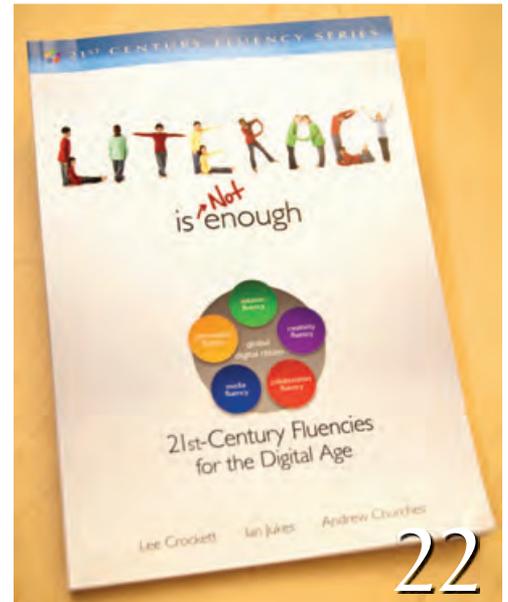
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Editor's Note

Hello, Southwest Friends!

September: Labor Day picnics, school schedules and habits are in place, and life is settling back into a familiar routine. So, what will this month bring? I'm thinking a visit with the grandchildren is in order, since September 8 is Grandparents Day. I'd better let Michael and Elijah know. My daughter moved back from Atlanta recently (love that), but in a few weeks, she'll be moving to Israel for a couple months. I'd sit on my porch, if I had one, to watch the revolving

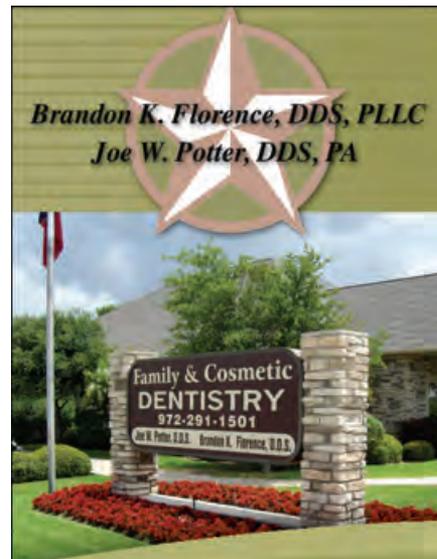
door of my children's lives.

Generally, I like September, since autumn officially arrives, hopefully bringing cooler weather, like my childhood home in Colorado. But I'll settle for some Indian summer and a few more days at the pool and, maybe, one more trip to the beach.

I love it when I hear from you about how the magazine has impacted you.

Beverly

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Seeking Real-World Skills for the Classroom

How do you make the classroom an engaging and beneficial place for students growing up in the 21st century? Duncanville ISD design coaches and teachers spent the summer learning how to implement Project Based Learning (PBL) concepts into third, fifth, and seventh grade curricula for the upcoming school year. PBL is a teaching method that puts students more in charge of their own learning - it focuses on giving students hands-on experiences that keep them motivated, learning, communicating, collaborating and, most of all, remembering necessary knowledge and skills.



project based learning

Visit the district's online News Room to learn how two fifth grade teachers took their quest for PBL initiatives to the extreme this summer when they toured Freese and Nichols Engineering. It's a field experience that will benefit Duncanville ISD students this year. Read more about their story online at www.duncanvilleisdnews.org.

Project Based Learning Takes Flight



On Monday, August 20 Duncanville ISD staff members gathered together to kick off the start of the 2012-13 year at Convocation, an annual event that gives staff members—teachers, bus drivers, nurses,

maintenance crews, Nutrition Services, and all other employees—time to rally behind one common goal: to provide the highest quality education for our students with a focus on Project-Based Learning.

This year's event theme was In-Flight, Continued. It showcased the district's vision for transforming classrooms into 21st Century learning hubs. The highlight of this year's event was an educator flash mob to Michael Jackson's hit song "Man in the Mirror." Educators stood together and vowed to "make the change" needed to transform traditional classrooms into active learning centers where students solve real-world problems.

Duncanville ISD has been moving toward Project Based Learning for the past seven years, and this year will see PBL curricula fully implemented for the first time in selected grades. Teachers spent the summer re-writing lessons for third, fifth, and seventh grades. Learn more online at duncanvilleisdnews.org about this exciting transition for the district and the community.

The 21st Century Classroom



New teachers enjoyed the humor and wisdom of Dr. Seuss, as superintendent Dr. Alfred Ray read "Hooray for Diffendoofer Day" during the 2012 Duncanville ISD New Teacher Welcome Breakfast, held Monday, August 13 at Methodist Charlton Medical Center. Dr. Ray hopes the

book will encourage new teachers to design work for students that challenges them to use 21st Century skills like collaboration, communication, and critical thinking. The book, which depicts project-based learning approaches, is an excellent example of the style of teaching Duncanville ISD encourages.

Apply Online for Free/Reduced Meal Program



Duncanville ISD parents can apply for the free and reduced meal program online using MEAL APP NOW, instead of completing forms by hand. The new online feature is available to families through the district website at

www.duncanvilleisd.org. The meal program is funded by the National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs. A new application must be completed each year; visit the district website to apply for the 2012-2013 school year.



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The REEEL

Deal

— By Angel Morris



In baseball, the trick is keeping your eye on the ball — in fishing, it's the pole. Steve Rhodes, known by many in Cedar Hill as police chief, has found success in both sports and life thanks to just such a well-focused eye. His love of fishing came from his grandfather, was shared by his father and is today a favorite hobby for Steve. "I come from a family of fishermen. I was still in diapers when first handed a pole," Steve recalled.

Born in 1961 in Torrance, California, Steve grew up in Northern California's Kenwood suburb. "Our family went fishing every weekend. I lived next to Sonoma Creek from age 10 to 18 and was constantly trout and steelhead fishing — just walking for miles down the banks of the creek, fishing my favorite holes," Steve said.

When not fishing, Steve was a standout catcher for Montgomery High School's baseball team. He went on to play in college, which is when he moved from California to Texas. "In

Cedar Hill **NOW**

1979, I came with family from California to Cedar Hill, as my father was accepted to Dallas Theological Seminary, and I was accepted to college,” Steve said. Steve pursued baseball early in his college career at The University of Texas at Arlington (UTA).

Unexpectedly, this is also when Steve’s interest in police work developed. “It was a fluke, really. I was just finding a way to work and pay my way through college,” he said. “The UTA police chief offered me a job that worked around my school schedule, and I played on the department’s intramural softball team when college baseball faded.”

Steve was employed by UTA Police Department (PD) from 1982-85. He was hired with Cedar Hill PD in 1985, where he worked his way through the ranks to the highest post. “I joined Cedar Hill Police Department (CHPD) as an officer and was selected for progressive promotions. During these formative years, I focused on reorganization of the department and boosting the department’s credibility within the community,” Steve said.

As a lieutenant, he was required to lead key initiatives within the department. Steve was successful in reducing turnover and implementing new systems for handling officer selection, retention, training and development.

