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SEPTEMBER 2017

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2017 College Boot-Camp and College Fair Up This Month

Make plans to attend this year's College Boot Camp to understand how to navigate an actual college fair successfully.

The DeSoto ISD College Boot

Camp: 10 am to 2 pm | 9.9.17 | UNT

Dallas. Registration:

www.DeSotoISD.org/CollegeBootCamp

DeSoto ISD College Fair:

6 to 8 pm | 9.13.17 | DHS Academy Cafeteria (No Registration Required)

DeSoto ISD Female Leadership Forum: 10.21.17

The DeSoto ISD Female Leadership Forum brings together girls in grades five through 12 to explore leadership skills and resources to assist in their development. This year's theme, "The Science of Polishing Global Leaders," encourages young female scholars to envision their potential through a STEAM-focused lens.

Event Details:

11 am to 2:30 pm | 10.21.17 | DeSoto HS

For Female Leadership Forum updates and registration information, send an email to FLF-Info@desotoisd.org

Eagles Football Tickets on Sale

Individual game tickets for pre-sale from 7 am to 5 pm at the district athletic office. Please be advised, ticket sales end at 2 pm on game days.

Pre-sale reserved tickets are \$7. Pre-sale adult general admission tickets start at \$6. Pre-sale student general admission tickets are \$3.

For tickets at the gate, reserved tickets are \$8 and general admission tickets are \$7.

For more information, contact the DeSoto ISD Athletics office at 972.274.8118.

CALENDAR

- **9/1:** FB @ Jesuit, 7:30p; VB @ Irv. MacArthur
- **9/4:** District closed for Labor Day
- **9/5:** VB v. YWLA
- **9/7:** FB @ Denton Guyer
- **9/8:** VB @ Duncanville
- **9/9:** College Boot Camp
- **9/11:** Regular Board Meeting
- **9/13:** DeSoto ISD College Fair
- **9/15:** FB v. Midland; VB v. Irving
- **9/18:** Education Foundation Golf Tourney
- **9/19:** VB @ Grand Prairie
- **9/22:** VB v. Irv. Nimitz
- **9/25:** Regular Board Meeting
- **9/26:** VB @ Cedar Hill
- **9/29:** FB v. Cedar Hill; VB @ S. Grand Prairie

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Frank Alegria works to spruce up the community.

Photo by Shane Kirkpatrick.

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Editor's Note

Times change ...

When I was a kid, my mom taught us that it wasn't correct to wear white after Labor Day. That was a rule of polite social behavior that everyone knew, and most people followed. Now, we have "winter white," and people wear Bermuda shorts in January, if they feel like it. Some rules are a bit silly, like the no white in the fall rule, and, maybe, it's better to have the freedom to choose whatever wardrobe you feel like. But other rules just

help society function smoothly. If we could all agree on some definitions of polite behavior and how to treat each other with respect, maybe modern society would be a bit less stressful. Personally, I'd be more than willing to put up with a few silly cultural norms, like we used to, if they helped us behave a little more civilly in our interactions with strangers and fellow voyagers on the path of life.

To steal a line from *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure*, "Be excellent to one another ... and party on, dudes!"

Adam

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In this approach, personalized cancer care incorporates the patient — making sure she or he is comfortable with the treatment every step of the way. The treatment itself results from a plan that a full team of physicians customizes to meet the patient's specific needs.

“All of the physicians involved in the care of that patient will evaluate the patient up front,” breast surgeon Martin Koonsman says. “We present the patients with a well-thought-out multidisciplinary treatment plan.”

One of the Clinics' essential resources is a “one-stop shop” appointment. A nurse navigator guides the patient throughout the cancer journey for moral support, starting with meeting the full team of care providers. In a casual, face-to-face discussion, the patient can ask the medical oncologist, breast surgeon and radiation oncologist any questions and discuss next steps for treatment.

The new approach is tailored to give patients a better understanding of what to expect. “It's not like the doctor says, ‘I'm going to refer you to another doctor,’ and you call — and wait — and try to make another appointment,” explains Linda Gage, a Multidisciplinary Breast Cancer Clinic patient. “They're talking, they're working together, and they coordinate things and get you through the process.”