Steve’s success was helped through experience he gained while earning his master’s degree in public administration from Dallas Baptist University (DBU). This included a semester course on managing cultural diversity at Oxford University in 1991. In 1996, he attended the 187th FBI National Academy, bringing more experience to Cedar Hill.

When selected as police chief in 1995, one of the main objectives was to create an organization known for its ethical standards, practices in law enforcement and proactive approach in delivering the highest quality of police services while maintaining fiscal responsibility. CHPD was “recognized” through the Texas Police Chiefs Association Foundation Law Enforcement Agency Best Business Practices Recognition Program in 2010.



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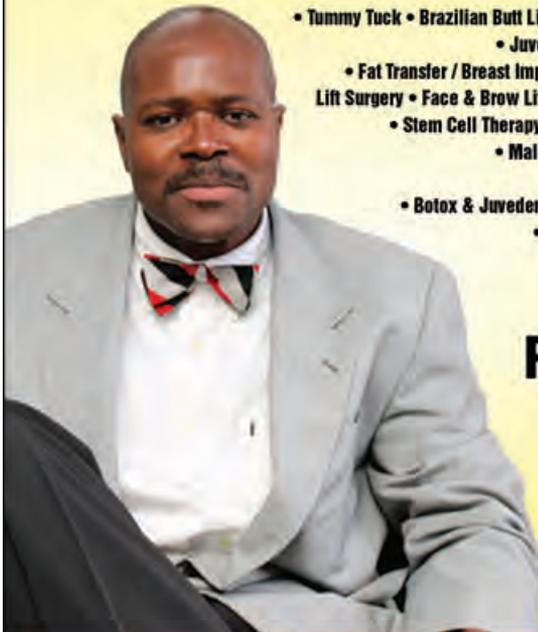
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Recognition is a state accreditation award, and Cedar Hill was the 31st law enforcement agency in Texas to be recognized. "I believe this award is the most meaningful of my tenure with Cedar Hill," Steve noted.

"One of the biggest challenges faced by police departments today is continuing to deliver the highest quality services with limited resources in an environment of constant change," Steve acknowledged. "Training and education help us overcome these types of challenges, as well as access to information. Technology has changed this field. Officers have to work smarter, not harder," Steve said.

With the doubling of its population since the mid-1990s, CHPD was faced with rapidly changing demographics and



other challenges related to the massive influx of new citizens. In 2000, city resources dwindled with the economic downturn, and Steve was instrumental in the implementation of a joint communication's center and jail, allowing Cedar Hill, DeSoto, Duncanville and Lancaster to share resources and save money.

In 2007-08, Steve assisted in planning the 34,000-square-foot police headquarters in the new government center complex — the first of its kind in Texas — integrating city, police and school district departments into one shared facility. "I'm also very proud to have established a full-service victim's assistance program and to have built a community safe house for women victims of domestic violence," Steve said.

With the high pressures of police management, it's no wonder Steve finds respite in fishing. He enjoys fishing the



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Klamath River for salmon, the White River for trout and Lakes Tawakoni and Squaw Creek for catfish. He likes Richland Chambers Lake for crappie, sand bass and catfish. “We own a lake lot right on the water at Pelican Isle, Richland Chambers Lake. I fish as often as I can get away — usually bait fishing and, most recently, ‘corking,’ a catfish technique taught to me by a good friend and fellow fisherman, Jim Hood,” Steve said.

Besides an uncanny ability to tie fishing flies, Steve said folks might be surprised to learn he has been a criminal justice professor at DBU for 20 years. And while he’s earned accolades as an officer and a professor, Steve considers his family his greatest success. His wife, Sherry, works for Salvation Army Divisional Headquarters in Dallas. His daughters, Shae (27) and Stephanie (20), and son, Ryan (25), as well as three grandsons, round out Steve’s familial joy. “Keeping God, family and country as priority and maintaining a balance in life have been key to my achievements,” he said.

The ability to keep his eye on a goal, no doubt, has also helped Steve — on the job and at the lake. “I’m a pretty lucky fisherman. I always catch fish, usually limit out and never get skunked,” he grinned. Truth be told, the hobby is something Steve might someday consider more seriously upon retirement from police work. “Fishing guide sounds like a good career. Taking stressed people out on the water to fish is relaxing and peaceful,” he said.

In the meantime, Steve continues to address the “next hill to climb” for CHPD in its efforts to remain current, competitive and recognized as the best. “The result is a senior leadership team and department with extremely low turnover, exceptional customer service and a reputation of excellence with those we serve,” Steve said. “Most of the leadership team has indicated they want to serve with the department until retirement.”

While he’s all business at the office, Steve anticipates free time spent enjoying the outdoors. And fishing, he admits, is the perfect antidote to a stressful week at work. “Who couldn’t benefit from a little time fishing?” Steve said. “All your troubles melt away when you are on the water.” **NOW**



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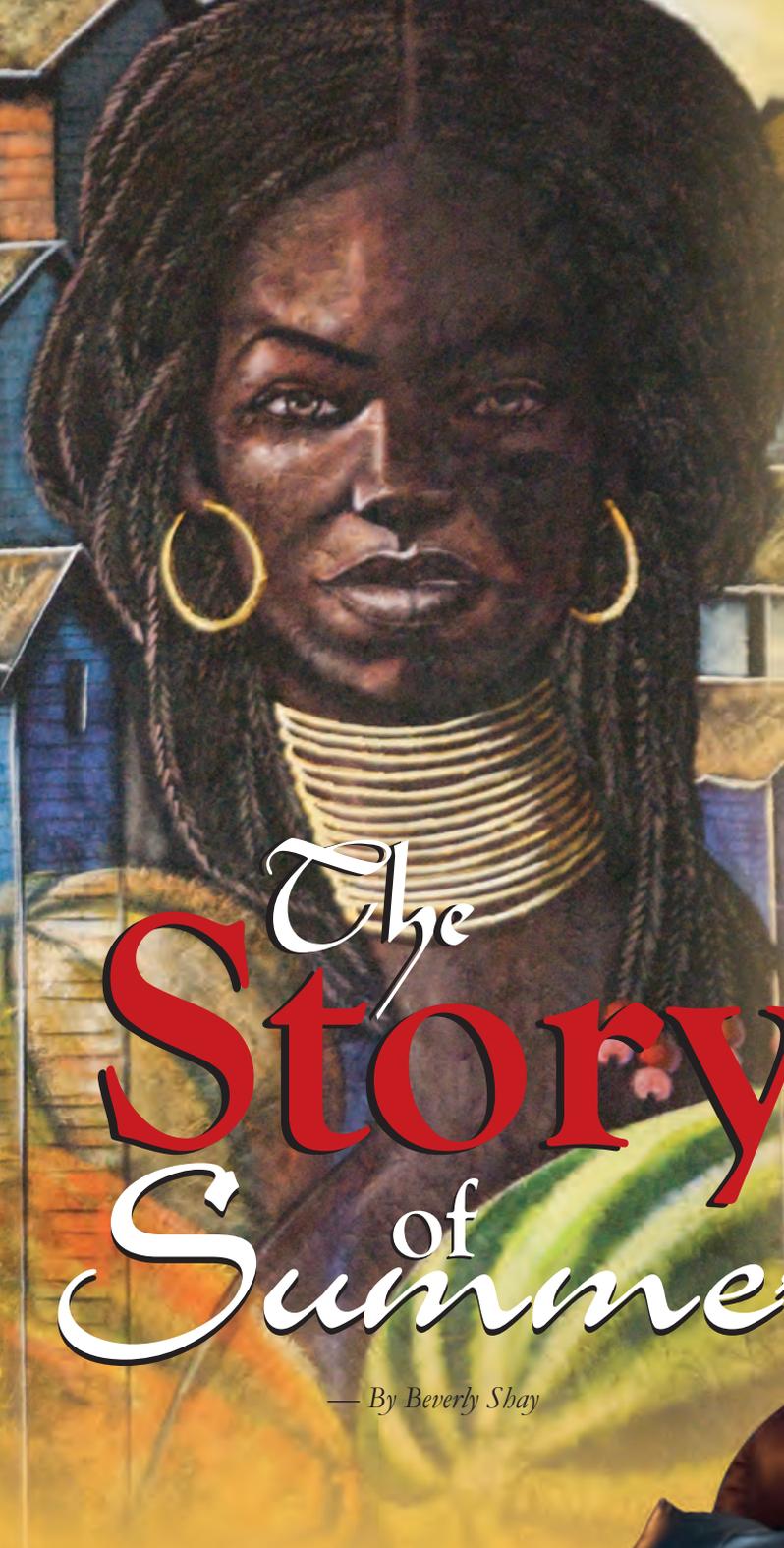
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Many girls dream of becoming actresses but don't. Summer Selby-Drew did. "By the time I was 8, I knew I wanted to act and make my own choices," Summer recalled. "I grew up in a strict environment. Choices were made for me. In college, I finally found my own freedom to choose and eventually found my core."