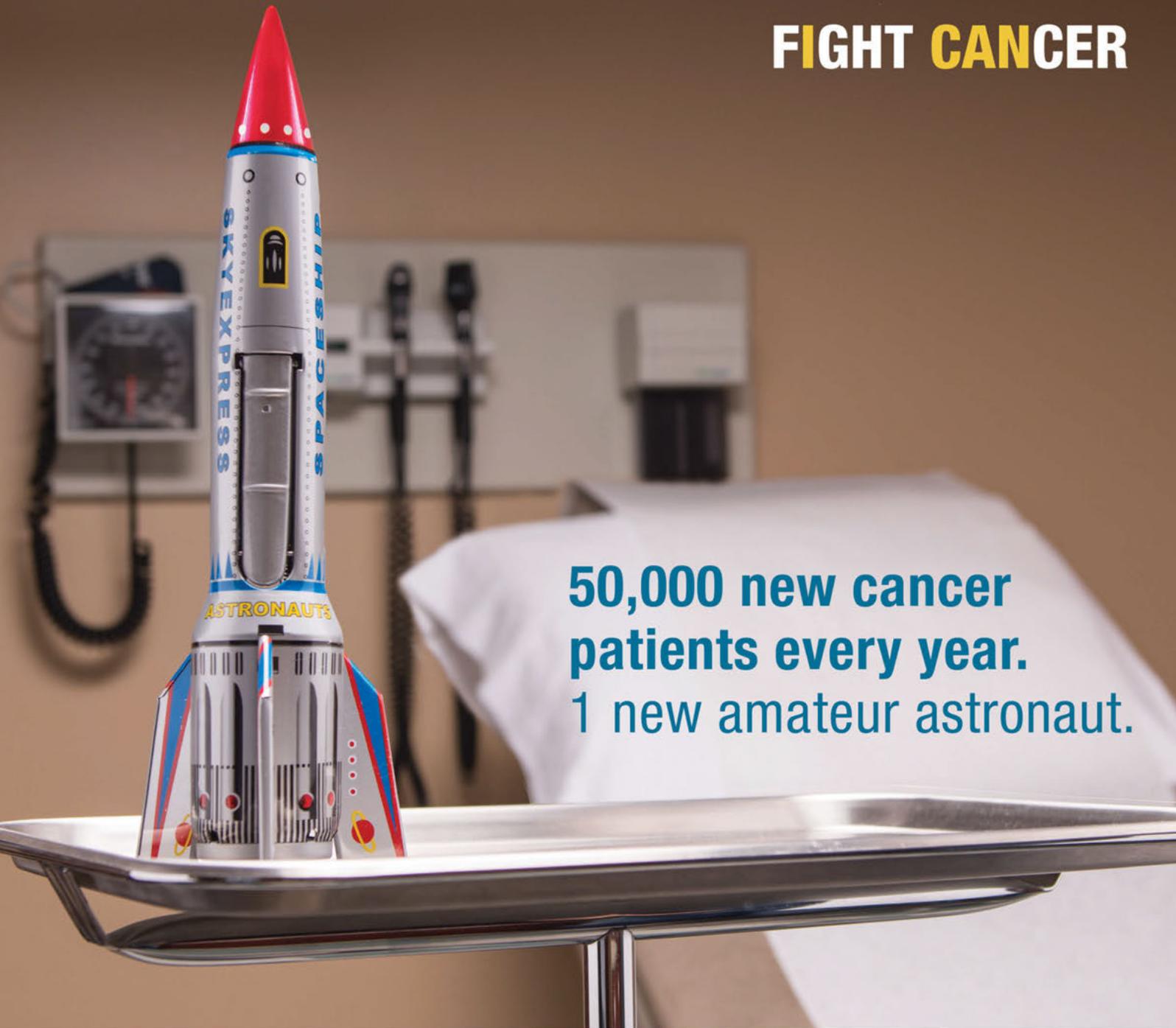
Texas Oncology's Multidisciplinary Breast Cancer Clinics give patients access to complete breast health services, including high-risk screenings, hormone therapy, radiation therapy, chemotherapy and surgery. Patients can also benefit from full-service pharmacies on location, genetic testing, survivor support groups and much more. Patients also have access to social workers, therapists, dietitians and other specialists to help them — and their families.

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A breast cancer diagnosis can bring trying times, so Texas Oncology's Multidisciplinary Breast Cancer Clinics approach it with expertise and attention to each patient's needs. Texas Oncology wants patients to feel comfortable talking about their needs and encourages them to get involved in their care.

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REFRESH, RENEW, REPAIR

— *By Adam Walker*



Dr. Frank Alegria is the sort of guy who sees a problem and looks for a way to fix it. Years ago, he and his church, through the Mission's Committee, were involved with a project to repair and beautify homes in Oak Cliff whose owners couldn't manage the needed work due to age or disability. It was rewarding, but he saw the need for similar service closer to home. "I looked around," he remembered, "and asked 'Why couldn't we do this here?'"

Frank, who pastors Duncanville First United Methodist Church as his day job, partnered with the city of Duncanville, other church groups including Duncanville First Christian Church and the Knights Hands of the Knights of Columbus from Holy Spirit Catholic Church, civic groups like the Theta Pi Chapter of Epsilon Sigma Alpha Sorority and local businesses like SEW-EURODRIVE and Republic Services to help citizens of Duncanville through the Property Improvement Program, called PIP Days.

PIP projects are vetted through the Duncanville city government's Neighborhood Vitality Commission and advertised on the city's electronic marquee sign at Main and Wheatland. Typically, the houses chosen belong to homeowners who are elderly or disabled and need some help catching up on needed repairs or maintenance for their homes. "More people know about the PIP days now, so we get homeowners contacting us for help," Frank said. "But we refer them to the city to fill out the forms for Kevin Hugman, the city manager.

The houses are recommended by the Duncanville code inspectors," Frank explained.

"Then the homeowners have to agree, and a list of four to six possible projects is put together. After the city gives us the list, we go to check them out. We have a limited budget and only so many skilled laborers, so some of the projects are too big or require skills we don't have on the team. We have lots

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of painters and people who can do trimming. We try to pick projects that we are sure we can complete in two weekends. One house we chose ended up needing more than \$4,000 of electrical work and used up our whole budget. We can't do everything we'd like to."

Frank and his team of laborers are very grateful for the help they receive from other groups, whose members have donated materials; Steve Martin at the Chamber of Commerce; and Jackie Coulton, assistant director of Public Works, who coordinates food and drink donations from local restaurants like Subway, Sonic, Chicken Express and COSTCO. This helps keep workers fueled and hydrated. "SEW-EURODRIVE sent manpower to help out on one of the projects, and they donated as well," Frank remembered. "And Republic Services, which contracts trash pickup for the city, helps with trash and debris collection at the project sites. We call, and they send a truck out to collect everything about 30 minutes later." The city also supplies portalets for the work sites and brings cases of water. With so many groups supplying whatever they can, the projects get tackled.

"PIP days is not a First Methodist thing. And it's not about proselytizing," Frank emphasized. "It's about helping people in need. It's community grassroots. We have all kinds of people, from all walks of life, out there working together to better the community by helping individual homeowners in need. It's the community taking ownership of the community. People plan ahead for PIP days. Some even schedule vacation

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days to come out and help because they feel it's important."

These projects happen twice a year, in April and September, and the group schedules two consecutive weekends for each project. "It's necessary, in case the project turns out to be bigger than we thought, or if one day gets rained out," Frank said. "Sometimes, the first week is mostly prep work — power washing the house, trimming hedges back, cutting tree limbs — so we can get at the rest of the project."

Everyone pitches in when it comes time to work. "I'm out there in my gray, paint-splattered coveralls, hat and work boots. I'm still at a point in my life where I can be physically involved. I clear my schedule, and I'm a worker. I'm Frank. I show up and get my work assignment,

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and also coordinate with the homeowner. Sometimes it helps that I'm bilingual. I use my son's truck and my chainsaws. I'm an extrovert. I like to be around people, be involved. But I remember going up on one roof with my chainsaw and saying to myself, "Frank Alegria, you are no longer 20 years old!" he laughed. "This is for much younger people than you. Get down!" But I still go up on the tamer roofs!"