Born in Indiana, Summer grew up mostly in Chicago. In college, she studied journalism but was unable to focus. "I was tangentially distracted. But when I took music and theater, I knew I had found my home. I love the smell, the energy, the creativity, the release of theater — it's *everything* I was looking for," Summer exclaimed. "Eureka College only had 500 students, but as Ronald Reagan's alma mater, it was a good place to learn theater and acting. I reveled in every component: depicting reality by designing, building and painting sets. I loved the totally new to me, mysterious world of makeup. Creating characters from the script was intriguing.

Looking back over our lives, we see what we could've done differently, but still we dream. One dream Summer had was finding the child she had at age 16, but gave up for adoption. "I was able to spend a few minutes with my son before his adoption. I promised him I would look for him when he was 21. I found him when he was 36, but was part of his life for only five years before he died of AIDS. He

influenced my pursuit of gay rights, as well as those regarding women and minorities," Summer stated quietly.

Summer found life's obstacles and

The Story of Summer

— By Beverly Shay



lessons could be melded into what was inscribed in black and white in scripts and developed into characters. "The root of acting is animating the back story and creating authentic, believable characters," Summer explained. Authenticity became a huge theme in Summer's life.

Although she achieved a double major in speech/theater and French, Summer spent 15 years of her life working in finance as a claims adjuster, trainer,



director of field sales training and national project manager over sales. Despite her skill with computers (new to offices at the time), as a black woman, she was seen as a candidate for the secretarial pool, stymieing her career advancement. "I was ready for something different, something I truly liked," she said.

Summer had married the day before college graduation, and then the two moved with their jobs — to Chicago, Indianapolis, Ohio, St. Louis, Plano and Allen, Texas — leaving little time for off-and-on minor theater roles. "I trained for a new job, wanting to work in a major metropolitan area where I could pursue acting on the side, but resigned when they wanted to send me to Utah," she said.

With a failing marriage and three sons to support, Summer realized she couldn't afford to move back to Chicago. So she decided to pursue her love: acting. "It was a scary transition. I didn't know anyone, didn't know how to start and needed immediate income. Being very analytical, I kept track of every interview, what I wore, how I did my makeup. I had headshots made, mailed my résumé to every casting director and agent I could find, until everyone knew who I was. I got my agent and eventually got an Emmy nomination for my favorite (and proudest) role to date

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Summer scored roles on *Walker Texas Ranger*, *Barney and Friends*, *Prison Break*, Hallmark Hall of Fame and starred in commercials and voiceovers. Between parts and gigs, she worked for a talent agency as a receptionist, filling financial gaps with substitute teaching in core and theater classes.

And then life changed. After being single 18 years, including eight years of Internet dating, she realized her constant failure had been her. "I began to work



on me, evaluating my selection of men, recognizing the red flags. I learned to extricate myself from non-nurturing relationships," Summer stated. "I looked for someone who would add to me, an overlapping partnership that would allow us both to grow individually. In May 2007, with fresh self-awareness, she met the man she would later marry.

"Randy would e-mail for two or three weeks and then just disappear. At first, I was cynical. I learned he was tall, white, redheaded, laid-back, a dog-lover and traveled internationally as an independent plane inspector for the FAA. Finally, in December I wanted to hear his voice. We talked and talked for six-and-a-half hours. I found him intriguing, interesting, kind, thoughtful, knowledgeable, his own person, brilliant, funny and impressing," Summer recalled. In January they met. They both like travel, jazz, R&B, country,



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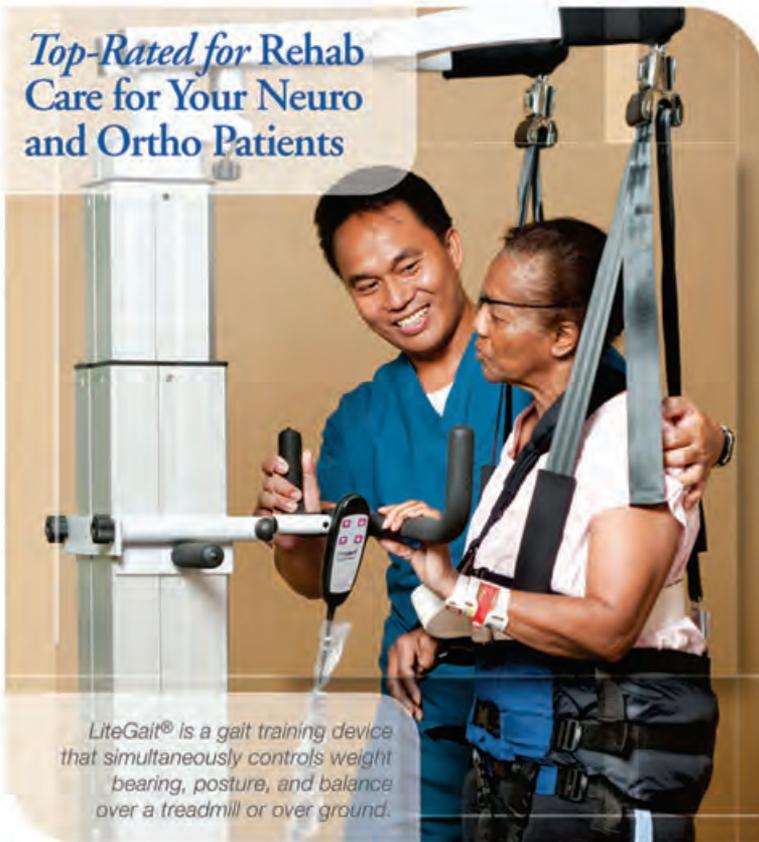
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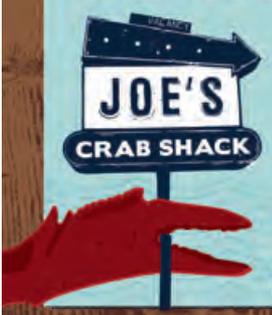
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movies, plays and family reunions. “Randy is the best relationship I’ve ever had.”