That one roof may have been too much, but he finds plenty of other ways to help. "I'm a good helper, not so good at measure and cut, but I'm a very good cook," he said, "and I can help with that whenever needed!"

The work day starts early, and the workers, being conscious of the temperatures and safety, go until they're too tired to continue, usually around 3 or 4 o'clock. "At the end of Saturday, I have to eat slices of dill pickles and drink cups of pickle juice, or I will wake up in the night from cramps!" Frank said.

Last spring, PIP days tackled a house where the siding had rotted out on one side. That job required replacing the whole side of the house. It was one of those projects that needed the full two weekends to complete. But at the end, the homeowners' house was saved, and the whole community benefited from the maintenance and beautification.

"We don't have any roofers on our team right now, but we have lots of people who can paint houses and fences. We have to know who can cut angles and who knows how to trim trees. We have to know the limits of our available skill sets," Frank explained. "The concept is similar to Habitat for Humanity, but we do repairs, not new builds. I think we're doing good work. We try to use only good materials; we want lasting repairs, not a Band-Aid. At the last house, we used about \$1,500 in materials to do work that would have cost close to \$10,000 in labor, if not for the all-volunteer team. We do this because it's the right thing to do. This family's donkey was in the ditch. So, we helped them get it out."

Through the cooperative effort of city government, businesses, civic organizations, faith communities and citizens at large, PIP Days is changing the face of Duncanville, one property at a time. And everyone reaps the benefits. **NOW**

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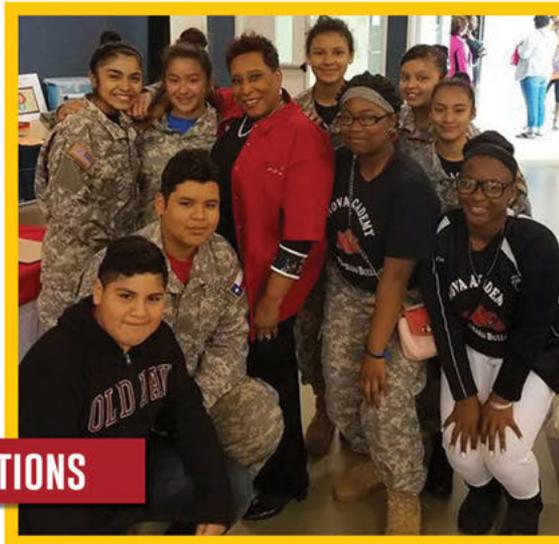
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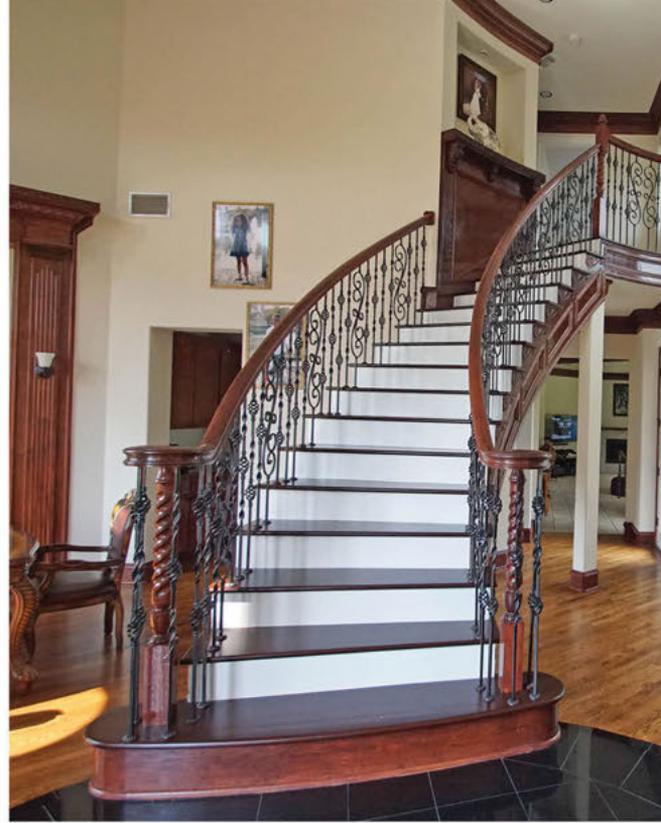
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Oasis

— By Adam Walker



At Home
Nigel and Aies

The home of Nigel and Aiesha Redmond is their own oasis from the outside world. The textured walls and black marble floor of the round entry area with the hand-carved spiral staircase to the second floor say luxury, while the disco lights lining the steps down to the living area speak of fun and parties. But the wall nook displaying one of many portraits of their children, Nigel II and Nilah, remind visitors that this is also a home where family is important.

To one side of the entry is the formal dining room with its nearly two-story, arched window. But in this home, where elegance and family function are constantly combined, the dining table where husband and wife — both lawyers — entertain, is also the homework table.

When Nigel and Aiesha found this gem, which was built in 1999 on an acre of land in a quiet, gated community in DeSoto, they knew they'd found the house where they wanted to raise their family. "We wanted a home where our kids could grow up and graduate," Nigel explained.

"We're the youngest family in the neighborhood," Aiesha added, "so it's pretty quiet here. We have great neighbors. It's a good place for our family. Everyone knows each other."

On the other side of the entry, down a hallway displaying abstract art, lie the guest room and the master suite. The guest room, with its honeycomb ceiling of rich hardwood, looks out to the backyard with its palm trees, pool and gazebo. And guests can make easy use of a small patio that is





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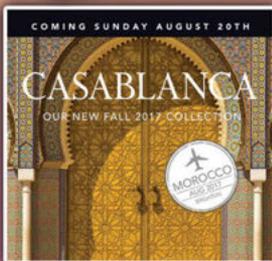
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accessed through the guest bath across the hall. In the master bedroom, the light blue of the bedding and the bedposts carved with lions complement the teal and copper abstract sculpture. The master bath includes a tub with jets to relax away a hard day in court for either of these lawyers, and his and hers closets for the attire necessary for their trade.



You'll find elephants scattered throughout the house. Aiesha smiled as she explained. "The elephants are for my sorority, Delta Sigma Theta. They show strength and determination."

The couple met in law school. Nigel is from Oak Cliff and Aiesha is from Houston. When they started dating, Nigel suggested they move back to the Dallas area, so they married and started their lives here. Aiesha is an assistant district attorney and Nigel is a criminal defense personal injury lawyer. "People always want to know if we argue," Aiesha smiled. "We don't. But we're both better attorneys because we can hear the other

side. Of course, we never work the same cases."

"Before we had the kids, our focus was on each other," Nigel added. "Now we receive joy and happiness by seeing our kids' joy and happiness."

The kitchen, breakfast nook and living room are a continuous space for easy entertaining. A gray and steel island with drop lighting and room for six stools divides the kitchen and minibar from the rest of the room. A marbled breakfast table stands by the glass door to the backyard, where another member of the family, Fluffy, the Golden Retriever-Poodle mix, spends time



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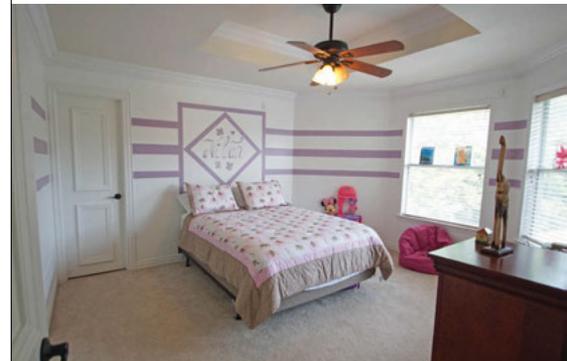


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romping. “Nigel II named him,” Nigel, the father, explained with a lopsided grin. “He named the fish Kodi, too,” he said, gesturing to the tank on the island. “Maybe we need to retire Nigel from naming the pets?”



The living area features a large painting of Martin Luther King Jr., Harriet Tubman and Malcolm X. This is only fitting, since Nigel is the civil rights chair for the local NAACP chapter. Both husband and wife are deeply involved in their community and have aspirations for public office at some point in the future. Nigel loves to read and started a book club for men, with about 50 guys reading and debating books together. He also speaks to youth at schools and other organizations monthly. Aiesha is the chair of the women in the NAACP committee, and she also leads a mentoring group called Diamonds for girls 12-18 at her church. Nigel coaches his son’s various sports teams. And they are both involved with Jack and Jill of America, an organization that exposes children to different cultures.

The sunken living room features a leather sectional, a large family portrait above the mantel, large floor vases and, on the stand below the TV, a sculpted panther representing Nigel’s alma mater, Prairie View A&M University. Around a hidden corner, by a glass brick wall, is the third of the downstairs bathrooms, convenient to the large open room.

The rest of the bedrooms are upstairs. A nook at the bottom of the back staircase displays a mother-of-pearl abstract sculpture, and the walls of the stairwell are a gallery of family photos, including pictures of Nigel’s parents and Aiesha’s Jamaican grandfather in his Masons’ regalia.

Nigel II’s room is decorated with the New York skyline in black and white.



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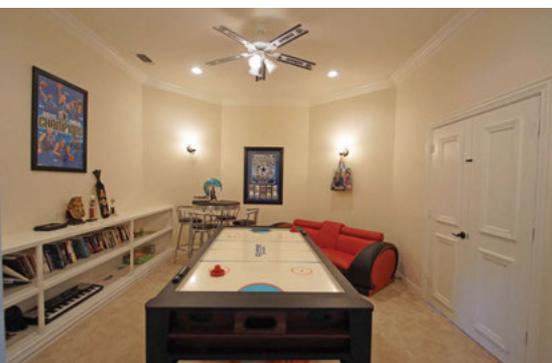
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“Black is my favorite color,” he explained, “and the skyline is my favorite part of my room — that and my window.” Next to the large bay window is a tiny one where a few of his awards from karate, soccer, baseball and piano perch. His mother explained that he likes to watch out his secret window to see anyone who doesn’t belong in the neighborhood. Many of Nigel’s paintings are displayed around his room and testify to his interest in the arts as well as sports. A bedspread spangled with solar systems completes the look.

Like her brother’s room, Nilah’s features a full bath all her own. But her room is done in orchid, pink and white,



with her name on the wall above her bed, and features some of those elephants connecting to her mother’s sorority. She is also an artist, as well as a ballerina and gymnast. “My favorite part of my room is my pictures, and my bed,” she declared.

A game room/library separates the two siblings. Many of the elder Nigel’s books fill the shelves here, alongside the framed sports art, including a poster honoring the 2011 Mavericks NBA championship. A Cowboys ceiling fan hangs over the air hockey table. Just across from this room is another half-bath.

At the end of the hall, a door opens onto a tiny balcony with one chair overlooking the backyard, which is decked out like a tropical resort with its pool featuring a Cowboys star and the outdoor kitchen where Nigel likes to cook. “After the pressure of a workday,” Aiesha explained, “we appreciate a house that feels like a vacation, instantly relaxing.”

Nigel agreed, “It’s an easy place for entertaining. I want our kids to see that sacrifices pay off, that there’s nothing they can’t do.” **NOW**

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MANY TALENTS

— By Rick Mauch

The world is full of stories. Christin Gillam wants to tell as many as she can, so that meant starting at an early age. Though only 6, she and her younger brother, Cory, would write plays and perform them in front of an audience of stuffed animals. Now, at age 34, she's still writing and presenting shows, only the audience is live. "We thought we were going to be on Star Search," Christin said with a chuckle.

Christin is an author, playwright, director, actor and song writer. In July 2016, she founded Christin Gillam Productions. And yes, she still works with Cory, whom she calls her "right-hand man." "My pastor, Julius Harris, encouraged me to start the company. It was time to spread my wings," she said. "I made it official, and here I am, with projects we're just trying to keep up with."

Her most recent project is the TV web miniseries, *Beyond Beauty*. Like much of her work, it is spiritually based. It's the story of a self-centered, beautiful young woman who is career-driven and learns there is more to life. Each episode is 30-45 minutes in length and can be found on YouTube through her website. "She had to find a way to get back to God," Christin said. She is looking forward to working on a second season of the show.