As women actors age, unless you’re a Meryl Streep type, roles get fewer and farther between and a bit more stereotypical, so “you just have to create your own venue,” Summer confided. Researching shows, she found nothing provided a voice for women over 55 — beyond child-rearing age, but not yet in wheelchairs. She designed a program for women of divergent backgrounds. “I needed everyday women who could speak well on camera,” Summer said. “So I placed an ad on Craig’s List, then interviewed and auditioned 25 women, picking four. From 25 years of auditioning, I knew what to look for.”

Summer shot the teaser in August 2011. Next, she researched Internet funding. “I settled on kickstarter.com and indiegogo.com. I needed a half-million-dollar budget for a 13-week season of 65 shows,” Summer stated. “On my second try, I raised \$5,000 in 60 days. I found a studio I could afford for one show a week — a turnkey operation — with taping, editing and broadcasting all done on-site to air on cable with international exposure on the Internet. I learned to market using Facebook and Twitter.”

The only companies willing to advertise to seniors were pharmaceuticals, life insurance, mobile chairs and Life Alert. “Yet people our age have the most time and expendable income. Some 78 million baby boomers await seduction by advertisers,” Summer laughed. “*Grown Folk* is the new TV talk show for senior women and those we love and take care of. We’ve experienced life and have learned what is important. It’s a forum for talk about aging parents, raising grandkids, yet still living edgy and vital,” Summer stated.

Summer loves all her shows — picking a favorite is hard. “One unique guest was Barbara Tomasino,” Summer said. “She wears pink camo, shoots pink-handled pistols and stages gourmet camp cook-outs.” Summer hopes for feedback on the first season and input on what women would like on future shows. **NOW**

Editor’s Note: For more information, visit Summer’s Web site: www.GrownFolk.info.

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District reveals Full Engagement 2015 Plan

On August 20, DeSoto ISD Superintendent David Harris revealed the district's new Full Engagement 2015 at the annual employee Convocation event. The three-year plan toward making DeSoto ISD a premier school district in Texas and the nation includes transformational initiatives and 360 degree ownership of district goals. Dr. Harris challenged all employees to Cross the Line and choose to be the best at what they do. This includes making a commitment to choose to be the best every day, to work hard toward defined goals, focus on achieving success and be resilient. Direction, not intention, determines our destination ... direction is defined by our habits, the disciplines of ones daily life.

"The perspective we have, how we approach every decision we have to make, will be determined by this commitment to becoming the best," said Dr. Harris. "Every DeSoto ISD employee should be focused on a students-first approach to teaching with the goal of academic success in mind."

Dr. Harris also spoke plainly about the district's finances. The 2012-13 school year will have a balanced budget of \$61.48 million and the combined tax rate will remain at \$1.44. The budget was reached through cost reductions, staffing reductions through attrition of 37 positions and some employee benefits reductions. In exchange, all employees will receive a 1% raise this year with the expectation that raises will be compounded over the next five years until all have a 5% raise. Dr. Harris will soon reveal a new incentive program for employees based on attendance and academics.

Enrollment numbers are climbing and the district launched the "First Day, Every Day - win an iPad" campaign to increase student attendance the first week.

Calendar of Events

Mon., Sept. 3 - Labor Day; No School
Tues., Sept. 4, 6:30 p.m. - PTA Council Meeting
Fri., Sept. 7, 6 p.m. - Volleyball* vs. Duncanville
Sat., Sept. 8, 4 p.m. - Football* vs. Jenks (OK)
Mon., Sept. 10, 6:30 p.m. - Board Meeting, Board Room
Mon., Oct. 1 - Staff Day / State Fair Day; No School
Mon., Oct. 8 - Early Release all DeSoto schools

*Full sports schedules online at www.desotoisd.org



Superintendent David Harris and Dr. Tawana Stallworth present one of 25 iPads won by Ruby Young Elementary for staff attendance at Professional Development to Principal Becky Sheppard during Convocation.

GOALS NIGHT

DeSoto ISD 2012-13 School Year

Join DeSoto ISD for the 2012-13 Goals Nights in September at each campus! Parents can visit with their child(ren)'s teachers, join PTA, learn their student's class schedule, hear campus and district goals from administrators, and learn more about campus curriculum, activities and expectations.

**DeSoto High School &
Freshman Campus**
Monday, Sept. 10 - 6:30-8 p.m.

DeSoto Elementary Schools
Tuesday, Sept. 11 - 6:30-8 p.m.

DeSoto Middle Schools
Monday, Sept. 17 - 6:30-8 p.m.



Real and Relevant Education

Vimary Nieves, Tammy Kuykendall and Lisa Treibly are excited about implementing Duncanville ISD's new problem-based learning system.

By Beverly Shay

The main goal of education is not to provide facts and figures that are memorized and then forgotten. For education to actually occur, what must be imparted to children is an understanding of why learning is valid and necessary. They must be equipped with skills and tools they will carry into every aspect of their lives. The end goal is not a vast well of knowledge, but the understanding of the relevance of knowledge and the confidence that it is both accessible and applicable, not just for individuals but for the community and beyond.

Duncanville Independent School District has set a goal to move beyond traditional teaching methods by marrying content with 21st century skills. To that end

classroom protocol is taking on a whole new look and outlook. "What we are implementing in all the third, fifth and seventh grades in the district this year is something I used 100 percent in my classroom last year," remarked Smith third-grade teacher, Lisa Treibly. "My classroom was the pilot to show how effective problem-based learning is, but this really is the way I have always taught — the way I think." What is so new about the approach the district is adopting? Instead of teachers providing all the information to students, now they will be guiding students to discover knowledge for themselves.

Tammy Kuykendall, chief communications officer for the district, explained it in this manner: "Problem-based learning provides a means to break the shell of traditional teaching. We are still using a standard scope and sequence, but we are designing the classroom and the learning system to facilitate the children to do the work necessary to reach



discovery. We are identifying community problems, which the children can solve and through which they can learn to communicate. Our goal is to change the paradigm of how education is viewed by the community, the parents and the students. We want to identify education as something real and relevant to each child in the context of society.”

To accomplish this goal, the teachers have been busy all summer, learning to implement the very skills they will introduce to their students. They have visited with local businesses to learn how the real world can be brought into the classroom, including special education

“We are working to make school relevant to kids, so they will want to come, discover and learn.”

and ESL classes. “Rather than having all the textbooks with all the answers, the student will be presented with a ‘problem.’ They will need to evaluate and identify the need, design a framework for solving the need, identify and use resources. This will be done as a small group, with children exchanging roles as designers, presenters, assessors. The groups will critique their own process and progress,” Tammy explained. Integral to the success of the program will be presentations of results within the classroom, to parents and to business people throughout the community.