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Christin's live productions can be seen onstage throughout the Metroplex, including at Point of Life Church in Cedar Hill. She is also a youth leader at the church, working with kids ages 12 and up. "Being able to work with my biological sister is such a rewarding experience," Cory said. "We work really well together and respect each other. She calls me her big little brother."

Christin, originally from Little Rock, Arkansas, moved with her family to Dallas in 1998 at the age of 16. After graduating from the University of North Texas with a degree in finance, she spent eight years in the corporate world, got married and had two children — her 12-year-old daughter, Paris, and 10-year-old son, Princeton.

Now a single mom, she decided it was time to again pick up a pen and return to her entertainment dreams, though she still works as assistant principal of operations at a charter school. Nine months later, she finished her first novel for young adults, *Hiberius*, a science-fiction tale, which she plans to continue

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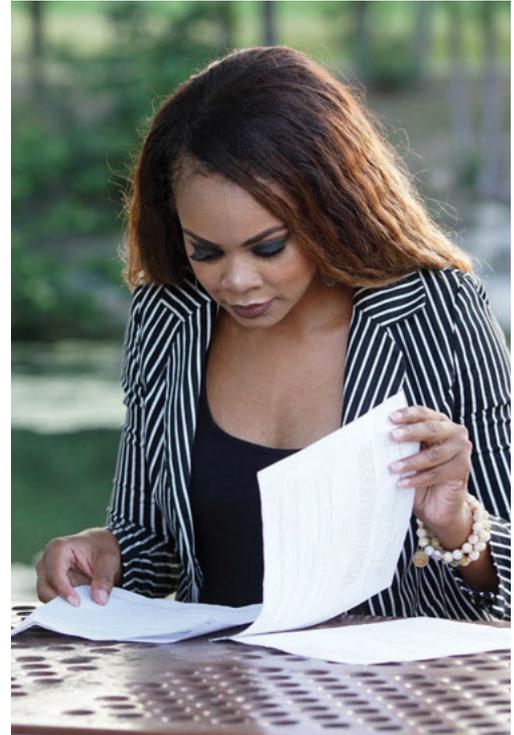


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in a series. It should be coming out in December. In 2014, she wrote an Easter play, *Halle the Orphan*. It was a big hit when performed at her church. "We had 15 kids in it, and it was very challenging, especially for someone who was just getting started," she recalled. "But when they performed, everybody was moved. It was a story about finding Jesus and delivering the message through the eyes of a child."

Since then, she has done nine productions. She is a quick creator, turning vision into reality in a short time. "It doesn't take me long to write," Christin said.

Perhaps her most successful play is *Silly No More*. It is the tale of a woman with four grown children and her efforts to gather them together for her birthday. She enlists the help of her friend, Marjorie, named after Christin's grandmother, to find them. In her words, it is time for them to stop doing silly things in life and come back together as a family. "She wants them to be *silly no more*, hence the title," Christin said. "Me, my parents and my brother, we all sat around and talked about how no one's sitting at the family table during dinner any more. No one hugs anymore."

Silly No More featured 10 original songs, nine written by Christin and one by her mother, Charolette Gillam. She is, in fact, working on a *Silly No More* album.



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Ironically, Christin's knowledge of reading and writing music is limited. She does, however, know what sounds right and is able to transmit that to the performers. "I'll give them a sample of what I need them to play, and it works. The sound is in my head," she said.

"She is an awesome talent who has a unique gift to speak to today's youth with stage plays and other productions," Pastor Harris said. "She uses her God-given talent to reach millennials with the Gospel."

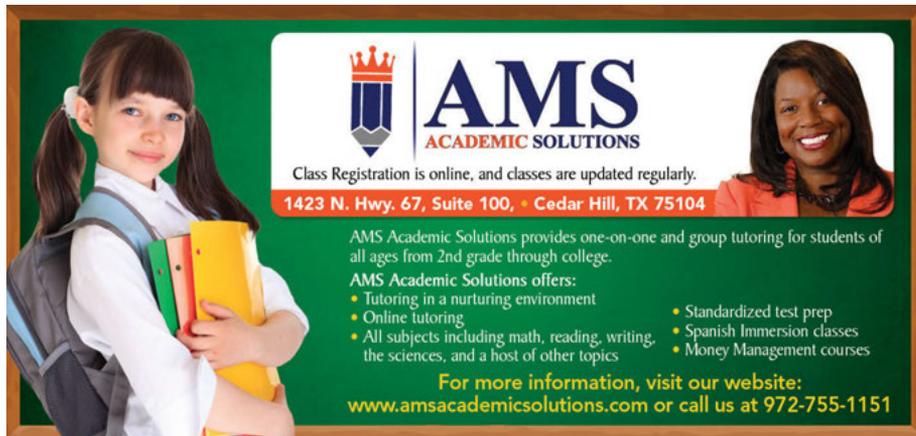
Along with shows on the Internet and TV, Christin's live productions can be seen on stage throughout the Metroplex.

Christin loves writing and directing best. She will give herself small roles in some of her shows, but there is the occasional larger role, such as when she played Satan in her play *Choose*. It is four vignettes about different individuals — a singer, father-daughter, teenage boys and a 90-year-old couple. Their lives are brought together through a car crash. "That play is one everyone wanted to see again. It's one of my favorite plays."

She loves working with young people. Christin traces this back to her own days as a child when they would have family night, and the focus would be on entertainment. "We'd either go to the movies or get a movie from Blockbuster, or sometimes we'd have game night," she recalled. "That sparked my love of movies. My dad and I watched movies all the time."

"My parents instilled a lot of Christian values in me. I think it's important that children and youth are involved."

Christin's company is family-based. She takes a moment to brag on Paris' singing and Princeton's acting and dancing, but adds that making A's in school always comes first.



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Her mother is the marketing manager; her dad, Damien, is the technical director; her sister-in-law, LaToya Gillam, handles the finances; cousin Mia McMurray works in craft services (food); and cousin Jay Williams is videographer. And, of course, Cory is with her every step of the way. “He’s my business partner. We grew up loving movies and stage plays. We’re in this together all the way,” Christin said.