“One of the great values I have seen in my classroom,” Lisa remarked, “is that students who are naturally more reserved or quiet and tend to sit back and let others lead, find their own strengths as they take on leadership roles within the small group. And those who tend to always want to be leaders learn how to accept and follow others. Throughout the year, each student participates in all the roles, learning how to think for themselves, how to relate to others and how to offer valid input.” Lisa also felt that by moving from group to group and hearing her students interrelate, she was



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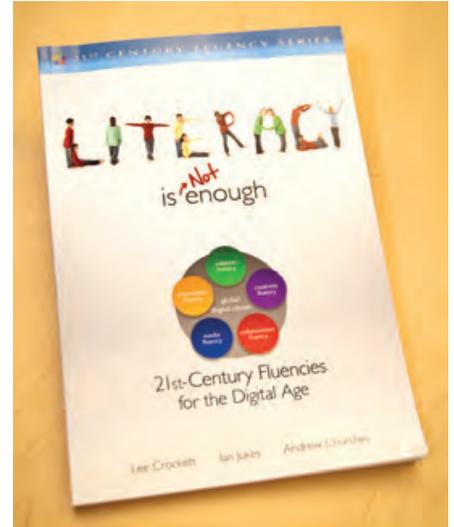
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getting to know them better, individually. "I was sort of like a helicopter pilot hovering over the entire classroom."

Vimary Nieves, a bilingual third-grade teacher at Fairmeadows, has also used the problem-based learning method in her classroom. "I am so impressed with how the students have risen to the challenge and embraced the collaboration with creative skills. We have surveyed the parents on what they want their kids to learn, and we feel this is providing it. By empowering the students to facilitate their own learning, they are, in turn, bringing these skills and this approach toward learning back into their own homes — something especially crucial for non-English speaking parents. And this is breaking down the lines of demarcation," Vimary explained. "I am very excited about this, because it is not only opening up a new, effective method of learning to my students, but it is enabling them to be effective, good citizens within the community now, which, in turn, brings their families more into the community."

This method of education may initially cause the assessment scores to dip, but as the children become more familiar with the methods, interact with one another, learn how to speak and how to listen and how to function, the improvement will be noticeable in school and out. "I want to encourage parents and the community to trust the process," Lisa remarked. "They will see the end result will be accountability and meaningful education. I have seen the children take ownership in what they are learning, which means

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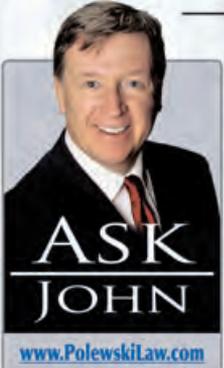
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they are taking home what they are learning and sharing it with their parents, which builds up the relationships at home as well.”

“We are working to make school relevant to kids, so they will want to come, discover and learn. As a teacher, I am shifting from gatekeeper, where my students are limited to my knowledge, to being a facilitator who is giving them keys — tools and skills — that enable them to find endless knowledge. I see my role of teacher not just as a profession but as a calling,” Vimary affirmed.

“The teachers have been trained in the very methods they will be using,” Tammy restated. “They are learning to ask questions that will challenge the children to evaluate their mastery of the tasks, use suggestions to guide them into areas they may not have yet considered and demonstrate how to clarify, confirm and yet challenge by using words that uplift. We will model some of these techniques during open house evenings for the parents, as well as post the information on the district’s Web site.

Daniel Pink, a best-selling author, encourages preparing students for their future, not our past. Deputy Superintendent Dr. McHaney likes to visit the schools and talk to the students, so he can personally encourage them to move from being passive recipients to active participants and ultimately become leaders. Whether teachers, administrators or district personnel, everyone senses a new excitement in the air — Duncanville ISD is stepping up to the plate, ready to hit a homerun. Vimary remarked, “We’re thrilled the children will be embracing and designing projects that will reach into the community, while at the same time learning basic skills in a real-world context.” **NOW**

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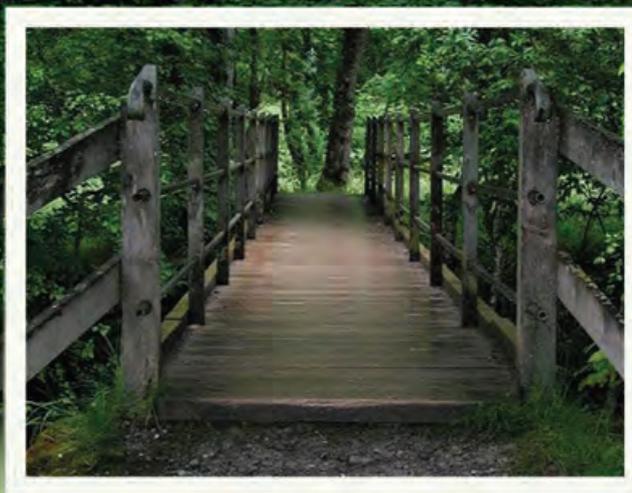
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At Home With Tommie & Polly Rains — By Zachary R. Urquhart



ing

People adapt. People change to fit their needs. People move homes to fit their stage in life. Many American families begin their lives in a starter home and then move into a quaint family residence as the kids arrive. More and more, families face one last move these days, opting to downsize into a nicer, newer home once the nest is empty. For Tommie and Polly Rains, that is just how their story unfolded.

Tommie and Polly were married on September 3, 1969, having met as students at Middle Tennessee State University. Tommie was a local boy, but Polly had transplanted from Massachusetts. "It was the first school dance I went to," Polly explained in regard to their meeting. "I was a freshman, and he was a senior. We met and dated for a while. It was fun communicating with our different accents, but eventually we got married. He had graduated, but I hadn't."

The honeymoon had an abrupt ending, literally. "We got back from our honeymoon, and went to my home in Gatlinburg," Tommie remembered. "My mom was on the porch with my draft notice. I joined the Air Force and went into officer training. So we traveled to lots of places in our first years." When

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Tommie's time in the service ended in 1972, he took a job with DuPont. "We went to Beaumont, and I was working in the medical products division, working with X-ray film and things like that. My division was eventually bought out by a foreign company called Afga." One key side effect of Tommie's new job was that they moved to Texas, for the first time.

Polly married her college sweetheart, not knowing he would end up taking her on a cross-country adventure in those early years. "After all the military



moves, we traveled with his job, too. We started in Beaumont then moved to Jackson, Little Rock, and finally, we came to Duncanville in 1987." While Tommie was working with medical supplies, Polly stayed at home and reared their three kids, all of whom graduated from Duncanville High School. Marti graduated in 1988, Matthew in 1996 and Joanna in 2000. Once all three kids were in school, Polly went back to college. "I wanted to make sure I was home while they were growing up. But when Joanna

got to be school-aged, I went to The University of Texas at Arlington and earned my music degree."