“Seeing her in her element has motivated me to follow my dreams as well,” Cory said. “She is a true example of success.”



Looking ahead, Christin is working on another TV web series entitled *Power of the Tongue*. She will be taking *Choose* on the road at the end of September or in early October. “I was called to do this,” she said. “It’s important to me that God uses me to create platforms for other people.” **NOW**



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— By Zachary R. Urquhart

While spring may be the time for a deep cleaning of your house, autumn is a natural time to give things around the house a facelift. School, television shows and fiscal years are all starting anew, and the end of the extreme heat is perfect for starting those labor-intensive projects you have been putting off all summer. Here are some ideas for home improvement projects, big and small, you could do this fall.





Change Simple Things

• *Keep with the times.* Trends and styles change frequently, so think about swapping light fixtures and faucets. Chrome and oil-rubbed bronze are popular now, and changing fixtures can be a simple way to update your look. If you are working with electricity, be sure to turn off your power and test to ensure your breakers were labeled correctly before working with what could be live wires. If you are changing pipes, consider swapping your old connections for push-to-connect fittings that will make future plumbing work easier. And if cost is an issue, there are lots of metallic spray paints that will allow you to alter the look of your existing fixtures.

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- *Look above for a simple fix.* A step above just replacing light fixtures and lamps, swapping out your ceiling fan can alter the entire look of your room. If you are changing the color or style of the lighting in a room, it is probably a good idea to get a new ceiling fan to match. While you could technically take the fan apart to paint it to match, there are so many working parts that buying a new matching one is usually a better idea. When deciding on your new fan, you can keep it simple or get fancy when picking from the dozens of styles available at any local hardware store. Changing fans can be a two-person job, so think about getting a helper, and be careful to make all the hardware and electric connections to manufacturer's specifications.

- *Make a statement.* Painting the entire house can be an exhausting, time-intensive task. But painting a room, or even just adding an accent color on one wall, is a relatively easy way to achieve a drastically different look. You can even let each child choose a color to make their room their own. The key to any good interior paint job is the preparation. Tape off the trim, get plenty of drop cloths and give yourself enough time for the paint to dry before moving furniture back against the wall.

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Know Your DIY Limits

- *Carpet has a shelf life.* If your carpet is hard to clean, fraying around the edges or just getting out of date, it may be time to call the professionals. Though you can install new carpet yourself, you need to weigh the cost of materials, including the tools you will undoubtedly need if you want to tackle the project on your own. If the space requires hiding a carpet seam in the middle of the room, it is likely that you will want an experienced company to do the work. Call around and get several quotes before you settle on someone, and be sure to look for reviews online to get a good idea of the quality of each company's work.

- *Hardwood does not have to be hard.* Decades ago, your choices were essentially carpet, sheets of slick laminate or real wood. Nowadays, though, you can find a variety of manufactured, wood-like floors that offer the refined look of wood without as much expense or difficulty in installation. Any home improvement store will have a selection of vinyl planks that look nearly identical to real wood, as well as ceramic and porcelain tiles offering a wood look. With any of these options, you should know your ability before deciding whether to do the work yourself or hire a company for the project. The flooring is easy enough to install in open spaces, but there is some finesse required for corners and transitioning to another type of flooring in another room.

- *Home needs a range.* While you are updating fixtures, it might be time to add a new cooking range to match the new style. If you have a combination oven

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and stovetop, it is easy enough to take out the old one and replace it with a new model. But, if you have a drop-in range, you need to be sure you know the steps involved before you end up with a hole in your kitchen counters.

Work Smarter

• *Take advantage of empty rooms.* If you have had any inking to move or change your furniture around, try new ideas while your floors are bare. Once you have taken up the old flooring, test different layouts before you put the new carpet or hardwood down. This will prevent you from scratching or tearing your new floors. This is also the perfect time to paint, as any spillage will be covered once you install the new flooring.

• *Have a plan.* If you are planning to overhaul your whole house, make a list of jobs you want to get done, and devise a plan to maximize your work time. If you are paying professionals, you will probably need to do all major work at once. If you are doing the work yourself, figure out if you need to tackle one room at a time, or if you can knock out several rooms in one fell swoop.

Whatever your home improvement plans are for the fall, planning a timeframe and detailed budget will help ensure your project stays on track. Don't rule out professionals who can achieve the look you want to do harder tasks. Updates can really give the home a new and improved feel. Plus, should you decide to sell in this hot housing market, they can dramatically increase the value of your investment. **NOW**

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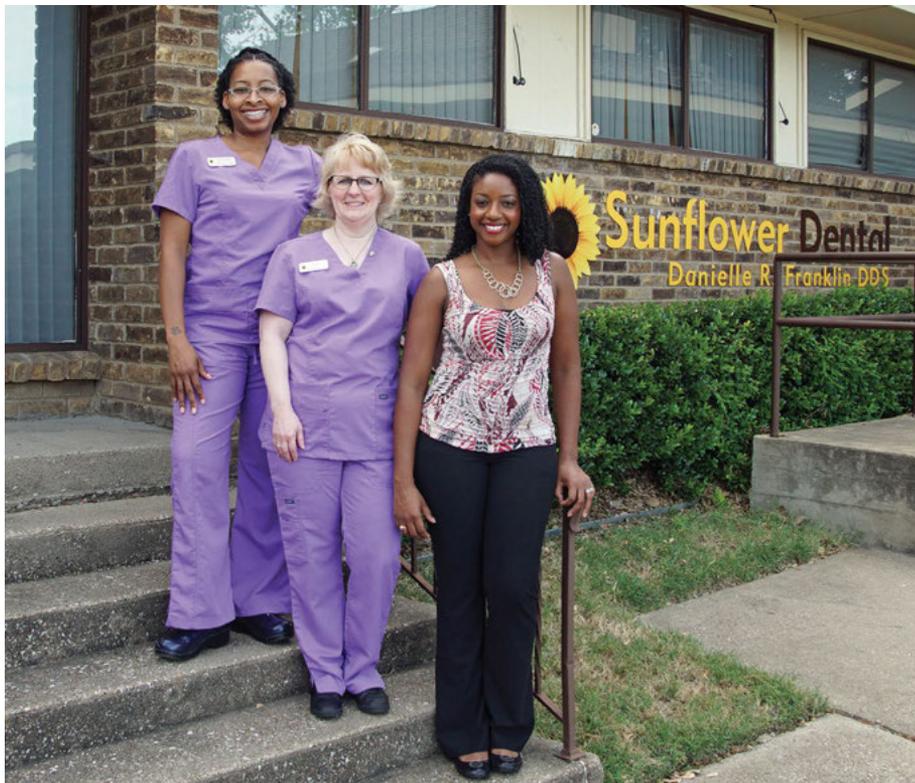
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A Different Philosophy of Dentistry

Sunflower Dental seeks to make dentistry welcoming and fear-free.