When they moved to Duncanville, Tommie and Polly already had three kids, so they needed a house that fit their family. They lived in a classic, TV-sitcom-style home with a few small living areas downstairs and bedrooms upstairs. "It was a great home, kind of like on *Leave It to Beaver*. When we moved, we actually sold it to one of Joanna's friends from high school." But, once the kids were



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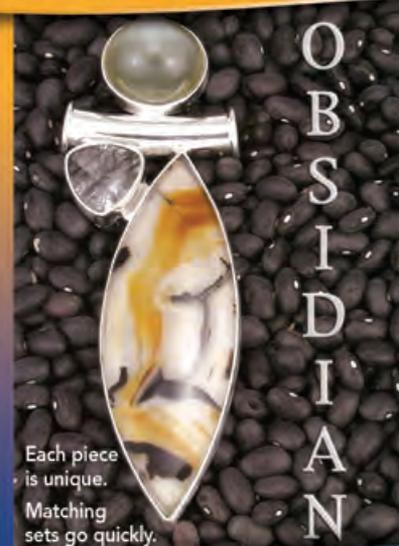
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out of the house, and Tommie started looking at retirement, he and Polly began thinking about one more relocation.

One morning, in 2005, Tommie and Polly went out to breakfast, and then to look at some homes. They came to the model home in Big Stone Gap, and 30 minutes later, they had written a deposit check to move into the neighborhood. Polly has a slightly amended version of the story, though. "What Tommie didn't realize, was I had already come and seen the models several times. I knew before we went that morning that I wanted this lot in this neighborhood."

Tommie and Polly moved from a family home with 18 closets, to a new house with only four. Tommie talks about some of the changes. "Now we have a big dining room, not much yard and some great play areas for the grandkids." With those grandkids in mind, they put the finishing touches on their home's design. Immediately inside, the abundance of open spaces is noticeable, perfect for a puzzle, train set or a riveting board game.

From the front entryway, a spacious living area opens up with a small sitting area, augmented with Polly's two pianos. That space opens into an even larger one, with a television on one side and the sunroom entry on another. Tommie and Polly enjoy relaxing in the sunroom, with its screened view of the train tracks. "Having the train there reminds me of growing up for some reason," Polly shared. "We only get one or two trains a day, so it's not bad. And the little ones love it, whenever they hear the whistle, they will run back to watch the train pass by." The kitchen, comfortably reached from the side of the television area, offers a simple island for casual dining, as well as opening to a more formal eating area.

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The opposite side of the home houses the master bedroom, guest room, office and one more open play area for the grandkids. Tommie talks about choosing what to do with the last few rooms. "We could have made another guest room or two, but that wasn't what we needed. With our family so close, we don't need beds as much as areas to live in, so

that's what we did."

In addition to the abundance of time spent with their family, Tommie and Polly are very involved in their community. Polly's pianos are more than just decoration. She practices often, as she serves as the music director for Trinity United Methodist Church. "I have done it, either as staff or as a volunteer, pretty much since we got to Duncanville."

While Polly serves in the music ministry, Tommie has helped with the youth for just about as long. "I started when Matt and Joanna were part of the group and have been involved ever since. I have definitely been on a lot of mission trips."

Tommie also has been through several community patrol classes. "I went through the Citizens Police Academy and FBI Citizens' Academy classes." Tommie was among the first members of the neighborhood's Home Owners Association as well. "The developer was in charge until we hit 75-percent residence, and then we took over. I was president, then secretary, and now I have been taking a break from it."

Tommie and Polly are additionally active in the Duncanville Community Theatre (DCT). They have been on the board of directors for several years, and have been involved as a family. "All the kids have been in shows with us, but Joanna especially loved the stage," Tommie said. "We have made friends at DCT, and we have brought our friends into that community."

Tommie and Polly love their children and grandkids. They love being involved in the community. They love their home. After traveling the nation and living for two decades in a house you might see on TV, Tommy and Polly have settled into their version of a storybook ending. **NOW**

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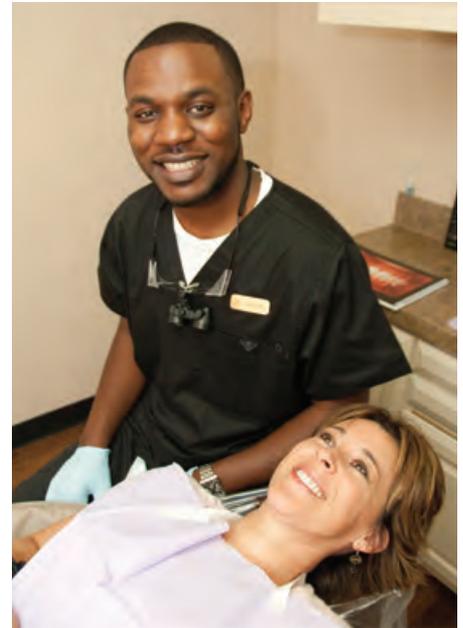


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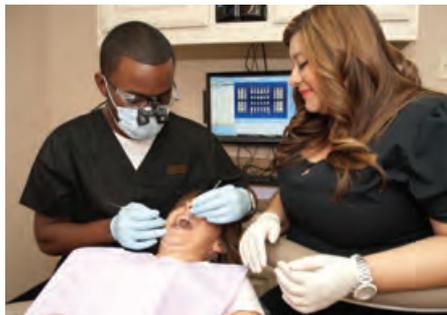
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— By Beverly Shay

“Some people might think I am a bit unusual, but I always liked going to the dentist,” stated Dr. Alix Sanders Jr. with his bright smile. “I think that was because I didn’t have cavities, and it was something fun to do in my small hometown. My mentor during my high school years in boarding school was a dentist with great personality. I wanted to be just like him, because he was happy and successful,” Alix recalled.

Alix attended undergrad pre dental school at Xavier University of Louisiana in New Orleans. “Xavier has a good reputation for getting African-Americans into careers in health professions,” Alix remarked. Although he planned to go to Michigan, and his wife to Baylor University, they both completed dental school at The University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Memphis.

“It wasn’t too far from my hometown in Mississippi.

“I have seen the full gamut of dental complications, most of which could be prevented. I find it rewarding to help others both by fixing dental complications and through educating patients in preventative dental health. It’s imperative to learn how to brush and floss effectively and to see your dentist every six months, regardless of having cavities or not,” Alix indicated.

Initially, Alix, who has been in practice since 2006, worked for six years in a family dental practice in Ft. Worth, where he saw adults and children. His recent transfer (March 2012) to the Duncanville area has been a pleasant one. “I plan on being here a long time. I love the practice, the staff and the patients,” Alix stated. “The small town feel reminds me of home. One of the

interesting aspects of this established practice is how interconnected the client base is. We have three generations of one family who come here. I like seeing that.” The practice was started in Duncanville in the ’80s when Dr. Pollard moved it from Oak Cliff. Then it was purchased by Dr. Martin, who sold it to Dr. Foreman two years ago. Dr. Foreman worked in communications during his five years in the Air Force, studied computer engineering and later followed his passion into dentistry.

“Dr. Foreman and I believe a practice should be built and maintained on core values of integrity and fairness and provide quality through fundamentally sound dentistry,” Alix said. “Because I

“Because I want my patients comfortable and to keep coming back, I intend to continue providing ethical service.”

want my patients comfortable and to keep coming back, I intend to continue providing ethical service.