— By Adam Walker

Four years ago, Dr. Danielle Franklin, a graduate of Baylor College of Dentistry, opened her office in Duncanville. “Growing up, I liked my dentist,” she explained. “So I wanted to be a dentist from a young age. I hear people say it all the time, ‘I like you, but I don’t like going to the dentist!’ People have a fear of the dentist, but I want to make people’s lives better by getting rid of that fear. That’s why I named my practice Sunflower Dental. I want a friendly, cheerful vibe!”

She starts the welcome with a great big sunflower on the outside wall of the office. Upon entering the waiting room, the open, cheery atmosphere and natural lighting set you at ease. Wood floors and bright, sunshine yellow walls join comfy seating in creating a more home-like vibe than in a

stereotypical doctor’s office. But she still has the expected pile of magazines.

Danielle, her assistant, LaShundra, and her front desk clerk, Cynthia, go out of their way to create a different dental experience. “I’m in a profession which I chose and love, but most people don’t want to be here. I try to change that by the end of the first appointment. I’m not just doing work on mouths. I’m building relationships.” Dr. Franklin takes patients of all ages from first tooth, at about 6 months, to adults and aims to treat them all like individuals.

Danielle was born in L.A., then moved to Minnesota. In seventh grade she moved to her mother’s hometown of Dallas. “I did a summer dentistry program at Baylor and loved it.” She

went on to Texas A&M University, and then graduated from Baylor in 2009. “When I was ready to open my own practice, I looked around and chose Duncanville. It has that small, big-town feel.” She does everything from general dentistry, crowns and bridges, whitening and deep cleaning to Invisalign and, of course, cavities and extractions.

“People need information to help them understand why they need treatment.”

Danielle sees Sunflower Dental as different from other dentist offices. “We all have good training. We all passed the same test. But my main concern is to know you. I talk to my patients about their experiences and what they want before I ever look in their mouths. You’re not just teeth. I don’t schedule 10 other patients at the same time. The main thing is building relationships with my patients. And I want you to be informed about your care. My website has videos of every procedure and service, so patients can see what I’ll be doing. I’m very visual, so I think it’s helpful. It’s your mouth. Patience is key. You should know what’s happening. People need information to help them understand why they need treatment,” she explained.

Sunflower Dental accepts all PPO insurance plans as well as CareCredit. They also offer payment plans. It’s one more way they try to make the experience easier.

The office is tucked away in the Wheatland Plaza professional buildings, so it’s not easy to spot, but Dr. Franklin just tells her patients that her office is right by the railroad tracks. She smiles at the explanation. “Hey, we’re here! Try us out!” **NOW**

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Officer Patrick Deggs, Mothers Against Drunk Driving's Enforcement Hero Award winner, poses by his squad car.



First Methodist School students learn about the solar system in a portable planetarium from the Frontiers of Flight Museum.



Saniyah, Ahsab, Ahyiah and Geordon, The McGrew Cren, perform the Jackson 5's "Blame It on the Boogie" at Zula B. Wylie Library's Summer Reading Talent Show.



Rachel Acosta keeps things popping at Cinemark 14.



Duncanville High School student Rosa Juarez shows off the tablet she won in the Duncanville Library summer reading program.



Future chefs participate in the Teen Chopped competition at DeSoto Public Library.



The Book Buddies program at DeSoto Public Library helps with literacy.



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Josh Thibodeaux is a State Farm agent based in Duncanville.

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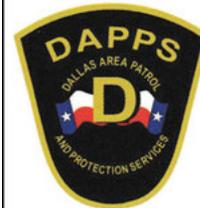
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In the Kitchen With Greg Shelton

— *By Adam Walker*

Greg Shelton grew up in Vicksburg, Mississippi. He is one of seven boys and learned to cook from his mother, Katie Mae Gray, who made sure all nine of her kids knew how to cook, wash and sew. “I cook from my soul. Therefore, there aren’t any recipes for most of my dishes,” Greg said.

He especially enjoys baking. “Although I occasionally use recipes from others for my desserts, I make them my own by adding my special touch. My wife, Teri, and I love entertaining our friends because it gives me an opportunity to cook and fellowship with them while enjoying the meal I prepared.”

Greg believes that presentation is very important. “Over the years, I learned if it doesn’t look good, people may not eat it at all!” **NOW**

Three-layer Banana Cream Cake

Cake:

- 1 1/2 cups butter, softened**
- 2 1/2 cups granulated sugar**
- 4 eggs, room temperature**
- 3 cups Pillsbury all-purpose flour, sifted**
- 2 tsp. baking soda**
- 3/4 cup plain buttermilk**
- 2 tsp. pure vanilla extract**
- 2 cups mashed ripe bananas**

Frosting:

- 2 8-oz. pkgs. cream cheese, room temperature**
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract**
- 4 cups powdered sugar**
- 1 cup pecans, chopped (optional)**

1. For cake: Cream butter and sugar in a

- mixing bowl until well blended. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition.
- 2.** Sift flour and baking soda together.
- 3.** Stir flour mixture into the butter/sugar mixture, one cup at a time, beating well after each addition.
- 4.** Add buttermilk. Mix in the vanilla extract. Add mashed bananas; mix well.
- 5.** Grease and flour 3 8- or 9-inch cake pans. Pour batter into each pan as evenly as possible.
- 6.** Bake at 325 F for 30 minutes. Test each layer by inserting a toothpick. If it comes out clean, the cake is done. Let cakes cool completely, on a cake rack with waxed paper, so they don’t stick.
- 7. For frosting:** Whip or beat cream cheese until smooth. Add vanilla extract; mix well.
- 8.** Add powdered sugar; beat well. Add chopped pecans.
- 9.** Spread frosting on each layer, one layer at a time. Then frost the outer edges of the cake.

7UP Pound Cake

Cake:

- 1 1/2 cups butter, softened**
- 3 cups granulated sugar**
- 6 eggs, room temperature**
- 3 cups Pillsbury all-purpose flour, sifted**
- 1 tsp. pure vanilla extract**
- 1 tsp. pure lemon extract**
- 1 cup 7UP**

Icing:

- 1 1/2 cups powdered sugar**
- 1/2 cup real lemon juice**

- 1. For cake:** Cream butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until well blended.
- 2.** Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition.
- 3.** Stir in the flour, one cup at a time, beating well after each addition.
- 4.** Add vanilla and lemon extracts; mix well.
- 5.** Gradually add 7UP. Scrape sides of bowl, and mix again.
- 6.** Spoon batter into a greased and floured Bundt or tube cake pan. Bake at 325 F for 1 hour and 25 minutes. Test cake before removing by inserting a toothpick. If it comes out clean, the cake is done. Remove cake and place on a wire rack to cool completely before placing on plate or covered cake round.
- 7. For icing:** Whisk powdered sugar and lemon juice together until smooth with no lumps. If mixture is too thick, add more lemon juice.
- 8.** Drizzle on cake.

Pineapple Pie

- 1 cup Eagle Brand Condensed Milk**
- 2 large lemons**
- 2 small cans crushed pineapple, drained**
- 1 8-oz. container Kraft Cool Whip**
- 1 1/2 cups pecans, chopped**
- 1 graham cracker pie shell**

- 1.** Pour condensed milk into a mixing bowl.
- 2.** Squeeze lemon juice into the bowl, making sure that seeds do not fall into the milk; stir well.
- 3.** Add drained pineapple, cool whip and pecans; mix well.
- 4.** Pour mixture into pie shell; place in refrigerator until pie is firm. Keep refrigerated until you are ready to serve.

To view recipes from current and previous issues, visit www.nowmagazines.com.

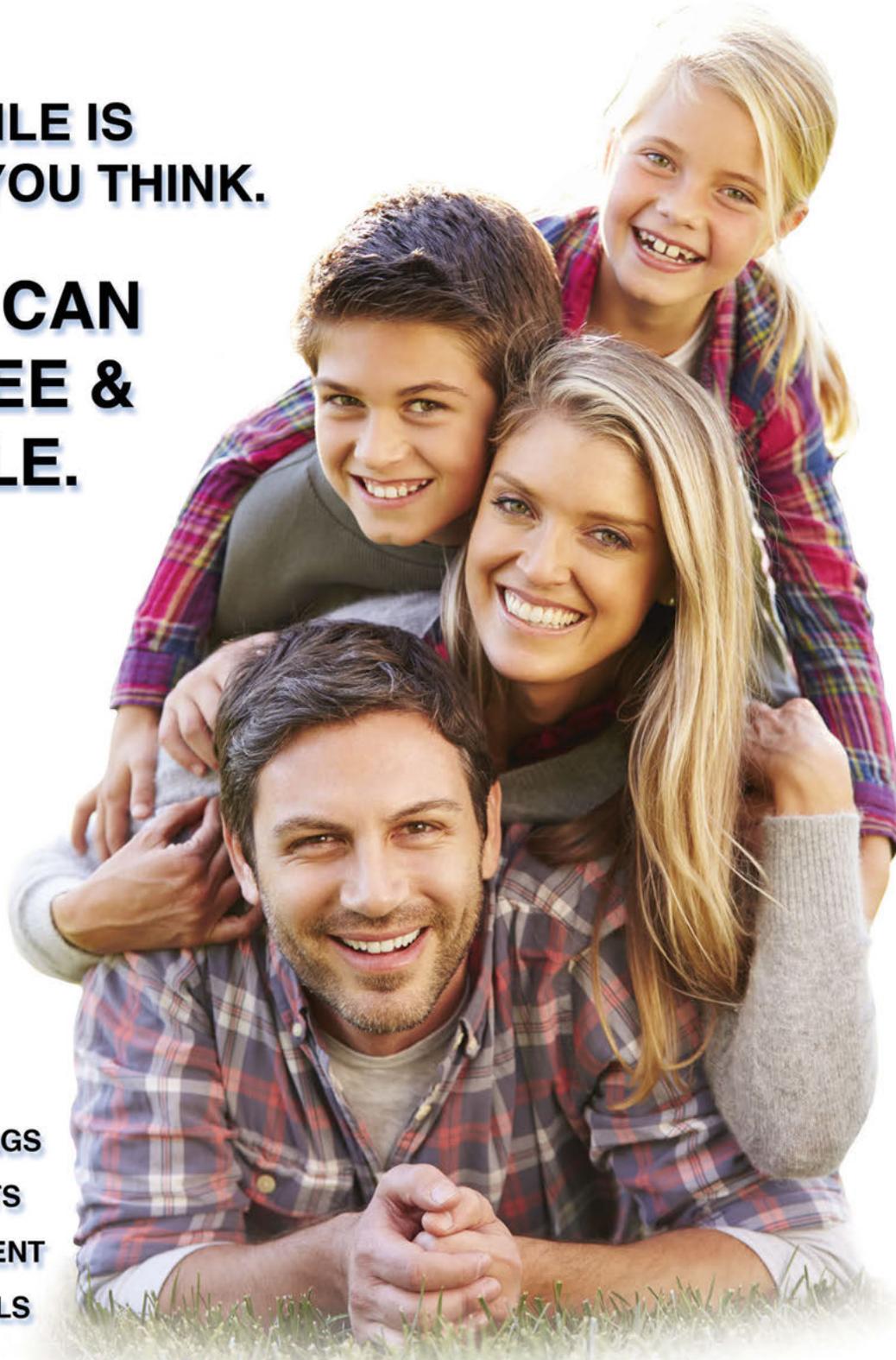
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