“We see a broad range of patients,” Alix said. “Mostly, it’s adult and teens, but I hope to attract more kids. It’s so important to bring children beginning at 6 months old. I want to teach patients and parents consistent proper hygiene — not just brushing, which cleans the front and back of teeth, but flossing, which cleans between teeth, should be done two to three times each day. Plaque builds up every 12 hours, so treating it mornings, after school or work and evenings can truly prevent the buildup. Mouthwash with fluoride does more than just freshen breath — it protects as well,” Alix affirmed.

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Angelica Kelley (back row on left), a junior attending Jackson State University on a volleyball scholarship, spent part of her summer teaching volleyball skills at the city-sponsored Summertime on Beltline.



Jelani Daniel and his little cousin, Jamauri Daniel, are all smiles during lunch at Cracker Barrel.



DeSoto High School cheerleaders greet guests and give a preview performance of some of their cheer routines during the back-to-school event.



Cristy Palmer, Laura Lopez and Jasmyn Hambrick wait outside WFAA8 for a segment on the Special Needs Event at Moseley Pool.

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Teacher Paula Red, of Duncanville, leads kindergartners in the Pledge of Allegiance at The Canterbury Episcopal School.



Duncanville ISD superintendent, Dr. Alfred Ray, reads Dr. Seuss to the new teachers at the new teacher breakfast.



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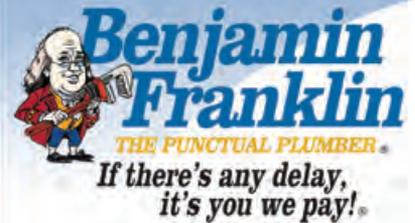
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Clearly, there's no "one size fits all" answer — your choice needs to be based on your individual circumstances. So, as you weigh your options, you'll need to consider a variety of key issues, including the following:

- *Estate considerations* — Your pension payments generally end when you and/or your spouse dies, which means your children will get none of the money. But if you were to roll the lump sum into an Individual Retirement Account (IRA), and you don't exhaust it in your lifetime, you could still have something to leave to your family members.

- *Taxes* — If you take the lump sum and roll the funds into your IRA, you control how much you'll be taxed and when, based on the amounts you choose to withdraw and the date you begin taking withdrawals. (Keep in mind, though, that you must start taking a designated minimum amount of withdrawals from a traditional IRA when you reach age 70 1/2. Withdrawals taken before age 59 1/2 are subject to taxes and penalties.) But if you take a pension, you may have less control over your income taxes, which will be based on your monthly payments.

- *Inflation* — You could easily spend two or three decades in retirement, and during that time, inflation can really add up. To cite just one example, the average cost of a new car was \$7,983 in 1982; 30 years later, that figure is \$30,748, according to TrueCar.com. If your pension checks aren't indexed for inflation, they will lose purchasing power over time. If you rolled over your lump sum into an IRA, however, you could

put the money into investments offering growth potential, keeping in mind, of course, that there are no guarantees.

- *Cash flow* — If you're already receiving a monthly pension, and you're spending every dollar you receive just to meet your living expenses, you may be better off by keeping your pension payments intact. If you took the lump sum and converted it into an IRA, you can withdraw whatever amount you want (as long as you meet the required minimum distributions), but you'll have to avoid withdrawing so much that you'll eventually run out of money.

- *Confidence in future pension payments* — From time to time, companies are forced to reduce their pension obligations due to unforeseen circumstances. You may want to take this into account as you decide whether to continue taking your monthly pension payments, but it's an issue over which you have no control. On the other hand, once your lump sum is in an IRA, you have control over both the quality and diversification of your investment dollars. However, the trade-off is that investing is subject to various risks, including loss of principal.

Before selecting either the lump sum or the monthly pension payments, weigh all the factors carefully to make sure your decision fits into your overall financial strategy. With a choice of this importance, you will probably want to consult with your financial and tax advisors. Ultimately, you may find that this type of offer presents you with a great opportunity — so take the time to consider your options. **NOW**

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Darryl Fenton is an Edward Jones representative based in Cedar Hill.

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Back to School, Back to Backpack Safety

Backpacks: almost every child has one, very few actually use one properly. Proper backpack use is more important than many parents and kids realize. The American Chiropractic Association (ACA) reported over 7,000 emergency room visits in a single year, in addition to countless complaints of muscle spasms and back, neck and shoulder pain.

Rolling bags can be used to minimize problems, especially for a petite student, whose recommended lifting and carrying weight is often less than the bag plus a couple of books. However, rolling book bags aren't always an option, as many districts disallow them for a variety of reasons.

Safe use of a backpack starts with choosing the best bag. The bag should have two shoulder straps which are wide and well-padded. Narrow, un-padded straps can dig into the shoulder, causing muscle and nerve injuries. The bag should not be so large that it hangs below the child's waist. A waist strap will help distribute the weight of the backpack, and a padded bag will reduce the corners of textbooks or other items gouging the child's back muscles.

Packing the backpack properly is instrumental in preventing injuries. A child's backpack should weigh no more than 15 percent of the child's body weight. For example, a 50-pound second-grader should carry no more than 7 1/2 pounds. A 120-pound teenager should carry no more than 18 pounds. Heavy items like text books should be packed closer to the body, lighter items like pencil boxes should go farther away from the body.

Proper lifting technique should always be used, as the bag will likely be

lifted 10 times a day or more. Packing on a desk, table or bed, instead of on the floor, will decrease the lift distance. Lifting with both arms, using both straps, holding the bag close to the body and using knees to lift from lower surfaces will decrease the likelihood of strains on the back and shoulders.

Wearing the backpack properly is critical. Using both shoulder straps, rather than slinging the bag over a single shoulder, will minimize the introduction of poor posture such as a lateral (side-to-side) curve in the joints and muscles of the spine. Cinching up shoulder straps and use of the waist belt will place the weight of the backpack between the shoulders minimizing the introduction of shoulder hunching and forward rotation of the hips.

Not all backpack injuries are to the spine of the person carrying the bag. The wearer may also injure wrist, elbow or shoulder with improper lifting or wear. Tripping injuries are common, as are injuries involving others being hit with heavy backpacks. Care should be taken to properly store bags not in use.

While adults should also follow these general guidelines, for children it is even more critical. Evidence suggests that injuries sustained during growth can impact posture and biomechanics for years. For more information, visit www.backpacksafe.com. **NOW**

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Calendar

SEPTEMBER 2012

September 4

DeSoto Library six-week beginner Spanish language classes (20 adults): 6:00-7:30 p.m. Textbook: \$10. Registration required: (972) 230-9661.

September 5

Duncanville Women's Club luncheon: humorist, Lu Mitchell: 10:30 a.m., Hilton Garden Inn. Cost: \$20. Reservations: Barbara: (972) 296-4601.

September 6

Grand Opening of Hope Mansion: 5:30-8:00 p.m. Tour, light refreshments and ribbon cutting. Jenaie Franke: (214) 232-2230 or Angie Hammond: (972) 814-5502.

Southwest Children's Chorus' auditions: ages 7 to 14: 6:30 p.m., DeSoto FUMC. (214) 649-3231.

Teens/Parents Scholarship Workshop: 7:00-8:30 p.m., CH Library. Registration required: (972) 291-7323.

September 8

Free health fair: 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Graceland Community Baptist Church, 310 S. Clark Rd. (972) 293-3700.

Cedar Hill 1931-1981 Class Reunion for all former CH students: 1:00-5:00 p.m., Old Bray Gym. Eva Mae Roberts: (972) 217-0201.

Kids on the Hill free Creative Arts Festival: 6:00-9:00 p.m., Valley Ridge Park Amphitheater: 2012 American Idol contestant, Isabelle Gallegos; storytellers: Toni Simmons and Nancy Burks

Worcester; Kansas City band, The Doo-Dads; crafts. (972) 291-5100.

September 10

Family Fun Night Science Expo: 6:00-7:00 p.m., CH Library.

Family Budgeting Workshop: 7:30-8:30 p.m., CH Library. Registration required: (972) 291-7323.

September 11, 18, 25 and October 2

DeSoto Library's free computer classes: 6:00-7:30 p.m. Registration required: (972) 230-9661: **Sept. 11:** Computer Basics; **Sept. 18:** Basic Excel I; **Sept. 25:** Basic Excel II; **Oct. 2:** Internet Basics.

September 15

CH Recreation Center's Mother/Son (5-12) Adventure Backyard Safari: scavenger hunt, crafts: 10:00 a.m.-noon. Preregistration required: cedarhilltx.com: (972) 293-5288.

Girls With Pearls Mother & Daughter Event: 3:00-5:00 p.m., Parties With Charm, DeSoto. Cost: \$15 includes: lunch, etiquette, gifts and Miss Kitty. RSVP: (972) 274-3446.

September 17

DeSoto City Manager's Cooperate Golf Challenge: 9:00 a.m., Thorntree Country Club. Cost: \$85/person; \$330/foursome. Register: www.desototexas.gov/golf.

September 20

Positive Parenting Workshop - Homework Help: 7:00-8:00 p.m., CH Library. Registration required: (972) 291-7323.

September 22 and 29

SAT/ACT preparation basics: 1:00-3:00 p.m., CH Library. (972) 291-7323.

September 24

Southwest Dallas County Parkinson's Group: 6:30-8:00 p.m., Trinity UMC, 1302 S. Clark Rd., Duncanville. (972) 298-4556.

September 28

Big Brothers Big Sisters' free breakfast Big Picture Event: 7:00-8:30 a.m., MCM Grande Hotel, DeSoto. Register: www.bbbstx.org/bigpicture.

September 29

11th Celebrating Life Foundation Festival/5K run/walk: 6:00 a.m.-noon, CH Recreation Center. Register: (972) 501-9981.

Garden Tea Tour, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Tour five Ellis County gardens. Sponsored by The Green Garden Club. Tickets: www.greengardenclub.org. Carolyn Mixon: (214) 914-6030.

September 30

165th Anniversary of Wheatland UMC, 8000 South Hampton Road, Dallas. Dr. Clara Reed, Metro District Superintendent: 10:30 a.m. Buffet lunch, music, entertainment, fellowship and dedication of bridge. RSVP required. Ginger Williams: (214) 954-7629.

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your event details to bshay.nowmag@sbcglobal.net.

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In The Kitchen With Lisa Haydin

— *By Beverly Shay*

Lisa Haydin comes from a very traditional Texan family. Her mom stayed at home, and her dad worked as a scratch baker in many popular Dallas bakeries, as well as several of his own family bakeries. “My playpen was a 100-quart mixer,” Lisa recalled, so it is no surprise she likes to bake. “I also love to cook. My friends call me Suzy Homemaker because I love to be in the kitchen.

“I think the recipes I love most are family recipes that have been passed down to me. My dad’s mom was a great cook. My passion is cooking favorites for my family — two daughters, six grandchildren and a new great-grandson.” **NOW**

Mom and Grandmother’s Chicken Spaghetti

- 1 whole chicken**
- Pinch of salt**
- 1 garlic bud, chopped**
- 1 onion, chopped**
- 1/2 stalk celery, chopped**
- 1 bell pepper, chopped**
- 1 small jar pimentos**
- 1 pkg. long spaghetti**
- 1 block Velveeta cheese**
- 1 can tomatoes**
- 1 10 3/4-oz. can cream of mushroom soup**

- 1.** Cook chicken in water with a pinch of salt and 1/2 of the garlic for an hour. Save the broth. Debone the chicken.
- 2.** Combine onion, celery, remaining garlic, bell pepper and pimentos in a saucepan

with enough broth to cover. Simmer until vegetables are tender.

- 3.** Cook spaghetti in remaining broth. Add veggies, Velveeta, tomatoes and soup to noodles. Mix well; place in a large roasting pan; bake 1 hour at 350 F. (It will be soupy, but it cooks down.)

European Sandwiches

- 3 Tbsp. mustard**
- 2 sticks butter or margarine, melted**
- 3 Tbsp. poppy seeds**
- 1/2 onion, grated**
- 1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce**
- 3 pkgs. Pepperidge Farm party rolls**
- 1 lb. shaved ham**
- 1/2 lb. Swiss cheese, grated**

- 1.** Combine first 5 ingredients in a bowl. Let sit while slicing rolls lengthwise.

- 2.** Spread mixture on top and bottom of rolls; top with ham and cheese.
- 3.** Wrap in foil; bake for 20 minutes at 350 F

Daddy’s Cream Puffs

- 1 cup water**
- 1/2 cup butter**
- 1 cup flour**
- 4 eggs**
- 1 tsp. vanilla**

- 1.** Heat water and butter until boiling. Add flour; stir fast over low heat for 1 minute. (Mix will form a soft ball.)
- 2.** Remove from heat; add eggs, one at a time; add vanilla.
- 3.** Drop by spoonfuls, or use a pastry bag to form éclair shape, onto parchment-lined cookie sheet. Bake for 25 minutes at 400 F.
- 4.** Cool; slice and fill with fresh whipped cream, vanilla custard or chocolate cream. Sprinkle with powdered sugar, if desired. Or fill with your favorite chicken salad.

Daddy’s Mexican Chocolate Cake

- 2 cups flour**
- 1/4 Tbsp. salt**
- 2 sticks butter**
- 2 cups sugar**
- 1 cup water**
- 4 Tbsp. cocoa**
- 1/2 cup buttermilk**
- 2 eggs**
- 1 Tbsp. baking soda**
- 1 tsp. vanilla**
- 1 Tbsp. cinnamon**

Frosting:

- 1 stick butter**
- 4 Tbsp. cocoa**
- 4-6 Tbsp. milk**
- 1 tsp vanilla**
- 1 box powdered sugar**

- 1.** In a bowl, combine flour and salt. In a saucepan, combine butter, sugar, water and cocoa; bring to a boil. Remove from heat; pour over flour mixture.
- 2.** In another bowl, combine buttermilk, eggs, baking soda, vanilla and cinnamon. Combine with flour mixture. Pour into greased jelly roll pan; bake 20 minutes at 400 F.
- 3.** Make frosting while cake bakes by melting butter and cocoa in a saucepan; stir well. Turn off heat; add milk, vanilla and powdered sugar; stir well. Pour over slightly cooled cake. Delicious served with vanilla ice cream.

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